Soon we will see our first glimpse at how places like the Gallatin and Madison Ranges, the Crazy Mountains and Pryor Mountains will be managed for the next few decades. In early January, the Forest Service will release its Proposed Action. The Proposed Action is the first rough draft we’ll see of a complete forest plan. And it is a critical opportunity to speak up for wild places.

Once the Proposed Action is released, MWA will be working hard to analyze the document and share with you what we find. As always, we will hold a gathering for wilderness advocates to discuss what the draft means for our wild places and share tips on how to comment.

Bookmark February 8th from 5:30-7:30 for this gathering. We’ll be in touch with more details about this event soon.
Madison/Gallatin Chapter Annual Meeting

Close to 40 members and staff enjoyed an evening of fellowship and food at the Madison/Gallatin Chapter's annual meeting, held on November 15 at the Lindley Center. The potluck supper featured pulled chicken and a bountiful array of delicious side dishes and desserts. Business was purposely kept short to allow more social time. Tom Ross, MGC president, started the meeting with a welcome and call to order. Patti Steinmuller presented the Brass Lantern Award to Doug and Patty Bartholomew.

Election of board members and officers was conducted. At-large members Susie McDonald, Amanda Garant, Anthony Pavkovich and Richard Lyon were elected to new terms; David Steinmuller was elected to serve as Vice President in a new term; Roger Jenkins was elected to a new term as Treasurer; and Tom Ross was elected to a new term as President.

Matt Bowser, stewardship director, and Sonny Mazullo, stewardship coordinator, gave a presentation on stewardship opportunities, focusing on trail adoption and maintenance. John Todd, conservation director, talked about state-wide successes and challenges followed by Sally Cathey, southwest MT field director, talking about regional issues.
Wild Winter Offerings!

Montana Wilderness Association started leading winter Wilderness Walks in 2004. Every year participants have been able to experience our wild places in a winter setting. Participation has traditionally been lower than the summer walks and the program continually faces challenges such as bad weather, lack of snow and the coordination involved due to the need for snowshoes.

This winter MWA has decided to widen the scope to include educational and outreach activities. The new program is called Wild Winter Offerings. The Madison/Gallatin Chapter's "offerings" follow.

Wilderness And... Building a More Resilient System of Protected Areas

Wednesday, January 17, 7:00 p.m.
Large Community Room, Bozeman Public Library

Travis Belote, Wilderness Society research ecologist will present a lecture ecologist on protecting the earth’s remaining wildlands by establishing an ecologically-connected network that better represents all ecosystems and species.

Winter Hike — Buffalo Jump State Park

Date: January 27
Difficulty: easy
Distance: 3—4 miles
Elevation Gain: less than 500 feet
Leaders: Catherine Nelson and Bob Bayley

This small, hilly park is filled with Native American history and the site of many buffalo hunts. Great views of the Tobacco Roots and Bridgers. Ideal family hike with children at least 5 years old.

Snowshoes probably won't be needed, but bring them if you have them; bring lunch, water, warm clothes.

Meet at Madison Buffalo Jump State Park near Three Forks at 10:00 a.m.
More Wild Winter Offerings

Outdoor Winter Survival Basics

Date: January 28
Time: 9:30 a.m. — 2:00 p.m.
Location: Bozeman area
Leader: Jeanette Hall (chall59715@hotmail.com)

A 4-hour course in basic outdoor winter survival skills: clothing, gear, snow shelters, fire starting, emergency location devices, etc. Meet members of Gallatin Search & Rescue team. Carpool to site.

Bring warm layers of clothes; lunch; water; pad to sit on; small snow shovel and snowshoes, if you have them.

Meet at the Bozeman FWP building south parking lot at 9:30 a.m.

Wilderness And... The Pryor Mountains: A Vision for the Future

Wednesday, February 6, 7:00 p.m.
Large Community Room, Bozeman Public Library

Dick Walton has wandered in the Pryor Mountains for fifty years, spending time with a variety of geologists, biologists, archeologists and Native Americans. He hopes to show folks who have not been to the Pryors why they should go and people who have been there why they want to go again.

He says that the ecologically and culturally important Pryors landscape is much more than a recreation area and needs increased effort to preserve those values for the future. He will address the draft CGNF Forest Plan which should be out then. Specifically he plans to describe our proposed wilderness areas in the Pryors and why they are needed.
And More Wild Winter Offerings

Winter Hike to Lava Lake
Date: March 3
Miles (round trip): 6 miles
Difficulty: Strenuous
Elevation Gain: 1,600 ft
Leaders: Tom Ross (tom.ross51@gmail.com) and Amanda Garant

Snowshoe or hike about 3.4 miles along Cascade Creek to have lunch at frozen Lava Lake in Lee Metcalf Wilderness Area; return on same trail. Total time outdoors will be about five hours. We will carpool to trailhead from the meeting place.

Bring snowshoes if you have them; hiking poles; warm layers; hat; lunch; water; pad to sit on.
Meet at the restaurant parking lot where Cottonwood Rd. intersects Hwy. 191 in Gallatin Gateway at 9:00 a.m.

GPS Tutorial and Field Trip
Date: March 17
Time: 9:30 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.
Location: Baxter Hotel plus field trip
Difficulty: easy, less than a mile, flat
Leader: Roger Jenkins (roger@twohikers.org)

Entertaining and instructive morning presentation, inside; followed by outside session to test new-found skills. Education, fun, and practical experience all rolled into one.

Bring GPS unit or smart phone with GPS; warm clothes and boots for field work; lunch and water.
Meet in the lobby of Baxter Hotel at 9:30 a.m.

Backcountry Film Festival
Date: March 21
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Location: Amphitheatre of Shoshone Yellowstone Conference Center in the Mountain Village at Big Sky.
A showing of the 2017-18 Backcountry Film Festival produced by Winter Wildlands Alliance.