



Ivishak Wild and Scenic River Values Investigation

by Jennifer Reed

Author Jen Reed paddling the Ivishak's clear blue waters.

Photo: Heather Bartlett

Located within northeast Alaska, the designated reach of the Ivishak WSR totals 80 miles. The Ivishak Wild and Scenic River (WSR) is classified as Wild (the classification that applies to rivers with the least amount of development along their banks), and possesses scenery, recreation, fish, and hydrology outstandingly remarkable values (ORV) – each dependent on flow and/or water quality – along its entire length. From its source at the Continental Divide of the Brooks Range Mountains, the Ivishak River flows north and west beyond its designated portion until the river's waters eventually reach the Arctic Ocean, just east of Prudhoe Bay.

In 2020, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Alaska Region (FWS-AK) focused effort on identifying wild and scenic river values for the Ivishak WSR and six other rivers the agency administers or co-administers in Alaska. (See article by Cassie Thomas in this RMS Journal issue.) The Ivishak WSR and two other FWS-administered rivers (Sheenjek, and Wind WSRs) flow from within Arctic National Wildlife Refuge (Arctic Refuge, Refuge). North to south the Arctic Refuge extends 200 miles – from the Arctic coast, across the tundra plain, over the glacier-capped peaks of the Brooks Range Mountains, and into the

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Executive Director's Eddy



We hope you'll join us with a river hoot or holler as we both learn from, and put behind us, a year like no other. While we look forward to a post-COVID-19 new sense of *normal*, we are not there yet, and will likely find that we will be reminded of 2020 for a long time. Our fundamental ways of communicating and doing will be changed permanently by what we've adopted in order to cope (i.e. accommodate the pandemic response) — there will no doubt be silver linings and unanticipated positives resulting from the disease which has rocked our world.

2020 called on our river experience to respond to the conditions and navigate around the obstacles, appreciating where we've been but never looking back upstream, in order to focus on what is ahead! In the absence of federal guidance *and* thanks to awesome, seasoned river managers, RMS hosted as many as three meetings, workshops, and presentations each month; provided an otherwise unavailable nexus of district/county, state and federal discussions about how rivers were being closed ... then opened ... and managed through unprecedented levels of demand. We have recently followed up to continue the dialogue, sharing how folks are planning for the upcoming season. We have rekindled a connection with the outfitting community (thankfully), whose members are critically important partners.

2021 flows excitedly before us with the prospect of continued program

innovation and growth thanks to the skills, experience, and enthusiasm of the RMS staff, board of directors, board advisors, and volunteers. You will hear more in these pages and future issues. We hope you will register and join us for our reinvented *From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals* River Management Symposium (April 12-15, 2021) hosted virtually with our resilient partners at Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and Virginia Commonwealth University. From the river-referencing Visual Resource Management training and inspiring and sobering reviews of the role of rivers in our industrial past to a livestreamed visit with sturgeon recently returned to the James River, our 50+ programs offer an exceptional value that can be attended from the comfort of your zoom lounge!

As we bid farewell to the year, we thank officers who have led the River Management Society Board through 2018-2020: Linda Jalbert, Bo Shelby, Dave Cernicek and Helen Clough (Helen re-ran for the Secretary's role for a one year term, so will serve through 2021). Thank you for your time and experience which adds up to well over 130 years of river study and management! We appreciate the wisdom, patience and river-running resilience you have invested on our behalf toward RMS' bright future. ♦

Risa Shimoda
Executive Director

RMS President's Corner

See you on the river!

This year started just like the last year with a float on the Verde River. It was just the two of us, along with several pair of ducks and geese, many phoebes, woodpeckers, and a free-form squad of red-tailed hawks and ravens playing in the sky above. It was the same day, same stretch of river, just one notable difference. Last year we encountered a great horned owl and thought it interesting that the nocturnal critter perched for some time, watching us as we watched it from the eddy below. At the time, we thought it an unusual and cool sighting. Perhaps that memorable encounter was foreshadowing what would unknowingly, yet certainly become an unusual year (to say the least).

You never really know what your run is going to be until you push off from shore. The RMS team started 2020 with a plan; working hard to put the finishing touches on the Symposium, line out the River Training Center courses and other priorities. We thought we knew the run. A few months into the year as we continued downstream, we dropped into a rapid with unknown and unexpected turbulence. Read and run; that's what happened as the RMS crew navigated unfamiliar waters. Through the leadership of our Executive Director and staff, a dedicated Board of Directors and volunteer members kept the RMS boats upright and moved forward with confidence and commitment.

RMS has worked so hard this past year to provide support and resources to address relevant and timely issues. We hosted forums and workgroup discussions to share resources and expertise on pandemic-related closures, re-opening procedures and associated visitor use management challenges. We collaborate with consultant and river professional to



address workplace discrimination and harassment. We opened our eyes wider to examine how the work we do can help break down the barriers to equality and inclusion for all people. There's always more to learn and room to grow. The challenge is upon us to stay on mission as we set our hands to the good work that is supported by good science, justice, and community.

The last three years as your President have been a challenging and rewarding experience. This has been the culmination of a near-30-year relationship with this great organization. RMS gave to me so much professionally and personally, and I am grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of a workforce that ensures that resources and services continue to be of value to RMS members and partners.

Please join me in welcoming and supporting the Executive Committee who, along with our outstanding Executive

Director Risa Shimoda, will guide us in this new era in RMS history. New officers Judy Culver, President and Shannon Bassista, Vice President will serve with returning board members Helen Clough, Secretary, Rob White, Treasurer, and Emma Lord, Chapter Liaison. This group brings new perspectives and ideas, an exceptional commitment to RMS and deep appreciation for the protection, management and enjoyment of rivers and wild places. Thanks to you all for your leadership and adventuresome spirit!

Lastly, let me remind you all that the greatest and most important asset of the River Management Society is its members. Wishing you the best in the days and years to come. ♦

With gratitude,

Linda Jalbert
RMS President (2017-2020)

2021-2023 National RMS Officers

The River Management Society is proud to announce the newly elected officers who will usher our society into a new era.

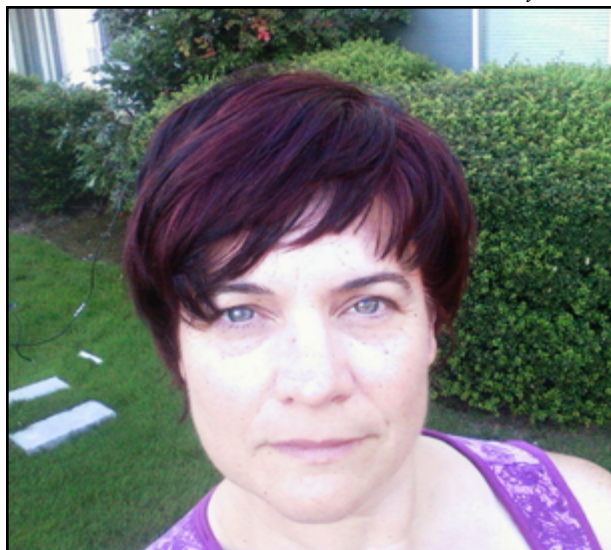
President – Judy Culver

Throughout her career, Judy has had deep connections to rivers and to RMS. At 18, she received a Maine Guides license and also guided in New York state. After two years of guiding she shifted to the Army and upon leaving active duty, headed to Alaska to spend a few years guiding and exploring rivers between classes at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. Her first federal job was in 2000 as a seasonal Dinosaur National Monument River Ranger where she would return a few years later to manage the river program. She broke into the field of Outdoor Recreation Planning in 2007 at Vermilion Cliffs National Monument, managing the eligible Paria River — a segment that is never truly “boatable” but has many of the same challenges as boatable rivers. In 2011, Judy returned to managing boatable rivers in Idaho (Clearwater River and Lolo Creek), Arizona (Verde River), and currently New Mexico (Rio Grande and Rio Chama). Judy is the Assistant Field Manager for the BLM Rio Grande del Norte National Monument, and oversees the recreation program across the Taos Field Office.

Judy’s contributions to RMS have included organizing and hosting a Southwest Chapter trip on the Yampa River in Dinosaur National Monument, past symposia committee membership, and volunteering as the RMS Merchandise Coordinator and Pro-Purchase Coordinator for several years. In 2018, she served as Chair of the Marketing Committee for the Vancouver symposium, as well as running the RMS store and working with the Silent Auction fundraiser. In 2019, Judy received “Outstanding Contribution to the River Management Society” for these contributions and more.

Welcome Judy! Thank you for your commitment to RMS and for leading us into the new decade.

Judy Culver



by Judy Culver

As we leave the crazy and unsettling year of 2020 behind, and look toward 2021 as a time of renewal and new beginnings, I look forward to the RMS Training Symposium *From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals*, and the launch of river trips and river management careers.

River and recreation management as a whole is facing the challenges of educating those who fell in love with the nation’s river and lake systems for the first time — or all over again — to safely and responsibly recreate. The silver lining in releasing the genie from the bottle and not being able to shove it back inside is that the increased use of waterways around the country can be funneled into increasing awareness of the threats to our nation’s rivers. It is important for managers to delve into ways to guide these newcomers (or seasonal users) who have been chased into our backyards toward becoming stewards of our rivers, lakes and water resources — in conjunction with finding ways to diminish the impacts of what was once hidden being loved to death.

A gargantuan challenge, yes, but RMS and our partners can meet these challenges by rolling up our sleeves and pitching in to educate ourselves, our users and our managers to understand and develop plans to address these challenges.

As the incoming President of RMS, I support any ideas, no matter how far outside the box you think they might be, to guide us through these challenges with the support of the outgoing board and RMS. May we all find time to get our feet wet while seeking out the quite roar of the rapids to soothe our souls in 2021. ♦



Shannon Bassista

Vice President – Shannon Bassista

Shannon moved from Maryland to Idaho to pursue a master’s degree in Resource, Recreation and Tourism at the University of Idaho and graduated in 2003. A master’s resource project that involved a visitor survey to Owyhee River boaters was her first taste of multi-day boating, and fed her passion and love for rivers — plus, exciting backcountry opportunities kept her in Idaho to pursue a meaningful lifestyle and career. In June 2004, Shannon started a permanent career as a Recreation Technician on the South Fork of the Snake River with the Bureau of Land Management in eastern Idaho. For the last 16 years, she has worked managing public lands including rivers, sand dunes, remote landscapes and wild lands for public benefit and natural resource management.

Shannon works at the BLM Idaho State Office in Boise as a state lead in the recreation program. This job requires dedication to the diverse field of recreation, managing staff, understanding budgets and how to track down funding opportunities, good communication between upper level managers and field staff, and disseminating information through all layers of bureaucracy.

