It was an uncharacteristically warm day in November the first time I drove into Fort Benton to buy a beat-up, 16-foot canoe. Fort Benton is quiet that time of year, almost empty, as if in the beginning stages of hibernation. Later that day I would shove off from town’s boat ramp headed 150 miles down the Missouri River and through one of Montana’s most storied places.

Over the next seven days, a Chinook wind battered us, and the warm weather abandoned us. By day we followed bighorn sheep on the canyon walls high above. By night we listened to the howl of coyotes echoing from those same walls under ink-black skies. By the end of our trip, my canoe was breaking through skim ice in the eddies. The experience has stayed fresh in my memory ever since.

On April 26th, President Trump signed an executive order that puts this storied stretch of the Missouri, a place that holds a crucial place in Montana’s history, at serious risk.

In the months before I arrived in Fort Benton in 2001, Montanans had completed an 18-month process that included comment periods and statewide public meetings held by the Secretary of the Interior, the governor, and the Bureau of Land Management. As a result of those comments and meetings, President Clinton designated the area in 2001 as the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. Polls and comments collected from the public showed the new monument held the support of a majority of Montanans.

Since that designation, there have been many attempts to weaken the Antiquities Act, the legislation that gives U.S. presidents authority to create national monuments. Recently, Montana Senator Steve Daines has been a regular source of many of these attempts, having sponsored legislation that would gut the Antiquities Act by taking designation authority away from the president.

President Trump is the latest, and perhaps most alarming, threat, one that could end up crippling or even destroying the Antiquities Act, an essential component of America’s public lands heritage.

According to a 2017 Colorado College Poll, 77% of Montanans support our designated national monuments. Nevertheless, President Trump ordered Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke to review national monuments larger than 100,000 acres that were designated after 1996. Montana’s Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument is subject to this review.

In their remarks at the signing, President Trump and Secretary Zinke chose to ignore the overwhelming popularity of our nation’s monuments. And while this review does not eliminate any protections, the...
President and Secretary of the Interior clearly signaled ending the use of the Antiquities Act – a law championed in Congress by an Iowa Republican, John F. Lacey, and a legacy-defining tool used by President Theodore Roosevelt 18 times.

During his Senate confirmation hearing and numerous times since then, Secretary Zinke has regularly shared his admiration for Roosevelt, whose conservation legacy is unmatched. The recent actions by the Trump administration, and the remarks at the press conference, show that Secretary Zinke is hell-bent on bringing that legacy to its knees.

After that first trip in November, much has changed. There’s more gray in my beard, my bones ache earlier during a long float or hike, but, most importantly, my wife and I now have two little travelers that join us on our trips down the Missouri. Both of my daughters made their first multi-day floats through the monument before they could crawl. My older daughter said her first word under the shade of an ancient cottonwood there, and we’ve lazed away days on the back of the slow-moving river.

Once you truly get to know a place, it becomes part of you. And it feels like my history runs deep in the Breaks and has mingled with the stories of others who have passed through here. You only need to scan the petroglyphs or walk among the tipi rings to realize people have been passing through this landscape for thousands of years, including Lewis and Clark.

Every year, thousands of people float the river for the opportunity to lay their heads in the same spots where these two explorers did the same back in 1805. Many more come to peer into aging homesteads perched above the river and imagine the hardship and grit that came with making a living in a place that so often is inhospitable.

This monument is indeed a place that physically connects us to our history and allows us to participate in the outdoor heritage that so defines us as Montanans.

A friend who grew up near Little Big-horn Battlefield National Monument reminded me that our national monuments tell the story of who we are and where we come from. Let’s make sure that our story lives on and we protect the places that tell it.

You can help us hold our ground.

