

Annual
Report **2025**

a message from our Executive Director

I'm a sucker for a good inspirational quote. Ask my family, who can't get a glass of milk from the fridge without reading Dr. King's thoughts on injustice. Big basketball playoff game? My kids get Michael Jordan's words of wisdom. Challenge at school? Ghandi's wisdom via text: "Be the change you wish to see in the world!" For me, quotes are a touchstone with those who achieved so much, who persisted in the face of adversity; I draw both motivation and perspective from them. I mean, if Mahatma Ghandi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. could take on whole social systems and be the change they wished to see, someone like me can- and should- dedicate myself to bettering the world in at least a small way. Our small way here at ITA is growing each year and we are thrilled we can play a part in connecting people with the natural world for the good of trails.

2025 brought challenges and uncertainty but our staff and board focused on what we could do, with what we had, where we were (a little Teddy Roosevelt there). We could clear trails. We could bring people together to work, learn, and laugh. We could get teens outside. Much like hiking a challenging route, we put our eyes forward and focused on the next step. And, come December, we found ourselves looking back at our biggest season yet!

This year, we hit 400 miles of trail cleared for the first time. We hit 16,000 volunteer hours for the first time.

Idaho Trails Association's mission is to keep Idaho's hiking trails open for all. We work with volunteers to preserve Idaho's trail system through education, maintenance projects, and public lands advocacy.

Become a member or volunteer at:
www.idahotrailsassociation.org

Idaho Trails Association
PO Box 165
Boise, ID 83701





“A sincere thank you to all, from the one-day trail project volunteer to the crew leader to the donor, who unite each year for the good of our shared trails and irreplaceable access to Idaho’s precious public lands.”

We realized recently that we reached 100,000 cumulative volunteer hours. We hired our first full-time Youth Coordinator. We worked with valued partner groups in the field on long-term projects like the Idaho Centennial Trail. And, maybe closest to my heart, we saw countless people share the labor of love we call trail work, making memories and meeting friends.

I love Annual Report time. It’s when we get to share what happens when hard-working volunteers, generous supporters, dedicated partners, and staff, passionate about their jobs, unite for trails. It’s a celebration of accomplishments, an accounting of our time and resources, and a thank you letter to supporters, rolled up in beautiful graphics and color thanks to our wonderful Communications Director, Kelly.

A sincere thank you to all, from the one-day trail project volunteer to the crew leader to the donor, who unite each year for the good of our shared trails and irreplaceable access to Idaho’s precious public lands.



Melanie Vining
Executive Director



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Kelly Hewes- Communications Director
Alex Cravener- Trail Projects Director
Barbara Sammut- North Idaho Program Coordinator
Taylor Mailly- Youth Program Coordinator

