

Ketchum Ranger District Trail Crew 2022 Annual Report

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Season Stats for Ketchum Ranger District Trail Crew 2022

Miles of trail maintained: 249.22

Trees removed from trails: 1,623

Drains installed or cleaned: 987

Feet of trail brushed: 38,311

Feet of tread improvement: 10,985

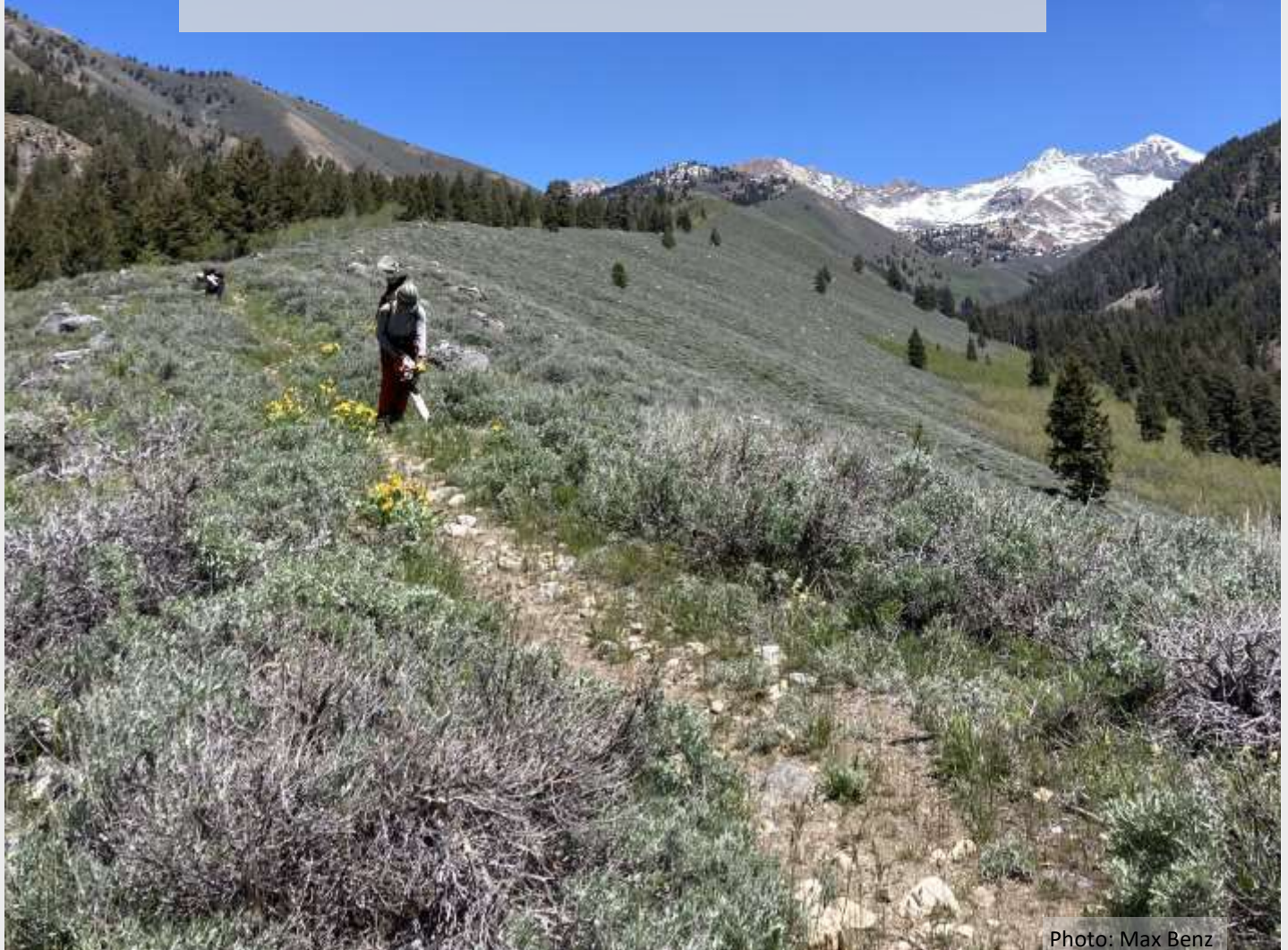


Photo: Max Benz

Maintenance and Projects

For the summer of 2022 the focus for Ketchum Ranger District (KRD) Trail Crew was on a backlog of heavy maintenance and smaller projects. This focus on heavy maintenance will have a long-term positive impact on the overall sustainability and safety of the trail network:

