

# CINNABAR FOUNDATION

## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

The Cinnabar Foundation was established in 1983 by four conservation leaders after a day hunting elk in a mountain cirque above Cinnabar Creek — north of Yellowstone National Park. Just as those clean, clear waters feed the free-flowing Yellowstone River, the Foundation helps sustain Montana's conservation traditions and the people who carry them into the future.



Cabinet Mountains southeast of Troy, Montana

## Dear Friends,

When Len and Sandy Sargent decided to create an entity to fund environmental advocacy and conservation groups in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, they didn't call it the "Sargent Foundation." They named it after the "best spot" Len had discovered many years before: Cinnabar Basin, near the northern boundary of Yellowstone National Park. The Sargents chose to name the new foundation after that ice-scoured basin because they wanted the Cinnabar Foundation to attract contributions from others and, thus, expand its ability to put money on the ground. In 1983, they gave the Foundation \$10,000 in seed money, and ultimately endowed it with other monies as well as proceeds from the sale of their ranch.

Their naming strategy worked. Over the years, many like-minded conservationists have made generous contributions to the Cinnabar Foundation. Others have included Cinnabar in their estate plans. All are confident in Cinnabar's seasoned ability to fund conservation groups that address current and future needs while upholding our constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment.

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## Cinnabar Founders Inducted into Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame

**Len and Sandy Sargent & Phil and Robin Tawney**

In December 2018, the Montana conservation community honored Cinnabar's founders and current board president by inducting them into the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame (MOHOF). Posthumously inducted were Len and Sandy Sargent and Phil Tawney. Phil's wife and current board president, Robin Tawney Nichols, also was inducted.

According to MOHOF founding executive committee member Jim Posewitz, "The Montana Outdoor Hall

of Fame was established to recognize that Montana's precious outdoor amenities came to our time carried by individuals who cared, showed up, and stood up on their behalf. They are amenities that, in the words of Theodore Roosevelt, 'add to the beauty of living and therefore to the joy of life.'"

Posewitz is a 2016 MOHOF inductee and emeritus board member of the Cinnabar Foundation.

### *Len & Sandy Sargent*

In recognizing the Sargents, Montana Historical Society Director Bruce Whittenberg spoke of their vision and generosity in developing a model to ensure funding for emerging grassroots conservation groups and issues within Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. "The Sargents filled that void in Montana by creating a historical legacy of activist philanthropy," he said.

Len and Sandy had a Hollywood movie-type love story. Though they met in the 1940s, it took almost 30 years for the stars to align. Timing was everything. Len was newly retired from teaching math and coaching football, hockey and baseball at the Taft School in Washington Depot, Connecticut. Sandy was divorced and living in Denver with her two children. The couple rekindled their attraction and married in 1969,

moving to Len's ranch at the far end of Cinnabar Basin. Their environmental activism soon began over efforts to prevent a federal dam that would impound the Yellowstone River at Allen Spur near Livingston, Montana. The Sargents also became fierce wilderness advocates for the Absaroka-Beartooth country and became well-recognized lobbyists at Montana's biennial legislature. After more than a decade of individual contributions to conservation organizations, the Sargents established the Cinnabar Foundation to provide more extensive and systematic funding to those groups. Since its inception, the Foundation has funded more than 300 conservation organizations with more than 1,900 projects totaling over \$8 million.

"The Sargents were always between the barricade and the balcony in every environmental fight – articulate and passionate about saving Montana's natural landscape," Whittenberg marveled.

After the Hall of Fame ceremony, the Sargents' daughter-in-law Judi Stauffer, remarked: "Len and Sandy inspired me deeply. They innately knew that to bring a big vision to fruition—like ensuring continuous funding for conservation efforts in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem—required building and nurturing networks of people and communities through meaningful service, education, advocacy and philanthropy. And, they didn't shy away from rolling up their sleeves and working tirelessly to get a job done."



Robin Tawney Nichols accepting the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame award on behalf of her late husband Phil Tawney and herself.

### *Phil Tawney & Robin Tawney Nichols*

Around the same time period, University of Montana students Phil and Robin headed to Helena, Montana, to work as interns during the 1971 state legislative session. They returned two winters later, having been recruited by Don Aldrich, Montana's lone conservation lobbyist and executive director of the Montana Wildlife Federation. Calling themselves the Environmental Lobby, the three spent days lobbying lawmakers and nights phoning activists across the state to rally grassroots support for or against pending legislation. That experience led the Tawneys and others to create the Montana Environmental Center (MEIC) in 1973.



The Sargents' daughter, Kerri Hart, accepting the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame award on behalf of her parents.



## Site Visits With Our Conservation Partners

Friends of Scotchman Peaks, Vital Ground, Yaak Valley Forest Council, Western Sustainability Exchange and Gallatin Valley Land Trust

Nothing beats getting out on the ground.

Year-round, Executive Director Gary Wolfe and individual board members keep in touch with grantees, other nonprofits, elected officials, and agency personnel to keep their fingers on the pulse of the conservation world in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. But twice a year, in conjunction with our spring and fall board meetings, Gary and the full board schedule site visits and field trips to gain a deeper understanding of and appreciation for our grantees' work. Members of Cinnabar's Legacy Society always are invited to join these outings and often do.

### *Wilderness, Grizzly Bears, Forests and Community*

Spring 2018 found the Cinnabar board meeting in the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem



Phil Hough, executive director of the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness.



The Cabinet Mountain Wilderness Ibex and Little Ibex peaks as seen from the Bull River.

of northwestern Montana. This remote area of the state, the lowest in elevation, boasts soaring peaks, untrammelled wilderness, plentiful wildlife, and an inland rainforest.

