MONTANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION

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Libby Rod and Gun
Public Land/Water Access Association
Rosebud/Treasure Wildlife Association
Russell Country Sportsmen Association
Traditional Bowhunters of Montana
Western Bear Foundation

Cover Story
A Tom in full strut in the foothills of the Bitterroot Mountains during the early Spring. Photo taken by Heath Helgert, NWTF volunteer for the Bitterroot Longbeards and owner of H2O Productions.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Speaking Up for Wildlife and our Outdoor Heritage
By Executive Director, Dave Chadwick

With the 2019 Legislative Session underway, MWF staff and volunteers have been devoting a great deal of energy to showing up and speaking up for wildlife, hunters and anglers, and our public lands at the Capitol. Thanks to our strong grassroots voice and our constructive relationships with lawmakers, we’ve already defeated several toxic bills that would’ve undercut scientific wildlife management and curtailed habitat protection. Of course, we have plenty of fights left ahead of before the Legislature adjourns.

In addition to speaking up at the Legislature, MWF remains busy working on other issues across Montana - from advocating for local conservation projects to working with our Members of Congress to support public land protection to speaking up at every meeting of the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

How do we do so much for wildlife? We depend on the dedication and support of thousands of members who are willing to take a stand for Montana’s wildlife and outdoor heritage - from showing up for a rally in the Capitol, to writing a letter to a lawmaker, to turning out at a local meeting on big game management. We can also accomplish our mission by working with other conservation voices from across the political spectrum - wilderness advocates, other hunters and anglers, businesses, farmers and ranchers - to do what’s best for Montana.

Contact Dave Chadwick at dchadwick@mtwf.org

MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Working Together to Manage Big Game
By MWF President, Bill Geer

Montana is blessed to have abundant wildlife – sometimes too abundant. Our deer, elk and antelope herds have healthy numbers, but that abundance means complex challenges for public opportunity to enjoy our public trust wildlife.

Nowhere is that more apparent than the discussion we’re having with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and in the Legislative over elk shoulder seasons.

Shoulder seasons were started in 2015 to address elk populations in select areas that are over the “objective” population number set in the statewide elk management plan. The seasons run from mid-August to mid-February, and hunting a species for six months out of the year makes a lot of hunters uncomfortable. These hunts were designed not to replace general season harvest, but rather to complement it. They were supposed to provide another tool for managing elk herds, and they were supposed to be based on objective scientific data about harvest.

Even though the shoulder seasons are a controversial experiment, the Legislature has several proposals that would write them into state law. MWF doesn’t support that, because those decisions should involve hunters, landowners and FWP. Legislative action on this issue gets headlines, but it just drives stakeholders apart instead of bringing them together.
Fighting for Fish, Wildlife and Habitat in the 2019 Legislative Session

By Nick Gevock, MWF Conservation Director

The 2019 Montana Legislature is well underway, with dozens of bills under consideration that would affect wildlife, habitat, public access and funding for the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. As we have for decades, the Montana Wildlife Federation has staff and volunteers at the Capitol to track legislation, testify at committee hearings, meet with individual legislators, and negotiate the details on bills that address a wide variety of issues. We are also providing information so that our members and other Montanans can stay up-to-date on the issues and get involved in the legislative process. MWF and our conservation partners are working hard to maintain our healthy habitat and wildlife and to improve public access to public lands, as well as to provide more incentives for hunting and fishing access to private lands.

Keeping Public Roads Open to Public Land

Over the last few years, MWF has been working to build support for legislation to crack down on illegal closures of public roads to public land. SB 224, sponsored by Tom Jacobson, D-Great Falls, would increase the fine for gating a county road from the current $10 per day to up to $500 per day, with no minimum fine. The bill would deter people from gating county roads and give county attorneys a powerful tool to reopen illegally gated roads.

MWF is working with county attorneys, commissioners and our affiliate, the Public Land/Water Access Association, to get the bill passed.

