

# Swan View's News

Holidays 2016



Swan View Coalition  
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Kalispell, MT 59901

*"Nature and human nature on the same path."*

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## *Holiday Issue: Renewing Spirit and Dedication!*

Ninety-five percent of Americans love Wilderness and want their remaining roadless public lands protected! So it's little wonder that industry wants those public lands privatized or under local control so the American public has little say in how they are managed!

We will continue our fight to keep America's public lands in public hands and as wild and free as possible. We've been at this for 33 years, thanks to our members and other supporters, and we certainly aren't backing down now!

As long as government is essentially run by lobbyists hired by big banks and big industry, we'll have our work cut out for us regardless of whether the administration is dominantly Republican or Democrat. Americans have made progress in social and environmental justice, regardless of the administration, when they have stood up and demanded it!

So we once again thank the [34,400 of you that told the Flathead National Forest](#) you want all roadless lands protected

as Wilderness and want damaged public lands restored for fish and wildlife! And we again thank those of you who send in donations to support our work, including those donations that met this year's Cinnabar Foundation matching grant!

This newsletter provides a bit more de-

tail on progress made in the Flathead Plan's DEIS and why we need to continue emphasizing national interest over local control of public lands (pages 2-3).

We also summarize our recent work, let you know what folks say about it and renew our pledge to you! (pages 4-6)

Like most Decembers, we need to raise \$16,000 to meet our year-end budget, so please [DONATE NOW](#) to support our work! (page 7)

**HAPPY SOLSTICE, HAPPY HOLIDAYS,  
HAPPY NEW YEAR and THANK YOU!**

Keith



Grizzly bear shaking off election results. Brian Parks photo

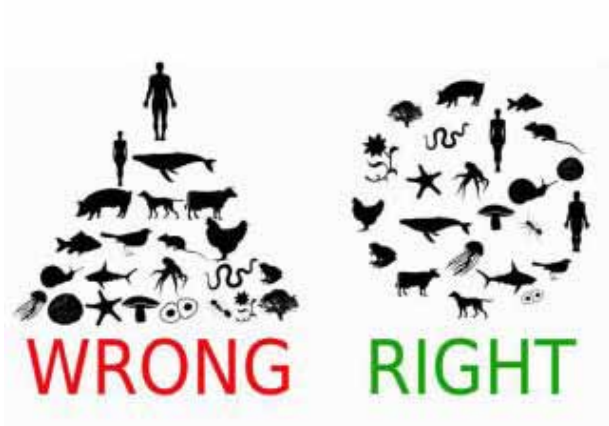
## *What Others Say About our Citizen reVision And the Flathead's Alternative C*

As reported in our Fall Newsletter, our Citizen reVision alternative was represented in part in the Flathead Forest Plan revision DEIS as a combination of Alternatives A and C. This would continue the current Plan's (Alt. A) promised decommissioning of 500 miles of roads damaging fish and wildlife habitat while expanding the current Plan's wilderness recommendations to include essentially all remaining roadless lands (Alt. C). Here's some of what others had to say about it in their comments:

"[T]he public would benefit from seeing a tribal alternative that reflected the more indigenous view of the natural world that served these ecosystems so well for thousands of years prior to the last century. Please consider developing and including tribal alternatives in this and all future forest plan revision processes . . . We are also in full support of comments submitted by the following groups, which we have reviewed, consulted on, and now heartily endorse; the Flathead-Lolo-Bitterroot Citizen Task Force; Friends of the Wild Swan; and the Swan View Coalition. We incorporate by reference the Citizen reVision proposal submitted on behalf of Friends of the Wild Swan & Swan View Coalition in 2014." (Wildlands Defense writing also on behalf of GOAL: The Tribal Coalition to Protect the Grizzly and Blackfoot Tribal Medicine Chief Jimmy St. Goddard).

"We appreciate that stronger wilderness protection is provided in Alternative C . . . TWS views Alternative C as clearly superior to the other alternatives and more consistent with the [Forest] Planning Rule . . . The FNF is among the top 5% wildest national forests in the country . . . Alternative C is clearly the superior alternative in maintaining wilderness character and values of

the [Recommended Wilderness Areas]. The Flathead Plan Revision must make it clear that motorized and mechanized recreational uses and other uses that reduce an area's wilderness character and potential are not allowed in RWAs . . . We concur with the DEIS that additional wilderness protection and other aspects of Alternative C provide superior protection of water quality, fish habitat, and other aquatic resources . . . We concur with the observation in the EIS that Alternative C 'would provide the highest



habitat security and connectivity for species that may be sensitive to high levels of human disturbance' . . . TWS recommends that the revised plan include Alternative A's road decommissioning objective." (The Wilderness Society).

