

Blackfoot Community Conservation Area

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CORE
2ND EDITION

Blackfoot Community Conservation Area

MANAGEMENT PLAN FOR THE CORE
2ND EDITION

Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council
Blackfoot Challenge
PO Box 103
405 Main Street
Ovando, MT 59854
Phone/Fax: (406) 793-3900
Email: info@blackfootchallenge.org
Web: www.blackfootchallenge.org
1st Edition, published May 13, 2008
2nd Edition, published June 5, 2017

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary	6
Note for the Second Edition	8
Abbreviated List of Management Actions since 2009	9
Introduction	11
Background and History.....	11
Location.....	13
Plan Purpose.....	15
Natural Landscape	18
Geography	18
Geology.....	19
Vegetation.....	20
Wildlife	22
Cultural Landscape	24
Native American History	24
Settlement History	25
Land Ownership of the Core	26
Decision-Making and Administrative Structure	27
Public Participation Process	27
Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council	28
Community Engagement.....	30
Management Goals and Objectives	31
Overview	31
Wildlife	32
Forest and Forest Products	34
Fire.....	36
Riparian and Wetland Areas.....	37
Range and Native Grasslands.....	38
Noxious Weeds	39
Recreation	41
Travel Management	43
Education	45
In-holdings and Neighbors.....	46
Economics	46
Looking Ahead	47
Plan Implementation	47
Monitoring.....	47
References Cited	49
Appendices	50
Appendix 1. Memorandum of Understanding between the Blackfoot Challenge and the Nature Conservancy for the BCCA Core.....	50
Appendix 2. Memorandum of Understanding for the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area.....	54
Appendix 3. Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council Members: Past and Present Terms and Contact Information	62
Appendix 4. Property Description & Directions to the Site	65
Appendix 5. Lists of Plant & Wildlife Species.....	66
Appendix 6. Project Proposal Form	71
Appendix 7. Guidelines & Criteria for Evaluating Project Proposals on the Core	72

LIST OF FIGURES

Appendix 8. Public Use & Recreation Policy for the Core.....	76
Appendix 9. Special Use Permit & Operating Procedures.....	77
Appendix 10. Post and Pole Harvest Permit & Policy	79
Appendix 11. Motorized Use Permit & Policy.....	82
Appendix 12. Firewood Cutting Permit & Policy	84
Appendix 13. Standards to Address Agency-Private Landowner Issues.....	87
Appendix 14. Glossary	89

Figure 1. Sunrise on Ovando Mountain	Figure 22. Grizzly Tracks
Figure 2. Vegetation of the Blackfoot Watershed	Figure 23. Forest Thinning
Figure 3. Map of the Blackfoot Watershed with Ownership Patterns & Location of BCCA	Figure 24. Aspen Stands
Figure 4. Critical Transition Zone	Figure 25. Mixed-Age Coniferous Forest
Figure 5. Map of the BCCA	Figure 26. Hot Boot Fire, 2006
Figure 6. Guiding Principles for Management of the BCCA Core	Figure 27. Mollet Park Wetland
Figure 7. Blackfoot River	Figure 28. Native and Desired Grasslands on the BCCA Core
Figure 8. View from Ovando Mountain	Figure 29. Biocontrol Site for Yellow Toadflax
Figure 9. "Prairie of the knobs"	Figure 30. Map of BCCA Ownership and Access Routes on the Core
Figure 10. Missoula Phlox	Figure 31. Cyclist in Mollet Park
Figure 11. BCCA Forest Lands	Figure 32. Hunting on the Ovando Mountain Block Management Area
Figure 12. Little Doney Lake	Figure 33. Fireline Road near Red Gate
Figure 13. Black Bear on BCCA Core	Figure 34. Snowmobiling near Doney Reservoir
Figure 14. Mountain Lion on BCCA Core	Figure 35. Boot Tree Kiosk
Figure 15. Mary Katomee, Member of the Salish-Kootenai	Figure 36. Students Monitoring Stream Flow
Figure 16. Buffalo on Monture Hill	Figure 37. Adjacent Landowners Don and Barb McNally
Figure 17. Brunett Homestead Near Doney Lake	Figure 38. Blackfoot Commercial Company in Downtown Ovando
Figure 18. Moonshine Cabin with Old Still	Figure 39. BCCA Council Members Evaluating Riparian Conditions
Figure 19. BCCA Council	Figure 40. BCCA Council Members on Tour
Figure 20. Bull Elk	
Figure 21. Gray Owl	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Community Vision for the BCCA Core:

Develop a working landscape that balances ecological diversity with local economic sustainability for the future benefit of the Blackfoot watershed community. Management will entail activities that seek to conserve, enhance and maintain a balance of wildlife habitat, wetlands, water, grasslands and timber resources with traditional uses including hunting, recreation, agriculture, and forestry. These shared values for the land will be complimented through working cooperatively with surrounding agencies and private landowners.

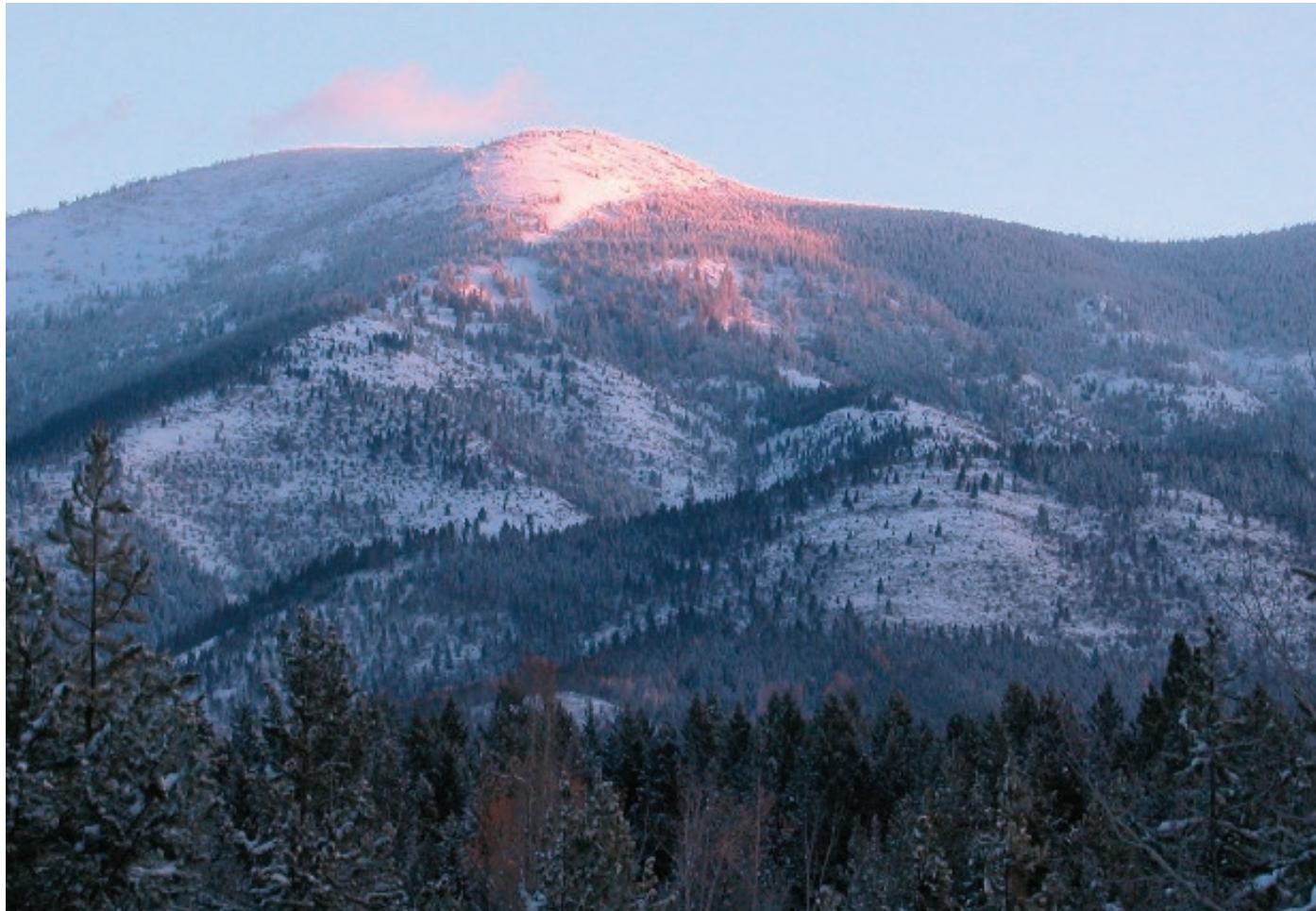
The Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA) is an innovative effort involving community forest ownership and cooperative ecosystem management across public and private lands in the heart of the 1.5 million acre Blackfoot watershed. Located at the southern end of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, the BCCA borders the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness areas and encompasses an important transition zone between wilderness, national forest and productive private valley bottoms, with lush riparian and wetland areas and important wildlife habitat. Historic uses of the area include livestock grazing, timber harvest, and recreational activities including hunting, trapping, horseback riding, hiking, snowmobiling and skiing.

The BCCA project involves two distinct phases. The first phase involves local management and administration of 5,609.37 acres of former Plum Creek Timber Company lands that were transferred from The Nature Conservancy to the Blackfoot Challenge in 2008, also referred to as the BCCA Core (Appendix 1). The second phase involves ongoing joint management of the Core with the larger BCCA itself—the surrounding public and private lands that comprise a 41,000-acre

multiple-use demonstration area for the watershed. It pilots innovative access, land stewardship and restoration practices. Land owners in this larger BCCA include the USFS-Lolo National Forest, MT Fish, Wildlife and Parks, the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and a number of private landowners. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) formed in 2008, and subsequently renewed in 2013, provides the legal framework for public agencies and private landowners to partner in cooperative cross-boundary ecosystem management (Appendix 2).

The BCCA Core is managed and administered by the BCCA Council—a committee of the Blackfoot Challenge—consisting of fifteen members representing agencies owning land within or adjacent to the Core, private landowners, recreational user groups, local businesses and/or commercial outfitters (Appendix 3). The original Council was appointed by the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors in July 2005 to coordinate a baseline inventory of the property, create the Management Plan for the Core, and develop the MOU for cooperative management of the 41,000-acre BCCA.

In 2005, a conservation easement was purchased by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife



JAN FARRAR

Service to protect the Core's conservation values and perpetuate its value as a working landscape. In accordance with the conservation easement, an Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement Baseline Inventory Report was completed in February 2007 to identify the BCCA Core's natural resources and assess current conditions for future management decisions and monitoring.¹ The Baseline Inventory summarizes the property's climate and physiography, vegetation, wildlife, and land

uses, with forest and habitat types surveyed and mapped.

The purpose of this plan is to guide land management decisions on the BCCA Core—the 5609.37 acres located in the heart of the conservation area. This document defines the community's vision for the property, characterizes the natural and cultural landscape, documents the public involvement process and administration of the property, and establishes management goals, objectives and issues requiring future

FIGURE 1. *Sunrise on Ovando Mountain*

¹ "Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement: Baseline Inventory Report," February 2007. Baseline data for the conservation easement granted by The Nature Conservancy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on property near Ovando, Montana. Report prepared by Rich Lane & Associates.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCCA:
Blackfoot Community
Conservation Area

TNC:
The Nature
Conservancy

MT FWP:
Montana Department
of Fish, Wildlife and
Parks

MOU:
Memorandum of
Understanding

MT DNRC:
Montana Department
of Natural Resources
and Conservation

USFWS:
United States Fish and
Wildlife Service

USFS:
United States Forest
Service

study to guide stewardship and restoration activities.

Based on a number of biological and social assessments, the Council identified the following resources, uses, and issues as central to management of the Core: wildlife, forest and forest products, fire, riparian and wetland areas, range and native grasslands, noxious weeds, recreation, travel management, education, in-holdings and neighbors, and economics.

The plan is intended to be a dynamic document that pools technical planning resources and local community-based knowledge. It is based on understanding historic landscape patterns, assessing current conditions, and establishing a roadmap for the future. Management goals, objectives, and activities as defined by the plan will be adapted as needed based on monitoring, landscape changes, and/or new information. Potential changes to the plan will be prepared by the Council, presented to the community for comment, approved by the Council and presented to the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors for final approval and adoption.

The BCCA provides a unique opportunity to coordinate private and public land management activities at the landscape scale, supporting the Blackfoot Challenge's mission to enhance, conserve and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Blackfoot River Valley for future generations. As a community-based forest, the cornerstone of the project is sound resource stewardship and sustainability for the benefit of local communities. The model of cooperative land management is based on the Challenge's legacy of building private and public partnerships across the watershed, from "ridge to ridge."

Note for the Second Edition

As a living document, this second edition updates and adds to the foundations of the first edition of 2008. Nearly a decade has passed since the plan was first published, and a lot of work has been done in that time. Forty individuals have served on the Council since it was originally formed, and some have never left (for current contact information and names of past members see Appendix 3). As the Council evolved and adapted, it has learned a great deal about how to manage a community area for multiple interests and values, and along the way has developed multiple policies and protocols based on that experience.

Many of the goals laid out in the first edition have been met, and many are ongoing. This updated plan does not subvert the original vision, principles, and management objectives identified for the Core in the first plan. Instead, it builds upon them and provides the public with a comprehensive list of updated policies, amendments, current Council member contact information, access routes and changes to ownership, permitting information, and management objectives going forward, as well as some descriptive photos that show the type of restoration, use, and management work that has been accomplished so far.

Abbreviated List of Management Actions, 2009 - 2016

2009:

- 11 public campsites designated along Haul, Boot Tree and Dick Creek roads
- Approximately 6 miles along Haul Road thinned as a fuel break
- 3 springs developed for grazing

2010:

- 170 acres of Martin and Dick Parks restored for wildlife habitat and forest health
- 42,000 feet of fence installed designating 4 grazing pastures
- Grazing Management Plan established
- 6,000 feet of Dick Creek restored

2011:

- 109 acres of pre-commercial forest thinning near Mollet Park
- Motorized Use Policy amended
- Haul Road graded

2012:

- 500 cyphocleonus biocontrol released on spotted knapweed
- Critter escape ramps installed on 8 stockwater tanks
- 2 game poles installed along Haul Road

2013:

- 148 acres of pre-commercial thinning north of Haul Road and west of Martin Park
- 8 vegetation transects established to monitor grazing
- 2 gravity-fed stockwater systems installed
- 3 game poles installed along Haul Road

2014:

- 80 acres on eastern side of the Core commercially thinned and restored
- 102 acres along western edge of the Core thinned as a fuel break
- Forest Management Plan established
- Boot Tree Kiosk updated

2015:

- 109 acres of pre-commercial thinning in Martin Park and north of the Boot Tree
- Ovando School students begin monitoring stream and forest health
- Additional 450 acres of forest restored across the Core

2016:

- Over 100 acres of weeds treated across boundaries
- 560 acres of forest restored
- Updated Management Plan for the Core

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Management goals for the Core include:

1. Manage habitat to promote diverse and sustainable populations of wildlife;
2. Promote a diverse multi-age forest using sustainable forestry practices;
3. Manage fuel levels utilizing prescribed fire, thinning or other land management practices to reduce the chance of catastrophic wildfire;
4. Implement riparian and wetland restoration and conservation strategies to benefit local fisheries, wetland and riparian area dependent species, and downstream resources and users;
5. Promote healthy range management practices while balancing the ecological and economic values of the area;
6. Prevent, control and/or eradicate noxious and invasive weed infestations through the practice of integrated weed management;
7. Provide for responsible recreational use at sustainable levels to benefit the public and the health of the resource;
8. Maintain a trail and road network for various forms and levels of administrative and recreational use that do not unduly degrade natural resource values;
9. Promote natural resource education, research and learning about local ecology and management through field observations, hands-on exploration and interaction with resource managers and researchers;
10. Maintain a cooperative relationship with private landowners who have in-holdings, adjacent or neighboring parcels of land; and,
11. Develop an economically self-sustaining resource that supports management of the BCCA and local community viability.

Background and History

The 1.5 million-acre (2,400 square mile) Blackfoot watershed in northwestern Montana is comprised of a diverse and ecologically rich combination of habitats due to its geologic and hydrologic features. Located at the southern edge of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, the area is part of a ten-million acre ecosystem that extends north into Canada. A tributary of the Columbia, the Blackfoot River flows 132 miles from its headwaters on the

Continental Divide to its confluence with the Clark Fork River just east of Missoula, a growing urban center. Four main tributaries and numerous creeks flow into the river with diverse and complex connections to wilderness areas, national forests, and private ranchlands in valley bottoms. Prairie grasslands, sagebrush steppe, coniferous forest, and extensive wetland and riparian areas characterize the internal reaches of the watershed. Over eighty percent of the watershed is covered with mixed species forests, with the remaining lands primarily in agriculture, grasslands, wetlands, lakes and streams.²

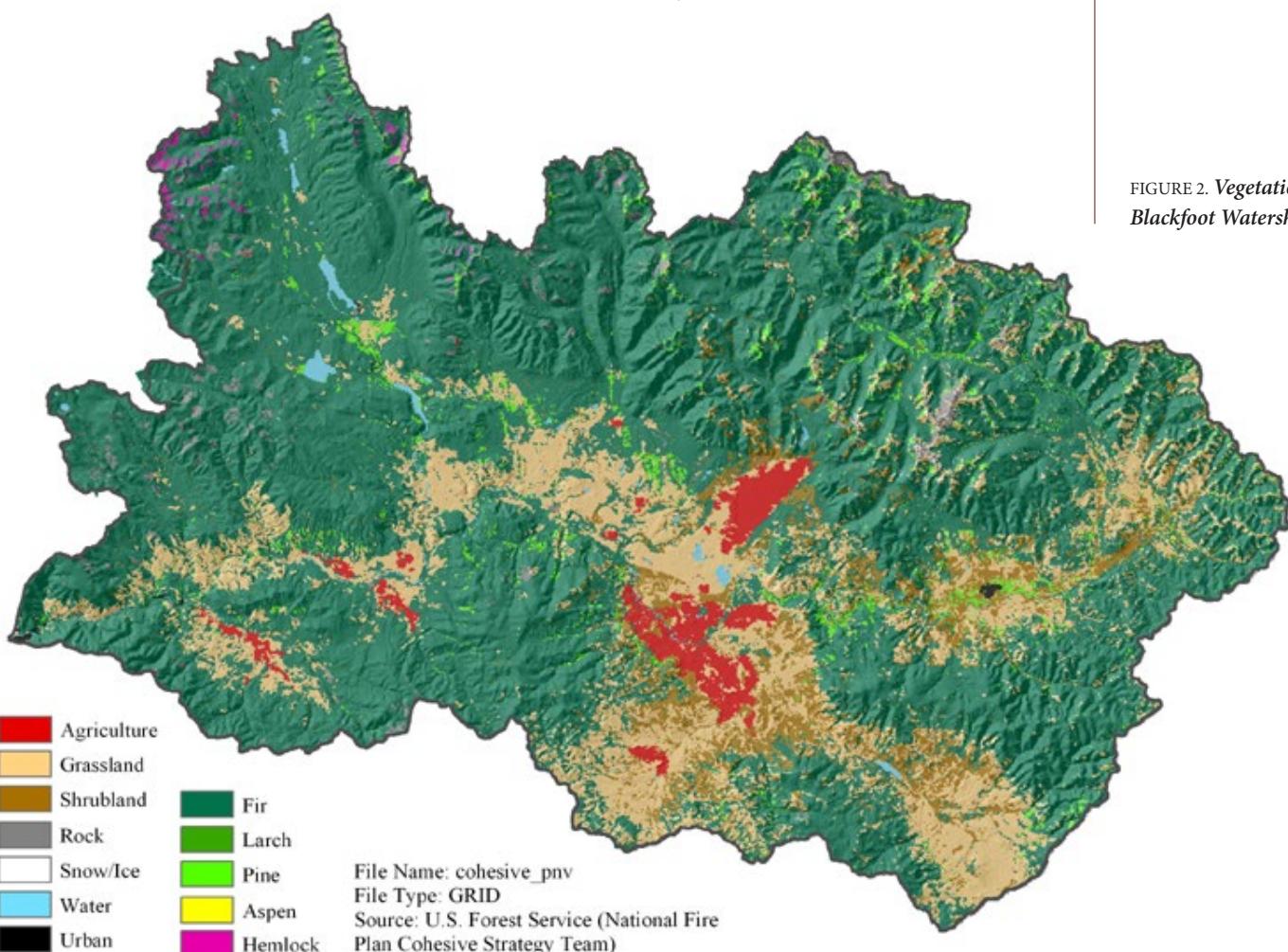


FIGURE 2. Vegetation of the Blackfoot Watershed

² Blackfoot Challenge. 2005. *The Blackfoot Watershed State of the Basin Report: Understanding Our Natural Resources and Rural Lifestyle*.