2025: year at a glance

98
projects
completed



5,601
logs removed



989
crew leader
planning hours

936
water bars built
or maintained

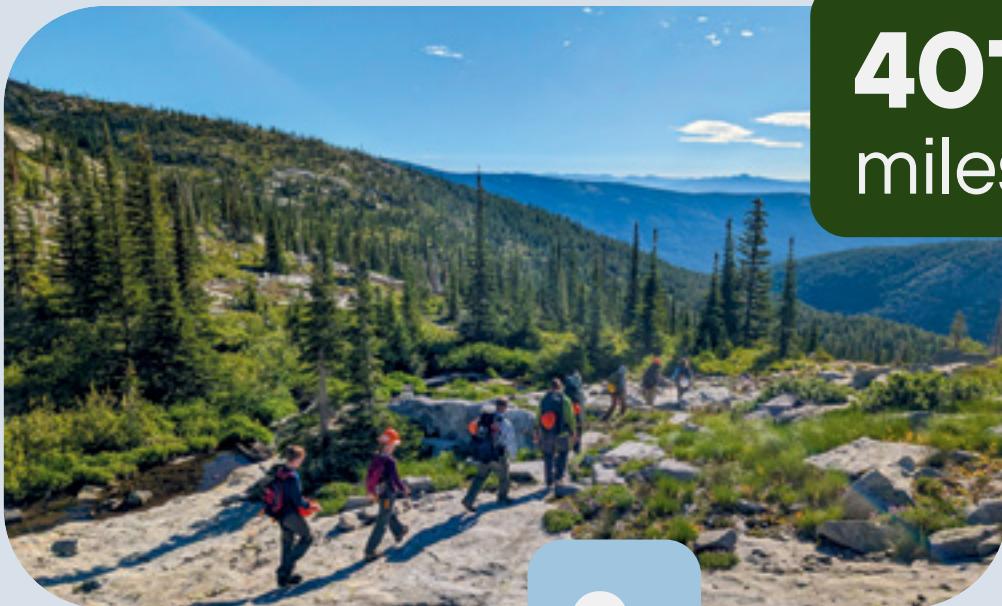


943
volunteers

16,614
volunteer
hours worked



401
miles cleared



94
miles
brushed

9
miles of tread
fixed

4,879
volunteer travel
hours



project highlights



In 2025, ITA completed a record-breaking 98 trail projects, including 91 scheduled volunteer projects and seven impromptu Strike Team efforts in response to specific land manager partner needs. Together, volunteers contributed an extraordinary 16,614 hours to improving Idaho's trail system.

Volunteer crews completed a wide range of critical trail work, including clearing downed trees and logs, cutting back brush, constructing bridges and puncheons, repairing eroded trail sections, cleaning water bars, installing drainage features, removing rocks and other obstructions, and building retaining walls. In total, ITA crews worked on more than 400 miles of trail statewide.

From frontcountry and roadside trails to remote backcountry and designated wilderness areas, volunteers approached every project with enthusiasm and a shared commitment to trail stewardship. Their dedication extended beyond the worksite; volunteers logged 4,870 hours traveling to and from projects in 2025. While some projects allowed for car camping, others required backpacking, jet boating, or flying into remote areas. Some lucky volunteers had the assistance of horses, mules, or even a donkey to help transport food and equipment.

This vital work took place on public lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Idaho Parks and Recreation, the Bureau of Land Management, and local city municipalities. Strong partnerships with these land management agencies and aligned organizations were essential to the success of these efforts. The support and collaboration of agency staff and partners ensured projects were efficient, safe, and impactful.

These achievements would not be possible without the collective strength of ITA's volunteer community. Beyond the 943 volunteers who participated directly in trail work, many others contributed through project planning, logistics, equipment transport, food packing, crew leader training, event support, and countless behind-the-scenes efforts. This collaborative, volunteer-driven spirit is what makes ITA a powerful and enduring force for trails across Idaho.

Idaho Centennial Trail

In 2025, Idaho Trails Association completed 13 projects along the Idaho Centennial Trail (ICT), stretching from the southern end of the Sawtooth Wilderness to the Upper Priest River near the Canadian border. This marked ITA's third consecutive year of dedicated funding and focused support for this 996 mile trail, which traverses some of Idaho's most remote and rugged landscapes.

During the year, 131 volunteers contributed 3,545 hours of trail work on the ICT. These projects were carried out in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation.

Beyond routine and in some cases long-neglected, maintenance presents unique challenges on the ICT because of its remote location. Work includes brushing, log removal, repairing creek "blowouts", removing rockslides, and finding lost trail sections. Despite this, ITA volunteers demonstrated a strong commitment to the trail's longterm care by contributing 71 project days and improving 64 miles of the ICT.



“I have always loved the outdoors, but doing trail work adds a whole other level of meaning for me. It allows me to connect more deeply with my surroundings. .”

-Youth Trail Crew Volunteer

2025 was ITA's sixth season of getting teens ages 14-18 out on trails through our Youth Trail Crew Program. We hosted nine projects this summer, ranging from one day to one week. Volunteers tackled tasks like clearing brush, repairing trail tread, and using crosscut saws and axes to remove fallen logs. In total, 83 volunteers completed 38 miles of trail maintenance, resulting in our biggest year yet—all under the expert guidance of volunteer youth trail crew leaders. Along the way, participants gained valuable trail maintenance and communication skills, connected with the land and each other, learned Leave No Trace principles, and experienced the importance of teamwork.

