

Stewards of the Swan Valley

<https://www.preserveswanvalley.org/>

Statement on Holland Lake Lodge

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(Condon, MT) – Stewards of the Swan Valley, a nonprofit based in Condon dedicated to protecting the natural and cultural resources and rural lifestyle of the western Montana valley, today released the following statement on Holland Lake Lodge:

“Stewards of the Swan Valley is dedicated to using a ‘home-grown approach’ to protect the historic Holland Lake Lodge and ensure that all Americans can enjoy this piece of public land in the shadow of the Swan and Mission mountains. We’re doing due diligence to determine how the lodge could be purchased and managed in a manner that ensures future generations of Montanans and Americans always have access to this historic landmark on public land.” – **Grace Siloti**, president, Stewards of the Swan Valley, and **Fred Clark**, vice president, Stewards of the Swan Valley

Grace Siloti has lived in Condon since 1976, is chair of the Swan Valley Community Council, is a businesswoman who, with a partner, owns and operates the Mission Mountains Mercantile, in Condon and owns Grace’s Greenhouse and Gardens. Siloti is a tireless advocate for Condon and the Swan Valley.

Fred Clark worked for the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) for 30 years as an archaeologist, tribal liaison, social scientist, advisory council coordinator, and senior agency leader. Clark worked directly in National Environmental Policy Act planning and project implementation at the forest, regional, and national levels, including having helped 15 national forests complete their forest plan revisions and having a significant role in developing USFS Planning Rules. Clark recently retired as national director of the Office of Tribal Relations at the Washington, D.C., office.

Clark also has more than a half-century of association with the Holland Lake Lodge and its surroundings: “This is where I grew up, built my house, and started my family. I’m a trustee of the Clark Ranch, located a mile directly south of the Holland Lake Lodge. Our ranch predates the Lodge as a 160-acre inholding homesteaded in 1914. There are currently five generations of my family connected to this very special place.”

Background on Stewards of the Swan Valley

Stewards of the Swan Valley (SOSV) is a charitable 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving the community, culture, and environment in the Swan Valley and adjacent areas in western Montana.

“Our mission is to reflect local community values while facilitating efforts that sustain, enhance, conserve, and protect the natural and cultural resources and rural lifestyle of the Swan Valley for present and future generations.”

SOSV serves as a resource and advocacy group for individuals and organizations concerned with potential development by property owners, timber companies, businesses, conservation groups, the state of Montana, and the U.S. Forest Service. SOSV is not opposed to development, but wants to ensure that future developments occur at a scale and scope that fit in the Seeley-Swan Valley instead of letting developments irreparably harm what makes this place so unique. Future generations should be able to enjoy and appreciate this special place just like we do now.

Note: Holland Lake Lodge is a **private entity** on federal land that operates under a Special Use Permit granted by the U.S. Forest Service. The lodge files an annual operating permit that must be approved by the Forest Service. Any future owner, whether a private or nonprofit interest, must continue to abide by a Special Use Permit and operating agreement approved by the Forest Service.

Appropriate development in the Swan Valley is not only desired but needed. Federal, state, tribal and private activities that reduce the danger from wildfire and provide income through wise use of forest resources along the Highway 83 corridor improve the environment. Upgrades to transportation, education, public safety, communications, and other systems enhance citizens' quality of life.

SOSV has heard from numerous Montanans and Americans about the future of the private lodge on public land.

SOSV members are committed to:

- Protecting the socio-cultural history of the rural valley, its wildlife and natural resources
- Listening to local folks and all Americans about their vision for the future of the lodge and public land
- Determining if a nonprofit could purchase and operate the facility for public use
- Maintaining the lodge's and land's cultural heritage and charm
- Ensuring access to the lodge to all who live and work in the Swan Valley
- Keeping the Swan Valley the beautiful place where we live, work and raise families
- Preventing increased disruption to wildlife and the valley's ecosystem