

Happy Public Lands Month, Montana Conservation Voters!

This time of year seems to bring up all the feels.

Before I was born, my dad stole a trail sign for Fenn Mountain. This sign hung in my barn my entire life and became part of the barn's "wallpaper" among horseshoes, pack mule gear, quarter horse racing photos and barn tools. Never giving it a second thought until my boyfriend, now husband, came home to Montana for the first time and asked why his last name was prominently displayed on our barn wall.

My dad passed when I was in elementary school, so this sign took on a deeper meaning. Never one to be "woo-woo," I couldn't help but wonder if that was my dad's way of communicating to me that my now Hubs was the right fit or that he simply had been handicapped.

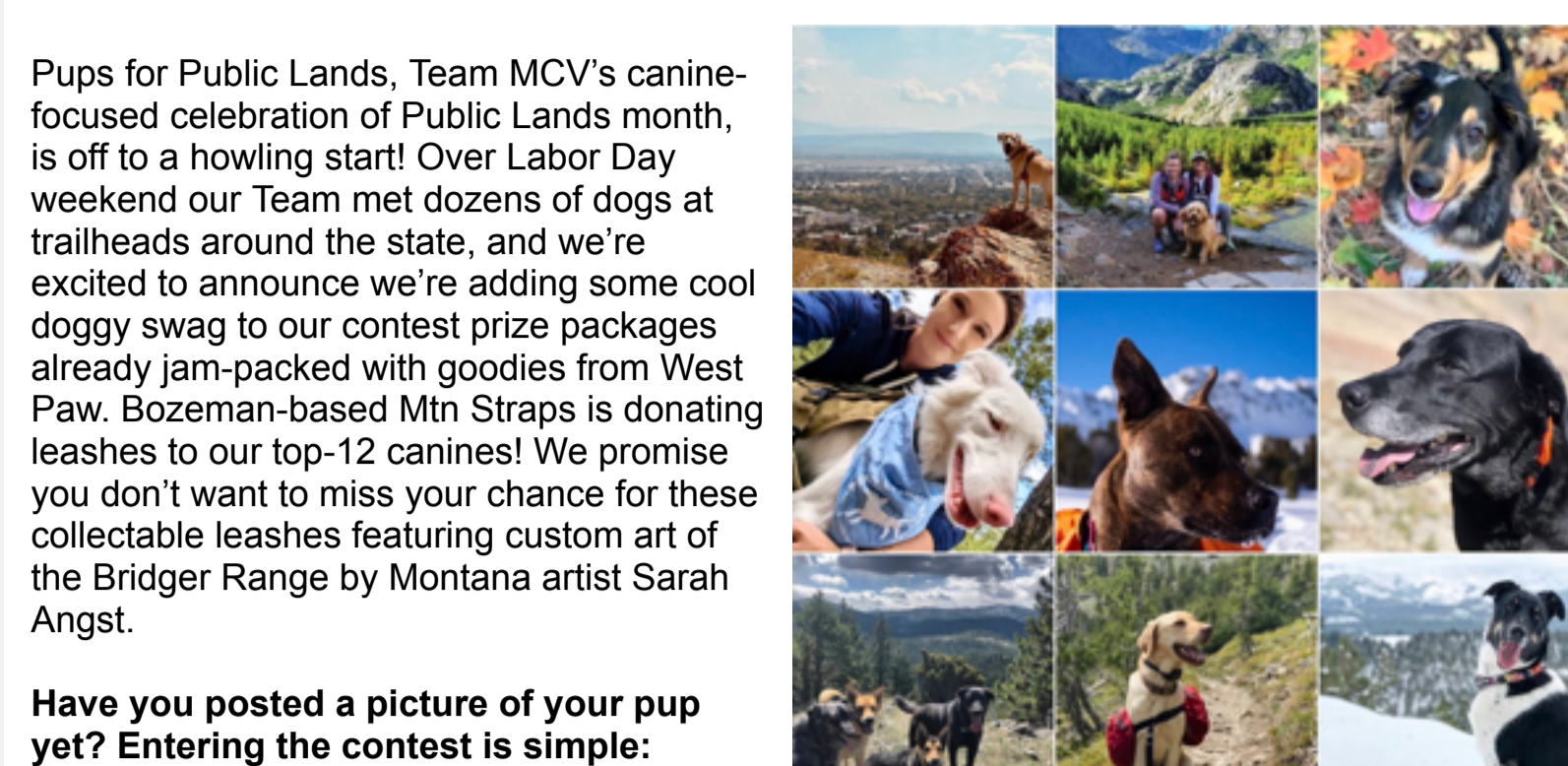
Whatever the case, this year my Hubs and I are celebrating 10 years of marriage. And to mark the occasion we quested out to find Fenn Mountain just outside the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

