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Welcome to the Flathead River to Lake Newsletter.

A Quarterly Newsletter

Issue 24 | May 2015

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Conservation and Restoration

Riparian Restoration Projects Growing

This spring, Flathead River to Lake Initiative partners planted over 1,000 shrubs and trees on two properties along the Flathead River as part of an expanding restoration effort to restore riparian areas.



Over 35 volunteers helped collect willows to plant along the river banks, build fences to protect young trees from deer browsing, seed exposed soils with native grasses, and plant native trees and shrubs.

Projects will be maintained and monitored by *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* partners for several years to ensure success and learn what works best in this area. The planting projects were organized through the Initiative's Flathead River Steward program. Projects received funding and technical assistance from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Many thanks to our volunteers, including the landowners, Flathead Valley Community College professors and students, Big Sky Watershed Corps members, MT Conservation Corps members, and Flathead River to



Lake partners. Thanks also to *Lower Valley Processing Company* for providing food for the volunteers!

To learn about volunteer opportunities contact Megan Stockfisch, Flathead River Steward Program, at 406-752-4242 extension 109, or riversteward15@gmail.com.

Stories from the Land

The Flathead Land Trust and Montana Land Reliance, our land trust partners in conservation, have captured the stories of local landowners on video, who share stories about their families' connection to the land and why they were inspired to place the land in a conservation easement to protect its values for the future. View the stories here:



- Flathead Land Trust: [Stories from the Land – the Glenn and Hazel Johnston conservation easement.](#)

- Montana Land Reliance: [Tom & Terry Siderius Testimonial.](#)

July is Montana Open Land Month

Governor Steve Bullock designated the month of July as Open Land Month to celebrate all that open land represents in Montana - our agricultural heritage, vast outdoor recreational opportunities, diverse wildlife habitat, scenic splendor, tremendous economic benefits, and much more. To find out about events and ways to

celebrate Open Land Month in the Flathead Valley or share photos and experiences, visit the official website at <http://openlandmt.org>.

New Farm Bill Guide

The Intermountain West Joint Venture and partners produced the new [2014 Farm Bill Field Guide to Fish and Wildlife Conservation](#) to help agencies and organizations working with landowners and agricultural producers implement Farm Bill conservation programs. To view or download the guide, visit iwjv.org/news/new-farm-bill-guide-now-available.

Events

May 16

Smith Lake Bike & Bird Tour

Join us on this bike and bird tour in the Smith Lake area on Saturday, May 16 from 9:00 am to noon to learn about birds and our conservation efforts to protect the Smith Lake wetland complex and important migratory bird habitat. The tour starts and ends at the Kila Pub, with an 8.5-mile bike ride on paved and gravel roads (mountain or fat tire bikes recommended). The tour is hosted by Flathead Land Trust and other Flathead River to Lake Initiative partners, in collaboration with Rails to Trails and Bike Saturdays. For more information and to register, contact Laura Katzman, Flathead Land Trust, at 406-752-8293 or lkatzman@bigsky.com.



June 10

Flathead River to Lake Initiative quarterly meeting

The next Flathead River to Lake Initiative quarterly meeting will be held Wednesday, June 10 from 9:00 am to noon at MT Fish, Wildlife, and Parks in Kalispell. For more information contact Constanza von der Pahlen, Flathead Lakers, at 883-1341 or criticallands@flatheadlakers.org.

June 9, 11, 16, 18 and 25

Wetland Plant Identification Workshop

Montana Natural Heritage Program and the Montana Wetland Council are providing five 1-day wetland plant identification workshops in June throughout Montana to learn about common wetland plants. Workshops near the Flathead include East Glacier (6/9) and Condon (6/11). To register call 406-444-4643.

June 16

Montanans for Healthy Rivers Forum

American Rivers is holding a public forum on Tuesday, June 16, from 7-8 p.m. at the Museum at Central School (124 2nd Ave. East) in Kalispell to discuss the *Citizen's Proposal for New Wild and Scenic Rivers in Montana*. For information contact Kascie Herron, American

Rivers, at 406-546-2316 or kherron@americanrivers.org.

Benefit Brews Night for Flathead Land Trust

The Kalispell Brewing Company (412 Main Street) will be holding a Benefit Brews Night for the Flathead Land Trust on Tuesday, June 16, by donating \$1 per beer sold between 5 and 8 p.m. Join the land trust in fun fundraising.

Third Monday of the month

Flathead River Commission monthly meetings

The Flathead River Commission meets the third Monday of every month from 7 to 9 pm at Flathead County's Earl Bennett Building, Rooms A&B, in Kalispell. Meetings are open to the public. For more information contact Bob Storer, Flathead River Commission Chairman, at bobstorer@centurylink.net.

July 12

Flathead Lake Poker Paddle

Paddle for Clean Water in this fun benefit for the Flathead Lakers. Paddle a course to 5 island stops to collect cards for your poker hand. Prizes for best and worst hands plus picnic dinner and live entertainment. The event is limited to 100 human-propelled watercraft. For more information visit pokerpaddle.brownpapertickets.com or flatheadlakers.org.



August 18

Flathead Lakers Annual Meeting

Learn about the state of Flathead Lake and the Flathead Lakers' work to protect Flathead Lake and its watershed on August 18, 6:15 to 9:00 pm, at Glacier Camp & Conference Center near Lakeside. For more information contact Robin Steinkraus, Flathead Lakers, at 883-1346 or lakers@flatheadlakers.org.

Aug. 29

Flathead River Raft Trip

Join the Flathead Land Trust and other Flathead River to Lake Initiative partners on a float of the Flathead River, guided by Montana Raft Company, on Saturday, Aug. 28, from 1:30 to 6 p.m. This fun outing will showcase lands along the Flathead River, from Presentine Bar to Old Steel Bridge Fishing Access Site, protected by Flathead River to Lake Initiative partners. The trip is limited to 40 participants at a cost of \$10/person. For more information and to register contact Laura Katzman, Flathead Land Trust, at 406-752-8293 or lkatzman@bigsky.net.

September 19

Sandhill Crane Bike & Bird Tour

Join the Flathead Land Trust on a bike and birding tour of wetlands in the Flathead's West Valley to observe Sandhill cranes. For more information contact Laura Katzman at lkatzman@bigsky.com or 406-752-8293.