

Appendix A

List of Plants and Animals

MAMMALS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Mustela vison</i>	American Mink
<i>Taxidea taxus</i>	Badger
<i>Castor canadensis</i>	Beaver
<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>	Big Brown Bat
<i>Ovis canadensis</i>	Bighorn Sheep
<i>Ursus americanus</i>	Black Bear
<i>Lynx rufus</i>	Bobcat
<i>Neotoma cinerea</i>	Bushy-tailed Woodrat
<i>Lynx canadensis</i> ^T	Canada Lynx
<i>Spermophilus columbianus</i>	Columbian Ground Squirrel
<i>Canis latrans</i>	Coyote
<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>	Deer Mouse
<i>Sorex monticolus</i>	Dusky or Montane Shrew
<i>Cervus canadensis</i>	Elk or Wapiti
<i>Martes pennanti</i>	Fisher
<i>Myotis thysanodes</i> *	Fringed Myotis
<i>Spermophilus lateralis</i>	Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel
<i>Canis lupus</i> ^E	Gray Wolf
<i>Ursus arctos</i> ^T	Grizzly Bear
<i>Phenacomys intermedius</i>	Heather Vole
<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i> *	Hoary Bat
<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>	Little Brown Myotis
<i>Myotis evotis</i>	Long-eared Myotis
<i>Myotis volans</i>	Long-legged Myotis
<i>Microtus longicaudus</i>	Long-tailed Vole
<i>Mustela frenata</i>	Long-tailed Weasel
<i>Martes americana</i>	Marten
<i>Sorex cinereus</i>	Masked Shrew
<i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i>	Meadow Vole
<i>Microtus montanus</i>	Montane Vole
<i>Alces americanus</i>	Moose
<i>Sylvilagus nuttallii</i>	Mountain Cottontail
<i>Puma concolor</i>	Mountain Lion
<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>	Mule Deer

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>	Muskrat
<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>	Northern Flying Squirrel
<i>Thomomys talpoides</i>	Northern Pocket Gopher
<i>Lontra canadensis</i>	Northern River Otter
<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>	Porcupine
<i>Sorex preblei</i> *	Preble's Shrew
<i>Sorex hoyi</i>	Pygmy Shrew
<i>Procyon lotor</i>	Raccoon
<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>	Red Fox
<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>	Red Squirrel
<i>Tamias ruficaudus</i>	Red-tailed Chipmunk
<i>Mustela erminea</i>	Short-tailed Weasel
<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i> **	Silver-haired Bat
<i>Lepus americanus</i>	Snowshoe Hare
<i>Myodes gapperi</i>	Southern Red-backed Vole
<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>	Striped Skunk
<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i> *	Townsend's Big-eared Bat
<i>Sorex vagrans</i>	Vagrant Shrew
<i>Sorex palustris</i>	Water Shrew
<i>Zapus princeps</i>	Western Jumping Mouse
<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>	Western Small-footed Myotis
<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>	White-tailed Deer
<i>Lepus townsendii</i>	White-tailed Jack Rabbit
<i>Gulo gulo</i> *	Wolverine
<i>Marmota flaviventris</i>	Yellow-bellied Marmot
<i>Tamias amoenus</i>	Yellow-pine Chipmunk

BIRDS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Recurvirostra americana</i>	American Avocet
<i>Botaurus lentiginosus</i> *	American Bittern
<i>Fulica americana</i>	American Coot
<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>	American Crow
<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>	American Dipper
<i>Spinus tristis</i>	American Goldfinch
<i>Falco sparverius</i>	American Kestrel
<i>Anthus rubescens</i>	American Pipit
<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>	American Redstart
<i>Turdus migratorius</i>	American Robin
<i>Picoides dorsalis</i>	American Three-toed Woodpecker
<i>Spizella arborea</i>	American Tree Sparrow
<i>Pelecanus erythrorhynchos</i> *	American White Pelican
<i>Anas americana</i>	American Wigeon

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Calypte anna</i>	Anna's Hummingbird
<i>Dendroica coronata auduboni</i>	Audubon's Warbler
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle
<i>Patagioenas fasciata</i>	Band-tailed Pigeon
<i>Riparia riparia</i>	Bank Swallow
<i>Hirundo rustica</i>	Barn Swallow
<i>Strix varia</i>	Barred Owl
<i>Bucephala islandica**</i>	Barrow's Goldeneye
<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>	Belted Kingfisher
<i>Cypseloides niger*</i>	Black Swift
<i>Chlidonias niger*</i>	Black Tern
<i>Picoides arcticus*</i>	Black-backed Woodpecker
<i>Pica hudsonia</i>	Black-billed Magpie
<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>	Black-capped Chickadee
<i>Archilochus alexandri</i>	Black-chinned Hummingbird
<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>	Black-headed Grosbeak
<i>Himantopus mexicanus*</i>	Black-necked Stilt
<i>Dendroica caerulescens</i>	Black-throated Blue Warbler
<i>Cyanocitta cristata</i>	Blue Jay
<i>Anas discors</i>	Blue-winged Teal
<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus*</i>	Bobolink
<i>Aegolius funereus</i>	Boreal Owl
<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>	Brewer's Blackbird
<i>Spizella breweri*</i>	Brewer's Sparrow
<i>Certhia americana*</i>	Brown Creeper
<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>	Brown Thrasher
<i>Molothrus ater</i>	Brown-headed Cowbird
<i>Bucephala albeola</i>	Bufflehead
<i>Icterus bullockii</i>	Bullock's Oriole
<i>Larus californicus</i>	California Gull
<i>Stellula calliope</i>	Calliope Hummingbird
<i>Branta canadensis</i>	Canada Goose
<i>Aythya valisineria</i>	Canvasback
<i>Hydroprogne caspia*</i>	Caspian Tern
<i>Carpodacus cassinii*</i>	Cassin's Finch
<i>Vireo cassinii</i>	Cassin's Vireo
<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>	Cedar Waxwing
<i>Poecile rufescens</i>	Chestnut-backed Chickadee
<i>Spizella passerina</i>	Chipping Sparrow
<i>Anas cyanoptera</i>	Cinnamon Teal
<i>Aechmophorus clarkii*</i>	Clark's Grebe
<i>Nucifraga columbiana*</i>	Clark's Nutcracker
<i>Spizella pallida</i>	Clay-colored Sparrow

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>	Cliff Swallow
<i>Bucephala clangula</i>	Common Goldeneye
<i>Quiscalus quiscula</i>	Common Grackle
<i>Gavia immer</i> *	Common Loon
<i>Mergus merganser</i>	Common Merganser
<i>Gallinula chloropus</i>	Common Moorhen
<i>Chordeiles minor</i>	Common Nighthawk
<i>Corvus corax</i>	Common Raven
<i>Sterna hirundo</i> *	Common Tern
<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>	Common Yellowthroat
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's Hawk
<i>Empidonax occidentalis</i>	Cordilleran Flycatcher
<i>Junco hyemalis</i>	Dark-eyed Junco
<i>Junco hyemalis caniceps</i>	Dark-eyed Junco (Gray-headed)
<i>Junco hyemalis montanus</i>	Dark-eyed Junco (Montana Junco)
<i>Junco hyemalis mearnsi</i>	Dark-eyed Junco (Pink-sided)
<i>Phalacrocorax auritus</i>	Double-crested Cormorant
<i>Picoides pubescens</i>	Downy Woodpecker
<i>Empidonax oberholseri</i>	Dusky Flycatcher
<i>Dendragapus obscurus</i>	Dusky Grouse
<i>Podiceps nigricollis</i>	Eared Grebe
<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>	Eastern Kingbird
<i>Anas penelope</i>	Eurasian Wigeon
<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i> ***	European Starling
<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>	Evening Grosbeak
<i>Buteo regalis</i> *	Ferruginous Hawk
<i>Otus flammeolus</i> *	Flammulated Owl
<i>Sterna forsteri</i> *	Forster's Tern
<i>Passerella iliaca</i>	Fox Sparrow
<i>Leucophaeus pipixcan</i> *	Franklin's Gull
<i>Anas strepera</i>	Gadwall
<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i> *	Golden Eagle
<i>Regulus satrapa</i>	Golden-crowned Kinglet
<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i> *	Grasshopper Sparrow
<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>	Gray Catbird
<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>	Gray Jay
<i>Perdix perdix</i> ***	Gray Partridge
<i>Leucosticte tephrocotis</i> *	Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch
<i>Ardea herodias</i> *	Great Blue Heron
<i>Ardea alba</i>	Great Egret
<i>Strix nebulosa</i> *	Great Gray Owl
<i>Bubo virginianus</i>	Great Horned Owl
<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i> *	Greater Sage-Grouse

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Tringa melanoleuca</i>	Greater Yellowlegs
<i>Anas crecca</i>	Green-winged Teal
<i>Picoides villosus</i>	Hairy Woodpecker
<i>Empidonax hammondi</i>	Hammond's Flycatcher
<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i> *	Harlequin Duck
<i>Zonotrichia querula</i>	Harris's Sparrow
<i>Catharus guttatus</i>	Hermit Thrush
<i>Lophodytes cucullatus</i> **	Hooded Merganser
<i>Podiceps auritus</i> *	Horned Grebe
<i>Eremophila alpestris</i>	Horned Lark
<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>	House Finch
<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>	House Wren
<i>Charadrius vociferus</i>	Killdeer
<i>Passerina amoena</i>	Lazuli Bunting
<i>Empidonax minimus</i>	Least Flycatcher
<i>Calidris minutilla</i>	Least Sandpiper
<i>Aythya affinis</i>	Lesser Scaup
<i>Tringa flavipes</i>	Lesser Yellowlegs
<i>Melanerpes lewis</i> *	Lewis' Woodpecker
<i>Melospiza lincolni</i>	Lincoln's Sparrow
<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i> *	Loggerhead Shrike
<i>Numenius americanus</i> *	Long-billed Curlew
<i>Limnodromus scolopaceus</i>	Long-billed Dowitcher
<i>Asio otus</i>	Long-eared Owl
<i>Oporornis tolmiei</i>	MacGillivray's Warbler
<i>Anas platyrhynchos</i>	Mallard
<i>Limosa fedoa</i>	Marbled Godwit
<i>Cistothorus palustris</i>	Marsh Wren
<i>Falco columbarius</i>	Merlin
<i>Sialia currucoides</i>	Mountain Bluebird
<i>Poecile gambeli</i>	Mountain Chickadee
<i>Zenaidura macroura</i>	Mourning Dove
<i>Vermivora ruficapilla</i>	Nashville Warbler
<i>Colaptes auratus</i>	Northern Flicker
<i>Colaptes auratus cafer</i>	Northern Flicker (Red-shafted)
<i>Accipiter gentilis</i> *	Northern Goshawk
<i>Circus cyaneus</i>	Northern Harrier
<i>Surnia ulula</i> **	Northern Hawk Owl
<i>Icterus galbula</i>	Northern Oriole
<i>Anas acuta</i>	Northern Pintail
<i>Glaucidium gnoma</i>	Northern Pygmy-Owl
<i>Stelgidopteryx serripennis</i>	Northern Rough-winged Swallow
<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>	Northern Saw-whet Owl

