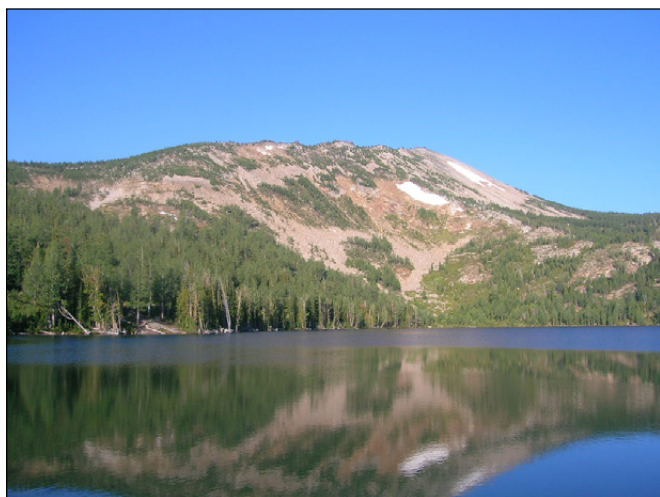




# The MontanaSierran

Published quarterly by the Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club—[www.montana.sierraclub.org](http://www.montana.sierraclub.org)

## Sierra Club Remains Focused on Protecting Lolo Peak



*Lolo Peak's false summit rises over Carlton Lake*

In November the Bitterroot National Forest passed the resort's fifth application through step one of two criteria needed before officially accepting the resort's application for a 99 year special-use permit on about 3,000 acres of national forest land for nordic and glade skiing, snow coach tours with backcountry skiing, and mountain biking. Also in November, the Lolo National Forest denied the resort's application through step one of that same process. The area that the resort is asking to use straddles both forests.

This fifth special-use permit application from the Bitterroot resort came after the Forest Service rejected four previous applications because the activities outlined in the proposals conflicted with forest plans regarding

lynx habitat, elk winter range, visual impacts and soil stability, among other things.


Local media reports regarding the Bitterroot NF decision in November stated that the resort was getting "initial approval" for commercial use, but nothing could be further from the truth. The agency has yet to officially accept the resort's application and now the Lolo NF has denied the application on their portion of the forest.

The Bitterroot Resort's master plan calls for semi-permanent commercial and development rights on 12,000 acres of our National Forest lands. Lolo Peak and the surrounding 16,000 acre Lolo Creek Roadless Area is adjacent to the northern boundary of the 1.4 million acre Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, just south of Lolo, MT.

It appears that the resort developers are desperate to obtain any type of permit on these adjoining public lands. The developer owns 3,000 acres of agricultural land in crucial elk winter range that he plans to develop into a village with 3,000 housing units and 3 golf courses.

The current special-use proposal must be viewed as step one in an incremental approach towards realizing their master plan—a foot in the door.

During step 2 of the application screening process, the Bitterroot NF will vet the resort's application through the following criteria:

- Does the resort have the technical and financial feasibility or capabilities?
- Is the proposed use in the public interests?
- Is there a need and a desire for the proposed use?
- Is the proposed activities consistent or compatible with the purposes for which the land is currently being managed or with other uses? 

### INSIDE



Sierra Club Remains Focused on Protecting Lolo Peak.....	1
Montana Chapter Contact Information.....	2
Outings.....	3
EPA Ruling Says Coal Plants Must Limit CO2.....	3
Events.....	4
Update on Forest Planning in Montana.....	5
New Sierra Club Report: Native Fish Recovery in a Time of Climate Change.....	6
A Recipe 4 Change.....	7



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Please send your letters, articles, photographs, illustrations and advertisements to:

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Rebecca Richter/PO Box 3766/Missoula, MT 59806

*The Montana Sierran is published quarterly by the Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club, a division of the national Sierra Club.*

The Montana Sierran reserves the right to edit or reject submissions at its discretion.

Submissions must include first and last name with city/town (and state, if outside of Montana). Please include your phone number and email address so we may contact you.

Please e-mail digital photographs at 300ppi as .tiff or .jpg files, and illustrations at 300 ppi in .eps, .gif, .pdf, .tiff, or .jpg. Including a caption is always appreciated.

Deadlines for content submission are on March 21, June 21, September 21, and December 21.

Please contact me at (406)546-9658 if you have questions concerning file formatting or content submission procedures. I look forward to hearing from you!

-Rebecca Richter, Editor

## Club Offices

### Location and contact information

#### **Missoula Office**

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Bob Clark, Associate Regional Rep.,  
bob.clark (at) sierraclub.org

#### **For more information about:**

Montana Chapter activities and meetings, contact Jeff van den Noort at (406)582-1871.

