



Expeditions

Summer 2019

BSAC High Adventure

Pilmont: One Year Later

On May 31, 2018 the Ute Park Fire began close to the Philmont Scout Ranch property line near Cimarroncito. Over the next few weeks, brave firefighters fought this and several other wildfires around the ranch. Before the fire was even out, people like you stepped up and asked how you could help. Philmont has been overwhelmed by the outpouring of support. To date, we have received more than \$450,000 in donations! Through service projects coordinated by the Philmont Staff Association and the Order of the Arrow more than 150 volunteers will contribute more than 7,200 hours of service to Philmont in support of recovery efforts.

What is Philmont doing to recover?

Philmont is working closely with local, state, and federal resources to help with fire recovery. The plans will involve more than \$1,000,000 in projects over the next 12 months. Philmont has identified three objectives that your donations will be used:

1. Prepare to host crews in 2019
2. Restoration work in the burn
3. Fire mitigation work to reduce the threat of wildfire in the future

Prepare to host crews in 2019

With the severity and location of the Ute Park Fire, Philmont has some work to do in order to ensure the infrastructure will be available to host crews in 2019. We must expand existing campsites, and create several new staff and trail camps.

Prior to 1993, Philmont had a staff camp at Santa Claus. Through the hard work of our maintenance team, the Santa Claus staff cabin was renovated and is ready to welcome crews this summer. Santa Claus will replace Harlan as the shotgun shooting camp. Since Harlan is in the burn scar, this camp will not be used.

Structures at Dean Cow were lost in the fire. The rock-climbing program that was there will be moved to the Chase Cow Camp located on the Chase Ranch. This camp features a historic cabin, beautiful rock features, and corrals. Our maintenance and conservation staff have constructed a yurt platform and will be installing campsites and a water system. Rock climbing routes will be installed as we get closer to the start of the summer season.

Philmont is very thankful for all our neighbors. If it wasn't for them, Philmont crews would not enjoy some amazing hiking opportunities that connect, and enhance, portions of our treks. The Express UU Bar ranch has graciously allowed Philmont to create a new staff camp at Garcia Cow Camp. This camp is near Philmont's southern border and will be a living history camp where staff will tell the story of Ernest Thompson Seton, the first Chief Scout of the Boy Scouts of America.

While the commissary and trading post at Ute Gulch sustained minimal damage, the land around the camp was burnt severely, and will not be safe to use this year. The commissary and trading post will be relocated to Cimarroncito.



Restoration work in the burn

The Philmont Conservation Staff and members of the Ranching team are working hard on recovery efforts in the burn. They have several strategies to combat erosion. These plans include reseedling, contour felling, wattle installation, mastication, and the installation of sediment ponds. Work has been slow due to weather, but will be ongoing over the next few months and years. There are safety concerns while working in the burn area, including falling trees and mud/rock slides during rain events. Philmont has been working very closely with local, state, and federal resources to produce a plan that will ensure the long-term success of efforts in the burn. One agency that Philmont is working with is the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) which is helping Philmont administer a grant that provides 75% of the funding while Philmont matches 25%.

Philmont is using donations to fund its \$150,000 commitment, which will be matched with \$450,000 in funds from an NRCS grant to provide \$600,000 worth of fire restoration and recovery work.

Thanks to an anonymous donor Philmont is the proud owner of a Masticator. This tool is being used for a couple of purposes. In the burn scar, as pictured above, the Masticator helps mulch the burned trees. This layer of mulch helps hold the soil in place and retains moisture to promote growth of new grasses. A much larger masticator will be contracted and will continue more of this work in the burn scar. The donated Masticator is also being used across the rest of the Ranch to produce a similar effect as the timber stand improvement crews by removing vegetation, providing more spacing between trees, and improving wildlife habitat. This is described in more detail below.



Fire Mitigation Work

The Ute Park Fire was a high severity fire. Most of it was a Crown Fire, meaning the fire spread from tree top to tree top. This type of fire behavior typically burns at a higher intensity, and usually results the loss of vegetation and can sterilize the soil. The loss of vegetation in combination with steep slopes and highly erodible soil increased the overall impacts that the fire had. Recovery from these types of fires can take decades.

