

Calendar of Events

- April 19**
Mt. Helena Trail Maintenance
- May 1**
Migratory Bird Day
- May 8**
10th Annual Don't Fence Me In Trail Run
- May 13**
Wildflower Hike
- May 17**
Bompart Hill Trail Work
- May 26**
Bike to Work Day
- June 10**
Kids Hike and Scavenger Hunt!
- June 12**
Helena Outdoors Fest
- June 12**
Governor's Cup
- June 19 – 20**
3rd Annual High Divide Trails Jamboree
- June 21**
Second Annual Weed and Seed BBQ
- July 8**
Geocache Hike
- July 12**
Nob Hill Trail Work
- August 12**
Mt. Ascension Hike
- September 9**
The Old "C" on Mt. A
- September 13**
Project to be Announced
- September 25**
Harvest Moon Banquet and Auction

Be sure to check pricklypearlt.org for locations and most up to date information on the hikes and workdays!



Time for Spring Cleaning at Great Northern Car Wash

It's finally nice enough (for now) to wash that winter grime off your car. Take your ride to Great Northern Car Wash on **April 15** and support the work of PPLT while doing some spring cleaning! **Tim Davis, owner of Great Northern Car Wash, will give 100% of the profits from that day's washes to PPLT!** Great Northern has it all and at a lower cost than the other guys. Plus, you're in and out in five minutes and they're open 24/7. Visit them at 931 N. Last Chance Gulch.

There's always something happening at the Base Camp

- Spring Art Walk**
Friday, April 30, 6:00–9:00 PM on the walking mall and beyond for a taste of spring. The Base Camp will be hosting watercolorist Jill Forseth.
- Banff Mountain Film Festival**
Friday, May 7, 7:00 PM. Trailers of the films will be up on the Base Camp's website soon!
- Canoe and Kayak Demo Day**
Saturday, May 15, 11:00 AM–3:00 PM at Spring Meadow Lake—FREE! Come on down and get your feet wet for summer adventures.

Specialty Plate coming soon...really!

We promise! It's just taking a bit longer than anticipated. Thanks for your patience. Check our website for updates.

Attention Online Shoppers—Click and give to PPLT

PPLT is a big supporter of local business. But let's face it, sometimes you may need something not available locally. Go through igive.com and raise funds for your favorite land trust. All you need to do is go to igive.com, register, and then shop 'til you drop! There are links to hundreds of stores, and every one gives a percentage of your purchase to PPLT. Bonus—NEW members earn \$5 for the land trust. Visit igive.com today, and happy shopping!

Native Plants Field Trips

The Montana Native Plant Society is planning summer field trips. Led by professional ecologists, botanists, and natural scientists, these fabulous Montana field trips offer enriching and fun opportunities to get out and explore Montana's abundant beauty. Learn more at mtnativeplants.org.

Discover Hiking by Moonlight

On April 26 the Montana Discovery Foundation is hosting a moonlight hike. Location will be determined based on conditions. Please call Sam Chapman at 495-3718 to learn the location or visit their website at montanadiscoveryfoundation.org.

Dip into Spring at Big Dipper Ice Cream

A Missoula favorite is coming to Helena! Head over to Big Dipper Ice Cream on the walking mall off Sixth Avenue for a tasty treat. This gourmet ice cream is delicious with varieties that are always changing. Stop on by!

We thank all of our Don't Fence Me In sponsors

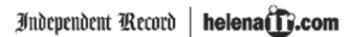
— MT. HELENA PARTNERS —



— MT. ASCENSION PARTNER —



— SPRING HILL PARTNERS —



— WITH ASSISTANCE FROM —

- Robert Peccia & Associates**
- Mosaic Architecture**
- Van's Thriftway**
- Valley Bank**
- Windbag Saloon**
- Keller, Drake, Johnson & Gillespie, PC**

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Michele Bazzanella
- Terry Cohea
- Connie Cole
- Ken Eden
- Paula Jacques
- Sarah Jaeger
- Art Keeler
- Jonathan Krauss
- Tom Likens
- Dawn North
- Bob Person
- LeRoy Schramm
- Mary Schuller
- Jeff Williams

STAFF

- Andy Baur**
Executive Director
- Heather Nese**
Development Director
- Andrea Silverman**
Land Protection Coordinator
- Joanne Martonik**
Administrative Services/Events Coordinator
- Emmett Purcell**
Trails Coordinator

PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST

21 N. Last Chance Gulch,
Suite 203
PO Box 892
Helena MT 59624
Phone: 406-442-0490
Fax: 406-442-1790
E-mail: info@pricklypearlt.org
www.pricklypearlt.org

Non-profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Helena, MT
Permit #293



21 N. Last Chance Gulch, Suite 203
PO Box 892
Helena, MT 59624
Return Service Requested

THE NEWSLETTER OF PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST

Connecting land and people

openviews

SPRING 2010:

Coming May 8: Tenth Annual Don't Fence Me In Trail Run

PPLT Transfers Park Land





openviews

Our mission is to protect the natural diversity and rural character of the Prickly Pear Valley and adjoining lands through voluntary and cooperative means. The Land Trust is dedicated to perpetuating the recreational, wildlife, scenic, agricultural and historic values of the land.