Join us in asking Secretary Zinke to do all that he can to protect our heritage, which means protecting our national monuments and the Antiquities Act. The Department of Interior is collecting comments through July 10th on the Missouri Breaks and other monuments. To learn more, and to send in your comment, please visit holdourground.org. If you use Twitter, tweet at him using his handle, @SecretaryZinke. And if you use Facebook, post a comment on his page.
Active Volunteers Represent Our Chapter on State Council by Tom Ross, Madison/Gallatin Chapter president

The meeting was organized by our Helena staff, which was also well represented by several key members throughout the weekend. The meeting was held at the Lubrecht Experimental Forest, which is owned and managed by the Franke College of Forestry and Conservation at the University of Montana.

Despite a rather dreary weekend, the Lubrecht Forest of Ponderosa pine with scattered larch and Douglas fir proved to be a productive setting, with good progress made in advancing MWA’s strategic plan for 2018-2022. That plan, which should be finalized and adopted by this fall, currently includes a focus on five key areas: public lands protection and power building, place-based wildlands protection, stewardship and outreach, philanthropy, and organizational effectiveness. The weekend also included the quarterly business meeting of the Council and a session to review and influence the selection criteria that will be used in our search for a new Executive Director. MWA’s Executive Committee will lead this effort and we hope to have a new Executive Director on board before year’s end.

Our chapter extends its thanks to all of its Council members for actively engaging in the governance of MWA. All chapter members are encouraged to visit wildmontana.org and the Wild Word blog frequently for organizational and other important information about MWA and our chapters. You may also contact Council members for updates on Council activities. Council members serve three-year terms and are elected by the MWA membership.

Retiring Board Member Feted

Bob Bayley, long-time MGC board member and treasurer, recently announced his “retirement”. He was honored at a recent board meeting with a pizza supper and cake. Bob promises that he will remain active so we look forward to his involvement for many more years.
The Ten Essentials of Hiking by Roger Jenkins

With hiking season knocking on our front doors, it is time to get out the hiking boots and give some thought to those things that should be in our packs. The absolute musts are usually referred to in hiking guides as the Ten Essentials: those items that you should never leave the trailhead without. And that means NEVER! EVER! It is absolutely amazing how many hikers have heard this, and yet fail to head the advice. Why not? Maybe it's complacency. Maybe it's the old "it can't happen to me" syndrome. Well, maybe not. But are you willing to bet your life on it? I personally know some folks who did, and came dangerously close to losing. The few pounds that the essentials represent are not "extra." They are absolutely critical. The list will vary depending on who you talk to, but the following are some that almost everyone can agree on.

**First Aid Kit**  You don't have to be prepared for cardiac bypass surgery on the trail. Keep it simple: A few band aids, some gauze and adhesive tape, an elastic bandage for twisted knees or ankles, some butterfly bandages for deep cuts, a few antihistamines for bee stings, and some pain killers are most of what is needed for day hiking. For extended back-packing trips, you might want to add a few more things.

**Maps**  Carry topographical maps. If you don't know how to read one, learn. Such is pretty simple and it is really important that you have basic map reading skills. You can purchase topo maps from a number of outdoor shops in the area or you can download them for free from any numbers of web sites. No excuses.

**Compass**  Do not assume you can find north on a cloudy day without instrumental assistance. You don't have to spend a lot of $$ on a compass, but given that in the western US, the differences between true north and magnetic north are significant, make sure you get one that can correct for these differences.

**Rain Gear**  Weather can change really quickly in the Rocky Mountains, so be prepared. The cost of rain gear has plummeted dramatically in the last two decades. Rain and wind protection can be essential to your survival, especially if you sustain an injury.

**Extra Clothes**  Including a wool or fleece hat. You lose at least 35% of your total body heat through your head. That 35% can make a tremendous difference in cool weather. The hat may be the thing that keeps you alive through an unscheduled night out. But most of all, it keeps the brain warm, so that you can think your way out of any predicament in which you find yourself.

**Matches**  Get the waterproof variety, or put the regular ones in a waterproof container. Cigarette lighters are very convenient. But try to use them after the flint has gotten wet, and you'll see why people who carry them also carry matches.