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Anas clypeata</i>	Northern Shoveler
<i>Lanius excubitor</i>	Northern Shrike
<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>	Northern Waterthrush
<i>Contopus cooperi</i>	Olive-sided Flycatcher
<i>Vermivora celata</i>	Orange-crowned Warbler
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey
<i>Seiurus aurocapilla**</i>	Ovenbird
<i>Myioborus pictus</i>	Painted Redstart
<i>Falco peregrinus*</i>	Peregrine Falcon
<i>Podilymbus podiceps</i>	Pied-billed Grebe
<i>Dryocopus pileatus*</i>	Pileated Woodpecker
<i>Pinicola enucleator</i>	Pine Grosbeak
<i>Spinus pinus</i>	Pine Siskin
<i>Falco mexicanus</i>	Prairie Falcon
<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>	Pygmy Nuthatch
<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>	Red Crossbill
<i>Mergus serrator</i>	Red-breasted Merganser
<i>Sitta canadensis</i>	Red-breasted Nuthatch
<i>Vireo olivaceus</i>	Red-eyed Vireo
<i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i>	Red-naped Sapsucker
<i>Podiceps grisegena</i>	Red-necked Grebe
<i>Phalaropus lobatus</i>	Red-necked Phalarope
<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>	Red-tailed Hawk
<i>Agelaius phoeniceus</i>	Red-winged Blackbird
<i>Aythya americana</i>	Redhead
<i>Larus delawarensis</i>	Ring-billed Gull
<i>Aythya collaris</i>	Ring-necked Duck
<i>Columba livia***</i>	Rock Pigeon
<i>Salpinctes obsoletus</i>	Rock Wren
<i>Pheucticus ludovicianus</i>	Rose-breasted Grosbeak
<i>Chen rossii</i>	Ross's Goose
<i>Buteo lagopus</i>	Rough-legged Hawk
<i>Regulus calendula</i>	Ruby-crowned Kinglet
<i>Oxyura jamaicensis</i>	Ruddy Duck
<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>	Ruffed Grouse
<i>Selasphorus rufus**</i>	Rufous Hummingbird
<i>Xema sabini</i>	Sabine's Gull
<i>Grus canadensis</i>	Sandhill Crane
<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>	Savannah Sparrow
<i>Tyrannus forficatus</i>	Scissor-tailed Flycatcher
<i>Charadrius semipalmatus</i>	Semipalmated Plover
<i>Accipiter striatus</i>	Sharp-shinned Hawk
<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus*</i>	Sharp-tailed Grouse

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Asio flammeus</i> **	Short-eared Owl
<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>	Snow Bunting
<i>Chen caerulescens</i>	Snow Goose
<i>Bubo scandiacus</i>	Snowy Owl
<i>Vireo solitarius</i>	Solitary Vireo
<i>Melospiza melodia</i>	Song Sparrow
<i>Porzana carolina</i>	Sora
<i>Actitis macularius</i>	Spotted Sandpiper
<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>	Spotted Towhee
<i>Falcapennis canadensis</i>	Spruce Grouse
<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>	Steller's Jay
<i>Melanitta perspicillata</i>	Surf Scoter
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i> **	Swainson's Hawk
<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>	Swainson's Thrush
<i>Myadestes townsendi</i>	Townsend's Solitaire
<i>Dendroica townsendi</i>	Townsend's Warbler
<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>	Tree Swallow
<i>Cygnus buccinator</i> *	Trumpeter Swan
<i>Cygnus columbianus</i>	Tundra Swan
<i>Cathartes aura</i>	Turkey Vulture
<i>Ixoreus naevius</i>	Varied Thrush
<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>	Vaux's Swift
<i>Catharus fuscescens</i> *	Veery
<i>Poocetes gramineus</i>	Vesper Sparrow
<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>	Violet-green Swallow
<i>Rallus limicola</i>	Virginia Rail
<i>Vireo gilvus</i>	Warbling Vireo
<i>Sialia mexicana</i>	Western Bluebird
<i>Aechmophorus occidentalis</i>	Western Grebe
<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>	Western Meadowlark
<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>	Western Tanager
<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>	Western Wood-Pewee
<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>	White-breasted Nuthatch
<i>Zonotrichia leucophrys</i>	White-crowned Sparrow
<i>Plegadis chihi</i> *	White-faced Ibis
<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>	White-throated Sparrow
<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>	White-winged Crossbill
<i>Melanitta fusca</i>	White-winged Scoter
<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i> ***	Wild Turkey
<i>Tringa semipalmata</i>	Willet
<i>Sphyrapicus thyroideus</i>	Williamson's Sapsucker
<i>Empidonax traillii</i>	Willow Flycatcher
<i>Phalaropus tricolor</i>	Wilson's Phalarope

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Gallinago delicata</i>	Wilson's Snipe
<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>	Wilson's Warbler
<i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i> *	Winter Wren
<i>Aix sponsa</i>	Wood Duck
<i>Dendroica petechia</i>	Yellow Warbler
<i>Xanthocephalus xanthocephalus</i>	Yellow-headed Blackbird
<i>Dendroica coronata</i>	Yellow-rumped Warbler

REPTILES

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>	Common Gartersnake
<i>Coluber constrictor</i>	Eastern Racer
<i>Elgaria coerulea</i> *	Northern Alligator Lizard
<i>Chrysemys picta</i>	Painted Turtle
<i>Charina bottae</i>	Rubber Boa
<i>Thamnophis elegans</i>	Terrestrial Gartersnake

AMPHIBIANS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Rana luteiventris</i>	Columbia Spotted Frog
<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum</i>	Long-toed Salamander
<i>Pseudacris regilla</i>	Pacific Treefrog
<i>Ascaphus montanus</i>	Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog
<i>Bufo boreas</i> *	Western Toad

FISH

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i> ^T	Bull Trout
<i>Cottus cognatus</i>	Slimy Sculpin
<i>Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi</i> *	Westslope Cutthroat Trout

INVERTEBRATES

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Rhyacophila betteni</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Parapsyche elsis</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Lepidostoma cascadense</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Lepidostoma unicolor</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Chyrandra centralis</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Dicosmoecus atripes</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Dicosmoecus gilvipes</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Anagapetus debilis</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Arctopsyche grandis</i>	A Caddisfly

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Neophylax splendens</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Neothremma alicia</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Micrasema bactro</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Helicopsyche borealis</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Hesperophylax designatus</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Onocosmoecus unicolor</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Brachycentrus americanus</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Brachycentrus occidentalis</i>	A Caddisfly
<i>Eukiefferiella brehmi</i>	A Eukiefferiellan Chironomid
<i>Eukiefferiella devonica</i>	A Eukiefferiellan Chironomid
<i>Eukiefferiella gracei</i>	A Eukiefferiellan Chironomid
<i>Ephydatia cooperensis*</i>	A Freshwater Sponge
<i>Helobdella stagnalis</i>	A Leech
<i>Nemotaulius hostilis</i>	A Limnephilid Caddisfly
<i>Serratella tibialis</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Ephemerella excrucians</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Baetis bicaudatus</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Baetis tricaudatus</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Epeorus longimanus</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Drunella coloradensis</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Drunella doddsi</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Drunella grandis</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Drunella spinifera</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Attenella margarita</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Acentrella turbida</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Timpanoga hecuba</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Plauditus punctiventris</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Caudatella hystrix</i>	A Mayfly
<i>Ergodesmus compactus</i>	A Millipede
<i>Lophomus laxus*</i>	A Millipede
<i>Endopus parvipes*</i>	A Millipede
<i>Rhyacophila brunnea</i>	A Rhyacophilan Caddisfly
<i>Rhyacophila alberta</i>	A Rhyacophilan Caddisfly
<i>Rhyacophila narvae</i>	A Rhyacophilan Caddisfly
<i>Rhyacophila verrula</i>	A Rhyacophilan Caddisfly
<i>Zaitzevia parvula</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Heterlimnius corpulentus</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Cleptelmis addenda</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Lara avara</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Narpus concolor</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Ordobrevia nubifera</i>	A Riffle Beetle
<i>Despaxia augusta</i>	A Stonefly

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Amphinemura banksi</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Prostoia besametsa</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Zapada cinctipes</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Zapada columbiana</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Zapada oregonensis</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Yoraperla brevis</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Doroneuria theodora</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Hesperoperla pacifica</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Claassenia sabulosa</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Setvena bradleyi</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Kogotus modestus</i>	A Stonefly
<i>Atherix pachypus</i>	A True Fly
<i>Tvetenia bavarica</i>	A Tvetenian Chironomid
<i>Cordulia shurtleffii</i>	American Emerald
<i>Pteronarcys dorsata</i>	American Salmonfly
<i>Agapetus montanus**</i>	An Agapetus Caddisfly
<i>Hyaletta azteca***</i>	An Amphipod
<i>Euphydryas anicia</i>	Anicia Checkerspot
<i>Papilio zelicaon</i>	Anise Swallowtail
<i>Sympetrum semicinctum</i>	Band-winged Meadowhawk
<i>Leucorrhinia proxima</i>	Belted Whiteface
<i>Sympetrum danae</i>	Black Meadowhawk
<i>Rhionaeschna multicolor**</i>	Blue-eyed Darner
<i>Leucorrhinia borealis*</i>	Boreal Whiteface
<i>Euconulus fulvus</i>	Brown Hive
<i>Rhionaeschna californica**</i>	California Darner
<i>Nymphalis californica</i>	California Tortoiseshell
<i>Speyeria callippe</i>	Callippe Fritillary
<i>Aeshna canadensis</i>	Canada Darner
<i>Ladona julia**</i>	Chalk-fronted Corporal
<i>Pontia protodice</i>	Checkered White
<i>Sympetrum internum</i>	Cherry-faced Meadowhawk
<i>Anax junius</i>	Common Green Darner
<i>Plathemis lydia</i>	Common Whitetail
<i>Leucorrhinia glacialis**</i>	Crimson-ringed Whiteface
<i>Lacinipolia cuneata</i>	Cuneate Arches
<i>Leucorrhinia intacta</i>	Dot-tailed Whiteface
<i>Libellula forensis</i>	Eight-spotted Skimmer
<i>Lestes dryas</i>	Emerald Spreadwing
<i>Discus whitneyi</i>	Forest Disc
<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	Four-spotted Skimmer
<i>Euphydryas gillettii*</i>	Gillette's Checkerspot
<i>Polygona faunus</i>	Green Comma

