

CINNABAR FOUNDATION

2019 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.



Absaroka Range southeast of Livingston, Montana

Dear Friends,

In recent years, the Cinnabar Foundation has increasingly focused on creating ways to ensure future financial support for nonprofit conservation organizations in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. Discussions among Cinnabar's staff and members of its board of directors have extended to those representing cohort foundations that also make grants in this region. A small and informal group of funders has subsequently come together as the Montana Conservation Funders Roundtable to discuss how to fill the void that will occur when several foundations either close up shop or shift their funding focus to other regions within the next few years. The "sunsetting" foundations are following a trend established a generation or so ago whereby funders spend all of their endowments and earnings over a specified number of years, often within the lifetimes of their benefactors. The obvious question is: How, if at all, will the money at stake be replaced and, where needed, augmented? [Learn more about the Montana Conservation Funders Roundtable on page 9.]

After the 2019 Roundtable, I had the opportunity to discuss the question at some length with a program officer from a major conservation foundation who has spent decades working

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Cinnabar Board Welcomes New Member

Lisa Flowers

In September 2019, the Cinnabar Foundation's Board of Directors welcomed conservation educator and advocate Lisa Flowers as a board member-at-large. Lisa brings to her position a wealth of experience in the public and nonprofit sectors where she continues to provide creative, energetic and strategic leadership.

For more than 20 years, Lisa's work has focused on teaching K-12 science, conservation and wildlife education primarily in the outdoors. She earned her doctorate in forestry and conservation at the University of Montana-Missoula while working as director of conservation education for the Boone and Crockett Club on the club's Theodore Roosevelt Memorial Ranch west of Dupuyer, Montana, on

the Rocky Mountain Front. Lisa also served as coordinator for several regional and collaborative outreach entities, including the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem Education Consortium, the Roundtable of the Crown of the Continent, and the Front Range Conservation Education Consortium.

Lisa has been recognized for her work in conservation education by the Montana Audubon Society (*Environmental Educator of the Year*), Montana Project WET (Water Education for Teachers), U.S.D.A. Forest Service Northern Region, Montana Environmental Education Association (*Sense of Wonder Award*), Montana Wildlife Federation, National Wildlife Federation (*Conservation Communicator Award*), and Shelby High School (*Teacher of the Year*).

Lisa is currently vice president for advancement at the University of Providence in Great Falls, Montana. When she isn't working in the education or conservation arenas, Lisa can be found in the outdoors — hiking, biking,



Lisa Flowers at a trail junction in the Highwood Mountains, an island range east of Great Falls, Montana.

boating, skiing, horseback riding, hunting, and gardening.

The sparkle in Lisa's eyes and her warm smile portray her sense of place and good fortune to be able to share a meaningful life with family, friends, and others in Montana and beyond.

Cinnabar Presents First Rick Hubbard Sargent Innovation Award

Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Rick Hubbard Sargent — artist, longtime Cinnabar board member, and the late son of Cinnabar's founders, Len and Sandy Sargent—urged the Foundation's board to encourage creative initiatives at the local level. The *Rick Hubbard Sargent Innovation Award* was created posthumously by his wife Judi Stauffer and friends to honor Rick, and to recognize and pay tribute to innovative new approaches to conservation that have the potential to radically change prevailing practices and transform existing paradigms.

In 2019, the Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) received the first *Rick Hubbard Sargent*



Attendees gather at the MWCC 2019 Watershed Tour hosted by the Missouri Headwaters Partnership on at South Meadow Creek near McAllister, Montana.

Photo: Courtesy of Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Innovation Award for its work in establishing the Watershed Fund to fill funding gaps experienced by local watershed groups so that those groups can focus on what they do best — conserve natural resources.