The Blackfoot Challenge: A Watershed Initiative



Blackfoot Community
Conservation Area

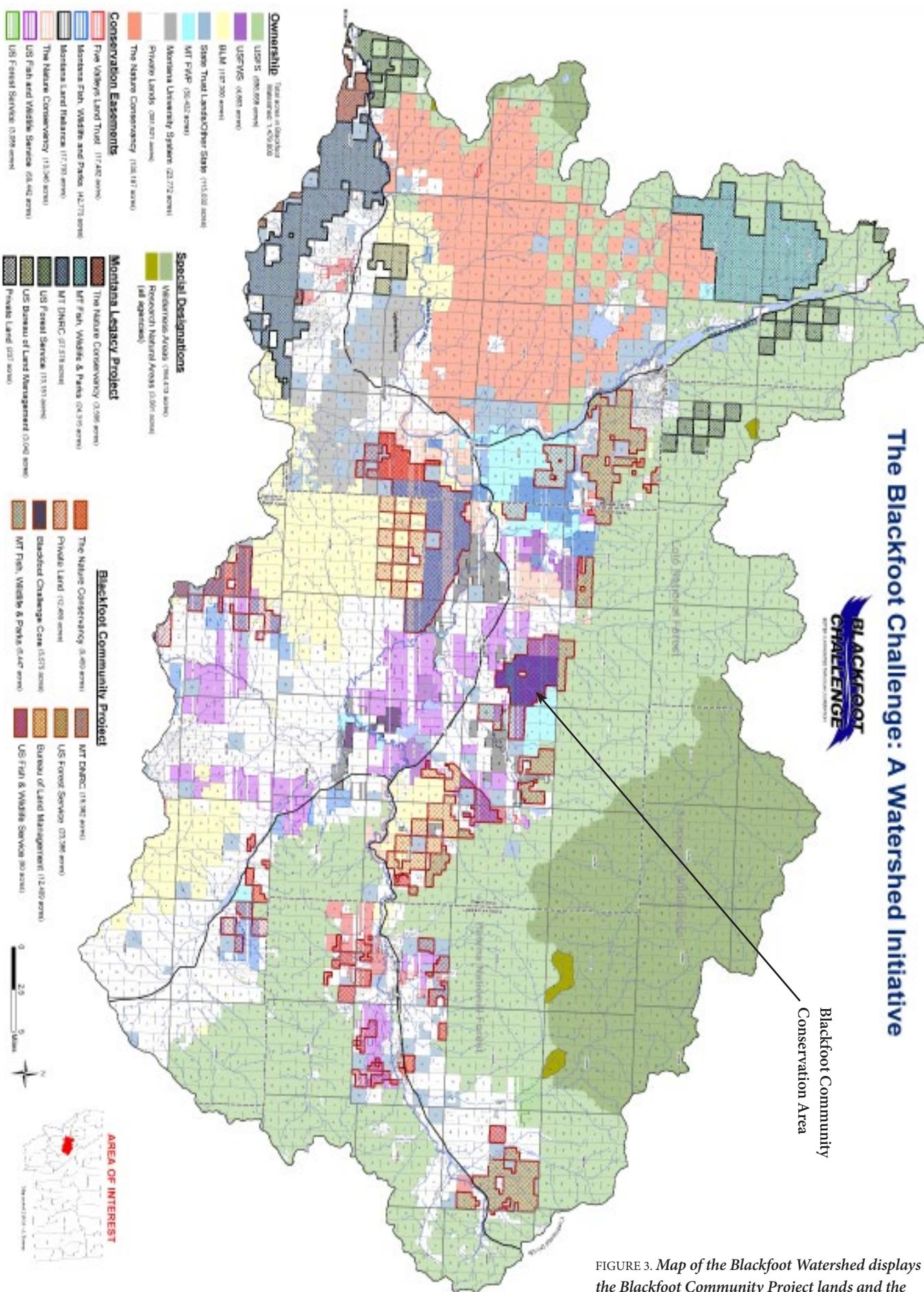


FIGURE 3. Map of the Blackfoot Watershed displays the Blackfoot Community Project lands and the BCCA, located in the heart of the valley.

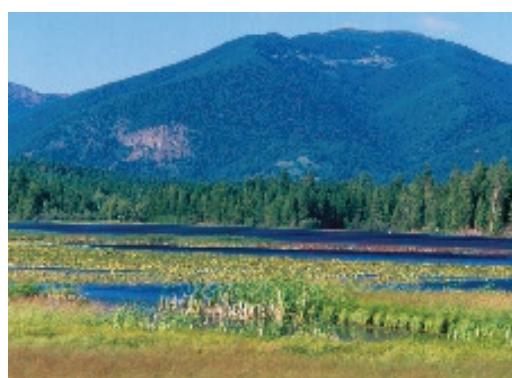
For centuries, the mid-elevation ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and western larch forests and associated vegetative communities in the Blackfoot watershed have contributed significant biological, agricultural and cultural value to human communities living throughout the valley. Beginning with Native American Salish, Kootenai, Nez Perce, Shoshone, Blackfeet, and Crow tribes followed by homesteaders and ranchers of European descent and continuing to the present day, these forested habitats continue to provide forage and cover for wildlife, forest products, grazing, hunting, and recreation opportunities.

In 2003, recognizing the conservation value and increasing potential for habitat fragmentation of some of these mid-elevation private forest lands, the Blackfoot Challenge and The Nature Conservancy initiated a land acquisition effort known as the Blackfoot Community Project to purchase 89,215 acres of Plum Creek Timber Company lands, stretching from the headwaters at Rogers Pass on the Continental Divide to the Clearwater drainage.³ The goal of the Blackfoot Community Project is to conserve and keep these former corporate timber lands relatively intact through re-sale to both public and private interests based on a community-driven plan. The land acquisition effort paved the way for the development of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA).

Location

The Blackfoot Challenge Community Conservation Area (BCCA) is located in

the mid-reaches of the Blackfoot watershed, near Ovando Mountain. (For a more complete property description and directions, see Appendix 4). Forming the southern border of the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness areas and lying north of the Blackfoot River, the area encompasses an important transition zone between wilderness, national forest and productive valley bottoms, containing important wildlife habitat with lush riparian and wetland areas. Land ownership in the BCCA is comprised of Lolo National Forest (59%), State of Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation lands (7%), State of Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks lands (13%), private lands (7%) and community-owned lands (the Core) through the Blackfoot Challenge (14%). Lands in the BCCA are still subject to the legal and administrative rules and regulations of their respective owners. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) (Appendix 1) provides the legal framework for public agencies and private landowners to partner in cooperative cross-boundary ecosystem management. The BCCA will function as a multiple-use area implementing innovative access, land stewardship, and restoration practices.



JIM STEINBERG

FIGURE 4. The BCCA is located in the mid-reaches of the Blackfoot Watershed, providing a critical transition zone between national forest and private valley bottoms.

³ Communities Shaping Their Future: The Blackfoot Community Project. See References Cited for full citation.



Blackfoot Community Conservation Area

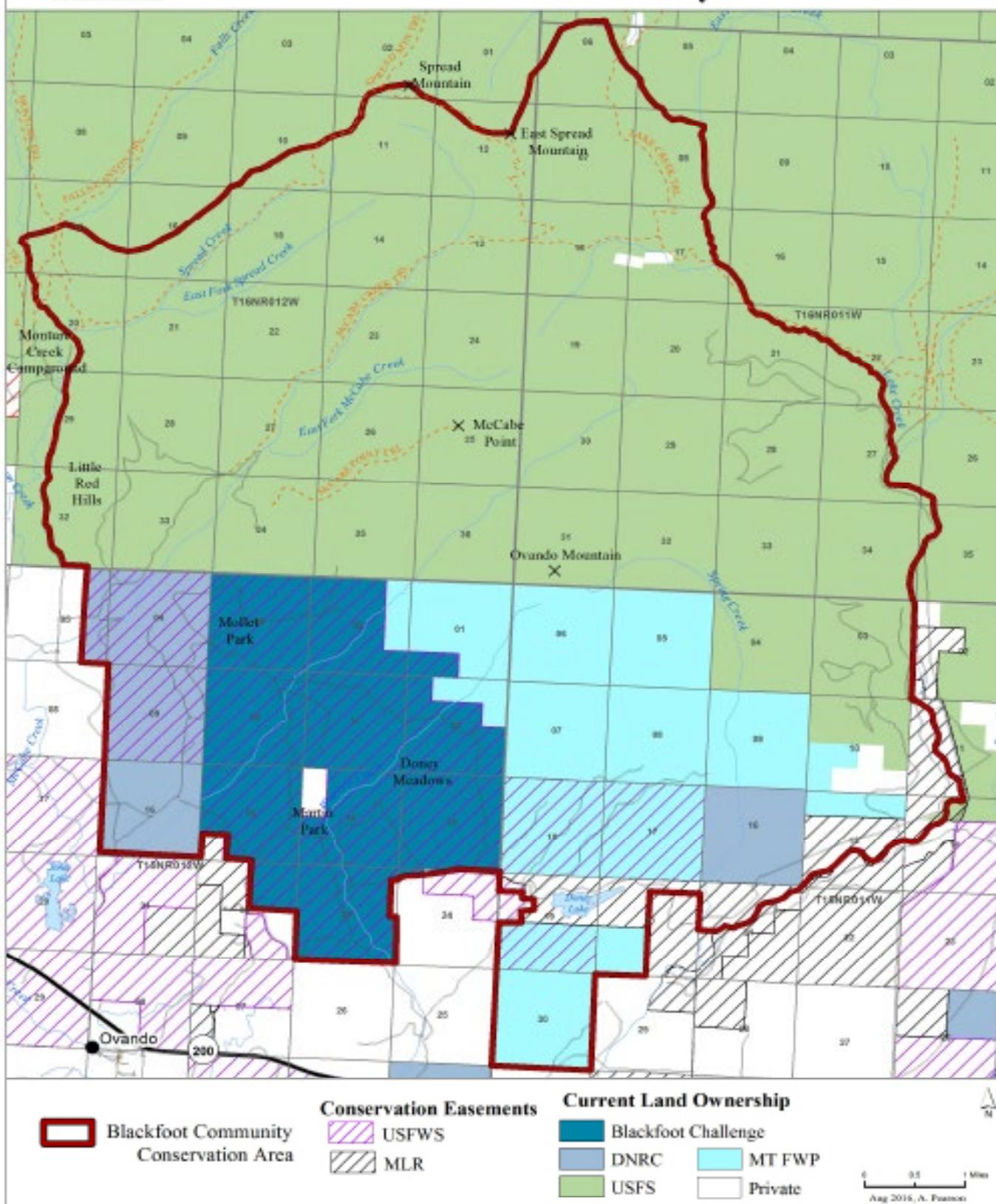


FIGURE 5. BCCA

The BCCA project formed around what is now called the Core—5,609.37 acres of private working forest lands transferred from The Nature Conservancy (TNC) to the Blackfoot Challenge for community-based ownership and management. The BCCA Core is subject to the conditions of a conservation easement purchased by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).⁴ The project pioneers innovative governance structures for local ownership and management of sustainable forest resources, exploring the intricate balance between conservation and community needs and viability. Building from this effort, management practices will be extended to include surrounding public and private lands.

The BCCA links social, ecological, and economic values together and is rooted in the efforts of the Blackfoot Challenge to bring public and private partners to the table to build trust and forge relationships. The goal is to work cooperatively to conserve, protect, and enhance the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Blackfoot River Valley. Hallmarks of the project include building long-term capacity for land management activities, collaborating with partners, continued public engagement in the process, enhanced resource stewardship, economic benefits to local communities, adaptive management and monitoring, and education about best management practices.

Plan Purpose

This document is intended to guide land management decisions on the BCCA Core – the 5609.37 acres located in the

heart of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area. The plan defines the community's vision for the property, characterizes the natural and cultural landscape, documents the public involvement process and administration of the property, and establishes management goals and objectives to guide annual stewardship and restoration activities.

The plan was developed by the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council (Appendix 3), a 15-member community-based group appointed by the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors, with comments and input sought from Blackfoot Valley landowners, residents and user groups through public meetings, work groups, surveys, and mailings. Community involvement and collaboration with public and private partners will continue to provide a solid foundation for future management decisions.

A key reference document for the plan is the Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement Baseline Inventory Report, completed in February 2007.⁵ The Baseline Inventory documents current conditions as a reference point for future observations and measurements related to the landscape's physical and biological characteristics.

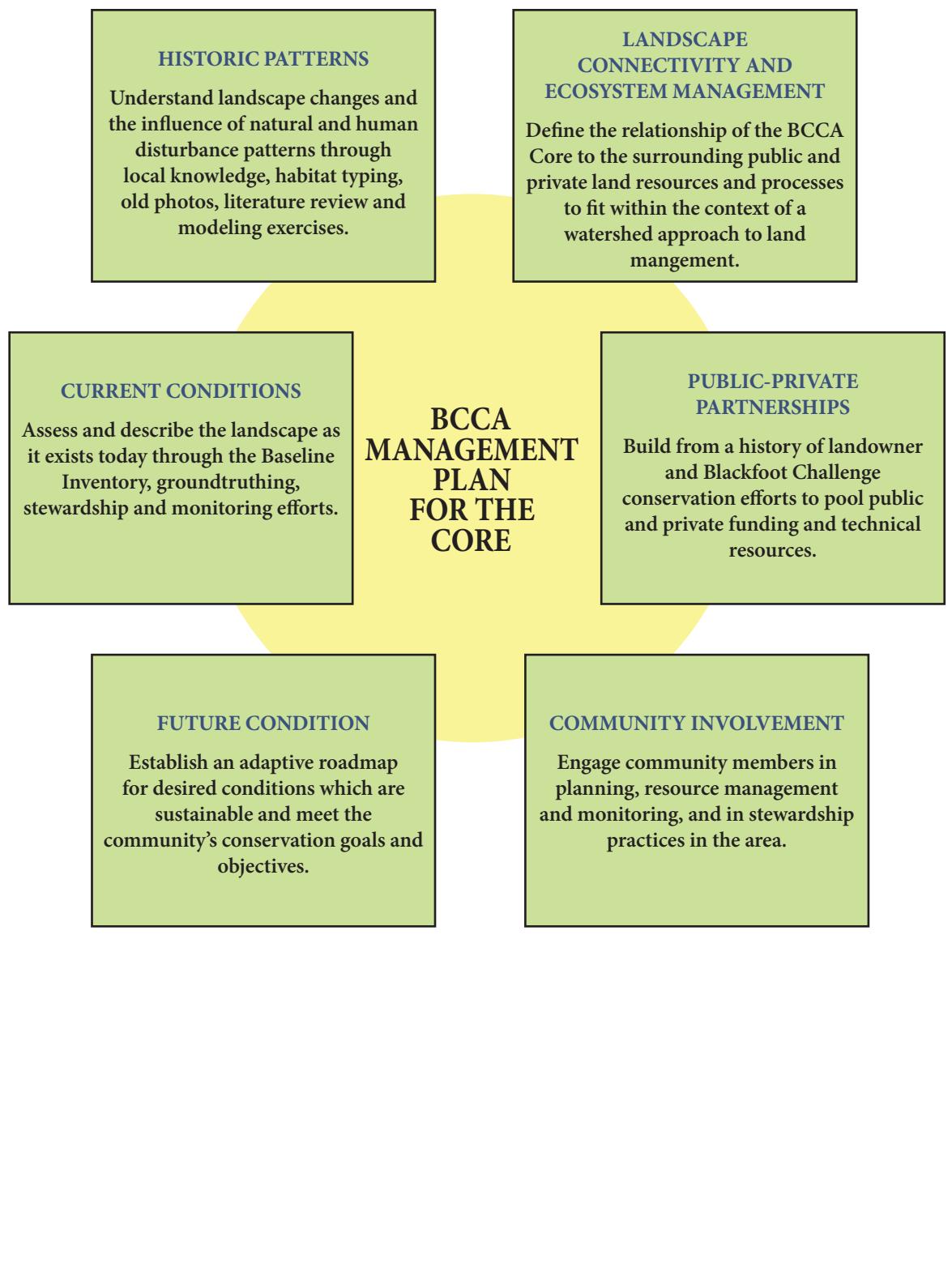
The plan is intended to be a “living” document that integrates technical planning resources and local community-based knowledge. Figure 6 shows the principles that will guide land management decisions and activities.

⁴ The full conservation easement can be found in: “Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement: Baseline Inventory Report,” February 2007. Baseline data for the conservation easement granted by The Nature Conservancy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on property near Ovando, Montana. Report prepared by Rich Lane & Associates.

⁵ Ibid.

INTRODUCTION

FIGURE 6. *Guiding principles for BCCA land management decisions and activities.*



The plan seeks to:

- Meet the requirements of the conservation easement held by the US Fish and Wildlife Service;
- Identify the range of resource issues, values and uses that are key to sustainable management and community use of the BCCA Core;
- Establish guidelines, measurable targets and funding priorities for annual management, stewardship and restoration projects;
- Emphasize the on-going balance and correlation between managing the landscape for both community and conservation purposes;
- Lay the foundation for cooperative management of the 41,000-acre BCCA by public and private partners;
- Provide mechanisms for ongoing community engagement in ownership and management of the BCCA Core;
- Integrate new knowledge and best available science; and,
- Adapt to ecological, social, and economic changes that affect the landscape.

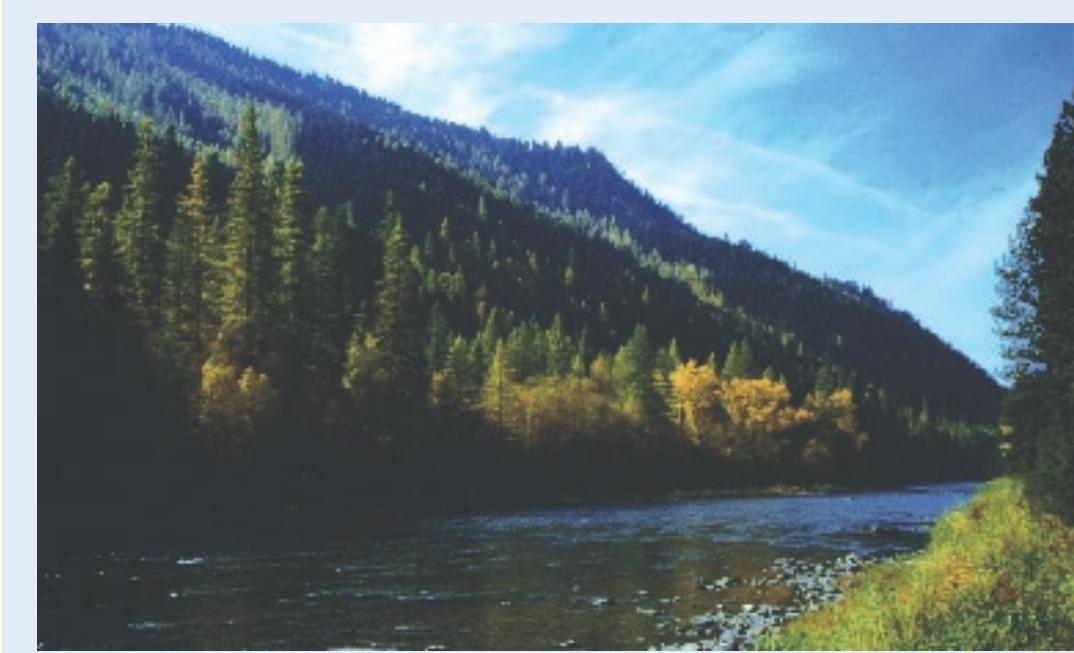
Geography

The Blackfoot River watershed lies at the southern end of what is known as the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, a 10 million-acre area of the Northern Rocky Mountains extending from Canada to the United States. The Crown is one of the most intact ecosystems found in North America, including the Bob Marshall-Great Bear-Scapegoat Wilderness Complex, Canada's Castle Wilderness, and Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park.⁶ The Blackfoot watershed acts as the Crown's

base, providing an important biological connection to other mountain ranges and watersheds in Montana.

