February Summary
Summarized by Cindy Hayes

Idaho became a state in 1890. Twenty eight years earlier the west was opened up to homesteading. Federal land was set aside within each township (sections 16, 36) to encourage the establishment of public schools. These lands were given in trust, with the stipulation that proceeds from their sale or lease (grazing, timber be used to support public elementary and secondary schools. Congress allowed in lieu grants. If the section of land allotted for a school was undesirable and unable to generate funding, they were allowed to select federal lands within their state boundaries, instead of their allotted lands.

Timber was abundant, and in 1876 Congress empowered the Special Agent in Dept. of Agriculture to assess forests in the United States. In 1897 John Leiberg, a pioneer Ecologist, Botanist and Forester, was commissioned to survey and record recently designated U. S. Forest Reserves. His survey was to present a multi faceted overview of the resources in the area. Leiberg’s report was to encompass topography, water supply, soils, forest stands, suitability for timber harvest, effects of fires, and current agricultural lands/development. His task took him through diverse terrain in three areas in the Inland Northwest. Leiberg’s detailed, exhaustive botanical report and maps are presently housed in the Library of Congress. His work on forest zones is the benchmark foresters currently use to measure the changes in habitat types in today’s forest composition.

The Transfer Act of 1905 transferred management of the forest reserves from Dept. of Interior Bureau of Forestry to the newly named U.S. Forest Service. In 1907 Priest River Forest Reserve officially became the Priest River National Forest. In 1908 it became a part of the Kaniksu National Forest.

In Leiberg’s generation, there was greater diversity of species in the forest. He collected 198 herbarium specimens during his 2 months of surveys. He recorded 16 trees suited for silviculture. His rough average was 4.8
President’s Message

Submitted by Ken Thacker

Looking back at my submission for the unpublished March/April Newsletter I am struck at how much has changed since then. What I wrote in late February said nothing about viruses, social distancing, pandemics or cancellations, then in early March we cancelled everything. Cancellations for April soon followed and now we are making month-by-month decisions and the May program has already been cancelled. The message here is to assume nothing will be scheduled through June and check the website periodically for updates. A key consideration in our decisions for cancellations is that nearly all of us are in the higher risk demographics for the COVID-19 virus. For us “higher risk” means greater chance of death if we get it and that is the overriding fact when we consider cancelling our events.

Speaking of the March/April Newsletter, the cancellation was due to Jill Wilson breaking her wrist when she fell on the ice in February. She was reduced to slow one handed typing at the computer and you are now reading this because her condition has improved. As always, we are indebted to Jill for first reminding us when our submissions are due and then producing a highly professional newsletter every two months. THANK YOU JILL!

As most of you already know, we lost our friend Steve Lockwood in mid-January. Steve died unexpectedly at his winter home in Tucson AZ. from Stage 4 Lymphoma, a condition few of us knew about. Personally, I will most miss his smile and smirk as he delivered his frequent witty observations of how it is around here. The family is planning a memorial for Steve in Sandpoint at some later date yet to be determined. Molly suggests remembering Steve with contributions to the Idaho Conservation League, KNPS or the Bonner County Human Rights Task Force.

Now, for some almost ancient news from my February submission. After Molly stepped down as chair of the Conservation Committee after almost 20 years, we were challenged in finding her replacement. As of mid-February, we had about 8 people involved with Susan Bates-Harbuck taking on the coordinator role and attending the monthly Panhandle Forest Collaborative meetings. The Collaborative is a group that normally meets monthly and works to reduce conflicts between the multiple uses and resource values on the Panhandle National Forest. One of those resource values is native plant habitat. Our involvement is incredibly important in supporting our mission of advocating for the conservation of native plants. At some point there will be more Conservation Committee meetings, and anyone interested in this important topic is welcome to join us.

And then there is our cabin at the Arboretum, or more specifically its roof. In case you missed it in the Fall, David Hutchens, who is a "lifelong ceramist, woodworker, student of life" and new KNPS member has offered to help with the re-roofing project. He also volunteered to give a class about making the hand split cedar shingles used when the cabin was first built, but the class has become another casualty of COVID-19. While the class is gone, we still need a roof and completing the project in the Fall is a possibility. We had hoped the class would draw new people to the Arboretum and pull together a cadre of shingle splitters to make shingles for the new roof. We can save about $2,000 on the cost of the roof if we make all the shingles ourselves. As of now, we are leaning toward hiring a contractor to do the replacement of the roof and providing volunteer labor for some parts of the project to save additional money. If you are interested in or have questions about getting involved, you can email me at idahoweedguy@yahoo.com or call me at 208-597-5469.

Stay safe everyone.

Ken Thacker
billion board feet of lumber suitable for saw logs, railroad ties and telegraph poles. White pine and tamarack (larch) comprised about 91 percent of the total saw timber.

