



# Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex

## 2012 Newsletter

VOLUME 22

### Invitation from your lead Ranger

"On behalf of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Managers, I'd like to invite you to the annual "LAC Meeting" (or if that terminology is not sounding familiar), the "**Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Public Meeting**". There will be time for open dialog and questions, but can you please let me know specific topics that you would like to have updates on this year?"

- Deb Mucklow

**SATURDAY, APRIL 14th**

**10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Seeley Lake Community Hall**

The Seeley Lake Community Hall is located just north of the town of Seeley Lake on the east side of Hwy 83 near mile marker 15. It is a couple miles south of the ranger station.



Deb Mucklow at Schafer Meadows



What Forest Manager has been actively involved in Limits of Acceptable Change monitoring since 1988

[ COME TO THE MEETING TO FIND OUT ... AND LEARN OTHER LAC TRIVIA ! ]

Backcountry Horsemen of America (3 chapters)

Flathead National Forest  
Hungry Horse Ranger District  
Spotted Bear Ranger District

Forest Service Wilderness Research Unit  
Intermountain Research Station

Helena National Forest  
Lincoln Ranger District

Lewis & Clark National Forest  
Rocky Mountain Ranger District

Lincoln Subgroup

Lolo National Forest  
Seeley Lake Ranger District

Montana Aeronautics Division

Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks

Montana Outfitters and Guides Association

Montana Pilots Association

Montana State University  
Department of Animal and Ranger Sciences

Montana Wilderness Association

National Forest Recreation Association

North American Outfitters Association

Professional Wilderness Outfitters Association

Sierra Club  
Montana Chapter

Swan Valley Citizens Group

The Wilderness Society

Unaffiliated Users

University of Idaho  
Department of Wildland Recreation

University of Montana  
School of Forestry and Wilderness Institute

# TWENTY FIVE YEARS!

*By Deb Mucklow, Spotted Bear District Ranger*

*Why the title **TWENTY FIVE YEARS?** This year, 2012, is the twenty fifth year that Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) data has been monitored. This is the plan that set the standard for wilderness management and brought together a diverse group that today would be called a collaborative group and touted as a successful way to work together. I think it is pretty exciting that this model and working group are now a national model. Of more importance to me is that the group has continued to have interest in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Great Bear Wilderness Areas) and developed a plan and kept that interest to participate in annual meetings or as their situation allowed.*

*In 1982 a group was formed as a LAC Task Force which is now commonly called the LAC group. [See the founding group members in the list on the left]. The group remains open to all and we encourage group and individual participation.*

*The plan developed by this group, and then with a public involvement process, was amended to all four National Forest Plans in April 1987. The first 5 year monitoring period started in 1988 and 2012 is the last year of the current 5 year monitoring period – hence twenty five years! As most of you are aware there has not been the planned revision of Forest Plans on the timeline that we all assumed would occur, and there is a new planning rule that will be or should be very close to final by the time we meet on April 14. Our plan would be to report on the latest 5 year monitoring period in 2013. Please remember that we will not have 100% monitoring completed for this monitoring period as agreed to in 2008. Trends and results indicated it was appropriate to do more implementation activities (all to be reported on).*

*For our next meeting, we've heard from some of you and plan to have presentations on the Gates Park Bridge, West Slope Cutthroat Trout Restoration, South Fork of the Sun Prescribed Fire Implementation, 2011 Wildfires, 2012 Wild and Scenic River Use Study, Bear Spray (a great tool), Partner involvement, trail projects, funding and available resource trends – open dialog for general questions and a BMWC LAC trivia contest. We need to hear from you! Please contact me at [dmucklow@fs.fed.us](mailto:dmucklow@fs.fed.us) or 406 -387-3851 on any suggestions. I value the tenure I've had with being able to be a part of this great wilderness complex and working group. I'm a relative newcomer having been involved since 1995! I'm looking forward to many more years and the experience that you can bring to me and us as a manager group to be the best leaders and managers for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex. Hope to see you April 14 in Seeley Lake!*

## ■ INFORMATION WANTED: Big Salmon Lake Fire

On 8/16/2011 an aerial detection flight of the Big Salmon Lake area discovered a wildland fire burning in heavy timber upslope from the lake. On 8/23/2011 a Forest Service law enforcement officer assigned to the Flathead National Forest responded to the fire area. After an investigation of the origin area the officer concluded that the fire was human caused and started near the northwest shore of Big Salmon Lake. Anyone having information about this fire is encouraged to contact Forest Service law enforcement at (406) 758-5297.



