



Updraft

April 2013

Center for Wildfire Education, History and Interpretation

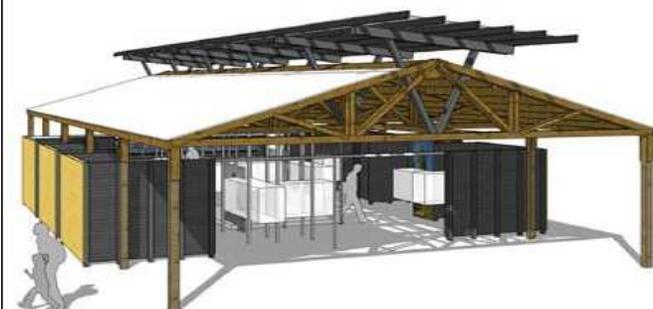
Our Mission: Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center will inform people of all ages of the historic impact and ecological role of wildland fire; the interaction of fire with human culture; the role of wildland agencies in fire management; and how the public can prevent / reduce the impact of wildfires

The Next Steps

In December of 2011, CBFIC received a \$6800 grant from the Icicle Fund to develop a concept planning document that could be used as a tool to establish CB's long term priorities, and to seek funding for more interpretive elements centered around the Arneson Shelter. In late May, CB board members, Entiat Historical Society board members, Mayor Vradenburg, photographer John Marshall, and some members of the community met for a two day workshop led by architects Mike Jobes and Mark Johnson of Miller Hull. One of their main goals was to create an affordable plan to turn the open pole barn into an enclosed interpretive center – a plan that could be accomplished in stages as funding becomes available.



The shelter has 5 bays. The three central bays will be enclosed by constructing 6 open-sided boxes that would contain interpretive artifacts and information that will be viewed from inside the shelter. The outside of the boxes, visible from the highway, will have fire murals painted on them. Large sliding, retractable doors will be placed at each end of this group of enclosed structures to secure the displays when the Center is not open. The north bay of the shelter will be left open and contain murals (photo points) and interpretive signage related to fire ecology. The south bay will also be left open as a picnic space and for large group gatherings. The displays inside the shelter will show 1) historical artifacts related to fire prevention, detection and suppression, 2) local fire history, 3) forest and fire management practices, past and present, 4) fire safe property practices, and 5) fire ecology. An interpretive garden will be planted around the shelter to display fire resistant plants.



The CB board is excited about having a plan that has reachable goals, does not require continuous staffing, and provides more mediums for fire interpretation.

**If you would like a copy of the plan for the purpose of sharing it with potential partners, please call 509-670-4875.



Nancy Belt Honored at Annual Fundraising Auction with “Fire Award”



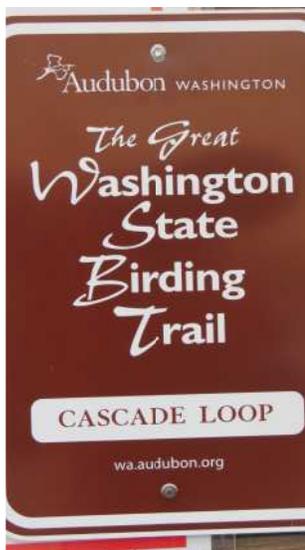
Dave Spies presents award to Nancy

Nancy Belt received long-overdue recognition at the annual fundraising/celebration dinner in October for her initial efforts to create Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center. It was her vision, while working as the Assistant Forest Dispatcher on the Wenatchee N F in 1990, that got the project rolling. Chelan Butte Lookout was taken out of service and was going to be dismantled. She wanted to find a way to preserve it and move it to a location where it would be a center piece for saving fire history and providing fire education; thus, the seed for CB’s growth was planted...

Nancy grew up in the Entiat Valley on an apple orchard in the 1950’s & 60’s. She spent a lot of time in the forests and mountains of NCW and like everyone in the valley, was somehow connected to the culture of the U.S. Forest Service. She started her career as a clerk and a part-time fire lookout on Sugarloaf. She worked her way through various clerk and dispatch jobs with the Forest Service, Wenatchee police department, University of Alaska Fairbanks – and back to the USFS -- until she eventually became the center manager for the Pendleton Interagency Communication Center where she retired. Since her retirement, she has worked part time at various interagency communication center during periods of high fire activity.

Two New Signs Add Opportunities for More Information

Columbia Breaks is now an official bird watching site on the Cascade Loop Audubon Birding Trail. Over the years, bird enthusiasts have placed at least 57 birds at CB.



Visitors can now dial a number, **509-343-0599**, to listen to two voices from the past as they describe their experiences with lightning storms while working as fire lookouts in the 1930’s. The first voice is that of Milt Barton who spent most of his youth growing up in North Central Idaho, living in LoLo which had a population of 50 -- and going to school in Kooskie with a population of 400. His father helped build Highway 12 over LoLo pass between Idaho and Montana. Because men left to fight in World War II, there was a worker shortage in the area. The U.S. Forest Service recruited high school students to work for them. Milt was selected to work in the Fog Mountain Lookout in the summer of 1942 – he was only 16 years old. The lookout was in the Selway River region of the Nez Perce National Forest – bordering the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and the Frank Church Wilderness areas.



The second voice is that of Dick Slagle of Republic, Washington. In the summer before his last year of college in 1942, he was asked to work in the White Mountain Lookout - in the Kettle Range of Washington state. The “Listening Post” site was installed with the help of the Initiative for Rural Innovation & Stewardship (IRIS) and the help of student Sky Merriman at Entiat High School. A financial contribution from the Entiat Chamber of Commerce also made the project possible.

New Partnership New Possibilities

A new active partnership is brewing in the Entiat community. The Entiat Historical Society and the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center have reached an agreement that will help the Historical Society realize one of its visions – a vision that is compatible to CB’s vision and that will benefit both non-profits.

The Historical Society was faced with a dilemma. They currently have a 117 year old home for their museum site. In 1895 the newly formed Entiat Improvement Company built the first frame house in the area for Jesse Bonar, who had been hired to clear land of sage and brush, plant hay fields, buy cattle and manage the ranch. The Historical Society would like to repair, upgrade, and restore the home to how it might have appeared in the early 1900’s, while leaving it on its original site. They also want to build a vintage barn of that same time period for display, storage and for community functions. The barn would help recreate the orchard, logging and mining history of the area. Both sites will be used to host the many vintage items common to the area and everyday life that are currently stored in attics, basements, barns and sheds. In order to build the barn, the Historical Society needed an additional site, which CB will provide in a long-term lease agreement.

The merger will benefit both non-profits by: 1) lending each other support to both groups’ visions, 2) increasing the attraction of visitors to both sites, 3) providing more visibility to both sites, especially visibility from the 97A highway corridor, 4) increasing the support within the Entiat community, 5) creating pride in the community, and 6) providing more incentive for possible donors to contribute support to both projects.



Doug Bowie, Gene Elllis & Randy Mclandress improve another section of trail

Maintenance Projects

Join Us April 27

Volunteers and board members will be at the site on Saturday, April 27 to work on several small projects:

- *Clearing dead brush from portions of the site
- *Painting bright yellow paint on portions of the entry signs.
- *Adding more gravel to portions of the trail.
- *Painting the new shed that stores the stage and chairs near the amphitheater.
- *Refurbishing picnic tables under the shelter.



Doug Bowie, Dave Anderson & Bill Moody install new shutters & paint the handrails

School Education Still a Top Priority



Students learning on the trail



Wayne Long directs students at Chelan Butte