"We believe a 'modified' Alternative C would be consistent with the FNF's unique roles and contributions . . . to the local area, region, and Nation, and the roles for which the plan area is best suited . . . we ask again that you build a full spectrum Alternative around the Citizen reVision . . . economic benefit to the local economy could include . . . road decommissioning . . . on the more than 500 miles of road already promised." (Sierra Club with consultant Brian Peck).

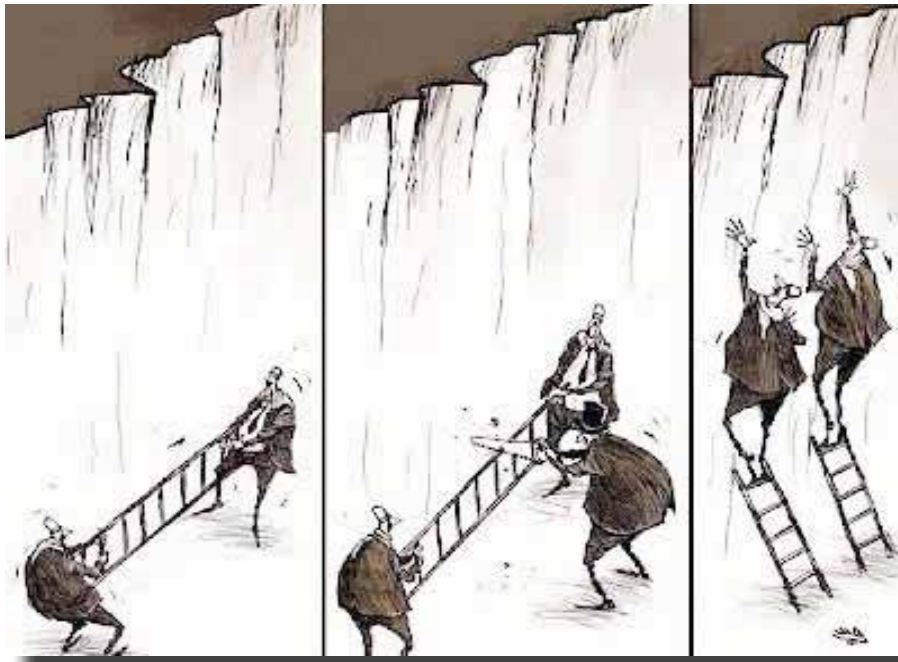
## *The Pitfalls of Local "Collaboration"*

Though presented with a clearly superior Alternative C in the Flathead's DEIS, "conservation" collaborators apparently felt duty-bound to compromise their already compromised proposals. While urging their members to tell the Flathead to ban all non-conforming uses like mountain bikes from areas recommended for wilderness, some groups nonetheless chose to compromise yet again.

"We think the FNF should include outstanding Alpine Crest Trail 7 and upper Lost Creek as recommended wilderness. However, we acknowledge that the FNF thinks Trail 7 should remain open to mountain bikes. This acknowledgement demonstrates our interest in finding a balanced outcome for this area . . . [Bunker Creek] Road 549 is now closed . . . We commented in our letters on the Proposed Action that

this road should be converted to a trail and the area incorporated into recommended wilderness. However, it seems clear that the FNF intends to maintain this road. Therefore we have modified our proposal to bring the recommended wilderness boundary down to 30 feet on either side of the road." (Montana Wilderness Association and Headwaters Montana).

"Alternative B comes closest to what we recommended . . . we undertook . . . negotiations with the assumption that non-conforming uses would not be allowed in recommended wilderness in the North Fork . . . In the spirit of compromise, the partnership would support a site-specific evaluation of non-conforming uses for the Whitefish Range recommended Wilderness . . ." (Sarah Lundstrum on behalf of the Whitefish Range Partnership).