The 41,000-acre BCCA is located in the north-central region of the Blackfoot watershed, and is dominated by Ovando Mountain (elevation 7,799 feet), a feature visible from much of the middle Blackfoot region. The 5,609.37-acre Core encompasses the lower southwest slopes and foothills of Ovando Mountain, with elevations ranging from 4,200 to 5,200 feet.

FIGURE 7.
The Blackfoot River



JIM STEINBERG

The Blackfoot River

The Blackfoot River, sometimes called the Big Blackfoot River to distinguish it from the Little Blackfoot River, is a snow-fed and spring-fed freshwater river originating near Rogers Pass on the Continental Divide. The river's canyon and the valleys it flows through were formed by the Missoula Floods, cataclysmic events at the end of the last ice age.

The river starts ten miles northeast of Lincoln and flows 132 miles to the confluence with the

Clark Fork River just east of Missoula. It is a fast, cold river with many deep spots, making it prime habitat for several species of trout. The Blackfoot is renowned for its recreation, including fly-fishing, canoeing, inner-tubing, and rafting. Montana Highway 200 runs parallel to the river from McNamara to Milltown. The river was featured in the 1976 novella *A River Runs Through It* by Norman Maclean, as well as the 1991 film that was based on it.



FIGURE 8. This view from the top of Ovando Mountain shows the critical linkage to higher elevation National Forest lands

Within the 41,000-acre BCCA are the headwaters to several tributaries of Monture Creek, itself a major tributary of the Blackfoot River, including McCabe, Spread, and Dick Creeks. Warren Creek and Spring Creek drain the south face of Ovando Mountain and surrounding foothills. The BCCA is bounded by Lake Creek on the northwest and the North Fork of the Blackfoot River on the southeast. The Core area includes portions of the Dick and Warren Creek drainages

Geology

The Blackfoot River valley was formed by continental glaciation when the Cordilleran ice sheet advanced through northern Montana. Quaternary glaciation and sedimentary deposition has led to the Blackfoot valley's geologic complexity.⁶ Alpine

glaciation in the Scapegoat Wilderness and mountains to the north of the valley occurred during the Bull Lake and Pinedale glacial periods. Large continuous ice sheets extended from the mountains southward into what is now the middle Blackfoot and Clearwater River valleys.⁷ Large deposits of till, outwash, and kame-terraces were left behind when the glaciers receded. More recent alluvium and stream deposits originated from reworked glacial deposits, adding to the current geomorphology of the area.⁸ Formations are made up of a combination of volcanics, siltstone, carbonates, and glacial deposits. Glaciated features, such as terraces, alluvial fans and pothole wetlands, are common to in the Middle Blackfoot, BCCA and on the Core Area.

⁶ Whipple et al., 1987; Cox et al., 1998. See References Cited for full citations.

⁷ Witkind and Weber, 1982. See References Cited for full citation.

⁸ Tetra Tech, 2004. See References Cited for full citation.

NATURAL LANDSCAPE

FIGURE 9. View of Kleinschmidt Lake from Marcum Mountain. In 1806, Meriwether Lewis referred to this glacially-carved landscape as the “prarie of the knobs.”



USFWS

Vegetation

Geologic, hydrologic, and geographic features combine to produce a wide array of vegetative communities within the Blackfoot watershed, including forests, grasslands, and wetlands. Low and mid-elevation forests in the BCCA Core are dominated by ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas fir, and western larch. In the higher regions, forest composition

shifts to subalpine fir and Engelmann spruce, especially on cool moist northerly aspects. Floodplain forests are comprised of Engelmann spruce, black cottonwood and aspen. In the watershed’s valley floor, meadows and native bunchgrass prairies dominate the landscape. Here, rare species can be found, such as Missoula phlox and Howell’s gumweed, globally imperiled regional endemics with population cores in the Ovando Valley, including the BCCA.⁹ For a complete list of vegetation species found in the BCCA, please see Appendix 5.

FIGURE 10.
Missoula Phlox



MARIA MANTAS

⁹ Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2005. Species of Special Concern Database, Helena, MT.

Portions of the middle Blackfoot Valley region are dominated by sagebrush communities. The greatest source of biological diversity in the watershed arises from wetland features such as glacial lakes, vernal ponds, basin fed creeks and spring creeks, marshes, shrubby riparian areas, and cottonwood forests – features common to the BCCA. It is estimated that 600 vascular plant species occur within the valley, nearly 30% of which are associated with wetlands.¹⁰ Salinity of pothole wetlands varies greatly, creating unique associations between water and vegetation. Seven plant species of special concern have

been documented in wetlands of the Blackfoot region. Fen peatlands, a rare wetland type in Montana, also exist throughout the middle Blackfoot.

The vast majority of the watershed and the BCCA remain in native vegetation. 76% of the BCCA is characterized as coniferous and deciduous forest, 5% as native grasses, and 19% as riparian areas and wetlands with less than 1% in deciduous and mixed forests and agricultural land. Within the Core area, approximately 56% is characterized as coniferous forest, 14% as grasslands, and 30% as riparian areas and wetlands.¹¹



ALI DUVALL

BCCA Forest Lands

Coniferous forest is the major vegetation type in the BCCA Core. Six major tree species are found—Douglas fir, ponderosa pine, western larch, lodgepole pine, Engelmann spruce, and sub-alpine fir. These forest stands were historically managed to provide saw timber and other softwood fiber for the region's forest products industry. Over the last 75 years or

more almost all of the merchantable timber has been harvested, including selective logging and some areas that appear to have been clear cut. Only a few areas were left unaffected by timber harvesting activities. Currently, small younger trees dominate the landscape in many areas of the property; natural and artificial regeneration have resulted in very successful reforestation.

FIGURE 11.
BCCA Forest Lands

¹⁰ Lesica, Peter. 1994. See full citation in References Cited.

¹¹ National Land Cover Dataset. 2007.

NATURAL LANDSCAPE

FIGURE 12. *This area, known as Little Doney Lake, forms the southern boundary of the BCCA. Nearly 150 acres of depressional wetlands can be found interspersed between ridges, knobs, and forested uplands on this property.*



STEVE KLOETZEL

FIGURE 13. *Black Bear*

Wildlife

The Blackfoot watershed maintains an abundance and diversity of wildlife that includes 236 species of birds, 50 species of mammals, five species of amphibians, and four kinds of reptiles. There are 12 native and 13 non-native (exotic) fish species living in the streams and lakes of the watershed. The Blackfoot River is a world-renowned native trout fishery, providing habitat for the complete life cycles of westslope cutthroat trout, a state species of special concern, and the federally threatened bull trout. The grizzly bear, Canada lynx, and water howellia



BOB SHEPPARD

are all federally listed species found in the Blackfoot.¹³ All of the threatened and endangered animal species occur on both the larger BCCA and the Core area. For a complete list of wildlife species found in the BCCA, please see Appendix 5.

The valley's glacial pothole wetland complexes attract breeding and migratory birds. Of the 236 bird species known to occur in the valley, twelve are species of special concern. The river provides year round habitat for bald eagles and includes a number of nest sites. The Blackfoot Valley's riparian areas, wet meadows, and forests provide excellent grizzly bear habitat as well as supporting black bear, mountain lion, smaller forest carnivores, elk, and both mule and whitetail deer. The Blackfoot as a whole is important to the integrity of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem and provides crucial links for wildlife from



FIGURE 14. *Mountain Lion*

BOB SHEPPARD

this ecosystem to other landscapes on its southern periphery. The BCCA enhances and maintains several wildlife habitat linkages.

¹³ Montana Natural Heritage Program, 2005. Species of Special Concern Database, Helena, MT.

CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

FIGURE 15. *Outfitter Joe Murphy took this photo of Mary Katomée, hauling firewood to her camp in the mountains north of Ovando in the early 1920s.*

Native American History

Until recent history, the Blackfoot valley was occupied by the indigenous peoples of western Montana for thousands of years. Known as Cokahlahishkit or the “Road to the Buffalo,” the Kootenai, Salish, Nez Perce, Shoshone, Blackfeet, and Crow tribes utilized the valley for its plant, animal, stone and mineral resources, as well as for cultural ceremonies.

The importance of the Ovando area is documented both in Pend d’Oreille and Salish oral histories and in the archaeological record.¹³ The Salish and Pend d’Oreille name of the Ovando area is Sntntnmsqa, meaning “Place-where-you-rein-your-horse-back,” because the trail dipped down through a creek—probably referring to Monture Creek—Native Americans had to hold back on the horse’s reins as they passed there. It is but one of numerous traditional Salish-Pend d’Oreille place names still used today by Native Americans to refer to the Blackfoot River corridor and surrounding areas.



OVANDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Ovando Valley contains numerous trails that led Native Americans to the many resources there and beyond. The trail up the Blackfoot River was used by the Pend d’Oreille and Salish to access the Rocky Mountain Front to hunt buffalo at least twice a year. Trails led north to what is now the Bob Marshall Wilderness and south to the Clark Fork valley. Just before the western movement of settlers, many groups of Pend d’Oreille and Salish occupied these valleys year-round. The open

FIGURE 16. *The Blackfoot River Corridor was an important hunting area for Native Americans. Buffalo enjoyed the forage on nearby Monture Hill.*



OVANDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

¹³ Native American history documented by Tim Ryan and reviewed by the Culture Committee of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe. Salish Culture Committee, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Pablo, Montana, September 2007.

There are memories of hard winters, hunting expeditions, bobsled travel to the Monture Schoolhouse, and root cellars storing potatoes and cabbage. The first major logging in the 1950s by the Anaconda Copper Mining Company generated stories of logging camps, big old red Macks, and corduroy roads, Rosignohl's landing strip, and the Cat Shed located at the Rodeo Park. Local names like "The Blind Corner and the Cattle Guard," "Duck Pond Hill," and "Red Fender Corner," as well as "Muchmore Park," "Valiton Ridge" and the "Moonshine Cabin" were never put on maps but were definite landmarks and reference points of their time. The area offered a variety of opportunities—families gathered gunnysacks of pine cones for sale by the bushel; cutting firewood was often a multi-family chore similar to haying. Besides local livestock grazing, large bands of sheep moved to summer range from the Pauly Ranch in Deer Lodge through Helmville to Ovando Mountain and west to Placid Lake.



OVANDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FIGURE 17.
*Brunett Homestead,
located near Doney Lake.*



OVANDO HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FIGURE 18.
*Former Moonshine Cabin
and Old Still on the BCCA
Core.*

valleys of the Ovando area were vital for camping, horse grazing, plant collection and hunting as well as other activities; it was an area that had sufficient resources to sustain a large group.

Settlement History

According to oral history accounts and other documentation¹⁴, the BCCA was used for a variety of purposes that were common across the Ovando and Helmville areas. The landscape provided resources for local ranches and farms, including hunting and food gathering, livestock pasture, hay meadows, firewood, and logging

opportunities. Early settlers recall old cabins scattered across the landscape with some long-forgotten mines and numerous outfitting camps. Starting on the east side of the property, Swede Hansen's cabin was located between the Haul Road and the river. Further west, the Doney family came to the area in the 1890's and homesteaded on what is now East Warren Creek. Other ownerships located along the BCCA border included Elija Hoyt, Anton Jacobsen, Elmer Staves, Henry McNally, Clate Johnson, Claire Eaton and Joseph Hanzel.

¹⁴ Ovando Historical Society. 2006. Oral History Account from Jim Bauer and Woody Needles of the Ovando Mountain Area.

Land Ownership of the Core

County records indicate that the BCCA Core was initially owned by Anaconda Forest Products and subsequently by Champion International. With the exception of one 80-acre private in-holding, there are currently no residences or buildings on the BCCA Core. In 1993, Plum Creek Timber Company acquired the land for timber management purposes. Plum Creek sold the property to The Nature Conservancy in January 2004 as part of the Blackfoot Community Project.

A conservation easement was granted to the USFWS in 2005, preventing subdivision and development for residential, commercial or other industrial purposes. The USFWS acquired the conservation easement for the purpose of preserving and protecting fish and wildlife habitat in perpetuity, including the wetland, riparian, and upland communities. Temporary living quarters, development of game, fir, fish or bird farms, commercial feed-lots, and refuse dumping are also prohibited. New road construction is tightly regulated. The easement grantor, TNC, agreed to limit the use of the property to ranching and other agricultural uses such as livestock grazing, hay production, noxious weed control, irrigation, and small amounts of soil and gravel extraction for non-commercial uses. Commercial timber harvest and other forest management practices are also allowed, as are hunting and fishing.

DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Public Participation Process

Public input and community involvement have been instrumental to designing and implementing the Blackfoot Community Project and the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area. In December 2002, nine months prior to the signed agreement between The Nature Conservancy and Plum Creek Timber Company, the Blackfoot Challenge hosted a community meeting in Ovando to acquire feedback on the large-scale acquisition of timberlands and the development of a community-based disposition plan. The Challenge hosted follow-up meetings in Ovando, Greenough, Seeley Lake, Helmville, and Lincoln between February and May 2003 to develop a list of community preferences for re-sale of the proposed project lands. At each meeting, landowners and community members were given a project update, an overview of the lands proposed for purchase and, most importantly, were asked to comment on a variety of issues including grazing leases, timber management, public

access, natural resources, development, cooperative management, and private versus public ownership.

As part of the process, in May 2003, community members met in Ovando to discuss the opportunity of developing a community conservation area at the base of Ovando Mountain. Landowners expressed support for keeping the area open for future generations and maintaining traditional uses including grazing, sustainable timber management, public access through block management, foot and horseback use, and snowmobile trails. Many community members also highlighted the value of the area for wildlife habitat and travel.

The next phase of public participation involved the distribution of a mail survey to local landowners and residents in the Ovando and Helmville areas in October 2004. A total of 347 surveys were successfully mailed of which 193 were returned for a 55% return rate. The purpose of the survey was to collect information on the



FIGURE 19. BCCA Council Meeting, January 2016

SARA SCHMIDT

DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

opinions of landowners related to future use, ownership, and management of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Core. The survey helped provide a baseline for community values related to the project.¹⁵

Implementation of the Blackfoot Community Project and BCCA continues to involve direct participation of local landowners and residents through committees, work groups, one-on-one discussions, an email newsletter, and website updates.

Community Comments from the Survey:

“The Blackfoot Community Conservation Area should be a model of collaborative management for sustained multiple use with conservation values on an equal footing with other values.”

“A well managed rural area that is open to the public but allows wildlife to flourish.”

“A ‘showcase’ of stewardship and a well-managed healthy forest, one that the Blackfoot community can take pride in.”

The original Management Plan stated that a representative from the Blackfoot Challenge would replace The Nature Conservancy representative once ownership changed. The Challenge chose to let the USFS Seeley Lake District Ranger occupy this seat, as this individual also serves on the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors.

In 2017, the Council combined the membership categories of “Private Landowners” and “User Groups” into one - “Stakeholders” - to encourage broader participation and interest in Council membership.

Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council

A key strategy for engaging the public in the BCCA project was the development of the BCCA Council, a committee appointed to represent the broader community and establish and oversee the management policies and practices for the area. In early 2005, an ad-hoc working group comprised of Blackfoot Challenge board and community members met to establish a slate of candidates and process for appointment to the BCCA Council. Some of these candidates were identified

from survey responses sent in by people interested in a high level of participation in the project. Other people stepped forward after receiving community mailings and updates. The major qualification necessary to serve on the Council was an interest in the area and a commitment to volunteer as a member for a two-year period.

Based on the ad-hoc working group’s recommendations, the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors appointed a fifteen-member Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council in July 2005. To represent the diversity of community values and opinions, the BCCA Council is comprised of two categories:

CATEGORY #1 AGENCIES

Four representatives from agencies that own or manage land adjacent to the Core, including Lolo National Forest, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

CATEGORY #2 STAKEHOLDERS

Eleven individuals representing both newer landowners and multi-generation ranch families, recreationists, local businesses, commercial outfitters, schools, and local clubs and organizations.

Council positions are filled annually as terms expire. The BCCA Council and Blackfoot Challenge solicits nominations from the community to represent Category 2 (stakeholders) as positions become available. Notices are distributed to the watershed community and posted on

¹⁵ Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Community Survey, 2004. For more information see www.blackfootchallenge.org.

DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

The charge of the BCCA Council is to develop and implement cooperative management of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area.

Delegated responsibilities of the Council are to:

- 1 develop and implement the Management Plan for the Core
- 2 develop an annual budget and workplan for the Core
- 3 fundraise for the annual budget and special projects
- 4 consider community proposals for uses or projects on the BCCA Core, and
- 5 form and maintain an updated MOU to coordinate management of the 41,000-acre BCCA.

The Board of Directors of the Blackfoot Challenge retains authority to:

- 1 approve the Management Plan for the Core
- 2 approve the annual budget and workplan for the Core
- 3 approve membership, new appointments or dissolution of the BCCA Council
- 4 establish an endowment fund and operating procedures to support long-term stewardship of the BCCA and appropriate areas throughout the watershed
- 5 endorse the MOU and policy plan for the 41,000-acre BCCA, and
- 6 provide liability coverage, administrative and general support for the BCCA Council.

the Blackfoot Challenge website at www.blackfootchallenge.org. Members serve three year terms, beginning January 1st of each calendar year. Agency members may serve consecutive terms. Stakeholders are also eligible to serve consecutive terms, and may reapply immediately after the completion of each three year term. There

is no limit to the number of terms a Stakeholder may serve on the Council. Selection is based primarily on three criteria: 1) the individual's ability to be an active participant for their term of appointment, 2) the individual's willingness to work positively and cooperatively to reach management decisions that best meet the goals of the BCCA, and 3) diversity of representation.

The Council is administered by a Chair and a Vice-Chair. The Chair term lasts three years, with two being the maximum number of terms any Chair can serve consecutively in the position. After two consecutive terms, the Chair must vacate the position for a minimum of one term, though they may still serve on the Council. The Vice-Chair term lasts one year. There is no limit to the number of consecutive terms a Council member may serve as Vice-Chair. These officers must be represented by Stakeholders (Category 2). A part-time Land Steward (by contract or partnership efforts) coordinates and implements on-the-ground projects specified in the annual workplan. A Management Work Group, comprised of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and one agency member, provides day-to-day oversight of the Land Steward and annual workplan activities.

The Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors provides staff support to assist the Council as deemed necessary by the Board and Council. Three workgroups have been formed, including 1) Forestry; 2) Grazing/Noxious Weeds; and 3) Recreation/Education/Wildlife, to complete preliminary work on given tasks and develop recommendations for full Council consideration and decisions.

In 2010, the Council lengthened the term from two to three years, and in 2014, eliminated the two term limit.

In 2014, the Council lengthened the Chair term from one to three years to allow members serving in the position more time to fully understand the administrative and financial policies, practices and procedures of the BCCA.

DECISION-MAKING AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

In 2009, the Recreation and Education workgroup expanded to encompass Wildlife and is now known as “REW.”

The Council endeavors to reach management decisions through consensus. To assist in realizing this goal, the Council will use the “thumbs rule” when a vote is required. Council members in favor of the decision or proposal will give a thumbs up; those who may not be in favor the decision or proposal but can accept it in spirit of compromise will give a thumbs sideways to indicate their position; and finally those who cannot accept the decision or proposal as presented will give a thumbs down. If a Council member gives a thumbs down, he/she will be encouraged to present an alternate proposal to meet the needs of all Council members. If the Council is unable to reach a decision using the “thumbs rule,” a decision shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members present and absent, requiring 80 percent approval for passage – 12 yea votes. The Council may use paper ballot, depending on the issue. Votes shall be recorded in the meeting notes.

Community Engagement

The Council will provide ample opportunities for public involvement and engagement in future land management and stewardship of the BCCA. A meeting schedule will be established to enable them to conduct their duties in an open and efficient manner. All meetings are open to the general public, and the public is afforded an opportunity to speak. Efforts will also be made to maintain positive relationships with adjacent and neighboring landowners.

Community members may develop and submit proposals to the BCCA Council for special projects and uses. Each proposal must include a project description, scope of the area affected by the use, timeframe and duration of use, estimated number of

Key strategies for community engagement:

- Regular communication with neighbors will be used in order to discuss management issues.
- The public will be notified about and encouraged to attend BCCA Council meetings.
- Public meetings will be held annually to report Council actions and to gather comments, feedback, and ideas. On certain projects and issues that warrant immediate feedback from the broader community, the Council will host special community meetings to acquire input.
- Communication and outreach tools will be developed to update the community on BCCA activities, i.e. newsletter, Blackfoot Challenge website, and post office notices.
- Community events and tours will be hosted on the BCCA Core to familiarize the public with the land.
- Members of the community will have the opportunity to be appointed to and serve on the BCCA Council as specified in term rotation procedures above.

