



IDAHO
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LEAGUE

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The Idaho Conservationist



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Pulling Together

Glenn Oakley



Rick Johnson

The cover of this issue features a photograph from ICL's 2017 artist in residence, Linda Lantzy: Yellow Dog Creek pouring over Fern Falls in the Coeur d'Alene National Forest.

The news is more remarkable each day. The president's advisor recently bragged about cabinet members recruited to dismantle federal agencies. Environmental regulations have been targeted with the bluntest of tools in Congress. At ICL, we often demonstrate that another word for regulation is "safeguard," yet the president has suggested cutting at least 75% of all regulations.

If these activities move forward, real people will be harmed by the loss of these safeguards; our air, water and public health will be compromised.

In recent blogs, I've compared navigating the times we're in to running a river—a ripe comparison as Idaho anticipates turbulent rivers after record snows. If we fixate on the news, it's like we're on a river, scouting rapids and seeing only the rocks. I've learned, in exciting ways, that if you look only at the rocks, that's where you'll end up.

You want to focus on the flow of water rather than on the rocks. You look for the line—and you get there, finding the flow. Finding the flow means focusing on the incredible love for our public lands, for our clean water and clean air, and for climate leadership.

From our interactions with the public, we know that Idahoans want commonsense conservation. In looking for the flow, we must seek more ways for people across Idaho to advocate for the air we all breathe, the water we drink and the special places we love. This is how we pull on the oars together.

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ICL Evolves as the Climate Changes

The climate is changing. Some people respond by pretending that it isn't happening. Others seek solutions. Fortunately, based on what we see in Idaho today, more people are in favor of real solutions.

ICL has nudged Idaho onto a coal-free trajectory. By the 2020s, Idaho will stop receiving power from two coal plants, Boardman in Oregon and Valmy in Nevada. In the next couple of years, utilities and state regulators will decide the fate of two more plants that serve Idaho, Colstrip in Montana and Jim Bridger in Wyoming. ICL has successfully convinced our utilities that clean energy is better and cheaper than coal.

Now our challenge is to accelerate the pace of these solutions. The change in federal administration doesn't help, but frankly, it doesn't really hurt either. ICL's strategy focuses on economics and state

laws. Studies increasingly show that clean energy options are also the economical energy options.

Two major pollutants that drive climate change are poorly regulated in Idaho. Methane, also known as natural gas, is a very strong greenhouse gas. ICL is looking for ways to reduce methane pollution by enacting strong equipment standards in the natural gas industry and capturing emissions from dairy waste.

The second, carbon dioxide, is the largest pollutant. While normally associated with power plants, the primary source in Idaho is transportation. So we can reduce vehicle trips by creating safe walk and bike routes and a viable public transit system, and we can electrify the remaining vehicles. Our It's My ID campaign (see p. 11) enables us to address the full suite of climate change-causing pollution.

(continued on next page)



Moon Pass / Linda Lantzy

What we do at ICL will continue to evolve as our climate changes.



ICL Evolves as the Climate Changes (cont.)

Part of our work involves encouraging people to take action at home and in public.

Along with stopping the harm, ICL also seeks to help nature adapt to the inevitable changes in our climate. Our work protects habitat where wildlife, plants and fish can thrive. More importantly, it connects these places so that species can move across the landscape as patterns of temperature and precipitation change.

Our work on water issues focuses on keeping plentiful, clean water in our lakes and streams, even as precipitation shifts from snowpack to rainfall. What we do at ICL will continue to evolve as our climate changes.

The social climate is changing as well. Agencies, cities and businesses across the state are already seeking ways to adapt to climate change, reduce climate pollution and operate sustainably. Part of our work involves encouraging people to take action

at home and in public. A community of Idahoans is taking on ICL's challenge to "go green," sharing stories and ideas for reducing their footprint in the Facebook group, ICL Greentips.

