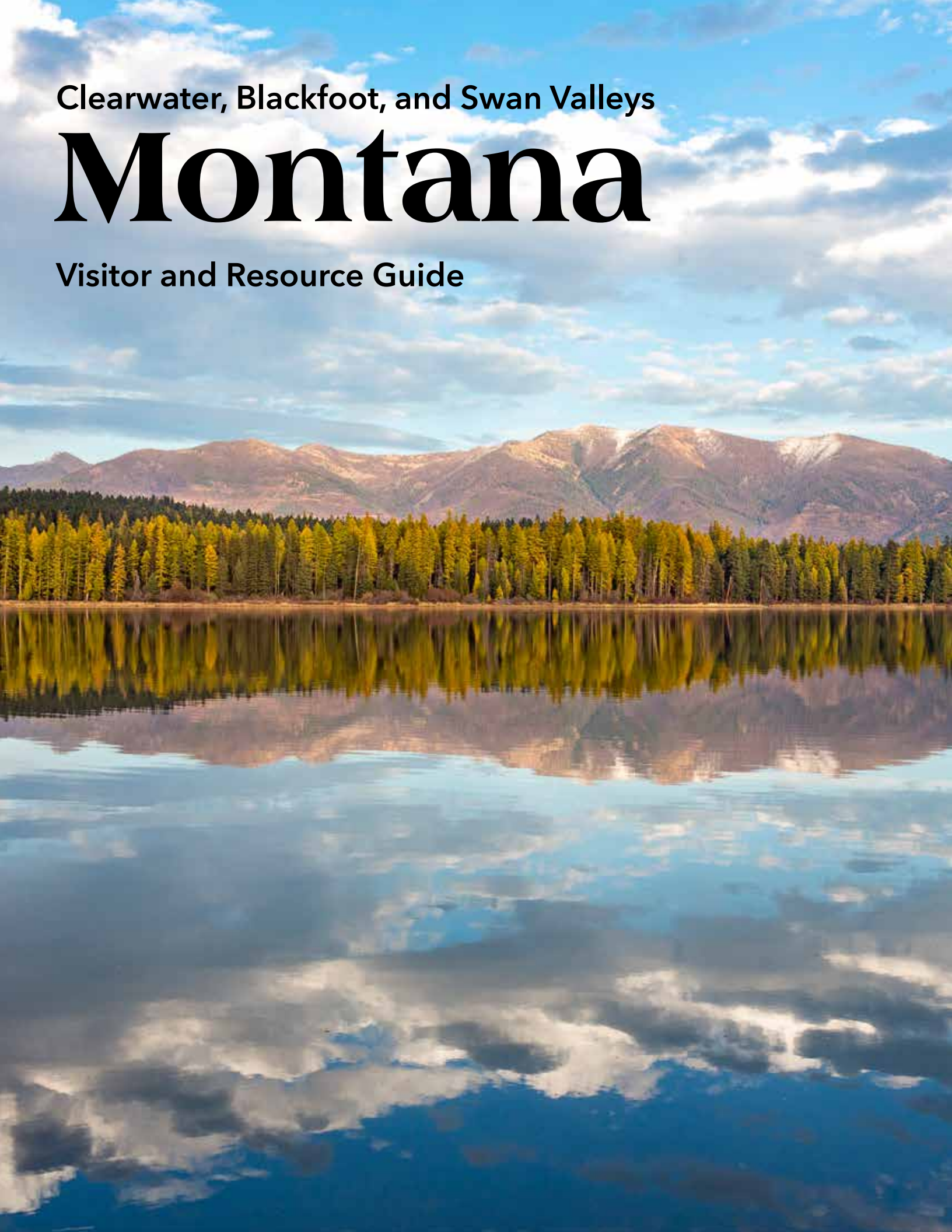


Clearwater, Blackfoot, and Swan Valleys

Montana

Visitor and Resource Guide



COMMUNITY DIRECTORY

Emergency

Ambulance, Fire, Police.....911
 Highway Patrol Dispatch855-647-3777
 Sheriff (non-emergency)406-258-4810
 Seeley Lake Fire Hall406-677-2400

Government Agencies

Missoula County Animal Control.....406-541-7387
 Missoula County
 Outdoor Burn Line406-677-2899
 Missoula County Satellite Office.....406-258-4847
 Montana Department
 of Fish and Wildlife & Parks406-542-5500
 Seeley Lake Post Office406-677-2474
 Seeley Lake Ranger Station406-677-2233
 Seeley Lake Refuse District.....406-677-3809
 Swan Lake Ranger District406-837-7500
 Road Conditions.....511

Libraries

Potomac Library.....406-721-2665
 Seeley Lake Library406-677-8995
 Swan Valley Library.....406-754-2521

Schools

Ovando Elementary School406-793-5722
 Potomac Elementary School406-244-5581
 Seeley Lake Elementary406-677-2265
 Seeley-Swan High School406-677-2224
 Swan Valley Elementary School.....406-754-2320
 Sunset Elementary School406-244-5542

Services

Missoula Aging Services/
 Seeley Swan Resource406-541-7688
 Seeley Swan
 Chamberseeleyswanchamber@gmail.com
 Seeley Lake Cemetery.....406-677-3409
 Seeley Lake Museum &
 Visitors Center406-677-2990
 Seeley Lake
 Senior Citizens Center406-677-2008
 Seeley-Swan
 Community Food Bank.....406-677-5025
 Seeley-Swan Medical
 Center (Partnership).....406-677-2277
 Seeley Swan Pharmacy.....406-677-8989
 Veterans and
 Families of Seeley Lake.....406-677-2543

This guide is produced by



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Cover and above photos are courtesy of Juan de Santa
juansphotography.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| History of the Area | 3 |
| The Tri Valleys | 4 |
| Discover Our Lakes..... | 5 |
| Safety Guidelines | 6 |
| Recreation | 8 |
| Camping and Campgrounds .. | 10 |
| Map..... | 12 |
| Winter Recreation | 17 |
| Points of Interest | 18 |
| Area Museums..... | 19 |
| Historical Points..... | 20 |
| Scenic Views & Photo Ops.... | 22 |

History of the Area

Long before the railroads, sawmills and ranches reached the Clearwater, Swan and Blackfoot Valleys, these areas were inhabited by Native Americans. Western Montana was home to many different tribes. Their movements are still evident today through the trails that criss-cross our valley floors. One of these trails, near the Gordon Ranch and Holland Lake, is still a popular entry point into the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

The tribes known to inhabit our valleys were the Kootenai Salish (Flathead), Pend d'Oreille (Kalispell), Crow, Shoshone, Gros Ventre, Nez Perce, the Semte'use (Seeley Lake area) and Blackfeet. Their subsistence lifestyle was dependent on a diet of wild game, fish, berries and starchy roots - all plentiful in our valleys.

