



**BOB MARSHALL
WILDERNESS**
FOUNDATION

SPRING 2024

The Roundup



The Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation works on the traditional homelands of the Amskapi Piikani, the Niitsitapi, the Séliš, Qlispé and Ktunaxa. We admire their deep connection to this landscape and we're inspired by their knowledge and ongoing commitment as the original and longest-serving stewards of the lands we now call "The Bob".

Photo by volunteer Tiffany Counts



Greetings FROM THE DIRECTOR

One month into our 28th year of operation, and the team here at the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation is riding considerable momentum toward the 2024 field season. Having reviewed and dissected every element of our 2023 season, we are refining our program planning to offer improved active Wilderness stewardship opportunities, in the hopes of facilitating greater conservation impact while fostering connections to truly wild places across the 1.6 million-acre Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex.

This Roundup serves both as 2023 Annual Report and 2024 Prospectus. We celebrate our volunteers, highlight our impressive 2023 accomplishments, and offer sincere gratitude to the people, businesses and agencies that have supported us financially. We also offer a glimpse at the docket for 2024.

Active stewardship with BMWF this year will include opportunities for water quality monitoring, campsite restoration, mitigating the spread of invasive plants, trail clearing and maintenance, and more. We aim to expand our Pack Stock program beyond two apprenticeships to include a paid internship in the interest of establishing a pathway to a land management career working with stock. We will continue to deliver BMWC-specific Wilderness education in Montana schools and communities, while developing modern educational resources for a broader audience.

2024 marks two important anniversaries for the BMWF. Sixty years ago this September, following eight years and 66 revisions, the Wilderness Act was signed into law preserving, among others, the Bob Marshall Wilderness proper. We encourage you to learn more about Wilderness designation this year, and keep your eyes open for celebratory events, not least of which is the 12th World Wilderness Congress convening in the Black Hills in late August.

This year is also the 20th anniversary of Artist Wilderness Connection (AWC), an artist residency which we deliver in partnership with the Hockaday Museum of Art, Swan Valley Connections, and the Flathead National Forest. The influence of immersive time spent in the Wilderness on a person is as universal as it can be poignantly personal, and we plan to showcase past artists and their stories throughout the year. Celebrations will kick off with a panel discussion during this spring's Wilderness Speaker Series at Flathead Valley Community College (bmwf.org/wss). And while we hold true the quote by Ansel Adams that, "Wilderness is not only a condition of nature, but a state of mind and mood and heart. It cannot be confined to the museum-case...", the entire 20-year collection of donated AWC-inspired artwork will be exhibited this summer at the Hockaday Museum in Kalispell.

Perusing the following pages, please consider the expertise and intention with which BMWF staff pursue our mission of Active Wilderness Stewardship. We are proud to work alongside the USDA Forest Service and remain ever grateful to our wonderful donors and supporters. We hope you'll join us for an exciting year celebrating and serving Wilderness conservation in the Crown of the Continent.

See you out there!

Clifford Kipp, Executive Director



Connecting People with Wild Places through Active Wilderness Stewardship since 1997

