COMMISSIONERS APPROVAL

KANENWISHER

FOSS

CHILCOTT

IMAN

STOLTZ

Members Present.....Commissioner Suzy Foss, Commissioner Greg Chilcott, Commissioner J.R. Iman and Commissioner Ron Stoltz

Date.....April 26, 2012

► Minutes: Beth Perkins

► The Board met at 9:00 a.m. with the Bitterroot Natural Resource Recovery Committee (BNRRC) regarding a draft policy for Natural Resources. Present were Nancy Ballance, Lee Foss and Ken Payne.

Nancy Ballance gave a presentation to the Commissioners regarding the economic decline for the Darby community. She discussed a need for a higher level of citizen involvement in natural resource use planning and coordination with local government. Commissioner Foss expressed gratitude for the document presented for consideration. She confirmed the BNRRC meetings have been open meetings available to the public with proper notice. Commissioner Chilcott agreed with Commissioner Foss and added the hydrology section of the document was quite impressive. (See Attached) The Board concurred to review the document section by section in a public meeting format with input. Commissioner Foss opened public comment. Hearing none, she then closed public comment and adjourned the meeting.

► Commissioner Chilcott attended a RC&D meeting at the Extension Office in Missoula for the remainder of the morning hours.

April 26, 2012

Ravalli County Board of County Commissioners
215 South 4th Street, Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

In November, 2011, a group of Ravalli County citizens met to discuss their concerns over the economic decline and lack of jobs which is negatively affecting the Darby school district enrollment and the long-term viability of the Darby community. The group concluded that a higher level of citizen involvement in natural resource use planning is needed to bring economic stability and growth back to Ravalli County.

Early in December, 2011, the citizens group of over 50 people met with the Ravalli County Commissioners to express their concern over the management of natural resources in Ravalli County.

The outcome of the meeting was a recognition that because approximately 80% of Ravalli County is public land or controlled by public entities, the County would need to coordinate with the federal and state government agencies that oversee the management of these public lands if the County is to play a major role in the management and use of its natural resources. Federal and state laws require their agencies to coordinate with local government and consider the local land use plans in the process of planning and managing public lands within the geographic boundaries of Ravalli County.

The citizens group, calling itself the Bitterroot Natural Resource Recovery Committee (BNRRC), was tasked with development of local land use plans to guide the County in effectively coordinating with the federal and state agencies to minimize impact upon and maximize benefit to the residents of the County. In January, 2012, the BNRRC initiated the process to conduct research, educate its members, and develop the plan for natural resource use in Ravalli County.

Through monthly education sessions, working sessions and independent research, the BNRRC and its 4,000+ Facebook members gathered land use statistics and information from the community, private industry, three private law firms, and relevant government agencies. Using the natural resource use policy adopted by Flathead County as a starting point, the BNRRC developed the draft Bitterroot Valley Natural Resource Use Plan.

The primary purpose of this Plan is to define the County's goals and objectives regarding natural resource use. Once adopted, the Plan will be used to coordinate the interests of Ravalli County with the federal and state management agencies. These interests include but are not limited to farming, ranching, timber, mining, recreation, wildlife and all other activities related to, and reliant upon, the availability of natural resources on federal and state managed lands.

Respectfully submitted by,

Bitterroot Natural Resource Recovery Committee,
Spokesperson, Nancy Ballance

2012

BITTERROOT VALLEY NATURAL RESOURCE USE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

Ravalli County is a general law county and, as such, is a political subdivision of the State of Montana, having corporate powers and exercising the sovereignty of the State of Montana within its boundaries, as provided in the Montana Constitution, those powers specified by statute and those necessarily implied there from.

Only the Ravalli County Board of County Commissioners (hereinafter referred to as the "Board") can exercise the powers of the County by agents and officers acting under the authority of the Board. The 509-982-0113Board serves as the Chief Executive authority of the County government and is charged by law with performing all duties necessary to the full discharge of these specified and implied executive duties. The Board is charged with governing Ravalli County in the best interest of all its citizens. One of its duties is to supervise and protect the tax base of the County.

The Board is aware that one goal of the County's citizens, and therefore its government, has been the continuation of a lifestyle which assures quiet enjoyment of private property rights and property interests and assures the highest degree of protection of these rights. Property rights and interests are important to the people who live and work in Ravalli. Many people who live in the County are reliant on the land and its productive use. Private ownership and incentive provided by private ownership is a driving force that supports the livelihood of many Ravalli County citizens.

Federal and state-managed lands make up 76% of the area of Ravalli County. Moreover, the County's economy is deeply affected and impacted by changes on federal, state, and private lands. State and federal agencies are charged by law governing state and federal lands inside Ravalli County's political boundary, to be managed in the best interest of all citizens. Local, state and federal planning decisions may create benefits for a great many state and national citizens outside the county, but may transfer a disproportionate amount of the costs and responsibilities to local communities and citizens. These decisions must consider impacts to Ravalli County's economy, custom, culture, and historic uses of both public and private property.

The Board believes that the American concept of "government of the people, by the people and for the people" is best served when government affairs are conducted as close to the people as possible (i.e. at the county level). The Board is charged to carry out its specified and inherent duties to operate the government of Ravalli County in the best interests of all its citizens and to protect and preserve the County's tax base. The Board finds it desirable to address the use and management of other resources within the political jurisdiction of the County in its comprehensive planning efforts.

The Board reached its decision in part because the use and management of that land has substantial and significant impact on the economic stability of the County. The Board is, therefore, legitimately interested in full participation in the planning process utilized by federal and state agencies for determining and implementing land use plans and other actions in Ravalli County. The Board's interest extends to land use plans or action formulation, development, and implementation (which include monitoring and evaluation).

It is the intent of Ravalli County government to protect the custom and culture of County citizens through a variety of actions. It is the policy of Ravalli County to work with federal and state agencies to coordinate and consider County, State and Federal policies before implementing actions, both within and without the boundaries of Ravalli County that affect the local communities and citizens.

Federal and state laws require federal and state agencies to coordinate with local government and consider the local land use plans in the process of planning and managing federal and state lands within the geographic boundaries of Ravalli County, Montana. Federal and state agencies proposing actions that will impact the

County, its citizens, and resources therein should prepare and submit in writing, in a timely manner, report(s) on the purposes, objectives and estimated impacts of such actions, including economic, to the Ravalli County Board of County Commissioners, 215 South 4th Street, Suite A, Hamilton, MT 59840 for review. The Board will then determine appropriate action to be taken by the County and provide input, information and comment on proposed actions or activities. The Board will also notify other government agencies of actions that are proposed by the Board affecting various resources and amenities in Ravalli County and solicit other agency input and comment. The purpose of this exchange of information and input is to minimize impact upon and maximize benefit to the residents of the County as well as other members of the public.

RAVALLI COUNTY

Ravalli County is located in the southwest area of Montana. The county encompasses 1,536,241 acres or 2394.21 square miles. Approximately 80% of the land mass is National or State Forest Land, wilderness, conservation easement or river floodplain.

The 2010 census shows the county population at 40,212 people. The 2000 census was 36070. As of the year 2010 it was populated with 16.8 people per square mile.

The County is bounded on the north by Missoula County, on the South and west by Idaho, the Bitterroot National Forest and the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, on the East by the Sapphire Mountains and Granite County and to the Southeast by Beaverhead County and Lost Trail Pass

Ravalli County is primarily forested land with the main Bitterroot Valley floor as agricultural (farming and ranching) interspersed with cities, towns, and urban areas of habitation.

The County's economy and social aspects were predominately and historically based on agriculture, forestry, mining, hunting and trapping. Stevensville is the oldest town in Montana. St. Mary's Mission was the first permanent white settlement in Montana and was established in 1841 by Jesuit missionaries. They were led by Father Pierre Jean DeSmet, who was asked by the Salish Indians to come to the valley. The missionaries were responsible for establishing agriculture, cattle raising, the first flour mill, the first sawmill, the first distillery of camas root for medicinal purposes, and the first pharmacy. Major John Owen, a trader with the army, established Fort Owen in 1850 and it served as a trading post for trappers, miners, settlers and Indians for 20 years. Hamilton was established by Marcus Daly, the Butte copper mining magnate, in the late 1880's when he came to the valley in search of timber to supply his copper mines on the east side of the Continental Divide. Darby began in 1882 as a mining and fur trading town, gradually changing to logging, agriculture, and cattle ranching. Some mining claims are still evident such as the Curlew mine. There were also attempt to drill for oil and locate coal deposits.

Due to the vast amounts of forests within Ravalli County and the contiguous National Forests, forestry management, timber harvest, fishing, hunting and trapping have always been a major factor in the social and economic history, custom and culture history of Ravalli County. Numerous sawmills and wood products processing plants were built from the time of early settlers and modernized through time. Log home building became a large valley industry in the 1980's through the mid 2000's.

Since the early 1980's the Bitteroot National Forest's output of raw timber has dropped from 42 million board feet annually to as low as 0.8 million board feet with an average of 8 million board feet per year since 2000. Consequently many sawmill and logging operations have gone out of business. The annual growth of growing stock trees on non-reserved forest land on the Bitterroot National Forest is estimated to be about 30.5 million cubic feet and net annual growth is estimated to be over 23.7 million cubic feet, and the annual mortality is about

6.8 million cubic feet. The County economy continues with fluctuations and a conversion away from the use of natural resources to other manufacturing and expanding service sector.

The County economy continues with fluctuations and a conversion away from the use of natural resources to other manufacturing and an expanding service sector.

Ravalli County's greatest challenge in the coming decades will be dealing with the economy. Over the past several decades the county's basic economic sectors have been changing rapidly. The goods and service sector expands with a growing population trend. There is less use of local natural resources and a change to importing and manufacturing.

As well as a vast service sector, the County has sizable government and educational employment such as The Rocky Mountain Laboratory, Bitterroot College Program, several public schools, U.S. Forest Service and a wide variety of federal, state, and county offices.

RAVALLI COUNTY LAND AREA

	Acres	Percent of Total Land Area
Ravalli County – Total Area	1,575,848	
U.S. Forest Service Administered Land	1,166,425	75.9%
Wilderness Study	101,974	
Wilderness	282,630	
Inventoried Roadless	296,148	
Management Areas (MA) where timber harvest is allowed	485,673	
State of Montana – Department of Natural Resources	29,299	1.9%
Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks	8,964	0.6%
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	2,868	0.2%
Private Land	367,638	23.3%
Total Forested Land (from MT NRIS) includes private and public lands	877,800	56.0%

CUSTOM AND CULTURE

The history of Ravalli County is steeped in stories of the ruggedness of early settlers and the use of natural resources in the County to sustain their lives and livelihoods. There are reports of miners and prospectors, hunters, trappers and trading posts, loggers, sawmills, home and business construction, coal mining and oil well drilling, livestock and crops. Establishment of the State and U.S. Forest Service brought roads, trails, telephone lines, ranger stations, work camps, and fire lookouts.

The custom and culture of Ravalli County has always been driven by available technology and the presence of valuable natural resources, timber being dominant. Other factors have included the distance to markets, prices, and forces of marketplace.

Beneficial use of natural resources has been the basis for Ravalli County's economy, custom and culture. Modern technology, mechanization, and markets have altered the means of production and marketing of these resources from their historic beginnings.

Timber harvest and milling, mining, farming, ranching and recreation provided the heritage of the county's residents, and such activities continue today. This is a land in which nature plays the upper hand. Early settlers of

this land worked hard to establish their livelihood, and to maintain that livelihood, today's residents must work equally hard.

In recent times the use of natural resources of The Bitterroot National Forest within the County has become less available. Road access for recreation, such as hunting, fishing, and trapping, as well as timber harvest and other resource use has been reduced. There is a cessation of timber management, timber resources and other management of benefit to all forms of life on the national forest lands within and contiguous to Ravalli County. This has resulted in fire fuel loadings in the forests in addition to insect and disease epidemics. These conditions have been compounded by years of drought resulting in catastrophic wildfires and other negative affects to critical major watersheds. This has greatly affected and altered the County's economic, social, custom and culture and overall human environment. There is hope the Bitterroot National Forest can be returned to its original direction and mission established by law for managing public lands and forests for the public good. Social and economic aspects of industrial enterprise and the custom and culture of Ravalli County have been greatly impacted.

ECONOMICS

A primary purpose of this Plan is to foster cooperation and coordination between federal and state management agencies, other counties and Ravalli County. These interests include but are not limited to farming, ranching, timber, mining, recreation, wildlife and all other activities related to, and reliant upon, the availability of natural resources on federal and state managed, and private lands within their respective jurisdictions.