Missoula/Bitterroot area activities and meetings, contact John Wolverton at yodelingdog (at) hotmail.com.

Visit our Chapter website at [www.montana.sierraclub.org](http://www.montana.sierraclub.org).

# Outings

Free and open to the public. No companion animals, please.



Trapper Peak, by Bob Clark

## Sunday January 25th, Cross-Country Ski trip from Lolo Pass to Lee Creek.

This trip is recommended for more experienced skiers who have skills in turning, slowing down and stopping. The "A", or Lee Creek Trail, is a 7 mile route along an un-groomed trail through varying terrain and conditions that can become fast on the downhills. The first mile follows the groomed trail from the visitor center to the point we leave the groomed trail. The next couple of miles is mostly a gradual uphill ski to a highpoint in the Lee Creek Saddle a little above 5400'. The total elevation gain would be close to 200'. It is often necessary to "break trail" along the upper portion of this route. If it is a clear day there will be great views of mountains all around from this point. The last four miles are all downhill on a closed road to the Lee Creek Campground at BM 4213'. Most of this portion of the route is steep enough that you can get moving quite fast if the snow is hard and icy. There are some sections where it levels out a bit briefly, allowing you to slow down and catch your breath. Car-pooling is encouraged; bring a day-pack lunch;

group size is limited. See contact info below.

## Saturday February 7th, Sunset/ Moonlight Cross-Country Ski at Lubrecht Forest, under an almost full moon.

We'll ski the gentler trails as they wind through this beautiful local forest. Plan on taking a long break at the mid-way shelter, so bring hot drinks and snacks. This is an easy ski for people who are not accustomed to low-light skiing. Harsh weather will cancel the trip and no pets, please. Low or no snow, and we'll divert to Lolo Pass. For the late afternoon meet-up/ride-sharing see contact info below.

## Late June, date TBA, Spring Wildflower Hike to Packer Meadow/ Lolo Pass.

Join us for this annual 8 mile hike on the Lee Ridge or (depending on conditions) the Lewis and Clark/Nez Perce Trail as we hike from Lee Creek campground (Hwy 12) up to Packer Meadow to see the spring wildflowers and hopefully see the purple Camas blooms in Packer meadow. This is a moderately strenuous hike. Horticulturist Adrienne Hopkins will help us identify wildflowers

and plants along the way. Bring your lunch and plenty of water. Watch for more info as we monitor spring snow conditions.

*Get Involved: To find out more about participating in these Montana Chapter Sierra Club outings, or if you'd like to share your favorite wild places by leading a hike or canoe trip in your region, please contact the Outings Coordinator, John Wolverton at: yodelingdog (at) hotmail.com.*

## EPA Ruling Says Coal Plants Must Limit CO2

In a move that signals the start of the our clean energy future, the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Appeals Board (EAB) ruled today EPA had no valid reason for refusing to limit from new coal-fired power plants the carbon dioxide emissions that cause global warming. The EPA ruling applies to coal plants yet to be permitted and those in litigation. The decision means that proposed coal plants nationwide must go back and address their carbon dioxide emissions. The ruling is now a key arguing point in our legal case against Highwood's air permit. The Highwood Generating Station, a 250-megawatt coal-fired power plant is proposed to be built on the shore of the Missouri River just outside Great Falls. The facility would spew almost 3 million tons of global warming pollutants into the air each year and put thousands of tons of other pollutants into the air as well, including sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, mercury and more.

Today's decision opens the way for meaningful action to fight global warming and is a major step in bringing about a clean energy economy. The EAB rejected every Bush Administration excuse for failing to regulate the largest source of greenhouse gases in the United States – carbon dioxide

The decision follows a 2007 Supreme Court ruling recognizing

See "EPA", page 6

# Events



Bruce Hamilton, National Deputy Executive Director, Sierra Club

## **Friday and Saturday January 16th and 17th, The Heat is On: Managing Our Resources in the Face of Climate Change, Missoula, Holiday Inn Parkside, 200 S. Pattee Street**

In a climate change world, where changes to wildlife and their habitat are already beginning to be documented, wildlife will need to adapt to these changes in order to find suitable habitat, making core habitat, winter range and corridors more important than ever.

Our distinguished speakers will present information that will help the public understand the relevance and urgency for fish and wildlife as well as for our way of life. Learn about real solutions that can help protect wildlife and the habitat they depend on. Please join us for both days!

**Friday, Jan. 16th 7:00 pm: Building Resilient Habitats to Protect Natural Systems from Climate Change - A Presentation** by Bruce Hamilton, Sierra Club National Deputy Executive Director. Participants are invited to a hosted reception following the presentation.