Shannon has been a member of RMS for 16 years, and brings along great energy and enthusiasm for the care, protection, and enjoyment of rivers. She has committed to working hard to continue the great RMS programs and will strive to find new opportunities for RMS members. Welcome aboard Shannon!

Rob White, Treasurer

Rob recently retired from Colorado Parks and Wildlife where he served as the Park Manager for the Arkansas Headwaters Recreation Area (AHRA) for the past 20 years. His career started as a seasonal ranger at Rocky Mountain National Park. During those three years, he also would substitute teach math, biology, environmental science and natural resource-related classes in Colorado and Michigan.



Rob White

In 1995, Rob started guiding trips for the Sierra Club National Outings program. The first trip was a week-long hiking trip in Rocky Mountain National Park and he’s been guiding trips there and other places ever since. Rob continues to lead backcountry ski, bicycle, and wilderness hiking trips in several national parks and USFS wilderness areas.

During his time at the AHRA, Rob developed a deep appreciation for all of the professional development and connections that RMS provided through its *RMS Journal*, workshops, symposia and many interactions with river rangers and river management professionals from throughout the country. Nearly six years ago, Rob jumped into RMS leadership as the Southwest Chapter President, during which time the Chapter hosted several river trips and two River Ranger Rendezvous. In addition to his volunteer work with RMS, he serves on the boards of the Central Colorado Conservancy, Greater Arkansas River Nature Association (GARNA) and the Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails Advisory Board (PROST) for the City of Salida, Colorado. Welcome Rob, and thank you for jumping in again!

Helen Clough, Secretary

Helen retired in 2013 after almost 40 years in federal service working for Bureau of Land Management, Forest Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service - National Wildlife Refuge System. During her FWS career, she traveled across the country visiting every regional office and teaching over 1,000 service employees about refuge planning at the National Conservation Training Center. Helen came to RMS when she was tasked with river planning for rivers within refuges in western Alaska in 1990. Helen has served with RMS in many capacities over the years. She was on the RMS Board as Treasurer from 2013-2014, President from 2015-2017, and Secretary from 2018 to present. She has also played a critical role in the success of the past three RMS Training Symposia, and is the program chair for the 2021 virtual symposium.

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From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals

RMS Training Symposium

Time to Register!

[Registration](#) is now open for the 2021 RMS Training Symposium — *From Mountain Creeks to Metro Canals* — presented by River Management Society in partnership with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) and Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU). This will be hosted as a virtual event April 12-15 via the Zoom platform.



Kayakers enjoying a James River sunset. Credit: Visit Richmond VA

Lucky Gift!

In addition, again thanks to Richmond Regional Tourism, one special early registrant will receive a box of 'Richmond's Finest' courtesy of Richmond To Go: AgriBerry Blueberry Jam, Ames' Hot Southern Honey, Blanchard's Coffee, Capt. Salty's Hot Nuts, Buz and Ned's Barbeque Sauce, Red Rocker Rocking Chair Mix, and Rostov's Richmond /RVA Blend of Tea.

As a reminder for members and colleagues, particularly those new to RMS: The symposium is a unique national gathering of students, scientists, agency field staff (e.g., rangers), planners and river trail leaders interested the health of rivers as the platform for outdoor adventure and fitness, economic development, science-based learning and sharing.

True to the quality and variety of past symposium programs, we will offer training workshops, presentations and storytelling which represent skills needed, experience valued and curiosity shared by and among river professionals. We hope that by listening to topic experts, sharing input and chatting between sessions we will be reminded of how lucky we are to have the responsibility to protect and manage the arteries of our landscapes for all who care to visit.

SWAG

New for 2021, and a terrific reason to sign up during the early registration period (**by February 28, 2021**): Richmond Regional Tourism and Virginia DCR are providing a special "thank you" to the first 100 full week registrants (including those who carried over their registration from 2020) — a waterproof camera pouch, and items commemorating the 50th Anniversary of the Virginia Scenic Rivers Program (dry bag, water bottle, coaster and pen). An RMS logo decal will be included as well!



Program Structure

The [program](#) begins with several pre-symposium events on Monday and ends Thursday. To accommodate people joining from across the country, sessions will begin at 1:00 p.m. eastern (that’s 10:00 a.m. pacific) on Monday and 11:00 a.m. eastern the rest of the week. Program sessions will end at 5:00 p.m. eastern with some events continuing beyond on Tuesday and Wednesday. If you live on the east coast, plan to have your mornings generally available for other activities and your attendance will extend into the early evening. If you are on the west coast, you’ll start early and be done by mid-afternoon. Those of you in the rest of the country fit somewhere in between. And, the few of us in Alaska (or Hawaii) have to be early risers for a few days!

The program is similar to the original program planned for 2020 in Richmond with most speakers staying with us, though they were asked to shorten presentations to fit into the virtual format and to figure out how field activities could be included.

Program tracks include:

- Rural and Mountain Rivers – Management Issues and Science
- Urban Rivers – Urban Renewal, Infrastructure, Issues and Economics
- Management Technology Tools
- Policy and Practice – State and Federal River Management Legislation, Policies and Systems
- Partnerships and Community-Building
- Water and River Corridor Trails
- Visual Resource Management

Over 60 presentations are scheduled with up to four concurrent sessions offered on Monday and three the rest of the event. A Visual Resource Workshop similar to that held at the Boise Symposium in 2016 will begin on Monday and continue as a concurrent track Tuesday through Thursday. Speakers represent state, federal and local agencies, colleges and universities, non-profit organizations, consultants and private businesses involved with rivers and river management.

Continuing Education Credits

Most sessions will offer continuing education credits. American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) credits are provided courtesy of the Virginia Chapter. Credits for the American Planning Association (APA) and National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) will also be offered for select sessions by our partnership with American Trails.

Monday’s pre-symposium sessions will consist of four tracks:

- Visual Resource Management Workshop
- Adding Depth to Understanding Diversity in the Workplace Workshop
- Drone Mapping/GIS Workshop, and
- Policy and Practice sessions related to Wild and Scenic Rivers, planning and construction in river corridors.

Zoom Format Information

The overall format will consist of 4 main Zoom “rooms.” The main Zoom lobby will be used for plenary sessions and will be available the rest of the symposium for interaction with our sponsors, technical trouble shooting, informal meetings and gatherings using the breakout room feature. The lobby will be a general gathering spot for information. Concurrent sessions will be held in three additional Zoom rooms. Most sessions will be for one hour followed by a 15-minute break. Each day there will also be a one-hour break. Meeting rooms will remain open during all breaks so participants can continue discussions, ask questions, break into small groups – the virtual equivalent of activities we would conduct during breaks at in-person meetings.

We will be providing the Guidebook app to those who pay for at least one full day to aid in planning, tracking and taking notes on the sessions you attend while learning and building your nationwide river and watershed management networks. The full app used on a smart phone will have all the same functions as it did at the Vancouver symposium. There is also a website version that participants can use to link to sessions, find program details, etc. We anticipate that most of us will use the phone app for finding sessions and our larger screens for attending. The app will also be used to notify participants of any last minute changes.

Tuesday - Program Highlights

Tuesday sessions include an opening plenary “*From Sewer to Park: Transforming a Metro River*” presented by Ralph Hambrick of the James River Scenic Advisory Committee and Nathan Burrell of the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Concurrent sessions include the Visual Resource Workshop, Partnerships and Community Building sessions, Management Technology Tools sessions, Urban Rivers – Urban Renewal, Infrastructure, Issues and Economics sessions, Rural and Mountain Rivers – Management Issues and Science. Speakers will showcase projects from the Boise River in Idaho to the Red River in Kentucky to the James River which flows through the heart of Richmond.

VCU Professor and symposium co-chair, Dr. James Vonesh and faculty from RMS River Studies and Leadership Certificate and other schools will lead a session entitled *Building a framework for the River-based Immersive Education & Research (RIVER) Field Studies Network*, followed by a related session focused on linking academics and practitioners to train tomorrow’s river professionals.

Posters will be presented at the end of Tuesday in a format similar to presentations we held last May for students. A new [call for posters](#) is out now with proposals due February 25th.

Wednesday - Program Highlights

Wednesday will open with a plenary presentation focusing on the Anacostia River and the history-making changes that have taken place on the region’s eyesore flowing from Maryland



Nathan Burrell. Courtesy: Richmond Free Press



Dr. Richard Smardon



Dr. Ralph Hambrick



Kayaking on the James River.
Courtesy: Richmond Regional Tourism

into Washington, DC. The rest of the day will include three breakout tracks covering Management Technology Tools, Policy and Practice – State and Federal River Management Legislation, Policies and Systems, Partnerships and Community-Building, Water and River Corridor Trails, and Visual Resource Management. Technical sessions will focus on fisheries and water topics. Two sessions entitled “Regional Renewal and Riverfronts” will showcase the successes of the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River. Several water trails presentations with highlight successful approaches to water trail development and management. The day will end with a virtual Richmond walking and history tour!

Thursday - Program Highlights

Thursday’s concurrent sessions include the following tracks: Visual Resource Management, Management Technology Tools, Partnerships and Community-Building, Policy and Practice – State and Federal River Management Legislation, Policies and Systems. Dr. Denielle Perry from Northern Arizona University will lead a two-part workshop entitled “*Investigations among socio-ecological diversity, connectivity and resilience to inform the future of river conservation.*” Other presentations range from the history of western river allocations to instream flow assessments to collaborative stream restoration. We will end the symposium with a plenary session presented by Dr. Richard Smardon, Professor Emeritus SUNY College of Environmental Sciences and Forestry entitled “*Revitalizing Urban Waterway Communities: Streams of Environmental Justice.*”

RMS Awards will be presented during the symposium. Invited introductory speakers include Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, Virginia U.S. Senator Tim Kaine, Richmond Mayor Levar Stoney, and Virginia Director of the Department of Parks and Conservation Clyde Chrisman.

We hope you’ll join us! ♦

(Ivishak, from page 1)
spruce and birch boreal forests of the Yukon River basin. With no roads, trails, or facilities within the Refuge, and administrative offices far to the south, the 19.6 million acre Refuge demands hours of air travel by small aircraft. Even to veteran Refuge staff, these varied and dynamic lands encompassing five ecosystems and thousands of unnamed waterways are strikingly vast.

Refuge staff field efforts over the decades provided detailed agency resource information for describing the characteristics of the Sheenjek and Wind WSRs’ ORVs, but the team identifying WSR values determined that such detail necessary to finalize decisions about ORVs was lacking for the Ivishak WSR, so a July, 2020 float trip was planned to investigate accuracy of initial findings, determine additional river value characteristics, and ultimately to ensure FWS would continue to meet mandates of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 to “protect and enhance” the values that made the Ivishak WSR eligible for designation, and led to the river’s inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic River System.

