



**FLATHEAD
LAND TRUST**
Conserving Our Legacy of Land and Water

VIEWPOINTS

Spring 2014

Critical Habitat Preserved on North Shore of Flathead Lake

Flathead Land Trust facilitated the protection of 189 acres of critical migratory bird habitat on the north shore of Flathead Lake in February 2014. The newly protected land, adjacent to a 161-acre State Park and 1,887-acre Federal Waterfowl Production Area, adds to a stronghold of protected feeding grounds vital to tens of thousands of migratory birds. The property also overlays an area with shallow groundwater so maintaining the land as open space will help protect water quality in Flathead Lake.

The landowner, Darrell Worm, wanted a conservation outcome for his property. He had his land listed on the market for years but could not bring himself to sell to developers. Flathead Land Trust was able to facilitate the purchase of the property by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks with funding from Bonneville Power Administration. Worm volunteered to use proceeds from the bargain sale to fund the restoration of the historic barn that was built by the original homesteaders of the property. The barn represents an era at the turn of the century when the rich soils in the Flathead Valley were first recognized.



In 1895, the Great Northern Railway published that, *“The most important factor thus far in the development of the Flathead is agriculture...the marvelous grain yields have shown the soil to be immensely rich and capable of wonderful results. In fact, each succeeding harvest produces some of the most astonishing results. They seem almost incredible.”*

Joseph McClarty and his wife came to the area to take advantage of the great agricultural opportunities and built the barn on the property about 1915. The metal quonset hut was added by the Wittlake family in the early 1950s for a swine raising operation. The Wittlakes continued to farm the property but divided it into five parcels in 1987. Darrell Worm bought the entire property in 1992, continuing its agricultural use and saving the valuable land from being developed.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks’ future plans for the property include maintaining agricultural production along with gradual wetland and riparian restoration. The land will also be open for public recreation, although with a seasonal closure from March 1 to July 15 for migrating and nesting birds.



“My hope for this unique property has been that it could be preserved for the people of Montana to enjoy and that its historic character could be protected. I am thrilled that through the efforts of the Flathead Land Trust and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks this hope can be realized.” said Darrell Worm.



Important Forested Habitat Conserved Along Flathead River

Flathead Land Trust purchased a conservation easement on 70 acres along the Flathead River near Eleanor Island in September 2013. The conservation easement protects a third of a mile of the Flathead River, wetlands, and a spring. Conserving the spring is especially important to bull trout, a threatened native species. The project adds to more than 5,000 acres that have been protected under the *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* since it was launched in 2002. The *Initiative's* success has been largely due to private landowners' willingness to voluntarily conserve their properties.

The project was completed in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, which secured funding for it through the Bonneville Power Administration. Bonneville Power Administration funds projects that help mitigate for fish and wildlife habitat lost with the construction of Hungry Horse Dam.



"We have been working hard with Flathead Land Trust and other partners to preserve water quality and promote riparian habitat for fisheries benefits in the Flathead River. This is an important property to protect in that effort and we were happy to help secure funding for it," said Kris Tempel of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

Funding Received to Safeguard Wetland Habitat in Smith Valley

Flathead Land Trust received a \$75,000 North American Wetland Conservation Act grant, \$10,000 from the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Mitigation Program, and a \$5,000 Travelers for Open Land grant to purchase a conservation easement on 49 acres in the Smith Valley. This conservation project fills in a puzzle piece in a block of conservation lands over 1,600 acres in size. The property is surrounded on three sides by protected wetlands and is adjacent to 189 acres that was added to the Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area through a previous conservation project by Flathead Land Trust. The project is part of Flathead Land Trust's new focus to conserve migratory bird habitat in the Smith and Flathead Valleys.



Flathead Land Trust also received an Intermountain West Joint Venture grant in January 2013 to help fund this migratory bird habitat conservation effort. The effort was initiated as a result of a study conducted by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the American Bird Conservancy, Flathead Audubon, and volunteer bird experts to quantify numbers and species of migratory waterfowl that use the Flathead Valley during the spring migration. These organizations recognized that the Flathead Valley, an area characterized by agricultural lands and extensive wetlands, was important to migratory waterfowl. The tens of thousands of birds that migrate through the Flathead Valley use this habitat for resting and feeding during their annual migration.

