



Photo by Karen Nichols

Welcome to the River to Lake monthly newsletter.

A Monthly Newsletter

Issue 4 | October 2009

In this issue:

- Three Loudon Family Farms Protected
- Bigfork Fisheries Conservation Area Project Completed
- Foys Bend Project Celebrated
- Flathead County River Commission Update
- River to Lake Partners Meeting – January 13

Land and Water Conservation

Three Loudon Family Farms Protected

Three new projects add to the network of conservation of critical lands along the Flathead River with the protection of the Loudon Family Farms. The Flathead Land Trust helped the extended Loudon family place three conservation easements on 540 acres of farmland, wetlands, riparian habitat and floodplain. The conservation easements will help the Loudons maintain their property to pass on to their children while protecting some of the best farming soils in the Flathead, as well as water quality, and fish and wildlife habitat.

The properties stretch along the Flathead River to the east and west of Church Slough, and add to an existing



Project area along the Flathead River

network, now totaling about 7,000 acres of private and public conservation lands along the river. A Natural Resource Conservation Service Farm and Ranch Protection (FRPP) grant and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) mitigation funding helped purchase the conservation easements. The Flathead Land Trust and Loudon family members are now moving ahead with negotiations to place conservation easements on three additional properties along the Flathead River by the end of the year.

Bigfork Fisheries Conservation Area Project Completed

Fish, Wildlife & Parks closed on what is now the 70-acre Bigfork Fisheries Conservation Area on the north shore of Flathead Lake. The landowners were interested in selling the property to FWP, which purchased it using BPA mitigation funds. This property borders the Flathead Lake Waterfowl Production Area (WPA). While some public access will be available, FWP plans to manage the property to complement the WPA's fish and wildlife habitat conservation goals. For more information contact Kris Tempel, Conservation Technician, FWP at 751-4573 or ktempel@mt.gov.

River to Lake Outreach

Foys Bend Project Celebrated

On October 2, Fish, Wildlife and Parks and The Conservation Fund celebrated the purchase of a 245-acre property along two miles of the Flathead River with BPA fisheries mitigation funds. The Conservation Fund

provided bridge funding to complete the project quickly as desired by the landowners, Cap and Bonnie Ingham. The Inghams were thanked for their significant bargain sale donation on the appraised value.



River to Lake Initiative partners thank Bonnie and Cap Ingham for adding their Foy's Bend property to the network of conservation along the Flathead River.

Cooperation and coordination

Flathead County River Commission Update

Flathead County River Commission members visited several properties along the lower Flathead River to examine river bank erosion problems and restoration projects. At the next River Commission meeting, Herrera Environmental Consultants are tentatively scheduled to present various river bank restoration methods the firm is proposing. The River Commission will meet on Tuesday, October 27 at 6 p.m. in third floor conference of the Earl Bennett Building at the Flathead County Land Use Planning & Zoning office at 800 South Main Street, Kalispell. For more information contact Joe Brenneman, Flathead County Commissioner at 758-5503.

Meetings

River to Lake meeting - Wednesday, January 13

Mark your 2010 calendars. The next River to Lake meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, January 13 from 9 am to noon. For more information contact Constanza, Critical Lands Program Director, Flathead Lakers, at criticallands@flatheadlakers.org



Foy's Bend Fisheries Conservation Area.
Photo by Gravity Shots.

To check a project location you can find the *River to Lake Map* at www.flatheadlandtrust.org/pdf/R2LMap.pdf

Past copies of the River to Lake News are available at www.flatheadlakers.org/flathead_lake_basin/critical_lands/river_to_lake/index.html

Please send news and information that you would like to share via the River to Lake E-News the first week of each month. If your information or request is time sensitive, you can request that we send an "Action Alert" e-mail.