



2022 ANNUAL REPORT



**OUR MISSION** The Montana Land Reliance (MLR) partners with private landowners to permanently protect agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open space. The immediate accomplishments of MLR's conservation work are measured in acres of land protected and miles of streambank preserved. The lasting benefits of MLR's work are the perpetuation of a lifestyle and an economy that rely on responsibly managed private land and the increasingly valuable Montana open spaces that will continue to nourish the spirit of future generations.



*On the cover: Missouri River Breaks*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER

**2022** proved to be the second-best year for conservation on record! Staff completed 27 conservation easements, adding 66,658 acres to our portfolio of protected lands across the state. These new projects bring The Montana Land Reliance's (MLR) total acres protected to 1,286,862 and keeps us on track to realize our long-term goal of conserving two million acres by 2040. The completed projects span the state, from Heron and Polebridge in western Montana, to Musselshell and Forsyth in the east. The lands protected in 2022 include core sage grouse habitat, native grasslands, riparian zones, forests, and working farms and ranchlands. With each protected acre, MLR ensures that the Montana we all love will continue to be available for future generations.

2022 also saw the hiring of Paul Burdett as MLR's General Counsel. Paul started his career as a litigation attorney at Goetz, Baldwin & Geddes, P.C., in Bozeman (now Goetz, Geddes & Gardner). Before accepting a position with MLR, Paul worked for the Montana Supreme Court and the First Judicial District Court in Lewis & Clark County. He has deep roots in Montana agriculture and is the third generation on his family's farm and ranch near Billings. Prior to law school, he worked as a guide on the Smith River. He received his J.D. from the University of Montana Law School. Please join me in extending a warm welcome to Paul!

2022 was a year of recognition for MLR's founders, Christine Torggrimson and Barbara Rusmore. I am pleased to report that Christine and Barbara were inducted into the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame, a deserving honor for their significant and lasting contributions to the conservation of Montana's wildlife and open spaces. Christine and Barbara founded MLR in 1978, with the goal of slowing what they saw as unchecked subdevelopment in Montana. Over the past 44 years, MLR has done just that. Barbara and Christine's legacy is much more than the founding of a land trust. It's the creation of a community of conservation-minded landowners who value protected landscapes across Montana.

*With each protected acre, MLR ensures that the Montana we all love will continue to be available for future generations.*

**In this annual report,** we celebrate the legacy of Craig and Martha Woodson, founders of Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) and recipients of MLR's 2022 Conservation Award. Thanks go out to RHF Executive Director, Les Gilman, for sharing with us some of his experiences working with Craig and Martha over the years. Martha Woodson passed peacefully in February 2022 at the age of 90. We extend our condolences to the Woodson family and the RHF community on her passing. We want to express our appreciation to Les Gilman who is retiring after serving as the executive director of RHF for 20 years, since its creation in 2002.



You will also be introduced to the Roen family, this year's recipient of the William F. Long Award. This award is given annually to a landowner who has protected critical upland bird habitat. The Roens are young, up-and-coming ranchers from Melstone, Montana, who completed conservation easements with MLR in 2021 and 2022 that protect 5,000 acres of greater sage grouse and upland bird habitat. You will read about their efforts to rehabilitate and restore grasslands while maintaining a sustainable ranching operation.

Finally, you will read about longtime MLR supporter Judy Hutchins and her work protecting at-risk lands in western Montana. Judy offers her perspective on what makes Montana such a wonderful place to visit and call home, and what we can do to ensure it stays that way. I think you will find Judy's advice admirable, reflecting the values and conservation ethic we can all strive for in our own lives.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to you, our landowners, supporters, donors, advisors, and friends. Your support makes our work possible. We look forward to 2023 as we work together to build on MLR's mission of partnering with private landowners to permanently protect our agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, and open space.

*—George Olsen, Board President*

Since 1978,

The Montana Land Reliance has worked with private landowners all across Montana to meet their conservation goals, including the protection of major watersheds critical to agriculture and wildlife habitat.

1,286,862 acres of ecologically, agriculturally, and historically important land, and 1,957 miles of streambank, are now protected under MLR's 965 conservation easements.