Like Rick, the MWCC board and staff were “thinking out of the box” by creating a new source of support for community-driven approaches to managing complex issues. Montana is home to dozens of local watershed

organizations successfully working on land and water conservation initiatives within their communities. Across the state, these collaborative groups are implementing conservation and restoration efforts that improve forests, grasslands, and water resources, yet securing adequate funding for this work always has been challenging. Over the years, the Cinnabar Foundation directly

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Protecting Montana's Wild Places and Public Lands

Montana Wilderness Association

by Ben Gabriel

Since 1958, the Montana Wilderness Association (MWA) has worked to protect our state's wild public lands. With ongoing funding from the Cinnabar Foundation, MWA continues to rally grassroots support for our work in communities throughout the state as we partner with local citizens, ranchers, small businesses, elected officials, outdoor recreation groups, and other individuals and interest groups that have a stake in the public lands we're working to protect. Our collective voice is indeed that much stronger because of the wide-ranging backgrounds and interests of our members, partners, and supporters.

Rallying for Public Lands

That collective voice resounded on January 11, 2019, when some 2,000 Montanans filled the Capitol rotunda in

Helena for the Rally for Public Lands. MWA played a leading role in organizing and promoting this event during the 2019 legislative session. Public landowners from Miles City to Sanders County gathered to celebrate the outdoor way of life that defines our state and to make it clear to decision-makers that Montanans will not allow special interests to seize and exploit our public lands for private gain.

Two of Montana's biggest public land champions, U.S. Senator Jon Tester and Governor Steve Bullock electrified the crowd with speeches highlighting the importance of protecting public lands from those who would choose to transfer or sell them. Tester and Bullock also stressed the importance of funding the infrastructure that enables us to access those lands.

Their message was heard by the legislators: Not a single bill aimed at land transfer was introduced.

Moreover, the legislature passed, and Governor Bullock signed Senate Bill 24, which provides some \$2 million in funding for state parks, trails, and fishing access sites by increasing the optional light vehicle registration fee from \$6 to \$9. This bill was one of our highest priorities for the session.

The Montana Wilderness Association (MWA) is one of Cinnabar Foundation's earliest and most consistently funded grantees.

First funded in 1986, MWA has received grants totaling \$332,500 for 33 of the past 34 years. MWA's grant total ranks third among Cinnabar's grantees. Only Montana Environmental Information Center (\$361,623) and Northern Plains Resource Council (\$363,000) have received more.

Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act Reintroduced

In June, Senator Tester reintroduced the Blackfoot Clearwater Stewardship Act (BCSA). Since then, MWA has been busy building the grassroots support he needs to get the bill through Congress.

Adding nearly 80,000 acres to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountains Wilderness Areas, the bill will permanently protect the wild Swan Front, Grizzly Basin, and the four most vital tributaries of the Blackfoot River—the North Fork of the Blackfoot River, Monture Creek, Morrell Creek, and the West Fork of the Clearwater River. Protecting these tributaries is critical for ensuring that the Blackfoot River and its native trout populations remain healthy for generations to come.

After the reintroduction of the Stewardship Act, MWA launched an intensive social media ad campaign that helped generate 500 calls to the offices of Senator Steve Daines and Congressman Greg Gianforte asking them to support the bill. We also distributed hundreds of yard signs throughout the state.



Grizzly Basin in the Swan Range, near the western boundary of the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Photo: Dee Linnell Blank

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Cinnabar Honors Stewardship Awardees

Smoke and Thelma Elser

The Cinnabar Foundation selected Smoke and Thelma Elser to receive the 19th Sargent Stewardship Award for introducing generations of happy campers to the breadth and depth of the Bob Marshall Wilderness and inspiring them to become lifelong wilderness advocates.

Smoke always has a story to tell and, more often than not, it's a tale about the Bob Marshall Wilderness. He began telling those stories in 1964 when he and Thelma celebrated the passage of the Wilderness Act by launching their business, Wilderness Outfitters. Using the Bob Marshall Wilderness as their classroom, the Elsers made it their life's mission to promote wild places, interpreting the land, the wildlife, and the values of Wilderness for more than 5,000 guests and, occasionally, for members of Congress.