As noted in other sections of this document, the economy of Ravalli County historically has been closely tied to the availability and management of natural resources. The economic challenge for Ravalli County in the first decade of the 21st Century is finding the right balance between using and conserving natural resources in a way that supports all of the industries of the valley.

The availability and use of these resources impacts the ability of natural resource industries to pay wages and property taxes that support households and services throughout the county. At the same time, conservation of these resources, open space, and working landscapes also impacts the economy by attracting tourism, wealthy migrants, and entrepreneurs who value access to vast areas for outdoor pursuit and the quality of life associated with a clean environment and abundant wildlife.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce's Bureau of Economic Analysis, the lumber and wood products manufacturing industry in Ravalli County as a whole has steadily lost jobs over the past decade. Labor earnings have dropped from a high of $6.6 million in 2001 to $2.3 million in 2009.

At the same time this industry reduces its contribution to the local economy through wages, it decreases its property tax payments to support county services as it loses its ability to make profits from the land. When unprofitable private land is acquired by federal and state agencies for conservation purposes, it is permanently removed from the tax base, adversely affecting funding for schools, healthcare, police, fire, and other needed services.

The federal government has several mechanisms to reimburse local government for loss of taxes. Payments to support local communities are derived from federal lands through the following mechanisms.

* 25% of Forest Reserve Fund (or elected current alternative)
* Payments in Lieu of Taxes (PILT)
* Taylor Grazing Act Section 3 and Section 15
* Refuge Revenue Sharing Act

Although several studies portray the Ravalli County economy in glowing terms as the surge of in-migration has brought in people with money who demand housing and a lot of services, many studies fail to address the negative aspects of this growth. Paramount of these oversights is the relationship and effects of how the growth in the service sector along with the decline of natural resource industries has caused Montana's per capita income to decline to 46th in the US. Low wages are a significant problem especially to the large percentage of Montana workers whose job does not require at least a bachelor's degree. Most economic reports fail to address the reasons for the decline in the natural resource industries. Their decline is primarily due to external forces such as appeals and litigation of timber sales on Federal Lands in Ravalli County. Mills have closed due to lack of log supply even during high markets. The existing forest industry in Ravalli County is at extreme risk unless the supply from National Forests can be increased.

The most significant change in the Ravalli and national economy is the decreased portion of income derived from labor. Americans used to move to places to follow jobs. Now people with money and job creation capability migrate to places they find desirable to live. A significant percentage of all personal income in the county now comes from non-labor income, such as transfer payments from investments, retirement accounts, and benefits. This phenomenon is partly a result of an aging society with fewer workers, but also reflects the region's ability to attract new entrepreneurs, the self-employed, and wealthy retirees.

As Ravalli County works with other jurisdictions to make decisions about the use of natural resources, the impact of all the above trends must be taken into account to ensure that the livelihood and quality of life for its 40,000+ residents is enhanced by a strong and stable economy. Changes in the availability and management of natural resources that swing too far in favor of either extraction or conservation of resources could adversely affect the delicate balance of jobs, property taxes, quality of life, and migration patterns that have sustained the growing levels of prosperity enjoyed by County residents.

The Ravalli County Economic Development Authority, with underlying funding by the U.S. Forest Service, contracted for the Ravalli County Economic Needs Assessment in 2002 (RCENA). The RCENA was written by Dr. Larry Swanson of the O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West at the University of Montana.

1. GOAL Improve the economic viability of the natural resource based industries.

- Objective A: Expand the membership types of the chambers of commerce that will encourage local natural resource individuals to join.
- Objective B: Include members from natural resource-based industry.
- Objective C: Raise awareness of the positive impact that natural resources make on the Bitterroot valley and its economy.
- Objective D: Schedule "field days" to tour resources.
- Objective E: Provide economic value statements to interested groups.
- Objective F: Establish and fund a non-profit committee made up of natural resource professionals that will:
- Objective G: Work to improve the economic viability of the natural resource producer.
- Objective H: Promote the aesthetic value of the industry.
- Objective I: Encourage and provide, during the Ravalli County Fair, programs and displays that will promote the natural resource based industry within the valley.
- Objective J: Raise the awareness of the general public of the positive role of natural resources within Ravalli County.
- Objective K: Encourage programs that will promote the value of the natural resources to our community.

2. GOAL Provide incentive policies to existing and new natural resource related industries.

- Objective A: Establish a process that will make a closer tie between the business community and the natural resource industries.

Objective B: Strategic partnering to existing and potential natural resource partners.

3. GOAL Promote and expand tax incentives and balanced tax policies to assist existing and new natural resources related industries.

Objective A: Support a balanced tax policy that is fair and equitable to all bio-based industries.

Objective B: Use public business tax incentives that will encourage new natural resource industries and maintain old ones.

4. GOAL Promote local and state control over natural resource policies.

Objective A: Streamline the local and state regulation process as it relates to the natural resource use and management without sacrificing good stewardship.

Objective B: Work with national policy makers to enhance their understanding of the use of natural resources in Ravalli County.

Objective C: Promote and provide incentives in the marketing and processing potential for natural resource products and value added products.

Objective D: Actively pursue and assist businesses that will add to the value of our natural resources via grants and policies.

Objective E: Actively support the natural resource industries as to their economic viability.

Objective F: Support and promote the establishment of new natural resource based industries within the county.

Objective G: Establish a closer relationship between these businesses and county resources such as Bitterroot Community College, State Forest Service and the Montana Agricultural Experiment Station.

COMMUNITY STABILITY

Historically the custom and culture of Ravalli County is a story retold in many western counties. The settlement of the County is a history of logging and milling, farming and ranching, mining, trapping, fishing, hunting, wildlife, road building and railroads. It was led by hardy individuals willing to work and develop the resources of the land to bring forth a community. The settlement of the County is based on the beneficial use of land and water.

The people of Ravalli County have traditionally earned their livelihood from activities associated with the County's abundant natural resources. The economy of the County was in the past, and is today, dependent on the availability and utilization of natural resources of the County. The economy of the Bitterroot has changed greatly since these times, but many people employed in Ravalli County are dependent on forestry, forest production, ranching and farming, recreation, mining, and other activities related to the availability of natural resources. While some of these industries have competing interests in how the resources are used, they all have a stake in decisions about extraction, conservation and access to public lands.

Much of the land producing the resources critical to the economy of Ravalli County is managed by Federal and State agencies, or is vitally affected by land management policies of federal or state agencies. The County economy benefits greatly from businesses operating on federal and state lands. These include timber harvesting, mining, livestock grazing, commercial recreational activities, and individual recreation opportunities.

In addition, there are service and support businesses that account for most of the job-related income in Ravalli County. Many of these businesses are the base for economic stability of the County. The management and use of federal and state land plays a vital role in the social fabric and economic health of the County. The effective use of private land is greatly dependent on management style and technique for federal and state managed land and water.

Recognizing the critical tie between use of the federal and state lands and the economic stability of the county, the Board will work to provide a voice for individual citizens and local communities in guiding the future of the County.

CONSTITUTIONAL PRINCIPLES AND PRIVATE PROPERTY

The U.S. Constitution created a form of government characterized by:

1. Limited powers granted to the federal government.
2. Separation of those limited powers into legislative, judicial, and executive branches.
3. Creation of a process where the branches act to check and balance the power of the branches.

The Board and the people of Ravalli County accept, support, and sustain the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Montana. The Constitution of the United States, Article 1, Section 8, clauses 17 and 18 limits the authority of the federal government to own only specified lands.

1. **GOAL** Ensure that all lands in Ravalli County be managed in coordination with the Board, its representatives, and thereby the citizens of this county
2. **GOAL** Reaffirm the fundamental rights of mankind as enumerated in the Declaration of Independence and acknowledge the limited nature of government as intended by the nation's founding fathers.
3. **GOAL** Protect private property and private property rights and promote the continuation of private economic pursuits.

Objective A: Protect private property rights.
Objective B: Protect local custom and culture.
Objective C: Maintain traditional economic structures through self-determination.
Objective D: Open new economic opportunities through reliance on free markets.
Objective E: Enhance environmental quality.
Objective F: Protect and preserve privately owned land in Ravalli County.

Recognize the limited private land base in Ravalli County. When private property is purchased by the Government, the tax base is reduced. Property values of remaining supply are accelerated along with taxes on the increased values. Proposals for government purchase of property should be evaluated with the long term goal of no net increase in Government ownership of property and preservation of private property rights in Ravalli County.

4. GOAL Ensure Due Process through the following processes:

Objective A: Notice
Objective B: Opportunity to be heard.
Objective C: The right to cross-examination.
Objective D: Disclosure
Objective E: Findings of fact.
Objective F: Conflicts of interest and the appearance of conflict or impropriety.
Objective G: Prompt decisions.
Objective H: Records of proceedings.
Objective I: Ground rules for fair play.
Objective J: Substantive due process.
Objective K: Coordination.

PRIMARY PLANNING GUIDELINES

The Board recognizes it is their duty and obligation to enter into official land use planning activities and to participate equitably and fully with the federal and state management agencies. In accordance with state and federal laws regarding land use planning and protection of private property interests, the Board seeks to maintain and revitalize various multiple uses of state and federally managed lands. To that end, the Board adopts this Natural Resource Use Plan, including General Planning Guidelines and Management Actions regarding various multiple uses of state and federally managed lands in the County. The Board has developed a process to coordinate in advance with the federal and state agencies regarding proposed actions which will alter or impact lands in Ravalli County. This includes, but is not restricted to, private property rights and private property interests, economic stability and historically developed custom and culture of the county, and the provisions of this Natural Resource Use Plan. Such agencies are requested, prior to taking official action or issuing a report on a proposed action, to coordinate with the Board. The agencies may accomplish this in part by providing the Board or its agents, in a timely manner, with the proposed purposes, objectives, and estimated economic impacts of such action. The Board is committed to a positive planning process with federal and state agencies. The County will consider the best interests of all people in Ravalli County and the State of Montana regarding use of state and federal lands.

Ravalli County is committed to seeing that all decisions on natural resources affecting the County will he guided by the following principles:

1. Maintain and revitalize the concept of multiple uses on all lands in Ravalli County.
2. Protect private property rights and interests.
3. Protect local historical custom and culture.
4. Protect traditional economic structures in the County that form the base for economic stability.
5. Open up new economic opportunities through reliance on free markets.
6. Protect the rights to the enjoyment of the natural resources of the county by all citizens.

Resource and land use management decisions made in a coordinated manner by federal and state agencies and County officials will not only maintain and revitalize the multiple use of lands in Ravalli County, but will enhance environmental quality.

This Plan is only the commencement of the planning process in Ravalli County. The process itself is ongoing and will require the Board to become involved with all stages of the resource process followed by federal and state agencies. These stages will include plan development, implementation, monitoring, coordination and evaluation.

LAND TENURE, DISPOSITION, ACQUISITION AND USE

Only 23.3% of the land in Ravalli County is private. It is this land that comprises the County tax base that must support most County services. The Board recognizes that land is essential to local industry and residents.

1. **GOAL** Land tenure adjustments for any government agency should provide for long term benefits to the community as a whole that can counter balance loss of private land, private property rights and interests or loss of property tax revenue to Ravalli County.

Objective A: Exchanges of government land with private landowners to adjust property lines for improvement of management of either or both will be sought.

Objective B: Isolated tracts of state and federally managed lands, which could be better and more efficiently managed by the private sector, may be identified and recommended for sale or trade.

2. GOAL The design and development of all federal and state land dispositions and acquisitions, including land adjustments and exchanges, should be carried out to benefit the residents of Ravalli County.

Objective A: That the County suffer no net loss in tax revenue.

Objective B: That private property interests are protected and enhanced.

Objective C: That the citizens of Ravalli County will suffer no adverse aggregate economic impacts.

Objective D: That the general public and the Ravalli County Board of Commissioners should be notified of, consulted with, and otherwise involved in all federal and state land adjustments in Ravalli County, as discussed in Appendix H, Framework for Coordination.

Objective E: The County should have the opportunity to investigate and evaluate all proposed changes to determine if the proposal is in the best interest of the County. Further, the County and other government agencies should collaborate and coordinate with each other in implementing proposed planning activities.

INTRODUCTION - WATER AND HYDROLOGY

Water resources are fundamental to the economic future and the quality of life in Ravalli County. Historically, surface water sources were the primary supply and are still a primary source for irrigation, recreation and fisheries. In recent years, and for the foreseeable future, groundwater sources are the primary source for new municipal, domestic, irrigation, and industrial supplies. The quality of this resource needs to be protected.

