

LINCOLN COUNTY GROWTH POLICY

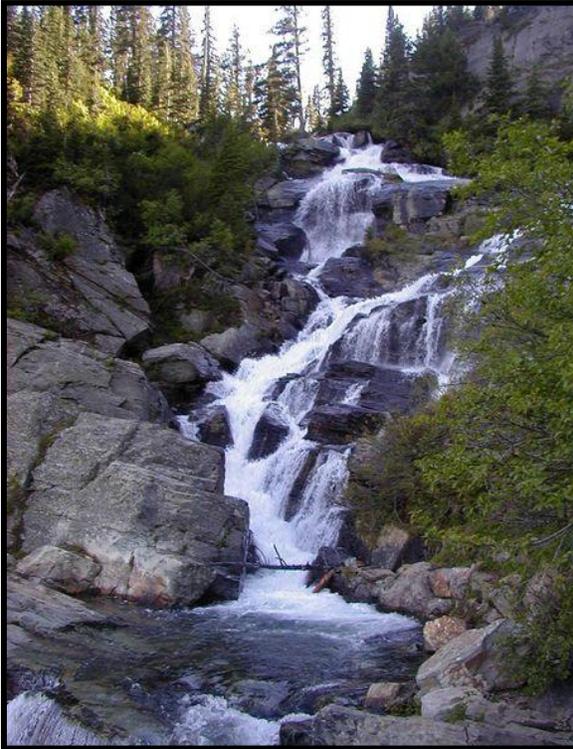
Adopted June 24, 2009



Savage Lake, Troy, MT.

Striving for a friendly, viable community for everyone, with a dynamic economy based on the utilization & conservation of natural resources, encouragement of new business opportunities, retention and expansion of existing businesses, availability of a skilled labor/work force, and supportive educational facilities.

INTRODUCTION



Leigh Lake Falls; Libby, MT

What is a Growth Policy?

A Growth Policy is:

A community **vision** for how it sees its **future**

A community **vision** for **how** and **where** it **wants to grow**

An **official statement of public policy** to guide growth and change

A **dynamic document** that **changes** with the community

A Growth Policy is not:

A set of regulations

Stagnant – Never changing

Lincoln County's Growth Policy contains:

6 elements ...

- Population and Economy**
- Housing**
- Land Use**
- Natural Resources**
- Public Facilities**
- Local and Social Services**

It also includes: present County conditions and projected trends; short and long term goals, policies and implementation strategies – all part of an “Action Plan” designed to achieve a desirable future for Lincoln County.

The term “**growth policy**” was introduced into Montana law in the late 1990s and essentially means Comprehensive or Master plan (i.e. - in state law, the terms, “growth policy”, “master plan” and “comprehensive plan” are interchangeable).

A growth policy is a broad body of public policy, focusing primarily on growth and development issues. While it is not a regulatory document in and of itself, once adopted, it is central for use in follow-up regulations or programs to implement the growth policy. For

example, a growth policy does not regulate property, nor does it enact any regulation. However, land may be regulated based upon recommendations contained in a growth policy. The growth policy is explained in the Montana Code, annotated in Title 76, Chapter 1; Part 6.

The Growth Policy is an official County public document that, upon adoption, becomes a guide for future County growth. The primary purpose of developing the Growth Policy is to help the public and elected officials identify goals and objectives, set priorities, and seek solutions to long term issues. The growth policy provides the Board of County Commissioners and the public with guidance when making land use decisions for the County.

The growth policy can be implemented through different methods, including the administration of subdivision regulations. When considering growth and development issues; the growth policy should be consulted. Any new development should be consistent with the document's goals and objectives. The growth policy is intended to be the guide to physical development in the County.

The Lincoln County Growth Policy addresses six individual elements and proposes an implementation strategy and action plan. Each element chapter begins with an executive summary which outlines conditions and trends. The executive summary is then followed by supporting data and narratives which describe in more detail the specific topic area for Lincoln County. There is overlap between the goals and objectives found in the first six chapters because all of the subjects are inter-related.

Change is inevitable. Lincoln County is growing and will continue to develop. This Growth Policy provides a sense of direction, a broad overview of where the County is (existing conditions) and where it is going (future desires). This Growth Policy is intended to help guide and manage change while protecting the resources and values that give us a quality of life and make our home a very special place.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

A special “Thank You” goes out to all of those individuals who helped in the process of gathering information, data and ideas for researching and producing the Lincoln County Growth Policy.

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POPULATION AND ECONOMICS

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

Lincoln County experienced dramatic growth from 1950 to 1970 before the population stabilized. This growth was due to high birth rates and jobs related to the construction of the Libby Dam. The County lost population from 1970-1990's due to the completion of the Dam and the loss of manufacturing jobs in the mining and forest industries. The County had a modest growth rate of 7.8% from 1990 to 2000. Most of the new population in the County is settling in the unincorporated areas; Eureka, Rexford, Fortine and the area along U.S. 93. The average population density in the County is 5.2 persons per square mile with most of that population concentrated in the Libby and Eureka areas and the area in between those two towns.

The population of Lincoln County is projected to increase steadily by 0.07% per year by 2030. Much of the projected population growth is attributed to expected increases in retirees and other older, more affluent newcomers. The scenic beauty of this area, unlimited recreation opportunities, vast public lands, lower cost of living, etc. have been discovered by people looking for a safe and quality place to live, work, retire, and recreate. From 1990 to 2000, people between the ages of 55 to 64 increased by 55% and people 65 or older increased 33.5%. With this increase in middle-age and retirement-age people comes an increase in Growth Policy issues such as increased demands for medical and public services including senior related housing needs.

The Montana, regional and local economies are changing and tend to reflect national trends toward a more service-based economy. Population growth in the last decade was due primarily to in-migration and an increase in service related jobs. Traditional dominant resource extraction industries have lost much of their hold on Lincoln County's economy due to national and international political and economic factors. The wood products and mining industries have experienced major declines in the last ten years. Since approximately 90% of the County's total land is held either by the Federal Government or large private corporations, most of the major economic development/land use decisions are made by others and out of the County's control.

According to the 2003 Census estimates, 18.3% of the population in Lincoln County had incomes below the poverty level. This is higher than the statewide average of 14.2%.

Per capita personal income and median income for Lincoln County is lower than State and national averages. The gap between income levels has widened since 2000.

Tourism is the second largest industry in Montana; bringing in over 10 million visitors who spent over 2 billion dollars.

Agriculture in Lincoln County is limited, due to mountainous terrain and narrow valleys. The only considerable body of open land for agricultural purposes is located in the Tobacco Valley near Eureka.

A vermiculite mine was owned and operated by W. R. Grace Company near Libby from 1963 until its closure in 1990. In 1999, the mine was blamed for dozens of asbestos-related deaths and illnesses among Libby residents and former employees due to exposure to asbestos-tainted vermiculite. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was called in and Libby was added to EPA's [National Priorities List](#) in October 2002. EPA then established a program to inspect all properties in Libby. EPA estimated that 1200-1400 residential and business properties will need some type of cleanup. The local economy has been helped significantly by the cleanup of Asbestos in area properties, businesses, and homes. While this has been a significant boost to the local economy, residents recognize it is a short term spike only and needs to be replaced and/or supplemented by long term jobs with benefits. The County looks forward to the day when it receives a Record of Decision by EPA designating Lincoln County as having a clean bill of health.

Two new business parks have been initiated and are being developed in Lincoln County since 2003. Both business parks are working to improve infrastructure and provide “living wage” jobs for the anticipated increased development of Lincoln County.

Mines’ Management, Inc. (MMI), an Idaho corporation has submitted plans for a copper and silver mine referred to as the Montanore Project. The underground mine would be in Sanders County, and the mill and other facilities would be in Lincoln County. This mine could have a significant growth impact on Lincoln County in the next decade.

Although the local economy is impacted by national trends, it is well positioned to respond to these trends with most levels of job training and economic development services.

Education levels in Lincoln County are lower than the statewide average. When compared to other counties, Lincoln County has a smaller percentage of people in management and professional occupations but has a higher percentage of production occupations.

Lincoln County will need to find a sufficient supply of quality workers to meet future employment opportunities as they arise in all commercial and retail areas. Long term employment opportunities could attract many residents who are now under-employed, or former residents who left Lincoln County to find work elsewhere. Employment opportunities will bring economic, social and environmental issues that will require thoughtful growth planning and implementation.

POPULATION

Lincoln County has two distinct geographic areas and population centers; North and South Lincoln County. South Lincoln County contains Libby, the County Seat, Troy, and the Yaak Community along with Bull Lake and the Chain of Lakes communities. North Lincoln County, also known as the Tobacco Valley, includes the Towns of Eureka and Rexford and the unincorporated towns of Trego, Fortine, West Kootenai and Stryker along with the community of the West Kootenai. Libby is the largest town in Lincoln County followed by Eureka and Troy as the three largest population centers.

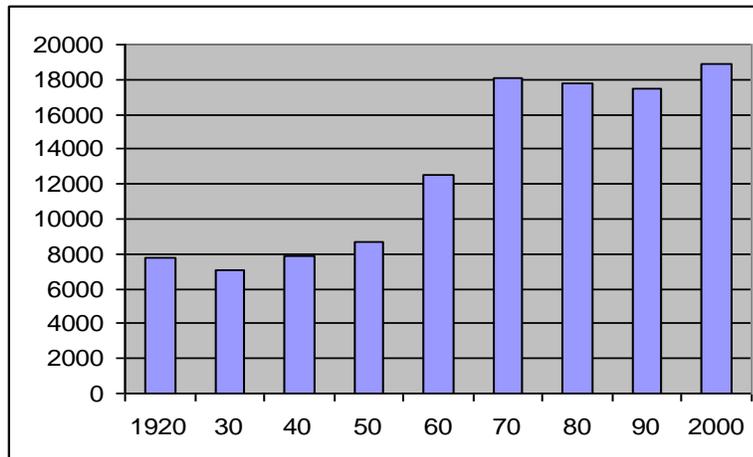
The population of Lincoln County is projected to increase steadily by rising from 18,866 people in 2004 to 22,740 people by 2030 - (US Census Bureau). Lincoln County is adjacent to faster growth counties in Northwest Montana: Flathead, Lake and Sanders. The population of Lincoln County is approximately 96.2% white, 1.5% American Indian, and 1.9% Hispanic with .04% all other.

Population Change

The population of Lincoln County grew dramatically from 1950 to 1970. After two decades of slight population losses from 1970 to 1990, the population in the County was once again growing with a 7.8% increase from 1990 to 2000. This compared to a statewide growth rate of 13% during this same time period. The 2000 population of 18,837 is ranked 10th among the 56 counties in the State.

A number of factors contribute to the population growth patterns in the County. During the period from 1950 to 1960, the high birth rates of the baby boom along with increased employment in the manufacturing sector contributed to population growth in the County. Building of the Libby Dam during the 1960's brought construction jobs and increased population during this decade. From 1970 to 1990, birth rates declined and with the completion of the Libby Dam, construction jobs fell from 1,611 in 1970 to 420 in 1980. Although the manufacturing base (primarily the wood products industry) began to decline throughout the 1990's, the population grew due to an increase in the service industries and in-migration related to the attractive natural amenities in the County.

Table 1: Population Change in Lincoln County 1920 – 2000 (US Census Bureau)



Examining population trends in adjoining counties provides other insights on the dynamics of population growth in the region. Since 1990, counties in western Montana have had dramatic growth rates. Nearby Flathead and Lake County experienced 25% growth from 1990 to 2000. Population growth in Lincoln County during the 1990's was modest compared to other counties in the western region of the State. Recent approvals in Lincoln County for large residential subdivisions, however, indicate that the rate of growth may be increasing.

Table 2: Census Population 1990 and 2000 – Selected Counties

County	1990	2000	% Change
Flathead	59,218	74,471	25.7%
Lincoln	17,368	18,837	7.8%
Sanders	8669	10,277	18%
Lake	21,041	26,507	25.9%
Montana	799,065	902,195	13%

Source: United States Census Bureau - Census of the Population

Components of Population Change

Births and Deaths

Over the last 20 years, there has been a nationwide trend of a decreasing birth rate. In Montana, the birth rate (The number of births in a year per 1,000 population.) fell from 17.7 in 1980 to 12.2 in 2004. In Lincoln County, the decline in birth rate was even more pronounced with an 18.3 rate in 1980 compared to only a 9.6 birth rate in 2004. Since 1990, the actual number of births per year has declined with fewer births in 2004 than in any of the previous 25 years.

The following table indicates the number of deaths of residents in the County regardless of where the deaths occurred. The number of deaths has fluctuated from year to year but a review of the five year averages indicates that over the last 10 years there has been a slight increase in the annual number of deaths. Deaths have consistently outnumbered the total of births each year, resulting in negative natural increase in population in the County.

Table 3: Components of Population Change – Lincoln County

Year	1995	2000	2004	1995-1990 Average Per year	2000-2004 Average Per year
Births	132	112	96	118.6	104.2
Deaths	158	203	186	182.4	192.2
Net Change	(-26)	(-91)	(-90)	--	-

Source: Montana Department of Public Health & Human Services, Office of Vital Statistics

Migration

According to the 2000 Census, 20% of the residents in Lincoln County resided in a different county in 1995. Three out of four of those newcomers were from out-of-state. The percentage of in-migration is higher than the statewide average of 13% but comparable to adjoining Flathead County with 22% of new residents from 1995 to 2000. Within the County, the City of Libby had the highest rate of new residents with 26% of the population having resided in a different county in 1995.

Population Projections

A. Low Growth Scenario

The Montana Department of Commerce uses population projections from the NPA Data Services, Inc. to make statewide and county projections. According to the projections, Lincoln County is assumed to have no growth from 2000 to 2005 and a 0.04% average annual growth rate from 2005 until 2010. The growth rate then increases in 2010 to a 0.07% annual increase to 2020 and increases again to 0.09% annually from 2020 to 2025.

Table 4: Low Growth Population Projections, Lincoln County Montana

Year	Population
2000	18,837
2005	18,828
2010	19,251
2015	19,858
2020	20,661
2025	21,595

Source: Montana Department of Commerce Census and Economic Information Center, NPA Data Services - 2004

B. High Growth Scenario

Population growth trends can change dramatically due to unanticipated gains or losses in the employment sector or in-migration due to the attractiveness of a region as a retirement or resort area. This scenario assumes that Lincoln County will have a steady growth rate of 1% annually. This would result in a 10% growth rate over the next 10 years compared to 7.8% growth from 1990 to 2000. Factors indicating that a higher growth rate may continue for the next 10 to 20 years include increased subdivision activity and the high growth rates in the adjacent counties. NPA Data Services projects that Flathead County will have an average annual growth rate of 1.9% from 2005 to 2025. An average annual growth rate of 1% would be slightly higher than the past decade but just about half of the projected rate of growth in the adjoining high growth counties.

Table 5: High Growth Population Projections by Year

Year	Population
2000	18,837
2005	19,779
2010	20,768
2015	21,806
2020	22,896
2025	24,041

Source: Montana Department of Commerce Census and Economic Information Center, NPA Data Services – 2004

Race & Ethnicity

In 2000, the population of Lincoln County was predominantly white 96.1% with American Indians comprising the largest minority group. Statewide, 90.6% of the 2000 population was white. For the first time in the 2000 Census, there was a category for "Two or More Races". This category accounted for 1.9% of the population in Lincoln County.

Table 6: Population by Race - Lincoln County

Race	Population	Percent
White	18,100	96.1
Black or African American	21	0.1
American Indian or Alaskan native	226	2.1
Asian	59	0.3
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	7	0.0
Other	74	0.4
Two or more races	350	1.9
Hispanic or Latino(of any race)	271	1.4

Source: U.S. Census of the Population - 2000

Age Distribution

The median age in Lincoln County in 2000 was 42.1 years. This is greater than the statewide median age of 37.5 years. Between 1990 and 2000, the County population of age 65 increased from 2,142 people to 2,859 people. The overall percentage of the population over 65 increased from 12.3% in 1990 to 15.2% in 2000. Statewide the number of people 65 and over was 13.4% in 2000. NPA Data Services projects that by 2025, 29.6% of the population in Lincoln County will be age 65 and over.

Table 7: Population by Age – Lincoln County

Age Group	#	Percent
Under 5 years	937	5.0
5 to 9 years	1,229	6.5
10 to 14 years	1,580	8.4
15 to 19 years	1,437	7.6
20 to 24 years	634	3.4
25 to 34 years	1,644	8.7
35 to 44 years	2,915	15.5
45 to 54 years	3,143	16.7
55 to 59 years	1,301	6.9
60 to 64 years	1,158	6.1
65 to 74 years	1,675	8.9
75 to 84 years	936	5.0
85 years and over	248	1.3

Source: U.S. Census of the Population – 2000

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

The United States and Montana experienced a prolonged period of economic expansion during the 1990's. The stock market reached record heights, inflation was held in check and interest rates remained low, providing relatively inexpensive investment capital. While Montana's economy has lagged behind the national economy, growth has remained steady until the fourth quarter of 2008. Lincoln County has not followed this trend as the unemployment rate in Lincoln County in 2004 was 12.8% which is nearly three times more than the unemployment rate of Montana, which was 4.4% during 2004.

Historically, the major economy of Lincoln County has centered on mining activity and the forest industry. Lincoln County has consistently been a top timber producer. However, these once traditional dominant resource extraction industries have lost much of their hold on Lincoln County's economy due to national and international political and economic factors. The wood products and mining industries have experienced major declines in the last ten years. Since approximately 90% of the County's total land is held either by the U.S. Forest Service or large private corporations, most of the major economic development/land use decisions are made by others and out of the County's control.

Employment

In 2000, according to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, lumber and wood products comprised 42.1% of all manufacturing establishments and 89.7% of all manufacturing employment for Lincoln County. At that time, Owens & Hurst Lumber, Plum Creek Lumber, and Stimson Lumber Company were the three largest lumber and wood product employers. During 2003 (the latest data available) the latest data available, the lumber and wood products industry comprised 43.2% of all manufacturing establishments, and employment declined to 72.6% of manufacturing employment. The strength of the lumber and wood products industry has historically been tied to the strength of the national housing and construction market, as well as the local availability of timber. Between 1993 and 2005, five lumber mills closed, leaving only Plum Creek with continuing operations in Lincoln County.

In 2003, the top three employment sectors in Lincoln County were government enterprises, retail trade, and healthcare and social assistance industries. The government enterprises sector, with 17.2% of total employment, was the largest single employer in Lincoln County. The retail trade sector was the next largest with 12.1% of total employment followed by the health care and social assistance sector with 10.2% of total employment (Table 8). Overall, the services sector (including trade, general services, utilities, and transportation) accounts for close to half of all employment. Contributing to the services sector is a vibrant recreation industry that provides visitors numerous angling, camping, hiking, skiing, snowmobiling, hunting and fishing, wildlife viewing, and other recreation opportunities.

Table 8: Lincoln County Employment Trends (2001-2003) for Major Industrial Sectors.

Industrial Sector	2001		2002		2003	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Services (Trade, Service, Utilities, Transportation)	2,829	32.4	3,938	44.3	3,876	43.1
Finance, Government, Education	1,749	20.0	1,721	19.4	1,801	20.0
Goods Production (construction/Manufacturing)	1,483	17.0	1,466	16.5	1,274	14.2
Resource Commodity (Agriculture, Mining, Forestry)	981	11.2	1,014	11.4	317 (D)	3.5 (D)
Total Employment	8,742		8,887		8,989	

Employment based on the number of full- and part-time jobs. Note: (D) = some data not included to avoid disclosure of confidential information; estimates included in totals. Source: Western Economic Services, LLC. 2006; U.S. Census Bureau 2006

The labor force in Lincoln County defined as persons working or seeking work, declined by 1,742 persons, from 8,501 in 1990 to 6,759 in 2004. This is a decline of 1.62% per year compared to an increase of 1.21% statewide with unemployment in Lincoln County increased by 1.4% per year from 1990 to 2004. The unemployment rate, the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the labor force, increased from 12.4% in 1990 to 12.8% in 2004. This is nearly three times more than the unemployment rate of Montana, which was 4.4% during 2004.

Total employment in Lincoln County is projected to increase to 12,572 people by 2030. Increases in future employment would likely be attributed to growth in the services sector. This increase represents an annual growth rate of 1.3% between 2003 and 2030, higher than the historical 1970-2002 growth rate of 0.5% (Western Economic Services, LLC. 2006).

Income (Per Capita)

Generally, counties with a smaller population and a rural economy have lower incomes than urban counties. In 2004, Lincoln County had a per capita personal income (PCPI) of \$20,778 compared to a State average of \$27,657 and \$28,598 in neighboring Flathead County. Although, Lincoln County has traditionally had a lower PCPI than the nation and the State, in the last decade the income gap has widened. In 2004, PCPI in Lincoln County ranked 48 out of 56 counties compared to a rank of 40 in 1994. In 2004, the per capita income in Lincoln County was only 63% of the national average. From 1994 to 2004, the average annual growth rate in PCPI for the State was 4.5% and for the nation was 4.1%. In Lincoln County the annual rate of growth during this 10-year period was 3.1%

Table 9: Lincoln County and Montana per Capita Income in comparison to Nation

Year	U.S.	Montana	Montana as % of National Average	Lincoln County	Lincoln County as % of National Average
1980	\$10,114	\$9,058	90	\$7,341	73
1990	\$19,477	\$15,448	79	\$13,023	67
2000	\$29,845	\$22,929	77	\$17,783	60
2004	\$33,050	\$27,657	84	\$20,778	63

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis

Median Household Income

The estimated median household income in Lincoln County in 2003 was \$29,262. This was lower than the statewide median household income of \$34,449 and adjoining Flathead County with a median household income of \$37,421.

Table 10: Estimated Median Household Income - 2003

	2003
Lincoln	\$29,262
Flathead	\$37,421
Montana	\$34,449

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

The most recent data available at the city level is from the 2000 census. According to this data, Eureka had the highest median household income in the County while Troy had the lowest of the three incorporated cities.

Table 11: Median Household Income - 2000

	2000
Libby	\$24,276
Eureka	\$27,120
Troy	\$19,635

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Income by Source

Total personal income (TPI) includes the total of earnings, dividends, interests and rent and personal current transfer receipts received by the residents of Lincoln County. In 2004 Lincoln County had a (TPI) of \$396,142,000. While Lincoln County ranks 10th in the State in population, the TPI for the County is ranked 12th in the State. The 2004 TPI reflected an increase of 4.5% from 2003. The 2003-2004 State change was 6.7% and the national change was 6.0%.

Since 1980, a larger share of Lincoln County's total personal income came from dividends and transfer payments. Due to the aging population, there is a trend in the State for a larger portion of income to come from retirement sources. Compared to the State average, however, Lincoln County has a larger proportion of income coming from dividends and transfer payments. Statewide, an average of 37% of income came from these sources while in Lincoln County these sources accounted for 47.7% of income coming into the County.

Table 12: Lincoln County Percent Income by Source - 1980, 1990 & 2004

Source of Income	1980	1990	2004
Net Earnings (Wages)	70.3%	64.0%	52.3%
Dividends, Interest & Rent	14.4%	16.4%	19.3%
Transfer Payments (Social Security, Pensions, Disability, ...)	15.3%	19.6%	28.4%

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Information System

In 2004, a larger percentage of individual income came into Lincoln County from transfer payments such as social security, pensions and disability than in 1994 and reflects a national trend of transfer payments is higher in Lincoln County than the State average.

Employers - Commercial and Retail

According to the Montana Department of Labor and Industry – Research Analysis Bureau, the top nine private employers in Lincoln County are as follows:

- St. John’s Lutheran Hospital (100-249 employees)
- Rosauer’s Food & Drug (100-249 employees)
- Revett Minerals Inc. (150 -175 employees)
- Plum Creek (50-99 employees)
- Mountain View Manor (50 – 99 employees)
- Libby Care Center (50 – 99 employees)
- A Full Life Agency (50 to 99 employees)
- First National Bank (20 to 49 employees)
- Environmental Restoration (20 – 49 employees)

Mines’s Management, Inc. (MMI), an Idaho corporation has submitted plans for a copper and silver mine referred to as the Montanore Project. The underground mine would be in Sanders County, and the mill and other facilities would be in Lincoln County. According to the plan submitted to the US Forest Service, construction will start in Year 1 with the hiring of approximately 135 employees. Construction employment will peak at 155 employees during Year 2. Total employment (construction and operations) is expected to peak at 505 employees during Year 3. Following completion of construction at the end of the third year of the project, total employment should level off to 450 workers. This could have a significant growth impact on Lincoln County.

Hard Rock Mining Impact Act

The Hard Rock Mining Impact Act is designed to assist local governments in handling financial impacts caused by large-scale mineral development projects. A new mineral development may result in the need for local governments to provide additional services and facilities before mine-related revenues become available. The resulting costs can create a fiscal burden for local taxpayers. The HRMIB oversees an established process for identifying and mitigating fiscal impacts to local governments through the development of a Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan. Under the Impact Act, each new large-scale hard-rock mineral development in Montana is required to prepare a local government fiscal Impact Plan. In the plan, the developer is to identify and commit to pay all increased capital and net operating costs to local government units that will result from the mineral development. The operating permit issued by DEQ is not valid until an impact mitigation plan has been approved by the HRMIB.

Montanore Mining Company (MMC) has prepared the Impact Plan with the cooperation of the affected local governments (Western Economic Services LLC 2005) and submitted it to Lincoln County where it was approved. The HRMIB will review the plan for its compliance with the Impact Act and the administrative rules. In the plan, the developer may commit to provide assistance that will prevent increased costs or may commit to pay increased costs through grants, property tax prepayments, or education impact bonds. *Source: Preliminary Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Montanore Project 2-15-08. Working draft not final Document.*

The in-migration of retired persons to the area (expected to accelerate as the Baby Boom generation begins to retire), combined with in-migration of persons whose employment allows them to live where they choose, is expected to be the most important factor underlying social and economic developments in the region over the next 25 years. Lincoln County is expected to see minimal impact from any larger regional pattern and to continue its slow pace of growth and change. What growth it does see would come from the finance/education/government and service sectors of the economy. *Source: Western Economic Services, LLC. 2006; U.S. Census Bureau 2006a.*

Poverty

Each year the U.S. Census Bureau establishes thresholds of poverty levels to measure the number of people living below a certain income level. The numbers are used to formulate economic policy and distribute social service aid. The poverty threshold for 2003 was \$14,810 for a household with two adults and one child.

According to the 2003 Census estimates, 18.3% of the population in Lincoln County had incomes below the poverty level. Children age 17 and under were more likely to be living below the poverty line. In Lincoln County, the percentage of people living in poverty has increased since 1989. In 1989, Lincoln County had a slightly lower percentage in poverty compared to the State average. The latest estimate indicates that while the State average has not changed much over the years, the percentage of people in poverty in Lincoln County now surpasses the State average.

Table 13: Estimated Percent of People in Poverty 1989, 1999 & 2003

	1989	1999	2003
All Ages – Lincoln County	14.2	17.9	18.3
Ages 0-17 – Lincoln County	14.3	26.0	28.5
Montana All Ages	15.0	14.3	14.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE TRAINING

Educational attainment levels are a major factor affecting the types of employers that are attracted to an area and the types of jobs that are appropriate for the population. Education and training are directly related to workforce availability, readiness and earning potential. “Education has value.” Schools and colleges need to be aligned and tuned into future workforce needs in order to train students to work and to maximize occupational opportunities as well as increase the quantity and quality of an educated workforce to area businesses, both existing and potential new industries by supporting technical assistance and learning opportunities to make them more competitive in today’s marketplace.

The Lincoln County Business Expansion and Retention Program (BEAR) have been initiated through the leadership of the Tobacco Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic (TVCDC) BEAR Committee and the Kootenai River Development Council. There have been some difficulties working on a County wide basis but it was agreed that the administration of the BEAR program would be done by Rae Lynn Hays, MSU/Lincoln County Extension Agent and Tracy McIntyre, Eureka Rural Development Partners. The County wide BEAR team has drafted brochures and is conducting presentations throughout Lincoln County.

Education

In 2000, the percentage of people in Lincoln County who have attained at least a high school diploma is 80.2% compared to the State average of 87.2%. The percent of persons with a Bachelor's degree or higher is 13.7% compared to the State average of 24.4%. Providing employers with workers who meet the demands of the changing job market is a challenge.

Table 14: Education Levels - Lincoln County - 2000

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	Number	Percent
Less than 9th grade	851	6.5
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	1,720	13.2
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	4,948	38.0
Some college, no degree	3,016	23.2
Associate degree	695	5.3
Bachelor's degree	1,217	9.4
Graduate or professional degree	561	4.3
Percent high school graduate or higher	--	80.2
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	--	13.7

Source: U.S. Census of the Population - 2000

ECONOMIC GROWTH

Much of the economic growth in Lincoln County will likely come from the expansion of existing businesses as opposed to the attraction of new ones. Lincoln County is a natural resource rich County but is a distance from major markets. Businesses that can take advantage of generally low costs of doing business, a motivated workforce and modern technology will find the County attractive. Several efforts are underway to improve the working conditions and business climate in Lincoln County.

Kootenai Business Park

In 2003, Stimson Lumber Company donated their former 400 acre mill site to the Lincoln County Port Authority. This site has now been developed into the Kootenai Business Park and is presently an active industrial site with potential to develop additional light manufacturing and industrial jobs that pay a “living wage” for southern Lincoln County residents. Business Park expansion efforts to improve infrastructure support and working conditions are well underway.

Tobacco Valley Business Park

The Tobacco Valley also has a new Business Park that has the potential to be a cornerstone of economic vibrancy in the Tobacco Valley. The TIFID Board is in the beginning stages of developing a master plan for the 22 acre site. The Board is also working on the development of a feasibility study for an incubator type rental complex and now has the ability to lease and/or sell the lots. The Tobacco Valley Business Park will have 3-phase power, DSL, and year round road access. The TIFID Board plans on beginning a phase 2 construction in 2008-2009 which includes building a rental unit (probably an incubator/shared office complex), putting in septic systems and wells, and some landscaping.

LIBBY ASBESTOS CLEANUP

The economy of the County has been helped significantly by the cleanup of Asbestos in area properties, businesses, and homes since the City of Libby was named a Superfund site by the EPA in 2002. The local economy has been helped significantly by the cleanup of Asbestos in area properties, businesses, and homes. While this has been a significant boost to the local economy, residents recognize it is a short term spike only and needs to be replaced and/or supplemented by long term jobs with benefits. In June 2008, The EPA and Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry have announced an \$8 million, 5 year project to bring a major research university to Libby to study the health effects of exposure to Libby Amphibole asbestos. The county looks forward to the day when it can get a Record of Decision by EPA designating Lincoln County as having a clean bill of health.

BROADBAND

A lack of affordable broadband is a problem in Southern Lincoln County, primarily due to market size and a lack of competition. The need for more Broadband at competitive prices would be good for Commerce by helping local businesses reduce their cost of doing business and it would offer opportunity for “Home Based Businesses” to compete on a level playing field with neighboring communities. In April 2008, Frontier announced a major broadband expansion that is under construction and near completion in October 2008 that should be a major benefit to the local economy in solving this need.

TOURISM

Tourism in Lincoln County is a growing industry as it is in all of Montana. As we are looking to diversify our economy from mining and timber, tourism is growing and promises to become more important to the area’s economic well being.

Multiple efforts are underway to increase the tourism based income in Lincoln County. Lincoln County is one of Montana’s hidden treasures with the potential to be a tourist destination stop. The natural beauty, abundance of wildlife, freedom to use the National Forest (hiking, fishing, scenic driving, hunting camping), a rich history, Lake Koocanusa, Ten Lakes Scenic Area, Kootenai Falls, Cabinet Mountain Wilderness etc. and the friendliness of the people are just a few of the County’s many attractions that will enhance tourism development.

The two major Local Development Organizations, (LDO) (economic development assistance sources), in Lincoln County are Kootenai River Development Council and Eureka Rural Development Partners.

See Chapter 7 (Implementation Plan part IV) “Lincoln County Action Plan” for Population and Economy Goals and Objectives.

HOUSING

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

Housing costs in western Montana are generally higher than in other parts of the state. The gap between income growths and housing prices grew much wider in Lincoln County from 2000 to 2005 and is estimated to get much worse by 2020. A generally accepted definition of affordable housing is housing costs do not exceed 30% of household income (Montana Department of Commerce- 2008). Personal income growth is falling further behind housing price growth thereby making housing less affordable. These factors have caused the affordable housing supply to be reduced significantly in Lincoln County. Some of the established housing stock has been poorly maintained over time and needs renovation and maintenance. Average annual wages in Lincoln County have decreased from 1990 – 2006 due to loss of higher salaried jobs (Montana Research and Analysis Bureau - 2008)

Strong housing demand has created a growing affordability gap that is approaching crisis proportions in Lincoln County and Northwest Montana. This increasing shortage of affordable housing affects the entire Lincoln County economy in areas such as workforce availability, workforce stability, workforce retention, delivery of basic and enhanced human services, school enrollments, municipal funding and business retention, expansion and recruitment.

Lincoln County has very extensive affordable housing needs of both homeowner and rental units. Property values are running at an all time high. Housing inventory for the Libby/Troy/Eureka areas has fluctuated significantly over the last year. While housing inventories have increased, low income housing is difficult if not impossible to find. In 2000, a median priced home in Lincoln County could be purchased with a median household income; this is no longer true and is projected to become much worse in the future (Montana Department of Commerce – 2008).

Lincoln County is aging quite rapidly as the population age 65 and older has the potential to double by 2020 which will greatly increase the needs for senior related housing and services. Seniors are staying in homes longer since middle housing stock (senior/elderly rentals and assisted living units) is in short supply. This result's in seniors moving from homes to nursing homes as there is little "in between" housing available. As a result, many potential starters, more affordable homes, are delayed or kept off the market. As our population continues to age, middle housing stock needs will continue to grow.

Lincoln County is seeing an influx of people seeking second/vacation homes which drives up the housing market and makes it appear that the County has more housing than is actually available.

Available housing does not mean affordable housing, although there are First Time Homebuyer programs available at below market interest rates and other programs to assist lower income people with down payment and closing costs. The high prices and lower income issues make it nearly impossible for young/new families to qualify for any type of home loan in today's market.

Lincoln County has seen a decline in average household size during the last decade. This decrease mirrored State and nationwide trends toward smaller households due to smaller family size, an aging population with more empty nesters, and more single or childless households.

Lincoln County is comprised of 9.2% privately owned non-forest land. Plum Creek Timber Company owns approximately 12.5% of the land in Lincoln County. In recent years, many private forest tracts have been sold off for residential development. The Company is responding to higher land values and the demand for rural recreational and residential properties by increasing land sales and developments within Lincoln County. This development will occur in the unincorporated areas of the County. This will be a significant growth issue Lincoln County will face in the future.

The overall housing goal is to promote balanced growth that will accommodate the projected population, and provide alternative approaches to meeting changing demographic and emerging needs. It is desirable and in the best interests of the County and local economy to promote the expansion of affordability in housing choices for all individuals, families, seniors, and other special needs groups. To maximize the cost effectiveness of providing future services and infrastructure, it is most cost effective and desirable to encourage new growth development near existing population centers. It will be important to foster high-quality development and redevelopment that protects our rural character and respects natural resources while supporting thriving communities.

Lincoln County does not have a county-wide lead organization working actively at this time to increase the number of affordable housing units. The Tobacco Valley has a Community Land Trust they have established to help address housing issues there. Neighboring Counties also have housing organizations working to create more affordable housing units. Lincoln County may wish to support the development of an organization to address housing affordability and supply issues.

HOUSING

Housing Units

In the year 2000, 73.7% of the housing units in Lincoln County were located in unincorporated areas. The number of housing units in Lincoln County has increased 16% from 1990 to 2000. This amounted to an annual average growth of 132 new units per year. The majority of this growth occurred in the unincorporated areas and this trend will continue in the future with the recent availability of Plum Creek Timber Lands being offered for sale in rural Lincoln County.

Table 1: Lincoln County Housing as Percent of Total Housing – 1990 and 2000

Geographic Area	1990 Housing Units	% of Housing Units	2000 Housing Units	% of County
Lincoln County Total	8,002	100%	9,319	100%
Libby	1,141	13.7%	1,281	14.3%
Eureka	491	5.2%	489	6.1%
Troy	409	5.0%	465	5.1%
Rexford	60	0.9%	81	0.7%
Unincorporated County	5,901	75.1%	7,003	73.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Housing Starts

From 2000 to 2004, the Montana Building Industry Association has reported 779 single-family housing starts in Lincoln County. This amounts to an annual average growth of 156 new units per year. There were 201 housing starts in 2004. These figures do not include mobile homes or apartments.

Table 2: Lincoln County Housing Starts – 2000 to 2004

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
# of Single-Family Housing Starts	130	107	149	192	201

Source: Montana Building Association, "Single Family Housing Starts by County,"

Household Size

In Lincoln County there was a decline in average household size during the last decade from 2.60 persons per household in 1990 and 2.40 persons in 2000. This decrease mirrored State and nationwide trends towards smaller households due to smaller family size, an aging population with more empty nesters, and more single or childless households. The average household size for the State of Montana was 2.45 in 2000. The average household size in the incorporated cities was smaller than the unincorporated areas.

Table 3: Average Household Size - 2000

	Lincoln County	Libby	Eureka	Troy	Rexford	Montana
Household Size	2.40	2.20	2.26	2.25	2.16	2.45

Source: US Census, 2000 Census of Population

Vacancy Rate

In 2000, vacant units comprised 17% of the housing stock in the County. Among these units, almost half were classified as seasonal homes. The majority of these seasonal homes were located in the unincorporated areas. Units that are for sale or rent accounted for 35% of vacant units, while units classified as "other" (units that are vacant but not for sale or rent) accounted for 12% of vacant units throughout the County. These "other" units comprised a larger portion of vacant units in the incorporated areas. Lincoln County is seeing an influx of people seeking second/vacation homes which makes it appear that the County has more housing available than it actually does. This is occurring primarily in the Tobacco Valley Area that is seeing a strong Canadian influence and the Thompson Chain of Lakes areas where Plum Creek Timber Company lands are being developed for vacation/residential properties.