Protecting Habitat Montana

Protecting the Habitat Montana program is of critical importance to MWF. This program has helped protect for wildlife habitat more than 880,000 acres throughout the state. It does that through targeted land purchases and conservation easements on private lands with willing landowners. MWF, through two of its affiliates, last year supported Gov. Bullock’s position in a lawsuit that easements under Habitat Montana don’t require approval of the state Land Board.

That case arose after the Land Board voted to indefinitely delay the Horse Creek Complex easement near Wibaux, which permanently opened 20,000 acres of private and adjoining public lands to hunting for mule deer, antelope and game birds. This session, HB 265, sponsored by Rep. Kerry White, R-Bozeman, would require state Land Board approval for easements, effectively undoing the ruling by the Supreme Court. MWF rallied the groups that form the Montana Sporting Coalition to send a letter against the bill and oppose it in committee and on the floor. We stressed that landowners need a predictable process to go through to enter into an easements, and adding a layer of bureaucratic government over that process was a waste of resources and would add uncertainty. We will keep working to kill this bill by engaging our grassroots volunteers.

Protecting Fair Chase

MWF has long stood up for Montana’s deep commitment to ethical, fair chase hunting and fishing. One bill this session would ban the practice seen in several other states of people selling the precise location of trophy big game animals. SB 127, sponsored by Sen. Jill Cohenour, D-East Helena, would make it illegal in Montana to sell wildlife location information. This is a solid, proactive

Streamlining Hunting & Fishing Licensing

Numerous bills that affect hunting and fishing licensing are moving in the session. Several aim to lower the cost of wolf licenses or allow them to be an add on to other big game licenses, including HB 280, HB 281 and HB 407. MWF is supportive of these measures, while working to maintain wolf hunting as an ethical, fair-chase hunt. The bills ensure that the wolf management account remains sound so that FWP can continue to manage the species, as it’s required to do under statute.

Working Together for Conservation

MWF understands that it takes teamwork and broad coalitions to stand up for our shared values of wildlife and habitat. We work with several coalitions to bring a powerful, united voice on key issues. We have been integral to forming and maintaining the Montana Sporting Coalition, a group comprised of more than a dozen hunting and angling groups with a combined membership in the state of more than 25,000 sportsmen and sportswomen. We hold weekly calls and work to protect Habitat Montana, other habitat programs and on select bills that draw our broad agreement.

MWF is also part of the Public Lands Coalition, which includes a host of other recreation groups working to protect public lands and that helped organize the Public Lands Rally. The group also has been critical to working on increased funding for state parks and other pro public lands measures in the state budget.

MWF attends the weekly meeting of the Conservation Working Group, another coalition with diverse organizations that monitors clean air, clean water, renewable energy, public lands and wildlife. And we attend a weekly meeting with stakeholders on key fish and wildlife issues with Montana FWP staff.
Another bill, SB 102 sponsored by Sen. Roger Webb, R-Billings, would have changed the park fee on vehicle registration from an opt-out, to a required opt-in, and raised it to $25. That would have cut the park system budget by nearly $2 million per year and caused major problems with their operations. The bill died unanimously in the Senate Fish and Game Committee.

Protecting the Budget of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

Montana FWP entered this year in sound financial shape. That’s largely because of the work done in 2015 to pass HB 140, a total revamp of hunting and fishing licenses that standardized discounted and free licenses and went to a four year review of licenses. Coupled with funding from the federal excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, equipment and fishing tackle, FWP is sound. And because of that, the agency is not asking for an increase in hunting license fees this session. FWP is looking to make some one-time, capital investments in buildings, equipment and technology to better prepare for the future. Among the greater of those investments is the proposal in HB 10 to make a $10 million investment to acquire a new Automated Licensing System, the computer hardware and software through which hunters and anglers purchase licenses and apply for special permits. The current system is 20 years old and long overdue for an upgrade, vital because it’s how the agency collects the vast majority of its operating revenue.

