



NATIONAL WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP ALLIANCE

Fall 2018 Newsletter

Building a
wilderness
stewardship
community

Join the NWSA!

Membership in the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance comes in two forms: individual or organization memberships.

Individual memberships show your support for the mission and purpose of the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, provide access to pro deal offerings and association with the greatest people on earth - wilderness stewards. Any donation over \$25 per year qualifies you as an NWSA member for Workshop and Symposium discounts.

Organization memberships entitle your group to apply for NWSA Grant programs, provide access to toolboxes and educational materials tailored to support wilderness stewardship organizations, and participation in review and comment efforts on industry wide-issues lead by NWSA.

All members have access to NWSA services and support, including volunteer workshops, webinars, and Conference/Symposiums, many at no or reduced cost.

Please consider a membership in NWSA as a wise investment for the future of wilderness stewardship. Collectively we are stronger than individually.

To join (or renew your membership), visit wildernessalliance.org/donate



**NWSA-USFS
Stewardship
Partnership
puts volunteers
to work in
every Region.**

One of the many trail crews funded in the 2017 round of trail grants.
Courtesy Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness

In its second full year, the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Partnership Funding is a joint project between the US Forest Service and the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA). The purpose of the Trail Stewardship funding is to help implement the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Act goals of increasing volunteer participation on the National Forest Trail System. The funding program was designed to encourage coordination and collaboration between local trail stewardship groups and their agency partners to identify and complete projects which would improve trail maintenance accomplishments and backlog elimination on the National Forest trail system.

The 2017 funding was announced to the trail stewardship community in January 2017. NWSA developed a strat-

egy of engaging the broader trail community by involving key national trail organizations: the American Hiking Society, Back Country Horsemen of America, the International Mountain Bicycling Association, the American Motorcycling Association, and the Blue Ribbon Coalition, in outreach for the program, and in reviewing and rating the proposals. Application information was provided on the NWSA website and through email blasts to trail stewardship groups associated with the national organizations.

In 2017, the Trail Funding application period began February 15th and ended May 1st. Eighty-nine grant applications, totaling over \$1,00,000 in requests were received and evaluated. A total of 21 projects were awarded funding and completed work (see below)

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About NWSA

Our Mission:

The mission of the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance is to develop a growing network of volunteer-based organizations to provide stewardship for America's enduring resource of wilderness.

Our Vision:

Our vision is to see each wilderness area within the National Wilderness Preservation System adopted by a wilderness stewardship organization dedicated to protecting and nurturing the area's character and values. We envision effective partnerships between community-based, non-profit wilderness stewardship organizations and all government agencies charged with the management of our national wilderness areas.

Our Goal:

Our goal is to improve wilderness stewardship and create an allied constituency for wilderness by connecting stewardship organizations with each other, linking our efforts and experiences, directing groups to resources, and fostering new organizations.

Our Objectives:

- Identify wilderness stewardship groups nationwide in order to determine the present level of support.
- Through our website and other resources, share knowledge, experience and expertise among local, regional and national stewardship organizations.
- Provide new groups with start-up models of different structures, help them anticipate the questions that typically arise as groups form, and connect them with people who have built successful organizations.
- Sponsor national and regional gatherings of stewardship groups.
- Provide grants to help stewardship groups accomplish on-the-ground projects benefiting Wilderness
- Help foster a culture within governing agencies that values volunteer-based wilderness stewardship organizations and has the means to give them effective support.

A BIG "THANK YOU" TO DARCY SHEPARD, OUTGOING NWSA TREASURER

Darcy began working with the NWSA in March 2011, assisting with logistics for the inaugural conference. She was elected Treasurer in September 2012, and serves as chairwoman for the 2016 cycle Boots on the Ground grant committee.

Her passion for numbers and the outdoors led her to her current position as the Director of Finance and Human Resources with Friends of Nevada Wilderness after serving as a yearlong AmeriCorps for the organization in 2010. She holds a BA in Journalism and Political Science and a Certificate of Excellence in Nonprofit Management (2014), both from the University of Nevada, Reno.

Darcy's enthusiasm for wilderness and public lands stewardship is inspired by her mother, who wore the iconic Woodsy Owl costume while working with the Forest Service in southern California.

WEBINARS AT WILDERNESSALLIANCE.ORG

NWSA's free webinars will keep you apprised of funding opportunities, policy changes and ways to strengthen and build your stewardship group. Webinars currently available at wildernessalliance.org/nwsa_webinars include "Climate Change and Invasive Species," led by Jack Morgan, Poudre Wilderness Volunteers; "NWSA/USFS grants for the Wilderness Stewardship Performance Program - Goals, Roles, How To Apply," led by: Randy Welsh, NWSA executive Director; and "Understanding Wilderness Stewardship Performance Program," led by Steve Boutcher, FS National Information Manager for Wilderness & Wild and Scenic Rivers

NWSA IS CONNECTED NATIONWIDE

The membership of NWSA is spread from coast to coast across the U.S. with nearly 140 associations in 29 of the 50 states. Colorado tops the list with 26 participating groups, with California in a close second with 25. Check out the member groups at www.wildernessalliance.org/connect.



DON'T FORGET: RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!

It's time to renew membership in NWSA for the 2019 Fiscal Year. Membership runs October through September matching the US Government Fiscal Year.

Your membership gift ensures an enduring wilderness. America's wilderness needs our care. The demands of a burgeoning population, climate change, and dwindling federal funds makes NWSA's work more critical than ever. Support our work in building a stronger wilderness stewardship community that is enabled to restore, protect and nurture America's wilderness. Renew your commitment today at www.wildernessalliance.org/donate

Partnership, from page 1

Awardees were notified and grant work began on May 15th. Projects were implemented mainly during the summer of 2017 though several continued into the fall and early winter of 2018. All projects were complete by March 2018. Reimbursements were finalized in April 2018.