For the first time, ITA was able to hire a part-time summer Youth Program Coordinator, thanks to a generous donor. A longtime volunteer Youth Leader, Barry Miller, assisted in trip logistics and parent/volunteer communication and also led four trips. This allowed ITA to grow this program, which has long relied solely on volunteers to plan and lead projects. Having staff dedicated to youth trips and off-season education and outreach, and to supporting volunteer leaders on the ground, is essential to this program's success.

Thanks to generous individual and business supporters and a grant from the Harry Morrison Foundation, ITA was able to hire our first full-time Youth Program Coordinator in January 2026! We are thrilled at the opportunities this staff position will bring for youth, from winter outreach and educational events to more intentional programming around the trail season. We look forward to engaging more youth from more places around the state and beyond.

Youth Trail Crew Program





Women in the Wild

2025 marked the eighth year of ITA's Women in the Wild Program. 52 women from across Idaho participated in six projects, building trail maintenance skills while fostering a strong sense of community and stewardship. Together, these crews cleared 18 miles of trail, removed 328 downed trees, and contributed an impressive 1,045 hours of volunteer service, making a lasting impact on local trails throughout the state.

Beyond the measurable accomplishments, Women in the Wild projects are also known for the strong connections they foster. Evenings often turn into impromptu gatherings, with volunteers pulling up chairs, sharing meals, and swapping stories.

The Women in the Wild season took volunteers from lakeside camps in the Idaho Panhandle to fly-in projects deep in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness. Crews cleared trails, removed avalanche debris, and tackled rugged backcountry terrain, while weekend projects offered opportunities to car camp, backpack, or "glamp" in a yurt. Partnerships with organizations like the Wood River Trails Coalition added to the adventure, skill-building, and camaraderie that define the program.

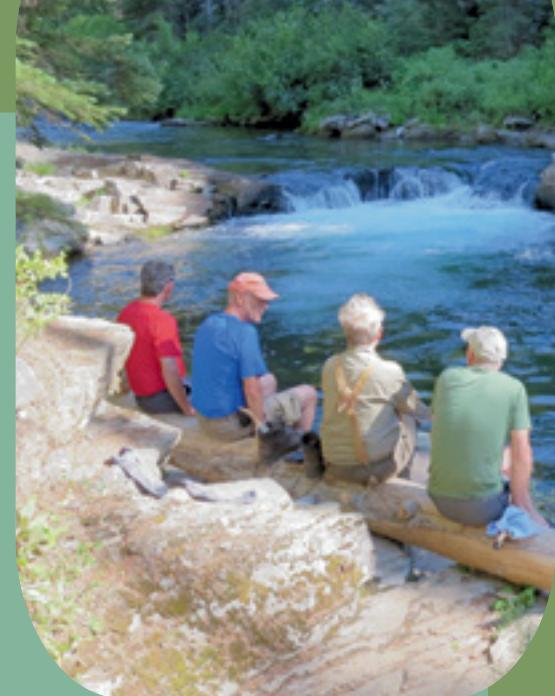
Every woman on this trip added positively to my experience, worked hard, and made the trip a pleasure. I wish I could bottle up this trip and this group because it was so much fun.

-Women in the Wild volunteer

notable projects

St. Joe River Trail

In the Idaho Panhandle National Forest's St. Joe District, 11 ITA volunteers spent a week restoring overgrown sections of the St. Joe River Trail. Ranging in age from 16 to 76, the crew removed dozens of downed trees, brushed miles of trail, repaired over 1,500 feet of tread, and built footbridges and water bars to improve safety and sustainability. With Forest Service pack support, volunteers established a backcountry camp that allowed for extended trail work while enjoying the surrounding area. Their efforts restored critical access for hikers, anglers, and other users. ITA plans to return next season to continue improvements.



