



# 2021 CBYCC/Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Trail Crew Spotlight: Wyatt Griffis

## WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON THE TRAIL CREW?

"I particularly enjoyed getting to improve my skills with a crosscut saw. There is an amazing amount of sophistication and technique behind this seemingly simple piece of equipment."

## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST CHALLENGING OR REWARDING EXPERIENCE?

"The most challenging experience of the season occurred midway through a wilderness hitch. We were hoping to clear 10 miles of trail that day. I and my crew leader started cutting a 5-foot diameter cedar log out of the trail. When the tree had fallen the log had fractured so that it had many shifting pieces, some were impossible to wedge as they were deep inside the log. As a result, the saw became almost hopelessly pinched several times."

After we had finally cut the log out of the trail we were hoping that the remaining logs further down the trail would be easier. This was not the case, however, as every single log we encountered for the rest of the day had some kind of difficult bind. The saw would sometimes get pinched even before we had one inch into the wood.

In the end, our 4 person crew was only able to clear three miles of trail that day."

## HOW DID THIS EXPERIENCE CHANGE OR ENHANCE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF "WILDERNESS" AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN IDAHO?

"Actually working in this Wilderness, as opposed to simply backpacking in it, gave me a whole new perspective on the role of the Forest Service in maintaining public access in these areas. While working out there was able to see how our work helped backpackers, wildlife biologists and packers."

## WHAT'S NEXT?

"I plan to spend several years working seasonal positions on various Forests and National Parks across the country while going through college. Eventually, I plan on taking a permanent position with a federal land management agency."

I plan to pursue a variety of jobs in natural resources with an emphasis on forestry. Working in CBYCC and Kelly Forks YCC allowed me to gain experience working in a variety of agencies and fields. I think that these programs greatly influenced my ability to have a successful natural resources career."

## FEATURED PROJECT PHOTOS: LOCHSA DOWNRIVER TRAIL RECONSTRUCTION



## About Wyatt

"In 2019 I applied for a position with the Kelly Forks Residential YCC. Working in that program allowed me to gain many skills that would be useful in a natural resources career. I was able to experience working for several different programs on the forest including Timber, Fisheries, Trails, and Fire."

In 2020 I worked on CBYCC's Grangeville crew, alongside other crew members who were from the local area. On the local CBYCC crew I gained experience working for several different agencies, including the National Park Service, the Forest Service, and the Idaho County Weeds Department."

## My Advice is . . .

"Backcountry trail work jobs are some of the most physically challenging jobs in the Forest Service. At times you will hike up to 26 miles in a day, or move loads weighing over 100 lbs across difficult terrain. For the most part you will be providing and carrying your own food. It is easy to get caught unprepared."

I recommend finding a good book on backpacking, *Long Distance Hiking* by Dan Fieldman is a good option."



# 2021 CBYCC/Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Trail Crew Spotlight: Annie Vaage

## WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE LEARNING EXPERIENCE ON THE TRAIL CREW?

"Each outing has presented new and different learning experiences. I love being exposed to new things. I have learned how to use backcountry tools, how to pack for nine days, how to help my crewmates, and more—each one is its own opportunity. I was also given the chance to complete my trail crew journey with a certification and red card in wildland firefighting. It's difficult to choose a favorite learning experience because I have enjoyed them all."

## WHAT WAS YOUR MOST CHALLENGING OR REWARDING EXPERIENCE?

"My most challenging and rewarding experience so far has been walking the 24 miles out from Moose Creek Ranger Station to the Race Creek trailhead in one day. Thankfully my crew was able to get pack support for the hike out, but it was still a very hard push to the end. I'm proud of my crew for staying strong to the finish, it was a great accomplishment."

## HOW DID THIS EXPERIENCE CHANGE OR ENHANCE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF "WILDERNESS" AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN IDAHO?

"Through this trail crew experience I've honed outdoor skills, explored the natural resource field, and I've experienced working in the backcountry. I have seen the most beautiful places and my love and appreciation for the outdoors has tremendously grown."

## WHAT'S NEXT?

"My current career aspiration is to be a wildlife biologist, with an interest in wildland fire science.

I plan to attend the University of Idaho for wildlife biology. I will be taking classes that introduce me further into the natural resource field and I might expand my major. I will continue to seek outdoor employment opportunities with outdoor agencies, whether it be trail crews or fire crews or any other opportunities I discover."

## FEATURED PROJECT PHOTOS: FIRE-WRAPPING AT HORSE CAMP CABIN



## About Annie

"I wanted to spend as much time outdoors as possible and I sought employment that would make that happen. Plus, I like a good challenge. Last summer I was a member of the 2020 Orofino CBYCC Crew and I had many great experiences.

I decided to apply for the Wilderness Trail Crew position because it presented many new opportunities. I viewed this position as a once in a lifetime opportunity and I knew I would gain valuable skills and memories."

## My Advice is... .

"Do it, it's truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!"