

## Methow Conservancy's Position on I-933

The Methow Conservancy Board of Directors voted in August 2006 to oppose Initiative-933. This is the first time the Methow Conservancy has opposed a ballot initiative in the history of the organization.

The broad implications of I-933, "The Property Fairness Act," have convinced the Methow Conservancy that a position against the initiative is necessary, and we are opposed for the following reasons:

- **Cost:** I-933 would require state and local governments to either pay landowners for claims of lowered property value, or waive the regulations in question. Processing these claims could cost taxpayers millions, and where regulations are waived, the public is likely to foot the bill for the resulting 'disasters' such as flooding or poor land use planning.
- **Polarization:** The polarization that could result from this initiative threatens to undermine the trust that diverse conservation interest groups have developed over decades.
- **Land degradation:** The laws that have been voted into place over the past decade have undergone extensive scrutiny to fairly protect vital natural resources. To broadly repeal these regulations runs the risk of large scale habitat loss, degradation and unintended damage to private property throughout the region.
- **Existing incentives:** Voluntary incentives already exist that reward private landowners for protecting conservation values. These programs compensate landowners who are unfairly affected by land use regulations, and they can be improved if bipartisan support for practical, voluntary land conservation programs remains in tact.