

Transboundary Grasslands Partnership: Montana Partner Directory

Federal Agencies

Department of Agriculture (USDA)

- **Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS):** Provides financial and technical assistance to landowners for conservation, including ALE-GSS, EQIP, CTA and CRP-grasslands. Eastern Montana area administered by Miles City office, with individual county offices. Contact Tracy Cumber (Glasgow, MT) 406-228-4321 ext. 126, tracy.cumber@mt.usda.gov.
- **Sage-grouse Initiative (SGI):** A special initiative through NRCS providing additional funding and guidance for Sage-grouse conservation on private lands. Contact Martin Townsend (Malta, MT), 406-654-1334 ext. 119, martin.townsend@macdnet.org or any Montana NRCS office.

Department of Interior (DOI)

- **Bureau of Land Management (BLM):** Agency responsible for multiple-use management of federal lands in the Western US. The Glasgow Field Office manages livestock grazing and other uses on approximately one million acres in Valley County. In TGP region, contact Glasgow Field Office, 406-228-3750, [BLM MT Glasgow FO@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_MT_Glasgow_FO@blm.gov); Malta Field Office, 406-654-5100, [BLM MT Malta FO@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_MT_Malta_FO@blm.gov); or Havre Field Office, 406-262-2820, [BLM MT Havre FO@blm.gov](mailto:BLM_MT_Havre_FO@blm.gov).
- **Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):** Agency responsible for conservation and management of federal trust species, including migratory birds and threatened/endangered species. USFWS has diverse programs relevant to transboundary grasslands.
 - Ecological Services Office (ES):** Responsible for protection of threatened and endangered species. Working with landowners on Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for Greater Sage-grouse and four declining grassland songbirds. Contact Karen Newlon (Helena, MT), 406-449-5225, karen_newlon@fws.gov.
 - Habitat and Population Evaluation Team (HAPET):** Responsible for science and monitoring, including development of decision support tools. Currently developing a multi-species spatial conservation planning tool for grassland and sagebrush-obligate songbirds, waterfowl, sage-grouse, and pronghorn. Contact Jason Tack (Missoula, MT), jason_tack@fws.gov.
 - Migratory Bird Program:** Region-wide program for conservation and management of migratory birds. Currently leading the development of a tri-national grassland bird conservation plan for four priority grassland birds. Contact Scott Somershoe (Denver, CO), 303-236-4201, scott_somershoe@fws.gov.
 - Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW):** Private lands branch of USFWS. Provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners to restore and enhance habitat for federal trust species. Contact Greg Neudecker (statewide), 406-793-7400, greg_neudecker@fws.gov; Loren Ruport (Malta, MT), 406-671-7927, loren_ruport@fws.gov; or Marisa Sather (Glasgow, MT), 406-403-4678, marisa_sather@fws.gov.
 - Prairie Pothole Joint Venture (PPJV):** Partnership among federal, state and non-governmental organizations in the glaciated Prairie Pothole Region areas of Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. Works with partners on protection, restoration, and management of grasslands for bird conservation through planning, science support and easement/grant delivery. Contact Sean Fields (Great Falls, MT), 406-727-7400 ext. 218, sean_fields@fws.gov.
 - Realty Program:** Administers USFWS wetland and grassland conservation easements within the TGP Region. Contact David Allen (Helena, MT), 406-671-8508, david_allen@fws.gov.
 - Refuge Program:** The Bowdoin Wetland Management District covers the TGP geography in Montana. Bowdoin Refuge is near Malta, MT. Manages Refuge lands for benefit of waterfowl and songbirds. Works with Realty program to implement wetland-grassland conservation easements in the district. Contact Bridget Nielsen (Refuge Manager), 406-366-6042, bridget_nielsen@fws.gov; or Jessica Larson (Biologist), 406-654-2583, jessica_larson@fws.gov.

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State Agencies/Institutions

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC): Agency responsible for managing state lands, waters and minerals in Montana for the benefit of future generations.

- **Montana Rangelands Partnership (MRP):** Employs range technicians to work individually with ranchers on rangeland monitoring. Contact Cheryl Schuldt (Valley County), 406-945-0404, cschuldt@macdnet.org; or Loni Blackman (Phillips County), 406-231-0901, loniblackman@macdnet.org.

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP): Agency responsible for managing fish and wildlife in Montana. Relevant programs in TGP Region include grazing management, grassland restoration, grassland conservation easements and long-term grassland leases. New Working Grasslands Initiative beginning in 2018. Contact Catherine Wightman (Statewide), 406-444-3377, cwightman@mt.gov; Brett Dorak (Malta, MT), 406-480-5645, brett.dorak@mt.gov; or Drew Henry (Glasgow, MT), 406-228-3709, dhenry@mt.gov.

Montana State University (MSU): State land-grant university based in Bozeman, MT.

- **Department of Animal and Range Sciences:** Houses eight Range Science faculty who conduct applied and basic research in grassland conservation and management throughout the West, including the TGP jurisdiction. See faculty page for ongoing and completed research projects in grassland ecosystems (<http://animalrange.montana.edu/faculty/rangescience/index.html>).

Local Government

Milk River Watershed Alliance (MRWA): Conservation District -sponsored group involved in health and protection efforts for the Milk River watershed. Activities include weed and invasive species management, riparian restoration, irrigation projects and outreach and fundraising for improvements to the St. Mary's River diversion system, which provides 90% of the Milk River flow. Contact Sarah Swanson, sswanson@fesmt.com; Jeff Pattison, pattison.jeff@gmail.com; or Casey Gallagher, gallagher.mrwa@gmail.com.

