

Happy January, Montana Conservation Voters!

The 69th Montana Legislature is officially underway in Helena, and the stakes couldn't be higher.

In 2023, Montana saw its first legislative supermajority in the 50 years — a supermajority that, unfortunately, threatened many of the values that make Montana the Last Best Place. This year, that supermajority is broken, and we're grateful there are conservation champions from both sides of the aisle stepping up to defend what makes our state so special.

Already, in just the second week of the session, over 4,300 bills have already been introduced or are pending. Some of these bills pose significant threats — efforts to undermine the state Supreme Court, reduce oversight in utility planning for electric and gas services, and jeopardize our native species. While the challenges ahead are substantial, we remain hopeful because we know that Montana's best days are still to come. Achieving that future will require all of us, from every corner of the state, to unite and stand against policies that harm our clean air, clean water, public lands and democracy.

Montanans love this place for good reason. It's time to take action to protect the Montana we know and love — the one where our way of life is shaped by the quiet beauty of our wilderness, the grandeur of our mountains, and the vastness of our plains.

This legislative session, Team MCV is fully committed to defending our right to access public lands and safeguarding our air and water for future generations. We're prepared to fight for our Constitution and democracy, knowing that we have the power to make a difference.

So what's next? Stay engaged and vigilant. Visit MontanaPushback.org to stay informed and take action in this legislative session. Together, we will fight to protect the Last Best Place for all Montanans.

Thank you for your unwavering support!



Yours in conservation,

Whitney Tawney
Executive Director
Montana Conservation Voters

JOIN US FOR THE 2025 MEMBER CELEBRATION: RALLY FOR MONTANA'S FUTURE!

Team MCV is thrilled to announce a powerful opportunity to come together and celebrate our shared commitment to protecting Montana! This year brings new hope—conservation champions are in the Capitol, ready to defend our rights to clean air, land, and water. With the supermajority no longer standing in the way, we have a chance to make real progress. Our Member Celebration will be a pivotal moment to connect, strategize, and inspire action for the year ahead.

Mark your calendar:
Friday, February 28, 2025
Great Northern Hotel, Helena
6–8 PM

Don't miss your chance to be part of this exciting event! You can show your support by sponsoring or by purchasing tickets now: [HERE](#)

Thanks to your support, our 2024 events were unforgettable, and we're counting on you to help make 2025 even more impactful. Whether you attend as a sponsor, supporter, or advocate, your involvement will help us protect the Montana we all love.

We can't wait to see you in Helena and build momentum for a stronger, more sustainable future for our state!

PUBLIC LANDS VICTORY: U.S. SUPREME COURT DISMISSES UTAH V. UNITED STATES

We're thrilled to share some fantastic news for our public lands — and for all of us who treasure the open spaces, clean water, and outdoor lifestyle that makes Montana the best state in the Union. The U.S. Supreme Court has dismissed *Utah v. United States*, a case that sought to transfer federal public lands to state control. This is a monumental win for Montana's public lands and a victory for all who value these irreplaceable resources.

Nearly one-third of Montana's lands are held in public trust, and this ruling ensures they will remain in public hands for generations to come. It safeguards our wildlife, our outdoor way of life, and the communities that rely on these lands for work, recreation, and cultural identity.

This decision also sends a powerful message: that public lands should stay in public hands. It protects them from privatization or exploitation by private interests, ensuring access to open spaces, clean air, and clean water for all. It's a win for our economy, and the future of our public lands.

While the Supreme Court's decision earlier this week is a significant victory, the fight is far from over. The Court's dismissal does not prevent Utah from refiling the case, which is why it's critical that your voice is heard if you haven't signed our petition yet. Our petition to keep public lands in public hands will be delivered at the Public Lands Rally on **February 19** in Helena — so sign on today [HERE](#). And don't forget to share it with your family and friends to help us make an even bigger impact.

