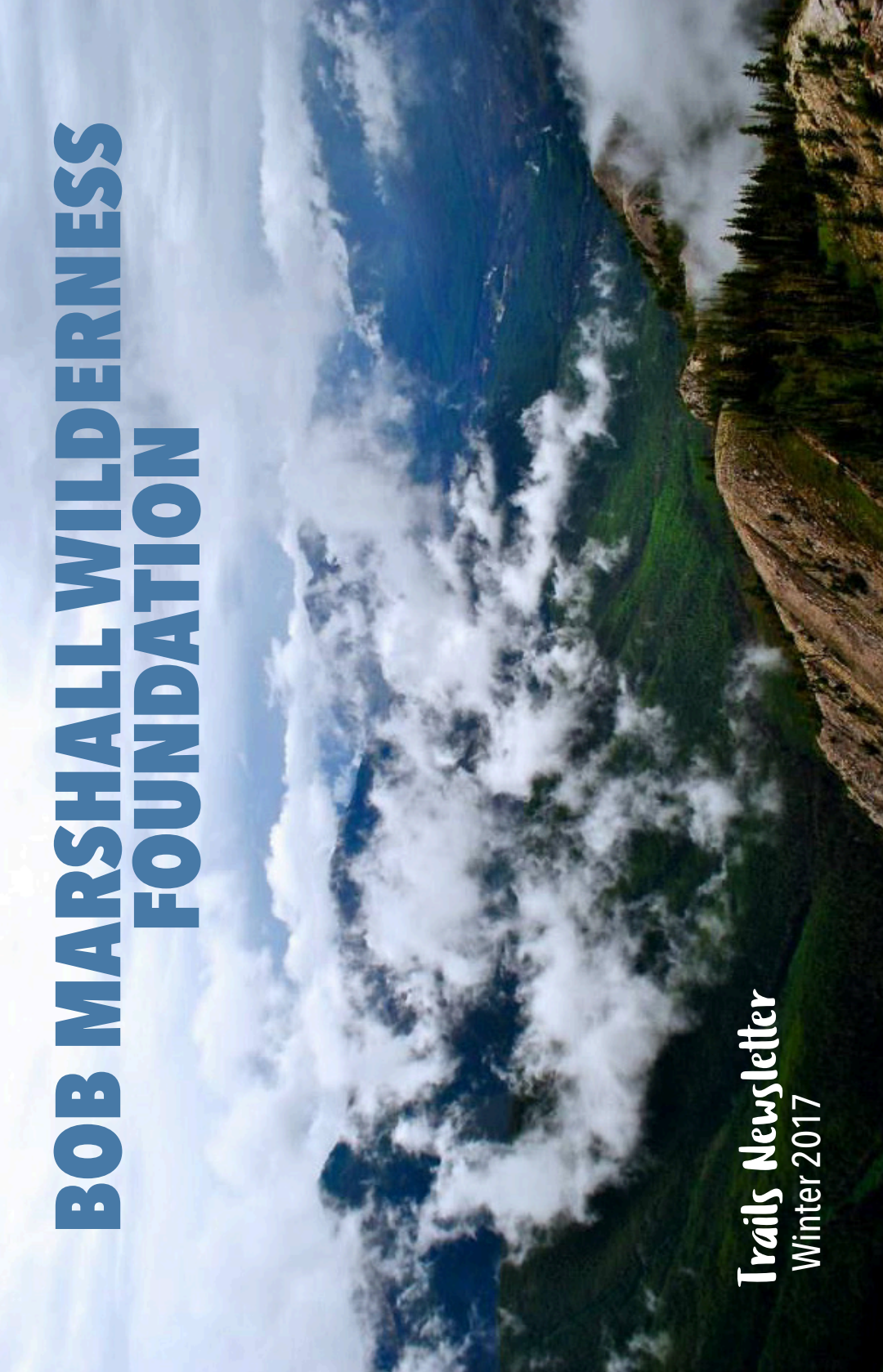


BOB MARSHALL WILDERNESS FOUNDATION

Trails Newsletter
Winter 2017



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Starting a New Year is like hiking; we look back down the trail at how far we've come and look forward to new scenery around the next bend. In this newsletter and Annual Report you'll read about BMWF's 2016 accomplishments. For volunteers this may bring back memories of the trail they helped repair or the meadow they helped clear of weeds, new friends, and the comradery built by sweating together and breaking bread together. For donors, these numbers will evoke a sense of pride for supporting the teams of hard working volunteers that give back to Wilderness. This combined effort speaks volumes about the importance of keeping trails open for all Wilderness recreationalists.