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Sphaerium simile</i>	Grooved Fingernailclam
<i>Sphaerium occidentale</i>	Herrington Fingernailclam
<i>Leucorrhinia hudsonica</i>	Hudsonian Whiteface
<i>Allogona ptychophora</i>	Idaho Forestsnail
<i>Oreohelix carinifera</i> *	Keeled Mountainsnail
<i>Aeshna eremita</i> **	Lake Darner
<i>Aeshna constricta</i> **	Lance-tipped Darner
<i>Lycaena cupreus</i>	Lustrous Copper
<i>Udosarx lyrata</i> *	Lyre Mantleslug
<i>Magnipelta mycophaga</i> *	Magnum Mantleslug
<i>Deroceras laeve</i> ***	Meadow Slug
<i>Aglais milberti</i>	Milbert's Tortoiseshell
<i>Somatochlora semicircularis</i> **	Mountain Emerald
<i>Enallagma annexum</i>	Northern Bluet
<i>Chlosyne palla</i>	Northern Checkerspot
<i>Lestes disjunctus</i>	Northern Spreadwing
<i>Ischnura cervula</i>	Pacific Forktail
<i>Cordulegaster dorsalis</i>	Pacific Spiketail
<i>Aeshna palmata</i>	Paddle-tailed Darner
<i>Ophiogomphus severus</i>	Pale Snaketail
<i>Papilio eurymedon</i>	Pale Swallowtail
<i>Gnophaela vermiculata</i>	Police Car Moth
<i>Zonitoides arboreus</i>	Quick Gloss
<i>Sympetrum madidum</i> **	Red-veined Meadowhawk
<i>Dasyfidonia avuncularia</i>	Red-winged Wave
<i>Calopteryx aequabilis</i>	River Jewelwing
<i>Colligyus greggi</i> *	Rocky Mountain Dusksnail
<i>Oreohelix strigosa</i>	Rocky Mountainsnail
<i>Sympetrum costiferum</i>	Saffron-winged Meadowhawk
<i>Pteronarcys californica</i>	Salmonfly
<i>Polites sabuleti</i>	Sandhill Skipper
<i>Aeshna juncea</i> **	Sedge Darner
<i>Aeshna umbrosa</i>	Shadow Darner
<i>Pacifastacus leniusculus</i>	Signal Crayfish
<i>Prophyaon humile</i> *	Smoky Taildropper
<i>Epitheca spinigera</i> **	Spiny Baskettail
<i>Lestes congener</i>	Spotted Spreadwing
<i>Microphysula ingersolli</i>	Spruce Snail
<i>Hyles euphorbiae</i> ***	Spurge Hawkmoth
<i>Sympetrum pallipes</i>	Striped Meadowhawk
<i>Oreohelix subrudis</i>	Subalpine Mountainsnail
<i>Coenagrion resolutum</i>	Taiga Bluet
<i>Libellula pulchella</i>	Twelve-spotted Skimmer

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Helisoma anceps</i>	Two-ridge Rams-horn
<i>Sympetrum corruptum</i>	Variegated Meadowhawk
<i>Margaritifera falcata*</i>	Western Pearlshell
<i>Cupido (Everes) amyntula</i>	Western Tailed Blue
<i>Stagnicola caperata</i>	Wrinkled Marshsnail

VASCULAR PLANTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Polygonum austiniiae*</i>	Austin's Knotweed
<i>Bidens beckii*</i>	Beck Water-marigold
<i>Potamogeton obtusifolius*</i>	Blunt-leaved Pondweed
<i>Centunculus minimus*</i>	Chaffweed
<i>Cardamine rupicola*</i>	Cliff Toothwort
<i>Carex crawei*</i>	Crawe's Sedge
<i>Carex chordorrhiza*</i>	Creeping Sedge
<i>Castilleja cervina*</i>	Deer Indian Paintbrush
<i>Drosera anglica*</i>	English Sundew
<i>Collomia debilis var. camporum*</i>	Flexible Collomia
<i>Juncus hallii*</i>	Hall's Rush
<i>Grindelia howellii*</i>	Howell's Gumweed
<i>Hutchinsia procumbens*</i>	Hutchinsia
<i>Physaria carinata*</i>	Keeled Bladderpod
<i>Drosera linearis*</i>	Linear-leaved Sundew
<i>Botrychium minganense**</i>	Mingan Island Moonwort
<i>Phlox kelseyi var. missoulensis*</i>	Missoula Phlox
<i>Carex livida**</i>	Pale Sedge
<i>Nymphaea leibergii*</i>	Pygmy Water-lily
<i>Eriophorum gracile*</i>	Slender Cottongrass
<i>Schoenoplectus subterminalis*</i>	Water Bulrush
<i>Howellia aquatilis^T</i>	Water Howellia
<i>Brasenia schreberi*</i>	Watershield

* Species of Concern

** Potential Species of Concern

*** Exotic Species (not native to Montana)

E Endangered—listed in the Federal Register as being in danger of extinction.

T Threatened—listed in the Federal Register as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Appendix B

List of Endangered and Threatened Species

MAMMALS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Lynx canadensis</i> (T)	Canada lynx
<i>Canis lupus</i> (E)	Gray wolf
<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i> (T)	Grizzly bear

FISH

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i> (T)	Bull trout

PLANTS

SCIENTIFIC NAME	COMMON NAME
<i>Howellia aquatilis</i> (T)	Water howellia

(E) Endangered—listed in the Federal Register as being in danger of extinction.

(T) Threatened—listed in the Federal Register as likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future.

Appendix C

List of Preparers and Reviewers

<i>Author's Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Work Unit</i>
Kathleen Burchett	Project leader	USFWS, Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Great Falls, MT
Mark Ely	Geographic information system (GIS) specialist	USFWS, Region 6, Division of Refuge Planning, Lakewood, CO
Kevin Ertl	Wildlife refuge specialist	USFWS, H2-O Waterfowl Production Area, Helmville, MT
Vanessa Fields	Wildlife biologist	USFWS, Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Great Falls, MT
Randy Gazda	Wildlife biologist	USFWS, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Great Falls, MT
Toni Griffin	Planning team leader	USFWS, Region 6, Division of Refuge Planning, Lakewood, CO
Greg Neudecker	Assistant Montana PFW coordinator	USFWS, Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Great Falls, MT
Jason Steigert	Economist	BBC Research & Consulting, Denver, CO
<i>Reviewer's Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Work Unit</i>
Laurel Bowen	Writer-editor	TBC Solutions, Clinton, TN
David Lucas	Chief of planning	USFWS, Region 6, Division of Refuge Planning, Lakewood, CO
Jim Stutzman	Montana state coordinator	USFWS, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, Great Falls, MT

Appendix D

Finding of No Significant Impact

**U.S. Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Region 6, Denver, Colorado**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion
Lewis and Clark, Missoula, and Powell counties, Montana**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has completed the Land Protection Plan and Environmental Assessment, Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion. The Environmental Assessment evaluates two alternatives, including a No Action Alternative, and the subsequent environmental consequences of expanding the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area.

Alternative B, the preferred alternative, was selected for implementation, because it best meets the Service's objective to maintain the continued presence of the large expanse of intact habitat in the Blackfoot Valley. The Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area expansion has been proposed to help protect the Blackfoot Valley from being drastically changed by widespread, unplanned residential or commercial development. This proposal also would benefit the American public by protecting wildlife, water quality and open space. The following is a summary of anticipated environmental effects from implementation of the preferred alternative:

1. Expanding the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area would provide for the conservation of up to 80,000 acres of important habitat on private land. This project would help maintain the uniqueness of the Blackfoot Valley region and complement other conservation efforts by The Nature Conservancy, The Montana Land Reliance, Blackfoot Challenge, and other state and federal agencies.
2. Conservation easements within the expanded Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area would help alleviate habitat fragmentation issues. Maintaining key biological linkages would facilitate wildlife movement and provide for wildlife habitat requirements for species such as the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, wolverine, and gray wolf. The potential for human-wildlife conflicts would be greatly reduced.
3. Compatible agricultural practices such as livestock grazing or haying would continue, while sodbusting (breaking of native rangeland) would be prohibited. Easements would maximize the connectivity with other protected grasslands and decrease the negative impacts of habitat fragmentation on wildlife species.
4. Water resources on 80,000 acres would be protected from increased non-point source pollution from residential subdivision, commercial development, and draining of wetlands, which are prohibited under the proposed easement program. This project will help reduce the demand for potable water associated with new subdivisions and the challenges to water rights that may follow.

5. Location and distribution, but not rate or density, of human population growth would be affected. Positive effects may occur from increased public wildlife viewing, and hunting opportunities. Open space also may enhance property values on adjoining lands as people begin to seek out undeveloped lands in the future.

6. The Service, within the approved project boundary, would create no additional land-use regulations. The purchase of an easement would not result in a transfer of land title, and private landowners would continue to pay property taxes. Preventing subdivision and development could decrease future tax revenues in certain market areas. However, open space could actually provide a net savings to local governments when compared to the revenues generated and costs of services associated with residential development.