At ICL, we participate in several forest restoration partnerships. These forums are looking at solutions to the rising intensity and frequency of wildfires and at ways for watersheds to handle the shift from snow to more rain. While certain state legislators stick their heads in the sand, we are encouraged that real leaders and real Idahoans are finding ways to make sure Idaho stays great.

Ben Otto
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Time to Raise Our Voices

On March 4, I joined thousands of Idahoans at a public lands rally at the Statehouse. Held on the same date as the Idaho State Historical Society's Idaho Day, this rally clearly demonstrated the broad and diverse support for our public lands. There were anglers, birders, cyclists, hikers, hunters, skiers, boaters, and folks of all ages. I was gratified to see so many people speaking up for one of the cornerstones of our heritage here in Idaho, our public lands.

The messages delivered by the speakers were varied. But they all embraced the idea that our public lands are vital to us—and we want them to remain in public, not private, hands. This event made it crystal clear that Idahoans and all Americans benefit from and enjoy our forests, mountains, lakes and streams. The rally underscored the support for our public

lands and vital watersheds, wildlife habitat and wilderness that they provide.

Rallies like this have been held throughout the West—and it joins rallies organized to support other values that we Americans hold dear. This gathering was yet another demonstration by ordinary citizens who demand that our elected officials—at all levels of government—hear our voices and act on our behalf.

If some of the proposed changes to federal policy and budgets move forward, I expect (and hope) to join future rallies to raise my voice to stand up not only for our federal land managers but also for those who protect our air and water.



MB Whitaker

Paul Cunningham

I was gratified to see so many people speaking up for one of the cornerstones of our heritage here in Idaho, our public lands.

Paul Cunningham, Chair

Idaho Conservation League Board of Directors



Still in the Crosshairs



Public Lands Rally / J. Oppenheimer

On March 4, around 2,600 Idahoans turned out for a public lands rally at the Statehouse. Citizens throughout the West are sharing their concerns about states' efforts to seize our public lands.

Despite celebrations over Rep. Jason Chaffetz's (R-UT) withdrawal of a bill that would have transferred up to 3 million acres to the states, other measures are still in play. One proposal would transfer up to 2 million acres of national forest to the associated state, for a loss of nearly 80 million acres. Another rule that passed the U.S. House allows Congress to avoid accounting for actual losses if lands are transferred.

In Idaho, Sen. Steve Vick (R-Dalton Gardens) introduced a measure that compels every state agency to sell off land acreage equal to or greater than any acres acquired. It also requires agencies to prioritize lands for sale.

Some politicians recognize that a public lands takeover is not in America's best interest. Our governor opposed the idea in his 2017 State of the State address, pointing to the state's inability to pay for wildfire suppression.

Lawrence Wasden was among 11 western attorneys general who found no basis in the law for a lawsuit to compel the federal government to transfer public lands to the states.

And the president has said, "I don't like the idea because I want to keep the lands great, and you don't know what the state is going to do ... are they going to sell if they get into a little bit of trouble?" If history is a guide, yes they will.

Jonathan Oppenheimer

Government Relations Director

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A Time for Persistence and Resilience

It's no secret that conservation work in Idaho is challenging. We see unending threats to our water, air and special places. Protecting these values takes vigilance. I am often asked how ICL staff remain motivated. Two words come to mind: persistence and resilience.

Persistence is to press forward despite adversity. Dedication to our work is important. But resilience—the ability to gain strength from adversity—is the wellspring of persistence. Because a resilient staff is essential, we intentionally focus on building resilience. Here we share some lessons with you because creating a resilient community is increasingly important today.

Resilience has three parts: a strong self, a strong community and optimism. Take care of yourself by eating well, exercising and finding joy in a hobby, music or book. Periodically take a break from the news and social media. It's important to step away so that you can return refreshed.

Community provides camaraderie. At ICL, we turn to each other to brainstorm

solutions or share a laugh. Find, or create, your community to do the same. This can be as simple as having friends over for dinner; it can be as elaborate as planning a public rally. Together we are more resilient.

A strong self and community help build resilience; optimism is the practice. So nurture optimism by focusing on the path around obstacles and believing that you can make a difference.