Beginning in 2008, the Council developed a number of policies to meet community requests for special projects and uses on the BCCA, including post and pole harvesting, motorized use and firewood cutting. See Appendices for all policies and permits.

users, and method for addressing liability concerns. The Council will assess whether the request increases or expands the level of existing uses or creates new uses on the BCCA Core, and whether the request is consistent with the overall vision for the Core. A set of general guidelines and criteria will be used to examine whether the use is compatible with the Management Plan for the Core (See Appendices 6 and 7).

Overview

The purpose of this plan is to guide land management decisions on the BCCA Core. The plan defines the community's vision for the property, characterizes the

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

natural and cultural landscape, documents the public involvement process and administration of the property, and establishes management goals and objectives to direct stewardship and restoration activities. The Council will develop an Annual Work Plan that defines specific projects and prioritizes activities, based on the budget and funding opportunities. The following section identifies resources, issues, and uses important to management of the BCCA Core along with future desired conditions and areas of future study.

A number of social and biological assessments provide the foundation for this section of the plan, including 1) the BCCA Survey,¹⁶ 2) the Ovando Mountain Land Management Evaluation,¹⁷ 3) the Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement Baseline Inventory Report,¹⁸ 4) the Lolo National Forest Management Plan Revision,¹⁹ 5) management policies and activities during TNC ownership, as well as BCCA monthly and other public meetings.

The resources, issues, and uses addressed for management planning are:

- Wildlife
- Forest and Forest Products
- Fire
- Riparian and Wetland Areas
- Range and Native Grasslands
- Noxious weeds
- Recreation
- Travel Management
- Education
- In-holdings and Neighbors
- Economics

Each item is discussed in this section with management goals, objectives and issues requiring future study.

¹⁶ Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Community Survey, 2004. www.blackfootchallenge.org

¹⁷ Blackfoot Challenge, Ovando Mountain Land Management Evaluation, 2005.

¹⁸ Rich Lane and Associates, 2007. See References Cited for full citation.

¹⁹ Lolo National Forest Management Plan Revision, 2007, see References Cited for full citation.

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Wildlife

The BCCA Core is an important wildlife area, providing an abundance of seasonal and permanent habitat for a wide variety of species due to its topographic, vegetative, and hydrologic diversity. Species include grizzly bears, gray wolves, elk, whitetail and mule deer, lions, great gray owls, Lewis's Woodpecker, Northern goshawks, bald eagles, wolverines, common loons, westslope cutthroat and bull trout. The area has also been identified as an important wildlife habitat linkage corridor based on current travel routes and the proximity to public lands.²⁰

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To manage habitat that will promote diverse and sustainable populations of wildlife.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintain identified wildlife travel corridors through the Core.
2. Maintain and/or recruit forested cover of large diameter trees for raptor nesting sites by promoting uneven-aged timber management for the appropriate tree species.
3. Maintain a range of forested forage such as tree lichen and understory grasses, sedges and shrubs for elk, whitetail, mule deer and moose on a year-round basis.
4. Maintain and recruit large diameter snags and standing burned trees to provide nesting and forage habitat for cavity-nesting birds and arboreal mammals. (Trees will be marked and off-limit to firewood cutting.)
5. Maintain and recruit large woody deadfall for small mammal populations.
6. Manage for a generally mature forest structure that is critical for elk escape cover by retaining adequate large diameter trees, carrying medium-sized saw timber trees to larger diameters (20 inch DBH and larger), and thinning pole-sized stands to increase growth rates in retained trees.
7. Maintain and expand aspen stands, particularly for cavity-nesters.
8. Identify sensitive elk calving areas and implement seasonal closures to motorized vehicles (May 1-June 15).
9. Manage habitat to benefit threatened and endangered species.

FIGURE 20. *The BCCA Core provides year-round habitat for resident elk and is classified as important winter range for ungulates and other species.*



RANDY SMITH

²⁰ Blackfoot Challenge, Ovando Mountain Land Management Evaluation, 2005.

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

10. Conduct wildlife surveys to monitor the diversity and number of species with habitat requirements.
11. Update and maintain a list of wildlife species found on the Core.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Assess special species needs not being fulfilled by the above management.



FIGURE 21. *Great gray owl*

BRAD WELTZIEN



FIGURE 22. *The BCCA Core also provides important habitat for the grizzly bear.*

STEVE KLOETZEL

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Forest and Forest Products

A tremendous amount of vegetative diversity is evident on the BCCA Core, with a majority of the land characterized as coniferous forest.²¹ Over the past 75 years almost all of the merchantable timber was harvested (with the exception of hardwoods). Timber harvest regimes included selective logging as well as some areas that appear to have been clear-cut. Some limited areas that approach old growth condition can be found along Dick Creek and in the western portions of Sections 12 and 13. Currently, small younger trees dominate the landscape in many areas. Natural and artificial regeneration have resulted in very successful reforestation of the property.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To promote a diverse multi-age forest using sustainable forestry practices.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintain and recruit forested cover of large diameter trees.
2. Maintain and recruit large diameter snags and burned trees.
3. Maintain and expand aspen stands.
4. Follow State of Montana Best Management Practices and Streamside Management Zone regulations on all timber treatments.
5. Pre-commercially thin timber on the most productive forest stands with the highest growth potential in a manner which will promote a diversity of species.

FIGURE 23. *Thinning project as part of a DNRC Forest in Focus Initiative grant, 2015.*



BRAD WELTZIEN

²¹ Rich Lane and Associates, 2007. See References Cited for full citation.

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Identify existing forest stands that are limited in scope or size and develop silvicultural prescriptions to increase their range and vitality.
2. Develop general silvicultural prescription plans for each of the eight stand types identified in the Baseline Inventory.
3. Delineate management units within the eight stand types.
4. Identify and prioritize stands where pre-commercial thinning will be required.
5. Using the forest inventory and rates of growth, identify sustainable harvests for the BCCA Core.
6. Identify stand types that may have existed previously.



FIGURE 24. *Aspen Stands*

STEVE KLOETZEL



FIGURE 25. *Mixed Age Coniferous Forest. This forest had recently burned in the Hot Boot Fire of 2006.*

STEVE KLOETZEL

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FIGURE 26. *Hot Boot Fire, 2006. This 80-acre fire was caused by a recreationist.*



STEVE KLOETZEL

Fire

Wildfire can play an important role in maintaining diverse plant communities. However, the proximity of the BCCA Core to private lands and structures requires that extreme caution be exercised in utilizing fire as a forest management tool. On three separate occasions in 2006 and 2007, DNRC fire crews, as well as the Ovando Volunteer Fire Department, suppressed human-caused fires in the BCCA. The early part of the fall hunting season is the time when the area is most likely to have problems with human-caused fires, when recreational use is at its highest. Historically, particularly during recent years, all naturally caused fires in the BCCA have also been suppressed. Controlled fire or fire-surrogates may be used in the future to manage plant growth and forest recovery as time and resources allow.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To manage fuel levels utilizing prescribed fire, thinning or other land management practices to reduce the chance of catastrophic wildfire.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Protect human life, property and forest resources through fire suppression and fuels management.
2. Continue the fire protection agreement with the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.
3. Utilize prescribed fire or fire surrogates to enhance forest health and fire protection.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Explore opportunities to implement prescribed fire as a management tool in

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

partnership with local fire departments, public land management agencies and other partners.

- Identify specific areas for the burns listed above.
- Remove native fish passage barriers, providing connectivity from tributaries to the Blackfoot River.
- Make improvements to riparian and wetland areas as resources permit.
- Protect water sources, such as springs and pothole wetlands, from grazing and livestock watering impacts.

Riparian and Wetland Areas

While only encompassing approximately 3% of the Core Area, riparian and wetland areas are critical to the health of the larger area and its plant and animal inhabitants. Wet areas range from stream-side belts to large numbers of glacial moraine potholes with water near the surface in late summer and evident above the surface in spring.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

Implement riparian and wetland restoration and conservation strategies to benefit local fisheries and downstream resources and users.

OBJECTIVES:

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

- Identify and monitor those riparian/wetland areas that are critical for livestock water and/or that need protection or special management practices (fencing, season of grazing, etc.)
- Identify any wetland/riparian areas that are of special value in the BCCA and develop a plan for protection and enhancement



FIGURE 27. *Mollet Park wetland in 2007, one year after TNC and partners completed a wetland restoration project.*

STEVE KLOETZEL

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FIGURE 28. *Grasslands comprise 377 acres of the Ovando Mountain Conservation Easement Area. The dominant habitat type of the major grassland parks is Rough fescue/Idaho Fescue. Muchmore Park, pictured here in 2006, is a blend of tame pasture grasses and native wetland sedges and rushes.*



STEVE KLOETZEL

Range and Native Grasslands

Range and native grasslands comprise 5% of the BCCA Core. Discrete grassland communities include Mollet Park, Martin Park, Doney Meadows and McNally Meadows. The dominant habitat type of the major grassland parks is rough fescue/Idaho fescue (excluding Doney Meadows which is dominated by timothy). There are also significant scattered “range areas,” where forage is available due to logging clearings or open-canopy forest types.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To promote healthy range management practices while balancing the ecological and economic values of the area.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Enhance native range conditions where native plant communities are determined to be in a degraded condition through livestock rotation, pasture rest, weed control, controlled burning, or other suitable means.
2. Conduct range inventories, as needed, to assess range conditions and sustainable livestock stocking rates for grazing leases.

3. Monitor livestock and wildlife grazing in order to manage for healthy range conditions.
4. Where revegetation is necessary, use only weed-seed-free native plant seed mixes.
5. Remove conifer encroachment on grasslands by hand or mechanical treatment, and controlled burns where possible.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Identify wetlands and riparian areas where livestock watering and use is detrimental to the resource.
2. Identify sources of funding for grazing-related projects on the area.
3. Determine best monitoring protocols for grazing leases.

Noxious Weeds

In many areas across the Core, noxious weeds are prevalent, particularly along roadsides, old logging decks, and slash piles. The principal noxious weeds are spotted knapweed, common toadflax, houndstongue, sulfur cinquefoil, common tansy, Canada thistle, and St. Johnswort. No known leafy spurge or hawkweed infestations are present at this time. There are also populations of invasive weeds including musk and bull thistles, reed canarygrass, cheatgrass, bulbous bluegrass, and common mullein.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To prevent, control and/or eradicate invasive and noxious weed infestations through the practice of integrated weed management.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Participate in the Blackfoot Weed Management Project with Powell County Weed District as a landowner within the Middle Blackfoot Weed Management Area.
2. Treat new invader species as the highest

priority for eradication and control.

3. Control weeds along all travel routes and monitor all travel routes for control needs on an annual basis.
4. Spot treat and monitor sensitive native plant communities such as riparian areas and native grasslands.
5. Utilize an integrated weed management approach including chemical application, biocontrol, revegetation, grazing, hand-pulling, mowing, and other innovative practices.
6. Require the use of weed-seed-free livestock feed by the recreating public, as well as weed-seed-free mixes for revegetation efforts.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Develop requirements for washing/cleaning vehicles traveling or using the BCCA Core.
2. Map specific new invader species.
3. Develop priority areas for weed treatment (and possible non-treatment).
4. Map existing aspen stands so that chemical herbicide treatments can be directed away from them.



POWELL COUNTY WEED DISTRICT

FIGURE 29. *Biocontrol is a key integrated weed management strategy. This photo shows a biorelease site on yellow toadflax.*

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

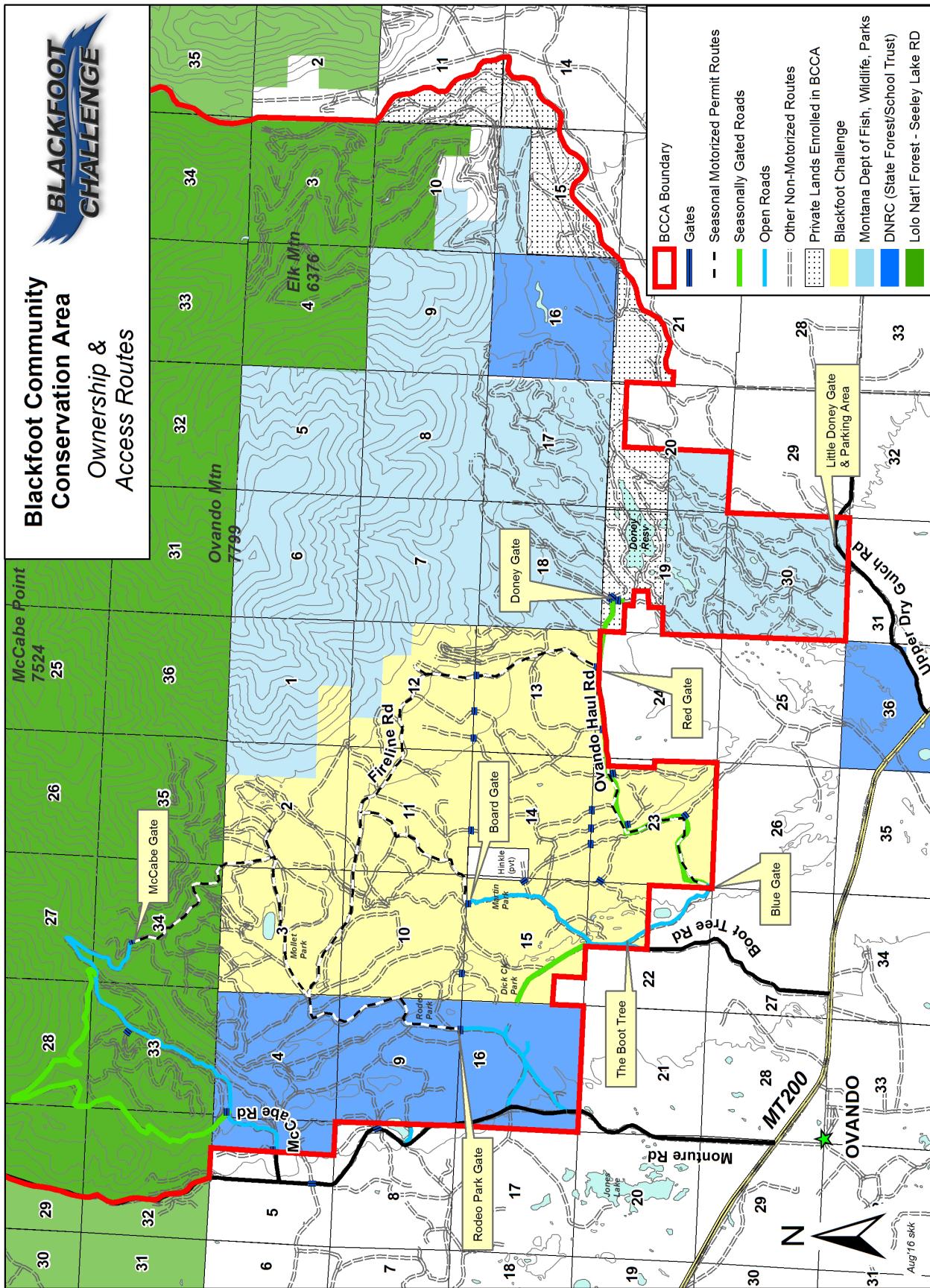


FIGURE 30. *Land Ownership and Access Routes on the BCCA Core*

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Recreation

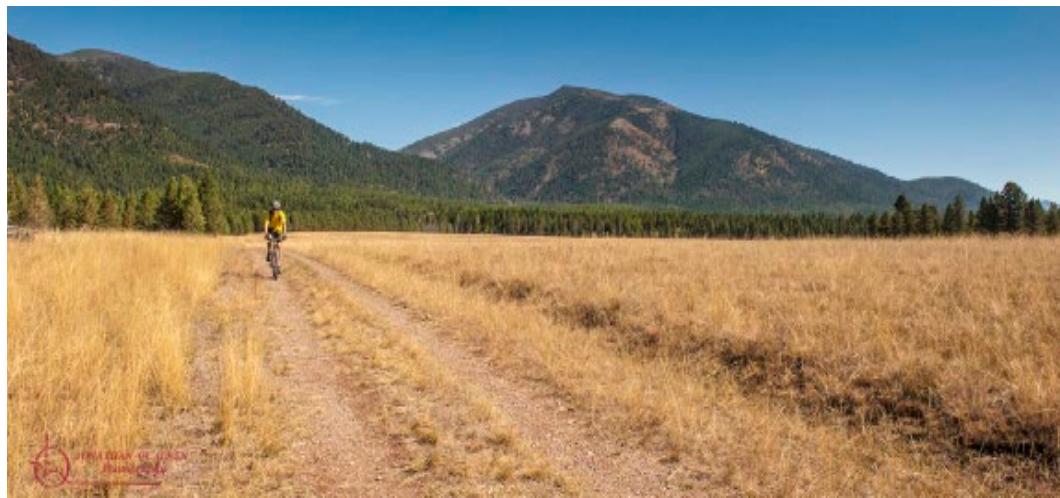
The BCCA Core provides a range of recreation opportunities including hunting, trapping, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding, camping, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, mountain biking, snowmobiling, dogsledding, berry gathering, and other activities. The main snowmobile route connecting Seeley Lake and Lincoln traverses the BCCA Core.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To provide for responsible use at sustainable levels to benefit the public and the health of the resource.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintain and enforce the Public Use and Recreation Policy (Appendix 8) which incorporates objectives detailed herein.
2. Allow for a range of appropriate forms of non-motorized public recreation, such as hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting and camping, at all times of the year while promoting resource health.
3. Allow for reasonable motorized public access while promoting resource health. Access is limited to open, established roads. Some roads may be seasonally closed due to sensitive wildlife areas, road conditions, and to accommodate grazing lessees.
4. Develop and/or maintain infrastructure necessary to support and manage recreational uses, such as roads, parking areas, gates, trails, camping areas and signage.
5. Work with local user groups and MTFWP to maintain the existing snowmobile trail system.
6. Allow non-commercial, legal, and sustainable animal and plant harvest (including firewood and Christmas tree gathering) by the public.
7. Cooperate with MTFWP to ensure that the Ovando Mountain Block Management Area (BMA) is well managed and consistent with the Core's resource management and recreation objectives.
8. To minimize conflicts with bears, human, pet and livestock food, garbage



JONATHAN QUALBEN

FIGURE 31.
Mollet Park, BCCA Core. A bicyclist rides through as a participant in the Ovando Gran Fondo, a fundraiser for the Missoula Symphony Association.

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

and all other attractants shall be acceptably stored at all times in accordance with the Lolo National Forest Food/Attractant guidelines.²³ Attractants shall not be buried, discarded or burned in an open campfire.

9. Educate and encourage recreationists to avoid introducing or exacerbating the spread of noxious and invasive weeds.
10. Educate and encourage recreationists to leave the Core in as clean or a cleaner condition than they found it.
11. Allow for reasonable special-use-per-

mits for educational, community, and commercial uses.

12. Monitor recreational use and impacts to the resource.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Cooperate with public agencies to fund and research annual hunting and trapping harvest numbers and big game herds on the BCCA.
2. Assess the impacts of off-trail snowmobile use or other forms of recreation on soils, wildlife, and plant communities.

FIGURE 32. *Hunters on the BCCA. Between 2006 and 2012, the Ovando Mountain Block Management Area saw the most use of any BMA in Region 2.*



ANDREA MORGAN

²³ Lolo National Forest Food/Attractant Order; <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/lolo/home/?cid=stelprdb5287227>

Travel Management

Two primary roads traverse the property, including the Ovando Haul Road and the Fireline Road. Public access is managed through a variety of open, seasonally open, and closed roads and trails (see Figure 30).

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To maintain a trail and road network for various forms and levels of management and recreational use that does not unduly degrade identified natural resource values.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop and implement a restricted, limited-use motorized travel policy.
2. Install and maintain gates or other road closure devices, parking areas, signage, and maps at major entry points to the BCCA.
3. Maintain three classes of public and

administrative-use roads:

CLASS 1: Open roads, which are open year-round to motorized public use.

CLASS 2: Restricted use roads, which are used principally for maintenance, and which are open to the public for motorized use only during specific times of the year.

CLASS 3: Closed roads, which are other maintenance routes that are closed to wheeled motorized use by the public on a year-round basis.