The numbers also show that nearly every BMWF project was filled to capacity; some trips had a waiting list! Affirmation that there is huge support for volunteerism for the conservation of public lands. This summer we saw the growth of the next generation of conservation leaders as the Wilderness Conservation Interns came to know the Bob, fell in love with it, and gained focus for the importance of preserving wild and open spaces for generations to come. The Packer Apprentice program blossomed successfully, producing two young, competent packers invested in continuing this valuable Wilderness trade.

Looking ahead to 2017, we anticipate another packed field season. For those of you who can't wait to get back to the Bob in 2017, the volunteer guide and project sign ups will go live on March 3rd. We will take you to the most scenic parts of the state and iconic places with cool names like Pretty Prairie, Big Prairie, Hobnail Tom trail, Doctor Lake, Goat Creek, and Indian Meadows. If you haven't already, be sure to explore our new website at www.bmwf.org and check out the vibrant pages filled with memorable scenes from the Bob, information on the Wilderness, stories from the Bob, artist reflections, and coming this spring-- an interactive trail conditions map.

Happy Trails in 2017!

Carol Treadwell



2016 was the first year that BMWF participated in the Greatfish Challenge and we were blown away by the generosity of the community that came together to help us raise \$34,000 to support stewardship of

the Bob. It is an honor to have the support of the community for the stewardship of one of Montanan's most treasured places on the doorstep of Whitefish. BMWF received 71 contributions totaling \$26,232 and matching funds from WFCF added another \$8,500. Thank you to all who contributed to BMWF's challenge fund! And thank you Whitefish Community Foundation for hosting this great community effort by bringing together so many wonderful local nonprofits and the community to support the good work they are doing.

MOUNTAINFILM on tour

MARCH 7 Great Falls

MARCH 8 Helena

MARCH 9 Whitefish

tickets at www.bmwf.org/events



TRAIL DOG OF THE YEAR: MARLEY SANDE



Marley Sande of Bigfork, MT found the BMWF 3 years ago at the ripe old age of 15. Every summer since, Marley has taken time off from her summer job to volunteer for a week-long trail clearing adventure.

Marley is one of the most capable and hard working young woman you will meet. She, along with the dozens of other youth volunteers who head into The Bob every summer, give us hope that our

wild places will be in good hands with the next generation. Marley says, "I love The Bob, and volunteering in it so I can escape the monotony of daily life and explore while giving back". This fall Marley headed to college in Bozeman where she's hard at work studying, and exploring new mountains!

PACKER OF THE YEAR: FRANK VITALE

For as long as we can remember, Frank Vitale of Columbia Falls, MT has packed many BMWF volunteer adventures in and out of the Wilderness each summer. We can't count the loads he and his mules have hauled, but we thank them loads! In addition to packing tools, food, and kitchen gear for volunteers, Frank dreamed up the Packer Apprentice Program and helped the Foundation bring it to fruition this summer. Thank you Frank for your commitment to support wilderness stewardship and conservation and to ensuring the skills and knowledge of wilderness packing are passed on to the next generation.



2016 ANNUAL REPORT



358 VOLUNTEERS

worked a total of **17,328** hours
on **41** projects

clearing **3,046** downed trees

maintaining **168**
miles of trail
that's as far as Whitefish to Lincoln!

managing **21** acres for invasive weeds

TOTALING **\$528,470**
IN WILDERNESS
STEWARDSHIP VALUE

"my trip was an opportunity to see the backcountry with someone else organizing all the logistics!"

- 2016 volunteer

WHAT WENT INTO IT?

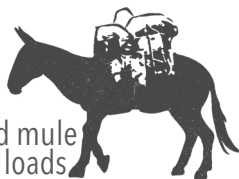
1,000
miles hiked



over **4,300**
cups of backcountry
coffee brewed



248
horse and mule
loads



of food, tools
and gear



Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation trips are about more than just trail work, they can be a life changing wilderness experience for volunteers.

