



MONTANA  
**FRESHWATER  
PARTNERS**



2025 **IMPACT  
REPORT**

## A LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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A few years ago, the massive flood on the Yellowstone reminded us just how much work remains to restore river health and help our communities and waterways coexist. This past year brought a new kind of challenge: as the need for restoration continues to grow, many of the federal funding sources that make this work possible have begun to dry up.

Despite these headwinds, Montana Freshwater Partners remains determined to build on the momentum we've gained. The same uncertainty that has disrupted federal agencies overseeing public lands, science, and the environment has rippled down to local organizations like ours. Restoring and maintaining healthy water systems requires steady investment in planning, coordination, and on-the-ground action—but in early 2025, federal funding freezes left us uncertain whether we would receive capital that had already been awarded for our vital work in the Upper Yellowstone and Shields watersheds.

In the face of uncertainty, we continue to stand up for freshwater ecosystems and the life they sustain—from people to birds, trout to toads. We've partnered with others to identify and advance high-priority projects in the Upper Yellowstone and beyond. Our team continues

to implement, manage, and monitor a dozen mitigation projects spanning the Flathead, the Rocky Mountain Front, and Eastern Montana.

Here at home, we've deepened our community connections—catalyzing the Park Co Water Initiative, installing new river signage at Mayors Landing in Livingston, organizing a cleanup that has removed thousands of pounds of trash from the Yellowstone, providing ten local businesses with river cleanup bags, and showcasing our collaborative work to over 50 community members through an engaging watershed tour.

We know the path forward will require creativity, adaptability, and continued collaboration. Our work may be harder than ever, but it has never been more important. Thank you for standing with us to protect Montana's freshwater ecosystems and the communities that depend on them.

For the love of water,



A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wendy Weaver'.

Wendy Weaver, Executive Director





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In our quest to control the river, we are fighting entropy.  
What use is it for us to tilt at a law of the universe?  
Let us loosen the reins and trust in the river's nature.

- Lilly McLane





## HOW WE GIVE BACK TO THE YELLOWSTONE

Our work along the Yellowstone has two main goals: to improve habitat and help ecosystems thrive; and to enhance the resilience of communities and people living near the river. We are working to accomplish these goals in the following ways:

### RIVER RESTORATION

Earlier this year, Montana DEQ invited nominations for a “Focus Watershed” to receive enhanced funding and technical support for reducing nonpoint source pollution. With strong partner backing, MFP successfully nominated the Shields Watershed, increasing resources for restoration projects in the Shields. We also revegetated two miles of Flathead Creek and obtained funding for a new restoration project on Bangtail Creek, both tributaries to the Shields River.

### WATERSHED RESILIENCE

Recent floods nationwide underscore the risks of building near rivers. In Park County, we’re raising awareness of these risks and the ecological value of natural flooding and channel migration. To promote the 2024 Upper Yellowstone Channel Migration Map, we

hosted over a dozen presentations and released an online tutorial. We also shared cost-effective strategies to reduce flood risk with local officials to support healthy, resilient river systems.

### COMMUNITY BUILDING

Community engagement and education are at the core of our Give Back to the Yellowstone program. In 2025, we reached over 1,270 people through events like our River Cleanup, Native Plant Sale, Beaver Week, and Watershed Tour. We partnered with local fishing guides to promote river stewardship and installed new educational signage. Volunteers contributed 831 hours cleaning up trash and supporting restoration—helping build a more informed and connected river community.







## **GIVE BACK TO THE YELLOWSTONE HIGHLIGHTS: PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION**

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Montana Freshwater Partners is regularly convening more than 25 local partners—including government agencies, nonprofits, landowners, and local officials—to collaborate on science-based watershed planning, restoration projects, and community education around water stewardship in Park County.

### **BEAVER CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM**

In 2025, we continued our partnership with the National Wildlife Federation and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to provide technical assistance and cost-share opportunities for projects that promote coexistence with beavers in southwest Montana.