He also noted in the 1899 report that Priest River Forest Reserve incurred extensive fires within the previous 150 years. He notes that many of the fires in the last thirty years (1860-1890s) owe their origin to wanton disregard for the value of the growing forest or for public property. Prospectors of the time were known to burn hillsides to get a clearer view of the land instead of bushwhacking. Over time there has been a change in public perception of fire exclusion/suppression philosophy.

Today the White Pine Blister Rust, which has substantially decreased healthy stands of white pine in the Priest Lake Basin, has changed the forest composition. White pine cover has declined. Forest composition which was once dominated by shade intolerant species such as western white pine, western larch and ponderosa pine has been replaced by shade tolerant species such as Douglass fir, grand fir, western hemlock and western red cedar. Research has now developed 4 resistant strains of western white pine which target different characteristics that confer resistance to white pine blister rust. Given time, hopefully, the white pine population can recover.

Here are the top 5 items on the 2015 Idaho Panhandle National Forest land management plan: Improve forest resilience to insect and disease pathogens; manage for a variety of forest communities to support diversity similar to historic levels; increase timber harvest and other management to increase the percent composition of white pine, larch and white-bark pine; retain soil and organic matter; improve resilience from wildfire and use prescribed fire as a management tool.

Private land ownership and subdivisions further impact plant species composition and plant communities. Increased recreational use takes its toll on the environment if it is not carefully planned. Preservation and conservation need to be the watchwords instead of extraction at all cost.

KNPS Native Plant Sale is Cancelled

Bob Wilson

Unfortunately, we will not be holding a native plant sale this year due to coronavirus concerns. The uncertainty of what the status of the outbreak will be this June makes planning difficult. There were many factors that went into this decision.

- Outside of New York, coronavirus cases are still increasing in this country. Although some states are starting to ease restrictions, including Idaho, we can’t expect the covid-19 incidence to decrease if people become complacent about social distancing and believe that the worst is behind them. We are still in the midst of a serious epidemic.
- Although northern Idaho has largely been spared as most of the cases have occurred in larger urban areas, there are an increasing number of outbreaks in rural areas.
- Governor Little’s plan, Rebound Idaho, would allow us to hold this event by June if we can maintain his proposed schedule for re-opening. However, this schedule could change at any time based on current conditions. There is no guarantee the sale would be allowed.
- It does not seem like a good time to hold a large outdoor gathering. It would be difficult to maintain adequate social distancing in the space where we normally hold the sale either during the sale or the set-up.
- It is likely that attendance will not be as high as what we have seen in the past if people are uncomfortable at a gathering like this.
Committee Reports

Arboretum Committee

We hope you are well and able to enjoy our glorious and long-awaited spring awakening. Some of you may know our lovely Arboretum suffered several downed trees from the big storm mid-March. There are branches carpeting the forest floor and we’d love for any amount of help you could provide to help clear the paths. Since we can’t schedule a group clean up, please consider popping over to spend an hour (or whatever works for you) to pile branches adjacent to the asphalt path—off to either side. For the time being, this is a self-directed volunteer opportunity; there is no set date or time or ringleader. Kindly bring your own tools—gloves, rake and a tarp or bucket to collect limbs and haul to the asphalt path. As soon as we are allowed, we’ll schedule a group clean up where we can address the needs of the plants and beds that would then be uncovered! We’ll let you know by email and we’ll post a sign on the main kiosk at the Arboretum.

New this summer is a way to pitch in without a season-long commitment. If you would like to help but feel ‘unqualified’, or perhaps you’d like to learn more about native plants, or you’d like to offer an hour to a most worthy and appreciated endeavor, then please drop by! Your involvement can take shape to fit YOUR schedule and availability. Once all public spaces are open, our Coordinator, Cara Johnson, will be at the Arboretum weekdays 9-noon, hopefully starting in June and going through August. You could pop over and help with a one-off task such as watering, or tidying a small area, or raking a path, or perhaps something else. You will have a choice!

For our stalwart and dedicated habitat-maintaining volunteers, we still need you!! We just can’t meet (yet) to go over pre-season planning. Kindly shoot us an email (see below) saying which habitat you’d like to care for this season, on your preferred day of the week and we’ll confirm your generous offer, and keep you in the loop as to what’s going on.

As most of you know by now, Collin Beggs and his Timberframe crew generously designed, built and installed our new arbor adjacent to the Meditation Grove on one of the rainiest February days ever! It’s not only gorgeous, but it’s built of cedar, black walnut and white oak and should last for 100+ years. We will have a grand community unveiling, date TBD, and everyone is invited. Stay tuned.

If you have questions, please contact us at: arboretum@nativeplantsociety.org

September Program Summary (Continued from page 1)

On Growing a Greener World with host Joe Lamp’l

Rachel Carson’s Silent Spring
A Book that Changed the World

Saturday June 27, 2020 (tentative)
Nan Vance, Research Plant Physiologist, USFS (retired)

Down and Dirty: The Life and Hard Times of Ground Nesting Pollinators
Nan will talk about her research on these fascinating and valuable “pollen wasps.” These gentle, ground-nesting wasps, whose nests are easily trampled by human intrusion, pollinate some of our most precious wildflowers.

