



IDAHO
CONSERVATION
LEAGUE

The Idaho Conservationist

Vol XXIII No 2
July 2020



FEATURING

Building a Diverse, Equitable, Inclusive, and Just Conservation Movement - 3

Planning Idaho's Clean Energy Future - 7

Dr. John Freemuth's Leadership and Legacy Live On - 11

For *All* Idahoans...

Glenn Oakley Photo



Justin Hayes

Wild places replenish my soul. Hiking, rafting, hunting and fishing with family and friends refreshes me and I feel welcome out in our public lands.

The events of the last month, the national awakening around racism, and the clarion call of the Black Lives Matter movement have helped me to better understand that not everyone feels welcome or has the privileges that I do. The systemic racism that Black, Indigenous and other people of color face, the

lack of respect, and the lack of opportunities keep many people of color from experiencing the world as I do.

If you know me, you know that I believe that social justice and conservation are intertwined. What has really been driven home to me anew though is that ICL needs to play an active role in helping walk toward a better future for all Idahoans. It is the right thing to do and it also aligns with our conservation mission and values.

I don't have all the answers to this, but I do know that ICL won't sit idle. Sometimes our actions will be imperfect. We will learn and continue to do better. Through our words and our actions, we will be part of the solution.

We call our organization "Idaho's leading voice for conservation." As a small but important step forward, I believe that we need to put our voices in service to the cause of racial and social justice. I suspect that this will make some people uncomfortable, and for that I do not apologize. If together we cannot find our own voice on these issues, will any of us ever be able to put our words into actions?

Just as we have said that climate is a lens through which we view all of our program work, social justice is also such a lens. Addressing climate change and the inequities in our society are intertwined. Public lands are not actually public if people of color are not welcome there. Clean water and clean air must be a right for all, regardless of color. Salmon recovery must honor the treaty rights of Native Americans and can we ever make amends for taking their lands and calling them public lands?

Using our voice will help us walk together along the path that we have outlined in our organization's strategic plan, and move us forward with actions to build a just, prosperous and sustainable future for all Idahoans — no matter our color, sexual orientation, ability, age or political party.

Justin Hayes

Executive Director
jhayes@idahoconservation.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Lori Gibson Banducci, *Chair, Boise*
- Rebecca Patton, *Vice Chair, Hailey*
- Judy Baker, *Treasurer, Boise*
- Bill Weppner, *Secretary, Boise*
- Tanya Anderson, *Victor*
- Patrick Bageant, *Boise*
- Matt Benjamin, *Ketchum*
- Carolyn Coiner, *Twin Falls*
- Jim DeWitt, *Boise*
- Megan Dixon, *Caldwell*
- David Eichberg, *Boise*
- Scott Friedman, *Sun Valley*
- Justina Gooden-Helton, *Idaho Falls*
- Alan Harper, *Athol*
- Jim Norton, *Boise*
- John O'Connor, *Bonnars Ferry*
- Julie Richardson, *Hailey*
- Kim Trotter, *Driggs*
- Margrit von Braun, *Moscow*

STAFF

- Mitch Cutter
Fellow, Salmon & Steelhead
- Jenny Estes
Development Director
- Randy Fox
Conservation Associate
- Dainee Gibson
Conservation Analyst
- Justin Hayes
Executive Director
- Shelby Herber
Community Engagement Assistant
- Katie Jay
Data Development Assistant
- Josh Johnson
Conservation Associate
- Marie Callaway Kellner
Conservation Program Director
- Scott Ki
Communications Associate
- Emerald LaFortune
Campaign Outreach Assistant
- Betsy Mizell
Central Idaho Director
- Matt Nykiel
Conservation Associate
- Jonathan Oppenheimer
Director of External Relations
- Ben Otto
Energy Associate
- Mallory Parsons
Accounting Assistant
- Haley Robinson
Development & Marketing Associate
- John Robison
Public Lands Director
- Julia Rundberg
Director of Finance & Administration
- Hannah Smay
Community Engagement Assistant
- Brad Smith
North Idaho Director
- Austin Walkins
Climate Campaign Coordinator
- Lana Weber
Community Engagement Coordinator
- Erin Zaleski
Office Manager

Boise
208.345.6933
icl@idahoconservation.org
www.idahoconservation.org

Ketchum
208.726.7485

Sandpoint
208.265.9565

Printed on recycled paper

“What a long strange trip it’s been”

~ Grateful Dead

Christina Smith Photo

A Spirit of *Preserverance*



Lori Gibson Banducci

It seems like years ago that I wrote that Justin Hayes, our new executive director, would “face some challenges as well as opportunities.” In fact, it was just a year ago in July 2019.

