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Need for a conservation strategy at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area Missoula Montana or protecting land by benign neglect

Mary Minor Smith
The University of Montana

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THE NEED FOR A CONSERVATION STRATEGY AT
PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA
MISSOULA, MONTANA

OR

PROTECTING LAND BY BENIGN NEGLECT

BY

Mary Minor Smith
BA George Washington University, 1969
presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Science
The University of Montana
1994

Approved by:

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Dean, Graduate School
May 18, 1994
Date
Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is a small, heavily used Forest Service area adjacent to the growing urban community of Missoula, Montana. It has a day-use picnic area and extensive hiking and skiing trails, but no endangered species. For most of its history, Pattee Canyon Recreation Area has been ignored by the adjacent land owners who have pursued their own interests of timber harvesting and homes largely unrelated to the Recreation Area. It is a typical example of a locally significant area and recreational resource which could be permanently altered by adjacent land uses because there are no controls on these lands.

Continued benign neglect will eventually compromise the values of the resource area because the potential for change in land uses is generally driven by factors other than the protection of these values. In this situation, where there is the urban/forest interface, it will be the urban values which win out.

Today, increasing population pressures and recreational demands are putting new demands on the Forest Service lands and the lands around it. These demands have already begun to affect wildlife habitat. The lands on which change could most easily occur in the coming few years are the most important to habitat and could affect the habitat of the Recreation Area dramatically.

A conservation strategy allows a group or community to think proactively about the long term protection of an area such as Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. It is a strategy and a means to carry it out. Such a strategy could benefit Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, by identifying options for action while they are still available.

There is a new interest in the open spaces of Missoula, which is focused on high visibility, "threatened" areas. Little consideration is being given to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. It will be significant if the community continues to ignore the future of a recognized resource and gives all its attention to the protection of new areas.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am grateful to the many, people who helped me understand the complexities of this wonderful area next to Missoula. Special thanks go to my committee of Bruce Jennings, Alan McQuillan, and Ron Erickson and to Joe Kipphut, Mike Hillis and Marcia Hogan of the Missoula Ranger District, who were always willing to answer just one more question. I appreciated the support (and library) of Bruce Bugbee and the helpful comments of Bob Lemire, and Pat O’Herren. Thanks too, go to my fellow students in the "Thesis Support Group."

Minie Smith

May 1994
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INTRODUCTION

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area (PCRA) is a small, but heavily used National Forest Recreation Area 15 minutes from the growing urban area of Missoula, Montana. Its location, just over three miles from a growing urban area of over 82,000 has much to do with its popularity.¹

There are several kinds of land owners adjacent to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area: small private owners, corporate, large private owners and the state. Each of these owners has different management agendas and missions. Although to date, these adjacent owners have had limited impacts on the values of the Recreation Area, there are virtually no assurances that future uses of these lands either individually or cumulatively, will continue to be compatible with PCRA. A growing population and increased recreation and housing demands are just some of the impacts that are putting pressure on the Recreation Area. It is a typical example of a locally significant natural and recreational resource which could be permanently altered by adjacent land uses because there are almost no land controls on these lands. Pattee Canyon Recreation Area has largely been overlooked by a community that seemingly assumes it will always be as it is now.

¹Unless otherwise stated, Pattee Canyon in this paper refers to the Recreation Area, not the group of homes located along Pattee Canyon Road.
This paper will examine the changes that have occurred in and around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area and suggest that by continued neglect, these changes will soon have inalterable impacts on the Recreation Area. However, by taking a proactive approach and determining a conservation strategy for PCRA, it may be possible to direct some of these changes. At the very least, it will enable decisions to be made about the future of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area based on information, not just letting the area develop by chance. An informed decision may not result in total protection for the area, but the citizens will be aware of the consequences of either no action or other avenues of action they might choose to take.

Specifically this paper will address the following:

- the current situation with regard to PCRA
- the need for a conservation strategy for PCRA
- impediments to the development and implementation of a conservation strategy for PCRA
- the effects of not developing a conservation strategy
- recommendations for future action
Pattee Canyon Recreation Area

LOCATION MAP
CHAPTER I

CHALLENGES OF PROTECTION

THE SETTING

Although called a canyon, Pattee Canyon is not a typical canyon. Rather it is described by geographers as a "wide saucer shaped basin" which is cut through by Pattee Creek and its tributaries.² The impression of a true canyon comes from the approach to the Recreation Area on Pattee Canyon Road, where steep, dark walls bound the road. From the top of these "walls" however, the land flattens out and does not reach the sides of the basin until the mountains some distance away.³

Pattee Canyon is heavily wooded with stands of ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and western larch. It does not have unique natural features or rare or endangered species, but has an abundance of wildlife for a forested area near an urban setting. There is some old growth, but parts of Pattee Canyon were also burned in two severe fires in 1977 and 1985. Its early history as the Timber Reserve for Fort Missoula is well illustrated by numerous stumps of old trees, constant reminders of a different past.

Since the Forest Service (FS) assumed ownership in

²John M. Crowley, Biophysical Land Inventory: Pattee Canyon (Missoula: University of Montana, Dept. of Geography), 2
³Ibid., 2
1926, recreation has been the focus of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. It does not have the national significance awarded to the Rattlesnake, but PCRA is used year-round by groups and individuals from the greater Missoula community.

The large picnic area and system of roads and trails make Pattee Canyon one of the most popular recreation areas close to Missoula.

Of the three National Forest sites near Missoula, Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is the only one emphasizing day-use, having a designated picnic area and a section for group use. Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is managed by a federal agency, the Lolo National Forest, but it is the local level, not the federal or state, which provides the strongest base of support. City and county plans have consistently identified PCRA as a "district park." The description of PCRA in the Missoula Trails brochure typifies the community's perception of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area:

The Recreation Area has a pleasant picnic grounds, shaded by large Ponderosa pines and a well-developed network of foot, horse, bicycle and cross-country ski trails.

4The Rattlesnake, also near Missoula, was designated a National Recreation Area and Wilderness in 1980.

5Lolo National Forest,"Pattee Canyon Recreation Area" (Missoula: Lolo National Forest, 1992) visitor brochure

6The Rattlesnake National Wilderness and Recreation Area and Blue Mountain Recreation Area.

7William Hollenbaugh, Missoula County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (Missoula: Missoula Planning Board, 1976), 24.

8Missoula Trails Project, "Trails: Missoula" (Missoula: Missoula Trails Project, 1992(?), 17.
THE CHALLENGE

Owners view their property in different ways, sometimes with a fierce emotional attachment. Some see property as a link to the past, others as a bridge to the future. Property owners want their land to be all sorts of things - a place to live, to work; a source of income now or someday; a source of continuity, food, security, investment income, serenity, beauty or tax relief.

How well Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is able to coexist with present and future owner's ideas for their land will determine the quality of the experience at PCRA. The adjacent landowners, users and other interested groups need to understand the effects of their land use decisions on Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. They will need to collaborate if the values of PCRA are not to be compromised.

The lands around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area are not static. There has been change over the years, most dramatically in the growth in homes, particularly the area between PCRA and Missoula. Change is not necessarily negative, but it does have impacts. Recognizing these impacts can help determine if the Recreation Area will be affected and in what way. A conservation strategy is a way to assess these impacts and design a plan for tomorrow.

A conservation strategy is not however, a plan for locking up an area for the future. Rather such a strategy should encourage those continuing uses of the surrounding

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lands which already promote or are compatible with the values of the Recreation Area. It should be seen as a positive approach for the entire area long term. It will however, require a variety of creative approaches to appeal to the desires and needs of the different landowners.

In many respects, PCRA is not a unique situation, but a typical example of an open space/conservation area caught between and urban/forest interface. It is also not unusual that it has been neglected; without a crisis, there is often not the impetus to think proactively. Further the conclusion drawn from this situation is not unique, but important for the community to consider. Continued "benign neglect" of the adjacent land uses will eventually compromise the values of the resource area because the potential for change of land uses is generally driven by factors other than the protection of these values. In the urban/forest environment, in the absence of controls, change will favor the urban and not the forest environment. It is this thesis that will be explored in the case study of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

ENVISIONING A CONSERVATION STRATEGY

Protecting a community's open space is hardly a new concept, yet certainly one that is becoming more urgent as urban sprawl and population growth chew up the remaining parcels of open land across America. Charles Little, in
Challenge of the Land, put it succinctly in 1968. For him, open space basically provides three functions for the community:

1) the establishment of recreational opportunities
2) a visually pleasant landscape
3) maintenance of natural processes\footnote{Charles Little, Challenge of the Land: Open Space Preservation At The Local Level (New York: Pergama Press, Open Space Institute, 1968), 9.}

He goes on to suggest that the well-known planner, Ian McHarg's approach, of basing land use decisions on natural processes, has proven to be both economically defensible and to result in the identification of the recreational and aesthetic attributes desired.\footnote{Ibid., 20.} It is this approach on which a conservation strategy is based.

The criteria of what is important to protect in a community may differ according to that community's needs, but the process to determine them is basically the same. Look for example at the list of criteria selected by the Adirondack Land Trust as priority areas to protect in the Adirondack Park in upstate New York.

- productive agricultural soils
- productive forest soils
- key tracts essential to the protection of critical state lands
- major scenic vistas
- important travel corridors
- significant natural resource areas such as shoreline, wetland and other important habitat
- designated agricultural districts
- wild scenic and recreational river corridors
- land designated by the state as critical open space\footnote{Adirondack Land Trust, Developing a Land Conservation Strategy (Elizabethtown, NY: Adirondack Land Trust, 1987), 7.}

Determining the objectives for protection is the
essential first step in deciding what lands to protect. Ian McHarg, in Design With Nature, elegantly states the approach: "Wherein lies its beauty, why is it vulnerable? What is the essential genius of this landscape?"\(^{13}\) The Nature Conservancy (TNC) utilizes this process - calling it preserve design - to ensure that the essential elements for natural systems protection are included in the lands they propose to protect. It can have many names.

Determining a conservation strategy is not meant to stop all land uses around an area. Often it is simply ensuring that an existing compatible land use will be able to continue.

A 190-acre dairy farm in Vermont will never be developed because the Vermont Land Trust bought development rights and put together a multi-party transaction to keep the land in farming.\(^{14}\)

Mostly, a conservation strategy is a proactive way of looking at important conservation resources within a community, before they are irretrievably lost. It is a plan that sets criteria to preserve elements of a landscape. The decisions which follow from it define that community.

"Communities chart their destinies by means of the land use policies they follow."\(^{15}\) It is a way of determining how

\(^{13}\)Ian McHarg, Design With Nature (Garden City, N.Y.: Natural History Press, 1969), 62.

\(^{14}\)Land Trust Alliance, Starting A Land Trust (Alexandria, Va.: Land Trust Alliance, 1990), vii.

\(^{15}\)Irving Schiffman, Alternative Techniques for Controlling Land Use (Davis, Calif.: Institute of Governmental Affairs,
impacts may be channeled. It may offer a way to maintain existing diversity around a particular site or promote a different mix of land uses than currently exist which will be more compatible with the land in question.

San Francisco's Greenbelt Project suggests that there may be a variety of reasons for protection, that may apply to different parts of the same area. In one section, the need is to determine a strategy for protecting a wetland before there is a threat to it, in another the need is to act quickly to keep a key park parcel from immediate development. Whatever the criteria chosen for protection, they must be definable. The goal of protection of "open space" may not give enough distinction between parcels to allow for setting of priorities.

A conservation strategy analyses the land - what is there and what the limitations are. The Adirondack Land Trust (ALT) recommends a simplified process (based on McHarg's principles) which can be adapted to any situation, big or small. The ALT encompassed 12 counties partially or wholly in the Adirondack State Park, but it would work just as well for a small area, a single preserve or PCRA.

Listing landscape elements which help promote the desired objectives is the essential first step. For example,

University of California, 1983), 2.

exceptional scenic or recreational features, or elements critical to natural habitats. Determining these elements will set the direction of the protection strategy.

Next, some rating must then be given to the elements. Which is more important? Mapping these elements over a base map helps determine priorities. Overlapping areas indicate an area of importance. The pre-established rating helps determine a priority among them. 17

Part and parcel of the conservation strategy is an implementation plan - a plan of action. McHarg again reminds us that a proposed land use map is not a plan.

It is the expression of physical, social or economic goals. It is the combination of these goals and the public and private powers to realize them that justifies the term "plan". 18

Thus any discussion of a conservation strategy must necessarily include a mechanism for making a plan work. Who has the power and who will carry it out? This is as important as determining what the actual strategy will be. A plan that is too ambitious, or has no solid supporters will not venture far from the shelf.

Land Trusts have been the prime movers in providing the power to create and carry out conservation strategies. In community after community, these are local organizations which have evolved through citizen initiated efforts. It is


18 McHarg, Design With Nature, 82.
here that the extensive discussions over objectives for preservation occur, and refinements evolve that are so necessary to carry out an effective plan. Objectives and priorities must be tempered by what is feasible for the group - its human resources, funding availability, political effectiveness and the like.

The Land Trust Alliance, the national umbrella group for land trusts, suggests that the success stories are no accident.

They happen because a few people in a community, state or region, got together and said 'We don't like what is happening here.' Open space land that ought to stay a natural area (or a farm or a trail or a community garden) is being taken over by urban sprawl or subdivisions. Special places that ought to be enjoyed by everyone are instead being destroyed.19

Land trusts are a growing movement. Strongest in the northeast, they are gradually taking hold in the west, notably in Colorado and Montana. Nationally there were 132 in 1965, and 550 by 1987. In 1992, there were 889, forming at the rate of one a week.20 Missoula is fortunate to have its own, the Five Valleys Land Trust.

Land Trusts are, of course, not the only groups to utilize the conservation strategy as a basis for making land use decisions. The Nature Conservancy has already been mentioned. A group organized to protect a certain specific

19Land Trust Alliance, Starting A Land Trust, vii.

area, like the San Francisco-based People for Open Space, is but one of many nationwide.

It is, of course, the introduction of ownership which complicates the protection process. TNC's Philip Hoose reminds us simply that "the land on which rare species lives and ecosystems function could be owned by anyone." Therefore another aspect of the conservation strategy is the tools it suggests be used to bring diverse owners toward a common preservation goal. Many feel that zoning, a tool that has been used since the 1900's is no longer enough. Strategies must now include many 'tools in the tool box' - many approaches to land protection.

Land use regulations focus on how the land will be developed, not if it should be...They also ensure that the same battles will be fought again and again as real estate values rise and planning board goals change.

Acquisition is not the automatic answer to every situation either. There are simply not enough funds to go around. What has evolved is a new emphasis on innovative ways to protect private lands. Voluntary approaches such as conservation easements and negotiated term agreements are increasingly popular, although they require a long term partnership of monitoring. Other options, such as right of first refusal, bargain sales, land exchanges, all with

21 Hoose, Building An Ark, 32.
22 Schiffman, Alternative Techniques, 3.
23 Wright, Rocky Mountain Divide, 13.
various different tax implications can also be effectively used. Creativity is the operative word when discussing current land protection techniques.

Each situation is different and the strategy must be adapted to it. Protecting San Francisco’s Greenbelt of 3.5 million acres requires a lot more cooperation and coordination with city and county officials than the farm owned by the elderly widow. Boulder, Colorado has been described as the most innovative and successful collection of land conservation programs in the Rockies.\textsuperscript{24} It is the product of both city and county working together and several private organizations, land trusts and TNC. The County spends about 1.4 million a year on protection, while a 1% local sales tax for the acquisition and management of open space helps in the city. Although the sales tax is not currently an option in Montana, the point is that it is an innovative concept to achieve a desired goal.

A similar experience occurred in the small (6,500) town of Lincoln, Massachusetts, where its Conservation Commission\textsuperscript{25} and one of its members, Robert Lemire were able to convince the town that protecting open space made economic sense as well, by reducing demands on services. Coupled with a conservation strategy which identified the

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid., 87.

\textsuperscript{25}An official town commission appointed to take care of the town’s natural resources.
parcels needing protection, a plan of action was constructed which resulted in protection of resources and increased economic growth for the community.26

In Maine, a conservation strategy which emphasized scenic resources helped identify key parcels in a large harbor on the large coastal island of Vinalhaven. Here it was important to maintain the working waterfront for the fishermen and yet not allow the entire very scenic shoreline be subdivided into many small house lots. Carefully designed individual conservation easements still gave owners options to build or to harvest timber, but in places or in ways that preserved the integrity of the harbor.27

In sum, there are many benefits to developing a conservation strategy. Given a known resource to the community, it is prudent to address its future while there are still options to do so. Information and creativity are key to making a conservation strategy work. At the very least, it provides citizens with the opportunity to assess what their future options really are. It avoids the non-strategy of benign neglect.

In the following pages the need for such a strategy at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area will be explored along with obstacles to such a course of action.

26Robert Lemire, Creative Land Development: Bridge to the Future (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1979), 55-110

27This strategy was initiated and carried out by the Maine Coast Heritage Trust, a statewide land trust.
CHAPTER II

CONSEQUENCES OF BENIGN NEGLLECT

INTRODUCTION

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is best understood by first examining the current situation there: how PCRA evolved, who its neighbors are and what has been the effect of neglect on PCRA and the neighborhood. This chapter will also explore why PCRA is valued, or, to put it another way, what are some of the values that need protection at PCRA.

OVERVIEW OF PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA AND ITS NEIGHBORS

AN EVOLVING BOUNDARY

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area did not start out as a Recreation Area. Its peculiar shaped boundary was the result of the War Department’s decision to designate this land as the Fort Missoula Timber Reserve in 1878. The Missoula National Forest (later the Lolo) received the land in 1926 from the Army, but made no substantial changes to the boundary until the 1980’s when a few additional parcels were added incidentally as part of a larger land swap. From the beginning there has been no particular plan to the formation of PCRA, rather an acceptance of what was there or offered. PCRA therefore, has a boundary not based on ecosystems or recreational needs, but on the timber needs of a new fort in the early days of Montana history.
For many years, the borders of the Pattee Canyon Recreation Area remained the same as the irregular parcel deeded by the Army. It was just under 1,600 acres in size, and included all but the center 240 acres where a rifle range was located. The rifle range remained Army property until 1952.

The Fort Reserve, unofficially surveyed in 1879, was resurveyed in 1901.¹ The reasons for the unusual boundary are not clear, although it may have been as some suggest, just where the best timber was. The Forest Reserve was surveyed by 'meets and bounds' and the Fort proper by 'sectioning.' It seems unusual that the Reserve property was surveyed in a different manner than the Fort when the two properties were done at the same time. Survey by sectioning had come to Montana about the 1870's and so was a method familiar to surveyors, but as there was no uniform code of surveying, there may have been flexibility for local circumstances.² Although the reasons for the partial star shape may elude us today, the legacy for the Recreation Area is an irregular and unusual management challenge with little relation to current use.

Few changes have occurred in the boundary since then. Some 157 acres in Section 12 were bought by the Forest

¹done by Edgar Ford, US Deputy Surveyor

²Wallace Long, surveyor and historian, Missoula. Telephone interview 3/15/94.
US Military Target Range, Missoula County
(Lolo National Forest Files - photocopy)
Service in the 1939 from a private landowner, Maude Hayes, for a ski area. A 43.7 acre adjustment was made to the boundary in 1986, as part of the Flex-Jackobson land exchange (in the Bitterroot and Lolo National Forests.) This exchange brought the FS ownership in Pattee Canyon up to the section line and eliminated a small triangular inholding created by the Timber Reserve. According to the Environmental Assessment for the exchange:

In return we will receive one parcel through which we have an existing road but no right of way and an inholding within the heavily used Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Its acquisition is desirable to enhance the current recreational opportunities and protect scenic easements currently in place, and the integrity of the recreational setting in Pattee Canyon would be retained.4

Although there were no scenic easements in place, the intent suggested by the FS is important. By 1986, both the recreational and scenic values of Pattee Canyon were considered significant to the FS.

