

LINCOLN COUNTY

Rural Living Handbook



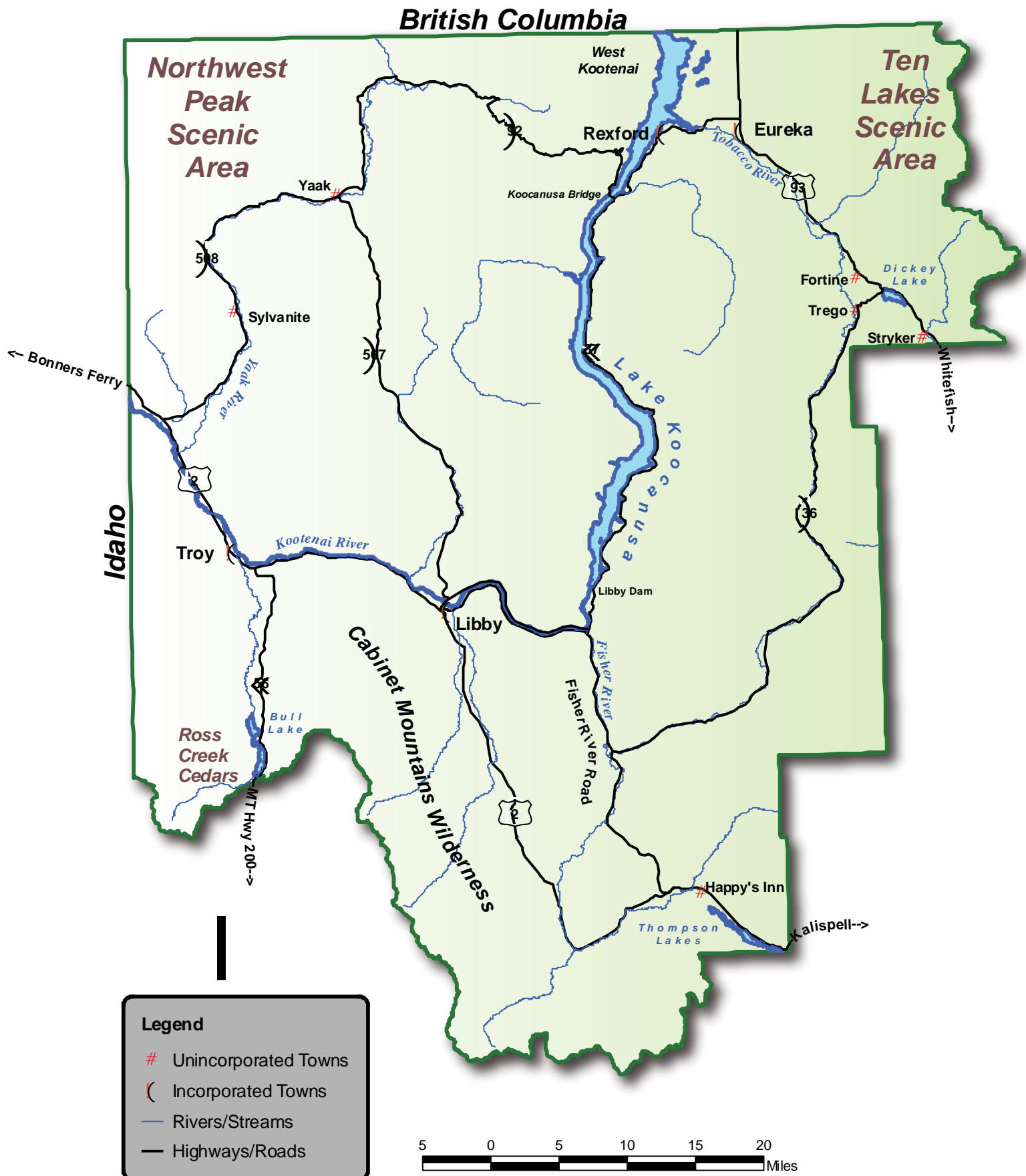
*A guide to
rural living in northwest Montana*

Provided by:



Lincoln Conservation District

Lincoln County Area Map



Lincoln County Rural Living Handbook

*A guide to rural living in
northwest Montana*



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Tobacco River

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Notes Page

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

This publication was printed with funds from the Lincoln Conservation District.

1,500 copies of this public document were published at an estimated cost of \$2.72 per copy, for a total of \$4,089.00 which includes \$4,089.00 for printing and \$0 for distribution.

Welcome to Lincoln County

The supervisors and staff of the Lincoln Conservation District and other agency representatives have developed this handbook for both current and prospective rural landowners in Lincoln County. Rural life can increase independence and self-reliance as well as develop strong relationships with neighbors. The lack of certain conveniences and services of urban living can be quite challenging.

However, if you have moved here from an urban area, you may be shocked by the hard work required to manage rural property. Newcomers often find the idyllic images of easy country living quickly dispelled when faced with the responsibilities of managing rural property.

Contained in these pages is information designed to provide not necessarily all the answers to your questions, but direct you to the resources and agencies that can assist

you. This handbook will not provide a thorough examination of all the topics, but will touch upon some of the most common issues you may face as a new landowner at one time or another. As a reader of the handbook, you will be guided to the appropriate agency for more detailed information. If you find yourself in doubt, the staff at the Conservation District can be a good first stop. If we cannot help you, we can put you in touch with the right people to get the help and assistance you need.

The last section of the handbook provides contact information for the local, state and federal agencies who can assist you. There you can find a quick reference guide to community services and agencies for land and resource management.

Please enjoy the natural resources Lincoln County has to offer and be a responsible landowner by following good land management practices.



Cabinet Mountain Wilderness



Lake Creek Falls

Lincoln County Facts

Lincoln County is located in the extreme northwest corner of Montana. It is heavily forested and largely contained within the Kootenai National Forest. Lincoln County is bordered by both Canada and Idaho.

There are 4 incorporated areas in Lincoln County: Libby, the County Seat, Eureka, Troy and Rexford. Unincorporated communities include Stryker, Fortine, Trego, West Kootenai, Yaak Valley, Lake Creek Valley and Bull Lake. The population of Lincoln County in 2009 was estimated to be 18,717 people.

County Assistance: Most county offices are located in Libby. Some county business can also be conducted at the North County Annex in Eureka. In Montana, county governments administer or help the state with county parks, county roads, courts, county nurses and health, planning, septic systems, schools, libraries, weed abatement, driver's licenses, property taxes and many other areas. County officials are always helpful and willing to answer questions.

Climate: The county has a mountain-type climate which is warm and dry in the summer and cold and moist in the winter. Most of the snow falls during the November through March period but heavy snowstorms can occur as early as mid-September or as late as early May. Annual snowfall varies from about 40 inches in the lower valleys to an estimated 300 inches in some mountain areas. Average annual precipitation varies from 18 to 25 inches near Libby and Troy to only 14 inches in the Tobacco Valley near Eureka. The higher elevations have precipitation amounts of over 70 inches per year.

Geography: The geography of the county is dominated by mountainous, forest-covered terrain within the Cabinet, Purcell and Salish mountain ranges. The mountainous terrain is cut by narrow river valleys forming the Tobacco Valley, Libby Valley and the Yaak Valley. The elevation in Lincoln County ranges from about 1,820 feet



above sea level where the Kootenai River enters Idaho, to over 8,700 feet in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Land: Lincoln County is comprised of an area of 3,675 square miles. Approximately 90% of the county's total land is owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service, the State of Montana or large private corporations, including Plum Creek Timber Company and Stimson Lumber Company. The Kootenai National Forest has 73.5% of the land with Plum Creek Timber Company owning and controlling approximately 12.5% of the land. Lincoln County is comprised of 9.2% privately owned non-forest land and 92% of the land covered by forestland.

Industry: During the last few decades, the natural resources industries of Lincoln County have been in a state of decline. No major lumber mill exists in the county, the Christmas tree industry has ended and high land prices have caused many farmers and ranchers to subdivide their land. Mining has remained a bright spot. The main industries today are educational, health and social services, and retail with some manufacturing. With less than 10% of the land in Lincoln County privately owned, recreational opportunities are abundant. As a result, tourism and service industries are increasing. Fishing, hiking, hunting, snowmobiling and camping are popular with residents and nonresidents alike.

History of Lincoln County

Ice and water created most of the geographical features of Lincoln County. Once, this area was a wide empty plain high above sea level and barren of animal or plant life. When the planet cooled and shrank, a great range of mountains heaved up to the west along what is now the Pacific Coast. This upheaval caused the sea to flow in upon the plains from the Gulf of Mexico to the Arctic Ocean. Through the ages, sediment eroded from these mountains and settled to the bottom of this inland sea, burying in the process billions of tons of shells and skeletons of sea creatures to eventually form limestone rock. Millions of years later the earth's forces caused this sea to gradually uplift to form the Rocky Mountains. In the intervening 60 or 70 million years the solid rock tops of the mountains weathered until their height was reduced by two (2) or more miles. Today geologists marvel that the oldest rocks on earth are exposed in the Siyeh Formation at the top of northwest Montana's mountains.

After the glaciers formed, over a million years ago, they alternately advanced and receded as the climate changed until their last retreat some 25,000 years ago. They covered all but the highest peaks. The Tobacco Valley is part of the Rocky Mountain Trench, which filled with a continental glacier in its 900 mile length from the Yukon to St. Ignatius, Montana. The glacier formed Glacial Lake Missoula and scraped out the valleys under it and the sediment flowing into the lake created the Tobacco Plains. The Kootenai River Valley was carved out by another glacier and as it melted, it too created a lake, Lake Kootenai, which left vast deposits of silt. In the years since, the Kootenai River has been cutting through the deposits eroding down to its present level.

As the glaciers melted, the first inhabitants arrived somewhere around 10,000 years ago. They were the Kootenai (or Ktunaxa) Indians. Their name is spelled Kootenay in Canada and anthropologists use Kutenai. To other tribes they were the "Deer Robe People," a cross between the Plateau Indians to the west and the Plains Indians to the east. They loved to hunt buffalo, as well as elk, goat, sheep, moose, bear and caribou. Many early explorers extolled their deer hunting ability and clothing made from their elegantly tanned hides. They constructed canoes of exquisite workmanship with which to travel the rivers and lakes to fish using bone for hooks. Lincoln County's

lands also provided berry-picking opportunities, with huckleberries, elderberries, thimbleberries, serviceberries and strawberries. The Kootenai knowledge of the physical geography was legendary and they, no doubt, knew every nook and cranny in the area. Early explorers recognized the Kootenai as great climbers with tremendous leg muscles. The explorers were unable to maintain a similar pace when traveling with Kootenai hunters. A series of interconnected trails, similar to our current road and highway systems, crisscrossed the Kootenai homeland. For centuries, these trails led to adventure whether it was hunting, fishing, trading or war before becoming many of our current roads and highways.

The Kootenai grew one crop, tobacco, from which the Tobacco Valley was named. It was the first explorer to this area, David Thompson, who named the Tobacco Valley. He traveled down the Kootenai River in the spring of 1808 and his explorations led to many others following in his footsteps. In the first half of the 19th century, fur trappers joined the Indians along the trails. Most trappers worked for the British Company North West Fur and later the Hudson Bay Company. Pine martin, often called the American sable, was the most valuable fur-bearing animal. Others, including wolverine, fisher, weasel (ermine), mink, wolverine, coyote, bobcat, lynx as well as beaver and muskrats, were all available in the wilds of Lincoln County.

In the last half of the 1800s miners entered the region. Lincoln County had no major gold finds but other minerals became important and mining remains an important industry in the southern half of the county.



"Perfect 2 Speed, Summit of the Yaak"

Montana became a state in 1899 and Lincoln County was part of Missoula County until Flathead County was created out of the most northwest sections of the state. Eventually Lincoln County was created in 1909 from the most northwestern corner of Flathead County and was named for President Abraham Lincoln. After a long fight between Eureka and Libby, including three trips to the Montana State Supreme Court, the County Seat was established at Libby.

Historically, because most of Lincoln County is forested, logging was the most important industry. At one time, Libby and Eureka had 2 of the largest sawmills in the state.

Some ranching and agriculture operations can be found in the county, mainly in the Tobacco Valley, which is more open than the mountainous terrain and narrow river valleys of the southern part of the county. The Christmas tree industry was also important in Lincoln County. At one time, northwestern Montana was known as the "Christmas Tree Capital of the World".

The population of the county increased after 1909 as the timber industry boomed. A steep decline in population followed the reduction of the lumber manufacturing business and population remained fairly steady during the 30's, 40's and 50's. The building of Libby Dam and the Flathead Railroad tunnel, through Elk Mountain, in the 60's and 70's led to a dramatic growth of residents. Many left after the completion of the dam and tunnel in 1973, but a few stayed and became permanent residents.

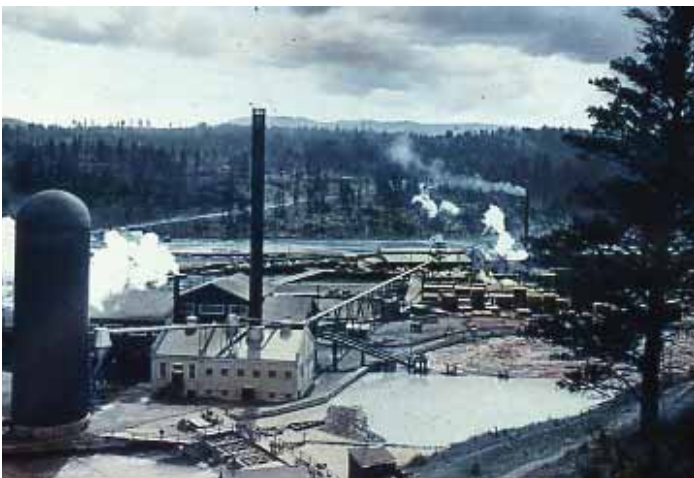
In the decade of the 1990's, the population skyrocketed as new residents came to make their home in this beautiful section of Montana.



Construction of Libby Dam 1970



Town of Marston



Eureka Lumber Company, circa 1917



Things didn't always go right in the good 'ol days

Code of the West

As it applies to Lincoln County, Montana

Lincoln County is a wonderful place to live, work and raise a family. It is our intention to provide to you a guide and introduction to the aspects of country living. You may discover other issues that have not been covered. By all means, research and examine all aspects of rural living so you will enjoy Lincoln County and have few unpleasant surprises.