The Bitterroot Valley is 80 miles long and 34 miles wide at its widest point. The Valley contains flood plains and river terraces along the Bitterroot River. At higher elevations benches slope toward the river. Foothills and steep slopes flank the benches.

Private land is primarily located adjacent to the West and East Forks and the Bitterroot River from the confluence northward to the Ravalli County - Missoula County line. Mountains occupy west and east sides of the valley bordering Idaho on the west and Granite County, MT on the east. The southern end of the valley is also mountainous, bordering Beaverhead County, MT to the southeast and Idaho on the south.

Elevations on the west side (Bitterroot mountains) range up to 10,157 feet in elevation (Trapper Peak), about 8,500 feet in the Sapphire Range to the east, and 8.000 feet on the hydrologic divide between Idaho and Ravalli County on the south. Most of the southern and western parts of the valley occur on igneous rock (e.g. granitic materials). A large part of the east side and northern end of the valley occurs on modified and unmodified sedimentary rock. Most of the valley-fill material consists of sands and gravels up to 300 feet thick (as determined by the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology). The West and East Forks as well as the main stem of the Bitterroot River occur on these materials.

Most soils in the bottom lands adjacent to the river are shallow to moderately deep over loose sands and gravel. The occupy a strip along the river of up to 2 miles wide. Deep soils occur on the terraces and benches of the east side. Soils on the west side are also shallow to moderately deep, and formed in granitic parent material (USDA-NRCS).

Ravalli County has major groundwater resources. The greatest water-well yields are developed in gravel aquifers. The most productive is the unconfined aquifer running from the confluence of the West and East Forks of the Bitterroot River to the Ravalli-Missoula county line.

Channel flow, taken from U.S. Geologic Survey data (2000-2010 data):

Table I Bitterroot River Discharge

West Fork of the Bitterroot River near Conner, MT	166,513 acre-ft/year
Bitterroot River near Darby, MT	593,655 acre-ft/year
Bitterroot River near Florence, MT	1,335,725 acre-ft/year

Precipitation is variable in Ravalli County and substantially influenced by elevation. Table II illustrates this effect.

Table II Temperature and Precipitation at Selected Locations in the Bitterroot Valley (1)

Location	Elevation - Feet	January Avg. Temp. oF	July Avg. Temp. oF	Annual Precipitation – Inches
Hamilton, MT T6N-R21W	3,750	26.5	66.6	13.6
Twin Lakes T5N-R23W Sec. 32	6,400	26.4	58.1	58.7
Saddle Mountain T2S-R19W Sec. 5	7,940	21.5	56.5	29.5

(1) USDA-NRCS

Annual stream runoff occurs primarily from snowmelt and precipitation in the headwater areas during late spring and early summer. Low flows in the basin occur naturally during the winter. Recharge to aquifers is greatest from April through July due to stream runoff from accumulated snow in headwater areas augmented by an average of about 10 inches of rain as measured at higher elevations for May and June.
The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has prepared a water quality improvement plan for the Bitterroot Valley/River dealing primarily with temperature issues and sediment for stream segments as identified in a publication entitled "Bitterroot Temperature and Tributary Sediment Total Maximum Daily Loads and Framework Water Quality Improvement Plan" (August 17, 2011).

In this plan the Bitterroot River watershed is divided into three separate planning areas:

1. Bitterroot Headwaters (completed in 2005)
2. Upper Lolo Creek (completed in 2003)
3. Bitterroot TPA (2011) which includes the Bitterroot River from the confluence of the West and East Forks to its confluence with the Clark Fork River, and Bitterroot River tributaries.

The Montana DEQ identified sediment related effects as a cause of impairment for the following tributaries of the Bitterroot River:

1. Ambrose Creek
2. Bass Creek
3. Lick Creek
4. Muddy Creek
5. North Fork of Burnt Creek
6. Rye Creek
7. Sleeping Child Creek
8. Sweathouse Creek
9. Threemile Creek
10. Willow Creek

Anthropogenic (man-caused) sources of sediment include:

1. Upland and stream bank erosion associated with removal of riparian vegetation
2. Unpaved roads
3. Culvert failure
4. Logging
5. Disturbed ground on small and large acreage ranches
6. Agriculture
7. Storm water from construction sites
8. Forced management practices
9. Wildfire

Montana DEQ identified temperature related effects as a cause of impairment for the following stream segments:

1. Middle and lower Bitterroot River (from confluence with Skalkaho and 8-mile Creeks)
2. Sleeping Child Creek
3. Willow Creek

Anthropogenic sources of temperature problem include:

1. Reductions in shade from small and large ranching operations
2. Crops
3. Suburban land use
4. Timber harvest
5. Irrigation withdrawals and return flows
6. Waste treatment plants
7. Urban runoff from rain and snow events
8. Wildfire

Most of the headwater streams occurring on U.S. Forest Service administered land are functioning properly (not impaired). Streams that are "impaired" are undergoing active and passive restoration (Bitterroot National Forest Watershed Condition Class Rating – 2012).

1. GOAL Productive watersheds must be maintained for water quantity and quality.

Objective A: Maintain healthy forests for productive watersheds.

Objective B: Develop water yield management plans for the forested lands within Ravalli County.

Objective C: Support the Environmental Protection Agency/Montana Division of Environmental Quality's Total Maximum Daily Load Program's Beneficial Use and Water Quality Standards.

Objective D: Develop a County policy regarding the impacts of urban development on the site hydrology - specifically address centralized versus decentralized collection and treatment of waste water and storm water runoff.

Objective E: Copies of all reports prepared for public entities related to water quality and/or quantity shall be maintained at the County Library.

2. GOAL Identify and secure water for future uses within the County.

Objective A: Develop a County plan for securing water for future uses.
Objective B: Develop a method for allocating the reserved water to future uses.

Water Rights

All existing rights to the use of any waters for any useful or beneficial purpose are recognized and confirmed by the Montana Constitution. "Existing water right" means a right to the use of water that would be protected under the law, as it existed prior to July 1, 1973.

1. GOAL Water rights established historically and beneficially used by the citizens of Ravalli County including, but not limited to, the purposes of agriculture (irrigation and stock water) domestic use, industrial use, mining and power uses are recognized as private property rights and are to be protected as such.

Objective A: Any new or additional development of surface water or groundwater after June 30, 1973, will be consistent with Montana laws and the Montana Water Use Act of 1973.

2. GOAL Allocation of water resources in Ravalli County are governed by applicable Montana Laws and the Prior Appropriation Doctrine.

Objective A: Any land use inventory, planning or management activities affecting water resources in Ravalli County, either directly or indirectly, is coordinated with local government and is consistent with the Resource Use Management Plan of Ravalli County.

Objective B: Use of water resources in Ravalli County is consistent with local culture and community stability with particular emphasis on the economic stability of the community.

Objective C: Recognize that water used for recreation, fish and wildlife purposes provide economic benefit to Ravalli County although these uses are not historically recognized as historic water rights or "existing water rights". These uses are generally non-consumptive uses of water and are dependent on maintained water quality.

Objective D: Encourage the completion of adjudication of water rights within the Bitterroot River basin and participate in the process to insure availability of water for domestic and commercial use in the future.

Water Quality

1. GOAL The Montana Water Quality Act (Title 75, Chapter 5, Mont. Code Ann.) provides authority and standards for water quality in Ravalli County.

Objective A: Any land use inventory, planning or management activities affecting point or non-point sources and water quality in Ravalli County, either directly or indirectly, is coordinated through local government and is consistent with the Resource Use Management Plan of Ravalli County.

Objective B: All management plans and land use practice modifications proposed by either state or federal agencies premised on water quality issues are coordinated through local government and are consistent with the protection of private property rights.

Objective C: The economic and social benefits of customary land use activities in Ravalli County should be recognized but not advanced at the expense of water quality.

Objective D: The County shall develop and maintain a permitting coordination office so all permits for any project will be identified for the project proponent.

Floodplains and River Terraces

Floodplains are relatively broad and smooth valley floors constructed by active rivers and periodically covered with floodwater during periods of overbank flow. Flood plains usually include the riparian and wetland areas. The floodplain is a part of the active erosional and depositional activity of river channels. They are zones of complex interaction between river water and groundwater. They contain the highest diversity of plants and animals and have the highest productivity of any other land type in the County. Intact floodplains are natural floodwater storage areas that allow spring floods to spread out and recharge alluvial aquifers, rejuvenate riparian forests and deposit fine sediment loads.

River terraces (benches) are abandoned floodplains that formed when their associated rivers flowed at high levels in the past. Many alluvium-filled valleys contain a complex series of river terraces that indicate ancient floodplains. Many of the river valleys in Ravalli County have terraces at their margins which, when irrigated, are some of the most productive farmlands.

1. GOAL Continue to reduce property damage and improve stream stability, water quality and fisheries habitat in floodplains.

Objective A: Continue maintenance of beneficial floodplain protection structures as indicated by project approved by one or more agencies with appropriate jurisdiction such as U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Farm Service Agency, Mt. Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, or Conservation Districts.

Objective B: Enhance upstream water retention and the use thereof through a combination of floodplain restoration projects and off stream storage.

Objective C: Develop accurate and detailed floodplain mapping in consultation with landowners. Maintain a current floodplain map reflecting all map amendments and bank stabilization projects.

Objective D: Discourage construction of any structure in floodplain areas and encourage flood proofing of existing structures situated in floodplain areas.

2. GOAL Protect river floodplain integrity.

Objective A: Discourage channelization of rivers and streams.

Objective B: Discourage use of bank stabilizing structures.

Wetlands

Wetlands are defined as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas.

Wetlands help regulate water levels within watersheds, improve water quality, reduce flood and storm damages, provide important fish and wildlife habitat, and support hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities. Wetlands are most common on floodplains along rivers and streams (riparian wetlands). They also occur in isolated depressions surrounded by dry land (for example, playas, basins, and "potholes") along the margins of lakes and ponds, and in other low-lying areas where the groundwater intercepts the soil surface or where precipitation sufficiently saturates the soil (vernal pools and bogs). Wetlands include marshes and wet meadows dominated by herbaceous plants; swamps dominated by shrubs, and wooded swamps dominated by trees. Wetland sites may provide critical habitat needs for many species, and they support a greater concentration of wildlife species, recreation and other activities than any other type location on the landscape.

1. GOAL Develop a cooperative approach to wetland issues.

Objective A: Work with water and wildlife agencies, agriculture and landowners to achieve acceptable solutions and mutual benefits, both economic and otherwise, on these issues.

Objective B: Adopt existing wetlands definition.

Objective C: Develop a map of wetlands of concern throughout the County.

Objective D: Promote compliance with federal and state laws regarding wetlands management in Ravalli County.

Reference: Federal Manual for Identifying and Delineating Jurisdictional Wetlands. 1989. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

Riparian Areas

Riparian areas can be defined as plant communities adjacent to and affected by surface or ground water of perennial or ephemeral water bodies such as rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, or drainage ways. These areas have distinctly different vegetation than adjacent areas or have species similar to surrounding areas that exhibit a more vigorous or robust growth form.

The high value of riparian areas is due to the abundance and variety of their natural resources and because they are tied directly to our most limited resource – water. Since water is a finite resource, mitigation can never fully recover loss of riparian areas to development. The more development occurs, and the greater our demand for water becomes, the more this will hold true. Enforcement of buffer strips and setbacks is needed to protect riparian areas from urban encroachment.

Overuse of riparian areas from livestock grazing and recreational use leads to soil compaction, bank erosion, increased sediment and nutrient loads, habitat loss and reduced productivity. There is a variety of land management tools that can offset such effects as fencing and off-channel watering and mineral licks, restrictions on off road vehicle use, seasonal closures, sanitation facilities, and hardened boat launches, etc. There is a variety of education and federal assistance programs to help landowners repair and protect riparian areas. The County government should ensure these resources are made available to landowners.

1. GOAL Continue to promote protection and management of riparian areas.

Objective A: Utilization allowances should be designed to enhance the range resource and provide an accurate and verifiable system for the comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the entire range resource in a pasture or grazing rotation system. Utilization allowances and monitoring and evaluation systems should not make measure one area while excluding other areas of the range resource.

Objective B: Encourage the development of riparian management plans in concert and coordination with landowners, ranchers and appropriate state and federal agencies.

Objective C: Adopt the United States Fish and Wildlife Service definition of riparian areas.

Objective D: Promote compliance with Federal and State laws regarding riparian management in Ravalli County.

Objective E: Coordinate with other agencies and private entities managing land, waterways, and wetlands containing threatened or endangered species.