The borders of PCRA were adjusted again in 1987 in a more substantial way with the addition of three parcels of land received by the FS as part of a larger trade with Champion International Corporation (CIC), known as the Deer Creek Land Exchange. This included portions of Sections 31, 25 and 25, about 422 acres. The justification here was that

3Lolo National Forest, "Cultural Resources Inventory Project Report" (Missoula: Missoula Ranger District, 1988), 3 phtoc’d.

Warning! Backcountry travelers may encounter a variety of dangerous conditions. It is your duty to inform yourself about these risks and take appropriate precautions.
that it would "improve the irregular exterior forest boundary in the Pattee Canyon/University Mountain area."
The 80 acres which comprised the parcel in Section 35 were described as an isolated CIC parcel that is "bordered on the east side by FS land."\(^5\) Actually, the parcels only touched in the NE corner, but the intent most likely was to "block up" the FS ownership. Other values are unmentioned.

The only other change was an administrative one: making all of Section 25, and the new parcels in Section 35 and 31 all part of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Most of Section 25 already belonged to the FS, having been acquired in 1940 in exchange with the Anaconda Company (O’Brien Creek Exchange). Additionally, this realignment coincided with the development by the City of Missoula of the Kim Williams Trail along the old Milwaukee Railroad right-of-way adjacent to the Clark Fork River which extends through Section 25 and the development of a connecting trail, the Hellgate Canyon Trail, from the Kim Williams to Mt. Sentinel. This trail was constructed by the Forest Service Smokejumpers in 1990. The administrative change did however, have the effect of creating an inholding out of the state’s land in Section 36.

Since that time, no changes have been made to the boundaries of the Recreation Area.

\(^5\)Lolo/Kootenai/Bitterroot National Forest, "Project File, Deer Creek Land Exchange" (Missoula: Lolo Nat. Forest, 1987)
WHERE CITY AND FOREST MEET

Pattee Canyon's proximity to town has been a feature of the area no matter who its owner has been. Benign neglect has allowed both to develop together. The Army chose the area for a timber reserve because it was a good close source of timber to build and supply the Fort, yet the 1901 Federal Resurvey shows the location of several cabins on or near the border of the Reserve.6

Today, Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is criss-crossed with trails of the past, some developed and, although some are just game trails, many are abandoned logging roads. It is not a pristine natural area and many signs of man's impact are evident. It is clearly wilder than a city park, though it has many of the attributes of one.

The FS has taken steps to preserve this atmosphere; no motorized vehicles are permitted off the roads and the area is day-use only. There has been some rehabilitation of the scars of from earlier days of uncontrolled use. Vegetative management has been used by the Forest Service in the picnic area to try and preserve the park-like ponderosa pines from the encroaching undergrowth, but also to reduce the fire buildup potential.7 On the other hand, the FS manages a developed picnic site here, encouraging urban use of the

6Lolo National Forest, "Cultural Resource Inventory",3.

wilder setting. The picnic area road, recently paved to keep down the dust, is for the convenience of this user.

In establishing need for the vegetative management in the picnic area, the urban/rural interface was given as one of three areas of concern, largely because of wildfire. Wildfire is a concern not for the Recreation Area which might benefit from fire, but because of the residences on three sides of the Recreation Area. As houses have increased on the southern border of PCRA, the area on the Larch Camp Road has evolved into the access and the back yards of these homes rather than a integral part of the Recreation Area.8 The mailboxes within PCRA and the school bus are reminders that this section of PCRA has a heavy urban influence. Still, a mountain lion was recently sighted at the school bus stop on the Larch Camp Road.9

RECREATION, RESEARCH AND HOMES

The public values the Recreation area for many different reasons including its proximity to town, the variety of recreational opportunities it provides and the natural atmosphere that exists there.10 The recent user survey of PCRA identified a wide variety of users, most of whom are hikers or walkers; it is a popular place to take

8 Lolo National Forest,"Pattee Canyon Recreation Area" visitors brochure.

9 Reported at the Landowners Association Meeting 4/14/94.

dogs. Mountain bikers use the roads and occasionally the trails. When winters are snowy, many cross-country skiers come to Pattee Canyon, where there are both groomed and non-groomed trails. Hang gliders drive the Crazy Canyon Road under special permit to reach their jump off point at the top of Mt. Sentinel. Horseback riders are sometimes present on the trails; other people come to jog, bird watch or just to appreciate a quiet place. Many families drive up to the picnic area for supper on a summer evening. There are groups as well, scouts, church groups and others.

A consistent user over the years has been the University of Montana, whose classes in many fields from geography to forestry have used Pattee Canyon as an outdoor laboratory. Pass-through users such as those going to the phone company and electronic site on University Mountain are also present. Finally, are the many landowners who daily drive through the National Forest area just to get home.

All of these users are urban based, but there has also been some use associated with forest uses on adjacent lands. It is significant that in the FS Special Restrictions at PCRA is a blanket permission to Champion and the State of Montana to cross PCRA to access their lands.11

11Lolo National Forest, "Special Restrictions Pattee Canyon Recreation Area" (Missoula: Lolo National Forest, 1992)
THE FOREST SERVICE AND PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

Management of Forest Service lands, including Pattee Canyon, is prescribed by the Lolo Forest Plan, which sets general standards for management of all areas within the forest. Since 1986, when the Forest Plan was approved, Pattee Canyon has been managed as a Recreation Area, described in the Forest Plan as Management Area 9 (MA 9). The 35 acres immediately around the picnic area are a Management Area 7 (Developed Recreation Sites) due to the facilities (picnic tables and outhouses) present. Section 25, originally MA 21 (Old Growth) was reclassified in 1993 as MA 9 so that all of PCRA is MA 9. Also Section 25 was extensively burned in the 1988 Hellgate fire.

Specific management plans are required to be drawn up to guide the management of a Recreation Area. However, unlike the Rattlesnake and Blue Mountain, the other National Forest Areas in Missoula, there is as yet no site specific management document for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, almost 10 years after the Forest Plan direction was set.

MA 9 areas receive concentrated use, are near population centers and are where a wide variety of developed and dispersed recreation are encouraged. Specific goals are:

1) to provide for a variety of recreational opportunities
2) to manage other resources consistent with the Forest Plan

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c) to provide for acceptable levels of water quality and fisheries habitat and improve opportunities for recreation

Managing "resources consistent with the Forest Plan" could mean active protection of habitat, but as not a stated goal, has tended to be less of a priority than the recreational uses, which are stated.

The MA 9 standards allow for coordination with federal, state and local agencies and private groups "to provide for the overall needs of the public." In addition, it directs that "small parcels of land will be acquired or easements obtained, which will provide access to available opportunities in high use areas." In reality however, the only land acquisition anticipated by the Forest Plan was the 43 acre triangular inholding referred to previously.

Specific regulations have been developed for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, based on standards developed in the Forest Plan. These built on the regulations established for the Area of Concentrated Use in 1973. Overnight use is now prohibited (except by special permit in the group area), brought about by problems with management, keggers and vandalism.

Today, management deals primarily with day-to-day user issues such as user conflicts, trail maintenance, and

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13Ibid.,III-27.

AMERICAN COUNTRY TRAVELERS MAY ENCOUNTER A VARIETY OF DANGEROUS CONDITIONS. IT IS YOUR DUTY TO INFORM YOURSELF ABOUT THESE RISKS AND TAKA APPropriate PRECAUTIONS.

LEGEND
- Historic Fort Missoula
- Historic Reserve
- County road
- Forest road
- Trailhead with parking
- Gate
- National Recreation Trail
- Ski trail (signed & groomed in winter)
- Trail (not signed or maintained)
- Dead end
- National Forest land
- Other ownership

Note: Backcountry travelers may encounter a variety of dangerous conditions. It is your duty to inform yourself about these risks and take appropriate precautions.

1992 0 1/2 1
3.1 in. = 1 mile.
signage. The vegetative management project and the paving of the road in the picnic area are examples of more substantial issues. Measurable time however, is spent dealing with concerns related to the homes surrounding Pattee Canyon, such as where garbage of these homes should be picked up. The larger management questions, such as whether there should be an organized Frisbee Golf (FOLF) course at Pattee Canyon, or more ski trails, are on hold until the writing of a comprehensive management plan.

Finally, there has been no coordinated effort by the FS to expand the trail system or visitor usage into the new sections of land beyond establishing the Hellgate Canyon Trail. A comprehensive examination of trail use and potential, should be part of the comprehensive plan analysis, and could well produce a different pattern of use. It seems unlikely that greater coordination between the northern and southern parts of PCRA would be possible however, as long as the link remains in state ownership.

THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area exists in a diverse neighborhood of adjacent land uses. The actions of the adjacent landowners indicate that use has occurred largely by individual landowners acting on their own on their own parcels and that there has been little concern for how and

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15Joe Kipphut, "Larch Camp Road Garbage Pickup Site Memo" (Missoula: Missoula Ranger District, Dec. 9, 1993)
if the Recreation Area would be affected.

Timbering and some homesteading were the primary historic uses of land around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Anaconda Company owned much of the land to the east of PCRA, using it to provide the fuel and props for their extensive mining operations in Butte and Anaconda.

Today, timber production remains the dominant use on lands to the east and south, on lands owned by Plum Creek, but a steady growth in homes has occurred on the Missoula side of PCRA and to the southwest. Land in still for sale off Pattee Canyon Road and it is considered prime development land. The requirement of large lot sizes has limited the total number of houses in Sections 2 and 11, but there are still additional houses that could be built in both these sections. Existing homes makes urban use dominant for these sections, not habitat protection or recreation.

Recreation, outside of the Recreation Area, is a major use only on the Section 26 lands owned by the University and the City. It also occurs incidently, on and near the Deer Creek Road and on some of the Plum Creek lands there and including Section 7.

There are several non-connected uses of PCRA. Three County roads bisect the area, Pattee Canyon Road, Deer Creek and Larch Camp Roads. Utility right of ways criss-cross the Recreation Area, and electronic sites are a concentrated use
of a small part of Section 30. Access is via a gated road from PCRA. A gas pipeline crosses Pattee Canyon Recreation Area as do several telephone lines.

All state lands near PCRA were part of the original grants to Montana when it became a state. Although classified as forest lands, there has been little harvesting. Grazing was an historic use of the State lands on Section 36, but today occurs only as a minor use of parts of Section 6.

In sum, several things can be concluded. The level of intensity of these uses has been limited to date. Homes are concentrated in Section 2, but are scattered elsewhere. Timber harvest and associated roading has been heavy in Section 7, but less so in other adjacent sections. Other uses have been marginal or have only happened in the past.

As important, is that there are no common goals among the landowners and no apparent adjustment of ownership practices to favor the Recreation Area. For example, looking at an aerial photo of Section 7 where Champion land began and ended, it seems clear that Champion’s timber practices hardly buffered the Recreation Area. Concern for their neighbors only occurred when they needed access across a neighbor’s land for timber harvest.  

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16Department of State Lands section files record numerous discussions with Champion re road access across their lands.
AERIAL PHOTO SHOWING MEETING OF SECTIONS 6, 7, AND 12
WITH PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA (1)
PATTERNS OF OWNERSHIP

CORPORATE BLOCK OWNERSHIP

A significant portion of the area around PCRA is dominated by the presence of block ownership, that is, contiguous ownership by Plum Creek. Brought about by their purchase of Champion lands statewide, Plum Creek is now the largest private landowner in the county.

These lands in block ownership can be expected to be given a higher priority with respect to timber harvest due to the economies of harvesting adjacent lands. It does not necessarily mean that isolated parcels are less important, but isolated parcels are more likely to be the lands disposed of if they do not have strong timber values.17

From the point of view of a conservation strategy, it may be easier to deal with one large owner than a myriad of small owners. Conversely, the effect of not dealing with these lands is greater.

STATE LANDS

There are 8 parcels of state land near PCRA, which are isolated parcels, following the pattern of state lands elsewhere in the state. Although these are all classified as forest lands, there is little relation one to another.

OTHER LARGE PRIVATE OWNERSHIPS

There are several large private ownerships near or

17Paul Davis, Forester, Missoula Unit, Plum Creek. Interview 1/28/94
adjacent to PCRA. The owners of the non-FS portion of Section 35 have placed an easement on some of their land, but the quality being protected by the Cox easement adjacent to Mt. Sentinel, was the scenic view from the valley floor of Missoula, not the protection of the values of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Three of the larger landowners in Section 2 have also employed conservation easements to protect wildlife habitat within PCRA. A total of 120 acres is under easement with another 85 pending. There are other large landowners in this Section and Section 12.

Much of the southern portion of Section 11 and the northern portion of Section 14 are in one ownership with no
building on these lands. Other single ownerships exist on Section 30 (two 145-acre parcels) and Section 24 (60 acres). Both of these are undeveloped lands. Although still in single private ownership of the northern half of Section 8 was recently subdivided. There has been no building there.

ADDITIONAL NATIONAL FOREST LANDS

There is also additional Forest Service ownership near Pattee Canyon that has not been incorporated into the Recreation Area. The east half of section 18 is an isolated FS parcel which is managed for timber production and forage production for winter big game range as MA 16 and MA 18.\(^\text{18}\)

EFFECTS OF NEGLECT

FEW PERMANENT CONTROLS

There are few land use restrictions on any of the lands surrounding Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. There are the three conservation easements on lands adjacent or near to Pattee Canyon, but which affect only a very small proportion of the perimeter of the Recreation Area. These are significant as they are the only permanent restrictions in the PCRA area. They run with the land and do not disappear if land ownerships change. Two are held by the Five Valleys Land Trust, a private non-profit organization, and the other by the City of Missoula.

In addition, there are also two citizen initiated

\(^{18}\)Lolo National Forest, Forest Plan, III-70, III-83.
zoning districts, established by the land owners\textsuperscript{19}. Zoning District 4, established in 1952, limits houses to one per five acres, describes minimum sewage disposal requirements and allows for the growing and harvesting of timber. Zoning District 32, established in 1972, is less restrictive, providing for a two acre minimum only and has no setback. This zone also prohibits timber harvest. These two zoning districts cover the area along Pattee Canyon Drive and the Larch Camp Road. They do not cover Section 12, or Section 6, which are unzoned, but which have development. Zoning Districts are enforced by the Office of Community Development, a coordinated branch of city/county governments in Missoula. Review of minor building changes is undertaken by the Pattee Canyon Landowners Association for Section 4 only, but major changes proposed for either zoning district must go through the full review process outlined by the County.\textsuperscript{20} The Association has routinely been reviewing all applications for new building and additions.

There are no other county-wide zoning ordinances in effect. The rest of the border areas are unzoned. If a building permit is not required, there is no oversight. Due to exemptions, there are a lot of buildings that do not need

\textsuperscript{19}Citizen Initiated Zoning Districts: MCA 76-2-101

\textsuperscript{20}There has been some controversy over the extent to which the homeowners association has oversight over major reviews. The legal jurisdiction of the association is currently under review by the county attorneys office.
a permit.\textsuperscript{21}

The Missoula Urban Comprehensive Plan maps the unzoned areas as "open and resource" with one dwelling per 40 acres,\textsuperscript{22} but it is only a plan and not an ordinance. Subdivisions of 160 acres or less do now fall under the revised state subdivision law, and Missoula County's subdivision ordinance which parallels it.\textsuperscript{23} However, as the 1993 subdivision of Section 8 illustrates, much land around Missoula was subdivided before the 1993 changes to the law went into effect. The county, through the Office of Community Development, is currently drafting land use regulations to direct future subdivision away from important resource areas.

In addition, land owned by the University (Section 26) has no restrictions on its use. Its original designation as an observatory site by statute in 1904, has long been abandoned, but its current use for recreation (the M trail) is an evolved use and has no legal long term basis.\textsuperscript{24}

\textbf{COOPERATION NOT CRISIS}

Looking at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area today, it is

\begin{footnotesize}
\textsuperscript{21}There are two resolutions by County Commissioners adding exemptions from building permits. (#83-99 and #85-082)

\textsuperscript{22}Missoula Planning Board, Missoula Urban Comprehensive Plan (Missoula: Missoula Planning Board, 1990 update) Map of Residential, Open Space and Public Land Use.

\textsuperscript{23}MCA 76-3-504

\textsuperscript{24}Kenneth Stolz, Assistant to the Vice President for Administration and Finance, U. of Mt. Interview 2/10/94.
\end{footnotesize}
perhaps hard to wonder why there is cause for concern. There are, after all, no major threats to the area by proposed projects. The user survey noted some complaints about past timber harvest practices on Champion lands, but that cutting is done and there is a new owner for those lands. There was a fire in Pattee Canyon in 1977, and homes were lost, but people have rebuilt. A plan to thin an additional 40 acres of timber within PCRA caused considerable controversy when proposed in 1989, today has aroused little concern. The Landowners Association in fact, voted to commend the FS for undertaking it.25 It would seem that many of the changes that have occurred have either been absorbed or accepted.

There are also numerous examples of cooperation between the Forest Service and community groups. The FS has certainly been a willing partner of discussions of the recreational future of the community, such as through the Missoula Trails project. The FS and the University were both part of the planning effort that produced the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan for the City and the County.

There is a recently updated Memorandum of Understanding between the County and the Lolo National Forest to cooperate and discuss the impact of major issues while in the planning stages. The County has similar agreements with the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, and the Montana

25Per motion at Annual Landowners Meeting 4/14/94
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

These MOUs help limit overlap, decrease regulatory review of major development proposals and provide a practical method of predicting and meeting future recreational needs in the area.\textsuperscript{26}

Although there is as yet no formal agreement with the University, there are currently on-going discussions regarding cooperation on research which would benefit both the University and the FS.

The Nordic Ski Club has a formal cooperative agreement with the FS, assuming responsibility for grooming of the ski trails. Although not formalized, the existence of the Landowners Association allows for a coordinated response from the homeowners to any developments in the Recreation Area.

The implications of all this cooperation, is that there is little impetus to take any proactive measures. The feeling is that everything is under control.

\textit{NOTHING DETRIMENTAL HAS HAPPENED}

Past management of the area known as PCRA does not suggest that use ever became more than could be handled by the Army or FS. The FS has responded to recreational demands, improving facilities and rehabilitating trails, and adding trails when other groups got involved. They have extended their management role to meet user conflicts and

\textsuperscript{26} Board of County Commissioners, \textit{Inventory of Conservation Resources for Missoula County, Montana} (Missoula: Board of County Commissioners, 1992 update), 15.
demands, rehabilitating the area when use got out of hand.

Timbering also left scars, but did not "ruin" the area. Much, but not all of the 1,577 acres within the Reserve were logged by the Army and logging roads were extended "up every drainage and draw." A small sawmill was built soon after the Reserve was established in 1878. FS materials indicate that some of the earliest logging in the area was carried out in the Reserve.27

A letter from the post commander in 1882 to the Assistant Adjutant-General in fact complains that,

I have the honor to report that there is no good hay land nor coal deposit in proximity to this post but what has been taken up or entered by private properties. The present timber reservation, containing 1,577.41 acres and declared by the President under the date of June 10, 1878, is sufficient to supply this post with the necessary fuel and lumber.28

Although after transferring it to the FS in 1926, the Army still maintained rights of use for military purposes, they did not actually exercise this use, so there was no effect. A 240-acre inholding for the rifle range was used by the Army until 1945, and was not transferred to the Forest Service until 1952. It was cleared and some bunkers built, but no substantial changes in the land were made.

