2018 Wild Winter Offerings
ABOUT THE REGISTRATION PROCESS

Montana Wilderness Association is excited to announce 2018’s Wild Winter Offerings.

Participants can visit www.wildmontana.org/walks to find an outing suitable for them and to register. To register, contact the organizer using the provided information.

To sign up for walks follow these simple steps:

2. Choose an outing that fits your ability and desires.
3. Activities are organized by chapter area and are listed by offering date.
4. Review the details of the outing and contact the organizer directly to register.
5. All future communication will occur between you and the activity organizer.

DIFFICULTY LEVELS

Each activity description includes a comment about difficulty and trail mileage. For your safety and that of fellow snowshoers and leaders, please be sure you are aware of these important details and are properly prepared for the outing.

- **Easy** - 3 miles or less; mostly level ground or only slight incline.
- **Moderate** - 4-6 miles or less; mostly level ground or up to 500 feet of gain.
- **Moderately Strenuous** - Distance of 7 - 10 miles with an elevation gain that will generally not exceed 350 feet per mile, with a total elevation gain of no more than 1000 ft.
- **Strenuous** - This hike could be 7 - 10 miles in length but include rocky trail conditions, tricky stream crossings, or elevation gain of more than 1000 ft. but less than 2000 ft.
- **Extremely Strenuous** - Any hike that is a distance of 10 to 14 miles or with more than 2000 ft. total elevation gain, but no more than 3000 ft.
- **Experts Only** - Usually involves distances of more than 14 miles or more than 3000 ft. in elevation gain. There might be very steep/rugged climbs, deep stream crossings, or non-maintained trails.

CHECKLIST FOR WINTER SNOWSHOE WALKS

- Be sure to ask your leader questions when you contact them so you are well informed and assured that the activity matches your abilities.
- Carefully review the descriptions and make your selections of activities based on your physical abilities, general state of health, hiking/snowshoeing experience, and equipment.
Children with adult guidance are welcome unless it is noted that an activity is not suited for children.

Each activity has a size limit to guarantee a quiet experience, to protect fragile wildlands, and to comply with the guidelines of the managing land agency.

All personal gear, food, and water are your responsibility.

No dogs are permitted, in fairness to fellow hikers and wildlife.

Please leave all firearms at home.

Be sure to plan adequate travel time so you are at the meeting place at the appointed hour.

Do not be a “no show” at the trailhead. It leaves everyone waiting and worrying and denies someone else the chance to hike. If your plans change, you must notify the Walk leader as soon as possible. Failure to do so will prevent you from signing up for future MWA outings.

The winter season can bring freezing temperatures, winter storms, and avalanche danger. Be well prepared to start your winter adventure.

Select proper fabrics and layer your clothing to help maintain a constant body temperature.

Bring plenty of food and water.

Carry the necessary emergency equipment.

Let others know where you are going and when you expect to return.

Recognize the symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia.

Check the weather before you go.

Montana Wilderness Association assumes no liability for personal injury or loss of personal property on the Wild Winter Offerings program. Prior to your walk, you will be asked to sign a waiver and release agreement.
EASTERN MONTANA
Prairie Wildlands Chapter

Pryor Mountains Hike
Date: Sunday, February 25
Nearest Town: Billings
Miles (round trip): 6 miles
Difficulty: Moderate

Join leaders Rita Harding and Bernie Quetchenbach on a hike into the Pryor Mountains. This is an ideal location to visit in the winter because this area is at a lower elevation and is somewhat arid. The Pryors are unlike any other landscape in Montana. They are geologically, ecologically, meteorologically, and culturally unique – an island of mountains rising from the prairie, formed by erosion of uplifted limestone instead of glacially sculpted granite. The numerous, rugged, and spectacular limestone canyons provide viewpoints from which to enjoy the solitude.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Rita Harding at 406-698-2628 or mtroses22@gmail.com.