Valerie Beebe donated a conservation easement to Flathead Land Trust in 2011, which was used as a required match for obtaining the wetland grant. Valerie said, *"I feel honored and privileged to help in any way to make a contribution to another Smith Valley conservation project."*



Valerie Beebe

\$1 Million Grant Sought to Protect Key Wetland Habitat

In December, Flathead Land Trust and its *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* partners submitted a North American Wetland Conservation Act grant application for \$1 million to implement five conservation projects. We will learn in July if the grant application is successful. The potential future conservation projects include:

- Adding 129 acres of wetlands to the Smith Lake Waterfowl Production Area and protecting 129 acres of other adjacent lands with a purchased conservation easement;
- Acquiring 77 acres on the north shore of Flathead Lake to add to the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Management Area;
- Restoring over a mile of a spring creek and associated wetland complex east of Columbia Falls;
- Purchasing a conservation easement on 157 acres that includes a half mile of Sabine Creek just east of the National Bison Range; and
- Helping the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes acquire 30 acres of wetland habitat along the Mission Mountain Front.

This complex grant was written in collaboration with the Flathead Lakers, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes. It required significant matching acres and funding. Montana Land Reliance and the Roth family provided a large portion of this match with a 700-acre donated conservation easement in the Swan Valley. Glenn and Hazel Johnston and Flathead Land Trust also provided a large amount of the match from a 700-acre donated conservation easement along the Flathead River.



Glenn and Hazel Johnston

Conservation Plan Update in Progress

Flathead Land Trust is beginning the process to update its Conservation Plan. The existing plan that was developed in 2006 has expired. The plan was intended to focus the organization's conservation activities in a proactive and strategic way. It highlighted focusing on the *Flathead River to Lake Initiative*, a collaborative effort to protect the most critical lands that sustain water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, farm lands, and recreational opportunities along the Flathead River and north shore of Flathead Lake. It also identified expanding land protection

near existing isolated easements and participating in community conservation projects. Efforts guided by the existing plan have proven successful. The *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* has received by far the greatest efforts and remains a priority focus area. New conservation opportunities in this focus area, however, are decreasing.

It is time that Flathead Land Trust update its Conservation Plan to guide our future achievements in conservation. The four potential focus areas being explored for the new plan include: 1) community projects (e.g. trails projects) 2) habitat conservation projects (e.g. migratory bird habitat) 3) agricultural conservation projects (e.g. prime soils) and 4) location specific projects (e.g. easement neighborhoods). The process of updating the plan will involve meeting with partners and gathering information on these potential focus areas. We will be requesting member participation later this year as part of the update process. We look forward to receiving your input to set the direction of Flathead Land Trust for future conservation success.



President's Message

Reaching out to our members, partners, and friends as well as continuing our excellent work of land protection – these are the Flathead Land Trust's 2014 goals. The Board and staff are working hard to connect the community to conservation. We are displaying materials and information at events around the Valley (Sportsman's Expo, Forestry Expo, NW Montana Fair, farmer's markets, etc.); producing regular newsletters; and arranging trips such as the Smith Lake/West Valley bird watching tour in March, an upcoming bike and bird tour of the Lower Flathead Valley in May, a Lone Pine hike this summer, and a fall boat trip on Flathead Lake. You may have noticed more e-mails to keep you up-to-date on our "doings" and successes.

Dar Wassink has recently become the office manager. We welcome Dar and all her years of experience with non-profits as well as her and her husband's long-term commitment to conservation and the Flathead Valley. You are invited to stop by the office and say "hello" to Dar. We are now moving forward with advertising for an executive director. The job is currently posted on our website. I am very hopeful a new director will be in place by July 1st of this year.