The Army itself seemingly recognized the recreational benefits of Pattee Canyon and established a picnic area for


28U.S.House of Representatives: Doc.33(51-1) 2739 (1889-92)
military personnel (not the public) adjacent to the rifle range. In 1939, the Anaconda Company, which was the adjacent landowner, cooperated with the FS and the Missoula Ski Club to build a ski area directly adjacent to the Reserve. It is believed that the CCC built the area on Section 7. The ski area was not successful, and was soon abandoned, due to the lack of snow.

When they obtained ownership of the rifle range, the FS reconstructed and expanded the picnic area to its present size of about 35 acres. In 1958, a large group picnic site was established (up to 200 people) and two smaller group areas for about 70 people.

Still it is not at all clear from the beginning that the FS relished its recreational management role. An early draft recreation plan for PCRA mentions discussions with the City regarding taking over the area noting that it was generally felt that the city had no desire to accept the extra maintenance burden." It was also suggested that the Bitterroot RC&D and the County might take over management. Nothing ever became of these suggestions.

On October 23, 1973, the FS declared the entire ownership at Pattee Canyon an "Area of Concentrated Use." because it was apparent that public use was of the property

29Lolo National Forest, "Cultural Resources Inventory,"4.

was no longer confined just to the picnic areas. Several factors, including an increase in recreation and an expanding population in Missoula, contributed to this administrative decision, which allowed the FS to institute regulations for the area. The popularity of on and off road use of recreational vehicles had resulted in the development of numerous new trails located in unsuitable spots.31

In what was probably the first major interaction with adjacent landowners, shooting of firearms were banned from PCRA. The presence of so many adjacent homes made shooting a safety hazard. Designation of an Area of Concentrated Use allowed firearms to be prohibited and recreational vehicles confined to the roads.

Following this designation, the FS organized a major volunteer effort to rehabilitate the trails involving schools, scouts and the University, thus beginning a trend of community involvement in PCRA. It was also during this time that the two parking lots were constructed.

Although downhill skiing did not pan out, cross-country skiing did. At the urging and cooperation of the University of Montana Cross-Country Ski Team a system of ski trails were developed in the 1970's, near the Larch Camp Road using old logging roads. They are, however, no longer used. In 1988, the "north side trails" were developed at the

instigation and help of the Nordic Ski Club.

It was not until the passage of the Forest Plan in 1986 that PCRA actually became a Recreation Area. In fact, after Pattee Canyon was declared an Area of Concentrated Use, the FS was careful to emphasize that this designation "recognizes the heavy public use the area receives, but does not give it a Recreation Area classification." There were other values which "can be developed with a high degree of coordination with these recreational values," which included: access roads for private and state property, outdoor classrooms, power and gas lines, University Seismographic housing facilities and stabilized study areas.32 Interestingly, these uses respond to activities around PCRA and for the most part, do not indicate a strong mandate to protect PCRA for its own values.

It could be concluded that because nothing detrimental has happened to PCRA and recreational use has been effectively controlled by FS use within PCRA, that all is well for the future of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. However, the only value being addressed by the FS was recreation and there was little attention given to activities on adjacent lands, or other changes occurring within the community.

32Ibid., 1.
VALUES OF PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

INTRODUCTION

Identifying and defining the values of an area are key to any conservation strategy. Historically, PCRA has developed as a recreation area, but there are other values which should be considered and evaluated. For many respondents to the user survey, the quality of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area related primarily to its naturalness and solitude. Scenic resources are also mentioned as a reason which draws people to PCRA. This section will briefly examine the values of recreation, habitat and scenery to PCRA. There may well be other values, such as the water resource, which should be considered in a conservation strategy. Any group developing such a strategy for PCRA would assess which were possible and desirable to consider. The object of this paper is not to do that strategy, but rather to suggest some compelling reasons why one should be done as well as the consequences of a failure to do such a plan. Finally, this section will address how these values relate to the lands around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

RECREATIONAL VALUES

Recreation has, as noted, been the dominant use of PCRA since the FS took over ownership in 1926. Users value PCRA for the variety of recreational experiences offered. It is not just a winter cross-country ski area, but hikers come

all year round. Joggers, cyclists, birders and horseback riders also enjoy PCRA. The FS has assembled a bird check list for visitor use. It is a favorite dog-walking area. In addition, driving for pleasure is also recognized as a recreational use and this use occurs in PCRA as well as many cars drive the loop through PCRA via the Deer Creek Road to East Missoula.35

Shooting is not permitted on PCRA lands, but does occur on Section 36, the state land and on adjacent private lands. Bow hunting is allowed in PCRA, if 150 yards from a road or developed area.

Recreational users want not only to continue to use PCRA but want more access to PCRA. The survey noted they asked for more trails, better signage and more division of uses, for example, to have trails for mountain bikes, which would not conflict with hikers. New groups, not formally present at PCRA, like the folfers, have requested space.

Recreational users are also asking for more coordination with the lands around Pattee Canyon. In the appeal of the ski trail expansion proposal in 1988, the FS agreed, as part of the settlement, to look into expansion of groomed ski trails onto Champion lands to the east, even though these lands, unless under active harvest, were

35Board of County Commissioners, Inventory of Conservation Resources, 16.
already open to some recreational use. The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan envisions expanding the recreational opportunities of Missoula onto the private lands along Deer Creek, and south to Miller Creek and looping into the South Hills. The proposed "Arco" Park at the Milltown Dam site will, should it be built, also tie into PCRA, by offering another destination that can be reached via PCRA.

Users also wanted access to Pattee Canyon from the University side and wanted a trail to attach into the Pattee Canyon Drive, another idea expressed in the City's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Users, illustrated by the fact that there is hardly a day when someone does not go to the "M" trail, want access to Mt. Sentinel via both the M Trail and the Crazy Canyon Road.

It can be concluded that the recreational values of PCRA look very strong. What is not clear is whether all recreational use would be available or desirable a) if much of the land now in timber changed to development uses or b) if additional area is needed to meet expanding recreational demands or c) what effect increased recreational use would have on wildlife. By clearly delineating on a map the areas key to recreational use and comparing it to lands important

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36 Lolo National Forest, "Memorandum of Withdrawal and Compromise Agreement" (Missoula: Lolo National Forest, 1989)

37 Urban Edges, "Missoula's Human Powered Travel System" (Missoula: Intergovernmental Trails Steering Committee, Oct. 1992), 82.
for other values, a conservation strategy could begin to sort out some of these questions.

**NATURALNESS AND SOLITUDE: HABITAT PROTECTION**

The habitat values of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area are one of its better kept secrets, although, as many of the respondents of the User Survey pointed out, the naturalness of PCRA is one of its essential key qualities.\(^{38}\)

The Inventory of Conservation Resources of Missoula County describes the county as "ecologically wealthy" with 300 species of birds, 23 species of waterfowl, 20 species of small game and numerous reptile, amphibian and insect species.\(^{39}\) Not all of course, reside in PCRA, but is indicative of the potential diversity if habitat conditions exist. The Inventory suggests that wildlife in the county has already been directly impacted by urban development.\(^{40}\) The fact that so much of PCRA is surrounded by timberlands, not urban lands has contributed to its wildlife values.

Large numbers of wildlife utilize the Pattee Canyon area including songbirds, white-tailed deer, flying squirrels and goshawks. Wildlife viewing is a popular activity in Pattee Canyon.\(^{41}\)

Although logging and fires have altered large sections

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\(^{38}\) Smith, "User Survey," 2.

\(^{39}\) Board of County Commissioners, *Inventory of Conservation Resources*, 25.

\(^{40}\) Ibid., 48.

of the Pattee Canyon/Deer Creek drainages, University of Montana Botany Professor, James Habeck observed that:

remaining nearly intact, however, is the former Fort Missoula Timber Reserve...only the southwestern part was burned in the 1977 fire. Although some portions of the Fort Missoula Timber Reserve was entered and selectively logged in the 1880-1900, many of the surveyed corners with their witness/bearing trees have remained relatively intact, reflecting 90 years of forest cover change associated with modern fire exclusion.\textsuperscript{42}

A significant feature of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is the presence of old growth trees. Many trees over 160 years old are still standing and now supply habitat to a number of old growth non game species. According to the EIS for the Forest Plan, non-game species dependant on old growth require a different strategy to protect them than other species require:

Old growth species, represented by the pileated woodpecker or boreal owl, require very specific habitat conditions. They generally require low to mid-elevation communities with disturbance-dependant tree species such as western larch or ponderosa pine.\textsuperscript{43}

These are exactly the conditions found in parts of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. According to wildlife specialists on the Lolo National Forest:

The old growth ponderosa pine/western larch communities in Pattee Canyon are a community type that is becoming increasingly scarce in western Montana. Fire exclusion

\textsuperscript{42}James Habeck, "Structure of Pre-1900 Ponderosa Pine - Douglas Fir Forests in the Northern Rocky Mountains" (Missoula: Intermountain Fire Sciences Lab, Nov, 1992), 3 #91640-RJVA.

has allowed these stands to fill in with climax species. While such progression to climax may benefit some old growth species, other old growth species are negatively impacted. These stands are also becoming increasingly at risk to stand-replacement fires.44

According to FS documentation however, a minimum of 8% old growth is necessary to sustain these communities. The EIS states that "old growth forests and dependant wildlife are most sensitive to land management activities."45

Recently mapped vegetative information from the FS shows that there is about 4.2% old growth within PCRA with the remainder coming from the lands adjacent to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.46 It suggests that protection of these lands is vital to the maintenance of old growth habitat on Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

As seen from the following vegetation map, most of PCRA is in various stages of forest growth, including the two burn areas. The lands to the south and east are predominately forested as well. This has allowed for a diversity of forest habitat, influenced only by the level of harvest, but not by any urban factors.

It can be concluded that maintenance of almost all the lands to the east of PCRA in timber and old growth has contributed to the maintenance of habitat quality of PCRA.

44 Mike Hillis, unpublished materials, 1994
45 Lolo National Forest, Forest Plan EIS, II-61.
46 This information is drawn from aerial photos and has not been ground-truthed.
VEGETATION MAP

OG - Old Growth, 160+ years
L-OG Logged, but old growth at 8 tree/acre
L-P Thinned, mid-seral
L-S Clearcut, trees less than 10' tall
P Dense mid-seral stands, poles
B-S Burn, stand replacement 1977, 1985
BG-PP Bunchgrass, scattered p pine climax

Note: This map is from aerial photos and has not been ground-truthed. Interpretation by Mike Hillis, Lolo National Forest, Wildlife Biologist, 1994.
**VISUAL RESOURCES**

Visual qualities have been recognized as important by the Missoula community, but the primary emphasis has been to protect the scenic resources visible from the valley floor as shown by the 600-acre Cox easement on Section 35. Protection of Mt. Jumbo also falls into this category, although it has other protection criteria including elk habitat.

The Forest Plan in MA 9 standards states that visual effects will be considered in a management plan for each specific area.\(^{47}\) It has not been done for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, because there is no plan yet. Scenic values are recognized as an important part of the recreation area experience. For example, one of the issues raised in the Environmental Assessment for the vegetation management proposed for the picnic area in 1988 was how the vistas and views could be maintained.\(^{48}\) Many of the respondents in the User Survey also noted the importance of visual effects as part of their recreational experience. Scenic values become higher due to increased public use. Although much of Pattee Canyon is wooded, where there are views, the public wanted pleasing visual sights. A frequent complaint was against the cutting practices of Champion in Section 7 which could


be seen from the recreation area.\textsuperscript{49} Visual quality is also affected by the presence of homes.

The criteria used by the Forest Service to determine "acceptable" alternation of a landscape in achieving visual quality in areas of high public use is "retention." This provides for management activities which are not visually evident. Under retention, activities may only repeat form line, color and texture found in the characteristic landscape.\textsuperscript{50}

Such criteria could only be applied to FS lands and would not influence Plum Creek in the management of their lands. It does suggest that it is important for the quality of the area to have some degree of control over the surrounding visual area, such as Section 7.

Although it is harder to identify special areas without such a survey, visual qualities should be recognized as an important part of any conservation strategy for PCRA. Particularly affected by this would be forest management practices adjacent to PCRA and how new homes adjacent to the forest affect the experience in the recreation area. These might be addressed by a buffer zone along the border generally or by specific viewshed protection.

\textbf{STILL MORE VALUES}

Much of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area's value as a Recreation Area stems from its proximity to town. This is

\textsuperscript{49}Smith, "User Survey,"1.

supported by the User Survey. The opportunities offered by PCRA are probably not unusual enough to warrant traveling long distances, but close to town they provide a recreational opportunity that residents can use for a hour or two instead of an all day experience. The User Survey found that most people spend less than 2 hours at PCRA.\textsuperscript{51}

If it was necessary to drive several hours to get to such an area, users would look for an experience that lasted longer. Instead some people visit PCRA every day, while others take advantage of being able to stop by after work to jog or go for a picnic with the family. This value coincides with the concept of PCRA as a district park, proposed in the 1976 Open Space Plan, which provides "intensive developments within a natural environment, and should be within a 15 minute drive of an urban area of 50,000 or more." That plan notes that although there are no areas that meet these criteria, (one of the major gaps in the recreation system) Pattee Canyon Picnic Area "contains elements of a district park."\textsuperscript{52} The Map of Potential District Areas designated Pattee Canyon as one of three areas to be developed.

Several previous proposals have recognized other values of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Even the FS had some plans for the future of PCRA; there were areas

\textsuperscript{51}Smith, "User Survey,"1.

\textsuperscript{52}Hollenbaugh, Missoula Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, 22-24.
identified in the Forest Plan as potential additions to Pattee Canyon. These included Section 36, the remaining half of Section 31 and Section 7. Although these areas are noted on a map in the Lolo National Forest Office, there is no written documentation as to why they were so identified. Moreover, no action has been taken by the Forest Service to acquire, trade or get easements on these properties.

Another proposal was made in 1974 by University of Montana Botany professor, Richard Sheridan. It would have designated the entire boundary of the original Timber Reserve as a state natural area, under newly passed legislation. He proposed the designation for PCRA, which he called "Es Nin Paks," after the Nez Perce and Salish name for the area meaning "crooked trail." It would have emphasized the scientific and natural aspects of PCRA and diminished recreational use.

Possible designation of the timber reserve as a natural area was also suggested in the City of Missoula Park Department's Open Space Plan in 1976:

\[53\]Sue Artley, Missoula Ranger District Lands Div., Interview 2/18/94.

\[54\]Although the eastern half of Section 31 was to be included in the trade with Champion in 1987, when the final assessment of values made equalization necessary, it was dropped out.

a large area with diverse seral forest and grassland communities. The natural processes of restoration would permit nature study and scientific investigation of plan (sic) succession biotic responses that follow the secession of human intrusion on that site.\textsuperscript{56}

Although neither of these suggestions considered lands outside of the original Timber Reserve Boundary, they do however, suggest that the concept that the Area has unusual values that are worthy of long term protection.

\textbf{WHAT'S MISSING: VALUES FOR PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA ON ADJACENT LANDS}

Analyzing the resource information presented leads to the conclusion that just for recreational, visual and habitat values, PCRA has needs from the adjacent lands. Although not comprehensive, this can be summarized as:

1. Old growth habitat can only be maintained by keeping the 8% of the area in old growth - a bare minimum according to the FS. Most of this habitat is on state lands adjacent to PCRA and on private lands.

2. Lands maintained in timber production offer more wildlife habitat and potential diversity than if houses are introduced with their accompanying cats, dogs, fences, garbage and noise.

3. Lands in timber production that are open to the public use, even in the limited form available on the state lands, expand the recreational opportunity more than if the lands are subdivided into house lots. Then the option is

\textsuperscript{56}Hollenbaugh, \textit{Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan}, 31.
lost forever.

4. Removal of inholdings not only removes inconsistent management policies and potential conflicts, but allows for the full utilization of recreational opportunities within PCRA. (Section 36)

5. Visual qualities are important for the recreational user as well as the view from the city. Maintenance of lands in timber productions, with some buffering of severe practices in adjacent areas and vistas would probably achieve the goal better than if in homesites. (Section 7)

6. The recommendations for recreational expansion go onto the lands to the south. Although there has been heavy cutting and roading in Section 7, and Section 13, the roads do provide access to the south and a tie in with Miller Creek and Mitten Mountain. Rehabilitation of some of these roads, and elimination of many might be more feasible in the long term under FS ownership than under continued ownership by a corporate owner who did not have recreation as a priority (although limitations of budget might well preclude this option any time soon.)

Benign neglect therefore has left some gaps in the PCRA picture, at least if PCRA is going to exist with the same opportunities it has in the past.
CHAPTER III

CHANGE WITHOUT PROTECTION

INTRODUCTION

Many factors have contributed to the lack of an organized plan for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Singly and together, they have contributed to inaction. In this chapter, the various reasons inhibiting protection will be discussed and then the chapter will focus on the on-going factors of change which are influencing the path of PCRA's future. A description of each section surrounding PCRA is found in the Appendix.

FORCES AGAINST PROTECTION

MANY LANDOWNERS

The diversity of ownerships, though perhaps not unusual for western lands intermingled with checkerboard ownerships left over from the railroads, has contributed greatly to the inattention to land use activities near PCRA. Approximately eight miles of the boundary are contiguous to private owners, 2 miles to corporate and 2 miles to the state. In total, the area is divided into four broad categories, but in actuality the picture is more complicated:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Landownership</th>
<th>Approx. Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>private (small and large)</td>
<td>4400 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>corporate (private)</td>
<td>4600 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USPS (includes non-PCRA)</td>
<td>2800 acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State (inc. university)</td>
<td>1850 acres</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Eight different specific ownerships are found in the lands adjacent to PCRA. These lands are found in 4 different sections T12N R18W, T12N R19W, T13N R18W, T13N R19W,¹ as shown by the map on the following page.

1. the City of Missoula (1 parcel - Section 26)
2. the University of Montana (1 parcel - Section 26)
3. large single private ownerships (4 with 4 different owners- Section 35, 30, 24, 11 (2 owners) and currently Section 8 although it is subdivided)
4. multiple small private ownerships (Section 2, 3, 6, 10, 11, 12)
5. State lands (3 parcels adjacent- Section 12, 30, 36 4 parcels nearby- Section 6, 8, 14, 8)
6. Corporate lands (2 parcels directly adjacent - Section 7, 13) many parcels nearby - all same owner)
7. County lands (3 roads- Pattee Canyon Drive, Deer Creek Road, 1.48 miles of the Larch Camp Road)
8. Forest Service (1 parcel) 1/2 of Section 18

In addition, the state land in Section 36 is an inholding of non-forest land within PCRA. All the homes off the Larch Camp Road are totally dependent on the Forest Service for access to their homesites.

Conclusion: The diversity of the ownerships makes it hard to see any reason for coming together on a common plan.

**MANY JURISDICTIONS**

What is obvious when looking at these different ownerships is that there is no framework into which these groups can logically fit. PCRA and the scattered National Forest land follow a federal mandate prescribed by the USFS. Department of State Lands have a statewide mandate. The

¹Note: the township and range will not be repeated throughout; just the section number will be given.
county's land ownership interest is only in the roads, while its regulatory power through the subdivision law covers any proposed development less than 160 acres. Plum Creek, although it must abide by these subdivision regulations, is otherwise free to manage its lands dictated by decisions made in its main offices in Columbia Falls and Seattle. The University is not responsible to another planning entity (although it does have to answer to the Board of Regents.) The City has jurisdiction over no more than its 90 acres in Pattee Canyon. Small and large private owners, subject to subdivision and zoning ordinances that might apply, are free to do with their land what they want.