The late 1800s brought a desire for westward expansion fueled by railroads, timber and ranching. Ranching was king in the Blackfoot while timber ruled the Clearwater and Swan. Ranches sprung up in the Blackfoot as early as the

1870s. The population throughout the region was growing and in 1889 Montana received statehood. The first school in the area was built near Ovando in 1884.

In the late 1920s Montana's popularity was bringing travelers to enjoy the beauty at lakeside cabins and dude ranches throughout the valleys. Guests from back east were spending their summers at places like the Gordon Ranch in Condon, the Tamaracks Resort and Double Arrow Ranch in Seeley Lake, E Bar L Ranch in Greenough and the Circle W Ranch in the Blackfoot Valley.

After World War II, the country's appetite for wild west adventure increased. Outfitting became more popular as well as excursions into the Flathead Primitive Area (later named the Bob Marshall Wilderness). The trips gave individuals the opportunity to see what life was like in the "Old West." Many of these outfitters are still operating today.



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THE TRI VALLEYS



The view of Holland Lake and the Mission Mountains on the hike to Holland Falls.

Photo by Eric Hayhurst

Blackfoot Valley

Glaciers initially cut the Blackfoot Valley leaving sharp mountains and rolling hills. Water flows westward from neighboring mountains to the Blackfoot River's depths. Ranches can be found on the grassy hills that first inhabited these regions.

Today, ranching and logging are the area's primary industries. Residents are as fiercely independent, resilient and yet welcoming as the first homesteaders who settled in the Blackfoot Valley in the late 1800s.

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Clearwater Valley

Aside from traveling Native Americans, the Clearwater Valley wasn't settled until it was recognized as a valuable lumber resource in the late 1800s. With limited space to ranch and a climate too harsh for farming, the first permanent residents lived a subsistence lifestyle.

Today, it's a modern community that still thrives on logging and recreation. Every summer weekend, you will find the local campgrounds and establishments full of people eager to experience Clearwater Valley's beauty.

Swan Valley

The Swan Valley's rich history began in the late 1800s with those adventurous few who braved the elements. Many fraternized with Native Americans to learn about local resources. Outfitters took eager adventurers into the Mission Mountains and Bob Marshall Wilderness. Outfitter and trapper cabins can still be found throughout the area.

Programs like the Montana Legacy Project have protected the landscape from development. Today, ranching, logging, guiding and recreation are primary businesses.

DISCOVER OUR LAKES

Lake Alva

Lake Alva is located approximately 11 miles north of Seeley Lake. Without housing development, two developed campgrounds (group sites are day-use only due to safety concerns) and "no-wake" speed allowed for motorized watercraft, the 300-acre body of water is a favored location for kayakers, paddle boarders and fishermen. Not only are the views of the Swan Mountains breathtaking, the lake is teeming with perch, rainbow trout and pumpkinseed sunfish. The island on the lake is a designated loon nesting area and is closed to hiking. Visitors can experience the loon's enchanting call and if lucky enough, may even see the magnificent bird.



Ice fishing on Salmon Lake.

Pathfinder photo

Holland Lake

Holland Lake rests at the base of the Swan Range in the Flathead National Forest. The crystal clear lake encompasses just over 400 acres and is home to a wide variety of fish species. Guests can take advantage of the campgrounds, a swim beach or relax at the historic Holland Lake Lodge. The scenic Holland Falls National Recreational Trail leads enthusiasts to Holland Falls and also serves as one of the major westerly routes into the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Placid Lake

At just over 1,210 acres, Placid Lake is the largest of our area's lakes. The dark blue waters of the arrowhead-shaped lake boasts views of the Swan Range. Placid Lake State Park at the eastern end provides an easy access point for recreation and its broad waters are perfect for a variety of water sports. Many species of fish, from trout to bass, make the lake a popular fishing spot. The lake is fed by Placid Creek to the west and drains into Owl Creek, which eventually leads into Salmon Lake and the Chain of Lakes to the east.

Salmon Lake

Salmon Lake is a 630-acre lake located 5 miles south of Seeley Lake and is situated along the Clearwater River Chain of Lakes. Resting along Highway 83 between the Mission and Swan Ranges, the lake is home to Salmon Lake State Park and features a campground, swimming beach, day use area and a public boat launch. This popular lake draws recreationists year round and is especially popular for ice fishermen looking for northern pike. Regardless of the season, there's something for everyone.

Seeley Lake

Seeley Lake is arguably the most well-known and visited of the lakes along the Clearwater River Chain of Lakes. The 1,025-acre, glacial lake is surrounded by campsites and provides multiple recreation opportunities for fishing, boating, skiing, paddleboarding and wildlife enthusiasts alike. On the north end, the Clearwater Canoe Trail is a unique canoe and kayak experience that gives guests an up-close opportunity to immerse themselves in our local plants and wildlife.

SAFETY GUIDELINES FOR SUMMER

Although the Tri Valleys are full of adventure and the exciting unknown, we must be aware of the inherent risks and dangers present. Please follow these guidelines to keep yourself safe, protect our wildlife and preserve the area we all love.

Drown your campfire and never leave it unattended. Always use a designated campfire ring. Check fire restrictions in the area you are visiting before lighting a fire. **For more information visit mcfpa.org**



Watch for black bears and grizzly bears. If you encounter a bear, maintain eye contact, back away slowly and leave the area. For more information visit nps.gov/subjects/bears/safety.htm and missoulabears.org



Bear's sense of smell is 2,100 times that of humans. Use bear proof storage containers and keep a clean camp to avoid a visit.