Learning the outfitters' trade from old-timers, they successfully shared their skills and wilderness ethic with a broader public. Early on, they saw the impact of large parties and large pack strings carrying heavy equipment needed to set up camp in the Bob Marshall. Their concern for the land led them to develop low-impact camping techniques and to design lightweight tents and compact



Cinnabar board member emeritus Jim Posewitz presents Smoke and Thelma Elser with the 19th Sargent Stewardship Award at the Missoula Conservation Roundtable's annual celebration in the Elsers' barn.

Photo: Lance Schelvan

camp kitchens requiring fewer pack stock. For more than 50 years, Smoke and Thelma taught the principles of Leave-No-Trace to backcountry horsemen, outfitters and government agency personnel through their winter horse and mule packing classes.

As a member of the Montana Conservation Elders, Smoke has spent the better part of the last decade working side by side with other honest, thoughtful, hardworking Montanans to develop a landscape-scale solution to public land issues in the Blackfoot and Clearwater valleys. The Blackfoot

Clearwater Stewardship Project is testament to the Elsers' belief in thoughtful and respectful collaboration. Wilderness could not have better friends than Smoke and Thelma.

Their recognition for outstanding environmental stewardship within Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem was accompanied by a special grant of \$5,000 from the Cinnabar Foundation, which they designated to be shared by the Montana Conservation Elders, the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation, and the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame.

A Thank You to Cinnabar

December 17, 2019

Thank you so much for bestowing the honor of a Sargent Legacy Grant to the Yaak Valley Forest Council. Our journey has been an amazing one and there is still so much more to travel. We couldn't have done any of it without your early and enduring support. The past year has brought the greatest and deepest challenges we have seen yet on the

Kootenai. We are organizing for the coming year, and rest assured we will proceed with creativity, inspiration, integrity, and, along the way, have some fun. How well we know and share Leonard and Sandy's sentiment, "*We only wish we could have done more.*" In a place as large as Montana, working in the small and overlooked or never-known corners is more vital than ever. Even in this million-acre valley, we see more what we have yet to do than our many past accomplishments. This is a gift—this always-looking-forward. It is an honor to receive this support and we

look forward to visiting with y'all soon about our big plans for the coming year. Please convey our deepest thanks to the entire Cinnabar family.

Gratefully,

Rick Bass,
Board Chair
Yaak Valley Forest Council

NOTE: Sargent Legacy Grants reward outstanding conservation work over a course of years.

Rock Ringling Receives Professional Conservationist Award

In 2019 the Cinnabar Foundation honored Rock Ringling, a longtime leader in Montana's land trust community, with the fourth *Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award*.

In presenting the award, Cinnabar's board president Gordon "Corky" Brittan said, "As so often in the past, you are breaking new ground since the first three Posewitz recipients were, for the bulk of their careers, employed by federal or state agencies. Committed to the same conservation ideals exhibited by those awardees but representing the nonprofit Montana Land Reliance, you have devoted yourself to the preservation of agricultural land and other private open space that sustains the people ranching and farming it, the animal and avian populations it



Rock Ringling accepts the *Jim Posewitz Professional Conservationist Award* from Cinnabar board president Gordon "Corky" Brittan at Rock's retirement party in Bozeman, Montana.

Photo: Courtesy of Montana Land Reliance

supports, and the countless people who both treasure it and take it for granted."

Raised in a ranch family, Rock never took either the agricultural way of life or its conservative and

conservationist character for granted. As managing director of the Montana Land Reliance (MLR), he patiently

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Conservation Legacy Society

by Doug and Marsha Okland



Marsha and Doug Okland joined the Conservation Legacy Society, in 2019, by designating Cinnabar as a beneficiary of a charitable gift annuity with the Montana Community Foundation.

A number of years ago while we were exploring the backroads around Yellowstone, we wandered into the Cinnabar Valley. We were struck by its beauty and solitude and have since visited the valley a number of times throughout the years.

This last year, when seeking a charitable organization to support, our research came across the Cinnabar Foundation. Their mission aligned with our passion. As outdoor enthusiasts, we wanted an organization that works with communities in protecting Montana wilderness, public lands, heritage, and outdoor traditions, now and for future generations. We especially liked that the Foundation encourages innovation, volunteerism, and creating partnerships to achieve their goals. Additionally, we were impressed with their low administrative costs, thus allowing more money for conservation projects throughout the state.