Hit the Trail

Tenth annual Don't Fence Me In Trail Run set for Saturday, May 8

Help us celebrate the trails by participating in the 30K, 12K, 5K, or 5K Dog Walk.

Registering for any of the events is fast and simple. Just visit our website at www.pricklypearlt.org and click on 'Register Online Now' below the picture of Mr. Prickers. The cost for the 30K is \$40 and the other events are \$25, plus a \$5 fee for every dog you decide to bring.

Since it's the Tenth Anniversary of DFMI, we have a special 10/10 deal for raising pledges. Get ten of your friends to pledge you ten bucks each and we'll waive your registration fee. To take advantage of this, pledges must be collected and turned into PPLT before you register. The Tenth Anniversary Deal does not apply to race day registrations. Please collect names

and current addresses of pledgers so we can thank them and send a donation acknowledgement letter. Also, if you raise \$500 we'll thank you with a custom DFMI spring jacket that will be the envy of all your friends.

This year we are partnering with Blue Cross/Blue Shield and the Governor's Cup. If you participate in DFMI, you can then register for FREE for the Governor's Cup held on June 12 in Helena. Visit www.govcup.bcbsmt.com for details. Please consider a donation to the Caring Foundation in lieu of your Governor's Cup registration fee and help low income children receive dental coverage.

Last year, we received several complaints that the 30K was just not very challenging. Well, we



Mark your calendar, get ready to run:
Don't Fence Me In set for May 8

Tom Likens

listened, we pondered, and we re-routed. **This year, participants of the 30K event will summit not only Mt. Ascension, but Mt. Helena too.** There is no other course like it!

The annual Open Space Fair begins at 10:00am. There will be food, booths and a free jumping castle for the kids! At 11:30 join us for the popular and entertaining

Dog Trick Contest. And new this year, we will be raffling off an Odyssey inflatable kayak generously donated by Headwater Rafts. So be sure to get your tickets ahead of time or on race day. Tickets will be available at the PPLT office, The Base Camp, or Capital Sports.

Please visit pricklypearlt.org or call 406-442-0490 for more information.

With more to come, 131 acres Transferred to City of Helena

AS REPORTED in our last newsletter, PPLT has been working since 2006 to secure critical open space on Mt. Ascension. This effort has included the acquisition of four parcels totaling 107 acres on the mountain adjacent to existing city-owned open space lands. In addition, PPLT assisted the City in a grant proposal to acquire an additional 20-acre parcel on the front side of Mt. Ascension.

In February, the City of Helena voted to approve the acceptance of the four initial lots and the grant from the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust which allowed the City to acquire the 20-acre Porter parcel from PPLT. With this sale, PPLT was able to repay its loan plus interest to the Conservation Fund, our generous national partner. In all, 131 acres were transferred to the City to be

added to the Mount Ascension Natural Park.

So why is this land transaction significant? First, much of the land lying beneath the magnificent Entertainment Trail is private. Without our work to secure these lands, this popular hiking and biking route could be closed off to public access. Second, the land we acquired is highly visible, beautifully framing Helena's south side and state capital. Third, this area is home to a migrating elk herd as well as numerous other wildlife species. With this and future land acquisition efforts, we hope to secure habitat and create a connection to other public lands for wildlife security. And finally, this effort showcases the incredible partnerships that are vital to ensuring long term open space protection. This includes the City

of Helena's willingness to accept and manage these newly acquired lands; our major funders including the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust and FWP Recreational Trails program; our amazing members and supporters and, of course, the landowners.

Without their cooperation, none of this would be possible.

But we haven't stopped there. We are currently in discussions with other landowners and funders to make additional land acquisitions to complete the protection of the Entertainment Trail and allow additional trail connections. Your help has been critical in making this project successful. Please know that through your generous support, you have helped create a legacy for generations to come. Thank you.