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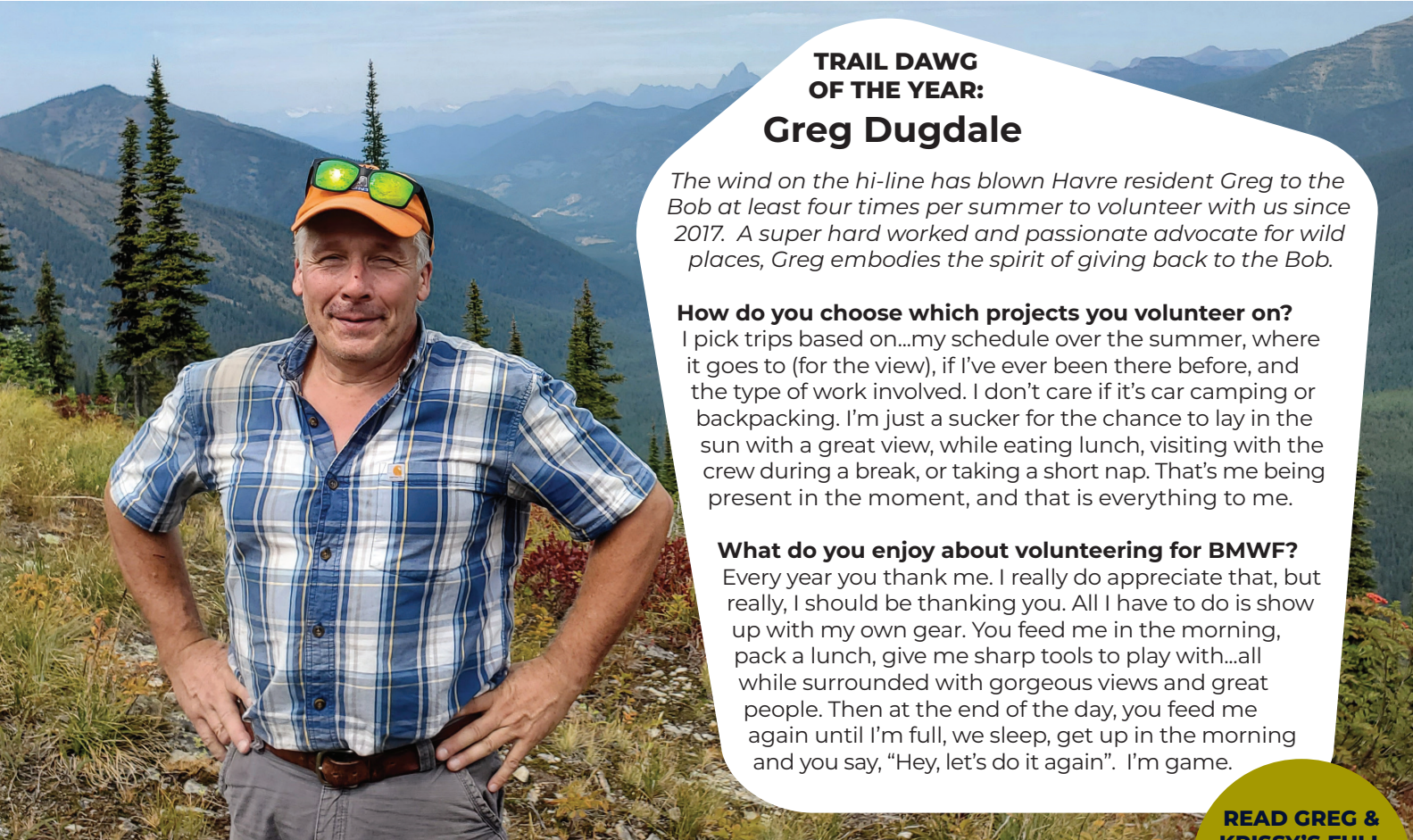
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2023

Volunteers of the Year Awards

Our volunteers are simply the best! Each year we're thrilled to recognize a couple of the hardworking folks who go above and beyond for the Bob.



TRAIL DAWG OF THE YEAR:

Greg Dugdale

The wind on the hi-line has blown Havre resident Greg to the Bob at least four times per summer to volunteer with us since 2017. A super hard worked and passionate advocate for wild places, Greg embodies the spirit of giving back to the Bob.

How do you choose which projects you volunteer on?

I pick trips based on...my schedule over the summer, where it goes to (for the view), if I've ever been there before, and the type of work involved. I don't care if it's car camping or backpacking. I'm just a sucker for the chance to lay in the sun with a great view, while eating lunch, visiting with the crew during a break, or taking a short nap. That's me being present in the moment, and that is everything to me.

What do you enjoy about volunteering for BMWF?

Every year you thank me. I really do appreciate that, but really, I should be thanking you. All I have to do is show up with my own gear. You feed me in the morning, pack a lunch, give me sharp tools to play with...all while surrounded with gorgeous views and great people. Then at the end of the day, you feed me again until I'm full, we sleep, get up in the morning and you say, "Hey, let's do it again". I'm game.