## FOOD STORAGE vs. SMELL STORAGE

*By L. Kevin Arnold, BMWC Law Enforcement Officer*



*As the majority of the Bob Marshall Wilderness users are aware of, the Forest Service has a special Food Storage order in place that includes all of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex.*

*Over the past several years I have visited with folks who have some slight confusion in the Food Storage order in regards on what and how food needs to be stored. A common misconception is that if food; including beverages are stored in an airtight container that it is sufficient and meets our regulations. The Food Storage order is designed to prevent bears from obtaining a food reward from a human source. Here is an example of an argument I commonly hear. Folks tend to keep certain food/beverage items stored in a creek or lake for a couple reasons. One is to prevent or prolong spoilage but the other is just to enjoy a cold beverage at the end of the day when you get back to camp.*

*Now I can't argue with either justification especially since I do the exact same thing. However, that being said the food/beverage must be secured in a certified bear resistant container or cooler. Many people have told me that they thought they would be okay just by leaving the beverage/food in its original air tight container since obviously it didn't produce an odor or smell attractant. They would more than likely be correct in assuming that its odor free but the fact of the matter is that a bear can still get a hold of that food/beverage and puncture the container and obtain a food reward. We all know bears, along with many other animals are really attracted to bright shiny things such as aluminum cans that may be floating in the creek. More times than not that bear's curiosity will probably get the best of him and they will puncture and bite through every one of those aluminum cans. (Continued on pg. 12)*

**“ ...  
you will  
be the one  
enjoying that  
cold beer  
instead of a  
Grizzly Bear  
... ”**



# Collaboration and Restoration in the BMWC

*by Shannon Connolly, Seeley Lake Ranger District*

*“biologically diverse”*

*“science based”*

*“roadless lands”*

*“premier mountain regions”*

In 2009, Congress established the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). The purpose of CFLRP is to encourage collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes. CFLRP projects can be funded annually for the next ten years.

The Southwestern Crown of the Continent (SWCC) Collaborative was one of ten of the initially selected projects nationwide. The SWCC is within the ten million acre Crown of the Continent ecosystem in northwest Montana and is one of the premier mountain regions of the world containing many of the largest remaining blocks of roadless lands in the contiguous U.S. The SWCC consists of portions of the Blackfoot, Clearwater, and Swan River watersheds and is one of the most biologically diverse and intact landscapes in the western U.S. The SWCC covers 1,449,670 acres. The Lolo, Flathead, and Helena National Forests manage 63% or 899,826 acres of the SWCC.

The goals of the SWCC are to restore forest and aquatic ecosystem function, to improve landscape-level biodiversity, resiliency, and adaptability, to enhance recreational experiences, and to reduce risks for those living in

the wildland-urban interface (WUI).

So what does all of this mean for the BMWC? Approximately 159,138 acres of the Scapegoat Wilderness is within the SWCC boundary, managed by the Seeley Lake and Lincoln Ranger Districts. On the Lincoln Ranger District, CFLRP helped fund the reconstruction of three miles of the Mainline trail #481 in 2011. Plans for 2012 include the reconstruction of five miles of the Mineral Creek Trail #484. On the Seeley Lake Ranger District, funds from 2011 were put into an agreement with MCC for the summer of 2012, so there will be a crew for 14 weeks working on numerous trail restoration projects across the District. Also, for 2012 there are plans to work on trail maintenance and trail and watershed restoration and rehabilitation on various trails across the District. Additionally, CFLRP will help fund noxious weed treatments for new invaders in the back-country and some wilderness campsite restoration.

For more information about CFLRP visit their website at <http://www.fs.fed.us/restoration/CFLR>.

[Refer to SWCC map on the next page.]

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## Be Prepared for Wilderness Hazards

*by Colter Pence, Hungry Horse  
Ranger District*



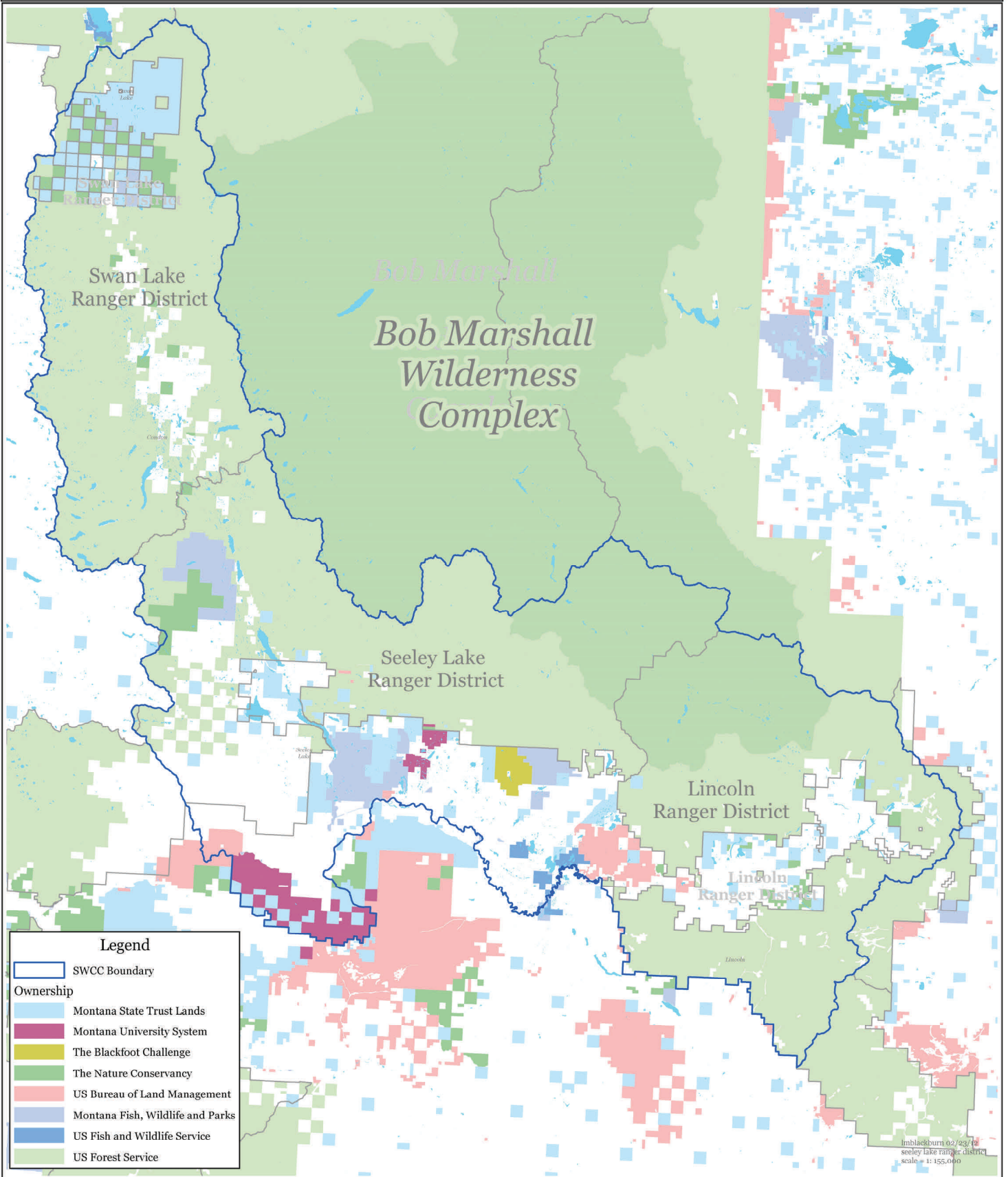
**Log jam created near Cabin Creek on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River during the high water of 2011**