Thank you for being part of this movement. Together, we'll continue working to keep Montana's public lands protected for future generations!

MCV AT THE MONTANA LEGISLATURE

What's Happening and How Can YOU Stay Informed

The first week of the 69th Montana Legislature is in the books! Our Program Director, Kearstyn Cook, and Field Manager, Natalie Wright, are on the ground in Helena, closely tracking developments in the Capitol to keep you informed.

This week, we monitored key energy, natural resources, and wildlife bills that were heard in their relevant House committees. Meanwhile, the Senate had a slow start after a dispute over [chamber's rules disrupted committee proceedings](#). Senate committees are expected to resume normal operations this week, and we're paying close attention to a Senate bill aimed to [allow online voter registration](#), which is scheduled for a committee hearing on Wednesday, January 15.

As the legislative session unfolds, it's essential to stay engaged on the issues that matter most to your community. Here's how Team MCV is helping you stay connected and take action:

— **WEEKLY ROUNDUPS:** Each week, we'll send a quick snapshot of key legislative priorities, upcoming votes, and actionable steps you can take. Whether it's contacting your legislators, attending hearings, or submitting public comments, we'll provide the tools you need to make a difference.

— **ORIENTATION GUIDE:** The legislative session is a marathon, not a sprint. To help you navigate the process, we've put together an [Orientation Guide](#) that explains how the session works, who's involved, and what we're focusing on this year.

— **LEGISLATIVE HOTLISTS:** We're tracking bills that matter most to our conservation efforts. Our [Legislative Hotlists](#) will help you stay updated on the bills we're supporting and opposing, so you'll always know what's at stake and how to engage.

— **2025 POLICY AGENDA:** For a deeper dive into our priorities — protecting conservation funding, advancing energy freedom, and defending our Constitution — visit [MontanaPushback.org](#). There you can learn more and take immediate action.

Your voice matters, and we're here to help you make it heard. Stay tuned, stay engaged, and let's work TOGETHER to protect Montana's future!

AN ENDURING LEGACY: THANK YOU JON TESTER

As we reflect on the remarkable service of U.S. Senator Jon Tester, his leadership in protecting Montana's public lands and supporting our outdoor economy stands out.

A lifelong Montanan with deep agricultural roots, Jon skillfully balanced land use and conservation, helping to sustain the \$7 billion outdoor recreation industry that supports over 71,000 jobs in our state.



Jon's achievements include leading the passage of the historic Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act in 2013, which protected the North Fork of the Flathead River, and championing the permanent reauthorization and funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund in 2019. He also sponsored the bipartisan Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act to safeguard 30,000 acres from industrial mining. Additionally, Jon was a key advocate for the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act, securing vital funding for wildfire mitigation and water infrastructure projects like the Milk River Project.

Throughout his career, Jon's dedication and hard work, shaped by his experience as a farmer and teacher, have made Montana a better place. We are grateful for his service and wish him and Sharla all the best as they begin their next chapter.

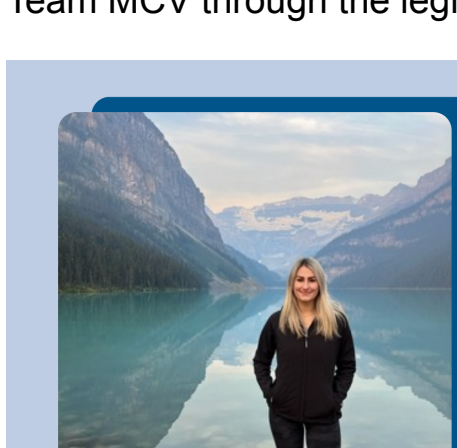


Sally Ericsson
Board Chair
Montana Conservation Voters

FIELD NOTES

Team MCV is sustaining the momentum of our impactful field program by keeping on a Regional Organizer in three of our key communities: Bozeman, Billings, and Missoula! These organizers will engage Montanans on a range of conservation issues directly impacting their communities throughout the 2025 legislative session.