- **Brushed and widened downed timber on 249 miles of trail to increase line of sight**
- **200' of tread work on Red Warrior to improve drainage near Sullivan Creek**
- **2050' of braided trail decommissioning**
- **Multiple small retaining walls and cribbing around district**
- **Climbing turn on Bear Gulch to improve uphill and downhill travel**
- **Hardening of trail tread at 'dead horse' rock slide on Little Wood**
- **Multiple new signs installed throughout the trail network, including nine new directional signs on Forbidden Fruit**
- **Crowning of tread on turnpikes on Harpers and Warfield**
- **Tread widening and trail hardening on Baker Lake Trail**



Backcountry Work

The far reaches of Ketchum Ranger District are hard to access with the day trip/front country format that our crew typically works. For this reason, each summer KRD hires local outfitters to give the trail crew pack support for backcountry work. For the summer of 2022 we had three such trips: Pioneer Cabin, Deer Creek, and Little Wood River.

Work performed in all three zones included:

- Log out of downed trees and brushing to Forest Service standards
- Tread widening and ‘hardening’ in areas where downhill edge of trail was eroding
- Decommissioning of braided trails
- Water drain installation and cleaning
- Directional sign maintenance



Wolfstone Trail

To uphold the 2008 Travel Management plan, KRD in partnership with Bureau of Land Management and Idaho Parks and Recreation widened and rerouted approximately one mile of the Wolfstone trail. The purpose of this project was two fold; firstly, was to move the trail away from Wolfstone Creek and its sensitive riparian areas. Secondly, was to widen the trail to allow for 50 inch or less All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs). With the newly rerouted trail, both Wolfstone and Kinsey Creek trails are wide enough to accommodate 50 inch or less ATVs, making for the only ATV loop on District. Once the reroute was complete, we used a combination of a mini excavator and people power to decommission the old trail and rehabilitate riparian areas.



Adams Gulch Adaptive Sports Improvement Project

Last fall, we were able to complete Phase 1 of the Adams Gulch Adaptive Sports Enhancement Project. This phase included rebuilding the existing Forbidden Fruit Trail, a local favorite for our ever growing mountain-bike community, as well as, building a new section of beginner friendly trail extending Forbidden Fruit for another mile.

Early summer of 2022, the KRD Trail Crew continued work on Forbidden Fruit. The crew put up nine directional signs identifying trail direction to reduce the chances of collision and to help with the flow of the trail. In June, Wood River Trails Coalition volunteers were able to put the final touches on the trail by raking out the surface to improve rider experience. This event was a huge success and was attended by over 60 people, reaffirming the importance of Forbidden Fruit to the local community.

Late fall of 2022 will see the second and final Phase 2 of the Adams Gulch improvements. Titus Trails will be returning to install new bridges over Adams Gulch Creek. Additionally, the Forest Service Construction and Maintenance Crew is improving and expanding the Adams Gulch Trailhead. This expansion will address the uptick in use, make parking easier, and replace the single restroom with a double.

A huge thanks goes out to all of the project partners for helping this project come to fruition: National Forest Foundation, Wood River Trails Coalition, Higher Ground, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, and our local trail community.



STAFF



Left to Right Backrow: Kent, Daniel, Amy, Nick
Left to Right Front Row: Lisa, Emily, Heather

Kent May: Trail Crew Supervisor

Prior to coming to the Ketchum Ranger District in 2022, Kent spent 16 years working for the Forest Service all over the West and Alaska. Kent's experiences range from Wilderness trails maintenance to recreation operations.