There are many hazards that wilderness users can encounter, high density blow down blocking trails, high water debris blocking the river, avalanche debris and snow lingering in slide path areas, hazard trees near campsites. Recent fire areas, even up to 15 years old, when subject to sudden wind events can dramatically change trail conditions, leaving a trail that was recently cleared appearing as if no one has cleared the trail recently. There are many places in the Bob Marshall Complex where this can happen. And with the high waters of spring 2011, river users found

(Continued on pg. 15)

# Southwestern Crown of the Continent

*Collaborating to Restore Forest Health at the Landscape Level*





# Lincoln Ranger District Updates

*by Amber Kamps, District Ranger*

Change has been in the wind on the Lincoln Ranger District. Many of you are already aware that Ernie and Renee Lundberg retired at the end of December. We had a wonderful party for both of them in January to celebrate their career and accomplishments. Thanks to those of you that found your way to Lincoln on that snowy winter night to help us send them into retirement with warm thoughts and well wishes. Since then I've seen Ernie in the office almost weekly, not sure why, but he's popped in for various things. I think he just misses us, yet he is quick to say that he is loving his new career as a retiree.

"We have a big program planned with a large trail crew..."

Casey Burns, whom many of you know as our Wilderness Ranger/Trail Crew Foreman, has stepped in behind Ernie for a few months starting in January. Casey is busy with the budget and preparing our District recreation, wilderness, trails, etc. program for the season. We have a big program planned with a large trail crew for both front and backcountry trails this year as well as multiple other recreation projects including volunteers and partners.

In June, Casey will return to his job as Wilderness Ranger/Trail Crew Foreman and Jason Gilbert will transition to fill in. Jason comes to us from our fire/fuels organization who has always had a keen interest and strong working relationship with recreation and trails. Jason will assume this role until Ernie's position is filled permanently. We currently are outreaching and advertising this vacant position and I hope to have someone here by hunting season.

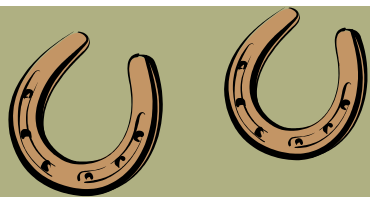
## New Lewis & Clark Forest Supervisor!

W E L C O M E

**Bill Avey** is the new Forest Supervisor for the Lewis and Clark National Forest. Bill started his career on Wyoming's Bighorn NF in 1981. He worked in a variety of fire management, wilderness management, trails, recreation, timber management, range management and special uses positions on the Bighorn, Manti-LaSal, and Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forests. He became the District Ranger for the Big Timber Ranger District of the Gallatin National Forest in 2000, where much of the ranger district consisted of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and adjacent roadless lands. He also did several Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor/Acting Forest Supervisor assignments in Montana and New Mexico during his time as District Ranger. After ten years as District Ranger, he became the Deputy Director for Fire and Aviation for the Northern Region in Missoula, MT in 2010. He started as the Forest Supervisor of the Lewis and Clark National Forest in February, 2012.

He has been married to Crystal Coffey-Avey for 26 years, she works for the Fire Science Lab of the Forest Service's Research Branch. Crystal and Bill have two daughters, Suzy, who is a graduate of Jamestown College and is planning to attend graduate school, and Caitlin, who is a junior at University of Montana.





# Horsepower: Where it all Started

*by Guy Zoellner, Spotted Bear Ranger District*

**Horsepower.** The term oozes petroleum, big diesel pickups, Harley's and cut-off flannel shirts in the garage. In an age where television is riddled with ads for vehicles boasting "the most" and "the strongest", we often forget where it all started from; the horse.