HB 2, the state operating budget, includes several new staff positions that FWP needs to keep up with an expanding grizzly bear population, as well as wildlife planners to update and craft plans for specific species of big game. The bear management specialists would be located in Red Lodge and Butte, two areas that are close to grizzly bear populations and responsible to support significant amounts of work with ranchers, homeowners and recreationists to prevent conflicts.

Fighting Aquatic Invasive Species

The issue of keeping invasive mussels and other non-native aquatic species out of our waters is critical this session. Last Legislature, Montana FWP was able to get a program up and running very quickly to inspect boats and work to educate boaters and other recreationists about the threat. But that law expires this year and must be renewed by the Legislature. The program is essential and must keep going. The big question is how it’s funded. The bill that came out of the state Environmental Quality Council, HB 32, does not include funding from hydropower generation. Several other bills are moving forward and MWF is engaged to ensure the program is maintained while the cost of running it is spread among different interests.

Strengthening Montana State Parks

Bills that affect our state park system are moving ahead. This follows the 2017 session, which included bills that would have either moved the parks division out of FWP or given it broad autonomy from the agency director.

SB 24, sponsored by Sen. Terry Gauthier, R-Helena, would increase the funding from the vehicle registration fee from the current $6 to $9. It required some of the funding go to trails and fishing access sites. The bill drew widespread support from trails advocates, rural and urban communities and sporting groups. The bill was tabled in the Senate Fish and Game Committee, but then blasted onto the floor of the Senate and passed easily.

This shows broad support for our state parks and a willingness to fund them. And it follows the nearly two year review of state parks by the governor’s Parks in Focus group that has made a series of recommendations to improve and better fund the system.

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Prohibiting the Budget of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

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Get Involved

MWF is active every day in the Capitol, including our grassroots volunteers, staff and lobbyist. For the most up to date information, join our Legislative Action Team and check our bill tracker on our homepage or sign up for our action alerts at http://montanawildlife.org/
Federal Policy Update
Successes and Challenges at the Federal Level

Major Public Lands Legislation Crosses the Finish Line

At the end of February, Congress passed the Natural Resource Management Act of 2019 (S.47), a bill that contained dozens of important proposals to protect public lands. Leading the list was the reauthorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which expired in 2018. The bill also included the Yellowstone Gateway Protection Act, which withdraws mining claims in the headwaters of the Yellowstone River. Other provisions of the bill will protect hundreds of thousands of acres of other public land around the nation and expand public access for hunting and fishing.

S.47 passed with overwhelming bipartisan support, reflecting the hard work that conservationists across the nation put into building support for the program. Senator Jon Tester, Senator Steve Daines, and Representative Greg Gianforte all worked hard to pass the bill, reflecting the efforts of MWF and dozens of other conservation groups, hunting and angling groups, and outdoor businesses to raise awareness and keep up the pressure on lawmakers. In addition to working on the ground in Montana, MWF teamed up with the National Wildlife Federation and state affiliates around the nation to generate tens of thousands of emails, calls and letters to Congress over the last few months.

Federal Government Proposes to End Protections for Isolated Wetlands and Headwater Streams

In February, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) released a proposal to redefine the federal Clean Water Act to exclude many Montana wetlands and streams from the law. Under the proposed rule, conservation actions to mitigate the effects of construction and development activities would no longer be required in up to 60% of Montana’s wetlands, along with 60% of the streams in Eastern Montana and 30% off the streams in Western Montana.

The proposed new rule overturns an earlier policy that was set after years of work and input from thousands of scientists, hunters and anglers, farmers and ranchers, and other resource users. MWF is working to raise awareness of how the new proposal will impact wildlife habitat, hunting and fishing opportunity, and clean water supplies in Montana before it is finally adopted by the EPA.