Conclusion: Although all the land is within Missoula County, there is no one existing jurisdiction for all the parties to discuss land use issues about PCRA. The result of this has been that all too often land use decisions are made individually or just one or two land owners cooperating over a specific project, such as an access road for timber hauling. The county has potentially the ability to bring all the parties together, but only where a development is proposed. There is no ready arena to discuss what to do about the future of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

**MANY GROUPS - NO LEADER**

In many areas across the county, it has been citizen groups which exist or are formed to bring diverse groups together to consider larger land use questions. The
Blackfoot Challenge, here in Montana is a good example. Its mission statement is relevant to the opportunity PCRA, although the resources and players are different.

The Blackfoot Challenge is a forum that promotes cooperative resource management of the Blackfoot River, its tributaries and adjacent lands. Our mission is to coordinate efforts that will enhance, conserve and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Blackfoot River Valley for present and future generations. We support environmentally responsible resource stewardship through cooperation of public and private interests.2

There are many groups in Missoula that have some relation to PCRA. No one group has taken the lead however to examine the broader issues of what PCRA might look like in the year 2050 or even 2000. This section will look briefly at some of the main groups who could potentially fill that role, but note why they have not.

**USER GROUPS**

Recreational users come to PCRA both individually and in groups, including the Missoula Nordic Ski Club, the Friends of Norway, LIMB (Low Impact Mountain Bikers), Five Valleys Audubon Society. They have not tended to be involved in issues at PCRA other than those related to their specific activity.

**Interest:** trails or specific area for activity. Most do not use PCRA exclusively, and may use PCRA for more than one activity.

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2"Blackfoot Challenge" (Bonner Mt: Blackfoot Challenge, 1994), brochure.
OPEN SPACE ADVOCATES

Two Missoula organizations are primarily concerned with open space and have demonstrated an ability to protect land: the Five Valleys Land Trust and the recently organized Save Open Space. Another group, Committee for Missoula’s Public Lands, was formed to organize the recent petition drive to protect lands at Fort Missoula. In addition, the Citizens Advisory Board for Open Space, the committee named by City Council to make recommendations for the spending of the 1980 Open Space Bond Issue, is still in existence. Statewide organizations such as the Montana Land Reliance and the Montana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, have not been involved in Missoula directly, but have done similar projects in other parts of the state. Only the Five Valleys Land Trust has had any direct involvement with PCRA, holding the two easements on land bordering the Recreation Area. They have expressed interest in getting additional easements from other Pattee Canyon owners, but are currently mostly involved in protection efforts on Mt. Jumbo.

Interest: open space with a priority toward lands in the Missoula Valley. Pattee Canyon has not to date been listed as a priority area by any of these groups.

HOMEOWNERS

The Pattee Canyon Landowners Association is the neighborhood organization involving some 70-80 homeowners in the Pattee Canyon area. It has dealt primarily with
subdivision review in the zoned portions of Pattee Canyon and common issues such as the collection of garbage and fire control.

**Interest:** has been focused on the concerns of local homeowners.

**UNIVERSITY**

The primary use of the university at PCRA has been for research projects and classroom instruction, largely done on a professor by professor basis. There is now an effort to coordinate this work both within the University and with the Forest Service so that the results will benefit both better. The university land also provides a recreational link with PCRA via Mt. Sentinel.

**Interest:** research site and outdoor classroom.

**UTILITIES**

These users have little to do with PCRA, but pass through the Recreation Area on the way to their communications facilities in Section 30.

**Interest:** No particular interest in PCRA.

**FRIENDS OF PATTEE CANYON**

This group was formed to appeal the expansion of the cross-country ski trails in 1988. It has continued in existence, through at a reduced scale, and commented on various other aspects of Pattee Canyon including the vegetative management plan for thinning at the picnic area, spraying for noxious weeds and funding for the FS. Members
are both from the City and Pattee Canyon.

**Interest:** in the entire PCRA, with emphasis on the recreational uses and the general management of the area.

**STATE**

The State of Montana has virtually ignored management questions that have arisen over Section 36. Otherwise have had no involvement with PCRA.

**Interest:** little interest in PCRA.

**COUNTY**

The County can regulate developments in Sections 2 and 11 only. Otherwise had little involvement in Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, outside of maintaining the three roads.

**Interest:** subdivision and zoning regulation. Has had no direct interest in a conservation strategy for PCRA.

**PLUM CREEK**

This corporation has had no direct involvement in the PCRA, but has access rights across PCRA to their lands. They have made no decisions re lands near PCRA.

**Interest:** General interest in ensuring that their timber harvest continues. New Environmental Principles suggest that their harvest practices "recognize and manage for aesthetic values near communities and major travel corridors by using appropriate harvest methods and tree retention."³

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³Plum Creek Timber Company, "Environmental Principles" (Seattle: Plum Creek Timber Company, 1991)
FOREST SERVICE

Manages PCRA and also the eastern half of Section 18. The FS has been hesitant to make recommendations regarding adjacent land uses. Although the FS has initiated land exchanges in other areas, there has been no such action with regards to PCRA.

Interest: in management of PCRA for recreation. There is some interest in the protection of old growth habitat in the area which would affect the maintenance of old growth in PCRA, but no action has been taken.

CONCLUSION

There are a number of groups who could well be supportive of consideration of the general welfare of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, but to date none have taken the initiative and brought all these diverse groups together in an effective forum. They each represent important points of view to be considered in a future conservation strategy.

MANY AND DIVERSE LAND OWNER MISSIONS

Part of determining a conservation strategy involves determining what, if any, restrictions exist on each of the land owners and if there is any flexibility and room for creative thinking among these landowners. Some landowners have a mandated mission and others do not. Few support protection of the recreational, habitat and scenic values.

MANDATED INTERESTS

National Forest lands: PCRA is mandated by the Forest Plan
as a MA 9 management area for recreation use. Section 18 is in MA 16 and 18, managed for timber harvest and winter game range.

**State lands:** are classified forest lands mandated to provide income for the common school and public buildings trust funds.

**City lands:** is dedicated to the Kim Williams Trail.

**County lands:** the roads are dedicated to be maintained as public ways. Pattee Canyon Road is a secondary state road (paved). Deer Creek and Larch Camp are both gravel, but if local landowners are willing to pay for improvements (paving), the county will undertake it for them. All are maintained to county standards, which are wider than FS roads.

**NON MANDATED INTERESTS**

**Plum Creek lands:** Their interest is in producing income from these lands, but they are not mandated to keep them in timber production, or even to keep them.

**Private lands:** left up to the landowner. Two owners have voluntarily restricted their lands by conservation easements to protect wildlife habitat, one for scenic values.

**University land:** used for recreation, but no mandate to do so for the future.

**CONCLUSION**

Outside of PCRA, only the city owned parcel is mandated to recreation. Only the two easements near PCRA
protect wildlife habitat by legal mandate. The easement to the City on Section 35 protects scenic values. The rest of the lands have mandates and missions which do not concern recreation, wildlife or scenery.

**FOREST SERVICE PRIORITIES**

Although Forest Service lands are by law, dedicated to the multiple-use concept⁴, they have since World War II been increasingly dominated by timber and the "need" to produce wood. The emphasis appears to be changing with the advent of ecosystem management to a mandate which considers a more balanced approach to resources.⁵ However, in either case, the place of recreation in FS lands is not a high priority, or a major use of these lands. The recreation areas place low in the budgets with the result that areas such as PCRA struggle to have enough money to deal with day to day maintenance issues. A recent letter from the Missoula Ranger District Ranger illustrates this well:

> At present, our budget only stretches far enough to cover our daily operation and maintenance needs in Pattee Canyon and not planning. The management plan is "something we want to do when we have time and money."⁶

Conclusion: As long as long term management continues to have a low priority, it is unlikely that the Forest

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⁴16 USCA sect. 528-31

⁵USDA Forest Service "Our Approach to Sustaining Ecological Systems" (Northern Region, April 1992)

Service on its own initiative is going to take a leading role in a conservation strategy for PCRA. Extra budgeting for PCRA will come only at the insistence on those at a higher level in the FS or perhaps as the result of citizen pressure to make this a FS priority, at the expense of something else.

**LACK OF INCENTIVES**

There are few incentives for the long term protection of land in Missoula. Although citizens are vocally advocating the protection of open space, surveys have indicated a limit to the amount they are willing to pay for it.\(^7\) Although a $500,000 bond passed in 1980, it remains to be seen if a $8 million bond will pass in 1994.

Federal income tax advantages for donating a conservation easement, or a bargain sale, might appeal to the larger land owner, but not necessarily be incentives to a small owner. Reductions in property tax for a property with a conservation easement varies from community to community. In Missoula no reductions have yet been given for easements.\(^8\)

No other advantages exist, except for the public relations values inherent in being known as a 'protector of the land.' This approach might have appeal for Plum Creek

\(^7\)Survey by Five Valleys Land Trust 1993 conducted by Dennis O'Donnell and Associates.

\(^8\)Tracy Stone Manning, Five Valleys Land Trust. Telephone Interview 4/29/94.
as they embark on a new policy of timber management backed by "Environmental Principles."

Conclusion: Until some greater incentive exists action will not be focused on Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

LIMITATIONS OF EXISTING LEGAL CONTROLS

A brief look at some of the broader environmental statutes suggest that almost none have particular relevance to the future land use situation at PCRA.

Endangered Species Act (16 USCA s 1531-43)

There are no known threatened or endangered species at PCRA which would trigger this act. Of the four threatened and endangered species which are found in Missoula County, the grizzly bear, the grey wolf, the bald eagle and the peregrine falcon, none are present in PCRA.

National Environmental Policy Act (42 USCA s 432-61)

NEPA would only be triggered if there is a major federal action in the area. A proposed management plan would be considered such an action and would require an environmental assessment. Although a management plan would assess the impacts of action within PCRA on the lands outside, it would not take the broad outlook envisioned in a conservation strategy. The forum provided by discussions of a management plan could however, bring the public together to discuss Pattee Canyon, and the values that are important to protect there. Any land exchange would require an Environmental Assessment.
National Forest Management Act (16 USCA s 1600-14)

The adoption of a management Plan for PCRA would become an amendment to the Forest Plan, the planning document prescribed by NFMA. As noted above, its focus would be the management of the Recreation Area and not how PCRA fit into the surrounding land uses.

Montana Environmental Policy Act (MCA 75-1-101)

This act would be triggered by a proposal to have a timber sale on any state land parcel. This would give citizens the opportunity to give reasons why a parcel should not be harvested. As with NEPA, it is not binding on the DSL to adopt this course of action, although legal challenges could be made. It would also be triggered for a land exchange.

Conclusion: these laws if applicable, would be triggered by a proposed project and do not necessarily encourage proactive thinking about land use, such as gained by a conservation strategy.

PLANNING + PROTECTION

In planning documents which relate both to the county and the city, PCRA has been consistently recognized as a community resource. However, there have been little implementation from the plans affecting PCRA. A summary of these documents illustrates the dilemma.

Missoula County Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (1976)

This plan clearly identified Pattee Canyon as important
to the open space of Missoula, stating that,

"Public lands are the cornerstone of Missoula's permanent open space system."9 Specifically referring to Pattee Canyon, the plan continues, "Public land, visual resource areas and conservation reserve lands serve as a scenic backdrop to the urban area. The impacts of Mt. Sentinel, Rattlesnake watershed, Blue Mountain and Pattee Canyon cannot be overemphasized in describing the life style of Missoula residents. The mountain fringe, valley corridors and certain resource areas are critical open lands. Mt. Sentinel, Mt. Jumbo, Waterworks Hill, Blue Mountain, Hellgate Canyon, Pattee Canyon and McCauley Butte are visually significant and should be protected...Other areas with unique natural resource values are the Rattlesnake watershed, Blue Mountain and the Fort Missoula Timber Reserve. Their close proximity to Missoula makes them especially important for day use activities."10

Missoula Comprehensive Plan (1975 with 1990 Update)

This broad policy document is "intended to provide the City and County and other agencies and districts with a coordinated guide for change over a long period of time."11 The area included is approximately 4.5 mile radius from Missoula which includes Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

The plan supports general goals rather than specific statements about any particular area. Many of the goals however, could be met by Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, for example, one goal is to "consider the economic significance of recreation facilities and open space in terms of their

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9Hollenbaugh, Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, 15.
10Ibid., 19-21.
11Missoula Urban Comprehensive Plan, vi.
attractiveness to both residents and visitors. Another is to "maintain wildlife as a visible presence in the urban area environment." In addition, it advocates "preserving open space within and around the urban area." The only place that Pattee Canyon is specifically mentioned is the description of the Parks and Open Space District, the "large publicly owned recreation areas." This district is "generally intended to eliminate development." There has been no implementation.

Inventory of Conservation Resources For Missoula County
(1985, October 1992 update)

This document provides county-wide resource information. It was "not designed to be the basis for regulation," but rather seen as "a foundation for the voluntary protection of private lands." The Missoula Valley region, which includes Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is one of eight regions described by the inventory. The inventory states that:

"subdivision, and residential, commercial and industrial development outside the city limits are significant features. Rattlesnake, Grant, Butler, O’Brien, Pattee Canyon, and Miller Creeks contain significant stringers of development radiating from

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12Ibid.,9.
13Ibid.,18.
14Ibid.,62.
15Board of County Commissioners, Inventory of Conservation Resources,2.
the urban core."\textsuperscript{16}

In this inventory, Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is now fully described as a district park, with two day use picnic areas, hiking trails and 10 miles of Nordic ski trails. The Pattee Canyon-Deer Creek Loop trail is cited as a popular bike route.\textsuperscript{17}

The map of "Open Space Resources" (Map 5) identifies the area around Pattee Canyon designated as important to the county. In addition to specific areas, such as important scenic vistas from Missoula and "important fringe lands," the inventory suggests that "mile-wide buffers are important adjacent to large blocks of public land, particularly in those areas managed for recreation, wildlife and scenic values."\textsuperscript{18} The document does not elaborate on this suggestion or indicate how it could be achieved.

\textbf{Report to Missoula $16,000 Pilot Project (July 1993)}

Although the study area in this project does not specifically include PCRA, its overviews of the situation of land in the city and county are very relevant. The document was in the form of a report of the Office of Community Development, the Missoula Parks and Recreation Department and the Citizens Advisory Committee on Open Space. It was the pilot project to create a plan for an open space system

\textsuperscript{16}\textsuperscript{Ibid.},6.

\textsuperscript{17}\textsuperscript{Ibid.},21.

\textsuperscript{18}\textsuperscript{Ibid.},45.
and a set of conservation and development guidelines for building in or near environmentally sensitive areas. The project was based on three assumptions:

1. that the Missoula urban area will continue to experience some measure of growth and development
2. that Missoula’s open spaces and natural and cultural resources should be conserved and enhanced
3. that development and conservation/enhancement can take place together in a complementary and mutually reinforcing fashion

The pilot study recommended that the project be continued to cover the Missoula Urban Area, which includes Pattee Canyon. Much of this document is devoted to developing a concept of an open space plan, but recommendations like the following, have implications for Pattee Canyon:

"undertake to secure the 'cornerstone' components of an urban area open space system, including major parks, and major trail corridors, appropriately situated agricultural lands and vistas and views of community significance."

When the continuation of this planning effort will take place (if at all) is not clear.

Missoula Non-Motorized Transportation Plan (1993)

The Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, on the other hand has very specific things to say about Pattee Canyon. It was adopted by the city in 1994. Although the final


20Ibid.,114.
version avoids mention of specific property to avoid arousing the ire of landowners, the significance of Pattee Canyon is well recognized. The introduction invites the reader: On weekends, you can reach trails and wilderness areas of Blue Mountain, Pattee Canyon or other favorite Missoula area attractions easily and safely from your front door without using your car.21

Goal #3 is to "create a trail/greenway network connecting Missoula to adjacent National Forest trails and recreational areas in or near the Missoula urban area." Pattee Canyon, described as a recreation destination, and the plan notes the extensive trail system there. The lack is in the trails to access this area from the city, causing people to have to drive to PCRA.

A major loop involving Pattee Canyon was proposed. It involves the extension of the Kim Williams Trail, linking it with the Deer Creek Road, to provide access back into Pattee Canyon and Missoula. The plan notes that LIMB (Low Impact Mountain Bikers) has also suggested a route on what is now Plum Creek land connecting to the Crazy Canyon Road. This route uses the Crazy Canyon Road to reach the top of Mt. Sentinel. It proposed that a new primitive trail will come down the south side of Mt. Sentinel to connect back to the

21 Urban Edges, Missoula Human Powered Transportation System, 1.

22 Ibid., 5.
Mt. Sentinel/South Hills Trail.\textsuperscript{23}

One of the pilot projects suggested is a multi-use trail from Jacobs Island to Pattee Canyon Drive along the base of Mt. Sentinel. A long term project is the primitive trail from Mt. Sentinel to Crazy Canyon Road (part of the link with the Deer Creek Road.) No action has been taken.

Conclusion: Although largely not implemented, these various plans do address the values considered for PCRA. There has not yet been the impetus for implementation.

\textbf{SIGNS OF CHANGE}

Change is happening to the lands around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area; the lands are far from static. This section will examine some of the causes of change and show the effect on PCRA.

\textit{URBAN POPULATION GROWTH}

The population in Missoula County doubled between 1940 and 1970. In 1975 it was estimated to be 65,000.\textsuperscript{24} When the Open Space Plan was completed in 1976 for the Parks Department, the population of Missoula was expected to be 72,561 by 1980 and 106,652 by 2000. In 1980, the actual population was 76,016. Today it is around 82,000.\textsuperscript{25} From

\textsuperscript{23}Ibid., 30.

\textsuperscript{24}Hollenbaugh, Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, 6.

\textsuperscript{25}Pat O'Herren, Missoula Office of Community Development, Interview, 4/94
1970 - 1980, the population in the county increased by a huge amount - some 30%. It slowed to a 3.5% gain between 1980 and 1990, but that trend appeared to be increasing in the 1990's. Recent analysis by the Office of Community Development shows that the actual growth is much greater. Using updated census figures, they project growth at 4.7%, but feel it is more like 12-17%. This could mean increases in population as much as 50,000 in the next 18 years.

The impact on the land has been startling. In the early 1980's, some 10,000 acres of previously undivided land was subdivided. It is estimated that this was about half of the total of previously developed lands. Figures for the county indicate that this trend continued in the years 1985-90, if not "escalated."

Subdivision applications for 1993 showed that the trend county-wide was far from reversing itself. All this has implications for the remaining open lands around Pattee Canyon, especially the unzoned portions. They are very vulnerable to development.

Effect on PCRA: potential increases in the number of homes, and increases in the number of recreational users.

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26 Board of County Commissioners, Inventory of Conservation Resources.

27 O'Herren, Interview.

28 Board of County Commissioners, Inventory of Conservation Resources.

29 Ibid., 47.
RECREATIONAL GROWTH

In the last few years, there have been increasing recreational demands placed on Pattee Canyon. Increased use of the picnic area since the FS took ownership in 1952, has, as noted, led to the expansion of the available picnic sites, and the paving of the road in the picnic area all indicate FS reaction to increasing user demands. Growth caused the FS to limit motorized use at PCRA and eliminate camping.

Recreational use has increased generally on the Lolo National Forest,\(^{30}\) and the User Survey documented this trend as well. Every third visitor to PCRA is new.\(^{31}\) Part of this can be attributed to new students at the University, but part must go to increase in use. As explained in the section on values, the community sees the expansion of recreational opportunities around PCRA as important to its future.

Effect on PCRA: More use has resulted in more conflicts between users. There has been no assessment of the effect on wildlife of increase in use.