### **RIVER AMBASSADOR PROGRAM**

Launched in summer 2025, this new program engages fishing guides and outfitters in sharing messages about protecting the Yellowstone River with visitors and recreationists. The program helps raise awareness of responsible river use and conservation.

### **MAYOR'S LANDING EDUCATIONAL SIGNAGE**

Three new educational signs were installed at Mayor's Landing to explain natural river processes, promote safe recreation and river etiquette, and to encourage stewardship of the Yellowstone River.

### **RIVER CLEANUP BAG PROJECT**

Through our Give Back to the Yellowstone program, we launched a new initiative in summer 2025 offering free, reusable river cleanup bags at businesses throughout Livingston and the Paradise Valley. The project encourages community members and visitors alike to help keep the Yellowstone clean.

### **UPPER YELLOWSTONE WATERSHED TOUR**

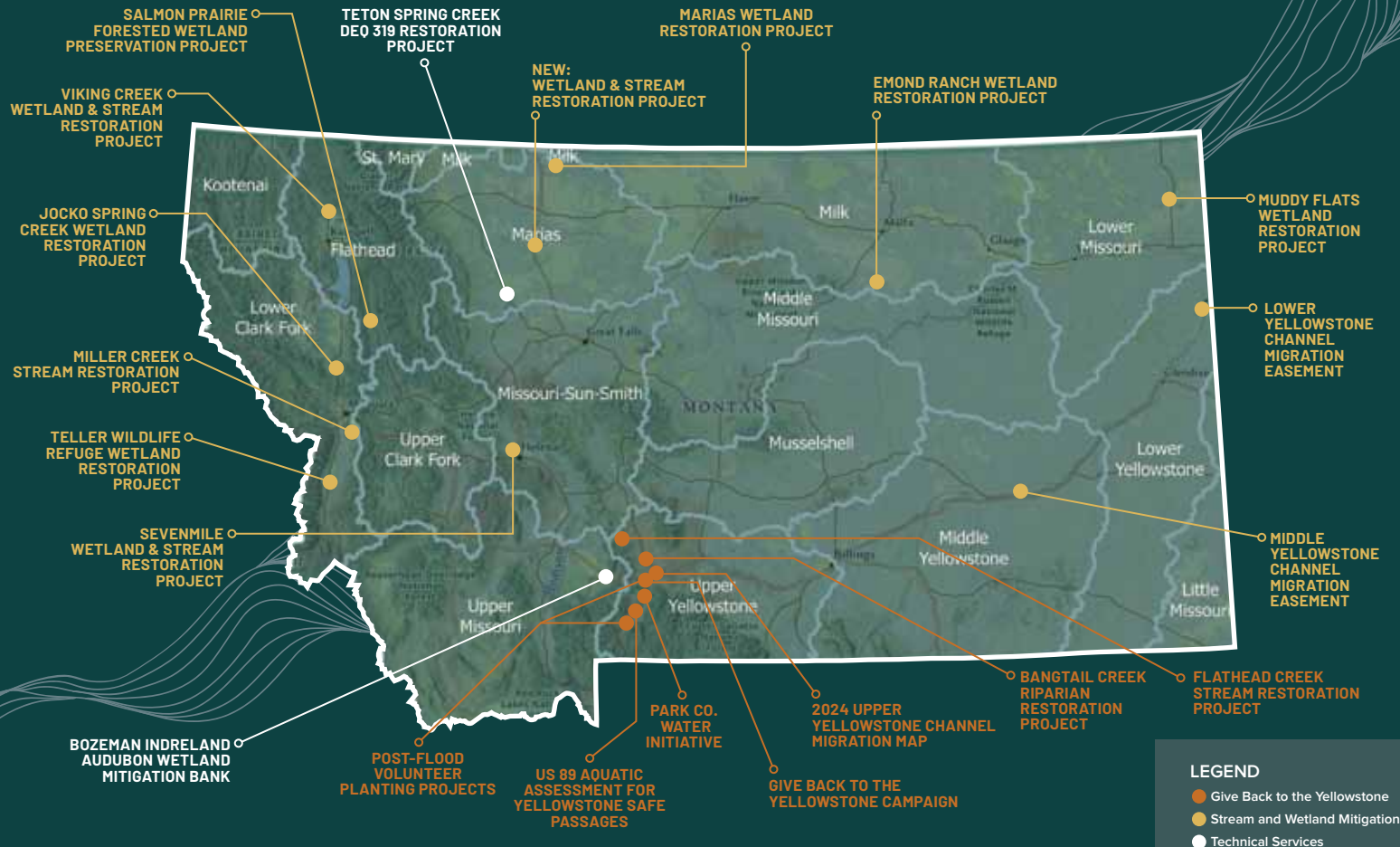
We hosted our second annual Watershed Tour in Paradise Valley, featuring local restoration sites and presentations on river dynamics, beaver coexistence, restoration techniques, soil health, and more. The event brought together more than 50 participants to learn, connect, and celebrate collaborative watershed stewardship.