Pack it in, pack it out. Leave nothing behind. Know your area and your abilities so you can safely return from your adventure.



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Winter hours:

Tues.-Sat. 10 a.m.-6 p.m.

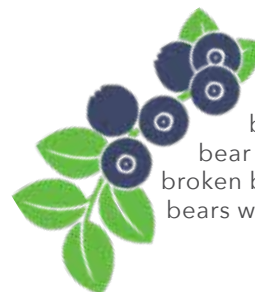
Summer hours:

Mon.-Sat. 10 a.m.- 6 p.m.

seeleylakeliqor@gmail.com



Carry bear spray and make yourself known. You can talk, sing, whistle, or even have a bell tied onto your bag to let animals know you are coming.



Watch for bear signs while picking berries. Piles of fresh bear scat, tracks and broken branches are all signs bears were in the area.

Always travel with water and be prepared to spend the night even if you are making a day trip. Always tell someone where you are going and when you plan to return. Stay on marked trails unless you know the area.



AND WINTER



When driving in winter conditions: slow down, avoid overcorrecting or braking too hard, and watch for animals on the road. Be cautious of black ice, especially around shaded corners. Check the road report before leaving and carry survival gear in your vehicle. Call 411 for local road conditions or visit roadreport.mdt.mt.gov/travinfomobile/

Test the ice thickness before going out. Ice is thinner above moving water or springs, something common in the Chain of Lakes. When venturing out on the ice, carry self-rescuing gear. If you fall through, place your arms on the unbroken surface, kick your feet to become parallel with the surface and pull yourself out with ice picks. Lay flat on the ice and roll or crawl away from the hole to keep your weight spread out. If performing an ice rescue, call 911 immediately. Do not approach the hole. Instead reach with an object from shore or throw a rope to the victim so you can pull them to safety.



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Recreation

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ATV riding is an extremely popular pastime around Western Montana. While there are no areas on public land designated for off-road use in our area, all county and Forest Service roads are open to ride from May 1 - Nov. 30, unless closed due to poor road conditions by the Seeley Lake District Ranger. Residents of Montana need to have a registration sticker and a resident trail pass before utilizing trails or public lands. The pass is valid for two calendar years, expiring on Dec. 31 of the second year of purchase. Nonresidents must purchase an annual Nonresident Temporary Use Permit, which is valid for the calendar year Jan. 1 to Dec. 31.

For more information, please visit fwp.mt.gov/activities/off-highway-vehicles. For ATV rides and other events visit seeleyswanatvclub.org/



File photo



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Backpacking

There are many areas in the Clearwater, Swan and Blackfoot Valleys to fulfill your desire to backpack. A great region to start your exploration journey is the Bob Marshall Wilderness. This fascinating and breathtaking land was named in honor of the Wilderness Society cofounder Bob Marshall. The Bob Marshall is a designated protected region that encompasses over 1.5 million acres. It's great for hiking, backpacking and camping.

Go to fs.usda.gov/attmain/flathead/specialplaces to learn more.

Another great backpacking adventure awaits in the Mission Mountains Wilderness. This area is favored by backpackers and other outdoor enthusiasts. The range covers over 73,207 acres that runs through the wilderness area and has more than 11 major peaks. Although many well-traveled trails run through this remarkable wilderness, it still remains home to a variety of wild animals. Remember to practice and enjoy the 'leave no trace' principle in wilderness areas.

For more information on the Mission Mountains Wilderness go to wilderness.net/visit-wilderness and search Mission Mountains.



Paddleboarders enjoying Holland Lake.

Photo by Eric Hayhurst

Biking: Mountain & Road

There are numerous mountain biking trails for cyclists to explore while in the area. Some of the most popular trails include: Rice Ridge, Morrell Falls, South Morrell Trail #30, Town Connector and the Seeley Creek Trails. In the winter, the 300+ miles of groomed snowmobile trails are also great for riding fat tire bikes.

Named Montana's Community of the Year in 2018, for their collaboration and hospitality to travelers, Ovando is a world-renowned stop on anyone's cycling trip. Ovando has built a reputation by welcoming Tour Divide riders, while they travel through the area on the self-supported 2,745-mile mountain bike race, as well as those traveling the Great Divide Mountain Bike Route and Lewis and Clark Trail.

For more information on the difficulty, location, and other restrictions for trails in the area visit trailforks.com then search Seeley Lake, MT.

Beaches & Swimming

The Valleys give beach enthusiasts many areas for fun in the sun.

In the Swan Valley, Holland Lake not only offers breathtaking views but also clear, cool water for swimming during the summer months.

The Clearwater Valley has several beach options. For a little peace and quiet, Lake Alva is perfect. With few campsites, no houses, easy access and no-wake designation, it's a peaceful place to swim.

Big Larch, on Seeley Lake's eastern shore, is always a crowd favorite with plenty of space. Seeley Lake's western side has River Point and Seeley Lake Campgrounds, both of which have developed swim, camping and recreation areas.

Further south, Placid Lake State Park operates as both a developed campground with full amenities and a day use site. Salmon Lake State Park is located along Highway 83 and has a marked swim beach with covered picnic tables and facilities.

The Blackfoot River has multiple swimming holes that are easily accessible from fishing sites. Be sure to use caution and read warnings and signage wherever you recreate.

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CAMPING AND CAMPGROUNDS

Nearly a dozen developed campgrounds are dispersed throughout our valleys providing a wide array of camping experiences. These are managed by either the US Forest Service (USFS) or Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP). Fees and amenities vary by campground. USFS campsites are filled on a first-come-first-served basis, except River Point and Lakeside, while FWP campsites must be reserved in advance.

For more information on any of Montana's 55 State Parks, or to book a reservation, visit www.stateparks.mt.gov. USFS campground information can be found at fs.usda.gov.

