



SPRING 2022

# *The Roundup*





## Greetings FROM THE DIRECTOR

Welcome to this first edition of The Roundup, our newly revamped Spring Newsletter. This new publication will be a chance to pause each winter, to look back over the year just completed and, just as importantly, look toward the season ahead of us. We are excited to also announce another new publication coming this fall – The Journal – a collection of stories from time spent in The Bob during our summer season.

If 2021 was your first year or your tenth year; If you support our work as a donor, sponsor, or volunteer – we are just thrilled to have you as a part of this amazing community. Together we make a difference.

Last year was full of new opportunities and exciting challenges. Between our volunteers and internships, the foundation was able to engage on over 500 miles of trail improvements and 37 acres of noxious weed treatments. We launched a series of new Education Programs for The Bob, and found ways to complete this work during the continuing pandemic. The summer was full of new partnerships and transformative experiences for many new and returning members of our community. The dedicated team of Crew Leaders and Interns made our summer flow, and the staff kept our eyes on serving The Bob while changing lives.

It is certainly an exciting time for this amazing community that loves The Bob so much. With our efforts, and new investments from the Great American Outdoors Act, the work picks up on the deferred maintenance needs across the Complex.

Looking to the year ahead of us – the **25th season** of the foundation – we are ready to celebrate (and work)! From our warm up to the season with our Mountainfilm on Tour events, to the kick off when we get to lace up the boots and hit the trail – we will be ready to have you join us. You will find a preview of some of our Volunteer Adventures in this publication – and the full roster of projects go live on our website in March.

There are so many ways to show your love for The Bob, celebrate 25 years of the foundation and support our work. You can visit the Bob Shop on our website for the latest in Bob Gear, register to volunteer for a project, come to one of our events or make a tax-deductible donation. We want to celebrate with you this year – and plan to see you at our events – from Helena to Bigfork, Choteau to Missoula. We can't wait to share our love for this magical place with our community.

See you out there!

Bill Hodge  
Executive Director



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since 1997

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## VOLUNTEERS OF THE YEAR AWARDS

We love our volunteers – we truly would not be here without them! Each year we're thrilled to recognize a couple of the hardworking folks who go above and beyond for the Bob.

### TRAIL DAWG OF THE YEAR: Carolyn Babcock

Carolyn has volunteered with us for eight years, and she's an amazing asset to have on our trips! Her laid-back, can-do attitude is a great motivator for other volunteers, and her kindness and ability to pitch in with camp chores is a huge bonus for our crew leaders.

#### Why do you volunteer for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation?

I was looking for someone to hike with and found out the BMWF had this wonderful program to do trail maintenance. I was hooked after my first trip. I find it a great way to enjoy what our American pioneers of conservation worked to set aside. Because of their commitment we can get out in nature, enjoy its beauty, solitude and wildlife. As Charlie Russell would say, "Like it was when the land belonged to God" – uncivilized, wild and free. A place to get away from the noise. I also appreciate all of the trail crews over the years who have maintained these trails – lots of tread work, moving downed trees and lopping brush. I volunteer because I selfishly want good trails to hike on and its a great vacation.

#### Do you have a favorite memory or experience on a BMWF project?

There are many. This last summer at Schafer Meadows our camp was on the Middle Fork of the Flathead and having a momma elk and her baby walk up the river towards our camp was a sight I will always remember.

#### What would you tell people who are thinking of volunteering for the first time?

Don't be afraid to do something you have never done before. This organization takes care of you. They send very qualified crew leaders, and they train you for the work to be done. You get to meet and work with people who love the wilderness and you get to have some really good conversations as you hike, clear trails and work to control noxious weeds. The great outdoors gives back a hundred fold to the effort you put in. Get in shape before you go and you will enjoy your time out there.



Carolyn's crew hiking into Schafer Meadows



### PACKERS OF THE YEAR: Melanie Totten, Seline Totten and Judah Westphal

These three are part of an inspiring next generation of packers who are keeping this historic skill alive and well. Together this team packed seven one-way trips for us this summer, hauling food, tools and gear into the Bob for our crews. Their initiative, skill and hard work was greatly appreciated, and we hope to have them pack for us for years to come!

#### Why do you volunteer for BMWF?

(Melanie) I have been packing with my father, Alden Totten, since I was 12 years old. My love for the wilderness just grew from there.

Three years ago my brother Patrick and I went on our first trip without our father. I've been trying to pack more every year

and get my sister more involved. This last summer I finally felt ready to take my own crew and pack for the BMWF. My sister Seline and family friend Judah took to the trail, both of them quickly picking up what they needed to do. My love for the Bob Marshall Wilderness started from a young age. I knew from the very beginning that once I was skilled enough to go packing on my own with my own crew I was going to. BMWF was the obvious choice and an easy place to start my journey.

