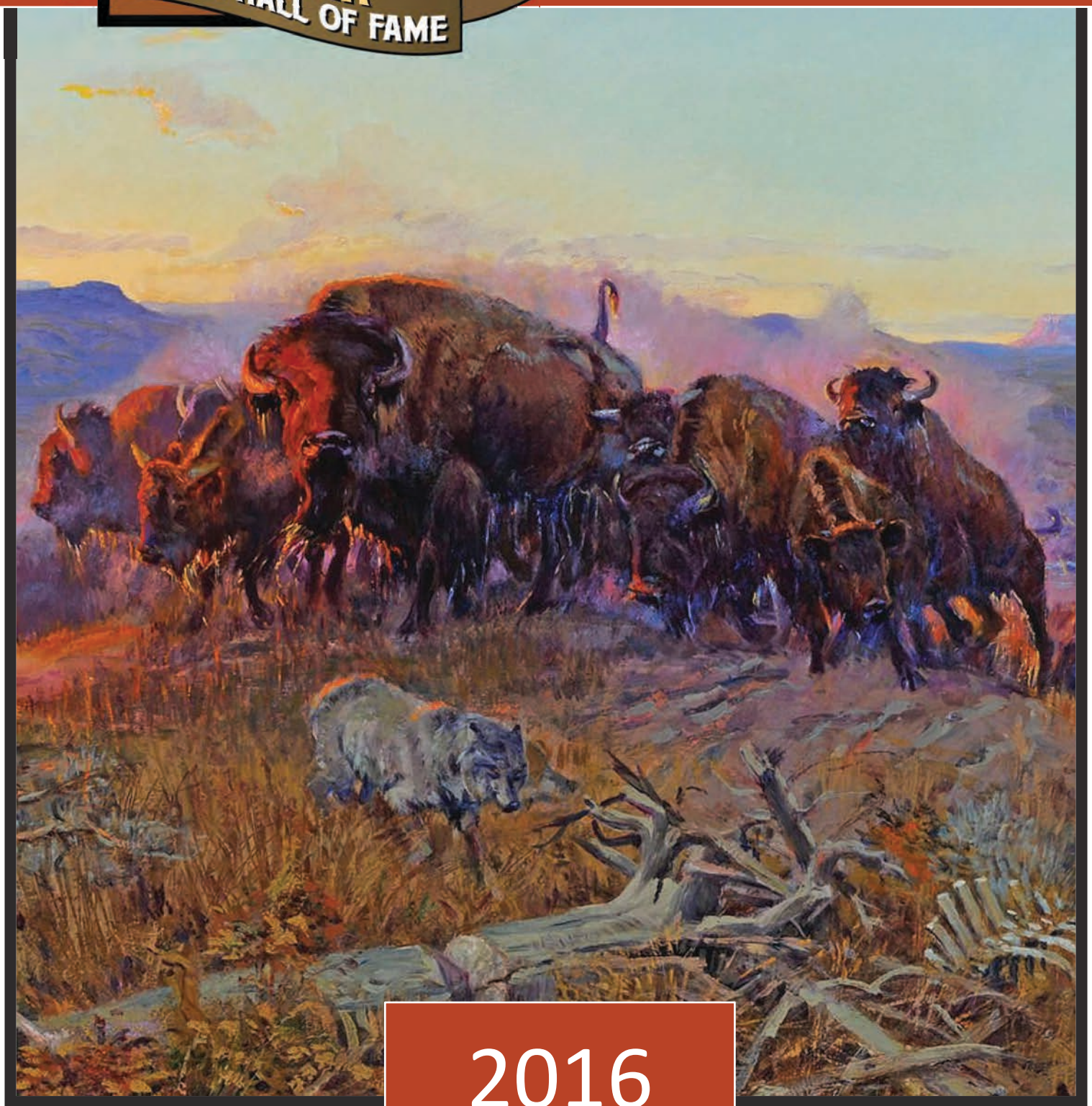
MONTANA
OUTDOOR HALL OF FAME

INDUCTION



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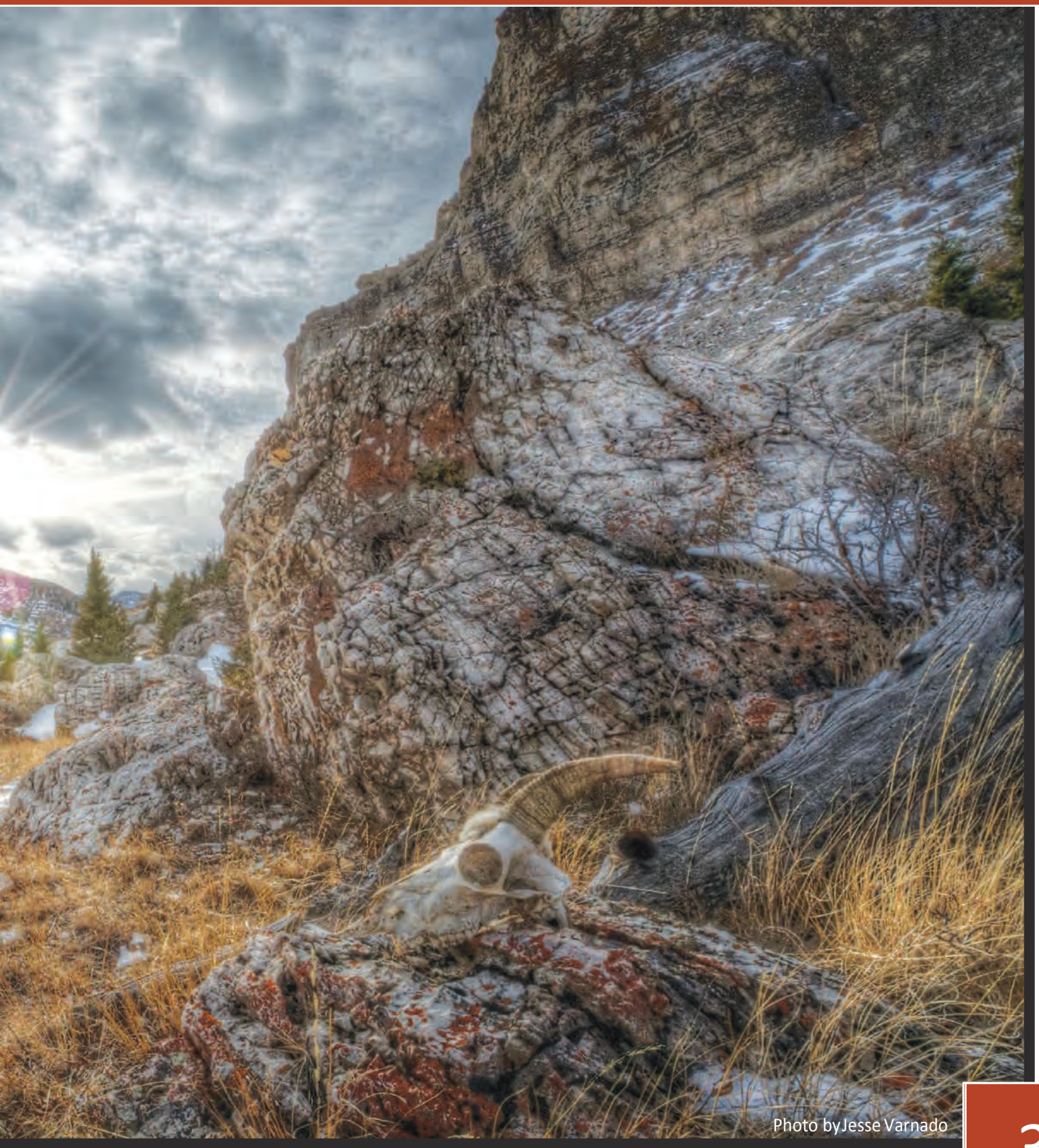


Photo by Jesse Varnado

Introduction

"We crossed the Rocky Mountain divide on the tenth day of October, 1857 ... Instead of the gray sagebrush covered plains of Snake River, we saw smooth rounded grass that waved in the wind like a field of grain. A beautiful little clear stream ran northwest on its way to join the Missouri River. ... Soon as we came to the divide ... bands of antelope ... were in sight all of the time ... We also discovered as we moved down the valley to Beaverhead that there was plenty of game, consisting of blacktailed deer, big horn or mountain sheep, and also many bands of elk."

This description of Montana comes from one of the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame's inductees, Granville Stuart. It was his first impression when he was just 23 years old.

Theodore Roosevelt, another of our inductees, was born a year later. Their trails crossed about 30 years after Stuart's arrival. They met in Miles City at a Montana Stockgrowers meeting and their primary topic was conservation, specifically "the Texas fever and the overstocking of the range."

One biographer noted Roosevelt "was a great admirer of Granville Stuart, and was always on his side of every question."

