

Swan View's News

Spring-Summer 2008



Swan View Coalition
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"Nature and human nature on the same path."

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Progress on Protecting Old-Growth and Habitat Security - But Much Work Remains to be Done

This spring brought mixed results in decisions by both the Forest Service and the federal courts. Judge Donald Molloy agreed with us and banned late-spring snowmobiling in grizzly bear habitat on the Flathead National Forest, but he continues to allow the Flathead to move more slowly on implementing the road closure and decommissioning work that it promised in 1995.

A judge in Washington, DC ruled against Montanans for Multiple Use in its bid to trash the Flathead's Amendment 19 road management program altogether - a lawsuit in which we intervened to protect bears. Hence, we have proceeded to the Appeals Court on two of our lawsuits and have intervened in MFMU's appeal of their loss.

While the Flathead issued two major timber sales this spring, both steer clear of logging or thinning old-growth forests. While this shows progress on an issue we've had

to litigate at most every turn in the past, we must remain vigilant! (See page 2 for more details on lawsuits and old-growth).

We are increasingly using email and our web sites to engage more people in protecting the Swan Range and other public lands, while still recognizing the value of essential hard-copy printed info. We've updated our web sites and database systems and recently inserted some 25,000 low-impact inserts into local newspapers (page 5).

Your letters, emails and financial support are critical to our work. Please make the "Swan Trek Bet" this summer (page 3). It's a fun way to learn more about the Swan Range while getting regular exercise and helping us pay the

bills necessary to continue our work.

Thank You!



If wildlife could read, write and vote, we wouldn't be asking for your help speaking up on their behalf!

Keith

Lawsuits Essential to Protecting Fish and Wildlife

Lawsuits are expensive and time-consuming, but often necessary to insure the public interest is protected and public law obeyed. Even when a lawsuit is lost, it often spawns positive changes in the behavior and policy of land management agencies.

Years ago, Swan View Coalition filed a lawsuit against the thinning of old-growth forest proposed in the Meadow Smith timber sale in the Swan Valley. The Forest Service withdrew the sale to beef up its EIS, which was then litigated by Friends of the Wild Swan while Swan View intervened in a lawsuit by Montanans for Multiple Use intended to stop all road closures on the Flathead.

Although FOWS lost that lawsuit, the Flathead listened to their and our comments when planning the Cooney McKay timber sale last year, withdrawing all old-growth forest from the logging plan. Meanwhile, Swan View's intervention in the MFMU case helped insure Bush administration attorneys did not roll over for MFMU's right-wing agenda.

In spite of the fact U.S. District Judge Donald Molloy has ruled against us in several lawsuits over the slowed pace at which the Flathead is implementing its Amendment 19 road closure and grizzly bear security program, the lawsuits have forced the Flathead to continue making progress with each new project it plans. How much progress it must make may well be decided by our appeals of Molloy's decisions to the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals.

The Flathead's decision this spring on the Red Whale fuels reduction project shows a heightened degree of regard for protecting old-growth, although we filed an administrative appeal because it falls far short on grizzly bear security. The project will log no old-growth and closes 24 miles of trail to motorcycles, but it fails to meet Amendment 19 by not closing a road that fragments the most important grizzly bear habitat in the North Fork Flathead.

On May 28, Judge Molloy ruled that snowmobiling on the Flathead National Forest cannot continue after grizzly bears have emerged from their winter dens. This will provide better protection for bears on 52,000 acres of habitat the Forest had opened to snowmobiling as late as the end of May in its 2006 Amendment 24 to the Flathead Forest Plan. Judge Molloy ruled that the 1995 Amendment 19 to the Forest Plan clearly prohibited snowmobiling after mid-March.

Judge Molloy also tossed out Fish and Wildlife Service's biological opinion authorizing the late-season snowmobiling: "By relying upon the degraded conditions resulting from the Forest Service's refusal to enforce its own ban on spring snowmobiling, the Fish and Wildlife Service was able to bolster the alleged benefits to grizzly bear resulting from Amendment 24, when in fact the Forest Plan was changed to allow more spring snowmobiling than was permitted before." We'll do our best to insure Molloy's ban becomes permanent.



Keith Hammer photo

A chrysalis in the Swan Range reminds us of the importance of protecting entire ecosystems.



Great views from the Swan Crest are a sure bet!

Keith Hammer photo

Make the Swan Trek Bet! For Fun, Fitness, and Fund-Raising!

Here's a way to help fund our work while getting healthy exercise and avoiding the purchase of another trinket to clutter your home!

1. Use the Virtual Trek chart, below, and the map on page 4 to "virtually hike" the 70-mile northern Swan Crest from the Bob Marshall Wilderness to Columbia Falls.

2. The "miles you hike" can be miles you hike, walk or bike anywhere, laps of swimming, hours on your favorite gym equipment, or whatever you choose.

3. Pledge a dollar per "mile," or whatever you can afford, as a donation to Swan View Coalition's work protecting the Swan Range and other public lands.

4. Ask your friends to pledge funds to match the exercise "miles" you are keeping track of, or to make a similar pledge for their own exercise "miles."

5. When you've "hiked" the 70-mile northern Swan Crest, or whatever amount you are able, make your tax-deductible contribution as outlined on page 5 of this newsletter.

You can also learn more about the natural and cultural history of the Swan Range as you "hike" along. Simply go to www.swanrange.org and click on the Virtual Trek near the top of the page.

Next, click on the Virtual Trek Map and then on each Mile-Post for photos and information about each location.

What a great way to exercise, learn, and help us continue protecting the very lands you'll be learning about!

Check-Off	Mile-Post	Location	Miles To Next Post
☒	0	Inspiration Point	5
	5	Gildart Peak	2
	7	Thunderbolt Mtn.	11
	18	Bond and Trinkus Lakes	4
	22	Hall Peak/Sixmile Mtn.	2
	24	Quintonkin Road	5
	29	Broken Leg Mountain	7
	36	Crater Lake	3
	39	Birch Lake	2
	41	Mount Aeneas	3
	44	Wildcat Lake	2
	46	Strawberry Lake	3
	49	Peters Ridge	2
	51	Lamoose Lake	5
	56	Jenny Lake	3
	59	Doris Mountain and Lakes	4
	63	Columbia Mountain	7
	70	Highway 2 Columbia Falls	Done!



For a full-color, interactive version of this Virtual Trek map, go to www.swanrange.org and click on Virtual Trek near the top of the page.

What You Can Do to Help!

1. Make the Swan Trek Bet described on page 3, pledging regular exercise for your own benefit while helping secure Swan View's financial health at the same time!
2. Make a generous donation to Swan View Coalition today and/or through your Swan Trek Bet! You can donate on-line at www.swanview.org or www.swanrange.org, by clicking on the Donate Now button! Our address is 3165 Foothill Road, Kalispell, MT 59901.
3. Pass along the enclosed Swan Ranger flyer to a friend.
4. Email a PDF copy of the Swan Ranger flyer to your friends and coworkers by going to www.swanrange.org, clicking on the link near the top of the home page, and following directions.
5. Save paper/trees: get this newsletter in color via email! (See below).
6. Let us know if you wish to continue receiving our hard-copy newsletter, but are unable to make at least an annual donation. Otherwise, we will be retiring old addresses we've not heard from in a while to conserve resources.



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 the costs of my newsletters, alerts, and Swan Ranger postings.
- ☐ 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 \$_____ to help secure grizzly, lynx and wolverine habitat for future generations.
- ☐ 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."
- ☐ Save paper! Email my newsletters to _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

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Making Progress While Streamlining the Process

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