



“WHY DOES MONTANA MATTER TO YOU?”

“I’ve heard the bugle of a bull elk and I’ve felt my heart pound as he crashed through the forest toward me. I’ve seen my universe shrink to a dozen yards as the fly I cast to a rising trout neared the undercut bank he was hiding under. Hiding behind a tree I’ve watched still-wet newly born fawns get licked dry by their mothers. I’ve been awakened from a deep sleep as hundreds of snow geese flew over my house in the inky darkness of an autumn night. In a thunderstorm downpour I’ve reassured the gelding that carried me across swollen rivers on the way to camp. I’m comforted by looking into the night sky to find Polaris showing me the way north. I know the amazing smell of walking through sage wet by the morning dew. I am humbled by all things Montana has given to me. --**Trapper Badovinac**--

“During my years as Montana’s U.S. Congressman, I came to realize the hold our state has on many people throughout the nation. The very word Montana is a show stopper, as in: “Hey Congressman, my parents used to take me to Montana for our summer vacations. It was wonderful.” Or.. “Wow, you represent Montana? I am in love with Glacier Park.”

“Here at home, we Montanans appreciate the pace of life this place encourages. And we have a deep visceral respect for the land, waterways and all the inhabitants: animals, fish, birds and we fully intend that their habitat will be protected. That is the only way to keep the name Montana as America’s show stopper state.” -- **Pat Williams**--

“Montana matters because it is truly the “Last Best Place” and it exists because we have fought hard for it. We must continue to resist special interests who want to exploit our resources and landscape for profit at the expense of us, the public, and to acknowledge that there is nothing wrong with upholding high standards. There should be no imaginary line between Eastern Montana and Western Montana, it is all the “Last Best Place.” --**Clint McRae, Rocker Six Cattle Co.**--

“Montana matters because we who hunt and fish, like our fathers and grandfathers, exert vigorous ownership over our wildlife resources. With the attitude of zealous proprietors, we have supported and demanded professional management, we have fought commercialization and privatization, and we continue to invest in the resource and in the next generation of stewards, the hunters and fishers-to-be”. --**Stan Meyer**--

“Many folks lament Montana’s odd border, uniting as it does the disparate landscapes of mountain and prairie, as well as the disparate lives of the people who inhabit them. I like to think that this arbitrary political boundary prods us to hear each other’s stories and to become better neighbors, knowing we all are connected.”

“And..... A state occupied by a single landscape would be like a year without seasons. Dull, indeed.” --**Robin Tawney-Nichols**--

“Yes, Montana Matters! Montana is one of the last states working very hard to maintain our hunting and fishing heritage. The Montana Wildlife Federation, Public Lands and Waters Access Association and others spend hundreds of volunteer hours protecting this right.”

Many people have determined that wild, free ranging animals and our public land can provide them income. This is a problem. People thinking they should be guaranteed income from resources held in the public trust –it is disrespectful and based on “Greed, not Need”. If we are to ensure “Montana Matters” we need to continue this fight that provides public opportunities. All we want is the opportunity to enjoy our public lands, and public waterways - to do this we need reasonable access.” -- **Bernard Lea**--

“Montana matters to each of us who live here in this great Big Sky State and who have the privilege to travel the world and to witness, first hand, what happens when and where conservation and wildlife stewardship is ignored. Nowadays, we all have to work hard to attain, let alone maintain, “par”, and your much appreciated support of Montana Matters does just that.” --**Miller Barber**--

From inner New York City I hear: “It must be so beautiful there” From out-of-state sportsmen I hear: “I have always wanted to hunt (or fish) there.” From out-of-state conservationists I hear: “You have what we lost” From out-of-state friends I hear: “I have always wanted to live there”.