We were unprepared for the rigorous trail of nine miles with a steady elevation gain of 3,500 feet with little water access, but we found the mountain guided by my dad's curiosity and perseverance—who I swear was the OG of get sh!t done. In our 24 hours of the grid we saw mule deer, a great horned owl, hawks and bear scat and prints. Bodies trees after the nine miles back down, we've never been in more awe.

As we studied the map before our trek, the Hubs and I realized Fenn Mountain is a part of the nearly 80,000 acres to be protected by the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act, which again feels like the guiding hand of my dad and why I continue to work to protect Montana as the Last Best Place.

So please join me in taking a moment to learn about BCSA and call Senator Daines and ask for his support of this once-in-a-lifetime chance to protect our outdoor legacy in Montana. BCSA is heading for action on 9/21 - so make your voice heard today!

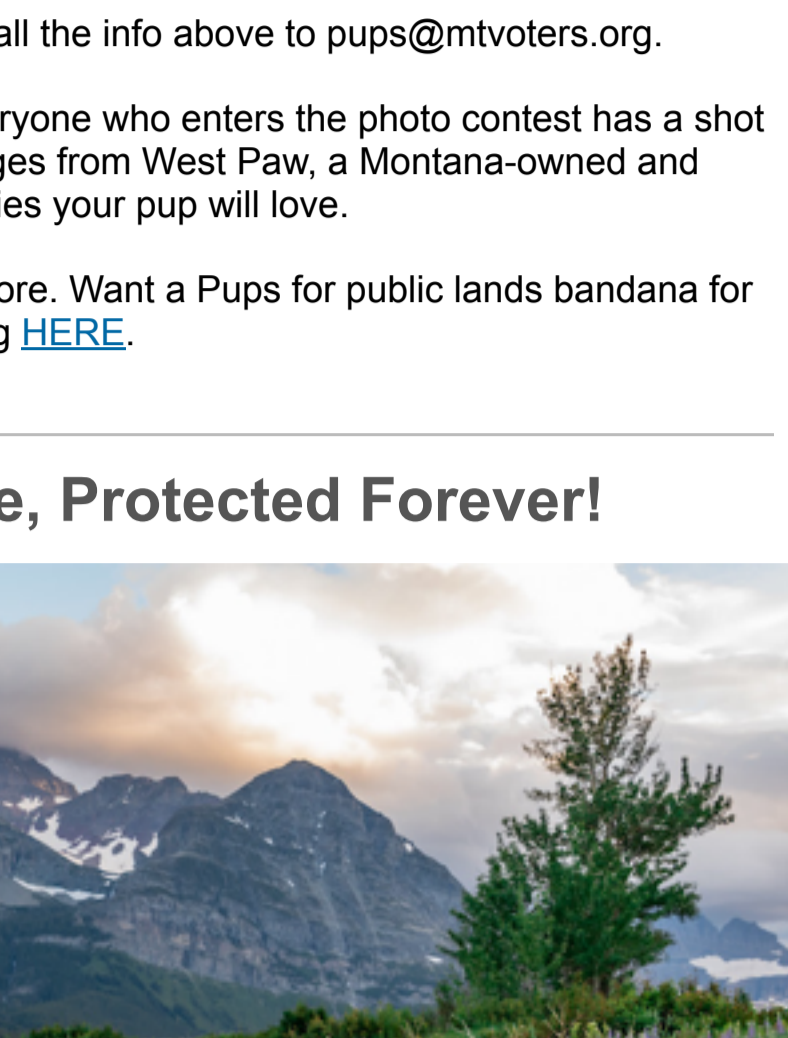
This month is chock full of opportunity and news! Read along and don't miss our Pups for Public Lands photo contest in partnership with West Paw and Mtn Straps, the permanent protection of the Badger-Two Medicine, the dedication of a new fishing access in honor of the late Jim Posewitz and so much more!