HOUSING GROWTH

County courthouse records show that some land was bought in Pattee Canyon in 1943 in Section 2, but most of the lots in that Section date to the 1950’s and 1960’s.

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\(^{30}\)Ibid., 16.

Sections 11 and 12 were developed in the 1970's. Section 6 was divided for the first time into 11 lots in 1979 as the result of an estate division. Home ownership grew and a Landowners Association for Pattee Canyon was formed in 1970's, which now includes almost 80 homes in Section 2, 6, 11 and 12 and along Deer Creek, as well as portions of Section 3, 4 and 10.

There are four main areas of private housing development in lands adjacent to Pattee Canyon. Section 2 has the heaviest concentration. Section 11 has only two landowners, and currently only one homesite. Section 6, which is unzoned already has been divided into 11 parcels with several houses. As there is increasing use of the Deer Creek Road, these private parcels become more attractive for homesites. Section 12 has had some division of land, but there are only three homesites currently. There is about 100 acres being prepared for sale in Section 2 into permitted 5 acre lots.

Land is still selling well in Pattee Canyon.\(^\text{32}\) According to one realtor, it is one of the exclusive areas of the city. Lots average about $45,000. Homes on these lots average over $100,000. Lots in the burn area (caused by the 1977 fire) sell harder, as there are no trees, but still

\(^{32}\)See list of sales in Pattee Canyon for last 12 months in Appendix.
bring in the same revenue. They also have a view.\textsuperscript{33}

The Crowley study of land capabilities in Pattee Canyon found that most of the lands in Pattee Canyon were not suitable for building.\textsuperscript{34} However, with few or no zoning controls, this information has little applicability. More to the point however is that new technology has made more building sites buildable. One planner noted that there are virtually no "undevelopable" sites in Missoula; the only limitations are money not slope.\textsuperscript{35}

Any of the houses built in the areas surrounding PCRA will have their own wells and septic systems, while developments within the city will be hooked into city water and sewer. The long-term impact of such continued scattered development on the water supply of Missoula is certainly a valid consideration that should enter into planning for the future.

\textbf{Effect on PCRA:} Houses bring domestic animals, fences, garbage, noise, traffic and other accoutrements of city life which contrasts with the forest habitat of PCRA. With few restrictions on where development can occur around PCRA, the potential exists for much more of PCRA to be surrounded by urban uses.

\textsuperscript{33}Tom McDonald, realtor, Gillespie Realty. Interview 3/94


\textsuperscript{35}O'Herren, Interview.
SUPPORT FOR OPEN SPACE IN MISSOULA

Missoula has demonstrated for some years that its citizens are concerned about the future of open space in their community. The 1994 effort to "Save The Fort" is but the most recent example of citizen action to preserve remaining open space within the urban area. Over 12,000 persons signed the petition to place this issue before the voters. Save Open Space was founded in 1993 by concerned citizens worried about "changes taking place in Missoula's urban landscape."  

Missoula passed a $500,000 bond issue in 1980 to preserve open space. Now in 1994, a new initiative is on the ballot to pass an $8 million bond issue for open space. This will be voted on in June, 1994, and will address open space needs in the county as well as the city. It is not clear yet however, how the difference in perspective will be resolved or where the money will be spent: the city has a natural interest in the county's lands while the county has little interest in urban parks. A seven member committee has been proposed to make decisions.

Effect on PCRA: According to the chairman of the Advisory Committee on Open Space, the emphasis will most likely go first to those areas within the urban community that are visually significant. The focus will be on the major natural areas and park spaces and realistically, none of Pattee

\footnote{"Save Open Space" Newsletter, March 1994 Vol 1 No 1}
Canyon falls into high priority. What of course, could change this is community involvement in PCRA as an area that is recognized as an important resource.

**INCREASING CONFLICTS**

Increases in both population and recreational use have increased the number of conflict areas concerning PCRA.

**RECREATION AREA AND USER GROUPS**

In the past uncontrolled use of PCRA caused the FS to tighten administration and issue regulations such as the one concerning off road vehicles in the 1970's.

In 1988, the Nordic Skiers proposed to establish groomed ski trails in Pattee Canyon. The resultant formation of the citizens group, Friends of Pattee Canyon, and their subsequent appeal of the FS decision to allow the trails to be widened to 12' and groomed, showed that there were strong and differing opinions as to how PCRA should be managed. The compromise that resulted reduced the width down to a less intrusive 8', but perhaps more importantly, brought agreement by the FS to do a comprehensive management plan for Pattee Canyon which will provide a framework for such decisions in the future. The FS also agreed to look into expansion of the ski trails onto adjacent private lands.

A second example, involves the conflict in 1993 over whether a Frisbee Golf course should be established at

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37Richard Gotshalk, Advisory Committee on Open Space. Telephone interview 2/94.
Pattee Canyon. There is already such a course at Blue Mountain. It may have been the fact that Folfers had painted targets on ponderosa pines and damaged trees and vegetation with their sport, but at the base of the conflict is a question of whether such an activity is really appropriate to the quiet and solitude many seek in Pattee Canyon. Hikers often noted that they were walking on the south side trails because the Folfers were making too much noise where they were playing on the north side. There has been no resolution of this question; the FS has deferred it to the completion of a management plan, at some undetermined time in the future.

The User Survey also noted conflicts between user groups. In relation to lands outside Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, comments were mostly about the visual problems caused by Champion’s cutting practices. Users generally did not appear to be bothered with homeowners.

RECREATION AREA AND HOMEOWNERS

A recent example of a homeowner related problem is the issue of garbage collection. Until recently, the pick-up point for the garbage was on the Pattee Canyon Road on FS land. Garbage was often spread out all over the road on trash day, due to animals. Resolution of this issue was worked out by moving the collection site off FS property.39

38 Mavis Mckelvey, daily visitor to PCRA. Interview 3/94
Traffic on the Larch Camp Road continues to be an intrusion into the Recreation Area. This road leads solely to private homes. It serves little purpose for the Recreation Area. Even the ski trails built off this road in the 1970’s are no longer used, due to the proximity of the houses.

Some of the proposals of the Non-motorized Transportation Plan brought opposition from landowners who did not want increased recreational traffic adjacent to their lands. The later versions avoided mentioning the specifics of routes and concentrated on the concepts of corridors in order to avoid such controversy.

All of the easements in the Pattee Canyon area to date do not include public access as a permitted use.

Homeowners along the Deer Creek Road (Section 6) will increasingly be impacted by the increased (and proposed) recreational use along the Deer Creek Road, particularly if a park is established at Milltown Dam. There have been complaints by homeowners regarding the type of use and the trash accumulated on the intermingled corporate lands.  

Shooting was prohibited at PCRA in 1973, because of the danger to the recreational user and the homeowners, although bowhunting is still permitted.

RECREATION AREA AND CORPORATE LANDS

The Plum Creek lands are open to public use, as long as

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40Missoula Ranger District files - letters from homeowners
there is not an active timber operation in the area. The areas adjacent to PCRA are currently not signed. Only some of the roads are gated.

Plum Creek has informally opposed any formal expansion of trails into their lands due to the question of liability. They noted that this could be solved by joint ownership of the roads with the FS as happens in the Lolo Pass area.41

Plum Creek also noted that they generally did not encourage subdivision near their active harvesting sites as it increased public comment and concern about their cutting practices (even though they felt them to be environmentally responsible.)42

There has been some concern about trash on the lands adjacent to PCRA, and mostly about the cutting practices in those sections which are visible from the Recreation Area.

RECREATION AREA AND STATE LANDS

Hunting is allowed on state lands, but only by bow and arrow in PCRA. There have been recreational user complaints about the methods used for the salvage logging after the Hellgate Fire which also showed little sensitivity for the recreation area. The example of the FS's recent vegetation thinning project in PCRA by horse logging is in sharp contrast to the practices used by the state.

41 Davis, Interview 2/94
42 Ibid.,
RECREATION AREA AND COUNTY

The existence of Pattee Canyon has brought more traffic to Pattee Canyon road, which is narrow and has no real shoulder. The road is dangerous because people drive fast. There are a great number of bikers, especially in the summer months. The county is unwilling to spend money on the road because not enough people live on it to push it high in the priority list. Adding a bike lane might help, but also might increase recreational use by making access to PCRA easier, and might further channel Pattee Creek. The width of county roads is an issue as they are wider than normal FS roads. There have been problems on the Larch Camp Road due to the dumping of road maintenance gravel on the side of the road which became a threat to the riparian areas. Trimming of trees adjacent to the road was recently done in a manner which showed little sensitivity to the Recreation Area and the stumps and slash was left.

Conclusion: most of these conflicts are brought on by urban demands of forest space.

HABITAT CHANGES

There have also been substantial habitat changes in Pattee Canyon, most notably caused by the two fires: the Pattee Canyon fire in 1977 and the 1985 Hellgate fire. Both fires burned hot due to the available fuel from dense growth and covered a considerable area in a short time. The Pattee Canyon fire destroyed 6 houses in 45 minutes (12 have been
James Habeck, UM Botany professor wrote that

"... modern roading and logging has led to significant changes in forest cover; two extensive fires in 1977 and 1985, followed by salvage logging, also altered large parts (2,000 acres) of these drainages."

The changes in the vegetative pattern as a result of fire protection was noted in the Environmental Assessment for the Vegetation Management project:

The best description of this change has been documented by Steve Arno and Jim Habeck (1986). Fire/Vegetation Ecology of Pattee Canyon: Management Implications. Pattee Canyon was probably dominated by open park like stands of ponderosa pine, western larch, and Douglas-fir during the period before 1900. Fire had been the dominant force in maintaining these open park like stands until about 1900.

Fire frequency prior to 1750 occurred at 10 year intervals, but increased to 5 year intervals between 1750 and 1900 (Arno and Habeck, 1986). These periodic fires were effective in removing any establishing regeneration and thus maintained large openings and more fire resistant species.

Effects on PCRA: Exclusion of fire from the whole PCRA area has meant the build up of fuel, making another fire a matter of "when" not "if." Some of the homeowners have taken to thinning trees on their properties, but not all landowners participate, which limits the effectiveness of the project. Following the example of the FS, much of this is being done by horse logging to lessen the impact. The incentive for doing this beyond reducing fire danger is that there is

43 Habeck, p. 3

"Lolo National Forest, "Vegetative Management Environmental Assessment,"2."
virtually no cost to the landowner if the operator takes the wood. There may even be some profit to the landowner if saw logs are taken.

**LANDOWNER CHANGES**

Perhaps the biggest landowner change has been the acquisition of all the Champion lands in Montana by Plum Creek. Although Plum Creek claims that all the lands will be kept in timber, it is not unreasonable to assume that some of these lands may indeed be sold off for houselots.

It is in the company's interest for most of this land to be in timber management for the long-term. But we also recognize that we have some properties that have other, higher values than timber management.\(^{45}\)

Another area of change, whose impact is unknown, is the Department of State Lands preparation of a Forest Management Plan. A draft is scheduled to come out in early summer, 1994. Although this is a programmatic plan, it does indicate greater attention to forest planning on state lands. It will not indicate specific cutting plans for the PCRA area however.

The north section of Section 8 was subdivided in 1993 in to eight lots. Although there are no houses yet on the land, this is one of the old growth areas identified as important for PCRA.

**Effects on PCRA:** All of these raise the prospect of more

\(^{45}\)quote from Jerry Sorensen, planner hired to assess Plum Creek's 1.4 million acres in western Montana. S. Devlin, "Plum Creek Surveys Its Lands" Missoulian 3/26/94 B-1
development or activities near PCRA either by increased subdivision or increased cutting.

**COUNTY PLANNING EFFORTS**

There is a bright outlook for planning and resource protection in Missoula County if the current Board of County Commissioners have their way. A new program "Cumulative Effects/Carrying Capacity" which uses the revised 1993 Subdivision Law and a parallel law adopted by the county for its legal basis, has enabled the Office of Community Development (OCD) planners to assemble resource data on 64 items (elements) from ownership to elevation, population data, hydrology, soils and vegetation. Using GIS technology they are able to compare and contrast various resource combinations, and they are also drafting regulations for sensitive resource areas, beginning in May 1994 with riparian areas.

OCD began the data collection process in June of 1993 and are just moving to the implementation stage. Part of implementation includes updating and revising the Memorandum of Understanding between the county and various agencies for sharing data and proposed projects, including the Lolo National Forest. Plum Creek has indicated interest in sharing information, but has been reluctant to enter into a formal agreement.  

46 Significant also for the PCRA issue is that the DSL opted not to participate in sharing information

46 O’Herren Interview
because they feel that their mandate is so restricted, it limits their activities. It is not clear why this should preclude cooperation and planning.

Effect on PCRA: The existence and availability of this database in the county suggests that the county might be one of the possible players to act as a forum for the discussion of broad land use issues. At the very least, the information would be helpful in developing a conservation strategy.

INTEREST IN PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

The two recent conservation easements in PCRA do indicate the beginnings of a recognition of and protection of PCRA's resources. One of the easement donors noted in a newspaper interview,

It seemed a way to preserve some very small part of the canyon in perpetuity... with preserving the wildlife therein and the flora therein and the trees. We feel very good about it.\(^{47}\)

These easements are significant in that they are not just protecting sites visible from the roads, but are protecting larger parcels of land for the habitat they contain. The lands protected are not the smaller 5 acre lots, but 45 and 75 acre parcels. Both were donated by people who have lived in Pattee Canyon for many years, and who have developed a long term commitment to the area.

The purpose of the two easements is illustrative:

...to enhance and restore open space, historic and

\(^{47}\)Mick Holien, "Twin Easements Preserve Pattee Canyon Acreage" Missoulian 12/31/93 statement by Nancy Erickson.
significant relatively natural features and values of the property. It is further the specific purpose of this easement to conserve important habitat for white-tailed deer, passerine birds, raptors, coyotes, mountain lion and black bear and to protect rare or unique native plants currently known or later identified and to conserve the diverse vegetative communities and the wildlife inhabiting these communities.  

The easements are adapted to the individual landowner's needs, showing the flexibility of this tool. One allows for an additional house, timber harvest by an approved plan and prescribed burning, while the other permits only a greenhouse and cutting for firewood only.  

Effect on PCRA: Although in relation to the total border of PCRA, these represent a small part, it is a significant step for the values the homeowners are trying to protect and could be used as a stepping stone for further protection.


49 Stone-Manning, Interview
CHAPTER IV
DEVELOPING A CONSERVATION STRATEGY FOR
PATTIE CANYON RECREATION AREA

INTRODUCTION

Having a clearer idea of some of the factors and players involved in Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, it is now possible to undertake some specific analysis of both the need and feasibility of doing a conservation strategy for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. There are elements peculiar to PCRA, though not totally unusual in Montana, which make a conservation strategy particularly challenging here. Understanding the ramifications of these elements will make designing a strategy more realistic. This chapter will concentrate on the process for selecting lands to protect rather than the organizational means to bring about such change. Attention will also be given to continuing the present course of action or continuing benign neglect.

A CONSERVATION STRATEGY MAKES SENSE

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area has key elements which make it desirable to protect for the long term. Its resources and recreational values are recognized by the community, and as shown in Chapter II, changes around PCRA are slowing eroding away the conditions that make these values possible. An alternative to just letting change
happen is to explore the likelihood of different avenues of change and develop an action plan to direct change in a way that helps insure the long term protection of the values of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Because there are no major threats currently proposed for PCRA, it is an ideal time to make such an assessment. It can truly be proactive, not retroactive.

A conservation strategy provides a mechanism for identifying the areas around PCRA to be protected and suggests an action plan for achieving these goals. As noted in Chapter I, both are necessary for a successful conservation strategy.

Rather than wait for a crisis situation when there is no time to develop a plan or identify which lands should be protected first, a conservation strategy encourages careful assessment of which lands and which techniques might work best. Protection will not be limited to what might be offered at PCRA, but those areas which are most significant.

However, equally important as determining which lands to protect, is to decide if in fact, it is possible to do anything about these lands. There may well be factors beyond the ability or means of the group involved which preclude long term protection or make it extremely difficult to achieve. Because the history of inactivity at PCRA suggests some problems, it is perhaps well to examine this aspect first.
Chapter II suggests that there are indeed lands to the east and south of PCRA which would enhance both the habitat and the recreational opportunity at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Understanding the constraints inherent in the protection of lands owned by Plum Creek and the Department of State Lands is clearly important to the protection of the entire area. The underlying question is that even if all the other lands around PCRA were protected in some manner, would the values of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area be compromised if the lands to the east were left alone? Knowing answers to these questions will help determine the approach.

THE LARGE LANDOWNERS: KEY ELEMENTS IN A CONSERVATION STRATEGY

This section will examine the land use patterns of the two largest landowners adjacent to PCRA, the Department of State Lands (DSL) and Plum Creek, to determine the extent to which they could be successfully integrated into a conservation strategy. Is there a way to direct the use of these lands to the continued benefit of the public resources identified in PCRA? What kind of tools would be required to accomplish this, and are these approaches feasible? If these lands were not protected, is it problematic how effective a conservation strategy for PCRA would ultimately be? These are important basic questions.
Plum Creek lands are largely in block ownership and the DSL lands are scattered. Neither are primarily recreational lands, although some recreational use occurs on both of them. Finally, because none of the lands are developed, they do provide habitat for wildlife in varying degrees depending on the extent of the timber harvest. Each ownership will be examined separately with details of each parcel found in the Appendix.

STATE OF MONTANA DEPARTMENT OF STATE LANDS

OVERALL MANAGEMENT AND GUIDING CRITERIA

The enabling legislation when Montana became a state established these land for the support of state trust funds. Sections 16 and 36 were specifically given for the support of the schools, but there are nine other trust funds. All non-renewable resource income (which includes timber) from these lands goes into one of these permanent funds and for the most part only the income is spent, unless the Legislature deems otherwise.

There are 5.2 million acres of state land, most of which are dedicated to grazing. Of four possible classifications, forests, grazing, agriculture and "other," only 500,000 acres as classified as forest land. ["Other" includes items such as the lucrative leasing of cabins lots.] Statewide Forest lands are targeted to produce 35-50 MBF annually; most of this comes from the Northwest Land
Office based in Kalispell. There is no income target.

The basis of the annual cut on the state's forested lands is increasingly controversial, as evidenced for example, by the recent effort by timber operators to challenge the low cut on the grounds that the state is not living up to its obligation to produce income for the schools. There is no overall forest management plan for state lands, although a programmatic plan is currently being drafted.

DSL indicated some flexibility in their management procedures. They anticipate that the Forest Plan will give them some guidance in determining what role the trust lands play in maintaining habitats, recreation, old growth or aesthetics. The historic interpretation of their mandate is that they must recover a reasonable return from state lands. So far this has been interpreted by the courts to mean a dollar return, which does not account for other values.

**IDENTIFICATION OF PARCELS**

There are four non-contiguous parcels of state land adjacent to PCRA and four additional areas close by. However, one of the adjacent parcels, Section 26, was

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1Bob Storer, Dept. of State Lands. Interview 2/4/94
2Ibid.,
3Jeff Janhke, Dept. of State Lands. Telephone Interview 4/94
4Materials for this section are drawn from parcel files at the Southwestern Area Land Office in Missoula
granted to the University of Montana and does not fall under the same trust fund mandates as the other state lands.