These two events show us that a conservation ethic rode into Montana seven years before our birth as a territory; and also arrived on a steam engine-drawn rail car a few years before we became a state. In the three decades that separate those events we had taken a wildlife resource that once "exceeded anything the eye of man had ever looked upon" and turned it into the wildlife "bone-yard" of a continent.

However, the seed of Montana's conservation ethic was planted, took firm root, and as the generations passed that ethic produced an outdoor masterpiece.

Two of America's great national parks sit as bookends, with the Northern Rockies sprawling out between them and the Missouri River Breaks National Monument stretching eastward. Where the Rockies "front" the plains, precious tracts of wild country are destined to remain forever wild, home to the great bear and a pyramid of companion species. Water gathers in these places. It seeps, meanders, rushes and at times thunders to three oceans. These streams, creeks and rivers are clean, cold and laden with wild fish.

The 14 people we recognize tonight are but a small sample of the legions of worthy and deserving Montanans. But the diversity of this second class of inductees is also worth acknowledging. From educators to agency personnel, from politicians to grassroots activists, from pioneers to present-day leaders, the stories of these fourteen inductees speaks to an ever-evolving conservation ethic that is uniquely Montanan.

Enjoy their stories and join us as we gather to celebrate the achievements of those who contributed through time and those now holding the line while expanding the outdoor horizons of America's Last Best Place.