And then a global pandemic happened.

Let’s be clear: conducting an Arctic field project in any given summer demands expert wilderness survival skills in extreme environmental conditions and capability to conduct complex logistical planning – but special considerations for field work during the pandemic further shaped preparations for the Ivishak float trip effort. Guided by intent to prioritize the safety of family, neighbors, colleagues, Tribal and community partners to slow the spread and impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic, the team met rigorous FWS-Alaska pre-approval processes for field projects by devising logistics that eliminated access through rural communities to prevent risk of virus transmission, and instead used the Dalton Highway immediately to the east of the Refuge boundary for most approach and egress needs (the feasibility of road access for the take-out, rather than aircraft access, makes the Ivishak WSR unique compared to other wild and scenic rivers in Arctic NWR and on the North Slope of Alaska). The team also developed a safety plan that incorporated COVID-safe practices into the field project plan by opting for travel by packraft, allowing each team member to be self-contained with supplies and equipment, to maintain strict social distancing measures.

In fact, what seemed to be barriers turned out to be the keys to a successful field project. Foreseeing the challenges of using solo boats to remaining a cohesive group, it turns out the use of packrafts enhanced our ability to intimately explore the nooks and crannies of the Ivishak River, report back to the group each of our magical finds, and provide a very thorough investigation and lively discussions about the river portion we packrafted. When weather deteriorated to what many would consider winter conditions on the intended final day of our peak-of-summer trip – preventing planned egress back to the highway by Refuge aircraft – we had the ability to extend our field project an extra day (and an extra 35 miles) beyond the designated portion of the Ivishak WSR, to eventually self-rescue by paddling to our vehicles at the highway, without aircraft support.

Informed by a wild and scenic rivers ORV identification workshop provided by RMS River Training Center earlier in the year, the team made direct observations of the Ivishak

WSR potential values, applied their analytical skills gained in determining ORV criteria, and were emboldened to characterize the stunning scenery, recreation, and fish outstandingly remarkable values of the designated portion vividly, with greater depth and accuracy. As a direct result of the field effort, the team also made a finding of an additional outstandingly remarkable river value for hydrology, since the river’s character is dominated by its ubiquitous and exemplary river-related spring system, which provides perpetual water resources in an Arctic region where water is otherwise relatively scarce or frozen most of the year. The Ivishak WSR has higher flows than most North Slope Rivers – a result of its high-yield springs – and these flows contribute to recreational river values; the abundance of water at consistent temperatures creates exceptional fish spawning and overwintering habitat in the river; and a unique scenic feature is the largest aufeis field on the North Slope of Alaska that forms where the Ivishak River flows out of the mountains. (Aufeis is a sheet-like layer of ice created from successive flows of water during freezing temperatures.) The team, familiar with many Arctic rivers and their springs, realized by being immersed within the Ivishak WSR that its exemplary springs drive all of the ORV characteristics of the river.

Understanding of these authentic descriptive characteristics of the Ivishak WSR contributed directly to a FWS-AK WSR values summary report. The report’s contents will help Arctic Refuge to focus management decisions around maintaining WSR characteristics, and to consider future management direction for rivers, ensuring the Ivishak (and Sheenjek, and Wind WSRs) remain superlative contributions to the National Wild and Scenic River System. ♦

Jennifer Reed works as the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Use Manager and is the FWS IWSRCC Committee Representative.

Friends of Alaska Refuges Membership Meeting

March 16, 2021
5:00pm Alaska / 9:00 pm Eastern
Join this monthly meeting!

Explore the Wild and Scenic Rivers of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges with the US Fish & Wildlife Service’s river specialist – Jen Reed.

This program will take place via Zoom. Details will be available in March through the [Friends of Alaska](http://alaskarefugefriends.org/) website (<http://alaskarefugefriends.org/>). Follow the March Membership Meeting link; no advance-registration requirement.

Presentations are recorded and can be viewed from the website after the event.



Spectacular view toward the source. Photo: Sara Wolman

Want more views of the Ivishak Wild and Scenic River? Follow Arctic Refuge on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/arcticnationalwildliferefuge) (www.facebook.com/arcticnationalwildliferefuge) and browse our video album for Ivishak WSR footage. If you like what you see there, keep your eyes peeled for more FWS social media throughout 2021 that will celebrate all three of the designated WSRs within the Arctic Refuge’s boundary during the Arctic Refuge 60th Anniversary Celebration.

Wild and Scenic

by Cassie Thomas

River Values for FWS in Alaska

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) administers or co-administers seven Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs) in Alaska. These rivers were designated by Congress in October 1980, pursuant to the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA, P.L. 96-487). Like the other WSRs designated by ANILCA, FWS's seven WSRs were deemed eligible for designation based on their free-flowing character and outstanding values. Such values were identified by teams of Bureau of Outdoor Recreation (BOR) employees, most of whom were Outdoor Recreation Planners, in field surveys conducted in the 1970s. These BOR staff focused mainly on the rivers' scenic and recreational values, as little information had yet been compiled by the federal government about other potential values, including natural and cultural values.

Thirty-nine years later, it had become clear that the descriptions of the designated rivers' outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs) from BOR's 1970s reconnaissance surveys were not adequate to ensure that FWS would continue to be able to fulfill the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act's (WSRA, P.L. 90-542) mandate to "protect and enhance" these values, which made the rivers eligible for designation. As a result of decades of scientific survey work, far more was now known about the rivers' natural values, as well as past and present human use and significance. New forms of recreational uses were evolving, and

many of the rivers now drew visitors from around the world. Accordingly, in fall 2019 FWS entered into a contract with the RMS's River Training Center to conduct an ORV identification workshop and compile a regional WSR Values report. The resulting updated ORV descriptions will help FWS meet its WSR management responsibilities by helping set priorities for resource monitoring, and by focusing agency management decisions on the protection of WSR values.

RTC trainers Mollie Chaudet and Cassie Thomas, aided by RMS AK Chapter volunteers Helen Clough and Sharon Seim, worked with Jen Reed (FWS rep to the Interagency Wild and Scenic River Coordinating Council and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge staffer) and FWS's regional planning chief, Stephanie Brady, to design and conduct the January 2020 workshop in Fairbanks, AK. Prior to the workshop, interdisciplinary teams of FWS staff from the five national wildlife refuges where the WSRs are located, and regional resource experts compiled information about potential ORVs, along with the rivers' hydrological characteristics, using forms patterned after the "technical specialist's reports" developed by the National Park Service for its WSR Values workshops. Information incorporated in these reports came both from the original BOR field work, and from agency resource data collected over another four decades.

During the workshop, attendees were given a brief overview of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act and then set to work applying ORV criteria to the potential values included in each WSR's resource assessment. The teams kept careful notes of their deliberations so the rationale for including or excluding each resource value from the ORV list would be documented. For resources determined to be ORVs, any flow or water quality conditions necessary to support the value were also described. Teams presented their preliminary findings to each other during the workshop, which further helped them refine their decisions.

After the in-person workshop, it was evident that some teams had lacked enough representation by certain resource experts to enable them to make final decisions concerning their ORVs. For two rivers located in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the Sheenjek and Wind, the decision was made to hold additional intensive half-day workshops in Spring 2020. Due to the developing Covid-19 pandemic, these workshops were held virtually. For another Arctic NWR river, the Ivishak, staff determined that there was insufficient field knowledge to support final decisions about ORVs, so a float trip was organized in July 2020 (*see article by Jen Reed in this RMS Journal issue*). For a fourth river, the Andreafsky, there was also inadequate field data, but regional Covid quarantine requirements made it infeasible to assemble the right experts

for a float trip. Final ORV descriptions for this river will be developed within the next year or two.

The result of FWS's and the RTC's efforts was a WSR Values report that was presented to FWS regional leadership in December 2020. This report is intended to help FWS managers in their day-to-day refuge management decisions, and will also provide the starting point for updates to the agency's river management plans. All involved in the effort were very enthusiastic about this important product, which was the result of a successful partnership between FWS, RTC, and key RMS volunteers. ♦



Rafts at the ready on the Ivishak River, Alaska. Photo: Nathan Hawkaluk

January 2020 workshop facilitators, from left, Stephanie Brady, Mollie Chaudet, Helen Clough, Cassie Thomas, and Jen Reed. Photo: Ian Wright



Covid Notes From An Antipodean Alaskan



View from my glider over
Nelson Lakes National Park.
We're running along a "convergence,"
which is like an eddy line in the air.

by Lon Kelly

Hello to the RMS membership. I'm writing from New Zealand, where COVID-19 has been largely eliminated: stopped at the borders by government action and public support that evolved along with our knowledge of the virus. While some businesses, particularly those reliant on international travel, have been terribly hurt or even ruined, day to day activities and work seem normal. We meet, we shop, we carpool, we travel in-country as we did pre-COVID. The economy is doing far better than forecasted a few months ago. New Zealand's economic recovery is going about as well as in the USA and Australia, and better than the UK and Japan.

New Zealand has recorded fewer than 2,200 COVID-19 cases and 25 deaths with a population of about 4.9 million. Alaska has documented about 47,000 cases and 200 deaths with a population under 800,000. It's painful to hear of the extensive and ongoing damage suffered by everyone back home.

I have been thinking about these statistics. I'm sure there is some confirmation bias on my part, and I know I'm not qualified to generalize about either Alaska or NZ. I just read the digital papers and talk to a small circle of friends and acquaintances, so what do I know? Maybe you shouldn't be reading this at all, but if you choose to continue, I will advance a partial explanation

I've been working on, mostly because people here so often ask me,

**“What's up with the USA,
and Alaska in particular,
and the failure to deal with COVID?”**

I propose that in this issue of the *RMS Journal*, focusing on Alaskan river issues, it's worth asking why, while New Zealand was able to largely eliminate the virus, Alaska was not? Both places are physically isolated from the rest of the world, with a small handful of international airports and seaports. Alaska has the long border with Canada and as much coastline as the rest of the US, but as a practical matter, its borders don't seem harder to control than New Zealand's. A Kiwi political COVID catchphrase has been, “We go hard and go early.” Doesn't that sound like something Alaskans could buy into?

There are plenty of differences between these places, of course. Alaska is a state in our federal republic, while New Zealand is a sovereign nation. Alaska's population per unit area is tiny compared to New Zealand's. The US federal government has been led by an aged charismatic reality show star who thrives

on conflict and recently narrowly lost his bid for reelection, while NZ is led by a young charismatic mother — with a pandemic mantra, “Be strong, and be kind to each other” — who recently won a resounding electoral victory.