Table 4: County Housing Unit by Occupancy - 2000

Type of Housing Unit	Lincoln County		Libby		Eureka		Troy		Unincorporated areas	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Occupied Housing Units	7764	83%	1149	90%	426	87%	421	91%	5,768	81%
Vacant (Total)	1,555	17%	132	10%	63	13%	44	9%	1,316	19%
Vacant - For Rent, For Sale or Sold	539	35%	87	66%	43	68%	26	59%	383	29%
Vacant – Seasonal	821	53%	9	7%	6	10%	9	20%	797	61%
Vacant - Migratory	2	--	0	--	0	--	0	--	2	--
Vacant - Other	193	12%	36	27%	14	22%	9	20%	134	10%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census2. 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Housing Unit by Type

In 2000, traditional single-family units were the predominant type of housing in the County, comprising 70.7% of all housing units. Mobile homes made up 22.5% of housing stock while duplexes and multi-family units comprised 5.9% of all units in the County. The majority of multi-family units (65%) were in Libby while the majority of mobile homes (89%) were in the unincorporated areas. The number of mobile homes increased from 1,941 in 1990 to 2,096 in 2000.

Table 5: Housing Units by Type - 2000

Type of Unit	#	%
Single-Family Detached	6,587	70.7%
2-4 units in structure	328	3.6%
5+ units in structure	218	2.3%
Mobile Homes	2,096	22.5%
Boat, RV, Van	90	1.0
Total	9,319	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census. 2000 Census of Population and Housing

Housing Condition

The Montana Department of Commerce Housing Division conducts a periodic, "Housing Condition Study" to collect information in support of the Montana Consolidated Plan for Housing. The purpose of the study is to evaluate the current stock of housing in Montana and better understand what type of housing structures are available to rent and purchase. The data was compiled from the database of buildings in Montana. This data base is maintained by the Montana Department of Revenue.

The financial appraiser gives single family homes a rating that describes the condition of the dwelling. The rating is based on the overall physical condition or state of repair, and the condition of such features as foundations, porches, walls, exterior trim, roofing and other attributes. The rating system follows:

- Unsound - indicating that the dwelling is structurally unsound, not suitable for habitation, and subject to condemnation.
- Poor - indicating that the dwelling shows many signs of structural damage (sagging roof, foundation cracks, uneven floors, etc.) combined with a significant degree of deferred maintenance.
- Fair - Indicating that the dwelling is in structurally sound condition, but has greater than normal deterioration relative to its age (significant degree of deferred maintenance).
- Average - indicating that the dwelling shows only minor signs of deterioration caused by normal "wear and tear."
- Good - indicating that the dwelling exhibits an above ordinary standard of maintenance and upkeep in relation to its age.
- Excellent - indicating that the dwelling exhibits an outstanding standard of maintenance and upkeep in relation to its age.

Only 3% of the single-family housing stock in Lincoln County is rated as unsound or in poor condition, and 8% of the single-family housing stock is rated as fair. This is below the statewide average of 9.2% of housing units that are in poor or worse condition. Of the majority of single family housing units in the County, 80% are in average condition, while 8% of the units are in good. Almost all of the homes rated in good condition are in the unincorporated areas. Statewide, 35% of homes are rated as good or excellent condition in 2005. The majority of mobile homes in the County are rated in fair condition, and only 12% are rated in good condition. This compares to 37% of mobile homes rated in good condition statewide.

Housing Quality & Workmanship

Another measure of housing condition is quality and workmanship. These ratings evaluate whether the structure was constructed with below average, average, or above average materials. Generally, maintenance on lower grade homes may be higher than they might be otherwise, and may result in future higher maintenance problems.

In Lincoln County, 27% of homes were rated as having cheap, poor or low cost workmanship and quality. This is higher than the State average of 22% in these lower categories. In the County, 34% of homes rated as average or above average workmanship compared to 41% statewide.

Table 6: Lincoln County Single-Family Housing Quality and Workmanship - 2005

Rating	Homes	% of Total
Cheap	276	2%
Poor	900	7%
Low Cost	2,450	18%
Fair	4,456	33%
Average	4,542	34%
Good	640	5%
Very Good	60	--
Excellent – Superior	10	--
Total	13,334	100%

Source: Montana Department of Housing, "Montana Housing Condition Study - Technical Appendix, Volume II," September 1999

In the County, 75% of mobile homes were rated as low cost compared to a statewide average of 54%. The statewide trend indicates that the majority of mobile homes with lower quality ratings were dated to the 1970s, with newer mobile homes using better materials and workmanship.

Housing Costs – Home Owners

Data from the 2000 Census indicates that the value of owner-occupied housing in Lincoln County was below the average for the State of Montana and significantly below other western counties. Sample data collected in 2003, however, indicates a significant increase in housing prices, and the price gap between Lincoln and other neighboring counties is getting narrower. This sample data is based on single-family home sales.

Table 7: Single Family Home Median Housing Value for Selected Counties - 2000 & 2003

County and State	2000 Median Value Census	2003 Median Value Board of Housing
Lincoln	\$82,600	\$123,250
Flathead	\$125,600	\$159,000
Sanders	\$82,900	\$120,000
Lake	\$117,200	\$155,000
Missoula	\$136,500	\$169,950
Montana	\$99,500	--

Source: U.S. Census of the Population & Housing, 2000 & Montana Board of Housing

Housing Costs – Renters

The average rent in Lincoln County in 2000 was the lowest among of State western counties. More recent data from the Montana Department of Commerce indicates that although rental costs are increasing, they continue to be among the lowest in the western part of the State. For example, in 2005, the average for a two-bedroom rental in Libby was \$503 per month compared to \$818 a month in Kalispell (Flathead County) and \$695 a month in Pablo (Lake County).

Table 8: Median Housing Rent for Selected Counties - 2000

County	2000 Median Rent
Lincoln	\$364
Flathead	\$484
Sanders	\$390
Lake	\$403
Missoula	\$530
Montana	\$447

Source: U.S. Census of the Population & Housing, 2000

The current rental units are rented almost as fast as they go on the market. Many of the rental houses are considered substandard housing while the apartments are usually very nice. The Section 8 Rental Assistance program for low income families is averaging a 2-3 year waiting list.

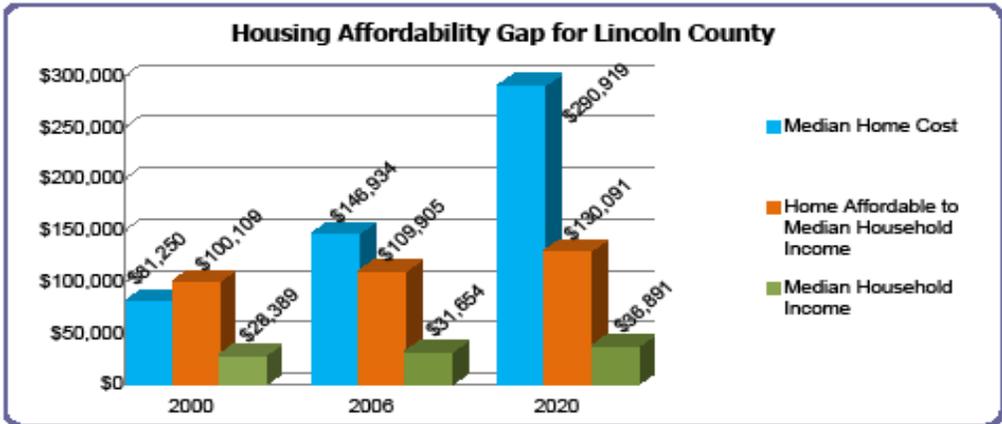
Housing Affordability

The Montana Department of Commerce recently released a White Paper on affordable housing that was drafted in April 2008. The white paper illustrates that in 2000 the median income in Lincoln County could afford a median priced home. But with the cost of housing escalating rapidly and the median wage progressing very slowly the median household income in Lincoln County can no longer afford a median priced home.

Housing Statistics and Projections for each county in Montana

Data collected by Housing Coordinating Team for the White Paper in an effort to document the housing affordability problems experienced by Montanans in 2006 and to predict the potential face of the problem in 2020, if no changes are made to current practices and trends.

County: **Lincoln**

Select Occupations and the ability to obtain affordable housing in Lincoln County

	2006				2020			
	Average Annual Pay	Median Home Cost	* Home Affordability Excess/Shortfall	% of Income to rent 2-bedroom apartment	Average Annual Pay	Median Home Cost	* Home Affordability Excess/Shortfall	% of Income to rent 2-bedroom apartment
All Wage Earners	\$26,780	\$146,934	(\$52,499)	29.4%	\$21,865	\$290,919	(\$213,817)	75.3%
Licensed Practical Nurse	\$30,120	\$146,934	(\$40,721)	26.2%	\$35,104	\$290,919	(\$167,132)	46.9%
Police Officer	\$36,180	\$146,934	(\$19,352)	21.8%	\$42,167	\$290,919	(\$142,226)	39.0%
Elementary School Teacher	\$35,860	\$146,934	(\$20,480)	22.0%	\$41,794	\$290,919	(\$143,541)	39.4%
Retail Salesperson	\$18,970	\$146,934	(\$80,040)	41.5%	\$22,109	\$290,919	(\$212,956)	74.4%
Senior on fixed-income	\$12,950	\$146,934	(\$101,267)	60.8%	\$18,882	\$290,919	(\$224,336)	87.2%

Housing Units and Structure-type data for Lincoln County

Homeownership rate in 2000 = 76.5%
Households in 2006 = 7,980 ~ Vacancy rate in 2000 = 16.7%
% change in population, 2006 to 2020 = 6.8%
% change in households, 2006 to 2020 = 9.3%

Estimated Housing Units needed by 2020 in Lincoln County

Housing Units	Units in Poor Condition Last by 2020	Units in Good Condition Available in 2020	Total Housing Units Needed by 2020	New Housing Units that must be created by 2020
TOTAL	7,533	10,850	10,152	-698
Single-family	4,510	8,753		?
Multi-family	73	434		?
Mobile Home	2,950	1,663		?

The data in the table gives a rough estimate of housing needs and some suggested options for the county in meeting those needs in the future. One option is to focus on rehabilitating the units in poor condition. This will reduce the number of new units needed. The type of new units will be determined entirely by whether they will be owned or rented. The higher the housing costs relative to incomes, the more expensive both rental and homeownership housing will be and the fewer new homeowners will be created between the years 2006 and 2020. What types of housing structures best fit the county's needs for homeowner and renter households in the future, given the costs of homeownership and rental units projected in the other charts above?



Montana Department of Commerce, Housing Coordinating Team, White Paper, April 2008

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a cost burden as that level of income at which housing costs consume at least 30% of household income. Housing costs include monthly payment (rent or mortgage, taxes, insurance and utilities). At this level, it is possible to qualify for a loan but the buyer must have little or no other debt. When housing costs exceed 30% of income, it is difficult for homebuyers to qualify for a loan. As the MDOC White Paper indicates on Figure 1 the trends are for larger percentages of income being needed for housing in the future which will be very difficult for median income households and devastating to low and fixed income households.

Home Ownership

Lincoln County has among the highest rates of homeownership in the State. Factors such as housing costs and demographics influence rates of ownership. In 2000, Lincoln County had a 77% rate of home ownership.

Table 9: Percent of Homeownership by County - 2000

County and State	% Home Owner
Lincoln County	77%
Flathead County	73%
Sanders County	76%
Lake County	71%
Missoula County	62%
Montana State	69%

Source: U.S. Census of the Population & Housing, 2000

Group Quarters

The U.S. Census Bureau defines group quarters as living facilities for persons not living in households. Typical types of group quarters include nursing care facilities, group homes, detention centers, and dormitories. Often these facilities provide housing for persons with special needs and are a critical component of the housing inventory. In Lincoln County, these special need groups include the disabled, seniors, homeless, and youth. The largest of these groups is the elderly senior population.

Nationwide, and in Lincoln County, one of the most significant demographic trends is the aging of the population. This results in a higher demand for assisted living in group quarters. The 2000 census data indicates that there were 126 persons living in nursing homes.

Lincoln County is aging quite rapidly as the population 65 and over projections illustrated in Figure 2. The percent of people age 65 and older has the potential to double by 2020 which will greatly increase the needs for senior related housing and services.

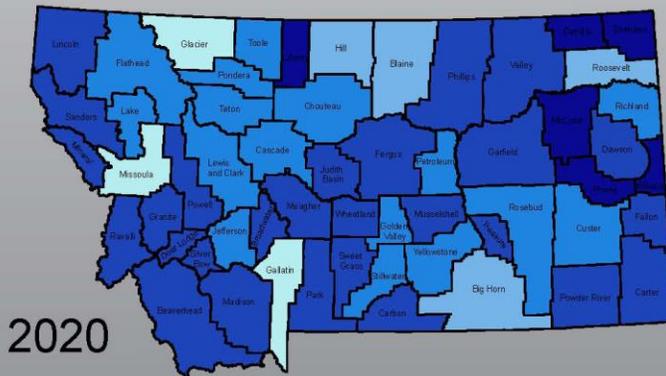
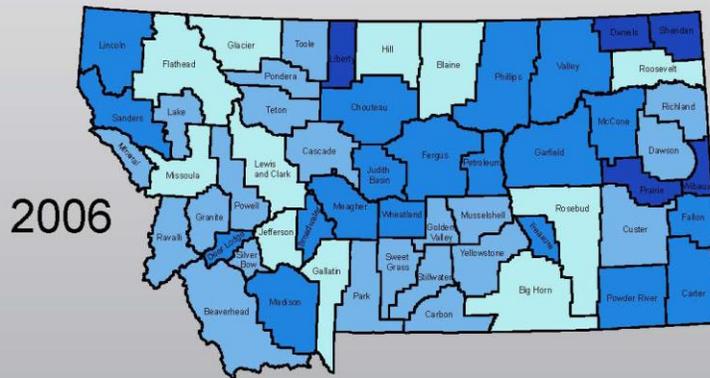
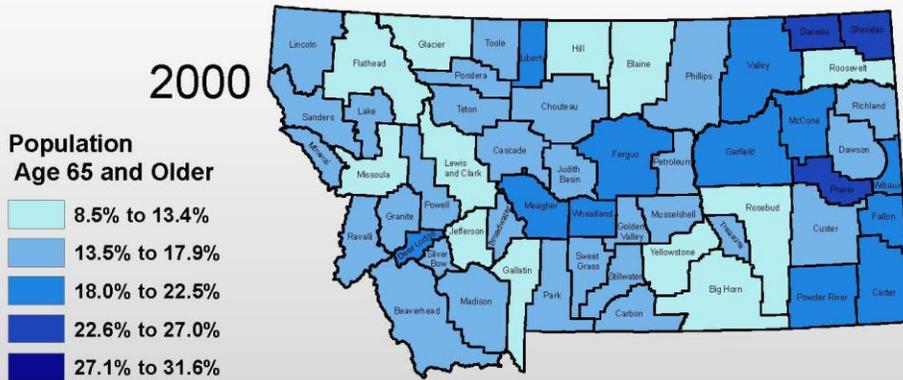
To properly prepare for the future's aging population, Lincoln County will need to address middle housing stock needs to include senior housing rentals and assisted living facilities. Additional facility needs will include nursing homes with medical facilities in close proximity.

Table 10: Lincoln County Group Quarter Population - 2000

Group Quarters	
Nursing homes	126
Correctional	25
Juvenile Correctional	22
Group Home	14
Other	4
Total	191

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Census of the Population 2000

65 and Over Population - Montana: 2000 to 2020



Source: NPA Data Service, Inc., 2008.

Housing Assistance

The following agencies provide housing assistance:

Northwest Montana Human Resources
214 Main Street
Kalispell, MT 59904
(406) 758-5477

Serving: Flathead, Lake, Lincoln, and Sanders counties.

Provides: Foreclosure Counseling, Pre and Post Home Purchase Classes, First Time Home Buyer Education, and Reverse Mortgage Counseling for seniors. Additionally, Self Help Housing, Section 8, Courtyard Apartments, Senior Home Rehabilitation.

USDA Rural Development, Kalispell Area Office
Tamarack Center
450 Corporate Drive, Suite 111
Kalispell, MT 59901
406-756-2005

Provides: Single and Multi - Family Housing programs and Community Facilities Programs.

See Chapter 7 (Implementation Plan part IV) "Lincoln County Action Plan" for Housing Goals and Objectives.

LAND USE

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

As the population of Lincoln County and the region increases, the demand for land for residential homeland, commercial sites, industrial facilities, roads, and supporting infrastructure increases. The demand for these necessities requires thoughtful consideration of how these necessities will impact adjacent land uses and other non-related issues such as air quality, school facilities, emergency services, traffic safety, water quality and availability, and so on. Where we decide to build residences, businesses, water and sewer systems and roads is the central issue that links all of the other issues together.

Lincoln County consists of topographic variations with numerous valleys and watersheds, characterized by large spans of mountainous coniferous forests and significant expanses of grassland areas; particularly in the north. Most of the development in Lincoln County has occurred in the larger valleys, where the majority of the private land is located.

Named for President Abraham Lincoln, Lincoln County was created from a portion of Flathead County on July 1, 1909, by the order of the 11th Legislative Assembly. Located in the extreme northwest part of Montana, it is characterized by the Cabinet, Purcell and Salish Mountain Ranges. Heavily forested and largely contained within the Kootenai National Forest, it still preserves much of nature's wildness. It borders both Canada and Idaho. The County seat is Libby.

The major economic growth of this area has been structured around natural resource extraction industries such as mining and forestry. Lincoln County has historically been one of the top timber producing counties in Montana. These industries have provided the backbone for economic stabilization up to the 1990's when major downturns took place. Mining has seen a resurgence of activity in Lincoln County since 2004 when the Troy mine reopened. There are two large mining projects planned in the near future that have the potential to impact growth. Approximately 90% of the County's total land is owned and managed by the U.S. Forest Service or large private corporations. Lincoln County is comprised of 9.2% privately owned non-forest land.

Lincoln County is predominantly a rural County. Urban development is concentrated in the incorporated areas of Eureka, Libby, Rexford and Troy. The city of Libby is the largest area and most densely developed. The incorporated areas account for less than five square miles of land. The largest unincorporated area is south Libby. This area extends from Libby four miles south along Highway 2. The incorporated communities are generally prime areas for expansion since the cost of services would be most efficient. Some communities have one or more natural limitations or infrastructures that limit potential future expansion such as: narrow valleys, water bodies, steep slopes, and highways. Other factors that currently limit the growth of our population centers are the lack of public water and sewer capacity and the need for infrastructure improvements.

Rural Development in Lincoln County generally occurs in the five river valleys (Tobacco Valley, Lake Creek, Yaak River, Fisher River and Libby Valley). Concentration of rural development is due to topographic restrictions and patterns of public land ownership. There are large tracts of privately owned forests. In recent years, many private forest tracts have been sold for residential development. Plum Creek Timber Company owns approximately 12.5% of the land in Lincoln County. The Company is responding to higher land values and the demand for rural recreational and residential properties by increasing land sales and residential developments within Lincoln County and the State.

Lincoln County is located adjacent to fast growth counties. Lincoln County's continued slow to modest population growth is projected over the next 10 to 20 years. The average population density in the County is 5.2 persons per square mile with most of that population concentrated in the Libby and Eureka areas. Most of the new population in the County is settling in the unincorporated areas, especially in Eureka, Rexford, Fortine and the area along U.S. 93.

From 2001 – 2006, 329 new Plats were recorded in Lincoln County. These land divisions created 1,931 new lots covering 10,968 acres. The majority of these lots are in the Tobacco Valley and Bull Lake Valley areas. The rural landscape in Lincoln County is changing between established and new land uses.

Lincoln County currently has limited Growth Policy implementation tools to assist in the management of future safe and wise development. A land use study would be useful for land use planning. The evaluation of current implementation tools and the determination of needs for potential new tools would be desirable. A land use analysis with corresponding land use maps would be helpful in guiding future development. Preserving private property rights is a high priority. Land use regulations and policies should strike a balance between protecting the individual's rights while also protecting the character and welfare of the communities.

LAND OWNERSHIP

Lincoln County has a number of very large landowners. They include: The United States Government, Plum Creek Timber Company, Stimson Lumber Company and the State of Montana. They own approximately 90% of the County's land area. Lincoln County is predominantly a very rural county. This Growth Policy will recommend best land use areas for the private (non-industrial) areas of Lincoln County. Lakeshore Construction Permit Regulations and Floodplain Permit Regulations are in force over 100% of the County as mandated by the State of Montana. The Growth Policy will also cover future land subdivision requests under 160 acres in unincorporated areas. While the County's influence over the federal and state government and industrial lands is limited, open communication and intergovernmental public/private coordination/cooperation has been sought in major land use decision making. This will be continued in the future as all owners understand that what happens in one-ownership can directly and indirectly impact what happens on other ownerships. The City of Libby has a separate Growth Policy and coordinates planning with the County.

Table 1: Ownership Acres, Square Miles & Percent of Total - 2008

Owner	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of Total
U.S. Forest Service	1,727,811	2,699.7	73.5%
Industrial Forest Land	294,822	460.7	12.5%
Other Private	217,225	339.4	9.2%
State Trust Land	66,045	103.2	2.8%
Water	37,449	58.5	1.6%
Other State Land	5,009	7.8	0.2%
Other Federal	1,776	2.8	0.1%
Private conservation	677	1.1	0.0%
Bureau of Land Management	15	0	0.0%
TOTAL	2,350,828	3,673.2	

Source: Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) Geographic Information System (GIS)

The primary uses of federal lands in 2008 include wildlife preservation, tourism and recreation, and timber production. The Kootenai National Forest has 73.5% of the land in Lincoln County. Lands owned by the State of Montana are used to generate revenue for schools through timber harvest, recreation, grazing, and wildlife habitat. Plum Creek Timber Company owns approximately 12.5% of the land in Lincoln County and is now offering some of their holdings for real estate development.

LAND USE

Historically, the major economic growth of this area was centered around mining activity. This industry provided the backbone for economic stabilization up to the 40's when the forest industry began to boom. Approximately 92% of the land in Lincoln County is covered by forestland. In recent years, however, the forest industry has faltered for a variety of reasons. Mining again appears to be making a come back. In 2008, it appears that the most significant effect on Lincoln County Land Use will be the result of forest industry companies disposing of or developing their land by creating residential or recreational subdivisions.

The 2000 census indicates a County population of 18,837 persons. There were almost as many in 1970, primarily due to the construction of Libby Dam. The population increased from 12,537 in 1960 to 18,063 in 1970. Although the ten year statistics appear inconsistent due to the Libby areas boom cycle, Lincoln County has as a whole retained a fairly stable population growth. The general distribution pattern shows the Libby area with over half the population, about 10,000; however with the majority of subdivision development occurring in the Tobacco Valley and Lake Creek Valley, that pattern may change. At present, the Tobacco Valley and the city of Eureka contain about 4,000 persons. Troy and its surroundings have the remaining 3,000 or so.

The socioeconomic conditions of Lincoln County can be directly attributed to five major industries: wood products, mining, agriculture, tourism and recreation, and government administration. Although the importance of one or another of these industries has varied through the years, the essence of Lincoln County's economy is that it is natural resource based trending toward service based industries.

Forestry

Although forest products have been an economic mainstay of Lincoln County for over a century, reductions of harvest from the Kootenai National Forest (KNF) in the past twenty years have caused a profound change in the forest industry. Harvest levels off of national forest lands have decreased from nearly 200 Million Board Feet (MMBF) annually in 1980 to a current harvest of less than 50 MMBF. In 2007, there was over 90 MMBF under environmental appeal or litigation on the KNF.

This large reduction in harvest on the KNF has not only had a huge impact on the local economy of the County, it threatens to have a devastating impact on Lincoln County's ability to provide government services, roads and road maintenance, and schools at 2008 population levels let alone to meet future population growth demands. In 2000, congress passed the "Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Community Self-Determination Act" in response to the declining timber sales and shrinking revenues to forested county governments. An extension of this Act will assist Lincoln County in maintaining schools, roads and other major programs through 2011.

Logs currently processed off of lands in Lincoln County go primarily to Plum Creek milling facilities in the Flathead Valley or to Riley Creek located in Moyie Springs, Idaho. Since the closing of the Eureka Owens and Hurst Mill in 2005, Plum Creek's Ksanka Mill, which employs 100, is the only major wood processing mill in Lincoln County.

Nationally and locally there is a changing complexion in the ownership of private forest land holdings. Housing developments within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) have increased significantly and this trend seems to be even greater in Lincoln County. These housing developments are putting a significant strain on local volunteer fire departments which are undermanned and under-financed. Lincoln County has a non-regulatory community wildfire protection plan and efforts are underway to reduce the wildfire hazard through education and fuel reduction projects.

Mining

Mining as a land use and industry, has seen a resurgence of activity in Lincoln County since 2004 when the Troy mine reopened. Lincoln County is a mineral rich county along with its neighbor to the south, Sanders County. The two Counties share copper and silver ore deposits offering tremendous opportunity for economic stimulus and potential future growth impacts if continued as planned. After having been placed on "care and maintenance" in 1993 by ASARCO – and maintained as such since 1999 by Revett Silver Company – the Troy Mine resumed operations in December 2004 and operating continuously since. Revett Minerals now employs approximately 175 workers at the Troy Mine with an annual production capability of 4.2 million ounces of silver and 20,000 tons of copper contained in concentrates.

At Rock Creek, located in Sanders County and owned by Revett Minerals, continues its efforts to advance the project. In December 2007, the United States Forest Service re-affirmed both the Rock Creek biological opinion and its Record of Decision. According to Revett, Rock Creek will employ 300 people at an average salary of \$45,000/year plus benefits and contribute \$925 million to the State and local economy over its 25 year life. Final phase of permitting and production is expected to begin in 2010 impacting the growth in both counties. *Source: Revett Minerals*

Mines Management, Inc. (MMI), an Idaho corporation has submitted plans for a copper and silver mine referred to as the Montanore Project. The underground mine will be in Sanders County, and the mill and other facilities will be in Lincoln County. According to the plan submitted to the US Forest Service, construction will start in Year 1 with the hiring of approximately 135 employees. Construction employment will peak at 155 employees during Year 2. Total employment (construction and operations) is expected to peak at 505 employees during Year 3. Following completion of construction at the end of the third year of the project, total employment should level off to 450 workers. Extractive uses for decorative rock and gravel are also increasing in Lincoln County.

Agriculture

Agricultural in Lincoln County is limited, due to mountainous terrain and narrow valleys. The only considerable body of open land for agricultural purposes is located in the Tobacco Valley near Eureka. Accordingly, less than 5% of the land in Lincoln County is classified as rangeland or agriculture (Table 1).

Table 1: Lincoln County Land Classification by Acreage and Percentage

Land Classification	Acres	Percent
Conifer Forest	2,150,708	91.6%
Rangeland (Grass, brush, & mixed)	39,187	3.58%
Reservoir	28,844	1.2%
Exposed Rock	24,031	1.0%
Agriculture - Crop, Pasture, Other	36,019	0.92%
Mixed Forest	13,061	0.56%
Lake	7,979	0.24%
Residential	55,61	0.24%
Deciduous Forest	5,384	0.23%
Stream Canal	3,181	0.14%

Source: Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) Geographic Information System (GIS)

Agricultural statistics data from recent years reflect little change in the number and average size of farms in Lincoln County. Three hundred and ten farms exist in Lincoln County. The average size of a farming operation is 175 acres. This is significantly smaller than the statewide average of 2,139 acres. Hay and cattle are the primary agricultural commodities. During 2004, total hay acreage was 8000 acres. 4,400 acres were irrigated and 3,600 acres were non-irrigated. Yields averaged 2.8 tons per acre on irrigated land and 1.3 tons per acre yield on non-irrigated land. Average agricultural sales per farm in 2002 were \$8,115, compared to a statewide average of \$67,532. Agricultural sales in the County for 2004 amounted to \$5,583,000. During that period, Lincoln County ranked 54th out of 56 counties in Montana. Receipts from hay (\$2,977,000) were slightly higher than yields from livestock products (\$2,606,000). Yields from hay in 2003 placed Lincoln County 43 out of 56 counties. Livestock production during the same year placed Lincoln County 55th out of 56 counties. Unlike most counties in Montana, government payments are not received by farms in Lincoln County.

Land Development

One of the most important aspects of a Growth Plan is to develop and delineate a pattern of land use that will reduce land use conflicts and provide for efficiency of service for those involved in land utilization. The initial step is to examine what land use currently exists. Then by analyzing and comparing the potential future needs and applying them to the existing physical environment, a desired pattern of land use should emerge for Lincoln County. This allows the County to prepare and develop strategies in order to initiate directions and programs to aid in the most desirous and advantages land use development. The following is an examination that should provide the background and the essence of the current land use development of Lincoln County.

Lincoln County, Montana, consists of intense topographic variations with numerous valleys and watersheds, characterized by large spans' of mountainous coniferous forests and significant expanses of grassland areas; particularly in the north. Most of the development in Lincoln County has occurred in the larger valleys, and the majority of the private land is located in these areas. For this reason, this plan will concentrate on the five largest valleys where it is assumed the development of the County will continue. They are in order of current population and intensity of development, the Libby Valley, the Tobacco Valley, the Troy / Lake Creek Valley, the Yaak Valley, and the Fisher River Valley. Each of these valleys will be evaluated separately with regards to land use, however a County over-view will be discussed initially as it is essential to examine the common aspects of these valleys and their associated communities, prior to their individual focus.

Public management, ownership and topography are the primary aspects that limit land utilization in Lincoln County. Topography is the configuration of a surface including its relief. Lincoln County is mountainous terrain with numerous creeks and several large rivers. The Kootenai River, which was to a limited extent, navigable, was also to lend itself most readily to land transportation through its associated valley. Consequently, this was the area in which the communities began to develop. Maps from the mid-1920s show twenty communities along the Kootenai River in Lincoln County. As the population grew and it became apparent that centralized services were needed, the river became more of a liability than an adventure. Now, only a few of the original communities remain. However, the population of Lincoln County is still relegated to the mountain valleys.

Lincoln County's lowland can be generally classified into five major valleys. The largest is the Tobacco Valley area just south of the Canadian border where the Tobacco River flows into the Kootenai River. This area contains the communities of Eureka, Rexford, Fortine, Trego, West Kootenai and Stryker. Seventy miles to the south is the Libby Valley where Libby Creek intersects the Kootenai. The largest urban area of the County, the city of Libby, is located here.

Approximately twenty miles to the west is the Lake Creek valley where Lake Creek enters the Kootenai. At the mouth of the Lake Creek in the north end of the valley is Troy, towards the middle of this valley lies the community of Little Joe, and the south end of this valley is Bull Lake and its associated community. Eight to ten miles northwest of this valley is the mouth of the Yaak River and its valley extends north practically to Canada. Rural development occurs all along the river, as is the case in most of these valleys where geographic features allow; however, there are two small community centers at Sylvanite and Yaak. The fifth valley is the

Fisher River which flows into the Kootenai approximately fifteen miles east of Libby. However, the majority of development in this valley lies at the opposite end, in the Chain of Lakes region, forty or forty-five miles southeast of Libby. It may be that the location of these communities is not strictly the product of geographic limitations; however, the fact remains that Lincoln County's physical features would preclude urban sprawl except along established valley guidelines.

Periodic flooding severely restricts certain land uses because it poses a direct threat to human safety and welfare as well as causing damage to personal property, County services, and public utilities. Lincoln County's flood damage potential was realized, and most studies are based on, the flooding that occurred in January 1974 after the construction of the Libby Dam. Flooding continues to be a basis for concern.

Due to Lincoln County's limited area to develop and its abundance of natural resources, land utilization should realize the best and most efficient use of existing areas. Adequate expansion of the differing uses and services should result in reduced potential for land use conflicts. Land use protects and maintains a high standard of care and stability for the physical, mental, and social well-being of each County resident. It protects or increases existing land values and provides adequate protection of the natural environment and its resources, while still allowing the utilization and enjoyment of them. Also land use maintains economic stability.

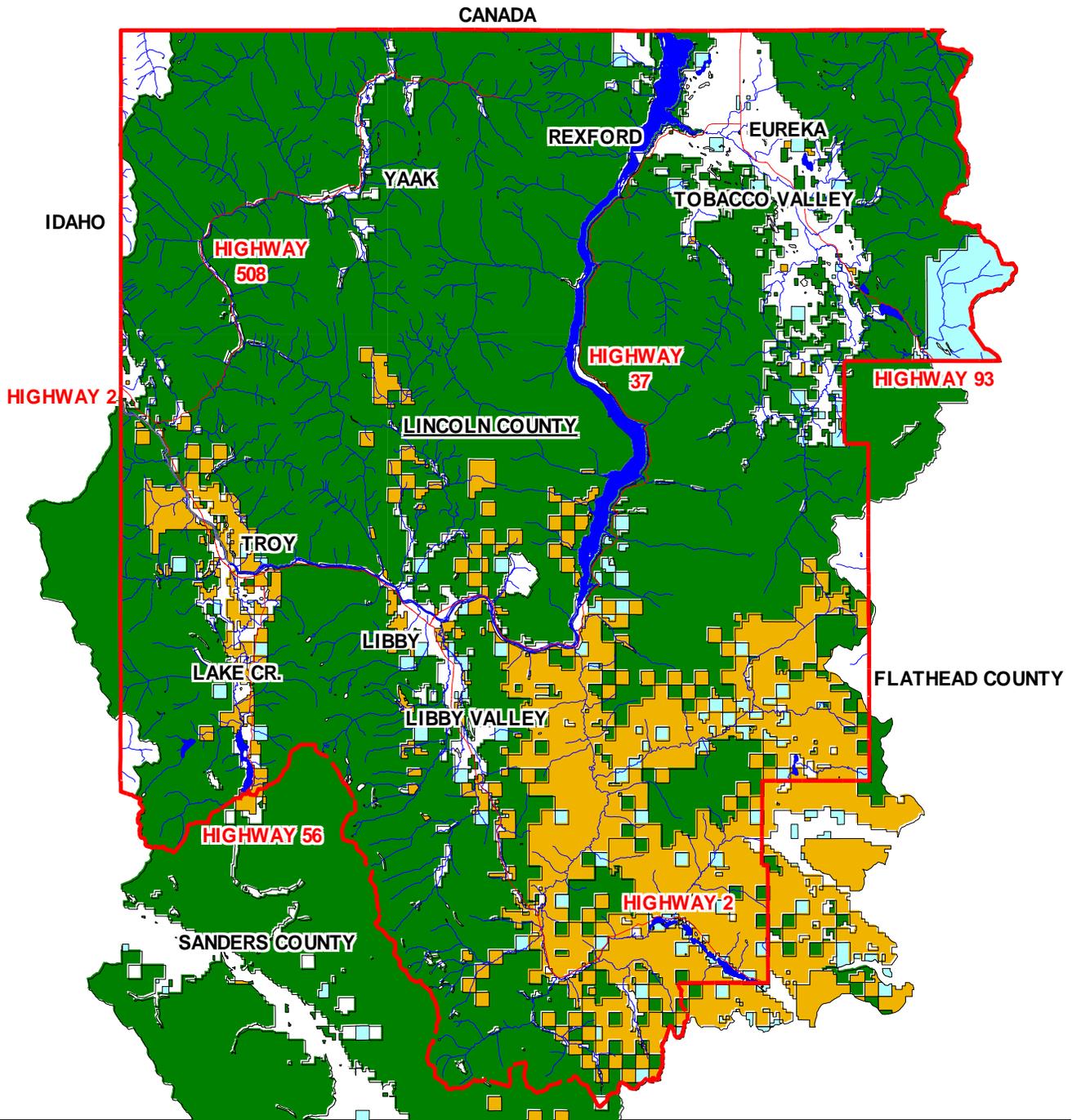
DEVELOPED AREAS

Development in Lincoln County generally occurs in the five river valleys (Tobacco Valley, Lake Creek, Yaak River, Fisher River and Libby Valley). This concentration of development is due to the topographic restrictions and patterns of public land ownership. Additionally, there are large tracts of privately owned forests. In recent years, some private forest tracts have been sold and have the potential for residential development.

Urban development is concentrated in the incorporated areas. The city of Libby is the largest area and most densely developed. Together the incorporated areas account for less than five square miles of land in the County. The largest unincorporated area is south Libby. This area extends 4 miles south along Highway 2. There are also small unincorporated areas located in the Tobacco Valley.

Libby is the most urbanized area with the largest percentage of land in commercial and industrial development of any city or town in the County. Eureka is surrounded by agricultural land while the forested areas are the dominant land use around Troy. Lake Koocanusa is the dominant land feature for Rexford.

Development within the city limits of Libby and Rexford is subject to municipal zoning regulations. The city of Troy is in the process of adopting zoning regulations. There is no municipal zoning in Eureka or the unincorporated areas in the city. Development restrictions that are administered at the County level consist of subdivision regulations, floodplain regulations (with the exception of Rexford), lakeshore construction regulations, and airport zoning regulations.



LIBBY

Libby is roughly in the center of Lincoln County and the County seat. It is located 17 miles south of the Libby Dam on the Kootenai River. The incorporated area is located south of the river on an alluvial fan created by several creeks that flow north from the mountains to the Kootenai River. U.S. Highway 2 bisects the community running west to east, then south and Highway 37 crosses the Kootenai River and follows the Kootenai River north to U.S. Highway 93 near Eureka.