READ GREG & KRISSY'S FULL INTERVIEWS AT BMWf.org/lovethebob

PACKER OF THE YEAR:

Krissy Gillispie

Krissy was our very first Packer Apprentice back in 2016. Fast forward and Krissy is now a confident Wilderness packer with her own string of four mules, a BMWF Board member, and an integral part of the BMWFs packing program.

What do you enjoy most about packing for BMWF?

I love hard work. I love getting up early...the exhaustion of a hard day of lifting loads, and then sitting on top of this amazing creature who safely takes me into the wilderness far far away from phones, computers, busyness, noise and light pollution. I love the teamwork (the crew and volunteers, the mules, other packers, the Forest Service employees). I have found my people.

Do you remember a favorite trip you packed?

Handsdown my first trip into Gates Park. Pulling into the cabin, feeling like I was in an old western movie...waiting for someone to ring the dinner bell. It's like a busy little frontier town from the 1800's. That evening we sat around a porch, listening to old timers tell stories and tell us 'youngins' what we need to do to protect this land.



Art and wilderness have long gone hand-in-hand. From the earliest cave paintings, to impressionism, plein air, and Charlie Russell portraying the wild Montana landscape for curious audiences back east – art has always been used to tell the story of humans and their relationship with nature.

By Allison Siems, BMWF Operations Director

Twenty years ago, four organizations joined forces to capture the beauty and inspiration provided by Montana's wildest places. This unique, collaborative artist residency was named Artist Wilderness Connection, and the first artists ventured into the backcountry during the summer of 2004.

AWC still largely operates the same as it did that first summer. Artists from all disciplines, media and styles are selected to stay in backcountry cabins where they can unplug and focus on their art in beautiful, remote wilderness settings. They are encouraged to explore themes around Wilderness values and related topics to structure their residency. Afterwards, the artists give back by sharing a public presentation or workshop related to their wilderness experience.

"For 20 years, AWC has provided rare opportunities for artists to immerse themselves in and be inspired by wilderness; and for our communities, the chance to connect with wild places through the eyes, experiences, and creativity of our program artists," shared Teresa Wenum, Conservation Education Specialist with the Flathead National Forest.