7. Oil and gas exploration or development on private land would not be precluded. Typically, conservation easements do not affect subsurface estates (oil and gas deposits) because the Service only acquires rights associated with surface ownership. In many places where the subsurface estate has been severed from surface ownership, including those in the Blackfoot Valley, the landowner does not own the subsurface rights; this means that the easement that the Service acquires from the landowner is junior to the subsurface rights. In instances where a landowner owns both the surface and the subsurface estate, the Service would treat oil and gas development as a permitted use and provide for such development in the easement document. Easements contain reasonable surface stipulations for such actions as revegetation of disturbed areas, access, and site reclamation.

8. Wind development within the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area would not occur on conservation easements which reduces fragmentation within the Valley from the placement of towers and associated infrastructure development. This improves wildlife corridors' integrity throughout the Valley. Restricting wind towers also prevents mortality from direct strikes of towers by migratory birds and other avian wildlife species.

9. Conservation easements purchased on private tracts would not change the landowner's right to manage public access to their property. Private landowners would retain full control over their property access rights, including allowing or restricting hunting and fishing on their lands, under the proposed easement program.

10. The proposed conservation easement program would maintain the long term biological productivity of approximately 80,000 acres of grassland, riparian, forest and tundra ecosystems, including increased protection of endangered and threatened species and maintenance of biological diversity by preserving a large intact functioning system. The nation would gain the protection of species for future generations of Americans. The public would gain long term opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreational activities from the continued presence of wildlife in the Valley.

11. Protection of the Blackfoot Valley will build resiliency and resistance to disturbances in the natural system from stressors which will help the ecological system absorb changes from climate change. The Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area will accomplish this by maintaining

intact, interconnected landscapes, and restoring fragmented or degraded habitats.

As part of the public scoping process associated with this action, comments were solicited from the public through news releases and public meetings. An open house was held in Ovando, Montana on May 19, 2010. Public comments were taken to identify issues to be analyzed for the proposed project. Approximately fifteen landowners, citizens, and elected representatives attended the meetings, and most expressed positive support for the project. In addition, the Service's field staff contacted local government officials, other public agencies, and conservation groups, all of which have expressed an interest in and a desire to protect the Blackfoot Valley from the pressures brought about by rural subdivisions.

Thus, this EA has taken a hard look at the environmental impacts to inform the public and ourselves about the consequences of the proposed action. Environmental consequences will be beneficial to wildlife habitat, endangered species, migratory birds, water quality, and native fish. While the proposal to expand the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area will largely preserve the current state of the natural environment and prevent degradation, there may be some reduction in energy development requiring surface occupancy, that would otherwise occur, but for the easements proposed by the Fish and Wildlife Service. Substantive conflict is not apparent over these land use issues; the vast majority of verbal and written comments received during scoping meetings and on the environmental assessment were in favor of the expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area through the use of voluntary conservation easements.

In determining whether this project is a major action significantly¹ affecting the quality of the human environment, we looked at both the context and intensity of the action (40 CFR § 1508.27, 40 CFR § 1508.14) as required by NEPA. The project will be implemented over time dependent upon the Fish and Wildlife Service's ability to obtain the funding needed for easement acquisitions. Of the 824,024 acres of habitat within the boundary area, 80,000 acres may be entered into voluntary easements with the Service, on a strictly voluntary basis with willing sellers only.

Because the human environment² is interpreted by the National Environmental Policy Act to mean the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment (40 CFR § 1508.14), in addition to our thorough analysis of physical environmental effects, we carefully assessed the manner in which the local people relate to the environment in the Blackfoot Valley. Economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require the preparation an environmental impact statement (40 CFR § 1508.14). The location of the proposed action is largely rural and dominated by agricultural industries, mainly ranching. The vast majorities of commentators on the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area project supported the proposed action indicating in various comments that it would help them to relate to their natural and physical environment in much the same way they do now- via a ranching economy. Those who are interested in pursuing other economic development opportunities, such as wind energy, will not be precluded from doing so because the proposed action involves easements acquired on a voluntary basis only.

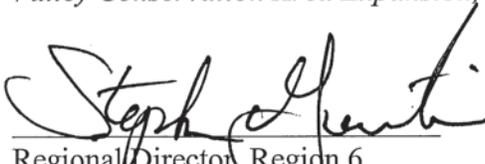
Therefore, in consideration of the fact that the Fish and Wildlife Service's conservation easement approach has a proven track record of effectiveness and minimal controversy due to its fundamental basis of voluntary participation to accomplish mutual goals of the Service and landowners, the compelling science in support of the project, and my review and evaluation of the information contained in the supporting reference, I have determined that expanding the boundary for the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area is not a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment within the meaning of Section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

The Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) and supporting Environmental Assessment will be available to the public. Copies of the Environmental Assessment are available for all affected landowners, agencies, private groups, and other interested parties.

The FONSI, Environmental Assessment, and other supporting documents are on file at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Refuges, Division of Planning, P.O. Box 25486-DFC, Denver, Colorado 80225. They are available for public inspection upon request.

Supporting Reference

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. 2010. *Land Protection Plan and Environmental Assessment, Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area Expansion*, Denver, Colorado.


Regional Director, Region 6
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

9/24/10
Date

¹ 40 CFR § 1508.27 "Significantly" as used in NEPA requires considerations of both context and intensity: (a) Context. This means that the significance of an action must be analyzed in several contexts such as society as a whole (human, national), the affected region, the affected interests, and the locality. Significance varies with the setting of the proposed action. For instance, in the case of a site-specific action, significance would usually depend upon the effects in the locale rather than in the world as a whole. Both short- and long-term effects are relevant; and (b) Intensity. This refers to the severity of impact. Responsible officials must bear in mind that more than one agency may make decisions about partial aspects of a major action.

² 40 CFR § 1508.14 "Human environment" shall be interpreted comprehensively to include the natural and physical environment and the relationship of people with that environment. (See the definition of "effects" (40 CFR § 1508.8).) This means that economic or social effects are not intended by themselves to require preparation of an environmental impact statement. When an environmental impact statement is prepared and economic or social and natural or physical environmental effects are interrelated, then the environmental impact statement will discuss all of these effects on the human environment.

Appendix E

Environmental Action Statement

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Region 6
Denver, Colorado

ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION STATEMENT

Within the spirit and intent of the Council on Environmental Quality's regulations for implementing the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other statutes, orders, and policies that protect fish and wildlife resources, I have established the following administrative record and have determined that the action of expanding the executive boundary of the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area:

- is a categorical exclusion as provided by 516 DM 2, Appendices 1 and 2, and 516 DM 6, Appendix 1. No further documentation will be made.
- is found not to have significant environmental effects as determined by the attached Finding of No Significant Impact and Environmental Assessment.
- is found to have special environmental conditions as described in the attached environmental assessment. The attached Finding of No Significant Impact will not be final nor any actions taken pending a 30-day period for public review [40CFR 1501.4(e)(2)].
- is found to have significant effects and, therefore, a notice of intent will be published in the *Federal Register* to prepare an environmental impact statement before the project is considered further.
- is denied because of environmental damage, Service policy, or mandate.
- is an emergency situation. Only those actions necessary to control the immediate impacts of the emergency will be taken. Other related actions remain subject to NEPA review.

Other supporting document:

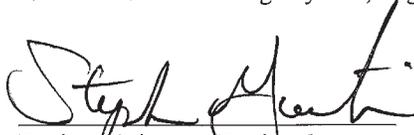
Draft Environmental Assessment and Land Protection Plan, Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion



Assistant Regional Director
National Wildlife Refuge System, Region 6

Date

9/24/10



Regional Director, Region 6
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Date

9/24/10

Appendix F

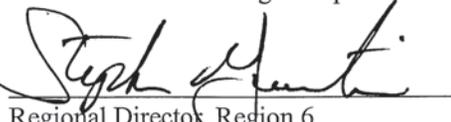
Environmental Compliance Certificate

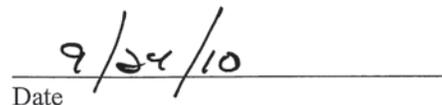
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, REGION 6 ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE

PROJECT: Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion
STATE: Montana

ACTION (indicate if not applicable)	DATE
NEPA (NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT)	
Categorical Exclusion.....	N/A
Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact	9/24/10
Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision	N/A
Executive Order 11593, Protection of Historical, Archaeological, and Scientific Properties.....	8/30/10
Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management	8/30/10
Executive Order 11990, Protection of Wetlands	8/30/10
Executive Order 12372, Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs	8/30/10
Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.....	8/30/10
Executive Order 12996, Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System.....	8/30/10
Endangered Species Act, Section 7	9/07/10
Coastal Zone Management Act, Section 307	N/A
Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.....	N/A
Level I Contaminants and Hazardous Waste (Secretarial Order 3127: 602DM2).....	8/30/10

I hereby certify that all requirements of the law, rules, and Service regulations or policies applicable to planning for the above project have met with compliance. I approve the expansion of the executive boundary for the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area to be administered and managed as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.


Regional Director, Region 6
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service


Date

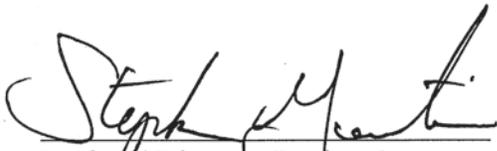
STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE

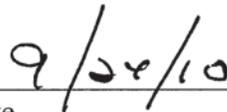
The following Executive Orders and legislative acts have been reviewed as they apply to the expansion of the executive boundary of the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area:

- 1. Executive Order 11593. Protection of Historical, Archaeological, and Scientific Properties.** The regional archaeologist determined that the acquisition of easements within the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion is not an undertaking under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. In fact, the project has the potential to protect cultural resources. If, in the future, the Service grants a special permit for the landowner under the easement, section 106 may be relevant at that time. If so, the Service will take the necessary steps to address any historical or archaeological issues.
- 2. Executive Order 11988. Floodplain Management.** No structures that could be damaged by or that would significantly influence the movement of floodwater are planned for construction by the Fish and Wildlife Service on easements acquired as part of this project.
- 3. Executive Order 11990. Protection of Wetlands.** This action is consistent with protection of existing wetland resources from incompatible activities and thereby complies with this executive order.
- 4. Executive Order 12372. Intergovernmental Review.** The Service has discussed the proposal to expand the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area with landowners; conservation organizations; other federal agencies; state, and county commissioners; and other interested groups and individuals. At the federal level, the Service staff has briefed Senators Baucus and Tester, as well as the congressional delegation, and coordinated with representatives from other federal agencies such as the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service. At the state level, Governor Schweitzer's staff, along with the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was briefed on the project.
- 5. Executive Order 12898. Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority and Low-Income Populations.** Expanding the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area will not have a disproportionately high or adverse human health or environmental effect on minority or low-income populations. Therefore, this action complies with this Executive Order.
- 6. Executive Order 12996. Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System.** The public has been invited to participate in the planning process and has been very engaged. The Service held a public open house to seek input from the public regarding the proposed expansion of the conservation easement program, and to identify the issues that needed to be addressed in the planning process. Approximately fifteen written comments have been received from the public. The public's issues and comments have been incorporated into the Environmental Assessment and a copy of the final document will be sent to all interested landowners, agencies, private groups, and other parties. Since this project will strictly be easement acquisition, the Service will not manage or have control over public access to the protected lands. This right will remain with the private landowner and therefore a compatibility determination is not needed for this project.