Objective F: The County should receive notification of all state, regional, interstate, and federal actions that have any impact on the water of the county prior to such actions being initiated. It shall be the policy of the county to comment on these actions where appropriate.

Objective G: Promote landowner education on best management practices and availability of programs on riparian and stream restoration.

AGRICULTURE AND IRRIGATION

Agriculture in the lower elevations of Ravalli County makes an important contribution to the economic base of the County, and is of critical importance to economic stability. Wheat, barley, flax, alfalfa, grain hays, silage, and livestock pasture constitute some of the major crops in Ravalli County. Specialty crops such as seed potatoes, mint, lawn sod, canola, mustard, raspberries, strawberries, grapes and vegetable crops are also very important products.

Many crops are enhanced by irrigation to increase productivity. Irrigation is from rivers and streams or from deep wells. Irrigated crops are integral to production of livestock and feed, food sources for livestock and to the custom, culture, social, and the economic stability of the County.

Historically and to the present day, grain farms in Ravalli County have contributed to the production and protection of wildlife and waterfowl by providing a food source at the expense of the agriculture community. The Bitterroot Valley is home to local populations and to migratory populations of waterfowl and other birds. Available water and wetland habitat plus the food sources are the necessary attraction.

1. **GOAL** Improve the climate for farming and ranching by providing a flexible menu of voluntary options for farmers to maintain the existing farm community.

2. **GOAL** Productive watersheds must be maintained and protected to assure adequate water supply for irrigation, agriculture and all life forms.

   Objective A: Maintain healthy forests for productive watersheds.

3. **GOAL** Water rights and irrigation ditch easements are to be protected.

   Objective A: Encourage that the re-adjudication process protects existing water rights.

4. **GOAL** Maintain water storage and conveyance structures.

LIVESTOCK GRAZING

Agriculture production in various forms in Ravalli County is necessary to the livelihood and well being of all its citizens and to the land. The County must strive to protect our ranching and farming heritage and the vital natural resources needed to keep farming and ranching families in business.

The Bitterroot National Forest has lands contiguous to and intermingled with private lands of various ownerships in portion of Ravalli County. The Bitterroot National Forest also manages and controls the headwaters and watersheds of the major rivers and streams in Ravalli County which are necessary for agriculture to exist in the County. Historically, there have been permits issued by the land owners to ranchers for the purpose of grazing on federal and private lands.

1. **GOAL** Balance agricultural use on federal and state lands with recreational use, water quality and wildlife habitat.

   Objective A: Retain the use of public lands contiguous to and intermingled with private lands.

   Objective B: Recognize and protect private property rights.

   Objective C: Support the agriculture industry.

   Objective D: Provide better management of lands and land improvements on livestock range that is also key big game habitat.

   Objective E: Support the tax base of the county.

   Objective F: Utilize a coordinated resource management and planning approach to ensure involvement of all interests.

Objective G: Enhance and protect riparian areas.

Objective H: Encourage consistent management of wildlife populations.

Objective I: Use sound management practices to develop innovative grazing plans.

Objective J: Have in place, a rapid response process to address land resource issues.

Objective K: Work cooperatively with the involved ranchers, and other interested parties to address resource concerns on a site-specific basis.

Objective L: Use approved methods to control noxious weeds to maintain or increase grazing levels.

Objective M: Maintain or increase forage available with structural improvements such as fences or cattle guards.

Objective N: Use deferred entry or rest rotation along with structural improvements.

Objective O: Protect riparian areas from overuse through fencing and off stream watering.

2. GOAL Manage grazing lands to maintain and enhance desired plant communities, and for the benefit of watersheds, wildlife, water quality, recreation and livestock grazing.

Objective A: Comply with the applicable federal and state laws, including the Range Lands Improvement Act.

Objective B: Encourage effective planning and management to maintain and enhance desired plant communities.

Objective C: Coordinate a management plan for each specific allotment.

Objective D: Encourage including all grazing improvements such as water development, noxious weed control, reseeding, fencing, salting plans, herding plans, and grazing systems in Allotment Management Plans, and allow for flexibility and opportunity to update the plan during the ten year period.

Objective E: Encourage utilization of standards and guidelines that are scientifically proven.

Objective F: Encourage decision-making regarding improvements which should be made on an allotment basis, because they are an integral part of the use of state and federal leases, private lands, other allotments, and the overall operation of each ranch enterprise.

Objective G: Encourage compliance with the multiple-use concept mandated by statutes. No individual value will be given priority in vegetation management decisions. Congress has directed that the federally managed rangelands be managed, maintained and improved "so that they become as productive as feasible for all rangeland values." 43 U.S.C. - 1901 CO)(2). In order to carry out the Congressional intent it will be necessary that the Forest Service "inventory and identify current public rangeland and trends." 43 U.S.C. - 1901 CO)(1). All planning effort will adhere to the careful and considered consultation, coordination and cooperation

requirements established by Federal statutes. See 43 U.S.C. - 1701; (a)(2)' ,- 1712 (c)(a); 1752 (d).

3. GOAL Encourage participation in meaningful coordination between Ravalli County and federal, state agencies and large private land management entities.

Objective A: Encourage appropriate compliance with all federal and state statutes.

Objective B: Encourage county actions to preserve, support, and increase the county tax base.

Objective C: Develop and encourage programs to enhance the effectiveness of local government in the public land planning process for grazing.

Objective D: Allow for allotment management planning that will utilize a coordinated resource management and planning approach to ensure grazing on federal and state lands in the future.

Objective E: Encourage mechanisms to allow subleasing of grazing rights or allotments on state or federal ground.

Objective F: Encourage mechanisms to allow flexibility of grazing allotments or grazing lease agreements.

4. GOAL Enable the Ravalli County Commissioners to take an active role by responding in writing to any allotment management plans. (AMP's).

Objective A: Ensure County participation and coordination on every agency decision affecting the county.

Objective B: Have written documentation recorded on behalf of the county showing the comments describing issues of importance to the county.

Objective C: Support the county tax base.

Objective D: Review federal and state agency plans and regulations to ensure they are consistent with the policies of Ravalli County.

Objective E: Encourage creation of a grazing database that determines where the grazing permits are located in the county and show the condition of those areas.

Objective F: Develop programs to enhance the effectiveness of local governments in the public land planning process and promote good forest management, riparian management, and grazing management.

NOXIOUS WEEDS

Noxious weeds threaten Ravalli County's economy and environment by "degrading the productivity and biological diversity of ecosystems" (Weed Management Task Force 2005). Weeds compete for resources, often crowd out native plants and threaten wildlife habitat and range land (USDA 2001). By 1994 spotted knapweed alone was estimated to have infested 40,000 acres in Ravalli County (Ravalli County 1994).

Ravalli County has a weed control policy.

The Montana County Noxious Weed Control Act 7-22-21-1 through 7-22-2153 and rules 4.5201-4.5203 authorizes the Ravalli County Weed District to enforce control of noxious weeds within the County, including state, Federal and private land (Ravalli County 1994).

Management Policies (USDI NPS 2000) which provide specific guidance for managing exotic plants, and the Exotic Vegetation Management Plan (USDI NPS 1991), a revision of which is due out later in 2005.

Because many noxious weeds thrive in disturbed soil, all County departments including Planning, Parks and Rec, Roads and Bridges and others musts work to ensure that construction activity throughout the County be designed to minimize soil disturbance and provide for rapid plant cover once construction is complete.Weed control in Ravalli County has been greatly facilitated by a strong cooperative relationship between the Weed Control District land management agencies and private land owners.

1. **GOAL** Control and contain Category 2 and 3 noxious weeds on all ownerships within Ravalli County and minimize the potential for any new infestations of Category 1 weeds that may become established and/or exist in the County, using Integrated Pest Management methodology.

   Objective A: Support the Board of Commissioners as the weed authority for Ravalli County.

   Objective B: Encourage an increase to the County and other agencies' weed budgets and procure as much alternative funding as possible.

   Objective C: Increase ongoing programs to educate the public, prevent spread, locate noxious weed populations, particularly new infestations and initiate control.

   Objective D: Support, if necessary, legal actions to assure protection of all lands from noxious weeds.

   Objective E: Encourage timely revision of the Ravalli.

   Objective F: Continue to strengthen cooperative relationships with all land management Agencies and land owners.

   Objective G: Encourage use of appropriate plants in restoration of disturbed areas.

MANAGEMENT OF VEGETATION

The Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), The Taylor Grazing Act, the Rangelands Improvement Act, Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act and National Forest Management Act mandate maintenance and improvement on the federally managed lands to provide timber, water, recreation, livestock grazing, forage and habitat for wildlife and fisheries. The Public Rangelands Improvement Act of 1978 states (43 U.S.C. - 1901) that: (federally managed lands were producing "less than their potential for livestock, wildlife habitat, recreation, forage, and water and soil conservation benefits."

Congress found that such conditions preventing an expansion of the forage resource and other unsatisfactory conditions on the public rangelands "may ultimately lead to unpredictable and undesirable long-term local and regional climatic and economic changes."

In order to eliminate such conditions Congress called for intensive planning and improvement of condition of the federally managed lands so that "they become as productive as feasible for all land values.

1. **GOAL** Work in conjunction with federal land managers (U.S. Forest Service) and encourage action on the intent of Federal Land Policy Act (FLPMA), the Taylor Grazing Act, the Rangelands Improvement Act, Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act, and National Forrest Management Act.

   Objective A: Identify areas of federal grazing permits on U.S. Forest Service lands intermingled with private lands for positive benefits of vegetation for wildlife and livestock.

   Objective B: The Board will participate as needed in forest land management decisions.

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Active forest management on Ravalli County lands must be based on sound science, economical decisions and common sense. Forest management practices must include planting, thinning and harvesting of the forest vegetation. Removal of merchantable forest products using economical mechanical and other harvesting systems will insure continued investment, employment and business opportunities in Ravalli County. This harvest should result in a stable and sustainable volume of merchantable product being removed each year. The Bitterroot National Forest and the State of Montana Trust Lands have the capability under proactive management to achieve a healthy forest ecosystem while providing clean water, clean air, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities and economic benefits and stability.

The Multiple-Use/Sustained Yield Act of 1960 and the National Forest Management Act of 1976 should be utilized in coordination with the County to guide active forest management on Bitterroot National Forest. Lands should be managed and administered for water and watershed protection, recreation, timber harvest, wildlife, air quality and livestock grazing. These resources should be managed for current and future generation to use and enjoy.

Wood products are one of our basic industries and one of our only renewable resources. Wood provides food, clothing, heat and housing for our citizens as well as the basis for our local, state and national economy. The health of our families, communities, state and nation are dependent upon the active management of our forestland to ensure they are healthy and vibrant. There are 1,166,425 acres of public lands managed by the Bitterroot National Forest located within Ravalli County. Healthy forest ecosystems require that the growth and

mortality be managed. If this growth and mortality were harvested, it could employ sawmill workers and other associated workers, equating to millions in direct sawmill worker and associated worker payroll.

1. **GOAL** Actively manage our forests to ensure a healthy and vibrant forest for current and future generations.

   Objective A: Manage at a minimum for the harvest of growth and mortality.

   Objective B: Maintain and restore watershed health through active management.

   Objective C: Improve and restore wildlife habitat.

   Objective D: Provide for the recreational needs in both roaded and unroaded areas.

   Objective E: Aggressively promote early detection and control of insects and disease.

   Objective F: Promote wildfire detection, control and full restoration of burned areas. Including maximum economical salvage of timber.

   Objective G: Utilize existing models in Ravalli County on public and private land that demonstrate that active management can provide a forest that has clean air and water, provides quality wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities, provides fiber and meets the social and economic needs of the community.

2. **GOAL** Through multiple use management, provide a sustainable and continuous supply of wood products, wildlife, fisheries and water.

   Objective A: Minimize single use and single species management.

   Objective B: Support active timber management on the designated suitable timber acres on the forest.

   Objective C: Provide guidance and support to local managers on Forest decisions.

3. **GOAL** Insure a stable output of products from the forest that utilizes the resources and provides for community stability.

   Objective A: Provide known stable outputs so that the industry may make the necessary investments to fully utilize these outputs.

   Objective B: Public lands managed by the Bitterroot National Forest that are non-wilderness and are available and potentially suitable for production should be managed and administered for water and watershed protection, recreation, timber harvest, wildlife, air quality and livestock grazing. They should be classed as suitable for sustained timber production to promote forest health, protection, and maintain sustained economic returns.