By definition, horsepower is what it takes to lift 33,000lbs one foot in height over the course of one minute. A healthy human can sustainably produce approximately .1 hp, not very much by any standard when the big trucks on television tout 300-500 horsepower. Now contrast that to the Wilderness where motors are no longer allowed and the options for accomplishing work and moving equipment are limited to either manpower or horsepower.

Moving downfall off the trail, digging new tread or building turnpikes are examples of work that must be done without the assistance of motors. In order to accomplish many of these tasks, backcountry managers use horses and mules. While livestock can't pull a crosscut or swing an axe, they can provide the needed torque to move heavy objects around in the backcountry. The majority of the gear necessary to work and recreate in the Wilderness is packed in on the backs of horses and mules. However, what most people don't see is the work that was done and still continues to occur using mule teams to drag and skid objects.



**Punch & Judy (and their people) working to fix the rotten puncheon near Mud Lake**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century the Forest Service used draft stock to aid in the construction of numerous airstrips within the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The logs necessary to build the cabins were harvested from nearby stands of timber, but inevitably found their way to the site behind a mule. The folks building the cabins even used the teams of stock to help pull the logs onto the cabin walls. There are spots miles from the current cabin locations where a person can still see evidence of shake mills that supplied the rooftop shakes for the cabins. These shakes were skidded, split and then packed to the various cabins all thanks to mules.

Trail plows were constructed and used to lay in many of the trails that are still in use today. This was a simple plow pulled by one mule, followed by another mule pulling a small grater that set the bench and outslope of the trail. For the curious Wilderness visitor there are still relics of many of these tools lying around the decommissioned airstrips or in Ranger Station barns.

Today's Forest Service mule teams receive slightly less but nonetheless important use. Both remote workstations at Big Prairie and Schafer Meadows have a working team of mules. They are used to skid firewood, haul materials for fencing, clean corrals, and skid timber for use in trail projects. An example of this was a thirty-year-old puncheon structure that had rotted out near Mud Lake in the South Fork of the Flathead drainage. The puncheon was approximately 150 feet long and bridged a wetland area that was otherwise unsafe to cross with stock. The location is on one of the most well traveled trails in the South Fork, so public safety and resource damage were of utmost concern. In order to fix the problem the entire structure was removed and a new one assembled. This required a team of mules to skid in larch logs for use as the sill part of the structure. Doing this using human strength was out of the question. So two mules, Punch and Judy, were brought in and neatly accomplished the task in a few days. This provided both longevity to the structure due to the rot resistance of the larch logs and greater efficiency of the crew's time.

The Bob Marshall Wilderness is often times noted for its stock use. Although a large percentage of horses and mules that enter the woods are carrying a saddle with either rider or freight, it is the indefatigable nature of stock in harness that sets them apart on the work scale. Finding and funding a crew of people that can provide the horsepower of two mules is a daunting task. It is the quiet, patient and proud nature of both team and teamster that makes them an invaluable resource in the backcountry.



# Upcoming River User Survey

*by Colter Pence, Hungry Horse Ranger District*

This summer the Flathead National Forest will be conducting a River User Survey on all three forks of the Flathead River, including the wilderness portions of the upper Middle Fork and upper South Fork. This survey is designed to gather information from all river users, including rafting, stock, hiking, and fishing parties – anyone who is recreating in the river corridor may be asked to take the survey. The survey will ask a series of questions about what the river user experienced on the trip that they are currently on or just finished. Forest Service employees will staff key locations to intercept river users and will ask

**“...to help river managers better understand the perceptions of river users in the Wilderness.”**



people to participate in the survey. Survey participants can choose to complete the survey when they are given it, or if they may take a copy, complete it at the end of their trip, and mail in afterwards. The forest hopes to reach all types of river recreationists including out-fitted and guided clients. Data gathered from the survey will be compiled and used to help river managers better understand the perceptions of river users in the wilderness. The results of the survey data may be used in future wilderness and river planning efforts. If you are asked to participate in the survey, we hope you are able to take the time to share with us information about your most recent wilderness river experience.

**Spruce Park rapid series on the upper Middle Fork of the Flathead River**

## Partnerships for Trail Improvements

*by Aaron Klug, Spotted Bear Ranger District*

The Spotted Bear Ranger District is lining up a full slate of trail projects in partnership with the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC). The funding for this work comes from a mix of Forest Service funds matched with county Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) grants, along with the collaborative partnerships with the Flathead Chapter of the Backcountry Horsemen and the MCC. Significant improvements are targeted for Trilobite Ridge trail no. 241, Bruce Mt. – Chipmunk Peak no. 99, Flathead Divide/Twin Peaks no. 200, Jenny Creek no. 141, and Rapid Creek no. 139.



The Flathead Divide project on trail no. 200 will complement other efforts in the area. The trail connects Long Creek Pass to Cy Creek Pass, and traverses almost five miles of high elevation country dividing the Middle Fork of the Flathead River and the Spotted Bear River. Backcountry Horsemen efforts in collaboration with work performed by Hungry Horse Ranger District trail crew has improved the Long Creek trail no. 166. Additional work is planned for the Cy Creek trail no. 332. This year, an MCC crew based out of Spotted Bear will work for almost four weeks on the Flathead Divide trail at the head of Grouse Creek. Specifically, heavy retread of rocky and sloughed off trail on the west side of Twin Peaks will be the main target. This section of trail has rendered the connection from Long Creek to Cy Creek impassable to stock. Packing support for this project is being graciously provided by the Backcountry Horsemen. (Continued on pg. 15)



Explore "The Bob" this summer!