We are proud of our decision to support the Cinnabar Foundation. The

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 406.240.7323 or gwolfe@cinnabarfoundation.org.

Foundation and its conservation partners are working hard to ensure Montana has clean air, clean water, and access to the lands which are so important to us all.

FULFILLING OUR MISSION

2019 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, outreach, educational programs, economics, law, policy, research, and “boots on the ground” hard work to achieve long-lasting conservation

solutions. Further, we continue to actively support both new and experienced leaders in conservation.

We are proud to report that in 2019, the Cinnabar Foundation awarded 81 grants and awards totaling \$459,321 to the following conservation partners:

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

\$24,000

Forward Montana Foundation	\$5,000	Western Sustainability Exchange	\$9,000
Montana Renewable Energy Association	\$3,000	Western Sustainability Exchange ²	\$2,000
Northwest Energy Coalition	\$5,000		

EDUCATION & RESEARCH — conservation, environmental, species

\$86,821

Artemis Common Ground	\$3,000	Montana Outdoor Science School	\$4,000
Ecology Project International	\$3,000	Montana Wilderness School	\$2,000
Montana Climate Solutions Council ¹	\$5,000	National Museum of Forest Service History	\$2,000
Montana Conservation Elders ³	\$3,000	Raptors of the Rockies	\$3,000
Montana Historical Society ²	\$1,500	Swan Valley Connections	\$10,000
Montana Natural History Center	\$12,000	Teller Wildlife Refuge	\$5,000
Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame	\$2,000	University of Montana: Baucus Institute ⁶	\$25,321
Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame ³	\$1,000	University of Montana: <i>Len & Sandy Sargent Environmental Studies Graduate Fellowship</i> ⁶	\$5,000

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY — diverse statewide environmental issues

\$75,000

Earthworks	\$3,000	Northern Plains Resource Council	\$15,000
Montana Audubon	\$7,000	Park County Environmental Council	\$8,000
Montana Conservation Voters Education Fund	\$15,000	Park County Environmental Council ²	\$2,000
Montana Environmental Information Center	\$10,000	Western Organization of Resource Councils	\$5,000
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$10,000		

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

\$87,500

Bitter Root Land Trust	\$10,000	Montana Aquatic Resources Services	\$3,000
Ducks Unlimited	\$3,000	Montana Association of Land Trusts	\$5,000
Five Valleys Land Trust	\$10,000	Montana Land Reliance	\$5,000
Flathead Land Trust	\$10,000	Montana Land Reliance ⁴	\$5,000
Gallatin Valley Land Trust	\$10,000	Prickly Pear Land Trust	\$8,000
Heart of the Rockies	\$3,000	Vital Ground	\$10,000
Heart of the Rockies ²	\$2,500	Whitefish Legacy Partners	\$3,000



Ennis Lake, Montana

PUBLIC LANDS — access, advocacy, stewardship, wildlife habitat

\$104,000

Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation	\$4,000	Mountain Journal	\$5,000
Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation ²	\$2,000	Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation	\$4,000
Backcountry Hunters and Anglers	\$5,000	Swan View Coalition	\$4,000
Blackfeet Nation — Agriculture Resource Management Plan	\$8,000	Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	\$5,000
Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation	\$4,000	University of Montana — Crown of the Continent / Greater Yellowstone Initiative	\$1,000
Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation ³	\$1,000	University of Montana — Wilderness Institute	\$3,000
Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument	\$5,000	Wyoming Outdoor Council	\$5,000
Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness	\$5,000	Yaak Valley Forest Council	\$10,000
Glacier-Two Medicine Alliance	\$4,000	Yaak Valley Forest Council ²	\$2,000
Great Burn Conservation Alliance	\$5,000	Yellowstone to Yukon	\$5,000
Montana Conservation Corps	\$5,000		
Montana Wilderness Association	\$12,000		