**Knife**  We're not talking here about the 40-tool, everything-including-the-kitchen-sink Swiss Army variety. Just a simple, one or two blades type will do. To cut fabric, make a large bandage, shave kindling, cut some cord, etc.

**Flashlight or Headlamp**  This one seems to raise the most eyebrows among novice hikers. "Why do I have to take a flashlight for a day hike?" Of course, the answer is because it's only light about half of the time. Sometimes, it's difficult to judge the amount of time that it will take to complete a hike. There are any number of reasons why you might be out after dark. But walking in the dark on a trail, without a light, can be a terrifying experience, especially after you've fallen a few times.

**Extra Food**  "Extra" implies that you have some food with you to begin with. Look, we know that no one is likely to starve to death, even if you go without food for a week or two. But that extra snack bar will give your body a little charge to help keep warm on a cold day, and may help you think straight.

Continued on next page
Ten Essentials of Hiking continued

The Tenth Essential  This is your call. Think about what might be important to you. For some, it might be strong insect repellant, for others, toilet paper, or a GPS. Probably, everyone should try to take along a good load of common sense. There was a recent incident of which I am aware where a couple of folks on a warm day, that finished up hiking on a long, exposed, south facing slope, suffered from heat exhaustion. This is the form of a serious medical condition that is easiest to contract. Know your route, your access to water along the way (that you can treat with pills, a filter, or the UV treatment system you, of course, are carrying). And if you are out most of a warm summer day without sources of treatable water, then carry enough water to get you through the day, usually two – three quarts per person. If you really cannot carry four to six pounds of water, maybe it is time for you to consider hiking where there ARE good sources of water.

Lots of Summer Walks Still Remain

Chances are, not all of these walks are full. If you see one that interests you, go to wildmontana.org/walks to register.

Sun., July 16  Eaglehead Mountain and Windy Pass
Fri., July 21  Sunlight Meadows
Sat., July 22  Twin Lakes
Sat., July 29  Cottonwood Lake
Thurs., August 3  Crater Lake
Fri., August 4  Crazy Mountains
Fri., August 11  Swan Creek
Sat., August 12  Wild Gallatins
Sat., August 12  Cabin Creek
Sat., Sept. 16  Millie Burn and Divide Peak
Sat., Sept. 16  Passage Falls and Wallace Divide

Pond in heart of wild Gallatins, photo by Roger Jenkins

Crater Lake, photo by Susie McDonald
**Great Group and Curious Finds** by Roxanna McLaughlin

On Saturday May 20, sixteen volunteers helped out to give some spring clean up attention to the section of HWY 191 adopted by the Madison Gallatin Chapter.

We had lovely weather that morning. Everyone gathered at the Bozeman Hot Springs parking lot, and after a safety talk, some gift cards (thank you, MGC board!) were given away in a snack lottery (volunteer next time to see what that is!). Then we put on those stylish safety vests and off we went, each group car-pooling to their designated one mile of right-of-way along the highway. Catherine Nelson was our SAG wagon driver, driving back and forth, supporting each team with water, trash bags, transport to bathrooms and getting drivers back to their cars. She and Bob also helped me get the litter clean up signs gathered up after lunch with everyone at the bakery/deli. I estimate that we gathered 20 bags of trash this time.

One of my team members got in some exercise time, practicing squats each time she picked up litter! And we all had some interesting finds, along the way.... two wrenches, a cell phone, a baby blanket, a phone book, a ping pong paddle, part of a car console, two hub caps, a roll of chicken wire, a working battery powered warning light, a set of keys, and a five dollar bill. You could write a good story using that list. Another ‘most interesting find’ reported was “great conversation with people who also love and care for wilderness!”

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who came to help in May!!

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**Here Comes Summer — and Another Cleanup** by Roxanna McLaughlin

Saturday, July 15 is the day we will have our second highway 191 clean up of 2017, sponsored by the Madison Gallatin Chapter, and we are looking for helpers to make the task as quick and fun as possible.