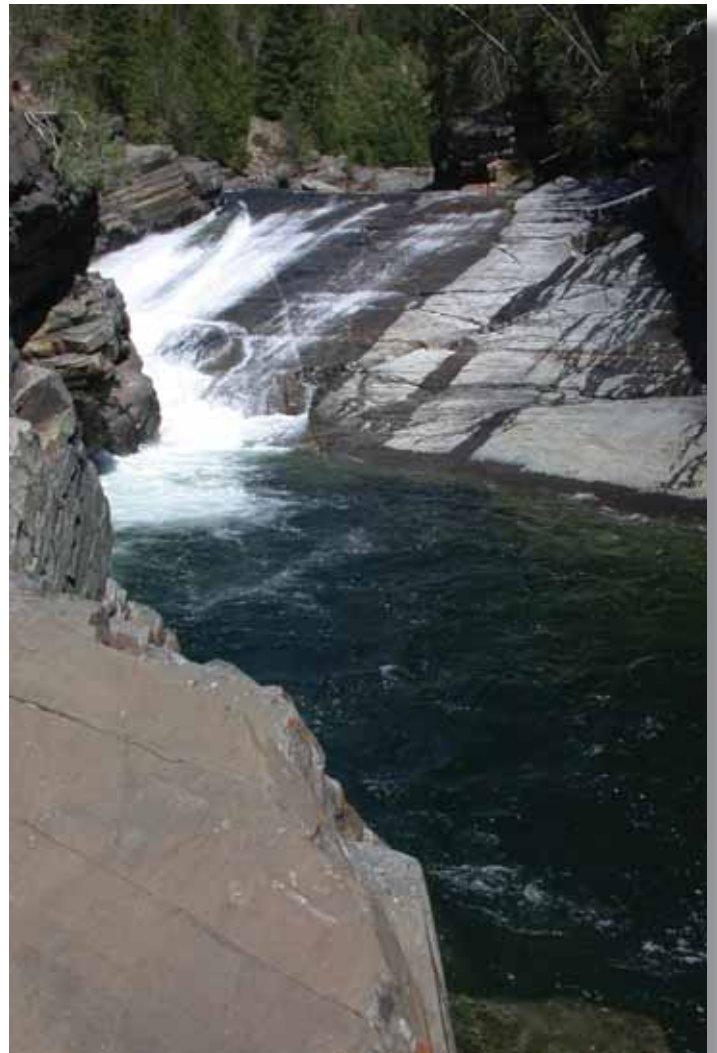
The men and women who first settled this part of the country during the westward expansion were bound by an unwritten code of conduct. The famous western author, Zane Gray, was the first to document this code in the early 20th century. The values of integrity and self-reliance are important features of the “Code of the West”. The code played an important part in their decision making, their actions and their cooperation with neighbors. In keeping with that spirit, this Rural Handbook is intended as a guide for those who wish to follow in the footsteps of the early settlers and reside in Lincoln County, Montana.

It is important to be aware that living in rural Montana is different than life in the city. Keep in mind you may have to drive 30 minutes to buy a gallon of milk or a dozen eggs, or you may find yourself driving into town 5 or 6 times a week to meet the commitment you have made to your child(ren) for sports and activities.

As you look for a place to make your home, look at the community and its people. County and small town governments are often unable to provide the same level of service that large city governments can provide. You should think about transportation, communication,

education, health care, employment and public services that are critical to our modern way of life. To that end, we are providing you with information to assist you in making an educated and informed decision before purchasing rural property or building a home.

Remember, your actions may have an adverse impact on your neighbors, human and otherwise. Respect your neighbor's livelihood and property.

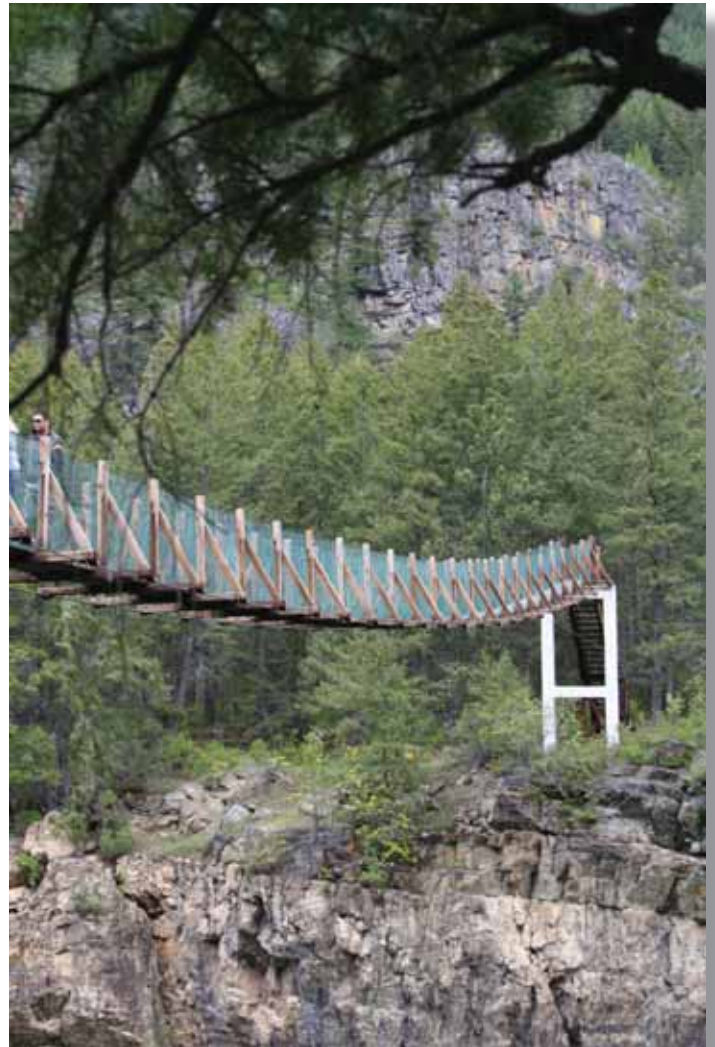


Yaak Falls

Being Neighborly

Although the Code of the West encourages self-reliance, part of the rural experience is being neighborly. Your neighbors may want a certain amount of solitude. However, getting to know your neighbors may have many side benefits. It may be purely social, such as sharing a cup of coffee and the latest local happenings. Neighbors often share advice on things like fighting weeds, sharing tools or equipment or where the best place is to purchase certain items. You may want someone to keep an eye on your property while you are on vacation. During critical emergencies, such as a medical crisis or severe storm, these folks may become your lifeline. The following tips may help you be a better neighbor.

- Recognize that being a neighbor is a two-way street.
- Respect your neighbors' endeavors.
- Cooperatively build and maintain boundary fences. Keeping livestock off of private property is the responsibility of the property owner, not the livestock owner.
- Control your dogs so they will not harass or harm your neighbors' livestock or cause tensions. If your dog causes harm to livestock you could be held financially responsible.
- Recognize that some portions of the county are open range and livestock may be on country roads or in open areas.
- Recognize that moving livestock and farm machinery on country roads is necessary. Be cautious and prepare for a delay.
- Prevent noxious weeds from moving from your property to your neighbors' land via wind, water or other means.
- Understand that some practices, such as burning fields and slash piles and running farm machinery after dark are common practices and necessary at certain times of the year.
- Realize that people who live in rural areas prize their privacy and their space.
- Private Property and Privacy: People are often unaware of private property lines. It is always the responsibility of the individual to know whose land they are on regardless if it is fenced or not. To alleviate unwanted trespass, obtain a good map that shows public land and public roads. Remember to always ask before entering private lands. Even when you are doing something as harmless as walking across a meadow or hiking through the woods, be sure you have permission.



Swinging Bridge, near Kootenai Falls

Buying Country Property

Much of the property you will find in Lincoln County is rural. Parcels will range in size from under an acre to 300(+) acres. Properties over 80 acres are limited. Smaller parcels are generally located within subdivisions and are closer to town. "Remote" and "very remote" properties, as well as semi-developed settings also exist. The majority of land for sale is tree-covered and in the foothills or mountainous settings. Open plains country can be found in the northern portion of Lincoln County.

If you are not completely familiar with the process of purchasing rural land, you can contact a real estate professional or attorney to assist you. Do not buy a property you are not intimately familiar with without obtaining title insurance.

Before purchasing you may want to address the following issues:

Access: Is there legal and physical access to the property? AND are the legal access and physical access in the same location?

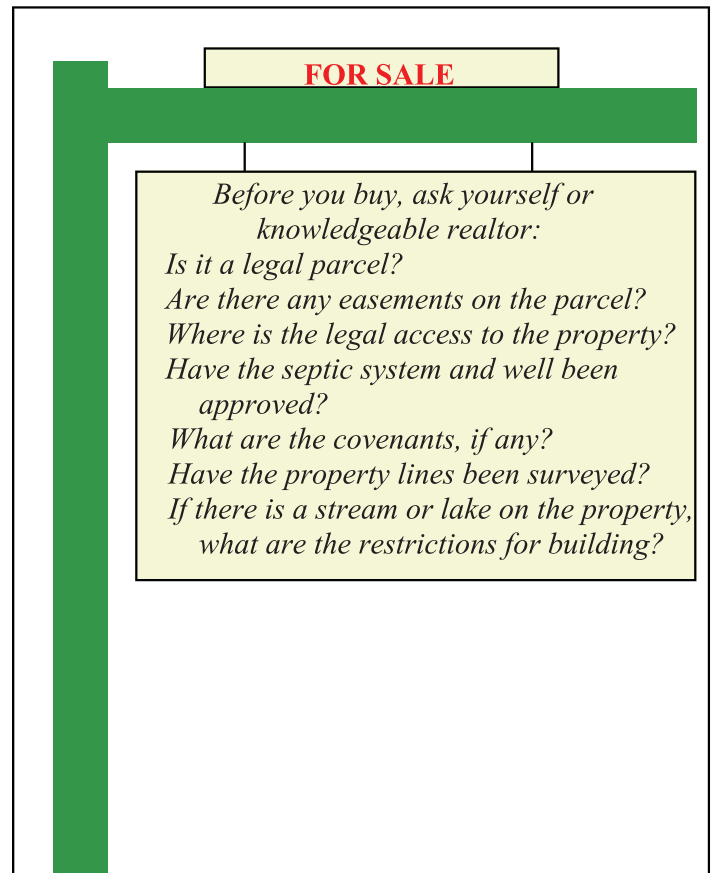
Maintained county roads, highways or county-approved subdivision roads access a major portion of the available land parcels. Very remote settings will often have difficult access, especially in the winter and early spring.

Remote land owners are expected to maintain their own roads, which are frequently in poor condition and steep. Maintenance can include snowplowing, graveling, grading and clearing fallen trees. In most cases there are several residents who share in these duties, but many times there are no written road maintenance agreements. Remote and semi-developed parcels can have some of the same access issues, but the frequency and immensity can be substantially less.

Restricted Uses: Are there use restrictions such as those controlled by:

- **Zoning:** At the time of the printing of this publication, there are no zoning issues in rural Lincoln County.

- **Recorded Covenants:** A copy of recorded covenants should be provided to you by the title company as part of your title insurance policy. If you have questions as to the meaning or enforcement of the covenants, you should seek legal advice.
- **Sanitary Restrictions:** If you intend to use your property for residential purposes, you should obtain a copy of the approved septic and well location on any parcel under 20 acres in size. All recently subdivided parcels under 20 acres in size will have pre-approved well and septic locations or will be designated as exempt. A parcel under 20 acres without pre-approved septic and well locations will need county and/or state review prior to installing those utilities.
- **Reserved Easements or other reserved use rights:** Rights of ingress, egress, water rights, mineral extractions, timber extraction or others may have been reserved by the previous owners. Your professional or title company can provide to you a list of any reservations against the property's title.



Electricity/Phone/Internet: If you desire to use electricity, phone lines or internet you will need to research the location of the nearest usable infrastructure. You may also want to obtain quotes as to the cost associated with the installation of these services to your property. If you plan on using cellular communication, check your cell phone at the property. Not all areas in Lincoln County have cell service. Cable television is generally not available in rural Lincoln County settings.

Water Wells: If your property does not already have a water well, you may contract with a well driller to drill one for you. Montana Department of Natural Resources will provide the depths, gallons per minute and other pertinent information on all recorded wells in the area. This will give you an indication as to the availability and depths of your well. However, there are no guarantees that your well will be similar. Well depths and production capacities can be very inconsistent. If a well already exists on the property, ask for the “well log” and make certain the water rights to the existing well are transferred to you at close of escrow.

Creeks, Lakes and Springs: Your property may have “live water sources” on it. The existence of water on your property does not necessarily guarantee your right to use these water sources. Research your rights that are associated with any live water on the property. Any recorded rights should be transferred into your name at the time of the close of escrow. These will not be part of your title policy.

Corners and Lines: Most properties have been surveyed and the survey map has been recorded at the Lincoln County Clerk and Records Office. Take the time to find the land corners or have them established for you prior to purchase. Many larger parcels (20 acres and over) were established by legal description only and can be legally traded without a survey. Research corners and lines to your satisfaction on these types of properties.



Big Therriault Lake

Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are a growing concern in Montana. Whether you own 5 acres or 500 acres, you should be concerned with the effects noxious weeds are having on your property and Montana's landscape. Your weeds can affect you and your neighbors. Besides being a nuisance, the impacts of noxious weeds include:

- Decreased wildlife habitat.
- Less forage for domestic animals and wildlife.
- Reduced water quality.
- Weed infestations make poor habitat for wildlife. In addition, several weeds can be toxic to animals and humans.



Spotted Knapweed

What do I do if I already have weeds?

Don't feel alone, a lot of folks already have weeds. There is a generalized approach to managing weeds. Three things you need to know before you begin your war against weeds:

- The best weapon against weeds is healthy vegetation!!!!!!
- Chemical spraying alone seldom eliminates weed problems.
- Each property is a little different, so make sure that your plan to fight weeds fits your property. To do that you will need to do some research and possibly contact your local weed professional. In Lincoln County, contact the MSU Extension Office at (406) 296-9019 in Eureka and (406) 283-2452 in Libby or Lincoln County Roadside Vegetation Program at (406) 283-2420.



Not all weeds are ugly as this Orange Hawkweed demonstrates.

The following 4 step plan will give you a general idea on what you need to do.

Step 1 Know what you want to do with your property. Any disturbance of healthy vegetation is an invitation to weeds: Road building, grazing, construction. Even if you are not doing any of the above activities, you may still need to do weed management.

Step 2 Weed Identification. Know your enemy. What weeds do you have? There are 46 species of weeds on Montana's noxious weed list.

Identifying each weed is also important because it can help you prioritize which weeds to battle. Removing one weed before it becomes a full blown infestation can make your job a whole lot easier.

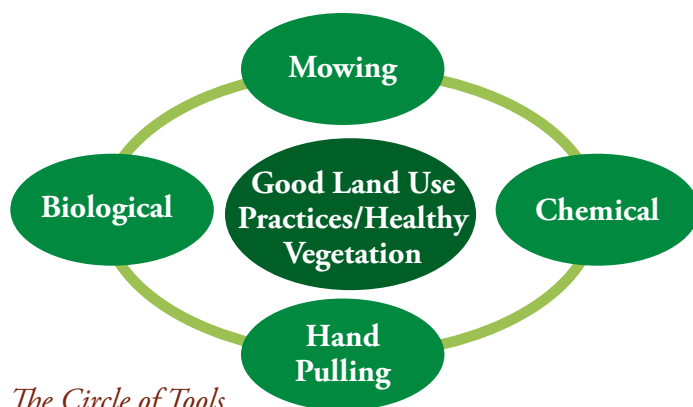
There are publications to help you fight and identify weeds. A good reference is "TIPS for Fighting Weeds on Small Acreages in Montana" published by DNRC. To identify noxious weeds on your property, information can be obtained from the MSU Extension Office in Eu-

reka and Libby or the Lincoln County Roadside Vegetation Program in Libby. Don't get frustrated, it may take a little time and research to find a good game plan to manage the weeds on your property.



The weeds listed above are the highest concern in Lincoln County.

