



**Centennial Valley Fire Learning Network  
Aspen Conservation Workshop  
September 21-22, 2006  
Elk Lake Resort**

Aspen woodlands across the Centennial Valley and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem support disproportionately high levels of biological diversity relative to their overall extent. Declines in aspen canopy cover over the past century have motivated aspen restoration programs throughout the region with varying levels of success. The complex interactions of fire, ungulate browsing, predators, and climate warrant an in-depth discussion about local aspen ecology, restoration efforts, and monitoring with a special focus on the Centennial Valley. The Nature Conservancy of Montana invites you to join us for two days of presentations and discussions focused on aspen ecology, management, and conservation.

**Objectives:**

- Define restoration needs and develop ecological goals for aspen in the Centennial Valley and surrounding areas of southwest Montana
- Review on-going restoration projects and synthesize lessons learned
- Develop key points for an adaptive conservation plan including range of acceptable prescriptions for aspen, information gaps, and strategies
- Identify common priorities for aspen restoration and discuss how to move them forward most effectively

**Desired Products of the Workshop**

- Guiding objectives for aspen management in the Centennial Landscape
- Set of acceptable or recommended strategies for aspen management in the Centennial Landscape
- Conservation Action Plan (CAP) for aspen in the Centennial Valley
- Collaborative review of prescriptions and monitoring methodology

**Benefits**

- BLM and State: Information and conversation for refining aspen management prescriptions; a scientifically rigorous monitoring plan to assess results of treatments and guide future management
- Red Rock Lakes NWR: Valuable review of aspen management from around the region to provide background for the aspen component of the Comprehensive Conservation Planning process
- All stakeholders: Ecologically appropriate management of important habitat for birds, mammals, amphibians, insects, and other biological elements.

## **Invited Participants**

### BLM

Kipper Blotkamp, fire specialist  
Pat Fosse, assistant field manager  
Aly Piwowar, forester

### Red Rock Lakes NWR, USFWS

Suzanne Beauchaine, assistant manager  
Karen Newlon, field biologist  
Mike Parker, manager  
Jeffrey Warren, wildlife biologist

### DNRC

Chuck Barone, forester  
Amy Kearney, forest entomologist  
Dick Moore, unit manager

### USFS

Brian Aber, wildlife biologist  
Jodie Canfield, ecologist  
Diane Hutton, ecologist  
Al Kyles, silviculturalist/FMO

Kevin Suzuki, ecologist

### TNC

McRee Anderson, FLN lead  
Elena Contreras, LANDFIRE  
Lynn Decker, FLN coordinator  
Nathan Korb, land steward  
Chet Work, land steward

### Research Ecologists

Andy Hansen, MSU  
Richard Keigley, USGS  
Bill Romme, CSU

### Other Stakeholders

Bob Brannon, MTFWP  
Patricia Dowd, GYC  
Steve Flynn, Sun Mountain Lumber  
Tom France, NWF  
Kim Ragotzkie, ID Fish and Game

## **Lodging**

Lodging and dinner provided by organizers for Thursday night. To make reservations for Wednesday and/or Friday night, please call Elk Lake Resort at (406) 276-3282.

## **Directions**

Available on the Elk Lake Resort web page:

<http://www.elklakeresortmontana.com/Directions.htm>

## **Schedule**

### **Thursday, September 21, 2006**

9am – noon Optional field trip: Hike to aspen stands on Hidden Lake Bench (B-D NF)

Noon Introduction and Opening Lunch

1pm – 3:00pm Aspen Ecology

Andy Hansen: Biological significance of aspen and broad-scale changes in aspen distribution across the GYE

Bill Romme: A historical perspective of aspen dynamics in the GYE

Richard Keigley: Three approaches to browse evaluation: architecture, L-D Index, and growth-rate analysis

Aly Piwovar, Key points from recent aspen conference in Logan, UT

Nathan Korb: Preliminary results of 2006 Centennial Aspen Inventory and Assessment undertaken by BLM, USFWS, and TNC

3pm-5pm Discussion: “What is the need for restoration of aspen in the Centennial Valley? What is a restored aspen stand?”

6pm Dinner (Prime rib and vegetarian lasagna)

### **Friday, September 22, 2006**

8am Breakfast

9am Summary of aspen issues using TNC’s Conservation Action Planning

9:30am Aspen Management Case Studies

Diane Hutton, Wisdom Ranger District B-D NF

Al Kyles and Kevin Suzuki, Ennis Ranger District B-D NF

Jodie Canfield, Gallatin NF

11am-noon Management prescriptions and Measures of Success

Noon Working Lunch, “Where do we go from here?” facilitated by McRee Anderson, TNC

1:30-4:00 Optional field trip: Hike into aspen stands in the Winslow Burn of 2003