



2015 Annual Report





The Idaho Trails Association (ITA) is a non-profit 501(c)3.

Mission

The Idaho Trails Association promotes the continued enjoyment of Idaho's hiking trails.

Purpose

To facilitate the active enjoyment of Idaho's public lands and hiking trails, the Idaho Trails Association brings together citizens and develops partnerships to foster:

- Care-taking of Idaho's hiking trails through stewardship projects, including construction and maintenance on non-motorized trails.
- Development of traditional trails maintenance skills.
- Preservation, protection and access to Idaho's hiking trails through outreach and advocacy.

In 2015 the Idaho Trails Association completed fifteen projects on public lands in Idaho administered by the United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). Our Agency sponsors were the Boise BLM-Bruneau Field Office and the Payette, Boise, Sawtooth and Idaho Panhandle National Forests. Four of these projects were within designated Wilderness, and involved both trail work and stewardship activities.

The project workforces ranged from five volunteers in more remote and logistically challenging areas to over fifty volunteers on the work days that were closer to large population bases. National Trails Day and National Public Lands Day have always had a great turnout with great projects on our public lands.

Board of Directors

Diana Burrell, President, *Boise*

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Advisory Board

Bryan Dufosse, *Boise*

John McCarthy, *Boise*

Phil Hough, *Sagle*

Sally Ferguson, *Boise*

Number of volunteers– **238**
 Volunteer field hours– **2,562**
 Monetary value- **\$43,239**
 Miles of trail cleared-**60.5**
 Miles of trail reconstructed- **22.5**
 New construction- **5780 feet**
 Logs cut from trail– **367**
 Water bars cleaned– **459**
 Tread resurfacing– **2200 feet**
 Rock removal– **7 miles**
 Wilderness campsite naturalization- **11**
 Human waste removal- **Piles**
 Trash packed out– **84 Pounds**
 Reconstructed and painted benches– 4
 Reconstructed fence- **400 Feet**
 Gate installation– **2**



Alice Lake trail, Sawtooth Wilderness

Project Highlights:

During 2015 ITA worked on fifteen projects throughout the state of Idaho. Three projects were completed in northern Idaho, two in southern Idaho’s Owyhee Canyonlands, and ten projects in Central Idaho. Highlights of four typical projects are provided below.

Oolite Trail and Trailhead reconstruction, Owyhee Canyonlands, January 2015!

Yes, January! Fifty three volunteers showed up for a one day work party in January to rebuild the Oolite Interpretive Trail Trailhead and the trail to the Oolite cliffs. It was an amazing winter day in the Owyhees.

Alice Lake, Sawtooth Wilderness, Sawtooth National Forest

Ten volunteers spent a week in July at Alice Lake in the Sawtooth Wilderness. The project work was concentrated on the trail linking Alice Lake to the Tin Cup Trailhead. Fifteen hundred feet of trail tread was resurfaced through a talus slope, three miles of trail were brushed and eighty three waterbars were cleaned and rebuilt. This project was supported by grants from REI, Cabela’s and the Sawtooth Society.



Alice Lake Volunteers, Sawtooth Wilderness



National Trails Day Volunteers

Chamberlain Lakes, White Cloud Wilderness, Sawtooth National Forest

Ten volunteers spent the week in the newly established Boulder White Cloud Wilderness clearing trails and upgrading the trail system. ITA partnered with the Idaho Conservation League to accomplish this weeklong project in Central Idaho. Volunteers cleared trees, rocks and resurfaced the trail in to the Chamberlain Lakes Basin. We also reopened the Chamberlain Creek Trail. We had two professional photographers on the project to photograph the area and record the events of the week.



White Clouds Wilderness Volunteers



Cleaning Chamberlain Creek ford

Mickinnick Trail, Idaho Panhandle National Forest

Eight volunteers spent a beautiful day improving the Mickinnick Trail on the Idaho Panhandle National Forest in northern Idaho. Eight logs were removed, fifty seven water bars were cleaned and three and a half miles of trail were brushed out. Four benches were repaired and painted and a pole fence and gate were also rebuilt on this project!



Trail Volunteers in northern Idaho



View from Mickinnick Trail

ITA's First Executive Director-Jeff Halligan

In June of 2015 the Idaho Trails Association hired Jeff Halligan as our first Executive Director. Filling this position is the first step to furthering our mission and expanding our reach throughout the state of Idaho. Working on partnership opportunities, agreements with agencies, applying for grants and managing day to day operations will help ITA do more work on Idaho's hiking trails. Jeff has already applied for and received grants from the National Forest Foundation and Clif Bar to hire a *Trails Program Specialist* for 2016. This position is key to helping organize and oversee ITA's stewardship and trail maintenance projects.



