

Nature Conservancy Lands, Ovando, Montana

\$564,088

Location: These lands lie about three miles north of the community of Ovando, Montana.

Acreage: Deeded: 1438.93 acres
Leased

Carrying Capacity: 200-250 AUM's

Crop Land: None **Stockwater:** Yes

Irrigation: N/A **Timber:** Yes

Precipitation: 17 inches **Fencing:** Partial

School Buses: N/A **Improvements:** None

Comments: The Nature Conservancy lands north of Ovando, Montana are primarily forested with 20-30 year old, well stocked second growth stands of ponderosa pine, lodgepole pine, Douglas-fir, Western larch and Engleman spruce. Merchantable volume is light and scattered but opportunities for near-term commercial thinning exists. Potential for long-term forest management is excellent with rotation age volumes in excess of 10 MBF per acre. All roads necessary for forest management have been constructed and are in good condition.

Topography of these parcels is primarily of flat to moderate slope allowing for good operability.

Land comes with a conservation easement held by the USFWS with the primary restriction on development.

Forestland grazing currently occurs on these lands with an estimated carrying capacity of 200-250 AUM's. Current grazing licensee desires to continue grazing these lands. Partial fencing exists on the parcels creating pastures incorporated with other grazing allotments. Future thinning of second growth timber will increase forage. Stock water is available in streams and small ponds and potential exists for additional stock water development.

Access to the land is through State Lands connecting to a county road or by a Forest Service road connecting to the county road. Access to the land is open to highway vehicle traffic but access on the land is limited to foot and horse traffic and winter snowmobile use. These lands provide excellent habitat for big game animals and area streams have bull trout and cutthroat populations. These lands have



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traditionally been available for public recreation and have significant use during the hunting season. This land is currently included in an FWP Block Management Area. Snowmobile, winter recreation is an important part of the local economy. These lands have snowmobile trails and provide access to trails on adjoining Forest Service lands.

Acquisition of this land would increase the State land base to 2,078.93 acres along the Monture Creek county road. This land may eventually be included in the landscape management efforts for the Blackfoot Community Conservation Area including USFS, FWP, Blackfoot Challenge, DNRC and small private holdings. The addition of this land to the State land base would provide for increased future revenues for the Common School Trust and protect the publics continued recreational opportunities.