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

\$50,000

Alternative Energy Resources Organization	\$2,000	Montana Watershed Coordination Council — Watershed Fund ⁵	\$10,000
Blackfoot Challenge	\$10,000	Montana's Outdoor Legacy Foundation	\$4,000
Blackfoot Challenge ²	\$2,000	Rocky Mountain Front Weed Roundtable	\$3,000
Citizens for a Better Flathead	\$4,000	The Wilderness Society	\$4,000
Future West	\$3,000	Western Landowners Alliance	\$3,000
Montana Watershed Coordination Council	\$5,000		

WATER QUALITY & FISHERIES

\$32,000

Big Hole Watershed Committee	\$4,000	Clearwater Resource Council	\$3,000
Clark Fork Coalition	\$15,000	Montana Trout Unlimited	\$10,000

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

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

³ **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.

⁴ **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.

⁵ **Rick Hubbard Sargent Innovation Award:** recognizes conservation work that pushes boundaries with the intent to expand understanding about more sustainable ways of being in relationship with our natural world.

⁶ **Cinnabar Program Initiative**

A Sharp Conservation Focus

Montana Association of Land Trusts

by Gavin Ricklefs

Montana land trusts generate a portfolio of incredible conservation projects, creating an array of dynamic outdoor recreation opportunities and demonstrating a remarkable commitment to the people of Montana. Every single day, our state land trust community makes Montana a better place to live, work and recreate.

Montana's 12 land trusts unite around two shared values: Our passion for private land conservation and outdoor recreation, and our strong and unanimous dedication to the Montana Association of Land Trusts (MALT).

Created in 2005, MALT has emerged as one of the most effective state land trust associations in the country. All of MALT's individual projects, activities and programs align with one of three strategic goals, which were adopted in 2006 and continue to guide MALT.

1. Conservation Policy: Enhancing and defending private land conservation statutes and policies in Montana.
2. Conservation Funding: Creating, supporting, and expanding private and public funding sources for land trusts and land conservation.
3. Outreach/Coalition Building: Pursuing outreach and coalition building, with an emphasis on nontraditional groups and partnerships.

Montana's state land trusts created MALT to ensure that the state's statutes and policies allow private land conservation to flourish. By any measurement, Montana private land conservation is flourishing.

Montana is a national leader in private land conservation with over 2.6 million acres conserved. Montana has



Falls Creek, a previously inaccessible 422 acres of prime wildlife and riparian habitat along Montana's Rocky Mountain Front now permanently protected through a partnership made possible by the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, in coordination with Lewis and Clark County, the Dan Barrett family, Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest and many other partners.

Photo: Courtesy of Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation

protected more acres through conservation easements than Idaho, Wyoming, and the Dakotas combined. Montana has protected more acreage through conservation easements held by accredited land trusts than any other state. Montana is the top Agricultural Land Easement Program state in the U.S. Montana is a regional leader in sage grouse and grasslands conservation.

MALT itself does not do conservation projects. Land trusts do. Land trusts generate landscape conservation projects; work closely with landowners to create voluntary conservation easements; plan, build and maintain community trails and parks; and more. But behind the scenes, MALT plays a steady and positive role.

MALT engages at the state policy level and is an active lobbying influence at the Montana legislature. At the federal policy level, MALT is recognized for leading concerted efforts to improve Farm Bill conservation titles and to obtain full, dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

While Montana's land trusts have greatly expanded their project diversity in recent years, MALT has retained its focus, actively helping land trusts increase their value to their

communities. More than ever before, Montana's land trusts—while retaining voluntary, incentive-based conservation projects as a priority—are building partnerships to create community parks, walking and riding trails, access for hunting and fishing, and expanding the services they provide to a wider range of community members.