[www.bmwf.org](http://www.bmwf.org)



Get outdoors and join a Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation volunteer project this summer. Explore the rugged and gorgeous country of the Bob Marshall Wilderness, Great Bear Wilderness, Scapegoat Wilderness and Rocky Mountain Front.



We provide food, group gear and adventure. You bring your personal camping gear and a willingness to explore! Check out the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation website for a calendar of projects, frequently asked questions, and registration information. Be sure to sign up early - projects fill up fast!

Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation  
PO Box 190688 • Hungry Horse, MT 59919  
406.387.3808 • [www.bmwf.org](http://www.bmwf.org)



# Wilderness Investigations : Coming Soon to a Classroom Near You!



*By Steve Archibald, Education and Outreach Specialist  
Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center*

For nearly 18 years the Arthur Carhart National Wilderness Training Center has worked hand in hand with other dedicated agency and non-profit wilderness organizations and individuals to provide training, information, and education to the wilderness community. Using Carhart's excellent teaching materials, found in the K-12 Wilderness and Land Ethic guide and the well-loved wilderness trunks, many young people were exposed to wilderness concepts in formal and informal settings.

Like the world in general, the education landscape has changed markedly over the past 10 years. Because of these changes, wilderness education has been shuffled to the back burner or nudged entirely off the classroom menu. What would it take to bring wilderness back to classrooms? That's where the Carhart Center and its new educational program come in. Wilderness Investigations (WI) is not just more educational stuff, rather, it's an educational movement to integrate wilderness across topics and disciplines. WI reconnects youth with the richness of our wilderness heritage by getting them outside.

The WI Toolkit is a rigorous, standards-correlated (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade focus), project and place-based set of five investigations available to teachers and designed to enhance student understanding and appreciation of the Wilderness Act of 1964, designated wilderness areas, wilderness stewards/managers, and the wilderness opportunities/responsibilities each student has as a U.S. citizen. WI offers integrated classroom, field, service-learning, and family learning opportunities. Each of the investigations allow students to experience and be involved in hands-on, real-world, meaningful wilderness education. WI creators worked with leadership of the Salish-Kootenai Culture Committee on the Flathead Indian Reservation to design a product that is respectful of Native People and connected to many educational goals shared by Tribal communities.

In addition to the WI Toolkit, two-day teacher workshops are provided for teachers and are co-sponsored by a variety of locally-based agency and non-agency partners. Teachers must attend a workshop in order to receive the Toolkit. A workshop recently completed in the wilderness-rich community of Seeley Lake, Montana reached 16 educators and potentially brings wilderness education to over 300 students this year. Upon completion of the two day workshop, WI teachers are given access to an online Wilderness Educator website where they are able to participate in further WI training, download desired WI components, and communicate with other WI teachers on topics related to wilderness education.

Here's where we are today in the initial year of WI:

WI was introduced to teachers as part of the Flathead Reservation Professional Development Day for reservation teachers, at the annual Montana Education Association conference, as part of A Forest for Every Classroom programs, at the annual convention of the Idaho Environmental Education Association, the Montana Environmental Education Association and as special presentations in a variety of university classes for in-service and pre-service teachers.

As the 2012 WI workshop season begins, interest has been high. In addition to the Seeley Lake workshop, other Montana-based sessions are being offered in Bozeman, the Flathead Reservation, Sweet Grass County, Twin Bridges, Billings, Great Falls and Helena. Workshops outside of Montana are scheduled or being planned in Logan (UT), Denver (CO), Las Vegas (NV), Green Mountain National Forest (VT), Sheridan (WY), in Yosemite National Park, and in communities around the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge (GA).

With demand for WI so high, a new piece of the puzzle is sliding into place. Selection of outstanding WI workshop alumni to participate in a train-the-trainer program is on the horizon. These master teachers will learn the ropes of workshop facilitation and then organize and present WI workshops in and around their communities.

WI agency workshop partners come from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Forest Service. Non-agency partners include Tribal Culture Committees, Tribal Departments of Education, nature centers, state environmental education associations, school districts, science schools, and other non-profit organizations.

Wilderness Investigations is one more link in the Carhart Center's efforts to advance America's Great Outdoors Goal to Promote and support replicable programs that teach about and connect children and families with their natural and cultural heritage. **If you're interested in bringing WI to your community, contact Steve Archibald at [srarchibald@fs.fed.us](mailto:srarchibald@fs.fed.us).**







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# Archaeology Inventory: from Danaher Creek to Youngs Creek

*By Tim Light, Flathead National Forest Archaeologist*

The Flathead National Forest Heritage program worked with Spotted Bear Ranger District personnel and volunteers for a fifth year of a long-term archaeological inventory of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (BMWC). The South Fork of the Flathead River Valley, south of Hungry Horse Reservoir, was selected for archaeological surveys because previous work in the area, although brief and incomplete, seems to indicate good potential for site location.