## *Flathead NF Continues to Cheat Fish and Wildlife! What We're Doing to Stop It!*

When the Flathead NF wrote Amendment 19 to its Forest Plan in 1995 to secure grizzly bear habitat, it took measures to protect water quality and fish at the same time. It told the public, in writing, that to lower road densities it would both reclaim the road by removing all stream-aligned culverts and decommission the road by removing the road from the "road system," triggering a National Forest Management Act requirement that the road be re-vegetated within ten years.

The FNF first attempted to ignore its fisheries biologists in 1999 by "reinterpreting" A19 to allow stream culverts to remain in reclaimed and decommissioned roads. That ploy was withdrawn after we threatened a lawsuit!

But in 2013, FNF began leaving culverts in "reclaimed" roads and refused to decommission them - so they could be used again and again! We've initiated a series of legal challenges against this.

Using the documents, data and photos we collected over the past several years, WildEarth Guardians joined us and Friends of the Wild Swan in filing a [notice of intent to file suit under the Endangered Species Act over the closed Raghorn Road](#) in the North Fork's Coal Creek. The FNF in 2010 promised it would remove all 13 culverts

from the "long abandoned" Raghorn Road in order to protect threatened bull trout and help restore Coal Creek, which is listed as an "impaired" watershed in Montana due to logging and roads.

In 2012, however, FNF removed only 3 of the culverts, orphaning the remaining and now inaccessible 10 to eventually collapse or blow out! To add insult to injury, FNF considers Raghorn to be fully reclaimed and no longer counted in road density impacts to grizzly bears and their

habitat!

In April we settled our Objections with the FNF over its Chilly James Restoration Project in the Swan Valley. We agreed to the full decommissioning of 26 miles of road. While Chilly James would also "store" 5 miles of road and not count them in road densities, we agreed to

bring our legal challenge to that problem on a more egregious project.

We raised similar Objections about "storing" rather than decommissioning roads in the FNF's Cold Jim and Beaver Creek projects in the Swan Valley. Those administrative Objections have been decided against us and we are lining up attorneys for the next step, which is litigation.

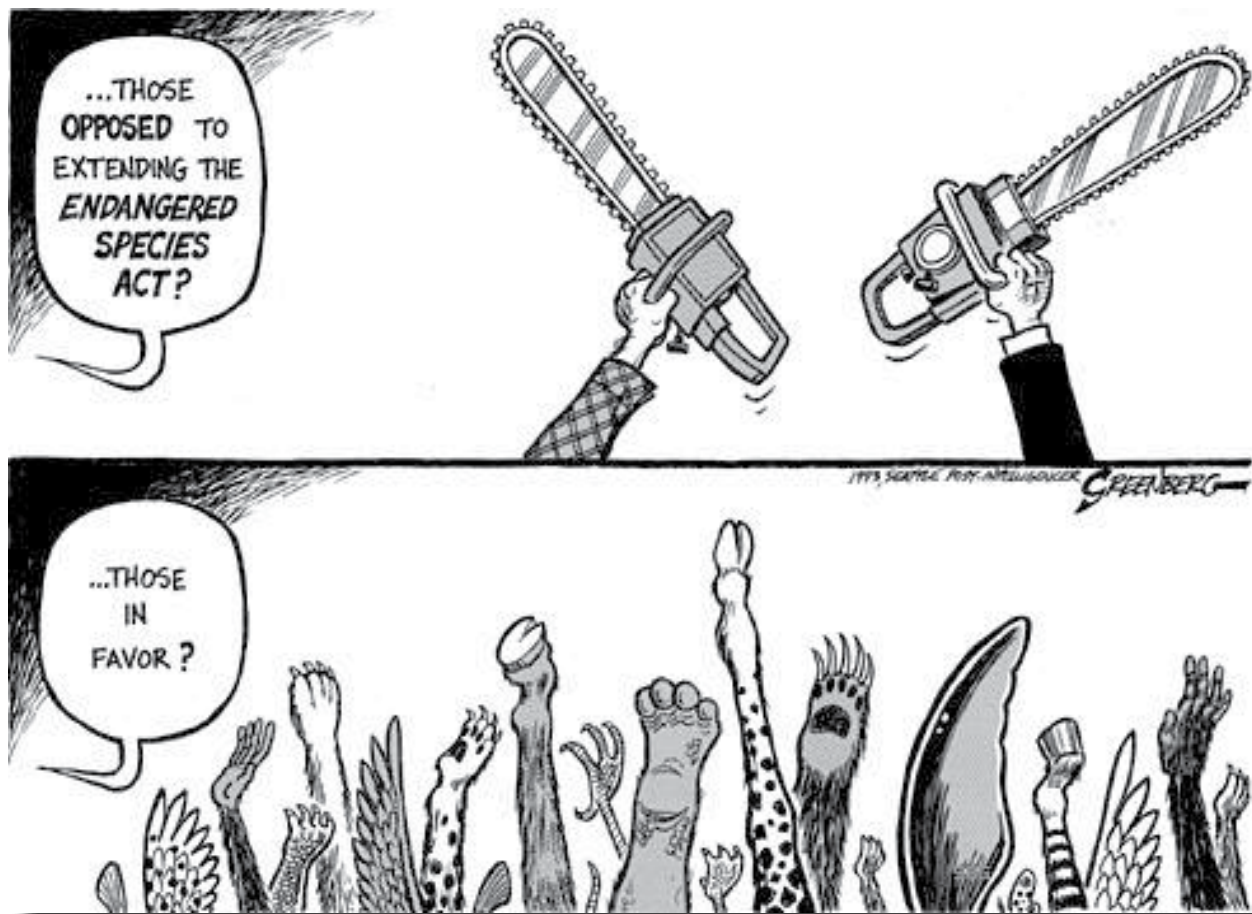
To learn more about this issue, see our [Raghorn 60-day notice](#) and our [Roads to Ruin report](#).