**Saturday, Jan. 17th, 9 am – 4 pm:** Learn about the impacts of residential development on wildlife, become

informed on the proper use of bear pepper spray, and hear the latest on native fish recovery. Presenters include Craig Jourdonnais (Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks), Monica Fella (Sierra Club Grizzly Bear Recovery Program), Jack Tuholske (Environmental Attorney), Brianna Randall (Clark Fork Coalition), Michele Landquist (Missoula County Commissioner), and Hal Harper (Governors Office).

*All presentations are Free and Open to the Public. Call 406-549-1142 for more information.*

## **Friday January 30th, Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club 2009 Lobby Day, Helena, Lewis & Clark Public Library**

Learn about lobbying your representatives in the Montana Legislature to protect the environment. In 2007 we had more than a dozen members and volunteers take part. Participants will receive a short training, eat lunch, and set out for the Capitol building as a group. This is a great opportunity to see how your State government works and to connect directly with your House and Senate representatives. There may also be opportunities to sit in on hearings and to testify on bills.

No previous experience is necessary, just a will to make a difference!

This is a full day activity which includes a hosted pizza lunch. Transportation from Missoula will be provided as well as travel reimbursement for folks coming from elsewhere in the State. We plan to leave the Capitol by 4:00 pm.

Contact Bob Clark at the Missoula field office to sign up.

## **February 2009, Premier Screening of *Grizzly* in Missoula**

The Sierra Club is presenting a premier screening of the new documentary, *Grizzly*, on **February 5 in Missoula** and **February TBA in Bozeman\***. *Grizzly*, which is narrated by Oscar Award-winning actress, Susan Sarandon, tells the story of two individual grizzly bears (one a mother with two cubs, the other a young male bear) living in Yellowstone National Park and also documents the lives of ranchers, politicians, researchers and homeowners living in areas surrounding the park. Shot over the course of four years, *Grizzly* contains many wildlife sequences rarely, if ever, before filmed. The film follows its main grizzly characters over the course of eight months, highlighting both spectacular grizzly behaviors (such as a male grizzly chasing down a bull elk) and gentle behaviors (such as our female character tenderly nursing and playing with her tiny cubs.)

Sierra Club's *Grizzly* presents the most complete portrayal of Yellowstone's grizzly bears to date. But unlike many previous films that portray grizzlies as living in a wild landscape, free from humans, *Grizzly* portrays the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem as a place where humans and wildlife share the landscape; a place where each must adapt to the presence of the other. Over the course of the film, both grizzly characters must confront and overcome a series of obstacles, both natural and human-made. The film uses a compelling and beautiful natural narrative to make it possible for audiences to get to know the 'real nature' of Yellowstone's grizzlies and to better understand the threats they face.

This first-ever film screening will be held throughout the state in January and February of 2009. The event is free and open to the public. John Shier, the producer, cinematographer, and writer of *Grizzly*, will be present to meet and answer any questions after the event.

\*For more information, contact Monica Fella at [monica.fella@sierraclub.org](mailto:monica.fella@sierraclub.org).

# Update on Forest Planning in Montana



*The Great Burn, by Catherine Schrader*

Forest Plans direct management on individual forests for the next 15 years. The document influences important management decisions for recommended wilderness, Inventoried Roadless Areas, old growth forests, recreation, protection of critical habitat for T & E species such as bull trout, wildlife corridors, summer and winter range for elk and other wildlife.

Forest Planning Background: In March of 2007, the 2005 Planning Rule was enjoined and the Forest Service was not permitted to utilize and/or implement the 2005 Planning Rule\*. After completing a quick EIS, the Dept. of Agriculture released in April of 2008 a new Final Planning Rule and Record of Decision, (aka. 2008 NFMA Planning Rule.) That same month 14 groups filed suit against the decision. The groups are asking the court to throw out the final planning rule and reinstate the 1982 rule that sets specific, mandatory requirements (like, “standards”) for the development

of forest plans and site-specific projections, among other things.

The agency is evaluating the new Rule, along with the current legal situation, and since, has not moved forward on Forest Plans with either a final forest plan or starting back at the beginning with an EIS process (the Beaverhead-Deerlodge NF is the exception.)

\* The Court said that the Forest Service violated the Administrative Procedures Act, for not adequately involving the public in developing the 2005 Planning Rule; the Endangered Species Act, for not properly consulting with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and the National Environmental Policy Act. The court remanded the decision to the Department of Agriculture for compliance with the APA, ESA, and NEPA.