Here's what Bozeman's Regional Organizer, Andrea, has to say about continuing the fight with Team MCV through the legislative session:

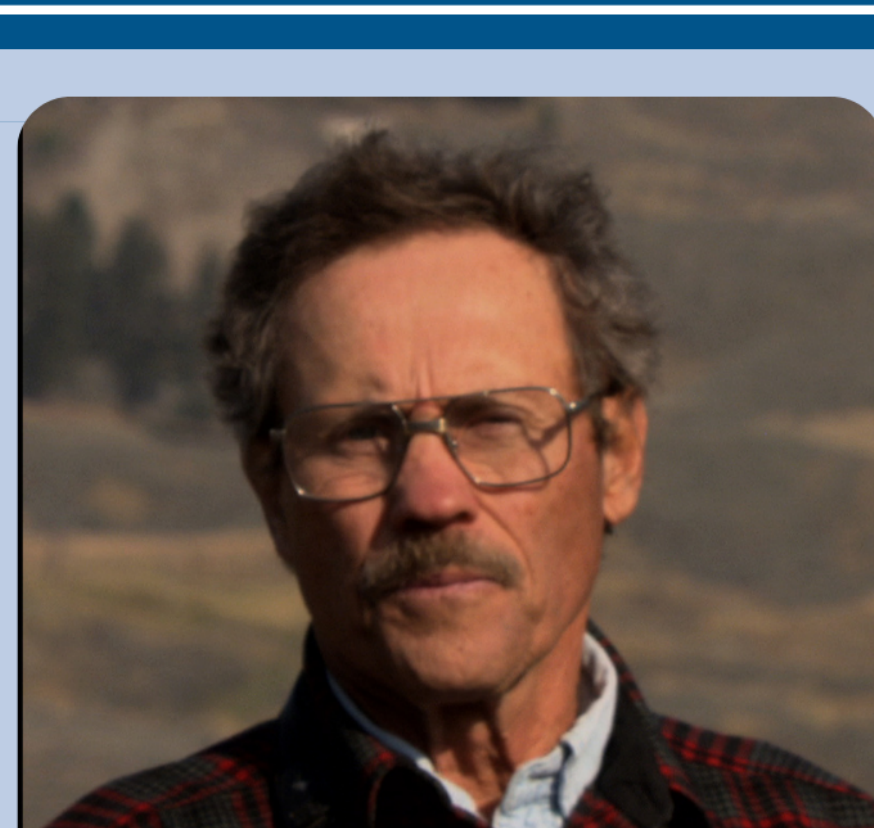


"The election results are in. Team MCV did some inspiring work this election cycle. Although the election results were not all we had hoped they would be, one thing is for sure, we fought for our Montana!

This legislative session is sure to be a sporty one, but I know team MCV has what it takes to PUSHBACK and defend our Montana this cycle.

This is not my first rodeo when it comes to legislative cycles. I worked during the 2021 legislative session. If you haven't experienced a Montana session, here is what you need to know. They are short, fast, and unpredictable; you need to be quick on your feet and ready to mobilize at any second. The next 5 months will go by like a whirlwind I am sure, but I'm ready for it!"

Member of the Month



Bob Landis
Gardiner, MT

Why are you an MCV member?

In the fall of 1968 my wife and I moved from Wisconsin to Billings. I was raised in a very conservative family and in 1968 I voted for Nixon. Soon after a Billings resident, Polly Holmes, took me under her wing asking, "Why do you vote for people that don't represent your outdoor interests?" In the next election I was her campaign manager, she won! And the golden age of Montana conservation began. Since then I have continued to support organizations, such as MCV, in the hopes of preserving our wild lands.

What's your top conservation issue and why?

