

Land and Water Conservation Fund

A Legacy for Future Generations

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| The Swan Valley - Rural, Wild, Threatened | 1 |
| Strategies in Motion | 2 |
| Crossing the Finish Line | 3 |
| Acquisition Map | 4 |
| Owl Loop | 5 |
| Bunyan Lake | 6 |
| Swan River South | 7 |
| Condon Creek | 8 |
| Falls Creek | 9 |
| Condon Loop | 10 |
| Lion Creek | 11 |
| Dry Lake | 12 |
| Swan River North | 13 |
| Cedar Creek | 14 |

“Given the rich biodiversity of the Swan Valley, sustainable forestry and the conservation partnerships among landowners, stakeholders, and community members are complementary tools that will maintain a healthy ecosystem into the future.”

Henning C. Stabins
Wildlife Biologist, Plum Creek Timber Company

Cover Photo: The Swan Range by John Ingebretson

The Swan Valley - Rural, Wild, Threatened

The Swan Valley is a critical landscape connection between the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (adjacent to Glacier National Park) and the Mission Mountains Wilderness. It provides productive forestlands and wetlands and vital habitat for the endangered gray wolf; threatened grizzly bear, Canadian lynx, bald eagle, bull trout and water howellia; and many other sensitive plant and wildlife species including fisher and wolverine. It is one of the last strongholds of our rural traditions such as trapping, hunting, fishing, firewood gathering and logging. The local forest-based economies require a sustainable timber base for the forest products industry and a functional ecosystem that provides connectivity for wildlife and fisheries and opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Underlying the forested landscape is a checkerboard pattern of public and private ownership, a remnant of federal land grants to railroads over 140 years ago. The majority of private land is held by Plum Creek Timber Company (PCTC), which acquired the land from the railroad in 1989 and has managed its holdings as an industrial forest.

In recent years the wild and rural Swan Valley has come under increasing threat from subdivision and real estate development of private lands, which would further fragment ownerships, land management, and the rich resources of the valley. In 2002, PCTC announced the sale of roughly 25% (20,000 acres) of its land in the valley. Some of these lands are critical to the integrity of the forest landscape and its natural, social, and economic resources.

Meeting the Challenge

A group of committed stakeholders and community members (the Swan Lands Coordinating Committee), has joined together to develop a long-term strategic conservation plan that protects public access, maintains the working landscape and conserves biological diversity in the Swan Valley.

The basis of this multi-faceted plan is a science-based resource assessment carried out by The Trust for Public Land (TPL) in collaboration with the Committee and PCTC. The plan guides the development of specific strategies to conserve important resource areas. TPL and the Committee partners are working hard to secure the necessary funding to implement these strategies.