



“...to protect the natural resources that make the North Fork an unparalleled environment for wildlife and people.”

Volume XVIII

Summer 2001

Number 1

COMMUNITY ADDRESSES COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Limits on types and location of new business may soon be a reality in the North Fork. In a recent landowner survey, 93.5 percent of respondents favored some restrictions on commercial development. Hearings on proposed codes reflecting survey result will be held at Sonderson Hall June 12 and July 10 at 7pm.

Reprinted from *The North Fork News*, Spring 2001:

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Results of the North Fork Land-use Planning Committee's August 2000 landowner survey are in. Response rate to the survey, which was mailed to all North Fork property owners, was more than 50 percent. Surveys were tabulated in October. Highlights are:

- ◆ 93.5 percent of respondents favored restrictions on commercial development on the North Fork.
- ◆ Included in the above are 23.5 percent who were against any new commercial development here.
- ◆ From the list of "appropriate additional businesses" on the survey, the most popular were motel/rental cabins, bed and breakfast, public showers, coin-operated laundry, private school and restaurant.
- ◆ From the list of "appropriate new businesses," the overwhelming favorite was auto mechanic.
- ◆ Except for B&Bs, respondents favored allowing additional businesses in the Polebridge town site only.

On Jan. 6, the North Fork Land-use Planning Committee met to translate survey results into proposed zoning regulations reflecting the wishes of North Forkers. A draft of the proposed code is scheduled to be mailed to all property owners in May. *Public hearings concerning the regulations are scheduled for 7 p.m. June 12 and July 10 (both Tuesdays) at Sonderson Hall.*

The survey and Public Forums ...give the North Forkers the opportunity to have a direct say in the future of the community – and property owners are urged to participate in

the process.

Land-use committee members are: Jon and Pat Cole, Sandi Elliott, John Frederick, Ed Heger, Duke Hoiland, Tom Marx, Lynn Ogle, Richard Wackrow, and Larry Wilson. *(continued on page 2)*

Also on the survey was a question about paving the North Fork Road. Of those who responded to the question, 61.3 percent favored paving to Camas Creek, 45.0 percent favored paving from Camas Creek to Polebridge, and 27.4 percent favored paving it from Polebridge to the Canadian Border.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Ed Heger

The past year has been productive for conservation in the North Fork. Highlights of the year include over 1390 acres being protected via conservation easements, a paving initiative was stalled, significant progress is being made on cross border conservation, and community based land use planning is progressing. These topics and more are covered in this year's newsletter.

The Board developed the NPFA brochure that you received recently. We felt that developing a mission statement and articulating the challenges facing the North Fork would sharpen our focus and priorities. We will continue to be active in promoting conservation on public land in the North Fork. We also believe a critical niche for NPFA is to promote conservation on private lands through community involvement. By encouraging landowner membership and participation we can improve our effectiveness.

The land use planning process takes another step this summer and fall. Public hearings will be held at Sondreson Hall, June 12 and July 10 at 7pm. These proposed zoning regulations for commercial development have been developed by the community and deserve our support. Landowners should plan on attending.

I am pleased to report a positive response to the brochure. We have over 35 new members. I encourage our current members to renew and urge those who share our perspective to join us. I hope to see you on the weekend of July 28 for our annual meeting and hikes. Finally, I want to thank the contributors to this year's newsletter. I believe you will find their work informative and a worthwhile read.

LANDOWNERS PROTECT WILDLIFE HABITAT by Marilyn Wood, The Nature Conservancy

Wildlife and human residents of the North Fork can breathe a collective sigh of relief. There'll be no additional housing developments on about 1400 acres of private lands in the area; thanks to four area property owners who signed conservation agreements with The Nature Conservancy of Montana last December. The agreements include 4 conservation easements and one land purchase. All of these agreements were made with willing landowners and a non-governmental organization.

The largest easement was for 1,127 acres of the Rocky Bar O Ranch, the largest tract of private land in the entire North Fork. Anyone living or visiting the North Fork area knows how critical this property is for wildlife habitat. Elk and deer are regular residents while the occasional grizzly, lion and wolf wander through. The Rocky Bar O Ranch provides critical low elevation habitat connecting other habitats found in adjacent Glacier National Park and Coal Creek State Forest. Intense development of the Ranch without conservation planning could have effectively "fragmented" wildlife habitat. The impact could have had serious impacts on wildlife throughout the entire watershed.

