

Swan View's News

Fall 2014



Swan View Coalition
3165 Foothill Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

"Nature and human nature on the same path."

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Wilderness and Wildlife: Celebrate, Protect, Advocate, and Restore!

The Summer of 2014 was exceptionally busy as we celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act while also working to protect wildlands and wildlife through the Forest Planning and legal processes! We've provided a short list of this summer's accomplishments on page 2 of this newsletter and included links to more info.

We recently won a significant legal victory in the Swan Valley that should go far to better protect public forests, fish and wildlife there. On page 3 we'll provide some details about how we are helping correct mistakes made in the Legacy Lands and other collaborative projects there.

The University of Montana has provided estimates of the amount of fuel consumed by snowmobiles in Montana. On page 4 we'll translate those estimates into the amount of CO₂ being spewed into the atmosphere in the name of "recreation" and argue that non-mechanized Wilderness designations make more sense for our climate, our health and our children's future.

While Montana agreed to protect the Broken Leg and Crater Notch trails from logging in 2006, it is back with another proposal to log these trails! On page 5 we provide details and urge you to write a short letter or email to MT State Lands opposing the logging of this key Jewel Basin access!

One of the greatest rewards for our hard work is the unsolicited praise we receive from folks like you. On page 6 we provide a sampling of this praise and also announce the details of our Annual Membership Meeting Nov 16!

We encourage you to make a donation in support of our work by November 30, so it can be matched by Cinnabar Foundation! Donating by Nov 30 not only doubles your money, it

means fewer year-end fund-raising letters we'll need to mail out in December!

May you again Fall in love with all things wild,

Keith



Keith Hammer introducing Stewart Brandborg.

How We Spent Our Summer "Vacation" 2014!

July 16 - Featured as "The Face of Environmental Activism" in the Flathead Beacon at <http://flatheadbeacon.com/2014/07/16/face-environmental-activism/>

Aug 6 - Found a massive slumping of the Sullivan Creek Road into Sullivan Creek while biking and hiking closed Forest Service Roads as part of the Flathead Forest Plan revision Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation process. Our photo of the landslide ran in numerous papers and the controversy was summarized by the Flathead Beacon at:

<http://flatheadbeacon.com/2014/08/06/landslide-sparks-concern-forest-service-road/>

We also found four plugged culverts up Bunker Creek, one of which had already washed out the road. Both Sullivan and Bunker Creek are bull trout "critical habitat."

Aug 17-20 - Backpacked from Napa Point to Trinkus Lake along the Swan Crest, taking photos for the Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation Process.

Sept 4 - Submitted our comments on the FNF Wilderness Inventory and Evaluation process. The 77 pages include 63 photos and maps showing the findings of our Sullivan Creek, Bunker Creek and Swan Crest fieldwork. These comments can be found at:

http://www.swanview.org/reports/SVC_on_FNF_Wild_Eval_140904.pdf .

Sept 12 - Spoke on a panel at the Mansfield Center's Wilderness 50th Conference, alongside Doug Scott, John Gatchell and Steve Kimball. Keith's presentation summary is at:

http://www.swanview.org/reports/Keith_Hammer_Wilderness_Presentation_opt.pdf

The excellent presentation there by Dr. Martin Nie and Chris Barns is captured in their article at <http://www.mountainwestnews.org/Page3.aspx?a=Perspectives&ID=177> .

Sept 20 - Participated in the Go Wild! Flathead Wilderness 50 celebration, where we brought in Stewart Brandborg as the keynote speaker. You can watch Brandy's speech and "call to arms" at http://youtu.be/O_s6ApF1PWg. Swan View Coalition's booth ran a slide show of the Swan Crest from the Bob Marshall to Columbia Falls, handing out postcards asking the Flathead N.F. to recommend the entire area as Wilderness.

