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Anne Dahl  
Swan Ecosystem Center  
6887 Highway 83  
Condon, MT 59826

December 17, 2008

Dear Anne:

I am writing in support of the Swan Ecosystem Center 319 grant proposal for 2009-2011. The tasks outlined in the proposal are important for understanding, maintaining, and enhancing the water quality of the Swan River, its tributary streams, and Swan Lake.

The Montana Legacy Project, a cooperative project between The Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Land, will dramatically affect land tenure in the watershed. When completed about 66,000 acres of Plum Creek timberlands will be transferred to the Flathead National Forest, the Swan River State Forest, or other conservation holdings. As the grant proposal outlines, there is a strong need for a science-based, locally supported watershed restoration plan during these changing times.

The grant proposal includes road restoration on about 5 miles of forest road in the Beaver Creek project area to reduce sedimentation near the headwaters of the Swan River; continued lake and stream trend monitoring to establish baseline conditions and identify potential causes of nonpoint source pollution; a collaborative, citizen-supported Watershed Restoration Plan; and outreach and education to raise awareness and protect water quality; is worthy of funding.

The matching funds provided for the 319 grant request demonstrate the cooperative approach of the participants in the Swan River Watershed Group. Thanks for your contributions to this effort.

Sincerely,

Caroline Byrd  
Western Montana Program Director  
The Nature Conservancy