In 2011 we undertook the fifth year of survey within the Wilderness. We used \$12,000 in Heritage Stewardship Enhancement (HSE) funds to take a crew of five; two FS heritage professionals, two volunteers, and one District employee, into the Danaher Meadow and Youngs area Creek in the upper end of the South Fork. We based for three nights, two days, at Danaher cabin. We located and recorded the remains of Danaher's original homestead (1898-99), the remains of two other homesteads or possibly early Forest Service facilities, and located two isolated flakes that probably mark a prehistoric site. We were originally scheduled to spend a two days at Basin cabin conducting new inventory and relocating and re-documenting a known archaeological site... but the Stadler Fire forced a change of plans and we moved from Danaher directly to Hahn cabin on Youngs Creek. This required on long, hard day hiking over a major ridge but it gave us several extra days at Hahn cabin for inventory. After one day to recover, the crew inventoried from below Hole-in-the-Wall to Cabin Creek, and intensively around Hahn Cabin. Unfortunately, and much to our surprise, no new cultural sites were identified. Over the course of ten days we inventoried approximately 1,000 acres, hiked almost 100 miles, recorded three historic-era sites, and located a possible archaeological site with two isolated flakes.

Remains of farming equipment at the Danaher Homestead



The Crew (left to right): Lisa Keibler, Eric Kroeger, Cindy Enstrom, Greg Enstrom, and Tim Light



(Food Storage continued from pg. 3)

This activity produces two problems; first and foremost you have just provided a bear with a food attractant/reward and secondly you no longer have any of those refreshing beverages to enjoy on your backcountry adventure.

So ultimately to ensure you're in compliance with the Forest Service Food Storage order and that you will be the one enjoying that cold beer instead of a Grizzly Bear be sure and keep ALL food attractants secured in a bear resistant container while using nature's natural refrigerator.



# Wilderness Weeds Update from the South Fork of the Flathead

## by Tad Wehunt, Spotted Bear Ranger District

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We had an interesting and difficult weed spraying season this year. The prolonged high water and lingering snow pack hampered our access in to the backcountry, and delayed our ability to continue our work on the spotted knapweed in the river corridor. In addition, an active fire season pulled our backcountry resources from their daily routine and challenged our late summer spraying regimen. Once in the backcountry, and waters receded, we we're encouraged to see the effects of the prior years' spraying in the upper reaches of the South Fork of the Flathead River. On one floodplain just below the confluence, we used 20 gallons last summer; this year we used only 3 gallons. With a more limited spraying window this year, the crew focused on areas where the knapweed is creeping away from the river corridor, or has greater potential to creep. Outside of the river corridor, we spent some more time attacking yellow toadflax, sulfur cinquefoil, ox-eye daisy, houndstongue, and leafy spurge. Each of these species remains in scattered, small patches. We are on the cusp of meeting our management objectives in several areas.

Our overall "river corridor containment strategy", for the Spotted Knapweed, is showing signs of success and slight improvement in some areas. Challenging years (like 2011 with above average high water and fire activity) increase the potential that we will lose some of the ground that we gained over the last several years. There are a few locations where seeds have moved out of the river corridor (i.e. 2-mile meadow, about 2 miles North of Big Prairie Ranger Station, along the East Side Trail #80). Recent fire activity can provide easy access for more spread away from the river corridor. In addition to Spotted Knapweed, there are isolated communities of Oxeye Daisy, Sulfur and Silver Cinquefoil, Houndstongue, Yellow Toadflax and

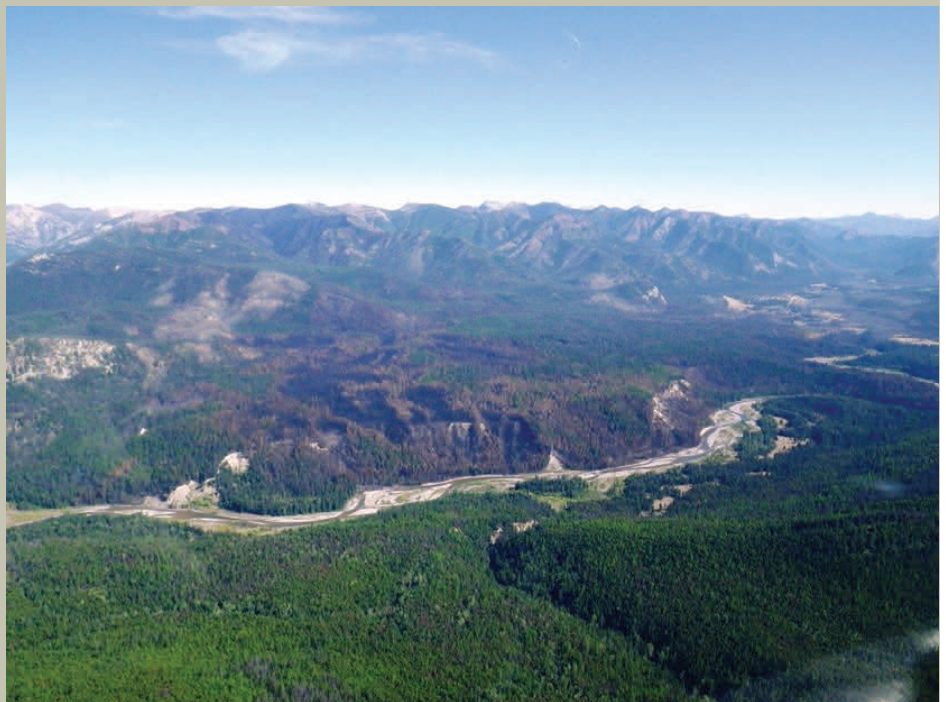
Canada Thistle in the areas of both the Big Salmon Lake and Hammer Creek fires. Our main concern will be with the Spotted Knapweed along the river corridor. The area along the East side of the river, from Big Prairie to White River Butte, is most susceptible to increased infestations. The fire burned fingers down to the river, closer to the White River Butte campsites, which is one of the largest areas of spotted knapweed that we spray in the Wilderness.