U.S. Highway 2 has a four lane section which begins approximately 3 miles west of the Libby city limits and terminates approximately 4 miles to the south. The majority of Libby's commercial development is along this section of highway. The central business district is bordered by Main Ave on the west, Mineral Avenue on the East, Highway 2 on the south and the Burlington Northern railroad tracks on the north. The largest industrial area though not intensively utilized at present is the old lumber mill site located east of Highway 2. Other industrial areas occur along the railroad tracks and on Highway 2 south of Libby. The city residential areas are located off of the main streets and are generally characterized by small lot single family residential. The majority of homes (73%) were constructed prior to 1970. Annexation has been occurring in all directions and has resulted in the large industrial area of the old mill site discussed previously and residential neighborhoods south and west of the city being included and developed as part of the city.

Outside of the city limits there are a number of suburban residential areas. Due primarily to the lack of public or community water and sewer facilities, these areas are characterized by larger lots and newer homes than the incorporated areas. These residential developments are located primarily south along U.S. Highway 2 and north along Highway 37; however other pockets of residential development are also occurring along secondary roads that branch off of these highways.

SOUTH LIBBY

South Libby is the area beginning at the south city limit line and following Highway 2 approximately four and a half miles. This highway corridor functions as the gateway into Libby. This is the first stretch of urban development that visitors entering Lincoln County from the east will encounter. There are multiple land uses and consequently numerous land use issues in this area.

The area has a mix of land uses from heavy industrial, storage, light industrial, commercial, auto service, and residential. Incompatible uses are often on adjacent lots. There is little or no screening or buffering between uses. Outdoor storage of heavy equipment, building materials, and industrial containers are visible from the highway and adjoining residential properties. Property maintenance issues such as dilapidated structures, weeds, inoperable vehicles, and trash are widespread. Many properties have deferred maintenance issues. Vacant properties that are not being maintained are another issue and may create nuisances.

TROY

Troy is located on the banks of the Kootenai River on Highway 2 about 14 miles east of the Montana/Idaho border. It is primarily surrounded by forest land. Within the City of Troy there is highway commercial along U.S. Highway 2. The central business district is located several blocks north of Highway 2 primarily along 3rd St. and Kootenai Ave. Public buildings, eating and drinking establishments and a few specialty shops characterized the small downtown. Residential areas are located off of the main streets and are generally characterized by small lot single family residential. The majority of homes were constructed prior to 1970. East of the railroad tracks is a residential area and a large Riverside Park is located just to the north between the railroad tracks and the river.

The Troy valley has the lowest elevation in Montana, and the topography and land ownership pattern is such that it also has the least potential for outlying residential development in the immediate vicinity. The majority of residential subdivision is occurring in the Lake Creek Valley which lies almost directly south of Troy along Highway 56.

LAKE CREEK VALLEY AND BULL LAKE

The Lake Creek Valley is approximately 16 miles long and terminates at Bull Lake which at 1160 acres is the largest naturally formed lake in Lincoln County. Residential development and small commercial enterprises are scattered along and a few miles to the west of Highway 56 all along the valley. The majority of the development occurs along the two lakes at the northern end (Savage and Milnor) and Bull Lake at the southern end.

This is an area which is seeing increased development primarily due to the changing land use from timber production land held by corporations to private residential subdivisions. The potential for new residents in this area is growing each year, and as with several other areas of Lincoln County, little infrastructure is in place in the vicinity to support them.

As large as Bull Lake is, new development in this area may have a tremendous impact on the area. Not only is the area identified by older high density subdivisions, it also is home to the tourist areas of Ross Creek Cedars and two Forest Service lake access campgrounds.

TOBACCO VALLEY

The Tobacco Valley is a wide agricultural valley of approximately 40 square miles in northeast Lincoln County. It contains the majority of small private land holdings in Lincoln County. Eureka and the US/Canadian border crossing Port of Roosville are located in the Tobacco Valley. Rexford is on the western edge of the valley near Lake Kooconusa. The valley is drier than most of Lincoln County, with only 60% of the annual rainfall of Troy. Glacial activity has resulted in many small hills, ridges and drainages within the valley and the town of Eureka.

The Tobacco Valley, named after the tobacco grown by Native Americans, has historically been an agricultural area with hay being the primary crop. Residential development in the Tobacco Valley has increased since 1990, most sharply in the last 3 years. Close proximity to Whitefish (58 miles), the Glacier Park International Airport (65 miles) and the international ski resort of Fernie, BC (30 miles) have fueled the residential second home and retirement development markets. As noted in the Population Chapter, this area had a 29% increase in population from 1990 to 2000. Two very large projects, The Wilderness Club and Indian Springs, added a combined 615 home sites to the valley. Land prices have also jumped significantly increasing 3 fold in the last several years. Much of the new growth is considered to be “spillover” from growth in the Flathead Valley.

EUREKA

The town of Eureka is in the southern portion of the Tobacco Valley, and is located 8 miles south of the US/Canadian border (Port of Roosville). Highway 93 runs through the center of town and is named Dewey Avenue through the commercial core. The central business district is approximately seven City blocks in length, with outlying auto-oriented commercial

development on either end, predominantly on the north. The BNSF rail line runs southeast to northwest on the west side of Highway 93. The Tobacco River runs between the Highway and the BNSF line.

Most commercial activity is located along Dewey Avenue and Highway 93. Scattered commercial uses are located in the surrounding residential neighborhoods. The town has no zoning regulations. The Dewey Avenue commercial area represents a traditional old Main Street feel, with storefronts abutting sidewalks. Several buildings in downtown Eureka are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Uses are a mix of local and tourist-oriented businesses. Signage is in scale with the buildings and historical street lights have been added through grant funds.

At the southern entrance to town along the Tobacco River is the Historical Village and start point for the Riverwalk Park. The five-acre Historical Village is a reconstruction of a variety of old buildings, with signage and educational materials. Riverwalk Park provides walking trails along the Tobacco River and Sinclair Creek. The site serves as a tourist rest point for travelers in the valley.

Eureka contains several areas of the old platted town site that are developed as residential neighborhoods: to the east of Dewey Avenue, north of town in the unincorporated area served by Midville Water and Sewer District, and southwest across the BNSF railroad tracks. Currently, there is activity towards annexing Midville to Eureka. Many of these neighborhoods are characterized by steep streets platted in a traditional lot and block grid pattern. These neighborhoods contain older homes, which are generally well kept. Scattered small-scale commercial uses are located throughout these residential neighborhoods. Neighborhoods farther from the core downtown area have a more rural feel. West of the railroad tracks, varying lot sizes exist near the old platted town site. The lack of zoning allows for outdoor storage and other uses not typically found in residential neighborhoods.

Highway commercial areas exist along Highway 93 north and south of the town of Eureka. Most of the highway-oriented uses are to the north, with scattered commercial uses along the Highway from Eureka for 5 miles up to the Port of Roosville. The intersection with Highway 37 is also a Highway commercial hub. The commercial uses along Highway 93 range from seasonal lodging to various local trade and industrial businesses. Uses have varying setbacks from the highway, and a variety of signage types and sizes. Strip commercial development along the five mile stretch between Eureka and the Port of Roosville is occurring, and will continue without development restrictions. Industrial uses are primarily to the north along Highway 93 corridor.

PORT OF ROOSVILLE

The border crossing at the Port of Roosville is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Commercial uses adjacent to the port are in transition, with a larger commercial establishment closed and boarded up. Commercial uses at the Port vary in setbacks and access layout.

REXFORD

Rexford is the smallest of Lincoln County's incorporated areas and is a residential community created by the U.S. Army Corps when the original town of Rexford was removed to make way for the Reservoir of Lake Koocanusa. Rexford consists of a small public core area and approximately 150 full time residents. It is located 8.3 miles west of Eureka along Highway 37. Adjacent to the town is a Lake Koocanusa Recreational Area and is the seasonal draw, with several RV parks located in the town being at full occupancy in the summer. Seasonal commercial uses exist in a one-block area.

WEST KOOTENAI

Changes came to this area in 1970 when the Corp of Engineers commenced building the Libby Dam. As a result, the once swift flowing Kootenai River was stilled to become Lake Koocanusa. A half mile long bridge now spans the waters of this lake. To the west of the bridge and to the north, just two miles south of the Canadian Border, is an area known to the locals as "West Kootenai". The West Kootenai is a small, predominantly Amish, community of Rexford, MT located on the West side of Lake Koocanusa. It is surrounded by miles of National Forest to explore the spectacular scenery and wild life this is an excellent location for trail riding, hunting, and fishing, boating and enjoying the great outdoors year round. Eureka is approximately 35 minutes away and the town of Libby or Whitefish/Kalispell area is roughly 75 minutes away. The West Kootenai area is especially proud of their West Kootenai Wildlife Management Area which was created, with the help of the Montana FW&P department to provide management for winter range of elk and deer. The area is also famous for the annual West Kootenai Amish Auction which includes local wood products and crafts, log home builders, quilters, bakers, furniture makers and many more craftspeople. They also have started and are still working on gaining members, equipment and resources to increase the growth of the West Kootenai Fire Protection Company for their area.

HIGHWAY 93 SOUTH COORIDOR (TREGO, FORTINE & STRYKER)

South of the Tobacco Valley, Highway 93 travels through mixed open meadow, hillside and riparian areas. Numerous recreational lakes are located adjacent or close to the corridor, including Dickey, Glen, Long, Frank, Loon, Marl, and Murphy Lakes and above the corridor, the Ten Lakes Scenic Area. The small communities of Trego, Fortine, and Stryker are found in southwest Lincoln County west of the Highway 93 corridor. This area has experienced significant residential growth.

The Highway 93 corridor through this stretch contains some scattered commercial and industrial uses. These uses are more dispersed than in the corridor north of Eureka. The largest industrial use is the Plum Creek Ksanka Mill, which is the only operating mill left in this part of Lincoln County. Billboards are scattered due to the lack of zoning or signage controls impacting the scenic and recreational nature of this corridor as growth and development pressures continue.

FORTINE

Established as a town site in 1905, the community of Fortine is located 11 miles south of Eureka and 39 miles north of Whitefish. The town site is approximately 3 miles west of Highway 93 across the BNSF tracks. The population in 2000 was estimated at 169. The town site contains a small commercial area with several buildings, post office, a golf course and a K-8 school. New growth has not occurred in the town site, but in large lot rural areas to the west and north. From a recreational standpoint, Fortine is considered to be a launch point for the Ten Lakes Scenic Area, and many miles of recreational trails.

Ant Flat Road is a westerly county road connecting Fortine with Trego, approximately 4 miles to the south. The historic Ant Flats Ranger Station is two miles from Fortine on this road. This site is on the National Register for Historic Places, and is now used also for educational purposes by the Kootenai National Forest.

TREGO

Trego was created as a station for the Great Northern Railroad. It is located 15 miles south of Eureka on the west side of Highway 93 and the BNSF tracks. Today it contains a general store, post office, a K-8 school and scattered residential development including an RV park.

STRYKER

Stryker contains a post office and several residential buildings. It is 20 miles south of Eureka, on the west side of Highway 93 and the BNSF tracks.

YAAK VALLY

Yaak is a long Valley (over 40 miles) located in the northwest portion of the County that contains a narrow band of private land along the Yaak River. It is accessed by two highways; Highway 567 which begins near Libby and Highway 508 which begins at Highway 2 just south of the Idaho border. The private land is essentially surrounded by Kootenai National Forest. There are a few commercial structures near the intersection of Highway 508 and Highway 567. There is also a school and some rural residential in the area. Although the number of residents is growing and increased community infrastructure may be necessary and desired, the area has little potential for extreme residential growth

CHAIN OF LAKES

The Chain of Lakes area is in the southeast corner of Lincoln County along Highway 2. The area is close to faster growth Flathead County and is a highly desired growth area of Lincoln County. The larger lakes in this area include Loon Lake, Horseshoe Lake, Crystal Lake, Upper Thompson Lake, Middle Thompson Lake and Lower Thompson Lake. Logan State Park provides access to Middle Thompson Lake. There are a number of seasonal homes around the lakes as well as commercial campgrounds. There are a few commercial businesses on Highway 2 providing services to these seasonal uses. This part of the County includes significant tracts of private forest land. Recently, some tracts of private forest lands have been sold and there is substantial planning underway for additional development. Plum Creek

and individual investors are planning for more development in the immediate future. The Chain of Lake Homeowners Association and Plum Creek have recently collaborated (2008) to prepare a Neighborhood Plan that outlines what and where new development will be allowed in the near future. The plan outlines the intentions of Plum Creek to develop their land holdings in the Chain of Lakes area for a total of 4-5,000 new lots in the future. The Company is responding to higher land values and the demand for rural recreational and residential properties by increasing land sales and developments within Lincoln County and the State. There are currently (April – 2008) about 260-280 homes in the area.

LAND DIVISIONS

Development Activity

A. Subdivision

There are several types of subdivision activity that result in new lots being created. These include the following:

Subdivision	A division of land that creates one or more parcels for the purpose of selling, renting, leasing or conveying the land. In Montana, subdivisions that create parcels containing less than 160 acres are subject to local regulations and the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act.
Certificate of Survey	Land divisions that are exempt from local government review and approval as subdivisions, but must be surveyed and a certificate of survey filed (without local subdivision approval) before title can be transferred. This includes any parcel 160 acres or larger in size or parcels less than 160 acres but exempt under provisions for a family transfer, agricultural purpose or relocation of a common boundary line.
Minor Subdivisions	Subdivisions that have five or fewer lots and proper access to all lots. The submission requirements and review procedures are streamlined for minor subdivisions.
Major Subdivisions	All subdivisions that are not exempt under certificate of surveys or that do not meet the criteria for minor subdivisions.

The following table indicates the number of plats and lots created from those plats that were recorded with the Lincoln County Clerk and Recorder since 2001. The majority of these lots have been created in the Tobacco Valley and Lake Creek Valley / Bull Lake areas. There is increasing activity south of Libby, in the Chain of Lakes area, primarily due to the transfer of timber corporation lands into subdivisions. The table indicates a dramatic increase in the number of subdivided lots since 2004 and indications are that this will continue at a progressively higher rate in the future due primarily to projected growth in the Tobacco Valley, Lake Creek Valley and Chain of Lakes areas of Lincoln County.

Table 8: Recorded Lots – Lincoln County

Year	# Plats	# Lots	Total Acreage
2001	30	133	703
2002	38	113	1373
2003	34	110	729
2004	89	221	1659
2005	54	239	4024
2006	84	1115	2480

Recorded Lots in Lincoln County from 2001 - 2006) Note: 2006 totals are from Jan.1, 2006 through Nov. 16, 2006

B. Preliminary Plat Approvals

In addition to lots that have been recorded, there has been a significant increase in the number of lots approved in preliminary plats. Preliminary plats have received County Commission approval but must still submit a final plat approval prior to being recorded with the County Clerk and Recorder’s office. Lots approved in preliminary plats, may be recorded in phases and may take several years before they are reflected in the total number of new lots that have been recorded.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) reviews all preliminary plats and certificate of surveys for suitability for septic or community water systems in the unincorporated areas in the County. DEQ does not review preliminary plats for lots being served by a municipal water system in the cities of Libby, Eureka and Troy.

Prior to 2003, the majority of plats that DEQ reviewed included certificate of surveys that may create one new lot through family transfers or minor subdivisions that created no more than five lots at a time. The number of plats each year ranged from 60 to 80 and resulted in approximately 15 to 180 lots per year. There was a slight increase in these numbers in 2004 and 2005.

In 2006, the number of plats that were reviewed increased by 33% but the number of lots that were approved increased by almost five times the number from the previous year. These lots were primarily included in preliminary plats and have not yet been recorded. Major subdivisions near Eureka such as the Wilderness Club and Indian Springs represent a significant portion of these lots.

Table 9: Development Activity – DEQ Review

Year	# Plats	# Lots
00	73	157
01	77	189
02	62	150
03	88	184
04	93	242
05	88	232
06	117	1,153

Notes: 1) Source: Montana Department of Environmental Quality
2) Includes both lots approved in preliminary plats and certificates of surveys. Lots in preliminary plats may or may not have been recorded.

The highest concentration of existing septic systems is in the Libby area, the concentration of newer systems is in the Eureka area. From 1999 to 2004 there was an average of 181 septic permits for new systems each year. There was relatively little fluctuation in this average from year to year. Half of the new permits in the last seven years were issued in the Eureka area. In 2005 and 2006, the average number of septic permits increased to 200 per year. The distribution of permits remained similar to previous years.

Table 10: Septic Permit Distribution

Area	% of Septic Permits
Tobacco Valley (Eureka, Trego, Fortine, Stryker...)	50%
Libby Area (Libby, South Libby, Chain of Lakes...)	25%
Troy Area (Troy, Bull Lake ...)	25%

This distribution is also indicative of the new residential construction in the last few years according to the tax assessments of Department of Revenue

Under the Montana Sanitation in Subdivision Act, parcels less than 20 acres in size resulting from the division of land must be reviewed for compliance with septic and wastewater disposal. The review is conducted by the Department of Environmental Quality and the local health official. Land may be subdivided into new lots and remain vacant for an indeterminate amount of time before there is any change in land use.

Until recently, most subdivisions were approved with individual septic systems. When these lots develop, tracking permits for a new septic system provide an indication of new housing starts. The Indian Springs and Wilderness Club subdivisions in the Eureka area, however, will both have community waste water treatment systems. There is currently no building permit system to track housing starts in these areas.

Land Use Regulations

Landowners wishing to subdivide tracts of land in or out of incorporated cities must follow the subdivision regulation process outlined by the respective cities (Libby, Troy, and Rexford) and the Lincoln County Subdivision Regulations. The city of Eureka follows the Lincoln County Subdivision Regulations. The County Subdivision Regulations administer the procedures for creating new lots and are designed to ensure that all residential and commercial lots are provided with infrastructure and services such as: adequate legal and physical access via road or street, public services (police, fire, etc.) and drinking water and wastewater treatment capacity and parkland/open space. The Lincoln County Planning Department reviews all subdivision applications, compiles staff reports, schedules and organizes public hearings before the County Planning Board, the County Commission and/or City Councils. The staff also provides a recommendation on all subdivision applications. This would be one of three recommendations: (1) approval, (2) approval with conditions, or (3) denial of the subdivision application.

Under state statute, a number of different types of land divisions are exempt from subdivision review process. Nonetheless, under the Lincoln County Subdivision Regulations the respective incorporated cities of Libby, Troy, and Rexford in cooperation with Lincoln County have the responsibility of ensuring that any proposed exemption is valid and in compliance with state law. The exemptions include the gift or sale of parcels to immediate family members (family

transfers), newly created parcels to be used exclusively for agriculture or to preserve open-space and court-ordered divisions. Family transfers are by far the most common exemption used to divide property outside of the subdivision process. Exempt land divisions do create new parcels that require public expenditures such as road maintenance, fire, and police protection, but they are not required to meet standards for access and safety that apply to subdivisions. Typically, exempt land divisions account for about 30 to 50 new lots per year. Lands that are divided off from larger parcels typically become residential, industrial and commercial sites. Tracking where these exempt divisions occur can help local governments to predict, plan and guide future growth, as well as to provide adequate services to those already living in high growth areas.

In addition to subdivision oversight, Lincoln County also has adopted sanitation, floodplain, and lakeshore protection regulations. The only zoning regulations that exist within the unincorporated parts of the County are with regards to airports.

Conservation Easements

“Conservation easements are voluntary conveyances of partial legal interests in land. Conservation easements allow land to remain in private ownership while ensuring the property's natural resource values will not be compromised by land uses that are incompatible with those resource values. This is accomplished by placing perpetual restrictions -- tailored to meet the agricultural, economic and ecological goals of the landowner -- on subdivision or other development. Montana allows the granting of both perpetual and term conservation easements, but term easements must be granted or renewed for minimum 15-year terms. While the state legislature has spelled out allowable restrictions that may be imposed by a conservation easement, the definition broadly encompasses acts that are detrimental to conservation, and "... other acts or uses detrimental to such retention of land or water areas in their existing conditions." The legislature has specifically authorized the acquisition of conservation easement by "qualified private organizations." Source: (Excerpt from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, <http://fwp.mt.gov/tmc/reports/legal.html#fw5>)

Activities generally restricted by a conservation easement include: (1) subdivision for residential or commercial activities, (2) construction of non-agricultural buildings, (3) nonagricultural commercial activities, (4) dumping of non-compostable or toxic waste, and (5) surface mining. Conversely, conservation easements on agricultural lands typically allow the landowner to: (1) continue existing agricultural and silvicultural uses, (2) construct buildings, fences, water and other improvements necessary for agriculture that are compatible with conservation objectives, (3) sell, devise, or gift the property subject to terms of the easement, (4) control access to the property, (5) construct family or employee residences that are compatible with the conservation objectives of the easement; (6) protect, restore and enhance fish and wildlife habitat, and (7) engage in any other land uses not specifically prohibited by the easement.

Conservation easements are an incentive-based conservation tool -- in contrast to mandatory land use regulations. Conservation easements are granted voluntarily by a property owner in return for certain economic benefits, which can include the payment of compensation to the property owner or income tax deductions equal to the decrease in the property's value as a

result of the development restrictions. Conservation easements also reduce the property's value for purposes of real estate taxes and estate taxes.

Because many of the agencies and organizations that use conservation easements to protect wildlife habitat, agricultural lands and other open space cooperate with other easement granting entities on conservation projects, much of their reporting overlaps, making it difficult to pinpoint the exact acreage under easement statewide. However, according to a report compiled by the State for the Secretary of Agriculture, Montana leads the nation in total acreage under conservation easement. Between 1978 and 1999, the acreage protected by use of conservation easements in Montana increased from 840 acres to more than 600,000 acres. More than half of that increase occurred between 1993 and 1997. A more recent estimate made by the Trust for Public Lands places the total area under conservation easement in Montana at 778,500 acres.

In 1999, the State legislature passed the Montana Agriculture Heritage Act, which created the Montana Agricultural Heritage Program to contribute state funding toward the purchase of agricultural conservation easements, or purchased development rights (PDR), to help stem the development of critical farm, ranch, and forest land with significant public values. The program was funded by an initial allocation of \$1 million from the general fund, and is overseen by a citizen commission charged with acquiring conservation easements from willing sellers and donors. During its first year in existence, the commission approved eight landowner grant applications totaling \$888,000. The grants were leveraged with \$6.36 million from federal, local, and private sources, including the participating landowners. The program has preserved 9,923 acres of agricultural land.

The Habitat Montana Program encompasses all four of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks' habitat conservation programs. The program most significant to a discussion of conservation easements is House Bill 526 (the program is actually named "HB 526"), which is 1987 legislation that provides annual, earmarked funding for a wildlife habitat acquisition program. The law sets aside approximately 2.8 million hunting license dollars annually to acquire interests in land through fee title acquisition, securing conservation easements or leasing. The program had helped protect nearly 250,000 acres by the end of 2001. Montana's Forest Legacy Program is the state implementation of the U.S. Forest Service's Federal Forest Legacy Program, which focuses on protecting environmentally important private forest lands threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. The Forest Service works with the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to implement the Montana Forest legacy Program. The program essentially works by granting federal funding at a 3:1 ratio to acquire fee-title to, or conservation easements on private forest lands.”

Table 11: Sq. Miles & Percent of Total Land Area by Type

Conservation Easement	Acres	Sq. Miles	% of Total Easements	% of Total Land Area
None	2,286,967	3,573	N/A	97.3%
Other State Land	59,966	94	93.9%	2.6%
Private Conservation	3,223	5	5.0%	0.1%
Other Federal	672	1	1.0%	0.0%
Total	2,350,828	3,673		

Source: Montana Natural Resource Information System (NRIS) & Montana Land Reliance

According to the Montana Natural Resource Information System, In Lincoln County, there are 63,861 acres of land covered under conservation easements. The majority of these easements are held by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the south part of the County north of Happy’s Inn.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's cultural resources worthy of preservation. Authorized under NHPA, the Register is administered by the National Park Service. Properties on the National Register include districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering and culture. *Since listing on the register is voluntary, there may be properties that are historically significant or identified in some other survey that are not listed on the National Register. Table 12 only represents properties actually on the National Register.*

Table 12: Lincoln County Properties Listed on the National Register

Resource Name	Address	City	Date Listed
Ant Flat Ranger Station	Forest Service Rd. 36 – 2 miles south of Fortine, Kootenai National Forest	Fortine	1996
Eureka Community Hall	Cliff St.	Eureka	1985
Farmers and Merchants State Bank	223 Dewey Ave.	Eureka	1995

Source: National Park Service, National Register Index Service

In addition to the individual buildings on the National Register, the State of Montana Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) maintains a database of buildings, structures, trails, archeological sites, and landmarks that have been identified from various reports and cultural surveys as being historically significant. These buildings are not on the National Register of Historic Places. Following is a list of structures that are included in a database search for Libby, Eureka and Troy.

- Libby – Burlington Northern Overpass
- Libby – Grace Export Plan
- Eureka – Creekside Motel
- Eureka – Shea Residence (Alverson Property)
- Eureka - Residence - Montana Traders
- Eureka - Residence – 510 Dewey Ave.
- Eureka – Residence - 102 Dewey Ave
- Eureka – Residence – 110 Dewey Ave.
- Eureka - Majestic Theater
- Eureka - Lincoln Electric Coop Bldg. (Northwest Recovery)
- Eureka - Residence – 136 Riverside Dr.
- Eureka – Residence – 125 Riverside Dr.
- Eureka – Residence – 112 Riverside Dr.
- Eureka – Residence – 158 Riverside Dr.
- Troy – Kootenai Bridge
- Troy – Troy Jail

In addition to the properties listed in the cultural resources database, SHPO maintains a Bibliography of reports and surveys that have been completed regarding cultural and historic resources in the State. These surveys often are undertaken as part of a transportation project, environmental assessment, housing study, or other project where there is a concern for protecting historical resources. In 1980, a comprehensive historic resource survey was completed for the entire City of Troy as part of a Community Development Block Grant project. The survey identified a number of commercial structures in the downtown area as historically significant. In 1981, a cultural resource inventories were completed for most of Eureka and Libby. These documents are available from SHPO.

- Lincoln County Survey, Libby, MT – Downtown, Jan 1981, Kingston Heath
- Troy, MT Historical Resource Survey, Gary D., 8/17/1980
- Cultural Resource Inventory, Eureka North and South Eureka, Lincoln County, MT

Kootenai National Forest

A history of the Kootenai National Forest indicates a rich cultural history. The following types of sites have been documented.

- Exploration, Fur Trades and Missionaries – 28 recorded sites. Most on Kootenai River north of Eureka.
- Transportation Routes – 56 recorded sites. Most are associated with population centers and major valley thoroughfares.
- Agriculture and Settlement – 228 recorded sites. Locations tend to be along valley bottoms and the more level Eureka-Fortine area.
- Mining – 176 recorded sites. Site distribution is densest around Sylvanite and in the Troy, Libby, West Fisher, and Silver Butte mining districts.
- Logging - 179 recorded sites. Clustered around mills locations in Troy, Warland, Libby, Eureka and Fortine.
- Forest Service Administration – 163 recorded sites associated with ranger stations, guard stations or lookouts. Their distribution reflects their function in fire detection and forest management.

Source: Historic of Kootenai National Forest, May 25, 1994, Northwest Archaeological Associates, Inc., Volume 1

The Kootenai National Forest celebrated its 100 year birthday in August of 2006. There are many historic and cultural resources in the Forest. The following historic buildings that are still standing mentioned in the “Kootenai National Forest: Celebrating 100 years of History”.

- Raven Ranger Station & Complex
- Ant Flat Ranger Station (National Historic Register)
- Bull River Ranger Station
- Fairview Ranger Station
- Sylvanite Ranger Station
- Historic Highway 2
- Mt. Henry Lookout
- Mt. Baldy Lookout
- Sex Peak Lookout
- McGuire Mountain Lookout

- Mud Lake Lookout
- Upper Ford Ranger Station
- Mount Wam Lookout
- Wolverine Cabin

SCENIC RESOURCES

Scenic Highways

The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States. Since 1992, the National Scenic Byways Program has provided funding for almost 1,500 state and nationally designated byway projects in 48 states. The U.S. Secretary of Transportation recognizes certain roads as All-American Roads or National Scenic Byways based on one or more archeological, cultural, historic, natural, recreational and scenic qualities.

- Lake Koocanusa Scenic Byway - created in 1992 to become the northern Regions' 5th scenic byway. It follows the Kootenai River and Lake Koocanusa via State Highway 37. Open year-round, this 67 mile route connects Libby and Eureka. The byway also includes a side loop (Forest Development Road No. 228) around the west side of the lake.

Kootenai National Forest Scenic Areas

- Ten Lakes Scenic Area - designated as a Scenic area in 1971. The 1984 Wilderness Study Act recommended the Ten Lakes Scenic area as wilderness. Located along the northeastern edge of the Kootenai National Forest, with the Canadian Border as one of its boundaries, the Ten Lakes Area is dominated by a high ridge of the Whitefish Mountains. Alpine glaciers shaped much of the present rugged scenery. As the glaciers grew they carved deep scallops, or cirques, and high, rim-rocked basins sheltering the many lakes of the area. The area is named for the ten lakes basin along the Canadian border.
- Northwest Peaks Scenic Area - at the northwest corner of the Kootenai National Forest close to both the Canadian and Idaho borders, Northwest Peaks Scenic Area is reached by Forest roads extending from U.S. Highway 2 and State Highway 508. Part of the Selkirk Range, lofty peaks and deep valleys provide primitive recreation opportunities. There are only a few miles of trail. The tallest of the mountains in this area are the Northwest Peak at 7,705 feet and Davis Mountain at 7,583 feet. The Northwest Peak Trail offers scenic views of the upper West Fork Yaak River drainage and a panoramic view of the surrounding area.
- Ross Creek Scenic Area - reached by four miles of Forest road from State Highway 56, the Ross Creek Scenic Area is a grove of ancient Western Red Cedars growing along the banks of Ross Creek. A .9 mile self-guided nature trail forms a winding loop through the grove. The giant cedars reach eight feet in diameter and 175 feet in height.

PARKS AND RECREATIONAL AREAS

County Parks

Lincoln County maintains a total of 500 acres of County parks. J. Neils Park north of Libby and Kootenai Falls Park on the Kootenai River, between Libby and Troy, account for almost half of the total parklands acreage with specialized parks of riding arena, shooting range, and sledding hill. There are several parcels providing lake or fishing access. The remaining parks are divided among neighborhood parks and scattered undeveloped parcels dedicated as part of subdivision process. There are questions regarding ownership and legal descriptions for some of these parcels.

Table 13: County Parks in Lincoln County

District #1 - Libby	Acreage	Type/Facilities
J. Neils Park	101.58	Ball Fields, Trails, Picnic Area
Granite Creek	23.92	Roping – Riding Arena & Creekbed
Pioneer Park	10.3	Pioneer Center
Edgewater Estates	12.60 (3 parcels)	Neighborhood
Middle School – Hill	22.28	Sledding Hill
Emkayan Village	2.78	Neighborhood – Baseball Field
Sunrise Terrace	6.77	Neighborhood
Big Horn Terrace	10.6	Cliffside Park
Quartz Creek	4.588	Quarter Creek Park
Middle Thompson Lake	0.395	Lake access
McGinnis Meadow	3.969	Gravel Pit
Whitehaven	2.44	Neighborhood
California Park	2.52	By Cherry Creek – Neighborhood
Miscellaneous Parcels	9.1727	Undeveloped, buffers, pocket parks
Total	213.9	
District #2 - Troy	Acreage	Type/Facilities
Bull Lake	0.6	Lake Access
Angel Island	9	Wetland on Bull Lake
Troy Museum	28.90	Museum & Park
Kootenai Falls	135.56	Picnic area, trails, overlooks
Kootenai Vista	7.49	Neighborhood
Deer Robe Park	5	Fishing access
Yaak Shore Acres	16.32	Neighborhood & buffer strips
Cedars Subdivision	2.39	Buffer strip – Ownership questions
Yaak Meadows	17.79	Undeveloped – Legal questions
Airbase Flats	27.68	Trap shooting range
Milnor Lake	1.057	Common Area
Misc.	.415	Undeveloped – Ownership Questions
Total	251	
District #3 - Eureka	Acreage	Type/Facilities
Murphy Creek	8.724	Moose Habitat
Emerald Estates	0.869	Mini Park
Trego Rd. & Ant. Flats	2	Gravel Pit
Pine Bay	6.34	Neighborhood
Indian Creek	13.94	Neighborhood
Misc. Lots less than 1 acre	1.676	Mini-parks, some undeveloped
Sophie Lake	2.12	Easement for lake access
Total	35.69	

Source: Lincoln County Planning Department

State Parks & Fishing Access

The Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Departments (FWP) manages state parks, fishing access sites and wildlife management areas throughout the State. In Lincoln County the department manages a state park on Middle Thompson Lake as well as several fishing access sites. FWP also operates Murray Springs Fish Hatchery in partnership with the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers.

Table 14: Montana Fish, Wildlife and Park Sites in Lincoln County

Name	Type	Boating	Picnic	Wildlife Viewing	Camping	Other
Glen Lake	Fishing access	Yes	Yes			Biking
Kootenai Falls	Wildlife Mgt. Area			Yes	Yes	Hunting
Logan State Park	State Park	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Biking
Tetrault	Fishing Access	Yes	Yes			
Chain of Lakes	Fishing Access	Yes		Yes	Yes	

Source: Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai National Forest offers abundant recreational opportunities for the residents of Lincoln County and is a major attraction for visitors.

- Winter Sports - downhill skiing, cross country skiing and snowmobiling. Turner Mountain is located on the Kootenai National Forest and operates a downhill ski area under a special use permit. The ski area offers 2,110 vertical feet of runs with a high elevation of 5,952 feet. Facilities include a lodge and a double chairlift. There is no lodging at the ski area. The area averages 250 inches of snowfall annually.

Snowmobile trails are located throughout the forest. The trails are groomed by the Lincoln County Sno-Kats and the Ten Lakes Snowmobile Club. Grooming occurs on a regular or intermittent basis and is dependent on weather. There are 36 miles of groomed cross-country ski trails and 162 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

- Cabinet Mountains Wilderness Area - located about 15 miles southwest of Libby, Montana. Elevations in this area range from 8,738 feet atop Snowshoe Peak to a low of 3,000 feet. There is no motorized access or bicycling in this area although horses are allowed. Hiking, hunting, fishing, and camping are popular activities. The area has high wildlife and scenic value.
- Hiking - a network of hiking trails across the forest with several designated as National Recreation Trails. The Kootenai National Forest has over 1,476 miles of hiking trails.

- Campgrounds, Picnic Areas and Fishing Access - numerous developed campground and picnic sites with facilities such as picnic tables, toilets, fire rings, and parking areas. Some sites have fishing access, boat ramps and group facilities. There are fishing access sites located on Lake Koochanusa, Bull Lake and other major water bodies.

The Forest Service also has cabin and lookout rentals available for overnight use. These include:

- McGuire Mountain – Lookout Cabin
- Webb Mtn. – Lookout Cabin
- Mt. Wam – Lookout Cabin
- Garver Mt. – Lookout Tower
- Mt. Baldy – Buckhorn Ridge (Lookout Tower)
- Yaak Mtn. – Lookout Tower
- Big Creek Baldy – Lookout Tower
- Raven Cabin – Cabin
- Gem Peak – Lookout Tower
- Sex Peak – Lookout Cabin

In addition to the Forest Service campgrounds there are nine private RV/campgrounds in the county. Three are located in the Eureka area, one is located in Troy, and five are located in the Libby area.

LAND USE POLICY DIRECTION:

Based on community input, and public hearings, Lincoln County has determined that the Growth Policy should address the following key items:

- The rural character of the County needs to be maintained. Rural character for the purposes of this document is defined as maintaining the traditional and historic land uses found throughout the County such as agriculture, natural resource extraction and management industries, low density housing, and ranching that ensure rural lifestyles and economies. Rural Character needs to be predominant over future development. Future development should occur in a manner that compliments and preserves open space, the natural landscape, native vegetation and wildlife habitat. Future development should protect surface and ground water and enhances “rural character”.
- Those rural areas of the County that do not require the provision of urban services and infrastructure should be developed with low-density residential development that is consistent with the historical patterns of growth.
- Higher density residential, commercial and industrial development should be encouraged to locate adjacent to existing population centers and public services in order to preserve the rural character of the County.
- Rural commercial development located outside traditional service areas should be appropriately scaled to serve the needs of the local community and the traveling public, while protecting and enhancing the rural character of the County.

- In order for the public and elected officials to make informed and appropriate land use decisions, the County will gather information about the existing land uses. That information will include the identification of those areas in the County most suitable for the different types of development that could occur, i.e. low density, high density, commercial and industrial.
- All regulations or incentives used to guide future development and thus maintain the rural character of the County must be designed to be fair and efficient.
- In order to maintain the rural character of the County, the land use policies identified in this document can be achieved at three (3) levels within the County. They include: neighborhood planning, Sub-County Community Districts and County-wide planning.
- Neighborhood planning is generally defined as a two phase process in which members of the “neighborhood” develop a plan to manage future development in their area. The first phase of the process involves establishing goals and objectives, much like a growth policy and identifying the steps required to address the issues identified by the “neighborhood.” The second phase of the process addresses the recommendations in the neighborhood plan by achieving goals and objectives through recommendations or incentives.
- “Sub-County” planning would involve areas not encompassing the entire jurisdiction of Lincoln County, but would rather be based upon designations such as watersheds or by the service areas used to provide local services such as fire protection or solid waste.