I arrived in Montana with high hopes of catching big trout, killing trophy animals and filming wildlife. Ditching the first two I have become a full time filmmaker and as such I am interested in protecting wolves that live in Yellowstone for the majority of their lives but do venture beyond the safety of its borders. Once wolves were delisted Montana has waged war on the species. This has affected directly my ability to capture significant wolf behavior at a reasonable distance. Since 2012 the wolves on the Northern Range have become much more wary of humans both in the park and north of the park. Good for the survival of the wolf, not so good for someone trying to make a living producing wildlife documentaries.

Where is your favorite outdoor spot in Montana?

My parents introduced me to the wilds of northern Montana, on a long trip from Wisconsin. My new wife then insisted we go a little further north (1500 miles of gravel north) to Alaska. Here I fell in love with the wilds of Denali National Park and met noted preservationists like Adolph Murie. When we moved to Montana the Beartooths were a logical extension, high mountains and alpine tundra. When the opportunity came to protect this area I and several others in Billings gathered signatures in support of creating the Beartooth Wilderness. Senator Metzger at the hearing for the bill commented on the value of some 10,000 signatures. I testified that the proposed wilderness was not only challenging to a young backpacker but with the Beartooth Highway accessible to a much older less physical hiker. At 84 I now know how accurate that comment was. My favorite Montana spot? That's easy and has been for 57 years.

SAVE THE DATES

January 23 (Moved from 1/16) — Legislative Catch-Up, Bozeman ([RSVP HERE](#))

January 24 — Legislative Catch-Up, Billings ([RSVP HERE](#))

January 27 — Legislative Catch-Up, Missoula ([RSVP HERE](#))

January 30 — Legislative Soirée & Lobby Day, Helena ([RSVP HERE](#))

February 13 — Constitution Rally at the Capitol, Helena ([RSVP HERE](#))

February 19 — Public Lands Rally at the Capitol & Lobby Day, Helena ([RSVP HERE](#))

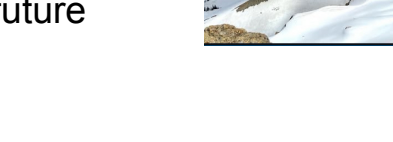
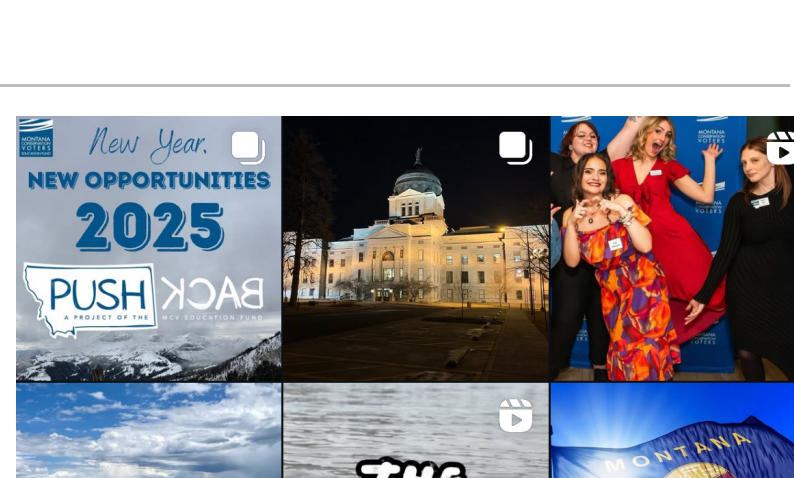
February 28 — MCV Annual Member Celebration, Helena ([RSVP HERE](#))

October 11 — Annual Gala, Livingston

November 4 — Municipal Elections

Now the legislative session is underway, staying connected with Team MCV has never been more important.

In addition to [MontanaPushback.org](#), social media is a great way to stay in the loop and get real time updates. Follow us to stay informed on the 2025 Legislature, upcoming events, petitions, educational resources, and much more! Follow us today to be part of the movement to protect our state for future generations!



Paid for by Montana Conservation Voters
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