

# SCNF Partner Post-Season Forum

12/16/2021

1000-1200

Teams Online

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**Attendees:**

- Youth Employment Program (YEP) - Steve Adams
- Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) – Angela Davis, Adam Hein
- Idaho Conservation Corps (ICC) – Lisa O'Flaherty
- Salmon Valley Stewardship (SVS) – Toni Ruth, Jenny Gonyer
- Pulaski Users Group (PUG) – Lex Carey, Greg Travelstead
- Student Conservation Association (SCA) – Tim Carroll, Kari Mueller, Jay Watson
- Selway Bitterroot Frank Church Association (SBFC) – Sally Ferguson, Ian Davidson
- Idaho Conservation League (ICL) – Stevie Gawryluk
- National Civilian Conservation Corps (NCCC) – Amanda Cochran
- Squaw Butte Backcountry Horsemen – Dan Waugh, Lisa Griffith
- Salmon-Challis National Forest (SCNF) – Chuck Mark, Heather Degeest, Josh Milligan, Kyra Povirk, Ken Gebhardt, Sydney Baker, Nick Schade, Larry Vogel, Dan Garcia, Katie Baumann, Diane Schuldt, Phil McNeal, Kim Nelson, Deanna Stever, Mike Steck, Amy Baumer, Gina Knudson

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## Summary

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**Agenda item:** Round Robin, Lessons learned, highlights, etc      **Presenter:** Partners

### Discussion:

YEP – Working with The Nature Conservancy to start program in Dillon, MT. They received a mini trail dozer in 2021. Highlights included working with other partners to complete projects. Challenge was recruiting workers.

MCC – Individual placement program – more members placed on the SCNF in 2021. Late requests for individual placements made for a tough quick turnaround. Better positioned in 2022 to meet SCNF needs with more lead time. Crew programs – provided trails and hazardous fuels crews. Coordinated with SCNF and Boise NF on some wilderness trails work, accomplished CDT trail work and trails for Phil on the South Zone. Haz fuels team got red carded and saw certifications. Members went on to be part of women's only team on East Coast.

NCCC – Fuels team highlights were serving as a fire resource for the Forest and furthering career plans of members. Half of their fuel team members go on to work with Forests.

PUG – Been in existence for 2 years. Lex is their first staff. Based in Ketchum/Hailey. Highlights were all-girl trail work trips. Challenges included confusion about their Central ID Resource Advisory Committee (CIRAC) award and the grants/agreement process.

SVS – Been monitoring with the SCNF for many years. Consolidated multiple monitoring agreements into one – much more efficient! Received CIRAC award for trails – looking forward to more opportunities to work with others to get trail work done. Hopes to talk with the SCNF and partners about how to make the most of travel and staff time. If one group is already in an area, we could be taking advantage of that resource to get additional work done to make more efficient use of travel time, limited vehicles. A highlight was returning to sites SVS had monitored 7 years ago. Challenge was high temps and smoke conditions. Need to develop strategies for that being our new normal.

SBFC – Group is focused on Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness, and they work with 4 Forests. Did some good work coordinating between Payette and SCNF in 2021. Wilderness stewardship performance monitoring is now consistent across all forests. 2021 was a good reminder that we need a solid Plan B in place during field season to account for disruptions due to fire, smoke, etc.

SCA – Idaho Americorps had 18 members, 4 seasonal staff. A highlight is seeing Indianola Guard Station come back to life. Collaborations included working on trail with YEP, serving as a resource with lead-based paint credentials, members provided service in the community to Swift River Farms, Lemhi County Animal Shelter (director is SCA alum who stayed in area). Proud of fact that SCA has had zero Covid infectious despite being in a residential setting during a pandemic.

ICC – Lisa is new state program manager. She has extensive trails experience, based in Boise now. Northwest Youth Corps, which ICC is under, is designated partner for the Resource Assistant Program, an individual placement internship program. She appreciates ability to be flexible and nimble – a necessity given challenging and ever-changing conditions.

ICL – Stevie is new staff, based in Wood River Valley and focused on community engagement and ICL’s wilderness stewardship program. On SCNF, in wilderness or areas recommended for wilderness, volunteers completed 180 miles of patrol, trash pickup, campfire ring dispersal, provided education on Leave No Trace ethics, for an overall total of 163 hours of volunteer service. Currently working on 2022 agreement with Forest Service.

BCH – Rob Adams has turned over coordination to Dan and Lisa. Dan is also on State BCH board and Idaho Horse Council. Average age of BCH members nationwide is 72. Trying to increase education and awareness with younger groups like FFA, 4-H. Squaw Butte BCH provided pack support for other partners and trail clearing. Idaho Horse Council is piloting a trail liaison program in Boise and now have liaisons in Moscow, Ketchum, and East Idaho.