Bitterroot, Lolo, and Flathead National Forests (6 million acres combined) are being revised under

one effort called the Western Montana Planning Zone.

The Bitterroot, Flathead, and Lolo National Forests will not release land management plans or begin objection periods until issues related to this court decision are resolved at the national level. Before the lawsuit was ruled on in 2007 the WMPZ had released a Draft Forest Plan, in May of 2006, prepared under the 2005 Rule and that’s were they sit.

Kootenai National Forest (MT) and Idaho Panhandle NF (ID) are developing new Forest Plans in a combined effort called the Kootenai-Idaho Panhandle Planning Zone. The Kootenai’s process is at the “draft proposal” stage and is also being developed under the 2005 Planning Rule, without an EIS. They have not moved forward on Forest Plans in 2008 and are evaluating the new Rule, along with the current legal situation as well.

Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest (3.1 million acres) has not been held up in such a manner because they chose to use the 1982, full EIS, Planning Rule and are not subject to the lawsuit process. The revised draft plan with the final EIS went out for comment in early 2008. They don’t have a projected date for completing and releasing the Record of Decision on the Forest Plan revision. Sierra Club has sent in comments and have standing in this process.

The Lewis and Clark National Forest is scheduled to begin their Forest Plan revision process in 2010.

Changes and appointments in Washington, D.C. will likely play a role in the development of the lawsuit and the Forest Plans. Once the agency again begins to development final Forest Plans, opportunities for engagement in the process and for citizen action will occur quickly and we believe 2009 will be the year. Sierra Club is well-positioned to deliver favorable final Plans considering our history of official engagement. 🐾

# New Sierra Club Report: Native Fish Recovery in a Time of Climate Change



Trout in Elwha, by Roger Peters/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

**M**issoula, MT—Global warming will have profound effects on Montana and the Northern Rockies. A Report commissioned and released by the Sierra Club highlights the impacts of global warming on cold water fisheries. The effects of climate change are already being felt, and will be stressed with increased water temperature and decreases in stream flow. Native fisheries have evolved with, and depend upon, cold water and interconnected habitat for survival. Global warming may constitute the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back and could lead to the extinction of numerous populations.

“It is becoming increasingly clear that we need to manage our natural resources within the context of climate change,” said Bob Clark, Associate Regional Representative of the Sierra Club in Missoula. “This report highlights the need to protect Montana’s native fish by focusing on an indicator species – the bull trout. If we keep fisheries healthy for bull trout, then we are ultimately keeping them healthy for other species as well.”

Creating Resilient Habitats: Native Fish Recovery in a Time of Climate Change, authored by Mike Bader a Natural Resource Consultant and Jack Tuholske an environmental attorney, describes the challenges to native fish recovery presented by climate change. Bull trout, one of the nation’s largest freshwater salmonids, require the coldest water of all native fish. They can provide an excellent yardstick to

measure aquatic health and to protect other native fish throughout their home range in Montana and Pacific Northwest.

There are strategies to protect native fish from climate change through a coordinated combination of ecosystem based habitat protection and restoration proposals, education, outreach, and investments in clean alternative energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions - the root cause of climate change.

The report, *Creating Resilient Habitats: Native Fish Recovery in a Time of Climate Change*, can be downloaded from the web at: [www.sierrasportsmen.org](http://www.sierrasportsmen.org). 🐾

"EPA", Continued from page 3

carbon dioxide, the principle source of global warming, is a pollutant under the federal Clean Air Act. This is a very important ruling and provides excellent guidance for what EPA and permitting agencies should do with CO2 and power plants in the air permitting process.

Meanwhile, work at the proposed Highwood plant was halted after the state Department of Environmental Quality said the developer, Southern Montana Electric, had begun construction too early.

The following day Sierra Club, Citizens for Clean Energy, the Montana Environmental Information Center and the National Parks Conservation Association filed an appeal with the Board of Environmental Review to invalidate the air-quality permit for the plant because the plant lacks effective emissions controls to protect the public's health from fine particulate and hazardous pollutants, including mercury. The recent EPA ruling on carbon dioxide will also be a key arguing point in prohibiting the air quality permit.

Coal plants emit 30% of our nation’s global warming pollution. Building new coal plants without controlling their carbon emissions could wipe out all of the other efforts being undertaken by cities, states and communities across the country.

Thank you for supporting Sierra Club’s effort to prevent construction of new coal-fired power plants nationwide. 🐾

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## A Recipe 4 Change



- 1 phone call to Senator Baucus
- 1 phone call to Senator Tester
- 1 letter to Governor Schweitzer
- 1 letter to your local newspaper
- Join Sierra Club's Energy Activist Network

Combine above ingredients and enjoy a full spirit and a warm heart!

