

ARCHIVED EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORTS

June 2011

The horizon for the Cinnabar Foundation is perpetuity, and we consider Big Sky Country to be a landscape of promise for future generations. Yet the dark cloud of human-induced climate change threatens our clean and abundant waters, diverse wildlife, healthy working landscapes, and outdoor recreation.

Scientists tell us that likely impacts in Montana include longer droughts, drier rivers, more extreme weather events, greater flooding, hotter forest fires, and loss of natural habitat. The lack of political will to confront this problem — indeed, a massive public refusal to even acknowledge the reality — can drag even the cheeriest optimist into despair.

But I'm happy to report that hope, good ideas and practical solutions are alive and well in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The Cinnabar Foundation's 2011 Climate Change Initiative encouraged conservation groups and educators to tackle the issue head on. The response we received from across Montana was tremendous. Of the 86 grants offered by the Foundation through mid-year, 71 funded applications were in direct response to our Climate Change Initiative, including creative approaches submitted by a rural school district, an association of green-energy businesses, and a grassroots conservation and family agricultural group.

Dozens of other proposals were worthy of Cinnabar's support. Unfortunately, our modest endowment and limited funds stretched only so far. Indeed, even for those groups and projects we did fund, we wish we could have been more generous.

For more than 25 years, the Cinnabar Foundation has been Montana's homegrown conservation fund, supporting a wide diversity of efforts to conserve Montana's spectacular great outdoors. But the reality is that our capacity to meet the growing challenges of today and tomorrow is inadequate. That's why the Foundation has decided to grow our permanent fund and invite new conservation investors to join with us to build up Montana's Conservation Fund.

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Revenue from Cinnabar's conservation fund is annually invested in a diverse portfolio of Montana-based conservation and education efforts, including private land trusts, watershed partnerships, environmental advocacy, volunteerism, sportsman conservation, youth in nature, and energy solutions. Every year, Cinnabar's conservation portfolio is reallocated to maximize its return on investment.

A legacy gift to the Cinnabar Foundation may serve as a tribute to someone special, a memorial to a loved one who has passed, or an investment for future generations. Donations to Cinnabar through estate planning are gifts that keep on giving.

To help grow Montana's Conservation Fund, contact me. Let's talk!

— Steve Thompson
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