

RESILIENT OUTDOOR COMMUNITIES



ABOUT US



**DIANE
CONRADI**

Diane Conradi is the founder/CEO of Montana Access Project. As an experienced attorney, founder and advisor to Whitefish Legacy Partners/Whitefish Trail, Montana State Parks Foundation, and appointed member to Montana's first State Parks and Recreation Board she has in-depth experience in creating, enhancing and sustaining high quality nature-based recreation access that supports economic vitality, community health and quality of life for residents and visitors alike.

Kathleen McMahon has 35 years of community planning experience. She has a Bachelor's Degree in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Illinois and a Masters Degree in Educational Technology from George Washington University. She is a member of the Montana Association of Planners, the American Institute of Certified Planners, and Montana Economic Development Association.



**KATE
MCMAHON**



OUR KEY PRINCIPLES

- By Rural For Rural
- Outdoor Community (Recreation +, Economy +)
- Expertise AND Experience
- Do With not For
- Meet where At
- Nature for everyone everyday

WHAT IS AN OUTDOOR COMMUNITY?



A community that invests in places for people to access nature to support economic and community vitality.

IMPACTS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT



BUSINESS &
WORKER
RECRUITMENT



SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM
DEVELOPMENT



COMMUNITY
VITALITY &
HEALTH



"BRAIN GAIN"



Outdoor recreation contributes to economic success in many ways.

TOURISM

Visitors who come to enjoy the outdoors spend money on lodging, restaurants, and other services, creating jobs and putting money into the community.

ENTREPRENEURS + TALENT

Access to the outdoors and a high quality of life attracts and retains new businesses and skilled workers.

RETIREMENT + INVESTMENT INCOME

Wealth from retirees and investors—who are drawn to live near outdoor access—helps boost the local economy.

TAX REVENUE

Spending at local businesses and increased property tax revenue contribute to the tax base.

NEW RESIDENTS

Places with recreation amenities on federal public lands have higher rates of in-migration, helping fuel jobs for teachers, doctors, construction workers, and more.

MAIN STREET BUSINESSES

Restaurants, grocery stores, gear stores, and other local retailers benefit from visitors and new residents.

GEAR MANUFACTURING

Companies that make outdoor equipment tend to locate in places with outdoor amenities, providing jobs and investment in the community.

HEALTHIER RESIDENTS

Access to the outdoors improves public health and reduces costs of chronic conditions, especially for impoverished and under-resourced neighborhoods.

EXAMPLE: ECONOMIC IMPACT

THE WHITEFISH TRAIL



Photo by Will Brewster

Economic Impact from the Whitefish Trail

72,966
ANNUAL TRAIL USERS



\$6.4 MILLION
ANNUAL CONSUMER SPENDING
ATTRIBUTED TO THE WHITEFISH TRAIL



68 JOBS
SUPPORTED
BY VISITORS WHO USE
THE WHITEFISH TRAIL



The economic impact of the Whitefish Trail will continue to grow as the community completes their vision.

WELLNESS BENEFITS OF THE GETTING OUT INTO NATURE

PHYSICAL WELLNESS



Being outside in green spaces supports an active and healthy lifestyle, which has shown to increase life expectancy, improve sleep quality and reduce cancer risk.

MENTAL WELLNESS



Being outside in green spaces lowers risk of depression and can restore and strengthen our mental capacities, increasing focus and attention.

COMMUNITY WELLNESS



Access to nature reduces environmental stressors such as air pollution, noise and heat.

BENEFITS OF NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

- Climate resilience
- Culture and heritage
- Clean Water
- Clean Air
- Abundant Wildlife
- Scenic Vistas





CHALLENGES FOR RURAL COMMUNITIES

- Patchwork of public and private landowners and managers
- Minimal professional staffing
- Reliance on public/private partnerships and volunteers
- Scarce resources
- Competing priorities
- Disconnect among funding priorities

How we support outdoor communities

PLANNING



PARTNERSHIPS



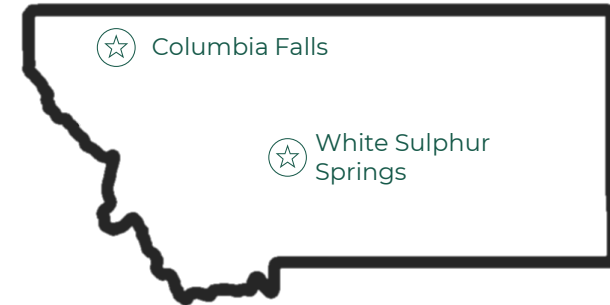
CAPACITY (\$ +
Leader)



Example: Community Led Planning (DIY)

COMMUNITY OUTDOOR RECREATION REALIZATION

CORR is for Montana communities seeking to realize their recreation vision. Communities are encouraged to tailor CORR to their specific community needs. The process can and is encouraged to be inclusive of various partners at the local, state, tribal, regional, and federal levels.



Community Outdoor Recreation Realization: Pilot Review and Recommendations

Pilot Process:



White Sulphur Springs
Population: 1,052
Central Montana near the
Smith River



Columbia Falls
Population: 5,651
Northwest Montana near
Glacier National Park

Recommendations

Involve multiple generations

Have a plan before you plan

Define the timeline

Establish a team leader

Talk with other communities

Make the process fun

VISION + PLANNING

- Inspires commitment
- Builds relationships among community leaders
- Integrate with existing plans and processes
- Increase competitiveness for funding and other resources
- Builds public support



A person is captured mid-air, jumping from a rocky cliff into a body of water. The scene is set during sunset or sunrise, with a warm, golden glow over the water and sky. Another person is visible on the cliff above. The background features a line of trees and a clear sky.

MAP Rec Connect Action Plans (RCAP)

Designed by rural for rural communities to:

- increase access to natural spaces,
- improve capacity, and
- increase investment.

RCAP OUTDOOR RECREATION

PLANNING PROCESS



01 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

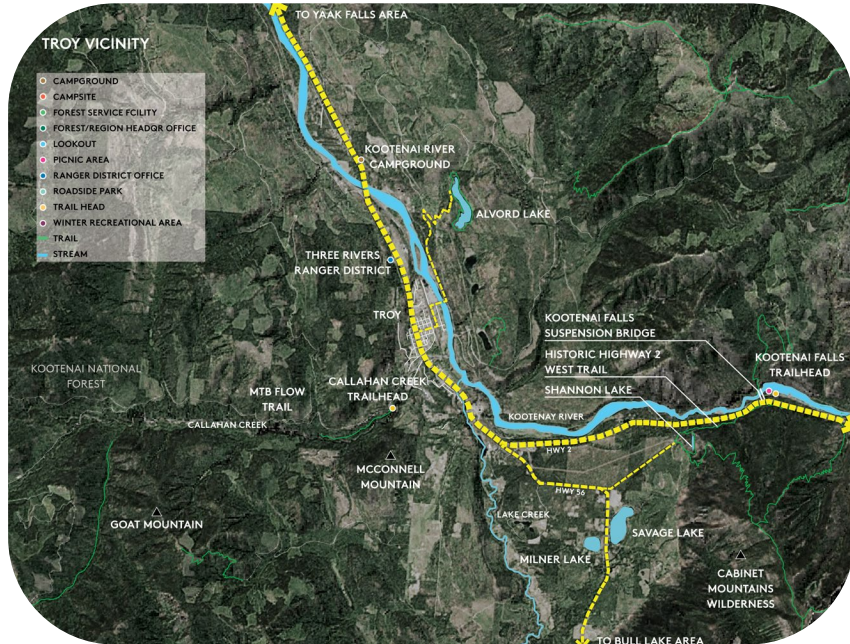
SURVEYS

WEBSITE & SOCIAL MEDIA



02

RECREATION ASSET MAPPING: ID OF KEY ASSETS



03

GOALS & OBJECTIVES



04 ACTION PLANS & IMPLEMENTATION

Action Item	Timeframe	Lead/Partner	Comment	Priority
6.4 Develop plan and install wayfinding signage in study area to direct users to rec assets	1-3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Troy• Lincoln County• Chamber• Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fundraising• Grants	MED
6.5 Improve/add information kiosks at frequently used trailheads, river access points and Kootenai Falls	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kootenai National Forest• Lincoln County• Community groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include info on trail difficulty, safety, etc.• Coordinate with mapping project below	MED

Coming Soon: Outdoor Community Lab



Outdoor Community Lab Get Grant Ready Workshops (Virtual and In-Person)

DECEMBER 1, 2022
1 - 4 PM

GET GRANT READY WORKSHOP

Want to learn more about what state funding is available for outdoor recreation?
Confused about how to create a proposal?
Want to hear success stories from rural Montana communities?
Join us virtually to learn more and hear from state agency experts! Free and open to all!

Guests:  MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  MONTANA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION 

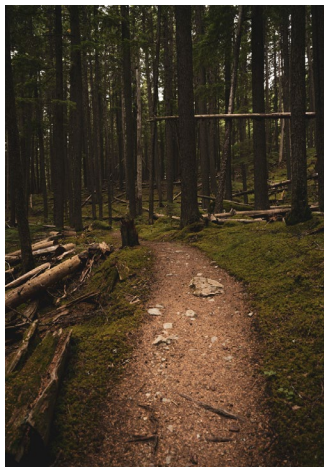
Hosted by:  HEART OF THE
ROCKIES  TOURISM & RECREATION RESEARCH



Partnership with Heart of the
Rockies Initiative

Includes Coaching

AND...



GET GRANT READY PROJECT PITCH FEST

CO-HOSTED BY:

Diane Conradi, Montana Access Project

Kara Maplethorpe, Heart of the Rockies Initiative

Melissa Weddell, Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research (ITRR)



GUESTS:



Coming Soon: Outdoor Community Lab Coaching



- Variety of Expertise
- Next Level
- Unstuck

Coming Soon: Outdoor Community Lab 1:1 Custom



- Building infrastructure
- Operation and Management
- Sustainable Capacity

STAY ENGAGED: LAB TRAININGS, COURSES, AND WORKSHOPS


KNOWLEDGE BASE

What do you need help with? What do you want to learn more about?
Click the buttons below to view resources by category.

CAPACITY RECREATION ECONOMY PLANNING FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS DESIGN & CONSTRUCTION

OPERATIONS & MANAGEMENT ENGAGEMENT ADVOCACY DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & ACCESSIBILITY

CAPACITY




Montana Residents: Attitudes Towards Tourism 2021

Montana Residents: Attitudes Towards Tourism 2021

Tourism

This study was conducted to continue tracking the perception of the tourism industry in Montana.

[Read More »](#)




Montana State Parks sees record setting visitation in 2020

Montana State Parks sees record setting visitation in 2020

FWP, Montana, State Parks

Quantifying the boom in state park visitation in 2020.

[Read More »](#)



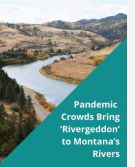
An Influential Voice In US Flyfishing Decries 'Rivergeddon 2020'

An Influential Voice In US Flyfishing Decries 'Rivergeddon 2020'

Crowding

Impacts of overuse on Montana rivers.

[Read More »](#)



Pandemic Crowds Bring 'Rivergeddon' to Montana's Rivers

Pandemic Crowds Bring 'Rivergeddon' to Montana's Rivers

Crowding

'Rivergeddon' on Montana rivers due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read More »](#)

CONTACT US



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SAVE THE DATE!



MONTANA OUTDOOR RECREATION SUMMIT

Oct 11 – 13 | Butte, MT

**Scan to
learn more +
sign up for
updates!**



SCAN ME!