Tom Ladenburg, owner of the Rocky Bar O Ranch, wanted to ensure that his traditional ranch activities would continue into the future and that the deer and elk he loves would always have a home. The Ranch will remain intact permanently. The easement allows for forest management activities and hay and livestock production. It also provides for Tom's desire to continue cabin rentals and other activities. Transaction costs for the Rocky Bar O easement were funded with private donations and a grant from the Montana State Agricultural Heritage Fund.

Conservation agreements were also completed on 268 acres with three other property owners- an easement and below-cost purchase involving 113 acres with Jim and Dawn Gaitis, a 50-acre easement with Ed Heger, and a 105-acre easement with Peter and Caroline Guynn (the old Boberg property). All 3 of these transactions were supported by grants from the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to help pay for any direct costs associated with the agreements. Grants are an important way to assure that the landowners don't incur expenses when donating easements.

All of these projects demonstrate the landowners' commitment to assuring the long-term protection of the North Fork's wildlife values while still maintaining its unique cultural heritage. To learn more about conservation easements, see Workshop announcement.

CONSERVATION EASEMENT WORKSHOP, JULY 26

Landowners interested in learning more about conservation easements are invited to a workshop on Thursday July 26 from 9am-noon. The session will delve into specifics, going beyond a discussion of conservation benefits to include complex economic, financial and tax implications. This will be an opportunity to learn how to structure an easement that best suits your individual needs. Workshop participants include Marilyn Wood, The Nature Conservancy; Amy Eaton, Montana Land Reliance; Susan How, Flathead Land Trust; real estate appraiser Dave Heine and CPA Reed Gunlickson. Lunch will be provided. Please contact Ed Heger 253-0678 to reserve a spot.

TRANSBOUNDARY NEWS

Wildlife Conservation Area Designated in British Columbia by Dave Hadden and Rachel Potter

In April, the Province of British Columbia designated the Canadian Flathead River (their part of our North Fork) and other portions of the southern Rockies as a Wildlife Conservation Area (WCA). This designation affects over 680,000 acres. The Flathead and Wigwam riparian zones, and higher elevations in the Flathead and parts of the Wigwam, Sheep Mountain, Elk River, Bull River, Height of the Rockies and Elk Lakes area are included.

This is a huge accomplishment for which our Canadian neighbors should be extremely pleased and proud. While the designation does not exclude commodity extraction and current operations, emphasis will be on management for threatened and endangered species and reduction of habitat fragmentation. Wildlife values will come first in the Canadian Flathead. Our information is that this designation will be finalized when the Province completes a management plan for the WCA. The writing and completion of this document is expected in 60-90 days and will be as contentious as the actual land designation effort. BC conservationists will be looking to Montana conservationists to offer testimony and support for this management plan.

International Conservation Reserve

This WCA designation sets the stage for future conservation work in Montana as well as British Columbia. In the last two years, a coalition of individuals, nonprofit groups and agencies from both sides of the border have formed the Flathead Transboundary Network, reviving efforts to establish an International Conservation Reserve (ICR) spanning the border from Canada's Flathead drainage to Montana's North Fork.

The ICR concept originated during the controversy and widespread concern over the Cabin Creek Coal Mine proposal in British Columbia in the early 1980's. Montana Governor Stan Stevens established the North Fork Steering Committee. The broad-based Montana group developed a 1990 "Conceptual Strategy" with goals to: "1) Preserve and if necessary restore water and air quality to sustain the environment for fish, wildlife, and people. 2) Preserve and if necessary restore the ecological integrity and biodiversity of the drainage..."

Due to a lack of a similar effort *at the time* in British Columbia, the Conceptual Strategy was put on the back burner, but remains an important document calling for meaningful conservation of the watershed. The NFPA continues to work with others on transboundary conservation concepts, including an ICR. To learn more about the ICR concept, visit www.transboundaryflathead.org.

Transboundary Publication Available

The Flathead Network recently finished a wonderful and informative publication *Conserving an International Treasure – The Transboundary Flathead* (a.k.a. State of the Ecosystem Report). There are chapters on human use, geology, climate, fire, water, plants, mammals, fish and aquatic life, birds, insects, and the ICR. It is a great reference as well as fascinating and enjoyable reading. The report will soon be available online at www.transboundaryflathead.org, for \$10 at the NFPA annual meeting, or for \$12 from Rachel in the mail (see membership page).