4. Encourage non-motorized public uses such as skiing, hiking, and horseback riding.

In 2008, the BCCA Council finalized a Motorized Use Policy for the Core that allows motorized use on designated roads for six weeks in the summer (Appendix 11).



STEVE KLOETZEL

FIGURE 33. *Fireline Road near Red Gate. This road was resurfaced in 2007 with grant assistance from the National Forest Foundation.*

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FIGURE 34. *Snowmobiling near Doney Reservoir.*

5. Monitor various road and trail uses to ensure that uses are balanced, and levels of use are compatible with each other and the resources of the Core lands.
6. Maintain seasonal motorized use closures to protect sensitive wildlife resources.
7. Plow parking areas in winter.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Implement and assess strategies for effectively tracking public use.
2. Explore possible foot trails for hikers and horseback riders.
3. Review policy every year and adjust as needed.



STEVE KLOETZEL

FIGURE 35. *The Boot Tree Kiosk, 2016.*



SARA SCHMIDT

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Education

One of the key priorities for the BCCA is to utilize the area for education, research, and learning opportunities to demonstrate innovative land management and restoration practices and partnerships.

MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To promote natural resource education and research opportunities for learning about local ecology and management through field observations, hands-on exploration, and interaction with resource managers and researchers.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Engage local schools in projects related to the BCCA Core, with opportunities for biologists and agency representatives involved in land management on BCCA to share observations in classrooms.

2. Encourage use of the BCCA Core as a demonstration site for innovative land management practices.
3. Develop records of natural and cultural change over time.
4. Encourage research by local universities on the BCCA Core.
5. Work with the Blackfoot Challenge Education Committee to develop specific education projects.

ISSUES REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Document cultural and natural history (i.e. logging, grazing, historic Rodeo Grounds, cabin sites, etc.) with schools and community.
2. Explore opportunities to develop the BCCA as an outdoor learning site with an interpretive trail system for education purposes.



FIGURE 36. *Ovando students monitoring stream flow on the BCCA, 2015.*

SARA SCHMIDT

MANAGEMENT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

FIGURE 37. *Don and Barb McNally, adjacent landowners and ranchers, attend a tour of forestry projects taking place on the BCCA Core, 2016.*

In-holdings and Neighbors

Maintain a cooperative relationship with private landowners who have in-holdings, adjacent or neighboring parcels of land.

OBJECTIVE:

1. Facilitate regular communication with neighbors.
2. Follow applicable standards and recommendations outlined in Appendix 13.

Economics

The rural communities of the Blackfoot watershed are experiencing shifts in demographics and economic structure. Although many of these changes are occurring at a regional scale, the BCCA Core provides the opportunity to link community viability with natural resource sustainability. Opportunities include utilization of the wood processing facility in Seeley Lake, providing recreation and tourism activities for local restaurants, promoting business for inns and guest ranches, and hiring local contractors to complete projects on the Core.

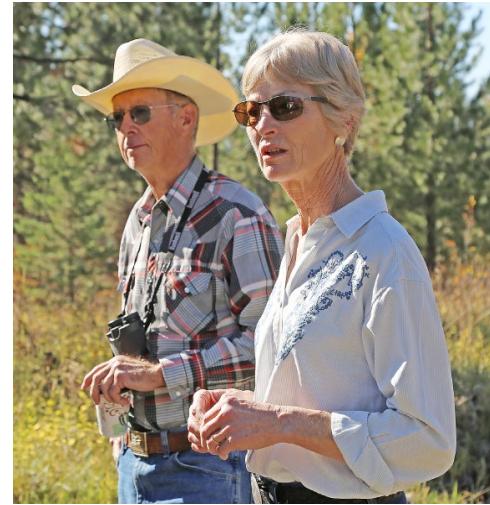
MANAGEMENT GOAL:

To develop an economically self-sustaining resource that supports management of the Core and local community viability.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop a long-term financial plan to fund annual costs for BCCA Core land management and stewardship.
2. Support local businesses and provide jobs or contracts for natural resource workers as opportunities arise.

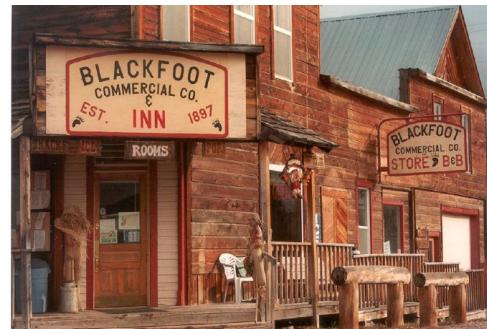
FIGURE 38. *Blackfoot Commercial Company in Downtown Ovando*



ANDI BOURNE

ISSUE REQUIRING FUTURE STUDY:

1. Explore innovative funding opportunities related to natural resource and recreation income, future growth, capacity and/or funding partnerships with agencies and other non-profit organizations.



TERI GARRISON

Plan Implementation

The BCCA Management Plan for the Core will be implemented by the Council through three standing Work Groups: Forestry, Grazing/Weeds, and Recreation/Education/Wildlife. Projects will be determined annually or as needed by 1) the goals, objectives and issues identified in the management plan, 2) special requests from community members or BCCA partners, 3) reaction to natural occurrences such as wildfire, insect infestation and/or drought, and 4) grant or funding opportunities for restoration and land management.

Project proposals will be submitted to the Council and appropriate Work Group for review using a set of guidelines and criteria that analyzes the proposed action and its impact(s) to the resource (See Appendices 6 & 7). If the project meets the criteria, the Work Group will develop an implementation plan that addresses the project purpose, scope of work, cost, funding sources and monitoring. The BCCA Council will review and approve the project plan with implementation supervised by the Management Committee and Land Steward.

Monitoring

Land management and restoration projects will be monitored by the Council, Land Steward and/or BCCA partners with results tracked and reported on an annual basis. Monitoring will be based on applicable standards developed by public agency partners, local experts, and related research. The Council may develop a community-monitoring program for specific projects to generate learning and understanding about natural resource responses to biological processes and disturbance patterns, human use and impacts.



ALI DUVALL

FIGURES 39. *BCCA Council Members Evaluating Dick Creek Riparian Condition*

The Management Plan for the Core will be revised as needed based on monitoring results and adaptive management (“learning while doing”). Potential changes to the Plan will be prepared by the Council, presented to the community for comment, approved by the Council and presented to the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors for final approval.

LOOKING AHEAD

The original Management Plan indicated that the Council would develop a written policy plan addressing issues that affect the 41,000-acre BCCA. Since that time, some policies have been developed, including the Motorized Use Policy and the Agency-Private Landowner Standards (Appendices 11 and 13.) As of 2016, the Council agreed to develop these policies on an as-needed basis.

“The BCCA should be maintained as a natural representative area where human use is balanced with preservation of the native animal and plant communities. Human use should be allowed and encouraged, but this should be done with a continual monitoring and analysis of needs of native population of plants and animals in order to provide for mutual survival. This should be an exemplary area for new management ideas for private land management.”

FIGURE 40. *The BCCA Council on tour on the BCCA in 2013*



SARA SCHMIDT

Blackfoot Challenge. 2004. Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Community Survey. www.blackfootchallenge.org.

Blackfoot Challenge. 2005. Ovando Mountain Land Management Evaluation.

Blackfoot Challenge, 2005. The Blackfoot Watershed State of the Basin Report: Understanding Our Natural Resources and Rural Lifestyle.

Blackfoot Challenge. 2008. Communities Shaping Their Future: The Blackfoot Community Project.

Cox, B, T. Gignoux and R. McCulloch. 1998. Economic Geology in the Western Montana Portion of the Blackfoot River Region: Discussion and Field Trip Guide. Abstract. Northwest Geology, v.28, p 101-109.

Lane, Rich & Associates. 2007. Ovando Mountain Habitat Conservation Easement: Baseline Inventory Report. Baseline data for the conservation easement granted by The Nature Conservancy to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on property near Ovando, Montana.

Lesica, Peter. 1994. The Distribution of Plant Community Diversity Associated with Glacial Wetlands in the Ovando Valley, Montana. Report prepared for The Nature Conservancy.

Lolo National Forest Management Plan. 2007. <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/lolo>.

Montana Natural Heritage Program. 2005. Species of Special Concern Database. Helena, MT.

Tetra-tech. 2004. Final Geology and Mineral Potential Report for Blackfoot River Proposed Acquisition, Plum Creek Timber Lands, Phase I. Unpublished report on file with The Nature Conservancy, 32 S. Ewing, Helena, Montana. 29pp.

The Nature Conservancy. 2007. Crown of the Continent. <http://www.nature.org/wherework/northamerica/states/montana/preserves/art14843.html>

United States Fish And Wildlife Service. 2005.

Whipple, J.W., M.R. Mudge and R.L. Earhart. 1987. Geologic Map of the Rogers Pass Area, Lewis & Clark County, Montana. USGS Miscellaneous Investigation Series: Map I-1642.

Witkind, I.J. and W.M. Weber. 1982. Reconnaissance Geologic Map of the Bigfork-Avon Environmental Study Areas, Flathead, Lake, Lewis & Clark, Missoula and Powell Counties, Montana. U.S. Geological Survey Miscellaneous Investigations Map I-1380.

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For the
BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA
Between the
BLACKFOOT CHALLENGE
And
THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

A. Participants

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is between The Nature Conservancy (the Conservancy) and the Blackfoot Challenge (the Challenge) (together the Partners).

B. Background

Conservancy's mission is "is to conserve the lands and waters on which all life depends." The Challenge's mission is "to coordinate efforts that conserve and enhance the natural resources and rural way of life throughout the [Blackfoot] watershed." The Challenge, in partnership with the Conservancy, purchased 89,000 acres through the Blackfoot Community Project (BCP) in western Montana's renowned Blackfoot Watershed. Since 2004, the Conservancy has been transferring this acreage (encumbered by conservation restrictions where necessary) to a combination of public and private ownerships through a process coordinated by the Challenge.

An integral part of the vision of the BCP was to create a community owned and managed conservation area. At the end of December 2008, the Conservancy donated 5,609 acres north of the town of Ovando to the Challenge. These 5,609 acres comprise the "Core Area" (Core) of the larger 41,000 acre Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA). The BCCA is comprised of the Core along with lands owned by the U.S. Forest Service, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and private landowners. This MOU refers to the Core and not to the greater BCCA. A separate Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) provides the legal framework for public agencies and private landowners to partner in cooperative cross-boundary ecosystem management for the BCCA (attached as exhibit A) among all the represented landowners and management agencies.

The Challenge owns the Core, which is managed for biological, community, and recreational values by the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council (the Council). The BCCA Council is a committee of the Challenge consisting of fifteen members representing agencies owning land within or adjacent to the Core, private landowners, recreational user groups, local businesses and/or commercial outfitters

C. Purpose

The purpose of the MOU is to describe the intent and responsibilities of the Conservancy and the Challenge in the ownership and stewardship of the Core resulting from the efforts of the Conservancy and the Challenge. This MOU does not create a formal legal partnership or other binding legal obligation.

D. Terms of Agreement

It is the Conservancy's intent and understanding that the Core will remain in the ownership of the Challenge and be managed by a community-based committee uninterrupted into the future. The following Terms of Agreement are stated here to memorialize the mutual understanding of the Conservancy, the Challenge and the communities of the Blackfoot Watershed as to the ongoing purpose of the Core and philosophy behind its ownership and management.

Terms of Agreement

The Conservancy and the Challenge jointly agree to the following terms:

1. The underlying and enduring intent of the Core community ownership and management is to link social, ecological and economic values together while underscoring the efforts of the Challenge to bring public and private partners to the table to build trust and forge productive relationships. The ongoing purpose of the Core as part of the BCCA is to work cooperatively to conserve and enhance the natural resources and rural way of life of the Blackfoot Watershed. Specific goals of the project include building long-term capacity for land management activities, collaborating with partners, continued public engagement in the process, enhanced resource stewardship, economic benefits to local communities, adaptive management and monitoring, and education about best management practices.

2. The Council manages the Core pursuant to the current "Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Management Plan for the Core" (Blackfoot Challenge, 2007). While the make-up of the Council will change over time and the Management Plan for the BCCA will be updated and adapted to changing conditions, the current Plan states an agreed upon "Community Vision" for the BCCA that expresses the intent and agreed understanding of the enduring purpose of the BCCA:

Develop a working landscape that balances ecological diversity with local economic sustainability for the future benefit of the Blackfoot watershed community. Management will entail activities that seek to conserve, enhance and maintain a balance of wildlife habitat, wetlands, water, grasslands and timber resources with traditional uses including, but not limited to, hunting, recreation, agriculture and forestry. These shared values for the land will be complimented through working cooperatively with surrounding agencies and private landowners.

3. Management of the Core and BCCA is supported financially by the permanent and irrevocable "Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Endowment Fund" (the "BCCA Fund") and the "Blackfoot Stewardship Endowment Fund" (the "Stewardship Fund"). The Conservancy and the Challenge jointly raised both the money used to pay for the underlying fee of the Core, as well as the initial money for the BCCA and Stewardship Funds for the purpose of providing ongoing and enduring financial support for the stewardship and maintenance of the Core. The BCCA Fund is held by the Challenge and is to provide funds for the benefit of the BCCA. The Stewardship Fund must be used primarily to benefit the BCCA, other conservation lands and associated lands resulting from the

APPENDIX 1

Blackfoot Community Project, and the Blackfoot watershed. Both the BCCA Fund and the Stewardship Fund are held separate from all other the Challenge monies, funds and accounts.

4. All owners of the Core must adhere to the terms of the Conservation Easement held by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service recorded in Powell County, MT on 3/31/2005 at Book 111 Deeds Page 506 (attached as Exhibit B).

5. Credible and open communication between the partners will be crucial to the success of this MOU. The Partners agree to address issues and opportunities as a team with the Council, with full disclosure of all critical facts and information that are involved in this MOU and are not subject to confidentiality restrictions.

6. The Challenge does not intend or desire to direct day-to-day management of the Core but wishes that the Council continue providing direct management oversight for the Core. Nonetheless, in the unlikely event that the Council should cease to exist as a community-based group, the Challenge will work with the Council and the Conservancy before such an event and coordinate formation of a similar body that manages the stewardship and maintenance of the Core under the auspices of the Challenge and is committed to managing natural resources through a community-based collaborative approach and will manage the Core according to the Terms of Agreement outlined here.

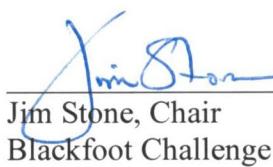
7. The Conservancy does not intend or desire to own, manage or sell the Core. Nonetheless, in the unlikely event that the Challenge should cease to exist as a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization, the ownership of the Core, according to the deed (attached as exhibit C), shall revert to the Conservancy. Consequently, before or as this event unfolds, the Conservancy, the Challenge and the Council, or similar body that manages the stewardship and maintenance of the Core under the auspices of the Challenge, will work together to find a suitable owner of the Core. A suitable owner will embody the mission of the Challenge as stated above, be committed to managing natural resources through a community-based collaborative approach and will own and manage the Core according to the Terms of Agreement outlined here and also according to the provisions of the Conservation Easement. This entity must be either a private non-profit 501c3 charitable organization or a government agency. After this suitable owner is identified, the Conservancy will transfer the deed to that entity without requiring payment of any kind for the property. The deed will continue to contain the reversionary clause to the Conservancy.

8. Each Partner designates a key contact person for the MOU as follows, the local Western Montana representative for the Conservancy (at the date of this signing Chris Bryant) and the Blackfoot Challenge Board designated representative for the Challenge (at the time of this signing Gary Burnett, Executive Director). The responsibilities of these designated individuals will include serving as the point person for their organization, maintaining open and regular communication between the two organizations, and overseeing any and all aspects of the MOU.

9. The activities envisioned by this MOU will be governed by the Partners' Articles of Incorporation, By-laws, and Policies and Procedures, and as such may be amended from time to time.

10. This document reflects the integration of the past discussions between the parties on this matter, and is acknowledged by the parties to contain the complete understanding between the parties on the matters covered hereunder.

With the signature of the two representatives' names below, this agreement becomes effective as of _____, 2013.



Jim Stone, Chair
Blackfoot Challenge Inc.

12.18.13
Date



Richard Jeo, State Director
The Nature Conservancy of Montana

12/10/13
Date

Attachments.

Exhibit A - BCCA MOU

Exhibit B - conservation easement held by Fish and Wildlife Service

Exhibit C - deed of Core to TNC

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
For the
BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA
Between the
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
And the
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS
And the
MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION
And the
BLACKFOOT CHALLENGE
And
PRIVATE LANDOWNER
And
PRIVATE LANDOWNER
And
PRIVATE LANDOWNER
And the
USDA FOREST SERVICE, LOLO NATIONAL FOREST

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is hereby made and entered into by and between the following parties: The USDI Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP), the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), the Blackfoot Challenge, the Nature Conservancy of Montana (TNC), Private Landowners, and the USDA Forest Service, Lolo National Forest (Forest Service).

I. BACKGROUND

A. Setting

The 1.5 million-acre Blackfoot watershed in northwestern Montana is comprised of a diverse and ecologically rich combination of habitats due to its geological and hydrological features. Located at the southern edge of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, the Blackfoot is part of a ten million acre ecosystem that extends north to Canada. As a sub-basin of the Columbia River, the Blackfoot flows a 132-mile course from its headwaters on the Continental Divide to the Clark Fork River, just east of Missoula. Over eighty percent of the watershed is covered with mixed species forests, with the remaining lands in agriculture, grasslands, wetlands, and streams.

The Blackfoot Community Conservation Area is located in the north-central portion of the watershed, approximately three miles northeast of the small town of Ovando. Forming the southern boundary of the Bob Marshall and Scapegoat Wilderness Areas and north of the Blackfoot River, the area encompasses an important transition zone between wilderness, National Forest, and productive valley bottoms, with lush riparian and wetland areas and important wildlife habitat. Generational uses of the area include livestock grazing, timber harvest, and recreational activities including hunting, trapping, horseback riding, hiking, snowmobiling and skiing.

B. History

The Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA) is the culmination of 30 years of private- public cooperative conservation in the Blackfoot River Valley of western Montana. The effort began in the mid 70's with the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement and the establishment of two Walk-In Hunting areas in the vicinity of the confluence of the Clearwater and Blackfoot Rivers. The Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited began in the early 90's and more federal and state agencies joined the landowner/ conservation organization effort to protect the cold water fisheries of the watershed. In 1993 private landowners, federal and state land managers, local government officials, corporate landowners, and conservation organizations came together to form the Blackfoot Challenge. The mission of the Challenge is to coordinate efforts that will enhance, conserve and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyles of the Blackfoot River Valley for present and future generations.

The Challenge and TNC formed a partnership in 2003 to initiate the Blackfoot Community Project (BCP). The BCP is a joint effort to purchase 88,000 acres of Plum Creek Timber Company (PCTC) land in the valley and re-sell it to a variety of public agencies and private individuals according to a community-based plan.

As part of the BCP, TNC purchased 11,208 acres of PCTC land south of Ovando Mountain in 2004. After numerous public meetings and internal discussions, TNC agreed in principle to transfer a 5,609 acre core area to the Challenge, who would manage the land on behalf of the community as a conservation area. The remaining acreage has been or is slated to be sold to the public agencies, who managed existing land adjacent to the former PCTC land. The agencies included the Forest Service, DNRC, and FWP. Prior to any of the sale transactions, TNC has sold or plans to sell a conservation easement that prohibited home sites on the 8,316 acres of the land slated for sale to the Challenge and the state agencies.

As the various parties discussed the disposition of the former PCTC parcels around Ovando Mountain, they agreed that this may be an historic opportunity to expand the concept of cooperative land management across ownership boundaries. They also concluded that it would be beneficial to include additional Forest Service land to the north of the mountain and to ask the private landowners on the south side of the area to join in the cooperative effort. The resulting 41,000 acre block, which is called the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area, is a coherent landscape that includes a wide spectrum of land from working forests through proposed wilderness.

II. PURPOSE

This MOU documents the intent of the parties to develop and implement a policy management plan for the BCCA. This document will outline general goals and identify several programs that are supported by the parties to this MOU. It will also serve as a framework to add other programs that may be of interest to the parties during the term of this MOU. It is understood by all that this MOU does not bind any party to a financial or other resource commitment, but rather is the framework from which specific participating and cooperative agreements can be developed as deemed appropriate by any combination of the partners. It is also understood by the parties, that decisions made on projects on federal or state lands are made by the individual agencies following their existing policies and procedures.