Photo by Jesse Varnado

Margaret Adams

1920–2005

Though Margaret Adams was a product of 1920s Havre, Montana – where she was raised with her seven siblings and graduated from what is now Montana State University-Northern – it was in Great Falls where she blossomed into an environmental educator and activist.

Margaret was a life-long elementary school teacher and principal. Her legacy lives on in the lives of children she taught, and in the lives of children now benefiting from Great Falls Public School's elementary environmental education program, which she created some 40 years ago.
She arrived in Great Falls to teach at Lincoln School during 1957. Shortly afterward, she became one of the early members of the Montana Wilderness Association, later testifying for designation of the Scapegoat and Great Bear Wildernesses. She received the MWA's Brass Lantern Award in 1992 and the Founder's Award in 2000 for her trailblazing work.
Yet, after becoming the principal of Lewis and Clark Elementary, Margaret's activism was notably marked by an inquiring bent to understand, learn and share ideas. She would famously insist that fellow board members and visitors research their opinions before taking a stand or offering comment on issues of concern.

That style of learned advocacy enabled her to work with folks who were not natural allies to achieve conservation victories.
For example, she co-founded the Great Falls Conservation Council, which continues to bring together conservation leaders from local nonprofits and governmental resource agencies every few weeks to discuss important regional issues.

She helped found the Upper Missouri River Breaks chapter of the Audubon Society – and served as its president as well as president of Montana Audubon. In 1997, she was named Montana Audubon's Conservationist of the Year.
Margaret also helped to create Lewis and Clark Fund, Inc., a nonprofit to further the U.S. Forest Service's Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Interpretive Center at Giant Springs in Great Falls.
And, ever the educator, she co-founded Friends of the Library in Great Falls.

Make no mistake, however, Margaret knew well the power of a strong woman's voice. When she was in her 60s, she and similar minded women of her age began taking extended backpacking trips through Montana's wilderness areas. When it came time to testify for wilderness legislation, their presence belied the argument that wilderness was only for the young.
And earlier, as a campaign for the Scapegoat Wilderness confronted USFS plans to log the area, a local store owned by Lincoln activist Cecil Garland – an inaugural inductee to the MOHF – was threatened with a boycott.
Margaret and her friends would have none of that and drove from Great Falls to Lincoln to stock up from the shelves of Garland's Town and Country store.

Bob Anderson

1943–2013

Bob Anderson was born in Seattle and raised in Livingston, Montana and spent his formative years hiking the Absaroka and Beartooth country.

He said he "wanted to know what was over the next ridge" and he found out soon enough by painstakingly drawing the boundaries of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness, an experience that was "like flying over the landscapes," and "the most wonderful thing."
With no background in political activity – but trained as an engineer – Bob was among the few primary activists whose work led to the designation of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness in 1978.

He formed the Absaroka-Beartooth Task Force in 1970, wrote a lands inventory that vastly expanded the area under consideration for Wilderness, and prevented the wilderness from being split in two by a road corridor through Slough Creek.

Today, the extraordinary, nearly one-million-acre lake-strewn landscape contains the highest, wilderness elevation expanse in Montana and, thanks in large measure to Bob's efforts, it's permanently protected.

Bob spoke lovingly of "that high place" and shared his knowledge of it in Beartooth Country – Montana's Absaroka and Beartooth Mountains, a definitive book published in 1984 by the Montana Geographic Series and reprinted by Farcounty Press in 1995.

Bob also was a founding member of "Citizens for the Great Bear," formed to protect lands between Glacier National Park and the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The Great Bear Wilderness, like the Absaroka-Beartooth, was designated in 1978.

In tandem with others, Bob battled against the Allenspur Dam on the Yellowstone River. The 380-foot tall earthen dam would have been just upstream of Livingston, Bob's hometown. He wrote a detailed analysis for the Livingston Enterprise, "The Challenge of Allenspur," which informed the scientific basis for resistance. In the end, even the Montana Legislature was opposed to flooding the Paradise Valley with a dam on the longest free-flowing river in the lower 48 states.

Additionally, Bob was a founder of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition in 1983 and served as its executive director. The GYC works to conserve the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem – which includes Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. Bob was elected to statewide office in 1990, 1994 and 1998 as a member of the Montana Public Service Commission. He led on issues of energy conservation, non-renewable clean sources of energy and efficient distribution of production.

Bob continued his conservation work after leaving Montana, striving to maintain the purity of Lake Tahoe waters. He achieved much before a tragic vehicle accident claimed his life in Serengeti National Park in Tanzania, Africa following a successful ascent of Mount Kilimanjaro in celebration of his 70th birthday.

Ken (1908–2007) and Florence (1911–2007) Baldwin

Ken and Florence Baldwin, perhaps more than any other couple in Montana's storied conservation history, were responsible for organizing hundreds to get involved in protecting Montana's wildlife and wildlands.

They were irrepressible catalysts of focused citizen advocacy for natural resource conservation – and they remained at the vanguard for decades to prod fellow conservationists to get and stay involved.

Avid hunters and outdoors people, Ken and Florence trekked regularly throughout Montana's wildlands. In the 1930s and 1950s, they noticed a troubling decline in the state's wildlife populations.