The goals and objectives of this element have been developed to meet these criteria. Goals and objectives of other elements of the Growth Policy have been evaluated for consistency with the protection of rural character as defined above, and by other factors contributing to local “rural character”. See Chapter 7 (*Implementation Plan part IV*) “Lincoln County Action Plan” for Land Use Goals and Objectives.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

Lincoln County is a natural resource rich county. The County has many natural resource amenities including: large rich mineral deposits, vast forestlands, very diverse and unique fish and wildlife species, extensive public lands and open space, quality water resources and beautiful mountain vistas. Most would agree these amenities make Lincoln County like no other place in the lower 48 states.

Lincoln County also has some natural resource/environmental issue areas to include two superfund sites; an unhealthy forest in a high risk condition for catastrophic wildfires; an area of poor air ventilation conditions and continued steady growth which needs to be properly planned for to continue the rural character and quality of life residents enjoy.

Water resources are extremely important throughout Lincoln County and the Kootenai River Basin. Surface water quality is generally very good but is slowly deteriorating. Groundwater resources are generally pure. The chemical quality of ground water is the most important ground-water problem. Highly mineralized water is present in shallow and deep aquifers in many parts of the County. Depth to groundwater varies throughout Lincoln County with some areas of deep, low yielding wells. Although little agriculture occurs here compared to other parts of Montana, irrigation still utilizes the most water in the Kootenai River basin. Mining and the wood products industry also use significant amounts of water. Public and rural water supplies are drawn almost equally from surface and ground water. In-streams flows in the Kootenai River basin support electrical power generation, fisheries, and recreation.

The overall climate for Lincoln County is considered to be of cool temperate with maritime influence with outbreaks of arctic air occurring occasionally in winter. Due to the influence of the Pacific weather system, the climate is mild and moist compared to the rest of Montana. Many of the same tree and plant species found in the Pacific Northwest are found in portions of Lincoln County.

Average annual precipitation varies from 18” to 25” near Libby and Troy to only 14” in the Tobacco Valley near Eureka. The trees, plants and grasses found in this northern part of the County are more representative of areas in eastern Montana. Higher average annual precipitation amounts are found in higher elevations. Some of these areas have precipitation amounts of over 70” a year. The wettest months are November through January and the driest are June through September.

Lincoln County geography is dominated by mountainous, forest covered terrain cut by narrow river valleys. The topography of Lincoln County is quite varied, with the Purcell, Cabinet and Salish Mountains and Whitefish Ranges defining distinct valleys: Tobacco Valley in the Eureka area, Libby Valley in the Libby area and the Yaak Valley surrounding the town of Yaak. The elevation in Lincoln County ranges from about 1,820 feet above sea level where the Kootenai River enters Idaho, to over 8,700 feet in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Noxious weeds are a major problem in Lincoln County. Lincoln County gets new invasive species first in Montana as it borders both Canada and Idaho. The County is charged with stopping the spread of these species here so they do not ultimately get east of the Continental

Divide to the major agriculture areas of Montana. Both aquatic and non-aquatic weed species are of major concern. Highway corridors and waterways are major conduits for the spread of weeds.

Fire suppression efforts over the past 100 years and recent housing development activities in and near forested lands has created a hazardous fire condition. New homes in rural forested environments have increased. Some of these home owners are unfamiliar with fire behavior characteristics and the potential risks from wildfires. This has resulted in an expansion of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) and added additional pressure on fire suppression organizations.

The Montana Natural Heritage Program, the US Forest Service (USFS) the BLM and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) maintains a database of plant species of special concern in the State. The term “species of special concern” includes plants that are rare, endemic, disjunct, threatened or endangered throughout the range, vulnerable to extirpation, or need further research. Lincoln County has 96 species of special concern (see County Resource Analysis for list).

There are currently five animals listed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as threatened or endangered species in Lincoln County. The gray wolf and the Kootenai River White Sturgeon are the only endangered species. There are three threatened species in the County. These include the bull trout, grizzly bear, and Canada lynx.

Lincoln County is home to six known ungulates. They include elk, moose, mule deer, whitetail deer, big horn sheep, mountain goat. White-tailed deer and to a lesser degree, elk, moose, and mule deer are prevalent throughout Lincoln County. Deer and elk are the most hunted game animals in the region and provide a tremendous economic and recreational activity for residents and some nonresidents of the area.

Many sites of historical, cultural, and spiritual importance are found throughout Lincoln County.

WATER RESOURCES

Surface Water

Surface water quality is generally very good but is slowly deteriorating. The primary surface water sources in Lincoln County are found in the Yaak, Upper Kootenai, Fisher and Stillwater watersheds. The Kootenai River flows south out of Canada into Lincoln County and leaves the State west of Troy. The Kootenai River Basin is an international watershed encompassing about 18,000 square miles of British Columbia, Northwest Montana and Northern Idaho. Basin topography is dominated by steep mountainous country, 90% of which is forested or above tree-line. Montana’s portion of the Kootenai Basin is narrow, with steep densely-wooded mountains and slender flood plains along the river and its two major tributaries, the Fisher and Yaak rivers. The upstream portion of the Kootenai River is dominated by Libby Dam and its reservoir, Lake Kocanusa. Sub-basins include Upper and Lower Kootenai, Yaak River, and Fisher River.

The Kootenai basin is sparsely populated. Although little agriculture occurs here compared to other parts of Montana, irrigation still utilizes the most water in the Kootenai River basin. Mining and the wood products industry also use significant amounts of water. Public and rural water supplies are drawn almost equally from surface and ground water (account for about 3% of the water used). In-streams flows in the Kootenai River basin support electrical power generation fisheries and recreation.

The southwest portion of the County is within the Lower Clark Fork watershed. The Lower Clark Fork sub-basin is part of the Columbia River basin and is characterized by mountainous and forested terrain. The Lincoln County portion of the watershed is among the least populated areas in the basin.

Surface Water Quality

Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act requires states to identify state waters where quality is impaired (does not fully meet standards) or threatened (is likely to violate standards in the near future). Every two years the states are required to submit a list of these impaired or threatened waters to the EPA. This "303(d) List" must prioritize the waterbodies in order to develop plans to bring the listed waters into compliance with water quality standards. There are 33 records in the Clean Water Act Information Center for Lincoln County (See County Resource Analysis for list of waterbodies).

According to the US Forest Service, nearly a third of the sub-watersheds in the County have indications that their watershed condition is "Not Properly Functioning." Conversely, less than a quarter of the sub-watersheds appear to be "Properly Functioning." And, nearly half of the sub-watersheds, although currently properly functioning, exhibit trends or substantial risks that may move them into a "not properly functioning" category. Many stream segments, lakes, and other water bodies have been listed in the last ten years as "Water Quality Limited Segments" by the State of Montana (See County Resource Analysis for complete list).

Dams

The Montana DNRC lists 4 high hazard dams in Lincoln County: Glen Lake, Kootenai Development Impoundment, Flower Creek and Costich Creek (Art Robinson, Montana Department of Natural Resources, Dam Safety Division, and November 2006). These dams are used for hydropower, flood control, fire protection, irrigation, recreation, stock watering and water supply. Montana DNRC classifies dams based on potential damage resulting from a dam breach, as follows: "high" - significant loss of life and property; "significant" - no loss of life and significant property damage; and "low" - minor property damage. One federal dam, the Libby hydroelectric dam is also classified as high hazard.

The high and significant hazard dams in Lincoln County range from a 14 foot tall irrigation dam to the 422 foot high Libby hydroelectric dam on the Kootenai River capably of storing over six million acre feet of water. Catastrophic failure of any of the six high and significant hazard dams would cause downstream flooding that could impact residential structures and/or public roads. Failure of the Libby dam has been modeled by the US Corps of Engineers (USCOE) and has the potential to inundate roads, critical facilities and a large number of residential housing units.

(Draft Lincoln County Disaster Mitigation Plan, November 2003.)

Libby Dam

The Libby dam was constructed primarily for power production. The surface elevation ranges from 2,287 feet to 2,459 feet, full pool. The typical operation schedule for Libby Dam and Libby Reservoir begins in July, when the reservoir fills to full pool. Drawdown begins in September and reaches minimum pool elevation in April. Historically, the USACOE operated Libby Reservoir to reach full pool in July and began drafting in September to reach a minimum pool elevation by April and frequently by March 15. Presently, operations are dictated by a combination of power production, flood control, recreation, and special operations for the recovery of ESA-listed species, including Kootenai River white sturgeon, bull trout, and Snake River salmon stocks in the lower Columbia River. High rains in 2006 lead to an unusually large amount of storage above the dam. To address this issue, the highest release in the history of the dam of 51,000 cfs was completed in the spring of 2006.

Ground Water

Groundwater resources are generally pure. The chemical quality of ground water is the most important ground-water problem. Highly mineralized water is present in shallow and deep aquifers in many parts of the County.

Lincoln County lies within the Northern Rocky Mountains Intermontane Basins Aquifer. Although most of the basins that compose the aquifer system are not hydraulically connected, they share common hydrologic and geologic characteristics and are treated together as an aquifer system. These basins consist primarily of unconsolidated-deposit aquifers of quaternary sand and gravel. These types of aquifers are the most productive in the Rocky Mountains region and are a source of water for thousands of shallow wells. Recharge to the aquifer is by precipitation that falls directly on basin floors and by snowmelt that runs off the surrounding mountains and is transported into the basins by tributary streams. The basin aquifer system may yield as much as 3,500 gallons per minute but generally yield 50 gallons per minute or less. Yields are adequate for domestic use and livestock-watering purposes can be obtained in most places from wells that are 200 feet deep or less. Deeper wells yield adequate volumes of water for irrigation, industrial purposes and public water supply.

Aquifers and Wells

Well yields in Lincoln County are unpredictable because of the heterogeneity of the subsurface deposits. Larger yielding wells are found in unconsolidated materials such as sands and gravels. Areas where glacial lake depositions are found are usually very deep wells with a potential for low yields. Schoolhouse Lake Flats near Troy is an area that has very deep low yielding wells. Bear Creek near Libby is another area with deep low yielding wells. Several community water systems have been developed to address water issues where development has taken place. Emkayan Village North of Libby and Wilderness Plateau subdivisions near Troy are examples of community water systems. There are approximately 95 public water systems in Lincoln County which include businesses, churches, mobile home parks, etc. A public water system has 25 or more users, 60 or more calendar days in a year. The cities of Eureka, Rexford, and Troy all have wells and are public water systems. The city of Libby's public water system receives its drinking water from Flower Creek Watershed.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality database reports 130 incidents of leaking underground storage tanks in Lincoln County. Of these all but 22 have been resolved. Causes of contamination include perforation of the tank, corrosion, leaking pipes and spills. Remediation may include removal of contaminated soil; groundwater testing and other preventative measures (see County Resource Analysis for locations).

EPA SUPERFUND SITES

Libby Groundwater Site

The Libby Ground Water Site resulted from the treatment of poles and timbers with wood preservatives during the late 40's, 50's and 60's by J. Neils Lumber Company and St. Regis Paper Company. The treating plant was shut down in 1969 and dismantled. The primary wood preservatives that were used at the site were creosote and pentachlorophenol with a mineral oil carrier. As a result of wood treating chemicals being discovered in the groundwater, the Libby Ground Water Site was placed on EPA's "Superfund" list in 1983.

Champion International Corporation purchased St. Regis Paper Company in 1985, and agreed to clean up the site by signing a Consent Decree with EPA in 1988. International Paper Company is the current owner and responsible party for the site as a result of their purchase of Champion International in June of 2000. Remediation, as agreed to in the Consent Decree, continues under International Paper's ownership and they pay for all costs related to the site. They have paid to connect residential well users to the municipal water supply, and paid well owners for metered water. In the past few years, International Paper has arranged closure of the wells and settled final payments with the majority of property owners. International Paper has completed construction of land treatment units and facilities to treat soil and ground water. All activities related to the investigation and remediation of the site has been conducted under the oversight of EPA and MT DEQ. On-going remedial activities include soil treatment by land farming and groundwater treatment via ex-situ and in-situ processes, as well as institutional controls. EPA conducted a second five-year review for the site in March 2000 and determined that the remedy continues to be protective of human health and the environment.

Libby Asbestos Site

Mining of vermiculite was also a major industry in the County. The Zonolite Division of the W.R. Grace Company operated a mine and mill nine miles northeast of Libby. It was once the largest vermiculite mining operations in the world. The product had been mined commercially at the Libby deposit since 1923. The Libby deposit contained an integral by-product, asbestos, which caused liability problems for the company. W.R. Grace closed the plant and reclaimed the land in 1991. In response to local concerns and news articles about asbestos-contaminated vermiculite, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency sent an Emergency Response Team to Libby, Montana in late November 1999. The Team immediately began collecting information. EPA's first priority was to assess the current risk to public health from asbestos-contaminated vermiculite in Libby. Next, the Agency began taking necessary actions to reduce this risk. In December 1999, EPA began collecting samples - nearly 700 - from air, soil, dust and insulation at homes and businesses. Indoor air sample results were released in January - first to property owners and then to the media and general public. EPA also moved immediately to locate areas in and near Libby that were likely to have high levels of

contamination such as two former vermiculite processing facilities. EPA also looked at general asbestos exposures in the community and at health effects seen in people who had little or no association with the vermiculite mine in Libby. EPA worked closely with local, state and federal agencies to understand how people might come into contact with asbestos-contaminated vermiculite and what can be done to prevent future exposures - in Libby and elsewhere.

Libby was added to EPA's National Priorities List in October 2002. EPA established a program to inspect all properties in Libby. Approximately 3,500 properties were inspected in 2002 and 2003. Over 12,000 soil samples were collected and analyzed and the results are being sent to property owners. As of 2006, the former vermiculite processing plants and other public areas have been cleaned up. Cleanups have also been completed at a total of 794 residential and commercial properties. EPA expects to complete at least 170 cleanups in 2007. Based on current information, EPA estimates that 1,200-1,400 residential and business properties will need some type of cleanup. The total number depends upon the final cleanup standards set by EPA. EPA intends to propose these standards later this year. EPA is also initiating toxicological studies in 2007 that will provide data for the all-important baseline risk assessment, which will answer questions like "How Clean is clean?" and "How safe is safe?"

In 2007, The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has begun leading the asbestos investigation in Troy. DEQ and has hired Tetra Tech EM Inc., an environmental consulting firm, to perform the field activities and assist with the project. The project includes interior and exterior inspections and sampling at over 1,100 parcels in and around the City of Troy. The inspections are expected to take at least two years. Future clean up work beyond the inspections will depend on funding and the results of the inspections.

CLIMATE

The overall climate for Lincoln County is considered to be of cool temperate with maritime influence; outbreaks of arctic air occur occasionally in winter and rain and snow are common. The western portions of the County by contrast have milder winters. Mean annual precipitation averages approximately 30 inches for the Kootenai River basin. Precipitation generally rises with increasing altitude, and varies from 14.5 inches/year at Eureka, to an estimated 60 or more inches on some of the higher mountains. Annual snowfall varies from about 40 inches in the lower valleys to an estimated 300 inches in some mountain areas. Most of the snow falls during the November-March period, but heavy snowstorms can occur as early as mid-September or as late as early May. (Draft Lincoln County Disaster Mitigation Plan, November 2003.)

Much of the annual runoff occurs in spring with the snowmelt. The annual pre-dam hydrograph for the Kootenai River at the town of Libby, Montana shows a distinct peak in the April-July time period. Since 1972 when the Libby Dam was completed, flood flows on the Kootenai River have been modified by the dam. Relatively low runoff predominates the rest of the year, especially in the dry late summer, and in winter when much of the precipitation falls as snow and remains frozen.

AIR QUALITY

Overall air quality in Lincoln County is very good. Air quality is important to area residents for both health and quality of life reasons. One air-shed in Lincoln County does not meet state air quality standards. The area in and surrounding Libby is designated by the EPA as a non-attainment area for national air quality standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter. Non-attainment designations require that actions be taken to address sources of pollution and bring the designated area into compliance with federal standards. Because of this designation, Lincoln County has an air pollution control ordinance which enacts more stringent regulations on air emissions within the designated non-attainment area in order to achieve mandatory compliance with the air quality standards. These ordinances affect both the public and private sector for the operations and activities that are considered sources of particulate pollution. Activities regulated under the ordinance include the use of solid fuel burning devices (primarily wood stoves); outdoor burning; and materials applications limitations and dust control requirements for roadways, commercial yards/lots and parking lots.

Historically, the Libby area has been more dramatically impacted by poor air ventilation conditions generally associated with mountain valley regions because of unique local geographic features and a larger, more concentrated population base. However, community growth plans should recognize the potential for increased levels of air pollution in other areas of the County as population densities increase in these areas. A pro-active approach to air quality issues as part of an overall growth plan could help avert designation of additional air quality non-attainment areas within the County and the associated control program developments mandated by federal standards.

In 2004, the EPA designated Lincoln County as non-attainment for PM_{2.5}. The non-attainment status, due to consistently high annual levels of PM_{2.5}, led to revised Air Pollution Control Regulations, which were adopted in March 2006. This revised Air Pollution Control Ordinance regulates outdoor burning, dust control, and solid fuel burning devices. The aim of the ordinance revision was to reduce non-essential fine particulate emissions to a level that will not only meet the federal air quality standards, but will provide room for future economic growth and development. However, any new sources of PM_{2.5} emissions, such as new industry, would require permitting through the Montana Department of Environmental Quality. This permitting process would be difficult in the Libby Air Pollution Control District, where new emissions could push us back over the standards set in EPA's Clean Air Act.

The State of Montana regulates air quality through the authority of Title 17, Chapter 8 of the Administrative Rules of Montana (ARM). All regulations within the ARM's apply to all persons and activities within the boundaries of Lincoln County.

WOODSTOVE CHANGE-OUT PROGRAM

To address the Libby air quality issue, early in 2005 the EPA, Health Patio and Barbeque Association (HPBA), Montana Department of Environmental Quality and Lincoln County recognized the need and the opportunity to provide the community of Libby, Montana, with the means to identify and correct the environmental and health concerns related to the community's status of non-attainment of the EPA PM_{2.5} Federal Clean Air Standards. The program goals were to reduce PM_{2.5} emissions; assist the health of community citizens; provide a model for woodstove change-out programs. Continued monitoring of air quality effects would continue on into the future to evaluate long term success.

The final woodstove change-out figure as of March 2008 is 1,187. This figure includes 1,101 change-outs of non-certified woodstoves and 86 rebuilds of poorly-functioning certified stoves. The majority of non-certified woodstoves were changed out to certified woodstoves, but some people opted to change to pellet, gas, oil or electric (K. Hooper).

The program was funded by:

HPBA \$173,543 cash and \$450,000 in donated stoves & equipment
EPA \$100,000 clean air grant and \$985,200 congressional appropriation
DEQ \$105,820 for monitoring, etc

A total of \$1,814,563 was spent for the change-out program.

The woodstove change-out program officially ended on April 30, 2007. Education and program maintenance issues continue. Indications are that the change-outs will be effective in reducing annual PM 2.5 levels. As of 2008, some improvements have been seen but there are still some sporadic elevations in particulate levels. Air quality continues to be monitored on a 24/7 basis and will continue into the future (K. Lind).

FISH AND WILDLIFE RESOURCES

Fisheries

Changes in the physical environment, subsequent habitat alteration and the introduction of non-native fish species have been the main contributors to the reduction in fish habitat and species diversity. There are six fish species and three amphibian species in Lincoln County listed as threatened or endangered. Their appearance on these lists indicates the overall viability of these species at risk.

Bull trout: Bull trout are listed as Threatened under ESA. According to Lee et al. (1997), they are widely distributed across the Columbia River Basin, although their estimate current range is about 60% of the historic range. This species is found in Kootenai River drainages in Lincoln County.

Westslope cutthroat trout: This subspecies of cutthroat trout is on the Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list. This subspecies was petitioned for listing under ESA, although listing was determined to be "not warranted" by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is currently going through a court ordered status review. Westslope cutthroat trout are still widely distributed but remaining populations may be seriously compromised by habitat loss and genetic introgression (Lee et al. 1997). This subspecies is estimated to occur in 27% of its historic range in Montana, although genetically pure populations occur in only 2.5% of its Montana historic range (Liknes and Graham 1988). Most of the populations in Lincoln County are considered to be depressed. Migration barriers (dams, irrigation diversions, other) have isolated or eliminated habitat once available to migratory populations. Small often isolated populations persist throughout the range, but the long-term outlook for many of these populations is poor. The strongest population area in Lincoln County is in the northwestern portions of the County.

Interior Redband Trout: Interior redband trout are on the Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list. The allopathic form (i.e., not found in the same areas as steelhead trout) of interior redband trout is found on the Kootenai National Forest. Historically, this was the most widely distributed salmonid in the Columbia River Basin, although it was not widespread on the Kootenai. Current populations on the Kootenai range from strong to depress. Hybridization and competition are its main threats.

Torrent Sculpin: Torrent sculpin is on the Regional Forester's Sensitive Species list. Little is known about this species, including its historic distribution. Major risk factors are believed to be pollution, increased water temperatures, and sedimentation (Lee et al. 1997). A study is currently underway on the IPNFs that are designed to generate distribution and habitat information.

Burbot: Burbot, also known as ling cod, are listed as a sensitive species by the Regional Forester, and has been petitioned for listing under ESA. This species is found only in the Kootenai River. This population is very depressed from historic levels. Changes in hydrologic flows caused by Libby Dam are the biggest threat to this population.

Kootenai River White Sturgeon: Kootenai River white sturgeon is listed as Endangered under ESA. This species is restricted to 695 river kilometers of the Kootenai River. These fish have not successfully spawned in recent years. Changes in flows from Libby Dam are the biggest threat to population. Land management activities are considered a secondary impact to populations of this species (Lee et al. 1997).

Wildlife

Wildlife habitat on large timber holdings is being affected by new subdivisions. Much of these forage and winter range lands are found at lower elevations, adjacent to creeks and rivers. Wildlife conflicts and limitations on wildlife migration are resulting from the increased subdivision activity.

Lincoln County provides habitat for a wide variety of animals, birds and fish, notably the bald eagle and other species of concern or special interest such as the harlequin duck, osprey, boreal owl, great grey owl, pileated woodpecker and common loon. The woodland caribou were historically present but are now absent. Rare mammals include the grizzly bear, gray wolf, lynx, fisher and wolverine.

The majority of the land in Lincoln County is federal land. These lands are managed in a way that provides habitat for fish and wildlife and recreational opportunities for people. Some areas will provide reference landscapes and large, relatively undisturbed blocks of important aquatic and terrestrial habitat. However, public lands do not provide all the habitats required by wildlife. Many of the Lincoln County's unique wildlife depend on low elevation wetland/riparian areas (grizzly bears), rivers and streams (bull trout), or forested foothill private lands (big game winter range)

(See Appendix A - Lincoln County Count of Big Game Winter Ranges provided by Montana FWP).

The existing designated special wildlife management areas in the County meet only some of the habitat requirements of the wildlife they support such as stopover areas for waterfowl or big game winter habitat. Most species of wildlife in Lincoln County are relatively secure given the amount of public land ownership. However, many species spend little time on public land or require lower elevation habitats for some critical part of their life history. *(See appendix A -Lincoln County Wildlife Distribution Maps provided by Montana FWP)*

Threatened and Endangered Species

There are currently five animals listed by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as threatened or endangered species in Lincoln County. The gray wolf and the Kootenai River White Sturgeon are the only endangered species. Gray wolves have sustained a distinctive recovery trend in the northwest part of the state since the 1980s. In 2008, the state after completing an extensive process to take over wolf

management from the FWS was given management authority when the wolf was temporarily de-listed. In July 2008, Protectionist groups appealed the decision in federal court in Missoula and the wolf was recently re-listed. There are an estimated 500 Kootenai River White Sturgeon. The FWS approved a plan on July 16, 2008 to set aside over 18 miles of the Kootenai River as critical habitat for white sturgeon, the largest freshwater fish in North America. Kootenai Sturgeon can grow to 19 feet long and weigh 350 pounds. The move seeks to improve spawning outcome for the fish found only in northwest Montana, north Idaho and southeast British Columbia (July 23, 2008 Montanian). There are four threatened species in the County. These include the bull trout, bald eagle, grizzly bear, and Canada lynx. Of these threatened or endangered species in Lincoln County, the species most likely to be affected by growth over the next five years are the bull trout, grizzly bears, and, to a lesser extent, gray wolves. Most development would not likely impact Canada lynx because their habitat requirements are generally above 4,500 feet.

Hunting

White-tailed deer and to a lesser degree, elk, moose, and mule deer are prevalent throughout all of Lincoln County. Deer and elk are the most hunted game animals in the region and provide a tremendous economic and recreational activity for residents and some nonresidents of the area. Hunters typically support relatively conservative hunting seasons to help insure healthy accessible populations of game in the fall. Summer and fall range for these animals is relatively abundant and much of it is on public land. With the exception of agricultural and river bottom land that is being converted to other land uses, most of the summer habitat is currently secure and managed in a way that it will continue to produce deer and elk. Access to open lands and loss of hunting and other wildlife-related recreation areas is of concern for local residents.

The needs of ungulates change dramatically from summer to winter. During most normal or severe winters, ungulates move to lower elevation habitats where they get out of deep snow. This is particularly true for white-tailed deer. White-tailed deer winter range typically falls below 4,500 feet. In snowy cold winters, deer depend on dense forest canopies to intercept the snow while they actively forage on native forbs and shrubs and conifer needles or nearby agricultural lands. Wintering densities of most white-tailed deer winter range is at least 30+ animals/square mile. These are very important winter ranges. Land use development and subdivision in these bands of winter range can cause ungulate displacement or habituation, conflicts between landowners and ungulates, and degradation of winter range habitat.

Mule deer winter ranges are typically located at higher elevations than white-tailed deer winter ranges and often fall on public land. Mule deer typically move to lower elevations and often on to private land in the spring.

Elk are the most adaptable of the major ungulate species and can winter over a much broader landscape overlapping both white-tailed and mule deer winter ranges.

Moose also have winter ranges at lower elevations that often overlap deer and elk. Moose like dense forests along creeks and foothills, but they also use higher elevation openings and forests depending on snow depth and hardness.

Many species of wildlife such as deer, elk, black bears, grizzly bears, mountain lions, fox, raccoons, skunks, and bats can become attracted to developments and other associated activities such as hay

fields, horse pens, bird feeders, chickens, pet foods, and garbage. The rate of these wildlife conflicts has increased with human population growth as shown by the increasing number of human/bear interactions tracked by MTFWP. Depending on the location and type of proposed development, specific standards have been recommended by wildlife managers on a case by case basis to reduce the potential conflicts between wildlife and humans. Lincoln County has now placed electric fences around solid waste “Green Box” areas including bear resistant boxes for wildlife protection. When bears or lions become habituated to humans, these animals are usually removed from the population which can be a factor in that species overall management.

WATER RIGHTS ADJUDICATION

The Montana Water Use Act (Title 85, Chapter 2, MCA) of 1973 was an overhaul of water rights. All water rights existing prior to July 1, 1973, were to be finalized through a statewide adjudication process in state courts. There have been several deadlines over the years for claimants to file for rights that were established prior to 1973. Since all the claims cannot be adjudicated at once, claims are being decreed by basin for each of Montana's 85 drainage basins. Temporary decrees have been issued for the Yaak and Kootenai rivers.

FLOODPLAINS

Lincoln County has adopted floodplain regulations, which regulate all construction and development in the floodplain and floodway. Uses are delineated as to which uses are permitted, permitted conditionally or prohibited, as outlined in the current floodplain regulations (see the County website). <http://www.lincolncountymt.us/Planning/L.C.%20Floodplain%20Regulations%20/>

Floodplain maps of 100 year floodplains are based on the Flood Plain Management Study for Lincoln County dated February 1980. These maps are produced by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and are used to determine insurance rates. They are referred to as FIRM, or Floodplain Insurance Rate Maps. The FIRM maps from Lincoln County vary from 1979 to 2006, with the most current maps in the Libby area. All construction after the adoption of these maps must be in accordance with these maps and the regulations. The maps distinguish floodplains, floodways and floodway fringes. The floodway is the highest risk area consisting of stream channels and banks where most damage and destruction occurs. Residential and commercial development, mobile homes and septic systems are prohibited in this area.

For new subdivisions, Lincoln County requires that if any portion of a proposed subdivision is within 2,000 horizontal feet and 20 vertical feet of a live stream draining an area of 25 square miles or more, and no official floodway delineation or floodway studies of the stream have been made, the subdivider must furnish survey data to the Floodplain Management Section of the Water Resources Division of the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation for review as part of the subdivision process.

The floodway fringe is a lower hazard area that would be inundated by a 100 year flood. Construction is allowed in the floodway fringe by special permit and must meet established regulations. The Lincoln County Health Department, which issues permits for all on-site sewage disposal systems, does not allow a system in or within 100 feet of a designated 100 year flood plain.

GEOLOGY, SOILS AND MINERALS

Geology

The topographic features of Lincoln County are the result of geological activity that began approximately one million years ago when a significant gradual change in climate began signaling the beginning of what many commonly refer to as the ice age. This period, lasting until about 12,000 years ago, brought on a long period of glacial activity. Ice from continental or alpine glaciers covered the Lincoln Valley one or more times. Only evidence of the last glacier, the Wisconsin, can be found. During this time, an ice sheet from British Columbia (the Cordillera) entered Montana north of Eureka. One branch moved down the Tobacco Valley, over the Salish Mountains, and down the Stillwater Valley. The ice sheet eroded the valley sediments burying them under glacial materials in some areas and scoured bedrock in others. As the ice melted and the glaciers retreated (approx. 12,000 years ago) glacial Lake Missoula was formed.

Lincoln County geography is dominated by mountainous, forest covered terrain cut by narrow river valleys. The topography of Lincoln County is quite varied, with the Purcell, Cabinet and Salish Mountain and Whitefish Ranges defining distinct valleys: Tobacco Valley in the Eureka area, Libby Valley in the Libby area and the Yaak Valley surrounding the town of Yaak. The elevation in Lincoln County ranges from about 1,820 feet above sea level where the Kootenai River enters Idaho, to over 8,700 feet in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness.

Soils

Soil information is an important basis for a variety of land use planning decisions. It can be used to plan and manage crops and grazing, site development, infrastructure, transportation systems, etc. Soil limitations can affect suitability for particular uses such as building site development, installation of septic systems or lagoons, etc. Lincoln County has a wide variety of soils that vary in suitability for desired uses. Soils described by the Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Forest Service are evaluated in terms of their potential limitations for various types of uses including septic systems, road building, and building construction. Both agencies assign ratings of Not Limited, Somewhat Limited or Very Limited depending on their physical and chemical characteristics of the soil. The most reliable soils information available on a broad scale is found in the 1960 Soil Conservation Service Soil Survey (now known as the Natural Resource Conservation Service or NRCS) for Lincoln County and the Kootenai National Forest Soil Survey.

The NRCS and the US Forest Service teamed up in the early 1980's to classify soils in Lincoln County. Field data work was completed in 1982. The Soils Survey of Kootenai National Forest Area of Montana and Idaho was last updated in 1995. This survey is considered to be an Order 4 Survey, which represents broad scale classifications. A more detailed soil survey update for private lands in Lincoln County is under development. (See the Lincoln County Soil Survey for more information).

Minerals

Lincoln County has a rich history of mining. Four mining Districts have been identified. These districts all supported placer gold mining operations. The Sylvania District on the western fringe of the County (also referred to as the Paisley, Red Top and Yaak River District), the Rainy Creek District south of the Sylvania, also on the western county border (the largest district), the Cabinet District, on the southern edge of the County (also known as the Blacktail, Fish River and West Fisher Districts), the Libby District, south of Libby (also referred to as the Snowshoe District). In all, 72 mining claims have been identified in these districts. (Historical Mining Districts of Montana, LD Albright, September 2004.)

Mining as an industry, has seen a resurgence of activity in Lincoln County since 2004 when the Troy mine reopened. Lincoln County is a mineral rich County along with its neighbor to the south Sanders County. The two County's share huge copper and silver ore deposits that offer tremendous opportunity for economic stimulus and potential future growth impacts if they continue as planned. After having been placed on "care and maintenance" in 1993 by ASARCO – and maintained as such since 1999 by Revett Silver Company – the Troy Mine resumed operations in December 2004 and has operated continuously since. Revett Minerals now employs approximately 175 workers at the Troy Mine. The mine has an annual production capability of 4.2 million ounces of silver and 20,000 tons of copper contained in concentrates. Revett also owns the Rock Creek mine located in Sanders County where it expects to begin production in 2010. Both mines have and will continue to impact growth in both Counties.

At Rock Creek, the Company continues with its efforts to advance the project. In December 2007, the United States Forest Service re-affirmed both the Rock Creek biological opinion and its Record of Decision. The Rock Creek Project is in the final phase of permitting and is expected to begin production in 2010 (source Revett Minerals).

Mines Management, Inc. (MMI), an Idaho corporation has submitted plans for a copper and silver mine referred to as the Montanore Project. The underground mine will be in Sanders County, and the mill and other facilities will be in Lincoln County.

Mining of vermiculite was also a major industry in the County. The Zonolite Division of the W.R. Grace Company operated a mine and mill nine miles northeast of Libby. It was once the largest vermiculite mining operations in the world. The product had been mined commercially at the Libby deposit since 1923. (See Libby Asbestos Superfund Site for more).

There are no productive oil and gas fields in Lincoln County.

Extractive uses for decorative rock and gravel are also increasing in Lincoln County.

The Department of Environmental Quality database indicates that there are 52 permits for sand and gravel pits in Lincoln County. The north end of the County features high gravel resources particularly for decorative rock.

Extractive resources and gravel pits are not currently regulated by Lincoln County.

Seismic Activity

A belt of seismicity known as the Intermountain Seismic Belt extends through western Montana, from the Flathead Lake region in the northwest corner of the state to the Yellowstone National Park region where the borders of Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming meet. The Intermountain Seismic Belt continues southward through Yellowstone Park, along the Idaho-Wyoming border, through Utah, and into southern Nevada. In western Montana, the Intermountain Seismic Belt is up to 100 km wide. Lincoln County is located at the fringe of this belt.

The USGS hazard mapping indicates that nearly all of Lincoln County lies within the zone having a 10 % probability of exceeding a peak ground acceleration of 0 – 6% of gravity in 50 years. The USGS and ESRI/FEMA Hazard website maps show no record of historical earthquakes in Lincoln County.

VEGETATION

Vegetation in Lincoln County consists of a mix of open grassland areas, riparian areas and timber cover. Timber stands are predominantly Douglas-fir, lodgepole pine with western larch, ponderosa pine, grand fir, hemlock, western white pine, alpine fir and cedar. Whitebark pine occurs at high elevations.

Riparian Areas

Riparian communities along the perennial drainages and larger intermittent streams are often dominated by cottonwood and willow. The under-story often consists of woody plants such as chokecherry, buffalo berry, sumac, currant, grasses, and forbs. Lincoln County reviews development and management activities in riparian areas.

Noxious Weeds

Noxious weeds are a major problem in Lincoln County. Lincoln County gets new invasive species first in Montana due to its location bordering both Canada and Idaho. The County is charged with stopping the spread of these species here so they do not ultimately get east of the Continental Divide to the major agriculture areas of Montana. Both aquatic and non-aquatic species are of major concern. Highway corridors and waterways are major conduits for the spread of weeds. Some major weeds of concern in Lincoln County include the Hawkweed complex, Rush Skeletonweed, and Tanzy Ragwort. Two problem weeds, Yellow Star Thistle and Eurasian Water Milfoil are not in Lincoln County yet but they are being prepared for since they are in Idaho (D. Williams).

Noxious weeds threaten rangelands, croplands and recreation lands. The Lincoln County Vegetation Management Advisory Board and the Lincoln County Weed Control District assist the County in vegetation management operations and practices, including information gathering, research, education and site monitoring. District responsibilities include noxious weed control along all county roads and on county property and administering the Montana Noxious Weed Law within the county. Educating the public on weed control importance and needs is a big part of the District's program. State Weed Management Plans (Idaho and

Montana), forest plan monitoring, and assessments, indicate noxious weeds are increasing their infestation areas (USDA 1998a-b). Several new invaders have been found, indicating an increase in noxious weed diversity. The Forest Service has noted that the 1987 Forest Plan does not adequately cover weed management. The issue will be addressed in the new Forest Plan, as well as an Environmental Impact Statement prepared by the Kootenai Forest specific to the issue of noxious weeds. Noxious weed abatement is addressed in the Lincoln County subdivision process but more encompassing regulations are being pursued.

Forested Areas

Lincoln County is highly forested, with over 80% of the County covered in timber stands. The predominant land mass, for vegetative coverage in the County, is the Kootenai National Forest, comprising 73.5% of the land area. The August 2003 Analysis of the Management Situation for the Kootenai and Panhandle Forest Plans notes that there have been extensive changes in vegetation type and size classes (e.g. western white pine, whitebark pine, ponderosa pine, western larch, aspen, cottonwood, some native forbs and grasses, snags, down wood) from historic ranges, which may increase the risk and uncertainty in managing for contributions towards ecological sustainability. Disturbance processes, such as wildfire and insects and disease, have also changed from historic ranges. Increased tree density and fuel loading as a result of fire suppression has created stress on forests, resulting in increased insect and disease activity. This, in turn, has resulted in more intense wildfires over a greater land area than existed historically. In addition, there is an increase in the number of people living adjacent to and within the forests. This increase of population in the wildland-urban interface limits fire activity and creates a need to deal with acceptable fuel treatment options. These changed circumstances will be addressed in the revised Forest Plan for the Kootenai Forest.

Kootenai National Forest

The Kootenai National Forest encompasses all of Lincoln County and the northern half of Sanders County, for a total 2.2 million acres. Four District Offices fall within Lincoln County: Forest Service lands comprise 73.5% of all land in Lincoln County. The forest includes some of the most diverse and productive forests in the Northern Forest Service Region, as well as a diversity of aquatic and terrestrial habitat.