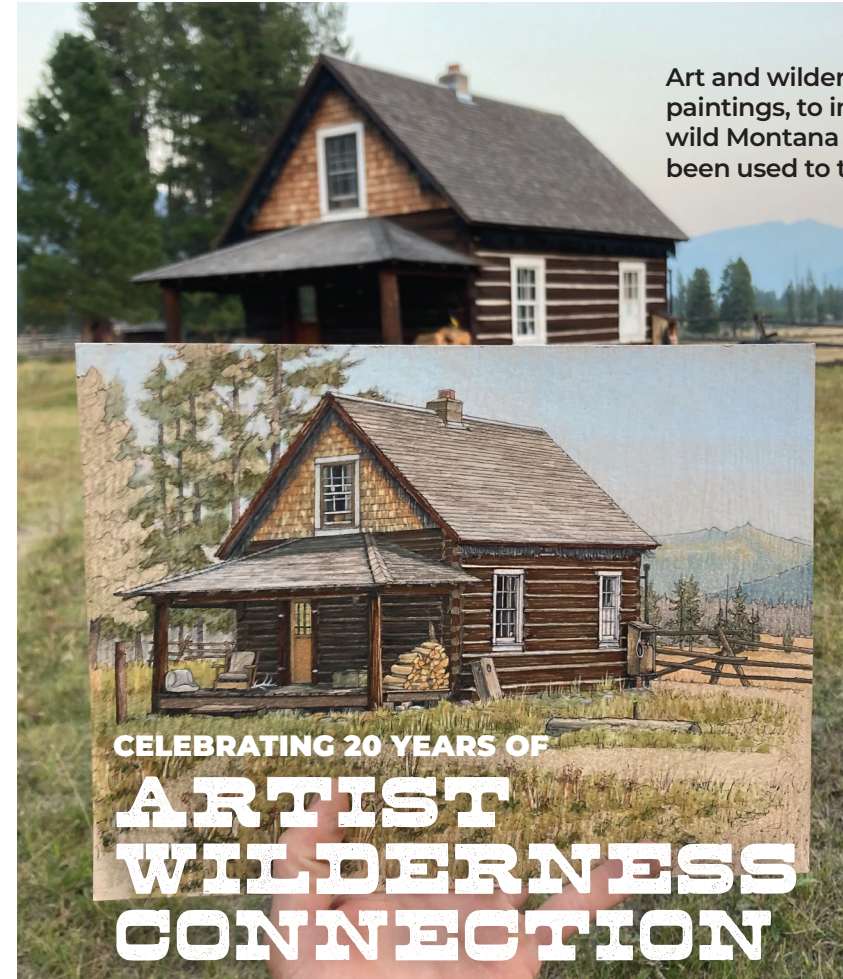


Photo by Griffin Foster, 2023 AWC artist

Each partner plays a crucial role to carry out the residency. Flathead National Forest provides use of their administrative cabins as the setting – a unique benefit, as these are usually reserved for trail crews and patrols. Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation supports the artists with pack support and help with communication, safety and problem solving throughout their time in the backcountry. Hockaday Museum of Art provides exhibit space or program opportunities for the artists to share their experience with the broader community. Swan Valley Connections helps promote and market the program.

Since 2004, 56 artists have participated in AWC, each harnessing their unique experience for their creative pursuits.

"My two weeks at the Spruce Park Cabin were life-changing. I'm still walking the trail leading from the cabin into the daily wilderness surrounding me," said writer Michael Garrigan of his residency in 2021. "My time there gave me the chance to discover who I am as a writer and to dig deep into what is important to me as an artist, teacher, and person."

Mandy Mohler, photographer and illustrator behind Field Guide Designs, also stayed at Spruce Park cabin back in 2012. "I remember saying to myself while I was back there - 'I wish I could stay here forever. I wonder how I can make this my job. Wouldn't that be great?'" she shared. "So I took that wish and used it to create my own personal art style. My art business likely wouldn't be what it is today without the opportunity of Artist Wilderness Connection."

Painter and muralist Griffin Foster, is still reveling in his stay at Shaw Cabin in 2023. "With each passing day in the backcountry, my mind and body realigned with the natural world," he reflected. "It felt like traveling back in time, where horse packers dominated the transit and oil paintings were the tool used to describe landscapes before the development of photography. I was a scribe on a journey to show the urban folk what lay on the other side. My two-week residency in the Bob was a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

We're grateful to play a role in creating these transformational experiences that produce incredible works of art to share with our community. Thank you to our partners for making this program possible, and to all of the past artists for embracing the adventure!

SAVE THESE DATES!

Join us to hear more from past artists and celebrate 20 years at these special events!

Wednesday, April 17th, 2024: AWC Artist Panel at the Wilderness Speaker Series
7:00-8:15 PM at Flathead Valley Community College.
bmf.org/wss

June 28th-Oct. 26th, 2024: Full AWC Art Collection on Display at Hockaday Museum of Art
Opening reception on Thursday, June 27th. bmf.org/awc