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**Agenda item:** Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA); Infrastructure Bill **Presenter:** Josh Milligan, SCNF

**Discussion:**

**GAOA** was funded for 5 years. Forests received funding for FY21 and FY22, and FY23 awards are not yet final but expected soon. Focus of these investments is deferred maintenance and increasing public services and access. The SCNF has concentrated on maintaining or fixing roads, bridges, trails, and recreation sites. Funding isn’t meant to increase federal workforce since it has a limited lifespan of 5 years so much of the work is planned for partners and contracts.

So far, the SCNF has invested in trails work accomplished by partners and a temporary FS seasonal “strike team”, improvements at Salmon River Road campgrounds accomplished by partners.

Jay Watson, SCA, said he appreciates the Forest Service for carrying out a healthy array of projects suitable for youth corps engagement. The Park Service didn’t go that route.

Josh said if partners want to be involved in GAOA proposal developments, the next submittal for FY24 funds will happen around June. Partners can work with Gina or Josh. Keep in mind the main sideboard – the need to address the maintenance backlog.

**Infrastructure Bill** – Makes GAOA look small. Essentially amounts to a tripling of USFS budget. A lot of funding is specifically directed at wildfire suppression and hazardous fuels, but other funding is directed at programs relevant to our partners, like road/trails and ecosystem restoration.

Tim, SCA, asked if wildfire resiliency and community education are included in the funding. Josh confirmed such activities are included.

**Conclusions:**

SCNF welcomes partner help in designing future GAOA projects. There’s really nothing to lose. Project amounts tend to be in the \$100K - \$500K range. It’s helpful if environmental analysis is already complete or not required because the desire is to see these projects implemented rather quickly.

Action items	Person responsible
✓ Provide Infrastructure Bill fact sheet to partners	Josh

**Action items****Person responsible**

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**Agenda item:** Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee**Presenter:** Amy Baumer, SCNF**Discussion:**

After a 5-year gap, the SCNF stood up the CIRAC last year. Committee met in May 2021. For this year, Amy expects amount available to be about \$300K and a small amount of funding not awarded in 2021. On January 3, the Forest will put out a call for proposals which will be due March 4. The CIRAC will meet to decide on projects in March/April timeframe so awards can be used for 2022 field season.

**Conclusions:**

Request for Proposals is coming January 3, 2022, due March 4, 2022.

**Action items****Person responsible**

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✓ RFP announcement to public

Amy

✓ RFP email to partners

Gina

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**Agenda item:** Finding New Ways to Work Together

**Facilitator:**  
Gina

Discussion:

Forest Supervisor Chuck Mark talked about the value of partnerships and the importance of looking at mutual benefits. He's aware that sometimes when the Forest Service utilizes partners, we replace staff capacity rather than add capacity. He's heard the importance of consolidating agreements and making those processes more efficient. He agrees with making sure we build in adaptability to our agreements.

Jay Walker shared that capacity is a challenge for partner organizations, too. SCA has 30 teams going out into the field which means they have to add supervision and admin staff. He referenced a burned area rehabilitation project in Region 5 that was landscape scale and involved multiple forests. They hired a project support intern to re-supply crews and perform other tasks that made the field crews better able to stay focused on work on the ground. Good, interesting model.

Lisa, ICC, and Jay talked about value for larger partners of a regional master agreement. Jay will send an example from Region 5 and Gina will share with group.

Toni, SVS, would like to see the group discuss possibilities for travel efficiencies. If we knew where different groups would be working in 2022 season, there might be opportunities to share resources. She brought up issue of housing shortage in the area. SVS tries to hire local youth to help ease this limitation. They work with Bureau of Land Management on an environmental education program called Hands on the Land. Would be great to be able to scaffold local kids into a natural resource job path.

Tim, SCA, suggested re-considering one-off volunteer projects on the Forest in favor of embedding into one of SCA's or another partner's projects. He also talked about sharing partner expertise. Examples include: chainsaw certification, working with volunteers, inclusivity, using SMART goals, climate/disaster relief.

Tim would like to explore using GAOA to address housing needs. SCA has a policy for when crews can perform what kinds of work when smoke rolls in – based on Air Quality Index. He's happy to share with group.

Sydney Baker is part of SCNF rec staff. Backcountry Horsemen supported other partner groups when Forest couldn't provide stock. That's helpful.

Larry Vogel, North Zone rec program manager, gave example of SCA and YEP working together to improve a trail. He's on the lookout for more opportunities that could benefit from partner teamwork.

Toni, SVS, said another area where teamwork has worked in the past is sharing interns.

Josh said initiatives like GAOA benefit from publicity and partner groups are often well suited to help the Forest share stories.

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## ***Follow Up***

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Gina will send notes out and get a date on the calendar for pre-season discussion. Look for more discussions on possibility of GAOA project focusing on FS housing maintenance and improvements.

Thank you!