Executive Director Phil Hough and members of the Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness (FSPW) as well as retired USDA Forest Service and Idaho Department of Lands personnel led us on a short hike through the Ross Creek Cedars, a grove of western red cedars, some of which are more than eight feet in diameter and more than 500 years old, the benchmark for ancient growth. We paused among those ancient trees to hear an update on the proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, which includes land in Montana and Idaho. With support in part from an operating grant from the Cinnabar Foundation, FSPW continues to rally local support through outreach, conservation education, messaging, and building the political strength necessary for success.

FSPW collaborates in this effort with Cinnabar grantees Montana Wilderness Association and the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative.

We ended our afternoon afield with a barbeque hosted by the FSPW board at the family homestead of Sandy Compton, FSPW program coordinator.

The following day, the Cinnabar board and guests visited a crucial linkage area that will safeguard habitat for grizzly bears and other wildlife moving through the Cabinet-Yaak ecosystem. This is a special project of Vital Ground, a land trust that conserves and connects habitat for grizzly bears and other wildlife, and helps communities prevent conflicts between bears and people. Partially funded by the Cinnabar Foundation, this project preserves a total of 42.5 acres in an area still platted for the Wild River subdivision development. With a dozen parcels now secured for

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# Cinnabar Recognizes Two Professional Conservationists in 2018

**Alex Sienkiewicz and Dan Wenk**

## Alex Sienkiewicz

Who knew that just doing your job would cause such a ruckus? The Foundation recognized Alex Sienkiewicz in Spring 2018 for holding his ground and helping to create precedent with national implications: Historic public access is legal, and it matters.

As a professional in the U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Alex was especially well suited to his 2011 assignment as Yellowstone District Ranger in an area dominated by the rugged and wildlife-rich Crazy Mountains and by controversy as private landowners fought the public's historic access to that spectacular high country. Armed with leadership skills, a law degree and a doctorate in forestry, he was the perfect person to stand up to these landowners.

In recent years, blocked gates and no trespassing signs had increasingly greeted public trail users who wished to cross small sections of private land to access the people's forests. Those access points had been in public use for decades — some for as long as 100 years — yet these landowners shut out the public to gain exclusive access to the Crazies and their plentiful herds of elk and deer.

Each year as District Ranger, Alex instructed his staff on Forest Service protocol for public access. He posted informational signs urging trail users to refrain from signing documents that granted them permission to use historic trails to access public land because such documents could then constitute legal precedent for the landowners' unlawful claims of permissive access. These government signs were repeatedly removed and replaced by locked gates

In 2016, the Cinnabar Foundation board established the *Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award* to recognize, from time to time, natural resource management and conservation professionals, who like the award's namesake, have made significant contributions to Montana and to the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. This year, the Cinnabar Foundation chose to honor two such heroes.

and no trespassing signs, prompting Alex and his colleagues to immediately reopen the gates and replace those signs with new ones spelling out the public's right to access.

Alex knew he stood on solid ground since agency regulations clearly recognized the public's right regarding the historic use of trails. He simply



Alex Sienkiewicz (left) receiving the Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award from Dan Wenk at the Montana Wildlife Federation's annual gathering in Helena, Montana.

defended the public's right to historic access to the Custer-Gallatin National Forest against a barrage of challenges from landowners, commodities groups, and politicians. Even when U.S. Senator Steve Daines (R-Montana) and U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Sonny Perdue sided with the landowners. Even when, with no evidence of wrongdoing, Alex was summarily removed from his position as District Ranger and

reassigned to the forest supervisor's office.

Alex's exile didn't last long. An internal investigation soon found that his management was consistent with the existing policies and direction of the Forest Service and the Office of General Counsel, and Alex was transferred back to his position as Yellowstone District Ranger.

To honor Alex Sienkiewicz for standing tall in defense of the principles and idealism at the core of the U.S. Forest Service, the Cinnabar Foundation made five grants of \$1,000 each to *Bitter Root Land Trust*, *Bighorn River Alliance*, *Montana Conservation Corps*, *Montana Raptor Conservation Center*, and *Gallatin Valley Land Trust*.

## Dan Wenk

The Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award was presented in early Fall 2018 to Dan Wenk for the example he set in championing core conservation values in the face of opposition from many sides during his tenure as Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park from 2011-2018.

Bison management, the reintroduction of wolves, and the delisting of grizzly bears are with little doubt the three most contentious issues that have confronted Yellowstone Park Superintendents over the past several decades. Each is complex and many factored. In every case, Dan was patient, sought the very best information available, and tried to factor in and then balance likely population trends and habitat changes. When necessary, he

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## Cinnabar Recognizes Two Professional Conservationists in 2018

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rose and defended policies that he thought were in the best long-term interests of the Park bison, wolves, and grizzlies, and of the people who live in the area — even to the point of retiring from his prestigious position to do so.

The legacy Dan leaves and the standard he set for future Yellowstone Park Superintendents is one of accumulating scientific knowledge, recognizing climate and other gradual ecologic shifts, maintaining an openness to and respect for the professionals with whom they may interact, providing forward-looking leadership, and taking a firm stance in the defense of the animals around which the life of Yellowstone in large part revolves.

Dan's contributions, however, have not been simply to Yellowstone or even the National Park Service but to our



Dan Wenk with his 2018 *Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award*. Cinnabar Executive Director Gary Wolfe presented the Award to Wenk at the 14th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

country. His lengthy Park Service career began in 1975 and continued through his service as Superintendent of Mount Rushmore National Memorial (1985-2001), and, after an assignment as NPS Deputy Director of Operations (2007-2011), culminated with his being named Superintendent of Yellowstone National Park. For his outstanding service in leadership positions spanning more than 30 years of his 43-year career, Dan received the Department of the Interior Secretary's Leadership and Presidential Rank Award.