Sept 25 - We won a very important lawsuit in the Swan Valley against the Forest Service and Fish and Wildlife Service, winning two-thirds of our claims regarding the Glacier Loon Timber Sale and the logging of Legacy Lands transferred from Plum Creek to Forest Service ownership. Judge Molloy ruled that the Forest Service must indeed comply with federal laws while allowing the Nature Conservancy to provide logs from these now-federal lands to Plum Creek until 2018 under terms of the land transfer. Since 2009, the Forest Service simply rubber-stamped 12,000 acres of logging on Legacy Lands!

Judge Molloy also ruled that, now that the Forest Service owns more than 75% of the land area in numerous Grizzly Bear Management Subunits due to Legacy Land acquisition, it must apply the stricter road density and road decommissioning standards of Amendment 19 rather than the "no net loss" Swan Valley Agreement. The court opinion is at: http://www.swanview.org/reports/Glacier_Loon_Order_9.25.14.pdf .

Court Ruling Brings Relief to the Swan Valley!

There's a lot good to be said about the Montana Legacy Project, which transferred some 112,000 acres of land from Plum Creek to The Nature Conservancy and finally to the Forest Service. But The Nature Conservancy received a \$25 million tax refund by setting up Forestry Conservation Bonds and agreed to continue to supply Plum Creek timber from those lands through 2018. This was made worse when the Forest Service claimed it had no choice but to rubber stamp 12,000 acres of TNC logging rather than modify it to better protect fish and wildlife.

U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy, however, recently ruled in our favor on this issue. Because the Forest Service now owns the Legacy Lands, Molloy ruled the Legacy Land logging program and its individual timber sales must receive review under the National Environmental Policy Act and the Endangered Species Act; including consultation with Fish and Wildlife Service to protect threatened and endangered wildlife. Molloy has stopped the logging until the program is made to comply with the law.

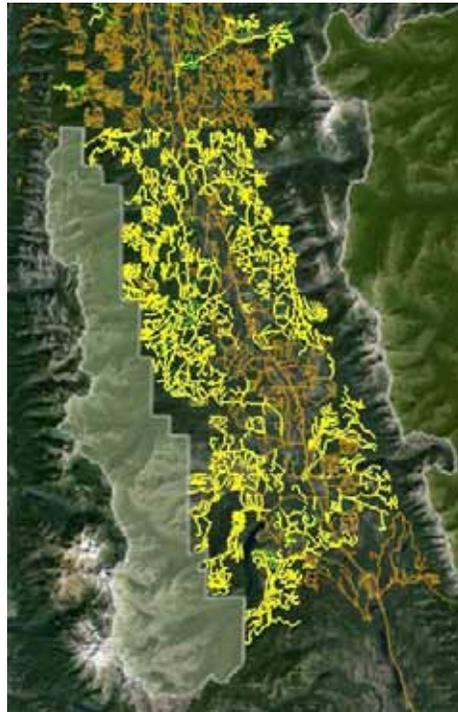
Our lawsuit also claimed that the Forest Service must apply its stricter standards for road closures and road decommissioning in Grizzly Bear Management Subunits where transfer of the Legacy Lands has boosted federal ownership to over 75% of the Subunit. On this Molloy also agreed with us.

These previously checkerboard Subunits were managed to allow existing substandard grizzly bear habitat security to persist under the Swan Valley Grizzly Bear Conservation Agreement. Now, the Forest Service must significantly improve grizzly bear security in these Subunits under Flathead Forest Plan Amendment 19.

The SVGBCA serves as an example of a "management by lowest common denominator" political compromise between the Forest Service, State Forest and Plum Creek - whereas Amendment 19's stricter standards are based instead on science. Moreover, the Southwest Crown Collaborative was previously mistaken that 800 miles of road had already been decommissioned in the Swan Valley until we submitted the Flathead's spreadsheet showing only ten miles of road had been decommissioned because the SVGBCA does not require it. The Flathead National Forest acquired another 400 miles of old logging roads along with the former Plum Creek lands, so

Molloy's ruling is a timely prompt to the Forest Service to shape up!