Virtually every MALT member is expanding its service in Montana. The **Five Valleys Land Trust's** Mount Dean Stone project is a tremendous example of an effort that provides a wealth of natural resource and recreational benefits to Missoula. **The Trust for Public Land** and **The Nature Conservancy** are leaders in forest health and landscape conservation efforts that improve forest resiliency and benefit local economies. **Prickly Pear Land Trust** is winning national awards and receiving national accolades for its Tenmile Creek Park project. Montanans everywhere are applauding the **Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation's** work to expand and improve recreational access to public and private lands. Sage grouse conservation projects led by the **Montana Land Reliance** and **Montana**

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Montana Conservation Funders Roundtable

Looking Ahead

Many of Montana's nonprofit conservation organizations rely heavily on a shrinking pool of foundations, and the Cinnabar Foundation wants to ensure those nonprofits will be funded long into the future.

Over the past two years, the Cinnabar has met with representatives from a small group of private foundations to address how to fill the funding gap created when foundations shut down, focus their resources elsewhere, or plan to spend out their endowments in the near future.

Meeting in Helena, Montana, in November 2018, the group identified a three-fold need to: 1) "bring back" conservation funders who have shifted their focus; 2) recruit new conservation funders to Montana; and 3) secure increased funding from foundations already supporting conservation activities within the state.

Those assembled agreed that, over the next five years, Montana is uniquely poised to make significant conservation gains in the protection of land, water and wildlife because of several critical factors that are unique to our state:

- **Large landscapes are at risk but offer opportunities for preservation.** Montana still has abundant, connected large landscapes with more than six million acres of unprotected wild and roadless country that provide exceptional wildlife habitat and support a rich and diverse wildlife resource. The opportunity to protect large, intact landscapes and their associated wildlife is unique in the lower 48.
- **Community-based conservation is a Montana tradition and can be expanded in many areas.** Montana has been a pioneer in successful community-based conservation with a decades-long tradition of successes whereby stakeholders and neighbors set aside their differences to come together for land and water protection. This record of success and those partnerships offer other communities a blueprint for enduring conservation success.
- **Support for public lands is a bipartisan issue in Montana.**
- **Private land conservation is alive and well.** Montana has a dynamic land trust community. Land trusts and public agencies have negotiated in excess of 1,000 conservation easements on more than two million acres of privately-owned lands—conserving important wildlife

habitat, productive agricultural lands and timberlands, watersheds, recreational opportunities, and scenic vistas.

- **Montana has a mature, well-established conservation community that works well together.** With well-established organizations spread across the state, an organizational infrastructure for conservation action already is in place.

In September 2019, the Cinnabar Foundation brought together private funders a second time in conjunction with the Foundation's semi-annual board meeting. The initial group was joined by representatives from several other private foundations and the Cinnabar Foundation's board of directors. The purpose of this second Montana Conservation Funders Roundtable was to build upon the initial meeting and to further explore ways to sustain and grow the Montana conservation funding base. After an extensive discussion of various goals, strategies, and tactics, the group agreed to continue to work together to attract more philanthropic funding to further conservation efforts in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

The Cinnabar Foundation is proud to play an important role in these efforts.

Cinnabar Presents First Rick Hubbard Sargent Innovation Award
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funded many of these local organizations but was unable to support all of their worthy requests.

Launched in 2018, the MWCC Watershed Fund solves a large piece of the funding puzzle by securing and leveraging monies from federal, state, and private sources to provide additional support to its member watershed groups. MWCC works closely with the Cinnabar Foundation and other partners, which collectively contribute to the Watershed

Fund, and then re-grants these funds to local watershed groups via a rigorous competitive grants program. Grants are awarded for both organizational capacity building and project implementation.

In 2019, the Watershed Fund awarded 50 grants totaling \$241,500 to local watershed groups. With the help of MWCC, recipient organizations leveraged those grants with matching funds and in-kind support for a total impact of \$904,515. Of the 50 grants awarded, 10 supported project implementation and 40 helped build capacity. All together, these grants resulted in 39 miles of improved streams,

40 conservation practices implemented, and 14,633 acres of land made more resilient. In addition, this support allowed many small organizations to retain or expand their staffing, invest in professional development, and improve their community outreach capabilities.

As the first program of its kind in Montana, the Watershed Fund is successfully addressing critical funding gaps that, otherwise, would inhibit many community-based watershed organizations from implementing important local conservation measures.