CONSERVATION GROUP SEEKS COMPROMISE WITH SNOWMOBILERS

by Rachel Potter

In December, U.S. magistrate Leif Erickson ruled that the Flathead Forest has not enforced its forest plan since 1986, by allowing snowmobiles in management areas 2 and 2A. Erickson wrote "The (forest has) continually failed to enforce the terms of the forest plan from 1986 through the winter 1999-2000...The use of motorized vehicles is in direct contravention with the use designations for those areas." U.S. District Judge Don Molloy is expected to issue a decision reflecting Erickson's recommendations. (continued on page 4)

Since the forest plan was enacted in 1986, improved technology has facilitated dramatically increased motorized winter use in many previously inaccessible areas. Flathead Forest personnel have estimated that some MA2A (non-motorized) basins in the Whitefish Range see 100-150 snowmobiles a day.

Since the ruling, the Montana Wilderness Association is working toward a compromise with the Flathead Forest and the Montana Snowmobile Association that would permit snowmobiles in most currently used areas while limiting expansion of use into other areas of critical habitat.

PAVING UPDATE by Ed Heger

As you are probably aware, the project to pave the lower North Fork Road has stalled. Funds were shifted to Big Mountain Road improvements. While this was good news, the pressures for paving will continue for a couple of reasons:

- ◆ As development continues, more residents tire of traveling the poorly maintained road and become more likely to support paving. This trend showed up in the Land Use survey results that had an advisory question on paving. A majority of the respondents (61.3%) supported paving the section from Camas Bridge south. The survey did not include an improved gravel road option. Nevertheless, there is sizable landowner support for paving.
- ◆ Paving will save Flathead County considerable road maintenance dollars. The North Fork Road is one of only a few county roads eligible for federal funds. In addition, once the road is paved and brought up to state standards, the county can turn the road, along with all future maintenance costs, over to the state.

While a lack of funds has temporarily stalled paving, the issue has heightened some peoples' recognition that the quickest way to forever change the North Fork would be to pave the road. Paving would accelerate the pace of development, having a significant adverse impact on wildlife and the life style of residents and visitors.

This view is supported by a jeopardy opinion issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 1982 concluding that adverse impacts on endangered & threatened species would occur. Funding for the recent paving effort was diverted prior to preparing an EIS, which would be required before paving. It is likely that an EIS would reach the same conclusion, i.e. paving has an adverse impact on endangered species.

While pressure for paving continues given ongoing development and county budget considerations, it is offset by strong opposition and the potential for an EIS that prohibits paving. Now may be the time to look at a creative compromise. Such a compromise might involve using federal funds to provide ongoing maintenance for the entire road rather than paving only a short section. Improved maintenance, combined with assurances that this is not a prelude to paving, has the potential to win support from local residents, the conservation community, and the county.

NORTH FORK WETLANDS REPORT AVAILABLE by Rachel Potter

In 1999, the Montana Natural Heritage Program identified and inventoried wetlands in the North Fork. The information will be used to help prioritize wetlands for protection and mitigation. Twenty four wetlands were inventoried and evaluated for significance based on: presence of rare plant or animal species or uncommon natural vegetation types, the diversity of vegetation types, the functional integrity of the wetland, the landscape context and the size of the wetland. Three sites, were given the highest rank of Outstanding Significance - the Teepee Lake Complex, Mud Lake Complex, and Hay Creek-North Fork Floodplain wetlands. The report has detailed descriptions of these and 7 other sites.

The report states that "The North Fork Valley stands out as having the least impacted wetland and riparian system among the Flathead River subwatersheds that we have inventoried." However, they are "threatened by increased recreational and housing development, incompatible land use activities and the spread of noxious weeds. Fortunately many opportunities exist to conserve and protect wetlands in the watershed. Leaving larger timber harvest buffers around wetlands and following best management practice guidelines could mitigate hydrologic changes and reduce potential inputs of sediments. Control of noxious weeds and prevention of new infestations would protect the integrity of the natural plant communities. Since these important sites are under mixed ownership, conservation will require collaborative efforts between private parties, land trusts and public agencies."

For copies of the report, *Ecologically Significant Wetlands in the North Fork Flathead River Watershed* by S.V. Cooper, J. Greenlee and C. Jean, write to: Montana Natural Heritage Program, Montana State Library, P.O. Box 201800, Helena, MT 59620-1800. Or find it on-line at www.nris.state.mt.us/mtnhp.

VOLUNTEER MONITORS NEEDED FOR WETLANDS, STREAMS AND LAKES

The Flathead Basin Commission is launching a volunteer wetland-monitoring program this summer. It will complement the Commission's ongoing lake and stream programs. We hope that at least one of the North Fork's sites of outstanding significance (see related article) will be included this year or next. Volunteers should have at least *some* background in vegetation, soils, birds, mammals, amphibians, or water quality. There will be training on the evenings of May 24 and 31, and all day June 9.