Little did we know the extent and impact of the challenges to come his (our) way, so quickly. From the current administration’s dismantling of bedrock environmental regulations to COVID-19 and now the worldwide social and racial justice movement spurred by the tipping point murder of George Floyd.

Fortunately, the staff of ICL is meeting challenges head-on with a spirit of optimism, perseverance in the face of adversity, vulnerability and creativity — led by a compassionate and adaptive leadership team.

Instead of looking at the limitations created by these crises, ICL leadership and staff have looked for and seized upon the opportunities.

- When ICL’s annual conference *Wild Idaho!* could not be held in person, the ICL team put together a web series of presentations and moderated discussions — providing an opportunity to connect and interact with a much larger audience.
- The ICL staff has effectively maintained the momentum of our breadth of work even while working from home.
- Virtual board-staff meetings created an opportunity for the staff and the board to engage more frequently and informally via Zoom. We are more connected and in sync than ever.
- Our strategic plan (created in 2019) prioritized justice, equity, diversity and inclusion as imperative to creating a lasting and impactful conservation community. Recent events have shown how critical this is to our work, our state, our country, and our world.

We can all take great comfort in knowing that the ICL community — staff, leadership, board, supporters and members — will address challenges with grace, creativity, and resolve for our mission to create a conservation community and pragmatic, enduring solutions that protect and restore the air you breathe, the water you drink, and the land and wildlife you love.

Our work continues and is strengthened due, in large part, to your continued support, particularly in these challenging times. We are ever so grateful.

Lori Gibson Banducci

Chair

Idaho Conservation League Board of Directors

ICL's commitment to a more diverse, equitable, inclusive, and just future for this community, for the conservation movement, and for *Idaho*

Vital conversations about race, police brutality, and equality (or lack thereof) in America reached new heights, taking the national stage in late May. ICL's staff and board heard the message that it was time to listen, learn, and take action to support the anti-racist movement.

This powerful and necessary moment in America was propelled forward by the murder of George Floyd by a police officer. The Black Lives Matter movement has forced this necessary discussion onto the national stage. Like many organizations around the country, ICL stands

against systemic racism and police brutality. Black lives matter.

Email inboxes and social media posts have been inundated with amazing reading lists, organizations to financially support, and suggestions from people of color to follow and learn from. We must listen and learn — and, we must also take action.

The need to address the systemic racism in America has been a long time coming. The roots of racism run deep — Black slavery and the genocide wrought on Native



Americans seem long past, but in truth it was just a moment ago. The intergenerational trauma experienced by people of color and the racism embedded in America's white-dominated society are real — and current.

The environmental movement in the United States has a problematic and exclusionary past. We acknowledge the injustices and underrepresentation that have occurred and will actively work to support a future that does not repeat the same mistakes.

Last year, as we created ICL's 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, we included a section entitled **Building a Diverse, Equitable, Inclusive, and Just Conservation Movement**. This was the first time that ICL embedded a true link to the fact that ICL as a conservation organization has a social justice mission. And from this flowed the creation of a joint staff and board committee to help further ICL's work on diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ). But it has become clear that we aren't doing enough or moving quickly enough. We are committed to changing that.

Here are a few of the projects our staff is working on to take action now:

- **Examining our hiring practices.** Hiring practices are notoriously biased and unfair. Layers of unconscious racism, sexism, ableism, and more seep into the process as humans naturally gravitate toward people who are most like ourselves. This perpetuates an exclusionary and homogenized workforce. We are reexamining our hiring practices from the ground up to make them more open, equitable and accessible.
- **Continued learning.** Together, all of our staff did our first DEI training at the end of last year. Our entire board will participate in training on bias, diversity, equity and inclusion at ICL's board summer retreat (now virtual). At the same time, we are identifying and putting into action additional educational opportunities for our staff's continued learning as well.