Yours in conservation,  
 Whitney Tawney  
 Executive Director  
 Working to get the Livingston Voters

**Doubling Down on Dogs for Public Lands Month**

Pups for Public Lands, Team MCV's canine-focused celebration of Public Lands month is off to a howling start! Over Labor Day weekend our Team met dozens of dogs at trailheads around the state, and we're excited to announce we're adding some cool doggy swag to our contest prize packages already jam-packed with goodies from West Paw. Bozeman-based Mtn Straps is donating leashes to our top-12 contest winners. We promise you don't want to miss your chance for these collectible leashes featuring custom art of the Bridger Range by Montana artist Sarah Angst.



**Have you posted a picture of your pup yet? Entering the contest is simple:**

On Instagram or Facebook, post a photo of your pooch on Montana public lands. In your post, please include:

Your pup's name  
 Where the photo was taken (at least the general area to avoid overburdening small and sensitive locations)

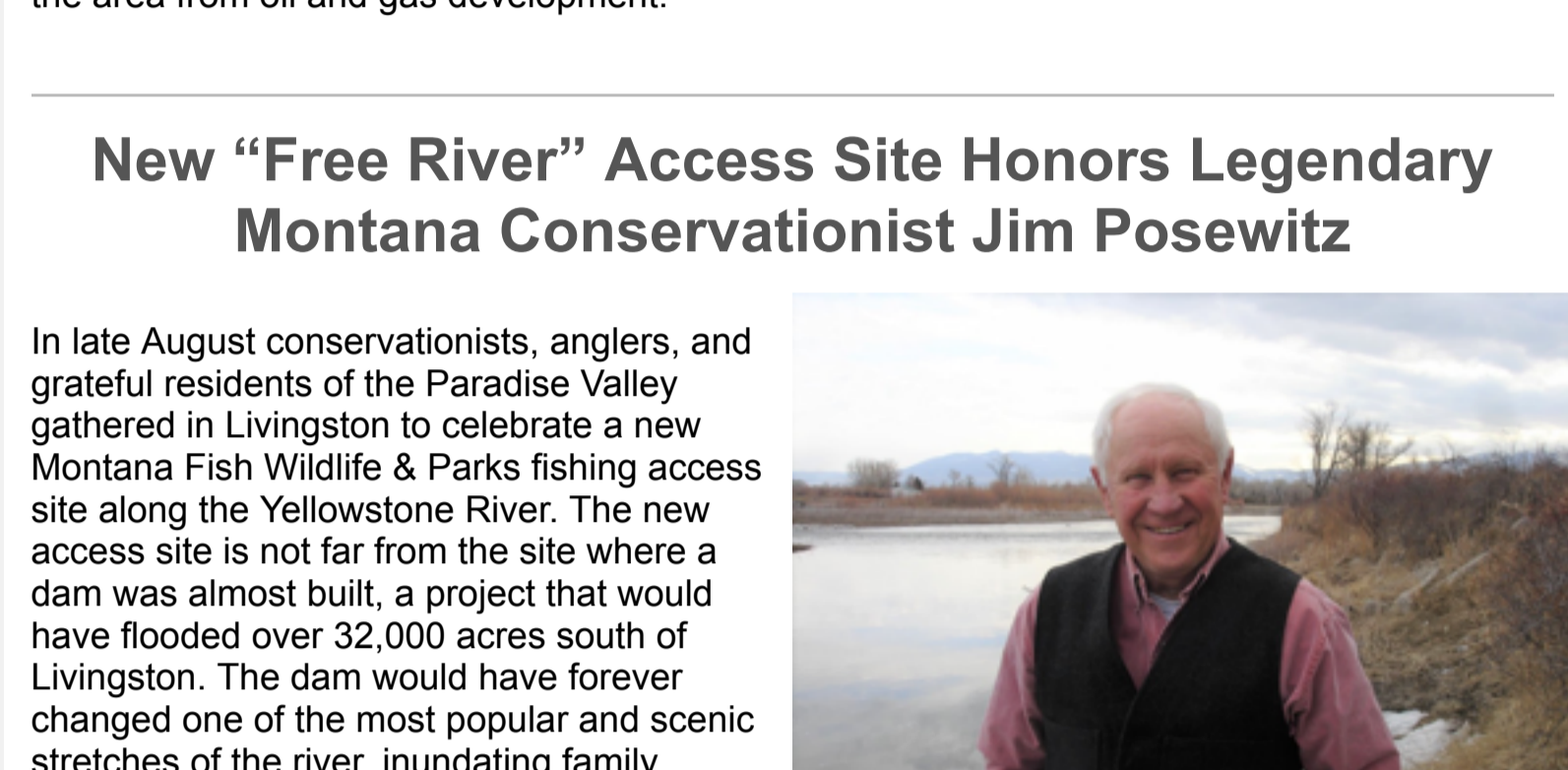
Finally, you must tag @mtvoters AND use the hashtag #pupsforpubliclands

