

Bud Moore

1917 – 2010



Bud Moore was a tireless conservationist and a wilderness champion for Idaho and Montana. He blazed a trail his whole life for all who revere wilderness and wild land—linking the mountain men, who taught him backcountry skills in his youth, to the modern foresters who came to understand ecosystem management with his vision. Throughout his life, he worked as a trapper, logger, horse packer, cabin builder, hunter, firefighter, fire manager and wilderness preserver. He was an ecologist, a naturalist and above all an advocate for the wilderness.

Bud's career with the United States Forest Service began in 1934. He worked various seasonal positions including lookout, trail crew foreman, fire dispatcher and alternate ranger on the Powell Ranger District. He joined the Marine Corps during World War II, but returned to his work with the Forest Service in 1949 as a ranger on the Powell Ranger District on the Clearwater National Forest.

One of his first actions was to stop a bulldozer cutting a "fire" road from Elk Summit to Moose Creek in what later became the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. The road would have bisected the wilderness but was considered necessary for fire control. Bud turned the bulldozer back. Years later he said, "I just told them, 'Not while I'm ranger on the Powell district are you going to take any dozers down to Moose Creek.'"

Bud went on to become the chief of fire management and air operations for the northern region of the Forest Service out of Missoula and led the effort to let fire once again play its ecological role in the national

forests. The first fire on the National Forests to be purposefully monitored and managed—instead of controlled—was the White Cap fire in the Selway-Bitterroot in 1972, carried out under Bud's guidance.

After he retired from the Forest Service in 1974, Bud continued to lead by example, overseeing a sustainable timber harvest and wildlife protection at his 80-acre homestead in the Swan Valley. In recent years, he applied his ecosystem management ideas to an old 200-acre mining claim, blazing a new trail for ecological restoration.

He was one of the founders of the current wilderness fire management policy and was a leader, during the 1960s and 1970s, in the push to use wilderness fire in ecosystem management.

In June 1974, the University of Montana awarded him an honorary doctorate for his contributions to natural-resource conservation and in 1996 he published a book titled *The Lochsa Story: Land Ethics in the Bitterroot Mountains*.

Bud used to give this advice to the new wilderness rangers: "You ought to be like the moose and show up here and there as often as you can. Be unobtrusive. Be present enough so that people in the wilderness know there is a wilderness ranger around and he's a great guy and he loves the country."

"As everything in an ecosystem is 'hitched' to everything else, we are ... linked to each other and to the land with similar invisible bonds."

—Bud Moore