**SUMMARY OF STATE LANDS PARCELS NEAR PCRA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>parcel</th>
<th>acres</th>
<th>income</th>
<th>grant</th>
<th>significance to PCRA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>Public Bld</td>
<td>old growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>$308</td>
<td>Common Sch.</td>
<td>inholding/recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>$499</td>
<td>Common Sch.</td>
<td>limited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>University</td>
<td>recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>$20</td>
<td>Common Sch.</td>
<td>recreation potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>261</td>
<td>$512</td>
<td>Public Bld.</td>
<td>recreation potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>$14,500</td>
<td>Public Bld.</td>
<td>old growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>320</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
<td>Common Sch.</td>
<td>old growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These lands are under the jurisdiction of the Missoula Unit Office of the Southwestern Land Office of State Lands which controls some 77,000 acres in this region. Forest lands in the Southwestern region are allocated to produce 8-10 MBF annually. All of the lands around PCRA are classified as forest lands as part of this base. There is however, no specific timber target for each parcel of land.

**USES OF THESE LANDS**

Timber: Each of these seven parcels is classified as forest lands and is therefore slated for timber production. Each parcel has been surveyed (about 1980) for its timber potential and some cutting has taken place. Cutting is

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5 Storer, Interview.
inconsistent and has not tended to follow a prescribed schedule. Moreover, the income produced has been slight and uneven. The result is that there is much uncut timber on these lands which has benefitted PCRA by almost doubling the percentage of old growth in the vicinity of PCRA.\textsuperscript{6} Although Section 18 and 8 initially appeared on a proposed harvest list six years ago, they were later dropped for parcels deemed to have higher priorities. A section proposed for timber sale would be subject to the Montana Environmental Protection Act and be required to be assessed through an Environmental Assessment.

**Recreation:** recreational use is permitted on state lands including licensed hunting and related activities, and fishing. Recently, hiking and bird watching were added as permitted activities.\textsuperscript{7} Recreational use of state lands generally continues to be a controversial issue. On the PCRA related lands, the primary recreational use has been hunting, except for Section 36, which has had much the same recreational use as PCRA.

**CONNECTION TO PCRA**

The only discussions with DSL regarding PCRA have occurred over Section 36, but have always broken off because the process of exchange is costly and time consuming and

\textsuperscript{6}Hillis, Interview 4/94

\textsuperscript{7}Amended effective Oct. 29, 1993. Recreational Use Rule 26-3-180
other areas were considered more important.  

Joint management of the Crazy Canyon Road, which passes through Section 36 to Mt. Sentinel, has not occurred, but it has been handled de facto by the Forest Service. There is no formal agreement between them. Even before limited recreational use was permitted on state lands, it occurred in Section 36, primarily along this road. Although noted in DSL files that unauthorized recreational use was a problem, little if anything was done about it.

Hunters and hang gliders regularly pass through PCRA to access this section. Use of the Crazy Canyon Road for adjacent landowners has also been granted to provide access to harvest timber on their lands.

RELATION OF PCRA TO THESE LANDS

The parcels of state lands represent a significant wildlife habitat link for PCRA. Sections 12, 8 and 6 have major stands of old growth. Section 36, as an inholding represents a present and future source of management conflicts with the FS. Its value to PCRA is for recreation.

WHAT DRIVES CHANGE ON DSL LANDS?

The stated need for income is the primary reason that the state gives as the purpose of these lands. As they take a more comprehensive look at their forest lands, through a management plan, it is not unreasonable that they will try

8 Storer, Interview

9 DSL files for T13N R18W Section 36
to implement a more aggressive cutting policy than has occurred in the past. Public opinion will be an important factor though. DSL indicated they try to generate public involvement particularly near urban or resource areas and they do have the option to "consider postponing treatment."  

It is also probable that state lands in general will receive increasing pressure to be opened to more recreational uses. This has already occurred with the addition of hiking and birdwatching to the list of permitted activities.

Although cabin leasing is described as the most income producing uses on state lands, it is not likely that any of these lands would be reclassified, based on the fact that no lands in the last twenty years in the Southwestern Office have been reclassified.  

OPTIONS FOR PROTECTION

Only a strategy which continued to meet the criteria of producing income would be acceptable to the state. This was recently reiterated in Board of Land Commissioners Amended Guidelines for Exchange. Of the tools available, such as acquisition and conservation easements, it would appear that

10Don Artley, State Forester, Dept. of State Lands. Interview 4/94

11Storer, Interview

12George Schunk, "Revised Land Exchange Policy -Memo to Land Board Members" (Helena: Dept. of State Lands, Jan. 12, 1994)
an exchange would offer the state one option of still retaining land from which to get income. They have also approved 15-year conservation licenses as a means of protecting resources while still producing income. The value would be determined on the highest and best use, regardless of whether past cutting had established a value. Conservation easements are also an option, but they must be acquired so that there is income produced.

It should be noted that the state has not engaged in many land trades to date and further, given the income potential for these lands, the value of any trades would be extremely high to the USFS. DSL noted however, that it is desirable for them to get out of high resource value areas which offer no compensation.¹³

CONCLUSION:

DSL lands rank high in both recreational and habitat potential for PCRA, but have problems in regards to exchange.

PLUM CREEK TIMBER COMPANY L.P. - THE CORPORATE LANDS

OVERALL MANAGEMENT AND GUIDING CRITERIA

Until 1993, this section would have referred to the lands owned by Champion International Corporation. In 1993, all of Champions's holdings in Montana were acquired by Plum Creek Company, making it the largest corporate landowner in the state. In Missoula County, Plum Creek now owns more

¹³Artley, Interview.
the state. In Missoula County, Plum Creek now owns more than 60% of the private land holdings. Plum Creek holds considerable land in the vicinity of PCRA, although there are only two parcels which are directly adjacent. Most are part of large block ownership and are managed by the Missoula Unit.

IDENTIFICATION OF PARCELS

Two parcels are directly adjacent to PCRA, Section 7 and the eastern half of Section 31, which is part of a large block of Plum Creek ownership extending along Deer Creek. Section 13 to the south of the Recreation Area and Section 7 are isolated parcels. The considerable block ownership exists on either side of the Deer Creek Road running out to East Missoula is not detailed here.

USES OF THESE LANDS

Timber: This land has all been historically used for timber harvest, as it was owned originally by the Anaconda Company. There are numerous road scars. Much of the land adjacent and near to PCRA has been cut in recent years, meaning that the potential for additional timber harvest will be in the future, when the trees grow back.

As a new owner of millions of acres, it will take some time for Plum Creek to fully assess what each parcel will mean to the corporate whole. However, as stated, the

\[14\] See Appendix

\[15\]Devlin, Missoulian 3/26/94.
they see themselves doing in the future.\textsuperscript{16} Moreover, they feel comfortable with the cutting plans of Champion which they acquired in the purchase, and "think that Champion has done a good job,"\textsuperscript{17} so at least for the present, do not appear to be altering the past cutting plans.

Although Plum Creek itself is often criticized for past harvesting practices, Plum Creek now feels that their adoption of "Environmental Principles" based on the new forestry principles initiated by Dr. Jerry Franklin and others in the Pacific Northwest, should do much to dispel this image. This remains to be proven.

Recreation: Plum Creek lands are open to the public for recreational use, barring an active timber sale. They, like their predecessor Champion, are leery of allowing maintained trails on their land unless they shared the actual ownership of the road with the FS as they do on Lolo Pass.\textsuperscript{18}

CONNECTION TO PCRA

There have been no formal discussions with the USFS over Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Plum Creek has held general meetings with the Lolo Forest about overall management problems created by the checkerboard ownership.\textsuperscript{19}

\textsuperscript{16}Davis, Interview.
\textsuperscript{17}Ibid.,
\textsuperscript{18}Davis, Interview.
\textsuperscript{19}Marcia Hogan, Lolo National Forest Public Affairs Officer, Interview 3/94.
There is currently a land trade going on with another forest in Region I, the Flathead, and Plum Creek. Relations at the moment seem cordial and there is a willingness to talk.\textsuperscript{20} It is not clear that there were ever discussions with Champion as to a land trade, although there were discussions regarding the expansion of the ski trails onto their lands. Nothing happened here because of the reluctance of Champion to be involved in questions of liability on their lands.

**RELATION OF PCRA TO THESE LANDS**

Overall, in spite of sometimes heavy timber harvest (eg. Section 7) it has been to the benefit of PCRA to have these lands in timber and not development. Combined with other National Forest lands further east, the lands in timber production represent a large area of land which is relatively undeveloped to the east of PCRA. Careful harvesting in this area will provide greater habitat stability and therefore compliment the area available within the recreation area itself.

The specific long term value to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area in these lands is two fold: first, maintaining the traditional use of the land in timber for both habitat and recreational reasons, and second is to expand recreational opportunities to the south, specifically involving Section 7 and possibly including Section 13.

\textsuperscript{20}Plum Creek indicted a wiliness to trade Section 7 to the FS, for example, in informal discussion with the author.
This would provide biking/hiking access to the south and offer the potential to tie in with Miller Creek. (An option explored in the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan.)

WHAT DRIVES CHANGE ON PLUM CREEK LANDS

The bottom line for Plum Creek is that it must produce income for its stockholders. Although selling off land to private owners is denied at the present time, it is not unreasonable to think of marginal timber parcels being eliminated from the corporate holdings in the long term. In this regard, Plum Creek indicated that they would be less likely to get rid of lands in block ownership, than the isolated parcels.\textsuperscript{21} Sections 7 is an isolated parcel.

When broached with the possibility of selling off some of the lands for development, as a more lucrative immediate possibility, one Plum Creek official shuffled it off, indicating that in fact timber ownership near developed areas often meant more problems for them as it brought a critical and perhaps not understanding public within sight of their harvesting practices.\textsuperscript{22}

OPTIONS FOR PROTECTION

It would appear that Plum Creek has a greater flexibility than DSL in pursuing land trades, but the bottom line is still income. With respect to the FS, it is likely that trades offer the only possibility for PC because the FS

\textsuperscript{21}Davis, Interview.

\textsuperscript{22}Ibid.,
has other lands that Plum Creek would be interested in acquiring.\textsuperscript{23} It is the unattached parcels, such as Section 7, which offer greater potential than those part of a block. As stated by the company, subdivision is an undesirable neighbor for a timber company.\textsuperscript{24} Creating some agreement, or conservation easement precluding this option on the Plum Creek lands adjacent to and along the Deer Creek Road would seem desirable to both Plum Creek and the FS. Working out the details of such an arrangement seemed problematic as Plum Creek indicated reluctance to enter into an agreement which would limit its options.\textsuperscript{25} A conservation easement could be drafted to protect the economic interests of the owner. There are many examples of corporate easements.

CONCLUSION

Plum Creek lands are important to PCRA if they remain in timber production. Certain of these lands have recreational values which would augment the experience at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

\textsuperscript{23}In the Flathead trade referred to above, the Elk Creek Land Exchange, acquisition was ruled out by Plum Creek for this reason.

\textsuperscript{24}Davis, Interview.

\textsuperscript{25}Ibid.,
OTHER OBSTACLES TO SUCCESS

LAND TRADES ARE DIFFICULT

Both of the approaches outlined above rely heavily on the technique of land trades. In this situation they are based on the assumption that the FS will have other lands to trade. This is not as easy as it sounds. In general lands must be traded for equal value, not necessarily equal size. Each agency involved has specific criteria to guide it land trades. Plum Creek as well, will be interested in trades as long as it forwards the corporate purpose.

In this region of checkerboard ownerships, trades have been the most popular way of rearranging the land ownership patterns into a more sensible and workable structure.

Trades are common with the FS and the corporate sector and have been done on a more limited basis with the state. The state's concern with value has led them to be more cautious about "giving away" state resources. Trading is a concept that is most willing to be discussed by the Forest Service and the corporate sector, and in a limited way by the state.

Both the state and the FS have guidelines for Land Exchange. Land exchange is a complicated process. It can easily take 2-3 years for one exchange involving only a few parcels. It requires an Environmental Assessment under the National Environmental Policy Act as well as an appraisal to determine the lands value for highest and best use. When land exchanges do occur, several are frequently lumped
together to try to reduce costs. That is to say, one parcel
swaps are unlikely. Any projected land exchange at Pattee
Canyon would fare better if it was part of a larger land
trade in the Lolo or regionwide.

CRITERIA FOR STATE LAND EXCHANGE

A revised Land Exchange Policy was adopted early in
1994 by the Montana Board of Land Commissioners. It is this
board which must act on recommendations by the Dept. of
State Lands to approve any land exchange. Power to exchange
state lands comes from the Montana Constitution.26 There
are seven criteria for land exchange; the first four are
mandatory. According to the newly passed Policy, lands to
be traded must be of:

1) equal or greater value
2) equal or greater acreage
3) lands bordering lakes and streams have to be
   exchanged for similar lands
4) A land exchange must produce income
5) It should be neutral re the net effect on
   consolidation
6) The land acquired should be likely to increase in
   value
7) The land exchange should not diminish access27

The overriding concern is that the exchange be in the
public interest. In addition, specific statutes enable the
exchange of timbered or cut-over or burned over lands.28
This would have applicability in Section 36 which is in the

26Montana Constitution Article X s 11(4)
27Schunk, 2-4.
28Ibid.,
area burned.

**CRITERIA FOR FOREST SERVICE LAND EXCHANGE**

For the FS, the exchange must be based on resources and not just to "improve management efficiency." Of particular relevance here is the guideline to:

"acquire all non-federal lands within other congressionally and administratively designated areas necessary to preserve or enhance the values which dictate the classification. This may require the acquisition of checkerboard lands." 29

FS guidelines also regulate how and what lands may be offered for trades. Reducing checkerboard ownership may not be a goal if it is not in the public interest.

**LACK OF PROGRAMS AND SUPPORT**

A recent federal initiative, the Forest Legacy Program, seemed ideal for the type of situation at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. Passed by Congress in 1990, it is a program administered by the Forest Service. Funds are allocated annually for acquisition of easements or fee title to important forest lands that may not be contiguous to federal ownership. Specifically the bill authorizes the FS:

- to cooperate with states in identifying and protecting environmentally important private forest lands threatened with conversions to non-forest uses, such as subdivisions for residential or commercial development. 30

Several areas in the east have been acquired. Twenty

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29 Lolo National Forest, _Forest Plan_, I-1.

30 USDA, "Forest Legacy Program," (Washington, D.C., April 1993)
six states including Montana were selected to participate. The state must indicate an interest in the program. Unfortunately, Montana chose to decline the program, citing lack of staff to implement it. It is possible for a state to reconsider, however, rejection in nearby Idaho had more to do with increasing government control than staff, so that could well be a factor too. Ironically, the first project was completed in Vermont, on lands owned by Champion International.

CONCLUSION

Although there is strong recognition of the value of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, there continues to be little public concern about its future. None of the agencies or groups are actively working on issues which directly affect PCRA. Until some group or agency makes PCRA a priority, the current situation of neglect is likely to remain.

EFFECTS OF NOT ESTABLISHING A CONSERVATION STRATEGY

In assessing the need for a conservation strategy, it is important to look at what would happen if no strategy is pursued. In this case, probably the least impactive situation is the continuation of the status quo, the slow erosion of PCRA. In this scenario there would be no land trades or agreements or easements, but there would also be no major changes in land uses. Put another way, is benign
neglect all right for the future, if PCRA has been able to survive the changes so far? The catch of course is that there is nothing to assure that even the current situation will remain.

There is no evidence to suggest that the population of Missoula will not continue to grow, rather the opposite is true. Increasing urban population will necessarily bring an increase in recreational demands. The proximity of PCRA to the growing population has in the past meant increased recreational use.

The need for additional homes will also put pressure on PCRA. There will not be many places where it is possible to buy 5 acres close to town. In the unzoned areas, even higher density can occur. The subdivision of Section 8 is a good example of how quickly land can be divided.

The urban impacts will continue in the western and southern boundaries of PCRA. It is habitat loss which will occur from these urban impacts. As noted in the Conservation Inventory, "Missoula County's growing human population is a direct threat to its wildlife."\(^3\) It will probably not be the recreation uses which suffer. Even if more logging occurs, these areas, though aesthetically unpleasing, may in fact open up areas to hiking, biking and skiing.

\(^3\)Board of County Commissioners, [Inventory of Conservation Resources, 50.](#)
Increased development cuts back the amount of habitat available, but there are subtler changes as well. Damage from deer causes intolerance for deer, garbage becomes an attractant for bears which leads to bear mortality, the presence of mountain lions leads to human/lion conflicts and homeowners cats lead to loss of songbirds are just a few of the impacts.\textsuperscript{32}

On the eastern side of PCRA, timber harvesting will continue with the possibility of more cutting on state lands. When the market for wood is good, the temptation is to cut more. Thus the future of PCRA timbered neighborhood is determined in the corporate board room in Seattle.

What should be apparent from this analysis is that the current situation is not likely to be the situation of the future. The development of the corporate lands and the cutting of the state lands could impact PCRA severely by limiting habitat. The costs to PCRA are too great even if the present trend continues, and overwhelming if major land use changes occur. What will be affected most is not the space for recreation, but the wildlife habitat. It will be lost to the cutting of old growth, even minimal increases in homes. Clearly the resources will be compromised.

\textsuperscript{32}Hillis, Interview.
CHAPTER V
THE FUTURE

INTRODUCTION

From this analysis several key elements about Pattee Canyon Recreation Area are apparent. PCRA is an important community resource but one that evolved largely through benign neglect. The community wants to continue to use PCRA. The consequences of neglect have not been irrevocable so far, but changes are happening and it is not clear how far in the future options will continue to remain available. There are still options for PCRA. There are actions which could be taken to change this situation and provide more stability for PCRA's long term protection. Finally, left unattended to go on as they are, the impacts of these ongoing changes will benefit the urban population and foreclose the options for wildlife habitat unless positive measures are taken to prevent them.

Two factors still need to be considered. Some thought needs to be given to the mechanism for actually putting together a conservation strategy for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area and some assessment needs to be made of the implications for the community of Missoula if it does not take a hard look at resources like PCRA. This is especially true for a community that is poised to spend $8 million for the acquisition of open space. This final section will consider these two questions.
OPTIONS FOR ACTION AT PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

Awareness

Basic to any kind of strategy and action is the need for community awareness of the situation. The citizens need basic information to help them make an informed decision. Understanding the implications of land ownership and the effects of changes on the wildlife habitat will enable a conscious decision to be made whether this habitat should be allowed to be abandoned. It is one thing to make a decision by benign neglect and quite another to make a conscious decision based on knowledge and analysis.

Part of this understanding may be the acceptance that not all parcels of land can be saved or protected into the future. But a decision not to save an area should not be made out of ignorance or lack of caring. A greater overall understanding of the community’s resources will help the public understand the reasons that a conservation strategy is necessary for an area like Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

The premise implied in developing a conservation strategy is that thinking about land use issues need to begin before the crisis or threat appears. Fortunately, there are options available in Missoula now which can help this process.

The aforementioned program of the Office of Rural Planning in the Office of Community Development is designed to pull together new and existing resource information of
Missoula County in a usable format. It will be invaluable in making informed land use decisions. The availability of such information can help citizens, either individually or in groups, define what choices are being made. The resource inventory, and the ability to overlay this information may not provide all the data necessary needed, but it is considerably more than what is available now on a piecemeal basis.

The Office, at the direction of the County Commissioners, is embarked on bringing this information to as wide an audience as possible. As seen with the map of the area around PCRA, an overall effect of the land uses and resources is possible. The visual impact of this information is an effective starting point for discussion.

A second area to raise awareness about Pattee Canyon Recreation Area specifically, is through the development of the Management Plan for the Recreation Area. A certain amount of public pressure is necessary to bring this item to the top of the FS priority list, but the public participation process involved in coming to decisions about the future management of PCRA could have far reaching implications.

A third possible means of raising awareness of the situation of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is to create the forum in which to bring the players involved in PCRA together at a table and present the issues facing this
important community resource. What is needed foremost is an effort to dispel the image that everything is fine at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. The County might well serve as the initial means to bring these groups together, even if it could not assume the responsibility of carrying forward on the project.

