

Salmon Valley Stewardship

FALL 2008

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Photo by Seth McFarland

Lemhi County:

A Leader in Renewable Energy?

I've never seen a community that has a better can-do attitude than Lemhi County. Great examples are the hockey rink and the volunteer effort to pave the formerly frontier-like high school parking lot.

Around the world, the social and economic costs of energy production and consumption have escalated swiftly. My bet is that Lemhi County isn't going to sit by idly and let others figure out the solution.

One bit of proof is the ad in the July 31 Recorder Herald requesting proposals for design-build services for a woody biomass/

solid waste power plant. This is just a first step in what could be a fairly involved process to have a small (10 megawatts), possibly county-owned power plant whose fuel comes from renewable sources.

At Salmon Valley Stewardship, we hope to support the county commissioners by delving into this idea with both thoughtful research and community discussion.

We'll keep you posted on these and other critical local issues.

Respectfully,
Gina Knudson, Director

Locavores Unite! SVS Fall Event Set for October

Salmon Valley Stewardship is looking forward to an evening of celebration honoring local foods and the people who produce it. Stay tuned for more information, but for now, set aside Saturday, October 25th, as a

day to savor local delicacies and learn more about the SVS dream of connecting people with their food. We'll unveil our first annual award to a business that helps us all better understand what sustainability really looks like

on the ground.

We'll soon be contacting SVS contributors about this special event, but if you want to make sure to reserve one of our limited spots, please contact us at salmonvalley@centurytel.net or 756-1686

Hughes Creek: Private Landowners Take First Steps



Forest Service biologist Kimberly Murphy (right) demonstrates stream survey protocol to SVS intern Jo Myers.



Any minute now, the Salmon-Challis National Forest should have the final environmental analysis done for the approximately 13,000 acre hazardous fuels reduction project in the Hughes Creek area.

The Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group gave the Forest Service guidance on the design of the project and promised to help get local landowners involved in treating private lands.

That partnership is producing results. Funding from the National Forest Foundation provided a cash match for Hughes Creek residents to treat noxious weeds (mostly the omnipresent spotted knapweed). Twenty-three landowners jumped at the chance and the County Weed Dept. headed by Daniel Bertram supervised the project. Lemhi County resident Ken Thacker aka The Weed Guy was awarded the contract, fulfilling one of the Forest Restoration Group's goals of furthering projects that benefit the local economy.

And thanks to a grant from the Idaho Department of Lands, group member Karin Drnjevic, the county's wildland urban interface coordinator, has invited

landowners to remove trees and brush on their land that might make their home or their land more susceptible to loss from wildland fire.

Hughes Creek resident Dick Rabe is spreading the word to his neighbors about both the weeds and the fuels reduction opportunities. "I'm just tickled that something is actually getting done in this area — I'm all for it!" the energetic Rabe exclaimed.

On behalf of the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group, SVS intern Jo Myers has been working with a Hughes Creek landowner to explore a possible stream improvement project. Years of mining have left much of the Creek's lower section altered and too swift and straight to provide good spawning or rearing places for fish like Chinook salmon, bull trout, steelhead or other trout species.

Putting her head together with members of the non-profit Trout Conservancy, Jo hopes that a series of constructed logjams could restore some of the creek's natural functions.

Stay posted for volunteer opportunities up Hughes Creek to help weeds, fire, and fish.



Planning for a Bright Future

Many of you helped shape Lemhi County's updated Comprehensive Plan adopted last November. That plan reflects your very clear message of "encourage growth where it makes sense and avoid developing in sensitive or unsuitable areas."

Salmon Valley Stewardship has continued to work with the county to help make those sentiments meaningful. With funding from the Brainerd Foundation, SVS and the County are working with contractors to define what sensitive areas are, map them, and suggest ways to avoid negatively impacting features like groundwater and wildlife. The project will be folded into the overall update of county's development code and public hearings on the topic are expected later this Fall.

In May, we teamed up with the Sonoran Institute to bring their Rural Subdivision Design Workshop to Salmon.

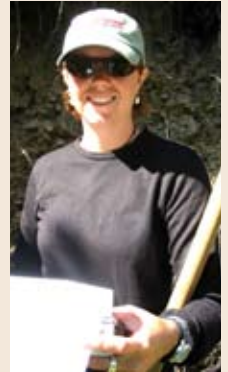
Don and Kathy Olson let us practice innovative designs on their gorgeous Lemhi River ranch and Dan Schroeder and JoAnn Wolters allowed us to dream big on their property next to the golf course.

Several landscape architects from Montana shared their expertise with the class, helping participants design projects that work with the natural environment and neighboring land uses.

At SVS, we believe that our stunning natural resources can be protected with responsible development that respects the past, present, and future.

Coming Home to Salmon

SVS summer intern Jo Myers grew up in the Salmon River valley rafting, cooking in hunting camps, guiding fishing trips, and working cows.



A graduate of Salmon High School, Jo got a degree in environmental studies from Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado in 2006.

Since then she has worked on the Snake River Sockeye Salmon Habitat Project to help restore the sockeye population in the Sawtooth Basin. She also organized a rally in Pocatello as part of a nationwide movement to ask Congress to reduce greenhouse gasses 80% by 2050.

At SVS, Jo has been charged with helping design stream improvements on the lower section of Hughes Creek.

This fall, she hopes to pursue the Environment and Community Master's program at Seattle's Antioch University. She wants to continue learning about developing sustainable lifestyles in small communities like Salmon.

"I discovered that I can't live very far from the Salmon River," Jo confessed.

We plan on reminding her of that when she finishes with grad school!

SVS sells cloth grocery totes for \$5.50

Data released by the United States Environmental Protection Agency shows that somewhere between 500 billion and a trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide each year. Less than 1% are recycled.

Plastic bags account for over 10% of the debris washed up on the US Coastline.

Plastic bags photodegrade: Over time they break down into smaller, more toxic petro-polymers which eventually contaminate soils and waterways.

Nearly 200 different species of sea life including whales, dolphins, seals and turtles die due to plastic bags.

Plastic shopping bags are made from polyethylene: a thermoplastic made from oil.

If we use a cloth bag we could save 6 bags a week, that is 24 bags a month, that is 288 bags a year, that is 22,176 bags in an average life time. If just 1 out of 5 people in our country did this we would save 1,330,560,000,000 bags over our life time.



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