

SVBR Partners

Northwest Connections
Swan Ecosystem Center
Swan Valley Bear Ranger



*A grizzly bear testing a bear-resistant garbage container.
Photo by Derek Reich/Zooprax Productions.*

Contact Us

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Supported By

American Wildlands
Defenders of Wildlife
Interagency Grizzly Bear Committee
Montana DNRC
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Plum Creek
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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
U.S. Forest Service
Wildlife Land Trust



**Using community resources
to promote human-bear
coexistence**

Swan Valley Bear Resources

About Us

The mission of Swan Valley Bear Resources (SVBR) is to offer community resources to promote coexistence between people and bears. SVBR is a collaborative effort between local non-profit conservation organizations and community members who have partnered with the U.S. Forest Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and other natural resource management entities, to pool resources, experience and expertise in addressing bear conflicts on private property in the Swan Valley.

In 2004, research and management data indicated that the Swan Valley had become a mortality sink for grizzly bears within the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem recovery area. Trends also showed that an increasing number of these mortalities were human-caused, related to unsecured bear attractants (i.e. bird feeders, garbage, etc.) on private property.

The goal of SVBR is to honor our rural way of life while at the same time providing resources and site-specific recommendations for interested landowners to secure bear attractants and reduce human-bear conflicts.

Loaner Program

One of the most dangerous temptations for bears in the Swan Valley is unsecured garbage. Once a wild bear learns to find food in garbage, his or her chances for survival are drastically reduced. SVBR is pleased to offer bear-resistant garbage containers on loan to anyone in the community. These 64 gallon, wheeled containers have a self-latching lid that prevents bears and other critters from accessing the garbage inside. When used properly, bear-resistant garbage containers are an important tool for teaching bears to stay away from garbage by denying them a food reward.

SVBR's bear-resistant garbage containers can be checked out for **FREE!!!** These containers were purchased through grants and donations for community use. Future donations to the Loaner Program will help purchase additional bear-resistant garbage containers.



Property Consultations

Landowners and residents of the Swan Valley who are interested in reducing and/or eliminating bear attractants around their homes and property can contact SVBR for property consultations. We have a network of skilled individuals and organizations who have experience dealing with a variety of bear attractants, including bird feeders, garbage, gardens, livestock, orchards, pet food, etc.

Recently, SVBR has assisted three local landowners with the implementation of electric fencing to protect livestock from conflicts with bears. We are equipped to provide technical information on fencing specifications, as well as to offer resources on where to purchase appropriate materials. In addition, we can help landowners search for potential cost-sharing opportunities and recruit volunteers to assist with fence construction.



Outreach and Events

SVBR sponsors a number of outreach efforts and events to help bring awareness to our mission of reducing human-bear conflicts in the Swan Valley. SVBR sponsors the Bear News, a bi-annual community newsletter that highlights current events relating to bears. SVBR is proud to host two community events each year, the Spring Bear Wake Up Social and the Bear Fair. These events provide a forum for experts in the bear research, management, and conservation fields to share their most up-to-date findings with our community. Additionally, Mark Ruby, the Swan Valley Bear Ranger does bear education outreach at area schools, local campgrounds, and for agency field crews and private groups by special request.



Children pose with a bear mount at the Swan Valley Bear Fair. The annual event organizes specialists and demonstrations for the community about different aspects of Montana bear management.

Research and Monitoring

The Swan Valley has long been a hot-spot for bear research and monitoring. SVBR hopes to add value to existing studies by tracking the effectiveness of efforts to reduce attractants on private property.