Practice these things, and together we can protect the Idaho we all love.

B. O.



Loon Lake / Aimee Moran

A strong self and community help build resilience; optimism is the practice.



Out and About in Idaho!



Mores Mountain / John Robison

One way to understand the importance of ICL’s work is to enjoy firsthand the clean air, clean water and special places we work to protect! We have a number of ways for you to get out there—such as our adventure series, a couple of river trips and the wilderness stewardship program. Because of our work to protect the Weiser River, we also encourage you to explore this little-known treasure.

Adventure Series

This spring, start looking for ICL adventures designed to connect you with Idaho’s public lands. With other conservation-minded folks, you can explore the spectacular peaks, lakes, streams and wildlife—from the Panhandle to the Owyhees, Boulder-White Clouds or

Tetons. Check out our sage-grouse lek tour to the Owyhee canyonlands, or go play in Central Idaho’s national forests and alpine lakes! Trips are offered for all skill levels and range from paddling and fishing to birdwatching and Leave No Trace trainings. Check out our website or contact the nearest ICL office for more details.

River Trips

Who’s ready for a river trip? Offered exclusively to you, our valued members, we have two on the books! In partnership with SOAR Northwest, we’ve planned a six-day trip down the main Salmon River, Aug 3–8. Flowing through the second deepest canyon in America and the heart of the Frank Church-River of No Return

One way to understand the importance of ICL’s work is to enjoy firsthand the clean air, clean water and special places we work to protect!



Boise foothills trail maintenance / Aimee Moran

Wilderness, the main Salmon is known for exciting rapids, big sandy beaches and rich history.

With ARTA River Trips, you can jump on board for an Aug 19–24 trip on the Middle Fork Salmon River, just in time for the full solar eclipse. Enjoy this quintessential river journey featuring an astronomical theme. World-class fly-fishing, epic hot springs and great hiking await you!

Contact me to learn more about these multiday river trips—including pricing, logistics and availability.

Wilderness Stewardship Program

Ready to get dirt under your fingernails and give back to our public lands? The wilderness stewardship program that we piloted last summer in Central Idaho is gearing up—and it's expanding! We invite you to serve your public lands by literally putting your boots on the ground. Partnering with the Forest Service and Idaho Trails Association, volunteer stewards collect various data, maintain trails, restore vegetation, rehabilitate campsites, and more.

For the first year, North Idaho stewards will venture into the majestic recommended wilderness in the Selkirk Mountains, and South Idaho stewards will do the same in the stunning Owyhee wildernesses. Central Idaho stewards will continue their work in the breathtaking Sawtooths and Boulder-White Clouds. Contact the nearest ICL office to learn more about becoming a wilderness steward!



Weiser River / Don Anderson

Weiser River

This Idaho treasure offers an unbelievable early-season class II boating run, the 84-mile Weiser River Trail, hot springs and camping! Through our work, we have spent more time in this “off the beaten path” part of Idaho. Check out the interactive map on our website, including a printable map so that you create your own adventure.

Jenny Estes

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This article was written with input from ICL's statewide community engagement staff—Emily Cleveland, Betsy Mizell and Lana Weber—and Water Associate Marie Kellner.



Boulder-White Clouds / Rachel Winer

Steady Pressure for Clean Water

Only by first admitting that we have a problem can we roll up our sleeves and fix it.

Frankly speaking, the Snake River is a giant sewer. Every municipal sewer in southern Idaho and hundreds of millions of gallons of agricultural runoff drain into the Snake. Out of sight, out of mind. Think of Brownlee Reservoir as the septic tank at the end of the pipe. Gross. Don't wince. Don't turn away. Idaho needs to embrace the truth. Only by first admitting that we have a problem can we roll up our sleeves and fix it.

The fact that water quality in the Snake is bad is no secret. Yet despite efforts to clean it up, the river is not improving. Why not? There are two reasons: the state's cleanup plans are not stringent enough, and flows continue to decline, making it harder for the river to dilute pollution.