Forest Service Cabin Rentals

- Double Arrow Lookout
- Monture Guard Station
- Mission Lookout Cabin
- Old Condon Ranger Station
- Owl Creek Cabin
- Swan Guard Station


For information about the cabin rental program through the USFS and rentals in the area visit recreation.gov

Forest Service Campgrounds

- Van Lake Campground - 6 dispersed campsites
- Holland Lake Campground - 40 Campsites
- Lindbergh Lake Campground - 11 Campsites
- Rainy Lake Campground - 6 Campsites
- Lake Alva Campground - 41 Campsites
- Lakeside Campground (Lake Alva) - 6 Campsites *Reservation only
- Lake Inez Campground - 6 Campsites
- Big Larch Campground (Seeley Lake) - 48 Campsites
- Seeley Lake Campground - 29 Campsites
- River Point Campground (Seeley Lake) - 27 Campsites *Reservation only
- Monture Creek (Ovando) - 6 Campsites

Fish, Wildlife & Parks Campgrounds

- Salmon Lake State Park - 24 Campsites
- Placid Lake State Park - 40 Campsites



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Hiking & Walking Trails

The Tri Valleys have endless hiking trails. Whether you are looking for a nature walk with the family or a challenging hike to the top of a peak, you'll never run out of options. Trails are easily accessed in the summer; and many are groomed in the winter. Dogs should be leashed at the trailheads and are welcome, except at the Seeley Creek Nordic Trails in the winter.

Some of the local favorite hikes in the Tri Valleys include Holland Lake Falls, Glacier Lake, Clearwater Lakes, Morrell Falls, the Canoe Trail and Garnet Ghost Town. The community trail around Boy Scout Road includes the Seth Diamond Trailhead and Girard Grove which leads to Gus, the record-setting larch tree. More adventurous hikers will take on Holland Peak and Pyramid Pass.

For more trail info check out seeleyinfo.org/recreational-opportunity-guides or download a trail app.



File photo

SWAN VALLEY CONNECTIONS

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Bear Spray Training & Purchase
Books & Maps
Experiential Outdoor Education
Private Land Stewardship Consultation
Living with Wildlife Information
Restoration, Research, and Monitoring



PHOTO BY ANDREA DININO

















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WWW.SWANVALLEYCONNECTIONS.ORG



SWAN VALLEY
CONNECTIONS

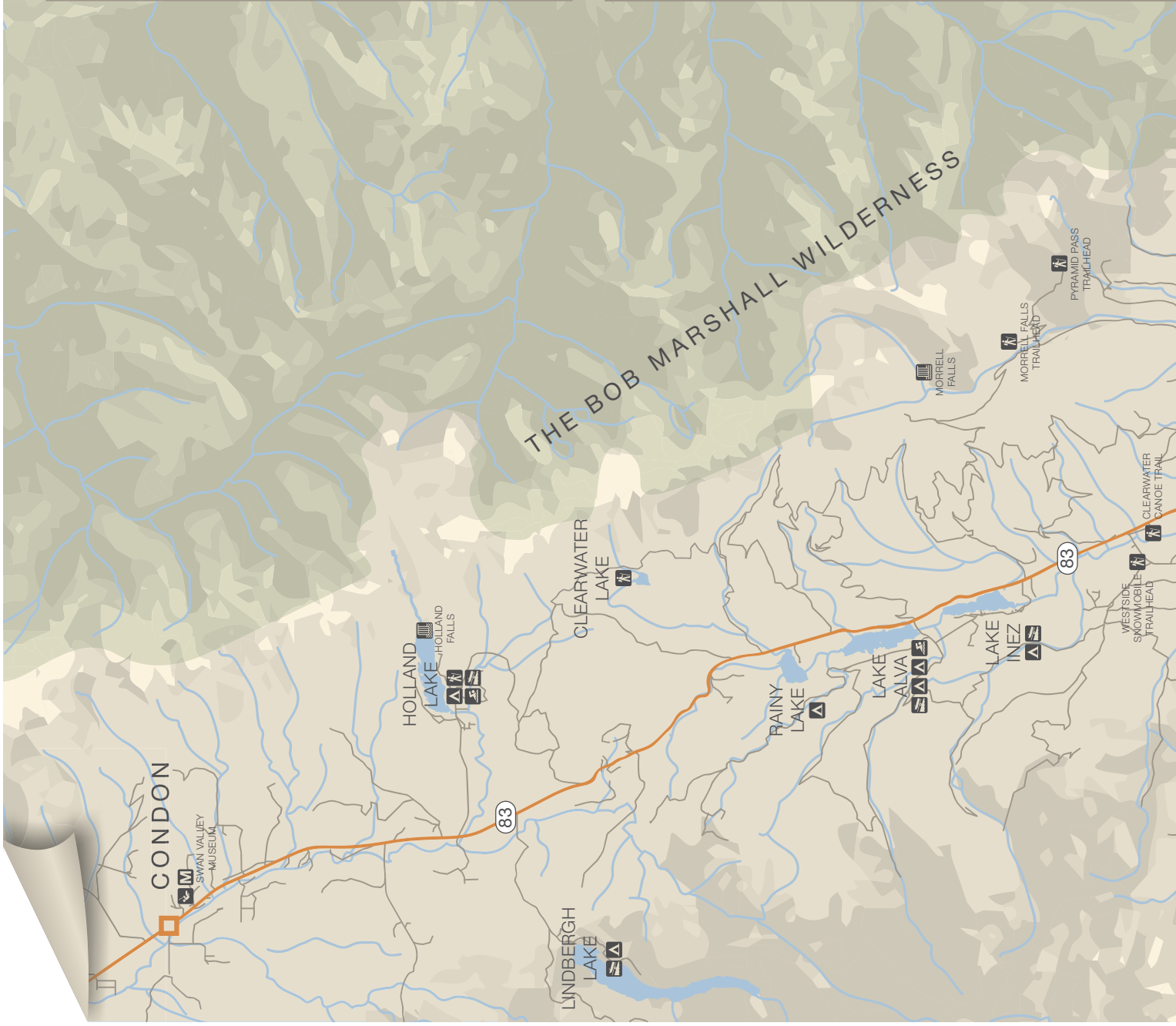
SWAN, CLEARWATER, & BLACKFOOT VALLEYS

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-  RIVER
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-  SIGHT SEEING
-  INFORMATION
-  MUSEUM
-  PLAYGROUND
-  CAMPGROUND
-  SWIMMING
-  TRAILHEAD
-  BOAT LAUNCH
-  LOOKOUT
-  BIG TREE
-  WATERFALL
-  AIRPORT