Alison Young
Board President and Interim Executive Director

Join Us to Bike and Bird the Lower Flathead Valley

Bike and bird with us in the Lower Flathead Valley on Saturday, May 17, from 9 am to noon. Bruce Tannehill of Flathead Audubon will lead the trip sponsored by Flathead Land Trust and the *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* in cooperation with the new Bike Saturdays program. Bike Saturdays is a program initiated by Dennis Ketterman (see Bike Saturdays at www.bikeandpaddle.com) to encourage people to travel by bike and patronize local businesses. We will bike and bird for 10 miles along back roads between Church Slough and Somers Bay Café. Conservation easements along the way will be highlighted. Lunch will be at Somers Bay Café where a percentage of each meal's cost will be donated to support Flathead Land Trust. Be prepared to bike on both gravel and pavement. After lunch, you can ride at your leisure about five miles on the bike path along Hwy. 93 back to the parking location at Fun Beverage. Please RSVP to Laura Katzman with Flathead Land Trust at lkatzman@bigsky.net or 752-8293.



Challenge Grant Aims for a New Executive Director

The Sustainability Fund (TSF) of the Flathead Community Foundation has offered a matching Challenge Grant to help raise funds to attract the best-qualified candidate as an Executive Director. TSF will donate \$5,000 if Flathead Land Trust can raise \$10,000 by June 30. The Board is working hard to accomplish the challenge – please help us out by donating toward this effort. **Thank you very much to all those who have already contributed!** Your gift must be "new" money, not your regular membership donation – please write "TSF Challenge" on your check. In thanks, the first 3 donors of \$500 or more will receive a lovely lamp handcrafted of Flathead River stones (pictured above).



Thanks to those who attended the Smith Lake/West Valley bird watching tour March 22!

Staff & Board Changes in 2014

Muffie Thompson was on the Board of Directors for three years serving as Board Treasurer until December 2013. Muffie contributed great expertise and many hours to the Flathead Land Trust. We thank Muffie for her dedication and years of service!

Dar Wassink became the new Office Manager in March 2014. She and her husband, Jan, have lived in the Flathead Valley for 36 years enjoying raising their three sons here. Both Dar and Jan have a strong background with non-profit organizations. Dar comes to us from an office manager position with the International Lama Registry and Jan is on the Board of Flathead Audubon. Dar is excited to have a part in conserving the Flathead.

Mike Davis joined the Board of Directors in December 2013. Mike grew up in Great Falls and obtained a degree in mechanical engineering. He currently works as a surveyor. Mike and his wife have been in the Flathead Valley for over 34 years and have two grown daughters. They value the land and know the importance of preserving it for future generations.

Join the Flathead Land Trust Family!

Become a board member – we want you! Or someone you know. Everyone has a skill to offer: fundraising, marketing, community contacts, finance, legal, advice and opinions! It is a “working” board committed to conservation. We do projects, have fun and enjoy each other’s company. Give a call – we’d be happy to chat with you: Dean Sirucek, 857-2028 or Alison Young, 755-5532.



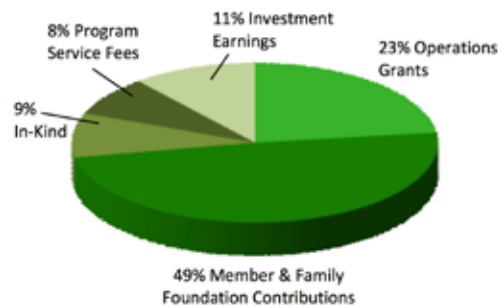
FINANCIAL SUMMARY

(As of 12/31/2013)

Our Assets

Cash for General Operations	\$ 53,812
Projects Fund (Intended to be spent on project costs)	\$ 16,809
Land Protection Assistance Fund (Helps landowners with expenses to implement conservation easements)	\$ 27,648
Stewardship/Legal Defense Fund (Used to monitor and legally defend conservation easements forever)	\$ 220,282
Endowment Fund (Investment earnings used for general operations)	\$ 55,817
Other (i.e, fixed assets)	\$ 10,068
Total	\$372,226

Where Our Support Came From for General Operations



What We Did With That Support



***We also used an additional \$685,000 of grant funding for conservation projects.**

Help Us Increase Our Membership

Flathead Land Trust Board and staff are working to at least double our membership in 2014 and you can help us! If every existing member could garner support from one other individual, we would be successful. Help us spread the word about Flathead Land Trust. We know you care about and want to maintain our excellent water quality, abundant fish and wildlife, rich farmland, scenic beauty and outdoor recreation resources. If more people knew about how Flathead Land Trust is helping to maintain the high quality of life in the Flathead Valley, we could increase our membership tenfold. Please assist us in this membership drive – tell your friends and colleagues to go to www.flatheadlandtrust.org to join on-line.