As Ken continued to hone a holistic approach to conservation, the couple's observations propelled Ken to join and later serve as president of fish and game groups like the Montana Wildlife Federation and the Gallatin Sportsmen's Association. In time, Ken realized "it was necessary that wildlands be set aside to leave the habitat for those animals."

In 1958, Ken sent letters to 100 Montana friends and colleagues. He aimed to seek support for a Congressional bill proposing a national system of Wilderness areas. Within two weeks, 21 people from across Montana met at Bozeman's Baxter Hotel where they established the Montana Wilderness Association – America's first state wilderness group – with Ken as its first president.

Florence and Ken then organized Montana support for The Wilderness Act. Evidence of their effectiveness is found in the fact that Montana's U.S. Senators Murray, Metcalf, and Mansfield were original sponsors of the bill from its beginning in 1958. Passage of The Wilderness Act of 1964 established the first permanent legal protection of wilderness in the State of Montana, including the Bob Marshall, Cabinet Mountains, Gates of the Mountains, Anaconda-Pintler and Selway-Bitterroot wilderness areas. Places like the Chinese Wall, Welcome Creek, and Red Rock Lakes will never change thanks to the Wilderness Act – and because of the foresight of Ken and Florence to create an organization that advocates for such wild places. Still, what Ken and Florence most enjoyed was sharing their outdoor experiences with others.

Two years prior to the passage of The Wilderness Act of 1964 the couple set out with a group of 40 hikers along a trail to Table Mountain in the Spanish Peaks. Their intention was to build grassroots support for wilderness by taking people to a special place that needed protection.

> "It was necessary that wildlands be set aside to leave the habitat for those animals."
>
> – Ken Baldwin

George Darrow

1924–2015

It would seem George Darrow was a contradiction. He was an oil-field roughneck, a military man, dude rancher, farmer, horse breeder, and petroleum geologist. He was an arts patron, gallery owner, and a passionate conservationist. He was a Republican Montana state legislator and proud co-author of the Montana Environmental Policy Act.

George Darrow – born in Osage, Wyoming, and educated in economics and geology at the University of Michigan, where he played football and wrestled – was an extraordinary Montanan whose contribution to conservation and protection of our shared environment cannot be overstated. A leader of Montana's Republican Party, George routinely crossed party lines to build the political bridges necessary for protecting Montana's natural resources and water quality.

In addition to championing Montana's bedrock environmental law, George was chief sponsor of the Montana Water Policy Act of 1967 and remained a staunch defender of every Montanans' "right to a clean and healthful environment," as codified in the Montana Constitution.

Close to his Bigfork home, George worked to conserve Cougar Canyon – a mountainous parcel of state land overlooking Flathead Lake – and advocated for wilderness designation in the Swan Crest. In 1992, George testified before the U.S. House of Representatives noting, "The entire snow-capped Swan Crest from Columbia Mountain through the Jewel Basin and into the Bob Marshall Wilderness provides the high-quality watershed, recreation and wildlife habitat that underlie the Flathead economy."

As a Montana Republican legislator – both in the House and the Senate, between 1967 and 1974 – George was at the center of Montana's foundational legislative efforts on behalf of conservation. And while knowing that the divides between Republicans and Democrats, politicians and the populace, and conservation and resource extraction runs deep, George expressed his views passionately and yet always managed to remain a gentleman and a statesman.

In an era when business and conservation interests seemed incompatible, George rallied the Bigfork Chamber of Commerce to support the Swan Crest Wilderness proposal. When politics demanded an all-or-nothing approach, he chose a path of deliberation and compromise, working to show that conservation paid enormous dividends to Montana businesses.

"The entire snow-capped Swan Crest [...] provides the high-quality watershed, recreation and wildlife habitat that underlie the Flathead..."
– George Darrow

Jim Goetz

1942–

Jim Goetz was born in Miles City, Montana, in 1942 and raised in Ennis, a Madison River town.

He graduated from Montana State University in 1965, and from Yale Law School in 1968.

The next year, he began to practice law in Montana – or, more to the point, he began to practice law for Montana.

In the 1970s, Jim drafted the prescient Montana Conservation Easement Law for a group of Blackfoot River Valley ranchers; later he represented A. B. "Bud" Guthrie, Jr. – famed author of the novel The Big Sky and the screenplay "Shane" – in contesting a subdivision in Teton County; he worked for Montana Trout Unlimited to keep water in the Yellowstone River to benefit fish; and he represented the Libby Rod and Gun Club in a case that saw the U.S. 9th Circuit Court enjoin the construction of a quarter of a billion dollar "re-regulation dam," below the main Libby Dam, on the Kootenai River in northwestern Montana. Had that project proceeded it would have inundated another seven miles of the Kootenai River.

In all, Jim's argued nearly 100 cases in the Montana Supreme Court, including various seminal cases under the Montana Constitution.

Most famously, in 1984 he served as the attorney for the Montana Coalition for Stream Access, which formed to protect the public's right to access Montana waterways. Those early Montana stream access cases included: "Montana Coalition for Steam Access v. Curran," which focused on the Dearborn River; and "Montana Coalition for Stream Access v. Hildreth," which focused on the Beaverhead River.
In arguing the cases, Jim won two district court and two Supreme Court lawsuits. As a result, today everyone can enjoy recreating on Montana's rivers between the high-water marks.