The Kootenai Forest Plan was issued in 1987. The Plan describes resource management practices, levels of resource production and management, and the availability and suitability of lands for resource management. The current forest plans have exceeded their intended 15-year life as both plans were approved in 1987. The Kootenai Forest and the Idaho Panhandle Forest are working jointly to update the Forest Plans. The new Forest Plan will provide up-to-date management direction for the Kootenai National Forest for a 10-15 year period after the plan is revised. A Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the *Federal Register* on April 30, 2002, which officially starts the public involvement or “scoping” phase. Draft Plans are now available for public review and comment.

NATIONAL FOREST COMPOSITION

The 2.2 million acres administered by the Kootenai National Forest are 96% forest land and 4% non-forest or water and 4% of the total area administered by the Kootenai is in a reserved designation. Reserved land is defined as land that has been withdrawn from production of wood products through statute or administrative designation.

On the Kootenai National Forest, Douglas-fir is the most common forest type, covering nearly 35% of the national forest land area. Next in abundance are lodgepole pine and spruce-fir at approximately 17%, larch at 11%, Engelmann spruce at 5%, and grand fir at about 4% of the total forest land area. Traces of western redcedar, mountain hemlock, western hemlock, ponderosa pine, whitebark pine, and western white pine also occur.

Plant Species of Special Concern

The Montana Natural Heritage Program, the US Forest Service (USFS) the BLM and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) maintain a database of plant species of special concern in the State. The term “species of special concern” includes plants that are rare, endemic, disjunct, threatened or endangered throughout the range, vulnerable to extirpation, or need further research. Lincoln County has 96 species of special concern.

Wildfire

Fire suppression has changed the vegetation patterns, structure, and composition of forests. Therefore, the role that fire plays in these ecosystems has also been altered. The last decade in Lincoln County has seen new homes and other structures built near and around national forests. Should fires occur, these structures within the wildland-urban interface are very vulnerable. As people, homes, and structures continue to occupy the wildland-urban interface and as hazard fuels continue to accumulate, a high risk and volatile situation needs to be addressed. Long periods of warm dry summer weather combined with lightning storms are often causes associated with wildfire. The summers of 1994 and 2000 were the two worst fire seasons on record in Lincoln County. In 2000 the Kootenai National Forest recorded 270 fires, burning a total of 45,465 acres. In 1994 over 60,000 acres burned on the Kootenai Forest. (Draft Lincoln County Disaster Mitigation Plan, November 2003.) The new Draft Kootenai Forest Plan addresses the restoration of fire-adapted ecosystems and the reduction of risk to communities and the environment.

An increased amount of shade-tolerant, fire intolerant and insect and disease prone tree and shrub species are dominating the forest landscape in Lincoln County. Higher fuel loading resulting from decades of fire suppression are resulting in an increase in the frequency and duration of wildfires; wildland-urban interface issues will require careful attention. The threat of catastrophic wildfire is very real in Lincoln County and is being addressed through a Community Wildfire Protection Plan and the USFS, DNRC, and RC&D Fuel Reduction Projects (*See Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan for more*).

Nationally and locally there is a changing complexion in the ownership of private forest land holdings. Nationally, there was a 13% population increase in housing developments within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) in the 1990's and this trend seems to be even greater in Lincoln County. These housing developments are putting a strain on local fire departments which are undermanned and under-financed. Lincoln County has a non regulatory community wildfire protection plan and diligent efforts are underway to reduce the wildfire hazard through education and fuel reduction projects.

There are large tracts of privately owned forests. In recent years, many private forest tracts have been sold for residential development. Plum Creek Timber Company owns approximately 12.5% of the land in Lincoln County. The Company is responding to higher land values and the demand for rural recreational and residential properties by increasing land sales and residential developments within Lincoln County and the State. Plum Creek's change in management has caused natural resource and environmental issues. These concerns include subdivision development, surface and groundwater protection, impacts to fish and wildlife and the access to public lands adjacent to Company lands. Other social and economic concerns include providing police, fire and ambulance services to these newly developed areas.

Lincoln County is fortunate to be protected by very capable and dedicated fire suppression organizations. These organizations include the US Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) and 9 volunteer fire departments throughout the County. As with any area with multiple fire suppression organizations there is always the need to closely communicate, coordinate and cooperate. This assessment looks at opportunities to improve these efforts through training, equipment use and shared resource data information. Lincoln County has a director of Emergency Management and along with the County sheriffs department is responsible for community preparedness in case of a County disaster. A Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan (PDM) has been completed for the County of which the County Wildfire Protection Plan is a part. *See Chapter 7 (Implementation Plan part IV) "Lincoln County Action Plan" for Natural Resource Goals and Objectives.*

PUBLIC FACILITIES

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

Lincoln County is faced with many daunting public facility issues in the immediate and foreseeable future. Concerns include replacing aging, obsolete, and extremely expensive public facilities to ensure future public safety and to meet future environment requirements and growth expectations. Some areas within the County are in need of better access to telecommunications and technology, most notably southern Lincoln County. The rugged mountainous terrain is a definite obstacle in providing adequate wireless service and the small market these areas represent make them less attractive to telecommunication companies. Compared to other surrounding counties, Lincoln County has the lowest mill levy of Counties in the region. Unlike most counties, Lincoln County does not have a mill levy for roads. Historically, the County has relied on federal forest funds for their road budget.

In October 2000, Congress passed Public Law 106-393 entitled "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000" which stabilized federal payments to states for funding schools and roads. The new law replaced the way the Forest Service had been returning a portion of its annual receipts to jurisdictions falling within national forest boundaries. Severe reductions in timber harvest from National Forests due to public policies led to the need for this alternative source of funding. In 2007, Lincoln received a total of \$5.48 million through this act of which 15% is mandated to be given to the Forest Service for Resource Advisory Committee distribution. The County then distributes the remaining funding by giving 33 1/3 % to the schools and 66 2/3 % to roads. The SRS Act was funded through 2007 and was just recently (October-2008) refunded for the next four years. This will provide great help to Lincoln County to maintain their schools, roads and other major programs through 2011. The ability to even attempt to meet increased public facility needs of a growing population is dependant upon continued funding of SRS or similar supplemental funding from other sources.

A common problem in rural areas is the need for upgrading water and wastewater systems and Lincoln County is no exception. There is a need for development and/or upgrades of systems in commercial areas as well as residential areas and it is a constant struggle to secure funding for such projects without placing an unreasonable financial burden on the individual residents. This is especially concerning in Lincoln County with a high percentage of very low to moderate income residents.

As new residents move into the area and businesses invest in the communities, it is important to place emphasis on meeting their needs without compromising the needs of current residents or the quality of life and rural character of the County. This includes making provisions for such things as: adequate emergency services, healthy working water and wastewater systems, solid waste removal to ensure healthy and litter free communities, road and bridge improvements built to meet or exceed traffic, safety, construction and clean air standards, increased technology capacity (especially in south Lincoln County), and ensuring affordable heating and electrical power is available to all residents and business.

Lincoln County borders Canada on its north border and after the tragedies of 9/11/01; the County and the Tobacco Valley have seen an increased presence of Homeland Security forces. With the Port of Roosville 8 miles north of Eureka on Hwy 93, the valley is also experiencing

an increase in Border Patrol Officers in the area. The extra officers have led to a re-evaluation of the Border Patrol's current facility and have contributed to the current growth in the valley. In addition to the Border Patrol, the Port has increased security in and out of the United States and has recently built a larger facility for the United States Port Authority and entrance. Lincoln County has been successful in securing several State and federal funding programs (including Homeland Security) to upgrade infrastructure and will continue to rely on these and other revenues as facility and service demands continue to grow.

Lincoln County sought bids on a major expansion to the County jail in 2006. The expansion was never completed because the bids were too high. This remains a major need for county law enforcement.

Troy Public Schools have begun the construction on a new civic/community center that will serve the athletic and educational needs of Troy students as well as the needs of the Troy community. Construction began on the project in July 2008.

Lincoln County's per capita personal and median incomes are significantly lower than State and National averages. The County has consistently had the highest or near the highest unemployment in the State over the past two decades. Additionally, 18.3% of the County population incomes fall below poverty levels (see Population and Economy Chapter for more). These factors coupled with anticipated severe budget shortfalls may make it difficult to maintain public facilities and continue the present level of services, let alone meet future growth demands.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation and land use are interrelated components of communities. Transportation routes and infrastructure can help to determine where development will occur. In Lincoln County, land use and development trends determine traffic volume, travel patterns, and road improvement needs. Most new development has happened in the unincorporated areas of the County where newcomers have been seeking a piece of Lincoln County's rural lifestyle. Large lot home sites (low density development) are the most common type of development in the unincorporated areas of Lincoln County. A 9/25/07 public opinion survey sent out by the Lincoln County Planning Board indicated that the majority of respondents (64.1%) pointed out that given a 1,000 acre land parcel and 300 homes in the prospective subdivision, they would prefer to live in small ½ acre clustered lots, The remaining 700 acres was preferred to be left as open space or permanently preserved farmland. This scenario was preferred over having 2.5 acre lots in a 1,000 acre land parcel with no preserved open space.

Transportation corridors can have a significant effect on land use patterns. Heavily traveled corridors attract commercial proprietors seeking highly visible locations. Roadside businesses and advertising signs may impact scenic and cultural values. They tend to increase local traffic congestion which results in safety and community character issues. However, the development also provides jobs and economic stability. Failure to plan for these factors can negatively impact quality of life issues such as air quality, noise pollution, congestion, scenic quality and safety. Planning for transportation needs is a critical component in achieving safe, healthy, attractive and economically viable communities.

The Lincoln County motorized transportation system is a combination of County roads, city streets in the cities of Libby, Eureka, and Troy, several State highways, rail ways and air travel. The non-motorized system involves sidewalks, bikeways and pathways.

Highways and Roads

Transportation is dependent on the major highways which include US Highway #2 which runs from the Flathead County line to the Montana/Idaho border. This road is basically in good repair and adequate for present and future increase in trips per day. One exception is the Swamp Creek portion, approximately twelve miles in length, where the road width is inconsistent, does not meet federal standards, and the three bridges are old and failing. Currently, a project has been started to reconstruct 6 miles. Lincoln County's five year goal for this highway is to secure the funding to complete the remainder of the road and to implement construction. In addition, the existing road should be rehabilitated to become a safe frontage road for the landowners who will no longer have direct access to Highway #2.

Highway #37, Highway #56, Yaak River Road, and the Farm to Market road are in good driving condition. The Farm to Market does need a rebuild from the Hammer Cut-Off Road to the termination at Highway #2 South. The five year goal would include that rebuild. The goal also includes enhanced winter maintenance to assure better winter driving conditions. State secondary #567, commonly known as the Pipe Creek Road, is maintained by the MT Department of Transportation up to mile marker 6.1. From mile 6.1 – 20.1 is a winding, hilly road that is a state secondary but under the jurisdiction of the Forest Service. It is maintained by logging companies when they are working in the area. Summer maintenance is provided by the Forest Service and winter plowing is provided by Lincoln County. The road is not sanded or otherwise treated for icy conditions. Approximately 200 cars per day travel this road but it has the capacity for 5,000 cars per day. Collaborative efforts are under way to consider rehabilitation and/or reconstruction of the road. The goal in the next five years would be to upgrade from 6.1 mile marker to 20.1 to provide a safer road for residents in that area, recreation seekers, and commuters from the Yaak Valley area. This would be accomplished with funding from the Federal Forests Highway Fund in cooperation with the MT Department of Transportation.

County Roads

Lincoln County has three roads districts which are District #1 Libby; District #2 Troy; District #3 Eureka. Each respective commissioner is responsible for the management of his or her road district. The County Road Fund is financed by PL 106-393 and some gas tax. Lincoln County will be struggling to find new sources of revenue when PL 106-393 expires in 2012.

The Troy District maintains 127.9 miles of paved County roads, 11 miles of gravel roads and 12 bridges (6 two-lane and 6 one-lane). Summer responsibilities include repair and repaving of roads, sweeping, clearing ditches, clearing and repairing culverts, maintaining road signs and spraying weeds along road shoulders. Troy District road crews also plows 52 miles of Forest Service Schedule A roads and 30 miles of the Yaak River Road (MT 508).

The Libby District maintains 186 miles of County roads and 25 miles of gravel Forest Service Schedule A roads. They also maintain 19 bridges. Their duties are basically the same as the Troy District.

The Eureka District maintains approximately 300 miles of chip-sealed roads and 10 miles of gravel roads. The Roads Department plows roads during the winter months and repairs and repaves in the summer. In addition to their ongoing road maintenance, this department is also responsible for sweeping the streets, clearing ditches and culverts, repairing the culverts when required, placing and maintaining road signs and maintaining bridges. Traffic related to new subdivision growth in the Tobacco valley is a major budgeting issue facing the Department at this time.

Most of the County roads in Lincoln County are old and built to standards that are not current. Lincoln County does not build roads, only maintains them. Subdivision roads are generally the responsibility of the homeowners associations. Most County roads are chip sealed. Most gravel roads require some dust abatement. Lincoln County's five year goals are to surface coat each road every 5 years and to continue to fix problem areas and raise the standard of the road. The County's long term goal is to maintain equipment needs, retain adequate staffing, and acquire the resources needed to maintain roads in the condition they currently are in. At this time, snow plowing creates a significant funding problem in all road districts.

Bridges in south Lincoln County are generally in good repair. A bridge of major concern, however, is the Bothman Road Bridge in Libby which must have extensive repair or be replaced. Our goal is to achieve a collaborative project with Montana Dept of Transportation, Lincoln County, and Fish, Wildlife, and Parks to provide a better bridge that accommodates the needs of the public and enhances the stream for bull trout habitat.

As new subdivisions are developed throughout the County, bridges will have to upgrade to accommodate the additional traffic. Lincoln County's goal will be to have the developers take a lead position in that endeavor.

City Streets

The City of Eureka has 3 full time public works employees who maintain the 12 miles of streets and alleys. Streets are plowed when the Mayor and Public Works Department determine that plowing is necessary. Cars are not required to be moved off streets. Most snow is pushed to the side, some snow is moved down to the City Park. Businesses and residential areas are both required to maintain their sidewalks free of snow.

The City of Troy maintains its own streets within the City limits. The funding source for street maintenance is fund #2500 taxes for streets and #2800 gas tax apportionments. Highway #2 bisects the City of Troy as does the Burlington Northern railway. There are approximately 12 streets in the community plus alleys. Currently there are infrastructure projects, i.e. sewer, storm drains and water lines that have significantly impacted the city streets. The Public Works Department comprised of 4 employees, manages water, sewer, and roads. The Dept. is responsible for summer and winter maintenance, including plowing, road repair, and chip sealing. Sidewalks are cleared by adjacent property owners, with the exception of the

sidewalks on Highway #2 which are cleared by the State. The five year goal would be to have all underground infrastructure needs completed and all streets repaired and rehabilitated.

The City of Libby maintains its own streets within the City limits. The funding source for the street maintenance is the general fund. U.S. Highway #2 bisects the City of Libby as does the Burlington Northern railway. The streets are generally in good condition. Water and sewer enhancements are being accomplished and streets are being rehabilitated and repaired immediately following the construction work which may include replacement of the base to assure a quality street upon completion. In winter months, the City of Libby limits on-street parking by a schedule to allow for street plowing. Streets are generally plowed when 4" or more of snow accumulates. Citizens and businesses are responsible for clearing the sidewalks adjacent to their property. The five year goal is to continue to upgrade the city streets. The Greater Libby Area is in a Clean Air District (see Natural Resources Chapter – Air Quality for more). A five year goal would also include paving of alleys to limit airborne dust particles.

OTHER TRANSPORTATION

Public Transit- Lincoln County Transportation Service (LCTS)

In 2006, a federal mandate came through the State of Montana Department of Transportation to increase transportation services to rural areas. All existing transportation services were required to consolidate all transit resources and create coordinated projects for their geographic area. Lincoln County had five groups providing transit service which included the three senior centers, Achievements Inc., and the Troy Christian Fellowship. There is also an area wide Transportation Advisory Group which is made up of all interested community members. Its goal is to advise the LCTS on community and service needs.

The Lincoln County Transportation Service was formed in 2006 under the 501c3 umbrella of the Senior Citizens of Lincoln County. The new Lincoln County Transportation Service began active rider ship on Oct 16th, 2006. LCTS has a board of five representing the five organizations with pre-existing transportation programs. LCTS is a "demand & response" transit system. LCTS has three wheelchair lift twelve passenger buses; two twelve passenger vans; one seven passenger van, and has a request for another seven passenger van with the MDOT for FY 2008. The drivers and vehicles are based in Libby, Troy, and Eureka to best meet the needs of the residents. LCTS currently employs 11 regular part and full time employees and has three seasonal employees. LCTS follows all Federal and State Transit regulations for safety, drug, and alcohol screening for employees. Employees working 16 hours a week or more have a health benefit plan available to them. The service covers all of Lincoln County for all residents with outreach to Kalispell for medical and some shopping from Libby, Troy, and Eureka. During the first month of full service, November 2006, LCTS provided 666 rides. In March of 2007 LCTS provided 3,847 rides with potential for expansion. 31% of the riders are for medical; 22% for shopping; 16% for nutrition; and 19% for other such as church, meetings, hair dressers, visiting or transportation connections. 48% are over 60; 32% are disabled and 20% under 60.

Future plans include at least one more wheel chair lift bus, one more twelve passenger van, and at least one more seven passenger van so LCTS can have a small vehicle based in each of the three communities. LCTS is projecting 10 vehicles on the road in five years. Replacement options include two or three smaller hybrid vehicles for times when LCTS is transporting smaller numbers. The result would be very cost effective and supportive of efforts to reduce pollution and waste. Additional expansion opportunities include transportation to jobs in the Flathead Valley from both Libby and Eureka. Also with possible future development in the immediate area there could be a need for more employment related transportation in the Troy and Libby area.

Airports

Lincoln County has airports in Troy, Eureka and Libby. The Troy airport is owned by the Forest Service. Some maintenance is shared with the Lincoln County Airport Board. It has a chip sealed runway of 3,570 feet. One airport manager resides on site. Currently there are no hangars on the field for occupancy other than a wooden structure that may need to be removed. Tie downs are available. This airport is very busy during the fire season.

The North Lincoln County airport was successful in receiving funding to install both weather towers and fueling stations improving the overall usefulness of the airport. The Airport Board is working on gaining landing rights so the US Customs can clear planes from Canada on site. They also want to expand and upgrade the runways, and build additional hanger space. The Board is striving to make the Airport a year round facility and plans on obtaining an instrumental approach for all weather conditions. The airport is approximately 5 miles north of Eureka. It has a paved runway 75 feet by 4,250 feet capable of handling jet aircraft. Aircraft, tie downs, telephone and jet fuel are available at the airport. One airport manager works on-site. 12 aircrafts are based on the field, of which 10 are single-engine planes. The airport averages 40 aircraft per week, with approximately 22% local general aviation traffic, and 4% air taxi traffic.

The Libby Airport is south of Libby on the Farm to Market Road. The runway is 5,000 feet long at an elevation of 2,601 feet. Numerous FAA grants have been secured to upgrade the airport over the years. It has a paved taxiway as well as a paved apron. Tie downs are available but there are no public hangars. Approximately 17 airplanes are based on the field. The airport has a lighted beacon, segmented circle with wind cone, MIRL, and PAPI. Aviation gas and jet fuel are available on the field. This airport is very busy during the fire season as the Forest Service has a fire fighting hub adjacent to the field. In addition to private aviation use, life flight and commercial traffic occurs. The County's five year goal is to continue to pursue federal and State grants to maintain runway asphalt integrity and safety additions. A new terminal building is needed. A possible runway extension may also be pursued.

Passenger Rail Travel

Amtrak's Empire Builder passenger train departs daily from the Libby Station traveling to the west coast in the morning and the east coast in the evening. The average capacity of the train is estimated to be 400 passengers. It has been the only public transportation in the area for years. It traverses the high line in Montana and makes available public transportation completely across the northern tier. It has been stated that approximately 4,000 people have utilized this

service per year. The County's five year goal would be to retain Amtrak in our area. Amtrak is subsidized by the federal government and comes up for renewal all too frequently. The depot is being or has been closed. In five years an adequate all weather area must be provided for passengers to wait as the trains are occasionally late. The potential for a railway ski trip with Libby as one of the destinations is good if Libby promotes Turner Mountain as a destination or there is an additional ski hill developed.

Rail Freight

Burlington Northern Sante Fe is an important commercial carrier in south Lincoln County. At the Kootenai Business Park in Libby, rail cars are stored and filled with Ore from the Revett Mine. If the Montnore Mine begins productions, the ore will be transported by rail.

The five year goal is to improve the rail sidings at the Kootenai Business Park to be more safe and efficient. Currently the sidings are old and in need of significant repair or replacement.

A number of rail crossings are not equipped with lights and bars. Some of these need to be identified for closing or upgrading.

Recently the rail spur that served the Tobacco Valley was purchased from Burlington Sante-Fe by a private company. Rail usage is still mostly based on lumber products.

Trails and Bike Paths

Non – motorized bicycle and pedestrian pathways can be enormous assets to communities. They are used for health and family recreation by people of all ages, particularly seniors and the young who don't always have motorized transportation. A number of pedestrian and bicycle trails have been planned and /or constructed in Lincoln County.

The City of Troy and surrounding community currently have paths at the Troy Museum, Roosevelt Park, and the Troy airport. All paths are used extensively by young and old alike. The five year goal is to create a green belt through the City that would connect all the paths creating a trail system that could be utilized year around. CTEP money and other grants will be pursued.

The City of Libby and the County have paths and trails at McGrade Elementary, Asa Wood Elementary, Plummer Middle School to the High School, City Hall, Pioneer Park, Flower Creek, and J. Neils Memorial County Park. Current planning is to create a loop trail around a bird sanctuary connecting back to J. Neils Park and a loop trail at the Heritage Museum. The five year goal is to begin to connect the individual trails to connect across the community. CTEP money and other grants will be pursued.

The City of Eureka has a variety of sidewalks in the downtown business areas and portions of residential areas. The Eureka River Walk is a 1 mile long paved trail and the Tobacco River Memorial Trail is a paved trail that extends from Eureka Park to Rexford for a total of 6 miles of which two miles are old railway line.

Some of the primary assets of Lincoln County include scenic views, environmental quality, and recreational opportunities. As the population of Lincoln County continues to age, additional non-motorized pathways will provide healthy recreational opportunities and could act as an economic development tool by attracting people who seek a healthy and active lifestyle. Future pathways need to be considered in planning for the future and in new major and urban subdivision development.

Forest Service Roads

There are thousands of miles of forest service roads in south Lincoln County. These roads are essential for managing the forest for fire protection, timber harvest, access to mines, rural residences, and recreation which includes hunting, fishing, hiking, photography, bird watching, and driving for pleasure. Currently many roads are closed seasonally or permanently for motorized access. Forest Service road maintenance budgets do not adequately cover the costs of maintaining all these roads to a standard desired by the public. As the Forest Service staff is continually downsized, there will be less maintenance. The County's five year goal is to stop the hemorrhage of outsourcing services from Lincoln County to urban service centers. This would allow knowledgeable employees to remain in this area and for those employees to be actively engaged in road issues. The wild land-urban interface cannot be effectively implemented without forest service roads. The County supports assistance from Montana's Congressional delegation in pursuing a needed increase in the forest service budget.

FEDERAL FOREST FUNDS

In October 2000, Congress passed Public Law 106-393 entitled "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000" which stabilized federal payments to states for funding schools and roads. The new law replaced the way the forest service had been returning a portion of its annual receipts to jurisdictions falling within national forest boundaries. Previously, counties received 25% of gross revenues generated from timber harvest, grazing, mining and all other uses from the federal lands within their jurisdictions. Monies from these payments were used primarily for roads and schools. The 2000 Act allocated funds as follows: For fiscal years 2001 through 2006, the Secretary of the Treasury shall calculate for each eligible State that received a 25% payment during the eligibility period an amount equal to the average of the three highest 25% payments and safety net payments made to that eligible State for the fiscal years of the eligibility period.

In 2006, Lincoln County received a total of \$5,981,970.61. Lincoln County receives more federal forest funds than any other county in the State. Flathead County ranks second among fund receipts with a 2006 allocation of \$1,720,883.40. The program expired at the end of FY2006 but was extended one more year with Lincoln County receiving a payment of \$5.48 million in FY2007. The SRS Act was just recently (October-2008) refunded for the next four years. This will provide needed financial help for school, roads and other programs through 2011. The ability to even attempt to meet increased public facility needs of a growing population is dependant upon continued funding of SRS or similar supplemental funding from other sources.

COMMUNITY WATER FACILITIES

Community water facilities provide safe and efficient water supplies to residents and businesses. They provide much needed services and benefits including good health, fire protection, and economic development opportunities. Community water facilities also have the ability to encourage compact development and channel population growth and development to existing population centers.

The community of Libby receives its water from Flower Creek drainage which originates in the Cabinet Mountains. The City has a new 500,000 gallon water treatment facility which is adequate for present and anticipated use. Troy relies on groundwater for its water supply. The community has two active wells and a third one is scheduled to come on line. Storage capacity for water is 325,000 gallons, which is adequate for existing use. The aging water distribution system for certain sections of Libby is in need of replacement. The city does not use water meters.

The City of Eureka has a water treatment plant that was constructed in 2003. The plant uses ultra-violet treatment and adds chlorine to the water. The water source is a combination of surface water and groundwater. The city has a 500,000 gallon storage tank. The water system is metered. It is estimated that approximately 25% of the distribution lines need to be replaced. There is no replacement program at this time. Water rates include a base charge plus a metered charge based on usage. There are approximately 550 households on the system. Almost all customers are within city limits. The city also serves a two block area in the Midvale Water District that equals about 15 additional customers. The Midvale Water District contracts with the city to manage its system.

The town of Rexford relies on two wells for its water supply. The town also maintains a forest service well. The town has a 150,000 water storage tank. The distribution system was installed in 1978. There are approximately 80 customers on the system. A meter system was brought on-line in 2005. Prior to metering there was occasional lawn watering restrictions in the summer. The meters have encouraged water conservation. There is some additional capacity to serve a subdivision south of town.

Several community water systems have been developed to address water issues where development has taken place. Emkayan Village North of Libby, Midvale near Eureka, and Wilderness Plateau subdivision near Troy are examples of community water systems. There are approximately 95 public water systems in Lincoln County which include businesses, churches, mobile home parks, etc. A public water system has 25 or more users, 60 or more calendar days in a year.

The primary obstacle to expanding the existing public and community water systems and completing new ones is cost. Upgrades to systems can cost from hundreds of thousands to millions of dollars. Grant funding is limited with the number of projects always exceeding available funding statewide. For small communities with predominantly low to moderate income residents, costly system upgrades can be huge financial obstacles and politically unpopular.

Lincoln County's per capita personal and median incomes are lower than State and national averages. Unemployment has been near the highest in the State (mostly double digit) and 18% of the County's personal incomes are below poverty level. Many of the very low to moderate income families live in the incorporated cities in Lincoln County. It will be very difficult for communities to approve and complete needed repairs or even consider new construction without the majority of funding needs being met by State and federal grant sources.

WASTE WATER TREATMENT

The waste water treatment system for Eureka is comprised of an aeration pond and two storage ponds. For most of the year, water in the storage ponds is maintained through evaporation. In the spring, when there is heavy run-off, the town has a permit to discharge excess flows in the Tobacco River. The plant was upgraded in 2001 and has a capacity of 21 million gallons for storage. This is still adequate for anticipated growth. Sewer lines are replaced as needed. In 2004 with the construction of the new High School, the Town of Eureka installed a lift station that will service the entire Midvale residential area (directly adjacent to the Town) and the Highway 93 Business corridor. Eureka has just finished a preliminary engineering report (PER) on their wastewater system and how to expand north. Annexation of the expansion project study area will probably need to occur in order to secure funding for the actual wastewater expansion project. The PER called for some minor updates to the current Eureka system.

The Town of Rexford treatment plan is comprised of an aerated lagoon and storage pond. Water levels are maintained through evaporation and irrigation on surrounding land. The town has a special use permit from the forest service to operate the system on Forest Service land. The facility is approximately 35 years old and has excess capacity. The collection system is gravity flow to a lift station at the aeration pond. There are no problems with the distribution lines. There have been inquiries regarding a subdivision south of town connecting to the system.

The wastewater facility for Libby is adequate for existing use, but will need to be expanded as the city annexes additional areas. The City recently annexed the Cabinet Heights area and has begun a new project to extend wastewater service to the 103 homes there. Wastewater treatment for Troy is handled by three aerobic lagoons and has adequate capacity for present and future use. The Industrial District has two aerated lagoons which need to be upgraded with a new lift station and eventually lined.

Storm Water Management

New Commercial, industrial, and residential developments are required to contain their storm water runoff on site, where it evaporates and infiltrates into the soil over time. There are numerous methods to contain the water, including in sumps, swales, and underground structures. The containment method depends on site-specific factors including depth to ground water, soil types, space available and topography.

SOLID WASTE

Landfills

Adequate area is available at the Libby landfill for the disposal of household waste generated throughout Lincoln County for at least 50 more years.

The satellite landfills located at Troy, Eureka, and Happy's Inn are 40 cubic yard roll-off container sites and function as transfer sites for material going to the Libby Landfill.

Rural population areas throughout the County are currently serviced by small "green box" refuse container sites. As populations increase in these areas due to subdivision activity, the trend will be toward consolidation of small sites into larger managed sites.

Lincoln County is positioned to meet all land fill requirements. The County has adequate land, soil and disposal cells to manage hazardous waste for the foreseeable future.

Recycling

Kootenai Disposal is located in Libby and provides curbside waste services in Libby, Troy and Wolf Prairie. The company also serves commercial and industrial clients. The company also provides drop-off recycling sites and collects newspapers, cardboard, cans, office paper and magazine. It does not take glass or plastic. Kootenai Disposal operates the drop-off site at their location and Kiwanis operates the community drop-off sites.

North Lincoln Sanitation provides curbside solid waste services in Eureka. They do not offer recycling services.

The County Environmental Health Department operates a landfill north of Libby. It also operates transfer stations in Eureka and Troy. The County also has a number of container sites throughout the County for County residents that do not have curbside pick-up.

ELECTRICITY AND HEATING

Lincoln Electric Co-op provides service in Eureka and north Lincoln County. In 2005 upgrades included more than \$1,455,000 to provide service to 164 new members, clear brush, limbs and dead trees from 55 miles of power line right of way, test and treat some 933 poles, complete substantial upgrades and rebuilding of electrical distribution facilities in the West Kootenai, Star Meadows and Tobacco Plains area, and build more than 31 miles of new overhead and underground power lines.

Flathead Electric provides electrical service in the City of Libby and in the surrounding area. Flathead Electric has been in operation since 1938 and is the second largest electric utility in Montana. The Cooperative's headquarters are in Kalispell. The service area includes all of Flathead Valley and Libby along with several hundred members along the Montana – Wyoming border. They have 6,075 meters and have adequate capacity to supply anticipated growth as well as the proposed Montanore Project.

The Yaak area and the development around Bull Lake are served by Northern Lights, also a cooperative. Northern Lights, Inc., (NLI) based in Sagle, Idaho, is a member-owned rural electric cooperative serving northern Idaho, western Montana and northeast Washington. It delivers electricity and other energy services to more than 2,600 miles of distribution line to the rural residents including parts of rural Lincoln County. The co-op was formed in 1935, and is the oldest rural electric cooperative west of the Mississippi River.

The town of Troy has its own electrical distribution system. All electrical utilities are dependent on the Bonneville Power Administration for their wholesale electric needs. Current supply agreements with the BPA expire in 2011 and rates are possibly going to increase.

Commercial facilities and residents use a variety of fuels for their heating needs. Electricity, propane, wood and fuel oil are used throughout the area for heating. There is no natural gas available in south Lincoln County

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Some areas within the County are in need of better access to telecommunications and technology, most notably southern Lincoln County. The rugged terrain is a definite obstacle in providing adequate wireless service. The lack of reliable, affordable service may be hindering commercial development. In south Lincoln County, Frontier is the only local telephone provider and now offers DSL internet services to its customers, providing they are not more than 18,000 feet from a relay point. The price being charged for this service is 25% to 50% higher than in communities where competition exists. Time Warner, which acquired the local cable network from bankrupt Adelphia, is now offering broadband service to their cable subscribers at a price that is also 25% to 50% higher than competitive markets. Rural Lincoln County and in areas where cable networks have not and will not penetrate and are located away from a Frontier relay site have to rely on dial-up service. Download speeds range from 1.5 to 4.0 Kbs. Typical connect speeds to dial-up service is 38-40 Kbs. T-1 lines for the medical facilities and Lincoln County Campus of Flathead Valley Community College are either not available or cost prohibitive. A T-1 line for the community college cost \$1,500 per month, while in Kalispell or even Eureka the cost ranges from \$350 to \$650 per month. Point to Point fees are also very high compared to communities that have competition for services. Cell phone coverage in south Lincoln County covers the greater Libby area and in the near future will include Troy and most of the rest of rural Lincoln County. Small markets and rugged terrain make it difficult to attract company interest in rural Lincoln County.

In 2008, Frontier Communications announced a major project to bring broadband to Libby. This project should have a major impact on improving service and reducing costs in this area.

Lincoln County Emergency Management will continue to support the Northern Tier Interoperability (NTIP) project to improve communication between emergency service providers at the federal, state, tribal and local government levels in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security.

The Tobacco Valley has excelled in telecommunications and technology under the leadership and progressiveness of the InterBel Telephone Cooperative (ITC). Telephone services include the full range of voice services such as voice mail, caller id, call forwarding and other voice

features. In 2006, ITC completed the installment of a 2nd route for long distance toll and internet through the Wolf Prairie area. This 2nd line will back up the main line and provide a source for continued services even if the main line has problems. ITC brought wi-fi capabilities to the Town of Eureka and business on the Highway 93 Corridor. The entire North Lincoln County (Tobacco Valley) has broadband capacity. ITC expects that in the next 3 to 5 years they will be able to provide video/entertainment throughout their network area.

The Tobacco Valley residents benefit from having a public Vision Net Center in the new Lincoln County High School. This service gives Valley residents an advantage of gaining college credit without leaving the area as high school students and community adults may enroll in instructional classes offered by the Flathead Community College and the Lincoln County Campus. The service is also used for a number of community needs including participating in meetings around the region and State. ITC has installed two community web-cams, one on the top of the ITC building that shows the downtown portions of Eureka and the newest one on Black Butte overlooking the entire Tobacco Valley.

The Lincoln County Campus of Flathead Valley Community College has two interactive teleconferencing classrooms and a portable interactive teleconferencing unit that bring college courses from the Kalispell campus to Libby, Troy and Eureka. In addition, this teleconferencing capability is offered to Lincoln County communities for a variety of other applications. By subscribing to the services of Vision Net, Inc., the college is linked to State, County and local agencies, K-12 school districts throughout Montana, and the Montana University System. The interactive teleconferencing rooms are available to private enterprise for a fee.

Alltel, Verizon and Cellular One are the cellular telephone service providers in Lincoln County.

OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES

Law Enforcement

Lincoln County sought bids on a major expansion to the County jail in 2006 and the bids were too high and rejected so the expansion was never completed. This remains a major need for county law enforcement.

Troy Civic/Community Center

Troy Public Schools has begun the construction on a new civic/community center that will serve the athletic and educational needs of Troy students as well as the needs of the Troy community. Construction began on the project in July 2008.

See Chapter 7 (Implementation Plan part IV) "Lincoln County Action Plan" for Public Facilities Goals and Objectives.

LOCAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

Executive Summary – Conditions and Trends

Lincoln County will face many challenges meeting the increased local and social service needs of a growing and aging population. With only 9.2 % of the County's total land area in private land ownership and a majority of the County's 2.5 million acres needing services, the task is immense.

In October 2000, Congress passed Public Law 106-393 entitled "Secure Rural Schools (SRS) and Community Self Determination Act of 2000". This act helped stabilize federal payments to states for funding schools and roads. In 2007, Lincoln County received a total of \$5.48 million through this act. Of this amount, 15 % was mandated to be given to the Forest Service for Resource Advisory Committee distribution. The County then distributed the remaining funding by allocating approximately \$1.55 million to schools and \$3.1 million to roads. The SRS Act was funded through 2007 and was just recently (October-2008) refunded for the next four years. This will provide needed help to Lincoln County to maintain their schools, roads and other major programs through 2011. The ability to even attempt to meet increased local and social service needs of a growing population is dependant upon continued funding of SRS or similar supplemental funding from other sources.

Beyond growth pressures and financial constraints, County agencies must also respond to other forces such as State and federal agency mandates that influence how services are provided. For example, Lincoln County Emergency Management is required to meet additional State and federal agency mandates for the National Incident Management System (NIMS). These governments continue to mandate additional training requirements, certifications, exercise requirements and reporting that apply to any agency that would be involved in an emergency response. This includes professional paid employees of agency departments, and volunteers. Lincoln County has historically utilized volunteers to meet most of its emergency service needs. Many emergency service organizations have identified getting new volunteers to replace outgoing volunteers as a major concern and problem. For example, volunteer crews have to travel greater distance to respond to calls due to new subdivisions being developed in outlying areas. This requires volunteers to spend longer time frames on an ever increasing number of calls. This results in working relationship problems between employers and volunteers. An alternative to this problem is to have professionally paid emergency service providers in Lincoln County. This would be a huge financial undertaking. The implications of non-compliance with meeting the NIMS requirements however, at some point, will render Lincoln County ineligible for preparedness grant funding. This quandary will continue to be a major growth issue and concern for Lincoln County.

Changes in federal regulations also affect the demand for home health visits and welfare services. State support of schools has decreased, placing more of the burden on local school districts. Health insurance reimbursements affect the type of services that are provided and have resulted in greater demand for outpatient treatment.