Moving on, and leaving federalism, the commerce clause of the US Constitution, and leadership style to the side, it seems to me that a significant factor in New Zealand's pandemic success is widely shared experience of the environmental impacts of invasive species and appreciation for the costly changes in human behavior required for mitigation once invasives are established. This shared knowledge isn't present in Alaska.

People have been manipulating the environment in New Zealand, extirpating native species and introducing invasive ones, since the earliest Polynesian settlement, and nearly every Kiwi knows this well. European settlers introduced plants and animals with wide-reaching and often unintended consequences and the evidence is all around us, from impenetrable gorse thickets on the hillsides to feral goats in the high country. Of course, Alaskans have been manipulating the environment and dealing with invasive species too. Paleoindians were hunting mammoths in Alaska thousands of years before the moa hunters came to New Zealand.

Turning to rivers, water quality is a present and widespread concern, particularly concerning didymo, a diatom first identified in NZ in 2004, also known as “river snot.” Didymo came in on top of the dairy farming boom that started in the 1990s. Dairy boosted the economy while introducing increased levels of e. coli and nutrients to surface water that can create health hazards. Dairy exports have grown ten-fold since 1990 and today many waterways are too dangerous for swimming due to bacterial and algal pathogens. Water quality improvement is now the second priority of the Environment Ministry, after climate change. Pretty much anyone who was alive in 1980 is reminded of water quality loss every time they pass over a bridge or think about having a swim: they know how hard it will be to turn back the tide.

In the bush, New Zealand runs an extensive, expensive, and controversial predator control program. It includes dropping 1080 pellets from helicopters to control rats and other introduced animals that prey on native birds. Rivers are supposed to be avoided by the 1080 drops, but it is clear some of the pellets wind up in the streams and ingested by fish. There are many other invasive mitigation programs underway: just Google “NZ invasive species.”

The bottom line is that the majority of Kiwis are quite familiar with how hard it is to control an invasive species once it gets a foothold. They will therefore support going hard and going early with the goal of elimination of a new exogenous threat and will tolerate subsequent vigilance and expense to maintain gains, especially after a costly and inconvenient initial attack has been successful. When a traveler breaks managed isolation people get mad. Early control at the border is one thing that has been shown to work. In Alaska, with much more land and smaller population, we simply don't have a critical mass of people who believe this in their hearts. The impacts of invasive species and human action in general are thin on the ground in Alaska, and not so obvious to everyone as they are in New Zealand. Could that be more consequential than leadership style? I think so.

Pete Seger famously repeated,

“I have no hope. I could be wrong.”

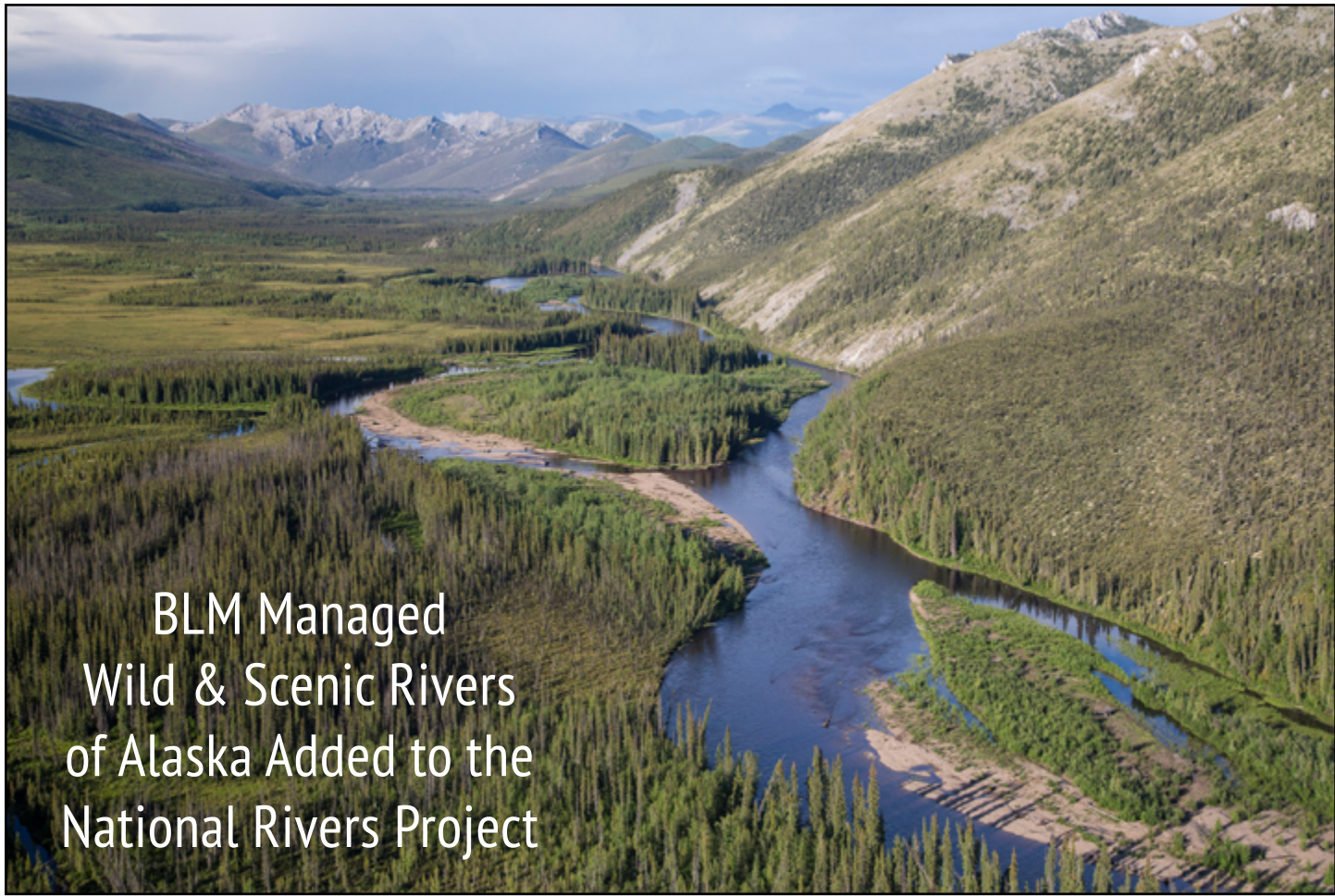
I won't go that far. Despite the demoralized state of the US land management agencies, I don't think we're winding up the long defeat. I hope to be vaccinated and able to return to Fairbanks in 2021. I hope we'll be able to eliminate this particular threat worldwide. I hope Alaskans can mobilize united support to go hard and go early next time, and to be strong and kind. I hope DOI can be renewed, so that the demoralized yet still dedicated public servants working there can be recognized and energized and supported. Maybe we'll even give a little more thought to our surface waters. It could pay off down the road.

Background

When I retired from BLM in 2015, Nora and I were well into a multi-year process towards permanent resident status in New Zealand. The idea was to have an endless summer. We would emulate the godwits and migrate with the seasons between our home in Fairbanks, Alaska, and our second home in Nelson, located on Tasman Bay towards the north end of the South Island. The COVID-19 pandemic changed our plan in March 2020, when my return tickets to Fairbanks via Honolulu were cancelled by the airlines. Soon after, New Zealand ratcheted up a lockdown where everyone except essential workers mostly stayed home for some six weeks. When we went for groceries or medicine, we cleaned our hands, signed in for contact tracing, and kept our distance according to markings on the sidewalks and store floors. The borders were squeezed shut, and remain so. Only NZ residents, with few exceptions, are allowed back in, and everyone is subject to supervised quarantine before movement into the general population is allowed.

Nora and I don't get out fishing or boating much these days. We ride our bikes. Nora lifts weights. I fly my glider. Glider pilots spend their days trying to visualize, anticipate, and sense how solar energy, gravity, and the earth's rotation drive air movements at every scale. We may recline more or less motionless in the cockpit for hours, but there is no time for thoughts of politics or pandemics. We observe the sun on the mountains, the circling birds, and ever-changing clouds with all our might. It's interesting that most of the phenomena you find in a stream are manifest in gliding. Air flows over and around the mountains as a fluid, with turbulence and eddies that are difficult to see ahead of time yet can help you move along safely. In fact, hydraulic jumps and downstream waves are the soaring pilot's main paths to long distance flights at high speeds, far above the thermally active layer of the atmosphere. So, even while our boats sit in Fairbanks, you might say I am still going with the flow.

I admit to some guilt-tripping about the glider. I don't claim sitting in a carbon composite electronically instrumented cocoon is an especially healthy activity, though it does focus mental and sensory attention on the atmosphere and solar power. Not green, but green-ish? Un-hip meditation practice or flow experience? Less ethical than riding a huge self-bailer and managing the ice cream cooler? A certain well-known glider coach says it's “extreme sport for old guys.” Whatever. I've made my peace with it and just hope to learn and improve and meet some goals before I age out. Cheers, Lon Kelly ♦



BLM Managed Wild & Scenic Rivers of Alaska Added to the National Rivers Project

by James Major

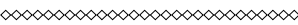
The first new additions to the National Rivers Project (NRP) in 2021 are here thanks to our partnership with Zach Million and other staff members of the Alaska Bureau of Land Management! RMS is excited to announce the inclusion of 640 miles of boatable BLM managed rivers in Alaska to the NRP and National River Recreation Database (NRRD). The NRRD is a geospatial portfolio of information on Wild & Scenic Rivers, water trails, whitewater rivers, access points, and campgrounds within the United States. The NRP is the website serving to help identify, explore, and plan trips on rivers within the database. Together, comprehensive river recreation and management information is provided for paddlers and resource managers.

These 640 miles represent segments of 13 designated National Wild & Scenic Rivers across the state. Segments that have been added are on Birch Creek, Beaver Creek, Unalakleet River, Delta River, Tangle River, Gulkana River, along with seven segments of the Fortymile River system. These include Logging Cabin Creek, West Fork Dennison Fork, Dennison Fork, and the North, Middle, South, and Main Forks of the Fortymile River. Several segments are notable for their accessibility in a state with many rivers and few roads, including the Delta and Tangle, accessed by the Richardson and Denali Highways, and the Fortymile system with access points along the Taylor Highway. For those seeking more remote adventures, there are access points on several rivers that are accessible only by air.