Pompeys Pillar National Monument Hike
Date: Saturday, March 3
Nearest Town: Billings
Miles (round trip): 3 to 4 miles
Difficulty: Easy
Join leaders Roger Otstot, Rita Harding, and a Bureau of Land Management staff member on an outing to Pompeys Pillar National Monument. Pompeys Pillar is known as the site of the only visible evidence of the Lewis and Clark expedition: Clark’s signature on a sandstone formation. It is also home to an area of critical environmental concern (ACEC) that most visitors don’t see. There will be discussions on efforts to improve wildlife habitat, as well as wildlife viewing and other recreational opportunities. By visiting in the winter, you get to visit places normally inaccessible because of water and plant growth. Lovely views of the Yellowstone Valley and, if we’re lucky, a variety of local wildlife will be seen. The outing will also venture to the Pillar to discuss its historical and cultural importance.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Roger Otstot at 406-671-0928 or rotstot@bresnan.net.

NORTHWEST MONTANA
Flathead-Kootenai Chapter

Stanton Lake Snowshoe

Date: Saturday, January 13
Nearest Town: Columbia Falls
Miles (round trip): 4 miles
Difficulty: Moderately Strenuous

Join leaders Ellen Horowitz and John Hartleib to learn about winter ecology while snowshoeing to Stanton Lake in the Great Bear Wilderness. This outing is geared towards novice snowshoers and families with children. We will climb ~300 feet to reach the Great Bear Wilderness boundary. Along the way, there will be opportunities to stop and look for tracks and other wildlife signs and talk about the ways animals cope with cold and snow. The hike will be complete with a lunch stop at the lake, which sits beneath Great Northern Mountain, the highest peak in the Flathead Range.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Ellen Horowitz at 406-752-2909 or horowitz@centurytel.net.
Avalanche Awareness Snowshoe at Flatiron Mountain

Date: Saturday, January 20
Nearest Town: Libby
Miles (round trip): 5 miles
Difficulty: Strenuous

Join leader Jon Jeresek for a pleasant snowshoe to Flatiron Summit where great views of the Yaak abound. This outing will focus on honing avalanche awareness and rescue skills. Activities include exercises in safe travel decision making, snowpack investigations and layering, and avalanche transceiver orientation.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Jon Jeresek at 406-293-8246 or jjeresek@gmail.com.

Wildlife and Winter Ecology Walk with Swan Valley Connections

Date: Saturday, January 27
Nearest Town: Condon
Miles (round trip): 2 miles
Difficulty: Moderate

Join Luke Lamar, Conservation Director of Swan Valley Connections, for an introduction to winter ecology and wildlife tracks and sign. This family friendly outing welcomes both wildlife tracking connoisseurs and beginners, as there's always something to learn from the evidence animals leave behind. The day will begin with a brief indoor presentation covering animal track identification. For the rest of the afternoon, you will have the opportunity to snowshoe around the valley bottom, learning about winter wildlife habitat needs, animal behavior, and adaptations by investigating tracks and interpreting animal sign.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Luke Lamar at 406-754-3137 or sara@svconnections.org.
Winter Survival Skills Outing with Ravenwood Outdoor Learning Center

Date: Saturday, February 24
Nearest Town: Columbia Falls
Miles (round trip): n/a
Difficulty: Easy

Join Brett Holmquist and Jennifer Bresee of Ravenwood Outdoor Learning Center for a full day of basic winter and wilderness survival skills. This outing will cover the basics of winter survival - shelter, signalling, fire, water, food - and explore specific skills in depth according to the interests of the participants.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Brett Holmquist at 406-260-8620 or brett@ravenwoodolc.org.