Fire and Police departments have experienced an increase in calls and requests for ambulance and other services. Also, more senior citizens have resulted in more pressure on senior services. Victims of family violence in Lincoln County face challenges rarely encountered in any other areas. The extreme geographic isolation, economic structure, social and cultural

pressures and lack of available services in our communities significantly compound the problems faced by family violence victims.

There are County programs offering varying types of public assistance to residents of Lincoln County. According to the Montana Department of Health and Human services, 12.73% of residents in Lincoln County receive some form of public assistance compared to 8.65% statewide.

Lincoln County has responded to help meet new growth and service demands by implementing a 911 system, which relies on the mapping capabilities of Lincoln County's Geographic Information System (GIS). All schools and libraries have internet access. Many of the schools have internet capabilities in the classrooms. Additionally, the Lincoln County Campus of Flathead Valley Community College has two interactive teleconferencing classrooms and a portable interactive teleconferencing unit that brings college courses from the Kalispell campus to Libby, Troy and Eureka. This teleconferencing capability is also offered to local communities for a variety of other applications.

Securing operational and program funding support through private and public funding programs (grants) has been a very successful method of supplementing budgets. Grants will continue to be pursued by most service organizations.

Lincoln County is a prime retirement location. According to the 2000 Census 17.5% of the County's population is over 65 years of age. This age group is anticipated to grow to over 25% of the County's population by the year 2025.

Growth and the inevitable change in societal forces will continue to challenge local agencies to evolve and to effectively respond to the County's population needs. This evolution will require continued cooperation, planning, technology, and innovation that are evident in many of the efforts that local agencies have already undertaken. Planning for local services will require strong intergovernmental coordination to provide cost effective and responsive services for the County's growing and aging population.

GOVERNMENT

County Government

Lincoln County was created from a portion of Flathead County on July 1, 1909. Lincoln County has three elected commissioners, with a chairman selected by the commissioners. Each of the three elected commissioners presides over a specific road district. In 2006, there were 140 employees on the County's payroll. Appointed advisory boards include the Planning Board, Weed Board, Fair Board, Local Emergency Planning Committee and Airport Board. The County seat and courthouse are in Libby. Additionally, the County has an office in Eureka and owns or leases office space in several locations in Libby. Libby, the County seat, is centrally located in the County and is the largest city in Lincoln County. Other incorporated areas include the cities of Troy, Eureka, and Rexford. Unincorporated developments include Fortine, Trego, Stryker, West Kootenai, Yaak and Sylvanite.

Each district (Libby, Eureka and Troy) has a County road shop. Other County properties include the fairground, parks, landfill, and two airports. Each of the incorporated cities has a mayor-city council form of government and provides administrative, police, code enforcement and public works services.

In 2004, there were 1,511 jobs in the government sector in Lincoln County. This is actually fewer employees than 1994. In the ten years from 1994, employment with the federal sector has declined while local and State government employment has increased (See Table 1).

Table 1: Employment in Government Sector - 1994, 1999 & 2004

Government Sectors	1994	1999	2004
Local Government	792	803	815
State Government	104	88	110
Federal – Military	115	104	98
Federal – Civilian	605	496	488
Total Government	1,616	1,491	1,511

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Information System

The primary source of tax revenue for local governments is property taxes. Lincoln County collects taxes for the various local governments according to the levies that local governing bodies establish annually. In addition to the city and County levies, there are the school levies and levies for other government functions. Public safety accounts for the largest share of the mill levy. Unlike most counties, Lincoln County does not have a mill levy for roads. Historically, the County has relied on federal forest funds for the road budget.

Table 2: Mill Levies in Lincoln County 2005-2006

ENTITY	MILL LEVY
Public safety	\$50.07
Library	\$10.00
Airport	\$2.61
Libby Park	\$2.25
Senior Citizen & Senior Transportation	\$1.56
Board of Health	\$2.78
Permissive Insurance & Insurance Fund	\$19.01
Lincoln County Campus	\$5.24
Other	\$12.40
Total	\$105.92
Libby	\$118.47
Eureka	\$109.89
Troy	\$154.29

Source: Montana Taxpayer Association

Compared to other surrounding counties, Lincoln County has the lowest mill levy of counties in the region. Mill levies and per capita spending are generally a function of property assessments, level of service and population. Although several of the surrounding counties have higher assessed values, they also have higher mill levies. Assessed values in Lincoln County increased by 2% from the 4 year period of 2001 to 2005. Statewide, total valuation of properties were ranked 17th in State out of 56 counties. In terms of population size, the County was ranked 10th in the 2000 census. Differences in spending needs vary according to population size, the type of services that governments provide and land development patterns.

Table 3: Comparison by County of Mill Levies – 2005-2006

County	Mill Levy	Total Valuation
Lincoln	\$105.92	\$25,684,840
Sanders	\$124.67	\$28,930,197
Flathead	\$132.58	\$171,523,347
Lake	\$181.62	\$53,950,478

Source: Montana Taxpayers Association

State and Federal

The State of Montana and the federal government maintain a number of regional offices in Lincoln County and are major local employers. State offices include: Health and Human Services, Montana Department of Revenue, Job Service, Department of Natural Resources-Conservation, Montana Department of Corrections/Institutions, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Family Services, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, and the Army National Guard.

Federal offices include: U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service, Resource Conservation and Development, U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Postal Service, and the U.S. Border Patrol.

PUBLIC SERVICES/SAFETY

Lincoln County Emergency Services

Lincoln County Emergency Management is responsible for providing assistance to the area's various emergency response crews through assistance from the Montana Disaster and Emergency Services Office, the Montana National Guard, the U.S. Forest Service, the Montana Department of State Lands, and various agencies that provide mutual aid in times of large-scale emergencies. Emergency Management will continue to support the Northern Tier Interoperability (NTIP) project to improve communication between emergency service providers at the federal, State, tribal and local government levels in cooperation with the Department of Homeland Security.

One of the major Emergency Management (EM) challenges regarding future growth will be meeting the additional training mandates now required under the National Incident Management System (NIMS) by State and federal agencies such as the Department of Human Services (DHS) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These agencies continue to mandate additional training requirements, certifications, resource typing, exercise requirements and reporting that apply to any agency that would be involved in an emergency response; including professional paid employees (departments) and/or volunteers. Lincoln County utilizes volunteers to meet many of its emergency service needs. The problem of meeting these requirements in Lincoln County with an aging and unpaid volunteer work force, a growing population, and a huge geographic area to cover will be a daunting one.

Future preparedness grant funding may be in jeopardy also as funding will be determined on EM's ability to meet these requirements while implementing their local pre- approved plan. Implications of non-compliance with the requirements, at some point, will likely render Lincoln County ineligible for preparedness grant funding.

FIRE SAFETY

City of Libby and Libby Rural Fire Department

The Libby Volunteer Fire Department/Libby Rural Fire District (combined services) provides structure protection within a 15-mile radius around the City of Libby. ISO ratings within the City fire district are a level 3, which is one of the highest ratings in the western United States. In the Rural Fire District, ISO ratings range from a level 6 to a level 9, depending on available water sources. Fire protection in the unincorporated area is provided by nine rural fire departments/service areas. These are experiencing increasing demands due to increased population and growth. Funding for the districts vary from mill levies to donations and fundraising.

Tobacco Valley Emergency Services

The continued residential growth has strained the volunteer ambulance and fire crews in the Tobacco Valley. One major concern is that the volunteer crews have to travel greater distance to respond to calls due to new subdivisions being developed in outlying areas. Not only are the departments not fully equipped to handle the rough terrain but the volunteers have to spend longer time frames more often on calls. This is putting a strain on employers of those volunteers. The Emergency Services Departments (ambulance and fire) are all staffed by volunteers. These men and woman are providing a tremendous service to communities but it may be time for the municipalities and the County to pursue paid emergency service crews.

Lincoln County Rural Fire Departments

Fire protection in unincorporated Lincoln County is provided by nine rural fire departments. Funding sources vary for each district with some districts receiving revenues from mill levies and others relying mostly on donations and fundraising.

- Libby Rural Fire Department
- Bull Lake Rural Fire District
- Eureka Fire Service Area
- Fisher River Valley Fire/Rescue Battalions 1 & 2 Libby Rural Fire District
- McCormick Rural Fire District
- Trego, Fortine, Stryker Fire Service Area
- Troy Rural Fire District
- Yaak Fire Service Area
- Cabinet View Fire Service Area
- West Kootenai Fire Protection Company

All fire districts in the County are part of a mutual aid agreement and will respond to calls for assistance from other districts. The State Fire Marshall office in Kalispell assists with commercial inspections, training, and inspections of suspicious fires. The Lincoln County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) is the lead agency for disaster related services and coordination. EMA is responsible for coordinating Mitigation, Preparedness, Response and Recovery activities related to natural and man-made disasters in Lincoln County. The EMA Director serves as the County Fire Warden and Chair of the County Fire Co-Op. The Fire Co-Op is comprised of all of the volunteer fire departments as well as State and Federal agencies with fire fighting responsibility. EMA represents the County for disaster related incident command functions, emergency operations planning, preparedness grant funding activities, serves as Chair of the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) and maintains status of FCC 2-way radio communications licensing and use authority for licenses held by the County.

There are limited portions of the County that are without structure fire protection, primarily due to distance from a rural fire department. Major needs identified by rural departments include a shortage of volunteer members and/or aging members, funding to meet increased demands from growth which including operations, training, and plant and equipment (*See Lincoln County Community Wildfire Protection Plan for more*).

There is strong interest in establishing impact or mitigation fees to provide sustainable funding and in tracking new construction through building site permits. It is felt growth must pay for growth.

Wildland Fire Protection

The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation has primary responsibility for fire protection on all private and State lands within Lincoln County. They have a reciprocal agreement with the U.S. Forest Service where both agencies exchange blocks of land for fire protection purposes. In the agreement, the State agrees to protect an agreed upon number of acres of federal land in exchange for the USFS protecting acres of private land within the forest boundary. This agreement and coordination with volunteer fire departments provides for efficient wildland fire protection in Lincoln County.

DNRC preparedness strives for and maintains a goal of 95% of all direct protection fires controlled at less than 10 acres. For the past ten years, 96% of DNRC's fires were suppressed at 10 acres or less. The Fire and Aviation Program provides direct protection to 5.2 million acres. The DNRC firefighting force is in a state of elevated readiness from June 15 to September 15. The Northwestern Land Office has suppression units at Kalispell, Libby, Plains, Stillwater, Swan, and an initial attack station at Boorman.

Suppression of wildland fires on the Kootenai National Forest is the responsibility of the U.S. Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation and the Volunteer Fire Departments within the Forest boundary. These organizations suppress an average of 145 wildland fires a year totaling an average of 6,400 acres. Fire management on the Kootenai National Forest encompasses a variety of fire management tools including wildland fire, prescribed burning, fire prevention and smoke management. When suppressing wildland fires the Forest uses many resources. Use of aircraft has increased over the last few years due to the increase in fire intensities and the need for quick response of both fire fighting individuals and other suppression resources, such as water and retardant.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Lincoln County Sheriff

Lincoln County's Sheriff's Department provides services outside the city limits of Libby, Troy and Eureka. The communities of Eureka, Libby and Troy have police departments responsible for law enforcement protection within city limits. All departments work cooperatively in providing the County full protection. The County jail is at capacity and there is an increasing demand on law enforcement.

The Libby Volunteer Ambulance Service is a 25-member department. It has Defibrillator Life Support Service licensed by the State and with the National Registry of EMT's. The group provides 24-hour volunteer coverage and is assisted with Advanced Life Support services by Alert Air Ambulances out of Kalispell Regional Hospital and Whitefish ALS. Other areas of the County are served by the Troy Volunteer Ambulance, Eureka Volunteer Ambulance, Fisher River Fire Rescue, and Bull Lake Ambulance. Major concerns include a lack of volunteers, funding, a shortage of members and very large service areas.

Since 2001, both the index crime rate and the overall crime rate for Lincoln County increased every year until 2004 and then declined slightly in 2005. The index crime rate represents more serious felony crimes.

Table 4: Lincoln County Crime Selected Crime Statistics – 2001 - 2005

	Index Crime Rate (2) Per 1000	Overall Crime Rate (3) per 1000
2001	591	3130
2002	679	3576
2003	691	3669
2004	746	4186
2005	720	3784

Notes: Source: Montana Board of Crime - Database, Index Crimes = Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft, Overall Crime Rate = Index Crimes + All other crimes. All other crimes range from DUI, curfew, vandalism ...

Among the individual jurisdictions, the unincorporated parts of the County had the highest rate for index crimes while the cities of Libby and Troy had a higher overall crime rate.

Table 5: Crime Rate for Individual Jurisdictions - 2005

	Index Crime Rate (2) Per 1000	Overall Crime Rate (3) per 1000
Libby Police	207	7864
Eureka Police	48	4710
Troy Police	67	6885
Lincoln County Sheriff	398	2763

Notes: 1) Source: Montana Board of Crime - Database, 2) Index Crimes = Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault, Burglary, Larceny, Motor Vehicle Theft, 3) Overall Crime Rate = Index Crimes + All other crimes. All other crimes range from DUI, curfew, vandalism ...

Another measurement of service demand is the overall number of calls that require law enforcement agencies to respond. The Lincoln County Dispatch records indicate that the number of calls has increased since 2001.

Table 6: # of Calls Responded to by Law Enforcement Personnel – 2001-2005

Year	# of Calls
2001	8,906
2002	9,910
2003	10,630
2004	10,030
2005	10,454

Source: Lincoln County Dispatch Office

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Lincoln County Transportation Service

In 2006, a federal mandate came through the State of Montana Department of Transportation to increase transportation services to rural areas. All existing transportation services were required to consolidate all transit resources and create coordinated projects for their geographic area. Lincoln County had five groups providing transit service which included the three senior centers, Achievements Inc., and the Troy Christian Fellowship. There is also an area wide Transportation Advisory Group which is made up of all interested community members. Its goal is to advise the LCTS on community and service needs.

The Lincoln County Transportation Service was formed in 2006 under the 501c3 umbrella of the Senior Citizens of Lincoln County. The new Lincoln County Transportation Service began active rider ship on Oct 16th, 2006. LCTS has a board of five representing the five organizations with pre-existing transportation programs. LCTS is a “demand & response” transit system. LCTS has three wheelchair lift twelve passenger buses; two twelve passenger vans; one seven passenger van, and has a request for another seven passenger van with the MDOT for FY 2008. The drivers and vehicles are based in Libby, Troy, and Eureka to best meet the needs of the residents. LCTS currently employs 11 regular part and full time employees and has three seasonal employees. LCTS follows all federal and State Transit regulations for safety, drug, and alcohol screening for employees. Employees working 16 hours a week or more have a health benefit plan available to them. The service covers all of Lincoln County for all residents with outreach to Kalispell for medical and some shopping from Libby, Troy, and Eureka. During the first month of full service, November 2006, LCTS provided 666 rides. In March of 2007 LCTS provided 3,847 rides with potential for expansion. 31% of the riders are for medical; 22% for shopping; 16% for nutrition; and 19% for other such as church, meetings, hair dressers, visiting or transportation connections. 48% are over 60; 32% are disabled and 20% under 60.

Future plans include at least one more wheel chair lift bus, one more twelve passenger van, and at least one more seven passenger van so LCTS can have a small vehicle based in each of the three communities. LCTS is projecting 10 vehicles on the road in five years. Replacement options include two or three smaller hybrid vehicles for times when LCTS is transporting smaller numbers. The result would be very cost effective and supportive of efforts to reduce pollution and waste. Additional expansion opportunities include transportation to jobs in the Flathead Valley from both Libby and Eureka. Also with possible future development in the immediate area there could be a need for more employment related transportation in the Troy and Libby area.

LIBRARIES AND MUSEUMS

Libraries

In 1920, the Board of County Commissioners created the Lincoln County Free Library. The current home of the Libby Library was dedicated in 1964. The Eureka Branch library building was completed four years later and the new Troy Branch Library was dedicated in 1984. The County also has two bookmobiles. Library usage, in terms of per capita circulation of materials, is comparable to the State average. The Libby library was further expanded in 1985 with funds from a Kellogg grant. Funding for the libraries is provided through the County.

The per capita collection of the Lincoln County Libraries (main library and branches) is slightly lower than the average for the State. With multiple facilities, however, the spending levels are slightly higher than the State average. With the system of a main library and two branches, the residents of Lincoln County have more convenient services and materials.

Museums

Museums offer many educational opportunities and celebrate the culture and history of a region. As attractions for visitors, museums also contribute to the local economy. State and federal agencies, as well as non-profit organizations, operate museums throughout the State. Table 7 presents a list, description, and the locations of museums in Lincoln County.

Table 7: Museums in Lincoln County

Name	Description	Location
Heritage Museum	The museum opened in 1978 and is a 12 sided log structure with exhibits telling the history of the County. Additionally, the museum grounds include a miner's cabin, old forestry cookhouse, and equipment shed and other old buildings housing special features.	Libby
Troy Museum	Historic Exhibits & Train	Troy
Libby Dam & Visitors Center	The Libby Dam Visitor Center includes an overlook of the Dam, exhibits, gift shop and book store. Tours of the dam and powerhouse originate at the dam.	U.S. Highway 37 – 18 miles northeast of Libby.
Tobacco Valley Historical Village	In 1983, the Lincoln Electric Co-Op sold the 5-acre site of the village to the County which then leased it to the Tobacco Valley improvement Board of History. Village includes a schoolhouse, library, log cabin, hand-hewn house, fire tower and caboose. Memorabilia, books, household utensils, documents, clothes, toys and signs	Eureka

Source: State & Local Visitor Brochures

EDUCATION

Schools K-12

Lincoln County has eight elementary schools and three high schools. The table below indicates that all but four schools experienced a decline in enrollment from the previous year.

Table 8: County School Enrollments - 2004-2005

School District	Elementary	High School	# Change from Prior Year
#1 Troy	279		(-29)
#4 Libby Unified K-8	828		(-55)
#13 Eureka	505		32
#14 Fortine	50		2
#15 McCormick	22		2
#23 Sylvanite	1		(-2)
#24 Yaak	3		(-4)
#53 Trego	47		(-3)
Troy High School		187	9
#4 Libby Unified 9-12		532	(-36)
Lincoln County H.S.		374	(-16)
Total	1,735	1,093	(-100)

Source: Office of the Lincoln County Superintendent of Schools, 2005

Despite increasing population, school enrollments have steadily declined over the last 10 years due to trends toward smaller families, the baby boom generation's children now graduating, the loss of manufacturing jobs in the County and young families relocating to find better jobs. Libby School District has seen a drop of approximately 750 students from over 2000 students a decade ago which significantly impacts the School District Budget (Western New 8-20-08).

School districts that are experiencing increasing enrollments, such as Eureka, can attribute growth primarily to new development. Other parts of the County have had slower population growth and consequently demographic trends are contributing to a decline of school enrollments.

Table 9: Public School Enrollment Trends

Grade Level	1995	2000	2005
Elementary	2,658	2,177	1,735
High School	1,218	1,213	1,093
Total	3,876	3,390	2,828

Source: Office of the Lincoln County Superintendent of Schools, 2005

Declining enrollments affect the funding received from the state of Montana. These funds are based in part on the number of students enrolled in each district. In 2005-2006, state funds from both special education and general education allocations accounted for 51% of the anticipated revenue for all of the school districts in the county.

Property taxes are the second largest source of revenue for school districts. In 2005 and 2006, levies accounted for 23% of anticipated revenues. Each district has its own mill levy. There are County wide education levies for transportation, retirement and elementary/high school equalization funds.

In October 2000, Congress passed Public Law 106-393 entitled "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self Determination Act of 2000" which stabilized federal payments to states for funding schools and roads. In 2007, Lincoln County received a total of \$5.48 million through this act of which 15% is mandated to be given to the Forest Service for Resource Advisory Committee distribution. The County then distributes the remaining funding by giving 33 1/3 % to the schools and 66 2/3 % to roads. This law and funding source was just refunded for four years through 2011 (source 10-8-08 Montanian) which will continue to provide much needed funding through 2011.

Salaries and benefits account for the largest portion of school budgets (80.55% for all schools.) Transportation was the next largest budget expense.

Post Secondary

On April 1, 1967, the voters of Flathead County agreed to create a community college district, according to the community college law of the 1965 Montana legislative assembly. In 1983, the voters of Lincoln County agreed to create a community college extension center of FVCC to serve the residents of Lincoln County.

The Lincoln County Campus of Flathead Valley Community college is located at 225 Commerce Way in Libby. The college offers associate degrees, certificate programs, continuing education and adult basic education – GED preparation. The college has a number of on-line courses.

The Lincoln County Campus also has two interactive teleconferencing classrooms and a portable interactive teleconferencing unit that bring college courses from the Kalispell campus to Libby, Troy and Eureka. In addition, this teleconferencing capability is offered to our communities for a variety of other applications. By subscribing to the services of Vision Net, Inc., the college is linked to state, county and local agencies, K-12 school districts throughout Montana, and the Montana University System. The interactive teleconferencing rooms are available to private enterprise for a fee.

HEALTH

HealthCare

The healthcare needs of Lincoln County are provided by a number of different organizations that work closely together.

- St. John's Lutheran Hospital in Libby is a private, not-for-profit, non-denominational community hospital and healthcare system. The facility has 25 acute care beds including three intensive/cardiac beds. St. John's can also use all their bed as "swing beds" for longer stays that do not require higher levels of care. St. John's provides a broad range of services including a birthing room, surgical services, an emergency/urgent care center staffed 24x7 with board certified physicians, a clinical laboratory with 24-hour blood bank, radiological services including CT and MRI, outpatient services include respiratory therapy, rehabilitation services (physical, occupational, speech therapy, cardiac rehabilitation), and Home Health/Hospice.

- At their August 2008 meeting, the St. John's Lutheran Hospital (SJLH) Board passed a motion based on their master plan to take the steps necessary to build a new acute care hospital. The estimated project budget is \$33 million and construction will begin within the next two years. SJLH has begun the planning process to build the new hospital. They have had several meetings already and are working hard to be ready to start construction next spring/summer (2009). SJLH has also been working to get the needed financing in place. Options for the current building that are being discussed include turning the patient care unit into a small assisted living center, remodeling a section of the building for the CARD, and using the basement as a warehouse/long term record storage area.
- Physicians and midlevel providers from several clinics and private practitioners including the Lincoln County Community Health Center (CHC) and the Libby Clinic provide medical care for the South Lincoln County area.
- The Troy Medical Arts Building, serves the Troy region, and houses the CHC; and Medicine Tree Clinic which allow weekly on-site physician care as well as minor procedures and x-ray technology.
- Eureka and the surrounding Tobacco Valley are supported by the community's new (year 2000) emergency and medical clinic and resident family physicians. In addition, the northern communities of Lincoln County are assisted by two medical centers, Kalispell Regional Medical Center and North Valley Hospital in Whitefish.
- Because of the unique needs of those exposed to asbestosis, the Center for Asbestosis Related Disease (CARD) provides special pulmonary evaluation and care. The CARD provides long term clinical follow-up of patients with asbestos exposure and disease, special health guidance and evaluation, and long term psychosocial support and a continual resource of education. The CARD actively works with multiple agencies (EPA, ATSDR, NIOSH) and universities in pursuit of meaningful research.
- A variety of private practitioners provide podiatric, dental, chiropractic, and alternative medical services.
- Kalispell Regional Medical Center, located 90 miles southeast of Libby, services these communities through the A.L.E.R.T. helicopter service for medical and trauma situations.
- Sacred Heart Medical Center and Deaconess Medical Center, both located 160 miles to the west in Spokane, Washington, provide trauma, burn, cardiac and obstetric care. These two facilities service Lincoln County through both rotor and fixed wing air service.

** Information provided by Mr. Bill Patten, CEO, SJLH*

Ambulance Services

There are three ambulance services in the County.

- Libby – Volunteer, non-profit. Six vehicles are located in Libby and one vehicle is housed at the Fisher River fire Department to serve the south part of the County. One paid employee for bookkeeping.
- Eureka Ambulance Service – Volunteer, non-profit. Three vehicles. 15 volunteers.
- Troy Volunteer Ambulance – Volunteer, non-profit.

AGING SERVICES

Lincoln County is a prime retirement location. According to the 2000 Census 17.5% of the county population is over 65 years of age and it is anticipated to grow to over 25% by the year 2025. Information and referral assistance, advocacy services, and nutritious meals are offered to seniors in Lincoln County through the local Area Council Agency on Aging and Senior Citizens Centers located in each of our communities. The current Senior Center in Eureka, also serving as a Community Center, has great programs including meals on wheels and some medical assistance. However, the building itself is two story, with limited handicap access and too small for the community.

Lincoln County is lacking in affordable housing for seniors with less than 100 rent subsidized units available in Libby and Troy. There are nursing homes in Libby and Eureka but there are a number of nursing home residents that are inappropriate for this level of care. They would be better served by a multi-tiered level of care in the form of congregate living or an assisted living facility. The Housing Committee of the TVCDC is looking into the options of a 3- tier facility that would provide services in the means of retirement community, assisted living and nursing home care (see Housing Chapter for more). Another large need for the senior population is some type of Senior Home Repair program. Many seniors are still living in their original homes but are no longer able to afford the upkeep and maintenance costs. There has also been a large increase in winter time heating costs that the Low Income Energy Assistance Program can not meet for those seniors that fall between the cracks. An example of this would be a senior citizen on Social Security Retirement that exceeds the low-income guideline for LIEAAP and pays for their own medicare costs and supplemental insurance premiums. .

The following services are available for senior citizens.

- Lincoln County Council on Aging (Libby)
- Tobacco Valley Senior Center (Eureka)
- Libby Senior Citizens Center (Libby)
- Kootenai Senior Center (Troy)
- Senior Food Pantry (Troy)

PUBLIC ASSISTANCE

There are a number of programs offering varying types of public assistance to residents of Lincoln County. According to the Montana Department of Health and Human services, 12.73% of residents in Lincoln County receive some form of public assistance compared to 8.65% statewide.

Health, Family & Human Services

In addition to public assistance, social service agencies provide a variety of services in Lincoln County. Agencies include:

- Libby Food Pantry
- Western Montana Mental Health Center
- Pregnancy Care Center

- Lincoln County Office of Public Assistance
- Lincoln County Women, Infant and Children
- Libby Job Service
- Montana Child and Family Services
- Lincoln County Crisis Solutions
- Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency
- Youth Court Services
- Libby Community Interagencies
- Families in Partnership (north and south Lincoln County)
- Early and Head Start
- NW Montana Human Resources
- Lincoln County Transportation Service

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Lincoln County is graced with a wide variety of community service agencies, all striving to build safe, healthy communities and strengthen families and individuals. In addition, the agencies work to promote self-sufficiency, help youth succeed, and meet the basic human needs of its growing population. The human services system is committed to providing comprehensive prevention and intervention services that meet current critical needs. There is a high level of collaboration, networking, and communication among service providers. Despite the continuing increase in unmet needs and the fact that funding from traditional funding sources has not kept pace with needs, the social service system endeavors to provide quality, affordable services. Lincoln County excels in service delivery areas due to strong leadership, superior communication and coordination among service providers.

CIVIC ORGANIZATIONS AND THE FAITH COMMUNITY

Lincoln County is fortunate to have many Civic Organizations and the Faith Community to provide additional support to human service support to families in Lincoln County. Civic organizations like Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, VFW, and the American Legion etc. support families and youth needs in many different areas. The Faith based Community also provides strong support to Families and those most vulnerable in our community. For example, the Methodist Church in Libby gives out commodities (non-food stamp items) and Christ Lutheran Church has a medical equipment loan closet. The faith community also provides supplemental assistance services to the homeless and indigent. Lincoln County has a successful Habitat for Humanity program which would not be possible with a strong community support structure.

VETERAN TRANSPORTATION TO SPOKANE MEDICAL CENTER

Free transportation service is available to Lincoln County Veteran's who require medical treatment at the Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Spokane, Washington. Transportation is provided by the Veteran's Administration and local volunteers who serve as drivers. Services are provided on Tuesday and Thursday each week and local veteran's need to call ahead for a reservation. Transportation leaves from Libby so North Lincoln County Veterans need to get to Libby to join other veterans. Stops are then made in Troy and selected Idaho cities prior to arriving at the Medical Center.

ADDICTIONS AND CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY SERVICES

Lincoln County offers a comprehensive delivery system that includes support and treatment systems to residents affected by alcohol or chemical abuse and other dependencies. Recovery and self help support groups are available for adults and adolescents. While we have no in-patient treatment programs, regular referrals are made to Pathways Treatment Center and MCDC in Butte, MT for in-patient chemical dependency treatment. Intensive out-patient treatment services are offered by Flathead Valley Chemical Dependency Clinic. Several private practitioners in Lincoln County offer outpatient services for a wide variety of addictive diseases as well.

CHILDCARE AND FAMILY RESOURCES

Lincoln County is a desirable location and healthy environment in which to raise children. The Nurturing Center in Kalispell, MT is available to help parents locate needed services and provides programs that strengthen families. Parenting classes and support groups are available community-wide. Local schools offer additional resources and encourage parental involvement through family resource centers. Licensed and registered childcare is available but somewhat limited. There is only one facility that offers odd hours and weeknight care and they can only handle 5 children at any one time. Headstart and Early Headstart are a huge family support system in Lincoln County. Training, education and technical assistance are available to childcare professionals. Registered family and group day care homes may participate in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. According to The Nurturing Center using the state average pay scale, the average cost of child care is \$22/day per child or \$440/month for one child. As in many communities, there is continued need to develop additional infant/toddler child care slots as well as odd hour and weekend care.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Lincoln County has a comprehensive network of agencies providing a variety of services to people with disabilities. These agencies, both state and private non-profit, have specific target populations and missions, which individually and in partnership promote maximum levels of independence and self-sufficiency for the specific consumer of those services. Local agencies provide direct services to people with disabilities covering all ages, income levels and types of disabilities. These local agencies also have connections and networks with statewide and national resources. One of the needs identified is additional Group Home living arrangements for mentally and physically challenged individuals. South Lincoln County has two group homes. One serves the extremely handicapped and bedridden consumer while the other is an apartment complex with on site case management but only has 9 apartments available. Many of the developmentally disabled clientele are living in the Senior and handicapped HUD subsidized units but would prefer to live in a complex specifically built for their needs. If there were another subsidized apartment for the Developmentally Disable consumers, this would free up some of the current subsidized apartment units for our senior population. Another benefit to this would be trickle down effect on the housing shortage. If more senior housing becomes available, many senior home owners would be willing to sell their existing homes for a simpler lifestyle thus making those homes available for resale.

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Lincoln County Mental Health offers a comprehensive public outpatient mental health delivery system. Adults with serious and disabling emotional and mental disorders can find case management, day treatment, medications management and 24 hour crisis intervention services. Pathways Treatment Center in Kalispell, MT offers in-patient psychiatric acute care services for adults and adolescents. A wide variety of self help support groups are also available. *See Chapter 7 (Implementation Plan part IV) "Lincoln County Action Plan" for Local and Social Services Goals and Objectives.*

Growth Policy

IMPLEMENTATION

This Growth Policy is an ambitious long-term plan. It involves implementation (the action steps to get things done), monitoring (regular review of progress), and evaluation (how Lincoln County is doing?). Each year what is working and what is not will be reviewed and evaluated for potential adjustment. This Growth policy needs to be reviewed a minimum of every five years to update goals and objectives.

This Growth Policy is intended to be a long-term document. It may take 10 or more years to accomplish some of the goals. Goals may be added or changed. Specific Objectives/actions will likely be accomplished in a shorter period of time.

This Chapter is divided into four parts. The first part lists and describes the specific tools that Lincoln County anticipates using to achieve the goals and objectives described in the six previous chapters of this Growth Policy. The second part focuses on the primary review criteria and public hearing procedure for subdivision review. The third part describes how and when the Lincoln County Growth policy will be reviewed and revised. The fourth part is the action plan. The action plan is a matrix that lists each objective, and identifies potential implementation measures, lead resources and partners, staffing, and proposed timeframes for each task.

Strategic Approach to Implementation

Implementing this Growth Policy will take the cooperative actions of county government, municipal governments of Eureka, Libby, Rexford and Troy, civic and non-profit organizations, local, state and federal agencies, education and research facilities, private business and citizens.

I. Implementation Methods

Implementation methods are essentially tools one may use to accomplish the job of implementation of the Growth Policy. The following are some of the methods Lincoln County may utilize to achieve the goals and objectives of the Lincoln County Growth Policy:

- Subdivision review
- Land use inventory and analysis
- Density map
- Design Guidelines
- Capital Improvements Planning
- Conservation easements
- Citizen participation
- Public education
- Intergovernmental coordination
- Recreation planning
- Impact fees
- Zoning

- Development permit regulations
- Lakeshore construction permit regulations
- Floodplain permit regulations
- Public-private partnerships
- Special plans
- Highway corridor planning
- Land exchanges

Some of the implementation methods listed above may not be utilized or realized due to public desires, staffing, financial and time constraints, shifting priorities or other unforeseen circumstances. Other implementation methods may emerge with the passage of time that is better suited for use in the future. In the foreseeable future the methods outlined in this chapter are the ones Lincoln County may consider to achieve the goals and objectives of this Growth Policy. The following is a brief description of those implementation methods:

Subdivision Regulations

Subdivision regulations regulate the process of dividing land into lots and providing public facilities (e.g., roads, water, sewer, storm drainage) as infrastructure. The platting and creation of lots is only the first phase in land use development; platted subdivisions, for all practical purposes, permanently determines the long-term pattern of land development and infrastructure for a community.

The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (MSPA) requires all units of local government to adopt and enforce subdivision regulations, and to review and decide on development proposals that would divide land into parcels of less than 160 acres, construct one or more condominiums, or provide multiple spaces for mobile homes or recreational camping vehicles.

Lincoln County is required by MSPA to review the subdivision of land into parcels. The general purpose of subdivision review is to prevent or minimize adverse impacts on public health and safety, the natural environment, and wildlife; ensure desirable future land use patterns; and allow cost-effective provision of public services, thereby reducing tax expenditures and more efficient delivery of public services.

The Lincoln County Commissioners, Planning Board and staff realize that there are areas where the subdivision process can be made more efficient and effective. Additionally, 76-1-606 Montana Code Annotated states that local subdivision regulations must be made in accordance with a growth policy. Therefore, Lincoln County staff, with assistance from the Montana Department of Commerce, will update the subdivision regulations as a means of providing improved public service. The updated regulations will focus on the following specific subjects:

- Defining the proper use of exemptions from the Subdivision and Platting Act
- Identifying the differences between low-density rural and high-density urban subdivisions;
- Modification of review fees and implementation of other incentives for certain types of subdivisions that are deemed to be in the public interest (e.g., affordable housing and cluster development);

- Connectivity of transportation corridors; and
- Defining standards for wildland-urban interface development.

According to state statute, all updates to the subdivision regulations must go through a public review process.

Land Use Inventory and Analysis

A land use inventory and analysis would be used to identify existing land uses within the County which aids in the identification of the constraints and opportunities for future development. Lincoln County will examine the practicality of conducting such an inventory and analysis within the County using text and maps to identify natural hazards, environmental constraints, transportation networks, natural amenities and other features.

Density Map

The purpose of a density map would be to encourage more intensive development close to cities and towns. The density map identifies areas where public services such as fire and police protection, school bus transportation and road maintenance can be provided in a cost effective manner, thereby reducing public expenditures. In addition, the density map provides the information needed to help maintain the rural character of outlying areas and protect important wildlife habitat of Lincoln County.

A density map could codify the county's policy of providing a greater level of predictability to the subdivision and development process. It could also provide for a level of flexibility by not necessarily prescribing minimum lots sizes, but by providing developers the option and incentive for clustering homes in certain areas of a development and thereby reducing road building and utility extension costs.

Design Guidelines

Design guidelines describe and illustrate site plan and design techniques that promote good design and environmentally sound practices. Guidelines would be an educational tool and compliance would be voluntary. The guidelines could be used as part of a cost-benefit impact analysis for specific projects.

Capital Improvements Planning

State law requires that this growth policy *include "a strategy for development, maintenance, and replacement of public infrastructure, including drinking water systems, wastewater treatment facilities, sewer systems, solid waste facilities, fire protection facilities, roads, and bridges."*

A potential method for implementing growth policy goals and objectives is by the use of a community capital improvements plan and corresponding capital budget. Capital improvements are major, high cost public facilities or public works that have a life of two years or more and that cannot be funded from one year's operating budget. Capital improvements include local government infrastructure such as public water systems, wastewater systems, storm drainage facilities, streets, roads, bridges, law enforcement facilities, parks, and so on.

While this growth policy infrastructure strategy discusses the needed capital improvements in general terms a “Capital Improvements Plan” (CIP) is a detailed document that helps communities identify their public facility needs, establishes project priorities, and creates a long-range program for the scheduling and funding of construction or repair projects. A CIP is prepared, updated, and reviewed annually in conjunction with the local government’s annual budget process and used to prioritize budgetary needs. It could help Lincoln County anticipate upcoming capital expenditures, and more effectively manage construction, maintenance, and repair costs related to public facilities. To appropriate money to pay for the projects that are scheduled in the CIP, Lincoln County will need to adopt a capital budget as part of its annual budget.

The objective of the CIP is to match needed improvement projects with revenue and financing sources to ensure that public facilities will be repaired, expanded, or constructed as to support future growth, public health and safety, or other community needs. State and federal grants and loans are often used to supplement funding for some of the projects in a County CIP. Lincoln County will consider the development of a Capital Improvements Plan based on growth expectations.