The Flathead Basin Commission is also always looking for additional volunteer lake and stream monitors in the North Fork. The lake and stream programs are less complex, requiring less time and no previous expertise. To find out more about becoming a volunteer monitor, contact Mark Holston at the Flathead Basin Commission, 406-752-6622, or fbc@digisys.net.

MORE FIRE FIGHTING DOLLARS by Cole Milstead

The new National Fire Plan will provide at least \$65 million dollars to state and federal agencies in Montana. The Plan provides for fire fighting, fuel reduction, community assistance, rehabilitation and restoration, and accountability. Allen Rowley, Flathead Forest Spokesman, said hiring more firefighters and reducing the risk of potential wildfires near communities would be the emphasis in the Flathead. To learn more about the National Fire Plan, visit www.fs.fed.us.

MORE HOWLS ON THE NORTH FORK ??

Tom Meier, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kalispell

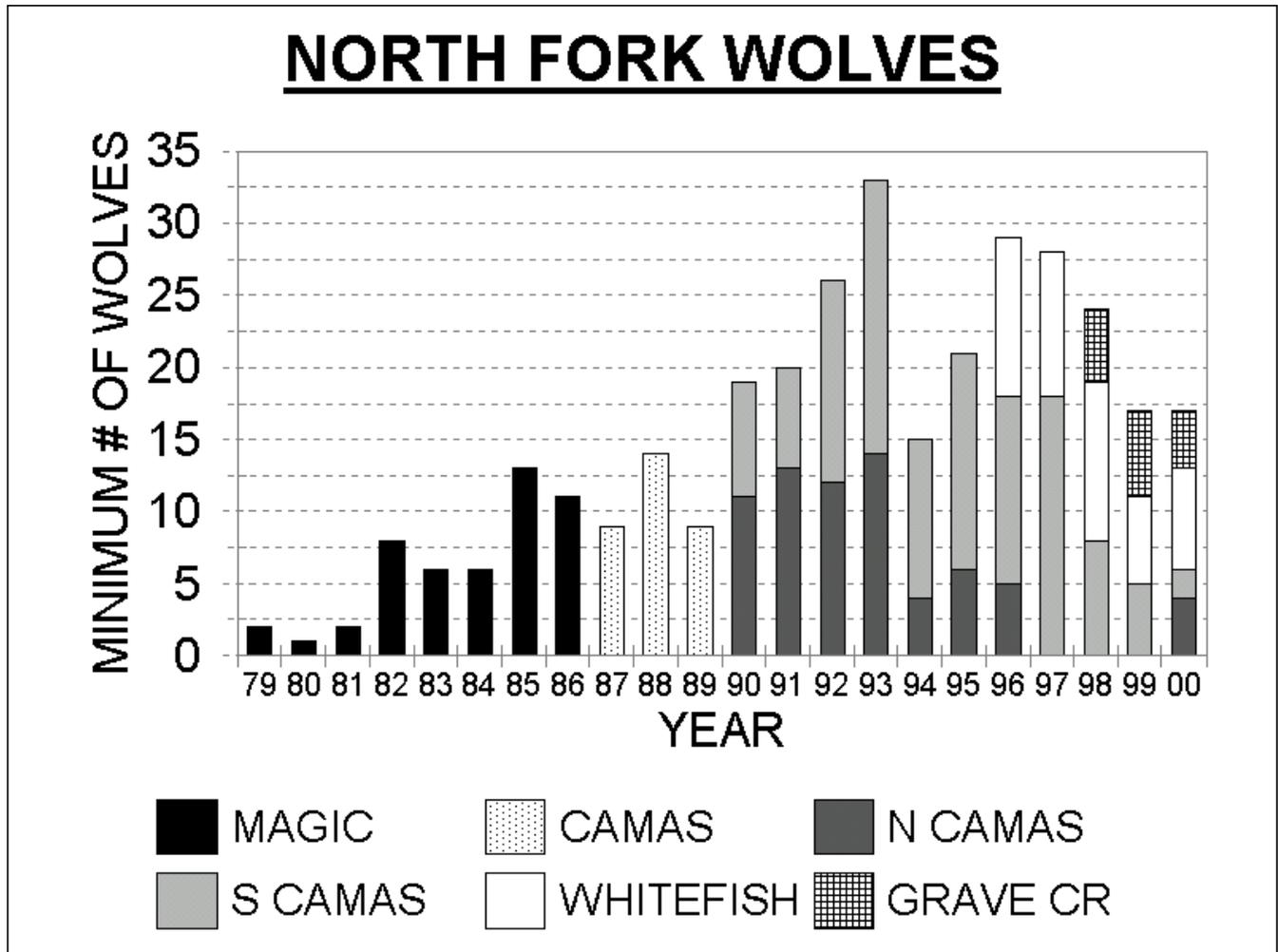
The North Fork was where wolves first reentered the western United States more than 20 years ago, after many years when only stragglers and dispersing wolves remained in the West. When the Magic Pack established a territory straddling the border, the North Fork became Wolf Central. Research projects were conducted on wolves, other predators and their prey through the 1980's and 1990's. Today, most of the research has ended, and the wolves are monitored and counted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and the National Park Service. Where wolves are concerned, the nation's attention has turned to Yellowstone National Park and, to a lesser degree, the Central Idaho wilderness, where wolves were translocated from Canada several years ago and increased rapidly ever since.