New Bills Would Tackle Chronic Wasting Disease

The recent discovery of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) in Montana’s deer herd poses a grave threat to our wildlife and way of life. CWD renders animals eventually helpless as they lose cognitive ability. It is always fatal, it’s extremely difficult to eradicate, and the potential threat to humans is still unknown.

To help combat this mounting threat to the Montana economy and way of life, Senator Jon Tester has introduced the Chronic Wasting Disease Management Act S.689. This bill would provide funding for rapid response by state and tribal wildlife agencies as well as funding for applied research to address the threat. Senator Tester’s bill would authorize the following annual funding:

- $20 million for state wildlife agencies to manage chronic wasting disease.
- $5 million for tribal CWD management.
- $10 million for states or tribes to rapidly respond to new outbreaks of CWD.
- $25 million for research grants to learn more about the disease. With an emphasis on state management and rapid response, this bill is an important step towards finding a long term solution to CWD management.

In the House of Representatives, Representative Greg Gianforte is a cosponsor of the Chronic Wasting Disease Transmission in Cervidae Study Act (H.R. 837). This bill would direct the National Academy of Sciences to conduct research on CWD. MWF thanks Senator Tester and Representative Gianforte, and we will continue to work on this important issue.
Federal Policy Update Continued

Wilderness Study Area Release Legislation Defeated - For Now

At the end of 2018, bills introduced by Senator Steve Daines and Representative Greg Gianforte to drop protections for hundreds of thousands of acres of wilderness study areas (WSAs) died without a vote in Congress. This is a big win for Montanans, who overwhelmingly opposed the top-down bills - one poll last year found that just 11 percent of Montanans support repealing protections for wilderness study areas. MWF has worked with a coalition of other public land conservation partners to urge our congressional delegation to support locally-developed solutions for public land protection.

Montana’s wilderness study areas provide crucial security habitat for elk, deer, and other big game, as well as protecting wild fisheries. They also provide unmatched access and opportunity for hunting, fishing, wildlife watching, and other outdoor activities. Looking ahead, MWF will remain on watch for any future anti-WSA legislation.

MWF partners with the Montana Outdoor Heritage Project

The Montana Wildlife Federation recently joined several other Montana conservation groups in launching the Montana Outdoor Heritage Project. This new initiative brings together Montana citizens, small businesses, conservation, the outdoor industry, and recreation groups to explore ways to conserve, maintain, and invest in outdoor heritage for future generations.

The Montana Outdoor Heritage Project is organizing community get-togethers and kitchen-table conversations across Montana to better understand our outdoor assets and forge a new path to conserve our heritage. Montanans haven’t had a serious discussion about reinvesting in our outdoor way of life and public lands in decades, and we believe now is the time.

Our Montana way of life and heritage did not happen by accident. Earlier generations of leaders in MWF and other conservation organizations fought for public access to our wildlife, lands, lakes, rivers. They opened state parks and protected habitat and winter range for our wildlife. The Outdoor Heritage Project aims to give today’s generation the opportunity to step up and protect Montana’s outdoor way of life.

MWF Weighs in on Montana Fisheries Plan

In December, Fish, Wildlife, and Parks released a draft Statewide Fisheries Management Program and Guide for 2019-2027. This document provides a roadmap for FWP’s management of fisheries the state of Montana. The document provides a compilation of the state-of-the-science on Montana’s 91 fish species and identifies fisheries’ priorities in primary water bodies within drainages.

After reviewing the draft document, MWF weighed in with comments that emphasize the looming threat of aquatic invasives species and illegal fish introductions, two issues that have plagued hundreds of bodies of water around the state. Overall, MWF supported the document as written and sees it as a great resource for anglers to understand how fisheries are managed by Fish, Wildlife and Parks.
MWF Calls For Shoulder Seasons to End

The Montana Wildlife Federation in January sent a letter to the Fish and Wildlife Commission asking for all elk shoulder seasons to end until we have the data from a full three years of large scale hunts to determine how they’re working. The Commission in February approved shoulder seasons for more than 45 districts.

