

# Montana PLT Newsletter

May, 2011

Volume I

Issue 1

## Forests

Forests in Montana are free,  
And where I love to be.  
There are different kinds of  
plants and trees,  
And animals and streams.  
But most of all where I love to be.

Forests in Montana are free,  
And where I love to be.  
They have snow and ice,  
Through rain and shine.  
That's where I love to be.

You can camp,  
you can swim,  
You can dance,  
you can spin,  
But nothing beats the fun you  
have,  
In the Forest.

If you get a chance,  
Come to the forest.  
In Montana.  
To see,  
What I mean.

By, Kate



This issue sponsored by:



## MT PLT Forest Exchange Box Goes International

The year 2011 was declared the **International Year of Forests** by the United Nations to raise awareness and strengthen the sustainable forest management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

In January, National PLT sent a 14x14x8 box to every state and asked that we put together a forest exchange box (preK-8 activity 20) to return and be a part of the International Year of Forests. Montana's forest box is the result of contributions from across the state. Sonia York's fifth grade class at Daly Elementary in the Bitterroot



contributed a special poem (at left) and diagrams showing the water cycle in a forest environment. Diann Ericson's youth groups at the Swan Ecosystem Center in Condon included beautiful artwork focusing on western larch. Sportsmen and foresters from across the state contributed antlers, tree cookies, maps and pine cones and Montana wood samples.

The MT box was chosen, along with five others to go on display at the US Mission to the United Nations in New York. One Forest Exchange Box from every state will be displayed to showcase the unique characteristics of America's woodlands in March at a Congressional briefing and reception in Washington, D.C., and at other venues throughout the year to celebrate International Year of Forests.

[http://www.forestfoundation.org/press\\_forest\\_exchange\\_boxes.html](http://www.forestfoundation.org/press_forest_exchange_boxes.html)

[http://www.forestfoundation.org/forest\\_exchange\\_boxes\\_gallery.html](http://www.forestfoundation.org/forest_exchange_boxes_gallery.html)

## **PLT GreenSchools!**

One in five people who live in the United States—55 million children, teachers, administrators, nurses and janitors—spend their days in K–12 schools. Schools can, and should, provide a healthy environment for students and staff, promote ecological sustainability, reduce consumption patterns, and teach students to be environmental stewards of their communities and of the earth and its resources.

For more than 30 years, Project Learning Tree® (PLT) has provided environmental education, professional development, and curriculum materials to PreK-12 teachers. PLT's supplementary curricula help teachers address teaching objectives while helping students learn the critical thinking skills they need to make responsible decisions about the environment. PLT helps young people learn *how* to think, not *what* to think about complex environmental issues.

PLT's *GreenSchools!* Program, in partnership with the US Forest Service, and the Corporation for National and Community Service, provides a blueprint for educators, students, environmental and health advocates, school board members, parents and interested community members to teach, learn, and engage together in creating a more green and healthy learning environment at their school. It combines environmental education, service learning, and leadership opportunities for students to help turn their school into a model green school.

Montana PLT is anticipating starting a *GreenSchools!* Program here in the state during the 2011-2012 school year. This program will allow Montana's teachers and students to investigate environmental issues at their schools. Students will then be encouraged to engage their community in service-learning projects to make the school and community more sustainable. Students will learn leadership skills that will help them in their future chosen careers. The *GreenSchools!* website is interactive website to assist teachers and students as they investigate their school's environmental footprint and work on developing projects. There is a developing network of *GreenSchools!* that share ideas and network with students elsewhere in the country to share ideas and develop new skills.

Through the *GreenSchools!* Program the teachers and schools will be able to work with the Montana DNRC and Forest Service new sustainable operations program efforts to learn new and innovative technologies that will benefit their school and communities. *GreenSchools!* Program sponsors grants that teachers can apply for to assist in implementing identified projects at their schools.

## PLT GreenWorks!

*GreenWorks!* is the service-learning, community action program of PLT that partners PLT educators, students, and communities in environmental neighborhood improvement projects. *GreenWorks!* blends service activities with the academic curriculum and addresses real community needs as students "learn by doing." *GreenWorks!* action projects make a difference in young people's sense of responsibility toward their communities, and in their understanding of their relationship to the environment. Some examples of past grant projects include habitat restoration, watershed improvement, outdoor classrooms, and energy conservation.

### Grant: Livingston School District LINKS for Learning

The Livingston School District LINKS for Learning received a \$3,781 PLT GreenWorks! grant. LINKS For Learning, a program of the Livingston School District, is an after-school and summer enrichment program currently serving children in grades K-5 in Livingston. LINKS activities are designed to encourage success in school, a lifelong interest in learning and a commitment to community involvement. The LINKS Garden Classroom project uses a portion of the green space surrounding Washington School for a vegetable garden and small orchard. The garden and orchard provide food for LINKS participants and the community, while serving as a living classroom where students, staff and community volunteers learn about living systems and develop practical skills.

The *GreenWorks!* grant paid for materials required for garden bed frames, which include a PVC system for covering crops in early spring and fall. LINKS and Park High students received lessons pertaining to forest ecology, economics and sustainability as wood products were integrated into LINKS Garden Classroom infrastructure.