Jim's advice to the Montana Coalition for Appropriate Management of School Trust Lands led to a law that opened public access to five million acres of school trust lands and isolated parcels of BLM and USFS lands for recreation.

Jim also personally handled and prevailed in a class action lawsuit against the Butte Water Company, brought by a group of nuns and citizens, to provide clean and safe drinking water to thousands of residents.

His numerous awards and accolades include the "National Resources Defense Award" from the National Wildlife Federation; "Legend of the Headwaters Award" from the Madison/Gallatin Chapter of Trout Unlimited; and the "Jeannette Rankin Civil Liberties Award" from the Montana Chapter of the ACLU. He's listed among Montana State University's most prominent alumni in its first 100 years.

Widely recognized among the nation's top litigators, Jim built his considerable reputation by defending the public's right to access Montana's waterways.

Bud Lilly

1925–

Bud Lilly's been called "a trout's best friend" and the "Father of Fly Fishing." Suffice to say he's changed the world.

Bud has been a director, founding or charter member of multiple organizations whose goals are to promote clean water, streamside conservation, and the preservation of wild trout fishing.

Think Montana Trout Unlimited, Montana River Action, Montana Land Reliance, International Flyfishing Center, Montana Trout Foundation, Federation of Fly Fishers, and more.

And now – perhaps closest to his heart – at 91, the U.S. Navy World War Two veteran is the director of the Warriors and Quiet Waters Foundation, a project that brings disabled vets to Montana to introduce them to fly fishing and the therapeutic power of ever-flowing waters.

Montana State University's unique library collection – which has archived more than 11,000 books, photographs, papers and other works for public review, research and study – is named in Bud's honor: The Bud Lilly Trout and Salmonid Initiative. It's the world's largest collection of trout information.

After returning from the war, Bud began a math and science teaching career that took him to Roundup, Deer Lodge, and Bozeman. In 1952, with $4,500 and his summers free, he opened Bud Lilly's Trout Shop in West Yellowstone.

From there, Bud started the first fly fishing schools west of the Mississippi and is widely credited for making fly fishing more appealing and accessible to women.

Also, based out of his landmark fly shop, Bud worked with Yellowstone National Park to adopt "sport fishing" philosophy after a survey indicated 400,000 trout were being tossed away every summer.

YNP soon allowed anglers to use only lures and flies, established three-fish creel limits and catch-and-release only areas. At Fishing Bridge, Bud urged a "viewing only" regulation for visitors to observe spawning Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

When Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks designated streams as "blue ribbon" in the 1960s, Bud helped develop a wild trout management policy that would take hold in the 1970s.

Since 1974 – following a then controversial and now celebrated research project on the Madison River conducted by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Dick Vincent – managing for naturally reproducing wild trout populations has been a priority in Montana.

The awards and accolades literally rained upon the humble story teller to include an honorary doctorate from Montana State University, induction to Federation of Fly Fishers Hall of Fame, the rare American Museum of Fly Fishing Heritage award for lifetime achievement, to name a few.

His latest project is on the Gallatin River near Logan at a new fishing access site. As long as Bud's around, the world of trout fishing is bound to just keep getting better.

Pat McVay

1920–

Kalispell's Pat McVay taught hunter education in Montana before Montana had hunter education.

In the early 1950s, when he began a 34-year career in the Civil Service with 27 years at Hungry Horse Dam, McVay conducted junior shooting and hunter safety programs in the hamlet of Hungry Horse.

There he'd discuss with anyone who'd listen the need for a law to establish a full-fledged hunter safety and education program in Montana.

Among the listeners was Mel Ruder, the legendary editor of Hungry Horse News.

On a cold January night in 1957, Ruder phoned McVay. The Montana Legislature had finally made hunter education the law of the land.

Three days later, Pat sent in paperwork to Montana Fish & Game for his students to be certified under the new law, thus becoming Montana's first Hunter Education Instructor.

Nearly 60 years later, Pat McVay, 96, is still at it, teaching the course at his ranch east of Kalispell. Pat's list of Montana hunter education milestones include teaching the state's first hunter education course; the first in-the-field instruction course; and first to conduct live-firing of .22 rifles, shotguns, and large bore rifles. In a touching story published in 2010, John Fraley, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' hunter education program manager in Kalispell, told the Flathead Beacon that Pat "teaches a homey, old-fashioned type of class," Fraley said. "He's funny and witty and he loves his students and they kind of return that."

Pat brings a Montana authenticity to his teaching. The setting, for starters, is his ranch home along the brooding Swan Mountains, where students are surrounded by an interesting assortment of animal mounts, pelts, firearms, and curiosities Pat's collected over the years.

By the end of the class, his students are so enthralled with their education on firearm safety and wildlife conservation and history, that they openly seek to adopt Pat and his love of hunting.

And adults similarly gravitate to Pat, Fraley told the Beacon. "He connects [with] people so closely – it's hard to explain."

Pat has touched the lives of more than 1,600 students over a six-decade-long volunteer career training the Flathead Valley's budding hunter-conservationists. And he's created a statewide institution. Today, 1,600 active hunter safety and education instructors teach about 10,000 students each year.