If you prefer email, send your pup photos with the info above to pups@mtvoters.org.

In addition to the leashes from Mtn Straps, everyone who enters the photo contest has a shot at winning one of the amazing top prize packages from West Paw, a Montana-owned and operated maker of toys, treats, and other goodies your pup will love.

Check out [mtvotersfund.org/pups](http://mtvotersfund.org/pups) to learn more. Want a Pups for public lands bandana for your dog? Donate \$50 or more today by visiting [HERE](http://HERE).

**Badger-Two Medicine, Protected Forever!**



This is HUGE news!

MCV Executive Director Whitney Tawney had this to say in response to this historic victory:

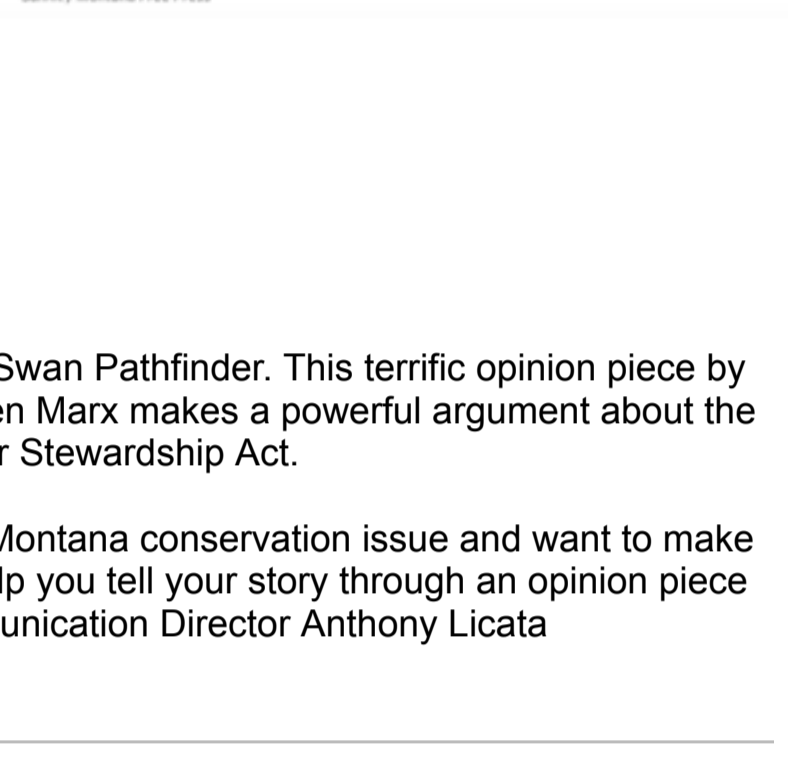
**"With action like this, the Last Best Place keeps getting better! Montanans are indebted to decades of work by Blackfeet Tribal leaders and many dedicated conservationists that led to this historic moment. We thank Secretary of the Interior Deb Haaland and Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack for recognizing the importance of this landscape and working tirelessly to make sure development will never happen."**

The Badger-Two Medicine area encompasses approximately 130,000 pristine acres in Lewis and Clark National Forest, adjacent to Glacier National Park, two wilderness areas, and the Blackfeet Indian Reservation. Badger-Two Medicine was once a part of the Reservation, and the area is sacred to the Blackfeet Nation which has consistently raised the alarm about oil and gas development and what that would do to the landscape.