In recognition of Dan Wenk's championing core conservation values and setting a high standard for Yellowstone National Park Superintendents, the Cinnabar Foundation made a special grant of \$5,000 to *Yellowstone Forever* in support of its Yellowstone wildlife health program, cougar project, and golden eagle monitoring program.

## Why I Joined the Conservation Legacy Society

by Rita Wolfe



Rita Wolfe joined the Conservation Legacy Society, in 2018, by designating Cinnabar as a beneficiary of her IRA.

The challenges of protecting Montanan's constitutional right to "a clean and healthful environment" are ever-increasing. I annually support my favorite environmental and conservation organizations to meet those challenges and would like to continue that support through my estate plan. But how do I know which groups will be most effective after I've passed on?

That's where Cinnabar can help. Each year the Foundation's board and staff carefully evaluate environmental issues and conservation opportunities throughout Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, then they award grants to the organizations that are best positioned to address those issues and opportunities.

A bequest to Cinnabar is a sure way to invest in Montana's future today. I recently became a Conservation Legacy Society donor by designating the Cinnabar Foundation's permanent conservation fund as a beneficiary of my IRA. My bequest will have a lasting impact by increasing Cinnabar's future grant-making capability, and by helping to ensure Cinnabar's enduring legacy of

providing critical funding to meet the challenges facing Montana and the GYE.

As founder Len Sargent once said: "While each of us is mortal, the horizon of Cinnabar is perpetuity."

### Leaving a Legacy for the Future

If you would like to include the Cinnabar Foundation in your estate plan, or want to establish memorial funds in honor of loved ones, please let us know so we can thank you and welcome you to the Conservation Legacy Society.

For more information, contact Gary Wolfe at [gwolfe@cinnabarfoundation.org](mailto:gwolfe@cinnabarfoundation.org) or call him at 406.240.7323.

# Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem

## A Roundtable Discussion

At a time when science is being questioned and sound environmental policy is being dismissed by the stroke of a pen, the Cinnabar Foundation brought together a respected group of wildlife biologists and conservation leaders to discuss current and future issues facing the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE). The thoughtful and thought-provoking discussion took place at Cinnabar's fall board meeting along Mission Creek just a few miles north of Yellowstone National Park.

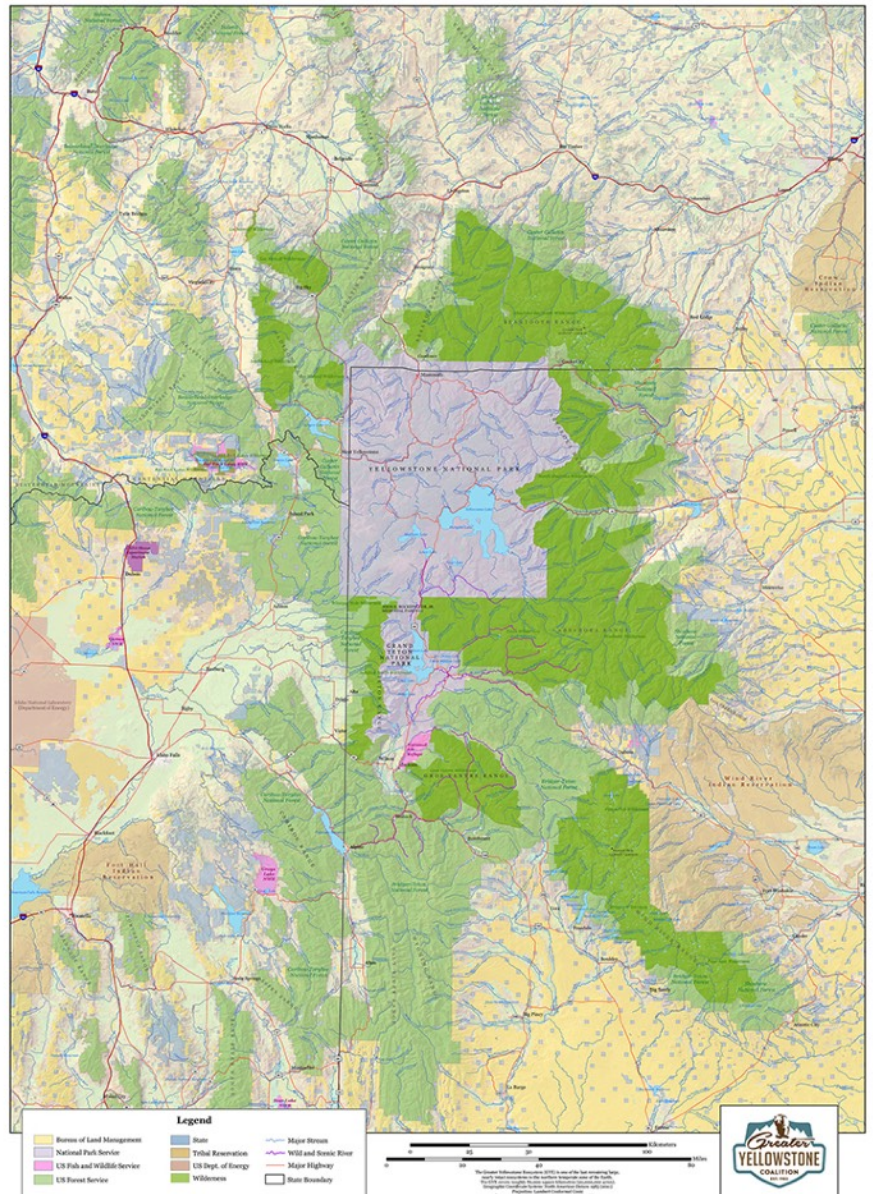
Roundtable participants included Caroline Byrd, executive director of the Greater Yellowstone Coalition; David Diamond, coordinator of the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee; Lill Erickson, executive director of the Western Sustainability Exchange; Chris Johns, former editor-in-chief of National Geographic Magazine; Alex Sienkiewicz, Yellowstone district ranger for the Custer-Gallatin National Forest; Doug Smith, senior wildlife biologist in Yellowstone National Park; Todd Wilkinson, founder of Mountain Journal; and Michelle Uberuaga, executive director of the Park County Environmental Council.