Step 3 Depending on the weeds you have, you need to formulate a plan. You can choose one or more of the following tools to “kill” those weeds.



The Circle of Tools

Central to your weed management is to make sure you have healthy vegetation by instituting good land use practices. For example, don't overgraze. Methods such as chemicals, mowing and others, are just tools to get to your overall goal of removing weeds.

Step 4 Weed Management is not a one shot thing. You will have to do a little bit each year. Over time, you should spend less time and money on weed management

and be able to enjoy your property for what you bought it for. Other weed prevention tools include:

- Use only weed-free forage.
- Wash vehicles after traveling in infested areas and check clothing and pets for seeds.
- Limit soil disturbance.
- Immediately re-vegetate disturbed areas with a desirable plant.

Weed problems never entirely go away, but with a good plan of action you will be able to successfully manage the weeds on your property. Have patience; your weeds did not grow overnight, nor will they disappear as quickly.

Private Applicator License: Most times, small-acre landowners will find “general use” pesticides will suffice to help eliminate noxious weeds. These include Ortho, Milestone, Sevin and Roundup. However, you can qualify to obtain a private applicator license which will enable you to purchase “restricted-use pesticides” (RUP). RUP pesticides can be identified by the words “Restricted Use Pesticide” on the top of the product label. To become certified, applicants need to either attend a 6 hour training program or pass the open book exam. County agents proctor these exams, which may be taken at the MSU Extension Office. Training programs can be viewed online at <http://www.pesticides.montana.edu>. Click on the “Private Applicator Program” link.

Sprayers: Through the Lincoln County Roadside Vegetation Program, residents can check out portable weed sprayers; backpack, ATV and pick-up bed sprayers are available for use for one week at no charge. For information, call the Lincoln County Roadside Vegetation Program at (406) 283-2420.

Chemical disclaimer— Because of the variety of herbicide available, differing soil conditions and a variety of environmental conditions, it is best you contact the local weed professionals to properly assess your weeds and identify the best options for your specific environment.

Native Plants and Landscaping

Given the diversity of Montana's landscape and climate, trying to select the best native plants for your landscape can be challenging. What may be considered a native plant in Ekalaka is not necessarily considered a native in Lincoln County. Further, a plant that is native to a streamside location in the Yaak will not necessarily thrive in the drier areas of north Lincoln County.

Additionally, the definition of "native plant" can vary widely adding to the confusion of selecting appropriate plants for your location. For this article, the term native plant refers to species that have evolved or occur naturally at a specific site. When shopping for native plants, be aware that some nurseries and growers classify plant species as native if they have been cultivated from a native plant. A cultivar is a plant that has been specifically selected for certain traits such as size, seed production or color. However, the genetics of these plants may differ from those that are truly native to Montana, or more specifically, Lincoln County.

Benefits of Native Plants in the Landscape

Better Adapted: As many gardeners and farmers know, the growing conditions in Montana can vary widely. Extreme temperatures, a limited frost-free period and varying moisture levels combine to produce a unique environment for testing a plant's ability to grow. However, native plants grown in appropriate sites are genetically adapted to cope with these challenges resulting in decreased environmental stress. Since approximately 60 percent of the damage to plants in Montana is caused by abiotic factors, this can significantly impact the success of your landscape choices.

Less Invasive: Unlike exotic or introduced species, native plants have natural predators and diseases to keep the plant community in balance. Consequently, these plants do not become invasive and choke out other desired species. Exotic plants, such as leafy spurge, have no natural enemies and therefore eliminate beneficial species often resulting in a mono-culture. As a result, wildlife and livestock lose valuable forage and habitat.

Education: Studying native plants can provide an opportunity for you and your family to learn about the unique landscape and heritage of the area in which you live as well as the natural relationships among plants, animals and humans in the ecosystem.

Getting Started

Identification: Perhaps one of the best ways to begin planning your native landscape is by learning how to identify native plant species as well as recognizing the habitat in which they thrive. Resource guides are available from the MSU Lincoln County Extension Office, Montana Native Plant Society, and the Natural Resources and Conservation Service.

Inventory: Secondly, conduct an inventory of the land in which you are planning to incorporate a native landscape. It is important to determine your soil type, elevation, moisture levels, frost-free days, locations of buildings, existing vegetation, as well as sun and wind exposure. Matching your current site conditions with appropriate native plants will result in optimum plant growth success.

Planting: The first decision to consider is whether to use plants or seeds in your landscape. If you are a beginner, consider starting with plants. Starting with seeds is rewarding, but requires patience and care until they are growing successfully. Some forbs can be seeded in the fall (October and November), if there is sufficient moisture available. Seeds can also be planted in the spring once the ground is free of frost, generally in April to mid-June. Once native plants are established however, they require minimal care in an appropriate environment.

Check Wildflower Mixes Carefully: Although they can be quite beautiful, use caution when considering a mix of wildflowers. Some of the plants are not native to Montana and may also contain weed seeds. As a result, these plants have great potential to become invasive.



Lupine in bloom



Bear Grass

Examples of Native Plants

Amelanchier alnifolia "Serviceberry"
Dodecatheon conjugens "Prairie shootingstar"
Prunus virginiana "Chokecherry"
Symphoricarpos albus "Common snowberry"
Arctostaphylos uva-ursi "Kinnikinnick"
Berberis repens "Oregon grape"
Linum lewisii "Blue Flax"
Monarda fistulosa "Beebalm"
Pinus ponderosa "Ponderosa pine"
Achillea millefolium "Yarrow"
Geum triflorum "Prairie-smoke"
Festuca idahoensis "Idaho Fescue"
Agropyron spicatum "Blue bunch wheatgrass"
Populus tremuloides "Quaking aspen"
Lewisia rediviva "Bitterroot"

Land Capabilities in Lincoln County

Traditional land uses in Lincoln County have included irrigated crops (grass and alfalfa hay), dryland pasture and hay, range, forestry, mining and recreation. Soil properties and climate determine the most appropriate use of a property. Capabilities and limitations for various soil types in the county can be found in the Soil Survey of Kootenai National Forest Area, Montana and Idaho. This information is accessible on-line at the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Data Mart (<http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/>) or Soil Web Survey (<http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/app/HomePage.htm>). Through these web-sites, it is possible to query an area of interest to determine soil number, descriptions, capabilities and limitations. Information relating to soil properties and engineering can be found in the database; however, the data is derived from representative soil profiles and does not cover site-specific conditions.

Environmental consulting or engineering companies can be contacted to provide site-specific soil analysis on a property. Listings for these firms can be found in local and regional phone directories.

The NRCS and MSU Extension offices in Eureka can assist you with general soils information. Soils data relating to irrigation and crop production are often available or can be determined. NRCS can be reached at (406) 296-7152. MSU Extension in Lincoln County can be contacted at (406) 296-9019 or on-line at <http://extn.msu.montana.edu/>.

An example of a wheel-line sprinkler system is shown here.



This photo shows an example of a center pivot sprinkler system

Be Firewise: A Guide for Homeowners in the Wildland Urban Interface

Each year more and more people move into previously uninhabited, forested areas in Lincoln County. Longer response times, limited water sources, difficult terrain and unpaved roads all increase the risk of fire damage to your home and property.

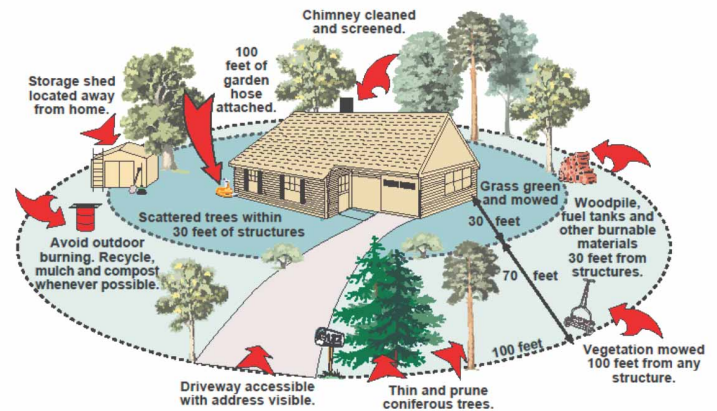
It is important that forest owners take responsible actions to create a defensible space zone around their home and outbuildings. “Defensible space” is an area around a structure where fuels and vegetation are treated, cleared or reduced to slow the spread of wildfire towards the structure. Your house is more likely to withstand a wildfire if grasses, brush, trees and other common forest fuels are managed to reduce a fire’s intensity. Defensible space provides room for firefighters to do their jobs.

Two factors are important to consider in the ability of a home to survive wildfire. These elements are the homes building materials and the quality of “defensible space” surrounding it.

Your Home: The best protection against losing your home to wildfire can be found in the building materials used in construction. The materials used, whether building, remodeling or retrofitting can make the difference in how well your home withstands both the potential “direct threat” of flames and the “indirect threat” of flying embers.

- Roofing materials should use fire-resistive materials (Class C or better rating), not wood or shake shingles.
- Inspect chimneys once a year and clean them at least twice a year. Equip chimneys and stovepipes with an approved spark arrester. Remember to regularly clean the roof and gutters that may accumulate debris from the surrounding trees.
- Enclose the undersides of decks and porches, eaves, soffits and fascia.
- Make sure roof eaves and vents are screened or enclosed to prevent embers from entering these spaces.

Your Landscape: Creating an effective defensible space involves developing a series of concentric zones, with increasing fuels management in zones closest to structures. Develop defensible space around each building on your property. Include detached garages, storage buildings, barns and other structures in your plan.



Creating defensive spaces around structures help protect from wildfires.

Defensible Space Management Zones:

Intensive Zone is the area of maximum fuel modification and treatment. The area immediately adjacent to your house is particularly important in terms of effective survivable space. It consists of an area of at least 30 feet around your house that is **Lean, Clean and Green Zone**.

- **Lean** - small amounts of flammable vegetation.
- **Clean** - no accumulation of dead vegetation or flammable debris.
- **Green** – plants are healthy and green during the fire season.

In the intensive zone, keep grasses well watered and keep them mowed to at least 3 inches in height. Also use fire resistant planting materials.

Extensive Zone is an area of fuel reduction. This zone is between 30 and 100 feet (or more) from the structure. The size of the zone depends on the slope of the ground where the structure is built. On steep slopes with heavy accumulations of vegetation and dense trees, the defensible space can extend out to 200 feet or more from the structure.

- Thin trees and large shrubs so there is at least 10 feet between crowns. On steep slopes allow more distance between crowns.
- Remove all ladder fuels from under remaining trees. Carefully prune trees to a height of at least 10 feet. For small trees, prune the lower limbs to allow a minimum one-third live crown ratio. Be sure to extend thinning along either side of your driveway all the way to your main access road.
- Mow grasses as needed through the summer. This is extremely important late in summer when grasses dry out.

General Management Zone is of no specific size. It extends from the edge of your defensible space to your property lines. It is an area of traditional forest management where the emphasis of the other forest management objectives can be applied. Forest management activities should not only address immediate fire risk, but should also integrate your other forest management objectives such as wildlife habitat, recreation, aesthetics or timber productivity.

Reducing canopy density, reducing the amount of fine fuels and tinder and favoring fire resilient species such as Ponderosa Pine or Western Larch is a wise choice to creating a fire resilient forest. Ponderosa Pine and Larch have thick bark that protects the cambium layer from being scorched by fire and they also self prune their lower limbs reducing ladder fuels which can carry fire into the tree crown. These trees are also much more likely to survive a wildfire than other conifer species.

Maintenance: Your home is located in a forest that is dynamic, always changing. Trees and shrubs continue to grow, plants die or are damaged, new plants begin to grow and plants drop their leaves and needles. Like other parts of your home, defensible space requires maintenance. Use the following checklist each year to determine if additional work or maintenance is necessary.

Defensible Space and Fire Wise Annual Checklist

- Trees and shrubs are properly thinned and pruned within the defensible space. Slash from the thinning is disposed of.
- Roof and gutters are clear of debris.

- Branches overhanging the roof and chimney are removed.
- Chimney screens are in place and in good condition.
- Grass and weeds are mowed to a low height.
- An outdoor water supply is available, complete with a hose and nozzle that can reach all parts of the house.
- Fire extinguishers are checked and in working condition.
- The driveway is wide enough. The clearance of trees and branches is adequate for fire and emergency equipment. (Check with your local fire department.)
- Road signs, your name and house number are posted and easily visible.
- There is an easily accessible tool storage area with rakes, hoes, axes and shovels for use in case of fire.
- You have practiced family fire drills and your fire evacuation plan.
- Your escape routes, meeting points and other details are known and understood by all family members.
- Attic, roof, eaves and foundation vents are screened and in good condition. Stilt foundations and decks are enclosed, screened or walled up.
- Trash and debris accumulations are removed from the defensible space.

Fire Wise Assistance: A Fire Wise Home evaluation may be obtained by contacting your local volunteer fire department, Montana DNRC Forestry Office, by contacting your local USFS District Office, the Lincoln County Fire Safe Council at (406) 293-2847 or go to www.firesafemt.com.

Small Woodland Management

A carefully managed forest can reduce the risk of wild-fire, provide habitat for wildlife, create recreational opportunities and grow healthy trees resistant to insect and disease epidemics. On the other hand, a careless timber harvest can damage the land and the future of the forest. Decide what is important to you and how those values might fit to the current attributes of your forest.

Know Your Woods

Good forest management depends on understanding how a forest ecosystem functions. Different tree species, under-story plants and wildlife all have specific needs. Begin to inventory, map and familiarize yourself with the various resources on the property. What kinds and sizes of trees do you see? What wildlife signs do you notice? Note areas of special concern. What do you like, what do you want to enhance? Formulate and outline a set of objectives.

Develop a Plan

What are your goals? Do you want to improve wildlife habitat, nature appreciation, weed control, financial return, or something else?

- Talk to other landowners for ideas.
- Often landowners decide to have a management plan written by a professional forester.
- Enroll in a Forest Stewardship Workshop to learn about your forest and develop a management plan for your property.
- You can also use the free assistance of your local DNRC Service Forester or the Montana Tree Farm program to help you develop a management plan to meet your goals and objectives.

Programs and Expert Help

Forest Stewardship Planning Workshop is a 3 day course designed to help landowners survey and formulate their own forest plans. Additional 1 to 3 day courses are also offered to help strengthen your knowledge on specific forestry topics including wildfire protection, roads, riparian management alternatives, forest ecology, weeds and understory vegetation. Contact Montana State University Extension Forestry for details or log onto: www.forestry.umt.edu/extensionforestry

Montana DNRC Service Foresters can provide site visits to assist you and reinforce your knowledge on forest management, forest health, reforestation, timber sale contracts, best management practices, streamside management zone laws, and fire hazard reduction. Service Foresters can provide information on financial assistance programs. Call DNRC Libby Unit at (406) 293-2711 or visit www.dnrc.mt.gov/forestry/

The Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS) provides both technical and financial assistance to help landowners improve forest health and timber productivity. Forest management activities such as tree planting, pre-commercial thinning, fuels reduction and soil and water protection may be eligible for financial assistance. For more information call (406) 296-7152.

Consulting Foresters (fee involved); Timber sale assistance and administration, timber appraisals, tax information. Contact a DNRC Service Forester for a list.

Conservation Districts Stream permitting, erosion control, tree sales. For information call (406) 297-2233.