In 2006, at the urging of Montana U.S. Sen. Max Baucus, Congress banned new leases on the Rocky Mountain Front and created incentives for companies of existing leases to relinquish them. By 2010, most leaseholders had done so, though 29 leases still remained in the Badger-Two Medicine. Over the next several years, most of those leaseholders also voluntarily relinquished those claims recognizing the cultural and ecological significance of the area. In 2016, the Department of the Interior cancelled the remaining leases, which led to a legal challenge culminating in today's news, bringing to a close a 40-year fight to protect the area from oil and gas development.

**New "Free River" Access Site Honors Legacy Montana Conservationist Jim Posewitz**

In late August conservationists, anglers, and grateful residents of the Paradise Valley gathered in Livingston to celebrate a new Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks fishing access site along the Yellowstone River. The new access site is not far from the site where a dam was almost built, a project that would have flooded over 32,000 acres south of Livingston. The dam would have forever changed one of the most popular and scenic stretches of the river, inundating family ranches and destroying some of the best trout habitat in the state. The access site is named in honor of one of the most ardent fighters to protect the River from the dam, the late Jim Posewitz.

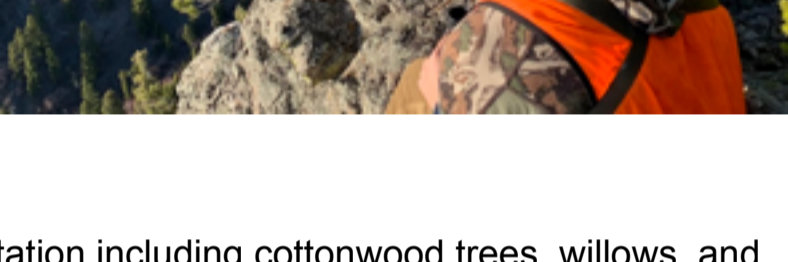


In attendance were Posewitz's family, MCV members and notable Montana conservationists from across the state. The Jim Posewitz Free River Fishing Access Site features interpretive panels that tell the story of the dam that thankfully never came to fruition and Jim Posewitz's contributions.

"Without his hard work, and others like him, we wouldn't have the Yellowstone we do today," said Mike Duncan, Region 2 fisheries manager for Montana FWP. To hear more from Duncan and learn more about how the catastrophe was averted, check out Randy Newberg's great short ["The Dam that Never Was: A Conservation Story of the Yellowstone River."](http://The Dam that Never Was: A Conservation Story of the Yellowstone River)

**MCV in the News**

[The veto and the void. Montana Free Press](http://The veto and the void. Montana Free Press). This well-reported article details the mess created by Governor Gianforte's inexplicable and shady veto of SB 442 (the marijuana revenue funding bill intended to fund our public lands and more!) And Team MCV loved seeing our Helena billboard to hold the Governor accountable included in the story.



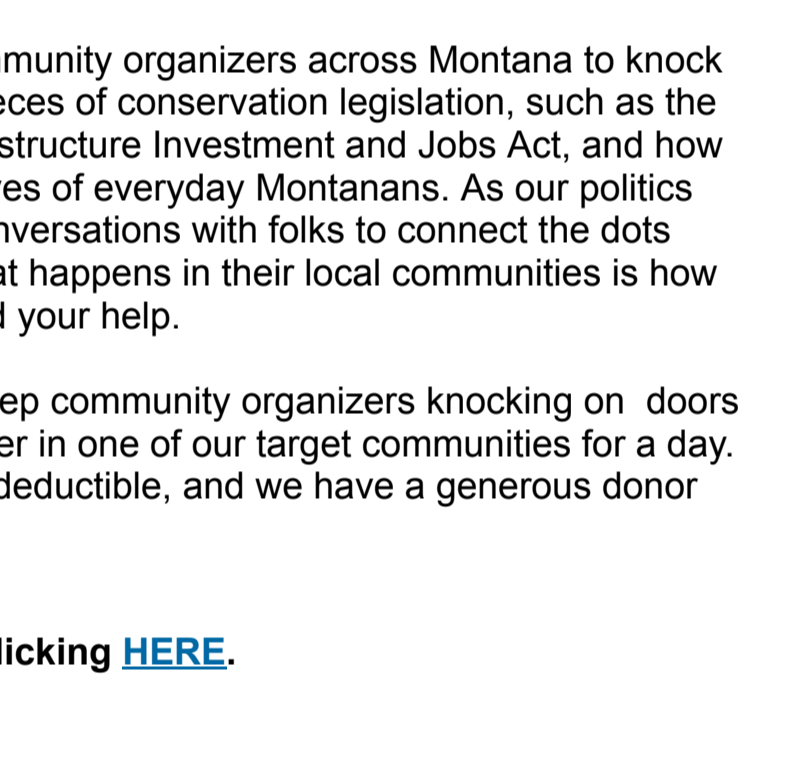
[A Year in IRA Investments Robber MT Horses, Businesses, Public News Service](http://A Year in IRA Investments Robber MT Horses, Businesses, Public News Service). This radio and online piece details how the Inflation Reduction Act has impacted Montana. New jobs in agriculture, investments in solar power, and even caps on prescription drug costs. It has also provided new funding for agriculture conservation programs, bolstering soil health and water quality on Montana farms and ranches.