TOWN OF SEELEY LAKE



FISHING ACCESS SITES

BLACKFOOT RIVER:

- JOHNSRUD PARK
- DAIGLE'S EDDY
- SHEEP FLATS
- THIBODEAU RAPIDS
- THIBODEAU CAMPGROUNDS
- WHITAKER BRIDGE
- RED ROCKS
- BELMONT CREEK
- CORRICK'S RIVER BEND
- NINEMILE PRAIRE
- ROUNDUP
- THREE STALL
- SIX STALL
- RUSSELL GATES MEMORIAL
- SCOTTY BROWN BRIDGE
- RIVER JUNCTION

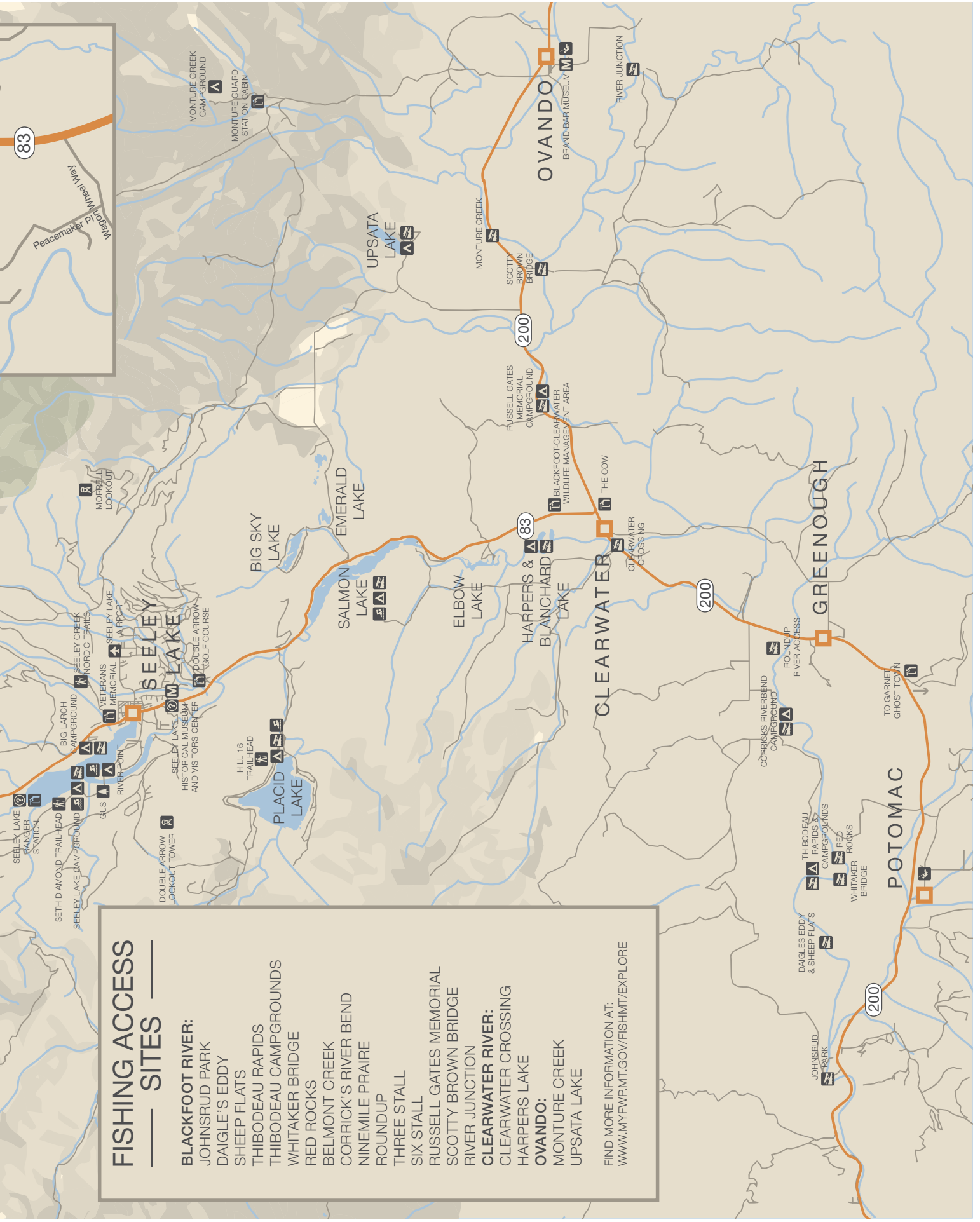
CLEARWATER RIVER:

- CLEARWATER CROSSING
- HARPERS LAKE

OVANDO:

- MONTURE CREEK
- UPSATA LAKE

FIND MORE INFORMATION AT:
WWW.MYFWP.MT.GOV/FISHMT/EXPLORE



Motorized Boating & Watersports



Kneeboarding on Seeley Lake.

Photo by Carrie Sokolowski



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Watersports are a popular Western Montana pastime in the summer. Whether you enjoy water skiing, boating, tubing or if you're just looking for a place to get your boat in the water, we have a great area for it!

Aquatic Invasive Species are a serious concern in Montana. Visitors must have their boats checked at watercraft inspection stations across the state every time. Look for Zebra Mussels and please clean, drain and dry all watercraft and wading accessories.

The major public access boat ramps are:

Swan Valley

- Holland Lake
- Lindbergh Lake

Clearwater Valley

- Big Larch Campground
- Lake Inez
- Placid Lake State Park
- Seeley Lake Campground
- Salmon Lake State Park

The Blackfoot River provides enthusiasts multiple access points along its 130-mile span. **For a full list of points, visit myfwp.mt.gov.fishMT/explore.**



The Blackfoot River

Photo by Kathy Schoendoerfer

Fishing In The Blackfoot

The Blackfoot River is one of Montana’s most popular streams for fly-fishing, rafting and floating. The beautiful scenery, coupled with exceptional trout habitat make it a perfect place to fish for Montana’s prized brown, bull, cutthroat and rainbow trout. The pristine watershed begins in the Continental Divide from the mountains near Lincoln, and stretches 130 miles to the west in Missoula. There are multiple public fishing access sites along the river. Numerous tributaries, coupled with varying terrain, moderate rapids and deep pools along its route make for a dynamic riverscape. Aside from fish, it provides habitat for a wide array of animals.

