

## WHITEFISH RANGE SHARED VALUES

Montana's Whitefish Range, like Glacier National Park, is prized by our local communities – it is our job site, our playground, our refuge, our hunting grounds and our home. Just as we enjoy our right to use the land, water and wildlife we have inherited here, so do we carry a responsibility to leave these resources healthy and accessible for future generations.

Our freedom to use and enjoy the Whitefish Range is due to the forethought of stewards who came before us. Likewise, the foresight we demonstrate today will inspire tomorrow's generations, and protect their freedom to enjoy these lands as we have.

Adjacent Glacier National Park was established in 1910 both for the use and enjoyment of future generations, and for protection of its extraordinary natural resources. Likewise, the Whitefish Range has traditionally balanced these same dual stewardship functions of human use and forestland protection – and it provides economic vitality to nearby rural and urban communities through livelihood, recreation, healthy forests, hunting and fishing, clean water and clean air.

Our shared vision for the Whitefish Range is to ensure a balance of traditional and modern land uses. The unique qualities of this mountain region should be maintained, and the Range should continue to provide multiple-use values including both motorized and non-motorized recreation, sustainable forestry, wildland restoration, hunting, fishing and unique opportunities for backcountry solitude.

We recognizing that change is a constant – even the remote North Fork Flathead River Valley is not immune -- and that people are a central component of this landscape; yet we also submit that as we adapt to inevitable change our waters should remain clean, our wildlife habitat connected, our fisheries robust and our economy vital. The Whitefish Range, at the heart of Glacier Country, should remain a critical part of our unique way of life and a key component in the local identity of our tightly-knit communities.

In order that this region remain rural in its nature, and that our public access be maintained, and that our neighbors be educated about the region's unique values, and that we sustain the historic traditions for which the Whitefish Range has come to be known, we must work in a collaborative manner. If we do not act deliberately and do not plan together for changing times, then the future of this place almost certainly will be decided by others.

By identifying the shared traditional livelihood and lifestyle values associated with the Whitefish Range, and working together to safeguard those values, we can ensure that the exceptional natural and cultural heritage of this range may be passed on to future generations.

**Approved by unanimous consensus of the Whitefish Range Partnership 01/03/2013**