

Sawtooth

INTERPRETIVE & HISTORICAL Association

ANNUAL NEWSLETTER 2025

Working to protect and advance the natural and cultural history of Idaho's Sawtooth & Salmon River country.

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Each fall, we take time to reflect on the season, and like most years, we have a lot to celebrate; however, 2025 brought a level of uncertainty for SIHA that shadowed our successes. We have been deeply affected by the personnel reductions in the local Forest Service offices. These staff are the first tier of communication to visitors and locals in the area. Their friendly faces greet people, answer questions, give directions to campsites and trails, and help foster an understanding of Wilderness and campfire regulations. These services are essential to ensuring every visitor has a safe and meaningful experience with minimal impact, and this summer all the positions were vacant.

Into this immense gap, SIHA stepped in. In addition to maintaining our regular operations at the Stanley Museum and Redfish Visitor Center, SIHA staff and volunteers served at the front desk of the Stanley Ranger Station. We also funded the housing for volunteers at the SNRA Headquarters, who would otherwise not have been hired. These efforts kept those facilities open to the public three days a week, mid-June through mid-September, allowing access to information, permits, maps, and a welcoming volunteer who knows the area.



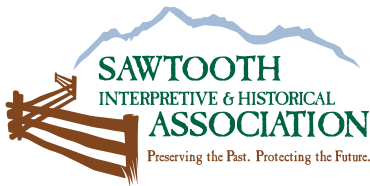
Jeff Walker

Across all four visitor centers and offices, and at our Wilderness portals at Tin Cup, Redfish, and Iron Creek trailheads, we served more than 31,300 visitors, certified over 150 Junior Rangers, and shared the wonders of the Sawtooths with more than 1,980 people at our free daily programs and special events.

But behind the scenes, we are feeling the strain. Reduced hours at two of SIHA's bookstore outlets, resulted in a revenue loss of more than \$20,000 in book and map sales this year. Combined with last year's wildfire-related closures, these challenges are creating a gap we cannot close without your assistance.

Your year-end gift will help SIHA continue to provide vital visitor services, educational programs, and stewardship in the Sawtooth and Salmon River country. The gears are already in motion for another busy summer in 2026. With your contributions, we'll be ready to serve thousands more visitors, inspire the next generation of Junior Rangers, protect our natural resources, and share the magic of the Sawtooths with everyone who spends time here.

Thank you for supporting our work and the Sawtooths!
Lin Gray, Executive Director



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SIHA - Team Highlight

Susan Kim - Board Member



Susan Kim joined SIHA's Board of Directors in 2021. Originally from the East Coast, she earned degrees from Duke University, Vanderbilt University, and the University of Pennsylvania. After completing her pediatric residency at the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, she and her husband, Dave, moved west to raise their family somewhere quieter, with good recreation options. They settled in Boise, where Susan practiced pediatrics for more than 25 years.

The Sawtooth Mountains quickly became their family's favorite escape, and Stanley a second home; a place where they could relax, explore, and reconnect with the outdoors. When Susan retired from medicine in 2020, she became more involved in the local community. The passing of a beloved storyteller in her family sparked a passion for genealogy and a desire to preserve the stories of people and places. That, paired with her natural curiosity and background in science, led her to earn a certificate in genealogical research from Boston University and launch her own genealogy business helping others uncover their family histories.

Her growing interest in the region's stories naturally aligned with SIHA's mission of preservation and interpretation. When invited to join SIHA's board, it felt like a meaningful way to give back to the place their family has long loved. Along with board responsibilities, Susan collects and processes oral interviews and recently played a key role in organizing SIHA's first online auction by researching and setting up the auction platform, uploading items, managing bids, tracking winners, coordinating prize distribution, and sending thank you's. Susan's attention to detail and dedication were essential to the event's success.

For Susan, one of the most meaningful parts of serving on the SIHA board is helping preserve both the land and the stories that define it. What began as a love for the Sawtooth landscape has grown into a commitment to protect its history and share it with others. Her thoughtful perspective and dedication to preserving history make Susan an invaluable part of SIHA's team.



Join us at our Winter

PRESERVING OUR HISTORY SERIES!



We share oral history interviews from our archives in partnership with the Stanley Community Library.



Stanley Museum - Merritt Family Collection

**Programs are held at 5:30 at the library
and are accessible on Zoom.**

Thursday, January 29..... The Laniers
Thursday, February 26 Tom & Aileen Chivers
Monday, March 30..... Bill Sullivan
Monday, April 27William Schindler

OUR 2025 IMPACT

We continue to connect thousands to the Sawtooths each year!

9 summer crew members made all of the numbers below possible.



7,358

connections made with visitors in the field: on trails, in campgrounds, and at Discovery Stations.

305 people joined History Day to experience roping, candle making, gold panning, and more.

179

history lovers joined our oral history series at the Stanley Library.

150 new SNRA Junior and Master Rangers promised to enjoy and respect this special place.