Lead Draw Trail

Near Pocatello, ITA partnered with the Caribou-Targhee National Forest and multiple user groups to complete a major reroute on the Lead Draw Trail. 19 ITA volunteers joined partner groups to construct nearly two miles of new trail, improving safety and user experience. Working alongside Forest Service staff, volunteers shaped new tread, installed sustainable trail features, and created a durable improvement that will benefit hikers, mountain bikers, and other trail users for years to come.

Magruder Ridge Trail

Following the 2024 Magruder Fire, two projects focused on restoring fire-damaged trails along Magruder Ridge in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Crews fixed tread, removed downed trees, brushed dense ceanothus, and installed drainage to protect the trail longterm. The first crew camped near the trailhead to reopen initial access. A second crew was then packed into a backcountry camp along the ridge, continuing restoration toward the Selway River. Together, these projects reestablished critical access through one of Idaho's most remote landscapes.



Salmon River Trail

In the spring, ITA volunteers partnered with the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forest to restore a remote section of the Salmon River Trail in the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. Accessed by jet boat and plane, five volunteers, a cook, and a Forest Service trail leader addressed severe washouts and rockslides caused by post-fire erosion from the 2023 Elkhorn Fire. Part of the Idaho Centennial Trail, this route provides critical access to historic homesteads, guest ranches, and river beaches deep in the Wilderness. Guided by Forest Service Trail Specialist Noel Payne, the crew rebuilt trail tread using non-mechanized techniques, moving massive boulders and constructing rubble walls to stabilize the corridor.

Wilderness Immersion Trips

ITA's Wilderness Immersion Projects allow volunteers to spend extended time working in some of Idaho's most remote Wilderness areas—places too complex or difficult to maintain through traditional short-term projects. In 2025, ITA hosted two Immersion Projects. The first took place in the Frank Church–River of No Return Wilderness, where eight volunteers spent nearly two weeks restoring neglected trails between Chamberlain Guard Station and Dillinger Meadow. The crew cleared 10.7 miles of trail, removed 506 downed trees, and reopened key loop segments planned for completion next year. The second project brought an experienced crew to the Sawtooth Wilderness to work on the Little Queens River Trail. Over a 10-day backpacking project, three volunteers and two crew leaders cleared nine miles of trail, reclaiming more than 15,000 feet of overgrown tread and improving access along this popular route.



Strike Teams

In 2025, ITA launched its Strike Team Program to support Forest Service partners facing staffing and budget challenges. This initiative deploys experienced crew leaders and volunteers to respond quickly to unplanned trail maintenance needs. Across seven projects, 21 volunteers contributed 320 hours, completing scouting, data collection, access clearing, and trail preparation for future crews. By filling critical gaps, Strike Teams ensured timely maintenance and sustained public access across multiple Idaho trail systems.

education and empowerment

Presentations, classes, and projects

In an ongoing effort to educate the public on topics related to trail preservation, Leave No Trace principles, and traditional trail skills, ITA hosted 17 presentations and classes both in person and virtually in 2025. Presentations included Backpacking 101, the Idaho Centennial Trail, and Backcountry Nutrition.

Wilderness First Aid

In 2025, ITA held classes in north and south Idaho, continuing to ensure our volunteer leaders have solid skills in wilderness first aid and CPR. Thank you to Brian Mahon and Anne Poinier for teaching these classes and to Sorren CPA's Center of Influence (Boise) and ITA Board Member and Crew Leader Tom Dabrowski (Sandpoint) for hosting.