- **Land acknowledgements.** We are crafting land acknowledgements to pay respect to the Tribes who have lived on the lands in Idaho for millennia. These will be shared at events and in our printed materials to honor the history on these lands.
- **Elevating others.** We are actively looking for opportunities to partner with and elevate the work of organizations run by and supporting people of color.

This list will continue to grow. We know that this is not a complete or final list of actions and we want to continue this work with a focus on being accountable for taking action. We will continue to provide updates about our DEIJ work moving forward in our newsletters, annual reports, and on our website. Expect to see a list of what we have accomplished and what our next steps are in our fall newsletter.

We invite you, our members and supporters, to share ideas about other actions ICL can take to strengthen our allyship and support a future that is more diverse, equitable, and inclusive for this community, for the conservation movement, and for Idaho.

The Idaho Conservation League DEIJ Committee

Tanya Anderson

Matt Benjamin

Lori Gibson Banducci

Justina Gooden-Helton

Justin Hayes

Haley Robinson

Austin Walkins

The Great American Outdoors Act

If you've hiked or biked on trails in the Boise Foothills, if you've splashed in the frigid waters of Lake Pend Oreille at Sandpoint's City Beach, or if you've launched your boat into the Snake River from Marsing Island Park or gone birding at Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge, you've enjoyed the benefits of the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Since its creation in 1964, the Land and Water Conservation Fund has contributed nearly \$300 million to benefit the citizens of Idaho.

Would it surprise you to hear that the fund has accumulated over \$40 billion in revenues from off-shore oil leases, motorboat and other recreation fees, but Congress has appropriated less than half for the intended purposes of conservation and recreation? Instead, Congress has raided the fund to pay for unrelated projects.

The good news is that the bipartisan Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA), which just passed the Senate and is now pending in the House, would guarantee full funding of \$900 million per year for land acquisition and conservation investments. To boot, the bill would provide \$9.5 billion, over five years, for maintenance in our national parks, national forests and other public lands.

For decades, public land managers have deferred maintenance of roads, trails, campgrounds and other facilities due to a lack of congressional funding. Idaho's national forests alone face a backlog of over \$500 million.

The GAOA will support thousands of jobs across the country, at a time of record unemployment. In addition, outdoor recreation is big business in Idaho with \$7.8 billion in consumer spending, accounting for 78,000 jobs and generating \$2.3 billion in wages and salaries and nearly \$447 million in state and local tax revenue every year. GAOA infrastructure investments will improve access, restore water quality, and promote public safety, all while creating jobs for Idahoans.

Senators Risch and Crapo voted against the bill over concerns about the lack of congressional oversight, but look how far that's gotten us in the last 56 years! Thankfully, Representative Simpson has co-sponsored the bill in the House, and ICL will be working with partners and members to demonstrate support in the hope that the bill is signed into law this summer.

Idaho's public lands are a critical part of our quality of life, and the COVID-19 pandemic has driven home the importance of maintaining recreational access to these lands. As Idaho continues to grow, we must invest to protect special places, and we must ensure that we keep our commitment to maintain the roads and trails that help take us to the places we love.

Jonathan Oppenheimer

Director of External Relations
joppenheimer@idahoconservation.org



Safeguarding *YOUR* Drinking Water

If you live in south-central Idaho, chances are you get your drinking water from the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer (ESPA) — the sole source of drinking water for over 300,000 Idahoans, including residents of Twin Falls and neighboring communities. This groundwater also supports extensive irrigated agriculture and a robust fish farming industry along the Snake River.

Last summer, ICL released our first groundwater quality report for the Magic Valley. In the past year, we acquired a large amount of new groundwater data to build on that inaugural report that shows how at-risk the water quality in the ESPA truly is. We will be releasing our second groundwater quality report this summer with the updated data. In the meantime, here are some of our findings.

Idaho's priceless groundwater resources are increasingly at-risk due to excess amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus being put on the land, primarily from fertilized agricultural fields and massive dairy farms. For example, the estimated 425,000 dairy cows in the Magic Valley produce roughly 50 million pounds of waste per day — equivalent to the waste produced by a city of roughly 12 million people!

That level of nitrogen and phosphorus far exceeds what typical crops can absorb, with the remainder leaching into the groundwater and contributing to serious health effects when found at high enough concentrations.