Long before modern settlement, the Blackfoot River was a historical route for many Native American tribes, who used it as a travel route to and from their ancestral hunting grounds. The Nez Perce called the Blackfoot River “Cokahalishkit,” which means ‘river of the road to the buffalo.’

Meriwether Lewis explored the length of the Blackfoot in 1806 as part of the Corps of Discovery. Seaman Creek near Ovando is named after a Newfoundland dog that accompanied the explorers on their journey.

Around the turn of the last century, the Blackfoot was used as a means to float valuable timber from the forests of the Clearwater and Blackfoot Valleys to the mill in Bonner.

Norman Maclean further added to the Blackfoot’s fame and popularity when he wrote his semi-autobiographical novella “A River Runs Through It.” It tells the story of his life growing up with his younger brother Paul, under the strict direction of his father and fly-fishing the Big Blackfoot. Later, in 1992, Robert Redford adapted the book to the screen and released a film. The film romanticizes life in Montana in the early 1900s and only served to entice outdoor enthusiasts to visit the area. The Maclean family still holds one of the first Forest Service leases on Seeley Lake.

Kayaking, Canoeing & Paddleboarding

Floating or paddling your way through the water is a perfect way to enjoy the wildlife and take in the breathtaking views. Be sure to check out the Clearwater River Canoe Trail at the north end of Seeley Lake. The quiet movement of the watercraft provides up-close opportunities to see waterfowl, while the clear, shallow water allows you to see turtles and fish. The 3.5 mile trail takes approximately 2 hours to float due to the slow current.

If you prefer a tranquil lake environment, then check out Lake Alva! The lake is another favored spot for canoes, kayaks, paddle boards and you’re likely to hear a loon.

For more information on no-wake zones, visit fs.usda.gov.

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Photos by Asa Thomas Metcalfe

Golfing

If you're looking for a great game of golf in an amazing setting, head to the Double Arrow Golf Course in Seeley Lake. The 18-hole course is one of Montana's premiere courses open to the public. Each hole includes three sets of tees to challenge golfers of all abilities. **For more information visit doublearrowresort.com/golf-course.**

For an indoor, virtual golf experience stop in at Big Dog Dad's Indoor Golf Simulator. Along with offering leagues in the fall and spring, golfers of any level can keep their skills polished during the offseason. **For more information visit bigdogdadsgolf.com.**

Folging

Behind the Seeley-Swan High School is a par three frisbee-golf course that loops through the heavily wooded pine forest between the football field and Morrell Creek. Engage with the wilderness in a fun and easy way that challenges you to leave the beaten path.



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WINTER RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Snowmobiling

Snowmobiling is an unforgettable experience here in Montana. The average valley snowfall is over 100 inches annually. From Dec. 1 - April 30 local Forest Service Roads are closed to wheeled vehicles and are converted into over 300 miles of groomed snowmobile trails. All mechanized vehicles need a trail pass to ride on groomed trails. These can be purchased at ols.fwp.mt.gov.

For more information on the groomer's route, area trails and snowmobiling events visit driftriders.org



Snowmobiling from the West Side trailhead.

Pathfinder photo

Skating/Hockey

Ice skating and hockey are gaining popularity in our area. There are community skating rinks at the Condon Arena, Highway 83, Seeley Lake Elementary School and Lions Club Pond on Elm Drive in Seeley Lake.

Cross Country Skiing

Seeley Lake is home to the Seeley Creek Nordic Ski Trails originally built in 1978. The trails are consistently groomed for an optimal skate and classical ski experience. There is a variety of terrain for both experts and beginners with loops starting at 3K. Facilities include a yurt and a pit toilet. Dogs are not allowed on ski trails.

For more information visit seeleylakenordic.org.

Those looking for a more leisurely experience can visit the Double Arrow Golf Course during the winter season. The flat course provides beautiful views of the Swan Range and offers a great workout.



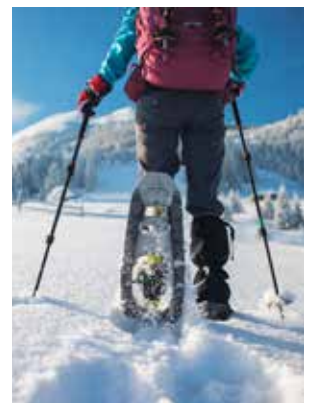
Ice Fishing

Ice fishing is a spectacular experience and a true test of skill.

The best times to ice fish are early morning and late afternoon which are prime feeding times. Overcast days are normally better than sunny days and when ice fishing, you will want to remain quiet to avoid scaring the fish. Salmon Lake is a great ice fishing destination and is popular for its prized northern pike. A few other tips: test the ice thickness prior to going out; carry self-rescuing gear; avoid areas of moving water where the ice is thinner and dress for the weather. **For more information, please visit fwp.mt.gov/fish/ice-fishing**

Snowshoeing

Snowshoeing makes walking on snow, trails and in the backcountry possible during the winter. This easy and family-friendly sport is a must-do winter activity that's bound to leave you with some pretty incredible Montana memories.



Points of Interest

*Learn, Explore
and Experience
Our Valleys*



Photo by Eric Hayhurst

Seeley Lake Visitors Center

The Seeley Lake Historical Museum and Visitors Center is located in the historic Barn on the south end of town. The Visitors Center is a clearinghouse for regional knowledge and the museum features historical displays from the region.

The Barn was built in the winter of 1929-1930. The Stallion Barn was originally located in Trail Creek Meadow (now the Double Arrow Golf Course). It was one of 13 buildings built by business partners Jan Boissevain and Colonel George F. Weisel who then started the Double Arrow Dude Ranch.

The Barn was remodeled in the late 1950s when C.B. and Helen Rich purchased the property to operate a guest ranch and provide outfitting services. They sold the Ranch in 1966 but continued operating the outfitting business from the old Barn until they moved their operations out to Kozy Korner. The gambrel roof collapsed under the 100-year snow event in the 1997-1998 winter.

Through federal, state, county and local

donations and countless hours of volunteer time and commitment, the Barn was moved to its current location north of the Double Arrow Golf Course on Highway 83. It opened as the Seeley Lake Historical Museum and Visitors Center in 2003.

