



MOUNTAIN EAR

Monthly Newsletter of the Rocky Mountaineers

HIKING-CLIMBING-MOUNTAINEERING-SKIING-
EXOTIC TRAVEL-EXPLORATION OF PEAKS AND
MOUNTAINS OF MONTANA AND OF THE WORLD

January 2002

THE GREAT BURN

The next meeting of The Rocky Mountaineers will be on Wednesday January 9th at 7:00 P.M. in the second floor meeting room (County Commissioners Room) of the Court House Annex. Use the Pine Street entrance.

The Great Burn Study Group will give a slide presentation on the Great Burn Proposed Wilderness. This visual presentation by Dale Harris, 30 year Great Burn advocate, and Bob Clark, Field Studies Coordinator will focus on history, "connection to place" and year-round recreational opportunities within the Great Burn Proposed Wilderness. Other issues include increased off-road vehicle use and an update on the search for grizzly bears in the area. This 275,000 acre roadless area west of Missoula is one of the regions largest unprotected areas. The great fire of 1910 burned heavily here, leaving charred snags, grassy slopes, and expanses of sub-alpine meadows. High cirques, dozens of clear lakes and several large drainages with pockets of ancient Western Red Cedar ascend to 8,000 ft. granite peaks. With a good system of uncrowded trails that includes 40 miles of the splendid Bitterroot divide, The Great Burn is one of Western Montana's "hidden secrets." Come on out and see "The Burn!"



TRIP REPORTS

Winter Fun- So far this winter we have not had a series of organized trips. Instead, we have had a group of outdoor enthusiasts who meet at a certain time and place and then decide where to go and what to do spontaneously. On **December 9th** we looked at the East Fork Lolo Creek road, but it was plowed and the gate was locked. So instead of Sally Ridge we decided to go up Bobcat Creek. Steve Schombel, David Kahl, Julie Warner and Lois Crepeau went a long way up this drainage and cut tracks for at least 1/2 mile beyond the last person. Three skied and one stubborn guy snowshoed and tried to keep up. On **December 16th** it had been raining in town and the snow was still thin. Instead of Pattee Canyon Steve, Dave and Julie went up to Lolo Pass and had a great time skiing up and down the 5 miles to Moose Pass. The trail was very well groomed, but, surprisingly we saw almost no other people once we got out of sight of the warming hut. A very quiet day. On **December 23rd** the snow was just too great and tempting at Lolo Pass, and so Dave, Julie and Fred Schwanemann passed up Babcock Creek and did the Packer Meadow Loop under brilliant blue cloudless skies. Julie reminds us that often the gray and gloomy days in town can be beautiful and sunny up in the mountains. On **December 26th** Steve, David Andrus, Dennis and Wendy Ferry and Glen and Janice Kelly did an unplanned snowshoe hike up the "B" trail from Lee Creek trailhead. This is a good road for beginners, and also has some steep hillsides and ridge tops for the more experienced. The only trip that came off as planned was the moonlight ski on **December 30th**. It turned into a great eve before New Year's Eve party for two clubs.

December 30th's "Full Moon Ski/barbecue" was a HUGE success, thanks to all who made the trek to Lolo Pass.

Gear and food was sledged to the warming hut on two sleds, and two barbecues were set up. While the brauts were sizzling on the grill, a feast of potato salad, chips, beans, cookies and drinks was set up in the warming hut. It was snowing lightly and the full moon wasn't visible. But many of us had head lamps and skied the short Glade Creek loop. The little kids (my grand kids Allison, 4 years old and Jack 2 years old, and my great grandson Noah 8 months old) had a fun time being pulled in sleds by their parents.

We packed up gear, cleaned the warming hut and
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BY-LAWS and OTHER BUSINESS

We got a lot of feedback at the business meeting on December 12, and have settled most of the questions concerning the new by-laws. We are going to put a minimum age of 18 for full membership. We will delete the clause about rock and snow climbing from the mission statement. We will not have a designated month, just an annual election. We decided that a quorum of 10% is a round number, better than 8% and more reflective of the average attendance in recent years. We support the concept of all members also being board members. We will add a clause that elections will be conducted under Roberts Rules of Order. We will substitute a family membership for the household membership, and will reinstitute a cheaper membership for individuals.

Unfortunately we have gotten bogged down on some of the more complicated issues. We had really hoped to have a set of proposed by-laws ready for the January 9th meeting to be voted on. Now it looks like it would be better to slow down and try to do the job right. There is no harm in continuing under the old by-laws which cover most situations. It would be good to have a clearer definition of who is a member and can vote and run for office. The really thorny issues concern liability. It has been pointed out to us that Montana has its own liability statutes, making it necessary to rework section 5.7. There is also much confusion over what to do about youth. We agreed that those under 18 should not lead trips, but what about participating without a parent or guardian? And there is section 5.6 which is very confusing. Should we rewrite it, and how?

Some other people don't like the idea of having all members be board members and would prefer the more traditional arrangement of officers, a board and general members. These people have put a lot of work and given good advice to the club for a lot of years. We want to be fair and listen to their ideas. We probably should try to decide this basic issue after the slide show on January 9th, and then try to get volunteers to help iron out the complicated issues; or maybe we should take a different direction with the by-laws.

In the meantime we will try our best to have entertaining shows at our monthly meetings, and we will be meeting regularly on the second Wednesday through May at 7 PM in the second floor meeting room of the Court House Annex. And we are trying to have a variety of trips on weekends. Right now we have several people who like to Nordic ski and snowshoe, but we haven't heard much from the ice climbers and telemarkers this winter. We certainly hope some of you will get more active in the club again.