In 2022

1	Axtell, Jr., Joe Page, Barbara Jean Axtell, & Nancy Axtell	758
2	Carlson, Jehnet	324
3	Casey, Ilene D. Fulker	230
4	Casey, Ilene D. Fulker	21
5	Martin & Margaret M. Clark, LLC	2,268
6	Cornell, Stephen E. & Maura Grogan Cornell	120
7	Dry Creek Ranch, LLP	3,240
8	Gildroy, Gordon Joe & Mary Ann	100
9	Herman, Sidney N.	4,951
10	Hutchins, Judith	52
11	Lepley Creek Livestock Co.	1,379
12	Lund, Marion I.	137
13	Machler, D. Mark & Sheila J. Machler, Joel Frank Machler & Lisa Lynn Werner	822
14	Machler, D. Mark & Sheila J. Machler, Joel Frank Machler & Lisa Lynn Werner	320
15	George Mattson Farms, Inc. & Janice Mattson	5,799
16	Middle Fork Land & Livestock, Inc.	22,203
17	Rimkus, Leon D. & Alice F.	203
18	Roen, Mitch Del & Jennifer Marie	3,639
19	Round Grove Ranch Company	3,352
20	Round Grove Ranch Company	4,802
21	Shields River, LLC	639
22	Six Meadows Ranch LLC	842
23	Sullivan, Donald G.	160
24	Switchback Ranch, LLC	9,651
25	Teller Wildlife Refuge, Inc.	10
26	Thistle Creek Ranch	439
27	Yellow Mountain Preserve, LLC	197