2023 By the Numbers

ANNUAL REPORT

81
TOTAL PROJECTS

422

VOLUNTEERS
GAVE BACK TO THE BOB

12

PARTNER & AFFINITY GROUPS
JOINED US IN THE FIELD

11

WILDERNESS INTERNS
GRADUATED FROM FIELD-BASED TRAINING PROGRAMS

2

PACKER APPRENTICESHIPS
SADDLED UP WITH MASTER PACKERS

2

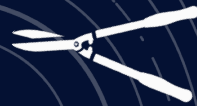
ARTIST WILDERNESS RESIDENCIES
SPENT TWO WEEKS IN BACKCOUNTRY CABINS

587

MILES OF TRAIL MAINTAINED



3,567 TREES
CLEARED



60 MILES OF TRAIL
BRUSHED



3,380 YARDS OF TREAD
IMPROVED

259 DRAINAGES
MAINTAINED



10 DRAINAGE STRUCTURES
CONSTRUCTED

3 CITIZEN SCIENCE
PROJECTS



308

MULE LOADS OF GEAR

67.5

ACRES OF WEEDS TREATED

284 LB OF WEEDS
HAND PULLED



53 ACRES OF WEEDS
SPRAYED



339 ACRES OF WEEDS
MAPPED



27 E-DNA
WATER SAMPLES
COLLECTED



105

PACKER APPRENTICE MILES
IN THE SADDLE

1,768 CUPS OF COFFEE



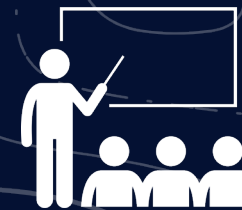
1,179 NIGHTS UNDER THE STARS



393 MILES HIKE TO WORKSITES



23 EDUCATIONAL TRAININGS & EVENTS



EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
REACHED
8,000+ PEOPLE

12 CLASSROOM VISITS, FIELDTRIPS & CAMPFIRE CHATS



2 WILDERNESS-101 BACKCOUNTRY
EDUCATION TRIPS

FINANCIALS

INCOME



\$869,429

- 2% Merchandise
- 4% Investments
- 4% License Plates
- 6% Fundraising Events
- 26% Individual Donations
- 58% Grants

EXPENSES



\$892,293

- 12% Fundraising & Outreach
- 25% Administration
- 63% Boots-on-the-Ground Programs

VOLUNTEER STATS



MALE: 50%



FEMALE: 48%

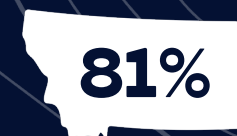
NONBINARY: 2%

RETURNING

38%

62%

NEW



81%
FROM MONTANA



3,008 BMWF
LICENSE PLATES
ON THE ROAD

Volunteer Voices HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE FIELD IN 2023

“ Highlights were: The people! I learned so much from my fellow volunteers and leaders, which is super important to me.

The work! I gained confidence in my trail crew skills, which is **something I've always wanted to try** but worried if I'd be strong enough to do.

The place! Our entire group hiked up the summit of Spruce Point for an incredible view after three amazing days of trail work. It was super rewarding, and a shared experience I'll not soon forget.

”



BMWFW #12: Nesbit Trail



BMWFW #06: Marion Lake

“It was wonderful. I go camping and hiking a lot but have a family and am always taking care of people with cooking and keeping people engaged when we're out there. I like being able to give back to the land that sustains us and also **getting into the wilderness as my own person** without family obligations, and I'd never be able to afford an outfitted trip for myself.”

”



BMWFW #25: Castle Lake

“ Main highlights: Joe was an exceptional crew leader. He was professional and went above and beyond to help ensure I was comfortable for my first experience in the backcountry. His organizational skills were incredible. His culinary skills were off the charts! I did not expect to have such beautiful, well-thought-out meals during our journey in the wilderness. I was so impressed by his ability to create nutritious, delicious meals after very long days at work.

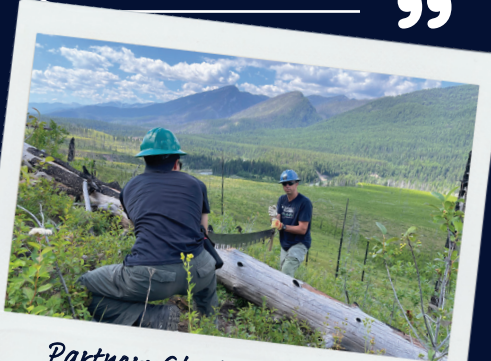
The work was rewarding and exciting. I never thought I would be able to use the tools provided and witness such excellent results.

I really loved my other crew members. We were just meant to work together. **I truly believe I developed life-long friends on this journey** into the Bob Marshall Wilderness.

Volunteering for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation was a life-changing experience for me. As this was the first time camping in the backcountry, **I could not have picked a better organization to support.** The team at BMWFW was professional, courteous and best of all friendly. I am truly honored to have participated in this trip and looking forward to future adventures!