volunteers came from **20** states

spending a cumulative **2166** days unplugged in the wilderness

for about **1/4** it was their first time in The Bob

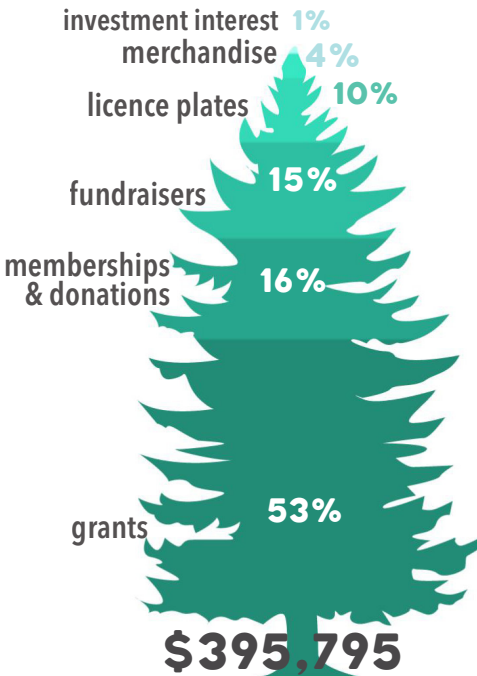
22% of volunteers were kids

"I'm thrilled to have had genuine conversations with others of different backgrounds and ages about what the wilderness means to us personally, for our culture, our heritage, and our future."
-2016 volunteer

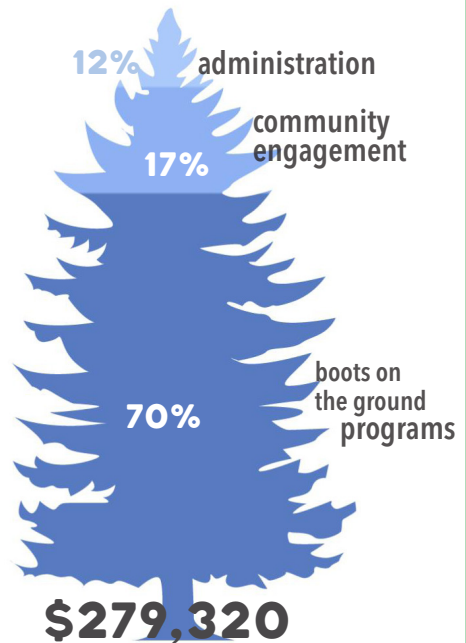


2016 FINANCIAL REPORT

INCOME



EXPENSES





Girls IN THE BOB

For the nine girls who traveled to The Bob from across Montana, New York, New Jersey, and New Hampshire this summer for the first Girls in the Bob trip, the experience was truly life changing.

"Girls in the Bob was a truly incredible experience. Not only did I get to help my community by making trails better and safer, I was able to push my limits and see what amazing things I could accomplish. Ripping apart the bridge the very first day, and chopping up fallen logs the following days was so rewarding, and it showed me the power that I hold within me. It was not only the volunteer work that I did, but also the day hikes that I went on. Being up so high and being able to see so far simultaneously makes you feel like a giant and an ant. You are on top of everything; you are the highest mountain. But you are also surrounded by nothing. The only thing keeping you on this massive ancient rock is the soles of your hiking boots. Living such an intense and monumental moment with people who were strangers just days before forms unbelievably strong bonds. This week, almost 5 months after our trip, we sent care packages to the other girls from our tent; the 2400 miles between us can't break the bond we forged in the Bob."

-Molly, 2016 Girls in The Bob participant

Thank you to BMWF Board member Sara Boilen of Sweetgrass Psychological Services for helping these nine remarkable young women find their strength while hiking over mountain passes and digging trail and for having the inspiration and ability to let nature nurture.



PACKER APPRENTICE PROGRAM UPDATE

The Packer Apprentice Program was born when Frank Vitale came to the BMWF Board of Directors and said: We don't see a whole lot of young people packing anymore, and a lot of us are starting to get a little gray around the muzzle. Wouldn't it be really neat if an organization like the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation had a kind of apprenticeship to start teaching them? Well, that's exactly what we did.



The first ever Packing Apprentices spent a week at the Ninemile Wildlands Training Center learning packing skills from legendary packer Smoke Elser and Casey Burns followed by six pack trips with the Master Packers as they assisted BMWF volunteer crews. On these trips Master packers Frank Vitale, Ralph Hopkins (Flathead BCH), and Ian Bardwell (USFS) helped them hone their skills and tracked their education resulting in a certificate of accomplishment. But it wasn't all diamond hitches and tying manti, along the trail the apprentices also picked up valuable lessons like: "You know Krissy, to a mule all the world is just a tossed salad" or "Krissy, don't you know cowboys don't drink water."

Applications for the 2017 Packer Apprentice Program will be accepted till March 15.

Thank You

to the members and sponsors who so generously support wilderness stewardship and conservation in The Bob



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Whitefish Community Foundation
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National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance

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in 2016 these packers'
 donated services totaled

\$86,400
 in value

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Size (circle one): Sm Med Lrg XL XXL

Name: _____

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