Consider also that nitrate (a potentially harmful form of nitrogen) levels below established regulatory limits are increasingly being tied to health concerns. That means current drinking water standards may not adequately protect people from getting ill or suffering from health conditions. This year's report shows that the highest nitrate concentrations are typically found in Twin Falls, Cassia, and Minidoka counties.

We all have the right to clean drinking water. ICL is working diligently to ensure that is the case for Idahoans across the state.

Josh Johnson

Conservation Associate
jjohnson@idahoconservation.org



Ecoflight Photo

Planning Idaho's *Clean* Energy Future

This summer, you can help accelerate Idaho's transition from dirty fossil fuels like coal and methane gas to low-cost, reliable clean energy. Each of Idaho's three utilities (Avista, Idaho Power, and Rocky Mountain Power/PacifiCorp) have submitted plans basically supporting a clean energy transition, but the pace of change is too slow to adequately protect our climate. And while each utility plans to invest in clean energy, they don't focus these investments in Idaho.

Be a climate hero and tell the state regulators your story about why investing in Idaho's clean energy future is important to you.

These utilities are regulated by a state agency called the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (PUC). Every two years, utilities submit new plans to the PUC that forecast energy needs and assess the optimal mix of power plants to maintain reliable and affordable energy. These are known as Integrated Resource Plans (IRP). It is in the IRP where the utilities make initial decisions about the size and scope of energy conservation programs and the portfolio of power plants we all pay for. When utilities are creating these plans, it's an important time for ICL and our supporters to engage with utilities to support a clean energy future for Idaho.

For example, Idaho Power's IRP does plan to divest from coal-fired power plants, but not until the late 2030s. Meanwhile, Idaho Power will add the Jackpot Solar plant

into its mix by 2022 to save money by displacing more expensive fossil fuels. But instead of adding even more solar to keep costs down, Idaho Power plans to maintain the coal fleet for another decade so they can recoup their outstanding debt.

Avista and Rocky Mountain Power have similar plans — divesting from its coal-fired power plants over the long-term — but this ignores near-term opportunities to transition to lower-cost wind and solar power. Further, none of our utilities plan to engage with customers to expand the use of rooftop solar systems to help control energy bills and access local power supplies.

Now is the time to be a Climate Hero and tell our utility companies and the Idaho PUC that Idahoans are ready for rapid action and we want clean energy to protect our air, our health and our economy.

Go to www.idahoconservation.org/energy for more information and links where you can speak up for an Idaho clean energy future.

Ben Otto
Energy Associate
botto@idahoconservation.org



Idaho outfitters, guides, and fishing communities need *urgent* action on wild salmon and steelhead

The lack of a steelhead season in 2019, the quick cutoff for spring Chinook fishing this year, and the ongoing COVID-19 crisis have combined to ravage the Idaho guides and outfitters industry. A recent editorial in the Clearwater Tribune from a group of Clearwater River fishing guides made a simple request of Idaho's congressional leadership: "Amplify the voices of rural Idaho. Save our fish. Most of all... represent us."

At the March meeting of the Idaho Governor's Salmon Workgroup, we were optimistic as the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) forecast slight or significant improvements for all Idaho stocks in 2020. This was welcome news for the Workgroup, which includes ICL's Executive Director Justin Hayes, and brought hope to guides and outfitters, who struggled through a dismal 2019 and the closure of the Clearwater River steelhead fishery in the fall.

But with the spring Chinook run nearly complete, this year has been just as bad or even worse. At the start of May, only 35,551 adult fish had passed Bonneville Dam: just one-third of the 10-year average return, slightly down from the same period in 2019. On May

13, IDFG closed the spring Chinook fishing season on the Clearwater River, only two weeks after it opened. Sections of the Little Salmon and Salmon rivers were soon to follow.

As we write this, only 20,638 spring Chinook have returned to Lower Granite Dam, destined for Idaho rivers. This is just 38% of the 10-year average, and gives fishery managers real concerns about even being able to meet broodstock requirements for the state's hatchery programs.

With such abysmal fish returns, we hope the plea from Idaho's outfitters and guides to save Idaho's fish, their livelihoods, and local communities doesn't fall on deaf ears. Spring 2020 again proves that we need bold action, like the removal of the four lower Snake River dams in downstream Washington State, to save Idaho's fish and its outfitting industry.