Businesses Benefit from being Flathead Land Trust Members

Flathead Land Trust has always been grateful for our business supporters. Now we want to show our appreciation by better showcasing business members. Beginning with this newsletter three business supporters will be highlighted in each future newsletter. The newsletters will come out twice a year (spring and fall). Business supporters who give at least \$500 will be acknowledged by having their logos displayed in our e-mails to our membership and partners. Businesses will be encouraged to sponsor upcoming events and in return the businesses will receive additional publicity in news media, membership and partner communications, as well as at future events. A special thanks to our business supporters who contributed \$500 or more in donations or in-kind services in 2013:

D.A. Davidson

Glacier Bank

Jordahl and Sliter LLC

Montana Academy

**Moore, Cockrell, Goicoechea
& Axelberg**

Third Street Market

Whitefish Credit Union

Highlighted Business Supporters

Long Term Supporter –



We appreciate the long-term support of Forestoration, Inc. Forestoration has not only supported Flathead Land Trust with membership donations, but also periodically provides pro bono technical assistance. Forestoration offers services for private landowners, nonprofits, cities, and commercial clients. Their areas of expertise include forest management, landscape design, trail construction, and land restoration. Notable trail projects include design of the popular Whitefish Trail network, the Viking Creek Wetland Trail, and special projects for Foy's to Blacktail Trails. Some of their most rewarding projects involve restoration of shorelines for clients who own land along lakes and streams. Forestoration also owns the Center for Native Plants, which will be opening a retail native plant nursery on Hwy. 93 just south of Whitefish in May.

Recent Supporter –



Plum Creek

In December, a grant from the Plum Creek Foundation funded a workshop organized by Flathead Land Trust for local attorneys. The purpose of the workshop was to educate attorneys on complex conservation easement legal issues so they are better able to represent and advise Flathead Land Trust, our partners, landowners and others. The workshop was led by attorneys Andy Dana and Don Murray; twelve local attorneys attended. It was a very successful event and as a result attorneys now have a stronger understanding of the complex legal issues involved in protecting private land. Plum Creek Foundation is committed to promoting sustainable forestry and conservation in rural communities where the company operates and where its employees live and work.

New Supporter –

Flathead Lake Brewing Company

Flathead Lake Brewing Company in Bigfork supported Flathead Land Trust with their Tuesday Toasts program. Every Tuesday in January between 5 and 8 pm Flathead Lake Brewing Company donated \$1 from every pint of beer sold to benefit Flathead Land Trust. They also promoted Flathead Land Trust in their advertising of the event and by displaying our brochures at their business in January. You can help thank Flathead Lake Brewing Company for their support by visiting their brewery.



THANKS TO OUR SUPPORTERS IN 2013!

Grantors and Foundations

\$10,000+

AGL Foundation
Intermountain West Joint Venture
The Bibler Foundation
Turner Foundation

\$5,000-\$10,000

Ila B. Dousman Fund, Inc.
The Cinnabar Foundation
The Sustainability Fund of the
Flathead Community Foundation

Up to \$5,000

Cadeau Foundation
The Carlson Charitable Fund
Eaves Family Foundation
Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott
Foundation
James and Wanda Hollensteiner
Foundation
Kramer Family Fund of the
Whitefish Community Foundation
Plum Creek Foundation
Ruth and Sam Neff Fund
SahanDaywi Foundation

