

FLATHEAD LAND TRUST

Conserving Our Legacy of Land and Water

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



2010 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Building On Success: A RECORD YEAR

Twenty five years ago a group of Flathead Valley citizens formed a small non-profit dedicated to preserving the valley's agricultural lands, forests, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. It was founded on a simple belief: that individuals and organizations working together could accomplish conservation in ways they could never do alone. As we look back on the unprecedented gains made in 2009, it's clear that the founders of Flathead Land Trust were onto something.

2009 was a record year for FLT. Six new conservation easements conserving 1200 acres. Multiple partner projects that increased public lands and recreational access. Two large federal project grants that enabled us to make significant conservation purchases while serving as a testimony to the quality and critical nature of our projects. The collaborative *River to Lake Initiative*, which focuses on protecting land along the main stem of Flathead River to the North Shore of Flathead Lake, really hit its stride in 2009. We and our partners protected over 1100 acres in the River to Lake corridor, bringing the network of protected private and public lands to nearly 10,000 acres.

But the work our members and funders support is about more than impressive statistics. Our work is about the intangible things we treasure as Montanans. It's about people in a community having public places where they can still hunt and fish, bird watch, and take walks on a summer evening. It's about families who have invested a lifetime in their land and want the chance to pass it on to their children intact. It is these outcomes, not mere numbers, that fuel our work.

In 2010, we will remain focused on those core project areas that brought us to where we are today. We have been awarded another large project grant for 2010, which will also be put to work conserving important habitat within the River to Lake corridor. We will continue to place special emphasis on the North Shore of Flathead Lake, one of the most biologically

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Jim Regnier, Board President



JIM AND WIFE LINDA AT THE GRAND CANYON

important regions in the Flathead and one of the most threatened.

As I begin my term as Board President, I want to extend a special thank you to Board members past and present, and to all the staff and field volunteers who made the projects you see in these pages possible. It is easy to have a vision for an organization; it is hard work to make the pieces come together as successfully as they have over the last several years.

I especially want to thank our retiring Board President, Ken Siderius. He shepherded FLT through many years of expansion, including the landmark year of 2009. He never once questioned whether we could accomplish the goals we set for ourselves; he expected we would and we did.

To our members and supporters, we hope when you read about all you helped accomplish in 2009 you will feel proud and inspired—inspired to recommit yourself to our fundamental mission: Conserving the Flathead's legacy of land and water.

Saving the Flathead's Special Places:

2009 IN REVIEW

- **6 new conservation easements** protecting nearly 1200 acres from the North Fork of the Flathead to farm lands in Lower Valley.
- **3 partner projects** completed under the *River to Lake Initiative*.
- **\$1 million project restricted grant from North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)** for conservation projects that benefit wetlands-associated migratory birds and other wildlife. First project—300 acres on Church Slough.
- **\$1.35 million project restricted grant from Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP)** for direct agricultural conservation. First projects—3 easements on 540 acres of prime Flathead Valley farm land, wetlands and riparian habitat.
- Intensive **outreach efforts along the North Shore of Flathead Lake** continued, including active negotiations for conservation purchases.
- Completed ***River to Lake Initiative* strategic planning** with partners.
- **2009 Annual Meeting & Easement Celebration** held at Dr. Glenn and Hazel Johnston's Flathead River easement property.
- Implemented a **fee structure for purchased easements** to help defray costs involved in managing complex federal grants and completing related transactions.
- Successfully **monitored all conservation easements**.
- **2 new employees hired to handle the increased workload**—a full time Lands Protection Specialist and a part-time Outreach and Development Director.
- **3 new Board members** joined our Board of Directors.

Land Protection Snapshot

AS OF 12/31/2009

	2009	2008
Number of Easements	42	36
Acres Protected through Conservation Easements	9,561	8,371
Number of Partnership Projects	8	5
Acres Protected through Partnership Projects	2,134	1,806
Total Acres Protected	11,695	10,177

HIGHLIGHTS

WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2010

2010 officially marks Flathead Land Trust's 25th anniversary and we expect it to be a big year all around.

Our conservation priorities in 2010? **Over \$1 million combined dollars remain from our 2009 NAWCA and FRPP project grants** (see 2009 highlights) which will be used on conservation easement purchases within the *River to Lake Initiative* (R2L) area. We're also excited to announce we've been **awarded another FRPP grant in 2010**. The restricted grant is slated for conserving agricultural lands on the North Shore.

The collaboration with R2L partners will remain a vital part of FLT. We are currently working with partners such as Flathead Lakers to **develop a website devoted to R2L projects**, giving landowners and others easy access to information about funding sources, projects and partners.

Economic trends have recently dictated our primary focus be in the R2L corridor, but we **remain committed to working on donated easements throughout the valley**.