#### What was a memorable experience you had this summer while out on the trail?

(Melanie) We had many great trips this summer. We rode in all kinds of weather, from six hours of rain to sunny trails for days. To pick one was really hard, so I asked Judah and Seline what theirs was. Seline's most memorable moment is when she led horses on the trail for the first time. She pulled three horses over Pyramid Pass and she did awesome. Judah's favorite moment was waking up early to watch the sun rise on the top of Pyramid Pass. For me, it was the back-to-back trips to Pyramid Pass and Owl Creek. It was hard and tiring and the horses were just as tired as us but it was fun and I will never forget those long rides and late nights.



Seline and Judah breaking at Upper Holland Lake



## CREATING WILD CONNECTIONS



Photo by Alex Kim

In July 2021, the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation embarked on a new type of backcountry adventure – an introductory Wilderness 101 trip for an affinity group, with the goal of improving access and building belonging in The Bob. Thanks to a partnership with Here Montana, the trip brought eight BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) individuals into the Great Bear Wilderness where they learned the history of the area, practiced setting up a backcountry camp and hiked to the Middle Fork of the Flathead River.

"Our motto is, 'Connecting People to Wild Places,' and it's important to us that this includes all people who want to experience wilderness," explained BMWF Program Director Rebecca Powell. "That means we need to start thinking about the barriers that exist for some – including access to the skills needed to safely recreate in the backcountry. For those of us who were lucky enough to have someone show us the ropes, it's easy to forget that these connections are rare or don't exist in every community."

Alex Kim, Program Coordinator for Here Montana, and Rebecca Powell and Erynn Castellanos from BMWF led the five-day trip, along a number of special guests. Aquatic Research Biologist Kellie Carim led a lesson on river ecology, and Lailani Upham of Iron Shield Creative shared stories from the ancestral tribes of the area. The group participated in a Forest Bathing session led by Certified Forest Therapy Guide Ellen Horowitz, and learned about packing and stock use from BMWF Master Packers Frank Vitale and Krissy Gillispie.

Here Montana is a BIPOC Outdoor Program based in Missoula, but the participants came from all over Montana. For many, this was their first wilderness experience, and for some it was their first time camping or backpacking. "Getting to watch the participants experience the outdoors, some of them for the first time ever, is by far the most fulfilling part of my job," Alex expressed. "This program allows [people] to build communities that they get to call their own and I am grateful to be a part of it."

**"This trip was the first time I have felt at home."**

- Elif Bilal, Wilderness 101 participant

Tenzin Lhaze, a Missoula resident, commented on her experience: "Like many people, the COVID period was an incredibly trying time and it made me revisit past trauma as a marginalized person. However, being in a

group of similarly experienced people that looked like me reaffirmed the common human experience and the strength of the human spirit in spite of these hurdles."

Elif Bilal, a participant from Bozeman, reflected, "I have been an immigrant in Montana for over four years but this trip was the first time I have felt at home – I am beyond grateful to have connected with incredible people and been introduced into the area. The entire time I felt blessed for having the opportunity of being welcomed into the sacred lands. I left with a deep appreciation of knowing that I just made lifetime memories that will always fill my heart with joy and gratitude. Thank you for making this possible."

The foundation will partner with Here Montana in 2022 for another Wilderness 101 trip and a Backpacking Stewardship trip for more experienced BIPOC users. BMWF offers other Affinity Group trips through our Volunteer Adventures as well. Those interested in learning more can reach Erynn Castellanos at [erynn@bmf.org](mailto:erynn@bmf.org).



Photo by Jose Antonio Ibarra Olivares



# 2021 BY THE NUMBERS

## ANNUAL REPORT



**69** TOTAL PROJECTS

**337** VOLUNTEERS



**10** PARTNER AND AFFINITY GROUPS

**9** WILDERNESS INTERNS



**3** ARTIST WILDERNESS RESIDENCIES

**540** MILES OF TRAIL MAINTAINED



**4,624** TREES CLEARED



**335** DRAINAGES MAINTAINED



**6** TRAIL STRUCTURES CONSTRUCTED



**1,845** CUPS OF COFFEE



**1,230** NIGHTS IN A TENT

**248** MULE LOADS OF GEAR



**150** PACKER APPRENTICE MILES IN THE SADDLE



VALUE OF PACKERS: **\$43,800**

**337** VOLUNTEERS

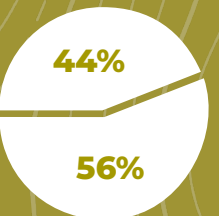
FEMALE: 55%



MALE: 45%



RETURNING



NEW

### FINANCIALS

INCOME



**\$605,960**

- 3% Merchandise
- 3% Fundraisers
- 6% License Plates
- 7% Investments
- 36% Grants
- 45% Individual Donations

EXPENSES



**\$532,470**

- 14% Fundraising & Outreach
- 16% Administration
- 70% Boots-on-the-Ground Programs

**37** ACRES OF WEEDS TREATED



**326,700** SQ FT WEEDS SPRAYED



**871,207** SQ FT WEEDS HAND PULLED

**12** COMMUNITY EDUCATION EVENTS



TOTALING **\$439,087**



IN WILDERNESS STEWARDSHIP VALUE



# VOLUNTEER VOICES

FROM THE FIELD



"This was an incredible experience. I had so much fun, learned a ton and am now completely hooked on the backcountry."