Splattschi Scholorship Fund

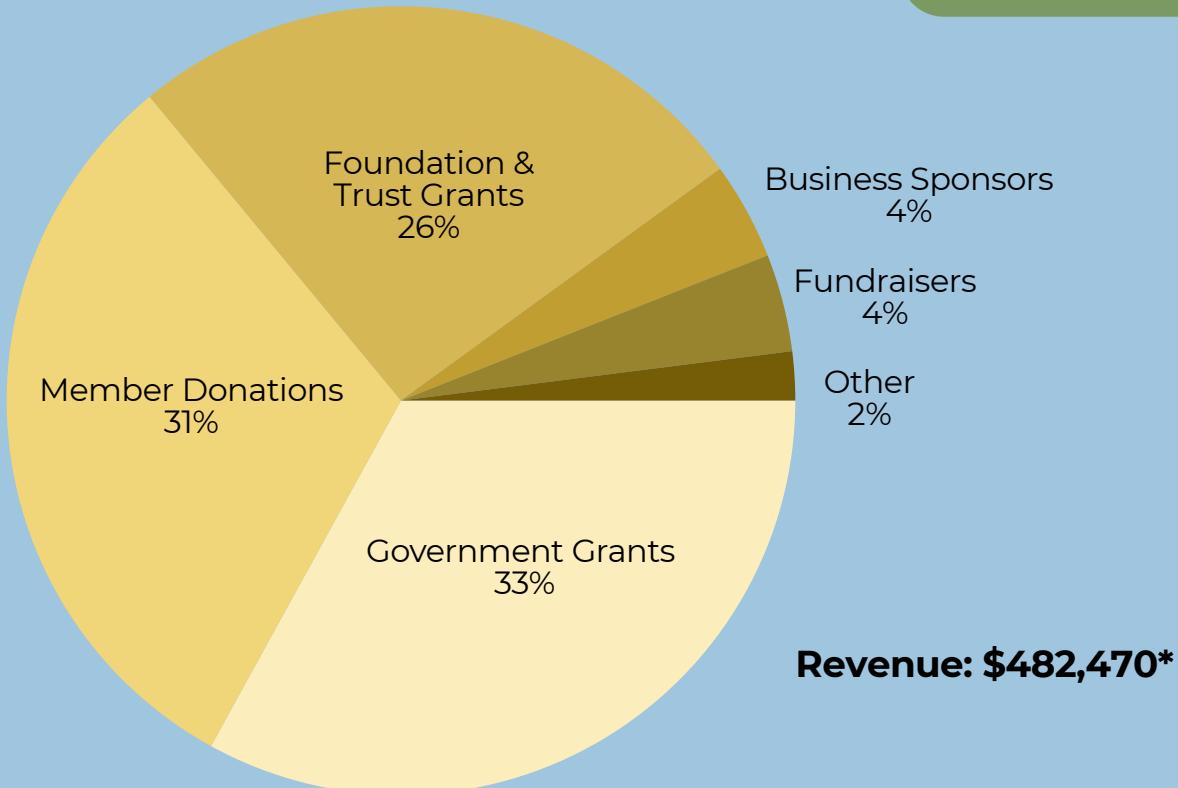
The Splattschi Scholorship Fund, established in 2022, helped outfit eight ITA volunteers with the gear needed to pursue outdoor adventure and more trail projects, including a mother and son who were able to attend an ITA backpacking trail project with their new gear. ITA was excited to award these scholarships to purchase items such as hiking boots and lightweight tents and thrilled to hear back from each recipient about how the new gear was put to use. This fund continues to help more people access the outdoors.