A strong organizational foundation is required to keep achieving large scale conservation. As our projects get bigger, so must our preparedness and resources. Today, conservation work is complex, the legal requirements extensive, and the technical knowledge required considerable.

Our organizational priorities in 2010? We are working toward **national accreditation through the Land Trust Alliance**, an important step in FLT's history. We are thankful for a cost sharing grant from Montana Association of Land Trusts for help in achieving that goal. Much energy will also go into **ensuring the long term financial sustainability** of our work. Grants from The Sustainability Fund and others will be instrumental to this effort.

Finally, we look forward to a big **25th anniversary bash in 2010** and would love to see our members there. As a membership organization, you are the foundation of all our efforts.

2009 Highlights:

RIVER 2 LAKE INITIATIVE



CHURCH SLOUGH

Farmland & Wetlands

In July, FLT and landowners Ben and Maureen Loudon finished placing a conservation easement on their beautiful property situated within the interior of Church Slough. This oxbow slough on Flathead River is widely considered one of the most important wetlands in the valley, and serves as a layover for tens of thousands of migratory birds each spring. The easement protects 295 acres of wetlands, river frontage and farm lands and utilized funding from a North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant awarded through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in 2009.

In September, three easements were completed with Betty, Ken and Bruce Loudon, totaling 540 acres on their family farmlands in Lower Valley. The easement purchases were funded by a Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program grant through USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Additional funding was provided by Bonneville Power Administration.

These projects are truly jewels within the *River to Lake Initiative* conservation area. People the valley over will be forever grateful to the Loudens for having the foresight to conserve them.



"ABC IS REALLY PLEASED TO WORK WITH FLATHEAD LAND TRUST AND THEIR RIVER TO LAKE INITIATIVE. THEY ARE SETTING AN EXAMPLE FOR THEIR CONSERVATION PARTNERS BY PERMANENTLY PROTECTING WETLANDS, STREAMSIDE HABITAT AND AGRICULTURAL LANDSCAPES THROUGH COLLABORATION AND POSITIVE LANDOWNER RELATIONS."

DAN CASEY,
AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY



PROTECTED LANDS



RIVERSIDE FARMS

Partnership Projects

Flathead Land Trust also partnered on three other projects within the *River to Lake Initiative*. They are good examples of the cooperative spirit required to complete a project over a period of years between many different parties.

McWeneger Slough Public Fishing Access was a long time in the making—from FLT's receipt of the land donation in 2003, to completing the access improvements in 2008, to turning ownership over to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) in 2009. It is a great legacy for the Siderius family who spearheaded the project, performed much of the labor, and donated most of the materials.

FLT also played a partner role in two major conservation purchases made by FWP in 2009—Foy's Bend Fisheries Conservation Area on Flathead River and the Bigfork Fisheries Conservation Area on the North Shore. In both cases, it was Flathead Land Trust that originally worked with the landowners interested in conservation options for their land. We are proud our relationships with local families helped initiate these important projects.

2009 Highlights:

VALLEY WIDE



NORTH FORK

Wild & Remote North Fork

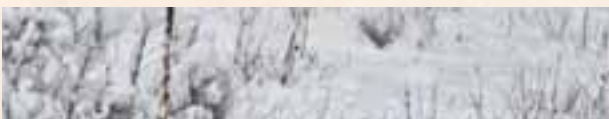
In March, we completed a 52 acre conservation easement on a portion of Garnet (Mud) Lake, adjacent to another easement FLT placed on Garnet Lake in 2008. The land is relatively untouched, with diverse maturing forest and associated wetlands that provide important linkage habitat from Glacier National Park to the east, the North Fork River, and the Whitefish Range to the west.

This acreage boasts the same excellent wildlife habitat that makes the entire North Fork of the Flathead such a special place. It supports white-tailed deer, black bear, grizzly bear, wolf, mountain lion, elk, moose, coyote, beaver, and many other species of small mammals and birds, such as the common loon. This project was done in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and is an important addition in our long history of conservation in the North Fork.



*"I FELL IN LOVE WITH
THIS PLACE WHEN I SAW IT
ALMOST 40 YEARS AGO.
NOW WITH THE HELP
OF FLATHEAD LAND TRUST,
CAROL AND I CAN PASS ON
INTACT THE WILDNESS AND
PRICELESS NATURAL BEAUTY
OF THIS LAND."*

DICK NELSON,
GOOD CREEK EASEMENT
OLNEY, MT



PROTECTED LANDS



GOOD CREEK

Great Conservation on Good Creek

In December, Dick and Carol Nelson of Olney donated a 301 acre easement on Good Creek. Surrounded by Flathead National Forest land, the easement contains 1.5 miles of Good Creek, a tributary of the Stillwater River. The Nelsons live on an adjacent piece of land and have been full time residents since 1988.