This MOU may serve to leverage resources and demonstrates an ongoing collaboration among the parties, which may strengthen the individual program areas, bring a greater public awareness of the need for the programs of the BCCA, and provide additional opportunities for increased funding.

APPENDIX 2

III. STATEMENT OF MUTUAL BENEFIT AND INTEREST

All of the parties have responsibilities and interests in the conservation and management of the BCCA and have expressed a desire to work cooperatively to accomplish mutual goals and objective.

IV. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A. Goals

1. Treat the 41,000 acre BCCA as one land management unit with a number of common management objectives.
2. Establish a consistent set of designations that describe the uses and management activities that are generally suitable on each ownership.
3. Provide a formal forum (the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council) to discuss issues of mutual concern and develop cooperative programs to address these issues across property boundaries.
4. Develop strategies that will enhance and promote support and funding of interagency/private projects.
5. Share experiences of our partnership with other groups that are developing cooperative conservation approaches to natural resource issues.

B. Specific Objectives

1. Establish a cooperative written policy for :
 - a. Access and Roads
 - b. Recreational Use
 - c. Vegetation Management
 - d. Integrated Noxious Weed Management
 - e. Wildlife Management
 - f. Water and Wetland Management
2. The participants may, as circumstance dictate, add topics to the list outlined in B.1.
3. Develop a policy management plan for the BCCA that addresses the issues outlined in B.1. above in a manner that reflects the wishes of the community and the interests, concerns, and decisions of the participants.
4. Implement a management plan that will have specific recommendations for roads and access, recreational use, vegetation management, integrated weed management, wildlife management and stream/wetland management.
5. Develop joint operating plans on a project by project basis.

V. ORGANIZATION AND PROCEDURE

The participants agree to use the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Council as the public forum to fulfill the terms of this agreement. The BCCA Council will be responsible for developing and implementing the policy management plan. The policy management plan will also describe the BCCA Council and the procedures under which the Council will operate.

VII. IT IS MUTUALLY UNDERSTOOD AND AGREED BY ALL PARTIES THAT:

- A. PRINCIPAL CONTACTS. The principal contacts for this MOU are listed in the attached and hereby incorporated Exhibit A. Exhibit A may be modified at any time without formal modification to this MOU. The most current Exhibit A will automatically be incorporated into this MOU.
- B. ASSURANCE REGARDING FELONY CONVICTION OR TAX DELINQUENT FOR CORPORATE ENTITIES. This agreement is subject to the provisions contained in the Department of Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, 2012, P.L. No. 112-74, Division E, Section 433 and 434 regarding corporate felony convictions and corporate federal tax delinquencies. Accordingly, by entering into this agreement the Cooperators acknowledges that it: 1.) does not have a tax delinquency, meaning that it is not subject to any unpaid Federal tax liability that has been assessed, for which all judicial and administrative remedies have been exhausted or have lapsed, and that is not being paid in a timely manner pursuant to an agreement with the authority responsible for collecting the tax liability, and 2.) has not been convicted (or had an officer or agent acting on its behalf convicted) of a felony criminal violation under any Federal law within 24 months preceding the agreement, unless a suspending and debarring official of the United States Department of Agriculture has considered suspension or debarment is not necessary to protect the interests of the Government. If the Cooperators fails to comply with these provisions, the US Forest Service will annul this agreement and may recover any funds the Cooperators has expended in violation of sections 433 and 434.
- C. NOTICES. Any communications affecting the operations covered by this agreement given by the USFS or the Cooperators is sufficient only if in writing and delivered in person, mailed, or transmitted electronically by e-mail or fax, as follows:

To the US Forest Service Program Manager, at the address specified in this MOU,

To the Cooperators, at the Cooperator's address shown in the MOU or such other address designated within the MOU

- D. PARTICIPATION IN SIMILAR ACTIVITIES. This instrument in no way restricts any of the parties from participating in similar activities with other public or private agencies, organizations, and individuals.
- E. ENDORSEMENT. Any of the Cooperator's contributions made under this MOU do not by direct reference or implication convey USFS endorsement of the Cooperator's products or activities and does not by direct reference or implication convey the Cooperator's endorsement of the US Forest Service's products or activities.
- F. NON-BINDING AGREEMENT This MOU creates no right, benefit, or trust responsibility, substantive or procedural, enforceable by law or equity. The parties shall manage their respective resources and activities in a separate, coordinated and mutually beneficial manner to meet the purpose(s) of this MOU. Nothing in this MOU authorizes any of the parties to obligate or transfer anything of value.

Specific prospective projects or activities that involve the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a party requires the execution of separate agreements and are contingent upon numerous factors, including, as applicable, but not limited to: agency availability of appropriate funds and other resources; cooperator availability of funds and other resources; agency and cooperator administrative and legal requirements (including agency authorization by statute); etc. This MOU neither provides, nor meets these criteria. If the parties elect to enter into an obligation agreement that involves the transfer of funds, services, property, and/or anything of value to a party, then the applicable criteria must be met. Additionally, under a prospective agreement, each party operates under its

APPENDIX 2

own laws, regulations, and/or policies; and any Forest Service obligation is subject to the availability of appropriate funds and other resources. The negotiation, execution, and administration of these prospective agreements must comply with all applicable law.

Nothing in this MOU is intended to alter, limit, or expand the agency's statutory and regulatory authority.

- G. USE OF U.S. FOREST SERVICE. In order for the Cooperators to use the US Forest Service insignia on any published media, such as a Web page, printed publication, or audiovisual production, permission must be granted from the US Forest Service's Office of Communications. A written request must be submitted and approval granted in writing by the Office of Communications (Washington Office) prior to use of the insignia.
- H. MEMBERS OF US CONGRESS. Pursuant to 41 U.S.C. 22, no U.S. member of, or U.S. delegate to, Congress shall be admitted to any share or part of this agreement, or benefits that may arise therefrom, either directly or indirectly.
- I. FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA). Any information furnished to the individual agencies under this instrument is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552).
- J. TEXT MESSAGING WHILE DRIVING. In accordance with Executive Order (EO) 13513, "Federal Leadership on Reducing Text Messaging While Driving," any and all text messaging by Federal employees is banned: a.) while driving a Government owned vehicle (GOV) or driving a privately owned vehicle (POV) while on official Government business; or b.) using any electronic equipment supplied by the Government when driving any vehicle at any time. All cooperators, their employees, volunteers, and contractors are encouraged to adopt and enforce policies that ban text messaging when driving company owned, leased or rented vehicles, POVs or GOVs when driving while on official Government business or when performing any work for or on behalf of the Government.
- K. TERMINATION. Any of the parties, in writing, may terminate this MOU in whole, or in part, at any time before the date of expiration.
- L. MODIFICATIONS. Modifications within the scope of this MOU must be made by mutual consent of the parties, by the issuance of a written modification signed and dated by all properly authorized, signatory officials, prior to any changes being performed. Requests for modification should be made, in writing, at least 30 days prior to implementation of the requested change.
- M. COMMENCEMENT/EXPIRATION. This MOU is executed as of the date of the last signature and is effective through December 31, 2017 at which time it will expire, unless extended by an executed modification, signed and dated by all properly authorized, signatory officials,
- N. AUTHORIZED REPRESENTATIVES. By signature below, each party certifies that the individuals listed in this document as representatives of the individual parties are authorized to act in their respective areas for matters related to this MOU. In witness thereof, the parties hereto have executed this MOU as of the last date written below.

EXHIBIT A: Principal Contacts

US Fish & Wildlife Service Contact

Kevin Ertl
967 Marsh Lane
Helmville, MT 59853
406-793-0050
kevin_ertl@fws.gov

Montana DNRC Contact

Neil Simpson, Service Forester
DNRC, Clearwater Unit
48455 Sperry Grade Road
Greenough, MT 59823
406-544-6286
nsimpson@mt.gov

Montana FWP Contact

Scott Eggeman, Wildlife Biologist
Seeley Lake, MT 59868
406-542-5542
seggeman@mt.gov

Private Landowner

Harry and Cindy Poett
3065 Kleinschmidt Flat Rd.
Ovando, MT 59854
406-793-5107
poetts@blackfoot.net

Private Landowner

Sandra Roe
2101 Old Trailhead Lane
Ovando, MT 59854
406-793-5503
sroe@blackfoot.net

Blackfoot Challenge Contact

Gary Burnett, Executive Director
PO Box 103
Ovando, MT 59854
406-793-3900
gary@blackfootchallenge.org

Forest Service Program Manager Contact

Rachel Feigley, Seeley Lake District Ranger
3583 Highway 83
Seeley Lake, MT 59868
406-677-3905
rfeigley@fs.fed.us

Forest Service Agreement Contact

Matt Gordon
Western Montana Acquisition Zone
Building 24, Fort Missoula
Missoula, MT 59804
406-329-1012
mgordon@fs.fed.gov

APPENDIX 2



USDA, Forest Service

OMB 0596-0217
FS-1500-15

Int. P. J. . acting
KATHLEEN A. DURR HETTE, Refuge Manager, Benton
Lake *Robert F. Johnson Jr.*
US Fish and Wildlife Service

3/28/13

Date

Kenneth P. McDonald
KENNETH P. MCDONALD, Wildlife Division
Administrator
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks

4/9/13

Date

Mary Sexton
MARY SEXTON, Director *John Tubbs*
Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation

8/26/13

Date

Gary Burnett
GARY BURNETT, Executive Director
Blackfoot Challenge

9.3.13

Date

Harry and Cindy Poett
HARRY AND CINDY POETT, Private Landowners

8-7-13

Date

Sandra Roe
SANDRA ROE, Private Landowner

8/7/13

Date

~~JOHN AND STEPHANIE TUBBS~~, Private Landowners

Date

Deborah L.R. Austin
DEBORAH L.R. AUSTIN, Forest Supervisor
USDA Forest Service, Lolo National Forest

3/15/13

Date



USDA, Forest Service

OMB 0596-0217
FS-1500-15

The authority and format of this agreement have been reviewed and approved for signature.

MATT GORDON
U.S. Forest Service Grants Management Specialist

2/4/13

Date

Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0217. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 3 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 3 BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA COUNCIL MEMBERS: PAST AND PRESENT

2017 Council Members Terms and Contact Information

Category/Name	Term Expires*	Phone	Email
---------------	---------------	-------	-------

STAKEHOLDERS

Ben Slaght, Chair	2017	793-0057	bwslaght@gmail.com
Leigh Ann Valiton, Vice-Chair	2019	793-5896	lavaliton@hughes.net
Jim Bauer	2018	793-5036	grammie@montana.com
Scott Gordon	2018	546-8420	gordon.scotta@gmail.com
Nick Hessler	2017	793-0909	nhessler@montana.com
Steve Kloetzel	2019	214-2036	skloetzel@tnc.org
Dan Massee	2018	793-5639	68festis@gmail.com
Don & Barb McNally	2017	793-5685	N/A
Bob Rangitsch	2018	793-2770	bobrangitsch@blackfoot.net
Bob Sheppard	2019	793-5718	tjsheppard@blackfoot.net
Tim Swanberg	2017	793-5038	woodpecker@blackfoot.net

PUBLIC AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES**

Neil Simpson (DNRC)	N/A	544-6286	nsimpson@mt.gov
Scott Eggeman (FWP)	N/A	542-5542	seggeman@mt.gov
Kevin Ertl (USFWS)	N/A	793-0050	kevin_ertl@fws.gov
Rachel Feigley (USFS)	N/A	677-3905	rfeigley@fs.fed.us

STAFF SUPPORT

Brad Weltzien – Land Steward	N/A	210-9900	brad@blackfootchallenge.org
Sara Schmidt – Coordinator	N/A	529-2822	sara@blackfootchallenge.org

* All members serve 3-year terms expiring December 31 of the last calendar year. As of Dec. 2014, all members are now eligible to re-apply to the Council immediately upon the expiration of their term.

** Agency members may serve unlimited consecutive terms.

BCCA COUNCIL MEMBERS, 2005-2017

Stakeholders	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Aitken, Gary					x	x	x	x	x				
Allen, Ralph	x	x	x	x									
Bauer, Jim & Norma	x	x	x								x	x	
Bennett, Dean	x	x	x	x									
Daniels, Alyssa	x	x	x	x									
Farrar, John & Jan					x	x							
Gonder, Carleen										x			
Gordon, Scott						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Hawkins, Donna	x	x	x	x									
Hessler, Nick											x	x	x
Henrekin, Rob					x	x	x	x	x	x			
Kloetzel, Steve										x	x	x	x
Massee, Dan					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
McNally, Don & Barb	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Miller, Betty	x	x	x	x	x								
Rangitsch, Bob						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Rich, Jack	x	x	x	x									
Rowland, Bob & Dawn	x	x	x	x	x			x	x				
Sheppard, Bob	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x	x
Sheets, Jen & Mary				x									
Slaght, Ben					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Stitt, John & Jamie					x	x							
Swanberg, Tim					x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Valiton, Leigh Ann						x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x

APPENDIX 3

BCCA COUNCIL MEMBERS, 2005-2017

Agencies	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Montana DNRC													
Helena, Amy					X	X	X						
Liane, Tony	X	X	X										
Lyngholm, Sarah				X	X								
Simpson, Neil								X	X	X	X	X	
Baker-Dickinson, Kristen												X	X
Montana FWP													
Eggeman, Scott											X	X	X
Kolbe, Jay		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
The Nature Conservancy													
Kloetzel, Steve	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
US FWS													
Ertl, Kevin	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
US FS													
Feigley, Rachel											X	X	X
Love, Tim	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			

APPENDIX 4

PROPERTY DESCRIPTION & DIRECTIONS TO THE SITE

Legal Description of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Core

Township 15 North, Range 12 West, Montana Principal Meridian

Section 1: S1/2SW1/4, 80 Acres

Section 2: Govt. Lots 2-4, S1/2NW1/4, SW1/4, SW1/4NE1/4, W1/2SE1/4, SE1/4SE1/4, 515.45 Acres

Section 3: Govt. Lots 1-4, S1/2N1/2, S1/2, 634.80 Acres

Section 10: All, 640 Acres

Section 11: All, 640 Acres

Section 12: SW1/4NE1/4, W1/2NW1/4, SE1/4NW1/4, S1/2, 480 Acres

Section 13: All, 640 Acres

Section 14: NE1/4, E1/2NW1/4, S1/2, 560 Acres

Section 15: N1/2, N1/2SW1/4, SE1/4SW1/4, SE1/4, 600 Acres

Section 22: N/E1/4, 160 acres

Section 23: All less tract in E1/2NE1/4 containing 16.16 acres, 623.84 acres

Section 24: That portion of N1/2NE1/4 and the NE1/4NW1/4 described as follows: Beginning at the Northwest corner of the NE1/4NW1/4 of said Section 24, the point of beginning; thence South 439.56 feet, along the West line of the NE1/4NW1/4 of said Section 24; thence North 79 degrees 30 minutes East, 1902.12 feet; thence South 89 degrees East 949.54 feet; thence South 84 degrees East, 1204.43 feet, to a point on the East section line of said Section 24; thence North 246.84 feet along the East section line of said Section 24, to the Northeast section corner of said Section 24, thence West along the North section line of said Section 24, a distance of 3985.0 feet to the Northwest corner of the NE1/4NW1/4 of said Section 24, the point of beginning. Recorded in Book 60, Page 361, Deed records of Powell County, Montana. TOGETHER WITH a portion of the NW1/4NW1/4 of said Section 24, Township 15 North, Range 12 West, more particularly described as follows: Beginning at the Northwest corner of said Section 24; thence South 620 feet; thence North 86 degrees 49 minutes East, 1342 feet; thence North 446 feet; thence West 1328 feet to the point of beginning. Records in Book 53, Page 311, Deed records of Powell County, Montana. 35.28 acres.

Directions to the Site

There are two main gateways to the BCCA Core, with kiosks located at each entry point. From Highway 200, two gravel county roads access the property. From the west, turn onto Monture Creek Road at mile marker 44 and travel approximately two miles. Enter through DNRC State Section 16. Turn right through a green gate and follow the winding road north to the Rodeo Park Gate.

To access the property from the south, turn onto the Boot Tree Road which is located just before mile marker 46 and proceed north for 1.5 miles. Look for the Boot Tree. At this point, the road forks and a person can either travel north 1.5 miles to the Board Gate (Martin Park) or southeast .5 miles to the Haul Road Gate.

An additional option includes entering the BCCA from the north via DNRC and Lolo National Forest land. To access the property from this point, follow the Monture Creek Road past the green gate for another two miles and turn right on the McCabe Creek Road. (For more information on public access, see Figure 30, Page 40.)

APPENDIX 5

APPENDIX 5

List of Plant & Wildlife Species

The following vascular plant species are found in the Ovando Mountain Conservation Easement area or at other locations within the Blackfoot Valley:

TREES

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Subalpine fir	<i>Abies lasiocarpa</i>	Bebb willow	<i>Salix bebbiana</i>
Rocky Mountain Juniper	<i>Juniperus scopulorum</i>	Sandbar willow	<i>Salix exigua</i>
Western Larch	<i>Larix occidentalis</i>	Other willow species	<i>Salix spp.</i>
Engelmann spruce	<i>Picea engelmannii</i>	Soapberry/Buffaloberry	<i>Shepherdia canadensis</i>
Lodgepole Pine	<i>Pinus contorta</i>	Western snowberry	<i>Symporicarpos occidentalis</i>
Ponderosa Pine	<i>Pinus ponderosa</i>	Gray Horsebrush	<i>Tetradymia canescens</i>
Black cottonwood	<i>Populus balsamifera</i>		
Quaking aspen	<i>Populus tremuloides</i>		
Douglas fir	<i>Pseudotsuga mensiesii</i>		

SHRUBS

		FORBS	
Mountain Alder	<i>Alnus incana</i>	Yarrow	<i>Achillea millefolium</i>
Big sagebrush	<i>Artemesia tridentata</i>	Rosy pussytoes	<i>Antennaria microphylla</i>
Three-tipped sagebrush	<i>Artemesia</i>	Heart-leaf arnica	<i>Arnica cordifolia</i>
Serviceberry	<i>Amelanchier alnifolia</i>	Fringed sagewort	<i>Artemesia frigida</i>
Kinnikinnick	<i>Artostaphylos uva-ursi</i>	Aster species	<i>Aster sp.</i>
Bog Birch	<i>Betula glandulosa</i>	Milkvetch species	<i>Astragalus sp.</i>
Rubber rabbitbrush	<i>Chrysothamnus nauseosus</i>	Sego lily/mariposa	<i>Calochortus apiculatus</i>
Red -osier dogwood	<i>Cornus sericea</i>	Camas	<i>Camassia quamash</i>
River hawthorn	<i>Crataegus douglasii</i>	Musk thistle	<i>Carduus nutans</i>
Silverberry	<i>Elaeagnus argentea</i>	Spotted knapweed	<i>Centaurea maculosa</i>
Common Juniper	<i>Juniperus communis</i>	Elk thistle	<i>Cirsium scariosum</i>
Oregon grape	<i>Mahonia repens</i>	Canada thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Chokecherry	<i>Prunus virginiana</i>	Hound's tongue	<i>Cunoglossum officinale</i>
Shrubby cinquefoil	<i>Pentaphylloides floribuna</i>	Common Horsetail	<i>Equisetum arvense</i>
Wild currant	<i>Ribes spp.</i>	Wild buckwheat	<i>Eriogonum spp.</i>
Prickly Rose	<i>Rosa acicularis</i>	Howell's gumweed	<i>Grindelia howellii</i>
Thimbleberry	<i>Rubus parviflorus</i>	Curly-cup gumweed	<i>Grindelia squarrosa</i>
Red raspberry	<i>Rubus ideaus</i>	Cow parsnip	<i>Heracleum maximum</i>
		Yellow toadflax	<i>Linaria vulgaris</i>
		Yellow puccoon	<i>Lithospermum ruderale</i>
		Lupine species	<i>Lupinus sp.</i>
		Pineapple weed	<i>Matricaria discoidea</i>

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Buttercup species	<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.
Dock species	<i>Rumex</i> sp.
Dandelion	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Stinging nettle	<i>Urtica dioica</i>
Common mullein	<i>Verbascum thapsus</i>
GRASSES AND GRASS-LIKE PLANTS	
Quackgrass	<i>Agropyron repens</i>
Slender wheatgrass	<i>Agropyron trachycaulum</i>
Smooth brome	<i>Bromus inermis</i>
Nebraska sedge	<i>Carex nebrascensis</i>
Wooly sedge	<i>Carex lanuginosa</i>
Beaked sedge	<i>Carex rostrata</i>
Orchard grass	<i>Dactylis glomerata</i>
Tufted hairgrass	<i>Deschampsia cespitosa</i>
Common spikerush	<i>Eleocharis palustris</i>
Rough fescue	<i>Festuca campestris</i>
Idaho fescue	<i>Festuca idahoensis</i>
Northern mannagrass	<i>Glyceria borealis</i>
Foxtail barley	<i>Hordeum jubatum</i>
Meadow barley	<i>Hordeum brachyantherium</i>
Baltic rush	<i>Juncus balticus</i>
Junegrass	<i>Koeleria macrantha</i>
Basin wild-rye	<i>Leymus cinereus</i>
Western wheatgrass	<i>Pascopyrum smithii</i>
Reed canarygrass	<i>Phalaris arundinacea</i>
Timothy	<i>Phleum pratense</i>
Kentucky bluegrass	<i>Poa pratensis</i>
Bulbous bluegrass	<i>Poa bulbosa</i>
Sandberg's bluegrass	<i>Poa sandbergii</i>
Bluebunch wheatgrass	<i>Pseudoroegneria spicata</i>
Hardstem bulrush	<i>Scirpus acutus</i>

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Needle and Thread	<i>Stipa comata</i>
Green needlegrass	<i>Stipa viridula</i>
Broadleaf cattail	<i>Typha latifolia</i>

The following wildlife species have been reported in the Blackfoot Valley. The list of bird species was developed for the Blackfoot Challenge. The Montana Natural Heritage Program prepared lists for the mammals, reptiles and amphibians. Several of the species observed (visual sightings, calls, tracks, scat and other signs) during the inventory for the Baseline Report for the Conservation Easement are marked with an asterisk.