   Objective C: On Federal lands suitable for timber harvest, a minimum average annual long-term harvest to capture the equivalent of 80% of the annual mortality shown by the most recent forest inventory is necessary to maintain and improve forest health, control hazardous fuel buildup, and support the local economy and local government The maximum allowable harvest

level should be equal to the average annual gross growth per acre shown by the inventory applied to suitable timberland acres.

Objective D: There must be a reasonable level of Federal revenue sharing with local governments. No more than 20% of the sawtimber sale volume on a 5 year running average will be "Stewardship Contracts" where all the revenues are retained by the Forest Service and no revenue is shared with local government.

4. GOAL Provide for education of the public about the long term benefits of active management of our forests and the value to the community of this management.

Objective A: Utilize science and common sense to illustrate the benefits of active management.

Objective B: Educate public land managers, local school boards, County Commissioners, State officials and the public of the importance of a stable local infrastructure to carry out active management of the forest.

5. GOAL Actively involve the Congressional/Legislative delegation to ensure they are continually informed, updated and supportive of management of our forest resources.

Fire-Fuels Management

Since the 1930's and 40's, fuels management was increasingly addressed in relation to timber harvest on private, state, and federal lands. Laws and regulations were brought into effect that required reduction and disposal of what is referred to as slash (limbs, unmerchantable stems, and debris) left following logging activities. This was a common sense move in the practice of sound forestry principles and aided in the reforestation and perpetuation of the forests by reducing the fuel-fire hazard on private, state and federal lands.

From the 1950's to the early 1990's the National Forest lands within Ravalli County saw timber harvest of mature and immature timber stands. The resulting tonnages of fuels (slash & debris) prone to fire were disposed of. The harvesting of timber stands created a mosaic in the forests that eventually regenerated into young vigorous stands that are less susceptible to fast moving wildfires as fire-fuels had been reduced. These areas serve as barriers to wildfire and serve as control barriers to surrounding maturing forest stands. In addition, a network of forest access roads served as access and aided as wildfire control lines.

Beginning in the early 1990's, forest management by harvesting, regeneration, and thinning of timber stands was significantly reduced on the National Forest Lands in Ravalli County. This was due to laws, regulations and litigation. These restrictions have affected management ability to deal with fire-fuel loading and have also affected the custom, culture, social and economic situation in Ravalli County.

The suitable timber base acreage on the Bitterroot National Forest is 485,673 acres of the 1,166,425 acre forest. Quantity for the Bitterroot National Forest, the buildup of fire fuels leads to catastrophic fire conditions that have been evident in the last twenty years.

The trend has been compounded by moderate to severe drought and the onset of disease and insect infestations of epidemic proportions throughout Ravalli County and which is prevalent in the Rocky Mountain Region and Pacific Northwest. Many timber stands are dead and dying, creating fire-fuel conditions that has not existed since the early settlement years. These events and conditions have lead to large catastrophic fires consuming thousands of acres in individual uncontrollable wildfire events.

The declining timber production trends on National Forest Lands within Ravalli County have shifted the demand for timber onto private lands. It has also forced the closure of many timber processing mills, a reduction of forest products and supporting industry jobs. This has resulted in the loss to the economy and revenue to all government agencies thereby increasing the economic burden on the County.

Private timberlands within Ravalli County are experiencing the effects of reduced timber harvest on National Forest and are filling the demand for timber. Good stewardship of the private timberlands is being demonstrated by hazardous fuel reduction and regeneration of timber stands is occurring. This is an asset to the local economy.

1. **GOAL** Coordinate with the Bitterroot National Forest in implementation of the National Fire Plan Strategy to strive to achieve fire-fuels reduction to acceptable standards on all private and public lands contiguous to private lands.

   Objective A: Promote the use of residual forest fuels as alternative power sources.

   Objective B: Encourage the National Forests and State Forests to practice acceptable forest stewardship to benefit the citizens, lands, waters and wildlife.

   Objective C: Cooperate with the Forest Service to help assess the condition of the National Forests in Ravalli County.

   Objective D: Federal timber harvests will be planned in coordination with local governments using the best available science (such as BEHAVE II fire models) to evaluate effectiveness of planned treatments. First priority is for Federal Lands that are classed moderate to high existing fire hazard fuels adjacent to all private and/or State lands must be treated to create effective strategic fuel breaks to protect public health and safety. Treatments must not be limited to precommercial thinning and underburning but must include opening commercial timber stand crowns to provide a crown fire resistant stand structure as recommended by Fiedler, Carl, et. al., 2001. A Strategic Assessment of Fire Hazard in Montana. University of Montana, School of Forestry, September 29, 2001. Highest priority will be given to treat all area adjacent to wildland urban interface areas by 2015. Drainages with continuous high/medium hazard fuels will have interior strategic fuel breaks planned and implemented by 2020 that will provide opportunities to control fires before they reach urban interface areas.

FIRE MANAGEMENT

In Ravalli County, fire suppression has always been and will be guided by the need to achieve the highest level of protection for human safety and private property on the County lands protected by local fire districts. Prevention is an integral goal of fire districts and within their respective departments.

Ravalli County Fire Districts (departments & substations) routinely respond, and, in many incidents, perform initial attack and/or assist in fire suppression on timber lands both on State of Montana (DNRC) and federally (U.S. Forest Service) protected lands within Ravalli County, for the protection of private lands and structures.

Federal and State employees have served as rural fire department members throughout Ravalli County Fire Districts providing for interaction and cooperation between agencies.

1. GOAL Encourage continued cooperation, qualification training, and assistance between Ravalli County Fire Districts (Departments) and State and Federal Agencies within Ravalli County.

Objective A: Continue and strengthen coordination and cooperation, and encourage Federal and State wildland fire presuppression and rapid suppression in wildland-urban interface areas or deeper areas within the national forest that pose a threat to private lands outside the national forest boundaries in Ravalli County. Rapid response fire suppression actions must be imperative at all times, especially in periods of high fire danger.

Objective B: Work with the Bitterroot National Forest to prioritize fire-fuel hazard reduction projects near the borders of the National Forest lands and County lands and general execution of the National Fire Plan Strategy.

Objective C: Encourage the Bitterroot National Forest to annually remove on the suitable timber base by harvesting an amount of timber equal to the annual growth rate and the mortality rate, including annual mortality by epidemic insect and disease, to reduce the effects of catastrophic wildfires.

Objective D: Discourage the Forest Service "Let Burn" policy on all forested lands outside of designated wilderness areas. Strong consideration to "let burn" wilderness fires should be curtailed if near wilderness boundaries during periods of high fire danger and which have the potential to threaten bordering federal and private lands.

Objective E: Encourage prescription burning only during periods of moderate fire danger and not during normal fire season conditions. Special consideration should be given to private lands within or bordering federal and state lands.

Objective F: Encourage a return to a previous policy of controlling wildfires by 10 a.m. the day following discovery.

Objective G: Encourage use of night crews on wildfires.

Objective H: Develop a Community Fire Plan and a Watershed Management Plan to help to protect local communities.

ENERGY

Ravalli County, with its geographic location, is one of the strategic sources to the Columbia River System. The Bitterroot River with its two forks, East Fork and West Fork is intrinsic to this system.

Northwestern Energy is the natural gas service provider in Ravalli County. Northwestern Energy has customers receiving natural gas transmission and distribution delivery services. None of the natural gas delivered on this system originates in the County. The entire commodity is moved into the valley through transmission pipelines from sources outside the County. Northwestern Energy continuously monitors system capacity and manages system improvements to assure availability of safe, reliable capacity for system users.

Any large projects, such as natural gas generation plants, would be outside the scope of this growth management activity. Northwestern Energy would welcome the opportunity to be involved in such activity within parameters of sound economic and financial investment decision making. Northwestern Energy is committed to providing safe, reliable natural gas distribution and transmission services to Ravalli County consumers. Continued access to public rights-of-way corridors is important to assure continued availability at economically affordable rates.
The forests on private and public lands currently contain millions of tons of wood fiber. On the National Forest large amounts of wood fiber are becoming unfit for manufacturing wood products due to lack of access. Normal tree mortality, insect and disease of epidemic proportions are a continuing process. The unfit wood product could be used as fuel for co-generation of electrical power and heat as opposed to incineration by catastrophic wildfires. Such uncontrolled wildfires release excessive carbon-laden ash and smoke into the atmosphere, contributing to the greenhouse gas affect as well as to pollution of lakes and streams, causing a detrimental health and safety factors to human health and well being.

Ravalli County recognizes that the development of its abundant mineral resources is desirable and necessary to its economic well being. Utilization of biomass from public forests would reduce fire-fuels to acceptable standards, lessen the risk of catastrophic wildfires and provide an economic boost for the County, state, and nation. Energy and mineral resource extraction is consistent with the local history, custom and culture. The following are the policies of Ravalli County.

1. GOAL Encourage appropriate energy resource exploration and development.

Objective A: Encourage elimination of unreasonable or unfounded barriers, Prohibitions and impediments to energy resource and development.

Objective B: Support the retention of existing energy operations consistent with sound economic and environmental practices.

Objective C: Support large and small scale energy resource exploration consistent with sound economic and environmental practices.

MINERAL RESOURCES

Many mineral resources occur on both private and government-owned lands within Ravalli County. These resources have great economic potential for the citizens of the County
Mining, mining claims and prospecting took place in the late 1800's and early 1900's within the Bitterroot National Forest in Ravalli County there are numerous drainages, creeks, mountain peaks and other geographic features that have been named for early day prospectors and miners.

Currently mining in Ravalli County is primarily limited to sand, gravel and rock. Various types of gravel are in demand for road construction. Round rock is used for concrete and asphalt road construction and decorative purposes. Crushed rock is used for fill and road surfaces. The demand for such materials increases as the population and development of the County increases and existing surfaced roads deteriorate. The demand for large fractured and round rock for decorative purposes has increased dramatically in the County in recent years, evidenced by retail yards and a continuous movement by transport on the local highways. Much is sold out of Ravalli County. Recreational mining by gold panning exists in limited fashion in Ravalli County.

1. GOAL Encourage appropriate mineral resource exploration and development.

Objective A: Encourage elimination of unreasonable or unfounded barriers, prohibitions, and impediments to mineral resource and development.

Objective B: Support the retention of existing mineral operations consistent with sound economic and environmental practices.

Objective C: Support large and small-scale mineral resource exploration consistent with sound economic and environmental practices.

2. GOAL Ensure compliance with all existing state and federal laws regarding oil, gas, and mineral exploration and/or their production.

Objective A: Carefully evaluate proposed revisions of the General Mining Law of 1872 for undue adverse impact on the mining industry in the County.

Objective B: The County will make recommendations regarding any proposed revisions to the General Mining Law of 1872 to the appropriate State and Federal representatives in order to influence the outcome to favor the custom, culture, and economy of Ravalli County.

Objective C: Mineral resource exploration and development are among historic multiple uses on state and federally managed land. Their continuance is compatible with the multiple-use principle.

ROADS and TRAILS: ACCESS AND TRANSPORTATION

An adequate transportation system of roads and trails on Federal and State lands is critical to the environmental, social, and economic welfare of Ravalli County and its citizens. This system of roads and trails provides access to public lands in pursuit of farming, ranching, timber harvest, mining, recreational activities, forest restoration projects, fire suppression and management, management of weed and insect infestations, and emergency services. It is the policy of Ravalli County to prioritize the establishment and maintenance of an adequate and sustainable transportation system on State and Federal lands through meaningful coordination with State and Federal Agencies and local interested parties.

Roads and Trails Rights Of Way

Historical uses of public lands have established official and unofficial rights of access to public lands as well as to private inholdings and mining claims. It is the policy of Ravalli County to preserve these rights of way and to enforce them when it is deemed necessary to do so.

For rights of way that existed prior to 1976, the relevant Federal Law is RS 2477, which Ravalli County adopts as County policy by reference.

No closures or other restrictions may be placed on any road, trail, irrigation facility, access to an irrigation facility, or any other travel way that qualifies under the provisions of RS 2477 may be made without meaningful coordination among Ravalli County, Federal and State Agencies, and local interested parties.

Road and Trail Closures and Restrictions

It is the policy of Ravalli County to keep as many roads and trails available yearlong for economic, management and recreational uses as is practically possible. However, Ravalli County recognizes that some roads and trails may necessarily be closed or seasonally restricted for resource and wildlife management purposes. These closures and restrictions should be thoroughly and meaningfully coordinated among State and Federal Agencies, Ravalli County, and local interested parties.