[Pass the BCSA and support Montana. Seeley Swan Pathfinder](http://Pass the BCSA and support Montana. Seeley Swan Pathfinder). This terrific opinion piece by local business owner and MCV member Adrien Marx makes a powerful argument about the importance of passing the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act.

If you feel passionate about BCSA or another Montana conservation issue and want to make your own voice heard, let us know and we'll help you tell your story through an opinion piece in local Montana media. Contact MCV's Communication Director Anthony Licata via [anthony@mtvoters.org](mailto:anthony@mtvoters.org) to learn more.

**Montana FWP Fall Update**

It's fall, a favorite time of year for Montana hunters as various hunting seasons get underway. Seasons are set by the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission, but they make important decisions about fish, wildlife, and public lands management year round. The next meeting is October 19, and the comment period for several proposals closes even sooner, so now is the time to make your voice heard. One of the most important issues currently up for discussion is the Wildcat Wildlife Management Area Acquisition.



The proposed Wildcat Wildlife Management Area is a 328-acre parcel on the lower Yellowstone River that includes approximately 2.2 miles of riverfront and high-quality riparian wildlife habitat.

Most of the riparian is made up of native vegetation including cottonwood trees, willows, and native grasses. The property supports beneficial habitat to a large suite of game and nongame species.

Mule deer, whitetail deer, Meriam's turkey, waterfowl, ring-necked pheasant, sharp-tailed grouse, and other species can be found on the property. In addition, the proposed property hosts, or has the potential to host, several "species of concern" including great blue heron, black-tailed prairie dog, spiny softshell turtle, little brown myotis and many other species.

The proposed WMA is located in an area (river mile 226) that FWP and the advisory committee have identified as high priority for habitat conservation and protection along the Lower Yellowstone River. Further, the proposed property would provide boat-in and walk-in access for anglers, floaters, hunters, hikers, and wildlife watchers.

Comments on the proposed Wildcat WMA will be accepted through September 19, 2023, with final adoption at the October commission meeting. To comment on Wildcat, the proposed 2024 fishing regulations, and other issues, check out the meeting page on the FWP website [here](http://here).

**Talking to the Neighbors: MCV's Community Organizers**

This fall, Team MCV is launching teams of community organizers across Montana to knock doors and educate Montanans on landmark pieces of conservation legislation, such as the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and how these new federal laws affect the day-to-day lives of everyday Montanans. As our politics become more polarized, having meaningful conversations with folks to connect the dots between what happens in Washington and what happens in their local communities is how we will change hearts and minds—but we need your help.

Team MCV is working hard to raise funds to keep community organizers knocking on doors this fall. Chipping in just \$70 will put a canvasser in one of our target communities for a day. Better yet, your donations to this effort are tax deductible, and we have a generous donor matching up to \$30,000 in donations.

**Act now by clicking [HERE](http://HERE).**

**Are You the Organizer We're Looking For?**

Want to talk with Montanans in your community and make a difference? Help Team MCV get the word out about conservation issues in your town by joining our canvassing team as a Field Organizer! We are currently looking for Field Organizers in Billings. Check out the job posting [HERE](http://HERE). We'll soon be hiring in Bozeman and the Flathead as well so stay tuned.



It's less than a month until MCV's 2023 Gala at the Livingston Depot on Friday, October 13! Sponsorships and tickets are going fast, and you don't want to miss this epic party to protect the Last Best Place.

