



THE TREK LEADERS

JOHNSON COUNTY CONSERVATION STAFF

JCC Naturalists Kristen Morrow and Frances Owen, and volunteer Jason Bies will lead the trip. These leaders have 15+ years of experience leading groups in the outdoors and are Wilderness First Responder or Wilderness First Aid certified. Combined, they have spent hundreds of nights leading youth on backpacking treks.



SBFC FOUNDATION STAFF

The Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation is a community of wilderness-minded and hardworking individuals dedicated to bringing citizens to wilderness to work, live, and play. A staff member from the Foundation will join the group in the wilderness and will be Wilderness First Responder certified, trained in radio communication, and have extensive wilderness experience in the area. They will lead the stewardship project and teach participants use of saws, axes, and more.



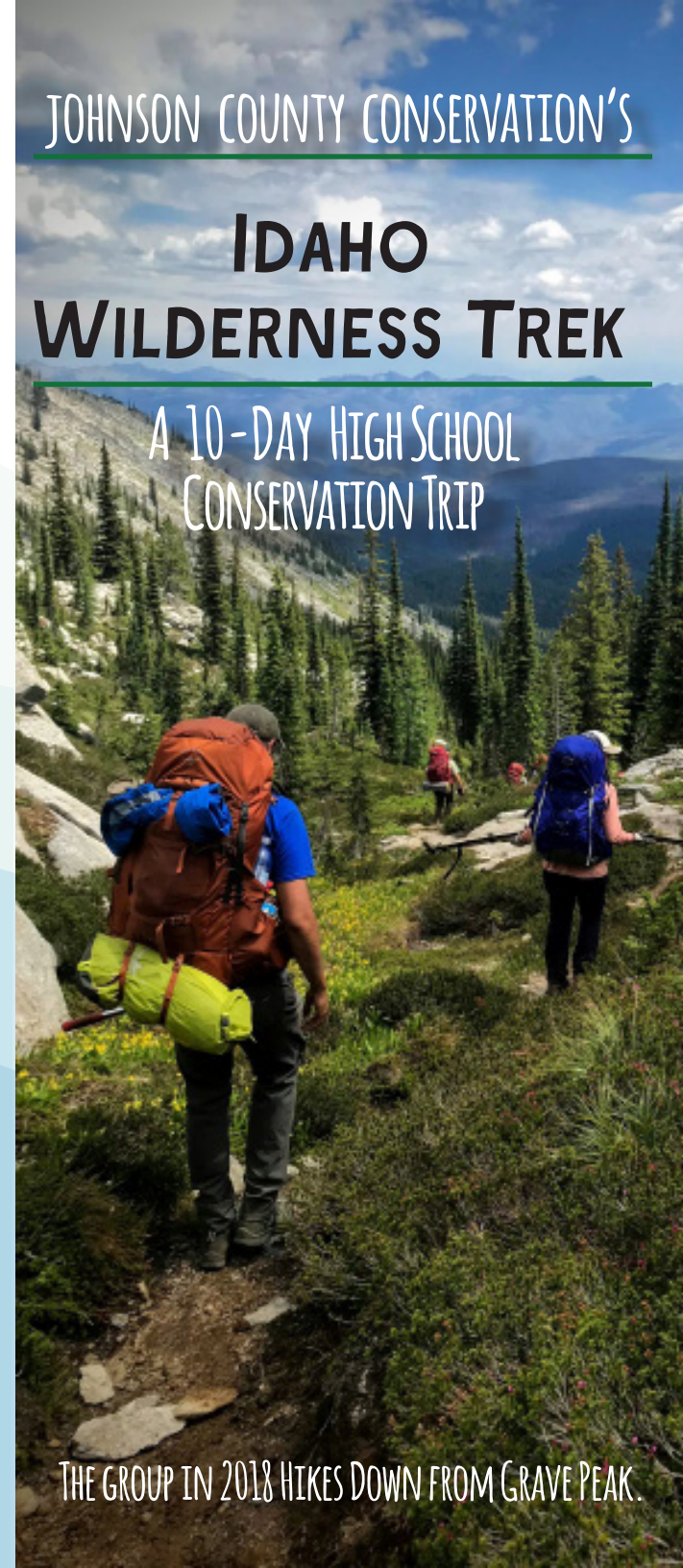
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JOHNSON COUNTY CONSERVATION'S

IDAHO WILDERNESS TREK

A 10-DAY HIGH SCHOOL
CONSERVATION TRIP



THE GROUP IN 2018 HIKES DOWN FROM GRAVE PEAK.

TREK OVERVIEW

The Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Trek is a 10-day conservation trek for high school students to one of the largest wilderness areas in the U.S. Through a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service and the Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church (SBFC) Foundation, Johnson County Conservation (JCC) is able to offer a trip that combines wilderness backpacking with a trail stewardship experience.

WHO CAN APPLY: Iowa high school students who have completed freshman-senior years. No conservation, camping, or backpacking experience needed. Preference for Johnson County residents/students.

WHEN IS THE TRIP: July 14-23, 2025

WHERE: The Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness area is located in northeast Idaho.

IS IT SAFE: Trip guides are highly experienced and trained in advanced wilderness first aid. Satellite devices will be used for daily communication with Forest Service officials.

WHAT IS THE COST: \$525, which includes all supplies (such as sleeping bags, tents, backpacks), transportation, and trek food. Scholarship applications are available.

HOW TO APPLY: Students must complete application process by April 1. Demonstrated passion and effort spent on application highly is valued. Scan the QR code or email kmorrow@johnsoncountyiowa.gov for the application.



Four Pillars of the Trek

STEWARDSHIP: Participants will work on a trail work project designated by the U.S. Forest Service and SBFC Foundation. This work centers on clearing trails of blown-down trees to make them accessible.

ADVENTURE: We aim to balance stewardship with adventure and try to fit in many joyful activities like swimming in alpine lakes, playing in the snow, star gazing, foraging wild edibles when we can, and climbing a mountain.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE/HISTORY: Students will start their learning through required podcasts and readings to gain more awareness for concepts of the Wilderness Act, ethics of public lands, fire ecology, and more. We'll explore these concepts more through discussions and trailside learning on the trek.

OUTDOOR SKILLS: Participants will gain skills with backpacking basics like tent set-up, backcountry cooking, bear hangs, water filtration, and map-reading/compass basics.

TREK TIMELINE

TUESDAY, APRIL 1: Application and letter of support due.

FRIDAY, APRIL 11: Selection of applicants.

THURSDAY MAY 1, 6 PM: Meet and Greet, optional but highly encouraged. Participants will have a chance to do intros and exchange contact info in order to go on training hikes together. Location TBD.

JUNE 10, 9:00-4:00: Mandatory orientation session including team-building activities, gear fitting, and backpacking skills training.

JUNE 16, 23, 30, 8:00-10:30: Group 4-mile pre-hikes to physically train, test backpacks and boots, check-in with students, and allow time to ask questions about gear and trip. Hikes will likely take place at Lake MacBride, Cangleska Wakan, and Pallisades State Park. These hikes are optional but recommended.

JULY 11, 9:00-12:00: Mandatory Gear Shakedown: Trek leaders will go through packs as a group, distribute JCC gear such as tents, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, etc., and teach students how to properly pack up and distribute their gear. Loaded packs will be left with trek leaders at the end for loading onto trailer. All personal items should be prepared and packed to bring to this session.

JULY 14 - 23: 10-day wilderness trek to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness!