

Granite County



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Georgetown Lake by Ben Hauptman.

Granite County is a rural, natural-resource supported county in central Western Montana. Winter and summer recreation draw visitors to the scenic beauty year-round, while agriculture is the economic base. Georgetown Lake provides a variety of recreational experiences, and is next door to the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness. The population of the county is about 3,000, and the county seat of Philipsburg has a population of around 900. The other incorporated town in Granite County is Drummond, with a population of around 300.

Montana State University Extension in Granite County is supported by three strong and important partners. County, state and federal funding sources work together to assure that MSU Extension in Granite County has the resources to provide timely and relevant education addressing locally-identified issues. Montana counties provide about 40 percent of the funding to support local offices, state funding provides about 40 percent, and federal partners about 20 percent. Like many Western Montana communities, the Granite County area has a rich mining past, but agriculture has provided the base of economic activity through the boom and bust cycles associated with historic mining. Granite County . . . Montana at its best!

Granite County 4-H

The Granite County 4-H program is comprised of 54 members and 16 leaders participating in various projects. The 4-H program in Granite County combines efforts to share the unique hands-on learning experience that is 4-H. Members in the Granite County 4-H program have the opportunity to share in hands-on learning at several different county events: Project Possibilities, Foods Fair, Stir-Ups, Quality Assurance, Countywide Communications, IPYA Presentations, and Showmanship Clinics. Granite County has three 4-H clubs that host and coordinate activities throughout the year. We were able to provide more stability in the 4-H program than we were able to in 2020. One of the successful programs in 2021 that has a major impact on 4-H youth is the public speaking opportunities Granite County offers. Kids are able to demonstrate their knowledge in particular project areas at Countywide Communications with illustrated talks, speeches, and mock job interviews where they learn non-verbal communication skills such as writing resumes and cover letters. Many kids move on to college or to the professional world and have become much more proficient in public speaking and interviewing for jobs because of this program. We successfully recruited a Cloverbud leader who has grown the future of the Granite County 4-H

program by coordinating monthly Cloverbud activities to keep younger kids engaged before they are able to fully join the 4-H program.

Noxious Weed Control Efforts in Granite County

Invasive species have become an area of concern to the landowners and ranchers of Granite County, particularly noxious weeds. In June of 2021, people were happy to see the return of the Noxious Weed Clinic. This was the 13th annual clinic that was hosted with the Granite County Conservation District. Private Applicators who attended were able to get six credits toward their Private Applicator License renewal. Attendees at this program learn how to properly identify noxious weeds and learn different practices to effectively control them. Building the education program around Integrated Pest Management principles helps the stewards of the land utilize the best methods of control while ensuring that other environmental impacts are minimized.

In 2021 there was a focus on invasive annual grass control, proper herbicide tank mixing, and how to integrate biocontrol methods into weed control programs. Granite County also hosted the 2021 Noxious Weed Trust Fund Council Meeting in July and took the council members on a tour of Granite County to show the successes and challenges landowners face controlling noxious weeds. Part of the tour focused on learning new monitoring methods for noxious weed trust fund grantees and looking at a houndstongue biocontrol monitoring site.



Top: Cloverbud Fun Day, by Billie Ann Kulaski;
Bottom: Knapweed infested site in Granite County, by Liz Willett

Granite County Staff



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