Avalanche Awareness Snowshoe with the Flathead Avalanche Center

Date: Saturday, March 3
Nearest Town: n/a
Miles (round trip): 3 miles
Difficulty: Easy

Join Jennifer Cloutier, Flathead Avalanche Center Education Coordinator, for an engaging avalanche awareness walk. This day is a great introduction to avalanche safety or a perfect way to refresh your knowledge. The class includes general information about avalanche hazard, how to avoid it, and proper equipment for traveling in avalanche terrain. The morning will include a demo and practice with rescue gear. The hike will also dive into the snowpack with snow pit exploration and discussion of safe travel techniques.
Ross Creek Cedars Snowshoe with Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness

Date: Saturday, March 10
Nearest Town: Troy
Miles (round trip): 4 miles
Difficulty: Moderate

Join Grete Gansauer of Montana Wilderness Association and Annie Gassmann of Friends of Scotchman Peaks for a winter snowshoe adventure into the deep and mysterious Ross Creek Cedars. These special trees lie on the edges of the Scotchman Peaks proposed wilderness, which has been the center of a decades-long citizen protection effort. Learn more about the community-driven effort to protect this special area of rich wildlife habitat and what you can do to get involved.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Grete Gansauer at 303-726-3931 or ggansauer@wildmontana.org.

NORTH CENTRAL MONTANA
Island Range Chapter
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Clary Coulee Snowshoe

Date: Saturday, January 6
Nearest Town: Choteau
Miles (round trip): 6 miles
Difficulty: Moderately Strenuous
Join leaders Sadie Russell and Sarah Dettmer on a south-facing Clary Coulee classic “Front of the Front” country snowshoe hike. To the west, you’ll see the imposing limestone reef of Choteau Mountain. To the east, watch rolling parklands unfold to the Northern Great Plains. The basic route is an out-and-back snowshoe to the open head of Clary Coulee with spectacular vistas in every direction. Depending on snow conditions, snowshoers may go another mile or so to the north for ever-expanding views of the Front and a chance to see wintering bighorn sheep.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Sadie Russell at 406-529-3757 or sadie.rae.russell22@gmail.com.

**Jefferson Creek Snowshoe**

**Date:** Sunday, January 7  
**Nearest Town:** Neihart  
**Miles (round trip):** 4 to 6 miles  
**Difficulty:** Moderate

Join leader Roger Peffer on a hike up a beautifully forested trail in the Little Belt Mountains. This is a great outing for beginner snowshoers. The gradual trail along the creek is usually chock full of interesting ice formations, and you can expect to see rabbit, squirrel, elk, and deer tracks in the snow.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Roger Peffer at 406-770-0035 or regorp77@msn.com.

**Paine Gulch Snowshoe**

**Date:** Friday, January 12  
**Nearest Town:** Monarch  
**Miles (round trip):** 4 to 6 miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy
Join leaders Chuck and Gerry Jennings on a snowshoe hike into the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. This hike parallels a creek bed that gains ~600 feet of altitude. It is an out-and-back hike, too, so the ultimate length depends on the enthusiasm of the group. This outing passes through a beautiful canyon with rock outcrops and old-growth ponderosa pines. Towards the turnaround point, the valley widens into a spectacular burned area.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Chuck Jennings at 406-788-7659 or 317charlesjennings@gmail.com.

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**Devil's Glen Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, January 27  
**Nearest Town:** Augusta  
**Miles (round trip):** 6 miles  
**Difficulty:** Moderate

Join leaders Casey Perkins of Montana Wilderness Association and local wilderness advocate Len Kopec along a rugged stretch of the upper Dearborn River. This hike travels through the heart of the Dearborn-Falls Creek area, which is now designated Wilderness thanks to the passage of the Rocky Mountain Front Heritage Act in 2014. Snowshoe hikers are rewarded with majestic views of the reefs and cliffs that form the Dearborn River Canyon en route to the stunning waterfall and deep pools near Devil's Glen.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Casey Perkins at 406-544-1093 or cperkins@wildmontana.org.

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**Porphyry Peak Loop Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, February 3  
**Nearest Town:** Neihart
Follow leaders Tom and Katie Kotynski into the Little Belt Mountains for a discussion of multi-use etiquette in the area. This hike starts at Kings Hill and climbs to the top of Porphyry Peak. Along the way, you can enjoy views of a lookout tower before the trail drops over the top of the peak, following the 747 trail. There is a steep uphill at the beginning and end of the hike. Afterward, there is an optional drive to White Sulphur Springs for lunch and a soak in the hot springs.

For more information or to register for this activity please click here.