We are so excited for the performance by special guest [Susanah!](http://Susanah!) An innovative, award-winning Native American dancer and hip hop artist, [Susanah!](http://Susanah!) is a member of the Apsákwike Nation who grew up in Crow Agency, Montana. His work combines Native, comedic, and urban hip hop cultures, and his performances will leave you smiling, dancing, and laughing.



Snag your tickets today at [mtvoters.org/gala](http://mtvoters.org/gala).

**Score on Epic Montana Fun, All While Supporting MCV and Conservation!**

The silent auction for MCV's Annual Gala goes live online tomorrow, Wednesday, September 13! We are so excited for our silent auction this year, which is jam packed with gear, guided adventures, and goodies from across Montana!

Here are some of the highlights:

A day of skiing at [Showdown Montana](http://Showdown Montana) followed by a relaxing stay at [The Edith in White Sulphur Springs](http://The Edith in White Sulphur Springs)

A two-night weekend stay or a three-night weekend stay at [Little Smith Creek Ranch](http://Little Smith Creek Ranch) just outside Victor, MT

Artwork fresh from the studio of Montana artist and conservationist [Claire Emery](http://Claire Emery)

Lift tickets and action photography at [Big Sky Resort](http://Big Sky Resort) for two

Plus more from [Crazy Hackle, Patagonia, Bozeman Symphony](http://Crazy Hackle, Patagonia, Bozeman Symphony), and more!

Watch your inbox tomorrow for a link to our online silent auction and information about how to bid online!

**Extra Thanks to our 2023 Gala Sponsors!**

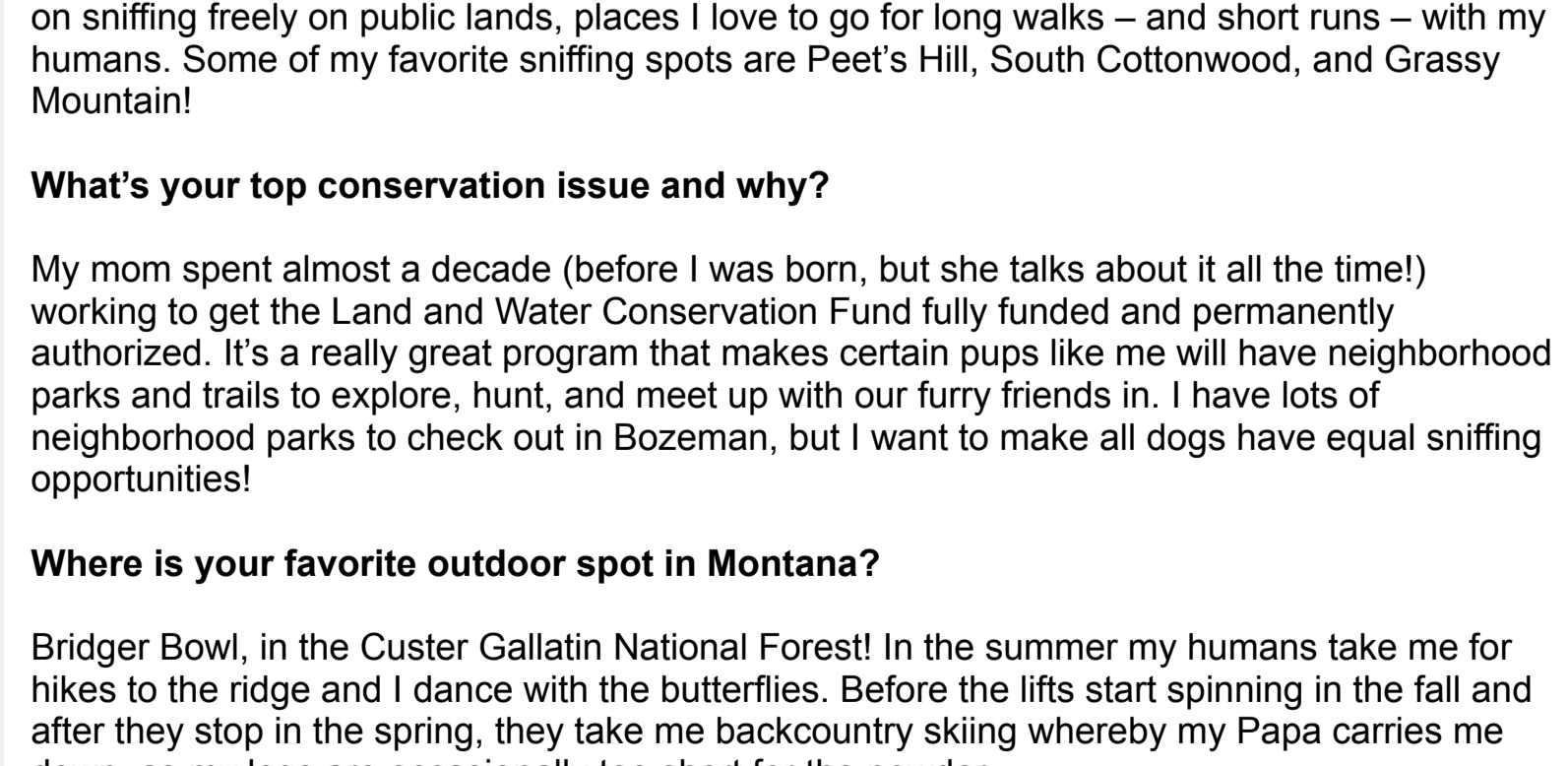
- Platinum**  
Western Conservation Foundation
- Premium**  
The Messina Group  
Treasure State PAC
- Leader**  
Clearwater Credit Union  
Ducks Unlimited  
Jeffrey Fortes  
Protect Our Writers
- Partner**  
Hilltop Public Solutions  
Katabolic Brewing Company  
League of Conservation Voters  
Lucy Dayton and Mark O'Keefe  
PacificSource Health Plans  
Sally Ericsson and Tom Garwin  
Sweetwater Travel Company
- Friend**  
Bill and Jan Lombardi  
Cathy Finney  
Forward Montana  
Graybill Law Firm, PC  
Jacques Cattier  
Jeanne-Marie Souvigney and Bob Raney  
Jenny and Ken Younger  
Jock Conyngham and Emi Kodama  
Kathryn and Terry Meyers  
National Wildlife Federation Action Fund  
Navigate Campaigns  
Outside Bozeman  
RevMT  
Stone Peak Recruiting  
The Billings Times  
Zach and Cary Meyers