Our designated stretch of HWY 191 is between mile markers 77 and 79. We will meet at 8:00 AM (to avoid the heat of the day) in the Bozeman Hot Springs parking lot. After a brief safety talk, distribution of safety vests and bags for trash we will divide into four groups, and carpool to the nearby clean up area.

Because this is a very busy section of highway, we can only accept adult helpers. Responsible teens as young as 16 can help if a parent attends.

The MDT has tips for what to wear as follows:

- Shoes or boots, not sandals or thongs.... We could encounter glass, nails, cactus, or stubble.
- Hats (and sunglasses?) to prevent sunburn and improve vision.
- Gloves to protect hands from splinters, glass and other hazards.
- Long sleeve shirts and pants to prevent sunburn, insect bites, cuts, scrapes and abrasions.

We have ‘grabbers’ for you to use, but if you prefer to bring your own equipment, that’s fine.

Please bring your own snacks and water. After we finish, we invite you to picnic together at the tables in front of the Coffee Pot Bakery and Deli. You can bring your lunch or purchase something delicious there at the deli.

Please contact Roxanna McLaughlin by July 8 at gaia_maid@yahoo.com or you can text or phone her at 406-539-7379 to sign up or get more information. Knowing how many people are coming will really help us be sure to have enough bags and safety vests for you to use, as well as keep you updated on any last minute changes.

Just a couple hours of time gives you a good feeling as you join your chapter in caring for the beautiful place that is the Gallatin Valley. And you just never know what you may find, along with new friends!
Help Needed for our Summer Farmer's Market Table

Our immediate past Chapter Chair, David Steinmuller, has been leading the charge to man our Chapter’s table at the Saturday morning Farmer’s Market at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds in Bozeman. But he can’t do it all himself. So he could use YOUR help. He does the setup, so you only need to show up at the Market at 9 a.m. to start co-manning the table from 9 to noon. It’s fun and a great way to meet interesting people, potentially recruit volunteers, and promote the Montana Wilderness Association, especially our new on-line hiking guide, hikewildmontana.org.

David needs help on July 8, 15, 29; August 15, 12, 26; and September 2. If you are interested, please contact him at dsteinmul@msn.com.

And of course, when you are visiting the Saturday Farmer’s Market this summer, please stop by and say “hi.” It is always great to see our local members.

MSU Students Appreciate the Value of Public Lands and Wilderness in Montana by Noah Marion, MWA public lands field organizer

Bozeman - Freshman students residing in both the Quads and Hannon Hall dormitories at Montana State University once again held their annual Charity Auction, in which all proceeds are donated to a non-profit organization of the student’s choosing. This year, Montana Wilderness Association, and specifically the Madison-Gallatin Chapter, was selected as the 2017 recipient.

This generous contribution by the students reaffirms our belief that young people care deeply about preserving the integrity of our wild places in Montana. They are willing to stand together to protect our public lands.

Montana State University students were strong advocates for conservation this semester. They rallied at the Capitol in Helena, held on-campus discussions to educate their peers, hosted State Sen. JP Pominichowski for a discussion on public land transfer, testified in front of legislative committees, attended forest planning meetings and submitted comments, and spent countless hours registering their peers to vote in Montana and pledging to vote to keep public lands in public hands.

The Montana State University Wilderness Association (MSU Wild) student organization is a perfect representation of this next generation of conservation advocates. MSU Wild members act as youth ambassadors for our organization on campus. They help us by communicating with, and inspiring, their peers to get outside and be active advocates for wild places. Many freshman take their first steps in the Lee Metcalf Wilderness on an MSU Wild organized hike. By helping facilitate these experiences, we can solidify the value of quiet recreation and conservation. These wild places become essential parts of both the physical and mental health of many in our communities, and students are no different.

Montana Wilderness Association will strive to further strengthen our bond with young people across Montana to protect our wilderness heritage, quiet beauty and outdoor traditions now — and for future generations.