416

Sawtooth Summer Series attendees at 6 programs, deepened their understanding of the SNRA.

4,300

people explored the Stanley Museum and learned about local history.

14,434

visitors served at the Redfish Visitor Center & Gallery.

4,254

public land users were educated at our portals held at the busiest SNRA trailheads.

568

participants in our free programs: Ranger Talks, Junior Rangers, Patio Talks, and Evening Programs.

360+

curious salmon fans joined us at the Museum and Visitor Center to learn about our amazing wild salmon during Salmon Fest.

123

students from Stanley and the Wood River Valley attended custom programs designed and delivered by SIHA Naturalists.

36

volunteers helped at work days, on projects, and at events, giving over 1000 hrs. of service.

Volunteerism

**SIHA volunteers
have kept us thriving
since the beginning.**

Retired Smokejumpers

The Sawtooth Association was formed to work in concert with the SNRA to provide public services and education, and since its inception in 1972, volunteers have been a critical component of our operations. Through 2010, the Association existed almost entirely because of the generosity of volunteers who managed daily operations, developed museum displays, wrote grants, completed building maintenance, and planned and staffed events. Over the decades, board members and others have volunteered countless hours working to meet the Association's mission to protect and advance the natural and cultural history of Idaho's Sawtooth and Salmon River country through preservation and education.

It wasn't until 2011, when we took over managing the Redfish Visitor Center, that we hired our first part-time executive director, Terry Clark. Working many more hours than paid for, he established a solid foundation for the Association and a full-time executive director was soon needed. Sarah Cawley, one of our many experienced summer naturalists who'd received no more than a living stipend, stepped into a leadership role in 2017, and continued building our standing as the local nonprofit focused on educating the public. Her networking skills brought new volunteers into our fold who helped with events and maintenance projects. She hosted our first spring roadside clean-up, bringing the community together to reduce the impact of winter trash

accumulation around town and along highways. These efforts and the end-of-season SNRA Clean-up (an event we've hosted with multiple nonprofits since 2020) result in hundreds of volunteer hours serving Stanley and the Sawtooths annually.

"Volunteerism is the core of SIHA. In recent years, we turned to full-time volunteers to expand our mission reach and to support organizational needs. We've 'hired' volunteers to work with our seasonal staff. This year, they made it possible to open the Stanley Ranger Station to the public," noted current executive director, Lin Gray. "More crew means we can send them to more places and serve more people, dedicating more hours to our mission."

Each year, multiple work days are scheduled to help maintain the Stanley Museum, Redfish Visitor Center, and now at the new Center for the Sawtooths. At the latter, a property we took possession of last year, over 1000 hours have been volunteered to clean up and establish housing for our summer staff, an apartment for permanent staff, and to host our first program onsite.

The cost savings because of volunteer efforts allow the Association to devote precious donations and bookstore revenue to critical operational needs. For such a tiny community, Stanley and the surrounding area abounds with generosity, and it makes all the difference.

An update on the Center for the Sawtooths



Thanks to a generous land donation in 2024, SIHA has a new project in Obsidian. This spring, volunteers, board members, and staff came together to outfit the bunkhouse (previously Sessions Café) at the Center for the Sawtooths. Our six-person summer crew moved in at the end of May and enjoyed comfortable housing as well as wildlife and hiking right out the back door. We've completed more site clean-up, focusing on staff accommodation and transitioning the old store into our meeting and classroom space.

We held our first public program at the Center on September 12th. Jane Kapler Smith, a retired ecologist who worked for many years at the US Forest Service Fire Science Laboratory in Missoula, presented, "Lodgepole Forests After Wildfire." Her message was uplifting: while we have experienced the loss of our forests as we knew them, we have the opportunity to learn something new from them. Take the time to wander through our recent burns and you will see new birds and bugs you haven't seen, wildflowers will shout their triumph of sunlight and space, and soon, seedlings will sprout from tree seeds, the beginnings of the next robust forest.



Naturalist Reflection:



"I truly had the best summer as a naturalist for SIHA. I always hoped to spend a summer working in Stanley after graduating college, and the fact that this position aligned so well with my career and degree was just perfect. Working for SIHA gave me valuable skills regarding my public speaking ability, interpretive techniques, as well as working with the public in general. **I enjoyed working at the Redfish Lake Visitor Center, and getting to share information and programming about the Sawtooths to each person who came in. Whether it was someone's 1st or 1000th time visiting, making the shared connection of appreciating the SNRA was something I will always look back on fondly.** Discovery Stations were another highlight for me. Those tables, as well as our trailhead portals, were where we make connections and share our mission with people who may not stop by the Visitor Center or even know SIHA exists. Being able to spark a deeper connection to the Sawtooths, in those brief moments, was really special to me. Outside of work, I truly had an amazing time exploring the SNRA more than I ever had before. It is such a special place, and getting the opportunity to provide education and be a steward for this public land was incomparable. I'll be dreaming about it for years to come."

