

OUTDOORS / RECREATION

Stimulus money clears trail, builds bridges, walls on Payette

BY MICHAEL WELLS

The Star-News

A quarter-million federal stimulus dollars bought cleared area hiking trails, new bridges, boardwalks, and rock retaining walls on the Payette National Forest.

Each year the Payette receives between \$260,000 and \$360,000 for trail maintenance of its 2,250 miles of summer trails, Payette Forest Recreation Specialist Jane Cropp said.

The Payette had also received about \$150,000 in forest fire recovery money for trails damaged by the fires, Cropp said. The additional \$250,000 in stimulus funds was put toward trails that had been neglected over the years as the annual amount only covers the more popular trails, she said.

The Payette performs trail maintenance on its primary trails once or twice per year, while secondary trails are maintained about every five years.

The stimulus money was used mostly on the secondary trails and other trails that rarely see maintenance crews, Cropp said.

The Payette has 337 trails



Photo courtesy Payette National Forest
Student conservation crews work on Lava Lake Trail 505 as part of trail work funded by federal stimulus dollars.

it maintains for both summer and winter recreation. "We concentrated on trails that had been closed and not worked on in a lot of years," she said.

Trails were cleared and improved in all of the Payette's five ranger districts. The

Certified growers can be found by logging onto the Web site at www.idahoweedawareness.com.

Officials have identified more than 64 different kinds of noxious weeds in Idaho, including infestations in wilderness and backcountry areas.

These weeds choke out native vegetation which deprive deer, elk, big horn sheep, and other wildlife of their natural food



in fires and felled by wind, new bridges over creeks and boardwalks over wetlands.

Work also included rock retaining walls to hold slopes in place above and below the trails, which often lead a hiker to stunning vistas of mountain peaks, lakes, rivers and other features throughout the forest.

Forty-four jobs were created to do the work and six local contractors were hired for jobs on the trails, Cropp said.

Trails that were improved include the Lava Butte trails from the Elk Creek trailhead, Elk Meadows area and Little French Creek drainage in the McCall and New Meadows Ranger districts north of McCall.

In the Krassel Ranger District, Monumental Creek Trail and Marble Creek Trail in the Frank Church River of No Return Wilderness received a lot of work.

Eight youths from the Northwest Youth Corps spent nine weeks in the wilderness along with four Payette interns to complete the back-breaking work, Cropp said.

The Payette is seeking an additional \$100,000 in stimulus funds for more trail work to be done next year, she said.



INFO DESK

Workshop on Mandala painting to be held this weekend in McCall

A Mandala painting workshop will be offered at Whirling Circles Studio in McCall on Friday and Saturday.

Friday's session at the studio, located at 125 E. Commerce St., will run from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m., while Saturday's session will run from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

The sessions will be presented by Uma Mulnick of McCall and Niki Fretwell, a certified Mandala facilitator. The workshop costs \$125 and includes tuition, canvas, art supplies, snacks and a healthy potluck lunch.

Mandala comes from the Sanskrit language and means "sacred circle." Workshop organizers said they have been used for centuries for the purpose of healing mind, body and spirit.

"In a safe and sacred environment, you will be supported in creating a personal healing Mandala painting on canvas," Mulnick said. "Even if you have no art experience, cannot draw a stick figure or never picked up a paint brush, you will leave with an extraordinary piece of heart-work."

For more information or to reserve a space, call Mulnick at 315-3777.

and McCall.

The Boise Cascade Corp. traces its roots in the building of a railroad, and eventually became the economic anchor for communities along the railroad.

But the story of the early beginnings of this world corporation begins with criminal activities at the highest levels of Idaho's government and the 1905 murder of former Idaho Gov. Frank Steunenberg, Fisk said.

Information will be taken from the book "The Idaho North Railway," which Fisk co-authored. The event is sponsored by Project Feel Good, Ada County Historical Society, CLA, and the Magic Black I

Bella Kitchen to offer class on pressure cookery Oct. 12

A class on pressure cooking taught by experts Billy and Gan Cook is set for 6:30 p.m. Oct. 12 at Bella Kitchen in the H McCall Courtyard.

The class will demonstrate pressure cooking equipment and techniques.

Pressure cooking, one of the earliest time-saving cooking techniques, is enjoying resurgence due to equipment improvements and its characteristic low energy consumption. The class costs \$25. Call Bella Kitchen at 634-4730 to sign up.

Discounts available for flood insurance policies

Some property owners in Valley County may be eligible for discounts on their flood insurance premiums through the county's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program's Community Rating System.

Some land within Valley County has been identified as being subject to flooding generally along the North Fork of the Payette River, Lake F