Montana Tree Farm System is part of a national network of forest landowners that offers free Sustainable Forestry Initiative certification and site visits and assistance with a forester. www.mttreefarm.org



Careful planning and finding the help you need prior to forest management activities can make all the difference.

Montana Water Rights

The State of Montana owns all waters (surface and groundwater) in the state on behalf of its citizens. Citizens possess a legal right to use the water within state guidelines if it is put to beneficial use.

Montana water law is based on the prior appropriation doctrine: *“first in time is first in right.”*

Priority is determined by date of first use—the earlier the priority date, the more senior the right. Senior surface water right holders can “call” junior rights to discontinue use if water is insufficient for all senior rights. When disputes arise over water use, the DNRC encourages water users to resolve the issue among themselves. This can include making a call on junior water rights. For water right dispute options, visit with any DNRC office or see http://dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_rts/wr_general_info/wrforms/609-ins.pdf

The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) is the state agency responsible for water rights. Visit the DNRC Water Right Query System website at <http://nriss.mt.gov/dnrc/waterrights> or check with the DNRC Water Resources Office in Kalispell, (406) 752-2288, to determine if you have a water right. You will need to know the legal description of the property. If you live within a city, belong to a water user’s association, are serviced by a ditch company or irrigation district, you may not have a water right. However, the city, association, company or district owns water rights from which it supplies your water. You may own shares in such an association, company or district.

By law, a recorded water right is required for uses to be valid, legal and defensible against other water users. A water right protects the use of that water from other uses later in time, from unrecorded, illegal uses or from others who exceed their rights.

Types of water rights:

- Provisional Permit: Grants the use of water for a specific amount and purpose.
- Certificate of Water Right—Issued on: Groundwater appropriations of 35 gpm or less and 10 acre feet or less: Groundwater appropriations of 350 gpm or less for use in non-consumptive geothermal heating or cooling exchange applica-

tions for completed developments: Groundwater appropriations for emergency fire developments by a local governmental fire agency where the appropriation is used only for emergency fire protection, which may include enclosed storage: Replacement well issued when an existing well fails and new well is constructed to replace it. The priority date of the old well is retained: Authorization to change to allow an appropriator with a recognized water right or a water right that was exempt from filing to change the place of use, point of diversion, purpose of use, or place of storage and maintain the priority date of the initial water right.

- Temporary Change: Allows an appropriator to change the water right temporarily for a period of up to 10 years, with possible renewal of not more than 10 years per renewal. No authorization is required for the water right to revert to the original purpose, point of diversion, place of use or place of storage after the term expires.
- In-stream Flow: Allows water that is diverted for consumptive uses to be transferred temporarily (up to 30 years) to an in-stream use. All or part of the water right can be leased to the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, leased to another party interested in holding the right for a fishery or converted to an in-stream use without a lease.

For further information regarding water rights, contact:
DNRC Water Resources Regional Office

655 Timberwolf Parkway Suite 4

Kalispell, MT 59901

(406) 752-2288

http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_rts/default.asp



This photo is an example of an irrigation diversion and fish screen taken on Therriault Creek.

Private Septic Systems

Living beyond the reach of a community sewer has the advantage of no monthly bill, but septic system owners are not off the hook. If properly designed, constructed and maintained, your septic system can provide long term, effective treatment of household wastewater.

The typical household septic system has four main components; a pipe from the home to the septic tank, a septic tank which leads to a drainfield and the soil. Microbes in the tank and the soil digest or remove most contaminants from the wastewater before it reaches groundwater.

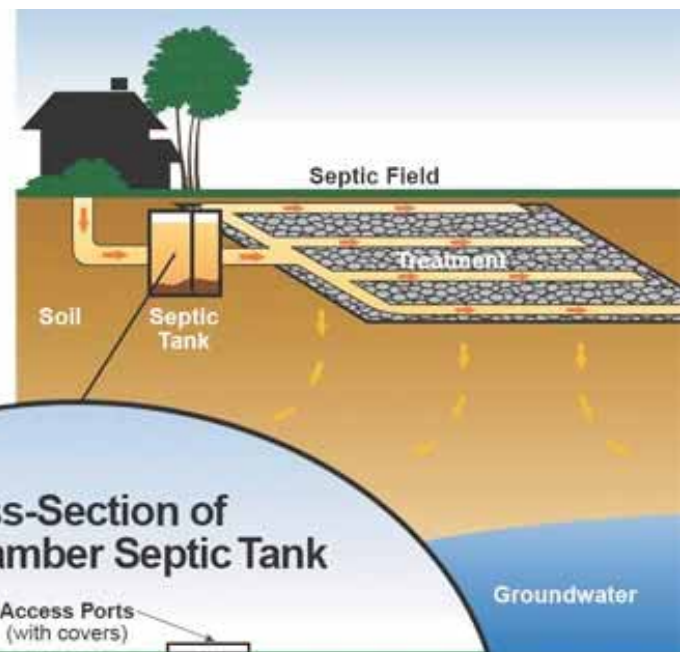
After the wastewater leaves the house, the first stop is in the septic tank where the solids sink to the bottom and the floatables float to the top. The septic tank provides primary treatment and serves to protect the drainfield by removing toilet paper, large solids, foreign objects and grease that could otherwise move to the drainfield and cause clogging.

The partially clarified wastewater, now called effluent, leaves the septic tank and travels to the drainfield where it is spread over a large area below the surface to infiltrate into the ground.

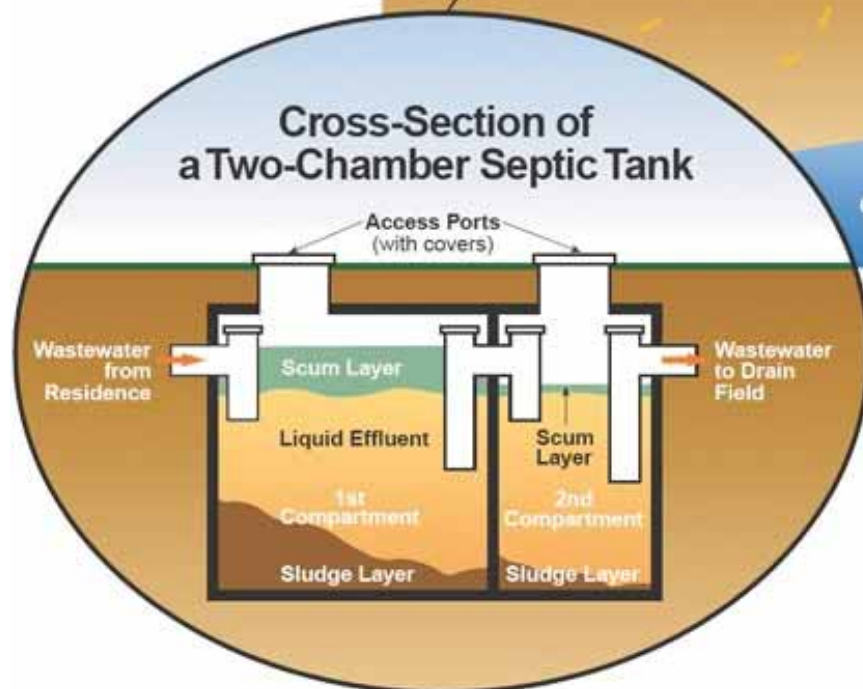
There are a number of things septic system owners can do to help their systems function properly and prolong life. Septic maintenance is inexpensive compared to the cost of replacing the drainfield.

Maintenance Tips for the Septic System

- The septic tank should be pumped approximately every 3 to 5 years, depending on the tank size and the number of people in the house.
- Your tank probably has an effluent filter if the home or septic system was built after 2001. This filter should be rinsed off each year. Contact the county environmental health department to find out how to perform this or you can contact a septic tank pumper to have the service provided by a licensed professional.



This diagram shows the parts of a septic tank and septic system



Maintenance Tips for Outside the House

- Deep-rooted vegetation can cause problems with drainfield lines.
- Irrigation and runoff from roofs should be diverted away from the drainfield.
- Never drive over the drainfield or septic tank. Compaction, increased settling, can compromise the system.

Tips for Inside the House

- Keep good records of the system layout and maintenance.
- Avoid running excessive amounts of water to the system at the same time; spread laundry out over the week.
- Ensure that your water softener is a demand regeneration type. Replace units that re-charge based on a timer. Do not discharge backflush/backwash water from a water softener system into your sewer line.

Things to avoid putting down the drain are:

- Prescription or non-prescription drugs
- Paint
- Wet wipes
- Grease
- Garbage disposal waste
- Coffee grounds
- Feminine products
- Paper towels
- Excessive household cleaners
- Powdered laundry, dish detergents, bleach

A compromised system can contaminate ground water and/or wastewater can back up into the home; sometimes it will rise to the surface and pool, causing health hazards and expensive repairs. Other reasons for septic system failure is a system which is too small for the home or the absorptive capacity of the soils the drainfield is constructed in is not adequate.

Contact the county environmental health department at (406) 283-2442 for current septic requirements or information. Other resources include the EPA, www.epa.gov/owm/septic and the National Small Flows Clearinghouse at www.nesc.wvu.edu.



Ross Creek Cedar Grove

Be a Responsible Well Owner

Being a private well owner carries a number of responsibilities. Public water system users can depend upon their local government to monitor the quality of water they consume. Private well owners should conduct their own water sampling and maintain their water source.

Protecting the Wellhead

The wellhead is where the well meets the surface of the ground and is capped. As a well owner, you should be familiar with the location of the wellhead and monitor the condition. In nature, the soil removes many contaminants as water moves into the ground. The drilling of a well cuts through the filtering layers and provides a quick path for contaminants to travel to ground water if the well is not properly constructed and maintained. Easy steps to protect the wellhead are:

- Ensure your well has a “sanitary well cap” with a rubber gasket and a screen vent.
- Ensure the casing (the outer wall of the well) extends at least 18 inches above the ground.
- Ensure the ground surface is sloped so water flows away from the top of the well and does not pond near the well.

Keeping a “Well File”

Keeping a “Well File” with all pertinent information to a water system is very important for scheduling maintenance and isolating potential causes if the water quality changes. Well files should include:

- Construction information including the drilling company, total depth, depth to water (this will fluctuate during the seasons of the year), gallons pumped per minute, the geology and the size of the motor.
- Maintenance records should include the work that was done, when and who did the work. Also include any information on maintenance of water treatment system.
- Water quality test results including laboratory reports and data and the cost of testing.

Well Water Quality Testing

To monitor the quality of a water supply, it is essential to regularly sample the well water to detect any changes. Test for nitrates and bacteria every year. It is also a good idea to do a thorough test initially and consider repeating a more comprehensive test every 5 years. Water sampling test kits are available at the North County Annex in Eureka and the County Annex in Libby.

Potential Contaminant Storage

A drawing of a property depicting a well and its surroundings is helpful. In this drawing include the septic tank and drainfield, home, garage, any animal pens, streams, ditches and the slope of the ground. Draw 3 rings around the well at 50, 100 and 250 feet. These rings represent zones where specific potential contaminants should not be located or stored.

- Less than 50 feet: Any sewer line should be outside this zone.
- Less than 100 feet: Leach fields, livestock yards, fuel tanks, pesticides and fertilizer storage should be outside this zone.
- Less than 250 feet: Manure storage piles should be outside this zone.

Sealing Old Wells

Property that has a long history of inhabitants is more likely to have abandoned wells that should be sealed by a professional well driller. Improperly sealed wells pose a large threat to water quality. When searching for an abandoned well, look in small structures and sheds as well as your property in general.



Is your well head protected? The cracked wellhead cap on the left is an easy way to allow pollution into your well. Although the well cap in the middle looks better, it is a non-sanitary version. It provides better protection, but may leak. The sanitary cap on the right provides maximum protection at a slightly higher cost.

Riparian Areas and Wetlands

Some rural land owners can have “that something special” piece of land. Creeks, wetlands or ditches on your property can benefit you in terms of aesthetics, erosion control and enhanced property values.

Healthy Streams

Cool, clean water in local waterways is essential to sustain balanced ecosystems for fish and wildlife. Streams are a delicate environment that needs to be protected. Riparian zones are the catalyst to provide this ecosystem. It can be identified by the water-loving vegetation that lives in this habitat. A healthy riparian area has lush and diverse native vegetation along the water's edge. Vegetation reduces water pollution by filtering out sediments, chemicals and nutrients from runoff. Water running through the area is slowed, reducing the risk of erosion and property loss. The habitat provides food and breeding areas for fish, birds and wildlife as well as keeping water cool in the summer time.

Don't judge your waterway by its size or configuration. Those that flow year-round (perennial) often have fish and other aquatic life in them. Surprisingly, many occasional flowing (intermittent and ephemeral) creeks are also extremely important to fish, wildlife and aquatic insect species. Stream care guidelines also apply for flowing ditches. A ditch is just a small stream, creek or wetland that has been converted. Remember, even fishless ditches and seasonal creeks flow into fish-bearing streams.

Remember water flows downstream. How you treat the section of stream on your property affects water quality on your neighbor's property downstream, just as the actions of your neighbors upstream affect you and your property.

So what can you do to preserve good water quality?

Keep new building as far away from creeks as possible. To protect the integrity of our precious water resources and the riparian areas adjacent to the streams (perennial), rivers and lakes, any work within a floodplain or within the embankment of a perennial stream requires a Floodplain Permit from the Planning Department and/or a 310 permit from the Lincoln Conservation District. It is recommended the Protected Zone be 100 feet slope

distance away and perpendicular to the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM). The County may reduce this guideline on a case by case basis to a minimum distance of 50 feet if the applicant can provide adequate justification (i.e., stream size; lot size are some examples). In addition to the Protected Zone a riparian “buffer” not less than 25 feet from OHWM should be included in all subdivision plans.

Keep a buffer strip of native trees and shrubs along the creek. The natural riparian area maintains shade which cools the water, aiding in fish spawning, creates cover and resting areas for fish, provides nesting areas for animals and birds, traps chemicals, sediment and other debris from entering the stream and prevents erosion and bank sloughing.

Preserve the natural features of the creek. Fallen logs and other natural debris and meanders are essential physical structures to maintain food and habitat for fish and wildlife. Unless the natural debris is threatening you or your property there is no need to clean up the stream area. If you are planning any work in a perennial stream, you must apply for a 310 permit from the Lincoln Conservation District.

Keep pasture and animal pens away from streams. Livestock that are allowed on stream embankments will cause erosion and stream widening as well as adding pollutants to the waterway.

Avoid filling ravines or slopes above creeks with dirt, grass clippings or other debris. Storms will carry this debris down slopes and into the waterways.

Remove noxious weeds carefully. Due to the sensitive nature of streams, it is best to contact the MSU Extension Agent or the Lincoln County Weed Coordinator before doing weed management around riparian areas.

Working in Streams, Wetlands or Riparian Areas. To protect the natural water resources in Montana, many permits may be applicable to projects affecting stream bed, banks or floodplain areas.