Mitch Cutter

Salmon & Steelhead Advocacy Fellow
mcutter@idahoconservation.org

"There is no doubt that these last four years have been very depressing."

-Joe DuPont, IDFG Fisheries Regional Manager

USFWS/Ryan Hagerty Photo

NORTHERN IDAHO

Mining in British Columbia is polluting the Kootenai River and white sturgeon



Shannon I, Wikimedia Commons Photo

Kootenai River white sturgeon are an ancient species of sturgeon that have struggled to survive alongside human impacts to their habitat – most significantly the construction of Libby Dam along a portion of the river in Montana. Over the last decade, scientists also have grown concerned that mining pollution from massive coal mines in the headwaters of the Kootenai River, in British Columbia, is accumulating in the water and in fish tissue downstream in Idaho.

Before European immigrants pushed into the Idaho Panhandle, the Kootenai River and a vast area surrounding it belonged to the Ktunaxa People (Ktunaxa has been anglicized as Kootenai). Today, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (a band of the Ktunaxa Nation) continues

to be the guardian of this land and leads the restoration and protection of the Kootenai River and the vulnerable fish and wildlife who depend on it.

The Kootenai Tribe of Idaho and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes in Montana, as well as First Nations in Canada, have long advocated for transboundary federal, state, and provincial intervention to end mining pollution into the Kootenai River. ICL is following the tribes’ lead and supporting their efforts to elevate this issue with state and federal representatives in Idaho and Washington D.C.

Matt Nykiel

Conservation Associate
mnykiel@idahoconservation.org

CENTRAL IDAHO

Can You Hear Me Now?

The Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) is one of Idaho’s most treasured landscapes, replete with soaring, snow-capped peaks and sparkling blue alpine lakes. But a proposed 200-foot-tall cellphone tower on a parcel of State-leased land in the heart of the Sawtooth Valley threatens to puncture that iconic skyline.



Linda Lantzy Photo

The cell tower, proposed by FirstNet (a subsidiary of AT&T), would be located on a ridgeline near Redfish Lake, very close to an existing 95-foot cell tower. The reasoning? To provide for better emergency communications in the area. Although enhanced communications for first responders is an important function, opposition to the proposed tower even came from Sawtooth Search and Rescue, whose co-director stated, in part, “(W)e feel very strongly that the existing Custer Telephone tower meets or exceeds the desired Cell Phone coverage in the Sawtooth Wilderness. We do not believe

that a 195’ tower, in one of the most scenic parts of the SNRA, is necessary.”

The proposed tower is three times taller than surrounding trees and in direct conflict with the core values protected by Congress when establishing the SNRA. Furthermore, this proposal has been put forth without sufficient public comment, would not actually provide adequate coverage, and has the potential to degrade the area’s designation as an International Dark Sky Reserve.

Thanks to you, our members, we have helped send over 250 letters to the Department of Lands and the Governor’s Office expressing opposition to this proposal and requesting that alternatives be considered. We plan to take this issue directly to the decision-makers and testify against the current proposal at the upcoming meeting of the Idaho Land Board.

Josh Johnson

Conservation Associate
jjohnson@idahoconservation.org

EASTERN IDAHO

Major win in Eastern Idaho for Clean Water and Cutthroat Trout

In a big win for wildlife and clean water, the U.S. District Court recently agreed with ICL and our partners and stopped Excellon Resources from moving forward with gold exploration near the Centennial Mountains by the town of Kilgore in eastern Idaho.

This important decision follows a December 2019 ruling that the U.S. Forest Service failed to consider Excellon's exploration drilling as a threat to water quality and Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

Together, these court decisions mean that the project cannot proceed until the Forest Service redoes their analysis, takes public comment, and issues a new decision — likely wiping out at least the 2020 drilling season at Kilgore.

This potential gold mine lies in the heart of a major wildlife corridor that connects the

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem with the rest of the Northern Rockies, home to everything from grizzly bears to Columbia spotted frogs. The project is also near the head of the Camas Creek watershed, which flows through the Camas National Wildlife Refuge and is a key water source for farmers further downstream.