Our lawsuit also stopped the federal Glacier Loon Timber Sale on behalf of threatened water howellia, bull trout, and grizzly bear, as well as imperiled wolverine. A link to Judge Molloy's court order and opinion is provided at the bottom of page 2 of this newsletter.



Roads in the Swan Valley!

Snowmobiling and Climate Change!

Google search results for “snowmobiles and climate change” are mostly about the effects of climate change on snowmobiling, largely due to the loss of snow. There are virtually no results about how snowmobiling contributes to climate warming.

A recent study by the University of Montana's Bureau of Business and Economic Research, however, provides data on the amount of fossil fuel being consumed by snowmobiles in Montana, from which we can calculate the carbon footprint of a sport that is helping melt the very snow it and species like wolverine depend on!

“Montana Recreational Snowmobiles: Fuel-Use and Spending Patterns 2013” is written to highlight the money pumped into Montana's economy as both resident and non-resident snowmobilers pursue their sport. It finds that resident snowmobilers burn 3.3 million gallons of gas in their snow-

mobiles each year and a similar amount of fuel to transport themselves and their snowmobiles to and from their destination. Non-residents annually burn one million gallons of gas in snowmobiles and about twice that in related transportation.

So that adds up to 9.6 million gallons of fuel consumed in the pursuit of snowmobiling each year in Montana alone. Multiply that by 20 pounds of carbon dioxide per gallon of gas (diesel pickups spew 22 pounds per gallon) and snowmobiling re-

leases 192 million pounds (96 thousand tons) of climate-warming CO₂ per year into Montana's and the world's atmosphere!

These amounts may pale in comparison to coal-fired power plants. Nonetheless, they point out the irony of a sport whose contribution to the economy is largely correlated to its consumption of fossil fuels rather than its contribution to better human health and lower health care costs. The BBER found that the average snowmobile gets 12 miles per gallon!

With ever-increasing numbers of people recreating on public lands and elsewhere,

it behooves us to try to minimize our individual impacts. At public meetings, those complaining the loudest about too little land to recreate on are often those using snowmobiles, ATVs and mountain bikes to travel faster and effectively shrink that very landscape.

All forms of recreation require transportation to the trail-head or play area. But we can choose recreation that requires only an economy car to get there and designate Wilderness areas close to urban centers so the drive is short and biking to the trail-head is a viable option. Once there, we can choose to hike, ski or snowshoe in order to burn no further fossil fuels, practice a heart-healthy pace of recreation that preserves the outdoors as a plenty-big place, keep a cooler planet for our kids, and not birth them into fossil fuel addiction!



The BBER report mentioned above can be downloaded at:

<http://www.bber.umt.edu/survey/..%5Cpubs%5Csurvey%5CMontanaSnowmobiling2014.pdf>

DNRC/Stoltze to Log Jewel Basin Area Trails!

Your email message or letter is needed today to keep F.H. Stoltze and DNRC from logging the Broken Leg and Crater Notch Trails that access the Jewel Basin Hiking Area!

While logging its neighboring land near the Jewel Basin Road this fall and winter, Stoltze wants to take feller-bunchers and grapple skidders onto Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation land to "salvage" 55 log truck loads of reportedly dead and dying trees.

DNRC says this beautiful forest may be reduced to as few as 8-10 trees per acre!

DNRC in 2006 agreed to protect the recreational and aesthetic values of these trails by moving its Foothills Timber Sale downhill and out of sight of them.

The Forest Service's Broken Leg and Crater Notch Trails lie on DNRC easements in the exact area Stoltze wants to log and are highly valued, non-motorized recreation trails leading to Jewel Basin and the

historic Alpine Trail #7. This is simply the wrong choice of an area to be logged!

The Broken Leg Trail #544 has already been turned into a logging road where it crosses Stoltze Land. Let's convince DNRC to again respect the value of these trails where they cross State Land and not allow logging there!

Please email or write a letter to DNRC's Nick Aschenwald today! Comments are due October 20, but send them even if you are late getting to this!

Tell him you want the public trees on State Land left for wildlife and people while Stoltze saws its nearby trees into boards! And tell him you want DNRC to honor its prior agreement to protect these trails from logging!

