

Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association

Executive Director's Update

April 11, 2025

AGENDA ACTION ITEMS:

- *Approval of Finance Report*

Thanks to Gary for fixing the Stanley Museum sump pump after I broke it! Just in time for all the spring melt.

UPDATES

- While **Forest Service** terminations have settled over the last two months, we are expecting to see additional impacts in the coming weeks. A second “deferred resignation” offer was made to all employees on March 31st, multiple people have taken the deal and are waiting to hear if its been accepted. If their resignations are accepted their last day will be no later than April 30. This will have even more of an impact than the illegal terminations did. On top of this a ‘reduction in force’ is expected some time on or after April 14th. General USFS priorities communicated from the Washington Office to all districts include firefighting, timber, range/grazing, mining, and keeping recreation sites open.
 - At this time there are no administrative/front desk staff to run the Stanley Ranger Station. Kirk, Michael and I are meeting on April 15th to discuss options. In 2024, sales were over \$18k. It is in SIHA’s best interest to help figure out how to keep the office open. To do this we may shift focus from weekend trailhead portals to more shifts at the ranger station, find local volunteers to help staff the desk, or consider other unconventional options.
 - I met with Melissa, head of the front country recreation, she is down to a summer crew of two and is asking for any support we can provide to assist with patrolling this summer. Patrolling includes making contact with folks in dispersed camping areas and talking to them about campfire protocols and the food storage order, cleaning up trash, and documenting vehicles to track the 10-day stay limit. She is also asking for help at river put ins when the river becomes restricted/closed due to chinook spawning. Her requests, along with the conversations we have had in the working group meeting, make me think SIHA needs to develop a volunteer program to help fill gaps. **This seems to be becoming an unforeseen 2025 priority, so I’d like to spend some time discussing on Thursday.**
- The **Sawtooth Coalition** held an Education Working Group session led by Sarin, me and the Coalition’s facilitator, Erin. Eleven different organizations and agencies attended and a handful more were interested but couldn’t make it. We discussed collaborating on a social media strategy, FS messaging needs, how to share volunteer information and create a referral system, short term needs and long term needs (like developing an LNT training program for organizational camp staff). I think it is important for SIHA be a leader in this group and actively working to create progress. However, taking on some of the meeting organizing, facilitation, and follow-up has made it very clear that my capacity is limited.
- **Crew:**
 - We are excited to have our summer crew hired. Alicia took on the majority of communicating with applicants, which was very helpful and she has already begun prepping for training and opening.
 - Our 2025 crew includes two returning Naturalists: Eddy (2022) and Cush (2024), Bailey (a Boise State student) and Sara (a College of Idaho student). Our historic specialists, both from the University of Idaho are Isaac and Eoin (pronounced Owen). This might be the most Idaho students we’ve ever had in one summer.
 - As a reminder, SIHA’s crew has been 6 naturalists in the past – allowing us to staff many more trailhead portals and comfortably provide specially requested programs. I would love for a 2026 goal to be to finding enough funding to have a normal crew so we can help fill gaps (if they continue at the Ranger Station) while maintaining our trailhead portal presence.
- See Erica’s report for details on our meeting with folks on the **Caribou/Targhee**. You’ll note one of the suggestions is new/customized shirts/hats/mugs etc. I would caution SIHA from making a big investment in these items given the level of overall sales we’ve seen in recent years.

- Our museum annual **operating plan** is working its way through signatures at the Supervisor Office level.
- Idaho Rivers United has an event organizer for **Salmon Fest**. We've been discussing ideas for August. She will be visiting Stanley at the end of April for the first time and I think this will help a lot with the planning process. As a reminder, there will likely be a number of additional activities during Salmon Fest and having board members at those activities to represent SIHA will be important.
- Four programs in our **Oral History series** have been held with about 90 people in attendance in person and online. We have our final winter program on April 24th.
- **FLS** speakers are not falling into place. Our next meeting is on April 15th, when we'll regroup and start to come up with other options. Hopefully we'll have some positive news by the board meeting.

GRANTS

To be researched/submitted:

- **NFF** – \$8,000 - April 25 deadline - Invited grant to support a SIHA naturalist with their Treasured Landscapes program.
- **ISHS** – Summer deadline – Funds for Oral History Project needs – 1 to 1 match required
- **CHC Foundation** – July 31 deadline – Roof replacement project if needed.

Submitted:

- **Janice Seagraves Family Foundation** - \$7,500 - to support historic specialist wages - They meet every couple months to review requests, I'm not sure if we'll hear in May or June. I don't know much about this foundation but thought I'd give it a go to understand how competitive SIHA can be
- **Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation** - \$15,000 - roof replacement of the Ice House/Tool Shed & office, award announced by August 1 - this is a long shot but an attempt to find non-federal funding

Active Grants:

- **Sawtooth WinterFest** - \$2,100 – general support for Redfish program
- **Idaho Heritage Trust** - \$15,000 reimbursable - for roof replacement of the Ice House/Tool Shed & office. Bid from Heck Roofing out of Twin Falls came in at \$30,000. SIHA has \$3595 in dedicated funds for contingency with possible increase in costs due to tariffs. 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.
- **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 \$6-8,000 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:** Our request to install this sign was approved by Kirk. Michael Powell is willing to build the sign and we'll likely need a few helpers in the process. 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. **UPDATE:** May only be redeemed with maxgiving.org – Susan is scheduling a demo to see how it might fit into 2025 fundraising
- **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:** On hold with project/spending until we know where the federal funding stands.

FUNDRAISING:

- **Idaho Gives** is April 28 through May 1. Alicia is working on social media marketing and I'll be putting together a couple emails to our list. Thanks to Caitlin, the Sawtooth Valley Gathering is donating two weekend passes for the event in June. We'll be using them as a giveaway for anyone who donates \$20 or more during Idaho Gives. Please consider sharing our Idaho Gives emails to help spread the word to folks who aren't paying attention but might be excited to contribute with the possibility of a prize.
- Susan Kim has sent a couple emails regarding an **online auction** we are working to pull together. You'll hear more details at the board meeting.
- Terry secured a 5-night/6-day Main Salmon raft trip for our **2025 drawing**. Right now I am leaning toward selling 100 tickets for \$100 each, but we might reduce it to \$50 each and sell 200 tickets for a lower barrier to entry. Either way I'm hoping we can make \$10,000.

OBSIDIAN:

- Terry will share more details about the information he has received from Keith Reese about buildings and an engineer who specializes in public water and wastewater facilities.
- The plumber has been onsite working! Michael has been helping with carpentry needs.
- We'll share an update at the meeting about our first work day. We have 1 volunteer who is not a board member or spouse! And 8 board/spouses who are pitching in.
- Our next CeSaw meeting is 4pm Mountain Time on May 5.

IMPORTANT DATES

- Our next scheduled board meeting is scheduled for **Thurs. June 19, 2025**, in person location TBA and via Zoom.

Submitted by Lin Gray