Beaver Creek National Wild and Scenic River.
Photo: Bob Wick (BLM)

In addition to the boatable reaches added to the NRP, 19 access sites and 7 campgrounds have also been added to assist with trip planning. A variety of trip lengths can be accomplished on the newly added rivers, from one to two-day trips on the Fortymile, to what the BLM says may be the longest road-to-road float in North America, with put-in for the Beaver Creek Wild and Scenic section at Nome Creek and take-out at the Yukon River Bridge that carries the Dalton Highway 360 miles downstream.

Stay tuned in the upcoming months as we add more BLM managed boatable Wild & Scenic Rivers in the Western U.S.! Contact James Major at james@river-management.org for more details. ♦



The National Rivers Project is a product of several federal agencies, state programs, nonprofit organizations, and efforts of individuals. The Project has been fortunate to work with partners from all over the United States to bring together paddling information for Wild & Scenic Rivers, water trails and whitewater rivers. River Management Society is grateful for financial support offered by the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Without these federal partnerships, the database and website would not be what they are today – what already has been captured, and what is in the queue to add.

River Management During Covid

by Judy Culver

Recreation, Game and Fish and local tourism groups spent years researching techniques to reach non-traditional users and build local recreation based tourism. COVID-19 solved that conundrum but devastated beloved recreation areas, waterways and river systems around the country. Recreation and river management was turned on its ear by COVID-19 and the unexpected and unprecedented exponential increase in outdoor recreation with daily visitation above and beyond 4th of July weekend numbers.

River managers are used to increased pirated and illegal river trips on permitted rivers during high water years but the usage seen in 2020 was unusual in so many ways. Each state installed frequently changing public restrictions and outfitter policies requiring interpretation, planning on the fly, and adjustments to river permits and for river runners. At a time where some areas were closed, those areas or river systems that remained open were overrun by new users and visitors unfamiliar with even the basic concepts of Leave No Trace, staying on the trail, recreating responsibly on public lands, the importance of wearing lifejackets and knowing the dangers of the activity they are attempting.

Frustration at politics, losing employment, COVID-19 restrictions, being confined, or river systems being closed was expressed through trespass, increased vandalism, illegal and unsafe boat practices, violent conflicts with other river and trail users and general abuse of public, private and tribal lands. Attacks on land managers, private property owners and road crew employees, equipment and each other increased along with visitation numbers skyrocketing above 4th of July numbers in areas that remained open.

RMS began hosting river management discussions attended by state, city, federal agencies and outfitters in an attempt to gather together the resources and information about what river managers were seeing on the ground and how different river programs, outfitters, and states were managing river systems and general operations during COVID-19. Without the support of RMS and the sharing of information and tools

to manage use, and protect staff and volunteers, there would have been more impacts, less communication and less planning for 2021 and beyond.

Now the genie is out of the bottle — aggressive and improper behavior is becoming the norm while recreating on public lands and waterways — there is no way in the foreseeable future to put it back in the bottle. River managers and our partners have a huge task of figuring out

(continued page 30)

SOCIAL DISTANCING FOR ALASKAN BOATERS

1.3 CANOE PADDLES

4.8 TYPE IV THROWABLE FLOTATION DEVICES

0.6 STAND UP PADDLEBOARDS

4 LIFE JACKETS

Welcome!

New RMS Members

Professional

Cody Perry, Founder, Director
Rig To Flip, Grand Junction, CO

Andrew Petitdemange, Natural Resource Specialist
National Park Service, Boston, MA

Martin Overholt, Bowling Green, OH

Lochen Wood, NEPA Planner
USDA Forest Service, Fort Collins, CO

Lindsey Wight, Executive Director
Missisquoi River Basin Association, East Berkshire, VT

Jack McNamee, Consultant- Liaison
River Creek Confluence Park Committee, Leesburg, VA

Casey Andrews, WSR and Wilderness Manager
USFS, Hood River, OR

Dave Johnson, President
Leavenworth Outdoor Center, Leavenworth, WA

Tim Abbe, Chief Science Officer
Natural Systems Design, Port Angeles, WA

Kestrel Kunz, Southern Rockies Stewardship Assistant
American Whitewater, Crested Butte, CO

Hattie Johnson, Southern Rockies Stewardship Director
American Whitewater, Carbondale, CO

Associate

Tiffanee Hutton, Restoration Project Manager
Trout Unlimited, Truckee, CA

Maria Blevins, Associate Professor
Utah Valley University, Salt Lake City, UT

Malcolm Miller, Salida, CO

Bud Hoekstra, BerryBlest Farm, Glencoe, CA

Government / Corporate

Big Adventures, LLC, Fletcher, NC
Tyler Brown, Chief Operating Officer
Steve Jordan, Sales Manager

Dept of Conservation and Recreation, Richmond, VA
Nathan Burrell

Bureau of Land Management, Redding, CA
Jessica Tyra, Outdoor Recreation Planner
David Byers, Park Ranger
Lauren Archer, Park Ranger

Government / Corporate Member Plus

Ohio River Recreation Trail, Louisville, KY
David Wicks Perry Thomas
Russell Clark Brewster Rhoads
David Rutter Jack Sutton
Jerry Shulte

Government / Corporate Plus

Dawn Duncan, Engineering Department
Natural Systems Design, Seattle, WA

Nonprofit / NGO Member

Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, Abingdon, MD
Kathleen Hoenke, GIS Coordinator / Spatial Ecologist

Idaho Rivers United, Boise, ID
Reese Hodges, Conservation Associate

Adventure Scientists, Bozeman, MT
Jenelle Dowling, Scientific Director

Student

Ben Fowler, Ph.D. Student
Park Solutions Lab, Clemson University, Atlanta, GA

Max Evans
Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Christian Fauser, M.S. Student
Environmental Science and Policy
North Arizona University, Flagstaff, AZ

Marc Speake
Sierra Nevada University, Incline Village, NV

How does an “agricultural logo” relate to river management?

by Dave Schade

If you have been following my articles over the years, you would see that my own understanding of river management has expanded (evolved) over the last decade as I have changed positions here in the Department of Natural Resources¹. In my last journal article, I discussed why I believe that the river management field is much larger than most of us routinely think and that everyone is now (or at least should be) much more aware of the need for water and management of our water resources.

In my new position as Director of the Division of Agriculture, I started an assessment of the state of the Division and the industry. I did not get very far along with the analyses, when I realized the Division didn’t have a logo. All other DNR Divisions had great logos, but staff had defaulted to using our “Alaska Grown” marketing logo; and after lengthy discussion, I learned that three different attempts to design a logo had failed.

Therefore, I decided that it was imperative for our staff to design a logo for the Division. That became a process in itself, and it soon became apparent why the previous attempts failed. In short (just like the issues and discussions we had when developing our new RMS logo), the views on what the Division did and how we should portray ourselves were so divergent — we couldn’t get a focus on where to go. So, we decided to develop a number of types of logos, and then started to eliminate and refine where we wanted to go. We quickly figured out that while some delightful, artistic designs were great for color print, when we tried to figure out how to use them on a shirt or other materials, they would be pretty near impossible. We also had to steer clear of conflicts with other state and agricultural-themed logos as well.

After about four iterations, we had simplified our designs, and started to focus in on what the Division represents for ourselves and the industry. Those elements were agricultural production, environmental quality (i.e. we do invasive pest detection and control as well as provide natural grasses, etc. for reclamation of impaired lands), inspection, and marketing services. Well, as you might guess, it also became apparent that we were not going to get that all in a logo that fits in a 3-inch circle. Therefore, we continued to simplify even more.



And then it all started coming together. The Division is responsible for the support and regulation of food and fiber production in Alaska, as well as supporting all of our natural resource industries with the sustainable development of our land and other resources. With that in mind, we started working on putting simple elements together which would distinguish what we do. We started with a mountain and tree background, which represents the natural state that is Alaska. Then we added fields — one representing grazing (which has a barn adjacent) and the other representing row crop production (which has a tractor). But that still wasn’t right, so we added the element that always ties everything together – water. That is right, we illustrated a river flowing out of the mountains and down through the fields. Now we were getting pretty close, but someone pointed out that we needed the fence to keep things segregated.

Now, don’t think this went quickly or easily. We had many, many versions, and hours of discussion on which animals to put on the logo, what kind of tractor, etc. But, in the end, we decided to leave the concept simple — and hopefully, it is one that will stand the test of time. However, we *still* were not done. This logo could be used for many northern latitude states (or even country ag departments) so we tried a couple of additions to make it Alaska. The final two came down to a northern lights sky or the Alaska flag’s “big dipper.” And again, since the northern lights are not just a symbol of Alaska, I pushed for the state flag background. I think that our team did a great job on the logo, and am equally happy with how we all discussed the issues of water and rivers and their importance as we went through the process.

In closing, I hope you can see how everyone (especially managers) should consider rivers — even those who work in agricultural management need an understanding (read RMS training here) of watershed and river management. I also hope you like the final Alaska Division of Agriculture’s logo as well as we all do! ♦

¹ For those of you who have not, I started in 2008 as the Navigability Sub-Unit Manager in the Public Access Assertion and Defense Unit (A river manager job), then in 2012 became the Water Resources Section Chief (all things water management surface and subsurface) and I am now the Director of the Division of Agriculture.

Introducing 2021-2023 Northeast Chapter Officers

President – Emma Lord

Emma’s love for water and rivers started in the foothills of the Catskill Mountains in upstate New York. Summertime trips to the best (and secret) swimming hole on Catskill Creek were filled with swimming, fossil collecting, wildlife sightings, and the all-around enjoyment of the sights and sounds of being on a river. Emma earned a B.A. in Environmental Studies from Green Mountain College (2013) and M.S. in Geology from the University of North Dakota (2016), with a concentration in geomorphology. She is currently a Natural Resource Specialist with the National Park Service (NPS) in New Hampshire. Working in the Partnership Wild and Scenic Rivers Program, Emma works with local Wild and Scenic communities and partners to protect and enhance their outstanding rivers and river-related resources through a collaborative approach.

After a referral from a longstanding member, Emma joined RMS in 2017 while working as a Wild and Scenic Rivers Fellow with NPS. She served as the RMS Northeast Chapter President from 2018-2020 and helped with the marketing and outreach efforts for the 2018 RMS Symposium. Emma is currently on the planning team for the 2021 RMS Symposium as well.

Vice President - John Field

Dr. John Field, President of Field Geology Services, LLC, received a Ph.D. in 1994 from the University of Arizona with concentrations in fluvial geomorphology and hydrology. During eight years as a university professor, Dr. Field received two excellence in teaching awards and was active in training teachers and government agency personnel on techniques for identifying flood and erosion hazards and assessing the stability and habitat conditions of rivers. Dr. Field has over 20 years of professional experience related to river restoration and has designed and installed numerous projects throughout New England utilizing large wood to improve river function and aquatic habitat. John has also been involved in international work, most recently in Nepal — working to prevent irrigation canal intakes from being eroded away by the Karnali River, the largest in Nepal.