Lisa Meister: Trail Crew Foreman

Lisa began her natural resources career at a private restoration firm in 2016. After completing a degree in Sustainability she worked seasons at several nonprofits in Washington and Idaho before joining the Ketchum trail crew in 2021. She spends her winters training as an arborist.

Emily Ainsworth: Trail Crew Member

Emily worked for three seasons with the Rocky Mountain Youth Corps out of Steamboat Springs, Colorado. This past summer was Emily's first season with KRD Trail Crew.

Daniel Forsythe: Trail Crew Member

Dan came to KRD Trails from Montana Conservation Corps where he was a crew leader doing trail and other Natural Resource projects on public lands. Prior to his work for the 'corps', he worked for the National Outdoor Leadership School in the Outfitting Department.

Amy Sevcik: Trail Crew Member

This was Amy's first year on KRD Trail Crew. Prior to KRD Amy spent six seasons as a Wilderness Ranger and on River Patrol in both Idaho and Colorado and two seasons as a Ranger in New Zealand.

Heather Johnson: Trail Crew Member

Heather worked four seasons with different conservation corps before joining the KRD Trail Crew in 2021. She is currently studying Field Ecology at Ohio University and is very excited to graduate.

Nick Reed: Trail Crew Member

Nick came to KRD Trail Crew as a break after four years in the Forest Service Wildland Firefighter Apprentice Program. Prior to being a Forest Service Wildland Firefighter, Nick spent four years in the Marine Corps as a Aircraft Rescue Firefighter.

Volunteers

Wood River Trails Coalition: This season the WRTC hosted numerous volunteer events on Ketchum Ranger District. This included rock and drainage work on Cow Creek, maintenance on Forbidden Fruit and Alden Gulch, and a Women's Only Weekend on Johnstone trail (in partnership with Idaho Trails Association). This was the second season of the WRTC Trail Boss program. This initiative is helping local trail enthusiasts gain skills and knowledge with specialized training sessions and small group projects on the KRD. WRTC is a huge part of the success of the trails community in the Wood River Valley, and a vital partner for the KRD Trail Program.

In 2022, WRTC completed their second year of their Trail Monitoring Program. The trail stewardship nonprofit works directly with Forest Service Recreation Managers each year to select a series of trails that will have infrared trail counter devices placed on them. The trail counters are able to give the District an idea of use levels day by day and month by month, as well as data on times of day and days of the week when trail use is higher or lower. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, trail counters from 11 trails on the Ketchum Ranger District recorded approximately 70,000 detections - truly remarkable use for the size of the community. Trail monitoring data has been used by the KRD trail crew to successfully apply to grants, inform yearly maintenance plans, and guide decision-making for trail head improvement projects.