These conservation professionals identified the mega issues facing the Yellowstone region and explored the roadblocks threatening their resolution



Yellowstone National Park is home to the country's largest wild bison herd.

## GREATER YELLOWSTONE ECOSYSTEM



while suggesting possible ways to move forward.

### *Climate Change*

Climate change is a “Game Changer” since the future of our planet depends upon how we respond to a changing environment. How do we do a better job of engaging people on this issue? It seems to be a partisan conflict.

### *Landscape*

We must protect the scale and integrity of the landscape. Comprising an area that includes Yellowstone National Park and parts of Montana, Idaho and Wyoming, the Greater Yellowstone

Ecosystem is rooted in its land and wildlife. Unlike ecosystems in the rest of the lower 48 states, the GYE is home to the “Big Three” large carnivores: wolves, grizzly bears and cougars. Elk are the system drivers for these carnivores.

The future of these carnivores and their prey depends upon the scale of their habitat. Therefore, it is essential that the Yellowstone ecosystem remain connected to other landscapes and that opportunities for wildlife migrations are maintained. To protect more of the system, we need to focus on habitat connectivity between private and public

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## Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem: A Roundtable Discussion

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land. That in turn demands a better understanding of all the ecological connections within the GYE and how they relate to each other.

The conservation professionals stressed the need to act soon to protect connectivity, warning that the window to protect this landscape is closing rapidly.

### ***Human Population Growth***

Human population growth contributes to climate change and threatens the wild amenities we seek to preserve and protect. As more people embrace the wild through tourism and dispersed backcountry recreation, we may be guilty of loving these special places to death.

We don't know the true cost but we can begin to address its impact of population growth on our environment by taking action to regulate development at the county level. This county-based environmental work is crucial. We can help landowners stay on their land with incentives and programs that promote sound stewardship like conservation easements and carbon offset credits.

We should engage the best minds to create a "conservation economy," shifting economic drivers to promote conservation as well as consumption, agreeing that it is a myth that we need a constant growth rate to be considered successful.



Yellowstone National Park's Gibbon River is a headwaters tributary of the Madison River and a popular trout fishing location.



Geothermal features are a popular attraction in Yellowstone National Park. More than 4.12 million people visited Yellowstone National Park in 2018.

### ***Science***

Good science will provide a solid foundation for decision-making. Science will not give us all the answers, but science should track changes over time. To overcome a distrust of science at the local level, invite people to take part through citizen science.

### ***Communication***

Communication is at the core of change. To build support from the people who live in this region, we need to communicate in a variety of ways.

To work with communities and gain their support, we need to talk with people, not at them. By communicating openly, honestly and respectfully, we will learn how to bring people together to work on conservation issues and how we can help people live with wildlife on the landscape.

Everyone loves a good story and we need great stories to explain the issues of the GYE. Journalism can play an important role in inspiring the public.

The history and story of the "Montana Conservation Ethic" needs to be taught broadly and to all age levels. Conservation education should be part of our school curriculum through a blend of history, philosophy and social sciences.

The Cinnabar Foundation board truly appreciates the dedication and commitment of the professional conservationists who took time away from their families on an October weekend. They helped us to better understand these evolving issues so that we can more effectively allocate our grant funds to support the critical work of our grantees.



The Yellowstone River flows 692 miles from its headwaters to the Missouri River.

# FULFILLING OUR MISSION

## 2018 Conservation Partners

Each year the Cinnabar Foundation partners with scores of nonprofit organizations and educational

institutions working within Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

We invest in efforts where the opportunities for success are supported by well-founded science, strategic planning, strong leadership, effective and collaborative actions, and community-based constituencies.

Our partner grantees use advocacy, capacity-building, communications,

economics, law, policy, research, and science/technology to find long-lasting conservation solutions. Further, we continue to actively support both new and experienced leaders in conservation.

We are proud to report that in 2018, the Cinnabar Foundation awarded 82 grants and awards totaling \$433,000 to our following conservation partners:

### CLIMATE ACTION — natural resource extraction, renewable energy, reduction of greenhouse gases, adaptation strategies

**\$23,500**

Climate Smart Glacier Country	\$2,000	Northwest Energy Coalition <sup>1</sup>	\$4,000
Conservation Hawks	\$2,000	Western Sustainability Exchange	\$7,000
Montana Renewable Energy Association	\$2,000	Western Sustainability Exchange <sup>2</sup>	\$2,500
Northwest Energy Coalition	\$4,000		

### EDUCATION & RESEARCH — conservation, environmental, species

**\$56,000**

Artemis Common Ground	\$3,000	Swan Valley Connections	\$10,000
Ecology Project International	\$3,000	Teller Wildlife Refuge	\$4,000
Institute for Journalism & Natural Resources <sup>1</sup>	\$5,000	Teller Wildlife Refuge <sup>2</sup>	\$2,000
Kaniksu Land Trust	\$2,000	University of Montana:	\$5,000
Montana Natural History Center	\$12,000	Environmental Studies Program <sup>5</sup>	
Montana Raptor Conservation Center <sup>4</sup>	\$1,000	Yellowstone Forever <sup>4</sup>	\$5,000
Raptors of the Rockies	\$4,000		

### ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY — diverse statewide environmental issues

**\$96,000**

Earthworks	\$3,000	National Wildlife Federation	\$3,000
Forward Montana Foundation	\$5,000	National Wildlife Federation <sup>2</sup>	\$2,000
Montana Audubon	\$8,000	Northern Plains Resource Council	\$15,000
Montana Conservation Voters Education Fund	\$15,000	Park County Environmental Council	\$8,000
Montana Environmental Information Center	\$15,000	Western Organization of Resource Councils	\$5,000
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$10,000	Education Project	
MontPIRG Leadership Fund	\$3,000	Yellowstone to Yukon	\$4,000

### PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION — wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, open space

**\$71,000**

Bitter Root Land Trust	\$10,000	Heart of the Rockies	\$4,000
Bitter Root Land Trust <sup>4</sup>	\$1,000	Montana Association of Land Trusts	\$5,000
Five Valleys Land Trust	\$10,000	Montana Land Reliance	\$5,000
Flathead Land Trust	\$10,000	National Parks Conservation Association	\$2,000
Gallatin Valley Land Trust	\$9,000	Prickly Pear Land Trust	\$3,000
Gallatin Valley Land Trust <sup>2</sup>	\$1,000	Vital Ground	\$10,000
Gallatin Valley Land Trust <sup>4</sup>	\$1,000		





Clark Fork River near Thompson Falls, Montana

## PUBLIC LANDS — access, advocacy, stewardship, wildlife habitat

**\$101,000**

Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation	\$3,000	Montana Conservation Corps <sup>4</sup>	\$1,000
Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation <sup>2</sup>	\$2,000	Montana Wilderness Association	\$12,000
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	\$5,000	Mountain Journal	\$5,000
Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation	\$3,000	Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation	\$3,000
Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation <sup>2</sup>	\$2,000	Swan View Coalition	\$4,000
Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument	\$5,000	The Wilderness Land Trust	\$2,000
Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness	\$5,000	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	\$5,000
Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance	\$4,000	Treesource	\$3,000
Great Burn Study Group	\$6,000	Wyoming Outdoor Council	\$5,000
Great Burn Study Group <sup>2</sup>	\$4,000	Wyoming Wildlife Federation	\$4,000
Helena Hunters and Anglers	\$5,000	Yaak Valley Forest Council	\$8,000
Montana Conservation Corps	\$5,000		

## SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES & AGRICULTURE — community-based conservation initiatives, rangeland stewardship, watershed partnerships

**\$31,000**

Alternative Energy Resources Organization	\$3,000	Citizens for a Better Flathead	\$5,000
Alternative Energy Resources Organization <sup>2</sup>	\$1,000	Montana Watershed Coordination Council	\$7,000
Blackfoot Challenge	\$15,000		

## WATER QUALITY & FISHERIES

**\$54,500**

Big Hole Watershed Committee	\$5,000	Montana Trout Unlimited <sup>1</sup>	\$10,000
Bighorn River Alliance <sup>4</sup>	\$1,000	Montana Watershed Coordination Council <sup>1</sup>	\$1,500
Clark Fork Coalition	\$15,000	Trout Unlimited	\$5,000
Clearwater Resource Council	\$3,000	Watershed Education Network <sup>2</sup>	\$1,000
Montana Trout Unlimited	\$13,000		

<sup>1</sup> **Tawney Opportunity Grant:** helps organizations meet unpredictable challenges or seize opportunities outside the Foundation's regular granting cycle.

<sup>2</sup> **Sargent Legacy Grant:** rewards outstanding conservation work over the course of years.

<sup>3</sup> **Sargent Stewardship Award:** a special monetary grant designated by the award recipient to a nonprofit environmental organization whose mission is in keeping with the purpose of the Cinnabar Foundation.

<sup>4</sup> **Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award:** a special monetary grant made in the recipient's honor to a nonprofit environmental organization whose mission is in keeping with the purpose of the Cinnabar Foundation.

<sup>5</sup> **Cinnabar Program Initiative**

## Site Visits With Our Conservation Partners

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conservation, Vital Ground Executive Director Ryan Lutey explained that wildlife is free to move though a critical bottleneck area that crosses the Kootenai Valley between the Cabinet and Purcell mountains.

The lowland temperate rainforests of the Yaak are home to diverse species. Yet this special place is one of the rarest and most under-protected ecosystems in the nation, according to Vital Ground's conservation Program Manager Mitch Doherty. With just 25-30 grizzlies in the Cabinet population and a similar number maintaining a habitat foothold in the Yaak, reestablishing a genetic linkage between these subgroups is urgent and critical. Combined with Vital Ground's Yaak Mountain property across Highway 2, the Wild River acquisitions establish a contiguous conservation pathway between public lands on both sides of the valley, a vital link to the recovery of the smallest population of grizzlies in the Lower 48 and a key concern to another Cinnabar special project grantee, Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y). Jessie Grossman, coordinator of Y2Y's Cabinet-Purcell Mountain Corridor project, explained that maintaining a



At the top of Hinsley Hill, Rick Bass, board president of the Yaak Valley Forest Council, explains YVFC's concerns about the proposed route of the Pacific Northwest Trail through a remote section of the Yaak.

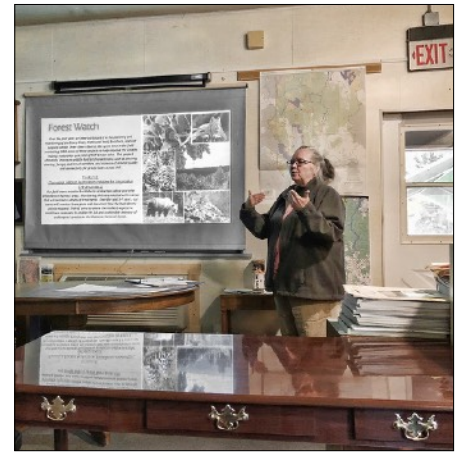


Cinnabar board and Legacy Society members learned from Vital Ground Executive Director Ryan Lutey, Program Manager Mitch Doherty, and Y2Y Cabinet Purcell Mountain Corridor Project Coordinator Jessie Grossman, about this crucial linkage area that will facilitate the safe movement of grizzly bears and other wildlife across the Kootenai Valley.

wildlife corridor through the Wild River property is a high priority for her organization. While Vital Ground is the lead organization for this project, Y2Y is a 50 percent funding partner.