**Involvement**

In order for a conservation strategy to work, it has to be developed within a framework - a group or agency who is willing not only to make decisions about what and how things should be protected, but also to carry it out. A plan is of little use if it is not implemented. The Open Space Project in California offered some advice on this subject:

* the plan should employ a variety of techniques, varied to suit changing needs, changing times and changing decision makers
* effective protection will take many years
* effective strategies require an overall vision clarifying the roles of urban and [rural] places
* an early alliance, whenever possible, between urban and rural interests is important
* while some conflict is inevitable between interests whose expectations are at odds, it is important to persist in the face of this conflict.¹

The group or agency undertaking the conservation strategy must be willing and able to do all these tasks.

Looking at the groups currently with some interest in PCRA, some assessment can be made. Although the County is currently moving in a direction that will result in both

¹Open Space Project, Part IV p. 1
greater information and regulation with regards to resource planning, realistically, given time and staff, they are not going to be able to focus on the details of one area until they are a lot further down the road. The first of their proposed regulations will go out to comment this spring, and it will take time to draft others and incorporate them into the regulatory framework of the county. Pattee Canyon Recreation Area however, might serve as a pilot project to illustrate the effectiveness of the planning efforts.

Ideally, the questions raised here about PCRA might best be dealt with by a local citizen group whose primary interest is the protection of PCRA. Ultimately such a group should coordinate this strategy with other open space efforts, but until it is clear that those efforts will operate within the entire county and not just the Missoula Valley, Pattee Canyon will not receive the attention it deserves.

Several groups offer the potential for carrying forward the task of organizing and developing a conservation strategy for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. The Friends of Pattee Canyon and the Landowners Association are the groups with the most direct interest in PCRA. The Five Valleys Land Trust already has some commitment to the area with the two easements it is currently holding.

Until a "champion" comes forward for PCRA and pushes for greater public understanding of PCRA there will be
little reason for public agencies to change their position.

**Tools**

The implementation of any strategy needs a variety of tools in the tool box. It is clear from the complicated ownership patterns and missions that there is no one solution for the entire area. It is also clear that the tool of zoning has had limited effect. The result has been not to protect PCRA per se, but to encourage housing in areas that are outside the immediate urban area. County resource regulation is in its infancy, so how well it will be enforced still remains to be seen.

Conservation easements remain a viable tool, but they carry with them the long-term monitoring responsibilities and the potential enforcement of easement provisions down the road. The donor of a conservation easement may be willing and eager to enforce the restrictions, while a subsequent owner may not have that commitment to conservation. Private organizations such as the Montana Land Reliance and The Nature Conservancy have had considerable success with the conservation easement approach, particularly because the easement can be tailored to the needs of the landowner to a great degree. However, agencies such as the Forest Service have shied away from them alleging concern over the costs of monitoring in the long
Corporate entities have granted easements, but the attitude of Plum Creek to be leery of any restrictions on their rights to do what they want with the land is not unique.

Most private conservation easements have been donated. Acquisition of conservation easements is certainly another option; but the funding must be found. Purchase of conservation easements is a possible avenue for discussion with the state, because it would result in income for the state. Renewable short-term conservation licenses are another tool used by State lands, but again requires funding.

Straight acquisition is also a technique, limited even more by the availability of funding. A citizen group is certainly limited in the amount of funding that it can raise to buy a parcel of land. Agency funds for acquisition are also strapped. For example, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, monies from oil and gas leasing revenues, are limited. High visibility projects or ones that protect habitat of rare and endangered species are frequently targeted.

Exchanges or land trades seem to be the preferred tool for Plum Creek and the Forest Service, but there are the limitations previously noted. Exchanges are complicated and take time and money to successfully accomplish. Until

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2Jeanne Evandon, Regional Office, Lands Div. USFS, Missoula, Interview 2/94
Pattee Canyon becomes a high priority with the FS and with the State, there is likely to be little action towards putting together land trades.

There is ample opportunity for creative thinking in working out solutions to the land uses around Pattee Canyon. For example, are there possibilities of the Landowners working out an agreement with Plum Creek limiting the growth of subdivision in return for maintenance of buffered lands in timber production?  

**Action**

The key to changing the priorities is public support and pressure. Until the agencies see a greater interest on the part of the public in protecting the resources at PCRA or implementing some changes in the patterns of land use, they are not likely to take the initiative.

As mentioned above, a good place to start the discussion about Pattee Canyon Recreation Area would be to push for the implementation of a management plan by the FS. Although the plan has limitations in that it would focus on the PCRA and less about the lands surrounding the recreation area, it would focus public discussion on Pattee Canyon.

A second area would be to encourage greater public involvement in the proposed county wide regulations for riparian zones and later for wildlife habitat. The County,

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3 Bruce Bugbee, Interview 4/94
through the Office of Community Development is drafting these, based on the Subdivision Ordinance. Although these would not address the question of PCRA directly, wildlife habitat protection is an important part of the strategy for protection for Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

A third area would be support of the June 8th bond issue for Open Space protection. If passed, the appointment of the 7 member committee to oversee the spending of this money offers another opportunity for involvement. Understanding the importance of PCRA and its resources by this group could help in the protection process.

This analysis has identified some areas outside the boundaries of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area which have qualities which would enhance and protect the Recreation Area. As mentioned though, development of a conservation strategy also needs to be based on what is realistic for the group or groups hoping to carry out such a strategy. A basis for identifying the areas to be included in a strategy could start from these areas and be refined by the specific objectives of the group. These areas and possible tools to accomplish them are included in the Appendix.

Key however, is getting all the participants in Pattee Canyon Recreation Area together to begin to discuss the future of the area. Such a forum, provided by the County perhaps, would be an excellent way to start.

In any of these recommendations, having a clear idea of
which lands are important to protect and a priority for achieving these goals will make it possible to easily integrate this information with other efforts. Having a strategy in hand will make PCRA a clearly identifiable project, and will make it easier to encourage general public support for the effort.

Letting land use decisions occur around Pattee Canyon Recreation Area as they have in the past likely will in the not too distant future, reduce the wildlife values of the area considerably. It is still possible to reverse this trend, but it will take organization and some creative thinking and a lot of public support. Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is an important resource for the community. It deserves to be kept intact into the future. At the very least, it deserves to have the community decide its future on an informed basis and not by neglect.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR MISSOULA**

Finally, it is useful to look back at Pattee Canyon Recreation Area in the larger context. At the beginning of this paper it was suggested that PCRA is not unique. Many communities have conservation resource areas like PCRA which are important to them, yet which have been largely ignored in the rush to protect rare or endangered species habitat or a very visible park site. What distinguishes Missoula at this juncture, is that it is about to consider passage of an
$8 million bond issue for protection of its open space resources. At least to the point of getting the issue on the ballot, there is a strong contingent of citizens supporting the concept of open space. What will this money go to protect? Will it go towards threatened and highly visible areas? Certainly valid arguments can be made for protecting these areas. The lesson to be learned from Pattee Canyon Recreation Area however, is that it is also crucial to examine the current conservation resources of the community and make sure that these areas are in fact going to exist into the future for the community. From the analysis of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, it is not at all clear that PCRA will be the same place in 2000 or 2050 if the forces of change are allowed to continue unhampered. Pattee Canyon Recreation Area should be seen as a beacon, warning of things to come, if benign neglect is allowed to continue.

CONCLUSION

Readers of this paper will hopefully not feel that benign neglect has left Pattee Canyon Recreation Area in a hopeless situation. Rather, it should be apparent that there is, in fact, much room for hope. There are still options left. There is much interest within the community in open space and there is a good base of support for the Recreation Area itself. There are also resources available
to provide data to support a conservation strategy.

Pattee Canyon Recreation Area is an important resource for the community. With awareness and a champion, much can be done to protect this resource well into the future.

*We owed it to do, not what was to perish with ourselves, but what would remain, to be respected and preserved into other ages.*

Thomas Jefferson

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APPENDIX

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APPENDIX 1
LANDS ADJACENT TO PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

T 13N R 19W Section 26
(Note: this description includes only those lands on the south side of the Clark Fork River adjacent to PCRA.)

Ownership:
A) City of Missoula
96 acres adjacent to the Clark Fork River (N1/2 of N1/2). Acquired with 1980 Open Space Bond Issue money.

Restrictions: none formally, but the purpose of the acquisition was to protect open space along the river and establish the trail in memory of Kim Williams using the old Milwaukee Railroad right of way.
Use: Recreation. Well used trail by joggers, bikers, hikers.

B) University of Montana
480 acres which includes Mount Sentinel
This is state land which was granted to the University as an Observatory site by an Act of March 4, 1904. It has no school trust fund obligations.

Restrictions: None
Use: The primary use has been for recreation as the trail to the M goes up from the University land. Heavily used trail. No activities other than trail maintenance have been performed. The University does not anticipate a change in the use, but on the other hand there are no restrictions to prevent it from doing so at some later date. Bikes are not allowed, although it is not signed on the University side.

T 13N R 19W Section 35

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
80 acres acquired in Deer Creek Land Exchange from Champion International Corporation 1987.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: Part of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. There are no trails on this part of the recreation area so it in fact receives little or no use. The western border is adjacent to the Cox Easement described below.

B) Large Single Private Ownership
560 acres of non-developed land owned by the estate of Walter and Evelyn Cox. It borders state and FS land.

'Compiled from agency files and county court records.
Restrictions: Conservation easement granted to the City of Missoula in August 1982 on a portion of this property. Only a very small part touches the FS land above, the rest lies in a diagonal line to the west. In sum the easement restricts the future use of only a portion of the property. (Note: the easement also includes portions of Section 34, which is highly visible from the valley floor and was the intent of the easement.)

1) selective harvesting of merchantable timber is permitted, but no clearcutting and along the ridge line to Mt. Sentinel special care shall be taken not to cut in a straight line or give the appearance of a jagged silhouette from the valley floor. (This is the area adjacent to PCRA.)
2) no mining
3) no motorized vehicles
4) does not grant public access
5) no new permanent structures

Use: Although timber harvesting has occurred in the past, it is not clear that there has been any since the easement was signed in 1982. In 1974, permission was granted by the FS and the state to use the Crazy Canyon road for access to harvest timber on the Cox land. It was deemed less damaging to use the existing road. Since that time the Coxes have died and the land has passed to their heirs. It is not certain what the future of this land will be.

T 12N R 19W Section 2

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
   A little less than half of this section is part of the original timber reserve which is now PCRA.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: Part of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. The Crazy Canyon Road goes up through this portion, so there is considerable use from hikers, bikers, and hang gliders.

B) Multiple Small Ownerships
   There are about 25 private homes in the western portion Section 2. The access is from Pattee Canyon Road.

Restrictions: Buildings and structures in this section are regulated by the requirements of Zoning District 4. They must be single family dwellings and have a five acre lot size. Agricultural use is permitted as is harvesting of timber. Mention of contact with the Homeowners Association is in reference to minor excavation. There are two conservation easements in this section, one adjacent to the
border of Pattee Canyon. Both protect wildlife habitat.

Use: Use is for single family residences.

C) Missoula County
The County is responsible for Pattee Canyon Drive, the road through PCRA. It is a secondary state road maintained by the county with a determined right of way. The road is narrow and windy with no sidewalks or bike lanes. The safety of this road, with increasing use of Pattee Canyon has been called into question many times. (Some have suggested that this was the most dangerous road in the state.) It is not a high priority road for the county due to the limited number of homes along it. The county has no plans to upgrade this road in the future due to budget constraints.

Restrictions: none
Use: Motorists going to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area, homes in Pattee Canyon or through to the Deer Creek Road. It is a popular bicycle route to PCRA and also a circle route with the Deer Creek Road.

T12N R 19W Section 11

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
   A large triangular shaped portion of this section was part of the timber reserve.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: This section includes the Larch Camp Road which is access to the homes in the rest of this section. Most of ski trails on the south side are located here. Part of the National Recreation Trail - the Sam Braxton Trail is located here.

B) Multiple Small Ownerships
   A triangular section in the north west of this section has six homes, all accessed by the Larch Camp Road.

Restrictions: This area is governed by Zoning District 32, house per two acres and timber harvesting prohibited.
Use: Use is for single family residences

C) Large Ownerships
   Except for a house lot of 5 acres, the rest of this section is in single ownership. This land is not developed. These owners also own land adjacent in Section 14.

Restrictions: This area is governed by Zoning District 32
Use: one single family dwelling exists

D) County
The County is responsible for the Larch Camp Road, a gravel road that it has maintained since 1975.

Restrictions: maintained as a gravel road
Use: Primarily by the residents of section 11

Note: .32 acres of the Timber Reserve is in Section 10 which also falls under Zoning District 32.

T 12N R 19W Section 12
Note: this is a small section with only 433 acres total instead of the usual 640 acres.

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
Lands in this section were acquired in 1939 from Maude Hayes to be part of the ski area located on Section 7 to the east.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: Part of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. The ski area was abandoned after several years due to lack of snow. There are no designated trails now.

B) Multiple small ownerships
The portion of land west of the FS ownership is divided into 11 parcels, but there are at this time only three houses.

Restrictions: There is no zoning in this section.
Use: Use is for single family residences

C) State of Montana
160 acres of state land are involved (S2S2). Both surface and subsurface are owned by the state.

Restrictions: This is state trust land, classified as State Forest Lands. The income is dedicated to support public buildings.
Use: Timber has been taken from this land.

D) County
The county maintains the Larch Camp Road in this section.

Restrictions: Maintained as a gravel road
Use: primarily by residents of Section 12
T 12N R 18W Section 7

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
   A small triangular shaped parcel was part of the original timber reserve.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: There are trails on this portion which go off the FS lands.

B) Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P.
   Plum Creek acquired the remainder of this section when they acquired all the lands in Montana owned by Champion International Corporation in 1993. Numerous logging roads have been constructed. These roads provide access to Miller Creek.

Restrictions: no legally binding
Use: timber harvesting

C) County
   The county owns and maintains the Deer Creek Road through this section.

Restrictions: this is currently maintained as a gravel road.
Use: Loop to East Missoula, used by bikers and automobiles

T 12N R 18W Section 6
and portion of T 12N R19W Section 1

Ownership:
A) Multiple Private Ownership
   A "L" shaped parcel and a small triangle from Section 1 were subdivided in 1979 from the estate of A. Daniels. There are now 11 lots in this section.

Restrictions: none
Use: Single family dwellings. There are currently 11 lots and several houses. There is some grazing in this area, but it is a minor use.

B) State of Montana (not adjacent to PCRA)
   The state owns 240 surface and subsurface acres in this section.

Restrictions: This is state trust land, classified as State Forest land. Income must be gotten from this land and dedicated to public buildings.
Use: This land has been harvested for timber.
C) Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P. (not adjacent to PCRA)
   Plum Creek acquired this parcel when they acquired all the lands in Montana owned by Champion International Corporation in 1993.

   Restrictions: no legally binding
   Use: timber harvesting

D) County
   The county owns and maintains the Deer Creek Road through this parcel.

   Restrictions: maintained as a gravel road
   Use: This road is heavily used by automobiles and bikers. Part of a loop from East Missoula through to Pattee Canyon

T 13N R 18W Section 31

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
   Due to the boundary of the Timber reserve, FS ownership has a slight angle, giving it just over half the section. Land in this section was acquired in a land exchange with Champion International Corporation in the Deer Creek Exchange in 1987.

   Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
   Use: Part of the Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. There is the remains of an old road put in when the state did salvage logging on Section 36, but it is not passable. There are no developed trails in this section.

B) Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P.
   Plum Creek acquired this parcel when they acquired all the lands in Montana owned by Champion International Corporation in 1993. The dirt road to the electronic site is owned and maintained by Plum Creek.

   Restrictions: no legally binding
   Use: timber harvesting. Part of this section was harvested in 1993 (NE corner) Road is gated at PCRA but leads to electronic site and used by the utilities there.

T 13N R 18W Section 30
   This section is divided into four equal parts. In addition, a small portion in the center is the location of several radio towers.
A) State of Montana
This section includes 147.94 surface and subsurface acres of state land (Lots 3+4 in E2SW4) (615 acres total in section)

Restrictions: This is state lands, required to produce income for the school trust fund. It is classified as Forest Land.
Use: This section is used for radio and telephone communications for USFS, US Dept. of Commerce, Montana State Telephone and Telegraph, Federal Aviation Administration and Comm satellite relay station.

B) Large Private Ownership
This parcel is held by Montana Gold Ventures
There are no buildings on it.

Restrictions: unknown
Use: no perceived use at this time. Owner not contacted.

The remaining two sections are not adjacent to the Pattee Canyon Recreation Area and therefore would have less impact on it.

C) Large Private Ownership
This parcel is held by one owner. There are no buildings on it.

Restrictions: unknown
Use: no perceived use at this time. Owner not contacted.

D) Plum Creek Timber Company, L.P.
Plum Creek acquired this parcel when they acquired all the lands in Montana owned by Champion International Corporation in 1993.

Restrictions: no legally binding
Use: timber harvesting

T 13N R 19W Section 36
This land is an inholding in Pattee Canyon Recreation Area.

Ownership:
A) US Forest Service
This land is part of the original timber reserve.

Restrictions: Management Area 9 designation in Forest Plan
Use: Part of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area. The Crazy Canyon road goes up through this portion, so there is considerable use by hikers, bikers and hang gliders.
B) State of Montana
These 378 acres of state land are dedicated to the Common schools fund and must produce income for it.

Restrictions: Income must be produced.
Use: These are classified as state forest lands. There has been timber harvesting and some grazing in the past. This land has also been used for hauling access for Dr. Cox on the adjacent lands (Section 35)

T13 N R19W Section 24
Only the portion of the south side of the Clark Fork is considered here.

Ownership:
A) Large Single Private Ownership
52 acres owned by the Five J Timber Company and acquired in 1974.

Restrictions: Not known, owner not contacted.
Use: Timber harvest. Some of this land would border the Kim Williams Trail on the old Milwaukee Railroad right of way.
APPENDIX 2

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF STATE LAND PARCELS ADJACENT TO PCRA

1. LANDS ADJACENT TO Pattee Canyon Recreation Area

STATE LAND PARCEL: T12N R19W Section 12

SIZE: 160 surface and subsurface acres
GRANT: Public Buildings

HISTORIC USE: Records show that it was only timbered in 1934 when 16 M of pine were taken off. 1980 report shows that Douglas Fir is in poor condition due to dwarf mistletoe and overstocking. A regeneration cut was recommended.

PRESENT USE: The only other timber taken was 1993 when 10 cords of wood was taken off.

EFFECT ON THE RECREATION AREA: Adjacent to the Recreation Area, but there are no trails in this section so visual effect is limited. However, this section has significant old growth.

INCOME PRODUCED: $49.40 in 1934, $20.00 in 1993

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STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R19W Section 36

SIZE: 378.30 surface and subsurface acres
GRANT: Common Schools

HISTORIC USE: This parcel has been cut for timber several times since 1926. The last cut was in 1987, and was a salvage cut after the Hellgate Fire. Grazing was an early use of the section. Hunting and recreational use has occurred. The Crazy Canyon Road goes through this parcel. Records mention cooperation with the FS over the road, but there were no details. The section is crossed by a natural gas pipeline and a buried cable of Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph. There are several references to temporary road permits being granted to the neighboring landowner (Cox-Section 35) in order to harvest his land. In 1975 it was noted that there was "unauthorized recreational use by the public on state land." Road use was also granted to Champion International (1985)

PRESENT USE: The land has not been cut since the salvage cut. Much of the salvage was left, however. Use today is almost totally recreational: hikers, bikers and hang gliders on the Crazy Canyon Road. Hunting occurs in the fall. The area was replanted, but with "marginal survival."
EFFECT ON THE RECREATION AREA: This area is an inholding within the Recreation Area. Recreational use has increased with the increase in use of PCRA. There was much debris left from the salvage cut. Hunting which is not allowed on the rest of the Recreation Area regularly occurs here during the hunting season.