Protecting Montana's Wild Places and Public Lands

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In September, MWA co-sponsored the Last Best Outdoors Fest in Missoula, featuring Senator Tester. The event highlighted Montana's \$7 billion outdoor recreation economy and the economic importance of passing the BCSA.

Protecting the Badger-Two Medicine

Sacred to the Blackfeet people, the Badger-Two Medicine is bounded by the Blackfeet Reservation, Glacier National Park, and the Bob Marshall Wilderness. It is the last unprotected wild land along the Rocky Mountain Front, and it is being threatened by potential development.

This year, we helped compel the holder of one of the two remaining oil

and gas leases in the Badger-Two Medicine to retire the lease. We now are working with our Blackfeet and conservation partners to find a solution that would permanently protect the Badger-Two Medicine from any industrial development.

Another Banner Season for Trail Stewardship

Since 2012, MWA's Volunteer Trail Crew has been mobilizing volunteers to maintain and construct trails across the state. Project work focuses on landscapes MWA is working to protect, including the Continental Divide.

In 2019, approximately 270 volunteers worked over 5,500 hours on 63 miles of trail, including a project along the North Fork of the Blackfoot River, an area that will become designated Wilderness when Congress

approves the BCSA and the act is signed into law.

MWA's work protecting Montana's wild places and public lands is powered largely by volunteers who contribute time, money and wisdom to MWA's campaigns. From volunteering on trail projects to serving on chapter and state boards, MWA's volunteers are the backbone of the organization.

MWA looks forward to many more years protecting Montana's wild public lands.

Ben Gabriel is executive director of the Montana Wilderness Association.

A Sharp Conservation Focus

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Nature Conservancy are producing results essential to state sage grouse policy goals. **Gallatin Valley Land Trust** has produced a community dream—a Main Street to the Mountains trail system for Bozeman. The **Vital Ground Foundation** is reducing grizzly bear conflicts and conserving prime wildlife habitat. **Flathead Land Trust** is working to protect vital wetlands and riverbanks with educational components added for area schoolchildren. **Kaniksu Land Trust** in Sandpoint, Idaho, has donated an incredible gift to its community called the Pine Street Woods. **The Conservation Fund** is working to conserve priority lands along the Rocky Mountain Front as well as to protect and restore Montana's grasslands. **Bitter Root Land Trust** has worked with communities on collaborative riverfront park projects and, thanks to area landowners, has produced some amazing agricultural stewardship and conservation.

Added up, the collective work of Montana's land trusts represents an



Skalkaho Bend Park on the Bitterroot River near Hamilton, Montana.

Photo: Courtesy of Bitter Root Land Trust

amazing success story and an impressive accomplishment.

As I said in the beginning: Every single day, our state land trust community makes Montana a better place to live, work and recreate. And

every single day, MALT helps its membership accomplish those results.

Gavin Ricklefs is the executive director of the Bitter Root Land Trust and board president of the Montana Association of Land Trusts.

Rock Ringling Receives Professional Conservationist Award

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worked with families for a generation or more to help them maintain their livelihood and protect their lands from development through conservation easements. Drawing on his on-the-ground experience and straightforward honesty, Rock inspired trust among those who were initially wary of the idea of conservation easements, an important tool that gives landowners tax breaks for charitable donations when they agree to forego certain development rights.

Rock did not succeed at once or by himself. A broad coalition of like-minded land managers was looking for a way to keep traditional forms of land ownership and use alive in perpetuity when Rock and his MLR colleague Bill Long hit on the idea of rethinking the tax benefits associated with conservation easements. While many ranch- and farm-owning families want to pass along their properties and their values intact, it is often hard and sometimes impossible to do so without some sort of financial incentive. Typically, those who work the land don't make enough money in a single year to get much benefit from the charitable donation of a conservation

easement. The key, Rock knew, would be to carry over the tax savings for as many as 15 years, making the donation of a conservation easement a significant option for those who want their land to remain open and undeveloped. Rock lobbied Congress for this change and won.