Jeff Halligan and a volunteer after cutting a log

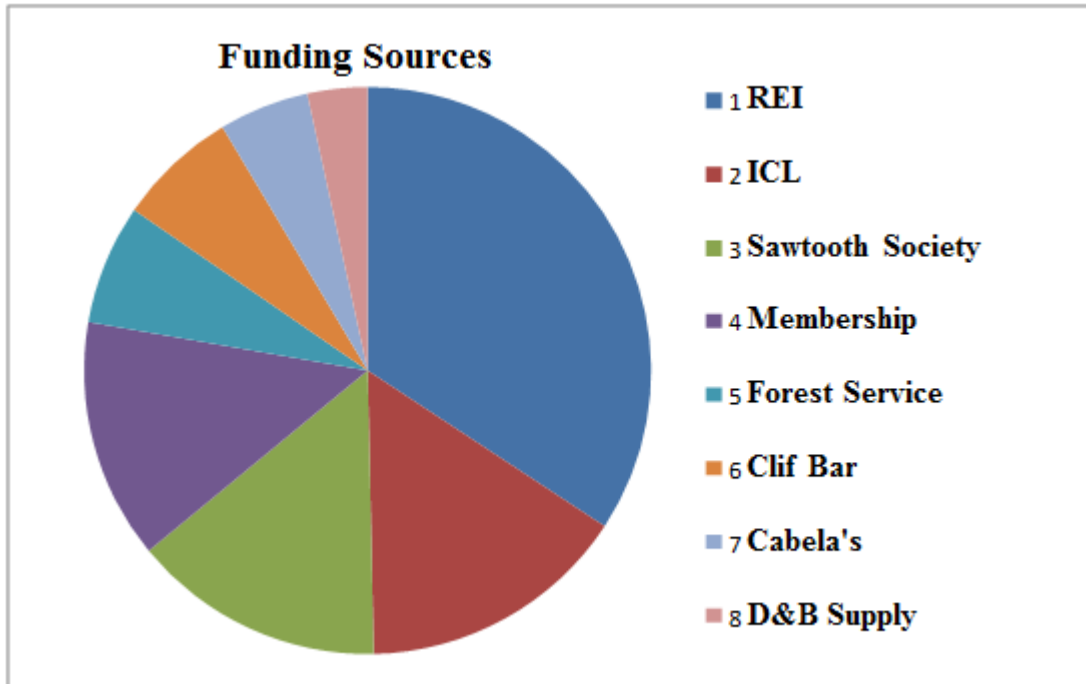


Volunteers having lunch and discussing the afternoon's project plans, Little Jacks Creek Wilderness, Owyhee Canyonlands

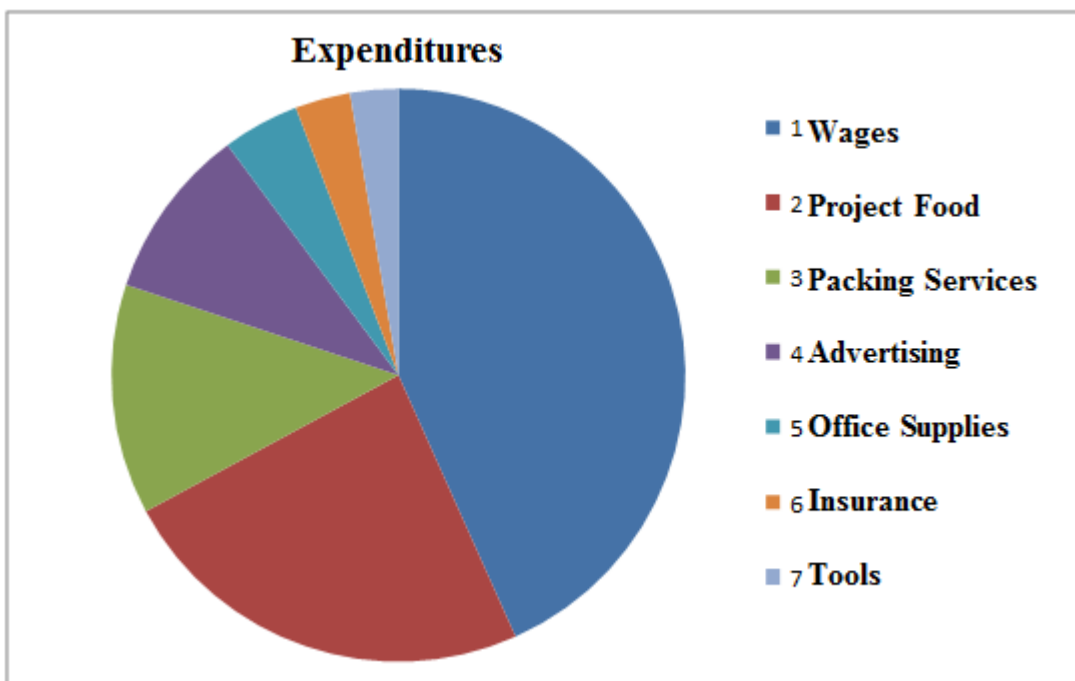
In June we held our first *Crew Leader College* to help train and certify crew leaders in crosscut saw skills, trail clearing specifications, and how to make trail work safe and fun. In fact, ITA provided training for several other organizations that have an interest in trail maintenance and traditional skills.