BIRDS

Common loon	Barrow's goldeneye
Pied-billed grebe	Common goldeneye
Red-necked grebe	Bufflehead
Eared grebe	Ruddy duck
Western grebe	Common merganser
Clark's grebe	Red-breasted merganser
White pelican	Turkey vulture
Double-breasted cormorant	Osprey
Bittern	Bald eagle
Great blue heron	Golden eagle
White-faced ibis	Northern harrier
Trumpeter swan	Sharp-skinned hawk
Tundra swan	Cooper's hawk
Canada goose	Northern goshawk
Snow goose	Ferruginous hawk
Ross's goose	Rough-legged hawk
Greater white-fronted goose	Swainson's hawk
Mallard duck	*Red-tailed hawk
Gadwall	*American kestrel
Harlequin duck	Merlin
Northern pintail	Peregrine falcon
Green-winged teal	Prairie falcon

APPENDIX 5

Blue-winged teal	Gray partridge	Caspian tern	Warbling vireo
Eurasian wigeon	Ring-necked pheasant	Common tern	Blue jay
American widgeon	*Blue grouse	Black tern	Gray jay
Northern shoveler	*Ruffed grouse	Forster's tern	*Stellar's jay
Wood duck	Sharp-tailed grouse	Mourning dove	Clark's nutcracker
Redhead duck	Spruce grouse	Barred owl	Black-billed magpie
Ring-necked duck	Virginia rail	Flammulated owl	American crow
Greater scaup	Sora	Great-horned owl	Common raven
Lesser scaup	American coot	*Great gray owl	Horned lark
Surf scoter	*Sandhill crane	Long-eared owl	Bank swallow
White-winged scoter		Northern pygmy owl	Barn swallow
American golden plover	Belted kingfisher	Northern saw-whet owl	Cliff swallow
Semipalmated plover	Northern flicker	Short-eared owl	Northern rough-winged swallow
*Killdeer	Red-naped sapsucker	Western screech owl	Tree swallow
Black-necked stilt	Williamson's sapsucker	Black swift	Black-capped chickadee
Avocet	Black-backed woodpecker	Vaux's swift	Mountain chickadee
Greater yellowlegs	Downey woodpecker	White-throated swift	Chestnut-backed chickadee
Lesser yellowlegs	Hairy woodpecker	Calliope hummingbird	Pygmy nuthatch
Solitary sandpiper	Lewis's woodpecker	Rufous hummingbird	Red-breasted nuthatch
Willet	Pileated woodpecker	Clay-colored sparrow	Brewer's sparrow
Spotted sandpiper	Three-toed woodpecker	White-breasted nuthatch	Chipping sparrow
Upland sandpiper	Cordilleran flycatcher	Brown creeper	Fox sparrow
Whimbrel	Dusky flycatcher	House wren	Grasshopper sparrow
Long-billed curlew	Hammond's flycatcher	Marsh wren	Harris sparrow
Marbled godwit	Least flycatcher	Rock wren	Lark sparrow
Sanderling	Olive-sided flycatcher	American dipper	LeConte's sparrow
Western sandpiper	Willow flycatcher	Golden-crowned kinglet	Lincoln's sparrow
Least sandpiper	Western wood pewee	Ruby-crowned kinglet	Song sparrow
Long-billed dowitcher	Say's phoebe	Mountain bluebird	Savannah sparrow
Common snipe	Eastern kingbird	Western bluebird	Song sparrow
Wilson's phalarope	Western kingbird	Townsend's solitaire	Vesper sparrow
California gull	Loggerhead shrike	Veery	White-crowned sparrow
Bonaparte's gull	Northern shrike	Hermit thrush	Dark-eyed junco
Franklin's gull	Cassin's vireo	Swainson's thrush	Bobolink
Herring gull	Red-eyed vireo	Varied thrush	Western meadowlark

		COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
American robin	Brewer's blackbird		
Gray catbird	Red-winged blackbird	Vagrant shrew	<i>Sorex vagrans</i>
European starling	Yellow-headed blackbird	Water shrew	<i>Sorex palustris</i>
Water pipit	Brown-headed cowbird	Northern pocket gopher	<i>Thomomys talpoides</i>
Cedar waxwing	Bullock's oriole	Yellow-pine chipmunk	<i>Tamias amoenus</i>
Audubon's warbler	Lasuli bunting	Least chipmunk	<i>Tamias minimus</i>
MacGillivray's warbler	Snow bunting	Red-tailed chipmunk	<i>Tamias ruficaudus</i>
Nashville warbler	Black-headed grosbeak	Hoary marmot	<i>Marmota caligata</i>
Orange-crowned warbler	Evening grosbeak	Yellow-bellied marmot	<i>Marmota lateralis</i>
Yellow warbler	Pine grosbeak	Columbian ground squirrel	<i>Spermophilus columbianus</i>
Yellow-rumped warbler	Cassin's finch	Golden mantled ground squirrel	<i>Spermophilus lateralis</i>
Townsend's warbler	Gray-crowned rosy finch	Northern flying squirrel	<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>
Tennessee warbler	House finch	Red squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>
Wilson's warbler	Red crossbill	American beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>
American redstart	White-winged crossbill	*Western jumping mouse	<i>Zapus princeps</i>
Common yellowthroat	Common redpoll	Deer mouse	<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>
Northern waterthrush	Hoary redpoll	Southern red-backed vole	<i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>
Western tanager	Pine siskin	Bushy-tailed wood rat	<i>Neotoma cinerea</i>
Rufous-sided towhee	American goldfinch	Meadow vole	<i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i>
American tree sparrow	House sparrow	Long-tailed vole	<i>Microtus longicaudus</i>
MAMMALS			
COMMON NAME		SCIENTIFIC NAME	
Fringed bat		<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>	
Yuma bat		<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>	
Little brown bat		<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	
Long-eared bat		<i>Myotis evotis</i>	
Long-legged bat		<i>Myotis volans</i>	
Western small-footed bat		<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>	
Big brown bat		<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	
Silver-haired bat		<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>	
Hoary bat		<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>	
Townsend's red-eared bat		<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>	
Preble's shrew		<i>Sorex preblei</i>	
Masked shrew		<i>Sorex cinereus</i>	
Dusky shrew		<i>Sorex monticolus</i>	
		Water vole	<i>Microtus richardsonii</i>
		Heather vole	<i>Phenacomys intermedius</i>
		Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>
		Norway rat	<i>Rattus norvegicus</i>
		House mouse	<i>Mus musculus</i>
		Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>
		Pika	<i>Ochotona princeps</i>
		Mountain cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus nuttallii</i>
		Snowshoe hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>
		White-tailed jackrabbit	<i>Lepidus townsendii</i>
		Grizzly bear	<i>Ursus arctos</i>
		Black bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>
		Gray wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>
		Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>

APPENDIX 5

COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME	SCIENTIFIC NAME
Red fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	REPTILES	
Fisher	<i>Martes pennanti</i>	Painted turtle	<i>Chrysemys picta</i>
American marten	<i>Martes pennanti</i>	Bullssnake	<i>Pituophis catenifer</i>
Least weasel	<i>Mustela nivalis</i>	Racer	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>
Ermine	<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Western terrestrial garter snake	<i>Thamnophis elegans</i>
Long-tailed weasel	<i>Mustela frenata</i>	*Common garter snake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>
Mink	<i>Mustela vision</i>	Rubber boa	<i>Charina bottae</i>
Wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo luscus</i>	Western rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus viridis</i>
Northern river otter	<i>Lutra canadensis</i>	AMPHIBIANS	
American badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	Western Toad	<i>Bufo boreas</i>
Striped skunk	<i>Mephitis taxus</i>	Tailed frog	<i>Ascaphus montanus</i>
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>	*Columbian spotted frog	<i>Rana lateiventris</i>
Bobcat	<i>Felis rufus</i>	Long-toed salamander	<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum</i>
Lynx	<i>Felis lynx</i>		
Mountain lion	<i>Felis concolor</i>		
Mule deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>		
*White-tailed deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>		
Elk	<i>Cervus elaphus</i>		
*Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>		

APPENDIX 6
PROJECT PROPOSAL FORM
Blackfoot Community Conservation Area Core

1. Name of Project:

2. Project Sponsor:

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail Address: _____

3. Project Description:

4. Project Location:

Location: (Subdivision, Section)

Specific Area of Use: (Include Map)

Size of Area Affected:

5. Project Timing:

Season of Use:

Length of Use: (Beginning & End)

Continuous or Intermittent Use:

6. Project Implementation:

Type(s) of Equipment Used:

Number of People Involved:

APPENDIX 7

APPENDIX 7

GUIDELINES AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING PROJECT PROPOSALS ON THE BCCA CORE

General Guidelines	YES	NO
A. Is the proposed action prohibited by the Conservation Easement?		
B. Is the proposed action compatible with the BCCA Core Vision? <i>A working landscape that balances ecological diversity with local economic stability for the future benefit of the Blackfoot Watershed Community. Management will entail activities that seek to conserve, enhance and maintain a balance of wildlife habitat, wetlands, water, grasslands and timber resources with traditional uses including hunting, recreation, agriculture and forestry.</i>		
C. Is the proposed action compatible with the 4.1 General Forest: Mixed Use Emphasis, Moderate Intensity Management Classification for the Core? <i>Moderate Intensity General Forest (and non-forested) areas emphasize a balance of sustainable ecosystems and resource uses with lands that are suited for timber production. These areas are generally suitable for providing a mix of fish and wildlife habitat; a relatively natural visual setting with moderate evidence of human management activity; a wide range of recreational opportunities, and a variety of other goods and services. Landscapes appear modified with roads and vegetation management evident at moderate levels.</i>		
D. Does the proposed action adversely affect resource management policies of BCCA agencies and private landowners?		

If Questions A and D = NO and B and C = YES, continue to next section. If not, review proposal objectives to see what may be amended to meet Guidelines.

A. Physical Environment - Land Resources	Impact	Impact	Impact
<i>Will the proposed action result in:</i>	<i>Unknown</i>	<i>Rate on a Scale of 0-4</i>	<i>Impact Can Be Mitigated</i>
(1) Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, or moisture loss		0=No Impact, 4=Significant	
(2) Destruction or modification of any unique geological or physical feature			
(3) Change that may modify the channel of a stream or bed or shore of water body or affect wetlands			
(4) Changes in drainage patterns or rate and amount of surface runoff			

A. Physical Environment - Land Resources (continued...)		Impact	
Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	Rate on a Scale of 0-4 0=No Impact, 4=Significant	Impact Can Be Mitigated
(5) Increase in risk or contamination of surface or groundwater			
(6) Effects on any existing water right			
(7) Changes in the diversity, productivity, or abundance of plant species or communities including trees, shrubs, grasses, or aquatic plants			
(8) Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered plant species			
(9) Establishment or spread of noxious weeds			
(10) Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat			
(11) Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species			
(12) Changes in the diversity of nongame species			
(13) Introduction of new animal species into the area			
(14) Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals			
(15) Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest, other activity)			
(16) Affect to threatened and endangered species or their habitat			
B. Human Environment		Impact	
Will the proposed action result in:	Unknown	Rate on a Scale of 0 - 4 0=No Impact, 4=Significant	Impact Can Be Mitigated
(1) Conflict with any existing land use of the area (either its productivity or profitability)			
(2) Creation of any human health hazard or potential health hazard			
(3) Alteration of the level of BCCA revenue and/or impact the economy of local communities			

APPENDIX 7

B. Human Environment (continued...)		Impact		
Will the proposed action result in:		Unknown	Rate on a Scale of 0 - 4 0=No Impact, 4=Significant	Impact Can Be Mitigated
(4) Effect to commercial activity				
(5) Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings				
(6) Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, cultural or paleontological importance				
C. Significance Criteria		Impact		
Will the proposed action considered as a whole:		Unknown	Rate on a Scale of 0 - 4 0=No Impact, 4=Significant	Impact Can Be Mitigated
(1) Have considerable cumulative adverse effects?				
(2) Establish a precedent or likelihood for future actions with significant adverse environmental impacts?				
(3) Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?				
D. Conservation Easement		YES	NO	
(1) Does the proposed action require a conservation easement permit or letter of authorization?				
<i>Summary of Categories</i>				
# of Unknown				
Total Impact Score				
# of Impacts that Can Be Mitigated				

Describe and analyze reasonable alternatives to the proposed action if necessary and how alternatives would be implemented.

Evaluate and list mitigation measures, stipulations or other control measures that can be reasonably enforced for the project and by whom.

APPENDIX 8

APPENDIX 8

PUBLIC USE & RECREATION POLICY FOR THE CORE

Recreation has been identified by the community as a key historic and existing use of the BCCA Core. The overall goal is to provide for responsible use at sustainable levels to benefit the public and the health of the resource. The following regulations exist for use on the BCCA Core:

- 1) Non-motorized public access is allowed on the BCCA Core, at all times of the year.
- 2) Motorized access is limited to open, established roads. Some roads may be seasonally closed due to sensitive wildlife areas, road conditions and to accommodate grazing lessees.
- 3) No unauthorized motorized use of closed roads or trails is allowed. Closed roads and trails are posted as such. A closed gate or other closure device (such as a log barricade or earthen berm) with no sign is closed to all motorized vehicles. Road restrictions apply even if a sign, gate or closure device has been vandalized or damaged.
- 4) Gates and roads must not be blocked. Administrative or emergency traffic may need to pass through.
- 5) No off-road or off-trail motorized use is allowed by the general public; however,
- 6) Snowmobiles are allowed from December 1 through May 1, except where signed closures exist. If resource damage occurs on soils, vegetation or wildlife, the BCCA Council may require that snowmobilers stay on groomed or signed snowmobile routes.
- 7) Hunting, fishing, trapping and all forms of legal animal harvest in accordance with relevant law are allowed; however, trapping requires a permit for use by the BCCA Council and numbers may be limited.
- 8) Personal-use plant, berry and mushroom harvesting are allowed.
- 9) Personal-use firewood gathering of dead or down wood is allowed; a \$15 permit is required with a 5-cord limit. Personal-use christmas-tree cutting is allowed; a free permit is required. Vehicles must stay on established, open roads for wood and tree retrieval.
- 10) Camping is limited to 16 days per campsite. During this time, the campsite must not be left unattended for more than 3 consecutive days. Camping beyond 16 days requires relocating to a new site at least 5 miles from the original site. To minimize conflicts with bears, human, pet and livestock food, garbage and all other attractants shall be acceptably stored at all times (see Lolo Nat'l Forest Food/Attractant Order #F06-003-LOLO-D6). Attractants shall not be buried, discarded or burned in an open campfire. During campsite occupation, firewood may be cut only for use within the campsite. No live trees may be cut by campers.
- 11) The use of certified weed-seed-free livestock hay, forage and bedding is required for all livestock users. Do not tie livestock to trees; instead use a post, high-line or hitch-rail.
- 12) Pack out all garbage. Leave the BCCA Core lands as clean or cleaner than you found them.
- 13) Avoid polluting with human waste. Pack out or bury all human waste at least 6" deep. Toilets located within 300 feet of water must be self-contained. Groups of 4 or more campers are requested to build and use a common latrine.
- 14) Special use permits may be allowed on a case-by-case basis for education, commercial or administrative use.
- 15) Hazards exist, so recreationists must use caution and enter at their own risk. The Blackfoot Challenge and BCCA Council assume no liability or responsibility of any kind with respect to any of the activities described above or otherwise.

It is your responsibility to know whose property you are using and that property's regulations. Avoid trespassing on private property. Please report violations or vandalism to the Blackfoot Challenge at 406-793-3900, or Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks at 406-542-5500 or 1-800-TIP-MONT.

For more information or to purchase a permit, please contact the Blackfoot Challenge at 406-793-3900.

APPENDIX 9

BCCA SPECIAL USE PERMITS - OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Blackfoot Community Conversation Area (BCCA) allows for Special use activities only when and where the activities contribute to the perpetuation of the BCCA Goals and Objectives, as laid out in the plan above. Special Use Permits (SUPs) will be issued only for activities applied for with the Project Proposal Form (Appendix 6) and approved by the BCCA Council (Council) prior to commencement of the requested activity. Individual, non-motorized use or motorized use in accordance with the current Recreational Motorized Use Policy does not require an SUP. SUPs include, but are not limited to, educational tours, group sponsored activities and promotional meetings. SUPs may or may not include authorization to use motorized vehicles in restricted areas. SUPs are not intended to include or regulate legal road access easements or management activities authorized by the Council. Management (Administrative) activities include but are not limited to planned forest management, grazing lease use and administration, weed management, BCCA Land Steward (Steward) work, game warden patrol, planned restoration activities, and Conservation Easement enforcement.

APPLICATION PROCESS: A party requesting an SUP will fill out the Project Proposal Form (Appendix 6) and submit to the Council for consideration. To allow for sufficient time for Council consideration and/or possible Work Group consideration, requests must be made well in advance of the requested activity (30 or more days prior). The Council, or its designated Work Group, will vote on all SUP requests in a timely fashion, via the “thumbs-up/thumbs-down” method. All meetings of the Council are open to the public. The Executive Committee of the Council may, at its discretion, choose to consider and permit an SUP request requiring consideration less than 30 days.

ADMINISTRATION: If approved by the Council, the Land Steward (Steward) will issue the requesting party a signed SUP, detailing any special requirements specified by the Council. The Steward will monitor the activity, and report back to the council on the actions and/or results of the activity.

TERMINATION: The Council reserves the right to terminate, at its sole discretion, any SUP it has permitted, whether or not the activity allowed under the permit has commenced.

LEGAL REVIEW: The Council shall consult with Blackfoot Challenge attorneys, as necessary, regarding issues of permitting, liability, contracting, insurance, accidents, conflicts of interest, and private benefit.

RESPONSIBLE PARTY: The BCCA Management Committee is responsible for ensuring all SUP Applications are addressed in a timely fashion, and administered effectively by the Steward. The Steward will issue SUP following Council action, ensure compliance with the permit conditions, and report back to Council.