Questions about sponsorships, our silent auction, or tickets? Contact Jessica at [jessica@mtvoters.org](mailto:jessica@mtvoters.org).

**There's Still Time to Become a Sponsor!**

Each sponsorship level comes with tickets to the gala and special ways to connect with MCV's supporters before and during the event. We are still accepting donations of quality gear and outdoor experiences to our silent auction, too!

Show your clients and community that you care about conservation by supporting MCV and sponsoring the best party in the West at [mtvoters.org/gala](http://mtvoters.org/gala).



**Member of the Month!**



**Baloo**  
Bozeman, MT

Since dogs are running our Public Lands Month celebration, we decided to ask one of our judges of the contest, Baloo, dog of Rebecca Edwards, the usual questions.

**Why are you an MCV member?**

I love MCV not only because my mom does, but because they help make certain I can keep on sniffing freely on public lands, places I love to go for long walks – and short runs – with my humans. Some of my favorite sniffing spots are Peet's Hill, South Cottonwood, and Grassy Mountain!

**What's your top conservation issue and why?**

My mom spent almost a decade (before I was born, but she talks about it all the time!) working to get the Land and Water Conservation Fund fully funded and permanently authorized. It's a really great program that makes certain pups like me will have neighborhood parks and trails to explore, hunt, and meet up with our furry friends in. I have lots of neighborhood parks to check out in Bozeman, but I want to make all dogs have equal sniffing opportunities!

**Where is your favorite outdoor spot in Montana?**

Bridger Bowl, in the Custer Gallatin National Forest! In the summer my humans take me for hikes to the ridge and dance with the butterflies. Before the life started commencing in the fall and after they stop in the spring, they take me backcountry skiing whereby my Papa carries me down, as my legs are occasionally too short for the powder.

**CHECK US OUT ON SOCIAL MEDIA**

Do you want to see more cute dog pictures, or a spectacular video from Whitney's Fenn Mountain adventure? Check us out on social media for Pups updates but also Montana news, conservation updates, and all things Team MCV! Check us out on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter - all at @mtvoters!