7. **Endangered Species Act, section 7.** An internal section 7 consultation concluded the proposed action would have a 'May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect species/modify critical habitat' on listed species within the acquisition project area.
8. **Coastal Zone Management Act.** Due to the location of the project area, compliance of this Act was determined to be not applicable.
9. **Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act.** Since the Service will not be acquiring any land within the project area in fee-title, no relocation assistance will be needed and no real property acquisition will occur.
10. **Secretarial Order 3127. Contaminants and Hazardous Waste.** A Level 1 pre-acquisition contaminant survey will be completed prior to the purchase of any easement.

I hereby certify that the Service has complied with all requirements of law, rules, or regulations applicable to pre-acquisition planning for the above project. I approve the expansion of the executive boundary of the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area and the subsequent acquisition of up to 80,000 acres of easements from willing sellers:


Regional Director, Region 6
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service


Date

Appendix G

Section 7 Biological Evaluation

INTRA-SERVICE ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT SECTION 7 EVALUATION FORM

Originating Persons: Kathleen A. Burchett, Project Leader, Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex and Toni Griffin, Refuges, Division of Planning, Denver Regional Office

Telephone Number: 406/727-7400

Date: 8/27/10

I. Region: Region 6

II. Service Activity: Establishment of the Expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area

III. Pertinent Species and Habitat

A. Listed species and/or their critical habitat within the 3 county action area:

LEWIS AND CLARK COUNTY		
Gray Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	E
Bull Trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	T
Grizzly Bear	<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	T
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	T
MISSOULA COUNTY		
Gray Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	E
Bull Trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	T
Grizzly Bear	<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	T
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	T
POWELL COUNTY		
Gray Wolf	<i>Canis lupus</i>	E
Bull Trout	<i>Salvelinus confluentus</i>	T
Grizzly Bear	<i>Ursus arctos horribilis</i>	T
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>	T

C - Candidate
 T - Threatened
 E - Endangered

B. Proposed species and/or their proposed critical habitat within the county / action area:

Mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*) listed as proposed threatened in Lewis and Clark, Missoula, and Powell counties.

C. Candidate species within the county / action area:

Yellow-billed cuckoo (*Coccyzus americanus*) is a candidate species in Missoula County.

IV. Geographic Area/Action

This Intra Section 7 covers the expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area in portions of 3 counties in Montana; Lewis and Clark, Missoula, and Powell counties.

V. Location

The proposed boundary expansion (see attached map):

- State of Montana
 - A. Counties: Lewis and Clark, Missoula, and Powell.
- Description of extent of boundary for the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area:

The Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area project area encompasses an 824,024-acre ecosystem that includes portions of Missoula, Powell, and Lewis and Clark counties. The parts of these counties make up the Blackfoot River watershed in western Montana. The watershed is bordered to the east by the Continental Divide, to the south by the Garnet Mountains, to the north by the Bob Marshall and Lincoln-Scapegoat Wilderness Areas, and to the west by the Rattlesnake Wilderness Area.

The watershed is located at the southern edge of the Crown of the Continent ecosystem, a 10 million-acre area of the Northern Rocky Mountains that extends north into Canada and includes Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Canada's Castle Wilderness, the Bob Marshall-Great Bear-Scapegoat Wilderness Complex, parts of the Flathead and Blackfeet Indian Reservations, Bureau of Land Management lands, and significant acreage of state and private lands. The watershed provides critical connections between the Crown of the Continent ecosystem and the Selway/Bitterroot ecosystem to the south. The center of the project area lies about 55 miles east of Missoula.

VI. Description of the Proposed Action

The Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area was approved as a unit of the National Wildlife Refuge System in 1994 and is a landscape conservation strategy to protect one of the last undeveloped, low elevation river valley ecosystems in western Montana. This proposal involves the acquisition of an additional 80,000 acres of conservation easements from willing sellers on private land within an expanded project boundary encompassing approximately

824,024 acres. No land will be purchased in fee title under this project. In addition, the proposal will rename the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area to Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area.

The Blackfoot Valley provides a vital habitat corridor between existing U.S. Forest Service boundaries, Bureau of Land Management properties, state wildlife management areas, Service waterfowl production areas, The Nature Conservancy easements, Service conservation easements, and Partners for Fish and Wildlife projects.

VII. Determination of Effects

At the federal level, four species are listed as threatened or endangered, including the grizzly bear, Canada lynx, gray wolf, and bull trout.

The proposed expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area (CA) will have a beneficial effect on species listed in Section III. One of the purposes for the expansion of the Blackfoot Valley CA is to support the recovery and protection of threatened and endangered species, and to reduce the likelihood of future listings under the Endangered Species Act.

Expanding the Blackfoot Valley CA would provide for an increase in conservation protection on up to 80,000 acres of important habitat on private land. This program would help maintain the uniqueness of the Blackfoot Valley and complement conservation efforts of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, The Nature Conservancy, and other federal and state agencies.

The fact that the Blackfoot Valley remains biologically and ecologically intact is a tribute to the area's ranchers and residents, who have long recognized what this unique and important landscape represents for ranching and wildlife. The project aims to ensure habitat for wildlife remains intact in perpetuity and, by doing so, strengthens the ranching heritage of the Blackfoot Valley.

Conservation easements along the Blackfoot Valley would help alleviate habitat fragmentation issues. Key biological linkages would facilitate wildlife movement and provide for wildlife habitat requirements including Canada lynx, gray wolf, and grizzly bears. The potential for human-wildlife conflicts would be greatly reduced and resiliency in response to climate change would be maintained.

The Blackfoot Valley watershed is the southern boundary for the NCDE grizzly bear recovery zone. The Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan includes most of the watershed as suitable and/or occupied habitat. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) Northern Divide Grizzly Bear Project, designed to estimate population size and distribution, confirmed the presence of twenty-nine individual grizzly bears in the Blackfoot River watershed in 2003 and 2004. The USGS estimates that at least forty bears are present during all or part of the year in the watershed. In recent years, grizzly bear activity has increased in the watershed. This area appears to be an important habitat link for grizzly bears that are re-colonizing historical ranges to the south. Maintaining habitat connectivity is critical to sustaining grizzly bear life histories and maintaining sustainable

subpopulations within the southern portion of the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem.

Grizzly bears breed, forage, and migrate throughout the watershed and den above 6,500 feet. They move from high mountain elevations to lower valley bottoms to forage seasonally for available food. Lakes, ponds, fens, and spring-fed creeks, common in portions of the valley floor, provide excellent bear habitat. Additionally, the vegetation found along certain reaches of the Blackfoot River and its tributaries provide bears with cover, food and natural movement corridors.

The Blackfoot River watershed is located within the Northwestern Montana/Northeastern Idaho Core Area for Canada lynx. The Blackfoot Valley watershed is a stronghold for the Canada lynx in the northern Rocky Mountains. Based on ongoing research in the upper and middle Blackfoot areas, lynx populations appear stable, although low reproductive rates are characteristic of this population. Since 1998, over eighty lynx have been monitored in the watershed, providing information on habitat use, reproduction, mortality, and movement. This research has shown that the watershed contains some of the most critical habitat for lynx in the continental United States. Large, intact spruce/subalpine fir forests above 4,000 feet in the watershed provide high quality habitat for lynx and for snowshoe hares, the primary lynx food source. Regenerating forest stands are often used as foraging habitat during the snow-free months while older, multi-storied stands serve as denning and year-round habitat.

The Northern Rocky Mountain Gray Wolf Recovery Plan established three recovery zones in Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. The Blackfoot River watershed is in the Northwest Montana Recovery Area. In August 2010, the gray wolf was relisted as endangered. As of 2009, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has confirmed the presence of four resident wolf packs and estimates that at least twenty-five to thirty-five wolves inhabit the Blackfoot Valley watershed.

Compatible agricultural practices such as livestock grazing or haying would continue, while sodbusting (breaking of native rangeland) would be prohibited. Easements would maximize the connectivity with other protected grasslands and decrease the negative impacts of habitat fragmentation on grassland birds.

Water resources on 80,000 acres would be protected from increased non-point source pollution from residential subdivision, commercial development, and draining of wetlands, all of which are prohibited under the proposed easement program. Protection of wetlands would support conservation efforts for mountain plovers. Conservation easements also focus protection along riparian corridors which are critical for wildlife including grizzly bears and aquatic resources such as bull trout.

The Blackfoot River watershed lies within the Clark Fork River Recovery Unit and the Upper Clark Fork Recovery Subunit for bull trout. Within this subunit, the watershed has been identified as a core recovery area and the watershed has been proposed as critical habitat within the Clark Fork River drainage.

Within the watershed, bull trout densities are very low in the upper Blackfoot River, but increase downstream of the North Fork. Streams that appear to be particularly important for the spawning

of migratory bull trout include Monture Creek, the North Fork Blackfoot River, Copper Creek, Gold Creek, Dunham Creek, Morrell Creek, the West Fork Clearwater River, and the East Fork Clearwater River. Bull trout spawner abundance is indexed by the number of identifiable female bull trout nesting areas (redds). Data indicate that the total number of redds counted in Monture Creek, North Fork, and Copper Creek from 1989 to 2000 have increased. With the onset of drought, bull trout redd counts declined in 2008.