DEFINITIONS: Special v. Administrative Use

Special Use Permits (SUPs) may be granted by the Council for special requests for a wide variety of activities on the BCCA. SUPs may or may not include authorization to use motorized vehicles in restricted areas. To obtain an SUP, a requesting entity must submit an application to the Council well in advance of the planned activity for Council consideration (minimum 30 days). SUPs may include, but are not limited to:

- ◊ Educational tours and events, such as for schools, weeds, wildlife awareness, winter survival, safety (Note that the Blackfoot Challenge Education Coordinator has blanket permission for smaller educational events when not taking vehicles behind gates)

APPENDIX 9

- ◊ Graduate Student or other research, scientific or otherwise
- ◊ Wildlife monitoring (such as the “wolf rider”)
- ◊ Promotional or political meetings and events
- ◊ Community events
- ◊ Wagon trains
- ◊ Training events
- ◊ Snowmobile event (FWP permit)
- ◊ Recreational Motorized Vehicle (RMV) uses exceeding the current RMV Policy limits
- ◊ Commercial activities of any kind (commercial firewooding, commercial christmas tree cutting, guided trail rides)

Special Use requests that have been *DENIED* (and reasons for denial) by Council in the past include: Commercial spreading of human ash remains (legal liability); Search and Rescue training (issues of non-compatibility with the mission and vision for the BCCA); Guided trail rides (inadequate information provided by requesting entity).

Administrative Uses, which are “landowner management” activities, are specifically authorized by either legal documents or the Council. Administrative Uses do not require an SUP. Administrative Uses may or may not include authorization to use motorized vehicles in restricted areas. Administrative Uses include but are not limited to:

- ◊ Planned forest management
- ◊ Grazing lease use and administration, by the Lessees or the Steward
- ◊ Land Steward Patrol
- ◊ Land Steward administration of contractors or other planned activities
- ◊ Weed management, by contractors, Lessees or Steward
- ◊ Game Warden or FWP-Block Management technician patrol
- ◊ DNRC or Volunteer Fire Department wildfire response activities
- ◊ Access and maintenance for irrigation rights and irrigators (including USFWS/Trout Unlimited to monitor water use)
- ◊ Planned restoration activities
- ◊ Conservation Easement monitoring by USFWS
- ◊ Use of road easements by Agency easement holders (DNRC, FWP, USFS)
- ◊ Use of road easements by Private easement holders (Valiton, Roe, and Poett families, all for various lengths of the Ovando Haul Road)
- ◊ Other activities as approved by the Council

APPENDIX 10
BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA
POST AND POLE HARVEST PERMIT

Amount Received \$ _____

Check No. _____

This Permit is issued to _____, hereinafter referred to as "Permittee," and authorizes the Permittee to commercially harvest Posts & Poles, by hand, from the below-specified lands of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area, hereinafter referred to as "BCCA."

This Permit shall be effective from _____ through _____.

CONDITIONS OF THIS PERMIT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Do not harvest any trees within 200 feet of any stream bed, lake shore or wetland.
2. Tree harvester vehicles will stay on established roads at all times. No driving off-road for tree retrieval. Drive only on open roads, or closed roads as permit conditions specify. Roads with tree regrowth on the roadbed shall be considered "not established", and thereby closed to all motorized use. Roads closed with downed wood, felled trees, or other permanent closure devices are closed to motorized use. Harvester vehicles will access only those roads necessary to reach the permitted harvesting area.
3. Security Deposit: A security deposit of \$_____ .00 is due at the execution of this permit. The deposit amount will be deducted from the final total administrative charge.
4. An administrative charge of \$1.00 per post/pole for the first 100, and \$0.50 per post/pole thereafter, will be assessed, payable in full at the close of the permit period.
5. The maximum number of Posts & Poles trees to be removed hereunder is _____. Harvested trees shall be of no more than _____ feet tall and of the following species: _____

6. Under this Permit, Permittee may harvest from the following BCCA lands:

7. Under this Permit, Permittee may access the following BCCA closed roads:

8. Use of logging trucks or heavy equipment for the harvest and removal of forest products will not be permitted.
9. Do not cut standing trees or down logs with signs, tags or paint marks on them.
10. Remove from the road surface, road bank, and draining ditches all debris resulting from tree harvesting. Do not litter or dump garbage. Do not block traffic on any road during harvesting.

APPENDIX 10

11. The Permittee, by signing this permit, agrees to indemnify and hold harmless BCCA, its officers, employees, contractors and subcontractors, from any and all loss, liability or damage whatsoever for injury to person or property while working under this permit whether arising from condition of the property, negligence of others on or off the property or accident.
12. This Permit must be in the Permittee's possession when harvesting and transporting wood products.
13. Permittee will comply with all State fire regulations (i.e. shovel, fire extinguisher, spark arresters, etc.)
14. Land owned by the Blackfoot Challenge will be patrolled for compliance with the conditions of this Permit. This Permit must be presented upon request for inspection of compliance. All BCCA public use policies shall be followed by Permittee.
15. Permittee, by signing this permit, agrees to adhere to and be bound by the terms and conditions of this Commercial Post & Pole Harvest Permit as detailed hereon, as well as the Information Sheet for Post & Pole Cutters as shown on the reverse side hereof.
16. Permittee must complete the information requested on the reverse side hereof (lower half). Should Permittee fail to complete the information as required, the Blackfoot Challenge may immediately terminate this Permit at its sole option and may further contact the appropriate authorities to bring charges of theft.
16. The Blackfoot Challenge has the right to revoke this Permit upon learning of any deliberate violation of this permit.
17. Additional Conditions: _____

Vehicle to be used to remove forest products:

Make _____ Model _____ License No. _____
Address _____ Phone No. _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Permittee _____ Date _____
Sold by _____ Date _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COMMERCIAL POST AND POLE HARVEST PERMIT HOLDERS

HARVESTING UNDER THIS PERMIT IS ONLY ALLOWED UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:

1. Follow all conditions outlined in this Permit. Violations of the Permit conditions can result in criminal or civil action and/or suspension of the Permit privileges.
2. We ask for your cooperation in observing all rights of private landowners, including the Blackfoot Challenge. You must obtain permission to cross other private landowners to access lands under Blackfoot Challenge ownership. No harvesting is allowed behind locked gates, on restricted use roads, or in other areas closed to firewood cutting, without authorization by the BCCA.
3. State of Montana fire season officially begins May 1st and ends September 30th; in some years the fire season is extended beyond September 30th. During the fire season it is important to observe all state fire regulations. Use of a

power saw requires the operator to have an 8-ounce liquid-chemical or 1-pound dry-chemical fire extinguisher and a shovel in the immediate area. The saw must have a screen-type arrestor installed.

4. Always follow safe cutting practices when using a power saw. Safety precaution literature is available from your chain saw dealer.
5. During wet periods, stay off of forest roads and suspend operations. Vehicle tires may rut the road, causing a trough may erode, thereby degrading the road and possibly water quality in the area.
6. Most forest roads are single-lane construction with pullouts which allow vehicles to pass. When a vehicle is met, pull out at the nearest wide spot to allow passage. Larger vehicles and vehicles traveling uphill always have the right-of-way. Drive at a safe speed. Always make sure you can stop in one-half the sight distance.
7. Report all malicious or peculiar activities to the BCCA Land Steward or Blackfoot Challenge Office 793-0039. If possible, get the Make, Model and License Number of the offending or suspicious vehicle. Your help in protecting our property is very much appreciated.

RECORD BELOW THE DATE AND NUMBER OF TREES FOR EACH LOAD REMOVED FILL OUT BEFORE LEAVING THE HARVESTING SITE				
Load Number	Date/Time	No. of Trees	Drainage or Area of Harvest	Inspectors Initials/ Date

APPENDIX 11

APPENDIX 11 BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA MOTORIZED-USE PERMIT

The Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA) Council implemented a new motorized-use policy in 2011. The policy allows for the public to obtain the lock combination and a motorized-use permit to access additional motorized routes on the BCCA from July 1st to August 15th. All drivers must read and sign this permit before receiving the lock combination. Please understand that motorized-use is a privilege extended by the BCCA Council. Abuse of this privilege may result in the elimination of motorized routes.

PERMIT CONDITIONS

- The lock combination shall only be used by the permit holder and their party.
- The lock combination shall not be distributed to others.
- The lock combination will be changed annually and may be changed at anytime during the course of the season – if this occurs, an attempt will be made to contact permit holders.
- One permit holder per group MUST sign-in at each gate and possess this permit.
- The permit is valid for designated motorized routes only (July 1 – August 15).
- The permit is valid for Day-Use only.
- Maximum group size: 5 cars/trucks or 10 ATVs (1 car/truck equals 2 ATVs).
- Total groups per week: 14 (routes may be closed if maximum number is reached)
- Maximum speed: 25 mph
- Adhere to all other public-use regulations posted at gates and kiosks.
- Livestock grazing occurs in the area – please keep all gates closed.
- Do not harass livestock or wildlife with vehicles.
- Please report any illegal activity to the Blackfoot Challenge Land Steward @ 793-3900 or Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks @ 1-800-TIP-MONT (1-800-847-6668).
- Pack it in – Pack it out.
- Special Conditions: _____

The BCCA Council and/or Public Agencies have the right to close motorized routes at any time due to, but not limited to vandalism, fire-hazards, off-road motorized travel, etc.

PERMIT VALID FROM _____/_____/_____ TO _____/_____/_____

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I understand the above permit conditions and agree to comply with them.

SIGNATURE: _____ DATE: _____

Permit not valid without authorized signature from the Blackfoot Challenge.

ISSUED BY: _____

DATE: _____

BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA (BCCA) MOTORIZED-USE SIGN-IN SHEET

(One permit holder per group MUST sign-in and possess a permit)

ADA

For ADA access please call: 406-793-3900

APPENDIX 12

APPENDIX 12 BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA (CORE) FIREWOOD CUTTING PERMIT

FOR PERSONAL USE ONLY

Firewood Permit No. _____

Amount Received \$ _____

Check No. _____

This permit is issued to _____, hereinafter referred to as "Permittee," and authorizes the Permittee to cut firewood in designated areas on portions of the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area (BCCA) owned by the Blackfoot Challenge, hereinafter referred to as "BCCA Core."

This permit shall be effective from **July 1 through November 15, 20____.**

CONDITIONS OF THIS PERMIT ARE AS FOLLOWS:

1. Firewood cutting is only permitted in areas designated by the BCCA Land Steward. Do not cut any standing or downed trees within 200 feet of any stream bed, lake shore or wetland.
2. Firewood cutters will stay on established roads and/or designated routes. Roads with tree regrowth on the roadbed shall be considered "not established", and thereby closed to motorized use. Roads closed with downed wood and/or felled trees are also closed to motorized use. Vehicles will access only those roads necessary to reach the permitted harvesting area.
3. The maximum amount of firewood to be removed hereunder is **five (5) cords**. An administrative charge of **\$15.00** will be assessed for this firewood cutting permit.
4. Firewood may only be cut from dead and/or downed trees. Firewood lengths will not exceed eight (8) feet. Use of logging trucks for the removal of firewood will not be permitted.
5. The firewood is cut for the PERMITTEE'S USE ONLY, and is not to be sold (1 permit per family). Resale of firewood is strictly prohibited.
6. Use of roads during wet conditions is prohibited.
7. Do not cut standing dead trees or down logs with signs, tags or paint marks on them.
8. Remove from the road surface, road bank, and draining ditches all debris resulting from firewood cutting. Do not litter or dump garbage. Do not block traffic on any road during cutting.
9. The Permittee, by signing this permit, agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Blackfoot Challenge, its officers, employees, contractors and subcontractors, from any and all loss, liability or damage whatsoever for injury to person or property while working under this permit whether arising from condition of the property, negligence of others on or off the property or accident.
10. This permit must be in the Permittee's possession when cutting and transporting firewood.
11. Permittee will comply with all State fire regulations (i.e. shovel, fire extinguisher, spark arresters, etc.)

12. Land owned by the Blackfoot Challenge will be patrolled for compliance with the conditions of this permit. This permit must be presented upon request for inspection of compliance.
13. Permittee, by signing this permit, agrees to adhere to and be bound by the terms and conditions of this Firewood Cutting Permit as detailed hereon, as well as the **Information Sheet for Firewood Cutters** as shown on the following page.
14. Permittee must complete the information requested on the lower half.
15. The Blackfoot Challenge has the right to revoke this permit upon learning of any deliberate violation of this permit.
16. Additional Conditions:

Vehicle to be used to remove firewood:

Make _____ Model _____ License No. _____
 Address _____ Phone No. _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Permittee _____ Date _____
 Sold by _____ Date _____

INFORMATION SHEET FOR FIREWOOD CUTTERS

**FIREWOOD CUTTING UNDER THIS PERMIT IS ONLY ALLOWED
UNDER THE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS:**

1. Follow all conditions outlined in the Firewood Cutting Permit. Firewood cutting shall only take place in designated locations identified by the BCCA Land Steward. Violations of the permit conditions can result in criminal or civil action and/or suspension of the permit privileges.
2. We ask for your cooperation in observing all rights of private landowners. This permit is only valid on property owned by the Blackfoot Challenge. You must obtain permission to enter all other private landownership. No firewood cutting is allowed behind locked gates, on restricted use roads, or in other areas closed to firewood cutting, without written authorization by the Blackfoot Challenge.
3. State of Montana fire season officially begins May 1st and ends September 30th; in some years the fire season is extended beyond September 30th. During the fire season it is important to observe all state fire regulations. Use of a power saw requires the operator to have an 8-ounce liquid-chemical or 1-pound dry-chemical fire extinguisher and a shovel in the immediate area. The saw must have a screen-type arrestor installed.
4. During wet periods, stay off of forest roads. Vehicle tires may rut the road surface and possibly degrade water quality in the area.
5. DO NOT drive off of established roads; erosion, tree damage and weed spread often result.

APPENDIX 12

6. Most forest roads are single-lane construction with pullouts which allow vehicles to pass. When a vehicle is met, pull out at the nearest wide spot to allow passage. Larger vehicles and vehicles traveling uphill always have the right-of-way. Drive at a safe speed. Always make sure you can stop in one-half the sight distance.
7. Report all illegal activities to the BCCA Land Steward at 406-793-3900. If possible, get the Make, Model and License Number of the offending or suspicious vehicle. Your help in protecting our property is very much appreciated.

APPENDIX 13

BLACKFOOT COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA

Standards to Address Agency-Private Landowner Issues

The greater BCCA is composed of the core acreage owned by the Blackfoot Challenge, state and federally owned parcels, and private property. Several MOU signatories have legally defined access easements across public and private land owned and managed by other BCCA partners. Each of these easements is unique and specific in the rights they convey. Easement width, purpose of use, and road maintenance responsibilities may vary significantly. In addition to legally recorded easements, the agencies have also traditionally been able to obtain temporary road-use permits for travel on other roads through public or private property in order to manage lands within the BCCA.

Road maintenance standards may vary according to the individual easements, agency policy, landowner wishes, and statutory mandate. In general, agencies are required to maintain roads at Best Management Practices (BMPs) standards in order to comply with Montana statute requiring protection of surface water quality. In addition, some roads must be maintained adequately for administrative use. When road conditions threaten to deliver sediment to surface waters, roads are generally brought up to BMP standards at the start of a project and returned to BMP standards or the original condition, whichever is higher, following project completion. However, where management activities require agencies to use roads crossing private lands, a landowner may request that a road not be improved any more than absolutely necessary.

Given potentially conflicting desires on final road condition, potential landowner concerns regarding unauthorized travel on roads across their lands, concerns about unauthorized use of their lands, and a general desire to be kept informed about activities affecting their lands, BCCA partners agree to keep other landowners informed as projects are planned and to work to come to a satisfactory agreement regarding road use and conditions as follows:

- I. Before any project is begun, managers will inform the BCCA Council of the project, the approximate amount of road use involved, and the specific roads to be used. The agency will make a good faith effort (using at least two forms of communication) to contact all private landowners or their representatives across whose lands the agency will require access, and will attempt to reach an agreement regarding road conditions and use, even when the agency has legal authority to modify roads unilaterally. If an agency's operating parameters preclude the above private landowner notification, the Agency's BCCA Council representative will attempt to notify private landowners.
- II. At the start of a project, the managing agency will ensure that property ownership transitions are marked on the access road to be used. These may be permanent signs, which will be checked to be sure they are still present; or temporary signs put up at the start of the project and removed upon project completion. If an agency's operating parameters preclude the above ownership transition marking, the BCCA Council will be notified by the agency's council representative so that the council may arrange for signage if deemed necessary.
- III. Following project completion, the managing agency will leave the road in previously agree upon condition, including any agree upon weed control and reseeding.
- IV. Contracts issued by the agency will contain language addressing the following points:
 - a. The access road may cross private lands. Access for contract purposes does not imply permission to use or modify private lands. This includes, but is not limited to: tree harvesting, equipment parking or staging, weed spraying, camping, fishing, hunting, trapping, and general recreation.

APPENDIX 13

- b. In the event of an unforeseen circumstance requiring action not allowed by this contract, regardless of ownership of the land on which the action is required, the agency contract officer will be notified before any action is taken. Specific agency rules may require written authorization from the contracting officer.
- c. Access roads may contain locked gates. Contractor may not install additional locks on any gate without specific approval of the contract administrator. In no case may an additional lock prevent any existing lock from providing access through the gate.
- d. Contractor is authorized to access the project lands for contract purposes only. Other activities not related to the project itself, such as hunting, transporting game animals and fishing, will be considered trespass and prosecuted to the full extent of the law.
- e. While project boundaries are marked, property boundaries on the access road to the project area are not guaranteed to be marked, and it is the contractor's responsibility to be aware of property boundaries where not marked, including on spur roads.
- f. If reasonable, contracts will contain maps showing the project area, the access routes to be used, and ownerships of importance.
- g. All telephone lines, power lines, fences, gates, signs, irrigation ditches or pipelines, water troughs, cattle guards, drainage structures, bridges, roads and other improvements within the project area and on adjacent lands shall be protected as much as possible during project operations, and if damaged shall be repaired or replaced immediately at the contractor's expense.
- h. Contractor will be required to restrict or suspend hauling during periods when the compacted road surface would be damaged, as directed by the agency contract officer. Restrictions are required when hauling would cause rutting into the sub-grade, or when surfacing materials would be displaced, such as during heavy rainfall or spring breakup freeze-thaw cycles.

APPENDIX 14

GLOSSARY

Adaptive Management: Adaptive management is a structured, iterative process for optimal decision-making in the face of uncertainty, aimed at reducing uncertainty over time by systematic monitoring. In this way, decision-making simultaneously maximizes one or more resource objectives and produces the information needed to improve future management. Adaptive management is often characterized as “learning by doing.”

BCCA Core: 5,609.37 acres located in the heart of the larger BCCA, owned by the Blackfoot Challenge and managed by a 15-member community-based Council composed of adjacent agency land managers and local residents and user groups.

Best Management Practices: Standard, well-defined methods for harvesting and managing forested lands in compliance with federal and state regulations regarding conservation of soil, water, plants, and animal habitats.

Block Management: A cooperative program between private Montana landowners and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Block Management helps landowners manage hunting activities and provides the public with free hunting access to private land, and sometimes to adjacent or isolated public lands.

Conservation Easement: A conservation easement is a voluntary legal agreement between a private landowner and a qualified organization that limits the uses of the land in order to protect its conservation values. In donating or selling a conservation easement, the landowner gives up certain rights (usually associated with development), but continues to own and use the land and retain the right to sell it or pass it on to heirs.

Ecosystem Management: An approach to natural resource management which aims to sustain ecosystems to meet both ecological and human needs in the future. It is based on an adaptive, collaboratively developed vision of desired future conditions that integrates ecological, socioeconomic, and institutional perspectives, applied within a geographic framework, and defined primarily by natural ecological boundaries.

Integrated Weed Management: The aim of integrated weed management is the use of a combination of different practices to manage noxious and invasive weed populations in a manner that is economically and environmentally sound. Such strategies include cultural, mechanical, chemical, and biological methods.

Pre-Commercial Thinning: Cutting trees from a young stand so that the remaining trees will have more room to grow to marketable size. Trees cut in a pre-commercial thinning have no commercial value and normally none of the felled trees are removed for utilization. The primary intent is to improve growth potential for the trees left after thinning.

Quaternary Glaciation: Glacial activity taking place in the geologic time period from the end of the Pliocene Epoch roughly 1.8 million years ago to the present. The Quaternary includes three geologic subdivisions: the Pleistocene, Holocene, and Anthropocene Epochs.

Species of Concern: Montana Species of Concern are native animals breeding in the state that are considered to be ‘at risk’ due to declining population trends, threats to their habitats, and/or restricted distribution. See <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishAndWildlife/species/speciesOfConcern/>

Streamside Management Zone: Certain timber harvest activities within at least 50 feet of any stream, lake, or other body of water are subject to Montana law protecting stream and riparian areas. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) must approve any exceptions to these prohibited practices.

Sustainable Harvest: The practice of forest harvesting in a manner which meets the needs of the present without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.