Nick Aschenwald-DNRC
655 Timberwolf Parkway
Kalispell, MT 59901
naschenwald@mt.gov



DNRC/Stoltze flagging on the Crater Notch Trail!

Please view this alert on our web site for links to maps, DNRC statements, and more information. Visit http://www.swanview.org/home/articles/blog/stoltze_dnrc_to_log_jewel_basin_area_trails/197

Annual Meeting Nov 16 30th Anniversary Cake Potluck and Music!

Please join us for our 30th Annual Membership Meeting Sunday, November 16, at 4pm. We'll meet at the Mountain Brook Community Library at 2353 Foothill Road.

We'll spend an hour electing officers, discussing a bit of business, and watching our quick but beautiful Swan Crest for Wilderness slide show!

Then we'll enjoy a potluck dinner and socializing, which will include a cutting (and eating) of our 30th Anniversary cake!

Dinner will be followed by a regularly scheduled Swan Range Community Music Jam Session at 6pm for those who wish to stay! You don't have to play an instrument to enjoy this low key get together!

We hope you can join us for a bit of business and a whole lot of FUN!



Swan Rangers toast their 400th outing last year. This year its Swan View's 30th Anniversary!

Recent Unsolicited Praise of our Work and Play!

I appreciate the important wildlands conservation work you accomplish.

Mike M.

Emailing the FS in support of this very important issue couldn't be any easier and any more important. Thank you for bringing this to all of our attention.

Cindie J.

Thank you for all your hard work putting all this together, and making it understandable for someone like me!

Joan G.

I completely agree. Our natural environment is the most valuable asset we have, especially the Flathead NF in our backyard.

Thomas P.

We appreciate your partnership with us. We celebrate your work to preserve our landscapes and views.

Chany O.

I really applaud your work and am so impressed at how you maintain such a lively and fun group and keep focus on important environmental issues.

Peter M.

Thank you for a memorable day and opportunity to enjoy the fun of hiking!

Nancy F.

Your Donations Again Doubled by Cinnabar Foundation!

Don't forget we've again been issued a \$4,000 Challenge Grant by Cinnabar Foundation - **so donate by November 30th to get your money doubled by Cinnabar!**

We rely in large part on member donations to fund our work protecting habitat for fish, wildlife and people. You can help us broaden our membership base by giving Gift Memberships at \$25 each, either on-line or using the donation form below! **It's easy to join others in supporting our work:**



1. Send a check to Swan View Coalition at 3165 Foothill Road, Kalispell, MT 59901 - or -
2. Use your credit card securely on-line at www.swanview.org or www.swanrange.org, by clicking on the **Donate Now button** found there (or above)!

Network for Good handles your transaction securely for us and informs us immediately via email of your donation by credit card. You can also choose to give monthly, quarterly or yearly there to make it easier or more affordable (or change your mind anytime)! If you have other info you want to get to us, such as Gift Membership info, simply email it to keith@swanview.org or mail them to the address in #1, above.



If there is pink on your mailing label, it means you haven't donated in nearly a year or more. Please make a donation so we can keep sending you our newsletter and continue our work!

- Here's \$25 to cover my minimum dues, newsletters, alerts, and Swan Ranger Reports.
- Here's \$50 to help restore a bit of peace and quiet to America's public lands.
- Here's \$100 to help keep forest roads from ending up in America's bull trout streams.
- Here's \$500 to help secure grizzly, lynx and wolverine habitat for future generations.
- Here's \$_____ to help save the world, one mountain range and one river at a time!
- Here's \$_____ for _____ Gift Memberships at a minimum of \$25 each. I've included each recipient's name, mailing address, email address, and my greeting on separate paper.
- As a gift of appreciation for my donation, please send me the Swan/Flathead history booklet "The Lineage of Chief Aeneas: A History of People and Place" and/or a Swan Ranger patch (circle "hang-loop" or "sew-on").
- Save paper! Email my newsletters to _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

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