Four years ago, we divided our district weed crew in to two teams, front country and backcountry, and were very pleased with the results. This past year, we decided to 'beef up' our backcountry crew, to a crew of four. They worked together to spray some of the bigger sites, yet were able to break off in to two teams to divide and conquer some of the smaller and more sparse sites. We had two Forest Service weed crew leaders, each



teamed up with a Student Conservation Association intern. This set up worked out tremendously well for us last year. We will continue this crew configuration in the 2012 field season. Volunteers are a great help, but having the ability to fund two backcountry positions in our weed program will help us not only in our application of herbicide, but in our monitoring and efficacy reporting. We continue to get out, away from our known infestation sites, and scout un-inventoried areas as much as we can, and plan to work with our GIS folks to update our maps this winter.

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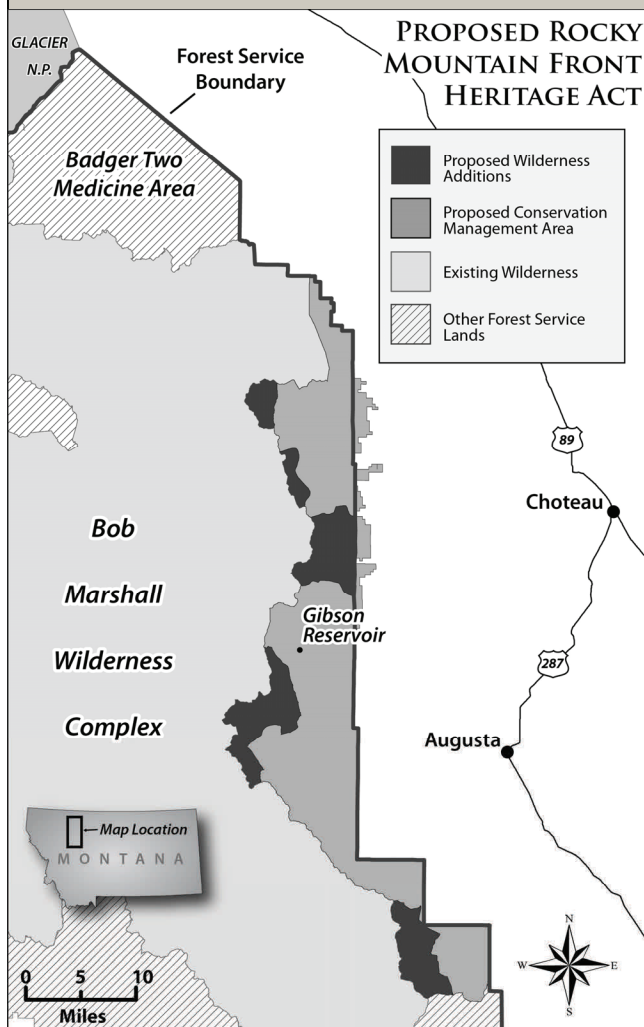


Hammer Creek Fire area and South Fork River corridor, 2011

# Legislation on the Front: the Rocky Mountain Heritage Act

*Contributed by Holly Baker, Montana Wilderness Association*

*The proposed Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act is a common-sense approach that will help keep the Front the way it is for our kids and grandkids.*



Currently there is no permanent plan in place to protect existing uses on the Front's over 400,000 acres of Forest Service and BLM lands. This means that future land management could look very different from today: new trails could open up inaccessible ridge tops and drainages to motorized use, or conversely, out-of-state interests could successfully pass legislation that would blanket the Front with wilderness. Something also needs to be done for the federal public lands along the Front that are threatened by the spread of noxious weeds.

We want to find middle-ground and provide certainty for the people who live, work, and play long the Front. The Heritage Act ensures that there is reasonable access for all users and the continuation of grazing, outfitting, hiking and hunting. To help us get there the Heritage Act has three main parts: (1) Conservation Management Area (2) Wilderness (3) Noxious Weed Management.

The Heritage Act requires the creation of a comprehensive plan for noxious weeds control and prevention – it does not state specifics of that plan, but ensures that all interested parties can take part in the public process and help shape the outcome.

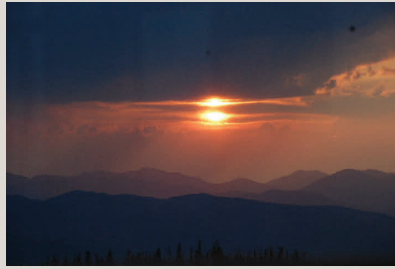
**CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT AREA (CMA):** 208,112 acres of Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management land would be managed under the CMA which is intended to keep things the way they are and protect against an uncertain future.