After years of ICL pushing on this issue, change may be coming. The U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency has acknowledged the problem (step one to fixing it) and is moving forward to issue more stringent wastewater discharge permits to cities that discharge to the middle Snake River, the stretch from Milner Dam downstream past Twin Falls to King Hill. The state also has to recraft the Snake River cleanup plan to address lower flows.

It's a long-term prospect because new permits require new pollution-control equipment. This equipment costs money and takes time to install.

After working to protect water quality in Idaho for nearly 20 years, I can vouch that progress is rarely instant. Slow, steady pressure is needed—and it's paying off.

Justin Hayes

Program Director

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It's My ID—In the Home Stretch

Thanks to generous donors, we are within \$250,000 of our \$4 million It's My ID goal. The campaign wraps up in May. Half the funds will expand our climate work; the other half will go into our endowment. Although It's My ID is one of the most ambitious efforts in ICL's history, we're nearly there because people care about conservation; they know we make conservation successes happen.

It's My ID is a special campaign that increases our ability to do the critical climate work necessary to protect Idaho's water, encourage strong energy policy and ensure that citizens are informed and empowered.

Climate change is affecting Idaho today—on the ground and in the water—forcing us to view our amazing landscapes and abundant wildlife through a new lens. New threats to our natural resources require creative and nimble conservation solutions.

You love Idaho—you want the next generation to inherit an Idaho like the one that means so much to you. So here's what you can do—consider making a gift to our It's My ID campaign. Your special gift above and beyond your annual support will help ICL address Idaho's conservation challenges for generations to come.

Because of an ICL leadership match, contributions to It's My ID are matched dollar for dollar, and gifts of \$3,000 or more can be pledged over three years. We have \$50,000 left in our matching pool, so invest today!

Did you get that? If you haven't given already, help us over the finish line by giving online or mailing a check today.

Suki Molina

Deputy Director

smolina@idahoconservation.org



Your special gift above and beyond your annual support will help ICL address Idaho's conservation challenges for generations to come.



Sawtooth Brewery—More Than Beer

The Sawtooth Brewery isn't known only for its delicious beer. It's also famous for its community-based generosity.

Founders Paul Holle and Kevin Jones loved beer, had left their respective jobs and thought that Ketchum needed a brewery. So in 2011, they went for it, opening the Sawtooth Brewery.

Because the brewery was inspired by the needle-sharp Idaho mountains that surround Sun Valley and Ketchum, many of their beers have fun mountain-themed names, such as Last Chair Stout and Freeheeler Rye IPA.

The Sawtooth Brewery isn't known only for its delicious beer. It's also famous for its community-based generosity. Since

opening, Paul and Kevin have created a place where likeminded people can gather. The Idaho Conservation League has hosted over 30 events at the brewery in the past three years. Our popular Science Pub program began in March 2014 at the brewery's first location. Since then Science Pub has taken off and covered an array of issues from wolverines to motor vehicle injection wells to climate.

During the Boulder-White Clouds campaign, the Sawtooth Brewery created a White Clouds Ale that was sent to officials in Washington, DC, to show community support for wilderness designation.

Besides providing a free venue for our programs, the Sawtooth Brewery has vouchers that allow customers to donate a portion of their food and beer to ICL.

It has been a real pleasure working with the Sawtooth Brewery owners and staff. We are excited to discover other ways of partnering in the coming years.

Betsy Mizell

Community Engagement Associate
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Sawtooth Brewery staff / Hillary Mayberry

Filling Their Social Calendar

ICL members come together over a shared love of Idaho and commitment to this special place. We also come together for community. Sara Gress and Virginia McConnell of Hailey are no different.

They moved to the Wood River Valley in 2015, looking for a place where mountains weren't far away but strip malls were. While Virginia had never been to Idaho until 2013, Sara was born in Boise and grew up camping, hiking, skiing and reading the ICL newsletters lying around her parents' house.