Shoulder seasons are rifle hunts that run outside the five week general season and can last from Aug. 15 to Feb. 15. They were meant to address chronically overpopulated elk herds causing damage to crops and fences on private lands.

MWF said in its letter that while we were receptive to trying shoulder seasons, we did so under the agreement that they would be evaluated after three years. With the timing of printing hunting regulations, that’s not possible this year, so the hunts are moving forward. By late July the data from the 2018-19 hunts will be gathered, and we should see whether the hunts are meeting the criteria for general season harvest we know are essential for effective elk management.

The seasons have also spurred a conversation in the state Legislature, and MWF has also called for a revision of the statewide elk management plan to address the outdated population objectives in it. MWF will continue to be a partner with Montana FWP, landowners and other interests to modernize elk management to ensure maintaining the public trust while we help landowners deal with elk game damage.

Working Together in Central Montana
Building Bridges with Other Outdoor Users

By Central Field Representative, Marcus Strange

As Central Montana becomes a growing destination for outdoor recreation, the pressure grows to balance resource protection with recreational uses. MWF is working to find common ground with mountain bikers and motorized trail users as we advocate for wilderness and wildlife protection across Central Montana’s public lands.

By collaborating with groups such as the Montana Wilderness Association and local trail based recreation advocacy groups near Helena, MWF is committed to finding a balance between different outdoor users. To this end, we recently joined the High Divide Trails Coalition, which brings a diverse cross-section of public lands users together to address conservation and recreation needs. Additionally, MWF has worked with the Elkhorns Working Group to address trail based recreation concerns in the Elkhorn Wildlife Management Unit.

Through collaborating with these local stakeholders, as well as our professional counterparts in the USFS and MTFWP, we have moved the needle in positive direction along the High Divide and in the Elkhorns. MWF continues to be a leader in Central Montana conservation by focusing and engaging with partners on the ninety-five percent where we do agree.

Supporting Access Projects in Central Montana

Collaboration is a crucial part of conservation. MWF has long recognized the value of convening a diverse group of stakeholders and pooling resources to more effectively move conservation work forward in the Big Sky state. In the last six months, MWF has had the opportunity to support Sheep Creek and Falls Creek public access projects by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. MWF’s Central Montana Field Rep, Marcus Strange, had the opportunity to testify in support of these projects in front of the Lewis and Clark and Meagher County Commissions. MWF also mobilized its members to testify and speak up in support of these projects. Both of these projects would improve access to tens of thousands of acres of public lands and protect crucial elk habitat.
Updates From the Field

Updates from Eastern Montana

Keeping Attention on Sage-Grouse Conservation

Last December, the Bureau of Land Management unveiled a proposal to open up millions of acres of sage-grouse habitat to energy development. The proposal throws out the sage-grouse conservation plans that had been in place since 2015. These plans, which had been developed after years of work by local stakeholders, provided for the protection of crucial grouse habitat areas in order to prevent the species from continuing to decline. Throwing these earlier conservation plans out endangers the species and raises the prospect of a federal Endangered Species Act listing, which would impact a wide range of land uses. MWF is weighing in on the new proposal and continuing to call for the protection of sage-grouse habitat.

2018 Farm Bill Provides Big Wins for Wildlife, Habitat in Eastern Montana

At the end of 2018, Congress passed a Farm Bill that includes substantial investments in several key wildlife and conservation programs. These programs are especially crucial in protecting wildlife habitat and public access on working farms and ranches across Eastern Montana. The 2018 Farm Bill slightly increases the acreage of the Conservation Reserve Program, bumps up funding for several habitat protect programs, maintains some key wetlands rules, and provides new funding for voluntary incentives to landowners to provide more public access. Montana’s entire congressional delegation worked hard to ensure that the Farm Bill included strong conservation programs. Looking ahead, MWF will be working to ensure that these programs are fully implemented and have the maximum benefit for wildlife and hunters.