Conserving native land cover is an important component of maintaining ecosystem structure and function. Under the proposed action, native forest habitats would remain intact, continuing to provide ecosystem goods and services to landowners and local communities. Ecosystem services include: soil erosion control, water supply, biodiversity, and carbon sequestration.

VIII. Effects Determination and Response Requested

A. Listed Species / designed critical habitat

No Effect / no adverse modification

X Concurrence

May affect, but is not likely to adversely affect species / modify critical habitat

YAW Concurrence

May affect, and is likely to adversely affect species / modify critical habitat

_____ Formal Consultation

B. Proposed Species / proposed critical habitat

No effect on proposed species / no adverse modification of proposed critical habitat (species: mountain plover)

X Concurrence

Is likely to jeopardize proposed species or adversely modify proposed critical habitat (species: mountain plover)

_____ Concurrence

Kathleen A. Burchett

Kathleen A. Burchett, Project Leader
Benton Lake National Wildlife Refuge Complex
National Wildlife Refuge System
Region 6

IX. Reviewing ESO Evaluation

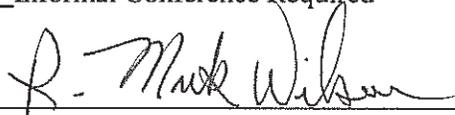
Y Concurrence

Non-Concurrence

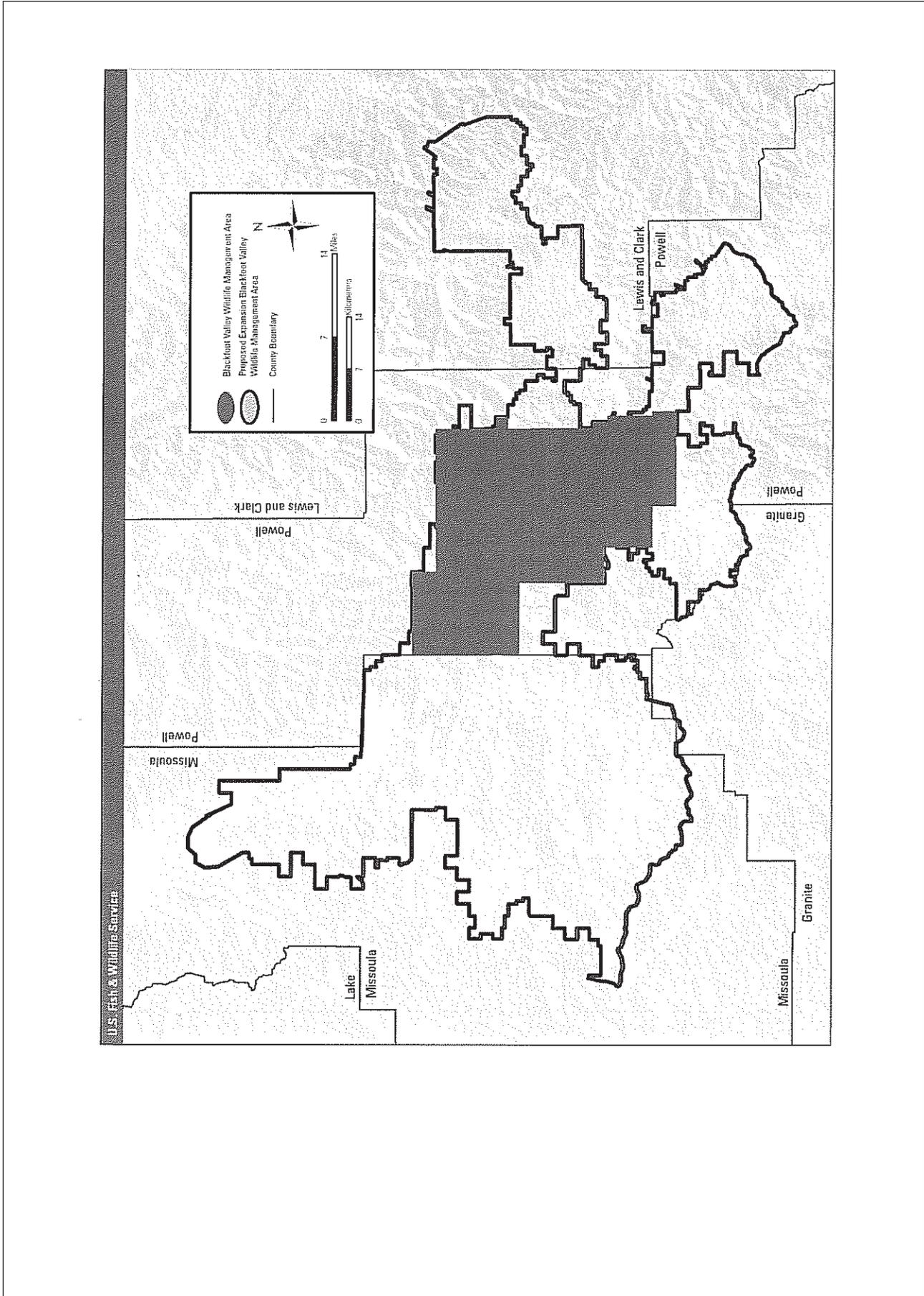
Formal Consultation Required

Conference Required

Informal Conference Required

 9-7-10

Mark Wilson, Field Supervisor
Ecological Services Montana Field Office
Region 6



Appendix H

Director's Approval to Expand the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area



IN REPLY REFER TO:

United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region



MAILING ADDRESS:
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, Colorado 80225-0486

STREET LOCATION:
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228-1807

SEP 27 2010

Memorandum

To: Director

From: Regional Director, Region 6

Subject: Transmittal of Decision Document—Crown of the Continent: Expanding the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area and the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area

The Decision Documents to expand the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area and the Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area, in Montana have been approved. With the approval of these projects, the Service, in cooperation with our partners, will be able to conserve up to 205,000 acres of native habitat.

In order to strategically conserve habitat within the Blackfoot Valley, the Service focused on the threatened grizzly bear, bull trout, and Canada lynx. High priority grizzly bear habitat was identified using expert knowledge of current bear linkages and priority lynx habitat was identified using a spatially explicit model developed by the U.S. Forest Service. For the bull trout, critical habitat has been designated and explicitly mapped in each recovery unit (RU) by the Service. There are approximately 365,000 acres of unprotected private land and 75,000 acres of commercial timber company land in the Blackfoot Valley WMA. With the current levels of development and fragmentation within Blackfoot Valley, bull trout populations appear to be increasing while the pressure of human-cause mortality on grizzly bears for the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem (NCDE) population is higher than acceptable for recovery. Conservation easements provide an opportunity to prevent further development and fragmentation that might reduce or reverse the positive trends in bull trout populations or increase human-grizzly interactions, putting further negative pressure on the NCDE population. Given that conserving all remaining private land with easements to prevent additional development is not a reasonable or desired goal, the Service has set a goal to protect 80,000 additional acres of existing private lands. Long-term monitoring of grizzly bears, lynx, and bull trout will be conducted and the acreage goal and acquisition priority will be periodically reevaluated, as additional scientific information is obtained collaboratively with Service partners and the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative.

In order to strategically conserve habitat within the expanded Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area, the Service selected the grizzly bear as a key focal species. Focusing on grizzly bears is likely to capture the habitat needs of several of the other key trust species. High priority grizzly bear habitat along the Front was identified using a spatially-explicit model developed by a multi-agency working group. Currently, grizzly bear populations appear stable; however, the pressure of human-caused mortality on grizzly bears is higher than acceptable for recovery across the NCDC. How much more fragmentation or development could occur without

affecting population stability or significantly affecting grizzly bear mortality is unknown. Given that preventing development on all of the remaining 600,000 acres of unencumbered private land along the Front is not a reasonable or desired goal, the Service has set a goal to protect 125,000 additional acres of private land with conservation easements. Long-term monitoring of grizzly bears will be conducted and the total conservation goal of 295,000 acres and acquisition priority will be periodically re-evaluated, as additional scientific information is obtained collaboratively with Service partners and the Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative.

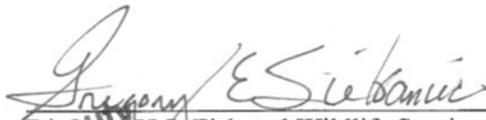
Attached are the following documents, in accordance with land acquisition planning requirements, submitted for the Director's concurrence.

1. Environmental Assessment
2. Environmental Compliance Certificate
3. Environmental Action Statement
4. Finding of No Significant Impact
5. Land Protection Plan
6. Realty Feasibility Report

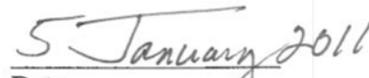
An Engineering Assessment was not completed, because these projects involve only conservation easements; and, therefore, no fee-title interests will be acquired and no structures will be built by the Service on any land acquired through this project. A Conceptual Management Plan was not completed, because daily management rights and responsibilities will remain with the private landowners. The only Service management responsibility will be annual monitoring for compliance with the terms of the easements.

Concurrence

Non-concurrence



Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Attachments



Date

Acting Deputy



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240



In Reply Refer To:
FWS/ANRS-NRCP/046481

FEB 1 2011

Memorandum

To: Regional Director, Region 6
Deputy

From: Director

Subject: Approval to Proceed with Publication and Distribution of the Final Planning Documents for the Expansion of Rocky Mountain Front Conservation Area and Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area

I concur with the September 27, 2010, request by the Regional Director, Region 6, and authorize the expansion of these units of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Congratulations on a thorough job with the Environmental Assessment and FONSI for these two units of the System. I am extremely excited about landscape projects such as this that strive to protect large areas for the conservation of fish and wildlife species.

You have proposed two expanded acquisition projects that define the principles of Strategic Habitat Conservation. Prior to land acquisition pursuant to the Land Protection Plan please link your priority areas to spatially explicit data. As these data become available, please assure that priority tracts are pursued that will provide measurable outcomes related to biological goals identified in the Environmental Assessment and Land Protection Plan.