Beyond grizzlies, the acquisitions protect habitat for moose, elk and numerous other species. By safeguarding the Kootenai River shoreline, the project also protects water quality and stream channel habitat for bull trout and white sturgeon, fish species listed as threatened and endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

The Yaak Valley Forest Council (YVFC) also is concerned with maintaining the small population of grizzlies in northwest Montana. With Board President Rick Bass and YVFC staff members, we braved a driving rain (this is a rainforest!) to overlook the proposed Pacific Northwest Trail and discuss possible rerouting to keep hikers safely away from core grizzly bear habitat. The YVFC commissioned a scientific report on the effects of the proposed route on core grizzly bear habitat. The group created the Friends of the Southern Route to advocate for another pathway and gained the support of at least 20 local businesses. This action is typical of YVFC, a



Yaak Valley Forest Council Executive Director Robyn King describes the issues and programs upon which the organization is currently focused.

positive and practical community organization working to ensure this unique ecosystem and the communities that rely on it are healthy and resilient. YVFC Executive Director Robyn King pointed out that, like the Friends of

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## Site Visits With Our Conservation Partners

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Scotchman Peaks Wilderness, YVFC staff and board members are immersed in their community, working to inspire leadership and neighbor-to-neighbor communication that results in healthy kids, strong families and a prosperous community. YVFC's long list of activities includes leadership in the Kootenai Forest Stakeholders coalition, promoting best management practice and mitigation monitoring on the Kootenai Forest, headwaters restoration, community development and conservation education.

### *Open Lands and Regenerative Agriculture*

Our fall board meeting in southwestern Montana included two field trips led by grantees Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLТ) and Western Sustainability Exchange (WSE).

Operating in one of the fastest growing regions in the nation, the Gallatin Valley Land Trust is strategically pursuing its mission to connect people, communities, and open lands through the conservation of working farms and ranches, healthy

ivers, and wildlife habitat and the creation of trails in the Montana headwaters of the Missouri and Upper Yellowstone rivers. GVLТ staff showcased two projects that have received Cinnabar funding.

The Hudson Creek Ranch Project completes an earlier GVLТ project along Bozeman Pass, between Bozeman and Livingston, Montana. Stopping at the Chestnut Mountain trailhead along the aptly named Trail Creek, GVLТ Program Director Brendan Weiner explained how his organization and its partners have protected a critical wildlife corridor of 459 acres through a conservation easement adjacent to an earlier GVLТ easement as well as a portion of the Gallatin National Forest.

Northeast of Bozeman, Brendan and GVLТ Associate Director Matt Parsons showcased another land conservation technique that will preserve still more critical wildlife habitat. Leading us on a short hike along a gentle trail beside Middle Cottonwood Creek, Matt and Brendan introduced us to the Middle Cottonwood Project, 160 acres of critical winter habitat for mule deer on the western slope of the Bridger Mountain Range. Located near Bozeman and adjacent to another



GVLТ Program Director Brendan Weiner describes the 160 acres of critical mule deer and elk winter habitat beside Middle Cottonwood Creek on the western slope of the Bridger Mountain Range.

stretch of the Gallatin National Forest, this area of rocky cliffs, lush meadows and rich bottomland is threatened by imminent fragmentation and development. Matt and Brendan explained that the land trust is negotiating to buy this property to preserve its amenities.

Bundled up in the early October cold, Cinnabar's board and staff headed to the Indreland Ranch in Big Timber, Montana, to see how some livestock producers, with the help of Cinnabar grantee Western Sustainability Land Exchange (WSE), are changing the way they do business, using practices proven to restore vitality to biologically significant ecosystems and the fish and wildlife they support.

Through its workshops, WSE gives ranchers tools to increase their soil health and plant vigor, while protecting wildlife habitat. Adopting these proven methods of "natural" ranching helps preserve wide open spaces and Montana's agricultural heritage, and strengthens rural economies.

For the last dozen years, Roger and Betsy Indreland, along with their daughter Kate, have benefitted from WSE workshops and generously share their on-the-ground experience through ranch tours. By his own admission,



GVLТ Associate Director Matt Parsons explains, at the Chestnut Mountain trailhead, how his organization and its partners have protected a critical wildlife corridor along the Bozeman Pass.

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## Site Visits With Our Conservation Partners

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Indreland says, “We are very unique cattle ranchers.”

Theirs is a ranch with a mission statement: “To provide genetics and services that help cattle producers attain more freedom and profitability in their business and life.”

The Indrelands achieve their mission by subscribing to regenerative agriculture, adapting cattle to their environment and placing an emphasis on healthy soil. They leave as little as possible to chance, sending in soil samples for a complex analysis, then augmenting the earth with low or missing minerals.

“If we get our soil right, our plants will be adequate forage for our cattle,” Roger says. “We look at cattle as a tool to improve our general landscape health, specifically in the soil. Good soil health comes from a diversity of plants and wildlife as well as water quality: It is all a system, a circle.”

The Indrelands have taken advantage of WSE workshops, including *Today’s Ranch*, a workshop focusing on the use of rest-rotation grazing to improve grasslands and increase profitability by reducing operating costs.



Rancher Roger Indreland explains that their family ranching operation subscribes to regenerative agricultural practices, adapting cattle to their environment and placing an emphasis on healthy soil.



Roger Indreland describes their ranch-scaled carbon sequestration program as his wife Betsy (far left) and WSE Executive Director Lill Erickson look on.