Trip Coordinator – John Little

During college, John worked for the Chewonki Foundation in Maine, initially as a camp counselor then a certified Canoe and Hiking Trip Leader. He was in love with the idea that he could get paid to travel and explore many of the best wild rivers in Maine. Since then, John’s paddled the Moisie and George in Quebec, the Connecticut and Susquehanna, as well as paddling from the Quebec border to NYC via Lake Champlain, the Champlain Canal and the Hudson River.

In 1982 John became employed at Richford Jr/Sr High School as their upper level science teacher. He enriched the curriculum with many field trips over the years, as well as co-lead the school’s ski program. In 1996 John earned a M.S. for Teachers, and expanded his teaching to include both Community College of Vermont and Vermont Technical College. Always he stressed the importance of the hands-on, experiential aspects of science and learning.

In the early 1990’s, John joined forces with other local citizens in an effort to protect their local river — from this sprang the Missisquoi River Basin Association (MRBA), working to protect and improve water quality for more than 25 years. MRBA has planted more than 20,000 trees, provided hands-on educational programs to local schools, and won the Governor’s Award for Environmental Excellence.

In 2004, with the support of the MRBA, John started going to local town boards and businesses to gain support for National Wild and Scenic Rivers designation. A decade later, the Upper Missisquoi and Trout Rivers (UMATR) were added to the national register of Wild and Scenic Rivers. Since, this new entity has been working to help disburse federal funds to preserve, protect and increase access to the designated sections of the local watershed. A couple years later, RMS presented John with the Frank Church Wild and Scenic Rivers Award in recognition of his efforts to make this all happen.

John has spent a goodly part of his life teaching about the natural world and how to enjoy its beauty. After 36 years in the public arena, he retired from teaching in 2018. John intends to spend more time paddling our natural aquatic environments, as well as enjoying his home in the hills of Vermont. ♦



Emma Lord



John Field



John Little

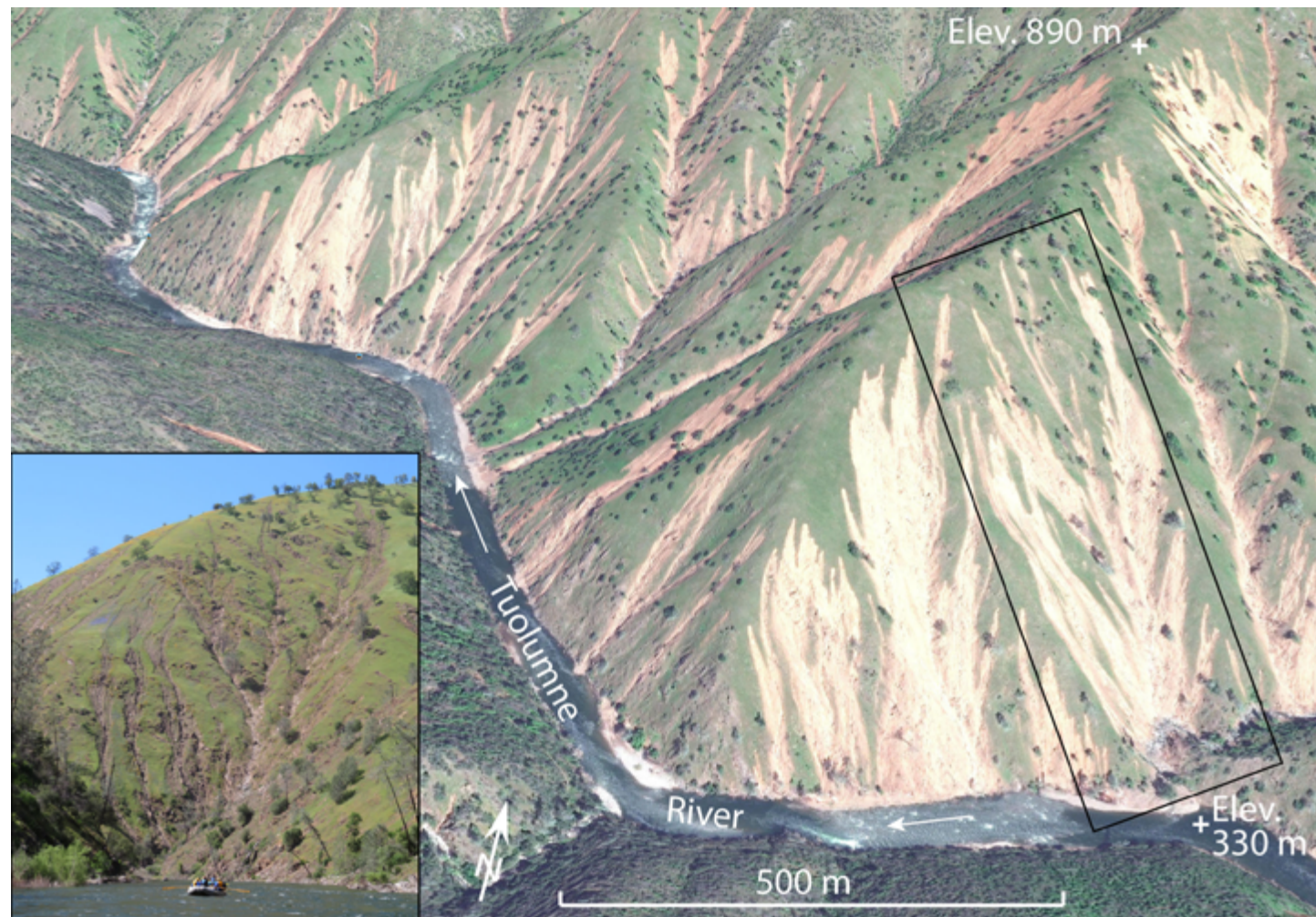
Linking Mesoscale Meteorology With Extreme Landscape Response: Effects of Narrow Cold Frontal Rainbands (NCFR)

by Brian D. Collins, Ph.D., P.E.

Major storms can cause extreme and hazardous landscape disturbances, but links between storm conditions and landscape response such as erosion and landslides remain poorly constrained. This is partly due to the lack of attention generally given to the finer-scale details of storms. We examined one type of atmospheric feature that is common in western North America (as well as in other regions), the narrow cold frontal rainband, and studied its effects on the landscape. In 2018, one such event

in the Tuolumne River watershed, California, caused more than 500 landslides in a narrow area, moving more sediment in one day than the river would normally transport in a year. We find that landscape change, including potentially hazardous events such as landslides, can be driven primarily by fine-scale rainfall patterns rather than by the larger-scale storm conditions. More integration between weather and landscape scientists can advance knowledge of how storms influence landscapes and produce hazards, especially during extreme events.

Below: Oblique image of the hundreds of shallow landslides within the Tuolumne River canyon north of Groveland, California, caused by the 22 March 2018 NCFR. Inset image shows view taken from river level on 21 April 2019 of the area encompassed by the black rectangle. Oblique image from GeoEye taken on 17 April 2018.

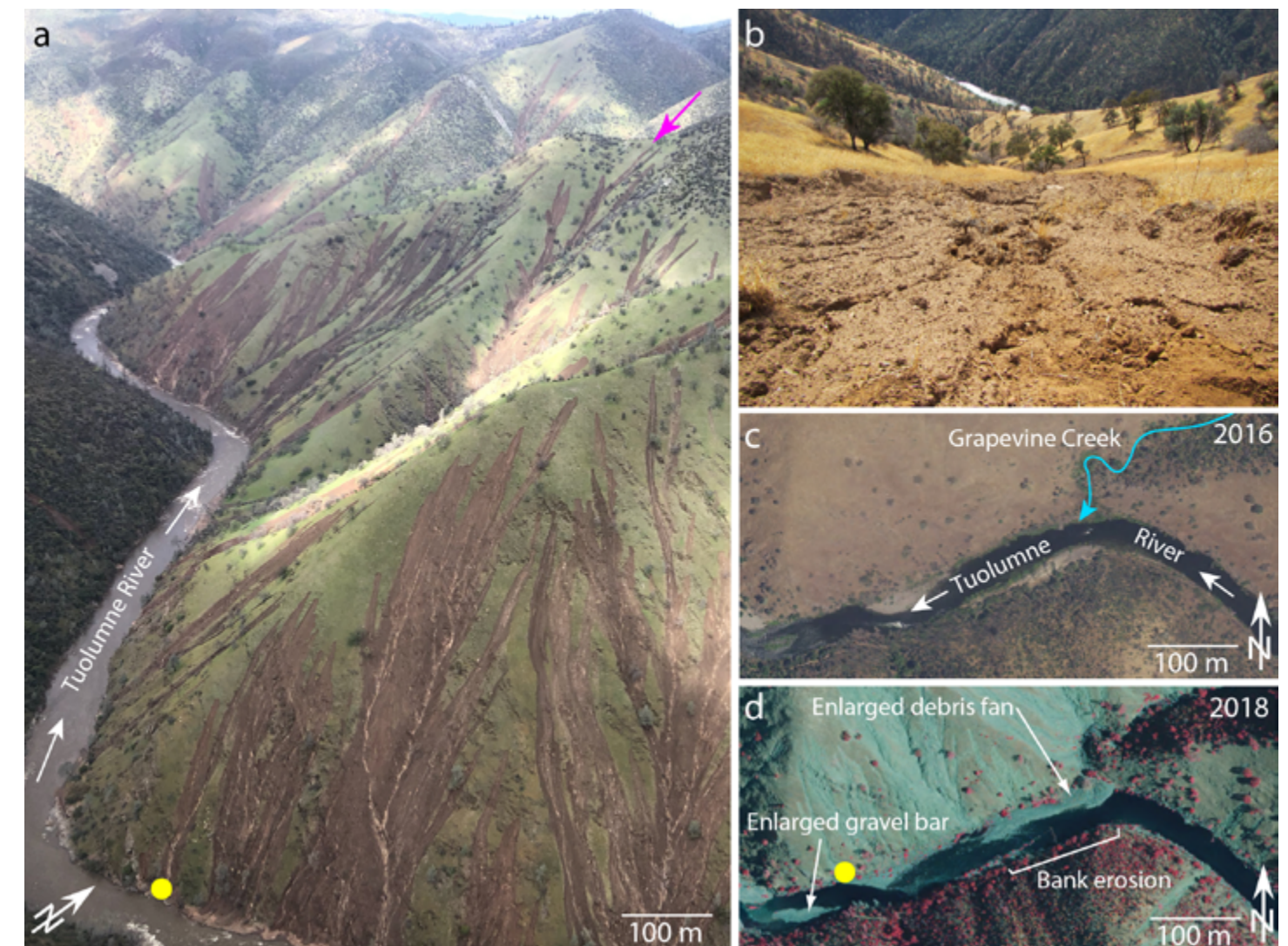


Below: Examples of geomorphic effects from the 22 March 2018 storm in the Tuolumne River canyon. (a) Overview image taken one day after the storm showing shallow landslide and debris flow scars. Image credit: Wayne Handley (used with permission). (b) Detail of initiation zone for one landslide, where soil failed down to saprolite on a south facing hillslope covered with grass. Pink arrow in (a) identifies location and view angle of image. Panels (c) and (d) show aerial images of the confluence of the Grapevine Creek tributary with the Tuolumne River in 2016 (prestorm) and 2018 (poststorm), respectively (yellow dot identifies identical location in [a], see also bottom right area of previous figure on p.24). In (d), compared to (c), landslides and debris flow channels are visible on hillslopes on both sides of the river, and the debris fan at the mouth of Grapevine Creek had enlarged greatly, as had a gravel bar 200 m downstream. Bank erosion occurred as the flow shifted toward river-left (south) in response to enlargement of the Grapevine Creek debris fan. ♦