Mt. Helena Parcel joins the Park

In addition to the transfer of the Mt. Ascension properties, PPLT has also transferred ownership to the City of Helena of two small but critical lots adjacent to Mt. Helena Park. The lots are located near the Holter Street access to the park. The Daisy Hill and Quarry Trails pass over the land. If these lots had been sold for development access to the Park from this popular trailhead would have been blocked and a rerouting of the trails would have been very difficult.

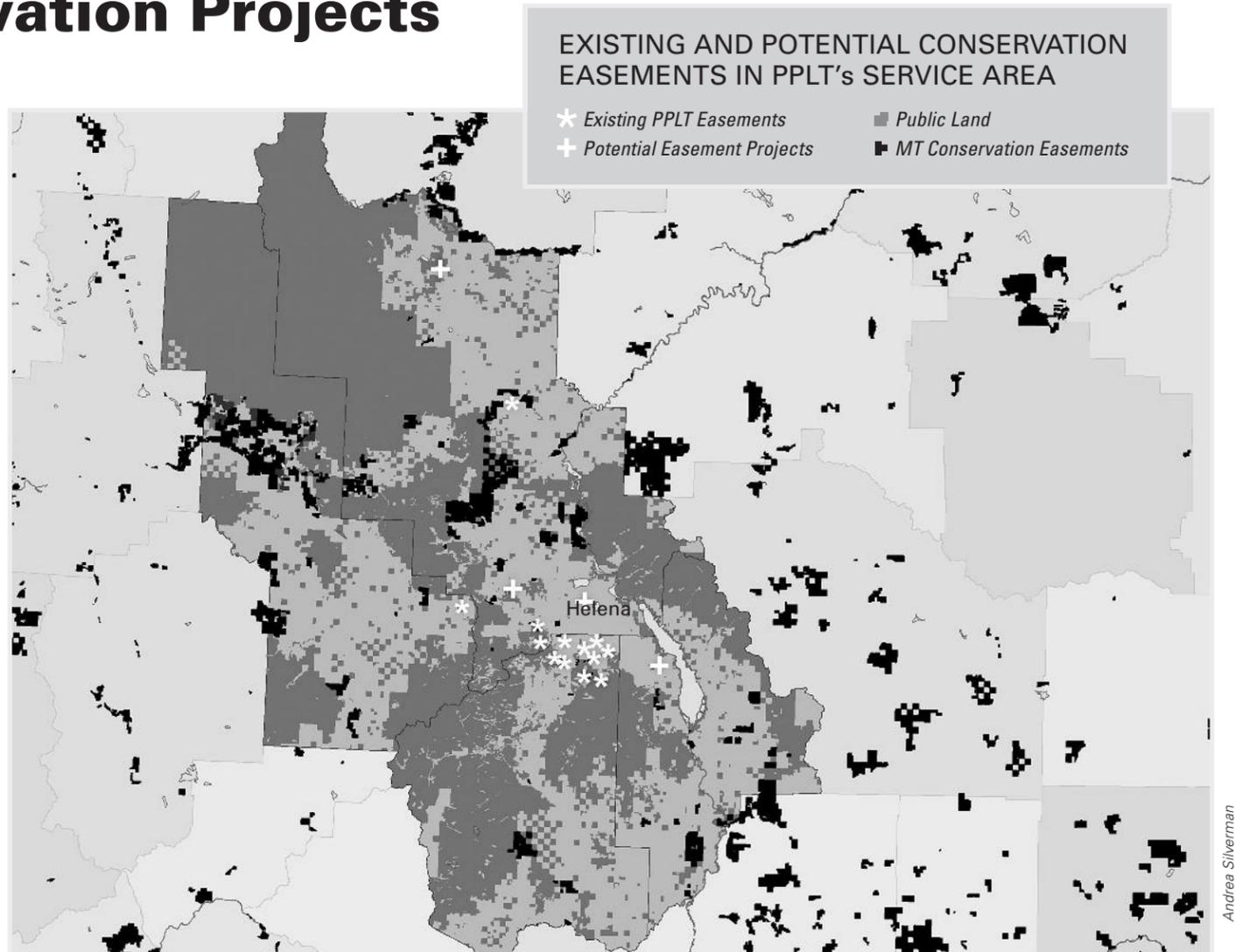
PPLT purchased these lots at a significant discount from Dal and Jane Smilie in 2007. A very generous donation from the Ambrose Family along with a grant from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks made it possible for PPLT to make this purchase. And once again, many of you amazing donors and supporters came through to close the funding gap and seal the deal.

2010 Conservation Projects

FOLLOWING UP on our successful completion of the conservation easement on Judith Williams' Lazy Y3 Ranch outside of Wolf Creek last year, PPLT has some exciting projects lined up for 2010! The theme this year seems to be "water" since all of the potential projects are located along streams and wetlands in our service area.