> "He's funny and witty and he loves his students and they kind of return that."
>
> – John Fraley

Bob Munson

1942–

Ducks, trout, sheep, turkeys, quail, pheasants, ruffed grouse—fool hens for crying out loud—they all have their own group. People who are looking out for them and their habitat. But elk? Way smarter, nobler, more majestic than all those. Yet nobody's taking care of them. Can you imagine life without wild elk and elk hunting? Hey what if …

Thus went the genesis of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. Bob Munson, Charlie Decker and two fellow parishioners from the Troy Christian Fellowship Church gathered around a kitchen table in a town in northwest Montana so small it had no stoplight and darn few stop signs.

Scant months later, on May 14, 1984, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation was born.

Who would launch a nonprofit organization and a national magazine and hold a national convention within the space of 11 months – all without two nickels in the bank? Clearly, they must have been elk hunters.

Thirty years hence, RMEF has conserved more than 6.4 million acres of elk country in 27 states while forever protecting almost 1.1 million acres of North America's most vital elk habitat.

In Montana alone, RMEF has so far protected forever 205,000 acres of the most crucial elk habitat and enhanced another 538,000 acres of incredible country. Additionally, the RMEF opened or secured public access to more than 700,000 acres, invested more than $84 million to fund some 1,600 scientific research and wildlife management projects and became a respected voice for sound wildlife stewardship and ethical, fair chase hunting.

Today more than 200,000 active RMEF members hail from every state in America.

Yet, where else but Montana would you find such fanatic, wild-eyed optimism? And it didn't hurt to put everything on the line and work harder than you've ever worked. That's Bob to the core. And he still brims with irrepressible energy, infectious enthusiasm, and wicked good humor.

Early on, he took Theodore Roosevelt's challenge to Dare Greatly. It served him well while as the RMEF's president for the crucial first 14 years, and continues to guide him today as he remains an ambassador for the RMEF's mission to "promote the proper management of elk and elk habitat to ensure their future in North America."

With Bob's guidance, the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has become a tremendous force for conserving wild country and ensuring the future of America's unique hunting heritage both in Montana and all across the nation. Bob, however, would be the first to point out that no individual deserves the credit for what could only be achieved through the passion, sweat and blood of countless others.

Still, throughout the RMEF's first 30 years, no one has dared more greatly than Bob Munson.

Jim Posewitz

1935–

With apologies to Montana author Norman Maclean, and perhaps to 13th Century Zen Master Dogen Zenji, for Jim Posewitz there's never been a clear line between anything and fish and wildlife conservation. It's all one.

In a career of unparalleled accomplishments, "Poz" made extraordinary contributions to the people of Montana.

Upon graduating from Montana State University on a football scholarship out of Sheboygan, Wisconsin, Poz started his career with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks in 1961. As young fisheries biologist in Great Falls and then Glasgow he advocated for the Missouri River's entry into the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

Later, he helped pass the Montana Water Use Act of 1973, worked for passage of the Montana Strip and Underground Mine Reclamation Act in 1980, Montana Environmental Policy Act, and the Major Facilities Siting Act, and influenced numerous other pieces of Montana legislation. With these new tools, he led efforts to 'reserve' in-stream flows in the Yellowstone River and protect the Rocky Mountain Front from an energy exploration frenzy.
He arm-wrestled with state and federal highway administrations to avoid impacts to rivers – including Interstate 15 through Bison Creek Canyon north of Butte and Interstate 90 along the Clark Fork and Saint Regis Rivers.
Poz worked for Montana FWP for more than 30 years; created Orion: The Hunters Institute and served as its executive director as well a founding board member and executive director for the Cinnabar Foundation. He's penned four books on hunter ethics and history, including Beyond Fair Chase: The Ethic and Tradition of Hunting, Inherit the Hunt: A Journey into the Heart of American Hunting, Rife in Hand: How Wild America was Saved and Taking a Bullet for Conservation.

Today, he continues to write eloquent opinion pieces for Montana newspapers and present his learned conservation philosophy at an array of venues. His knowledge of Montana conservation history is second to none.

"Jim Posewitz is a conservation legend in the Northern Rockies," said Collin O'Mara, president and chief executive officer of the National Wildlife Federation upon presenting Poz with NWF's 2015 Conservationist of the Year Award. "Whether it has been fighting for the reintroduction of bison onto the Great Plains…promoting fair chase hunting ethics…or preaching about the historic role of hunters in conservation…Jim has been the conscience and heart of the conservation and wildlife community for decades."

For anyone who's driven the highways from Helena to Missoula, or Helena to Great Falls there's ample sign of Poz's influence.

> "Jim Posewitz is a conservation legend in the Northern Rockies."
> – Collin O'Mara

Bob Ream

1936–

Over four decades of teaching and wildlife advocacy Bob Ream emerged as a gentle giant of conservation in Montana.
As an educator, public servant, and advocate for wild places and the wildlife that inhabit them, Bob's life work will provide benefits far into Montana's bright future.
As a notable wildlife biology professor at the University of Montana's College of Forestry and Conservation, he initiated the Wolf Ecology Project in 1973, setting the groundwork for recovery of the gray wolf in the northern Rocky Mountains.

