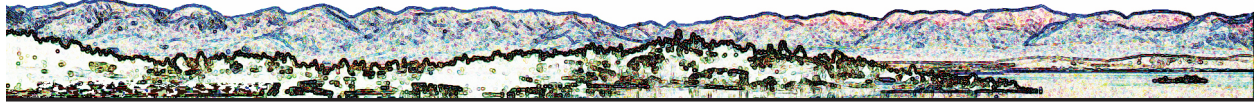


Swan View's News

Holidays 2017



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

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Holiday Issue: Recognizing and Protecting Nature's Gifts!

This issue is devoted to taking our cues from nature as times get more intense and issues more complex. Indeed, time spent in nature helps us realize that much of the fear, intensity and complexity of today's world is intended to distract us from our true selves and our innate ability to spot a political scam when we see one.

On page 1, we describe a few examples of how nature takes care of forests for free, while government and industry would rather we spend our tax dollars pretending we are fixing the problem through logging.

On page 2, we look at the perversely titled "Resilient Federal Forests Act" that essentially gives a free pass to logging on public lands and rewards "collaboration" with huge exemptions from environmental review.

On page 3, we review the tragic deaths of two renowned mountain climbers and skiers near Bozeman as a means to reexamine how we regard knowledge, understanding and our endeavors.

On page 5 we renew our pledge to you, our members, and to our work dedicated to keeping nature and human nature on the same path.

On page 6, we share some of the unsolicited praise folks have sent us over the past year - ranging from praise for our detailed work on public land issues to thanks for facilitating the Saturday Swan Ranger outings.

On page 7, we describe numerous ways you can help us raise \$15,000 to meet our year-end budget! So please [DONATE NOW](#) to support our work!

Lastly, here's a great big THANK YOU for helping us meet our Cin-

nabar Challenge Grant this summer and fall!

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

Keith



"Keeping and Eye on the Swans"

by Paulette Louis

Allowing Nature to Renew and Heal Itself!

As reported in our Fall newsletter, fires are nature's way of rejuvenating forest ecosystems that have evolved with fire over millennia. We also touched on how logging disrupts that natural evolution; robbing the forest of wood, carbon and nutrients that are essential as wildlife habitat and to the health of soil and clean water.

Here we follow up with a few examples of how nature can better "manage" forest ecosystems than the logging that, besides stealing trees, infects forests with roads and noxious weeds. The Flathead National Forest routinely reports, for example, that nearly all of its roads and nearby lands are infested with weeds. So much so that it estimates logging has a high likelihood of spreading weeds around in the woods even if equipment is washed before being hauled from one site to another!

Roads and weeds are the elephant in the room largely ignored by timber sale planners arguing that logging is needed, for example, to thin encroaching Douglas fir from what they think should be more open stands of ponderosa pine. The photo on this page is one of a series we took along various Flathead hiking trails. It shows how root rot is naturally killing the large Douglas fir and leaving the ponderosa pine.



Nature does this without building logging roads and spreading invasive weeds. It does it for free and keeps the carbon stored in the dead trees for a long time while many species of wildlife use them as homes, both while standing and after falling to the ground. And these dead trees contain the organic matter and nutrients necessary to keep soils and new trees healthy.

Some forests don't naturally burn very often and have hence earned the title of "old growth" or "ancient forests." Several fires this summer provided examples of

how older forests resist the spread of fire (without the "help" of logging).

A spokesman for firefighters on the Columbia River's Eagle Creek Fire talked about how the fire slowed as it encountered older forests.

["Because there's more cover from the tree canopy, the ground is moister - and that caused the fire to slow. Also, bigger trees don't catch fire as easily."](#)

Fire experts in Glacier National Park [similarly reported](#) the Sprague Fire slowed to a crawl when it encountered the moist cedar-hemlock forests where "the trees are so far doing a pretty good job of protecting themselves." We remain committed to removing impediments to natural processes, like logging roads, so nature can heal itself!