We are currently working with landowners in the Helena Valley, Austin, Augusta and Winston areas (see map). The projects involve everything from working ranches to critical fish and wildlife habitat to stunning vistas of the Rocky Mountain Front. In addition to negotiating the various easements, we're also working to secure funding for these projects.

We'll keep you posted as things develop, so look forward to hearing about some exciting new projects!



Andrea Silverman

Love the Trails? Your Input Requested!

The Helena National Forest is proposing to add some of the existing trails located on National Forest lands in the South Hills to the designated Helena National Forest transportation system. If incorporated, these trails will become eligible for maintenance and re-routing that are necessary for sustainability and improved resource management.

The following trails are being considered: Wakina Sky, Show Me the Horse, Mini Ridge, McKelvey Trail, Dump Gulch Trail, Stairway to Heaven, Pinchot Trail, Roger Fuchs Trail, Entertainment Trail, Archery Ridge, Emmett's Trail, TR Trail, and Black Forest Trail. Note that this process only covers the portions of these trails on USFS lands, not City owned lands. These trails would add about 13.58 non-motorized miles to

the official Helena National Forest trail system. PPLT has long desired to be able to help the Forest Service maintain and manage these trails. However, up to now we have not been allowed to because these trails are not "official" system trails and therefore not eligible for maintenance. As part of the process to make these routes official, the Helena National Forest has requested comments from the public about this proposal. Here's where you come in. Please share your thoughts about the incorporation of these trails into the official trail plan.

Send your thoughts via email to comments-northern-helena@fs.fed.us or send a letter to Roy Barkley, Trails Project Coordinator, 2001 Poplar, Helena, MT 59601. Or you can call Roy at 406-495-3853. We appreciate your input.

2010 Volunteer Trail Work Days: Our Tenth Year Out on the Trails

Two thousand ten marks PPLT's tenth year as Trail Coordinator for the City of Helena. Incredible! And, as in past years, we once again present our slate of volunteer trail workdays. This year we will again be working on some exciting new trail construction projects while also providing some much needed trail maintenance throughout the system. Thanks as always goes to our partner, the City of Helena, for working with us to make Helena's open space and trail system one of the finest in the West.



April 19, 5:30 PM - Mt. Helena Trail Maintenance

Show Mt. Helena you love her by helping to restore trails impacted by timber management activities and improve trail erosion control. Meeting Place: Tubbs Trailhead on West LeGrande Cannon Blvd.

May 17, 5:30 PM - Bompart Hill Trail Work

Help create a new official trail connection across the summit of Bompart Hill. Meeting Place: Lime Kiln Road Trailhead

June 19 and 20 - Third Annual High Divide Trails Jamboree

Join us for another fun filled weekend of camping, trailwork and story telling up on the Great Divide. Volunteers will team up to re-route an unsustainable portion of trail and install signs on the new 14-mile loop incorporating a newly completed section of the Continental Divide Trail. Meeting Place and Details TBA

July 12, 5:30 PM - Nob Hill Trail Work

Lend a hand in renovating some damaged trails on this new section of Helena Open Space. Meeting Place: Near the intersection of Saddle Drive and South Hills Drive at the Water Tank.

September 13 - Project to be Announced

We are planning an exciting new trail reroute but it is too early to spill the beans. Please stay tuned for details.

**Dates and times are subject to change due to weather, etc. Call the PPLT office or check pricklypearl.org for details.*

Bike to Work Day: May 26, 2010

Join state employees and community members in riding your bicycle to work, school, or wherever you need to go on May 26, 2010 in conjunction with National Bike to Work Month.

The Montana State Employee Alternative Transportation Committee, TAWSE, will be hosting an event in the Capitol Rotunda that day from 11:00 – 1:00. The event will have information from the City of Helena, Adventure Cycling Association, the Transportation for America National Campaign, Helena Bicycle Club, local bicycle shops, and many more. Come enjoy food donated by the Real Food Market and Deli and the Bagel Company.

Ride your bike down to Alive @ 5 after work and visit additional booths with information about local bicycle issues. Bike racks will be provided. See you there!

Please contact Canon Luerkens, TAWSE Chairman, at 461-5000 for additional information.

Annual Meeting Showcases Travelers for Open Land Program

PPLT HOSTED ITS ANNUAL MEETING February 25. Thank you to all the members who participated. Your interest in our work is appreciated. At the meeting, three board members renewed their terms and Jonathan Krauss was officially elected to the Board of Directors. Welcome, Jonathan!