The area protected by this easement is an extremely important one for wildlife. It provides extensive forested areas, wetlands, and grassy meadows and is surrounded by public lands, so it serves as an important travel corridor. Good Creek itself hosts westslope cutthroat trout, listed as a sensitive species by the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Bureau of Land Management. This was a generous donation from a great conservation minded couple. The Good Creek easement will continue to pay "conservation dividends" in Northwestern Montana for generations to come.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS

Anonymous (9)
 Susan and Charles Abell
 Cheryl Amundson
 Jennifer Asebrook and
 Richard Menicke
 Bill and Margaret Baird
 David and Chet Barclay
 Randy and Rayne Beach
 Jack and Leslie Beard
 Tom and Sharon Bengtson
 Ben and Ann Binger
 Gael Bissell and Rick Mace
 Cameron Blake and Sandy Gray
 Rebecca and Robert Blickenstaff
 Lex Blood and Judith Pressmar
 Nathaniel Blumberg
 Gene and Barbara Boyle
 Bill Breen
 Joe Brenneman and Nancy Pensa
 Kathryn and Michael Britton
 Patricia and Ralph Brown
 John and Kris Bruninga
 Linda Burkhart
 Sara Swan Busse
 Jennifer Byers
 Chris and Maureen Byrd
 Gerard and Loretta Byrd
 Tom and Kris Carlson
 Gary Carver
 Patricia and John Case
 Dana and Stephanie Christensen
 Bubba and Leta Chustz
 Allan and Phyllis Clark
 C.M. and Janet Clark
 Connie Cohen
 Margaret and Norman Cohn
 Mike and Diane Conner
 Diane Conradi and Steve Braun
 Margaret Cook
 Bill Corwin
 David and Dawn Cummings
 Steve and Sue Cummings
 Bill and Sarah Dakin
 Carol Daly
 Edward DeBartolo
 Tami and Mike DeGrosky

Dennis and Terry Divoky
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 Greg and JoAnn Dramer
 Francie Droll and John Webster
 Debra and Anders Engdahl
 Harry and Maddy Etter
 Gale Cooke and Michael Fitzwater
 Linda and Wade Fredenberg
 Gail and Scott Galloway
 Mike and Cindy Galvin
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 Mary and Don Garner
 Hi and Mary Gibson
 Bill and Jana Goodman
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 Lee Harris
 Don Hauth
 Gary and Lynn Havens
 Brace and Kathleen Hayden
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 Karin Hilding and Robert Gordon
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 Susan How
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 Dr. Glenn and Hazel Johnston
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 Stanley and Elizabeth Makman
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 Pat and Riley McClelland
 Sue and Greg McCormick
 Cathryn McDevitt
 Diane and Mike McLean
 Rhona and Jerry Meislik
 Joe Mendelsohn
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 Ed and Marge Rothfuss
 Marylou and Clay Running
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 Peter and Karen Saunders
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 Larry Schulz

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 Roger and Sue Sherman
 Charles and Jenny Lou Siderius
 Ken Siderius and Cathy Malarchick
 Richard and Joan Siderius
 Tom and Terry Siderius
 Gary and Mary Sloan
 Virginia Burns Sloan and
 James Sloan
 Doc and Teri Smiley
 Lucy Smith
 Don and Phyllis Snow
 Owen David Sowerwine
 Robin Steinkraus
 Howard Stephenson
 Cas Still and Andy Baxter
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 Tagen and Carrie Vine
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 Kyle and Susan Weber
 Dan Weinberg
 Robert and Nancy Westberg
 Heidi Westmoreland
 Alan and Katherine Williams
 Chuck and Karen Williams
 Rebecca and Larry Williams
 Sarah Wollin
 Marilyn Wood
 Lynn and Frank Woods
 Gerald and JoLynn Yenne
 Alison Young
 Andrew Zimet and Linda Farmer

BUSINESS MEMBERS

Bruce Boody Landscape Architect, Inc.
 Christensen, Moore, Cockrell,
 Cummings and Axelberg
 Forestration, Inc.
 Fraser Management & Consulting
 Freedom Bank
 Glacier Bank
 Grouse Mountain Lodge
 Illi Real Estate Appraisal &
 Consulting
 Insty Prints
 Johnson, Berg, McEvoy,
 & Bostock, PLLP
 Knife River
 Lion Mountain, Inc.
 Merlin Data Publishing Corp.
 Montana Academy
 Moose's Saloon
 Outback Ski Shack
 Re/Max Mountain View
 Snappy Sport Senter
 Stanley Steam & Boiler Consultants
 Third Street Market
 Thomas, Dean & Hoskins, Inc.
 Wheaton's
 Whitefish Credit Union