Road Decommissioning
Over the past thirty years, half of the roads that once existed in the Bitterroot National Forest have been decommissioned and, in many cases, "obliterated". This has resulted in serious permanent loss of access to public lands for timber management, fire management, restoration projects, and recreation. In many cases, roads and trails have been decommissioned without adequate consideration of the potential economic and social impacts of those actions. It is the policy of Ravalli County that roads that may appear to have no immediate use should be placed in long-term storage rather than decommissioned or "obliterated".

Roads on public lands which are candidates for long-term storage or decommissioning must be evaluated for their future possible uses as well as their recreational potential through meaningful coordination among State and Federal Agencies, Ravalli County, and local interested parties.

When it is mutually determined through the coordination process that a road is suitable for decommissioning, treatment of that road should be limited to culvert removal, restoration of drainage to a more natural condition, remediation of washouts and slumps, weed treatments, and/or reseeding and reforesting. All reasonable effort should be made to preserve reestablished vegetation on the roadway and on the cut and fill side of the roadway during treatment. Ravalli County does not endorse extreme ground-disturbing treatments such as recontouring or decompacting roadways. In all cases, treatments to decommissioned roads should preserve a trail for recreational use by hikers, mountain bikes, stock, OHVs, and/or motorcycles that is consistent with the land use prescriptions for the area.

Inventoried Roadless Areas

Management prescriptions for IRAs are in a confusing state of flux as a result of contradictory rulemaking and litigation. In view of these uncertainties about what is permitted and not permitted within IRAs, Ravalli County policies with respect to management policies in IRAs may have to be periodically revised.

Recommended Wilderness Areas
Federal statute allows individual Forests to identify portions of IRAs which meet the criteria for wilderness and to recommend those areas to Congress for designation as Wilderness Areas. It is the policy of Ravalli County that such Recommended Wilderness Areas (RWAs) fully meet the criteria for Wilderness as specified in the 1964 Wilderness Act, and that management prescriptions for RWAs should allow existing uses to continue and existing routes to be maintained until such time as Congress designates those areas as Wilderness.

Timber Harvest and Restoration Projects
Some of the County's most valuable timber reserves lie within those portions of IRAs that are not RWAs. It is Ravalli County's policy that timber harvests should be utilized in IRAs and that temporary roads should be constructed when necessary for timber harvest in IRAs.

Like most of the County's forests, IRAs contain over-mature stands, are adversely affected by insect infestations, and have accumulated dangerous levels of combustible fuels. Ravalli County encourages thinning and fuel reduction projects within IRAs as a necessary means to reduce the potential for unnaturally intense wildfires and to restore a vibrant, stable and resilient ecosystem to these areas.

Roads and Trails
All IRAs contain some system roads and many unclassified roads. And all IRAs contain system trails and some unclassified trails. In many cases, these unclassified roads and trails are legacy routes from past timber harvest, fire suppression efforts, and mining exploration. It is the policy of Ravalli County that none of these routes should be closed or decommissioned except when justified for resource purposes through the coordination process among State and Federal Agencies, Ravalli County, and local interested parties.

Recreation
The current Bitterroot National Forest Plan identifies IRAs (outside RWAs) to be suitable and desirable for motorized and non-motorized semi-primitive recreation. It is Ravalli County's policy that this recreational designation for IRAs be carried forward in all future Bitterroot National Forest projects and plans. Ravalli County does not endorse setting aside any area of any IRA for the exclusive use of non-motorized recreation; recreational roads, trails and areas in IRAs should specifically be designated for multiple use.

Recreation

The National Visitor Use Monitoring (NVUM) program is a statistically valid national protocol for monitoring how the public uses their National Forests for recreational purposes. It is the policy of Ravalli County that coordination efforts should rely heavily on these data when developing Forest Plans, policies, and projects. Some of the results of the most recent NVUM survey for the Bitterroot National Forest are:

- There are approximately 880,000 recreational visits to the BNF every year. On average, each visit spends $100 within 50 miles of their access point, mostly in Ravalli County. Recreation on BNF lands accounts for nearly $88 million to the economy of Ravalli County.
- 97% of all BNF visitors are from Ravalli, Missoula, and Lemhi Counties. However, the 3% of visitors from other counties, states, or countries account for a disproportionate amount of the spending in Ravalli County. These visitors typically stay at guest ranches, resorts or motels for multiple-day stays and are more likely to take advantage of outfitted activities. This accounts for the difference between average spending per visit ($100) and the median spending per visit ($17).
- Only 5% of all BNF visits access Designated Wilderness Areas in spite of the fact that about 50% of the BNF is Designated as Wilderness.
- Satisfaction levels by visitors to the BNF are very high, with more than 95% reporting a "satisfied" visit. Virtually no one reported an unsatisfactory experience or incident.
- Visitors were asked what they would do if their particular activity were no longer available in the BNF. 58% said they would go somewhere else to pursue their interests, and 16% said they would just stay home. In other words, Forest policies or practices that eliminate or restrict a recreational activity would displace the majority of participants in that activity to another location, probably outside Ravalli County.

Management of High Use Areas
Ravalli County will coordinate with State and Federal Agencies to encourage the development and maintenance of organized high use recreational facilities such as Lake Como, Powder Mountain ski area, Chief Joseph Cross-Country Ski Area, Painted Rocks State Park, and organized Forest Service campsites. Ravalli County encourages the development and maintenance of additional similar high use areas subject to meaningful coordination among Ravalli County, State and Federal Agencies, and local interested parties.

Management of Dispersed Recreation
For dispersed recreational activities such as hiking, camping, hunting, fishing, stock use, mountain biking, motorized recreation, backcountry skiing, snowmobiling, and backpacking, it is the policy of Ravalli County that these activities should be as widely dispersed in the Forest as possible to avoid over-use and crowding.

Crowding an increasing population of dispersed recreationists into increasingly smaller and smaller areas is bad forest management and can result in unrecoverable resource damage as well as a less satisfactory experience for the public.

It is especially important that widely dispersed roaded access to Federal and State lands be provided during hunting season, since the presence of hunters is the mechanism by which wildlife populations (both prey and predator species) are most effectively managed. Ravalli County will coordinate with State and Federal Agencies as well as local interested parties to implement this policy.

It is the policy of Ravalli County that no areas of public land outside Designated Wilderness Areas be allocated for the exclusive use of any category of visitor. With some exceptions, all roads and trails outside Designated Wilderness Areas should be designated for multiple recreational uses that are consistent with the physical attributes of the road or trail. Exceptions to this policy may also apply to high use areas such as the Powder Mountain Ski Area, Chief Joseph Ski Area, Lake Como Recreation Area or similar high-density–of-use areas. Exceptions to this policy can be made only after meaningful coordination with Ravalli County, State and Federal Agencies and local interested parties.

Dispersed Camping
The current Bitterroot National Forest Plan adopts the "300-foot rule" for motorized dispersed camping. This policy allows motorized campers to establish a campsite within 300 feet of any legal road or trail. It is the policy of Ravalli County that this rule should be incorporated into any future Agency plans, policies, or projects. Exceptions to this policy must be justified for resource reasons only after meaningful coordination with Ravalli County, State and Federal Agencies and local interested parties.

Cross-Country Travel
As a matter of policy, Ravalli County supports the ban on cross-country travel by summer wheeled motorized vehicles as proposed by the 2011 Travel Management Rule (TMR). Ravalli County supports the provision of the TMR that requires the designation of an adequate and sustainable route system for summer motorized travel that meets the current and projected needs of motorized visitors. Also as a matter of policy, Ravalli County supports the provision of the TMR which allows continued cross-country travel outside Designated Wilderness Areas and other high use areas for over-snow vehicles. No area of the non-wilderness portion of public lands can be closed to snowmobiles without meaningful coordination with Ravalli County, State and Federal Agencies and local interested parties.

User Conflict vs. User Preference
It is the policy of Ravalli County that, during the development of Forest Plans, policies and projects, a clear distinction between user *conflicts* and user *preferences* be made. User *conflicts* typically involve issues of safety or misbehavior. User *preferences* typically involve an intolerance for activities other than the individual's preferred experience. Recreational plans, policies, or projects should be based upon use conflicts and not on user preferences. Enabling user preferences as part of Forest policies and practices simply empowers more intolerance and more extreme behaviors.

Definitions
As a matter of policy, Ravalli County adopts the following definitions: Note that these definitions have been modernized from those included in the 1987 Bitterroot National Forest Plan:

- An ATV is a motorized vehicle designed for off-highway travel that utilizes three or more low pressure tires inflated to a maximum of 10 psi and is less than or equal to 50" in width. Street legal ATVs may travel on any route designated for travel by full-sized vehicles as well as Forest roads designated as R4 and R6 roads on the 1985 Bitterroot National Forest map, as well as trails designated for yearlong or seasonal ATV travel.

- A UTV is a motorized vehicle designed for off-highway travel that utilizes four low pressure tires inflated to a maximum of 10 psi that is greater than 50" in width but less than or equal to 76" in width. Street legal UTVs may travel on any road designated for full-sized vehicles as well as on roads designated as R4 and R6 on the 1985 Bitterroot National Forest map. Travel by UTVs is not permitted on trails.
- A jeep is a full-sized vehicle that is designed or has been modified to be capable of off-highway travel. "Jeeps" are allowed to travel on any road designated for full-sized vehicles plus any roads designated for travel by jeeps. There are no such roads designated for travel by jeeps in the Bitterroot National Forest at the present time, and it is the policy of Ravalli County to encourage such designations through the coordination process.

1. GOAL Maintain the historic right to travel over federal and state lands wherever necessary in pursuit of farming, ranching, timber harvest, mining, recreational activities, motorized vehicle use, historic uses, human safety and emergency (wildfire) egress.

Objective A: Support the economy with historic and traditional uses of the county and road systems of the County, federal and state lands.

Objective B: Keep rights of way going to and inside public lands open for economic-social purposes and for the enjoyment of all the public.

Objective C: Identify mechanisms to help maintain the uses of roads.

Objective D: Enhance the opportunities for further economic development.

Objective E: Encourage federal and state agencies to maintain forest roads for fire emergencies, human safety, recreation and forest management purposes.

Objective F: Control the spread of noxious weeds.

Objective G: Maintain open spaces.

Objective H: Protect the environment.

Objective I: Encourage adoption of rules controlling off road recreational use of four wheelers and other OHV's while providing areas for this form of recreation.

2. GOAL Protect private property rights in the County.

Objective A: Access to and/or across federal and state managed lands within the County should not entail encumbrances or restrictions on private property rights.

3. GOAL Ravalli County will cooperate in a coordinated approach to the issues of roads and rights of ways with state and federal agencies.

Objective A: The prevailing federal law with respect to roads and rights-of-way is RS 2477 (the Act of July 26, 1866) which states in Section 8: "The right of way for the construction of highways over public lands, not reserved for public uses, is hereby granted.

Objective B: Federal statute defines federal land right-of-way as follows: Any road, trail, access or way upon which construction has been carried out to the standard in which public rights-of-way were built within historic context. These rights-of-ways may include, but not be limited to, horse paths, cattle trails, irrigation canals, waterway, ditches, pipelines or other means of water transmission and their attendant access for maintenance, wagon roads, jeep trails, logging roads, homestead roads, mine to market roads, and all others.

Objective C: Road closures and obliterations in the County will not occur where there may be possible RS 2477 rights-of-way, without meaningful coordination and concurrence between Ravalli County, local interested parties, and relevant federal and state land management agencies.

4. GOAL Ravalli County, in coordination with federal agencies and state land management agencies, will continue to develop a complete inventory of all roads and rights-of-way in Ravalli County.

Objective A: Inventory will include, but is not limited to, a database, maps, GIS locations and photographs.

5. GOAL Permanent vehicular access to major non-wilderness forested watersheds is necessary to promote public health, safety, and general welfare through economically and ecologically sustainable management of forest health and fire hazard buildup. No existing public transportation system roads should be decommissioned unless there is demonstrated public support that the road is not needed for public recreation or for economically efficient management and protection purposes.

Objective A: The transportation system will be managed as necessary to provide for wildlife security and prevent damage to soil, water, and the road surface.

Objective B: Gates will be used to implement closures on all system roads so that the road may be opened quickly with no ground disturbance for emergency access or forest management and recreation activities.

ROADLESS LANDS

Roadless lands are a component of the custom and culture of the people of Ravalli County. Roadless lands represent remnants of our wilderness heritage. Some of these lands retain high wilderness character. Others provide a buffer between developed lands and wilderness.

Roadless areas are a part of healthy watersheds and provide clean water for community use, fish and wildlife habitat. These lands also provide opportunities for public recreation. They may affect management of adjoining lands.