We extend a special thank you to Aidan Myhre who delivered a great presentation about “Travelers for Open Land” (TFOL). This innovative program is a results-driven, voluntary partnership between the traveling public, the Montana hospitality industry, private land owners, and land trust organizations to conserve scenic vistas, wildlife habitat, working farms and ranches and recreational lands, which comprise Montana’s irreplaceable landscape for present and future generations. TFOL was conceived by Glenn Marx, Executive Director of the Montana Association of Land Trusts and Mike

Scholz, former director the Montana Innkeepers Association, as a way to protect those landscapes that keep travelers coming to Montana and keeping our economy strong.

Here’s how it works: Participating businesses ask for a donation from travelers, many of whom visit to enjoy Montana’s beautiful landscapes. These donations go into the Travelers fund at the Montana Community Foundation. The funds are then awarded in the form of competitive grants to land trusts to conserve Montana’s spectacular scenery, abundant and diverse wildlife and incredible waters, enabling Montana to keep its open lands. This, in turn, leads to more travelers visiting to experience our majestic state, completing the cycle. Learn more at travelersforopenland.com and please patronize the businesses that participate in this effective program. A list can be found on the website.

Board News: Passing the Torch

The leadership of the Board of Directors of a non-profit is critical in guiding the organization and helping to shape it as it grows. PPLT has been incredibly fortunate to have had strong direction from its Board officers since its inception. And as with any healthy organization, change is a vital part of its evolution.

Ken Eden has been our Board president for the last three years and he is stepping back to allow current VP Sarah Jaeger to take the reins. Ken has presided over one of the most exciting periods in PPLT’s history. His tenure saw the land trust leap into the effort to protect the Mt. Ascension backdrop and our largest conservation project to date—the 1,500 acre Mullan pass conservation easement. He has also engaged fellow board members in a more robust fund raising effort.

The staff appreciates Ken’s incredible ability to provide

meaningful advice and guidance, and for empowering us to do our best work. His ability to absorb an issue, summarize it and restate it so eloquently has allowed us to make well-informed decisions and move forward confidently.

Sarah Jaeger is no shrinking violet. She becomes our fifth Board president after serving on the board for four years. Sarah is a nationally known award-winning ceramic artist with a love of beautiful art, wonderful dogs, and Helena’s matchless open space. It is this fervor for our trails garnered from her routine trips to the summit of Mt. Ascension that drew Sarah to PPLT. She speaks passionately about our landscape and it is with this passion that she will gracefully guide PPLT to new heights.

Thank you Ken, and welcome Sarah!

Fly Away on May Day

On Saturday, May 1, PPLT will once again participate in the International Migratory Bird Day Celebration at the Helena Regulating Reservoir in the valley. Membership and Outreach Committee members will be helping out with a hands-on station for kids where they can make a plaster cast of a bird’s footprint. This year’s theme is “The Power of Partnerships” which fits well with PPLT’s goal of working with other community



groups and agencies to further our mission and recognition. Migratory Bird Day is locally sponsored by the U.S. Forest Service, the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the Montana Discovery Foundation, and others—a real “power of partnerships” with something for all ages. Early morning bird walks begin at 6:30 AM, and hands-on stations begin at 9:00 AM. Please call 449-5201 for more information.

Hoppin’ Good Time

March 15 was a hoppin’ good time at Blackfoot River Brewing! PPLT was there to participate in the inaugural Pizza and a Pint Community Night. Brian Smith, Brad Simshaw and Greg Wermers, the owners of Blackfoot, have made a wonderful commitment to the nonprofit community in Helena with this weekly event. Every Monday, eat gourmet pizza and enjoy a pint of your favorite brew for \$12. Thanks to Blackfoot’s generous donation of beer and McKenzie River Pizza providing pizza at a special price, about \$10 of every combo goes directly to support the featured nonprofit. During PPLT’s night, we

received more than \$1,780 from those who participated in the pizza party. Thank you very much to Blackfoot and McKenzie River Pizza for making it so easy and all those who came out to support both PPLT and one of Helena’s best local breweries!



Leave a Legacy

“Prickly Pear Land Trust has worked hard for more than 13 years to preserve and expand what we love most about Helena. Because the trails and open space mean so much to us, some years ago we included Prickly Pear Land Trust for a significant amount in our estate planning. We know our gift will help to leave a legacy of open lands and trails for others to enjoy forever, and it was easy to do. Please join us in helping to protect our lands close to home.” – Fritz and Angela Behr

For more information about planned giving, or if you’ve already included us in your estate, please contact Heather Nese at 406-442-0490. Thank you.