Meanwhile, in the North Fork, wolves have persisted but haven't shown the population surges that Yellowstone and Idaho have. Today there are about the same number of wolves here as there were ten years ago (see Figure). In fact, if you don't count the Grave Creek Pack, which spends most of its time on the other side of the Whitefish Divide, the end of 1999 and the beginning of 2000 marked the lowest point in the valley's wolf population since the 1980's. But our population estimates are minimums, in that they count only the known packs living mostly or entirely on the US side of the border, and don't count dispersing (lone) wolves or packs that live mostly in Canada. So although we know there is a Spruce Creek Pack in the upper North Fork, and a Wigwam Pack to the west, we don't count them because they are really Canadian packs. The movements of the North Camas Pack and the Grave Creek Pack in the Kintla, Kishenehn, and Tuchuk areas show that the Canadian wolves aren't coming over the border very far, because wolf packs tend to avoid one another or to kill one another when they meet.

All four of the wolves collared in 1999 were dead or had disappeared by spring of 2000, and with the Whitefish Pack denning north of Whitefish Lake, it looked like there was no pack activity in the North Fork. Two young wolves collared in May 2000 have shown how the local wolf population is rebounding. Wolf 226, a 2-3 year old male caught near Kintla Creek last year, turned out to belong to a pack (called "North Camas," though we have no real evidence they are related to the previous pack of that name) that had a litter of black pups in the park. In winter 2000-2001, the North Camas Pack numbered 4 wolves (1 gray and 3 black) and ranged roughly from Polebridge to Kintla Lake, with an occasional foray south to Hidden Meadow or northwest to Ketchikan Creek. A few times we couldn't find them from the plane, so they must have some more remote areas they visit at times.

Wolf 127, an adult female, disappeared from the South Camas Pack in 1998. She was recaptured last year, wearing a radio collar with a bullet hole through it. The bullet proved fatal to the collar but not to the wolf. She lived alone last summer, often in the Park south of Polebridge, and often wandering down the outside North Fork and Camas Creek roads. You may have seen her, looking skinny and a little confused in the dust. We were not optimistic about number 127, but by fall she had paired up with another wolf and seemed to be staying off the

road. She might have inherited the old South Camas Pack territory if a change of plans hadn't appeared over the Whitefish Divide. The Whitefish Pack, which had lived near Olney all summer, came over into the North Fork around hunting season 2000, and proceeded to occupy the best part of southwestern Glacier Park, from Quartz Creek to Blankenship. They bumped the South Camas pair out of the North Fork, and into the Middle Fork. Over winter, the Whitefish Pack numbered seven wolves, all gray except the old female, who is turning white.



So as summer 2001 approaches, we may be seeing a resurgence of the North Fork wolf population. Both the North Camas and Whitefish Packs are probably going to den in the Park, so if things go well for them, ten wolves could become twenty. The South Camas Pair may den in the Middle Fork, though they haven't shown much sign of settling down yet. The Grave Creek Pack, as usual, is staying west of the divide till summer, but is likely to produce a litter of pups and pop over the divide at some point. So will the valley be overrun with wolves by fall? Probably not. Pup survival has not been high in recent years, maybe due to diseases like parvovirus or distemper. Adult survival isn't so great either. Almost all Montana wolves are killed by humans, with illegal shooting probably the leading cause, followed by train and car kills and government control actions.