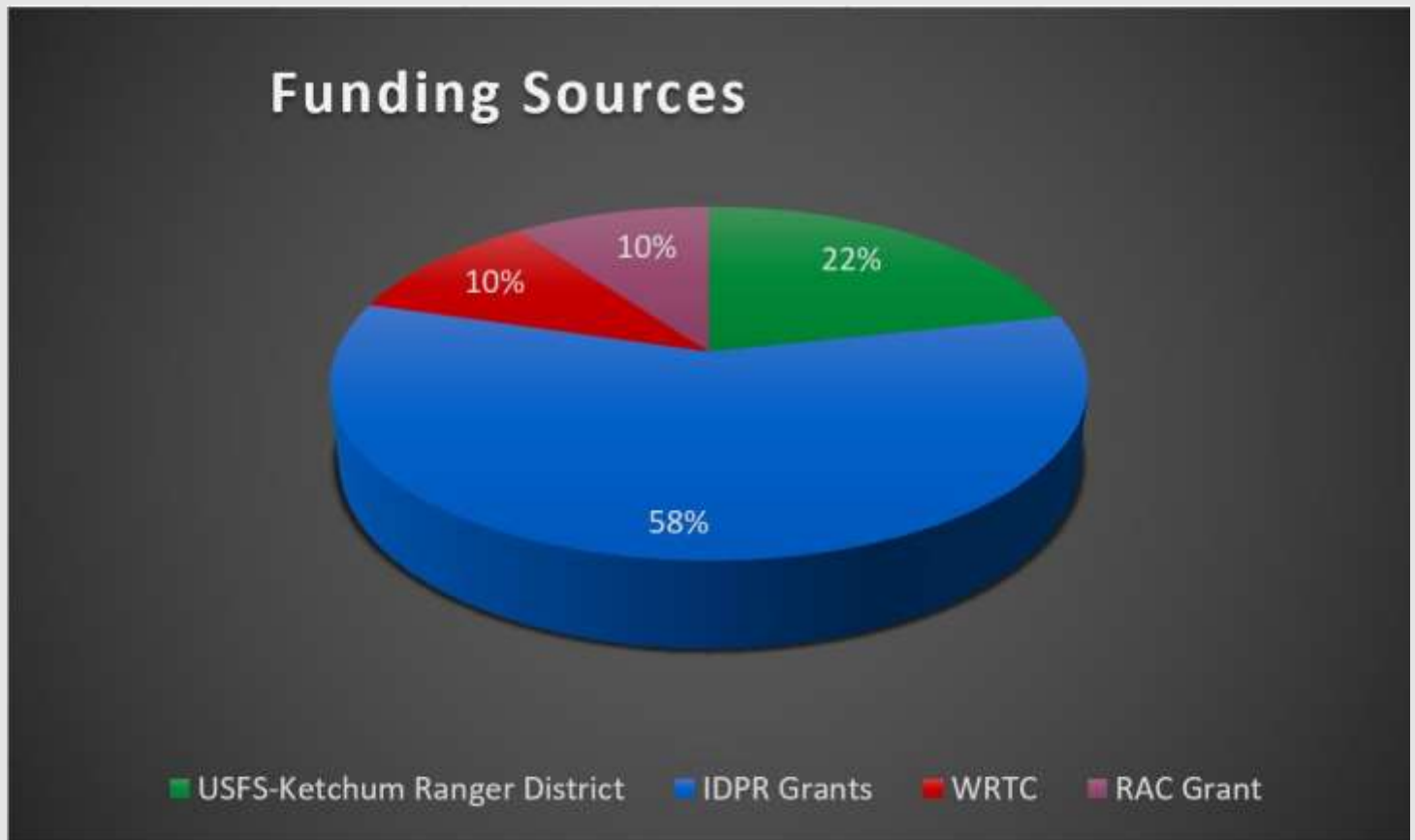
Idaho Mountain Dirt Bike Riders Association: Our local off-road motorbike club has worked diligently to log out our motorized trails for decades. This season they again went above and beyond to ensure our trails are open to all users. Their consistent availability to respond after wind events and storms to re-log out our motorized trails is nothing short of remarkable. If you see a motorcycle with a chainsaw on it, be sure to give them a high five and a sincere thanks.



PROFESSIONAL/AGENCY PARTNERS



2022 FUNDING



Budget: \$96,360

Trail Crew Wages: \$86,712.53

Packing: \$4,500

Materials and Supplies: \$5,147.47

100% of our budget goes directly to boots on the ground and tools in the dirt. This efficient use of funding ensures that Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR), National Forest Foundation (NFF), and the Wood River Trails Coalition (WRTC) are funding meaningful trail work on the Ketchum Ranger District. Continuing to lean on outside funding sources is imperative for the future of the Ketchum Ranger District Trail Crew.

Looking Forward

- Work on heavy maintenance (brushing, re-cuts of downed trees, tread repair, drain cleaning/construction) on remaining trails not addressed this season.
- Continue with small projects to enhance sustainability and safety of trail network.
- Secure a Student Conservation Corps Crew to carry on with improvements in Little Wood drainage.
- Make improvements to lesser used trails to encourage users to branch out from the busiest areas and routes.