During 2015 ITA doubled the amount of work accomplished on the ground over 2014. This was a great building year for us. Our trail skills improved while our work exceeded land management agency trail standards. We were able to recruit highly skilled volunteer crew leaders to supervise volunteers in safe and rewarding trail work and stewardship projects.

2015 Idaho Trails Association funding sources range from grants from REI, Sawtooth Society, National Forest Foundation and Clif Bar. Partners who supply funding and materials, include the Idaho Conservation League, Cabela's, D&B Supply, and the United States Forest Service. Membership dues and other fundraising activities supply the much needed funds to enhance our work.



Our largest expense for the year was wages for our Executive Director and our backcountry chef who cooked for the weeklong projects. Second was the cost of food for the volunteer crews. Packing services to move camp, supplies and food into the backcountry for the weeklong projects was third.



The Future:

ITA will hire a Trail Project Specialist for the 2016 season. We received a grant from the National Forest Foundation and Clif Bar to fund this position. We will be advertising for interested applicants in early February and are planning on having this person hired and working by early May. Our new Trails Project Specialist will be working from early May to the middle of September.

ITA is now facing a new challenge- requests for work are beginning to outpace our funding. As ITA's reputation for quality project accomplishment grows throughout Idaho we are getting more requests from the land management agencies for single day work parties to focus on trails close to population hubs. These work parties have been funded by REI and the land management agencies in the past, during 2016 ITA will be pursuing future funding opportunities that will allow us to expand our activities.

Another challenge we face is recruiting qualified crew leaders. Large volunteer projects require that ITA ensure we have a cadre of qualified crew leaders to manage our volunteers and that those crew leaders are available for specific dates. Recruiting other passionate crew leaders will be important for future expansion and success.

Finally, we want to ensure that as we grow our accomplishments, we maintain our reputation for excellent quality. ITA prides itself in teaching safety and completing the best quality trail work while also creating supporters and stewards of our public lands. Our volunteers may not complete a project as fast as a contractor or agency crew, but the quality of our work should be the same, and the potential of creating lifelong supporters of public lands is great. This goal is important for future partner relationships.

Our Message:

ITA is a hiking, trail advocacy and stewardship group. We formed to provide a voice for hikers throughout Idaho. Our role is to get work done and to develop strong citizen stewards who are informed and educated and provide support to land management agencies. Continuing our work towards accomplishing this goal is our priority.

ITA is proud of its ability to teach and promote traditional techniques for accomplishing trail work. We feel our skills training is needed to safely engage the public in volunteer stewardship of our public lands. ITA promotes these traditional skills to provide the training and understanding that work can be accomplished safely and efficiently in this manner.

By safely engaging the public in stewardship activities, we hope to build a more supportive public who will enjoy outdoor recreation and participate in the future management of our public lands.

Interested in becoming one of the people who will help ITA continue to grow? ITA is currently seeking folks to help with a variety of tasks, such as data management, improve public outreach, and others that will help us do more work on the hiking trails throughout Idaho. If you have a passion for trails, conservation and helping out please let us know! We are also looking for people who can help us start doing trail projects in areas around Salmon, Idaho Falls, Pocatello, and Grangeville. Please help us spread the word!

Our Thanks,

REI, Sawtooth Society, Idaho Conservation League, Shu's Running Company, National Forest Foundation, Cabela's, D&B Supply, Clif Bar, Sawtooth Brewing, Payette Brewing Company, In the Wild Chef, Hiking Idaho, Agency Partners, Volunteers, Members, Contributors, Board of Directors and Advisory Board

Your support will help ITA continue to help keep Idaho's hiking trails open to the public. ITA is dedicated to supporting, maintaining and educating the public about Idaho's unique hiking trail system.

To become a member please visit: www.IdahoTrailsAssociation.org



Idaho Trails Association

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