They enjoy the ICL community because of the cause and the people. Our wilderness stewardship program, in which Sara and Virginia participated last summer, is a perfect example of why they think ICL rocks. It not only connects people with each other, the wilderness and the agencies who manage them, but it also educates the public and increases ICL's visibility and good deeds.

Sara and Virginia appreciate that ICL acts as their unofficial social planner with our events. With friends, they regularly attend our monthly Science Pubs at the Sawtooth Brewery in Ketchum. They learn what ICL is working on and how they can take

action. They say that Science Pub feels like a "big living room get-together."

For these members, Idaho wouldn't be the same place without ICL. Sara and Virginia say they will continue to be members for, well, probably ever. They're exploring the White Clouds and Jerry Peak wildernesses this summer, so give them a shout-out if you pass them on the trail!

ICL members come together over a shared love of Idaho and commitment to this special place. We also come together for community.

Aimee Moran

Development Director
amoran@idahoconservation.org



Photo courtesy Sara Gress and Virginia McConnell

It's Our 30th *Wild Idaho!*



This May 19–21, we celebrate a milestone—our 30th *Wild Idaho!* You may have heard stories about this famous gathering at historic Redfish Lake in the Sawtooths.

Last year, new staff member Austin Hopkins wrote about his first *Wild Idaho!* “Seasoned ICL staff ... inevitably smiled and began their stories with, ‘Remember that one *Wild Idaho!* where...’ These stories—generally about a certain pink coat, colleagues risking hypothermia by jumping into Redfish Lake, and other intriguing topics—were followed by laughter. While others laughed, I looked quizzical. Fellow staffers patted me on the shoulder and affirmed, ‘This will all make sense soon.’ I realize now that, to fully understand *Wild Idaho!*, one must experience *Wild Idaho!*”

Mark your calendar and plan to attend our annual member meeting and conference, visit with conservation friends, learn about our work and raise a glass to ICL. For more information, visit our website.

S. M.

Remember the Idaho Conservation League in Your Estate Plans

We hope you will consider the Idaho Conservation League in your estate planning. Memorial gifts and bequests are placed in our endowment fund so that these gifts can permanently support conservation in Idaho. We welcome inquiries about bequests to Aimee Moran at 208.345.6933 x 15 or amoran@idahoconservation.org.

If you wish to make a provision in your will, the following general language is suggested:

“I give, devise and bequeath to the Idaho Conservation League, an Idaho not-for-profit corporation, located on the date hereof at 710 North 6th Street, Boise, Idaho, 83702, the sum of \$___” (or specifically described property).



Volunteers

Our thanks to the volunteers without whom our achievements would not happen. (9/1/16 – 2/15/17)

- | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|
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| Janet Beckley | Victor Mark |
| Kristen Binda | Victoria Martinez |
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| Tom Jones | Susan Valiquette |
| Lexi Juarez | Ariel Varland |
| Tricia Kennedy | Paula Warren |
| Ryan King | Samantha Westendorf |
| Frank Leone | Susan Wood-McKean |

Our February legislative reception (right), at Beside Bardenay in Boise, was very well attended. The event was cosponsored by ICL and Conservation Voters for Idaho.



2017 legislative reception photos / MB Whitaker



Helen Langworthy / Tim Crawford

In Memoriam

Idaho lost a dedicated conservation advocate with the passing of Helen Langworthy. A longtime resident of Idaho and supporter of ICL, Helen volunteered as an activist with us on a variety of issues for years. The photo at left was published in the Idaho Conservation newsletter in 1985, when she was a volunteer legislative observer.

R. J.

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**IT'S
MY
ID**

Make a gift to our It's My ID campaign—
help us reach our \$4 million goal for our endowment and
climate fund.

We are within 5% of the goal. Your special gift
allows ICL to address Idaho's conservation challenges for
generations to come.

- **An investment in It's My ID is an investment in Idaho's future.**
- **Gifts are matched dollar for dollar by ICL's leadership.**

Donate today at www.idahoconservation.org or call 208.345.6933.