Every mining company that has owned this project wants to ultimately develop a massive open-pit, cyanide heap leach mine at the site. This style of mining is so destructive to the environment that it is banned a mere ten miles to the north in Montana. ICL is committed to stopping the mine and preventing the environmental threat and damage such operations can bring to Idaho's special places.

Josh Johnson

Conservation Associate
jjohnson@idahoconservation.org



Josh Johnson Photo

SOUTHERN IDAHO

ICL and Partners Secure Protections for Jarbidge Area Mine Project

On June 23, the Idaho Conservation League, Idaho Rivers United, and the Idaho Chapter of the Sierra Club reached a successful resolution with the U.S. Forest Service and a mining company over a proposed gold exploration project in the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest. The three conservation groups secured additional measures to reduce the scope of the project and impacts to bull trout, and to enhance water quality protections.

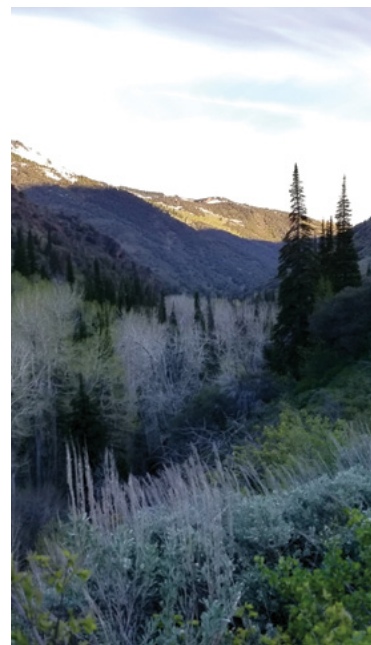
The project is located in the headwaters of the Jarbidge River in northern Nevada, near the Idaho border. The 24,000-acre project area, adjacent to the Jarbidge Wilderness, includes the headwaters of the Congressionally-designated Wild and Scenic Jarbidge River and its tributaries, and portions of four Inventoried Roadless Areas. The Jarbidge watershed also

supports the southernmost population of federally-listed threatened bull trout.

In April, the Forest Service released an Environmental Assessment (EA) describing potential impacts for this project. In May, ICL and its two partners filed a formal objection with the agency regarding its determination. The three conservation groups argued that the Forest Service failed to adequately analyze the potential impacts of the project in its EA.

Randy Fox

Conservation Associate
rfox@idahoconservation.org



Colin Tiernan Photo

Dr. John Freemuth's Leadership and Legacy Live On



John Freemuth,
Boise State University Photo

It's still hard to believe that Dr. John Freemuth is gone. The Idaho Conservation League lost a wise, dear friend this spring when he passed away.

His life and work touched many of us. Dr. Freemuth taught and mentored

thousands of students, many of whom went on to pursue careers in natural resource management. Such was the case with ICL's North Idaho Director Brad Smith, who connected with ICL through Dr. Freemuth.

Many of Dr. Freemuth's former students also work as land managers or for businesses dependent on public lands. While his graduates may approach public lands issues from different perspectives, they all still share a common foundation about the value of public lands and of Idaho-based solutions which will be critical for addressing public land issues in the future.

Many benefited from his wisdom when he was the Distinguished Professor of Public Policy and Cecil Andrus Endowed Chair of Environment and Public Lands at Boise State University.

His perspective also helped inform ICL's collaborative approach to public lands work including the Owyhee Initiative, the Boulder-White Clouds, and the Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership, among other successes.

ICL posthumously awarded the Cecil Andrus Award to Dr. Freemuth during its annual *Wild Idaho!* meeting this year, which was held virtually. This award, named after the four-time Idaho governor and former U.S. Secretary of the Interior, is reserved for extraordinary commitment to conservation values and bestowed only when the occasion calls for it.

Thank you Dr. Freemuth for helping us share our public lands stories, allowing them to merge and create the trust that moves all of us forward.

Jonathan Oppenheimer

Director of External Relations
joppenheimer@idahoconservation.org

John Robison

Public Lands Director
jrobison@idahoconservation.org

Awards

In addition to presenting the Andrus Award to Dr. Freemuth, ICL awarded three others at its *Wild Idaho!* meeting this year.