## OUR IMPACT IN CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION ACROSS MONTANA

MFP's work reaches beyond the Upper Yellowstone and Shields Watersheds that we call home and extends to communities across Montana through our statewide stream and wetland mitigation program. We also carry out mission-driven, technical fee-for-service work that helps protect and restore the state's precious aquatic resources. The map to the right highlights the geographic scope of our impact—rooted locally, yet felt statewide. At the core of every effort is partnership: working hand-in-hand with landowners, agencies, Tribes, watershed groups, and fellow nonprofits to care for Montana's waters and ensure they thrive for generations to come.



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS



## METRICS

**504** Acres of wetland  
and riparian habitat  
protected/restored

**1270** # of individuals engaged  
in river conservation/  
education in 2025

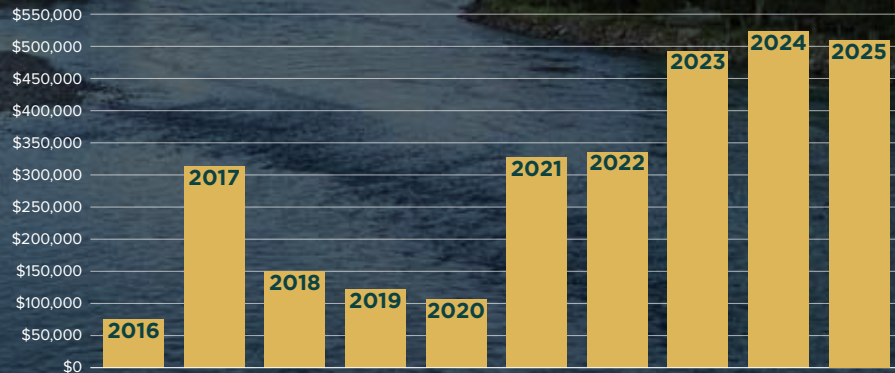
**831**  
Volunteer hours

**9910**  
Pounds of trash removed  
from the Yellowstone  
since the 2022 flood

**6.8**  
Miles (35,904 feet) of stream/  
river protected/restored

As of October 31, 2025

### \$ Invested in Montanas Restoration Economy



## FINANCIALS

Through October 31, 2025



### REVENUE

|                                          |                  |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Wetland & Stream Mitigation Program..... | \$322,067        |
| Program Income & Restricted Grants.....  | \$288,187        |
| Grants (unrestricted) .....              | \$36,062         |
| Contributions & Fundraising .....        | \$107,548        |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>                       | <b>\$753,864</b> |



### EXPENSES

|                                          |                  |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Wetland & Stream Mitigation Program..... | \$309,073        |
| Programs & Contracted Services.....      | \$239,779        |
| Operations .....                         | \$160,761        |
| Fundraising .....                        | \$59,124         |
| <b>TOTAL .....</b>                       | <b>\$768,737</b> |





## OUR MISSION

To restore, enhance, and protect Montana's rivers, streams, and wetlands through science-based innovative programs that benefit our communities and the landscapes we live in.

## OUR VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Healthy and resilient aquatic ecosystems—today, tomorrow, and for generations to come.



## WAYS TO GIVE BACK



**DONATE** Every contribution to Freshwater Partners powers our work to restore, enhance, and preserve Montana's aquatic ecosystems and water resources.



**MONTHLY GIVING** Set-up a monthly donation to protect Montana's water resources year-round.



**TAX-ADVANTAGED QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DONATION** There are a number of tax-advantage ways to give, including donating all or part of your IRA required minimum distribution, or donating non-cash assets to a qualified 501(c)(3) organization like Montana Freshwater Partners. These options can reduce your tax burden while also benefiting Montana's water resources for years to come.



To learn more about making a tax-deductible contribution or a planned gift, **scan the QR code** or contact Wendy at [wwaveaver@freshwaterpartners.org](mailto:wwaveaver@freshwaterpartners.org).

Montana Freshwater Partners is a registered 501(c)(3) organization, EIN #45-2804436. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

## THANK YOU

Our work and impact could not be possible without the generous support of those who donate financially to our organization.

Thank you to all the individuals, businesses, partner organizations, and foundations that make our work possible, with special thanks to the following organizations and businesses for their generous support.

American Bank | Arthur M. Blank Foundation | Bureau of Reclamation  
Catalyst Fund of the Network for Landscape Conservation  
Dan Bailey's Outdoor Company | ERA Landmark | FOAM  
Joe Brooks Trout Unlimited | MDEQ | Montana Trout Foundation  
MT Classic Boat Tours | MT FWP Future Fisheries Improvement Program  
Neptune's Brewing | Park County Community Foundation  
Park County Environmental Council | Pine Creek Lodge | Restoration Engineering  
RO Drift Boats | Sacajawea Audubon Society | Sullivan Fly Rods  
Sweetwater Fly Shop | Wild Livelihoods | Yellowstone Wood Boat Tours

## 2025 IN HONOR/MEMORY GIFTS

In 2025, tribute gifts honored loved ones while supporting our mission.

Donna Haskins in memory of Timothy Wright | Sandra Clark in memory of Timothy Wright  
KynsLee Scott in honor of her dad | Edward Shapiro in memory of Tom Moss  
Doreen Fairbank in honor of Liz Fairbank

## 2026 EVENTS

### BEAVER WEEK

April 2026

### NATIVE PLANT SALE

Pre-order plants online  
from February 1 - April 15 at:

[freshwaterpartners.org/  
mfp-native-plant-sale](https://freshwaterpartners.org/mfp-native-plant-sale)

Plant Pick-up and Sale Day: May 9

### RIVERS OF TIME GUIDED TRIP

June 25-July2, 2026

### YELLOWSTONE RIVER HOOTENANNY

July 16, 2026

### GIVE A HOOT

July 2026

### YELLOWSTONE RIVER CLEANUP

September 2026

### SHIELDS WATERSHED TOUR

September 2026

For more information on our  
upcoming events, please visit:  
[freshwaterpartners.org](https://freshwaterpartners.org)



Left to right: Wendy Weaver, Jeannette Blank, Leah Swartz, Halle Nienhaus, Ashton Bunce, Jennifer Norris



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**Stewardship is the art of gratitude in action;  
what we cherish, we sustain.**

- Aloo Denish Obiero

## OUR TEAM

### STAFF

Wendy Weaver, *Executive Director*  
Jeannette Blank, *ILF Program Director*  
Leah Swartz, *Project Manager*  
Ashton Bunce, *Project Manager*  
Halle Nienhaus, *Project Manager*  
Ellen Conley, *Finance Manager*  
Jen Norris, *Finance and Operations Assistant*  
KynsLee Scott, *Digital & Communications Contractor*

### BOARD

Marcus Pearson | Sarah Zuzulock | Caroline Neighbor  
Amir Darabi-Noferesti | Tom Parker | Elizabeth Fairbank



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P.O. Box 338, Livingston, MT 59047 | [freshwaterpartners.org](http://freshwaterpartners.org)  