This brief summary was submitted by:
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A [full journal article](https://doi.org/10.1029/2020JF005675) about the March 2018 Tuolumne Canyon landslides can be found at:
<https://doi.org/10.1029/2020JF005675>



(RMS Officers, continued from page 5)

Helen has been very involved with the RMS River Training Center since its inception in 2016 as a mentor, advisor and trainer. She was recently awarded the Interagency Wild and Scenic River Coordinating Council's *Jackie Diedrich Wild and Scenic Rivers Leadership Award* in recognition of her contributions to the River Training Center, helping to ensure that RMS meets the training needs of Wild and Scenic river managers throughout the country.

Helen lives in Juneau, AK, and during “normal” years spends a lot of time with her husband and dogs on a 40-foot trawler fishing and boating around southeast Alaska, British Columbia and Washington. Welcome back Helen, and thank you for your continued service and dedication! ♦



Helen Clough Receives Jackie Diedrich Wild and Scenic Rivers Leadership Award

by Bekah Price

The River Management Society (RMS) is thrilled to congratulate our incredible RMS Secretary Helen Clough on receiving the *Jackie Diedrich Wild and Scenic Rivers Leadership Award* from the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council (IWSRCC) on December 17, 2020.

The Council's Acting Chair Jennifer Beck, National Park Service, presented the award. The award recognizes river administering agency staff and former staff who have shown outstanding leadership in going above and beyond their assigned duties to help federal agencies protect and manage Wild and Scenic Rivers (WSRs), build capacity for river stewardship, and develop exemplary training programs for WSR professionals.

“Her dedication to sharing her vast professional experience with the next generation of river stewards is honorable and invaluable,” said Beck. “Helen has demonstrated outstanding leadership in her work to support river stewardship as Secretary of the RMS National Board, often going well beyond her designated board duties to ensure that RMS meets the training needs of Wild and Scenic river managers throughout the country and throughout the system.”

Now retired, Helen dedicated nearly 40 years of service to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, and USDA Forest Service. She has served as the RMS



Helen Clough and Ketcher

Symposium Program Chair and provided critical assistance to the RMS River Training Center, including leading efforts to coordinate with its instructor cadre, and effectively engaging with the IWSRCC Training Subcommittee.

“While sometimes progress is very slow or nonexistent, I think the river management community has come very far in a very short time,” said Clough.

“I’m especially encouraged by what we’ve accomplished this year in spite of the incredible challenges we faced both at work and at home. I’m really excited, and I don’t take much credit for it — Angie, Risa, Steve, Jennifer and a whole host of other people who’ve gotten the River Training Center really up and running — I think it’s doing incredible things. The State River Managers Group is coming together, and we’ve done this in spite of and maybe because of Covid. More people seem to be out there taking advantage of these resources because of Covid. And most importantly, all of you still in the trenches are there every day doing the best you can to take us forward. So I thank you very much for honoring me, and most of all, I thank you guys for what you do. I really appreciate it.”

Helen’s favorite river is the Black River in Alaska, followed by the Colorado River in the Grand Canyon. ♦

“Outstanding leadership and unrelenting enthusiasm.” A fitting description of Helen Clough, winner of the 2020 Jackie Diedrich Wild and Scenic Rivers Leadership Award!

Always a self-described *water person*, Helen plunged into river management plans when she went to work for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1990. Seeking more knowledge and training, she joined RMS and attended the first *Rivers for Tomorrow* symposium in Portland, Oregon. From there, Helen built a rich professional and volunteer career that included helping federal river management agencies protect and manage WSRs, build capacity for WSR stewardship, and develop exemplary training programs for WSR professionals — alongside her responsibilities as a member of the RMS Board of Directors.

In her federal career, Helen worked for several agencies, including as the Chief of Conservation Planning and Policy for the National Wildlife Refuges in Alaska for over six years, at the National Conservation Training Center, with the Bureau of Land Management, and with the USDA Forest Service. Throughout her career, Helen has developed, provided, and overseen training for thousands of employees and she continues to carry this work forward with an emphasis on river stewardship and management.

When asked for her thoughts on how river lovers can translate their passion into action, Helen reflected on following the advice of a mentor to get out there and see the rivers you’re working on: “It really did help me understand the issues and the planning, and gave me multiple opportunities to visit folks in the small rural Alaska Native villages along several of the rivers.”

She has appreciated over time seeing positive results from many of the things she recommended being implemented. When reflecting on volunteering, Helen noted that it was a great way to gain experience, insight, and contacts, plus accomplish important work that might not be part of your job. “We’re all in this for the

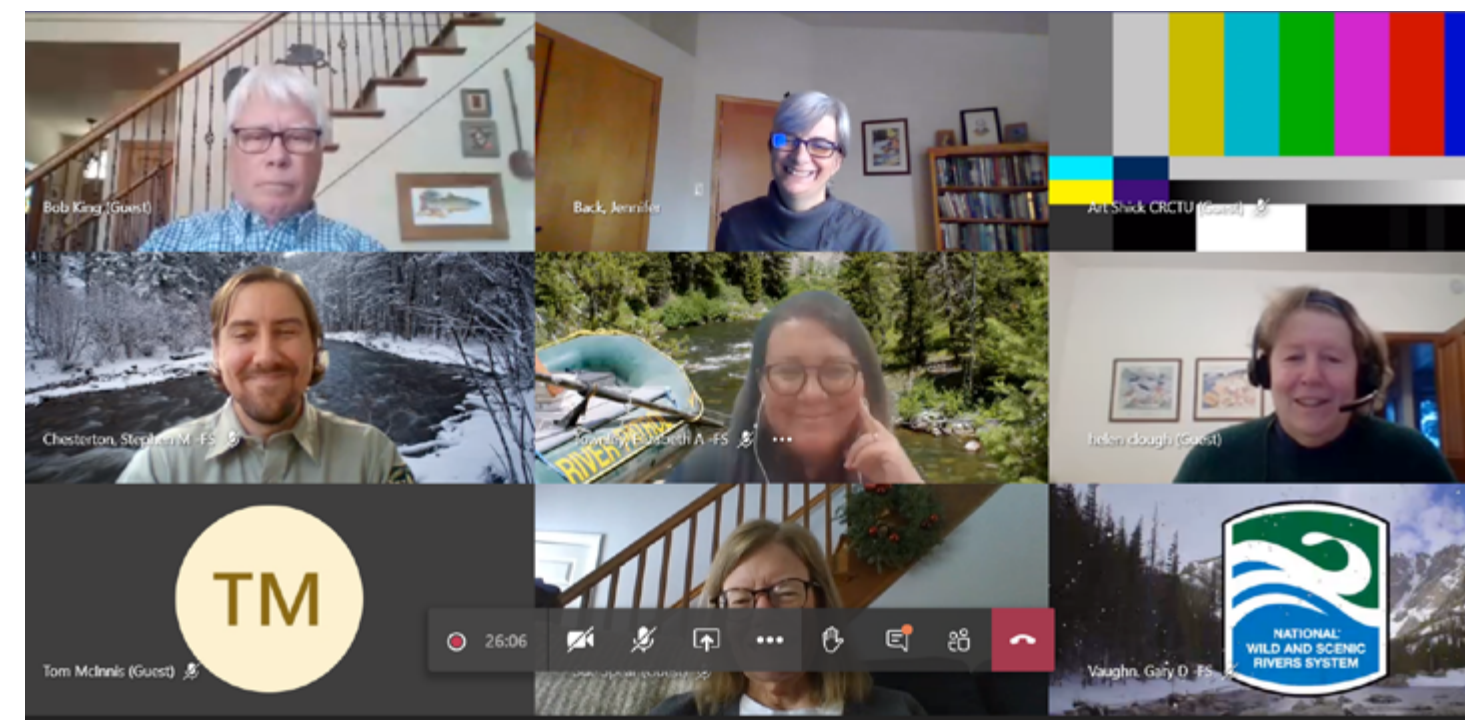
long haul, so don’t get discouraged or give up — keep trying until you find something that does work.”

Just a few examples of Helen’s commitment and contributions include chairing the 2018 *Wild, Scenic and Beyond!* River Management Symposium, in large measure a commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act; serving as Chair for the upcoming RMS Symposium in May 2021; organizing and supporting RMS training opportunities across the spectrum of river topics; coaching sessions for Comprehensive River Management Plans; multiple roles on the RMS Board of Directors; and participation in the Interagency Wild and Scenic Rivers Coordinating Council education subcommittee.

Helen has given not just funding and time, but heart to the WSR system. Her commitment to training the next generation of stewards and working proactively to ensure a broad base of agency, partner, and general understanding of WSRs is unparalleled. Thank you, Helen, and all the best for your next river adventures!

What is the best part of being involved with RMS?

Helen: “The combined skills, knowledge, dedication, and willingness to share of our members. I learned so much from folks like Jackie, Bob, Risa, Linda, Bo and a host of others who don’t even know me but taught me a lot of great stuff — what a privilege to work with a whole bunch of incredible people! It’s also a great opportunity for continuous learning.” ♦



Rowing On

by Cody Perry

Herm Hoops. Dedicated river runner, historian, advocate, and general pain in the ass passed away at his home in Jensen, Utah, on Monday afternoon, November 23rd. I like to think that as he pushed off this last time, the Green River inexplicably swelled to flood stage. A final gesture to an old friend. Let the following be a humble tribute in grief and love, waving farewell to this unforgettable character in the toucan hat.