ICL's dear friend and board member Steve Lockwood passed away in January. He won the Axline Award for Environmental Activism. Steve was a passionate environmentalist, a wonderful member of the ICL family, and a friend to many. A Sandpoint resident, Steve cared deeply about the environment and was most passionate about issues affecting generations to come. Steve also



Steve Lockwood, Phil Hough Photo

served on the Sandpoint City Council, the city planning and zoning commission, and the Lake Pend Oreille School District Board. Named in honor of the legacy of long-time ICL members Keith and Pat Axline of Challis, this award honors those who actively promote conservation values and are deeply committed to the cause.

Reporter Jeremy P. Jacobs of Greenwire/E&E News won the J. Robb Brady Award for Environmental Journalism. In his special report, “Bloodbath: Red Ink Pours Over Northwest Dams,” Jeremy dives deep into the Bonneville Power Administration, the federal agency he calls an “empire” that lies at the crucial nexus of energy and saving salmon and steelhead fish populations in the Northwest, the largest endangered species recovery program in the United States. The Brady Award is named after the former publisher of

the Idaho Falls Post Register. Started in 1999, the award celebrates excellence and integrity in press coverage of environmental issues.

Asa Menlove, a high school graduate from Boise, won the inaugural Alex Frizzell Award for Youth Activism. He has worked closely with ICL to foster a community of environmental activism among high schoolers in Idaho and connected with students who are excited to take action for salmon and steelhead, Earth Day, and other conservation issues. Named after a young woman who grew up in Boise, this award was created to honor her legacy and to recognize the importance and power of young people engaging in efforts that they care about. Alex interned with ICL in 2011 after her first year of college, contributing energy economic analysis that ICL continues to use today. Sadly, Alex passed away at age 21.



Jeremy P. Jacobs. Greenwire/E&E News Photo



Asa Menlove. Daniel Doherty Photo

Staff Updates



Photo Courtesy Dainee Gibson

Since our last newsletter, ICL has continued to expand and grow. We are excited to welcome two new full-time staff members to our team!

Dainee Gibson joined ICL as our new conservation analyst. Originally from rural Virginia, Dainee earned a degree in biology and sustainability science before moving out West to get a master’s degree from Idaho State University. At ICL, she will use her analytical skills to support our conservation programs. Dainee works with ICL’s climate team to help mitigate climate change in Idaho. She combines her education in sustainability science and conservation biology with her background in agriculture to ensure conservation success in our state.



Photo Courtesy Katie Jay

Katie Jay is ICL’s new data development assistant. After graduating from Seattle University with a degree in English and Creative Writing, Katie moved to Boise where she worked at a variety of nonprofits, including The Discovery Center of Idaho, the Treasure Valley YMCA, and Zoo Boise. Katie keeps track of the many gifts that support ICL’s mission, and makes sure our members get the thanks they deserve! When she’s not at work, you can find her down by the river with her husband and two kids, building stick forts and skipping rocks.

Board Updates

Thank you, Paul and Jerry!

The ICL family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to both of our outgoing board members, Paul Cunningham and Jerry Scheid. Paul and Jerry have brought so much to the ICL community and we are grateful for their contributions and years of service.

Paul Cunningham

“Paul has done much over the years to both strengthen ICL and to support staff. During his tenure as board chair he helped guide the organization by asking big picture questions. As chair of the conservation committee, he drilled in on very granular details. Being able to lead at these different scales ensured that the organization was always thinking, stretching and working hard.”

-ICL Executive Director Justin Hayes

Jerry Scheid

“Jerry is a real mover and shaker in the Idaho Falls community and has played an instrumental role in helping ICL deepen connections in folks in eastern Idaho. It’s people like Jerry who have such a deep-rooted history in Idaho that make the ICL community so special. “

-ICL Central Idaho Director Betsy Mizell

Welcome, Megan and Justina!

We are so excited to welcome Justina Gooden-Helton and Megan Dixon to ICL’s board of directors! Both bring a wonderful array of experience and enthusiasm. We are very much looking forward to the contributions they will bring to our wonderful board of directors.

Megan Dixon

Megan has worked at The College of Idaho since 2008 as a Lecturer in geography, environmental studies, and writing. Since living in Idaho, she has been on the Coordinating Team of the Boise River Enhancement Network, developed an annual presentation about Lake Lowell for the Deer Flat Master Naturalists program, and acquainted several groups of students with the natural history of the Sawtooth Valley. She lives in Caldwell with her husband Scott and son Rowan, and they take regular adventures in Idaho to go backpacking and skiing.