Crew Leader Education and Mentoring

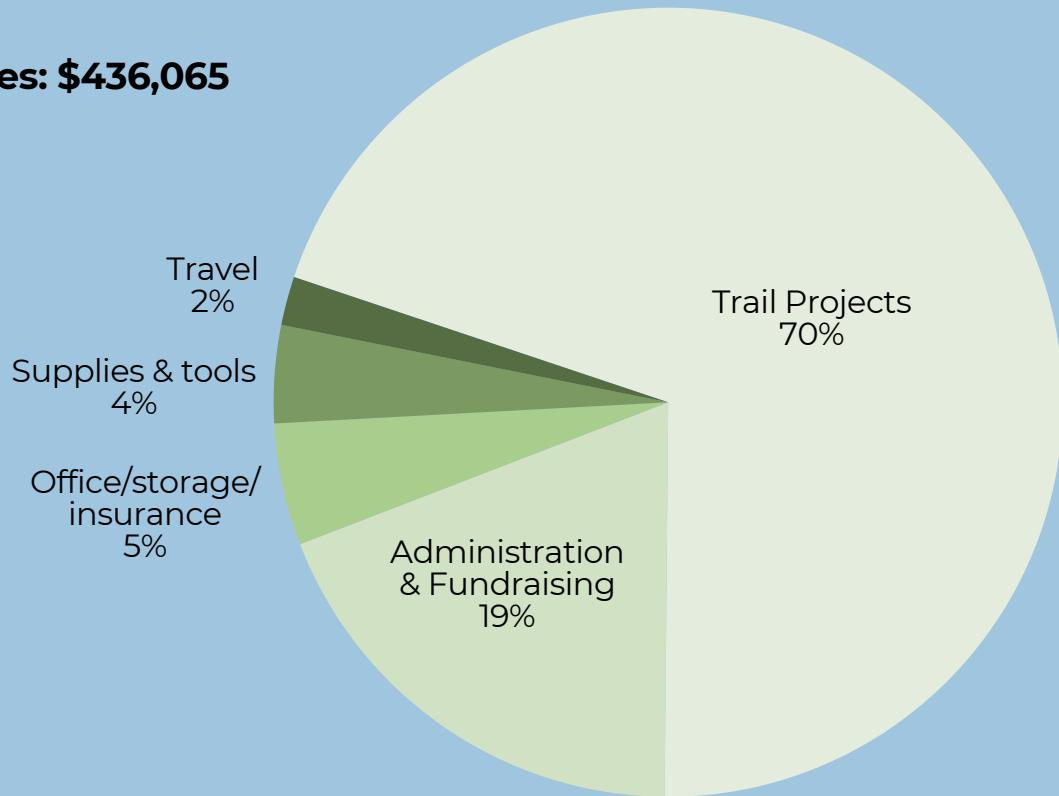
The Crew Leader Education and Mentoring (CLEM) sessions continued in 2025 with trainings in Sandpoint in the north and outside McCall in the southern part of the state. Over forty crew leaders met for long weekends to learn new skills, brush up on old ones, and share ideas for leading safe, fun, and productive ITA trips. This year was focused on crosscut saw training and certification for our leaders, a requirement for ITA's crews to be self-sufficient and safely lead projects on lands managed by the Forest Service. A spring axe training and a fall saw certification training were able to be added thanks to the support from Forest Service Coeur d'Alene Ranger District staff.



finances



Expenses: \$436,065



*excess revenue deposited in ITA emergency reserve fund

thank you to our partners!

Land Managers

In 2025 ITA partnered with the following Land Managers: US Forest Service Regions 1 and 4, Bitterroot, Boise, Caribou-Targhee, Idaho Panhandle, Nez Perce-Clearwater, Payette, Salmon-Challis, Sawtooth, and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests, Boise BLM-Bruneau Field Office, BLM - Coeur d'Alene Office, City of Boise- Ridge to Rivers, City of Pocatello, Bogus Basin, Idaho Parks and Recreation, and the Land Trust of the Treasure Valley.

Volunteer Groups

Thank you to the following volunteer groups that partnered with ITA in 2025: Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, the Squaw Butte, Twin Rivers, and Priest River Chapters of the Backcountry Horsemen of Idaho, Boise State University, ESI Construction, Great Burn Conservation Alliance, Idaho Women's Charitable Foundation, Monday Hikers, Sage International School, The Sawtooth Society, Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, Washington Trails Association, and Wood River Trails Coalition.

Donors

Thank you to ITA's incredible donors for helping ITA make a big impact on Idaho's trails! Every new and renewing member fuels the mission, turning donations into miles of open trails and unforgettable outdoor experiences. This year donor support also helped make it possible to hire a full-time Youth Program Coordinator, which will allow us to expand our Youth Program to include more summer trail projects and host events and outreach during the off-season.

