

ALVORD LAKE COMMUNITY FOREST

November-December 2015

WHAT: Vital Ground, MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks, U.S. Forest Service, Society of American Foresters and a diverse partnership of local organizations and individuals are working together to complete the **142-acre Alvord Lake Community Forest Project** by the end of 2015. This project is located in Lincoln County, two miles north of Troy in northwest Montana (see map on reverse page).

PURPOSE: The **Alvord Lake Community Forest** is to conserve a cornerstone private parcel along Alvord Lake's southeast lakeshore that provides important fish and wildlife habitat, along with numerous recreational opportunities for the local community. The parcel is bounded by Kootenai National Forest to the west and Stimson Lumber Company lands that are protected by the Kootenai Valleys conservation easement to the north and east. Conservation of this parcel will maintain habitat connectivity across this important forested landscape for a variety of wildlife including grizzly bears, moose, elk, fisher, lynx, wolverine, nesting common loons, great blue herons, osprey, bald eagles, spotted frogs, western toads, and painted turtles.

FUNDING STATUS (Project budget: \$1,145,000).

In June 2014, the U.S. Forest Service approved a \$400,000 Community Forest and Open Space grant for Vital Ground's bargain sale acquisition and establishment of the **Alvord Lake Community Forest**.

Committed	Source
\$400,000	USDA Community Forest Grant
\$315,000	Landowner donation
\$100,000	MT Fish & Wildlife Conservation Trust
\$116,500	Foundations & Corporate Sponsors
\$110,000	Vital Ground Donors
\$ 52,000	DNRC LSR forest restoration grant
\$ 5,500	MT FWP Mitigation trans. costs
\$1,070,700	Total Committed
\$ 46,000	Funding Need



COMMUNITY FOREST CONCEPT:

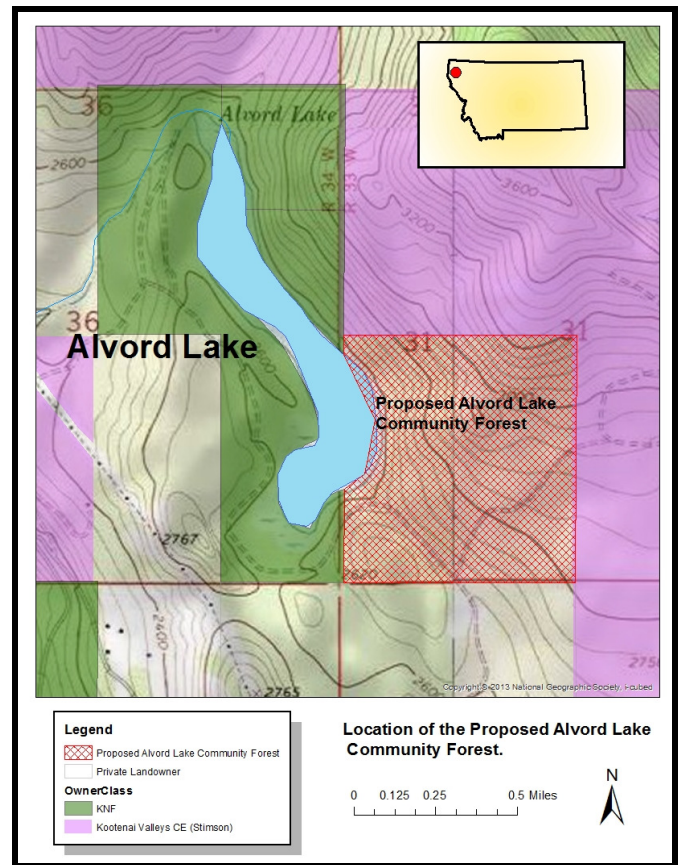
The local communities in the Troy/Libby areas support the concept of the **Alvord Lake Community Forest** because this designation maintains protection for the area's natural resources, continued public access, educational opportunities, and hinges on **community participation** in future management planning and decisions. Project stakeholders completed a draft Community Forest Management Plan in December 2013 that will provide the basis for future management. When the project is complete, Vital Ground will be implementing this management plan in cooperation with the local community. To that end, the community has identified **12 distinct Community Forest Management Plan Goals:**

1. Continue **historical uses** such as recreation, boating, wildlife and waterfowl viewing, fishing, hunting, outdoor education, and hiking.
2. Control **noxious weeds** using both chemical and biological controls.
3. Maintain and improve **wildlife and fishery habitat** including the protection of the existing common loon nesting and brood-rearing areas.
4. Improve **vigor, health, resiliency, growth, and diversity** of the forest by thinning, planting, and timber harvest, etc.
5. Improve the value and distribution of important **wildlife forage** through management activities such as prescribed burning and thinning of sapling-size trees.

6. Initiate forest management that would improve the **species composition and structure** of the forest to a more historical range of distribution.
7. Provide opportunities to showcase examples of varying forest management and **Wildland Urban Interface (WUI)** to the general public and other resource professionals.
8. Reduce risk of catastrophic **wildfire**.
9. Build on existing **outdoor education** programs using outdoor classroom and trail to include interpretation and signing.
10. Strengthen existing **educational partnerships** with Troy Schools, Forest Service, Boy Scouts, FWP, Society of American Foresters and others on use of Outdoor Classroom, opportunities for resource interpretation, forestry, natural sciences, trail/property maintenance, and other outdoor education.
11. Initiate and maintain a **water quality monitoring** program that would provide a baseline inventory and assessment of Alvord Lake for current and future users. Expand to include shoreline, riparian areas, wetlands, and tributaries to Alvord Lake.
12. Maintain **walk-in public access** for education and recreation with motorized road access restricted to timber/land/administrative management.
13. Consider extending an ADA **handicap accessible trail** along the lake with opportunities for improved fishing access.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- a. **Share** this project information with your membership/partners by posting it on your website and in newsletters and encouraging members to make voluntary direct contributions to this project.
- b. **Join** the Alvord Lake Community Forest Steering Committee and participate in future management of the Alvord Lake Community Forest.
- c. **Commit to a direct cash contribution** to the Alvord Lake Community Forest acquisition.
- d. **For more information, contact:**
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406-549-8650



Partners/Supporters: Friends of Alvord Lake LLC, Kootenai National Forest, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, Kootenai Tribes of Idaho, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Lincoln County Conservation District, Troy School District, Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust, Libby Chapter of the Society of American Foresters, William H. Donner Foundation, Oberweiler Foundation, Cinnabar Foundation, First Interstate Bank, First Security Bank, Montana Loon Society, Flathead Audubon Society, Yaak Valley Forest Council, Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society, Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Cabinet Resource Group, Stimson Lumber Company, Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative, local fishing and sporting businesses and organizations, and many grateful local citizens