Since the summer of 2015, an average of more than 1,000 visitors stop at the Visitors Center annually. It is a must stop for information about the Tri Valleys. It offers brochures, maps and a gift shop.

The Visitors Center is staffed by a small number of paid employees, most of whom are connected to the Seeley Lake Historical Society. The staff is an incredible resource to learn about upcoming events, find out what services are available in the area as well as get a local perspective about what to see and do tailored to your activity level and interests.

For more information on the Visitors Center and Museum, visit seeleyinfo.org or call 406-677-2990. Hours vary by the season.

AREA MUSEUMS

Brand Bar Museum

**314 Main St.
Ovando Town Square
406-793-5685**

Ovando's Brand Bar Museum offers a collection of local history and relics from the town's colorful past. It came about by the hard efforts of Marie McNally, and opened in 1992 and is now run by the Ovando Historical Society. View the collection of local memorabilia, maps of early homesteads or read stories of early area settlers. Spend an afternoon and enjoy a stroll through the past, in this once-bustling, early west cowtown. The grounds are complete with a Hoosgow (jail for visitors).

Seeley Lake Historical Society and Museum

**2920 MT Hwy 83N
Seeley Lake
406-677-2990**

The Seeley Lake Historical Society and Museum is located in the restored Double Arrow Ranch barn. The original horse stalls house themed displays. Visitors can take multiple self-guided tours through each stall. Themes include homesteading, the Big Burn of 1910, old-time logging and the history of local business among others. Outside are additional displays including the furnished 1920s Maloney cabin, Blackfoot Indian lodge, a dugout canoe and more.

Swan Valley Museum

**6774 MT Hwy 83N
Condon
406-754-2745**

The Swan Valley Museum has wonderful displays and interpretive materials for all ages and interests. One of the newest exhibits is a Selish-QL'ispe Place Names Map featuring Pend d'Oreille Indian names of area landmarks. Other displays include Swan Valley Homesteader Family Trees and the Upper Swan Oral History Project. Also, it's worth visiting the Maki, Whalen and Messerer cabins on site.

Grizzly Claw Trading Co.

In Seeley Lake • Hwy 83



The Mercantile Building

www.grizzlyclawtrading.com

Grizzly Claw Trading Company is a connection between the "Old West" and the "New West". Inside, you will find local, western, and Native American art, a large variety of jewelry, furniture, antiques, books, local pottery, rugs, rocks and fossils, furs, 1800's Native American beadwork, vintage knives and guns, contemporary hand crafted knives and much more...

Among our local jewelry displays, Montana Sapphire and Idaho Opal jewelry are a feature. We also sell contemporary and vintage Native American jewelry.

Grizzly Claw Trading has a full selection of Crystals, Fossils, and Rocks from Montana and around the world.

Jitterbug Java is a full service espresso bar with indoor and outdoor seating and internet access. There are bakery pastries and bagels, snacks, smoothies, frappes, and chai teas. Our Fair trade organic coffee is roasted in Montana and voted "Best in the Valley" for 3 consecutive years. Come browse around while sipping a fine espresso drink.

You can visit us year-round at 3187 Hwy. 83 in Seeley Lake, the gateway to the Seeley- Swan Valley, Bob Marshall, and Mission Mountain Wilderness Areas for year round, outdoor recreation and adventure. We sell maps and guide books to trailheads, boat ramps, campgrounds, and fishing access sites. Enjoy!

**Visit us year round at 3187 Hwy 83
or call 406-677-0008**



HISTORICAL POINTS



Garnet Ghost Town

Pathfinder photo

Double Arrow Lookout

Built in 1932, the Double Arrow Lookout offers a panoramic view of the Clearwater Valley and Swan Mountain Range. The Lookout is a 14 x 14 foot structure on a 20 foot pole tower. It was manned in the summers for wildfire detection until the early 1990s when it was removed from the ground detection network. The Forest Service restored it for public use in 2006 and reinforced the structural integrity replacing the legs and cross beams in 2021 and 2022. It is also listed on the National Historic Lookout Register.

The Double Arrow Lookout is part of the Forest Service Recreation Cabin Rental program. It can be reserved at recreation.gov.

While you can drive up just for the view, a high-clearance vehicle is recommended in the summer and it is only accessible by snowmobile in the winter. The road is also gated below the Lookout. Unless you have rented the Lookout and have the code for the gate, expect a short hike the rest of the way.

For more information about the Lookout, directions from Seeley Lake and availability visit recreation.gov or call the Seeley Lake Ranger Station at 406-677-2233.

Garnet Ghost Town

Take the opportunity to step back in time and visit Montana's best preserved ghost town. In 1897, the townsite was named Garnet for the semi-precious, ruby-colored stone found in the area. The surrounding mountains were also rich in gold-bearing quartz. By January of 1898, Garnet boasted 1,000 residents, a school, four hotels, a doctor's office, 13 saloons and four stores, among other enterprises. Twenty gold mines were in operation at the time.

Today, Garnet Ghost Town offers many opportunities to experience the past. Visitors can take a hike along the Warren Park Trail, Placer Trail or take a self-guided tour on the Sierra Mine Loop Trail. In the Ghost Town itself, learn about the remaining structures and the miners' daily lives. There is also a gift shop and visitor's center. Other activities, including panning for gold are offered throughout the summer.

Garnet Ghost Town is located in the Garnet Mountain Range. Turn south on the Garnet Range Road between mile markers 22 and 23 on Highway 200. Follow the signs for approximately 11 miles to Garnet's parking area. Make sure to bring cash for the entry fee.

For more information visit garnetghosttown.org

Monture Guard Station

The Monture Guard Station Cabin is an old Forest Ranger Station, located on Cottonwood Lakes Road, between Seeley Lake and Ovando. The cabin has been completely remodeled and is available for rent from December 1 to April 14 through recreation.gov. In the summer, the Guard Station is used for backcountry operations on the Seeley Lake Ranger District.

For more information on this cabin visit fs.usda.gov/recarea/lolo/recreation/wintersports/recarea.