“Montana is the dream, vision, inspiration and hope of those less fortunate than we Montana residents. Montana has the opportunity to serve as the model of a State dignified by its harmony with its lands and waters.” --**Greg Munther**--

“Montana Matters because those great and enduring values of open space, freedom to roam, and equal opportunity remain largely in tact for ours and future generations. Of all the states, Montana has the best chance of escaping the tide of greedy and selfish efforts to make these values simple commodities available to only the highest bidder. All Montanan’s should recognize the significance of Theodore Roosevelt’s words of 1886 when he said, “We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that we are worthy of such good fortune.” **–John Gibson–**

“Montana Matters , because it is the last best place, you can enjoy outdoor recreation on your own terms without belonging to any pay for services organizations. You can teach your children the values & benefits of nature, and how to interact with what is wild. They learn many things like how death is as much a part of nature as is birth.” **–Henry Mischel–**

”I consider myself well traveled throughout my many years, but have not found any other state that gives me the same feelings I had while growing up in the badlands of North Dakota. In one word “Freedom”. Certain factors entail “Freedom” in my possibly biased view. For instance, where else can you walk out your own back door and within minutes enjoy thousands of square miles of public land? Land that you can actually hike into for 30 minutes and be totally alone. Montana still recognizes unnecessary laws which infringe on individual freedoms. These are the reasons I live in Montana. It is a last stand of sorts...of family, of rewarding the competent, self reliant, and minimal government. In our world of technology and changes I strive to find a state which preserves tradition and freedom.” **–Cecil Tharp Jr–**

“Montana matters to me because being and living part time here has fully awakened what was otherwise deeply embedded in my soul: The glory to first fully appreciate and, then, the fervor to fight to preserve and conserve the replenishing bounty of all that nature has to offer. As an angler, the river is my cathedral and, just like with the Notre-Dame Cathedral, I want my grandchildren and their grandchildren to have the freedom and access to worship the rivers of Montana, decades hence, just as I now have the great privilege to do.” **–Ronald K. Clausen–**

“When I think of Montana and when I speak with my friends and family across the country, I think of “Opportunity”. Opportunity to enjoy vast expanses of public land, opportunity to fish blue ribbon waters that I dreamed of as a child, opportunity to follow my setters across the uplands of the state and the opportunity to become involved in the management of those resources. Teddy Roosevelt, Gifford Pinchot and many of our early conservation heroes gave us the opportunity here in Montana. Truly an everlasting gift that we must cherish, share and carefully manage for the future.” **–Tom Puchlerz–**

“There’s a time worn cliché, especially true for “newcomers” to Montana, “I wasn’t born here but I got here as fast as I could.” Fourteen years later, I’m still probably a “newcomer” although friends tell me I am almost an honorary native.”

“Either way, as with so many others who found their way to Montana recently or long ago, some on a wagon train and others by jet, I count my blessings every day.”

“I count my blessings for the places that are still as wild and untouched as before man or woman left their footprints; for the view from my window of endless mountains and snow capped peaks that retain their icy whiteness well into the spring thaw; for the herds of elk that wander through our pasture, in fall and spring, annual reminders of what’s been before and yet to come. I count my blessings for Montana nights as bright as the New York City skyline, made all the more brilliant by an endless constellation of stars.”

“I count my blessings for being on, near and sometimes even in rivers and streams and creeks that fishermen and women all over the world can only dream of.”

“But most of all, I count my blessings for the opportunity to call Montana home – there is no other place like it on the face of the earth; and that is why, Montana Matters. **–Janet Rose--Exec Director, International Wildlife Film Festival**

“The “quiet beauty of our state, the grandeur of our mountains, the vastness of our rolling plains” – these are the first things that come to mind when I think about why Montana Matters. The land, water and wildlife of Montana are exceptional, but there are many exceptional places in the western United States. I stay in Montana, and I have worked hard to do so, because of the people here. It’s my family and my friends, my mentors, and my neighbors. We have a tradition here of talking with each other, having a beer together and finding common ground on difficult issues. We care enough to volunteer our time and donate our limited funds to

take care of this place and its people. The people of Montana have recognized that government has a role to play in conservation, but that it shouldn't be too involved in how we live our lives."

"It's because of these cultural traditions, that we have clean water, abundant wildlife and places to hunt and fish. And it's the people of Montana who were brilliant enough to enact a constitution that recognizes the quiet beauty of our state and the right to a clean and healthful environment. We are truly blessed to enjoy this place together." -- **Pelah Hoyt**--