



Volunteer, Matt Goff inspecting a hemlock



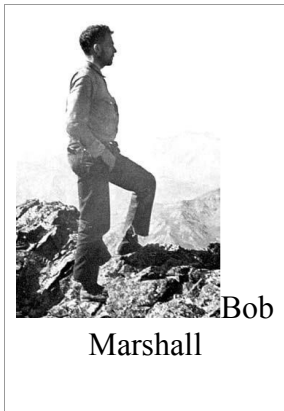
Author Nick Jans in Red Bluff Bay



Volunteer Nate Borson in South Baranof Wilderness

Sitka Conservation Society Receives the Bob Marshall Group Champion of Wilderness Stewardship Award

Our national resource of Wilderness, and the spectacular areas of Alaskan Wilderness lands in the Tongass National Forest, would not have been possible without the pioneering efforts of Robert “Bob” Marshall. As an early head of Recreation management with the US Forest Service in the 1930s, Marshall was one of the first to suggest that primitive and unconfined lands needed to be protected for the future. Along with other fathers of conservation like Aldo Leopold, he helped found the Wilderness Society, which worked with Congress to create the 1964 Wilderness Act.



Bob
Marshall

Marshall truly loved wild places, especially those he found in Alaska. His experience traveling to one of the last blank spaces on the map, informed his respect for the human need to experience wild places:

“For me and for thousands with similar inclinations, the most important passion of life is the overpowering desire to escape periodically from the clutches of a mechanistic civilization. To us the enjoyment of solitude, complete independence, and the beauty of undefiled panoramas is absolutely essential to happiness.”

- Bob Marshall

The Bob Marshall Award for Champion of Wilderness is one of the Forest Service’s highest honors and recognitions awarded to organizations and individuals who work to preserve our nation’s unique and vital wilderness resource. The Sitka Conservation Society, were recognized for their dedication and active involvement in wilderness stewardship, especially for their efforts to:

- partner with the US Forest Service, using grants from the National Forest Foundation to help the Sitka Ranger district surpass their stewardship



Kitty LaBounty, SCS Botanist in West Chichagof-Yakobi Wilderness

- goals for both of their wilderness areas (West Chichagof-Yakobi and South Baranof)
- mobilize over 100 volunteers to collect needed solitude data in wilderness
- facilitate cooperation between Forest Service staff and citizen scientists in expeditions to collect data in little-explored areas of wilderness
- sponsor the development of a wilderness focused film
- prepare and successfully lobby the City of Sitka to adopt a resolution recognizing the value of wilderness to the community
- actively engage the community in wilderness related projects and education
- and perhaps most impressive, helping to shift community thinking in a town where relationships between conservationist and the Forest Service were often adversarial, to a view of SCS, the Forest Service, and the community as partners in wilderness protection and management.

Bob Marshall was a true Champion for Wilderness. The Sitka Conservation Society is proud to be recognized for their efforts to continue his legacy and ensure that his vision of wilderness preservation continues today and into the future.

“The preservation of a few samples of undeveloped territory is one of the most clamant issues before us today. Just a few more years of hesitation and the only trace of that wilderness which has exerted such a fundamental influence in molding American character will lie in the musty pages of pioneer books ... To avoid this catastrophe demands immediate action.”

-Bob Marshall



Filming *Echoes of the Tongass* to be released in November 2010



Biological inventories, Partnering with University of Alaska

Sitka Conservation Society

Protecting the natural environment of the Tongass and Sitka's quality of life since 1967

www.sitkawild.org