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IN AMERICA 

Appendix I

Public Involvement

Public involvement was initiated for the proposed expansion of the conservation easement project in the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area in May 2010. A media contact list was compiled and news releases and factsheets were developed and distributed to media outlets, local organizations, elected officials, and interested parties. The news releases and factsheets described the proposed expansion of the conservation easement project, and announced an open house to gather input from the public. Personal outreach efforts were made with county commissioners and other persons of interest.

Scoping was conducted during a public open house, on May 19, 2010; 7-9 p.m. at the Ovando School, 108 Birch Street, in Ovando, Montana. The purpose of scoping was to seek input from the public regarding the proposed expansion of the conservation easement project, and to identify the issues that needed to be addressed in the planning process. Fifteen people attended the open house. Five individuals, two agencies, and two organizations provided comments during the scoping period. Comments identified biological, social, and economic concerns regarding the proposed expansion of the conservation easement project. The issues raised and comments received helped the planning team to develop the alternatives presented in the environmental assessment (EA) and land protection plan (LPP). Key issues are described in Chapter 1 of the draft EA and LPP, under “Issues Identified and Selected for Analysis.”

The draft EA/LPP was presented to the public July 26, 2010 for a 30-day comment period. Six written comments were received during the comment period on the draft EA and LPP.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

The following issues, concerns, and comments are a compilation of those expressed during public scoping, and during the July–August 2010 comment period for the draft EA and LPP. Comments were provided by local and county governments, state agencies, private organizations, and individuals concerned about the natural resources of the Blackfoot Valley. Comments were received verbally at meetings, via email, and in writing.

The refuge staff recognizes and appreciates all input received from the public. To address this input, several clarifications and some changes are reflected in the final EA and LPP.

The issues, comments, and concerns are presented as received, followed by responses from the Service. Comments about editorial and presentation corrections were addressed in the production of the final EA and LPP, and are not detailed here.

Comment 1. *I am writing in support of the US Fish & Wildlife Service proposal to use Land and Water Conservation money to purchase easements in 3 areas of Montana, the Blackfoot Valley, Rocky Mountain Front and Swan Valley.*

During the last 40 years I have recreated in each of the areas in question and I value the relatively uncluttered space there greatly. What better way to spend tax dollars than to preserve a landscape that can be enjoyed by everyone in perpetuity.

I would like to continue hunting, fishing, camping and sightseeing in these areas. By purchasing these easements, we can keep the private lands a viable source of income for the owners and at the same time keep the landscape unchanged for visitors like me.

Response 1. Thank you for your comments. The goals of the conservation easement project are to protect fish and wildlife resources while concurrently maintaining the rural character of the area. Implementation of the expansion will support your values of preserving a landscape in perpetuity, keep private lands a viable source of income for the owners, and keep the landscape relatively unchanged for visitors to the Blackfoot Valley.

Comment 2. *I noticed that the checkerboard ownership west of Placid Lake is excluded from the proposed expansion. These lands have been identified as some of the highest conservation value lands in the Clearwater Valley (see recent discussion among Missoula County, Rural Initiatives and MT FW&P [Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks], USFS [U.S. Forest Service], USFWS [U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service], and Plum Creek Timber [Company] in their IAG [interagency group] proposal for the land use plan). Was this decision based on other potential conservation strategies for these lands or other reasons to exclude this area?*

Response 2. Thank you for your comments. The Service agrees that the checkerboard area west of Placid Lake has high conservation value. The proposed boundary has been modified in the final LPP to include this area within the project boundary.

Comment 3. *Please consider parcel sizes smaller than 160 acres in Missoula and Lewis and Clark Counties. These counties generally have smaller lot sizes than Powell County and these smaller parcels have high conservation value. Also, please consider allowing other entities to hold conservation easements because some landowners don't want the government holding their easement. The proposed expansion is great!*

Response 3. Thank you for your comments. The Service agrees, and the following language was included in the draft EA and LPP, Chapter 2—Alternatives, page 7, “Alternative B (Proposed Action),” “The Service generally focuses on parcels greater than 160 acres, however parcels less than 160 acres may be considered for conservation easements if unique biological values exist.” A similar statement is also included in Chapter 6—Land Protection Plan, “Priority Areas,” page 29, first paragraph.

Comment 4. *Lincoln area may have some smaller acreages that are critical connecting corridors.*

Response 4. Thank you for your comments. See Response 3.

Comment 5. *I believe it is very important to consider a smaller acreage when dealing with Missoula and Lincoln County (given that biological values can be conserved on a landscape).*

Response 5. Thank you for your comments. See Response 3.

Comment 6. *US Fish and Wildlife Service needs to look at smaller acreages for special species & wildlife corridors.*

Comment 6.1. *Also take a hard look at small communities to analyze effects of easements.*

Response 6. Thank you for your comments. See Response 3.

Response 6.1. The Service is very sensitive to the needs of communities to remain economically healthy. We engage the communities to ensure this, by such actions as: coordinating with local communities to establish buffer zones as requested, maintaining the land in private ownership so not to affect tax roles, meeting with county commissioners and community planning boards.

Comment 7. *The 160 acre minimum won't work for much of the watershed. In Potomac, there are key pieces of meadow-creek bottom that need to be protected that may be 100 acres or less.*

Response 7. Thank you for your comments. See Response 3.

AGENCY AND ORGANIZATION COMMENTS

Agency and organization comments received include the original letter received and our responses.

Comment 8. *I will be unable to attend the upcoming meetings regarding easements. I do want to express my support for the easement expansion along the Front and in the Blackfoot. I also support establishment of an easement program in the Seeley/Swan region. As you know, there are significant amounts of state trust land in all the areas which we manage in cooperation with neighboring landowners. Maintaining these working lands for habitat and open space as well as livestock and timber productivity is critical for the state and local communities.*

Thank you for this opportunity to support conservation easements as a vital tool for maintaining working lands in these important areas of Montana.

*Mary Sexton,
DNRC [State of Montana,
Department of Natural Resources
and Conservation] Director*

Response 8. Thank you for your comments. The Service will continue to maintain close communication and implement collaborative conservation efforts with Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation in the future.

Letter # 9**From:** "Jon Haufler" <Jon_Haufler@emri.org>**To:** <toni_griffin@fws.gov>**Date:** Tuesday, August 24, 2010 10:36AM**Subject:** comments on Blackfoot Valley Conservation Easement Program

To whom it may concern:

The Clearwater Resource Council (CRC) is a collaborative citizen organization of approximately 200 members in the Seeley Lake area whose mission is to initiate and coordinate efforts that will enhance, conserve, and protect the natural ecosystems and rural lifestyle of the Clearwater River region for present and future generations. We would like to comment on the proposed expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Easement Program.

The CRC strongly supports the expansion of this easement program. The Clearwater Valley is an important area within the larger Crown of the Continent Ecoregion, providing habitat for a wide diversity of species and important linkage zones for additional species. Maintaining the conservation status of key lands in the Valley will be important to help maintain the quality of habitat and linkages needed to sustain this key ecoregion. Expansion of the Easement Program to include the Clearwater Valley and additional areas will help play a pivotal role in achieving this goal.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this important expansion.

Sincerely,

Jon Haufler

President

Clearwater Resource Council

www.crcmt.org

Response

Response 9. Thank you for your comments.

Letter # 10

P.O. Box 8953 • Missoula, Montana 59807 • (406) 549-0755 • Fax (406) 728-2841
 Email: office@fvlt.org • www.fvlt.org

June 14, 2010

Toni Griffin, Planning Team Leader
 Division of Refuge Planning
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 PO Box 25486, DFC
 Denver, CO 80225

Dear Mr. Griffin,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the expansion of the Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area. As a community-based conservation organization, Five Valleys Land Trust (Five Valleys) is keenly aware of the importance of the entire Blackfoot watershed to the people of western Montana. We value the watershed's clean water, healthy populations of fish and wildlife, working lands, and diverse recreational opportunities.

Over the years the United State Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has accomplished a tremendous record of vital land conservation work in the central portion of the Blackfoot, but unfortunately the Service has not been able to take advantage of land protection opportunities in other deserving parts of the watershed. The Potomac Valley is a particularly important place for additional conservation work. Due to its close proximity to the growing urban center of Missoula, the Potomac Valley is highly threatened by subdivision and development. Many Potomac families continue to be actively involved in ranching and forestry activities and their lands contain productive agricultural land, as well as, wetlands and riparian areas that provide connectivity for wide-ranging fish and wildlife species. Five Valleys has worked with private landowners in the Potomac for many years, and we think that additional USFWS involvement there will assist all of the cooperating agencies, organizations, and area landowners achieve more of our shared conservation goals.

We lend our strong support for the proposal to expand the Conservation Easement Program's boundaries to include the Potomac, Clearwater and Lincoln areas of the Blackfoot. In addition, we urge the USFWS to consider adjusting the program requirements slightly to better serve these new areas. Parcel sizes are generally smaller in the Potomac, Clearwater and Lincoln areas, in part because the 160-acre minimum lot size requirement imposed in Powell County and the Upper Blackfoot is not in effect in these parts of the Blackfoot located in Missoula County and Lewis and Clark County. Nonetheless, there are many parcels worthy of protection that are less than 160 acres and we hope they will be eligible for this program.



Board of Directors: Lucy Beighle • Sean Benton • Laura Brehm • Jim Brown • John Corwin • Jim Cusker • Mary Lynn Eiseman
 Anne Fogel-Burchenal • Julie Gardner • Kathy McAllister • Jeffrey Roth • Jim Royan • Amber Sherrill • Don Sokoloski
 John Talbot • Chuck Tribe • Jim Valeo • Pam Volkmann

Response

Response 10. Thank you for your comments.

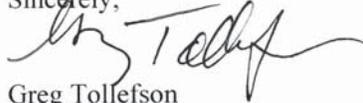
Response 10.1 See Response 3.

Letter # 10

Finally, although the USFWS Conservation Easement Program has a good reputation in the greater Blackfoot community, some landowners don't feel comfortable entering into an easement that is held by a government entity. In these cases, USFWS might be better able to meet its conservation goals if private land trusts were allowed to hold easements under this program. Private land trusts in Montana have protected important fish and wildlife habitat in coordination with the USFWS through the NAWCA program, and a similar partnership could strengthen this program provided the kind of flexibility is built-in that will allow landowners to enter into conservation easements with the qualified public or private conservation entity of their choice.