Over the last 110 years, forests across the Western United States have not been allowed to burn. Human involvement in the prevention of fires and modifying the landscape, has altered the natural fire regimes. As result forests have become unnaturally dense and large amounts of fuel have been allowed to accumulate. As a result, catastrophic fires are becoming more and more common across the West. Philmont's goal is to help restore the forest to their natural cycles and historic forest structure through forestry management. This involves reducing stand densities, removing ladder fuels, and creating openings in the forest canopy. The outcome from these forest management practices will result in restoring the form and function of our ecosystems and making them more resilient to fire, insects, and changing climate.



Philmont has been working hard to ensure that we are able to provide a quality program to crews coming in 2019 and beyond. There is still a lot of work to do in both the burn scar and the rest of the Ranch in order to ensure the forest can thrive and Philmont can protect the Waite Phillips Legacy. Your donations are helping us to achieve these objectives. We want to thank you for your support. We appreciate this time to educate you as we continue to be good stewards of your donations. We still have much to do and will continue to provide wilderness and learning adventures that last a lifetime. We thank you once again for your past and ongoing support.

South Manitou Island



South Manitou Island is the southernmost of an island chain that extends north to the Straits of Mackinac and is located in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. This small island (eight square miles) has a fascinating natural and human history, being formed from glacial deposits and settled by Europeans because of its forest and natural harbor. Located at the entrance to the Manitou Passage, an international shipping lane between the mainland and the island, a lighthouse was built in 1871 to guide ships through that part of Lake Michigan. Steam ships often stopped at the island to get wood for their boilers. South Manitou also was the site of a US Life-Saving Station (later a Coast Guard Station) with its crews providing numerous rescues through the dangerous waters.

Besides the Visitor Center that has exhibits that tell the human and natural history of South Manitou, there are a number of other sites worth visiting as well. In addition to the lighthouse, other points of interest include abandoned farmsteads with farm buildings, deserted machinery, an old school house and a cemetery, giant virgin white cedar trees, large perched sand dunes, and the offshore wreck of the Francisco Morazan. The island's ecosystem is fragile and thus, practice of leave no trace is important.

The Manitou Passage State Bottomland Preserve was established in 1988 to conserve the historic and archeological value of over fifty known shipwreck sites. Due to protection by state and federal law, contact Park Headquarters in Empire for more information regarding dives.

Although South Manitou can be visited on a daily basis, island tours are available, there are three campgrounds for those who wish to stay overnight. Hiking trails allow exploration of the island and backpacking from campground to campground for a longer stay is possible as well. Access is by way of the Manitou Island Transit, a 1 ½ hour cruise from Leland.

Maumee River Water Trail



The Maumee River Water Trail, a 99 mile trek, begins in Riverside Park in Antwerp and ends at the mouth of the river at Lake Erie in Toledo. Suitable for canoes and kayaks, this stretch of the river's course has, at present, 39 launch sites. Upstream from Defiance, the Maumee is designated as a state scenic river while downstream from Defiance it is a designated state recreational river.

The river has an important historic and cultural heritage and is of major state and national significance. In early days, the Maumee, named by the Miami Indians, constituted one of the chief modes of transportation. During the late 17th and into the 18th centuries, Native Americans moved into the Maumee Valley due to tribal warfare and pressures of European settlement. In 1794, General "Mad" Anthony Wayne built Fort Defiance at the confluence of the Maumee and Auglaize Rivers before marching his troops to near the present-day site of Maumee where he defeated the Indians at the Battle of Fallen Timbers. Fort Winchester in present-day Defiance and Fort Meigs in present-day Perrysburg were significant outposts during the War of 1812. The Miami and Erie Canal, built between 1825 and 1845, linked Toledo with Cincinnati and was a major route of transportation until railroads diminished its importance. The end of the canal era was marked by the devastating flood of 1913. A large portion of the canal followed the Maumee from Toledo to Defiance before heading south.

More information regarding the water trail is available from a variety of sources including Metroparks Toledo (metroparkstoledo.com), ODNR Division of Parks & Watercraft (watercraft.ohiodnr.gov), ODNR Division of Wildlife (wildlife.ohiodnr.gov), ODNR Paddle Ohio (paddle.ohiodnr.gov), Wood County Park District (woodcountyparkdistrict.org) and USGS Water Data (waterdata.usgs.gov)