**Winter Trails Day with Get Fit Great Falls**

**Date:** Saturday, February 3  
**Nearest Town:** Great Falls  
**Miles (round trip):** Variety  
**Difficulty:** Variety

Winters in Montana can be long for those who sit inside waiting for spring rather than getting outside and enjoying the unique recreation opportunities that winter brings. To help battle winter cabin fever, join Get Fit Great Falls on its 11th annual Winter Trails Day event. The day will featuring numerous guided snowshoe hikes and cross country ski tours at the Silver Crest Cross Country Ski and Snowshoe Area. All activities are free of charge.

For more information click here.

**Sawmill Gulch Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, February 17  
**Nearest Town:** Monarch  
**Miles (round trip):** 2 miles
Difficulty: Easy

Join leaders Jo Ann Wright and Bonnie Warren for an easy hike for novices, first-time snowshoers, and families with children. The hike follows an old logging road across a gorgeous meadow to a wooded lunch spot where a fire will be built to roast s’mores (makings provided by hike leaders). Sawmill Gulch Roadless Area is designated as a quiet, non-motorized area and supports Western Cutthroat Trout and American Dippers. One just might see footprints of black bears, mountain lions, and snow fleas on this outing.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Jo Ann Wright at 406-781-9590 or blueskymtns@gmail.com.

Blacktail Gulch Snowshoe

Date: Sunday, February 18
Nearest Town: Augusta
Miles (round trip): 9 miles
Difficulty: Moderate

Join leaders Len Kopec and Deva McKnight for a hike that starts in the Sun River Canyon. This snowshoe excursion travels through a variety of forest types, including old growth Douglas Fir, spruce, and mature aspen groves. Blacktail Gulch is well protected from the wind and there is usually good snow in the area. This hike is suitable for beginners and families with older children as the trail rises gradually with no steep climbs or avalanche danger.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Len Kopec at 406-562-3668 or mtsilverback@gmail.com.

Middle Fork Teton and Lonesome Ridge Snowshoe

Date: Saturday, February 24
Nearest Town: Choteau
Miles (round trip): 7 to 8 miles
Join leaders Bill Cunningham and Len Kopec for a snowshoe hike near Cave Mountain. This outing visits the spectacularly rugged valley of the Middle Fork of the Teton, an area bounded by the peaks of the majestic Rocky Mountain Front. This out-and-back hike crosses the Middle Fork and climbs to the broad open saddle of Lonesome Ridge.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Bill Cunningham at 406-466-5699 or billpoll@3rivers.net.

Deadman Ridge Snowshoe
Date: Saturday, February 24
Nearest Town: Neihart
Miles (round trip): 6 to 7 miles
Difficulty: Strenuous

Join leader Roger Peffer on a beautiful and challenging snowshoe hike up Deadman Ridge. Views from the ridgeline on this hike can be spectacular. This one-way outing (shuttles will need to be arranged) is appropriate for experienced snowshoers, as some sections are relatively steep (both up and down) and the final climb through steep timber can be challenging.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Roger Peffer at 406-770-0035 or regorp77@msn.com.

Limekiln Loop Snowshoe
Date: Saturday, March 3
Nearest Town: Lewistown
Miles (round trip): 6 miles
Difficulty: Moderate
Join leaders Susan Lohmuller and Rachel Stansberry for a snowshoe hike through an open forest in the Judith Mountains. This area sees little human use during the winter months, making them the perfect time to visit. The Limekiln Trail Loop overlooks expansive views of the Island Ranges in Central Montana.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Susan Lohmuller at 406-366-3821 or susanlohmuller@gmail.com.

SOUTH CENTRAL MONTANA
Madison-Gallatin Chapter

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Madison Buffalo State Park Hike

Date: Saturday, January 27
Nearest Town: Three Forks
Miles (round trip): 3 to 4 miles
Difficulty: Moderate

Join leaders Catherine Nelson and Bob Bayley for an outing to Madison Buffalo Jump State Park. This small, hilly park is filled with Native American history and was the site of many buffalo hunts. This area provides great views of the Tobacco Root and Bridger mountains. This is an ideal hike for families with children at least 5 years old.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Catherine Nelson at 406-585-8025 or cnhobbit@gmail.com.