Herm grew up as a rough-and-tumble farm kid in tri-state New York. The Hoops family had a small but notable operation raising horses, cows, and producing hay. It's here where Herm molded his adventurous spirit with plenty of open spaces and the oars of a little row boat to pull around the farm pond.

His first introduction to the wide West was through the window of a 50's station wagon during a family road trip. That trip, the scale of it all, left an indelible impression on the Hoops family; but it's clear that for Herm it was the beginning of something altogether different.

Herm learned to love running rivers in Vermont, but nothing could have prepared him for the seductive labyrinths of the Colorado Plateau. These were the halcyon days of early river running during the 1970s. Rafting wasn't near as popular, pedestrian, or middle class as it is today. The boats, the gear, even the river access were far more primitive. With no crowds and no permits necessary, Herm fanned out running rivers in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho. But there seemed to be a special chemistry, a kind of destiny with one canyon in particular: Desolation.

I came to know of Herm as a guy who did a ton of trips through Desolation Canyon. He always seemed to be on the river. I saw his name credited in every book I could get my hands on about Deso. From the Belknap Guides to James Aton's classic,



The River Knows Everything, and many, many more. There's a solid chance any given river guide in Desolation or Dinosaur either knew, loved, tolerated or were terrified of Herm Hoops. An imposing, large, grizzly of a man, who is always introduced as a legend and known to wear a toucan hat on the river, and little else.

Herm was mercurial. He was serious, obsessive, and could dig in with no intention to budge. He was also a hopeless romantic, he was reflective, self deprecating and FUNNY! Herm somehow managed to be an outlaw and a sheriff in the river community all at once, and he did that across decades. He knew the owners and operators of major inflatable boat manufacturers and, maybe more importantly, every bartender at Ray's Tavern in Green River.

I can speak for the river community that we've lost an elder and an icon. His absence will be felt in the circles of average river rats, federal water managers, congressional staffers, and anyone foolish enough to let Herm Hoops get a hold of your email address. It's been a single day and I can feel the immense undertow of his absence; and an empty green parrot hat.

A few years ago, I was returning some borrowed gear to Herm and we sat down for a moment in his garage to catch up. You have to imagine this space, a two-door bay with a boat in some stage of repair. The walls are covered in river memorabilia. Posters, stickers, maps, photographs, and gear. All of it is well used and organized — *Hoops* stenciled on every ammo can. We looked out over the fields toward the Green River and suddenly, Herm told me he had been diagnosed with cancer. Not knowing what to say, I asked him if he wanted to go down Deso.

Herm's love for rivers isn't unusual; but his lifelong dedication to their conservation is. Years of participating in the mundane public comment process, attending countless late-night



water meetings across the region, drafting letter after letter to all levels of decision-makers. Herm did all this — he made a difference. He made worthy friends and adversaries.

He straddled a time before and after standardized western river regulations were developed, before designer life jackets and Facebook forums. Herm led generations of boaters toward his own brand of a conservation ethic before river conservation was an assumed pillar of rafting culture. Herm understood that threats came from not only oil and gas, or water development, but also unchecked recreation along these treasured rivers. When it came to protecting a place, Herm never stopped pushing the rafting industry, the boating community, or stirring the pot.

Herm's passion went beyond the deep canyons of the Colorado Plateau and into the arms and support of his loving partner Valerie. Herm met Val while he was working as a ranger in Dinosaur National Monument and lucky for him, convinced her to come on a river trip. Val is beautiful, quiet, and shy. Herm is large, bellicose, and gregarious. Like a swirling eddy, they balanced each other. Herm and Val had a tradition of conducting a romantic dinner on the banks of the river. Herm looking dapper in a formal military mess dress uniform and Val dazzling in a

black mini skirt cocktail dress. They'd set out a table complete with candles and champagne. Toasting their union, enveloped in majesty around them, enveloped in each other.

Herm loved being a father to his two kids — Hatteras and Gillian — and introduced them both to the river as toddlers. At the put-in, Herm would place young Gill in the truck with her foot on the gas, then he would run back to blow up the boat with a hose of engine exhaust. Herm told his kids there was never any room for a tent... they'd have to sleep under the stars. There was no room for hot cocoa, only coffee, no room for Hatt's walkman either. Herm instead suggested they indulge themselves with the sound of water dripping off the oars and the song of the canyon wren. Hatt and Gill may not have understood it at the time, I wouldn't have either, but Herm was weaving the river into his kids' very being. He made sure that the river would flow from within.

By nature all rafters have river families, and Herm is no exception. The canyons were sacred — like a key to the universe for Herm — and, more than anything, he loved the intoxicating joy of sharing these places with his river family. People like his sister Brenda Hoops Rouse, Michael Dean Smith, Tamsin

McCormick, Pamela Derby, Leif Johnson, Scott Warthin, Daniel Earth and many others.

That day in the garage, when I asked Herm if he wanted to go down Deso, it wasn’t to escape the fact that death comes for us all. It was about completing a circle. Coming back to where one started. You see Herm rowed boats into places he fell in love with, but he also keep rowing boats onto a realization that social and environmental justice won’t happen on their own. He rowed boats into the hearts of people he loved. He still rows boats in the hearts and minds of many. So we set out to tell Herm’s story, one we all need more now than ever.

Not long after that last Deso trip with Herm and Val, Hoops sent me a letter containing a single skeleton key, and with it, some advice:

“Take this Brother, a key to the Rivers, may it serve you well... proceed with caution, there are many distractions. Befriend bureaucrats, but know they don’t report to the rivers. Stick up for the little guys with a cheap boat and little money... they are the future protectors. Read, ask questions, and from time to time, throw yourself on the sword.”

- Herm Hoops, Editor-in-chief of the Utah Utardian.
- Herm Hoops, 2019 River Runner Hall of Fame inductee.
- Herm Hoops, NPS, Administrator & Ranger at Dinosaur National Monument.
- Herm Hoops, RMS, Outstanding Contribution to River Management Award.
- Herm Hoops, Inflatable Boat Historian and Author.
- Herm Hoops, River Runner, Mentor, MFA quicksilver ballet.
- Herm Hoops, The Outlaw Sheriff.
- Herm Hoops, husband, father, brother and friend.
- There will never be another like you. ♦

To spend more time with Herm, Google:

The Salad Days: The Illustrious River Career of Herm Hoops

The River Radius Podcast – Hoop’s Echo (May 4, 2020)


(Covid, from page 17)

how to educate millions of non-traditional users on water safety, the importance of life jackets, sharing resources, and “Leave No Trace” while attempting to mitigate vandalism, destroyed relationships with private, tribal and local communities, and lost access to public lands and river systems.

Surprisingly, river managers are also faced with managing traditional river users who normally respect river permitting processes, who exploited many river system group sizes and permit restrictions knowing that staffing was decreased or non-existent. Sadly this behavior was extensive and experienced across the country.

2021 will see an unprecedented number of roll-over river permits that were canceled due to river systems being closed down or in the case of New Mexico, in addition to the closure, a 14-day mandatory quarantine of out of state visitors when the Rio Chama reopened. The process of rolling over permits has been piece-meal due to glitches in recreation.gov but is still moving forward albeit slowly. As a result of the roll-over permits, the number of launches available through lotteries will be decreased, thus altering the percentage of successful lottery winners in 2021.

Collaboration amongst river managers across the agencies, states, and organizations is more important than ever to continue communicating the good, bad and ugly of 2020 and beyond. The challenges going forward will be salted with the lessons learned in 2020 and the hope that the 2021 river seasons around the country will open without COVID-19 restrictions.



RMS is well positioned to continue aiding river managers in meeting these challenges and the impacts of COVID-19 on recreation uses and its associated impacts to rivers and watersheds in the near future. ♦

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RMS is fueled by the amazing energy of its members – and, chapters are always looking for leaders who care about the management of rivers. Potential chapter officers are team players who love working with others and believe a regional dialogue would help local members and the organization as a whole! Are you ready to serve?

Membership in RMS makes a great gift for a colleague or friend!



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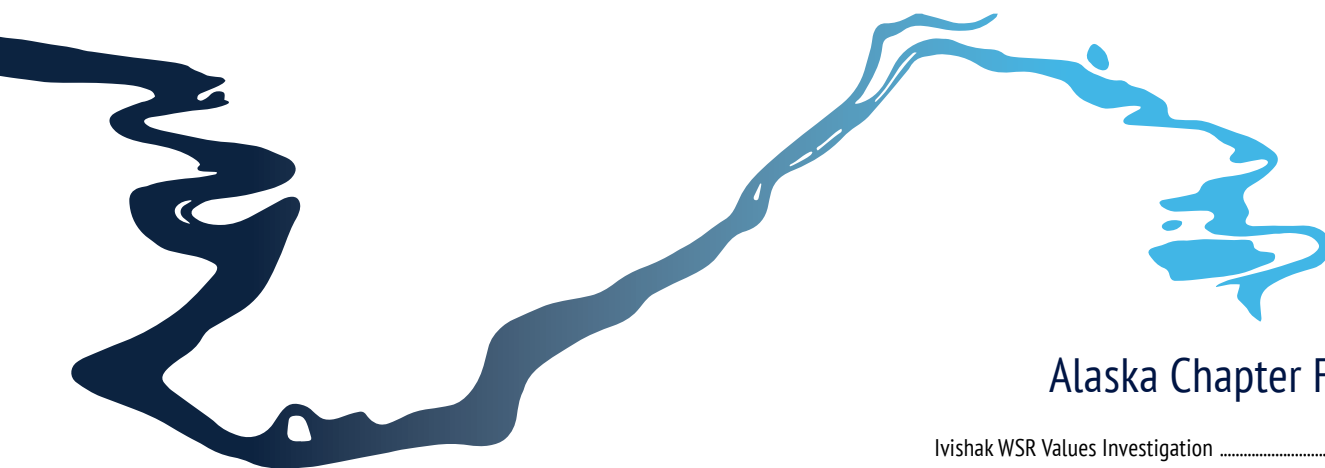
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Alaska Chapter Focus

RMS Journal Submission deadlines:

Spring 2021	Vol. 34, No. 1	Southeast	Feb 1
Summer 2021	Vol. 34, No. 2	Midwest	May 1
Fall 2021	Vol. 34, No. 3	Southwest	Aug 1
Winter 2021	Vol. 34, No. 4	Northwest	Nov 1
Spring 2022	Vol. 35, No. 1	Northeast	Feb 1
Summer 2022	Vol. 35, No. 2	Pacific	May 1
Fall 2022	Vol. 35, No. 3	Alaska	Aug 1
Winter 2022	Vol. 35, No. 4	Southeast	Nov 1

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