The National Fire Plan indicates that fires are almost twice as likely to occur in roaded areas as in roadless areas, because roadless areas are generally further away from communities and sources of human-caused ignitions. The report titled "Protecting People and Sustaining Resources in Fire Adapted Ecosystems-- A Cohesive Strategy" (65 Fed. Reg. 67480) advocates a higher priority for fuel reduction on land that is near communities and readily accessible municipal watersheds.

In Ravalli County the current Forest Plan shows Roadless Lands account for 680,752 acres of the Bitterroot National Forest. This represents 58% percent of the Bitterroot Forest. Almost all roadless lands are outside of the designated timber base. These roadless lands include both non-motorized and motorized areas.

Ravalli County encourages the management of U.S. Forest Service roadless land to achieve the following goals:

1. **GOAL** To protect clean and abundant water sources for the needs of the citizens of Ravalli County (potable water, agriculture, and recreation), and the diverse needs of fish and wildlife.

2. **GOAL** To protect wildlife habitat and other natural resource values inherent in roadless lands.

3. **GOAL** To provide an array of recreational opportunities consistent with maintaining clean water, wildlife habitat and populations, and including non-motorized and motorized access.

4. **GOAL** To support the further delineation of roadless lands as appropriate through the forest planning process.

TOURISM

Tourism is a growing industry in Ravalli County that is highly resource related with a 10-year increase from 1993 to 2003. In 2001-2002 a survey of non-residents was conducted by the Montana Institute for Tourism & Recreation Research of the University of Montana to provide Ravalli County Visitor Characteristics. Rating high on the scale were the mountains, rivers, lakes, open space, wildlife, hiking, skiing, golfing and camping opportunities. These attractions, plus visits to friends and relatives living here, have attracted visitors from throughout this country and internationally.

When wildfires hit, visitation dropped to 43 percent lower than the same period in 2002. This is an indication that as forest health declines with increased incidence of fire, the tourist industry is affected.

Continuing tourist appeal of the region depends upon maintenance of environmental quality, healthy air and water, scenic landscape and well maintained facilities. Access to these amenities through legislative policies must be assured. Regulations and management of natural resources and associated services must protect private businesses that provide the revenues for financing the stewardship and sustainability of environment, wildlife and human habitat historically characteristic of Ravalli County.

1. **GOAL** Facilitate and maximize economic opportunities that capitalize on resources having appeal to visitors as well as local citizens.

   Objective A: Protect the quality of landscapes and geographic resources that have appeal and provide sources of enjoyment and recreation.

   Objective B: Provide opportunities for recreational activities both motorized and non-motorized.

   Objective C: Facilitate public access, use and enjoyment of public lands both federal and state.

   Objective D: Retain and possibly expand such facilities as campgrounds, picnic areas, fishing lakes, hiking trails and other such amenities within the Park.

2. **GOAL** Maintain active involvement in cooperative efforts to facilitate a working relationship between, private and public activities in support of tourism opportunities.

Objective A: Exert cooperative effort on those measures deemed expedient to protect the quality of natural resources. Avoid those restrictions deemed unnecessary and against the public interest if not scientifically and technically substantiated such as: fuels reduction, trail access, and road maintenance vs. closure.

Objective B: Seek and expand those procedures and activities that facilitate and merge the interests of the public, private property owners and managers of public lands in the interests of more satisfactory utilization of natural resources.

Objective C: Work cooperatively to develop and maintain a transportation system both within and outside of the park to get visitors to the park from outlying communities and through the park maximizing convenience and enjoyment. These should include service from hotels and motels.

3. GOAL Protect the economic interests of the County and involved Agencies which relate to revenues derived from natural resources within the County associated with tourism, while keeping in mind that these lands are for the enjoyment of all people of all ages and economic levels.

Objective A: It shall be the policy of Ravalli County to consider, review, and comment upon draft plans and environmental impact statements affecting natural resource use related to tourist attractions within the County.

RECREATION

Recreational opportunities abound in Ravalli County there are many state, federal and private owned camp and picnic grounds plus the numerous lakes, streams, and rivers accessible to the public.

Motorized recreation opportunities, by comparison, are more restricted than in prior years on National Forest lands due to road closures and road obliteration. The lack of motorized access reduces recreational activates for many people who are unable to hike. It has negatively impacted the economics, custom and culture of Ravalli County.

Recreation and tourism are an important part of local business viability throughout Ravalli County. Recreational activities such as camping, picnicking, hiking ,boating, fishing, rafting, golf berry picking, photography, traveling by horseback, auto and OHV, aerial flights, hunting and fishing in the fall; snowmobiling, downhill skiing, cross country skiing, ice fishing. Local businesses and the service sector depend heavily on the influx of visitors' year around to federal, state, and private lands which provide the recreational opportunities.

1. GOAL Encourage a broad spectrum of recreation opportunities on lands in Ravalli County.

Objective A: Provide opportunities for primitive recreational activities, motorized and non-motorized uses, camping, fishing, and horseback riding.

Objective B: Encourage recreational activities for pleasure as well as those that enhance and encourage opportunities for economic development in the County.

Objective C: Encourage recreational activities on the lands in Ravalli County that increase the capacity for federal and state land resources to provide more economic return to the county.

Objective D: Developed recreation sites offering a high level of amenities and services should be maintained or expanded by offering for bid long-term (25 years or more) leases for private enterprise investors to install, manage and maintain visitor improvements and services and to charge fees necessary to provide such facilities and services. Developed sites support the diverse recreation opportunities on which Ravalli County economy depends. The Forest Service should provide free-of-charge low level improvements, especially those needed to accommodate dispersed public recreation such as trail head parking, outhouses, stock ramps and hitching rails, boat launch sites, trash containers, etc. Existing developed recreation site capacities should be increased.

Objective E: Continue to seek out and expand upon cooperative efforts with interested user groups.

Objective F: Determine on status maps where the areas of interest for recreation are located.

Objective G: When notified that a planning or decision making effort is beginning, the County should submit comments in writing, describing issues they need to have addressed in support of the County. Status maps are available at the County Planning Office and Court House.

Objective H: It should be the policy of Ravalli County to coordinate, review, and comment upon all draft plans and environmental impact statements affecting recreation in Ravalli County when deemed necessary.

2. GOAL Encourage recognition of the social, cultural, and economic significance of recreation in the region, and encourage implementation of policies that will ensure the viability of recreational opportunities.

3. GOAL Encourage implementation of plans and programs that provide a balance of year around motorized and non-motorized summer recreational opportunities in Ravalli County and northwestern Montana.

Objective A: Road and trail management will maintain a reasonable balance of roads open for public use. Open roads should be distributed across the forest so that public use is not concentrated but dispersed throughout the Forest.

Objective B: The multiple use trail system on non-wilderness lands must provide a reasonable balance of opportunities winter and summer for a broad spectrum of users. District Rangers will coordinate with the County to identify the most desirable locations to provide quality opportunities for various users, equestrian, hikers, x-country skiers, mountain bikes, motorcycles, ATVs, 4x4's, as well as expanded multiple use trail opportunities.

Objective C: No non-wilderness area should be restricted from snowmobiling.

CULTURAL, GEOLOGIC AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Ravalli County contains many special features. Some by their remote and rugged nature are largely protected, but others are known to have existed and have been greatly disturbed and/or destroyed.

Where an imminent threat to these special features is identified, mitigation efforts necessary to protect significant scientific, educational, and recreational value will be identified. Many other special features are susceptible to damage by recreation seekers.

Most routes of travel by Native Americans have been covered by roads or abandoned and overgrown by brush and trees with the advent of roads. Undoubtedly some travel routes were used by the Forest Service and travelers into the backcountry areas.

1. GOAL Encourage the preservation of all parts of our cultural heritage.

Objective A: Recognition of special features in Ravalli County

WILDERNESS

The Wilderness Act of 1964 created a National Wilderness Preservation System to be composed of federally managed lands designated by Congress as "wilderness areas." The Act defined wilderness as "*an area where the earth and its community of life are untrammeled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain.*" The definition states that a wilderness is in "contrast with those areas where man and his own works dominate the landscape." The Act provides that all suitable wilderness areas should be inventoried by the federal agency charged with management responsibility for the particular area. The inventory and recommendations by the agency as to whether the areas should be established as wilderness areas were to be completed within (10) years of passage. In the Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976, Congress established a clear directive that by 1991, the Secretary of the Interior must review all roadless areas of 5,000 acres or more on the federally managed lands (identified as having wilderness characteristics as described in the Wilderness Act) and give to the President a recommendation as to the suitability or non-suitability of each such area for preservation as wilderness.

1. GOAL Ravalli County will facilitate coordination for designation and management of wilderness areas in Ravalli County.

Objective A: Ravalli County will coordinate with decision-making agencies, providing its recommendations regarding areas proposed as wilderness or non-wilderness areas. Said recommendations will be based upon the evaluation of effects on Ravalli County and Western Montana.

THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND SENSITIVE SPECIES

The keystone of good environmental stewardship lies in a healthy resource base. Endangered and threatened species, as well as all plants and all animals, depend on the intricate balance of stable ecological, economic, and social functions of the immediate community.

Coordination with local government on the impacts of Endangered Species Act (ESA) actions is required by the laws and regulations of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA).

1. **GOAL** Ravalli County will coordinate in the proposed designation, delisting and management of any species designated in any category or classification for protection or consideration of protection, under the Endangered Species Act or similar designations.

   Objective A: Ravalli County will coordinate with federal and state agencies to prepare an analysis of the economic and social impacts such designation will have on the County prior to the designation or delisting of any species for protection under the Endangered Species Act.

   Objective B: Ravalli County will consider the information from the above analysis to develop a coordinated management plan with state and federal agencies for the management of any species designated for protection or delisting under the Endangered Species Act.

   Objective C: Ravalli County believes that protection of endangered and threatened species can be most effectively achieved by cooperation between private landowners and public land users rather than by imposing land-use restrictions and penalties.

REFUGES & WETLANDS PROTECTION AREAS

Ravalli County contains wildlife refuges, wetland protection areas, and conservation easements acquired and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USF&WS).

The areas remove private land acreage from the County's tax rolls thereby reducing revenues from private land sources. As with other federal lands the USF&WS lands are subject to the Weeks Act which provides for Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILT) to reimburse annually the affected counties for loss of revenue.

Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge - 7,885 acres (fee title acres)

A conservation easements is a voluntary agreement that allows a landowner to limit the type or amount of development on their property while retaining private ownership of the land. The easement is signed by the landowner, who is the easement donor, and the Conservancy, who is the party receiving the easement. The Conservancy accepts the easement with understanding that it must enforce the terms of the easement in perpetuity. After the easement is signed, it is recorded with the County Register of Deeds and applies to all future owners of the land. Data is unknown and unavailable for Ravalli County at this date.

1. **GOAL** Ravalli County will coordinate with USF&WS designation and management of proposed wildlife refuges, wetland protection areas and conservation easements in Ravalli County.

   Objective A: Ravalli County will forward to Congress and to the appropriate decision-making agencies it recommendations regarding areas proposed as wildlife refuges, wetland protection areas and conservation easements. Said recommendations will be based upon the evaluation of effects on Ravalli County and northwest Montana.

WILDLIFE

Hunting both big game (including elk, deer, moose, mountain goats and sheep, grizzly and black bear) and waterfowl, and upland game birds has been a traditional part of life in Ravalli County even before the first settlers. In early days, hunting and trapping of fur bearing animals was a necessity for survival. Today it is still essential and still provides a food and income resource for many people living and working in Ravalli County. The County is known for its big game hunting and provides good hunting for County residents and out of state visitors.

Income for County residents is provided by activities such as employment for outfitters and guides, selling supplies, and equipment, and providing lodging and meals and other goods and services to hunters, trappers and fishermen. Increased population of wildlife and lack of suitable habitat on National Forest Lands is forcing wildlife to move onto private lands causing damage to private lands and, thus, a negative impact on private property and a hazard to public roads and drivers.

The Board and the people of Ravalli County accept, support and sustain the Constitution of the State of Montana; Article IX Section 7, preserving the right to harvest wild fish and wild game.

1. GOAL Coordinate improvement to wildlife habitat on private and public lands in order to sustain viable and harvestable populations of big game and upland game species, as well as wetland-riparian area habitat for waterfowl, fur-bearers, and a diversity of other game and non-game species.

Objective A: Barriers to fish migration (steep culverts, dams, etc.) often protect pure-strain native fish species from hybridization or from non-native predators. No barriers to fish migration (man-made or natural) will be removed unless genetic testing shows upstream fish populations to be hybridized or populated with non-native species that is the similar to fish populations below the barrier.