Plant Sale Cancelled (Continued from page 3)

- Our plant sale is important and a valuable event for the Sandpoint community but in no way can it be considered essential.

I fully expect that by this time next year, we will not still be in crisis mode and can hold the plant sale. We should have adequate testing capability and contact tracing that will allow us to limit the spread. Hopefully we will have treatment therapies that are effective in greatly reducing deaths and (fingers crossed) a vaccine available. Until then, I hope everyone will stay safe and stay well.
Submitted by Cindy Hayes

Dennis and I moved to Sagle from New Mexico 15 years ago. The main attraction was the lake, the ski area, and the vibrant community. We joined KNPS to meet some people and learn about the native plants here in the north. We also joined the Monday Hikers and clocked many miles with them. I have volunteered at the Arboretum, Hospitality, and am still on the KNPS landscape committee. I also volunteer at the Panhandle Animal Shelter, where I walk dogs waiting for adoption. I love gardening and spend as much time outdoors as possible. Dennis and I have a big garden and a fruit orchard which keeps us both busy during the summer.

I was born in Manhattan in New York City and grew up on Long Island. I had many opportunities to explore the outdoors. I recall hours spent hiking with my brother and sisters on family trips to upstate New York. I also enjoyed summer days at the beach on Long Island.

I attended college in upstate New York. After that, I moved to Ohio, then to Pennsylvania where I finished my BA degree in Sociology. My two sons were born during this time. They are now 44 and 42. After working as a ski instructor and miscellaneous volunteer work to support women, I finally got an actual job. For awhile I worked as VP at a chain of health clubs in the Lehigh Valley, PA. It was a wonderful, healthy place to work. I commuted back and forth on my bike over many of the short and steep hills of Pennsylvania. Some mornings I dropped my kids off (on their bicycles) on the way.

While getting my life back on track after a divorce, I joined the Windward Sailing Club where I met Dennis in 1985. Our first vacation together was a week long self-supported bike ride in Vermont, where I fell in love with traveling by bicycle and with Dennis.

We moved to New Mexico in 1990, a job transfer for Dennis and early retirement for me. I joined the ski patrol as a way to meet people and keep myself busy. They became our family away from home, and many are still dear friends. One benefit of ski patrol was learning emergency medical care and, of course, a lot of skiing. Eventually I went back to school and then started a massage therapy business which kept me very busy. While living in the Southwest, I enjoyed skiing in the sun, sailing, kayaking, biking and running. Dennis and I also spent 3 weeks in New Zealand traveling on our bicycle's for my 50th birthday. Life was busy and fun. New Mexico was the perfect place to live, if one enjoys being outside. Our yard was all native plants and not a minute was spent on weeding.

After Dennis’s retirement we moved to Idaho. We wanted to be somewhere where all the lakes weren’t drying up and where there was more water and snow. Since living here we have also done more bike tours; visiting Italy, France and the Netherlands (where the bikes outnumber the cars. We also traveled in Australia for a month (not on our bicycles). It was something I wanted to do ever since I was a child. It was a major check off on my bucket list. As you can see, most of my hobbies are physical. I do dabble in stained glass and can lose myself reading a book or putting together a puzzle.

A tidbit which most people don’t know about me is that I have an identical twin sister, and yes, we do look alike.

Dennis and I both love Idaho and the friends we have made here. We look forward to many more years here and wherever the road may take us.
A Voice From the Moist Montane Forest

Maple and Mountains

Illustration and words by Marilyn McIntyre

It is late February and there is 3' of packed snow on the ground resulting from a season-long fall of 10'. We did manage a couple of days at 9° F but the temperatures mainly stayed in the high 20°-F and low 30°-F range. In spite of the almost daily bouts of patchy freezing fog, the sun was a precious commodity, appearing just often enough to give us hope.

We lost a voice for the native plants and friend of the Moist Montane Forest when Steve Lockwood died suddenly while he and Molly O’Reilly were at their winter home in Tucson. Like so many of us, Steve developed his love for wild nature while a kid and he made good use of the many Oregon mountain trails and rivers for backpacking and kayaking. It was when he teamed up with his wife Molly that he learned the value of native plants that could grow in the shade of her big leafed maple. Together, through KNPS, they became a voice for the plants, which is growing louder as the Conservation Committee makes plans for the coming year.

Steve was generous, honest and open as well as articulate and caring. He had the great gift of making you feel like you were his best friend as he spoke directly to you. We will miss Steve’s smiling face and enthusiastic presence at our KNPS gatherings where he never failed to offer help and encouragement to us all.

We still have Molly!

I offer this poem by Nora Bateson, I Am Forest.

I want to be the soil that is alive with a world of organisms. And I am. I want to be the water that is the current of time. And I am. I want to be the green leaves tipped toward light. And I am. I want to be the rotting log with fungi and insects throughout. And I am. I want to be the deep roots finding darkness slowly in hard earth. And I am.

As we all are

Forest.
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