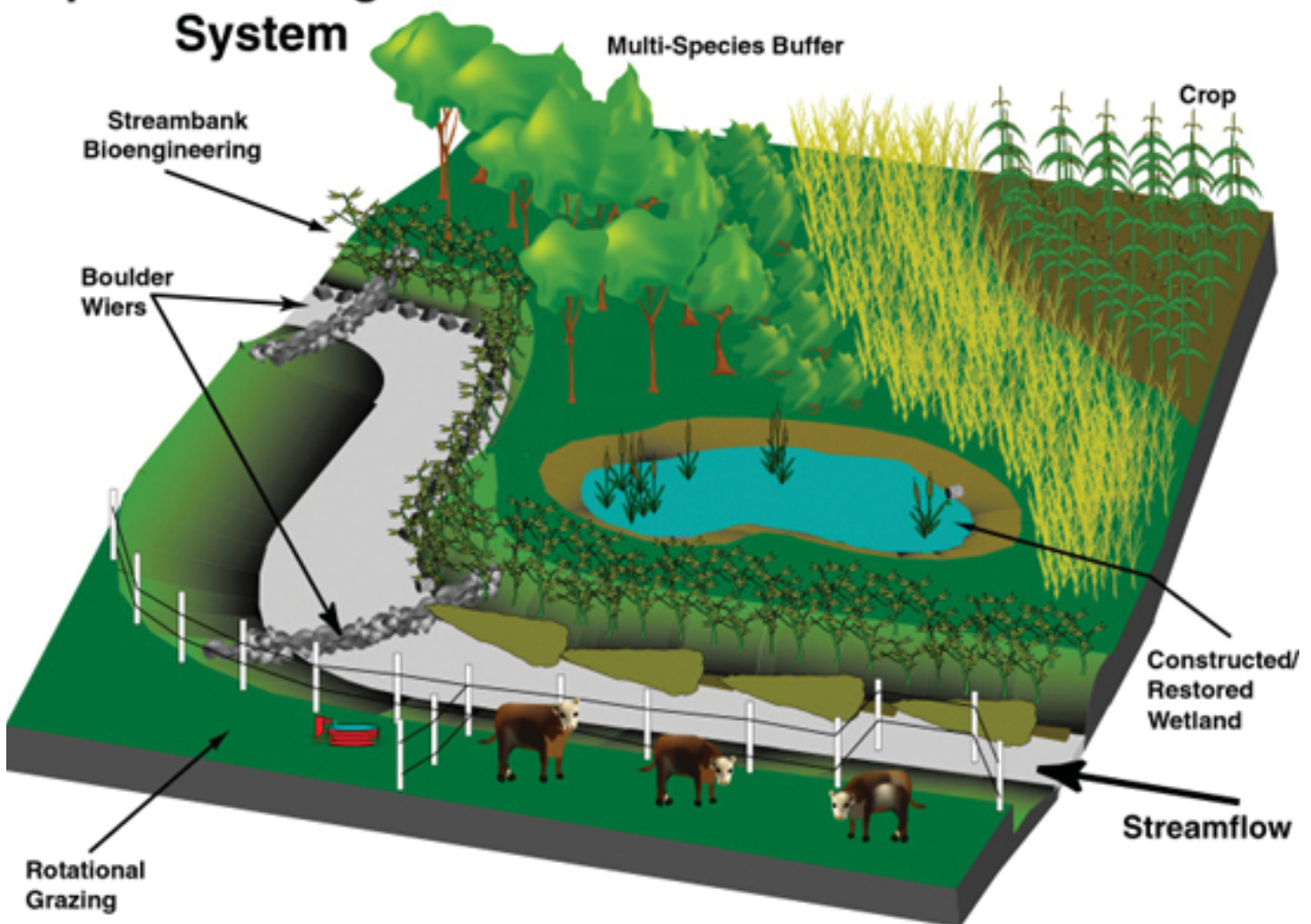
These may include:

- Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act (310 Permit)
- Montana Stream Protection Act (SPA 124 Permit)
- Montana Floodplain and Floodway Management Act (Floodplain Permit)
- Clean Water Act (Section 404 Permit)
- Rivers and Harbors Act (Section 404 Permit)
- Short-term Turbidity Standard (318 Permit)
- Montana Land-use License or Easement on Navigable Waters

These permits have similar information requirements and can be completed by using the joint application available on the Lincoln Conservation District Website: www.lincolncd.org. The permitting process can take time. Remember to allow up to 90 days for a permit to be processed by the permitting agency.

To assist the public in obtaining basic information on water resource permitting and the agencies to contact, a permitting guide specific to Lincoln County is available on the Lincoln Conservation District Website.

Riparian Management System



Raising Livestock

At one time, nearly every farm family had a flock of chickens, geese or turkeys in their backyard, along with a milk cow, a few hogs and other sustainable animals. Increased agricultural commercialization has led to the decrease of dependence on locally grown products. Rural living offers to the land owner the opportunity to raise farm animals and to have a source of food products in your own backyard.

Owning livestock and poultry can be a fun, rewarding and challenging experience for the entire family. Like any activity, there are impacts and responsibilities the owner should understand. Raising livestock and poultry can cause potential conflicts between wildlife predators (wolves, bears, mountain lions and coyotes).

Please keep in mind, Lincoln County has open grazing for livestock. This means you may be greeted on the road with a cow or two or more!

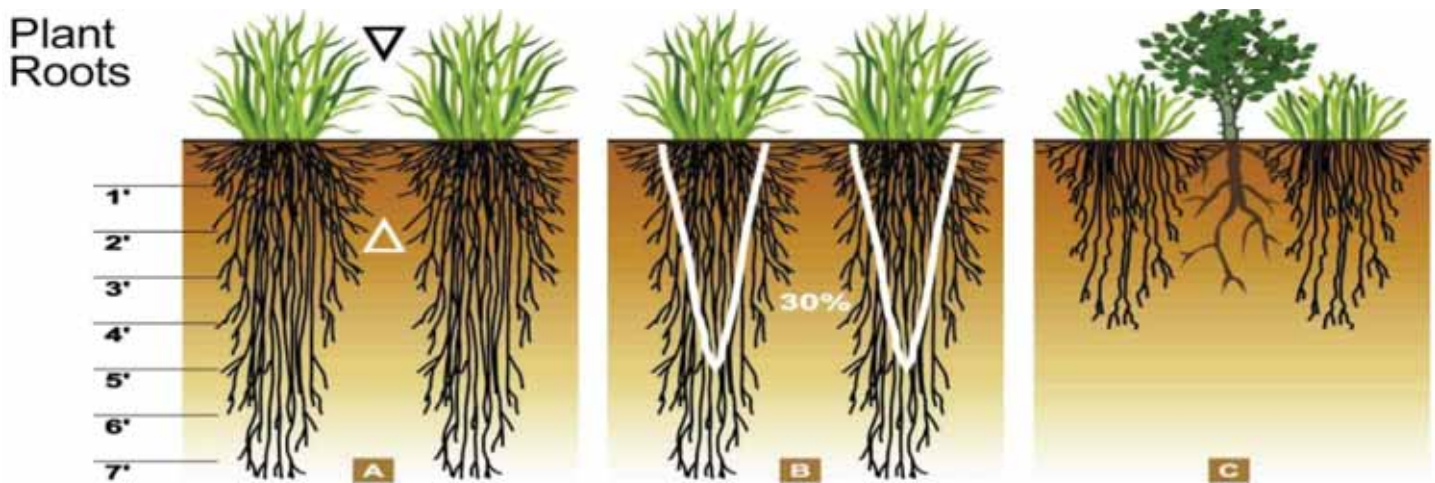
What Goes in as Food, Comes Out as Manure: No matter which animal it came from, manure and used bedding should be gathered regularly and stored away from natural waterways. Ideally, manure should be kept on a solid surface and under cover (a tarp is fine), particularly during the rainy season, to avoid leaching nutrients and bacteria into the soil or running off into a nearby waterway. An added benefit of storing manure this way is that you can compost it at the same time and create valuable soil amendments for your garden or pastures. Cleaning the stalls or pens of livestock will also help alleviate the odor created from manure.

Manage Grazing to Increase Animal Health, Maintain Pasture Vitality and Protect Water Quality: If you plan to keep your animals in a fenced area, be sure you have enough pasture per head. With enough pasture and cross fencing, you can provide nutritious grazing for your animals without destroying the grasses. When establishing the area where you will keep your animals, it is important to fence the animals away from streams and provide off-stream watering facilities. This protects the streamside vegetation and maintains water quality.

Spring Grazing: It is tempting to graze livestock when the green grasses begin to emerge in the pasture. However, this is also the most critical time of growth and establishment for the plant. In April and May, the soil is damp with moisture so plants can be damaged by trampling. In addition, if plants are grazed too early in the season or too frequently, defoliation could result in decreased root mass.

As you can see from the figure below, the amount of vegetation corresponds directly with root mass. Therefore, if grass is grazed improperly, the amount of root mass decreases significantly and opens up the possibilities for weeds to grow.

A good rule of thumb is to wait until grasses reach an appropriate grazing height and then allow animals only to defoliate the plant to a stubble height of 50%. For example, if grazing timothy, animals should be put out on pasture when the plant reaches a height of 8 inches.



Healthy Plants = Healthy Roots

The plant is then able to rebuild photosynthetic tissues without robbing the root zone. After a period of rest, the pasture will once again be ready for grazing, and therefore, be more productive for a longer period of time.

Rotational Grazing: Giving your pastures time to rest can be a difficult objective to achieve without proper planning. However, horses, for example, only require a few hours of grazing each day. Therefore, by allowing your horse to graze 2 hours in the morning and 2 hours in the evening, you could prevent obesity in your horse as well as protect your pasture from overgrazing.

For more information on pasture grass selection, grazing, or animal nutrition, please contact the MSU Extension Office in Lincoln County.

Cattle on the Flanagan Ranch



Winter Livestock Management: Winter can be a rough weather time for Montanans, and especially their livestock. Animals that have no shelter from wind or wet conditions require up to 30% more feed per day than those animals that have access to a windbreak or three sided shed.

An animal's need for nutrients goes up as the temperature drops. More energy means additional high-quality forages and grains. Long stemmed forages keep the rumen active, which in turn provides heat for the animal.

When caring for animals in times of weather stress, remember that animals have a much better tolerance for cold than humans. For example, the comfort range for cattle is somewhere between 40 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit. Horses have a wider range, from about 10 to 80 degrees Fahrenheit. With proper management, livestock owners should sail through the winter months with relatively few problems.

Living With Wildlife

One of the benefits of rural Montana living is the abundance of wildlife and some adaptable animals, such as deer, raccoons, black bears and turkeys, can do well in the environments we create near our homes. However, while wildlife being nearby does not itself pose a problem, some issues involving public safety, property damage, wildlife health and public perceptions of wildlife arise when wildlife and people come together.

Animals are opportunistic and will take advantage of any source of food and shelter. The key to living with wildlife is learning to understand them. Understanding the feeding habits, seasonal cycles, reproduction and other behavioral patterns will help you develop a strategy on coexisting with wildlife.

There has been a growth in the number of people who, in addition to feeding songbirds, also directly or indirectly feed deer, turkeys, bears, skunks, and other animals around their homes. Although we like to think we are helping wildlife by providing food, the reality is, we are encouraging wildlife to become dependent on people and upon artificial food sources. Wild animals that have been fed quickly lose their fear of humans, which may cause human-wildlife conflicts for an entire neighborhood or community. Not only is it illegal, but feeding game animals, such as deer, can also attract predators, such as mountain lions and coyotes. By inviting deer into your yard, you may also be inviting a mountain lion for a free meal.

What to do about nuisance bears. If you have had a visit from a bear (grizzly or black) it is best to contact the Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks immediately after the initial incident. Reporting the incident can help prevent future visits for both you and your neighbors. There may be surrounding neighbors that are having similar problems. Reporting all bear incidents or concerns gives MFW&P an opportunity to determine the most effective way to resolve the problem or prevent one from happening.

Preventing Conflicts. There are many things around our homes that can unintentionally attract wildlife and cause a conflict. Preventing conflicts between people and wildlife must be a community-wide effort to be truly

effective. The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks offers these tips on preventing conflicts:

People Food: Do not store refrigerators or freezers outside. Do not leave food unattended or in vehicles. Barbecue grills and smokers should be secured in a building when not in use.

Birdfeeders: It is best to feed songbirds only when bears are asleep in the winter (November through March). If you must feed birds the rest of the year, hang feeders at least 10 feet high and 4 feet away from any tree or pole. Be aware black bears are excellent climbers. You can also bring feeders in at night, but bears may still be attracted to seed and hulls left on the grounds.

Pet Food: If your pets are allowed in the house, feed them in the house. If they are outside pets, feed only the amount of food your pet will eat in a single feeding. Clean up any spilled or leftover food immediately and bring bowls in at night. Pet food should be stored in a secure building or bear-resistant container.



Cow moose and her calf on Bear Creek Road.

Livestock: Livestock feed should be stored in secure buildings or bear-resistant containers; leftover feed should not be left out overnight. Some livestock are vulnerable to predators. Be sure to keep all feed secured, clean up afterbirth and remove dead animals quickly. Pens, coops and corrals should be at least 50 yards from wooded areas with electrified fencing.

Fruit Trees and Gardens: Pick all fruit from trees as they ripen. Do not leave fruit to rot on the ground. Gardens should be harvested immediately as vegetables, herbs and flowers mature. Locate gardens away from forests and shrubs that bears may use for cover. Do not use blood meal as a fertilizer. Electric fencing is the most effective way at deterring bears.

Trash: Garbage should be stored inside a secure building or in a bear-resistant container. Only put garbage out

the day of pick up or haul your garbage to the landfill regularly.

Compost Piles: Compost piles are not generally recommended in areas where bears live. Compost should be limited to grass, leaves and garden clippings and should be turned frequently. If food scraps must be added, bury them deeply. Never add meat, oils or fats to compost. An electric fence is effective at deterring bear.

Assistance

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) provides assistance with wildlife conflicts. Information on living with wildlife or preventing wildlife conflicts can be found at the MFWP website at <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/livingwildlife>. Please contact the MFWP Libby Office at (406) 293-4161 for local information and assistance.



Bears can be very tenacious to get to the food.

Wildlife Friendly Fencing

Wildlife-human interaction probably occurs more in Montana now than any time in the last hundred years. Human sprawl has swept across the state, with increasing modern development alongside traditional farming and ranching. This, in turn, has increased the miles of fence in Montana, creating additional problems for wildlife.

Fences can be wildlife traps and barriers. Most large mammals, like deer and elk, are fully capable of jumping over fences. However, elk calves and deer fawns are frequently reluctant to try jumping for the first time and subsequently get separated from their mothers. Unfortunately, even animals that try to jump over fences are not always successful and may be injured in the attempt.

There a number of things a landowner can do to help avoid animals being caught in fencing. A Landowners Guide to Wildlife Friendly Fences: How to Build Fence

with Wildlife in Mind written by Christine Paige and funded by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks gives readers information on how to construct wildlife-friendly fences or cost-effective ways to modify existing fences.

Here are a few tips from the guide to consider when designing your fence:

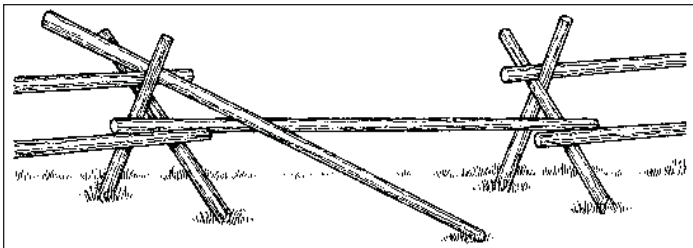
- The purpose of the fence.
- Topography; hills, gullies, streams and wetlands.
- Species of wildlife present.
- Daily or seasonal wildlife movements in the area.
- Presence of water, food and cover for wildlife.
- Presence of young animals.