Congratulations LINKS and students for a job well done!

### Grant: Glacier Gateway Elementary plants Native Shade Trees



In 2010, the Glacier Gateway grade school in Columbia Falls completed a project that included planting of native trees to green up the playground area and provide future shade for students. With the PLT GreenWorks! grant and matching funds from Plum Creek, 450 seedlings were planted and 13 saplings were moved to the playground area for future shade and beauty!

Videos of interest:

<http://www.forestfoundation.org/video.html>

<http://www.mttreefarm.org/>



Did you that in 2009 Montana harvested trees that produced about 305 million board-feet of wood that provided the lumber needed to build just over 1500 three bedroom homes, or repair and remodel more than 4500 homes.

Keeping healthy and productive forests in Montana means we may be able to produce wood that will help Japanese Earthquake and Tsunami victims rebuild their homes as well.

We wish to take this opportunity to thank the **Plum Creek Foundation** for offering a grant that allows us to update you with this newsletter and subsequent updates in the future. Project Learning Tree is a non-profit program that is funded with private donations, agency grants, and in kind support from our sponsors (listed below). We rely on donations and volunteers to make a difference! If you or your business is able to contribute time or money to Project Learning, Please fill out the enclosed form and mail it MSU Extension Forestry.

<b>SUPPORT LEVELS FOR PROJECT LEARNING TREE (WATCH US GROW!)</b>		
Seedling	\$25	Pays for a set of teacher workbooks or sponsors a coffee break at a workshop!
Sapling / pole size timber	\$25 - \$100	Help sponsor a facilitator stipend or purchase helpful materials and books for the workshop trunks!
Mature saw log timber	\$100 - \$500	Sponsor a workshop, newsletter printing, or help with our working annual program budget.
Old Growth Relics	\$500 +	Assure continuation of facilitator trainings and a high quality PLT program coordinator in Montana.

**Past Sponsors** (in kind and financial): MSU Extension Forestry, MT Office of Public Instruction, Plum Creek Timber Company, Stoltze Land and Lumber, Montana Natural History Center, U.S. Forest Service, Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation, Montana Women in Timber, Montana Logging Association, Montana Wood Products Association, Montana Tree Farm Program, Society of American Foresters, University of MT, MT Dept. of Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

**Please send Contributions to:**

**MSU Extension Forestry**  
**Project Learning Tree Coordinator, Cindy Bertek**  
**32 Campus Drive MS 0606**  
**Missoula, MT 59812-0606**



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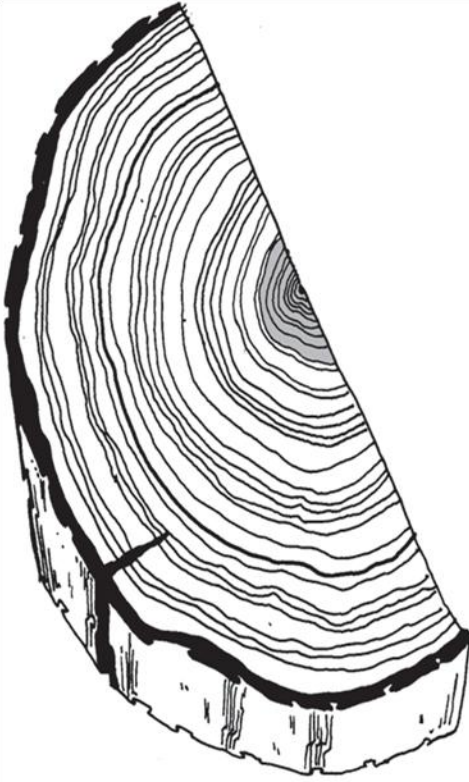
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**For** questions or other information about workshops, or to request a workshop near you, contact MSU Extension Forestry office: 406-243-4706, [cindy.bertek@cfc.umt.edu](mailto:cindy.bertek@cfc.umt.edu) or log onto their website: <http://www.cfc.umt.edu/extensionforestry/registrationforms.htm>

**Project Learning Tree People Make the Difference!!!**

This past year 87 educators were trained at 7 workshops in Montana. Student contacts expected by participants in one year: Over 2,100! Since 2008, when PLT was revitalized in Montana, 46 facilitators have been trained and 262 educators trained in 17 workshops. Montana should be proud of our commitment to outdoor education! Thanks everyone for your support!

## PLT History in a Tree Cookie



- 1976 - PLT began in 13 Western states
- 1930 - PLT went International with Canada becoming a partner
- 1989 - PLT reaches 49 states
- 1990 - PLT begins a multi-year curriculum revision
- 1993 - PLT releases its new revised PreK-8 Activity Guide and Greenworks! service learning grant program
- 1994 - National Field Study of PLT by the Research Commission of the NAAEE
- 1995 - First Secondary Modules released
- 2002 - PLT releases Energy & Society and Burning Issues curriculum materials
- 2006 - PLT releases newly revised PreK-8 Activity Guide
- 2008** - PLT revitalized in Montana (MSU Extension Forestry Coordinating)
- 2008 - New "Forests of the World" secondary guide released
- 2010 - New "Early Childhood Exploring Nature"



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