Cinnabar recognized Rock for this transformative achievement and for helping to preserve more than one million acres of private land in Montana alone, all in the larger interest of a public good. He designated the special grant of \$5,000 that accompanies the Posewitz Award to the Montana Land Reliance.

Dear Friends

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for and with conservation organizations and foundations throughout North America. She told me that funders focused on wildlife and wild land areas are coming to understand that, just as an environmental perspective must be long-term, successful conservation efforts often take a great deal of time. As a consequence, at least some foundations are rethinking their early-termination plans. In the view of the program officer, every donor wants to achieve something real and important, preserving sensitive large-scale landscapes, say, but the reality is that doing so commonly requires a generation or so of work, all of which must be funded. In my words not hers, *endurance is essential*, however much it might occasionally frustrate a donor's desire to produce near-term and personally-satisfying results.

When Len and Sandy Sargent created the Cinnabar Foundation in 1983, it was their explicit desire that the Foundation operate in perpetuity. The term is vague, but the intention is precise: to extend the activities of the Foundation beyond the ability of any one individual — indeed, of any one generation — to see the results. The Cinnabar board was thus charged with the responsibility to take a long view of conservation history, focus on what seems to be the most pressing current

problems, manage the endowment carefully, and pass on to those who will guide it in the future both a clearly-defined and well-informed conservation ethic with the means to spread and implement it in the face of an evolving and sometimes unforeseen set of circumstances.

Not all of the Cinnabar Foundation's support is long-term, but much of it is. Roughly half of our annual funding is in the form of operating grants. These grants go to support conservation organizations, which year after year, have made demonstrable progress on one environmental front or another, earning the respect of and providing a model for other such organizations in Montana and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. At the same time, we fund special, short-term projects that are typically local in character; the seed money we provide helps them get off the ground. Finally, the Cinnabar Foundation annually budgets funds to provide Tawney Opportunity Grants to help organizations meet unpredictable challenges or seize opportunities outside the Foundation's regular granting cycle.

We certainly don't expect every other foundation to follow our lead. But we think Cinnabar provides a model of sustainable, flexible, and effective support. That we have been at it for the past 36 years and with a great deal of success (as elsewhere indicated in this



Madison River above Quake Lake.

report) is, we hope, ample evidence. We invite your support through a donation or through a legacy gift from your will or trust.

Gordon "Corky" Brittan

Gordon "Corky" Brittan
President, Cinnabar Foundation Board
of Directors

THE CINNABAR FOUNDATION BY THE NUMBERS: 2019

GRANTS AND AWARDS

\$459,321



NUMBER OF GRANTS

81



PROGRAM EXPENSE RATIO

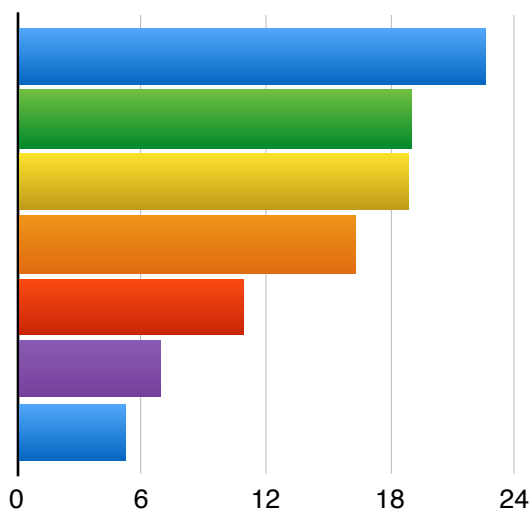
93.78% *



★ The Cinnabar Foundation's administrative expenses are low 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: 22.6%
- Private Land Conservation: 19.0%
- Education & Research: 18.9%
- Environmental Advocacy: 16.3%
- Sustainable Communities & Agriculture: 10.9%
- Water Quality & Fisheries: 7.0%
- Climate Action: 5.3%



2,052

GRANTS
AWARDED SINCE

1985

TOTALING
MORE THAN

\$8.7M

WHO WE ARE

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

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