Of course, the best alternative is no fence. If you must have a fence, think “less is best”. If you are only marking your property boundary, use one or two rails for a wood fence or no more than three strands of barbles wire in a metal fence.

Assistance

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) provides assistance with wildlife conflicts. Information on living with wildlife or preventing wildlife conflicts can be found at the MFWP website at <http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/livingwildlife>. Please contact the MFWP Libby Office at (406) 293-4161 for local information and assistance.

Both the photo and diagram show an example of a Jackleg fence commonly used for property boundary fencing. This type of fence can be difficult for wildlife to cross. The diagram shows a dropped rail which will provide a gap as a passage for animals. Other dropped rail fences include high post & rail and zigzag.



What Can Lincoln Conservation District Do For You?

Lincoln Conservation District was formed in June 1943 under the State Conservation Act originally passed in 1939 and is one of 58 conservation districts in Montana. These districts work within their local counties to fulfill the state's policy to conserve soil, water and other natural resources which grew from the "Dust Bowl" conditions of the 1930's.

Purpose: The purpose of the Lincoln Conservation District is to promote sustainable resource management for all natural resources in the county.

Mission: It is the mission of Lincoln Conservation District to promote and protect the natural resources of Lincoln County, Montana. Lincoln Conservation District will continue to educate the public and work to foster better understanding between all parties concerned with the protection of our natural resources.

The District has a 7 member Board of Supervisors; 5 elected and 2 appointed by the towns of Eureka and Rexford. Associate Supervisors also serve on the Board and are appointed to the Board by the Supervisors. The Board also has the support of advisors from the Natural Resource and Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service and Montana Department of Fish Wildlife & Parks.



310 Permits

Montana's Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act, the 310 Law, requires any person planning to work in or near a year-round (perennial) waterway on private or public land to first obtain a 310 Permit. The Lincoln Conservation District administers the 310 Law within Lincoln County. The purpose of the 310 permit program is to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, maintain water quality and stream channel integrity and to keep streams and rivers in as natural a state as possible. Permit applications can be obtained by contacting the Conservation District (406) 297-2233 or www.lincolncd.org.

Applications are reviewed and accepted or denied at the monthly District Board Meetings.

- There is no fee for a 310 Permit.
- Emergency Action: If a person takes emergency action, the Conservation District must be notified within 15 days in writing of the action taken and why.

Annual Tree and Shrub Sale

The Lincoln Conservation District offers an annual tree and shrub sale to the property owners of Lincoln County. The plants are purchased through a northwest conservation nursery. Customer orders are accepted beginning in September each year until spring of the following year, usually the last week of March. Plants generally arrive in April and are available to be picked up during a designated period at the U.S. Forest Service Office in Eureka. Buyers are able to select from plants that are native to the area and are good for habitat restoration, riparian restoration, erosion control and wind breaks. Plants will vary from conservation grade to 4 to 5 feet in height. For more information, call the District Office at (406) 297-2233 or visit the Lincoln Conservation District website at www.lincolncd.org.

Educational Programs

Rolling Rivers Stream Trailer: This trailer is ready to provide water education to residents of all ages in Lincoln County! A stream table on wheels, this unit can demonstrate not only stream dynamics but watershed principles as well.



Rolling Rivers Stream Trailer demonstration by the Lincoln Conservation District

Loaded with several hundred pounds of re-cycled material to create sand and a self-contained tank for pumping and re-circulating water, a meandering river is created. Small figures of farm animals, farm equipment and heavy construction equipment are placed on the sand to create a small community. Trees and brush are added to the riverbank. When the water is turned on, the water flows down the water channel. By removing the brush and trees from along the river, the demonstration shows a variety of water lessons including what happens when a river bank erodes.

Montana Youth Educational Programs: The Montana Department of Natural Resource Conservation offers annual youth camps for youngsters 12 to 18 years of age. These include the Envirothon, Montana Range Days, Youth Range Camp and Montana Natural Resources Youth Camp. The Conservation District coordinates with Lincoln County high schools to send students to the annual Envirothon in Lewistown. Students have the opportunity to display their knowledge of the environment.

The District also offers scholarships to youngsters to attend the youth camps held each year.

Workshops and Training: The Lincoln Conservation District offers a variety of workshops and training to the businesses and residents of the county. In cooperation with other agencies, workshops can include: realtor workshops for CEU credits, master gardener workshops and technical workshops.

Literature on various topics including weed identification and resource management are available at the Conservation District Office and the MSU Extension Offices.



Realtor workshop



High school students at the 2009 Envirothon

Planning & Development

The Lincoln County Planning Department provides land use planning and implementation services to the citizens and elected officials of Lincoln County and the cities of Troy, Eureka and Libby. The Department seeks to effectively improve the health, safety and welfare of all Lincoln County residents through active involvement in community and economic development, natural resources and land-use planning. Our goal is to evaluate existing conditions and ensure the provision of adequate public services to meet future needs. Visit: http://www.lincolncountymt.us/planning_dept.htm or call (406) 283-2461.

The following permits and approvals are, or may be, needed:

To Subdivide Land

The Montana Subdivision & Platting Act (MCA, 76-3) governs the adoption of local subdivision regulations. Lincoln County has adopted Subdivision Regulations pursuant to state law. Please visit our website for a complete set of Subdivision Regulations and the Citizen's Guide to Land Subdivision. It is advisable to consult with a surveyor or engineer as there are certain requirements in order to transfer or sell property.

To Build a Residential or Commercial Structure

Septic Permit – Contact the Department of Environmental Health (406) 283-2442.

Building Permit (if in the city of Libby or Troy) – Contact the city building inspector at:

Libby: (406) 293-2731

Troy: (406) 295-4151

To Build Near Lakes or Streams

Lakeshore Construction Permit and/or Floodplain Permit – Contact: Lincoln County Planning Department, (406) 283-2461, Floodplain Administrator, (406) 293-6296.

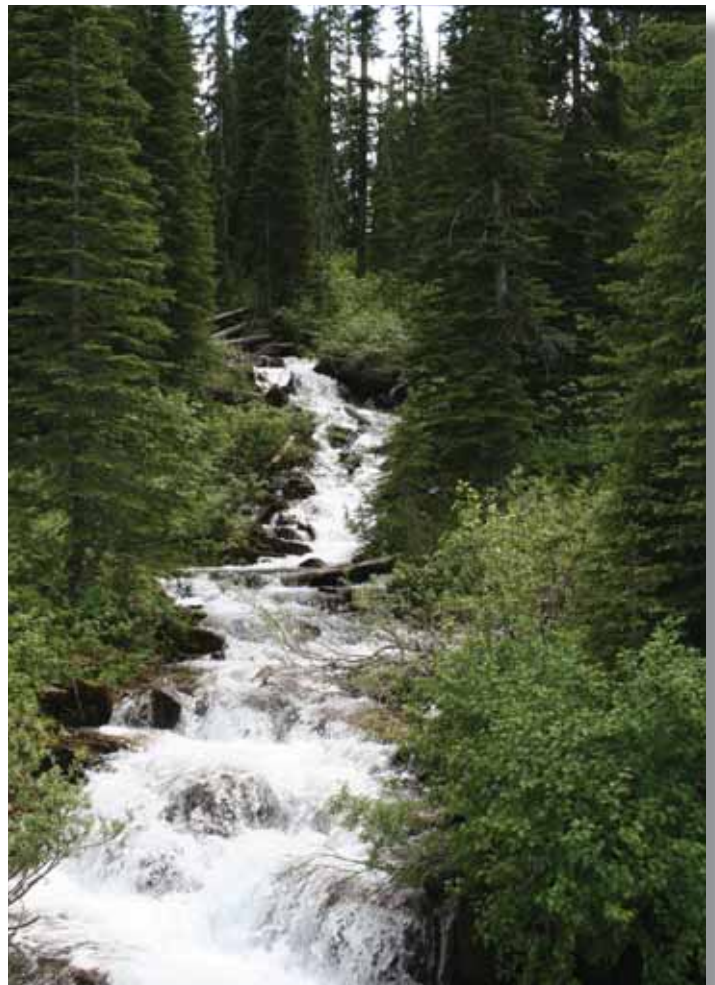
To Build a Road to Access Your Property

Approach Permit – Contact the Lincoln County Road Department(s):

Eureka: (406) 889-3702

Troy: (406) 295-4420

Libby: (406) 293-4557



Big Therriault Creek

Animal Control

Lincoln County Animal Control is a county operated department and serves the entire county and is contracted with the towns of Libby, Troy and Eureka to provide the enforcement of animal control within their city limits. The department has one full-time officer and one part-time officer in the Libby area and one part-time officer in the Eureka area.

Lincoln County Animal Control's main mission is to protect the public from vicious and dangerous animals and to control the spread of rabies. Rabies is spread when the saliva of an infected animal enters the body through a bite or broken skin. The virus travels from the wound to the brain, where it causes swelling or inflammation. This inflammation leads to symptoms of the disease. Most rabies deaths occur in children.

In the past, human cases in the United States usually resulted from a dog bite, but recently, more cases of human rabies have been linked to bats and raccoons. Although dog bites are a common cause of rabies in developing countries, there have been no reports of rabies caused by dog bites in the United States for a number of years due to widespread animal vaccination.

To help reduce the spreading of the rabies disease, all dogs in Lincoln County and within the city limits of Libby, Troy and Eureka are required to be licensed each fiscal year. Licenses are to be purchased starting July 1st of each year and expire June 30th of the following year. Owners **MUST** show proof of a current rabies vaccination for each dog, including the tag number and the expiration date. Kennel licenses are current for one year from the time of purchase. Owners **MUST** show proof of a current rabies vaccination for each dog including the tag number and the expiration date. Licenses for the county, cities and kennel licenses will **NOT** be sold without proof of current rabies vaccination.

License Fees:

Spayed or Neutered	\$ 5.00
Unaltered	\$10.00
Duplicate Tag Fees	\$ 1.00
Annual Kennel License	\$50.00
Senior Citizens, <i>one (1) free license each year (over 62 years of age)</i>	

If a dog is found to be unlicensed, the owner will be cited.

Lincoln County Animal Control's other county ordinances include dogs at large, vicious dogs and dog bites. City ordinances include dogs at large, dog bites, barking dogs, vicious dogs and pit bull / wolf prohibited within the city limits. For all the county and city ordinances, fees and further information please visit: www.lincolncountymt.us, click on **County Departments, Environmental Health and Animal Control**. For further information on rabies please visit: www.cdc.gov/RABIES or call the Libby office at (406) 293-4040, Eureka Office at (406) 889-5457.



*"Saving Pets
through
Educating
Owners"*

Waste Management

The rural areas in Lincoln County do not have roadside garbage pick-up and you may have to haul your own waste to the local transfer station or the landfill site. The Lincoln County Landfill in Libby is the main site with an outlying transfer station in Eureka and Troy.

Libby: 4000 Pipe Creek Road: (406) 293-7146

Eureka: 653 Airport Road: (406) 889-5117

Troy: 273 Dump Road: (406) 283-1713

The above locations accept the following specialized products:

- used appliances
- scrap metal
- wood products
- concrete,
- motor oil**
- anti freeze**
- batteries (auto or lead acid)
- yard waste
- general home waste

***Troy transfers station does not accept these products.*

For residents who live away from the 3 primary locations, 264 green boxes are available in 40 locations throughout Lincoln County for household waste.

RECYCLE: Lincoln County residents are encouraged to take part in the recycling programs. Self-serve recycle trailers are available with bins for:

- papers of all kinds
- plastics #1 through #7
- tin/steel cans and aluminum (sorry no glass)
- cardboard (sorry, no wax surface)

Recycling Sites:

Eureka: County Annex, 66121 MT Highway 37

Libby: Across from City Hall, 952 East Spruce

Troy: 141 St. Regis Haul Road



Recycling trailer(s) for Libby and Troy



Recycling Bin at Eureka Recycling Site

JUNK VEHICLES: At the Libby Landfill, junk vehicles are stored for annual crushing and recycling. If you have a junk vehicle call (406) 283-2442 for a release form to have the vehicle collected and hauled to Libby at no cost to you.

COMMUNITY RECYCLE DAYS: Recycle Eureka, a non-profit organization, holds recycling drives during the year for the residents in the Eureka area.



Forest Products

The Kootenai National Forest offers firewood, Christmas trees and other natural products for harvest. Permits are required for these activities and can be obtained at the Forest Service Office in your district.

Firewood: A \$5.00 fee is charged for each cord of wood with a minimum of 4 cords and maximum of 12 cords. A cord of wood measures 4' x 4' x 8'. Roads are opened at different times during the summer to allow gathering behind the gates. Check before you go.

Christmas Trees: Permits for cutting Christmas trees are \$5.00 each with a maximum of 3 trees per family.



This photo shows firewood being stacked on pallets to help prevent rotting of the lowest row.



Find your perfect tree.

Rock Harvesting: Permits are required to harvest rocks in the Kootenai National Forest. There is no charge for the permits under one cubic yard for personal use. Limit one permit per family, per year. Any harvesting over one cubic yard requires a special use permit and the fee is determined by the type of rock collected. If you are harvesting rocks within a perennial streambed, a 310 permit is required and can be obtained through the Lincoln Conservation District.



Avoid piling slash under the crowns of live trees.

Composting

Composting is the natural way to convert your organic materials, such as yard trimmings and food scraps into compost that can be spread in garden beds, under shrubs or can be used as potting soil for outdoor plants. It also reduces stress on your septic system and improves the performance. Depending on your available space, you can create your own compost pile.

Composting requires 3 basic ingredients:

- **Browns** – these include woody materials such as dead leaves, branches, twigs, straw and hay and break down more slowly.
- **Greens** – These include materials such as grass clippings, vegetable waste, fruit scraps, manure and coffee grounds. Greens are high in nitrogen, the favorite food of compost bugs
- **Water** – provides moisture to help break down the organic matter.

Having the correct amount of greens, browns and water is important. Ideally, your compost pile should have an equal amount of browns to greens and alternate layers of organic materials of different size particles.

Contact the MSU Extension agent at (406) 296-9019 for more tips on composting.

Composting can be broken down into 6 easy steps:

Step 1 Choose your material.

Step 2 Contain It: You can purchase your bin from a garden store or build your own with wood, cinder blocks or fencing.

Step 3 Wet It: Maintain enough moisture so that the pile has the feel of a wrung out sponge. If you are building a massive pile, sprinkle the layers as you go. Covering your compost is optional.

Step 4 Turn It: Turning or shaking the pile will add oxygen to fuel the microbotics. More turning = faster composting.

Step 5 Let It Be: After you have completed adding new ingredients, the organisms will have a chance to finish their work. You can expect the pile to shrink to about one fourth of the original volume.

Step 6 Use It: Your compost pile will be ready in 1 to 4 months. When the material at the bottom is dark and rich in color, the compost is ready to use. Apply an inch or more to your garden beds.