Conservation Easements

Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between a landowner and a public agency or qualified private tax exempt organization. Easements set conservation parameters for the land for a specific period of time (typically long-term) or in perpetuity. Conservation easements have been utilized in Lincoln County in the past and will be considered as an implementation method in the future.

Citizen Participation

Local residents are essential to any planning process and can aid the county in a number of ways. Residents help to form long-range planning policies by providing decision makers with insights and information about the things they value about their area and the kinds of growth related problems they want to avoid. Local residents also provide information regarding individual development proposals that can allow the governing body to make informed decisions. Residents often understand the physical conditions and constraints of adjacent or nearby properties and have a stake in how their immediate area develops.

Lincoln County will work to ensure public participation and education throughout the entire process of choosing the appropriate methods for implementing the goals of this Growth Policy. All stakeholders will be included in the decision making processes.

Public Education

The Lincoln County Planning and Environmental Health offices provide public education on many planning and environmental related issues. They are in a unique position to provide growth and development related information to the public. Information concerning water quality and quantity issues; sanitation, land use, floodplain, lakeshore, air quality, and subdivision regulations; wildlife corridors, disaster preparedness, wildland fire, and other planning and environmental health information can be obtained from their offices.

Local citizens, realtors, developers, surveyors, etc. frequently request information concerning these development related issues. Information on these subjects and much more is close at hand and is assembled and distributed cost-effectively and in a non-regulatory manner. Free informational brochures are on display and available at the County Planning and Environmental Services offices. Information can also be sent out upon request.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Lincoln County routinely addresses land use issues that impact local, state and federal agencies and vice versa. Many public entities will influence how the county develops in the coming years such as public water and sewer districts, the Montana Department of Transportation, the municipalities of Eureka, Libby, Rexford, and Troy etc. These agencies and governments have the opportunity to coordinate, cooperate and plan together for the benefit of all local residents. Their ability to work together will determine whether or not Lincoln County can maintain its unique qualities in the face of continuing growth.

Lincoln County is committed to work with the public sewer and water districts, and the incorporated towns to develop future service and growth areas where relatively high-density and mixed-use development could be encouraged. The County intends to work closely with public water and sewer districts to help develop infrastructure in order to make it cost-effective for developers to undertake development projects in any identified growth areas

The Lincoln County planning staff currently does all the subdivision and floodplain reviews for the City of Troy and the Town of Eureka. Lincoln County will continue to request comments on all subdivision proposals from local, state and federal stakeholders including: the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Lincoln County Conservation District, United States Forest Service – Kootenai National Forest Supervisor, Department of Natural Resources Conservation offices in Libby and Missoula, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks offices in Trego and Kalispell, Department of Revenue, County Road Offices, Utilities, and Fire Departments.

For any intergovernmental cooperation to succeed, it is imperative that the agencies and local governments meet and communicate regularly in order to understand future plans as well as differences of needs and perspective. There are many areas of land use planning where coordination can help serve the needs of the public. These include: (1) identifying and taking advantage of economic development opportunities; (2) identifying and achieving the meeting of the public facility, housing, and local and social service needs; (3) developing cooperative land use policies; and (4) reviewing projects and policies with the help of fire district personnel and natural resource experts. Lincoln County will explore areas over the coming years to open new lines of communication with stakeholders and form new partnerships for the public good.

Because of the value citizens bring to the planning process, Lincoln County seeks to inform citizens when growth-related policies are being formed and when development projects are proposed for their immediate area.

Recreation Planning

Tremendous outdoor recreational opportunities can be found in Lincoln County throughout the year. These include: hunting, fishing, boating, swimming, golfing, hiking, biking, snowmobiling, skiing, horse riding, scenic driving or simply having a picnic and taking in the spectacular views. These opportunities bring visitors to the area and are some of the most important reasons that many of Lincoln County's residents chose to live here. Tourist dollars are an important economic base in Lincoln County.

A number of local, state and federal management agencies are responsible for managing the resources and recreational facilities. At this time, no comprehensive management plan that spans these agencies exists. One of the greatest recreational issues at hand is improved public access to area lakes and the Kootenai River. A comprehensive recreation plan is one tool that could be used to assess current conditions, identify opportunities and limitations, and pursue solutions that give the public greater access opportunities.

Due to the level of public interest a recreation plan could also include a non-motorized transportation facility plan for linking businesses, schools, neighborhoods and recreational resources.

Impact fees

As new residents move to Lincoln County, they require numerous public services including police and fire protection, roads and bridges and sewer and water services. Impact fees are a way for local governments and public service providers to recover the costs of providing new or expanded services to the new residents. An impact fee is a one-time capital charge levied against new development and is designed to cover a portion of the cost of the capital infrastructure consumed by new development. So the principal purpose of an impact fee would be to provide a funding mechanism to maintain any adopted level of service standards established by the County. The enabling legislation for impact fees is found under 7-6-1601 of the Montana Code Annotated.

Although impact fees do not contribute to the maintenance of existing facilities (e.g., road grading or snowplowing), they do constitute available resources for improving and constructing capital facilities in order to serve new development (e.g., a sidewalk linking a subdivision to a town).

In order to ensure that new development pays for its proportional share of maintaining infrastructure and local services, Lincoln County will determine if implementation of an impact fee for new development is a mechanism desired by the residents. If the public expresses a desire to proceed, the County will undertake a study to determine the feasibility of implementing such a fee. Further action on the actual implementing of impact fees will be based upon the findings of the initial study.

Zoning

Zoning is the legal method by which local governments protect the public health, safety and welfare by dividing jurisdictions into use districts (zones), restricting various uses to certain

zones, and imposing requirements that the permitted uses must meet. Zoning is not new, as early as the 1800's, city governments in America were preventing slaughterhouses from locating in residential neighborhoods to prevent odor and noise problems, and also requiring adequate separation space between buildings to prevent the spread of fire.

One basic objective of zoning is to separate incompatible uses to prevent the adverse or undesirable effects they can have on one another. Another objective of zoning is to achieve a quality and character of development that ensures attractive, safe and healthy communities. Zoning is the only way to regulate density, construction standards, and land uses. The subdivision review process cannot stop changes in neighborhood land use. The issues of density and intrusion of incompatible uses into residential areas are what zoning is designed to address. Separating incompatible uses through zoning often may be the most direct and least costly means of protecting property values, maintaining a viable business district or a pleasant and safe residential neighborhood, or assuring functional and safe industrial and commercial areas. Thus, zoning can provide very real benefits to citizens and communities.

In order for zoning to be effective (and legal), the zoning regulations must be consistent with the goals and objectives identified in this growth policy.

Lincoln County will assist interested community districts and neighborhoods in developing land use plans and any development standards, zoning regulations or incentives that the residents desire in order to implement their plans.

The use of zoning as a regulatory tool will only be considered by Lincoln County if the residents of a community district or neighborhood express an interest in using such tools or if zoning is required by the state.

Development Permit Regulations

In conjunction with a density map, Lincoln County may look at the creation of development standards that continue established residential and commercial patterns such as density and style, in order to maintain the character of Lincoln County's rural areas and to protect fish and wildlife habitat and water resources.

Development permit regulations are a form of zoning. Development permit regulations may be adopted under any of the three zoning enabling statutes. As with conventional zoning, the regulations must provide for an appeals process. Development permit regulations are an alternative to traditional zoning as a means to regulate land use. One key element of traditional zoning is separating uses by dividing the jurisdiction into use districts (zones). In contrast to traditional zoning, which focuses on location of uses, development permit regulations usually focus primarily on the character or quality of new development, with less emphasis on regulating the location of development.

Rather than addressing land use or density, development permit regulations typically set out requirements that apply to new development throughout the jurisdiction. A new use may be permitted to locate in most locations, provided it meets the standards and requirements. Development permit regulations are particularly suitable for rural, unincorporated areas or

small towns. These communities typically have low development densities, and in unincorporated areas land use patterns have not been established.

Development permit regulations can be drafted to regulate location of new uses, such as the location of a house on a lot, and can apply different requirements in different areas within a county.

Lincoln County may seek to craft any type of land use regulations that will fit its needs as circumstances arise with assistance from the planning board and interested stakeholders. The County will analyze each proposed land use regulation to assess its purpose and potential use and whether it is needed for the public good.

Lakeshore Construction Permitting

As authorized under the Aquatic Ecosystems Protections Act (75-7-201 through 75-7-210, MCA) Lincoln County has adopted regulations and issues permits for lakeshore construction projects.

Lincoln County permits projects within the Lakeshore Protection Zone, which addresses construction and development activities conducted 20 horizontal feet above the Mean Annual High Water Elevation on lakes no smaller than 20 acres in water surface area.

The purpose of the permitting process is to conserve and protect County lakes due to their high scenic and resource value to residents and visitors. The permitting process protects high property values and maintains a clean and healthy environment. In general, the regulations are designed to allow landowners to develop their properties while minimizing erosion, protecting water quality, protecting the visual environment, and protecting the physical, chemical and biological integrity of the lakes. As new techniques for achieving the goals of the regulations become available and new ways to achieve greater efficiency become apparent, Lincoln County will amend the regulations in cooperation with Lincoln Conservation District and Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks.

Lincoln County will develop a plan to review lakeshore development activities on lakes over 20 acres.

Airport Influence Zone Planning

Lincoln County has airports in Troy, Libby and Eureka. The Troy Airport is owned by the U.S. Forest Service. The North Lincoln County airport was successful in receiving funding to install both weather towers and fueling stations improving the overall usefulness of the airport. The Airport Board is working on gaining landing rights so the US Customs can clear planes from Canada. They also want to expand and upgrade the runways, and build additional hanger space. The Board is striving to make the Airport a year round facility and plans on obtaining an instrumental approach for all weather conditions.

The Libby airport has a lighted beacon, segmented circle with wind cone, MIRL, and PAPI. The County's five year goal is to continue to pursue federal and state grants to maintain runway asphalt integrity and safety additions. A new terminal building is needed. A possible runway extension may also be pursued.

Businesses and seasonal residents require regular and reliable air transportation. High quality air service is seen nationally as a necessary component of economic development programs. Airports in Lincoln County can also be quite busy during the fire season.

The Lincoln County Airport Board continues to pursue planning for future expansion and public safety as our communities grow and residential and commercial development around the facilities continues. Lincoln County presently implements an Airport Hazard Ordinance for the Libby and North Lincoln County Airports.

Floodplain Permitting

Lincoln County adopted floodplain development regulations in 1991 that established a permitting system for development within the 100-year floodplains of local streams. The regulations are based on a 1978 study by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) that delineated the 100-year floodplains. The regulations provide guidance for development in flood-prone areas by restricting uses that are dangerous to public health, safety and property. The purposes are to: (1) minimize the need for rescue or relief efforts; (2) maximize the natural capacity of streams to flood and their floodplains to absorb the water; and (3) to ensure that those people who occupy the 100-year floodplains assume fiscal responsibility for their actions.

Periodically FEMA updates its study areas and Lincoln County anticipates updating its regulations to reflect any new technical and policy information within the next five years. When this takes place, Lincoln County will ensure that the regulations are clear, concise, legally sound, technically advanced, protect water quality and wildlife habitat.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships are efforts that government agencies and private entities can make to achieve their individual and mutual goals by working together.

These partnerships typically require public and private investment capital and resources. The partnerships result in a project or facility that enhances the overall common good, while meeting the needs of individuals or companies.

Examples of public-private partnerships include expanding public sewer, water and road infrastructure in an area to achieve certain goals like facilitating affordable housing, business attraction or expansion, or infill development. Lincoln County may or may not enter into public – private partnerships, yet reserves the right to do so for the public good if mutually beneficial project opportunities present themselves.

Special Plans

Special plans may be prepared for activities that are either beyond the required content of the growth policy, or that warrant specific attention. These plans should be incorporated into the growth policy and should generate additional specific goals and objectives. For example, in order to implement downtown redevelopment or historic district preservation programs, urban or neighborhood renewal plans need to be formulated that focus in detail on a specific

geographic area, and on policies and recommendations dealing with redevelopment or historic preservation. Section 76-1-601(3)(a) and (b), MCA authorizes local governments to include one or more neighborhood plans in the growth policy.

Examples of special plans are: housing plans, economic development plans, parks and recreation plans, agricultural plans, open space plans, transportation plans, neighborhood plans, pedestrian trail plans, urban renewal plan, and plans to address specific impacts, such as from coal or hard rock mining or energy development. Lincoln County will consider special plans under the growth policy for the public good.

Highway Corridor Planning

Highway Corridor planning is critical to linking Lincoln County communities and meeting the transportation and development needs for future growth. Lincoln County will continue to work with the Montana Department of Transportation and all appropriate parties to complete needed improvements. The evolution of the highway corridors near and in communities will likely influence the future character of Lincoln County more than the development of other areas.

Land Exchanges

Land exchanges can be an effective tool to achieve the management goals of private corporations and county, state and federal agencies. Lincoln County is unique in that municipal areas have corporate lands and agency ownership nearby. In many instances, agency lands are relatively flat and may have a highest and best use as subdivisions. Subdivisions near municipalities could utilize, add to or improve on needed infrastructure and be more cost effective than subdivisions scattered in more remote areas of Lincoln County. Law enforcement and fire protection for these subdivisions would draw from the facilities already established thereby benefiting public safety at a reasonable cost.

Lincoln County will encourage land exchanges that will potentially evolve into subdivisions near municipal areas. Subdivisions adjacent to municipalities will increase the tax base, lower housing costs, provide cost effective infrastructure and improve the economic base of communities.

II. Subdivision Review & Public Hearing Process

The Montana Subdivision and Platting Act (76-3-101 through 76-3-625, Montana Code Annotated) requires that a subdivision proposal be evaluated for compliance with six primary review criteria, in addition to state and local law. The primary review criteria are a subdivision's anticipated:

- Effect on agriculture
- Effect on agricultural water user facilities
- Effect on the natural environment
- Effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat
- Effect on local services, and
- Effect on public health and safety

The purpose of this section of the Lincoln County Growth Policy is to define the primary review criteria in order to provide guidance to developers, the public and public officials so that the subdivision process is more predictable and efficient. No two subdivision proposals are the same and the process requires a degree of flexibility in order for decision makers to exercise sound judgment. While most of the impacts of subdivisions may be mitigated, in some instances the probable impacts of a subdivision may be deemed too great for the project to be approved. As always, the decision makers will attempt to balance the rights of the developer with the good of the community when reviewing subdivision proposals.

The following paragraphs list the primary review criteria and define how staff, the Lincoln County Planning Board and the Board of County Commissioners will use them to evaluate subdivision proposals. Also, included are potential mitigation measures that may be attached to subdivision proposals as conditions of preliminary approval. Since 1974, every county, city, and town has been required by state law to “adopt and provide for the enforcement and administration of subdivision regulations.”

Criteria Definition

This section clarifies how Lincoln County defines these review criteria:

Agriculture: All aspects of farming or ranching including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including, forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

Agricultural Water User Facilities: Those facilities which provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, head gates, pipes, and other water conveying facilities.

Local Services: Local services are defined as any and all services that local governments, public or private utilities are authorized to provide for the benefit of their citizens.

Natural Environment: The natural environment is defined as the physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, sound, light and objects of historic and aesthetic significance.

Wildlife: Those animals that are not domesticated or tamed.

Wildlife Habitat: The place or area where wildlife naturally lives or travels through.

Public Health and Safety: The prevailing healthful, sanitary condition of well being for the community at large. Conditions that relate to public health and safety include but are not limited to: disease control and prevention; emergency services; environmental health; flooding, fire or wildfire hazards, rock falls or landslides, unstable soils, steep slopes, and other natural hazards; high voltage lines or high pressure gas lines; and air or vehicular traffic safety.

Evaluation / Effect

Subdivisions will be evaluated for their material effect on these six criteria. The evaluation of the effect of the proposed subdivision on these six criteria determines if there are significant unmitigated adverse impacts. Unmitigated adverse impacts are potential grounds for denial of a proposed subdivision. Below are examples of items considered in evaluating the impact of a proposed subdivision on the six criteria. These examples do not reflect all potential items, but they do include a preponderance of the items under consideration. Depending on the proposed subdivision, some of these items included may not apply. In addition, some proposals may require evaluation of other topics not included in these examples to weigh the subdivision's effect on these criteria. It is the sub-divider's responsibility to document proposed mitigation of any adverse impacts on these six criteria.

Effect on Agriculture

- Number of acres that would be removed from the production of crops or livestock.
- Acres of prime farmland (as defined by the USDA) that would be removed
- Effect on use of remainder and adjoining properties as farm or ranch land
- Potential conflicts between the proposed subdivision and adjacent agricultural operations including:
- Interference with movement of livestock or farm machinery
- Maintenance of fences
- Weed proliferation
- Vandalism or theft
- Harassment of livestock by pets or humans

Effect on Agricultural Water User Facilities

- Location and proximity to agricultural water user facilities
- Potential conflicts between facility users and subdivision residents including:
- Seeps, flooding, washouts
- Obstructions and interference
- Unintended uses (recreation or landscaping)
- Water rights
- Vehicular access to facility

Effect on Local Services

- Increased demand on services and need to expand services
- Ability to provide services to subdivision
- Response times
- Conditions of roads, bridges, and railroad crossings
- Physical Barriers
- Provision of adequate local services and public facilities simultaneous with or prior to onset of impact
- Any special or rural improvement districts that would obligate local government involvement fiscally or administratively

Effect on Natural Environment

- Noxious weeds
- Runoff reaching surface waters (e.g.: streams, rivers or riparian areas).
- Impacts on ground water supply, quantity, and quality
- Impacts on air quality
- Impacts on scenic resources
- Impacts on historic, pre-historic, and cultural resources
- Wetlands
- Cumulative impacts of multiple subdivisions on natural environment

Effect on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

- Loss of significant, important and critical habitat, as defined
- Impacts on significant, important and critical habitat including potential effects of roads and traffic; closure of existing operations and/or potential to provide new access to public lands; and effects of humans and pets on wildlife

Effect on Public Health and Safety

- Creation of potential man-made hazards (e.g.: unsafe road intersection, development in Wildland residential interface fire areas)
- Natural hazards (e.g.: wildfire, flooding, steep slopes)
- Existing potential man-made hazards (e.g.: high pressure gas lines, lack of fire protection, cumulative impacts)
- Traffic safety
- Emergency vehicle access
- Emergency medical response time
- Cumulative impacts on groundwater from individual sewage disposal systems and/or individual wells
- Any other item that endangers public health and safety

Public Hearing Procedures on Major Subdivision Proposals

A fundamental component of the subdivision review process is the opportunity for members of the public and interested groups to offer comments on the proposal. The opportunity to make comments is provided by the public hearing process. The Planning Board will also accept written comment received outside of the public hearing, but may set deadlines for the receipt of such comment. Under state law, the requirement to hold a public hearing does not apply to the first minor subdivision, containing 5 or fewer lots, from a tract of record.

The following section describes how public hearings will be conducted for the review of subdivision proposals:

- When required under the MSPA and/or the Lincoln County Subdivision Regulations, subdivision proposals shall be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation in

Lincoln County not less than 15 or more than 30 days prior to the date of the public hearing.

- Minutes shall be taken at all public hearings and made available to the public.
- At the public hearing, the Chairman of the Planning Board shall open the hearing, introduce the proposal and ask for a staff report to be presented. A staff member shall review the proposal, evaluate it against state and local law and the public review criteria described above (when applicable), and make a recommendation to the Planning Board. Members of the Planning Board may then ask questions of staff.
- The Chairman will then ask the developer or his/her designated agent(s) to respond to the staff presentation and to describe pertinent features of the proposal. The Board may ask questions of the developer at this time.
- The Chairman will then ask for public comment on the proposal in a manner and of a duration to be determined by the Chairman and members of the Planning Board. All members of the public choosing to speak shall identify themselves prior to commenting on the proposal and shall direct comments to the Board and not members of the audience.
- After public comment has been received, the Chairman may then close the floor to public comment. However, during the Board's deliberation, any Board member may ask further questions of the staff, developer and the public.
- After deliberation, a member of the Board may then move to recommend approval, conditional approval, or denial of a proposal. The Board may also ask the developer for an extension of the preliminary review period if unanswered questions persist. After additional discussion, all Board members may vote on the motion or abstain from voting.
- The Planning Board will then forward its recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners for a final decision prior to the mandatory review deadline.

III. Growth Policy Review and Revision

This Growth Policy is intended to be a general guide for the growth and development of Lincoln County from 2009 through 2019. It provides a community vision and sets out a potential implementation schedule listing actions the Lincoln County Board of County Commissioners, in cooperation with planning staff and other interested parties, can take to achieve that vision. It is based on recent conditions and trends and assumes that similar trends will continue. This Growth Policy cannot and does not describe every single issue and task Lincoln County will engage in to guide growth in the coming years because some of the issues yet to confront us are currently unknown and some priorities are sure to change.

As required by state law (76-1-601, Montana Code Annotated), the Lincoln County Growth Policy needs to be reviewed a minimum of every 5 years to determine if any revisions to the document are necessary. The Lincoln County Planning Board, Board of County Commissioners, planning staff, and the public will review the document to determine its relevance and accuracy and address the document's deficiencies and also make any revisions as required by state law. At the minimum, the parties will update the implementation plan and schedule of tasks to reflect those that have been achieved and the new issues to be addressed.

Schedule for Review

Annually: The Planning Board will submit an annual report of past year's accomplishments and the next year's annual work plan to the County Commission. The report will also identify any revisions proposed for the Growth Policy.

Conditions that might trigger changes and revisions to the Growth Policy include:

- Issues that come up during implementation phase that may not have been anticipated during the drafting of the plan.
- New development proposals not provided for in the plan.
- Modifications needed to comply with changes in state legislation, judicial decisions or state programs.
- Priorities that need to be reassessed to take advantage of new opportunities such as grants, partnerships, and State and Federal programs.
- Planning Board evaluation of implementation measures and progress, and determination that modifications would enhance the effectiveness of the Growth Policy.
- Changes affecting information assumptions, needs or legal framework
- Additional public input suggest the need for changes
- New data and/or changed circumstances and issues

In the meantime, if local conditions are such that a component of this growth policy is inaccurate or damaging, a court finds that a section is illegal, or other conditions arise that make this document either non-functional or otherwise inspire revision, the Lincoln County Planning Board and Board of County Commissioners, in coordination with interested parties and the public, will revise this document in accordance with state law.

In the event that a component of this document is found to be invalid, the remainder is deemed to be in full effect.

IV. Implementation Measures-Action Plan

ACTION PLAN

The action plan is a matrix that lists each objective, and identifies potential implementation measures, lead resources and partners, staffing, cost considerations, and proposed timeframes for each task. Following is a description of those parameters.

1. LEAD RESOURCES/PARTNERS

This column includes existing or potential key participants in implementing an objective. Other participants may also be identified in the future, the list is not meant to be exclusive.

2. STAFFING

Refers to staffing needs for county government, and includes staffing in all departments, not just Planning Department.

In-house - Will be completed with existing staff.

Contract - Contract with outside firm to complete work.

Partner - Partner with other state/federal agency, non-profit, or other organization to complete work

Volunteer - Could be implemented at least in part with volunteer work from community

3. TIME FRAME/PRIORITY

Near Term - Immediate need. To be addressed within one year.

Mid Term - Defined need. May phase in implementation within 1 to 2 years.

Long Term - Requires program development that necessitates a longer timeframe 3+ years

Ongoing - Ongoing activity.

As Needed - Monitor and take action when need arises

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

Policy Statement: *Lincoln County will strive to guide population growth and development in a matter that protects the area's character and resources, minimizes public expenditures, and attracts and retains business.*

POPULATION & ECONOMY

GOAL 1: Facilitate and encourage all interested parties to be involved and have input in decisions relating to future growth and development

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Review & update policies that make the public aware of development proposals, encourage & consider citizen input.	Review & update policies. Subdivision Regulation development, Public education and citizen participation.	Planning Dept., County Information Technology (IT) Staff and Montana Department of Commerce.	In-House, State	Ongoing	Update to improve regulations, proposal awareness and citizen involvement.
Ensure that the County will take appropriate steps/time to inform the public, land managers & other stakeholders of the process when updating existing or creating new development regulations.	Citizen participation, Public Education, Subdivision Regulation development, Intergovernmental coordination.	Planning Dept., County Information Technology (IT) Staff and Agencies	In-House	Ongoing	Informed & Involved Public, Land Managers & Stakeholders
Monitor EPA "Libby Asbestos" Cleanup Project.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Public Education & Citizen Participation.	County Commissioners, Environmental Health, Agencies	In-House, State	Ongoing	Record of Decision by EPA finalized that Libby & Lincoln County receive a Clean Bill of Health.
Monitor the implementation of the Montanore Hard Rock Mining Impact Plan.*	Intergovernmental Coordination, Public Education, Citizen Participation, Public/Private Partnerships, Capital Improvements Planning.	County Commissioners, Environmental Health, Planning Dept. & Agencies	In-House & State	Ongoing	Successful implementation of the mining impact plan
Monitor & provide input to the development & implementation of the Kootenai/Panhandle National Forest Plan	Intergovernmental Coordination, Public Education & Citizen Participation	County Commissioners, Planning Board & Agencies	In-House, Partners	Ongoing	Successful completion & implementation of a forest plan consistent with forest health & multiple use principles will reduce catastrophic fire potential & improve economic conditions.

** Note: The Hard Rock Mining Act is designated to assist local governments in handling financial impacts caused by large-scale mineral development projects. In the plan, the developer may commit to provide assistance that will prevent increased costs or may commit to pay increased costs through grants, property tax prepayments or education impact bonds.*

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

POPULATION & ECONOMY *(continued...)*

GOAL 2: Facilitate the construction of new infrastructure and the expansion of existing infrastructure in a cost effective manner so that facilities are available to support population growth and economic development.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Develop a Capital Improvement Plan for Lincoln County	Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvements Planning, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipalities	Contract	Mid Term	Timely maintenance & development of public infrastructure.
Work with incorporated & unincorporated communities (public & private) to establish future growth areas & to increase public sewer & water capacity so that it's available & affordable when businesses seek to relocate and/or expand.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Land Use Inventory & Analysis and Capital Improvements Planning	Planning Board, County Commissioners & Planning Dept.	In-House & Contract	Long term	Improved coordination of planning and infrastructure development.
Increase broadband capacity in South Lincoln County to enhance local business opportunities.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Public/Private Partnerships	County Commissioners, South Lincoln County Municipalities & LDO's	In-House	Near Term	Increased business opportunities & reduced cost of doing business.
Increase the number of workforce/affordable housing units throughout the County.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Public/Private Partnerships, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipalities	In-House	Near Term	Increased housing & business opportunities.
Increase cellular phone coverage throughout the County	Intergovernmental Coordination & Citizen Participation	County Commissioners, County IT, Municipalities & LDO's	In-House	Long Term	Increased communication & business opportunities
Seek competition among private sector providers who will offer Wi-Fi or Wi-Max wireless connectivity to rural areas	Intergovernmental Coordination & Citizen Participation	County Commissioners, County IT & Municipalities	In-House	Long Term	Increased communication & business opportunities

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

POPULATION & ECONOMY *(continued...)*

GOAL 3: Work with all interested parties, government agencies and citizens to pursue economic development opportunities

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Support local efforts to improve wage levels and expand small business opportunities	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, LDO's	In-House	Long Term	Quality jobs with benefits
Improve the infrastructure located at the Kootenai & Tobacco Valley Business Park's	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation, Public Education & Capital Improvement Planning	County Commissioners, Municipalities, Planning Dept., Agencies, Airport Boards & LDO's	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Improved infrastructure to attract new businesses
Support local tourism efforts to promote Montana's great northwest as a destination convention & resort area.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, Municipalities, Planning Dept., Tourism Board, Chambers of Commerce & LDO's	In-House & Partners	Long Term	Increase tourism & economic benefits to Lincoln County

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

POPULATION & ECONOMY *(continued...)*

GOAL 4: Support local efforts by Job Service, Lincoln County Public Schools, TVCDC, Eureka Rural Development Partners & Flathead Valley Community College to work towards the following community wide GOALS.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
<p>Embrace education as a life-long process as a value to life-long learning:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase the local marketing & knowledge of "Education has Value" 2. Create/focus on existing opportunities to expand education offerings with local High School & businesses 3. Upgrade technological capabilities for work training 4. Increase funding to improve technology & expansion 5. Increase employment / professional opportunities through occupational training 6. Expand VisionNet for on-line college courses throughout the County 7. Support efforts of other organizations, such as sunburst/Families in Partnership to expand beyond college degree, such as GED Prep, Home economics, child care, etc... 	<p>Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education</p>	<p>Job Service, LDO's, FVCC & Public Schools</p>	<p>In-House & Partners</p>	<p>Long Term</p>	<p>Better understanding of the value and need for greater education by citizens.</p>

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

Policy Statement: Lincoln County will strive to work with the private and public sectors to facilitate the development of all types of housing while maintaining the character of Lincoln County.

HOUSING					
GOAL 1: Increase affordable housing in Lincoln County to include, but not limited to, Workforce, Senior and Special housing needs.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Develop standards and potential incentives for the development of affordable housing	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation, Public Education & Subdivision Review	Lincoln Planning Dept. & Tobacco Valley CDC	In-House, Partners & Contract	Mid-Term	Increase the awareness of affordable housing needs and opportunities
If feasible, establish a new housing organization to address housing needs in Lincoln County with emphasis on affordable & special need housing.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Lincoln Planning Dept. & Tobacco Valley CDC	In-House, Partners & Contract	Mid-Term	Formation of a Housing Organization dedicated to establishing affordable housing opportunities
Support current affordable housing efforts underway in the Tobacco Valley, to include the formation of a Community Land Trust.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Tobacco Valley CDC	In-House, Partners & Volunteers	Mid-Term	The Successful formation of a Community Land Trust
GOAL 2: Seek to increase the supply of available / developable lands near the lower valleys & city centers.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Investigate opportunities to facilitate land exchanges of public lands for private lands near residential areas.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Public / Private Partnerships, Land Exchanges	Planning Board, County Commissioners, Agencies, Planning Dept. & Municipalities	In-House & Partners	Near Term	Increase land acreage near municipalities for potential development.
Determine if cities or Lincoln County would allow or designate surplus lands to be set aside & made available for affordable housing.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Public / Private Partnerships, Land Exchanges	Planning Board, County Commissioners, Agencies, Planning Dept. & Municipalities	In-House & Partners	Mid Term	Increase land acreage near municipalities for potential development.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

HOUSING *(continued...)*

GOAL 3: Maintain existing development patterns while protecting property values & natural resources.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Craft development standards that continue residential & commercial patterns such as density & style to maintain the character of Lincoln County's rural areas & to protect fish and wildlife habitat & water resources.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Density Map, Citizen Participation, Public Education & Design Guidelines	Planning Dept., Planning Board & Agencies	In-House, MDOC & Partners	Long term	Maintain rural character and protect fish & wildlife resources

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

Policy Statement: Lincoln County will strive to facilitate future growth & development, while working to maintain the County's rural character, high quality of life & sense of community. Public concerns expressed to the planning board indicated a need to balance the property rights of individuals & the well being of the community. Lincoln County will work to ensure public participation & education, while achieving objectives associated with all goals.

LAND USE					
GOAL 1: Complete a Land Use Inventory & Analysis of the existing land uses with the County to identify the constraints & opportunities facing future development.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Conduct an inventory of the existing land uses and conditions within the County using text & maps	Gather existing GIS data and if necessary contract with a private firm for the creation of additional GIS data. Create base maps for individual layers i.e. topography, soils, transportation networks, fire hazard etc. Public participation will be essential during the process to focus limited resources on those areas of most concern to the County's residents.	Planning Dept., Planning Board, County GIS Department, Natural Resources Information System (State Library), Montana Department of Commerce and Federal Agencies	In-House, partners, contract	Near Term	Provide the County residents with the baseline information regarding the physical characteristics (topography, soils etc) and status of land use in the County.
Analyze the information gathered during the inventory to identify constraints & opportunities for future development (i.e. document natural hazards, environmental constraints, transportation networks, natural amenities, etc...)	Combine individual map layers in order to create maps that would help identify those areas most suitable for development and those areas that might have constraints. Public participation will be essential during the process to focus limited resources on those areas of most concern to the County's residents.	Planning Department, Planning Board, County GIS Department, Natural Resources Information System (State Library), Montana Department of Commerce and Federal Agencies	In-House, Partners, Contract	Near Term	Develop a Constraint/Opportunity Map to aid the County residents in making informed decisions about land use.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 1 (cont...): Complete a Land Use Inventory & Analysis of the existing land uses with the County to identify the constraints & opportunities facing future development.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Gather & consolidate information through the inventory and analysis process to serve as an educational tool and as a guide for choosing the appropriate methods for implementing the Growth Policy.	The information will be provided to County residents via public meetings and workshops, hard copy documents and maps and in electronic form on the County's website.	Interagency Committee, Agencies, Planning Dept., Planning Board & GIS Dept.	In-House, Partners, Contract	Near Term	County residents will better understand the physical constraints and opportunities for residential, commercial and industrial development in the County.

GOAL 2: Provide clear & consistent regulatory guidelines to property owners & private developers throughout any regulatory review process in order to reduce delays and minimize costs.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Ensure that existing development regulations and standards are clear, inclusive and legally sound.	Based upon the requirements of statute and public input, review and update the County Floodplain, Lakeshore and Subdivision Regulations.	Planning Board, Planning Department, MDOC, Environmental Health & County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Long Term	Reduce delays and costs incurred during the regulatory review process.
Ensure that the process for reviewing divisions of land exempt from the Subdivision and Platting Act is clearly defined and provide detailed guidance about when exemptions can be used.	Gather public input about how the process can be improved under the existing statutory requirements and amend the County Subdivision Regulations accordingly.	Planning Board, Planning Department, Environmental Health, County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Reduce delays and costs incurred during the regulatory review process.
Define under what circumstances an application for subdivision will be deemed complete so that the statutory review period may begin.	Based upon statute and public input, a comprehensive list of the materials necessary to have a "complete" subdivision application available and provided to applicants at pre-applications meetings.	Planning Department, Planning Board, County Commissioners.	In-House	Ongoing	The development community and the general public will understand exactly what materials and documents need to be submitted in order for a subdivision application to be review under statute.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 2 (cont...): Provide clear & consistent regulatory guidelines to property owners & private developers throughout any regulatory review process in order to reduce delays and minimize costs.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Provide streamlined regulatory review processes in order to increase the efficiency of approving and/or permitting development proposals.	Educate the general public, the development community and County agencies about the requirements of state statute and the County's land use regulations.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Increase efficiency of approving and/or permitting development proposals.

GOAL 3: Implementation of the Growth Policy may be achieved at several levels & may include various methods of implementation; such as regulations & incentives.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Implement the Growth Policy at the following levels: *Countywide *Sub-County Community Districts *Neighborhood Plans *(see land use chapter for definitions)	Methods used to implement the Growth Policy could include regulations & incentives, such as; subdivision & zoning regulations, impact fees and development of capital improvement plans that can aid in the expansion of infrastructure such as roads, water supplies & wastewater treatment systems.	Planning Board, Planning Dept., County Commissioners, Municipalities, Environmental Health & Agencies	In-House & Partners	Long Term	Provide the residents of the County with choices in determining how they wish to implement the Growth Policy.
Assist interested community districts & neighborhoods in developing land use plans and methods of implementing those plans that meet the desires of the residents.	Capital Improvements Planning, Subdivision Regulations, Zoning or Development Permit Regulations	Planning Dept. Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Maintenance of community or neighborhood character and the creation of coordinated, cost-effective developments

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 3 (cont...): Implementation of the Growth Policy may be achieved at several levels & may include various methods of implementation; such as regulations & incentives.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Consider zoning as a regulatory method when residents of a community district or neighborhood express interest in zoning and bring forth a plan.	To be determined by the level of interest expressed by residents in community districts or neighborhoods. The development and adoption of any zoning regulations would follow the requirements of statute.	Planning Board, Planning Dept., County Commissioners & Agencies	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Zoning will only be implemented when desired by the public

GOAL 4: Encourage higher density residential & commercial development to locate near existing population centers and public services.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Identify areas adjacent to municipalities where essential public services could be provided more efficiently to new residential & commercial development.	Based upon public input & information such as that provided by the Land Use Inventory & Analysis, cooperate with the County's municipalities to pursue capital improvements planning adjacent to municipal boundaries.	Planning Department, Planning Board, County Commissioners, Municipalities, GIS Department	In-House, Contract & Partners	Near Term	Coordinated, cost effective extensions of capital improvements beyond municipal boundaries that will encourage additional development near public services.
Maintain and expand existing infrastructure in unincorporated areas in order to encourage additional development.	Based upon public input & the information such as that provided by the Land Use Inventory & Analysis, work with water & sewer districts to pursue capital improvements planning.	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House	Ongoing	Cost effective extension of community Infrastructure in unincorporated areas of the County.
Identify those areas in the County that might be suitable for higher density development; particularly those adjacent to or near existing population centers.	Use the County Land Use Inventory & Analysis to identify those population centers that may be most suitable for public investments in infrastructure.	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Near Term	Cost effective provision of public services and improved coordination of planning & infrastructure development.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 5: Provide flexibility within development regulations

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Acknowledge & protect the rights of private property owners in preparing land use regulations.	Educate the public about the statutory & practical reasons for the regulation of certain land uses to ensure that they fully understand and can participate in any regulatory review process. Ensure that the planning staff, Planning Board & County Commissioners fully understands their legal duties & obligations in balancing private property rights & administering the County's regulations.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Protection of private property rights throughout the Growth Policy Implementation.
Encourage development in the rural areas of the County identified as having potential for higher densities of residential and commercial development.	Based upon public input & information such as that provided by the Land Use Inventory and Analysis, provide incentives for development.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Cost effective provision of public services i.e. fire protection, sheriff, schools etc.
Use clearly defined & innovative planning and design techniques to conserve the County's rural character, open lands and natural environment, while meeting the requirements of statute and the desires of County residents.	Educate the public, the planning staff, the Planning Board and County Commissioners about innovative options available to implement regulations in the County i.e. subdivision regulations etc.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Development of residential & commercial properties that are consistent with the rural character, open land and natural resources.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 5 (continued...): Provide flexibility within development regulations.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Protect home based business & occupations where they would be compatible with existing residential & commercial developments.	All regulations developed and adopted by the County include language that permits the use of home occupations that are compatible with existing or proposed uses.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Increase compatibility of uses in residential and commercial developments and reduce potential conflicts amongst uses.
Support efforts to strengthen Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) regulations for new subdivisions.	County regulations such as the Subdivision Regulations should reflect the best practices developed by the State of Montana for new development in the WUI.	Planning Board, Planning Dept., LDO's & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Near Term	Reduce the potential for Wildland fires, economic loss and increase public expenditures for fire suppression and protection of residential and commercial structures.
Ensure that vegetation management for new subdivisions in the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) are completed prior to filing the final plat and those provisions for future maintenance of vegetation is addressed.	County Subdivision Regulations shall include language requiring that vegetation management shall be completed prior to filing a final plat. The regulations shall also address the maintenance of the vegetation.	Planning Board, Planning Dept., LDO's & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Near Term	Vegetation management for subdivisions in the WUI is completed. The long term of vegetation maintenance plans are approved and monitored as needed thereby reducing the future public expenditures on fire suppression.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 5 (continued...): Provide flexibility within development regulations.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Ensure new development pays for its proportional share of maintaining infrastructure & local services.	The County will determine if impact fees for new subdivisions is a mechanism desired by residents to provide funds to assist in maintenance of public infrastructure and services; i.e. road & fire. If the public shows interest, the County will undertake an initial study to determine the feasibility of implementing a fee. Further action on implementation of impact fees will be based on the findings of the initial study.	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Complete study to determine if impact fees are a feasible option for the County. Present results of initial study to the public to determine whether further action should be taken.
Identify design standards and regulations that could mitigate the potential impacts of incompatible uses upon one another.	Land Use Inventory & Analysis, Subdivision Review, Design Guidelines, Zoning, Development Permit Regulations, Citizen Participation & Public Education.	Planning Board, Planning Dept., Environmental Health & County Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Reduce potential conflicts between different land uses.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LAND USE *(continued...)*

GOAL 6: Review the Growth Policy, at least, every five (5) years from the date it is adopted.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Establish a detailed & scheduled process for reviewing and revising the document.	Establish and adopt a schedule where planning staff updates the Planning Board and County Commissioners about progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of the Growth Policy. Based upon this update, the Planning Board will determine if review and revision of the document should take place earlier than the five year interval established by statute.	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House	Ongoing	Growth Policy progress will be evaluated & revised as needed for continued success.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL 1: Lincoln County will manage, protect, enhance and conserve water resources through a comprehensive watershed management program.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Achieve fish & wildlife habitat protection & restoration by continuing to coordinate with state, federal & local agencies.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Planning Dept. & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Water resources will be protected, enhanced & conserved throughout the development process.