Winter Skills Course

Date: Sunday, January 28
Nearest Town: Bozeman
Miles (round trip): n/a
Difficult y: Easy

Join members of the Gallatin Search and Rescue for a 4-hour course in basic outdoor winter survival skills. Topics include clothing, gear, snow shelters, fire starting, emergency location devices, and more.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Jeanette Hall at 406-580-3038 or chall59715@hotmail.com.

Lava Lake Snowshoe
Date: Saturday, March 3
Nearest Town: Big Sky
Miles (round trip): 7 miles
Difficulty: Strenuous

Join leaders Tom Ross and Amanda Grant for a snowshoe hike along Cascade Creek. The destination of the outing is the spectacular Lava Lake, tucked away within the Lee Metcalf Wilderness.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Tom Ross at 406-548-7484 or tom.ross51@gmail.com.

GPS Training
Date: Saturday, March 17
Nearest Town: Bozeman
Miles (round trip): <1 mile
Difficulty: Easy

Have a GPS or smartphone with GPS capability, but not sure how it all works or why you might really want to use it in the backcountry? Want to get ready for the summer hiking or biking season? We’ve got you covered. The leader of this outing will conduct an entertaining and instructive morning presentation where questions will be solicited and experiences shared. In the
afternoon, assuming the weather cooperates, we will head out to a local fishing access area to test our newfound skills. Education, fun, and practical experience all rolled into one. How could you ask for more?

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Roger Jenkins at 406-585-5338 or roger@twohikers.org.

WESTERN MONTANA
Shining Mountains Chapter

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**Introduction to Snowshoeing**

**Date:** Saturday, January 6  
**Nearest Town:** Missoula  
**Miles (round trip):** 2 to 3 miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy

Join leaders Steve Seninger and Daphne Herling for a basic introduction to snowshoeing. Learn about the silent beauty of winter walks in the forest, how to use the equipment, and best winter travel practices.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Steve Seninger at 406-531-8348 or steve.seninger@business.umt.edu.

**Elk in Winter Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, February 10  
**Nearest Town:** Missoula  
**Miles (round trip):** 5 miles  
**Difficulty:** Moderate
Join leaders Bert Lindler and Jay Gore for a snowshoe hike across hillsides that overlook Sawmill Gulch and Grant Creek. This area is part of the wintering range of several hundred elk. Learn about the challenges and rewards of having a large elk herd wintering right on the outskirts of Missoula.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Bert Lindler at 406-396-0567 or blindler@montana.com.

Becoming an Outdoors Woman Winter Workshop

Date: Friday, January 26 - Saturday, January 27
Nearest Town: Seeley Lake
Miles (round trip): Variety
Difficulty: Variety

Winter is a special time to enjoy the outdoors. Becoming an Outdoors Woman (BOW) has scheduled this event with your safety and comfort in mind. Most classes spend time outdoors so dressing properly is a must! Participants will receive a list of recommended clothing. Winter BOW is based at the Seeley Lake Elementary School and many off-site locations. We provide driving directions and carpooling options to off-site classes.

The registration fee is $115 and includes 3 classes, lunch, and dinner on Saturday, along with necessary gear for most classes. Some classes require an additional fee for materials. You are responsible for your own lodging and meals not provided by the workshop.

A limited number of partial scholarships are available for first time BOW participants. Please contact the BOW coordinator at 406-444-9944 for more information or to register.
Southwestern Wildlands Chapter

Orienteering Workshop
Date: Sunday, March 18
Nearest Town: Whitehall
Miles (round trip): > 1 mile
Difficulty: Easy

Join the Jefferson Valley Search and Rescue for a day of orienteering. Learn basic map, compass, and GPS skills from members of the local search and rescue.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact David Bailey at 520-499-6699 or idgafaa@gmail.com.