Gardening for Wildlife Gains Momentum in Billings

Since its inception last October, the Billings Gardening for Wildlife project has made great strides. We have hosted education and outreach efforts including two pint nights, two gardening expos, eight presentations, and one workshop, resulting in face-to-face engagements with over 250 people. Social media engagements have reached over 10,000 people.

Our overarching goal is to certify Billings as a Community Wildlife Habitat, and the process is already impacting the community. Many organizations are working on projects that aim to make Billings a healthier, more resilient, and more sustainable city. There is a wealth of knowledge in Billings, and this project is already facilitating better communication to exchange ideas, expertise, and support across various groups. Upcoming outreach activities will focus on increasing awareness of the project, expanding the volunteer base, and engaging with new partner organizations, including local government, city planning, and schools.

When Billings residents certify their gardens, they’ll join over 223,000 gardeners across America who provide safe places for wildlife, like birds, to thrive.

MWF Outreach and Education Assistant, Garden@mtwf.org
Protecting Public Lands and Watersheds in Western Montana

By Western Field Representative, Alec Underwood

Guiding for the Future

Within Montana’s booming $7.1 billion outdoor recreation industry lies an important stakeholder group—fishing guides and outfitters—who are directly dependent on our rivers being healthy, functioning ecosystems. Through a new effort to create collective stewardship within the industry, they may be well on their way to playing an increasingly important role in watershed conservation.

Over the last year, the Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana has been developing the Guiding for the Future program, which aims to “inspire dedicated stewardship of aquatic ecosystems while increasing knowledge, professionalism, and ethics of fishing guides and the fly fishing industry throughout Montana.” Participating outfitters and guides will undergo a curriculum that increases knowledge, skills, and commitment to helping steward the rivers on which their livelihoods depend.

MWF has been a supporter of this effort and is currently helping to develop the course to help fishing guides learn how to become more effective advocates for protecting Montana’s rivers and streams from threats such as climate change, aquatic invasive species, habitat degradation, and illegal fish introductions. To learn more about the program, visit www.guidingforthefuture.org.

Working to Improving Public Access in the Upper Clark Fork

Over the past few months, MWF has been supporting several conservation easements and land purchases in the Upper Clark Fork region. Through the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and the Natural Resource Damage Program (NRDP), these projects will increase access for hunters and anglers and protect important habitat.

The Buxbaum-Boulder Creek Ranch Conservation Easement located between Drummond and Philipsburg and will protect approximately 1,193 acres of diverse habitat including important big game winter range as well as non-game species habitat, native grasslands, forested draws, pocket wetlands, and aspen stands. Hunting access will be administered by FWP.

The Graveley-Warm Springs conservation easement will protect more than 8,200 acres of prime habitat near Garrison. The property is a great mix of native grassland, wetlands, forested areas and aspen groves that sits along the eastern flanks of the Garnet Mountain Range. The easement will also allow hunting access in perpetuity giving hunters opportunities for elk, mule deer, whitetail deer and antelope.

Another recent project added a 154 acre parcel to the Garrity Mountain Wildlife Management Area near Anaconda. Along with protecting a migration corridor for bighorn sheep and key habitat for bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout, the addition will provide for expanded recreational opportunity.

The public acquisition of the 2,650 acre Clark Fork River Ranch will preserve important riparian habitat containing unique wetlands, big game habitat including winter range for pronghorn antelope and moose, and 1,200 acres of important upland habitat that benefits a variety of wildlife. Over five miles of the Clark Fork River corridor will be accessible to the public, and hunting will be allowed in perpetuity.
At the end of 2018, the Montana Wildlife Federation said goodbye to our Eastern Montana Field Representative John Bradley. John left the MWF staff to become the Executive Director of the North Dakota Wildlife Federation. John’s ability to collaborate with diverse partners will help him move many crucial conservation projects forward in North Dakota.