GOAL 2: Protect & Enhance the quality & quantity of surface and ground water resources before, during and after development.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Support & Coordinate with Lincoln Conservation District in their efforts to preserve the quality of surface & ground water resources.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Lincoln Conservation District, Planning Dept., Environmental Health & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Water resources will be protected, enhanced & conserved throughout the development process.
Seek more participation from public agencies in the subdivision review & regulation development process.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Planning Studies & Public Education	Lincoln Conservation District, Planning Dept., Environmental Health & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Regulations are developed with more participation and input from public agencies.
Utilize Best Management Practices (BMP's) as developed by the Lincoln Conservation District.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Lincoln Conservation District, Planning Dept. & Environmental Health	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	BMP's utilized throughout the development process.
Support the development & implementation of wellhead production programs for all public supply wells & require the siting & construction of individual wells in a manner to protect existing water users & the ground water supply.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Planning Dept. & Environmental Health	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Water supplies protected during the development process.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

NATURAL RESOURCES (continued...)

GOAL 2 (cont...): Protect & Enhance the quality & quantity of surface and ground water resources before, during and after development.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Encourage community water systems in new, major subdivisions.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Planning Dept. & Environmental Health	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Community water systems installed to meet the water supply needs & reduce potential environmental impacts.

GOAL 3: Allow development along shorelines which is compatible with the protection of natural processes, conditions and functions of the shoreline environment & meets all applicable local, state and federal laws.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Develop a plan to review lakeshore development on all lakes over 20 acres.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Planning Dept. & Agencies	In-House & Partners	Near Term	A plan to address lakeshore development in all lakes over 20 acres.

GOAL 4: Encourage land use and development activities that minimize impacts to Air Quality.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Monitor air quality pursuant to the EPA Clean Air Act Non-Attainment Status for Lincoln County.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Environmental Health, Planning Dept. & Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	New development to be consistent with the EPA Clean Air Act Non-Attainment Status for the Great Libby Area.
Maintain air quality standards in the subdivision review process.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Environmental Health, Planning Dept. & Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Air Quality standards to be maintained during the subdivision review process.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

NATURAL RESOURCES (continued...)

GOAL 5: Protect Lincoln County's natural heritage, including, native vegetation and unique land sites.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Collaborate with state programs & local conservation groups to identify and protect plants, plant communities, habitats and landforms which reflect the County's natural heritage.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Planning Studies, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Planning Dept., Conservation Groups & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Natural heritage, native vegetation and unique land sites will be protected during the development process.
Protect unique geological sites, conditions & values.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review & Public Education	Planning Dept., Conservation Groups & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Unique geological sites, conditions & values are protected during the development process.

GOAL 6: Encourage neighborhood plans to address future protection of scenic beauty and quality of life in Lincoln County with respect to view-sheds, noise, odor & outdoor lighting.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Provide technical input to neighborhood plans to address these issues.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Zoning, Subdivision Review & Public Education.	Planning Dept., Planning Board, Commissioners	In-House	Long Term	Protection of neighborhoods

GOAL 7: Encourage the protection & enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat in Lincoln County.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Participate in multi-agency processes with community representatives in land use decisions.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Planning Studies, Citizen Participation & Public Education.	Planning Dept., Conservation Groups & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Land use decisions will reflect multi-agency contributions.
Recognize habitat priorities with Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) listings in land use decisions.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Planning Studies, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Planning Dept., Conservation Groups & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	FESA and habitats will be protected during the development process.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

NATURAL RESOURCES (continued...)

GOAL 7 (cont...): Encourage the protection & enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat in Lincoln County.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Coordinate habitat restoration efforts with regional organizations.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Planning Studies, Lakeshore Construction Permit Regulations, Floodplain Permit Regulations, Subdivision Review, Citizen Participation & Public Education.	Planning Dept., Conservation Groups & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Habitat restoration efforts will be coordinated with regional organizations during the development process.
Acquire public access when former quasi-public land access to public areas is compromised by private development.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Planning Dept., Planning Board, County Commissioners & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Near Term	Public access will be acquired prior to approval of private land development when formerly quasi-public access to public land is compromised.

GOAL 8: Protect and Enhance wetlands in all their functions according to local, state and federal regulations.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Identify wetland areas in subdivision developments and consider "Dedicated Open Space" as a part of an overall wetlands preservation plan.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Subdivision Review, Citizen Participation & Public Education	Planning Dept., Planning Board & State, Federal & Local Agencies	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Consideration of wetland areas as "Dedicated Open Space" being done as a part of an overall wetlands preservation plan.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

Policy Statement: Lincoln County will strive to support & promote the provision of adequate infrastructure to existing and future development in a manner that is fiscally efficient, far-sighted and environmentally sound.

PUBLIC FACILITIES					
GOAL 1: Allow for the development & maintenance of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation network.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Work with Montana Department of Transportation (MDOT) & all appropriate parties to complete needed improvements, within the next 5-10 years, to the remaining 6 miles of Hwy 2 (Swamp Creek); rebuilding of Farm to Market Rd.; and improvements to city streets in Libby & Troy. Complete needs assessments/engineering studies, as needed, to seek funding from appropriate sources.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvements Planning, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, County Road Depts., Municipalities & MDOT	In-House & Contracts	Long Term	Complete much needed improvements.
Collaborate efforts to rehabilitate or reconstruct Pipe Creek Road to better serve all users.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Capital Improvements Planning, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, County Road Depts., Municipalities, USFS & MDOT	In-House & Contracts	Ongoing	Complete much needed improvements.
Amend the County Subdivision Regulations to require developers to take the lead in new road & bridge construction to meet necessary traffic & safety standards.	Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House	Near Term	Amend Subdivision Regulations

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

PUBLIC FACILITIES *(continued...)*

GOAL 1 (continued...): Allow for the development & maintenance of a safe, efficient and environmentally sound transportation network.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Retain staff, equipment and resources to maintain & improve existing roads.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Capital Improvements Planning	County Commissioners & County Road Depts.	In-House	Near Term	Secure funding or develop a plan to maintain & improve existing roads, while retaining staff.
Capital Improvement Plan developed by the County should include information about transportation needs & priorities based upon growth projections.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Capital Improvements Planning	County Commissioners & Planning Dept.	Contract	Near Term	Develop a plan to maintain & improve existing roads based on projected growth.
Identify, prioritize & develop recreational transportation projects that link residential & commercial development & communities.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Recreation Planning & Special Plans	County Commissioners, Planning Dept., Planning Board, Agencies & Municipalities	In-House, Contract & Partners	Mid Term	Develop a plan to identify & prioritize recreational transportation projects that link residential & commercial development & communities.
Determine if the County Subdivision Regulations should be amended to require developers of major subdivisions to connect streets & provide easements for future road connections where appropriate.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House	Ongoing	Decision will be reached and implemented where necessary.
Determine if Subdivision Regulations should be amended to require developers of major subdivisions to provide a secondary ingress/egress to protect public health & safety in case of an emergency.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House	Ongoing	Decision will be reached and implemented where necessary.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

PUBLIC FACILITIES *(continued...)*

GOAL 2: Support public facility & service improvement efforts in Lincoln County

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Support the efforts of all communities to improve public facilities & infrastructure in Lincoln County.	Intergovernmental Coordination & Capital Improvements Planning	Planning Dept., Planning Board, County Commissioners & Municipalities	In-House, Partners & Contract	Near Term	Develop a plan to support public facilities & service improvements based on projected growth.

GOAL 3: All commercial, industrial and residential developments will have adequate sewer/septic, water supply and storm water management facilities.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Require developers to meet state & local sewage disposal & water supply standards for new developments.	Subdivision & DEQ Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board, Environmental Health, DEQ & County Commissioners	In-House, Partners & Contract	Ongoing	Continued enforcement of state & local standards.
Consider an incentive program to motivate owners of aging & potentially failing septic systems to seek connection to new public facilities.	Subdivision Review, Public/Private Partnerships, Impact Fees (reduced)	Planning Dept., Planning Board, Environmental Health & County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Consider a motivational incentive program.

GOAL 4: Require developers to pay for impacts of their projects on public infrastructure and services.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Determine if impact fees for new development is a mechanism desired by residents to provide funds to assist in maintenance of and/or development of public services; i.e. road & fire. If the public shows interest, the County will undertake a study to determine the feasibility of implementing a fee. Further action on implementing impact fees will be based on the findings of the study.	Citizen Participation, Public Education & Impact Fees	Planning Board, Planning Dept. & County Commissioners	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Complete study to determine impacts fees; if requested by the community.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

Policy Statement: Lincoln County will strive to work with other governments and public & private agencies to anticipate, identify and respond to the public's safety and service needs.

LOCAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES

GOAL 1: Work cooperatively with public and private service providers for the common good.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Require development proposals that impact public/private agency resources to include comments from agencies prior to approval.	Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Continue to seek & consider public & private agency comments on development proposals prior to approval.
Require developers to mitigate the impacts of development so that service providers may maintain a high level of service.	Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board & County Commissioners	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Require mitigation to maintain a high level of public service.

GOAL 2: Ensure that developers address & mitigate the concerns of emergency response agencies (police, ambulance & fire safety) and school districts to protect residents and property in all areas of the County.

OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Require verification that emergency response agencies & school districts can effectively serve all new subdivisions.	Subdivision Review	Planning Dept., Planning Board, County Commissioners, Agencies, Schools & Service Organizations	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Continue to require verification prior to approval.
Ensure that new development in WUI have adequate water supply nearby, include defensible space around homes, have alternate ingress / egress when appropriate, adequately signed, use proper construction material & any other measure necessary to ensure public safety.	Subdivision Review & Citizen Participation	Planning Dept., Planning Dept. Board, County Commissioners, Service Organizations, Environmental Health & County Emergency Management	In-House & Partners	Near Term	Continue to require verification that new development project safety consideration & water supply issues are remedied prior to approval.

Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LOCAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES (continued...)					
GOAL 3: Work with State & Federal Agencies to address emergency management mandates that influence how Lincoln County Emergency Management provides service.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Investigate issues with National Incident Management System (NIMS) training requirement mandates to retain enough volunteer EMS personnel to ensure emergency preparedness & continued grant funding in the future.	Capital Improvements Planning, Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, County Emergency Management & State & Federal Agencies	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Determine feasibility of having paid professional emergency service depts.
Investigate the potential cost effectiveness of having professional paid emergency service depts. As an alternative to current volunteer system.	Capital Improvements Planning, Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, County Emergency Management & State & Federal Agencies	In-House & Contract	Long Term	Determine feasibility of having paid professional emergency service depts.
GOAL 4: Promote & accommodate public and private services that serve all segments of population.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Support Lincoln County Transportation Service to ensure that everyone has access to all public & private services.	Capital Improvements Planning, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, Lincoln County Transportation & Churches	In-House & Partners	Ongoing	Continue LCTS services to ensure access to all public & private services to everyone.
Support the efforts to open a 24/7 care facility in the Tobacco Valley.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.
Support efforts to expand senior care programs (nutritional, home health).	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.

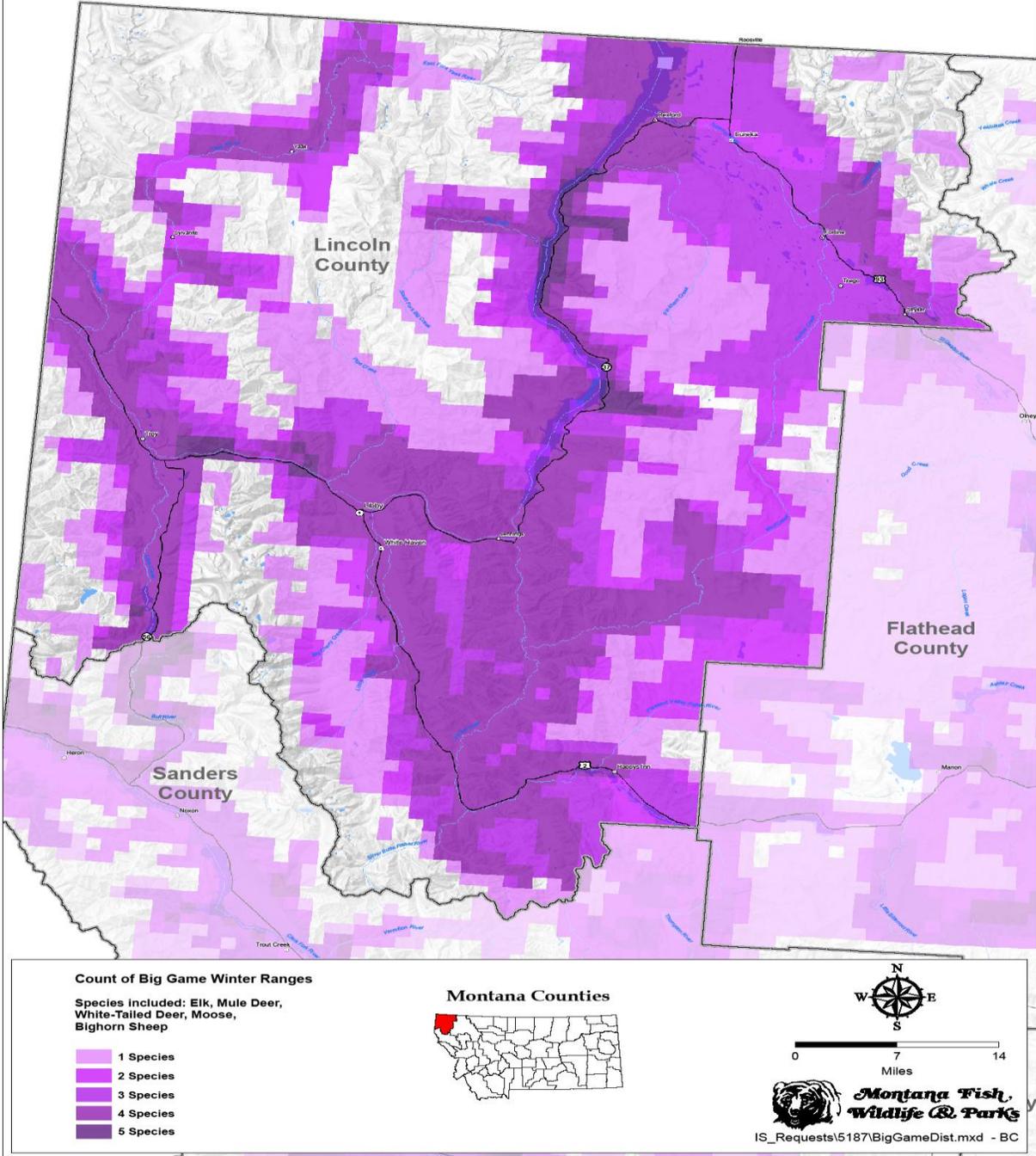
Lincoln County Implementation Action Plan

LOCAL AND SOCIAL SERVICES (continued...)					
GOAL 4 (continued...): Promote & accommodate public and private services that serve all segments of population.					
OBJECTIVES	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES	LEAD RESOURCES / PARTNERS	STAFFING	TIMELINE	EXPECTED RESULTS
Continue providing County Health Clinic & County Nurse services in the Tobacco Valley.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.
Work with area agencies, schools, local & state governments to improve the services offered to at risk youth with mental disabilities and/or chemical dependencies.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.
Support the development of a Home Repair Program to provide services to seniors.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.
Support County/Community social service organization (Families in Partnership, etc...)	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, Churches & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.
Support efforts to increase the number of Child Care Programs/Facilities.	Intergovernmental Coordination, Citizen Participation & Public Education	County Commissioners, Churches & Municipality	In-House	Ongoing	Continue support of their local efforts.

APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

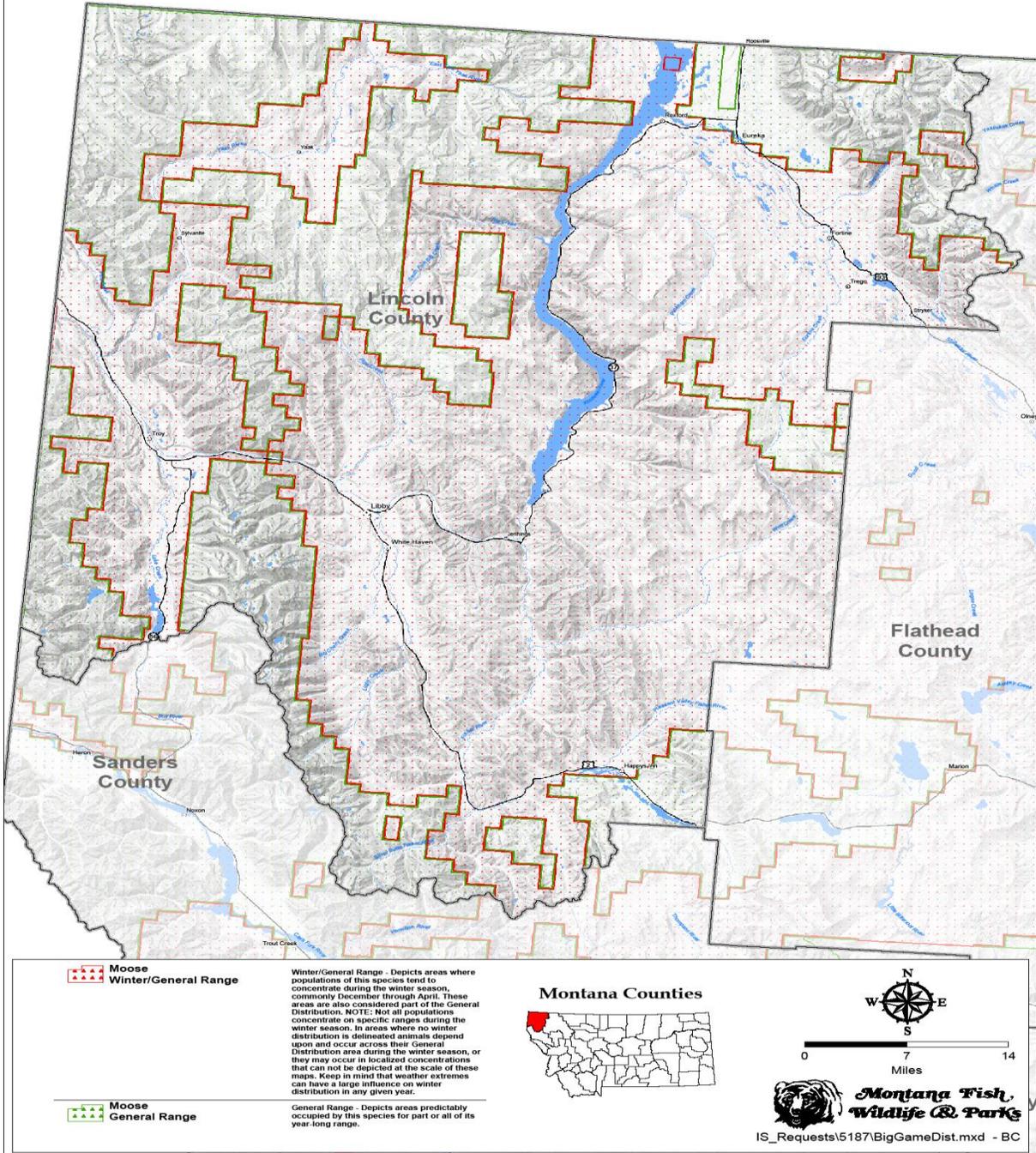
Lincoln County Count of Big Game Winter Ranges



APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

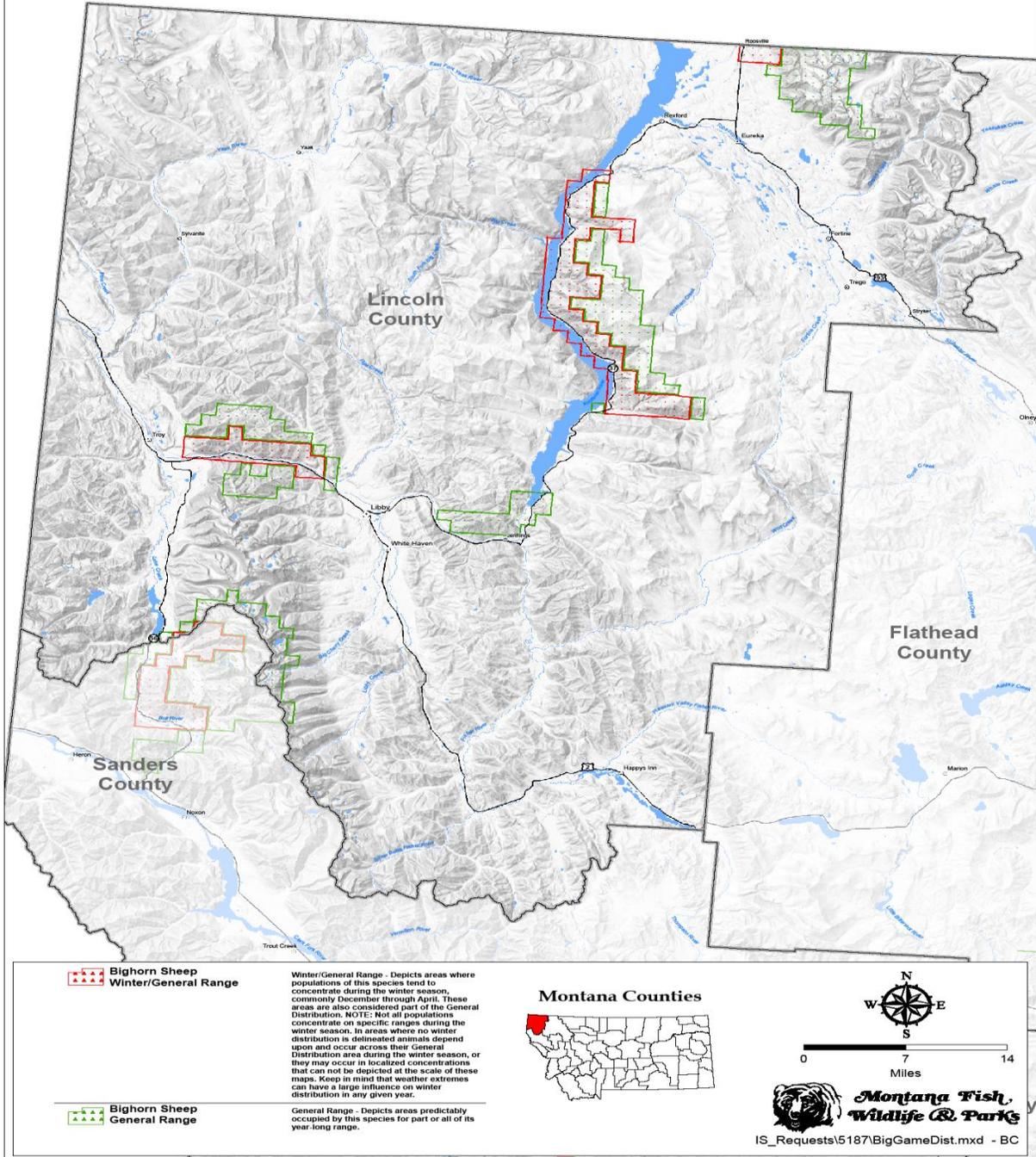
Lincoln County Moose Distribution



APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

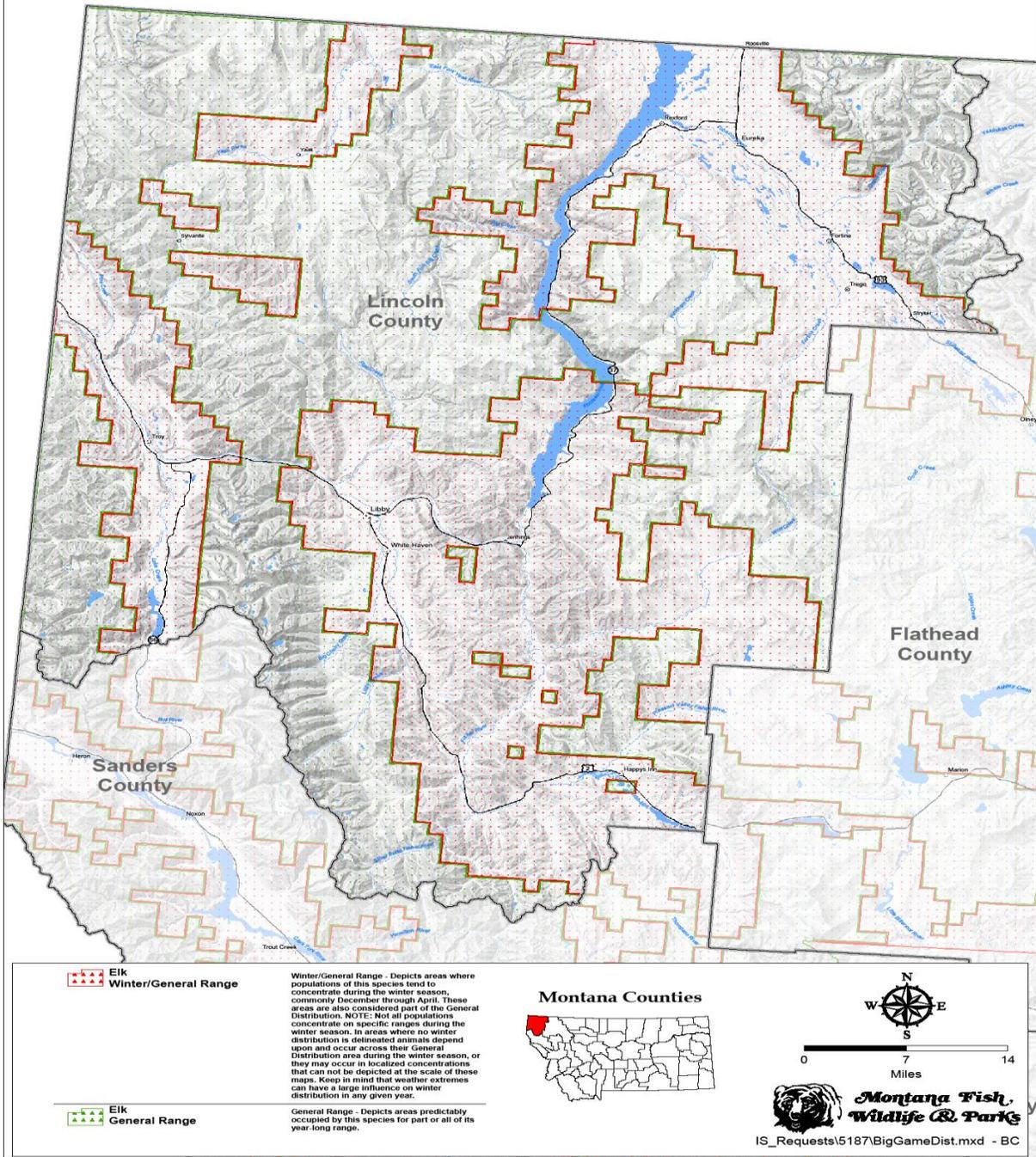
Lincoln County Bighorn Sheep Distribution



APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

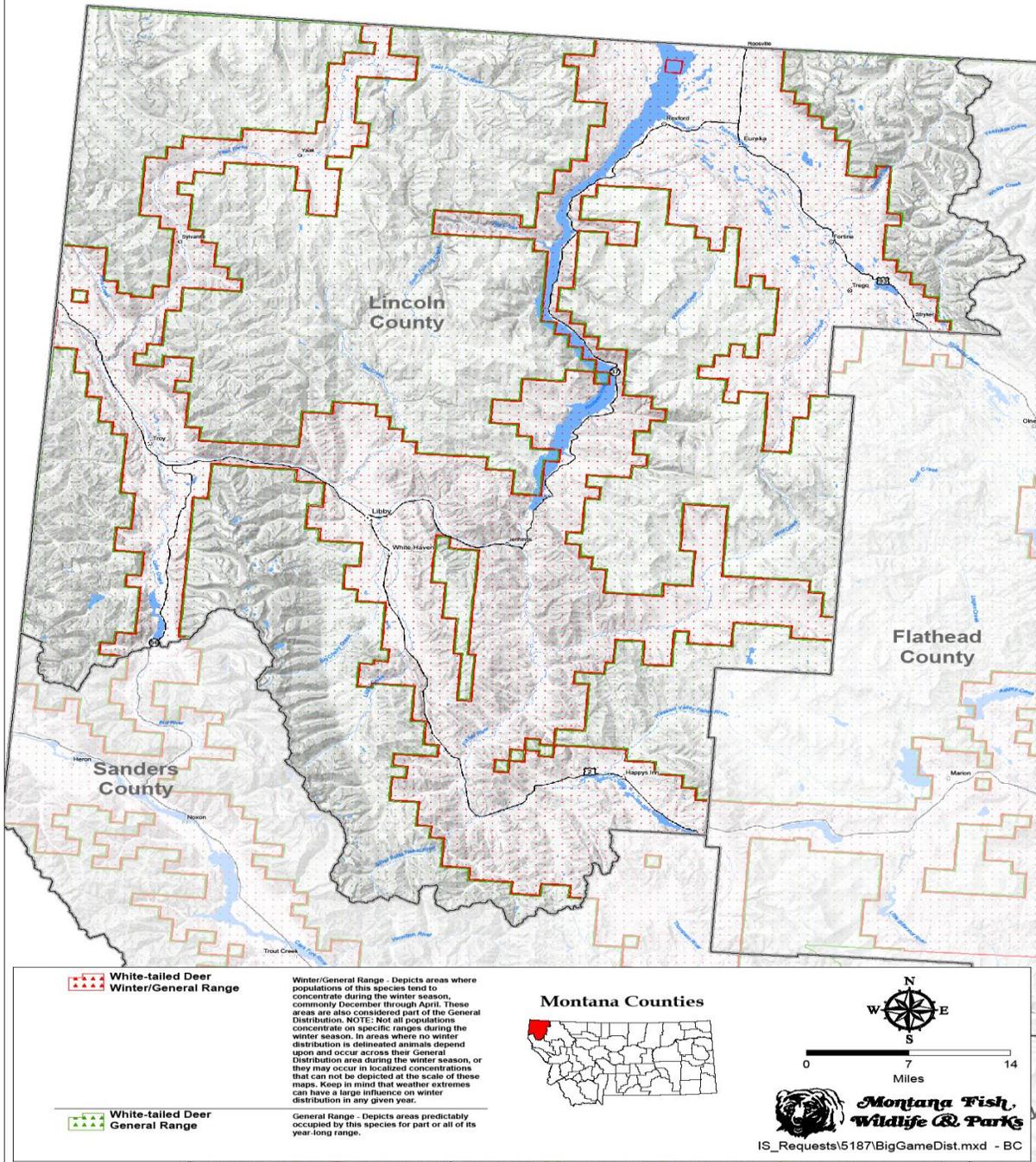
Lincoln County Elk Distribution



APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

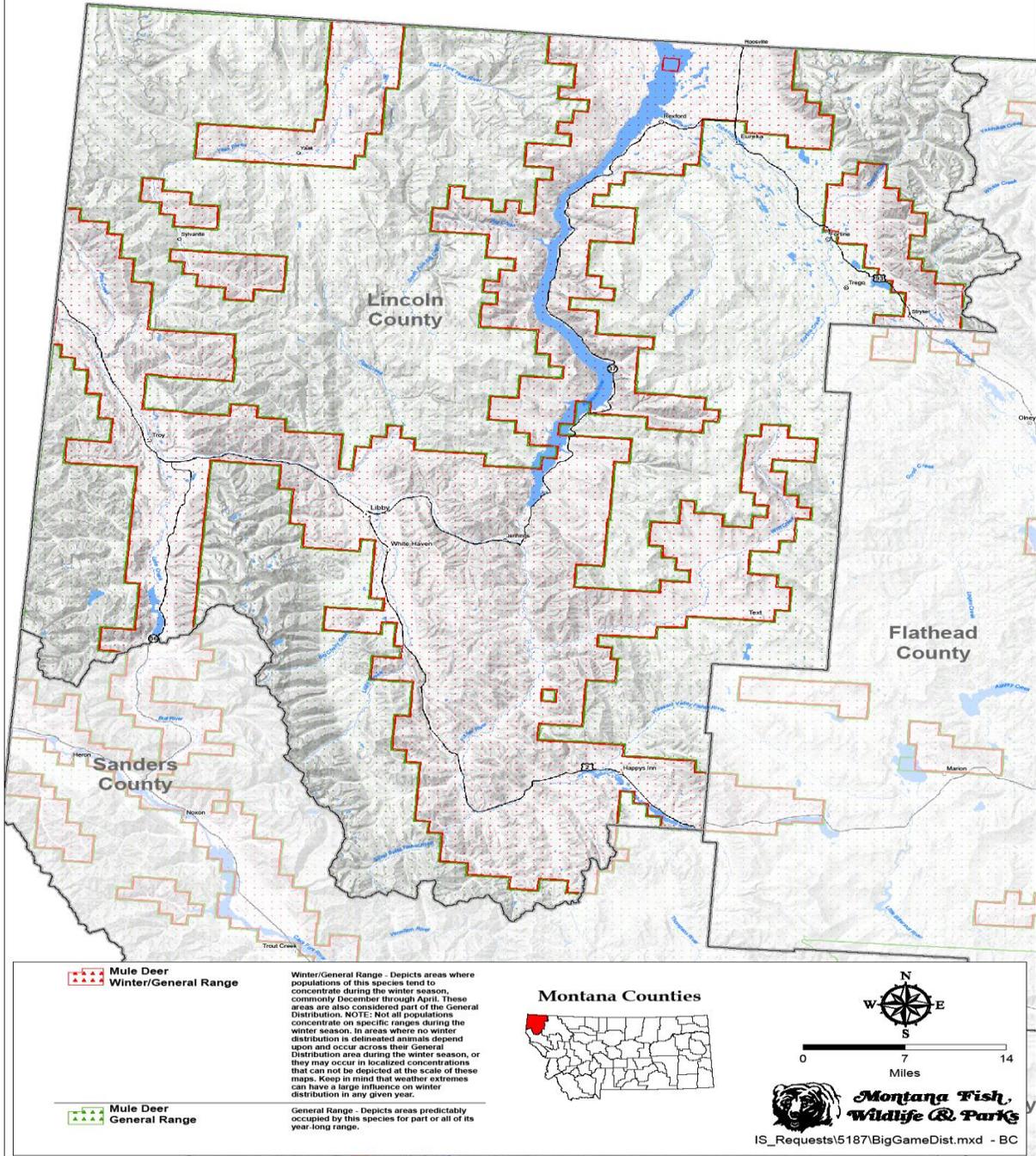
Lincoln County White-tailed Deer Distribution



APPENDIX "A"

MONTANA FISH WILDLIFE & PARKS MAPS

Lincoln County Mule Deer Distribution



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