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The Transboundary Trail - Polebridge, MT

A New Trail Tells an Important Story

October 13, 2014

Dear ***Dave***:

We've just completed a neat trail project in Polebridge that you'll want to check out next time you pull up to the Polebridge Mercantile (the "Merc") for a "Huckleberry Bearclaw" and cup of coffee. The trail celebrates the natural history and citizen effort to permanently protect the *North Fork Flathead* watershed from inappropriate industrial development.

We've dubbed it the **Transboundary Trail** because the North Fork Flathead is one river belonging to two countries, Canada and the United States. The international border is just 17 miles north of Polebridge. The head of the river lies 57 miles upstream from there.

Citizens on both sides of the border have worked effectively for almost 40 years to protect the watershed's pristine waters, fish, and wildlife. In 2011, B.C. passed the

DONATE NOW

Please review the **Transboundary Trail Project** below. It was funded in part by the Brainerd Foundation. We greatly appreciate your help in completing this unique trail.

Please donate [here](#).

~Thank You!



*The new Transboundary Trail tells the human, natural, and conservation history of the transboundary North Fork Flathead River. Virtually tour the trail [here](#). (Sign design by **Golan Graphic Design, Columbia Falls, Montana.**)*

different interpretive stops along the path.

The Merc is the heart of Polebridge. Proprietor Will Hammerquist conceived the project. *Headwaters Montana and National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA)* designed and installed it.

Believe it or not, over 60,000 people pass through the Merc every year.

As Hammerquist observed, "These folks have braved the North Fork [gravel] Road. They're open and looking for new experiences. The Transboundary Trail gives them real information about how this valley has been protected from industrial development."

At trail's end a traveler can fill out a post card to the Premier of British Columbia, and join [Friends of the Flathead](#). The Friends are enthusiastic supporters of [Flathead Wild](#), the on-going campaign to double the size of Waterton Park into B.C., and create a Wildlife Management Area stretching from the border all the way north to Banff National Park in Alberta.

Other [Flathead Wild](#) goals include establishing a Whitefish Range Wilderness on the

Flathead Area Watershed Conservation Act that banned mining and energy development on the Canadian side. Montana's congressional delegation is still working to pass complementary legislation in Congress before the end of 2014, the *North Fork Watershed Protection Act*.

Conservation of this region really started over 100 years ago when you consider the establishment of Waterton Lakes National Parks in 1895, and Glacier National Park in 1910.

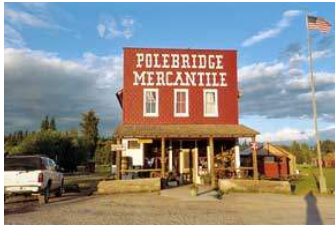
But people have recognized the power of this place for much longer than that. Native Americans/First Nations have lived here and found spiritual guidance in the mountains for more than 10,000 years.

The Transboundary Trail is located one hundred yards north of the historic Merc. It's just one-quarter mile long with nine



The Transboundary Trail ends with a call to action: to [join Friends of the Flathead](#). If you haven't joined Friends, please do so now [here](#)! And please tell your friends.

U.S. side of the border, and protecting the wildlife corridor from the border south to Whitefish, Montana.



The Polebridge Mercantile... a welcome site after navigating the North Fork Road. Coffee and fresh-baked treats await you... the Transboundary Visitor.

Michael Jamison with NPCA thinks the trail will provide an opportunity for visitor to help complete the conservation legacy of this special place.

Jamison said, "We're really excited about this trail. It gives visitor a tangible way to

contribute to completing the conservation legacy of Waterton - Glacier International Peace Park."

When you do make that trip to Polebridge we highly recommend that you stop first at the Merc and pick up that cup of coffee and Huckleberry Bearclaw, then amble over to the trail.

Visit the trail on your next North Fork adventure. Or you can visit the trail from the comfort of your home [here](#).

We'd be very interested to get your feedback on the Transboundary Trail. Please [write us](#).

As always, thanks for your interest, participation, and [support](#)!



*Dave Hadden, Executive Director
info@headwatersmontana.org
406-837-0783*



The Flathead Wild! campaign map showing the Waterton Park expansion into B.C. and the Wildlife Management corridor stretching from Banff to Whitefish. (Click [here](#) to enlarge map.)

Headwaters Montana, Inc. | 4068370783 | info@headwatersmontana.org |
PO Box 4310, 511 Lakewood Court, Whitefish, MT 59937

Protecting the Water, Wildlife and Traditional Outdoor Heritage in the Crown of the Continent!

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HEADWATERS MONTANA INC | PO Box 4310 | 511 Lakewood Court | Whitefish | MT | 59937