INCOME PRODUCED: Income since 1954: $308.95 1926-54: $4460.77 Total income from grazing: $364.31

STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R18W Section 30

SIZE: 147.940 surface and subsurface acres
GRANT: Common Schools

HISTORIC USE: No file information available

PRESENT USE: Income records show that since the 1950's income has been received from rentals of a variety of electronic site users including the Forest Service, Comsat, Mountain States Telephone and Telegraph, Federal Aviation Admin. Dept. of Commerce. Air easement to Montana Power.

EFFECTS ON THE RECREATION AREA: This section is adjacent to a portion of the Recreation Area which does not have trails, so from that respect the effect is limited. Traffic to and from the electronic site has to pass through the recreation area. The road to the site is gated as is mostly on Plum Creek land.


STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R19W Section 26

SIZE: 480 acres
GRANT: University of Montana

HISTORIC USE: Recreation. This site was granted to the University as an Observatory site by an Act of March 4, 1904, but never used a such. It has no trust fund obligations and there are no restrictions on its use.

PRESENT USE: Recreation. The trail to the M goes up from University land. No other activities than trail maintenance. Trail goes to top of Mt. Sentinel and hooks up with the Crazy Canyon Road which makes a loop for hikers. Bikers are not permitted on this trail.
EFFECT ON THE RECREATION AREA: This land is an important recreational component adjacent to and coordinated with the recreation area. Such recreational use needs to be formally recognized.

INCOME PRODUCED: None (none required)

2. STATE LANDS NEAR Pattee Canyon Recreation Area

STATE LAND PARCEL: T12N R19W Section 14

SIZE: 320 Surface and subsurface acres
GRANT: Common Schools


PRESENT USE: Last Cut in 1968

EFFECT ON RECREATION AREA: None known as it is on the other side of the ridge line from PCRA and includes the back side of Mitten Mountain.

INCOME PRODUCED: $14,561.95 in 1951; $19.64 in 1968

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STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R18W Section 18

SIZE: 261.2 surface and subsurface acres
GRANT: Public Building

HISTORIC USE: Timber production. From 1938-1987 there are 13 records of timber harvest. In 1978 it was grazed. Plum Creek given temporary road easement to access their lands. USFS road permit issued in 1988 but extended to 1992 as timber sale moved back.

PRESENT USE: Last cut in 1987. Montana Power maintains a right of way. DSL records describe it as a "marginal area"

EFFECT ON THE RECREATION AREA: It is not adjacent to the recreation area, but the Environmental Assessment for a road easement by the FS noted that "portions of the road may be visible from the Pattee Canyon area." It also mentions that the area in general has high recreational use and therefore advises against clearcutting.

INCOME PRODUCED: 1938-52 $6,632.87 $1970 $93.11, 1986 $5, 1987 $413.75
STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R18W Section 6

SIZE: 120 Surface and subsurface acres

GRANT: Public Buildings

HISTORIC USE: Timber production. It was harvested several times from 1957-1987. There was also a proposal from the Missoula Public Schools to use the area as an outdoor lab. Nothing came of this proposal. Road use permits were granted to Champion in 1976 and 1988. There is a right of way to Montana Power.

PRESENT USE: Last timber harvested in 1987 for the ROW.

EFFECT ON RECREATION AREA: It is adjacent to private homes rather than the recreation area so the impact is limited.

INCOME PRODUCED: 1951-68 $12,025.51 1978 $10, 1987 $2,567.70

STATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R 18W Section 8

SIZE: 320 surface and subsurface acres

GRANT: Common Schools

HISTORIC USE: Timber production.

PRESENT USE: Only a small portion of this area has been harvested. There is much old growth remaining.

EFFECT ON RECREATION AREA: It has stands of old growth.

INCOME PRODUCED: $2500 since 1950.

CORPORATE LANDS ADJACENT TO Pattee Canyon Recreation Area

CORPORATE LAND PARCEL: T13N R 19W Section 31

SIZE: 320 acres

HISTORIC USE: Timber harvest. This was owned by the Anaconda Company. The timber road which goes though this section leads to the electronic site on section 30. This land was most recently owned by Champion International. They exchanged land on the western half of this section with the FS. This is in a different drainage however from Pattee Canyon.

PRESENT USE: Timber harvest. A portion of this in the NE corner was harvested in 1993.
EFFECT ON RECREATION AREA: This was an area identified by the Forest Plan as a desired addition to the Forest. It is adjacent to a little used section of PCRA and is in a different drainage.

CORPORATE LAND PARCEL: T12N R19W Section 7

SIZE: 640 acres

HISTORIC USE: This was also owned by the Anaconda Company. It has been harvested many times, particularly by its most recent owner, Champion International. It is heavily roaded.

PRESENT USE: Plum Creek has no immediate plans to cut here and would be willing to discuss a trade for this parcel. It already receives some recreational use and is mentioned in the Non-motorized Transportation Plan as a possible bike route.

EFFECT ON RECREATION AREA: This area from a recreation point of view makes the most sense as an addition to the recreation area, particularly given the interest in connecting trails to the Miller Creek area.

CORPORATE LANDS NEAR Pattee Canyon Recreation Area

No details of these lands will be included here, but note should be made that Plum Creek owns much of the lands on either side of the Deer Creek Road out to East Missoula. With increased use of this road for recreation, particularly as envisioned by the County and the City, the importance of these lands increases. Not only is the visual effect of the approach to Pattee Canyon Recreation Area important, but the lands role in wildlife habitat. Section 13 to the south is also important for a recreational link to Miller Creek.
APPENDIX 3

POSSIBLE CONSERVATION STRATEGY
A Point of Beginning

Maintain habitat:
1) Protect old growth
   a) immediately initiate discussion with DSL re trade for sections 12, 18, 8, and 6
      1) Forest Service
   b) initiate discussions with private owner of Section 8 which is recently subdivided re protective easements for the old growth
      1) Five Valleys Land Trust

2) Keep land in timber production
   a) obtain easement from Plum Creek re keeping this land in timber and not subdividing. If not easement then memorandum of agreement
      1) Forest Service
      2) Landowners

3) Eliminate further subdivision
   a) easement/ agreement with Plum Creek
      1) Forest Service
      2) Landowners
   b) encourage further easements from small private owners especially in unzoned Sections 12, 8 and 6 and in private portion of Section 14
      1) Five Valleys Land Trust
   c) obtain further easement on remaining portions of Section 35
      1) Five Valleys Land Trust
   d) encourage landowners association to strengthen existing zoning and extend to Sections 12, 8 and 6
      1) Pattee Canyon Landowners Association

Maintain quality recreational opportunities
1) adding identified parcels
   a) obtain Section 7 and possibly 13 in land trade with Plum Creek
      1) Forest Service

2) complete management plan
   1) Forest Service

3) PC Road
   a) investigate use of federal bike monies for bike lane along this road
      1) User group – bikers?
      2) Friends of Pattee Canyon
Eliminate Management inconsistency
1) eliminate inholdings
   a) initiate discussions with DSL re trade of
      Section 36
      1) Forest Service

2) minimize areas of conflict
   a) encourage landowners association to take
      greater role in stewardship of Pattee Canyon
      1) Forest Service
      2) Landowners Association

Protect Visual Effects
1) Keep land in timber production
   a) initiate agreement/easement with Plum Creek
      1) Forest Service
2) Create visual plan
   a) will be done as part of the management plan
      1) Forest Service

Raising the importance of Pattee Canyon Recreation Area
1) FS undertaking the management plan
   1) Forest Service
2) need for a champion
   a) coordinate pieces of the conservation strategy
      1) citizen group (new or existing)
      2) County
3) Greater involvement in county planning
   a) encourage recognition of importance of PCRA
      1) Friends of Pattee Canyon
      2) User groups
      3) Landowners Association
      4) Five Valleys Land Trust
APPENDIX 4

SUMMARY OF THE
USER SURVEY OF
PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA
1993

Thanks to a user survey conducted by the U.S. Forest Service for the past two years, the public and the Forest Service have a better idea just who the Pattee Canyon visitor is. The survey provides valuable information to guide the Forest Service as it prepares to undertake a management plan for Pattee Canyon.

The survey was conducted every month for two years (April 1991 - March 1993) at random times of the day and at several locations in Pattee Canyon. Almost 700 (699) people responded voluntarily to the ten questions asked. The information is not definitive, but does give indications of public sentiment on a number of issues.

WHO IS THE PATTEE CANYON VISITOR?

The "average" visitor to Pattee Canyon comes in a group of 2.3 people and stays less than two hours. Most visitors come for walking and hiking, but do not bring a dog. The average visitor comes at least 6 times a year; 91% were repeat visitors, due, they indicated, to the proximity of town. Most felt the quality of Pattee Canyon was the same or getting better. For 31%, quality was related to naturalness and solitude. The major suggestions for the future are: "great - like it the way it is" "leave it as wild as it is! "limit development" and "maintain naturalness."

The primary users of Pattee Canyon are hikers, but, as is illustrated below, many use Pattee Canyon for several activities.

The primary users are:
- hikers (71%)
- skiers (48%)
- bikers (44%)
- dogs (30%) (walking or being with dog)
- nature
- study (24%)
- joggers (17%)
- others (8%) (includes frisbee golf -5%; picnickers-2% and horse users-1%)

Pattee Canyon has a long history of use: 4% have been visiting for 30 or more years (some as long as 75 years!) Significant for planning is that 33% have come in the last two years - every third visitor is new.

There are few large groups that use Pattee Canyon; 91% were four or fewer people. Only 34% came with dogs. Dogs are controversial however, particularly on the ski trails. Half of the additional comments received related to dogs, split about evenly pro and con.
Finally, people tend to come to Pattee Canyon again and again; 38% visited more than once a month.

WHAT IS THE QUALITY OF PATTEE CANYON?

According to the survey, the quality of the area is about the same (55%) or getting better (38%). Significantly, this was reversed for people who had visited more than 5 years (getting better 50% and staying the same 39%).

Most felt that the number of people they encountered was about right (75% agreed); the quality of their experience was not jeopardized by too many people. Although the "right" number of people encountered is not defined, we can infer from their comments that great increases in numbers will tip the balance to "wrong." This is supported by the fact that 31% indicated that naturalness and solitude were key factors in determining the quality of Pattee Canyon. A sample of comments:

- like having few people around
- don't make it easier to visit
- like the solitude
- at times too many people
- any more = too many
- too many visitors

The two other items after naturalness and solitude, which affected visitors perceptions of the quality of the area, were skiing (21%) and facilities (13%).

WHAT DO PEOPLE DO WHEN THEY COME TO PATTEE CANYON?

The most popular activities in the last twelve months were walking/hiking and being with the dog, followed by skiing and biking. All other activities were significantly less popular.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>activity</th>
<th>% of activity visits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hiking</td>
<td>(29%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dogs</td>
<td>(19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skiing</td>
<td>(15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>biking</td>
<td>(14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nature study</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frisbee</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>golf</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jogging</td>
<td>(5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>(6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>picnicking</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horses</td>
<td>&lt;1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that when asked whether the primary purpose of the visit to Pattee Canyon was for this activity, joggers, though numerically a small group, almost all just came to Pattee Canyon to jog.
WHY DO PEOPLE COME TO PATTEE CANYON?

The survey looked more closely at why people come to Pattee Canyon. By far the main reason for visiting Pattee Canyon was its proximity to town and its accessibility (43%). The rest of the responses fall into two broad categories, sports and atmosphere. Sports (31%) includes: skiing 7%, hiking/walking 4%, biking 4% and dogs 5% and exercise 3%. Almost as significant is the atmosphere created by Pattee Canyon (22%): getting away from town and people 6%, scenery-clean air 5%, quiet 3%, low impact 3%, nature/outdoors/wildlife 2% good trails 2%. (The remaining reasons had less than 10 responses each.)

Visitors to Pattee Canyon often leave the trails. A little more than half (55%) said they did mainly for two reasons: adventure and fun (23%) and exploring nature/wildlife/birding (19%).

REACTIONS TO CHANGES AT PATTEE CANYON

The survey also asked a number of specific questions about the Pattee Canyon area. The two questions which elicited the most support were the desirability of having some areas without trails and having trails designed especially for skiing.

Trails Results indicated that although supportive of high standard trails (wide, steady grades, fairly straight), most (68%) wanted a medium standard of trail (18" width, winding, with no grade over 12%). This also had the lowest number indicating it was undesirable. Significantly, some 84% wanted to leave some areas with no trails.

Ski Trails Again, a high response to the desirability of designed ski trails (70%). Only 7% thought this was not a good idea.

Facilities Wheelchair accessible toilets were thought desirable by 66%, but the public was largely neutral (58%) on the subject of steel, open fire rings instead of the existing cement fireplaces (58%) and there was a substantial negative response.

Forestry Most of the respondents were neutral about controlled burns and thinning, with the next most chosen answer being desirable in both cases.

Horses Although horse use does not currently appear to be large, 58% felt that it was desirable to keep areas closed to horses.

Bicycles Bicycles are a much bigger user group, yet just more than half (52%) felt that it was desirable to close some areas to bike use. There were also a significant number which were neutral (23%).
**Interpretation** 61% felt that interpretative signs along the trails explaining natural history or early history would be desirable, again however, with a large neutral component.

**Dogs** Nearly half of the respondents (46%) felt that requiring dogs to be on a leash was an undesirable regulation. Still the issue is not clear cut for some 33% thought it would be desirable.

**AND THE FUTURE**

**WHAT DOES THE VISITOR WANT FOR PATTEE CANYON?**

What do visitors want Pattee Canyon to be like in the future? According to this sample, the largest percentage want it to remain as it is (23%). For example:
- leave it just as it is
- don't civilize too much
- limit development
- maintain naturalness

Major suggestions from this survey include:
- leaving some areas without trails (84%)
- developing trails designed for skiing (70%)
- maintaining a medium standard of trails (68%)
- having wheelchair accessible toilets (64%)
- developing interpretive signs and materials (61%)
- closing some areas to horse use (58%)
- closing some areas to bike use (52%)

In addition, there were a number of comments which were made throughout this survey (more than 10 responses). These included:
- expanding trails
- better marked trails and trail information
- eliminate trash
- add drinking water
- expand and groom more ski trails
- limit logging

In a final section for random comments it is significant to note that half had something to do with dogs, about evenly divided between those who want dogs to be leashed and those who want them to continue to be free. Dogs and skiing appear to be an area of conflict.

Note: for a copy of the complete report and survey questions contact the Lolo National Forest, Missoula Ranger District, Missoula, Montana. This report was compiled by Minie Smith, for the Lolo National Forest in October, 1993.
APPENDIX 5

LOCATION OF CONSERVATION EASEMENTS NEAR PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA

Cox Easement - Section 35

Erickson Easement - Section 2

Tawney Easement - Section 2

Source: Five Valleys Land Trust
SALES NEAR PATTEE CANYON RECREATION AREA - 1993

--PRICE STS --ADDRESS-------- AREA TP BR BTM AGE SQ FT OF
--- LISTED---

172000 SLD 209 PATTEE CANY 20C 1 2 2/0 10-20 1250- LA
PFA 12/15/92 02/08/93 74500 296 LAMBROSE
5 SHOWINGS’ TIL MARCH 1, 1993. GREAT STARTER
ONE FOR A YOUNG FAMILY. PAY 0% DISCOUNT
ON ANY FINANCING. THIS HOME IS
SITUATED IN THE HEART OF LAC AREA. THIS
IS A MUST, CALL LISTING AGENT.

155000 SLD 540 HIGHLAND PAR 20C 1 4 2/1 10-20 2000- G
CONV 01/15/93 03/11/93 159900 55 GILLESPIE
CLASSIC HOME W/EKREN LIVING RM & STORE &
GOOD ACCENTS. WIRE IRON SHT FROM PATTEE
GOLF COURSE. 2 DECKS W/VIEWS OF PATTEE
CANYON & MISSOULA VALLEY.

124000 SLD 2350 LARCH CAMP R 20C 6 4 2/0 10-20 3000- H
CONV 12/20/92 02/25/93 129900 85 GILLESPIE
A RARE FIND. OUT OF ALL THE POLLUTION. WHAT
A VIEW! OVER 3100' OF FIW LIVING SPACE W/
MAIN FLOOR & UPPER FLOOR DEN, FAM RM, PLAY
RM, STORAGE CLOSETS & MUCH MORE. OFFERS TO
LA, "SALE CONTINGENT ON 3' SEC ADQ HOUSING.

155000 SLD 2365 PATTEE CANY 20C 6 3 2/0 20-35 1500- R
CARPET 2238
CONV 10/13/92 01/12/93 159900 18 REDCARPET
SCENIC AREA. PATTEE CANYON. SPACIOUS
QUALITY BRICK AND CEDAR HOME W/LEG BDRMS
& HARDWOOD FLOORS. CREEK AND DEER IN YOUR
BACKYARD. 3 GARAGES, BARN AND GUEST CABIN.
MAIN FLOOR UTILITIES.

213000 SLD 4970 ARNICA 20C .6 3 2/1 5-10Y 2000+ G
CONV 02/15/93 04/26/93 219900 40 GILLESPIE
BEAUTIFUL HOME & HORSE PROP. HARDWOOD FLOORS
ceramic tile counters, cherry cabinets, island in kitchen, recessed lighting, french
doors. tastefully decorated throughout w/wallpaper, borders. Awesome view! co/lA JULIE B.

100000 SLD 1290 LARCH CAMP 20C 2 2.50 SUBMT MIL BO
UNIT 12784
CD 03/09/93 04/01/93 7500 498 PAYNE
BEST VIEW OF MSLA VALLEY. RATTLENGUE &
MORE! LOCATED IN THE BURN AREA BUT IN A
GREAT STATE OF RECOVERY. SUPER BUILDING
SITE FOR A DREAM HOME.__________

165000 SLD 1640 LARCH CAMP R 20C 2 10.83 SUBMT SLO C-
17-92-19-92
CASH 08/23/93 09/21/93 18000 96 C-21 GREAT
* W/200 DR. 5 MI SE OF MSLA. TOP OF THE
WORLD SPLENDOR! BEAUTIFUL VIEWS OF THE MSLA
VALLEY, PATTEE CANYON & THE RATTLENGUE.
* OWNER FINANCE W/20% DN, 10% INT FOR 10-15
YRS.

150000 SLD 2260 PATTEE CANY 20C 2 1.00 N/A SLO ST
CONV 01/15/93 03/11/93 159900 55 GILLESPIE
BEAUTIFUL TREED BLDG SITE, CLOSE TO TOWN. INCREDIBLE VIEWS & PRIVACY.
PROPERTY NEEDS TO BE SURVEYED & SPLIT BY A
PROPERTY BOUNDARY RELOCATION.

95000 SLD 1950 PATTEE CANY 20C 1 5.60 N/A MIL P/ F
MORTGAGE REMN 1977
TERRIFIC BUILDING SITE ON A LIGHTLY
TIMBERED HILLYSIDE. VIEWS W/TO CITY
LIGHTS AND PETTY CR. NOT IN THE BURN.
POWER & GAS TO PROPERTY. TOUCHES PATTEE
CREEK AT ONE CORNER. CO/ LA SCOTT HOLLERBECK

Source: Gillepsie Realty