The ups and downs of wolf populations are never viewed with unanimous approval or disapproval, and the readers of this newsletter probably vary in their opinions about wolves as much as the country's population as a whole. North Fork wolves have been spared one source of controversy for the most part; they encounter few livestock. The Grave Creek Pack killed one calf near Eureka last year, the first time that pack has been convicted of that particular crime. The impact of wolves on wild prey populations is a more likely source of controversy in the North Fork. Here and elsewhere, it has been shown that while wolves alone often have no great effect on prey populations, when they are combined with other predators or with severe winter weather, or both, their impact can be significant. These things seem to have happened in the North Fork, and many would see the temporary decline in the wolf population as a blessing, while ungulate populations have a chance to rebound. Probably the only safe generalizations that can be made are that the wolves aren't going to go away for long, and they aren't going to wipe out all of their prey.

The wolves of the North Fork, and of northwestern Montana as a whole, may not be expanding as rapidly as the Yellowstone and Idaho wolves. They certainly aren't a highly visible tourist attraction like the wolves in Yellowstone, but they have a history and a certain integrity that is appealing. North Fork wolves got here on their own, which makes them more acceptable to those who oppose wildlife reintroduction by the government. In the last year or two, the USFWS has released three groups of wolves in northwest Montana, placing nine wolves at Spotted Bear in 2000 and five wolves west of Lake Kootenai in 2001. All of these wolves were moved from other parts of Montana in response to actual or possible cattle depredations. As best we know, all of these wolves originated in northwest Montana, which ultimately means the North Fork. Thus far, Idaho and Yellowstone wolves have not moved, or been moved, into northwest Montana, so the North Fork remains the source of northwestern Montana wolf recovery and a vital link in connecting Canadian and US wildlife populations.

WHY FLY? by Tim Thier, MFWP Area Biologist

Each year, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (MFWP) conducts a variety of helicopter surveys around the region to better assess the status of big game herds. Occasionally, we get complaints from people on "what the heck are you doing and why are you doing it?" People don't like the noise a helicopter creates and they view the activity as little more than another way to harass animals. I'll try to address these and other issues and present some real, live data.

Helicopter surveys are just one tool we use to monitor wildlife populations. Other tools include check stations, hunter phone surveys, ground surveys, research projects, and information relayed by the public. The latter is especially important, because it is impossible for a biologist to know his or her entire area intimately, unlike John Q. Public who watches wildlife daily around his home. While information from the public is important, neighbors will sometimes disagree on what they are seeing. Therefore, it is important to look at a variety of information sources to get the most accurate picture possible on the status of wildlife populations. This information is then used to document population trends and to make recommendations to the MFWP Commission to shorten or lengthen seasons or to increase or decrease quotas.

Helicopter surveys are one way to get a lot of information in a short amount of time. A good example would be last year's spring helicopter survey east of Eureka. In 1.6 hours of survey time, I counted and classified 617 mule deer, 132 elk, 145 white-tailed deer and 24 bighorn sheep. Had I tried to duplicate this effort from the ground, it would have taken me many days to get that kind of a sample. Also, I would have had a problem with duplications (how many times did I count the same animal, but on different days?). And like it or not, there still would have been some disturbance to the animals.

Besides total numbers observed, trends monitored include the number of young per 100 females and the number of adult males per 100 females. In order to distinguish a calf from a cow elk, or a cow moose from a bull that has shed his antlers, it may be necessary to approach animals fairly closely. Every effort is made to get in, do our classification, and get out as quickly as possible. We don't want to unduly disturb animals and besides, spooked animals are more difficult to classify. Usually, no more than seconds are spent over any individual animal.

Different species respond differently to the presence of a helicopter. Bighorn sheep are the most sensitive, wolves the least. We actually had an incident in the North Fork four years ago where 2 wolves tried to use our helicopter to restrict the escape of a small herd of elk, as they rushed toward them from the opposite side! Elk and moose are towards the more tolerant end of the spectrum, deer less so. It is not unusual to fly over moose or elk and they won't even rise from their beds.

Helicopter flights are scheduled for the time of year when the observability of animals is greatest. Flying is expensive, so we try to spend the least amount of time in the air as possible. For the North Fork, that means a total of 3 helicopter flights each year. The first is usually conducted in late April and is focused on elk along the North Fork bottoms, both inside and out of GNP. This is the most controversial of North Fork flights due to its proximity to people. A second flight is conducted in late August in the upper Trail Creek area that focuses on black and grizzly bears in huckleberry fields. A third is conducted in mid-December for moose along the foothills, from the Red Bench Burn area north to Teepee Lake.