Foundations and Nonprofits

Every year a significant portion of ITA's funding comes from the generosity of various foundations and nonprofit organizations in the form of grants or other support, like partnering on trail projects:

American Trails Legacy Trails Program funded final hitches on the Middle Fork Salmon River Trail through a joint grant with the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation.

Avista Foundation supported trail work in north Idaho.

Harry Morrison Foundation provided funds for ITA's first Youth Program Coordinator.

Idaho Fish and Game's Access Funds and Community Challenge Grants funded work in backcountry areas of Idaho.

Idaho Parks and Recreation grants funded work in the Sawtooth and Frank Church Wilderness areas.

Idaho Power supported trail work in Hells Canyon through shuttling volunteers with their jet boat.

Idaho Recreation and Tourism Initiative's Be Outside Idaho Grant purchased camping equipment for youth trail projects.

Innovia and Equinox Foundations granted funds to support trail projects in north Idaho.

Love Big Foundation provided support for ITA's crew leader first aid and trail skills trainings.

M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust provided funds for ITA's new Northern Idaho Trail Program Specialist position.

Sawtooth Society provided grant support for trail projects in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area.

Stibnite Foundation granted funds to support trail work in west-central Idaho.

Business Members

Thank you to ITA's Business Members for supporting trail work across the state with their contributions!

\$500+

AudioRaxx
ESI Construction
Hyperspud Sports

\$1000+

Café Mulé
Idaho Forest Group
Idaho Power
McAlvain Construction

Sage Environmental Services
Scheels
Trailkeepers Clothing Company

Thank you to the following businesses and individuals that donated items and services for fundraising efforts like ITA's Pack Your Summer Auction, End of Season Raffle, and Annual Membership Drive as well as gear to be used on trail projects:

888 Milling and Custom Woodwork
Axe Force One
Bardenay
Big 5
Birdie's Pie Shop
Bogus
Burgdorf
CDA Cruises
CDA Summer Theater
Chisel Designs
Coeur d' Alene River Cruises
Dave Beck
Diamond V Trail and Pack Stock
Diane Lang
Evans Brothers
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Good-to-go
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Hammerdown Expeditions

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Jenny Turner
Jessica Evett
John McCarthy
Jolly Gear
Katherine Winrich Photography
Lookout Pass
Mackay Bar Ranch
Mark Tabor
Middle Fork Ranches
Mother Earth Brewing
Mother Madre Bees
MTNTOUGH+
Mystery Ranch
Nick Hazelbaker
Payette Brewing
Pistol Creek Ranch Outfitters
Purple Rain

Raptor Reef
Red River Hot Springs
Riverdog Flies
ROW Adventures
Salmon River Brewery
Sawtooth Flying Service
Schweitzer Mountain
Smith Air
Spokane Chiefs Hockey Club
Sportsman & Ski Haus
Taisie Designs
Telaya Wines
Three Rivers Rafting
Town Shirt
Trailkeeper's Clothing Company
Trails End Brewery
Triple Play
White Clouds Preserve
Zip Timberline

Thank you to the following businesses, organizations, and individuals who supported ITA through events and fundraisers:

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers
Bogus Basin
Boise Bicycle Project
Broken Horn Brewing
Boise Public Library
City of Boise
City of Pocatello
Coeur Climbing
Coeur d'Alene Library
College of Southern Idaho
Idaho Outdoor Association

Idaho State University
John Charles Meyer
Ken and Virginia Greger
Kootenai Environmental Alliance
Kootenai Nonprofit Group
Lake City Trail Alliance
Library! At Cole and Ustick
Lost Grove Brewing
Matchwood Brewery
McCall Library
Outdoor Exchange

Out There Outdoors
Palouse-Clearwater
Environmental Institute
Payette Brewing
Payette Land Trust
Riverstone Farmers Market
Sawtooth Brewery
Steve Stuebner
Trails End Brewery
Twin Falls Public Library



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