HOME COMPOSTING

Controlled microbial process
Converts organic materials into a soil conditioner

- ⇒ Grass clippings
- ⇒ Shredded branches
- ⇒ Leaves
- ⇒ Food scraps
- ⇒ Straw



ITEMS TO LEAVE OUT OF YOUR COMPOST PILE

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Bones | Fish |
| Butter | Cat and dog manure |
| Cheese | Oils |
| Peanut butter | Milk products |
| Meat | Mayonnaise |
| Dressings | Highly rhizomatous weeds |
| Grass clippings that have been sprayed with herbicide | |
| Diseased or insect infested plant material | |

WHY

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Slow to decompose | Attract animal pests |
| Contain parasites | Herbicide residual |
| Coats compostable materials (oil) | |
| Disease and insects can persist | |

Libby And Vermiculite

Vermiculite was mined from Zonolite Mountain nine miles northeast of Libby from the early 1920's until 1990. It was once the largest vermiculite mining operation in the world. The vermiculite mined at the W.R. Grace Company operation in Libby is contaminated with amphibole asbestos fibers. Mining and processing operations, natural veins of vermiculite, as well as home use of Libby vermiculite products, have resulted in the spreading of asbestos through the town. Unusually high numbers of people in Libby have been diagnosed with asbestos-related respiratory disease. Since 1999 the Environmental Protection Agency's Emergency Response Branch has been conducting sampling and removals to address the most highly contaminated areas in the Libby valley. In October 2002 Libby was added to the EPA's National Priorities List and the EPA established a program to inspect all properties in Libby. EPA has worked closely with local, state and federal agencies to understand how people might come into contact with asbestos contaminated vermiculite and what can be done to prevent future exposures.

As a resident, you are most likely to contact this material in the form of contaminated vermiculite (used as insulation or a soil amendment) or asbestos ore (used as decorative landscape rock or driveway gravel).

If you are new to Libby or know or suspect you have these materials on your property and were not contacted by EPA, contact the EPA Information Center at (406) 293-6194 for the latest information on the work being

done. The staff will answer your questions or direct you to the appropriate resource.

If you have vermiculite in your home, you should assume it is contaminated with asbestos. Sealed in the attic or walls, it poses little threat to you. There is a risk to residents or others who may be exposed during home repair, renovation or demolition. You can minimize exposure by:

Inside:

- Sealing cracks and openings with caulk.
- Preventing access to vermiculite-filled attics or crawl spaces.
- Carefully sweeping (after wetting) any vermiculite that filters in living spaces.
- If considering a remodel, consult with a trained contractor to minimize release of vermiculite.

For more information, contact the United States Environmental Protection Agency at www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/libby.

Outside:

- If you have vermiculite in your garden, wet the area before disturbing the soil.
- If you see exposed asbestos ore in your yard or driveway, an addition of a few inches of clean soil or gravel can help minimize exposure to those materials.



Vermiculite Mine in Libby

Recreation Opportunities

Lincoln County offers snow-covered mountains, valleys, crystal lakes and clear mountain streams for an abundance of outdoor activities.

Recreational activities abound year around. Snow season brings the enjoyment of cross country skiing, ice fishing, snowmobiling and snowshoeing. Snow can be expected as early as October and continue through May.

The seasons of spring and summer bring out the brilliant colors of nature as well as open up an abundance of activities to enjoy. Fall colors dominate the local views and denote the beginning of hunting season in northwest Montana.

Various times of the year the forest offers the recreationist camping, picnicking, backpacking, floatboating, boating, kayaking, fishing, mountain biking, horseback riding, rock climbing, wildlife viewing, just to name a few.

- **Ten Lakes Scenic Area:** The area was named for the Ten Lakes basin along the Canadian Border and offers spectacular beauty at Therriault Lakes and Bluebird Basin areas. Wildflowers abound in spring and summer along with the much-coveted huckleberry. All this can be enjoyed on over 89 miles of trails.



Little North Fork Interpretive Trail

- **Northwest Peaks Scenic Area** provides acres of primitive recreation opportunities. There are only a few miles of trails, but of those a visit to Yaak Falls is a sight to behold. The Northwest Peak Trail offers spectacular views of the upper West Fork Yaak River drainage.
- **Cabinet Mountains Wilderness** has more than 20 trails giving access to dozens of small lakes, alpine meadows and panoramic views.
- **Ross Creek Scenic Area** is home to the ancient cedar grove at Ross Creek. These giant trees reach 8 feet in diameter and 175 feet tall. Growing from the shady forest floor are lush ferns and flowers.
- **Kootenai Falls Swinging Bridge**, between Troy and Libby, was built by the Forest Service to access forest fires across the Kootenai River. The bridge offers a spectacular view of the Kootenai River gorge directly below Kootenai Falls.



Ross Creek Cedar Grove

Wildlife: The forests of the Kootenai are home to a huge variety of wildlife including elk, deer, moose, big-horn sheep, mountain lion, black bear and grizzly bear. The Ural Tweed Big Horn Sheep are native to western Montana and can be viewed along Lake Koocanusa. Our smaller wildlife neighbors are weasel, mink, beaver, otter, squirrel, pine martin, skunk, bobcat and lynx, just to name a few.

Fishing: Rivers, streams and lakes offer habitat to a variety of fish; rainbow, westslope cutthroat, bull and brook trout and mountain whitefish. The kokanee salmon, yellow perch, largemouth and small-mouth bass and sunfish are found in the lower elevation lakes.

Feathered Friends: Our population of birds has 191 species that have been recorded. Just a few too many to list!! A check list is available at the Forest Service Office in your area.

Camping: The Kootenai National Forest has 39 campgrounds for the outdoorsman, 20 of those are open year around.

Lookout Cabin Rental: The Kootenai National Forest has a number of former fire lookouts that are now available to rent. They include Webb Mountain, McGuire Mountain, Mt. Wam, Big Creek Baldy and Stahl Peak.



McGuire Mountain Lookout

Hiking, Backpacking: Over 300,000 acres of backcountry with no roads are available with 1,500 miles of trails. Many trailheads have sign-in boxes to help find hikers in an emergency. Always tell someone your destination and time you are due back.

Hunting: Elk, deer, black bear, mountain sheep, mountain goat, moose, turkey and grouse.



Summer fun on Lake Koocanusa

Swimming: Most lower elevation lakes.

Power Boating: Power boating on larger lakes and reservoirs.

Floating: Parts of the Kootenai, Fisher, Yaak, Tobacco and Bull rivers.

Horseback Riding: Individual trail riding with a limit of 8 head of stock is available without a permit.

Skiing: Downhill at Turner Mountain; some cross country skiing trails are intermittently groomed with unlimited opportunities on backcountry roads.

Snowmobiling: There are 166 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

Stay Safe in Bear Country!!

If you are camping in the wilderness, keep your camp clean. Some helpful safety tips are to store all food in vehicles or high in a tree. Plan your meals so there are no leftovers. Cook and store food away from where you are sleeping. Deposit garbage in a bear-resistant refuse container. Don't bury it.



Trail Riding at Swisher Lake



Established equine campsites are available in the Kootenai National Forest



Big Horn Sheep can frequently be seen along Highway 37

While on the trail, avoid surprise encounters by making noise, especially in heavily wooded areas. It is best to travel in a group and look for bear activity, fresh tracks or scat. Always carry a canister of bear spray. Make sure it is an EPA registered bear spray with 1 to 2% capsaicin and related capsaicinoids, has a spray duration of at least 6 seconds and a range of 25 feet.

For information on recreation activities and scenic areas, visit your area U.S. Forest Service Office.

Safe Winter Driving

Winter is the most difficult driving season. If you are not prepared it can be dangerous. It can be inconvenient, annoying, even infuriating. Not only do you have snow and ice to cope with, but there are fewer hours of daylight as well. Winter conditions call for different driving tactics; slower speed, slower acceleration, slower steering and slower breaking.

- The best advice for driving in bad winter weather is not to drive at all, if you can avoid it.
- Remember: A 4-wheel drive or all-wheel drive vehicle does not make you accident proof.

Tips to make the going easier and safer:

- Clear the ice and snow from your vehicle, all windows and windshield wipers.
- Drive slowly.
- Turn on your headlights.
- Use low gears to keep traction, especially on hills.
- Don't use cruise control or overdrive on icy roads.
- Be especially careful on bridges, overpasses and infrequently traveled roads as these will freeze first.
- Don't assume your vehicle can handle all conditions. Even four-wheel drive and front-wheel drive vehicles can encounter trouble on winter roads.
- Stopping on snow and ice without skidding requires extra time and distance.
- Look farther ahead in traffic. Actions by other drivers will alert you to problems and give you extra time to react.
- Tell someone where you are going.

Suggested Equipment and Supplies for Winter Driving:

- Snow shovel
- Scraper with a brush on one end
- Tow chain or strap
- Tire chains and/or snow tires
- Flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Abrasive material (cat litter, sand, salt or traction mats)
- Jumper cables
- Warning device (flares or reflective triangles)
- Brightly colored cloth to signal for help

- Waterproof container with candles, matches or a lighter, high energy food
- Heavy blanket or sleeping bags, ski caps and mittens
- First aid supplies
- Compass and/or GPS unit

Your Tire and Chain Options:

- To qualify as traction tires, your tires must have at least an eighth of an inch of tread and be labeled Mud and Snow, M+S, All Season or have a Mountain/snowflake symbol. It is recommended you carry chains in your vehicle even though you have approved winter tires. Studded snow tires are popular in winter driving. Remember, studded snow tires are only allowed for highway use October 1st through May 1st.

If You Get Stranded:

- Stay in the vehicle.
- Run the engine for heat about once every hour or every half hour in severe cold. For extra heat, burn a candle inside a coffee can.
- Make certain the vehicle is not air-tight by opening a window a little.
- Avoid alcohol. It lowers body temperature.
- Signal to other motorists you are stranded by using flares or flashlights or by tying a piece of brightly colored cloth to the exterior of the vehicle.

Snowplows are usually spreading anti-icing materials from the back of the truck and may need to stop or take evasive action to avoid stranded vehicles. Stay at least 15 car lengths (200 feet) back. Use caution when passing. Snowplows can throw up a cloud of snow that can reduce visibility to zero in less time than you can react.

For more tips go to the Montana Department of Transportation website: www.mdt.mt.gov

Winter Power Outage—Are You Prepared?

Without power you quickly lose access to many essentials of modern living. Depending on the time of year and the duration, a power outage can mean the difference between life or death. For instance, a summer wind storm can be a major inconvenience by causing a temporary loss of power and some loss of food in the freezer. However, even a short winter outage in Montana can be extremely dangerous to humans, livestock, pets and structures.

Are You Prepared? Since you never know when or how long you could be without power, here are a few tips to prepare for three essentials: warmth and comfort, cooling and water and sanitation, hygiene and health.



Lincoln Electric Cooperative repairing lines

General: Prepare an emergency kit (batteries, flashlight, food, water, bedding, candles, and other necessities) for at least 72 hours without power - in isolated rural areas, especially during winter months, perhaps longer.

Safety Comes First! If you need emergency heating for your home during the winter, safety is the primary consideration when choosing and using backup heating and cooking systems in order to decrease the risk of house fires, injuries and poisoning from toxic fumes.

Home Heating Options: Severe winter storms can cause power outages for a few days or even weeks. Some common alternative sources of home heating are fireplaces, wood-burning stoves and kerosene heaters. Keep in mind, however, stoves that have blowers, augers to feed fuel pellets or other electric controls will not fully

function without electricity. Make sure you have an ample supply of wood, pellets, propane, kerosene or other combustible fuel.

Pieces of Equipment That Should Not Be Used For Home Heating:

- Charcoal grills
- Unvented shop-type propane space heaters
- Unvented home kerosene heater

In the event of a furnace breakdown, it is tempting to use appliances that still have electric or gas supply to them. However, using appliances that are not designed for home heating is a dangerous compromise. Appliances that are not designed for home heating include:

- Gas and electric oven or stove
- Gas clothes dryer

Emergency Food: During an emergency, providing hot meals for your family may be difficult. Keep in mind if you have an electric kitchen cooking appliance, you will need to use an alternative cooking source. Have a supply of meal-in-a-can (don't forget the can opener) foods such as stews, soups, canned meats, beans or spaghetti to supplement dry products such as powdered milk, cereal, bread, dried meats and cheeses. Freeze-dried meals for campers and backpackers are often excellent foods that can be prepared with a minimum of heat and water.

Sanitary Facilities: If your water is shut off for an extended time, sanitation quickly becomes a problem. To prepare for a power and water outage, a portable camper-type chemical toilet with plenty of extra toilet paper is a clean alternative. For short outages, conserve the water in the toilet by turning off the water supply at the base of the toilet or disconnect the handle. When flushing is absolutely essential, flush only enough water to avoid toilet clogs. Instruct users to put toilet paper in a separate covered container.

Water Supply: If you rely on electricity to run your water pump, a power outage will restrict your water use for cooking, drinking, laundry, bathing and flushing the toilet. Prepare for an outage by storing water in large covered containers and in the bathtub. During an outage keep in mind the water heater, toilet tanks and the



Grave Creek in Winter

household plumbing have a sizable but limited water supply which should be saved for later use. For cooking and drinking, prepare by having sealed bottled water on hand.

Home Generators: Today, portable and whole-house electric generators are widely available and used to restore power to some home appliances during a power outage. However, if not installed and used properly, these can become a hazard. When selecting, installing and using a portable generator, give special attention to how much wattage the generator can accommodate so that it does not overload and malfunction.

Never use a portable generator indoors. Place outdoors with the exhaust away from vents, windows and doors to prevent carbon monoxide from entering the house. Make certain your generator is properly grounded and keep it dry. Have whole-house generators installed by a qualified electrician.

Never try to power the house wiring by plugging the generator into a wall outlet. For portable generators, it is best to plug appliances directly into the generator using a heavy-duty, outdoor rated extension cord. Have ample fuel available for extended usage.

Electricity is a powerful tool and it can be a lethal hazard. Good safety habits are the best prevention against electrical hazards. Visit www.electricalsafety.org for more information.

Freezing Pipes: If the ability to heat your house is lost during times of frigid temperatures, you will have to protect pipes and water sources from freezing. If your water supply has not been discontinued, you can keep water from freezing in the pipes by dripping water from the kitchen and bathroom faucets. If your water supply has been shut off during freezing temperatures for an extended time, consider draining all pipes. If convenient to locate, water equipment such as the water softener and pressure tanks could be covered with blankets, bales of straw or other insulative materials.