CENTRAL MONTANA
Wild Divide Chapter

Winter Wildlife Snowshoe with Exploration Works
Date: Sunday, January 21
Nearest Town: Helena
Miles (round trip): 3 miles
Difficulty: Easy
Join Exploration Works to get out and explore a favorite local snowshoe area, Trout Creek Canyon. Learn about animal movement patterns and snow tracking. Additionally, you’ll have the chance to explore the winter adaptations of Montana wildlife. All ages are welcome and this is an opportunity you don’t want to miss.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Paige Terhune at 406-457-1800.

**Winter Shelter and Fire Skills Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, January 27  
**Nearest Town:** Helena  
**Miles (round trip):** 3 miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy

Join leader Bob Ronan of the Montana Wilderness Association on a short snowshoe (or hike if not a lot of snow) along the CDT from the top of MacDonald pass. Along the way, we will be gathering materials for a primitive fire and discussing winter travel preparedness and shelter options for both expected and unexpected situations. We’ll find a suitable spot to take a break and demonstrate both the bow-drill and hand-drill methods of primitive fire lighting to get a hot drink brewing. A Swedish fire torch will be made and used for heating while we discuss other fire lays, including the “Upside-down Fire”. We’ll erect a “super shelter” to demonstrate how this compact, home-made shelter captures radiant heat from fire, and maybe even build a quinzee shelter if there is enough snow.

To register [click here](#). For more information please contact Bob Ronan at 406-443-7350.

**Willard Creek Snowshoe**

**Date:** Saturday, February 10  
**Nearest Town:** Clancy  
**Miles (round trip):** n/a
Difficultly: Easy

Join leader Joe Namin-Sessions on a snowshoe hike to Willard Creek. This hike takes you into the heart of the Elkhorn Mountains, a prime wildlife habitat. Come learn about the Elkhorns and discuss current threats to the quiet beauty that exists there.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Joe Naiman-Sessions at 406-439-8050 or joenaiman@gmail.com.

Charter Oak Mill and Mine Ski or Snowshoe with Montana Discovery Foundation

Date: Saturday, February 10
Nearest Town: Elliston
Miles (round trip): n/a
Difficulty: n/a

Join Montana Discovery Foundation for an afternoon exploration at the Charter Oak mill and mine site. Beginning at the snowmobile parking lot we will take an easy ski or snowshoe along the Little Blackfoot River to Charter Oak. This was a lode mine and mill that was active off and on from the early 1900s to the 1980s. It is one of the few intact sites of that era remaining that is available for touring. The historical buildings and equipment left on site stand out in the snow, offering unique opportunities for sightseeing and photography.

All Montana Discovery Foundation programs are provided in partnership with the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Debbie Anderson at 406-495-3711.

Snow Science with Exploration Works

Date: Sunday, February 11
Nearest Town: Helena
Join Exploration Works for an afternoon of winter science activities and fun! Join us in exploring snow science, winter survival, and snowshoe use. We will be at Centennial Park from 12:30 pm to 3:00 pm, so feel free to stop by whenever you can! The event is free and open to the public.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Paige Terhune at 406-457-1800.

### Trout Creek Canyon Snowshoe

**Date:** Saturday, February 24  
**Nearest Town:** York  
**Miles (round trip):** 3 miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy

Join leader Bill Hallinan on a snowshoe hike up Trout Creek Canyon. This is a beautiful walk perfect for a beginner or anyone wanting to enjoy the intense quiet of the limestone canyon. Optional burgers at York Bar afterwards.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Bill Hallinan at 406-461-9876 or wjhallinan@gmail.com.

### Winter Wildlife Snowshoe with Exploration Works

**Date:** Sunday, March 11  
**Nearest Town:** Helena  
**Miles (round trip):** 3 miles  
**Difficulty:** Easy
Join Exploration Works to get out and explore a favorite local snowshoe area, MacDonald Pass. Learn about animal movement patterns and snow tracking. Additionally, explore the winter adaptations of Montana wildlife. All ages are welcome and this is an opportunity you don't want to miss.

For more information or to register for this activity please contact Paige Terhune at 406-457-1800.