“ I'd never even heard of The Bob before signing up (length and general location worked out for a roadtrip I was doing), and went 60 miles down a dirt road **to a land of packers and gorges I hadn't imagined.** The trail work was varied and challenging and fun. The people were great, the food was great. I could have stayed longer.

”



Partner: Glacier High School



BMWFW #09: Blacktail Ck.



BMWFW #28: Vinegar Mtn.

“**The Bob Marshall Wilderness blew me away,** it was my first time hiking in from the east side. The landscape is one of a kind, the crew leaders were knowledgeable and fun, and meeting like-minded volunteers is always a pleasure.”

Volunteer Adventures

GIVE BACK TO THE BOB THIS SUMMER!

? **VOLUNTEERING BASICS** - What can you expect on a BMWFW volunteer trip?

BMWFW PROVIDES:

- An experienced, highly trained Crew Leader who will show you the ropes
- All meals, tools, and group camp supplies
- Pack support to and from camp to lighten your load
- A free-of-charge, unforgettable way to experience The Bob!

YOU BRING:

- Personal camping gear and clothing (but we have a gear library if you need anything!)
- Motivation to roll up your sleeves and work for 8-hour days using traditional trail maintenance tools
- No experience needed; Just a positive attitude, ready to learn new things and have an adventure!

2024 VOLUNTEER ADVENTURES: SNEAK PEEK

This is only a small selection of the trips we have available! Find the full schedule at bmwf.org/volunteer

PRETTY PRAIRIE
Rocky Mountain Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Moderate
Work difficulty: Easy
Description: Your basecamp will be near the historic Pretty Prairie Cabin. Help restore the natural prairie by pulling invasive Houttuynia and Spotted Knapweed, as well as campsite rehabilitation along both sides of the South Fork Sun River.

MARION LAKE
Hungry Horse Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Easy
Work difficulty: Moderate
Description: This popular day hike grows alder, devil club, and thimbleberry like it was a wild jungle! We need some tough trail lovers to lop, saw and clear the trail corridor for all hikers to enjoy. This is a trailhead based trip, great for a quick weekend getaway.

BIG PRAIRIE
Spotted Bear Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Strenuous
Work difficulty: Strenuous
Description: Not for the faint of heart, with nearly 30 miles of hiking over two days to reach the historic Big Prairie Ranger Station. Your crew will be using crosscut and handsaws to clear Tilsen Peak trail # 127 of downfall. Enjoy a day off mid-week for your efforts.

SWITCHBACK TRAIL
Lincoln Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Moderate
Work difficulty: Moderate
Description: The Switchback Trail #478 connects Heart Lake to the Landers Fork river, and is in need of a lot of deferred maintenance to get it back into shape. There will be drainage work, cutbacks and lots of brushing needed to open up the trail corridor.

WASHBOARD REEF
Rocky Mountain Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Easy
Work difficulty: Strenuous
Description: Bring back Washboard Reef trail #117 from the brink of disappearing. Your hike to the worksite will get more strenuous as you clear the trail of heavy downfall to reestablish this beautiful ridgeline hike on the Rocky Mountain Front.

SPRUCE POINT
Hungry Horse Ranger District

Hike difficulty: Moderate
Work difficulty: Difficult
Description: Spruce Point rises high above the Middle Fork of the Flathead, with outstanding views of the Great Bear Wilderness and Glacier National Park. Be prepared for heavy clearing work, with lots of sawing and lifting trees off the trail.

LEARN MORE AND SIGN UP AT BMWFW.ORG/VOLUNTEER



JOIN THE BOB SQUAD!

The Bob needs you! Help us do the projects above, and so much more.

Complete, clip and mail to PO Box 190688, Hungry Horse, MT 59919

Contact us to discuss endowment or stock gifts! clifford@bmwf.org / (406) 387-3847

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone/Email: _____

Payment Method: Check enclosed Card - Number: _____

I wish to remain anonymous

Ex. Date: _____ Security Code: _____

Signature: _____



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bmwf.org/donate

THANK YOU

to these donors and supporters who so generously gave to sustain our work in wilderness stewardship in 2023

TRAIL BLAZER

Algorand Matching Funds 2023
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