Business Members

\$500+

D.A. Davidson
Glacier Bank
Jordahl & Sliter
Montana Academy
Moore, Cockrell, Goicoechea &
Axelberg, P.C.
Third Street Market
Whitefish Credit Union

\$250-\$500

Bruce Boody Landscape Architect
Eddy Sandler Trial Attorneys
Eisinger Auto Group
Flathead Building Association
Forestation, Inc.
Fraser Management & Consulting
Freedom Bank
Insty Prints
Johnson, Berg, & Saxby
Johnston Ranch Associates, LLC
Law Office of Diane Conradi
Moose's Saloon
Re/Max Mountain View
Snappy Sport Senter

Up to \$250

Flathead Electric
Illi Real Estate Appraisal &
Consulting

Individual Members

\$5,000+

Chase, Victory and Ted
Gordon, Richard and Cheryl
Watkins
Hauth, Don

\$2,500-\$5,000

Kuhl, Richard and Marylane
Pannell
Young, Alison

\$1,000-\$2,500

Dakin, Bill and Sarah
Gratch, Alan and Sallie
Greenwalt, Dale and Kim Warren
Kuhl, Kendra Pannell

Individuals

\$1,000-\$2,500 (continued)

Peterson, Eugene and Janice
Regnier, Jim and Linda
Santa, John and Carol
Scott, James and Christine
Sliter, Jennifer and Justin
Zimet, Andrew

\$500-\$1,000

Binger, Ben and Anne
Blank, D. Linnell
Colyer, Thomas and Louise
Swanberg
Garner, Mary and Don
Hildner, Richard and Suzanne
Jones, Jeff L
Jordan, Gil and Kim Pinter
Kuhn, Walter and Nancy
Rolfing, Steve and Sue
Siderius, Ken and Cathy
Malarchick
Sloan, Gary and Mary
Tannehill, Bruce and Gail
Cleveland
Thomson, Muffie and Jack
Weber, Kyle and Susan

\$250-\$500

Berg, Kathryn
Blackler, Edwin and Janet
Case, Patricia and John
Chustz, Bubba and Leta
Downey, Dave and Janet
Matelich, Ron and Swithin
McGrath
McLean, Diane and Mike
Meislik, Rhona and Jerry
Morrison, Mike and Katie
Morrow, Janet
Olson, Dan and Jeanne
Orr, Joe and Kimberly
Rothfuss, Ed and Marge
Seabaugh, Liz and Rusby
Siderius, Richard and Joan
Sirucek, Dean
Smith, Lucy
Stanley, Christine
Thompson, Art and Diane
Trieweler, Terry
Vranish, Dr. Loren and Sherry
Webb, Myrt

\$100-\$250

Anonymous (1)
Bauder, Don and Rebecca
Bengtson, Tom and Sharon
Blickenstaff, Rebecca and Robert
Brosten, Jerry and Aileen
Brown, Patricia and Ralph
Bruninga, John and Kris
Carlson, Tom and Kris
Chase, Lavinia and Edith Springer
Collins, John and Anne
Cummings, David and Dawn
Cummings, Steve and Sue
Dores, Michael and Jordonna
Ericsson, Sally
Flowers, Mayre
Gibson, Hi and Mary
Hulet, Susie and Elliot
Issel, Trish and Chuck
Johnson, Connie and George
Losleben
Little, Dr. Tom and Gerene
Longhart, Fred

\$100-\$250 (continued)

Lopp, Bob and Jane
McClelland, Kevin
McClelland, Pat and Riley
Mendelsohn, Joe
Miller, Dr. Wayne
Mumma, Harley and Nancy Hyde
Murray, Don and Barbara
Mutascio, Paul
Nedom, Woody
Nelson, Douglas and Barbara
Nickels, Matt
Oehlerich, Dawn
O'Neil, Robert and Truckner,
Bobbie
Parsons, Valerie and Larry
Reynolds, Marilyn and Bruce
Harris
Schaus, Richard
Schroeter, Sun and Franklin
Schwennessen, Rose and Don
Sherman, Roger and Sue
Siderius, Charles
Sloan, Virginia
Smiley, Doc and Terri
Snow, Don and Phyllis
Sogard, Mickey and Jeff
Sorensen, Jerry
Sowerwine, Owen David and
Haydi
Svennungsen, Mark and Nancy
VanDenburgh, John and Kristen
Williams, Rebecca and Larry
Yurchak, Nancy

