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The Pathfinders Clear Nature Trail in the Swan Valley

By Diann Ericson for The Seeley-Swan Pathfinder

Recently, Seeley-Swan area Seventh Day Adventists donned insect repellent and work gloves on a sunny May morning. The project the group readied for was not a hike or camping trip, but to perform community service, one of the organization's major goals. Their objective that day was Squeezer Creek Nature Trail in the Goat Creek area of the Swan Valley. The trail is a favorite for bird watching and serves as resting and nesting grounds for every type of neo-tropical song bird found in the valley.



Pathfinders working on sweeping a foot bridge over a creek. Photo provided.

The trail which has existed for more than two decades is located on State land. But, maintenance of the trail has been sporadic over the years. The generosity of Flathead Audubon and Montana Audubon has supported various efforts of Swan Ecosystem Center to keep the trail open.



The Swan Valley Pathfinders and their parents during the day's excursion to clean up the Squeezer Creek Nature Trail. Photo provided.

For five years, the cadets at Swan Valley Youth Academy under the direction of Swan Ecosystem Center cleared the trail. Since 2006 Audubon monies were used to employ Montana Conservation Corps to open the trails. This month June, 2007, the trail is in its best condition in several years. For this we thank Montana Conservation Corps, the Swan River State Forest and especially the Pathfinders for their volunteer time and work.