Raghorn Road slumps in Coal Creek! Keith Hammer photo

## *Our Pledge to You!*

1. We will remain a strong voice for voiceless wildlands, fish and wildlife!
2. We recognize that federal public lands are owned jointly by all Americans and that their management cannot be left to control by local government or local "collaborators!"
3. We will advocate for quiet, slow-paced habitats for people, recognizing this is best for public health and the health of fish and wildlife!
4. We recognize that northwest Montana is home to 400,000 people but at best a thousand grizzly bears and far fewer wolverine, fisher and other wildlife deserving a much bigger break than given thus far!
5. We will continue to recognize that all lands are sacred, that all life is sacred and that the politics of repetitive compromise has failed us and the planet.



## *Unsolicited Praise For Our Work!*

"I was pleased to note that the Forest Service has received so many responses supporting the additional Wilderness areas and roadless designations."  
*Edd B.*

"I listen to MTPR streaming. You sounded great in your recent interview regarding the comments on the forest plan. Thanks for all the good work you do."  
*Susannah C.*

"You do wonderful work keeping the wild in wilderness. Thank you so much!"  
*Lynn S.*

"Thank you for your newsletter. Lots of information important to my writing a letter to the Flathead National Forest."  
*Pat H.*

"Saw you on TV. Good job!" *Bert G.*

"I signed up after reading your 'Roads to Ruin' report. I want to be sure to get more information like that - great stuff."  
*Marla N.*

"Glad you're out there tracking these shenanigans."  
*Greg D.*

"It is your enormous strength - not to finally do as most folks do and turn their backs on the inundation of bureaucratize and go away to live life without continuing the good fight."  
*Roland C.*

"Thank you for conserving peace, quiet, and the native ecosystems that

make the Flathead such a gift to us all!"

*Lucy S.*

"This [roads] report will be of tremendous help to new folks and those who have been in the trenches for years."

*Brian P.*

"Congratulations for another outstanding victory. You all are relentless and inspiring warriors."  
*Barry R.*

*Barry R.*

"Thanks so much for organizing the great hike today. Very scenic and the people in the hiking group are super."  
*Harry H.*

*Harry H.*



A love of common ground bridges all gaps! Norma Linsky photo



## Help Us Raise \$16,000 to Meet our Year-End Budget!

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 by giving Gift Memberships at \$25 each**, either on-line or using the form below! **It's easy to join with and help others support 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](http://www.swanview.org) or [www.swanrange.org](http://www.swanrange.org), by clicking on the **Donate Now** button found there (or at right)!



**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](mailto:keith@swanview.org) or mail it to the address in #1, above.

**THANK YOU** to those of you who helped meet our Cinnabar Foundation matching grant! Please join them in helping us meet our budget and continue our work!



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: \_\_\_\_\_

Swan View Coalition, Inc.  
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Kalispell, MT 59901

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