In 1975 he founded both the Wilderness Institute and the remarkable Wilderness and Civilization program, the latter establishing a unique set of educational experiences that takes a cohort of undergraduate students each year into Montana's wildlands.

Bob served as interim dean of the College of Forestry and Conservation from 1993-1994 where he catalyzed the transition of the school beyond traditional forestry practices to incorporate wildlife biology, wilderness management, and restoration ecology.

Bob served with distinction in the Montana House of Representatives from 1983-1997 as one of the state's most trusted voices for resource protection. He was chief sponsor of Montana's Stream Access Law, Montana Superfund Law, restitution payments for illegally taken wildlife, best management practices in the streamside management zone, and many others.

His commitment earned him the appointment as Chair of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Commission from 2009-2013, a period where key debates over Montana's most iconic wild species were at the forefront.

Bob's background in science and his determination to bring fair, lasting policies regarding wildlife and wildlands have been decisive in sustaining Montana's natural heritage.

For Bob, conservation efforts always needed to focus on people and how a deeper understanding of nature could improve lives. For instance, since its inception 40 years ago, more than 1,000 students have been swept into the magic of Montana's wilderness through Bob's personal commitment to creating an academic program grounded in personal outdoor experiences.

The Wilderness and Civilization Program at the University of Montana remains one of the premier, transformational educational programs in the nation, and dozens of leaders in Montana's conservation community identify their initiation into environmental awareness as the "Wilderness and Civ" program.

Bob advocated policies that not only protected wildlands but ones that encouraged research and conservation education that would allow future generations to develop the science-based capacity to address emerging resource management dilemmas.

Tony Schoonen

1930–

Tony Schoonen's boyhood experiences shaped a conservation consciousness that in turn shaped today's extraordinary public access to Montana experiences coveted by hunters and anglers the world over. Tony was a resident of the Montana State Orphanage in Twin Bridges nearly from birth to about 14 years of age. As was the custom in the 1930s, local ranch folks would take in kids from the orphanage. It was Tony's good luck to live on the Seidensticker Ranch where the family raised him as their own.

When he was done with chores he roamed the Big Hole ranch with the single-shot shotgun and springer spaniel gifted to him by his ranch family.

These experiences – and one critical moment – set in motion a love of the outdoors and a life of conservation activism.

The moment came in the late 1950s, upon returning to the ranch from two years of service in the U.S. Army. Sylvester "Siv" Seidensticker, the ranch patriarch, had used heavy machinery to channel Big Hole River water to irrigation canals.

The backhoed channel moved irrigation water efficiently but it gnawed at Tony as much as the land. The practice seemed to knock the ranch – which Siv worked to improve for livestock and wildlife – off kilter.

For Tony, mulling over the imbalance led to a new conservation consciousness. In time, Tony would recognize that his caretaker, who he held in the highest regard, had turned toward efficiency but the unintended consequence degraded the river and its associated fish and wildlife habitat.

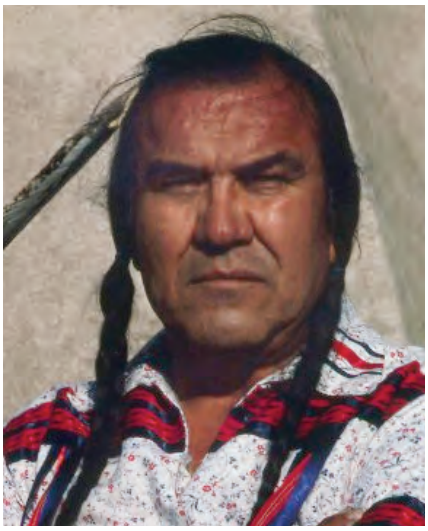
Multiply that imbalance by the probable scores of others and Tony had his life's work cut out for him. After earning his master's degree from the University of Montana-Western, Tony began a 30-year career as a teacher and principal that took him to Cardwell, Whitehall, and Butte. By the early 1960s, his was a familiar face at the Montana Legislature.

The year 1962 saw the passage of a law Tony championed to require highway construction to follow strict guidelines to protect streams. In 1974, a new state law ensured that streambeds would be protected and rivers wouldn't be diverted by construction activities. More than 20 years later, Tony and the Montana Coalition for Stream Access, prevailed in two U.S. District Court decisions and two Montana Supreme Court decisions giving the public access to rivers and streams below the high water mark.

Consider, though, Tony's signature political activities were aimed at recognizing and maintaining the public's right to use and conserve Montana's natural resources. If you hunt or fish or hike on school trust lands, or if you access a favorite stream at the public right of way at a bridge, you have Tony to thank.

Bearhead Swaney

1931–2009



Gifted leader and orator, Thomas "Bearhead" Swaney inspired a generation of Montanans to advocate for environmental protection and tribal sovereignty.

Bearhead grew up next to the Flathead River in Dixon, Montana and lived most of his life on Post Creek, near St. Ignatius.
A Korean War veteran, Bearhead was one of the most earnest tribal leaders of the 1970s and '80s.
As a member of regional and national American Indian councils, Bearhead was among the best-known Indian orators in the nation and recognized throughout Indian Country as a "warrior" –in the most respected use of the word –for wildlife, wilderness, water, and air.