Below is a table showing some of the survey results for moose in HD 110, which consists primarily of the North Fork. You can see a general decrease in the total numbers of moose observed. You can also see some dismal calf/cow ratios, especially for the period 1995-1998. As a result, the MFWP Commission reduced the number of moose permits for this district from 35 to 12. You can also see that the proportion of calves has increased significantly the last couple of years. Hopefully, we can again begin to increase the number of permits within the near future. It is also interesting to note the consistently high proportion of bulls observed, among the best in Region 1. Assuming a 50:50 sex rate at birth and a preference for bulls by hunters, there is little evidence hunting is negatively impacting this population.

Table 1. Moose observed in Moose HD 110 on helicopter surveys, 1994-2000.

| DATE | TOTAL | BULLS | COWS | CALVES | UNC L | CALVES: 100 COWS | BULLS: 100 COWS | SURVEY HOURS |
|--------------|-------|-------|------|--------|----------|---------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 12/12/9 4 | 74 | 29 | 31 | 8 | 6 | 25.8 | 93.5 | 2.0 |
| 12/15/9 5 | 48 | 22 | 23 | 2 | 1 | 8.7 | 95.6 | 2.0 |
| 1996 | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 0.0 |
| 12/19/9 7 | 43 | 22 | 20 | 1 | 0 | 5.0 | 110.0 | 2.9 |
| 12/19/9 8 | 28 | 15 | 10 | 2 | 1 | 20.0 | 150.0 | 1.2 |
| 12/18/9 9 | 49 | 20 | 19 | 8 | 2 | 42.1 | 105.3 | 1.5 |
| 12/20/0 0 | 39 | 20 | 14 | 5 | 0 | 35.7 | 142.9 | 1.5 |

In summary, helicopter flights are an extremely valuable tool for monitoring wildlife populations. I will make every effort to see they are done in a manner that is least disturbing to wildlife and people. If anyone has a complaint, concern, or would just like to chat, please don't hesitate to call me at 406-882-4697.

2000-2001 NFPA OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

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 John Frederick, Board Member, 406-888-5084, john@nfhostel.com

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Officers are elected for a one-year term; board members for two. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact a board member.

NORTH FORK PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION SUMMER SCHEDULE — 2001

Questions about the NFPA and its activities may be directed to nfpa@gravel.org.

A copy of this schedule is posted on our web site at <http://www.gravel.org>.

June 12, Tuesday 7pm. **Public hearings concerning proposed zoning regulations**, with Flathead County Planner. Sondreson Hall.

June 27, Wednesday. **Naturalist Walk with Ralph Waldt**. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy. Call Marilyn Wood for details, 837-0909.

July 7, Saturday 7pm. **Protecting your property from fire** by Lynn Ogle. Followed by NFIA business meeting at 8. Bring a snack. Sondreson Hall.

July 10, Tuesday, 7pm. **Public meetings concerning proposed zoning regulations**, with Flathead County Planner. Sondreson Hall.

July 12, Thursday 6:30 pm. **Interlocal agreement meeting**. A great opportunity to hear what the local agencies and groups are doing and to share your ideas and concerns. Don't miss it. 5pm. **Potluck Dinner**. Meat provided. Please bring a side dish. Sondreson Hall.

July 22, Sunday. **Numa Lookout Hike**. 2900' elevation gain. Call Brady Dunne, 758-7413 evenings, by 7/13 to sign up and for details. Sponsored by the Montana Wilderness Association. 9am at the Merc.

July 25, Wednesday. **Naturalist Walk with Ralph Waldt**. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy. Call Marilyn Wood for details, 837-0909.

July 26, Thursday, 9am. **Half-day workshop on conservation easements**. Contact Ed Heger 406-253-0678. Lunch provided. Sondreson Hall.

July 28, Saturday 5:30pm. **North Fork Preservation Association potluck, annual meeting and elections**. Bring a side dish. Sondreson Hall

♦ 7:30 p.m. **Steve Barrett will speak about fire ecology and management**. Steve has studied the fire history of the North Fork and other parts of the state extensively.

July 29, Sunday, 8:30am. **Easy to moderate hikes with NFPA**. Huntsberger Lake and Hornet Lookout, tentative destinations. Meet at Sondreson Hall to carpool.

August 4, Saturday, 8pm. **NFIA business meeting**. 9:15, **annual elections**. Bring a snack. Sondreson Hall.