~ Bailey, 2025 Naturalist

The Alpine Examiner:

Getting to the heart of matters in the Sawtooth National Recreation Area

When you read SIHA's summer crew blogs in the **Alpine Examiner** you'll find personal reflections, information about the flora, fauna, and natural history of the area, local history experiences, and other news from our crew.



We think you'll enjoy their perspectives:

"Sawtooth State of Mind"

by Eoin Gleeson,
Historic Specialist

"Seasons of the Sawtooths"

by Sara Vanderwyk,
Naturalist

"Bird of the Burn: Black-backed Woodpecker"

by Bailey Cole, Naturalist

"Osprey: Worldwide Sensation"

by Eddy Black,
Naturalist

Shop Our Online Store!

Exclusive items in our online store are ready for your holiday gift giving!



These are limited runs!

Grab your one-of-a-kind
Sawtooth National
Recreation Area swag now!



Congratulations to our 10th Annual Summer Photo Contest Winners!

SCENERY

"City of Granite" Logan Holstien



PEOPLE IN NATURE

"Best Friends" Elizabeth Silvís



WILDLIFE

"Surprise at Our Window" Gary Smith



Become a part of
Sawtooth History
or Memorialize a
Loved One

Purchase A Brick in "Your pathway to Sawtooth History"

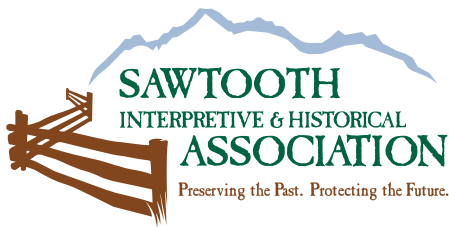
Funds raised from brick sales go into SIHA's Building Fund to help with the maintenance and upkeep of historic buildings in the Stanley Museum complex and the Sawtooth and Salmon River country.



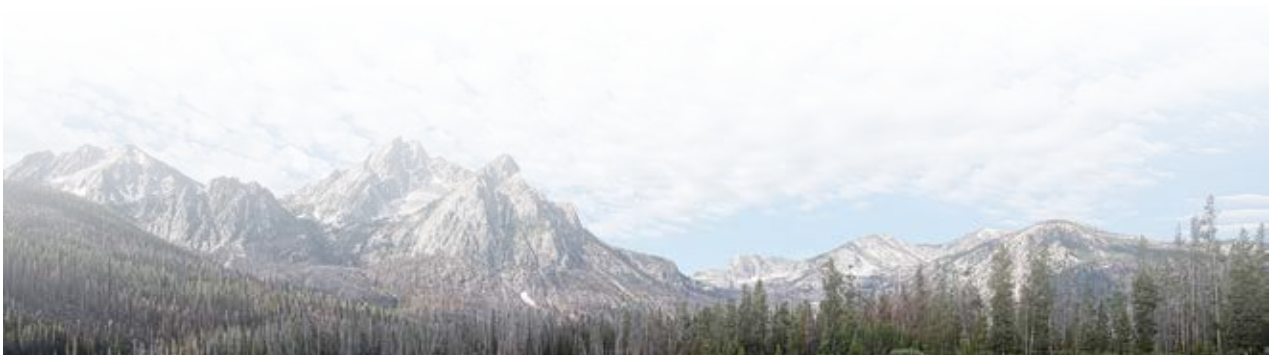
Thank You
to our Supporters!

We have moved our annual donor list to digital-only and you can find it in the digital version of the newsletter on our website!

DiscoverSawtooth.org



P.O. Box 75 - Stanley, Idaho 83278



Give Back to the Sawtooths with an End of Year Donation to SIHA!

We are Your Boots on the Ground! When you Give to SIHA you are Supporting:

Information Sharing • Daily Junior Ranger Programs • **The Preservation of Local History**

Special Events: History Day, Smokey Bear's Birthday, and the Salmon Festival • **Guest Speakers**

Evening Programs • Campground Roving • **Discovery Stations** • Teaching People how to Recreate Responsibly

Oral History Interviews • **Custom Education Programs for Summer Camps and Schools** • and more!

To donate scan here or go to
www.DiscoverSawtooth.org



All for the Benefit of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area!



Hannah Fake

Our deepest gratitude to our members, volunteers, donors, seasonal staff, community members, partners, foundations, businesses, and visitors. Your continued support provides stability for the Association as we take on new projects and fill unexpected gaps. We couldn't do it without you.

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Jim Stark

2025 marks the 10-year anniversary of
the designation of the Cecil D. Andrus
White Clouds Wilderness!

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Terry Carstensen	Susan Kim	Michael Powell
Terry Clark	Helen Kreuzer-Bryson	Debbie Reese
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Carol Cole	Teresa Lipus	Jim Stark
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		Stewart Wilder

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We strive to be accurate with our acknowledgements. If you notice an error or omission, please contact Lin Gray, lgray@discoversawtooth.org

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