While working out of MWF’s Billings office for the last four years, John was instrumental in MWF’s work on a wide range of issues, including sage-grouse conservation, passage of the 2018 Farm Bill, and the protection of backcountry Bureau of Land Management lands. John helped grow MWF’s membership and was a reliable presence at local rod and gun club meetings all over the region.

MWF will miss John, but we are excited to have his leadership in North Dakota. John’s two-year old labrador retriever, Ida, is also excited for the opportunity to chase pheasants and waterfowl across the Peace Garden State.

Laurel Rod & Gun Club is a blue-collar sportsmen/women club that dates back to the 1920s. The club has more than 400 family members who enjoy the Montana outdoor traditions of shooting, angling and hunting. We operate our shooting range in Laurel, and it serves as the base for all of our activities and regular meetings. But we’re not just about shooting.

Laurel Rod & Gun has a strong conservation mission, and we speak up as a voice for our sporting heritage and the things that make it possible. We’re a strong supporter of our public lands and waters, public access, the Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks and the work its professionals do, the Fish and Wildlife Commission, and the tenets of the North American Model of Fish and Wildlife Conservation. In short, we’re an old-school grassroots conservation organization made up of committed members who want to maintain our traditions.

Our members each hunter education, speak up on issues affecting our public wildlife and show up at hearings on key conservation issues. We also submit comments on the issues that affect our wildlife, habitat and access. We are the boots on the ground that makes a difference, and we know that when we band together with hunters and anglers from around the state, our collective voice is powerful.

J.W. Westman is a longtime Laurel Rod and Gun member, past president and serves on the MWF board of directors.

Since our founding in 1936, MWF’s role as part of the National Wildlife Federation has provided us tremendous leverage nationally and regionally. Working with NWF gives us access to national experts in Washington DC who ensure that we have a seat at the table on federal policy issues ranging from the Land and Water Conservation Fund to the Farm Bill. Being part of the Federation also gives us the ability to work closely with other state wildlife federations, including our neighbors in Wyoming and Idaho on issues like grizzly bear management to working with affiliates all over the country on issues like the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease.

In 2017, the National Wildlife Federation adopted a strategic plan that focuses on three main areas: protecting, restoring and connecting wildlife habitat; transforming wildlife conservation to address new challenges; and connecting more Americans with wildlife. Expanded partnerships with MWF and other state organizations are a crucial part of the achievement of this strategic plan, helping us leverage the power of MWF’s membership alongside millions of other Americans. For more on the NWF strategic plan, visit www.nwf.org/strategicplan.

From our local affiliates on up to the National Wildlife Federation, MWF is part of a powerful conservation family that gives us unprecedented power to conserve our wildlife, public lands and waters, and access to the outdoors.
A lot has changed since the Montana Wildlife Federation was founded over 80 years ago. The threats to wildlife, habitat, and public access keep growing and getting more complex. One thing that is easier today than in the past is your ability to financially support our mission. In just a few minutes, you can join the growing number of people who support MWF with a monthly donation.

Giving monthly is convenient, easy, and provides MWF with the funds we need to advance our conservation mission. You can enroll online in just a few minutes and provide the organization with dedicated funding to fuel our grassroots outreach and advocacy on behalf of Montana’s wildlife, habitat, and public access.

**Signing up as a monthly donor to MWF:**

- Gives you an easy and seamless way for you to donate by credit/debit card.
- Makes a big difference to MWF every single month. A small donation every month adds up to a lot more over time!
- Reduces MWF’s fundraising expenses, meaning even more dollars can go to our conservation mission.

You can sign up as a monthly donor at www.montanawildlife.org, or you can call our office at 406-458-0227.

Supporters like you make MWF’s work a reality, and with your monthly investment MWF will be here to protect wildlife and recreation for generations to come. Sign up to become a monthly donor today so future generations can enjoy our abundant wildlife, habitat, and public lands tomorrow.