August 4, Saturday. **Mt. Hefty volunteer work** with the Forest Service. Clear and mark trails and build cairns. Call John Frederick (888-5084) or Frank Vitale (752-2909) for more info.

August 11 and 12, Saturday and Sunday. **Thoma Trail Maintenance**. Overnight at historic Thoma lookout. Need sleeping bag, pad, water, gloves and food. Forest Service provides food for the evening meal. Bring a tent if you don't wish to sleep with the mice in the lookout. Frank Vitale will pack supplies with mules. We could use lots of help. You are welcome to join us Saturday if you can't spare two days. Call John Frederick at 888-5084, or Frank at 752-2909 (evenings).

August 18, Saturday. **Mount Hefty Hike**. 2500' elevation gain. Call Dave Hadden, 837-0783, before August 15 to sign up. Sponsored by the Montana Wilderness Association. 8am, at the Merc.

August 25, Saturday. **Naturalist Walk with Ralph Waldt**. Sponsored by The Nature Conservancy. Call Marilyn Wood for details, 837-0909.

September 11, Saturday. **Lake Mountain Hike**. 1800' elevation gain. Call Dave Hadden, 837-0783, by September 5 to sign up. Sponsored by the Montana Wilderness Association. 8am, at the Merc.

October 6, Saturday. **Glacier View Mountain Hike**. 2600' elevation gain. Call Dave Hadden, 837-0783, by October 1 to sign up. Sponsored by the Montana Wilderness Association.

Look for a more detailed North Fork hike and trail work flier at the Merc in late June.

INFORMATIVE WEBSITES

British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks

www.gov.bc.ca/elp

Extensive information on the ministry's activities and environmental issues in BC.

East Kootenay Environmental Society

www.ekes.org

Key Transboundary partner in British Columbia. Dynamic grassroots group.

Flathead Basin Commission

www.montanaweb.com/fbc/

Information on activities, volunteer water quality data, etc.

Flathead County

www.co.flathead.mt.us

Among other features, info on land use planning and development.

Flathead Land Trust

www.flatheadlandtrust.org

Focuses on NW MT.

Flathead National Forest

www.fs.fed.us/r1/flathead

Still mostly general info at this time.

Glacier Institute

www.glacierinstitute.org

Offers a wide selection of classes for children and adults. Based out of Big Creek and West Glacier.

Glacier National Park

www.nps.gov/glac/

Another extensive site including weather, trail and road status, hiking maps, backcountry camping guide, history, resources, research, planning documents, and lots more.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

www.fwp.state.mt.us

Fishing, hunting and parks information.

Montana Native Plant Society

www.umt.edu/mnps

Just started. Soon to have Flathead Forest species list. Local field trips, programs and lots more.

Montana Land Reliance

www.mtlandreliance.org

Statewide land trust dedicated to conservation on private lands.

Montana Natural Resource Information System

<http://nris/state/mt.us/>

Info on a variety of Montana's natural resources.

Montana Wilderness Association

www.wildmontana.org

The Nature Conservancy of Montana

<http://nature.org/states/montana>

News about North Fork conservation easements, and lots more.

North Fork Preservation Association

www.gravel.org

Schedule, mission statement and paving articles and letters.

Transboundary Network

www.transboundaryflathead.org

Includes definition, goals and brochure of International Conservation Reserve concept, action alerts, background and history.

MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL FORM

IF YOU HAVEN'T PAID YOUR DUES YET, IT'S TIME!

If there is a green line on your mailing label, you have paid your dues in 2001. ***Thank you!***

I want to help protect the North Fork of the Flathead River Valley at the western edge of Glacier National Park.

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| _____ | New | Name | _____ |
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| | | | _____ |
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| | | Phone | _____ |
| | | Email | _____ |

I want to join the NFPA. Here is my membership fee of \$15.00/year _____
family membership of \$20.00/year _____
living lightly membership of \$10.00/year _____

I want to help. Here is my donation of _____ for _____

Please send me _____ extra newsletters _____ NFPA brochures _____ ICR brochures

Please send me _____ copies of *Conserving on International Treasure - the Transboundary Flathead* (enclose \$12 each, incl, postage)

Please remove me from your mailing list. _____

NFPA is a 501(c)(3) organization. Your contribution is tax deductible

Mail check or cash to: North Fork Preservation Association
c/o Rachel Potter
P.O. Box 394
Columbia Falls, MT 59912
(406) 892-2446

North Fork Preservation Association

P.O. Box 4

Polebridge MT 59928

Please remember to pay your dues!