We need your help to establish a clean energy future for our state and nation! America needs to tackle climate change head-on by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, establishing a cap on carbon emissions—income from carbon permits must ease the burden on low-income families and protecting communities and wildlife from the impacts of global warming. A daunting task, but one that we must insist our leaders accomplish.

America must invest in clean energy, which will combat global warming and create millions of new jobs during the current economic recession.

Please take a few minutes of your time to:

1. Write or call Senators Max Baucus and Jon Tester
2. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper
3. Join our Energy Activist Network

Our ask is simple: Urge Senators Baucus and Tester, and Governor Schweitzer to be leaders in energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy. We need bold, aggressive action that addresses the imminent and rapidly growing threat posed by the climate crisis. Urge elected officials to resist supporting even dirtier and more expensive new ways to extract the same old fuels, like coal to liquids, oil shale, tar sands and so called "clean coal" technology.

America needs large-scale investment and incentives for solar,

wind, and other clean renewable sources of energy, a smart electricity grid, and high-efficiency, plug-in hybrid automobiles. At the state and national level we need to embark on an effort to retrofit buildings with better insulation and energy-efficient windows and lighting (approximately 40 percent of carbon dioxide emissions in the United States come from buildings — and stopping that pollution saves money for homeowners and businesses.)

Finally, we need to put a price on carbon dioxide, cap global CO2 emissions and invest together in efficient ways to reduce global warming pollution quickly.

Write or Call Senators Baucus and Tester and Governor Schweitzer Today!

### Senator Max Baucus

United States Senate  
511 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510-2602  
800-332-6106 (D.C.) or  
406-329-3123 (Missoula), 657-6790 (Billings), 586-6104 (Bozeman),  
782-8700 (Butte), 761-1574 (Great Falls), 449-5480 (Helena), 756-1150 (Kalispell),

### Senator Jon Tester

United States Senate  
Senate Dirksen Bldg., Room B40 E  
Washington, D.C. 20510  
202-224-2644 (D.C.) or  
406-728-3003 (Missoula), 252-0550 (Billings), 452-9585 (Great Falls), 586-4450 (Bozeman), 449-5401 (Helena),  
723-3277 (Butte), 257-3360 (Kalispell), 365-2391 (Glendive)

E-mail comments to Senators:

<http://baucus.senate.gov/contact/emailForm.cfm?subj=issue>  
<http://tester.senate.gov/Contact/index.cfm>

### Governor Brian Schweitzer

State Capitol  
Helena, MT 59620-0801  
Phone: (406) 444-3111  
Fax: (406) 444-5529

E-mail: [governor \(at\) mt.gov](mailto:governor@mt.gov)

Write a letter to the editor and send it to Montana newspapers!

Letters must be less than 300 words and contain the writer's name, address and telephone number (phone numbers are for verification, not publication).

Missoulian, [oped \(at\) missoulian.com](mailto:oped@missoulian.com)  
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[tribletters \(at\) greatfallstribune.com](mailto:tribletters@greatfallstribune.com)  
(250 word limit)

\*\*\* Please send us a copy of your letter for our files, [bob.clark \(at\) sierraclub.org](mailto:bob.clark@sierraclub.org) \*\*\*

Join Montana Sierra Club's Energy Activist Network: Over the next year there will be opportunities for our communities to address climate change at the state and federal levels. We support clean energy choices that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and protect our wildlife and water. We urge responsible officials to support positive measures and oppose poor choices like dirty coal. Most importantly, we need to build a network of activists from around Montana who, when called upon, will contact decision-makers, write letters, talk with their family and friends, or help with public visibility events.

To be included in our Energy Activist Network contact the Missoula office: 406-549-1142 or [bob.clark \(at\) sierraclub.org](mailto:bob.clark@sierraclub.org). Please provide the following: Name, address, phone, e-mail. 🐾



## Mark Your Calendars (see pages 3 & 4 for more info)

### **The Heat Is On: Managing Our Resources in the Face of Climate Change**

Friday & Saturday January 16th & 17th (Missoula)

### **Cross-Country Ski trip**

Sunday January 25 (Lolo Pass to Lee Creek)

### **Montana Chapter of the Sierra Club 2009 Lobby Day**

Friday January 30 (Helena)

### **Premier Screening of *Grizzly***

Thursday February 5, 2009 (Missoula) February TBA (Bozeman)

### **Sunset/Moonlight Cross-Country Ski**

Saturday February 7 (Lubrecht Forest)

### **Spring Wildflower Hike**

Late June, date TBA (to Packer Meadow/Lolo Pass)

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