Building on the success of the first season, a total of 42 projects were funded in 2018, totaling \$402,000, for both motorized and non-motorized trail uses. One-hundred-fourteen proposals were received, requesting over \$1,400,000 in funding for both motorized and non-motorized trail uses. 114 proposals were received, requesting over \$1,400,000 in funding.

Funding proposals ranged in size from \$1,745 to \$20,000. The program elicited over \$1,000,000 in matching cash, and over \$2,000,000 in in-kind matches. Over 5,300 volunteers, trail crews, and non-profit staff were expected to participate across these projects, maintaining over 1,700 miles of trails. Also funded were additional signing, structure repair, and many bridges replaced using these grant funds.

Further information on the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Partnership Funding program can be found at wildernessalliance.org/trail_funding.

Questions about the Trail Stewardship Funding program may be addressed to the Fund Manager, Randy Welsh, Executive Director, National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance at 801-808-2167 or randy@wildernessalliance.org.

NWSA WSP Winter Grants available now!

The National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance is excited to announce the continuation of the Wilderness Stewardship Performance activity funding in partnership with the USDA Forest Service for the period from November 2018 through May 2019.

Any current 501 (c) (3) member organization of NWSA in good standing may apply for these Grants. Organizations may include the cost of joining or renewal to NWSA in their grant application budgets. Approximately \$25,000 is available during this round of WSP grants for work to be performed from November 2018 through May 2019.

Grants are anticipated to be a minimum of \$1,000 and an average of \$2,000 per organization. Actual grants may vary depending on the needs of each project, the number of proposals, and the availability of funds. These grants are expected to help increase WSP scoring for 2019, so work is expected to be complete by May 2019.

There is a matching contribution requirement. The match must be dollar for dollar (or 1:1) or cash equivalent and may be accomplished through cash, contributed funding, and/or in-kind contribution. All other factors equal, cash matching will raise evaluation scores, but is not required.

Deadline for applications is November 15, 2018. Complete information available at bit.ly/NWSAWinterGrants2018

2017 Trail Grants by the numbers

- 82 organizations applied, submitting 90 proposals totaling over \$1,000,000 in requests
- 21 trail projects were awarded \$230,000 in funding
- Projects were in every region of the Forest Service
- Projects included: Trail construction/reconstruction, trail maintenance, structure rehabilitation, sign installation, bridge replacement, backlog elimination
- Over \$448,000 in Cash Match from selected projects
- Over \$745,000 in In-Kind Match from selected projects
- Nearly 2,000 Volunteers supported
- Over 30,000 volunteer hours
- 30 trail crew staff and leaders supported
- Over \$700,000 in value of volunteer labor alone
- Over 750 miles of trail maintained to standard
- 2 bridges built, over 1000 water bars and drainage cleaned
- Over 500 feet of structures replaced or rehabilitated
- Thousands of trees cleared from trails nationwide
- Nearly 300 different workday events

2017 GRANT RECIPIENTS

Alaska Trails
Arizona Trail Association
BCHA - Idaho Foundation

BCHA - Washington
Boulder Mountain Bike Alliance
Evergreen MBA
Friends of Scotchman Peaks
Friends of the Dillon Ranger District
Friends of the Shawnee
Idaho Trails Association
Mountain Bike Missoula
Mountain Bike the Tetons
Northwoods Volunteer Connection—
Friends of Boundary
Waters Wilderness
Partners of Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock
Prescott Trail Riders
Santa Barbara Trail Bike Volunteers
Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship
Stewards of the Sequoias
Volunteers for Outdoors Colorado
Washington Trails Association
Wild South

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**Interested in serving
on the NWSA board?
Contact Randy Welsh.**

WE'RE 10 YEARS OLD! SORT OF.

October of 2008 marked the beginning of a great idea – NWSA was born!

In 2008 at a Wilderness Volunteer Workshop in Colorado, Elaine Dermody of Friends of Wilderness in Steamboat Springs, and Chris Brown, the Forest Service Director for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers, got to talking: Could we find ways for volunteer wilderness stewards to connect, support each other, and help foster new groups? Ralph Swain, Region 2 Wilderness Program Manager, was enthusiastic about the idea — the workshop where Elaine and Chris talked was one example of Ralph's efforts to increase awareness and cooperation among volunteer-based groups across many years.

In October, 2008, Chris gathered Forest Service leaders, wilderness advocates and experts, and representatives from stewardship groups for a meeting in Washington, DC. Shaaron Netherton from Friends of Nevada Wilderness, and Dave Cantrell from

Poudre Wilderness Volunteers were part of a contingent representing boots-on-the-ground stewardship organizations. Everyone at the meeting agreed on the need. But how to make something happen?

At the Region 2 Wilderness Volunteer Workshop a few months later, the group got to work. With support from Chris and FS managers and rangers in every region, Elaine, Dave, and Shaaron located outstanding volunteer organizations and explained the idea. Everywhere they went, they found interest and enthusiasm for the idea that volunteer groups across the nation could support each other and help new groups form.

“Let's get together!” A few thousand emails later, we were all set: Poudre Wilderness Volunteers offered to host a gathering, organizations from every corner found ways to send someone, national experts offered their support, and a new organization was born in Fort Collins in 2010.



A happy NWSA Board at the Wilderness Workshop in Russellville, AR, last year. Left to right: Dave Cantrell, Stuart Dodd, Sandy Compton, Ian Nelson (standing in for Jennifer Tripp), Randy Rasmussen, Katie Currier, Anne Baker, Darcy Shepherd.