Indreland angus thrive almost exclusively on pasture forage. Wind blowing in from the Beartooth Mountains keeps this forage uncovered almost all winter long.

They match their calving date to the growing season, with Indreland calves hitting the ground starting May 1, when plentiful forage is available. Cows calve on the open range – they rely on Mother Nature to weed out the weaker animals. “We believe calving is the cow’s job, not ours,” Roger explains.

WSE also offers a comprehensive training program to provide new and existing range riders, ranchers, conservationists, and agency personnel with the skills range riders need to effectively and nonlethally protect livestock from predation and to manage cattle in ways that promote healthy grasslands for both wildlife and livestock.

WSE Executive Director Lill Erickson explained that her organization works one-on-one with ranchers to teach regenerative practices. In 2018, WSE used its Sustainability Criteria© to certify the use of these practices on 220,000 acres, bringing the total number of acres WSE has helped conserve with regenerative practices to over 2.45 million acres.

The Indreland ranch is the first to enroll in WSE’s Montana Grasslands Carbon Initiative to pull climate-changing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and sequester it safely underground.



Cinnabar board and Legacy Society members at the Indreland Ranch.



## Conservation Partner Spotlight:

### Empowering NextGen Conservation: Ecology Project International

by Erin Clark

Montana's youth grow up with access to unique natural resources in their local communities that most of their peers can only dream about. Where else, other than Gardiner or West Yellowstone, would you learn at an early age how to navigate past bison on the sidewalk on your way to school? How many communities across our state include kids who learn to keep bear spray close at hand while they wait at the school bus stop?

The wildness of our Montana home is a privilege but also presents challenges—social, economic and logistical.

Montana teens experience and develop appreciation for the complexities of living in a wild state through a learning and living program offered by Ecology Project International (EPI). Since 2008, EPI has engaged more than 1,700 Montana, Idaho, and



Data collection in winter provides extra opportunities for learning and adventure. While snowpack persists, EPI students learn how to conduct research on snowshoes. These students are collecting scat for a study about moose reproduction rates.

Wyoming students in our Montana-based field programs in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the Bitterroot Valley. Cinnabar Foundation has supported these place-based programs for middle and high schoolers since 2015.

EPI students set aside their phones, pledge to step out of their comfort zones, and don snowshoes or hiking boots to set out on 5- to 20-day learning adventures. Working alongside wildlife biologists and EPI educators, they contribute to ecological restoration projects, actively deploy the scientific process, challenge their physical capabilities, and explore the perspectives of conservation stakeholders represented in their communities. They emerge from the experience with skills, confidence, knowledge, and heightened perspective to become our next generation of Montana conservation leaders.

In the words of a 2018 Livingston, Montana, student: "I don't think there's a program anywhere like this. You taught me so many aspects of how the wildlife and humans in Yellowstone come into play on a large scale. I have never felt confident that science was my strong suit, but you helped me grow out of my self-doubt, and I developed a closer understanding with my peers because of this experience."

In 2019, EPI will welcome more than 150 students from over a dozen Montana communities. These students will design and execute their own



Ecology Project International students engage with Chris Geremia, a Yellowstone National Park bison biologist, to explore how ungulate grazing impacts grass and forb growth in the park. Interaction with scientists is an important part of the EPI experience.

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Privately-owned ranchland north of Yellowstone National Park provides important winter habitat for elk.

### Conservation Partner Spotlight continued from page 14

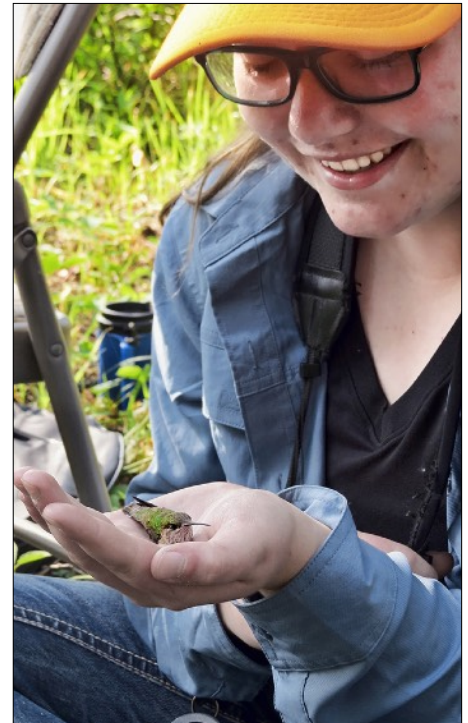
scientific research projects, contributing to research and service projects led by EPI's partners. Each student will leave their EPI experience having made an immediate, positive impact on habitat and wildlife, and having developed the determination and ability to make a difference for conservation in Montana for decades to come.

The power of the educational experience EPI provides to Montana youth is achieved through partnership

with schools, teachers, researchers, conservation professionals, ranchers, and the funders who support EPI's mission. Together, these partners are empowering the next generation to sustain a uniquely wild Montana.

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Erin Clark was the Yellowstone Program Director for Ecology Project International from 2012-2018. She is currently the Western Field Director for the Montana Wilderness Association.



EPI's summer internship at MPG Ranch in the Bitterroot Valley provides immersive opportunities for students to interact with scientists and wildlife. Each intern works one-on-one with a scientist during the month-long program. This student contributed to a hummingbird study, which included several days of banding birds at MPG Ranch.



EPI students learn how to use radio telemetry equipment to locate collared ungulates on Yellowstone's northern range. The students contribute data to help Yellowstone National Park biologists evaluate responses of bison, elk, mule deer, bighorn sheep, and pronghorn antelope populations to historically high bison populations.