FOUNDATIONS-FUNDS-OTHER

Cadeau Foundation
 First Interstate BancSystem
 Foundation
 Heart of the Rockies Initiative-
 Wilburforce Foundation
 Homer A. and Mildred S. Scott
 Foundation
 Ila B. Dousman Fund, Inc.
 James and Wanda Hollensteiner
 Foundation
 Kramer Family Fund of the
 Whitefish Community Fdn.
 Montana Association of Land Trusts
 Plum Creek Foundation
 SahanDaywi Foundation
 Samuel H. and Ruth H. Neff Fund
 The Bibler Foundation
 The Carlson Charitable Fund

The Cinnabar Foundation
 The Sustainability Fund of the
 Flathead Community Foundation
 Turner Foundation

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Loren Kreck in memory of
 Mary Kreck
 Loren Kreck in memory of
 Tom Sexsmith
 Pauline Sjoldal in memory of
 Dolly Siderius

TRIBUTE GIFTS

Valley Ellingsen for daughters
 Kris and Peg Ellingsen
 Anonymous donor for
 Marilyn Wood
 Judy and Bill Cox for Jim Regnier
 Alan and Sallie Gratch for
 Ken Siderius

STEWARDSHIP & PROJECTS

Ben and Maureen Loudon
 Bernice Loudon
 Betty Loudon
 Bruce and Janice Loudon
 Ken and Patty Loudon
 Dick and Carol Nelson
 The Nature Conservancy

IN-KIND & VOLUNTEERS

Walt Bahr
 Dan and Susannah Casey
 Andrew Dana
 FLT Community Advisors
 Ben Long/Resource Media
 Marcy Mahr
 Marti Kurth Public Relations
 Harley Mumma
 Echo Nelson
 Siderius Construction

*We sincerely apologize for any
 errors or omissions in this listing.
 For corrections, please call our
 office at (406) 752-8293.*

INCOME SUMMARY¹

Dues/Contributions	\$59,070
Stewardship Donations	\$61,270
Grants-Operating	\$84,000
Grants-Project Restricted ²	\$2,570,326
Interest/Dividend Income	\$8,404
Program Service Fees	\$80,450
Gain/Loss-property sale	\$(3,583)
Misc. Income	\$209

Total Income for 2009 **\$2,860,146**

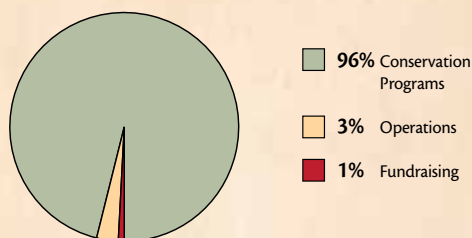
¹ Income summary includes operations and project restricted income.

² Project restricted grants include federal conservation grants awarded to FLT, but held by the granting agency until spent on projects.

EXPENSE SUMMARY

Conservation Programs	\$1,267,392
Operating/Admin	\$41,898
Fundraising	\$13,119

Total 2009 Expenses **\$1,322,409**

ASSET SUMMARY AS OF 12/31/2009¹

Checking & Savings	\$209,331
Fixed Assets	\$3,378
Accounts Receivable ²	\$1,439,843
<i>Investment accounts:</i>	
GNESA Fund	\$76,239
Projects Fund	\$141,942
Stewardship	\$161,172
Endowment Fund	\$46,047

Total Assets **\$2,077,952**

Liabilities **\$3,463**

Total Equity **\$2,074,489**

¹ Financial Summary figures are preliminary and subject to final CPA review.

² Accounts Receivable represents funding FLT has been awarded in project grants, but has not yet received.



WHEN THESE SWANS NEEDED A PLACE TO REST...

*Flathead Land Trust
Members were
there.*



**FLATHEAD
LAND TRUST**

Conserving Our Legacy of Land and Water

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Kalispell, MT 59903-1913

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*"AS A FIFTH GENERATION MONTANAN,
I FEEL A DEEP RESPONSIBILITY TO SUPPORT AN
ORGANIZATION PROMOTING CONSERVATION OF OUR
BEAUTIFUL LANDS FOR BOTH PEOPLE AND WILDLIFE.
THE COST OF MEMBERSHIP IS SMALL
BUT THE REWARDS ARE GREAT!"*

CHERYL AMUNDSON
NEW MEMBER IN 2009 (and hero to swans everywhere)

In 2009, Flathead Land Trust members helped protect over 1000 acres of farm land and wetlands that serve as critical habitat for migrating waterfowl every spring.

If you'd like to join us in conserving wildlife habitat, water quality, and the scenic wonders of Flathead Valley, visit www.flatheadlandtrust.org to learn more and donate.



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