2. GOAL Coordinate with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks in consultation with all affected landowners, lessees, and permittees to develop specific Wildlife Management Plans.

Objective A: Support Wildlife Management Plans should include annual head count, population targets, harvest guidelines, special hunts to mitigate damage to private property, and guidelines for future site-specific management plans affecting upland game birds, waterfowl and big game habitat. National Forest lands should be included in such planning.

Objective B: Wildlife Management Plans should be directed toward maintaining healthy balanced wildlife populations in conjunction with available habitat.

Objective C: Encourage open land and forest land studies to monitor wildlife relationships to the available habitat and the impact on vegetation enhancement projects for wildlife.

Objective D: Initiate cooperative studies with willing private landowners on wildlife damage to farmland, timberland, and related concerns.

Objective E: Encourage reconciling wildlife population fluctuations related to both habitat condition and other non-habitat impacts on reproduction and survival.

Objective F: Encourage development of a record keeping system tracking the incidence and disposition of wildlife damage and predation on government and private lands.

Objective G: Coordinate with federal and state agency on plans and regulations regarding wildlife to ensure coordination with the County Comprehensive Plan.

Objective H: Encourage cooperation between federal and state agencies and private landowners to provide stable wildlife populations.

Objective I: Open access roads for late-season hunts, when expected harvest quotas have not been met.

FISHERIES

Fishing has been a traditional part of life in the Bitterroot Valley, starting with the Native Americans and continuing through the arrival of the early European settlers. Paramount to all these early visitors and settlers was the use of fishery resources for food and survival. Even today fishing provides food for many of the valley's residents and visitors, in addition to the recreational sport that has become a regional and national attraction. People from all across the nation know about the Bitterroot River and its reputation as a top, blue-ribbon trout stream. As a result of this reputation, an entire local business network has emerged to accommodate the demand from both visitors and residents alike. This network includes numerous fishing guides, fishing equipment retailers, and it is augmented by the hospitality industry, and all kinds of local retailers from gas-and-convenience stores, to grocery stores, to clothing stores.

Fire-related Impacts

Negative impacts on streams occur from the increased soil erosion and debris flow that result from runoff caused by snowmelt and rainfall events. In the Bitterroot Valley some local streams actually turned black, from runoff, following the 2000 fires (Chris Clancy, FWP, verbal, 2012, Mike Jakober, USFS, 2012). Additional research indicates that impacts from sediment and debris flow are particularly significant during the first year, following a forest fire, depending on local weather conditions (Agee 1993, DeBano et al. 1998, DeBano et al. 1996, Robichaud and Brown 1999b).
Jakober's research on fisheries habitat in the Bitterroot National Forest(2012) indicated that sediment (less than 2 mm) increased between 2000 and 2002. Thereafter, it decreased back to the baseline levels between 2003 and 2005. He also noted that studies have shown that large trees, located by streams, fall into and accumulate within stream habitat for approximately 20 years following severe burns. Then, the accumulation of tree debris declines for approximately 30 years, until it reaches pre-burn conditions. Beyond this time frame, the accumulation of tree debris actually decreases for 20-30 years, probably due to the lack of mature trees to fall back into the stream habitat.

Further research by DeBano et al. (1996) demonstrated that following a wildfire in a ponderosa pine stand, sediment yields from a low-severity fire recovered to normal levels after three years, but moderate-and-severely burned watersheds took 7 and 14 years, respectively. Nearly all fires increased sediment yield, but wildfires in steep terrain produced the greatest amounts. Noble and Lundeen (1971) reported an average annual sediment production rate of 2.5 tons/acre from a 900-acre burn on steep river break lands along the South Fork of the Salmon River in Idaho. This rate was approximately seven times greater than hillside sediment yields from similar, unburned lands in the vicinity (Robichaud, 2011).

Such impacts in the Bitterroot River ecosystem have lead to fish kills in areas immediately adjacent to and downstream from the recent fires. Sleeping Child Creek had miles of fish kill after the 2000 fires, and many

other tributaries and branches of the Bitterroot River also suffered significant reductions in fish populations. However, experience in the Bitterroot ecosystem also has shown that the native Westslope Cutthroat Trout have a remarkable ability to withstand the impact of increased sediment and debris flow from a burned area. Their population numbers did decline after the fires, but they did recover in subsequent years; and they often exceeded previous population numbers, sometimes exceeding baseline populations by several times (Jakober, USFS, 2012). On the other hand, the Bull trout population in Upper Rye Creek apparently has been wiped out by the negative impacts from the 2000 fire and is showing no signs of recovery (Chris Clancy, FWP, verbal communication, 2012; Jokober, USFS, 2012). In addition, the brook trout have seen a decline from pre-fire populations in many streams, where they have been out-competed by the native Westslope Cutthroat Trout during the recovery process (Jakober, 2012.

Additional impacts from fire-related runoff occur to trout spawning beds, called redds, and also to their primary food source, the macro-invertebrates. In the first case, the redds can be compromised from sedimentation that smothers or restricts oxygen reaching the developing fish eggs or fry. Moreover, the redds can be destroyed completely by the force of a heavy debris flow, brought about by a heavy rainfall event. The macro-invertebrates can be killed or dislodged by heavy sedimentation or debris flow, and their previous population densities do take time to be re-seeded or re-established.

The overall impact of fishing-related business activity is estimated to be up to 12 million dollars per year, provided further negative impacts from reduction of scenic beauty, excessive smoke, and the destruction of fisheries habitat do not accrue from the continual, annual summer fires. Unfortunately, the annual summer fires have inhibited the economic potential of this important local business activity. As a consequence, Ravalli County is determined to coordinate with the U.S. Forest Service to put out these fires as they develop in our "view shed," so that we can maintain, perpetuate and improve this important natural resource and the business and recreational activities that result from its utilization.

Existing Fisheries Management

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) has management authority over Montana fisheries, including the lakes of Ravalli County and the Bitterroot River and its tributaries (MCA 23-2-101, MCA 87-1-201,MCA 87-11-301).Exceptions include wilderness areas, where FWP coordinates with the U.S. Forest Service, and the Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge and the state's Bull Trout populations, which are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The state's conservation and management plans attempt to maintain and enhance the state's 56 native fish species, including those native game fish found in Ravalli County, such as Artic Grayling and Burbot, found at higher elevations along the county's southern borders, and Mountain Whitefish, Northern Pike, and Westslope Cutthroat Trout, found in the Bitterroot River drainage. The FWP also grows and plants Rainbow and Westslope Cutthroat Trout for recreational fishing opportunities in the county's lakes. Their stocking policy for 2011 can be found at their website: http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/hatcheries/stockingPlans2011.html

In addition, the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission has adopted administrative rules for river recreation management in Montana. The rules went into effect on Nov. 5, 2004. These rules guide FWP when developing river recreation management plans or recommending rules to the commission. The rules identify an analysis-and-decision-making process that the department and the commission can use to prevent or resolve social conflicts on rivers. Citizen advisory committees have been appointed to help develop these management plans and rules.

Most importantly, the fisheries resources of Ravalli County are enjoyed by a multitude of people, including those from this state, as well as other states and countries. The result has been the gradual development of numerous fishing-guide services, located all across the Bitterroot Valley. Their activities are managed by the Board of Outfitters, under the Montana Department of Commerce. The FWP has no role in this oversight process, but some land managers, such as the U.S. Forest Service and the Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNRC), regulate fishing-guide services within their jurisdictions.

1. GOAL Coordinate with appropriate agencies to maintain and enhance Ravalli County's fisheries resources.

Objective A: Coordinate with all relevant agencies to preserve and enhance the fisheries resource in Ravalli County, in order to insure a viable, sustainable fishery.

Objective B: Promptly put out fires in the surrounding "View Shed," in order to reduce the detrimental health effect from smoke, reduce non-point source runoff from burned areas into the aquatic habitat of the Bitterroot River ecosystem, and reduce the negative economic impact on local businesses and property values.

Objective C: Support appropriate programs which maintain healthy forests for productive watersheds, so that they can be more suited to withstand the threat of wild fires and insect infestation, as well as minimize erosion into sensitive fisheries habitat.

Objective D: Support the protection and restoration of fish habitat through appropriate policies, incentives and education programs.

Objective E: Support appropriate policies, programs, and incentives that emphasize responsible management of fish populations, including both native and introduced fish species.

Objective F: Support the state hatchery program to stock lakes and reservoirs, where natural reproduction is limited or lacking, and use the hatchery program to fulfill conservation objectives.

Objective G: Support monitoring of fishery populations and regulating angler harvests to maintain sustainable fish populations.

Objective H: Support education programs that address all aspects of maintaining a healthy and sustainable fishery.

Objective I: Encourage the maintenance of adequate public access to fisheries.

Objective J: Emphasize a balance between commercial guides and recreation anglers, so that all parties have appropriate access to the fisheries resource for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Ravalli County contains many predatory animals. Grizzly bears, black bears, wolves, wolverines, mountain lions, bobcats, lynx, and coyotes are the larger variety. Skunks, raccoons, marten, mink, muskrats and beaver are some of the common smaller varieties. There are other smaller varmints that can and do damage to agricultural lands and other properties.

Grizzly bears, wolves, and lynx have federal protection under the Endangered Species Act. In previous times they were controlled by hunting and trapping permits. Black bears, mountain lions and bobcats are currently controlled by applied hunting seasons and limits. Coyotes are subject to elimination on sight.

Ravalli County passed a Large Predator Policy on March 5, 2012 which outlines how coordination with state and federal agencies concerning bears, wolves and lions will be controlled.

The Board and the people of Ravalli County accept and support the use of trapping for the purpose of controlling predatory animals.

1. **GOAL** Control predatory animals to reduce property damage and predation on large game species and livestock.

   Objective A: Support programs which maintain trapping as an historic and environmentally sound method of controlling predatory animals.

   Objective B: Encourage regulations which will secure household and business wastes in closed containers and in locations that will not attract wildlife.

   Objective C: Encourage regulations which will secure pets in ways that discourage predatory behavior towards wildlife.

2. **GOAL** Encourage control of disease-bearing vectors, predators and rodents that are a recognized threat to public health.

   Objective A: Protect private lands bordering Federal and State lands from predatory animals and property damage.

   Objective B: Protection should fall within the boundaries of legal constraints and sound environmental practice, not to exclude chemical control.

   Objective C: Encourage retention of and expansion of an animal damage-control plan for the protection of livestock, crops and humans.

   Objective D: Government and private entities are encouraged to coordinate their pest control actions and regulations with those of Ravalli County.

   Objective E: Government and private entities are encouraged to prepare and implement plans for controlling animals and rodents in accordance with recognized and proven practices.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

1. **GOAL** Preserve and protect the peace and dignity of the people of Ravalli County; protect their rights and privileges established under the Montana Constitution and the Constitution of the United States.

   Objective A: Support and develop interagency coordinated agreements to insure full cooperation of federal and state law enforcement agencies with the Ravalli County Sheriff.

   Objective B: Ravalli County Sheriff should be advised of law enforcement activities within Ravalli County. Ravalli County Sheriff is to have prior notification by any state law enforcement agency of any investigations, searches, arrests, or any other law enforcement activities.

   Objective C: All law enforcement agencies are encouraged to cooperate with the Ravalli County Sheriff.

2. GOAL Obtain the maximum Federal and State funding available to support local law enforcement and related activities which may include fighting fire, search and rescue, and other activities as needed.

Objective A: Apply for and have State and Federal agency support and concurrence to budget and appropriated funds for local law enforcement and related activities.

Objective B: Develop interagency coordinated agreements with respect to budget and appropriated funds for local law enforcement and related activities.

Objective C: Enhance the County law enforcement training programs through available State and Federal funds and state and federal training programs and facilities.

Objective D: Create a written policy and/or protocol for working with Federal and State law enforcement agencies.

THE CONTINUING PROCESS

The Ravalli County Board of Commissioners recognizes that this plan is an interim plan. The Ravalli County Natural Resource Document will be a work in continuous progress. It will require the cooperation, work, and dedication of many County residents. Additional planning alternatives will be developed and added to this plan as needed. The ongoing planning will include consideration of all historic and current land uses in Ravalli County.

REFERENCES

Water and Hydrology

Table 1-1 (from the DEQ, August 17, 2011 report) lists the 2010 impaired water bodies, causes of impairment, and impaired beneficial uses
Generalized recommendations for remediating both sediment and temperature impacts are also provided in the DEQ, August 17, 2011 report.

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