Gianforte and Westerman Undress "Collaboration"

The Emperor of Collaboration wears no clothes now that the perversely titled Resilient Federal Forests Act of 2017 ([H.R. 2936](#)) has passed the U.S. House of Representatives and awaits action in the Senate. Written by Arkansas Rep. Bruce Westerman and cosponsored by Montana Rep. Greg Gianforte, the bill would reward those who collaborate with the government with huge exemptions from environmental review.

Current regulations allow logging on less than 250 acres of public land to be "categorically excluded" from environmental review in an environmental assessment or impact statement. The Westerman bill would automatically increase that Categorical Exclusion to 10,000 acres and increase it to 30,000 if the logging project is developed by a collaborative. In other words, 47 square miles of logging would not need environmental review because a handful of people in a room say its a good idea!

The Westerman bill in fact would ham-

string judicial review of public lands logging, render public comment meaningless, cripple Fish and Wildlife Service review of logging projects, and replace objective science with political ambition. It is essentially a free pass to logging on public lands, encourages logging in America's few remaining roadless lands and removes long-standing limits on clear-cutting.

As we've reported in prior [newsletters](#), the concept of collaboration was born of government as a means to give power to folks claiming there are too many trees in the forest - and to marginalize the science and the people saying the forests instead suffer from too many roads, too many bulldozers and the invasive weeds that follow.

The Westerman bill is the latest threat to take science and the public out of public land management. Politics has long trumped science in D.C.. Now the practice is more obvious but nonetheless spreading like a disease via local "collaboration."



A Helena, MT collaborative chose to clear-cut much of its Chessman Reservoir water supply!
Polly Pfister photo

To Understand Does not Mean to Conquer But to Stand-Under in Awe

Too often we confuse knowledge with power, understanding with control, and endeavors with accomplishments. In all cases, the latter is the former invested in the ego. It is as though the marvelous currency of our relationship to the world has been melted down into a boat anchor.

[The unfortunate deaths of two commercially sponsored mountain climbers that were backcountry skiing near Bozeman this fall](#) provides some reflection on these matters. On October 7, Inge Perkins was buried in a snow avalanche and her partner in life Hayden Kennedy was partially buried. He was able to free himself but unable to locate Perkins. A despondent Kennedy hiked out, wrote a note directing authorities to the area where Perkins was buried, and committed suicide.

Kennedy had lost a number of climbing friends and had [recently written about those losses](#):

"I've watched too many friends go to the mountains only to never return . . . Clichés like 'they were just following their passion' are what we all say in moments of loss and tragedy. Of course, that is just bullshit . . . There is this dual nature of sublime meaning and utter absurdity in climbing mountains. Sending [climbing] harder, bigger, more badass routes won't make you a better, more humble, more gracious or hap-

pier human—yet we often approach those mountains like they can. There is no glory, no real answers, in sending and summits, yet we organize our entire lives around the myth that there are."

Bozeman psychotherapist Timothy Tate wrote about the deaths of the young Perkins and Kennedy in [Mountain Journal](#):

"In traditional culture, [young] people did not go to the mountain to become rich or famous or made more full of hubris. They went, and returned, holding more hu-

mility, embraced by other older individuals who reinforced the notion that the power of validation comes from within, by striving to discover who you are . . . But more often than not our young [today] are left to thrashing around, trying to experience something, anything, that grabs them by



Snow drifts on Mt. Aeneas

Keith Hammer photo

their raw roots and shakes them up: in a word, the extreme. Seeking extreme experiences, be it on snowboard, skis, rock-climbing, whitewater kayaking, or BASE jumping, are examples of risk taking behaviors."

May this tragedy resolve us to marvel at our relationship with nature rather than attempt to capitalize on it; to stand in awe of how nature works rather than meddling with it (see page 2); and to truly know ourselves, our relationship to others and our relationship to the world.

We Renew Our Pledge to You!

