

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA



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Montana has long been famous for its Big Sky, vast open spaces, spectacular mountain ranges, clean air and pure water. From the Missouri River Breaks to the Beartooth Plateau, from Glacier National Park to the dark cedar forests of the Scotchman Peaks, Montana harbors some of the finest wild country found in this nation.

These natural elements are important parts of the engine that drives Montana's economy. Those places surrounded by public lands, especially protected lands such as wilderness areas or national parks, are the fastest growing parts of our state and the most economically stable. Protecting the best, the wildest, of Montana's public lands is not only ecologically smart, its good business.

The Scotchman Peaks is such a place. A rugged landscape sculpted by glaciers and scoured by ancient floodwaters, this corner of the Kootenai National Forest is a worthy subject for wilderness designation. Not only does it provide quality habitat for wildlife such as elk, mountain goats and grizzly bears, these remote mountains and valleys are also a source of pristine water flowing into the Kootenai River, the Clark Fork River and Idaho's Lake Pend Oreille.

But beyond that, the Scotchmans have a history, a rich tradition, which has been passed down through generations of people that live, work and play in this special area. Grandparents take their grandchildren here to learn to hunt and fish. Moms and dads have encouraged their children to explore this rugged region, facing the challenges and thrills that build character and instill respect for wild places and the animals that inhabit them. People of all ages go here to find solitude and peace among the peaks, beneath towering trees, and beside crystalline waters.

That's what the Scotchman Peaks offer - serenity, solitude, a home for wildlife, a home for the hearts and souls of Montanans who love wild places. It makes sense to protect it, for Montana and for the nation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Brian Schweitzer', with a stylized flourish at the end.