

Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association

Executive Director's Update

February 14, 2025

AGENDA ACTION ITEMS:
• <i>Approval of Finance Report</i>

UPDATES

- I apologize this report isn't more thorough. If you haven't seen the news, this article helps share the **staffing** cuts coming down from Washington: <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/02/13/forest-services-fires-3400-employees-00204213>
 - The choices the new administration is making are rippling through our FS partners and SIHA's former employees. I've had brief conversations with SNRA leadership indicating that SIHA will help in any way we can to reduce the impact of terminations on the agency and the individuals being terminated but the stress and despair is palpable and makes focusing a challenge. At this time, it appears that all front desk staff at the Stanley Ranger Station and SNRA Headquarters will be terminated by the end of day today, Friday Feb. 14. Ketchum and Fairfield Ranger Stations will also lose their front desk staff. All of these folks have been hired within the last year - which is why they are being terminated first. Additional people may be fired next week.
 - We had an executive committee meeting to begin discussing how everything will impact SIHA. Mostly, we need to wait and see and be prepared to pivot – like we often do. Erica was just beginning to make book orders, so we are pushing those back as much as we can and working to determine what kind of ordering would be necessary if our only bookstore outlets are at the Stanley Ranger Station and the Redfish Visitor Center.
 - If any of our past staff are interested in remaining in Stanley for the summer, we plan to offer them naturalist and historic specialist positions.
 - We also discussed setting up a fundraising campaign to raise wages for FS staff being terminated. In this scenario SIHA would hire them to do the job they had been hired to do by the Forest Service for the summer season. There would be lot of details to work out.
- **Crew:**
 - Alicia and I began crew interviews on February 11th and they will continue into the middle of the coming week. We have 12 naturalist applicants and 13 historic specialist applicants. We have 1 returning naturalist from last year, Rory Cushen and a naturalist from 2022 who may also be returning, Eddy Black. If additional positions are not filled by folks being terminated by the Forest Service, we hope to hire two College of Idaho students – one naturalist and one historic specialist and that leaves two other positions to fill.
 - At this time there are no FS funds to cover RV volunteers or housing costs.
- Erica caught an omission in the **2025 budget**. The line item for contributions (Trail Map Fund expenses) was not included in the total calculated expenses of the budget. Given the budget constraints of the USFS, we expect them to request most of what is in the fund this year. Once they have made a formal request, I'll share it with the executive committee to have an email vote to amend the budget.
- I intended to have a **work plan** for your review at this meeting. The actions of the new administration are making it hard to know what to plan for and to support the SNRA. In reviewing our 2022 strategic plan, it seems like now would be a good time to asses it, identify how Obsidian should fold in, and consider the instability that may come in the next several years. Is there anyone who would be willing to be part of a group doing this over the coming months?
- Our museum annual operating plan has been submitted to our permit administrator, Tom Winter. Once the Forest Service can complete agreements again, we'll be able to move forward with our 20-year

special use permit for the Stanley Museum. Luckily our current agreement doesn't expire until the end of 2025.

- The Sawtooth Coalition continues to meet regularly and we've just convened an **education working group** to discuss visitor education and information dissemination needs of the SNRA. I am planning for SIHA to take a leading role in these discussions and any activity that comes out of the working group.
- I met with Idaho Rivers United earlier this week regarding **Salmon Fest**. They are working to fill an event organizer position. That person will take on the majority of logistics. It will be interesting to see how the process goes.
- Four programs in our **Oral History series** have been held with about 70 people in attendance in person and online. Upcoming program dates are at the bottom of the agenda.
- We had an **FLS** meeting this week. Maurice Hornocker has agreed to join us on June 20 at the Community Library. We'll share more details in the meeting. Other topics we are considering. Carter Neimeyer has a new book, we are looking to invite him. Salmon topic, of course. A Sho-Ban Speaker and a program on forest succession after fire. If we can't find speakers for these topics we may include a history program, an oral history program, and/or a geology of program. Our next FLS meeting is February 27th at 3pm.

GRANTS

To be researched/submitted:

- **Central Idaho Resource Advisory Committee** – February? deadline – continuing with roof replacement – up in the air with the new administration
- **ISHS** – Summer deadline – Funds for Oral History Project needs
- Other sources for roof replacement
- Other sources for crew compensation

Submitted:

None in review at this time

Active Grants:

- **Idaho Heritage Trust** - \$15,000 reimbursable - for roof replacement of the Ice House/Tool Shed & office. Estimated project total is about \$37,000. SIHA has \$3595 in dedicated funds. If we can secure additional funds this project will be completed in 2025. But we have 3 years to find additional funds before we lose the IHT grant. **UPDATE:** With the uncertainty of federal funding we may need to consider other ways to complete this project.
- **Sawtooth Festival** - \$1550 awarded to support FLS and other programming by purchasing a new printer and a 20x20 tent– **UPDATE:** I purchased a new printer in January and plan to wait until May to purchase the tent.
- **2025 Redfish Fund:** Val A. Browning Foundation - \$25,000 awarded for 2025 Redfish crew compensation – this will cover 3 naturalists, we need an additional \$6,000 for a 4th naturalist.
- **Redfish Wayfinding:** \$1,783 awarded - Stanley WinterFest Community Grant for new information kiosk and wayfinding signs to be installed at Redfish once we are open and see how people are using the new path and parking lot. **UPDATE:** I've submitted a request to Tom Winter to install a new information kiosk on the lakeside of the visitor center – now that it is the main entrance to the building. Michael Powell is willing to build the sign and we'll likely need a few helpers in the process. Tom will share the request with Kirk and any other programs for approval. The goal is to complete this by May/early June.
- **Suzi Boyle Giving** - \$1000 awarded for technology costs related to fundraising efforts. Cost/transaction fees for an online raffle ticket platform or similar fundraiser.
- **Sho-Ban Interp Project.** Idaho Humanities Council, major grant cycle. \$5,550 awarded for Shoshone-Bannock Interpretive signage/exhibit. + 2022 Q1 License Plate Fund, \$6,500 awarded for Shoshone Bannock Interpretive project

- **Displays Complete:** with IHC final report submitted and working to schedule a dedication ceremony (tentatively early July 2025) so we can wrap up the Goat plate funds side of the project.
- **Reimbursable:** \$30,000 was awarded by the FS in 2023 for outdoor interpretive signs, more replica artifacts and an outdoor mobile classroom. **UPDATE:** Parfleche class took place on January 18th at Fort Hall with at least 25 participants. I'm working to reschedule the fish trap class for this summer however, it is unclear if this grant will continue to be available to SIHA. We do have about \$1500 in outstanding payments to Tribal members who I have not received an invoice from. We will pay these invoices when they are submitted to SIHA. I do not know if SIHA will be reimbursed for them with the federal funds allocated by the previous administration.

OBSIDIAN:

- The design narrative is ready for review and discussion with the full board. You can find a link to it in the agenda. Please review to determine if you think anything has been missed or needs finessing. After review by the board, the Operations Committee will schedule a site inspection that give SIHA recommendations about how to move forward based on building conditions.
- Vertical Electric - Ralph Pavone, approximately \$11,000 bid for bunkhouse electrical needs.
- Big Wood Plumbing – Matt Dohse, met onsite on Jan. 24. He appeared willing to do the plumbing work needed. We asked for an estimate, I'll follow up and see if I can get it back from him by our meeting.
- The next general CeSaw meeting is scheduled for 4pm Mountain time on February 25th.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Our next scheduled board meeting is scheduled for **Thurs. April 17, 2025**, at the Stanley Community Library and via Zoom.

Submitted by Lin Gray