Missouri River Conservation Districts Council (MRCDC): The Council includes 15 Conservation Districts in 14 counties that border the Missouri River in Montana, including the majority of the TGP Region. Coordinates a Community Working Group surrounding Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge. Serves on steering committee for Montana Rangelands Partnership (see DNRC, above), assists with restoration, grazing management and invasive species control. Contact Rachel Frost, 406-454-0056, mrcdc@macdnet.org.

Valley County Conservation District (VCCD): County-based organization committed to protecting soil, water, land and wildlife resources of Valley County. Sponsor educational and outreach programs. Represents interest of local community on wildlife and natural resource issues such as bison or predator management. Contact Jeff Pattison, pattison.jeff@gmail.com; or Lih-An Yang (administrator), 406-228-4321 ext. 101, vccdmt20@gmail.com.

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Non-Profits

Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCR): Organization dedicated to bird conservation. Employs private lands biologists across the plains to assist in delivery of USDA programs to private landowners. Supports demographic research and monitoring, including extensive, west-wide monitoring through the IMBCR program as well as intensive monitoring sites in Montana and North Dakota and in the southwestern US and Mexico for full life-cycle demographic rates of grassland birds. Contact Maureen Correll, Maureen.correll@birdconservancy.org; Jacy Bernath-Plaisted, jacy.bernath-plaisted@birdconservancy.org; or Adam Beh, adam.beh@birdconservancy.org.

Ducks Unlimited (DU): Wetland conservation organization that has been delivering projects in Montana since 1984, including wetland restoration and enhancement, conservation easements and land purchases. Over the past decade, DU's focus has been on working with landowners and other conservation partners to develop a variety of options to perpetuate working ranchlands. This includes highlighting a suite of programs such as USFWS easements and habitat restorations, USDA Wetland Reserve Easements and Agricultural Land Easements and Montana FWP easements. DU provides cost-share dollars for these programs and is an active partner in granting programs including seven North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grants along Montana's Hi-Line. Contact Bob Sanders (Helena, MT), 406-459-1785, rsanders@ducks.org.

National Wildlife Federation (NWF): Group dedicated to wildlife conservation. In TGP region, NWF is working on multi-species fence modification and removal; Modelling pronghorn seasonal habitat requirements and barriers to movement to increase connectivity; Fence flagging and removal for sage-grouse on public and private land; Bison conservation; Wildlife conflict resolution program for areas with predator or wildlife disease issues. Contact Tom France (Regional Director), 406-541-6706, france@nwf.org; Andrew Jakes (Biologist), 406-541-6733, jakesa@nwf.org; Hayley Newman (Sage-grouse Project Coordinator), 406-541-6736, newmanh@nwf.org; or Kit Fischer (Wildlife Conflict Resolution), 406-541-6731, fischerk@nwf.org.

Pheasants Forever (PF): Group dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education, and land management policies and programs. Staff work with partners (including the USDA, FWP, and others) to provide landowners with technical assistance regarding habitat conservation. This includes promoting existing programs, providing education and outreach about wildlife and conservation opportunities, and working with partners to identify additional conservation needs and interests in local communities. Contact Hunter VanDonsel (Blaine County), 406-461-3827, hvandongsel@pheasantsforever.org; or Aaron Clausen (Hill County), 605-280-9212, aclausen@pheasantsforever.org.

Ranchers Stewardship Alliance (RSA): A rancher-led conservation organization headquartered in north-central Montana. RSA works to continually strengthen our rural community, economy and culture through wise stewardship of the prairies that are the foundation of our way of life. Current projects include financial and technical support for installation of grazing infrastructure on expiring Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) lands, restoration of marginal cropland or exotic grass to native grassland, and education and outreach activities such as low-stress livestock handling and grazing management workshops. Contact Leo Barthelmess, 406-654-1405, or through our website www.ranchstewards.org.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC): Organization dedicated to land and water conservation. In Montana, TNC works in partnership with others to ensure nature and people thrive together. In TGP Region, primary activities include administering voluntary grassland conservation easements, owning and managing the Matador Ranch grassbank, and managing a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) program for sage-grouse and grassland birds in partnership with USFWS. Contact Brian Martin, bmartin@tnc.org.

Western Landowner's Alliance (WLA): WLA works west-wide to shape public understanding and policy to support private land stewardship. The goal is to elevate the practitioner perspective within the national conservation discussion and encourage public investment in private land management. Working to highlight successful examples of innovative private lands operations and identify economic opportunities on the horizon. Contact Cole Mannix (Helena, MT), 406-544-7329, cole@westernlandowners.org.

World Wildlife Fund US (WWF): Northern Great Plains program includes Sustainable Ranching Initiative that works with ranching and tribal communities to help maintain grassland biodiversity. Also conducts monitoring of focal wildlife species such as grassland songbirds. Develops decision-support tools such as Plowprint, an annual assessment of intact grassland throughout northern Great Plains region. Based in Bozeman. Contact Kevin Ellison (birds, Sustainable Ranching Initiative), Kevin.Ellison@wwfus.org; Dennis Jorgensen (bison, Tribal partnerships), Dennis.Jorgensen@wwfus.org, or Kristy Bly (ferrets, prairie does, Tribal partnerships), Kristy.Bly@wwfus.org.