"Bearhead probably had more innate qualities of leadership than anyone I've seen," local historian Thompson Smith, told Char-Koosta News, the official newspaper of the Flathead Indian Nation. "He conveyed a sense of sovereignty in his being…He had a burning sense of justice – and for a more sustainable relationship with the earth. He had a deep love for the earth and all of creation and felt that nature and those among us with the least are very vulnerable; they both need protection and care."

Indeed, as head of the CSKT Health Department, Bearhead incorporated his environmental ethos into drug and alcohol addiction programs by involving young people in their homelands' natural resource setting.

As a young man, Bearhead advocated for Montana wildlife, helping to establish tribal-lands based conservation areas, including one for grizzly bears in the Mission Mountains. For these efforts and more, he received the American Motors Conservationist of the Year Award in the late 1970s.
Bearhead helped establish "Primitive Area" status for the 35,000-acre South Fork and wilderness designation for 95,000 acres on the westslope of the Missions – the nation's first tribally designated wilderness area.
In 1979, due in large part to Bearhead's efforts, the Flathead Indian Reservation was designated as national "pristine" airshed, making CSKT one of the first Indian tribes to achieve the Class I designation for their lands.
In Bearhead's view, however, protecting the Flathead River was his greatest accomplishment – and the one with which he had the most personal connection.

When Bureau of Indian Affairs proposed to log old-growth ponderosa pine from the banks of the 72-mile-long lower Flathead River, he and his cousin Joe McDonald organized a float trip with world-renowned wildlife biologists Frank and John Craighead, BIA foresters, and his tribal council. The BIA soon withdrew its proposal.

"Bearhead probably had more innate qualities of leadership than anyone I've seen."
– Thompson Smith

Pat Williams

1937–

Pat Williams – born in Helena and reared in Butte – employed his considerable political savvy to do more to protect Montana's wildlands than almost anyone alive.

Pat served 18 years in Congress from 1979-1997. No one in Montana history has served more consecutive terms in the U.S. House of Representatives than Pat Williams.

As a congressman, Pat helped Montanans protect invaluable landscapes and outdoor opportunities.

In the early 1980s, Pat secured protection for more than 320,000 acres of wilderness and fended off federal government efforts to open the Bob Marshall and Rocky Mountain Front to seismic testing in an area known as the Overthrust Belt.

More than 30 years later, Pat's effort made possible the permanent protection of that important landscape via the passage of the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act of 2013.

His thoughtful and sometimes hard-nosed representation shaped a generation's perception of wildland protection and the value of wildlands, clean water and wildlife – and the importance those all hold for Montana's economy and way of life.

Additionally, Pat led the 1980 congressional designations for the Rattlesnake Wilderness near Missoula and the Lee Metcalf Wilderness near Bozeman. The Rattlesnake legislation included designation of an adjacent national recreation area management emphasizing environmental educational opportunities. Pat's work, even when legislation stalled, cemented public perceptions that Montana has many areas worthy of federal Wilderness protection.

In that way, Pat similarly championed 1990's Lolo-Kootenai Accords, an early collaborative effort to balance forest-jobs creation with wildland protection. While legislation fell short, the Accords broke decade-long animosities among mill workers and environmentalist to provide a model to address public-land issues across Montana through meaningful collaboration.

Today, Pat continues his service at the University of Montana's Center for the Rocky Mountain West and as an outspoken advocate for forest restoration, wilderness protection, education, arts and social justice. A number of years ago, the Missoulian recalled the time when Pat and a friend were on a walk through The Rattlesnake National Recreation Area. A man on a bicycle passed by then stopped and looked their way.

"You're Pat Williams," he said, pointing at the retired congressman. "Yes," came the reply. The man went on to say that they'd met before during the heated debate over the future of the Rattlesnake. He'd been a motorcycle rider back then and was bitterly opposed to the legislation - which did away with motorized recreation. Then he stuck out his hand to Williams. "I want to thank you for saving us from that folly." We all have Pat to thank.

Acknowledgements

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- Land Tawney
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- Janet Ellis

Nomination Process:

Want to nominate someone for the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame? Here are the minimum inclusion criteria:

1. The nominee has made a significant contribution to restore, conserve, or protect fish, wildlife, rivers, lands, and other outdoor amenities in Montana.
2. The nominee has made a significant contribution to advance the public's interest in and enjoyment of fish, wildlife, rivers, lands, and other outdoor amenities in Montana.
3. The nominee's contributions were tailored specifically and uniquely to the challenges facing Montana at the time.
4. The nominee's accomplishments are of such a nature as to have lasting significance for Montana.
5. The nominee's accomplishments are on par with the scope and breadth of accomplishments set by other inductees of the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame.
6. The nominee's contributions have positively affected others to take actions on behalf of the public's interest in fish, wildlife, rivers, lands, and other outdoor amenities in Montana.

The Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame committee will start accepting nominations in 2017. If you wish to receive an email, notify us at Debra@mtoutdoorlegacy.org

Photo by Jesse Varnado

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