Justina Gooden-Helton

Justina has over 15 years of sales and marketing experience and has served on several for-profit and nonprofit boards. Justina has demonstrated a longtime commitment to the environment through personal responsibility, hands-on volunteerism, and financial support of environmental groups. Justina is an active member of the Idaho Falls community where she currently lives with her husband Rob and their son Cole. Currently, Justina is the owner of Yoga 2.46 and is a Baptiste Power Yoga instructor at Yoga London in Idaho Falls.



MBWhitaker Photo

Paul Cunningham



Robert Bower Photo

Jerry Scheid



Photo Courtesy Megan Dixon

Megan Dixon



Photo courtesy Justina Gooden-Helton

Justina Gooden-Helton

Member Profile

Alida Bockino — Teacher, Leader, Advocate

For ICL Legacy Member Alida Bockino, the outdoors is a family affair. Raised in a small farming community in New York state, she remembers gardening, rescuing “all sorts of pets and critters,” and doing everything she could outside. In 1972, when her husband Joe decided to attend the University of Idaho, they moved to Moscow, fell in love with the area, and never looked back.

Alida now lives just east of Moscow on a few acres lush with ponderosa pines and over fifty different native plants. Her three children have gone on to successful careers in ecology, outdoor recreation, and more. She also raised generations of students during her tenure as a kindergarten, first grade, and special education teacher.

Alida was my own kindergarten teacher when I attended Lena Whitmore Elementary decades ago. As Alida explains, young students were easy to impress, and she enjoyed sharing lessons about the natural world. She said, “It was amazing because I’d have parents come back and tell me, ‘My son told me today I needed to do these three things to protect the environment.’ The kids were so into it.”

When she retired, the principal of the school joked she had replaced “kids with kids” as she moved into retirement with a few goats to help carry gear on her ongoing backpacking adventures.

Careers in education also gave Alida, Joe and the family ample time to explore all across the state, and they spent

many summers backpacking and winters cross country skiing. When I asked Alida to pick a favorite place in Idaho, she ran through her memories of everywhere from the Sawtooths to the Seven Devils to Moscow Mountain, but she kept returning to the North Fork of the Clearwater, a place she and Joe would return to often so Joe could fish and she could photograph wildflowers.

In addition to being an ICL Legacy Member, Alida is also one of ICL’s most engaged activists. Over the last few years she has made over 300 contacts to Idaho decision-makers including making phone calls, sending emails, and writing letters to the editor. Advocacy is clearly important to her. Alida said, “I’ve been to so many beautiful places and seen so many spectacular things. I want to make sure they will always be like that. Not just for other people, but also for the creatures, plants and animals that live there. It’s the mothering instinct.”

Her advice to others just beginning to get involved? Stay hopeful and kind. “Even though it seems sometimes like an insurmountable obstacle,” she reflected. “Just keep on keeping on. Eventually, more and more people will be on board with trying to preserve Idaho. Even if it’s just one person at a time.”

Emerald LaFortune

Campaign Outreach Assistant - Salmon & Steelhead Recovery
elafortune@idahoconservation.org



Photo Courtesy Alida Bockino



IDAHO
CONSERVATION
LEAGUE

208.345.6933
PO Box 844
Boise, ID 83701

Non Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Idaho
Conservation
League

Electronic Service Requested

Wild Idaho! Web Series

ICL is excited to share the conservation work we are doing around the state, and to bring our conservation community together — virtually! We are in the midst of our first-ever *Wild Idaho!* Web Series.

You can watch Part One: Our Public Lands and Part Two: Salmon and Steelhead Recovery online at www.idahoconservation.org/wildidaho

Tune in live for the next two parts of the series!

Wild Idaho! Web Series — Part Three: Climate and Public Health

Thursday, July 16, 6:30 pm MTN

Wild Idaho! Web Series — Part Four: The Snake River and Clean Water

Thursday, July 23, 6:30 pm MTN

As always, the Idaho Conservation League's work is only possible because of your membership support. Thank you for standing with us! We hope you will join ICL in the next two webinars to see how we've put your generosity to work.

Learn more and register at www.idahoconservation.org/wildidaho.