Monture Guard Station

Pathfinder photo

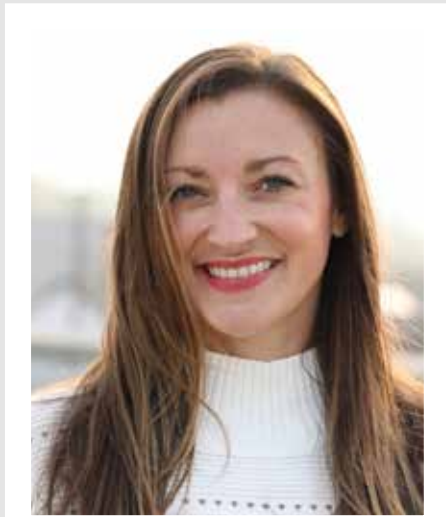


Morrell Lookout

Pathfinder photo

Morrell Lookout

Located atop a point near Morrell Peak, the original tower was built in 1921. It's the only actively-staffed fire tower in the valley. A 45-minute drive from the town of Seeley Lake, the views are well-worth the effort and it makes a great day trip. You may even be lucky enough to be invited up for a tour! High-clearance vehicles are recommended. Call the Seeley Lake Ranger District at 406-677-2233 to find out if the road to the lookout is open before making the trip. As road conditions can be unpredictable due to the high elevation even in summer!



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SCENIC VIEWS & PHOTO OPS

The Cow

Near Clearwater Junction, where Highways 200 and 83 intersect, sits a Sinclair gas station Clearwater Stop-N-Go. Out front is a statue of a steer. "The Cow," as it's affectionately referred to by locals, is an important landmark in driving directions. The Cow is also famous because it's featured in Far Cry 5, a video game (rated 17+ for mature audiences), down to every detail including his little Sinclair dinosaur friend. The game includes other familiar landmarks and allows you to explore the surrounding area.



"The Cow" at Clearwater Junction.

Pathfinder photo



- Forest Restoration
- Brush Grinding/Mastication
- Mechanized Logging
- Excavating
- Road Grading
- Road Building

Leelyn & Teresa Cahoon
406-210-4688 406-677-4112

Gus

Along with many other attractions, Seeley Lake is home to the world's largest western larch tree named Gus, estimated to be more than 1,000 years old. If you visit in the late fall, you will likely see Gus in a golden yellow/orange stage. Gus is located just down Boy Scout Road in Seeley Lake, you will find a small pull off that leads to the Girard Grove trailhead. After a short walk, you will find yourself at the base of Gus.

We'd love to hear from you!

Submit your photos, articles and comments to pathfinder@seeleylake.com



Heritage Building | Seeley Lake
406-677-2022 • www.seeleylake.com

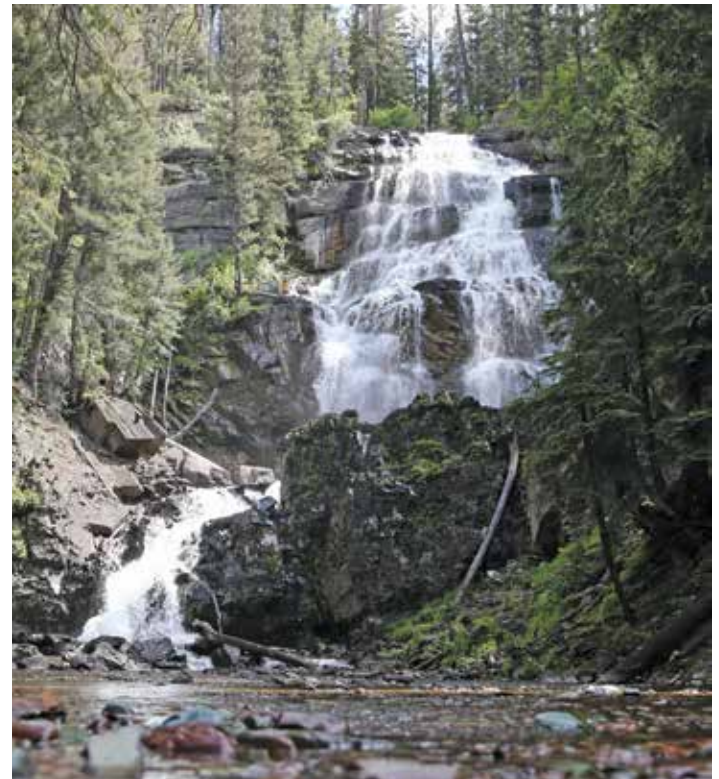


Holland Falls

Holland Falls National Recreation Trail is located in the Swan Valley near Condon. The trailhead begins at the Holland Lake Campground and meanders around the lakeshore and before emerging at a breathtaking view of the falls. The trail is 1.6 miles long and changes 750 feet in elevation. **For more information on this amazing location visit fs.usda.gov/recrea/flathead/recreation.**

Morrell Falls

If you are looking for a great day trip to a Montana waterfall, there's an amazing hike close to the town of Seeley Lake. The Morrell Falls National Recreational Trail is just 8 miles from Seeley Lake. Taking Morrell Creek Road to West Morrell Road and then Pyramid Pass, will lead you through the burn scar from the 2017 Rice Ridge Fire, to the Morrell Falls trailhead. It's a three-mile hike into the falls and the trail is also open to bikes and horses. The terrain is rolling and the trail ends at the falls. The moderate trail is mostly wooded and is great for hikers of all skill levels. Remember to pack some water and a lunch and don't forget to take time to enjoy the scenery. **For more information visit fs.usda.gov/recrea/lolo.**



Holland Falls

Pathfinder photo

Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area

The Blackfoot-Clearwater Wildlife Management Area, locally known as "The Game Range," is located near Clearwater Junction. At nearly 45,000 acres, its primary function is to provide elk and deer winter range. The Game Range is open to motorized vehicles on designated roads and all other non-motorized travel from May 15 - Nov. 10. A limited number of hunting tags and trapping permits are also available. Camping is permitted for a maximum of 16 days and food storage orders must be followed due to bears frequenting the area.

Morrell Falls

Pathfinder photo



Double Arrow Lodge

Seeley Lake, Montana

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Seasons Restaurant

406.677.2777

DoubleArrowLodge.com