Up to \$100

Anonymous (1)
Asebrook, Jennifer and Richard
Menicke
Bissell, Gael and Rick Mace
Blood, Lex and Judith Pressmar
Boorman, Barbara R.
Boyle, Gene and Barbara
Breen, Bill
Brett, Lynne and Angel Rosario
Byers, Jennifer
Byrd, Gerard and Loretta
Carver, Gary
Casey, Dan and Susannah
Clark, Allan and Phyllis
Cohen, Connie
Conner, Mike and Diane
Corwin, Bill
Cox, Judy and Bill
Davis, Mike and Lore
DeGrosky, Tami and Mike
Divoky, Dennis and Terry
Dramer, Greg and JoAnn
Ensign, Charles
Ertel, Larry and Linda
Evans, Dave and Sue
Fisher, Pete
Fredenberg, Linda and Wade
Galloway, Gail and Scott
Gangemi, John
Gardner, Mary Jo
Gniadek, Steve
Hadden, David
Harris, Lee
Hayden, Brace and Kathleen
Higgs, Wilson and Charlotte
Hilding, Karin and Robert Gordon
Hodder, Beth
Houlberg, Poul
Hunter, Ryan and Eve
Hutchison, Alice

Up to \$100 (continued)

Johnson, Sally
Jones, David and Jean
Katzman, Laura and Chris Downs
Knotek, W. Ladd
Lackey, Jim and Launa
Lippincott, Jonathan and Nancy
Long, Dallas and Suzanne
Lundgren, Diane and Bill
MacLaren, Gayle and Scotty
McCormick, Sue and Greg
McDevitt, Cathryn
McDyre, Shawn
McIntyre, Valerie
Morehouse, Doug and Karen
Ober, Alanna and Michael
Paschke, Dan and Jean
Potter, Jack and Rachel
Pridmore, Donna
Reeves, Karen and Doug
Chadwick
Reynolds, Dave and Cheryl
Robbins, Dean
Robbins, Erick and Jennifer
Sanders, Patricia
Saunders, Peter and Cary
Sjoldal, Pauline
Stephenson, Howard
Stine, Bill and Linda
Thompson, James and Betty
Thompson, Steve
Thuma, Brett
Valentine, Connie
van Lynden, Anna
Vignere, Joel
Weinberg, Dan
Wickersham, Michael and Nina
Williams, Karen
Woods, Lynn and Frank
Yenne, Gerald and JoLynn

Tributes

Lavinia Chase and Edith Springer
for Alison Young

Memorials

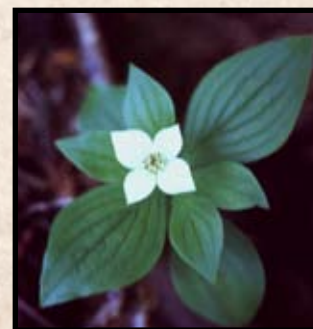
Christine Stanley
for Peter Stanley
Robert O'Neil and Bobbie
Truckner for Chuck Williams
Tom Colyer and Louise Swanberg
for Alfred Swanberg

Stewardship Contributions

Iron Horse Development
Wade, Pete

Conservation Grants

Bonneville Power Administration
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Travelers for Open Land



We appreciate your commitment to land conservation!



2014 Board of Directors

Alison Young - *Interim Executive Director
& Board President*

Jeff Jones - *Treasurer*

Richard Kuhl - *Secretary*

Don Hawth

Dean Sirucek

Edd Blackler

David Sandler

Mike Davis

2014 Staff

Laura Katzman - *Land Protection Specialist*

Ryan Hunter - *Land Protection Specialist*

Dar Wassink - *Office Manager*

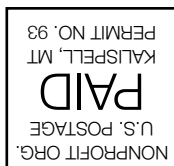


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