"THIS WAS MY FIRST BACKPACKING TRIP WITH MY 13- AND 14-YEAR-OLDS. THE BMWF CREW WAS VERY PATIENT AND PROVIDED LOTS OF EDUCATION RE: LEAVE NO TRACE, TOOL SAFETY, CUTTING OF TREES, AND TRAIL MAINTENANCE. THE BOYS AND I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER THIS AMAZING TRIP."

"The project and work was very satisfying. The before and after comparison really validated the time and energy put in. The areas of the "Bob" and Scapegoat that we were in were beautiful! A big "shout out" to Meg, our

crew leader - She was patient, kind, knowledgeable, a good wilderness steward, and an amazing chef!"

"It's the people who make the trip. Sam did a great job creating a positive, inclusive atmosphere. He was thoughtful, kind, and engaging. He put all in the group at ease and helped everyone to build capability, confidence, and pride in the work we did."



"MY WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE WAS WONDERFUL. THE ONLY THING I WOULD CHANGE IS TO STAY LONGER! I CAUGHT A TROUT OUT OF THE SUN RIVER, WE SAW A BALD EAGLE NEST WITH A BABY BALD EAGLE, I USED A CROSSCUT AND PULASKI FOR THE FIRST TIME!"

"It was a truly amazing experience! I wouldn't change anything - It was such a lovely time and I learned a lot. What a great foundation and mission, and Amelia was a very calm, thorough, fun, and welcoming trip leader. Couldn't ask for a better guide. Highlights were: learning more about trail maintenance, learning more about the Spotted Bear Ranger Station and USFS, learning more about plants from others on the trip!"

"I felt incredibly lucky to be part of such a welcoming group of individuals from a variety of backgrounds. Everyone did their part to contribute to the project and we all learned from each other's life experiences along the way."



"AMAZING! I loved our trip and didn't want it to end. The Bob Marshall was beautiful and our crew was so much fun. I got to experience a great trip with my mom, who I don't see very often as we live on opposite sides of the country. A highlight was getting to build a big drain to divert water on trail (and got nice and muddy in the process!) and a water bar. Also, getting to know such a cool group of environmentally-minded strong women!"



# VOLUNTEER ADVENTURES

Give back to the Bob this summer on one of our free volunteer vacations!



## A TYPICAL DAY ON A BMWF TRIP

- 7:00 AM** Coffee's on!
- 7:30 AM** Eat breakfast, clean up, pack your lunch.
- 8:00 AM** Leave camp for the worksite. Work until lunch, taking periodic breaks.
- 12:00 PM** Half hour lunch break, followed by several more hours of work with breaks.
- 4:30 PM** Arrive back at camp. Freshen up, have a snack. Go for a swim, fish, or relax.
- 5:00 PM** Dinner crew helps prepare dinner.
- 6:00 PM** Dinner time! Afterwards, cleanup crew does dishes and picks up. Enjoy the evening swapping stories around the fire.

## HOW TO CHOOSE A TRIP

### DIFFICULTY RATING SCALE

HIKE		WORK
Trailhead based or car camping with no hike into camp		Easy work; lopping brush or handpulling weeds
Easy hike to camp; <5 miles with little elevation gain		Relatively easy work; sawing/digging with hiking breaks; spraying weeds
Moderate hike to camp; 5-10 miles, <1,000 ft. elevation gain		Moderately difficult work; repeatedly lifting up to 40 lbs., frequent sawing, digging, etc.
Challenging hike; >10 miles with significant elevation change		Difficult consistent and repetitive work such as sawing or swinging a pulaski for the full day
Strenuous hike; 15+ miles over mountain passes or over two days		Very strenuous work and/or difficult hike to worksite; hard continuous labor (sawing, digging) in difficult terrain

## 2022 VOLUNTEER TRIPS

A sampling of our trips this summer - find the full list on our website in March!

**BMWF #05: Bear Lake**  
06/28-07/02  
Rocky Mountain Ranger District  
Mortimor Gulch Trailhead

Hike in eight miles along the Gibson Reservoir to your camp along the beautiful Sun River! The crew will clear the 6 mile trail to Bear Lake using crosscuts and handsaws.

**BMWF #10: Meadow Mountain**  
07/21-07/24  
Spotted Bear Ranger District  
Meadow Creek Trailhead

Camp at the popular Meadow Creek Trailhead and hike from camp to work each day. The crew will be working to clear the Meadow Mountain trail #56. Can you make it to the summit? Some hard work may just get us there.

**BMWF #14: Palisade Creek**  
08/13-08/18  
Spotted Bear Ranger District  
Lion Mountain Trailhead

A strenuous 10 mile hike 4,000 ft up and over Lion Creek Pass will bring you to camp on Palisade Lake high on the Swan Crest. Work will be clearing and brushing out the trail along Palisade Creek to get it back into shape.

[BMWf.ORG/VOLUNTEER](https://www.bmwf.org/volunteer)



# THANK YOU

to these donors and sponsors who so generously supported our work in wilderness stewardship in 2021

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