Again, Five Valleys would like to commend the USFWS for its conservation efforts and achievements in the Blackfoot Valley that have benefited all of us who cherish the precious natural values of the watershed. Thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



Greg Tollefson
Conservation Director

cc: Kevin Ertl, Refuge Operations Specialist
Kathy Burchett, Project Leader

Response

Response 10.2 Current policy does not permit Service interests to be managed by other agencies or organizations. There are a variety of agencies and land trusts that offer conservation easements in the Blackfoot Valley, and landowners are free to pursue a conservation easement with the agency or organization that best meet their individual needs.

Letter # 11



BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
200 W BROADWAY ST
MISSOULA MT 59802-4292

PHONE: (406) 258-4877
FAX: (406) 721-4043

BCC 2010-187
August 12, 2010

Toni Griffin, Planning Team Leader
Division of Refuge Planning
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P.O. Box 25486, DFC
Denver, CO 80225

RE: Blackfoot Valley and Swan Valley Conservation Easement Programs

Dear Toni:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed expansion of the Blackfoot Valley conservation easement program, and creation of the Swan Valley Conservation easement program. The Missoula Board of County Commissioners supports and encourages efforts to improve land and resource management of public and private lands located within Missoula County. Accordingly, we strongly support both of these conservation easement programs.

We appreciate the continued presence of conservation partners such as USFWS. We are especially pleased with the Forest Service landscape scale approach to protecting the globally important Crown of the Continent ecosystem.

The continued and expanded availability of different funding sources will also support and complement other ongoing efforts in the County. In 2006, Missoula County voters approved a \$10 million open space bond. Of the nine projects approved for the use of bond funds, five projects, covering almost 4,700 acres, have been approved in the Potomac, Greenough, and Swan Valley areas.

In addition to our support, we reiterate the following suggestions made by the Open Lands Citizen Advisory Committee, in their June 21, 2010 letter, for your consideration:

- Reduce the minimum parcel size to less than 160 acres. There are landowners with smaller holdings in key areas that would be able to benefit from the program.

Response

Response 11. Thank you for your comments.

Response 11.1 See Response 3.

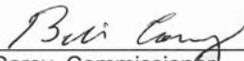
Letter # 11

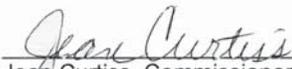
- Allow land trusts or other state or federal agencies, besides USFWS, to hold the easements. This would allow a landowner more choice in who he or she might be working with, as well as free up agency time spent monitoring easements.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or our Rural Initiatives staff (406-258-3432) at your convenience.

Sincerely,
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Michele Landquist, Chair


Bill Carey, Commissioner


Jean Curtiss, Commissioner

BCC/ppr

cc: Pat O'Herren, Missoula County Rural Initiatives
Greg Neudecker, USFWS
Dennis Iverson, Missoula County Open Land Citizen Advisory Committee
Nancy Heil, Missoula County Rural Initiatives

Toni Griffin, USFWS – August 12, 2010

2

Response

Response 11.2 See Response 10.2.

Letter # 12

Toni Griffin
 Division of Refuge Planning
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
 P.O. Box 25486, DFC
 Denver, CO 80255

June 21, 2010

Re: Proposed Expansion of Conservation Easement Program in the Blackfoot Valley
 Proposed Conservation Easement Program in the Swan Valley

Dear Ms. Griffin,

The Missoula County Open Lands Citizens Advisory Committee (OLC) heard a presentation at our June meeting from Kevin Ertl and Greg Neudecker regarding the USFWS proposed conservation easement programs in the Blackfoot and Swan Valleys. We are writing to offer our strong support of both these programs.

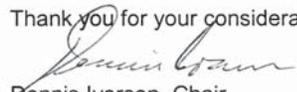
In 2006 Missoula County voters approved a \$10 million bond for the purpose of preserving open space. OLC reviews and makes recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners about the use of these funds in rural areas of the County. Bond funds have been approved to support 9 conservation easements covering over 5,814 acres in the County, with significant other funding matches. Five of these projects covering almost 4,700 acres have been approved in the Potomac, Greenough, and Swan Valley areas.

We support and encourage the continued presence of conservation partners and the availability of different funding sources. In particular, we applaud the USFWS landscape scale approach to protecting the Crown of the Continent, an ecosystem of global importance.

In addition to our support, we offer the following suggestions for your consideration as you expand the USFWS program:

- Reduce the minimum parcel size to less than 160 acres. There are landowners with smaller holdings in key areas that would be able to benefit from the program.
- Allow land trusts or other third parties besides USFWS to hold the easements. This would allow a landowner more choice in who he or she might be working with, as well as free up agency time spent monitoring easements.

Thank you for your consideration.


 Dennis Iverson, Chair
 Missoula County Open Lands Citizens Advisory Council
 c/o Missoula County Rural Initiatives
 200 W. Broadway
 Missoula, MT 59802

Cc: Greg Neudecker, USFWS
 Nancy Heil, Missoula County Rural Initiatives
 Missoula Board of County Commissioners

Response

Response 12. Thank you for your comments.

Response 12.1 See Response 3.

Response 12.2 See Response 10.2.

Response 13. Thank you for your comments.

Letter # 13


**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Region 2 Office
3201 Spurgin Road
Missoula, MT 59804-3101
406-542-5500
Fax 406-542-5529
August 24, 2010

Toni Griffin, Planning Team Leader
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Refuge Planning
134 Union Blvd., Suite 300
Lakewood, CO 80228

Reference: Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area Expansion--Draft EA

Dear Ms. Griffin:

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) strongly supports the proposed US Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Blackfoot Valley Wildlife Management Area and the expansion of the Blackfoot Valley conservation easement program. As the holder of nearly 50,000 acres of conservation easements in the Blackfoot watershed, FWP recognizes the role easements can and do play in the permanent protection of critical fish and wildlife habitat there. The USFWS's conservation easement program has been a key component of the broader 35-year Blackfoot Valley conservation initiative, and FWP has actively partnered with the Service to protect crucial habitat and working landscapes in the watershed.

One of the reasons conservation easements have been so broadly accepted and applied in the Blackfoot is that there is a variety of agencies and land trusts willing to craft agreements that fit with landowners' long-term conservation vision for their properties. USFWS conservation easements have proven to be a good fit for many landowners, and they have effectively protected fish and wildlife habitat of national significance.

USFWS easements have perpetually conserved important coldwater native fisheries, sensitive wildlife species' habitat, crucial connectivity between large blocks of public land, and the public's opportunity to enjoy its fish and wildlife resource. They have also built public-private partnerships and trust that benefit fish and wildlife well beyond individual easements' boundaries.

FWP manages three existing Wildlife Management Areas in the Blackfoot and intends to acquire a fourth by early 2011. In total, these FWP-managed WMAs comprise nearly 75,000 acres in the

Response

See next page for response.

Letter # 13

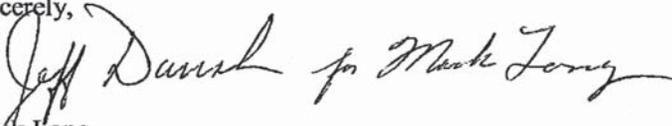
Page 2 of 2
Blackfoot Valley WMA Expansion, Draft EA

Blackfoot and are heavily used and highly valued by the public. We agree that because FWP has referred to the more than 70 statewide properties it manages for wildlife conservation as “Wildlife Management Areas,” the Service’s use of the same name for this current initiative may cause some public confusion. We support the Planning Team’s idea of changing the name of the proposed Blackfoot Valley WMA to the “Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area.”

FWP believes that the additional conservation easements the proposed USFWS program expansion would enable, would ensure the protection of critical fish and wildlife habitat on private working lands that might otherwise be developed or otherwise impaired. The protection of private lands subject to this proposal would complement the significant and ongoing conservation investments FWP and others have made in the watershed. Enabling the Service to work across a broader area and with additional willing landowners in the watershed makes good sense and would further leverage the work we and others are doing to protect this critical landscape.

Thank you for providing the opportunity for FWP to comment on this proposal.

Sincerely,



Mack Long
Regional Supervisor

ML/sr

C: Greg Neudecker, USFWS, Ovando, MT
Kevin Ertl, USFWS, Helmville, MT

Response

Response 13. Thank you for your comments.

Letter # 14**Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation**

Mike Mueller
 Lands Program Manager
 8550 Saint Vrain Way
 Missoula, MT 59808
 Phone (406) 493-6650
mmueller@rmef.org
www.rmef.org

August 24, 2010

Toni Griffin
 US Fish and Wildlife Service
 Benton Lake National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Complex
 922 Bootlegger Trail
 Great Falls, MT 59404

Dear Toni,

Please consider this letter from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation as support for the expansion of the conservation easement boundaries and wildlife management areas for the Blackfoot Valley Conservation Easement Program and the Rocky Mountain Front Easement Program. The conservation of important landscapes, wildlife habitat, fisheries habitat, open space, working productive farms and ranches and wildlife corridors and connectivity that has been already accomplished by conservation easements in these areas has truly been impressive. It has been valuable work accomplished toward ensuring the future of our natural resources. We applaud the USFWS for these accomplishments and encourage these efforts continue in the future. The RMEF has a vested interest in completing conservation easements in both of these areas and would like the opportunity to work with the USFWS and other partners to protect even more valuable elk country.

The expansion of these conservation areas will allow for more accomplishments in land conservation in these landscapes and the ability for private and public conservation entities to work together with the private landowners in the area. Conservation easements are an important and effective tool to private land conservation. The RMEF has completed both acquisitions and easements in these areas and will continue to work toward conservation outcomes with private landowners and public land management agencies.

We encourage you to continue to consider expanding these wildlife management area boundaries which will allow more opportunity to conserve Montana's elk country. Please contact the RMEF or myself anytime at 406-493-6650 or mmueller@rmef.org. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on these proposals.

Sincerely,

Mike Mueller

Mike Mueller
 Lands Program Manager

Response

Response 14. Thank you for your comments.

Response 14.1 The Service also looks forward to continuing our conservation partnership with the National Elk Foundation.

Response 14.2 Fish and wildlife benefits generated from conservation easement projects expand to a large suite of species. These benefits are expected to include large herbivores such as elk.