



## GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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May 13, 2010

Leslie Weldon, Regional Forester  
Northern Region  
P.O. Box 7669  
Missoula, MT 59807-7669

Dear Ms. Weldon:

The Governor's Office of Economic Development (GOED) would like to call to your attention the Southwestern Crown of the Continent Collaborative's Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) proposal recently submitted to your office for consideration. We have been briefed on the proposal and believe that this proposal is the result of a model collaborative effort rooted in sound science and built upon a long and productive history of effective collaboration throughout Montana's Blackfoot, Clearwater and Swan Valleys.

The SW Crown CFLRP proposal, if implemented, would ensure that collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration would continue to be a high priority in the Blackfoot, Clearwater and Swan Valleys. The proposal's emphasis on treating 80% of all high risk acres identified in the area's three Community Wildfire Protection Plans ensures that lives, homes and communities will face a significantly reduced risk from wildfire. The participation by federal, state and local officials as well as a diverse array of non-profit organizations and private land owners, in the development of the proposal will facilitate ongoing collaboration on the fuel reduction and forest restoration efforts envisioned in the proposal.

In addition to its emphasis on fuel reduction and wildfire risk reduction, this proposal could protect and restore clean water, improve fish and wildlife habitat and treat tens of thousands of acres of terrestrial and aquatic invasive species.

Finally, this proposal could provide much needed jobs in the woods where fuel reduction and forest restoration could put people back to work and could also provide much needed saw logs and biomass to existing and proposed future facilities in the region.

We urge you to seriously consider the SW Crown CFLRP proposal as it moves forward through the selection process.

Best regards,

EVAN BARRETT  
Chief Business Development Officer