Fresh snow

Local Resources

Emergency Services – Dial 911

Law Enforcement

Eureka Police Dept.; 106 Dewey Avenue; (406) 297-2121
Libby Police Dept.; 603 Mineral Avenue; (406) 293-3343
Troy - Police Dept.; 301 Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-4111
U.S. Customs; Roosville; (406) 889-3865
U.S. Border Patrol; Roosville; (406) 297-9075
Lincoln County Sheriff Dept.
 Eureka; 106 Dewey Avenue; (406) 296-2555
 Libby; 512 California Avenue; (406) 293-4112
Highway Patrol; 800-525-5555
 Eureka; 106 Dewey Avenue; (406) 296-2555
 Libby; 512 California Avenue; (406) 293-5150

Fire

Bull Lake Volunteer Fire Dept.; 47 Bethel Drive, Troy; (406) 295-9711
Eureka Volunteer Fire Dept.; 10 Utility Drive, Eureka; (406) 297-9083
Fisher River Volunteer Fire Dept.; 100 West Camp Road, Libby; (406) 293-3907
Libby Volunteer Fire Dept.; 119 East 6th, Libby; (406) 293-9217
Rural Fire District No. 1; (406) 293-9217
Trego/Fortine/Stryker Volunteer Fire Dept.; (406) 882-4820
Troy Fire Dept.; 301 East Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-4411

Ambulance

Eureka Volunteer Ambulance; 103 Schagel Way; (406) 297-3318
Libby Volunteer Ambulance Barn; 307 Montana Avenue; (406) 293-5582

Animal Control

Eureka Animal Shelter; 19 U.S. Hwy 93 North; (406) 889-5457
Lincoln County Animal Control
 Eureka; 19 U.S. Hwy 93 North; (406) 297-2121 (Eureka Dispatch)
 Libby; 255 County Shop Road; (406) 293-4040
 Troy; 301 East Kootenai; (406) 295-4411

City Hall

Eureka; 108 Dewey Avenue; (406) 297-2123
Libby; 952 East Spruce; (406) 293-2731
Rexford; 142 Gateway; (406) 297-2439
Troy; 301 East Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-4151

Chamber of Commerce

Eureka; 2 Dewey Avenue; (406) 889-4636
Libby; 905 West 9th ; (406) 293-4167
Troy; 301 East Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-1064

Hospital

St. Johns Lutheran Hospital; 350 Louisiana Avenue, Libby; (406) 293-0100
North Valley Hospital; 1600 Hospital Way, Whitefish; (406) 863-3500
Kalispell Regional Medical Center; 310 Sunnyview Lane, Kalispell; (406) 752-5111

Justice Court

Eureka; 66121 Mt. Highway 37; (406) 297-2622
Libby; 512 California Avenue; (406) 283-2412

Landfill/Transfer Site - Lincoln County Landfills

Eureka; 653 Airport Road; (406) 889-5117
Libby; 4000 Pipe Creek Road; (406) 293-7146
Troy; 273 Dump Road; (406) 283-1713

Recycle Sites

Eureka; County Annex, 66121 Mt. Highway 37
Libby; across from city hall, 952 Spruce
Troy; 141 St. Regis Haul Road

Sanitation

North Lincoln Sanitation; 331 9th Street North, Eureka; (406) 297-2777
Kootenai Disposal; 2049 Highway 2, Libby; (406) 293-3711

Library—Lincoln County Public Library

Eureka; 318 Dewey Avenue; (406) 296-2613
Libby; 220 West 6th ; (406) 293-2778
Troy; 207 North 3rd ; (406) 295-4040

Lincoln County Offices

Eureka Annex; 66121 Mt. Highway 37; (406) 297-3139
Libby Annex; 418 Mineral Avenue; (406) 293-7781
Libby Courthouse; 512 California Avenue; (406) 293-7781

Medical Clinic

Eureka
North Country Medical Clinic; 1343 Highway 93 North; (406) 297-2438
Eureka Health Prompt Care; 304 Osloski Road; (406) 297-3145
Libby
Libby Clinic; 211 East 2nd Street; (406) 293-8711
Prompt Care Walk-in Clinic; 350 Louisiana Avenue; (406) 293-0186
Lincoln County Community Health Center; 711 California Avenue; (406) 293-3755
Troy
Medicine Tree Primary Care; 318 East Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-5752
Northwest Community Health Center; 206 Callahan Road; (406) 295-8318

Lincoln County Health Nurse
Eureka Office; 66121 Mt. Highway 37; (406) 296-2023
Libby Office; 418 Main Street; (406) 293-2660

Post Office

Eureka; 155 14th Street; (406) 297-2132
Fortine; 170 Meadow Creek Road; (406) 882-4550
Libby; 518 Main Avenue; (406) 293-4184
Rexford; 202 Gateway Street; (406) 297-2106
Trego; 252 Fortine Creek Road; (406) 882-4651
Troy; 123 Kootenai Avenue; (406) 295-4021
Stryker; 120 Sunday Creek Road; 406) 882-4723

School District

Eureka; Business Office; 335 Sixth Street; (406) 297-5650
Elementary; 235 Seventh Street East; (406) 297-5500
Junior High; 335 Sixth Street East (5-8 grades); (406) 297-5600
Lincoln County High School; 340 Ninth Street East; (406) 297-5700
Fortine District 14(county); 290 Main Street (K-8 grades); (406) 882-4531
Trego District 53 (county); 56 Loon Lake Road (K-8 grades); (406) 882-4713
Libby; Business Office; 724 Louisiana Avenue; (406) 293-8813
Elementary; 700 Idaho Avenue; (406) 293-8881
Middle School; 101 Ski Road (6-8 grades); (406) 293-2763
High School; 150 Education Way; (406) 293-8802
Troy; Business Office; 218 Spokane Avenue; (406) 295-4606
McCormick Elementary (county); 1860 Old Highway 2 North (K-8); (406) 295-4982
Morrison Elementary; 501 East Kalispell; (406) 295-4321
Yaak Elementary District 24 (county); 11784 Yaak River Road (K-8 grades); (406) 295-4805
Troy Junior High/High School; 326 Spokane Avenue; (406) 295-4520

Senior Center

Eureka; 310 1st Avenue E; (406) 297-2188
Libby; 206 E. 2nd ; (406) 293-7222
Troy; 304 3rd; (406) 295-4140

Utilities

Lincoln Electric Cooperative; 500 Osloski Road, Eureka; (406) 889-3301
InterBel Telephone Cooperative; 300 Dewey Avenue, Eureka; (406) 889-3311
City of Troy Power and Light; 301 East Kootenai, Troy; (406) 295-4540
Northern Energy; 1215 Highway 2 West, Libby; (406) 293-5548
Northern Lights; P.O. Box 269, Sagle, Idaho; 800-326-9594
Flathead Electric; 121 West 4th Street, Libby; (406) 293-7122
Frontier Communications; 114 East 4th Street, Libby; (406) 293-4175
Buried Cable Location Service UDIG; (800) 551-8344

Agencies: You Might Want to be Aware of

In this booklet, we have referenced public agencies. You may want to be aware of others that may be involved.

Federal

Army Corp of Engineers

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers plans and constructs reservoirs and local measures to control floods and improve navigation. It is active in flood control, hydroelectric power, municipal and industrial water supplies and recreation as well as planning for water resource development.

Contact: 17115 Highway 37, Libby, 59923
(406) 293-7751

www.nwo.usace.army.mil/

Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

Land managed by the BLM is generally non-forested public land used for grazing and recreation. Its Minerals Management Service manages all minerals within the public estate (regardless of who owns or manages the surface).

Contact: Missoula Field Office
3255 Fort Missoula Road, Missoula 59804
(406) 329-3914

www.blm.gov/mt/st/en.html

Bureau of Reclamation (BOR)

BOR locates, constructs and maintains works to store, divert and develop water in the western United States. BOR projects provide for municipal and industrial water supply, hydroelectric power, irrigation, water quality improvement, fish and wildlife, outdoor recreation, flood control and navigation.

Contact: Pacific Northwest Regional Office
1150 N. Curtis Road, Suite 100, Boise, Idaho 83706
(208) 378-5012

www.usbr.gov/pn/

Environmental Protection Agency

The mission of the EPA is to protect human health and the environment. To accomplish this, the EPA develops and enforces regulations, offers grants, studies environmental issues, sponsors partnerships, and provides education about the environment.

Contact: EPA Information Center
108 E. 9th Street, Libby 59923
(406) 293-6194

www.epa.gov/region8/superfund/libby

USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service

NRCS works side-by-side with conservation districts to provide science-based technical assistance with soils, conservation practices and planning to Montana land owners and others.

Contact: 949 US Highway 93 North, Eureka 59917
(406) 296-7152

www.mt.nrcs.usda.gov

USDA - United States Forest Service – District Ranger Stations

The Forest Service manages forested public lands for multiple uses and oversees projects on them. It is concerned with timber management, erosion, grazing, weed control, water quality and other soil and water problems. USFS sponsors cooperative programs through state forestry agencies, the Natural Resources Conservation Services and conservation districts to control fires, stabilize gullies, improve forest growth, plant trees and control forest pests.

Contact: Supervisors Office; 31374 Hwy 2, Libby

(406) 293-6211

Eureka; 949 US Hwy 93 North

(406) 296-2536

Libby (Canoe Gulch); 12557 Hwy 37

(406) 293-7773

Cabinet Mountains (Trout Creek); 2693 Hwy 200

(406) 827-3533

Fortine (Murphy Lake); 12797 US Hwy 93 South

(406) 882-4451

Troy (Three Rivers); 12858 US Hwy 2

(406) 295-4693

www.fs.fed.us

US Fish & Wildlife Service

The USFWS is responsible for wild birds, mammals (except certain marine mammals) and inland sport fisheries. FWS conducts research activities, conducts environmental impact assessments and manages wildlife refuges.

Contact: Creston Fish & Wildlife Center

780 Creston Hatchery Road, Kalispell 59901

(406) 758-6880

www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie

State

Lincoln Conservation District

LCD is one of 58 conservation districts within the State of Montana that are helping local people match their interests and needs with the technical and financial resources necessary to put conservation practices on the land. The Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act, also known as the 310 Law, is administered by Conservation Districts.

Contact: 949 US Highway 93 North, Eureka 59917

(406) 297-2233

www.lincolncd.org

lincolncd@interbel.net

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation

DNRC promotes stewardship of Montana's water, soil, forest and rangeland resources; regulates forest practices; gas and oil exploration and production; administers grant and loan programs.

Contact: 1625 Eleventh Avenue

P.O. Box 201601, Helena 59620

(406) 444-2074

www.dnrc.mt.gov

Montana Department of Agriculture

MDA administers state laws protecting agricultural producers from diseases, insects, predators and weeds. MDA regulates fruit, seed and other agricultural product grading. MDA issues and approves licenses for nursery dealers and pesticide operators and applicators.

Contact: 302 North Roberts Street
P.O. Box 200201, Helena 59620
(406) 444-3144
www.agr.mt.gov

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

DEQ is the state's lead agency in charge of implementing state and federal resource protection laws. The agency has both regulatory and non-regulatory functions and administers the provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Contact: 1520 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901, Helena 59620
(406) 444-2544
deq.mt.gov

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks

MFWP oversees the state fisheries and wildlife programs and manages state owned parks. MFWP provides technical assistance to conservation districts in regulating non-governmental projects affecting streams under the Natural Streambed and Land Preservation Act. It also regulates governmental stream projects under the Stream Preservation Act.

Contact: 385 Fish Hatchery Road, Libby 59923
(406) 293-4161
fwp.mt.gov

Montana State Forestry

Montana State Forestry operates forested trust lands to promote stewardship of natural resources under the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.

Contact:	Stillwater Unit (406) 881-2371	Libby Unit (406) 293-2711
	P.O. Box 164	177 State Lands Road
	Olney 59927	Libby 59923

Montana State University Extension

The MSU Extension Service is a publicly funded educational resource system with links to the education and research resources and activities for 74 land grant institutions, 3,150 counties and the USDA. The goal of the Extension Service is to strengthen the social, economic and environmental well-being of families, communities and agricultural enterprises.

Contact: 66121 Highway 37, Eureka 59917 (406) 296-9019
Libby (406) 283-2452
www.msuextension.org

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Lincoln Conservation District 2012

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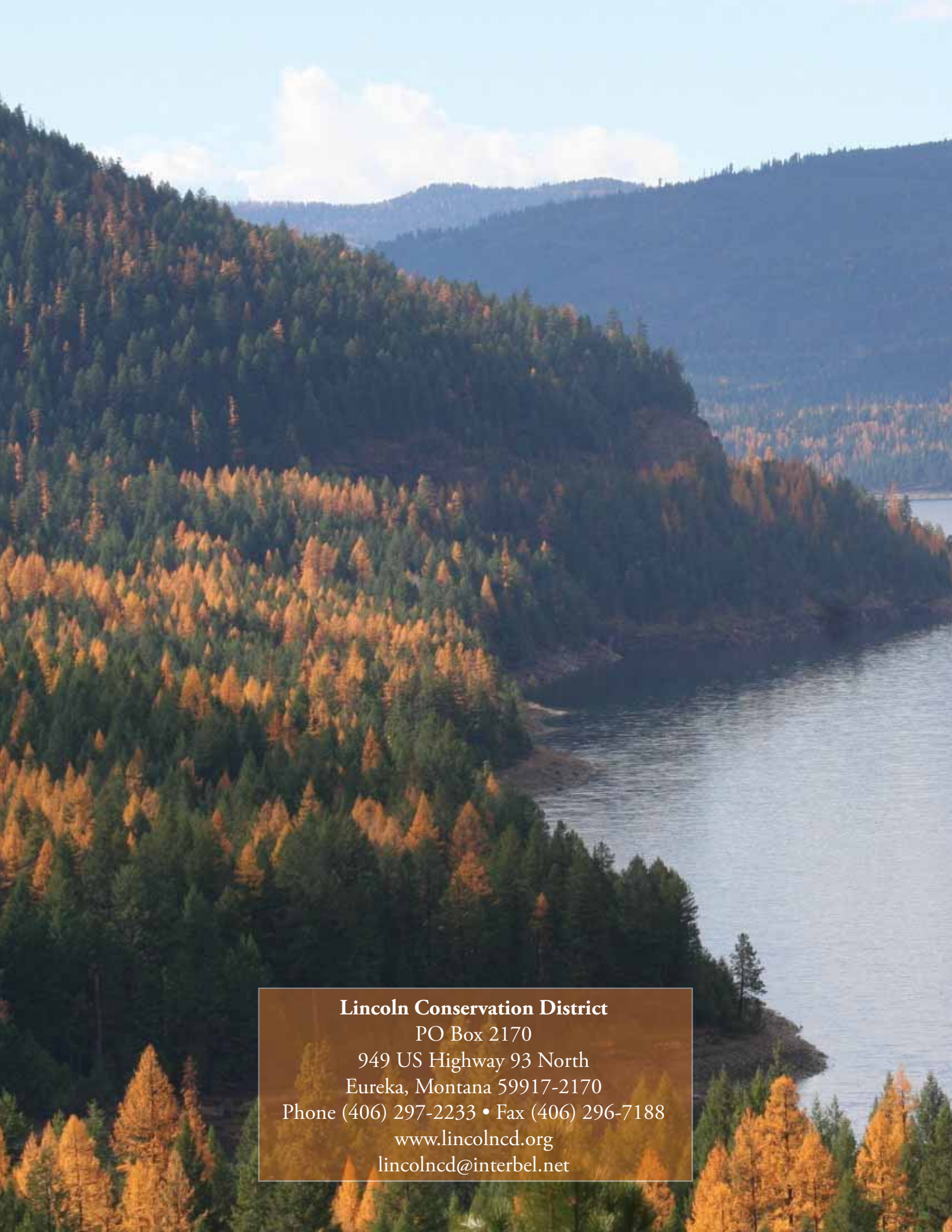
Becky Lihme, District Administrator



Cabinet Mountains from Horse Meadows.



Fisher River



Lincoln Conservation District

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