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



Swan Rangers enjoy old cedar-hemlock forest in Krause Basin!

Keith Hammer photo

Unsolicited Praise For Our Work!

"Thanks for all you do in protecting our natural resources. Fighting the good fight!"
Cate C.

"Your passion for the health and longevity of the forest is inspiring. Thank you."
Jessie

"The Big Creek story [about road decommissioning to protect grizzly bear and bull trout] definitely speaks to the power of persistence and dedication."
Valerie K.

"Thanks very much for including and accepting me into your hiking group this past summer. You have affirmed for me that the small things really are the big things."
Mary D.

"Thanks for [the letter to the editor] giving readers actual facts regarding the true effects of logging on forest fires!"
Polly P.



Infinity Ridge

Keith Hammer photo

"I thank you and the Coalition for all that you do to help preserve the environment for nature's sake and for our future generations."
Dick H.

"What a great record of your valuable work. You all should be very proud"
Edd B.

"Excellent work. Great letter and supporting documents."
David G.

"Every Saturday, I look forward to your email of that day's hike. The photos are always inspirational and educational.

"Your clear vision and effective action have been on the cutting edge for many years."
Larry C.

Please keep it up!"
Nancy F.

"I'm glad you were able to get [the Missoulian] to include the idea that dead trees have tremendous ecological value and the entire idea of 'salvage' is an industrial forestry paradigm."
George W.

"Nice letter in the [Flathead] Beacon yesterday! I'm glad someone is piping up."
Grete G.

"My wife Cari and I greatly appreciate your work on behalf of that special place and rest a little easier knowing you're out there on the job."
Rosco J.

Help Us Raise \$15,000 to Meet our Year-End Budget!

We rely in large part on member donations to fund our work protecting habitat for fish, wildlife and people. **You can help us broaden our membership by giving Gift Memberships at \$25 each**, either on-line or using the form below! **It's easy to join with and help others support our work:**

1. Send a check to Swan View Coalition at 3165 Foothill Road, Kalispell, MT 59901 - or -

2. Use your credit card securely on-line at www.swanview.org or www.swanrange.org, by clicking on the **Donate Now** button found there (or at right)!



Network for Good handles your transaction securely for us and informs us immediately via email of your donation by credit card. You can also choose to give monthly, quarterly or yearly there to make it easier or more affordable (or change your mind anytime)! If you have other info you want to get to us, such as Gift Membership info, simply email it to keith@swanview.org or mail it to the address in #1, above.

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



If there is pink on your mailing label, it means you haven't donated in nearly a year or more. Please make a donation so we can keep sending you our newsletter and continue our work!

Here's \$25 to cover my minimum dues, newsletters, alerts, and Swan Ranger Reports.

Here's \$50 to help restore a bit of peace and quiet to America's public lands.

Here's \$100 to help keep forest roads from ending up in America's bull trout streams.

Here's \$500 to help secure grizzly, lynx and wolverine habitat for future generations.

Here's \$_____ to help save the world, one mountain range and one river at a time!

Here's \$_____ for _____ Gift Memberships at a minimum of \$25 each. I've included each recipient's name, mailing address, email address, and my greeting on separate paper.

As a gift of appreciation for my donation, please send me the Swan/Flathead history booklet "The Lineage of Chief Aeneas: A History of People and Place" and/or a Swan Ranger patch (circle "hang-loop" or "sew-on").

Save paper! Email my newsletters to _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP: _____

Swan View Coalition, Inc.
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Holiday Issue: Recognizing and Protecting Nature's Gifts!

Executive Summary	page 1
Allowing Nature to Renew and Heal Itself!	page 2
Gianforte and Westerman Undress "Collaboration"	page 3
To Understand Does not Mean to Conquer	page 4
We Renew Our Pledge to You!	page 5
Unsolicited Praise for Our Work!	page 6
<u>Please Help Us Raise \$15,000 to Meet our Year-End Budget!</u>	page 7