## Cinnabar Accepts Leadership Role in Intermountain West Funder Network

In June 2018, Cinnabar's Executive Director Gary J. Wolfe accepted an invitation to join the steering committee of the Intermountain West Funder Network (IMWFN). The steering committee provides strategic guidance to the Network, a regional division of the Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities, focusing on the eight-state region of Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, and New Mexico. IMWFN provides a unique opportunity for funders to promote meaningful engagement, strengthen communities, and build philanthropic connections that will leverage funding and support for one of the nation's most iconic and fastest-growing regions.

IMWFN's goal is to create a network of grantmakers who can work

alongside each other—as well as with their partners in the nonprofit, public, and private sectors—to address local and regional environmental, growth and development issues through meaningful community engagement and innovative solutions in the Intermountain West.

The Network creates opportunities for funders to learn together, build relationships, and catalyze action. Participating funders are able to:

- Learn from each other about the issues, possibilities, and breakthroughs affecting their programmatic areas;
- Engage in discussions about priorities and leverage points; and
- Enhance the impact of their individual foundations by learning more about prospective partnership funding and collaborative projects.

In addition to Cinnabar, IMWFN's eight-member steering committee consists of representatives from Kendeda Fund (Montana), Santa Fe Community Foundation (New Mexico), Thornburg Foundation (New Mexico), Gates Family Foundation (Colorado), Babbitt Center for Land and Water (Arizona), Lincoln Institute of Land Policy (Arizona), and Funders' Network



Gary Wolfe has been the executive director at the Cinnabar Foundation since 2015. Having spent more than 40 years working in natural resource management and conservation, he holds a Ph.D. in wildlife biology.

for Smart Growth and Livable Communities (national office).

The Cinnabar Foundation has been an active IMWFN member since 2017.

### Dear Friends

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Just 30 or so conservation nonprofits existed in Montana and the Yellowstone region when the Cinnabar Foundation began grantmaking. Since then, the number of groups has exploded: Montana alone is home to hundreds of

environmental and conservation organizations. Over the years, Cinnabar has provided grants to 316 distinct nonprofit organizations, collaboratives, and educational institutions. Many of the individual nonprofits we have funded would not be around were it not for an early infusion of strategic grants from Montana's only conservation fund.

We invite you to join us by donating to our endowment or by becoming a member of the Legacy Society through planned giving.

Robin Tawney Nichols  
Chair, Cinnabar Foundation

### Cinnabar Founders Inducted into Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame

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"As MEIC's first staff," Bruce Whittenberg said, "Phil and Robin were in the middle of crafting or reforming nearly every law (in the 1970s) that had anything to do with protecting land and water in Montana." This included laws to protect air and water quality, requiring mining reclamation, and detailing environmental standards for energy production and subdivision

development, control for instream flows, and more. This, too, is where the trajectories of the Tawneys and Sargents intersected as Len and Sandy became full-time MEIC volunteers throughout several legislative sessions.

In the 1980s, having earned a law degree from the University of Montana, Phil became the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's first legal counsel, and a founding board member of the Cinnabar Foundation. His work lives on at the Foundation and across hundreds

of thousands of acres of wildlife habitat conserved by RMEF.

Meanwhile, Robin wrote magazine articles about Montana's complex conservation issues and published children's and family guides to Yellowstone National Park. Since Phil's passing in 1995, Robin has continued to write and is co-author of "Len and Sandy Sargent: A Legacy of Activist Philanthropy." She assumed Phil's seat on the Cinnabar Foundation board and has served as chair since Len Sargent's death in 1997.

## THE CINNABAR FOUNDATION BY THE NUMBERS: 2018

### GRANTS AND AWARDS

**\$433,000**



### NUMBER OF GRANTS

**82**



### PERCENTAGE SPENT ON GRANTS & PROGRAM INITIATIVES

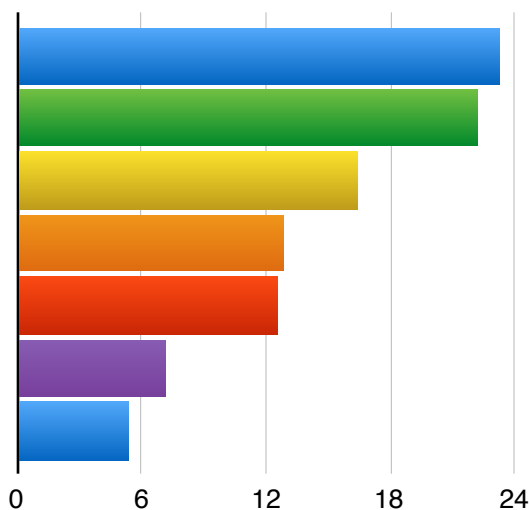
**97.4% \***



★ The Cinnabar Foundation's administrative expenses are very low (less than 3%) due to the active engagement of the volunteer Board of Directors. The primary administrative expense is salary and operational support for a part-time executive director. The Cinnabar Foundation's most recent IRS Form 990-PF is available on our website.

## CONSERVATION PORTFOLIO

- Public Lands: 23.3%
- Environmental Advocacy: 22.2%
- Private Land Conservation: 16.4%
- Education & Research: 12.9%
- Water Quality & Fisheries: 12.6%
- Sustainable Communities & Agriculture: 7.2%
- Climate Action: 5.4%



**1,971**

**GRANTS AWARDED  
SINCE**

**1985**

**TOTALING  
MORE THAN**

**\$8.3M**

### WHO WE ARE

PRESIDENT	Robin Tawney Nichols
VICE PRESIDENT	Gordon "Corky" Brittan
SECRETARY	Judi Stauffer
TREASURER/ DIRECTOR EMERITUS	Ernie Turner
AT LARGE	Grant Parker
DIRECTOR EMERITUS	Jim Posewitz
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Gary J. Wolfe

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