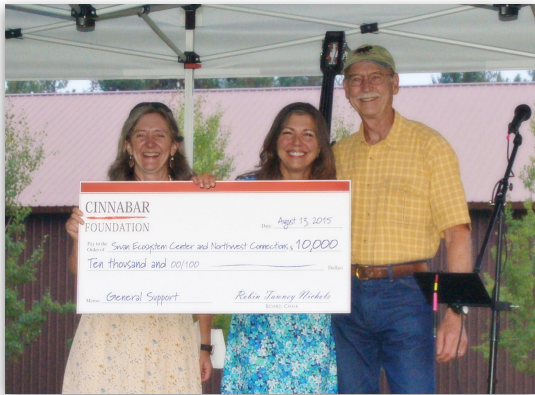


# CINNABAR FOUNDATION

## Cinnabar Supports Community-based Conservation in the Swan Valley

During the August 13<sup>th</sup> Swan Valley *Shintangle*—a fundraising event for the **Swan Ecosystem Center** (SEC) and **Northwest Connections** (NwC) held in Condon, Montana — Cinnabar

Foundation Executive Director Gary Wolfe presented \$5,000 grant checks to each organization.



(L to R) *Marnie Criley*, interim executive director for Northwest Connections; *Maria Mantas*, executive director for Swan Ecosystem Center; *Gary Wolfe*, executive director for Cinnabar Foundation.

*Photo by Rita Wolfe*

SEC and NwC recently announced their intent to merge by year-end. Their decision to merge resulted from a consensus of the boards and staffs that they would be better able to pursue their long-range vision of success as a unified group. The two organizations have enjoyed a close relationship since their inceptions nearly 18 years ago. Through the years, they have shared board members, sponsored events together, and worked closely to accomplish their collective vision for conservation and education in the Swan Valley. Over the next six months the two organizations will chart the course for what will be a new organization that will build upon the great work and programs that are currently serving the community and students from around the country.<sup>1</sup>

“There is much to be done,” said SEC Board Chair Steve Ellis, “but I have no doubt it will be outstandingly successful. It is a very exciting time.”

Maria Mantas, current Executive Director for SEC, will become the director of the merged entity. Mantas feels that the combination of the two outstanding staffs will create a synergy that will exceed the work of the independent organizations.<sup>2</sup>

Jim Quinn, Board Chair for NwC, as well as a board member for SEC, said “The merger between SEC and NwC will enable both organizations to serve more people. The new organization will have a stronger combined influence both locally and regionally.”

“The Cinnabar Foundation has been a long-time supporter of both organizations,” said Gary Wolfe, “and Cinnabar’s board strongly supports the organizations’ decision to merge. We believe it’s important for each organization’s donors to continue to support the combined entity at the same, or higher, level than they supported the individual organizations.”

The Cinnabar Foundation’s 2015 grants to SEC and NwC helped to underwrite some of the costs of the merger process, as well as provide general operating support.

20 August 2015

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<sup>1</sup> Swan Ecosystem Center’s Summer 2015 Newsletter

<sup>2</sup> Swan Ecosystem Center’s Summer 2015 Newsletter