**WILDERNESS:** The Heritage Act would add approximately 50,449 acres to the Bob Marshall Wilderness and approximately 16,711 acres to the Scapegoat Wilderness for a total of around 67,160 acres. The Forest Service currently manages between 93,000 and 98,500 acres of non-wilderness lands to maintain its wilderness character.

**NOXIOUS WEEDS:** Noxious weeds are a common enemy for ranchers, sportsmen, private landowners and public land managers. The Heritage Act would require the Forest Service and the BLM to prioritize noxious weed management on the public lands. The total acreage involved is approximately 405,272 acres (this includes all of the CMA, Wilderness, and the Badger-Two Medicine area of the Lewis and Clark National Forest).

For more information about the Heritage Act visit [www.savethefront.org](http://www.savethefront.org)  
or call Holly Baker at 406-466-2600





***(Hazards, continued from pg. 4)***

*debris blocking passages and had to find alternate means to get around the debris.*

*For all hazards in the wilderness, users need to be prepared for changing conditions, bring the tools and equipment to clear hazards and know how to use those tools and equipment. Also making advanced plans, having alternate plans or routes, and checking in with others who know the area can help ensure you are better prepared for unexpected hazards in the wilderness. As you become aware of hazards in the wilderness, passing that information on to the Forest Service will help us be able to spread the word and possibly work to clear the hazard.*

*If you encounter a hazard in the wilderness, a blown in trail, river debris blocking the channel, a hazard snag tree next to your campsite, please consider doing the following: size up the hazard from a safe distance, determine what alternatives you have, then choose your best alternative that keeps you the safest while minimizing resource damage. Your party's safety is number one.*

*While recreating in the wilderness be aware and expect the unexpected.*



***(Trails continued from pg. 8)***

*Similar high elevation work will occur on the Chipmunk Peak – Bruce Mountain trail and on Trilobite Ridge. The Chipmunk Peak trail traverses extraordinarily scenic country through the west side of the South Fork of the Flathead River country, straddling the Bunker, Bruce and Sullivan Creek drainages. Certain sidehills of this high elevation trail have eroded or disappeared entirely, rendering it unsafe for stock travel and difficult to follow on foot. Four weeks of MCC labor should address the most major concerns. Similarly, 8 weeks of MCC project time will be devoted to the famous Trilobite Ridge trail in the upper Middle Fork of the Flathead. This will further work that began during the summer of 2011.*

*In the upper South Fork of Flathead River, an additional MCC crew will be based out of the historic Big Prairie Ranger station for the summer field season. Of significant concern to many wilderness users of the area is the deteriorating condition of the Jenny Creek trail, which is increasingly becoming one of the main access routes in to the upper South Fork. Miles of mud and compromised tread require reconstructive attention. In conjunction with a Forest Service trail crew, the MCC crew will work for four weeks building turnpike and constructing reroutes on the Jenny Creek trail. An additional 4 – 6 weeks of labor will improve tread width and design on the Rapid Creek trail. Rapid Creek feeds into Danaher Creek and is the main access route from the eastern front into the famous Danaher Valley.*



**SBRD employee hiking along remnants of the Flathead Divide trail**

*The Spotted Bear Ranger District is excited to see important projects come to fruition. The collaborative partnership agreements and common goals pursued by the agency, the MCC, Backcountry Horsemen, and our county RACs provide great opportunity for the enhancement of our invaluable trails systems.*

**NEW!**

## Wilderness Regulations & Rules Sign

You may start seeing a new sign posted at trailheads around the Wilderness complex. The new sign compiles all of the rules and regulations that apply within the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (including food storage, general Wilderness prohibitions, party size limits, stock containment restrictions, and others.) With one sign, wilderness users can anticipate what regulations they need to comply with if they are making an extensive trip through the complex. Users will also see that regulations are consistent throughout the Wilderness complex.

### *Bob Marshall ~ Great Bear ~ Scapegoat Wilderness Areas*



Pursuant to 36 CFR 261

### Regulations



#### FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST

**Hungry Horse-Glacier View  
Ranger District**  
(406) 387-3800

**Spotted Bear Ranger District**  
(406) 758-5376 (summer)  
(406) 387-3800 (winter)

#### LEWIS & CLARK NATIONAL FOREST

**Rocky Mountain Ranger District**  
(406) 466-5341

**HELENA NATIONAL FOREST**  
**Lincoln Ranger District**  
(406) 362-7000

**LOLO NATIONAL FOREST**  
**Seeley Lake Ranger District**  
(406) 677-2233



[www.wilderness.net](http://www.wilderness.net)

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/goto/flathead/places>

**CONTACT US!**



**Lincoln Ranger District**  
1 5 6 9 H w y 2 0 0  
Lincoln, MT 5 9 6 3 9  
(406) 362-7000

**Hungry Horse Ranger District**  
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Hungry Horse, MT 5 9 9 1 9  
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**Rocky Mountain Ranger District**  
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Choteau, MT 5 9 4 2 2  
(406) 466-5341

**Spotted Bear Ranger District**  
P O B o x 1 9 0 3 4 0  
Hungry Horse, MT 5 9 9 1 9  
(406) 758-5376 / (406) 387-3800

**Seeley Lake Ranger District**  
H C 3 1, B o x 3 2 0 0  
Seeley Lake, MT 5 9 8 6 8  
(406) 677-2233