## 2022 PROTECTION HIGHLIGHTS

**54,908** acres  
of Range/Forest

**7,394** acres  
of Elk Habitat

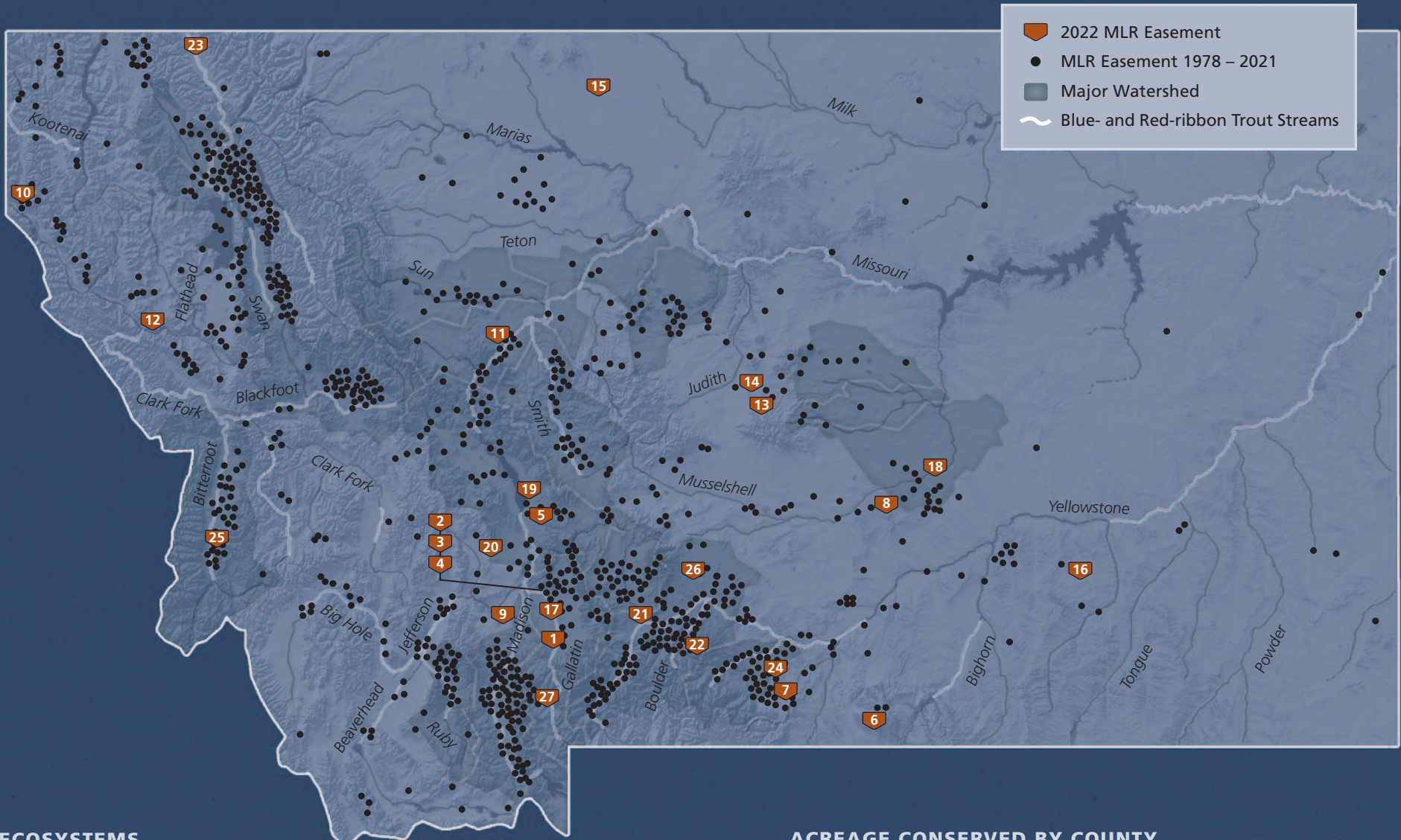
**837** acres  
of Wetlands

**51** miles  
of Streambank

TOTAL 2022 ACREAGE

**66,658**

Beaverhead Mountains

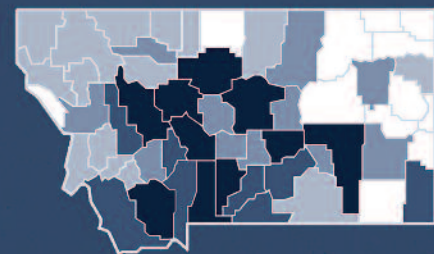


**ECOSYSTEMS**



- Northern Continental Divide
- Northern Great Plains
- Greater Yellowstone

**ACREAGE CONSERVED BY COUNTY**



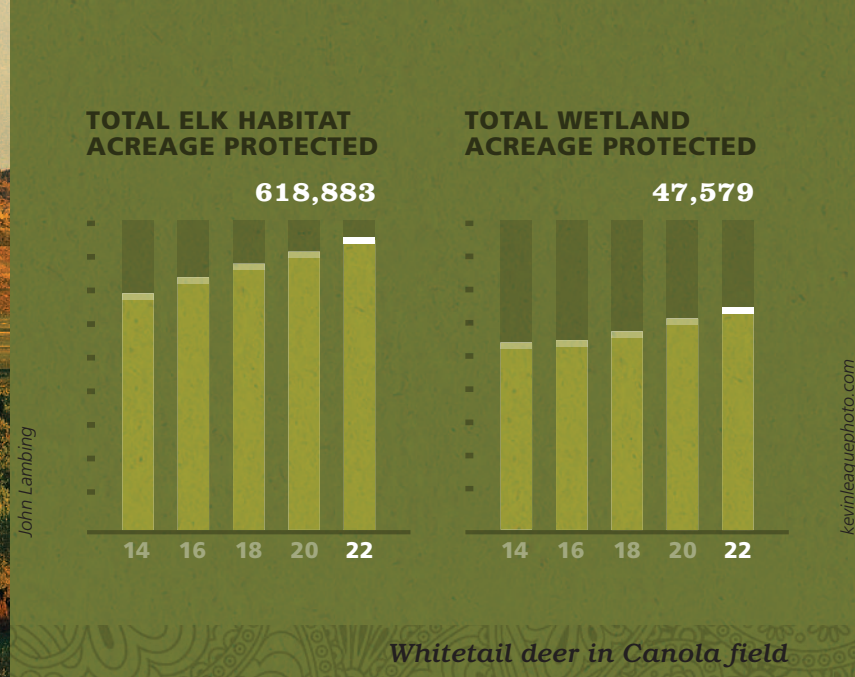
- 1–10,000
- 10,001–25,000
- 25,001–50,000
- More than 50,000



*private land conservation*

*watershed protection*

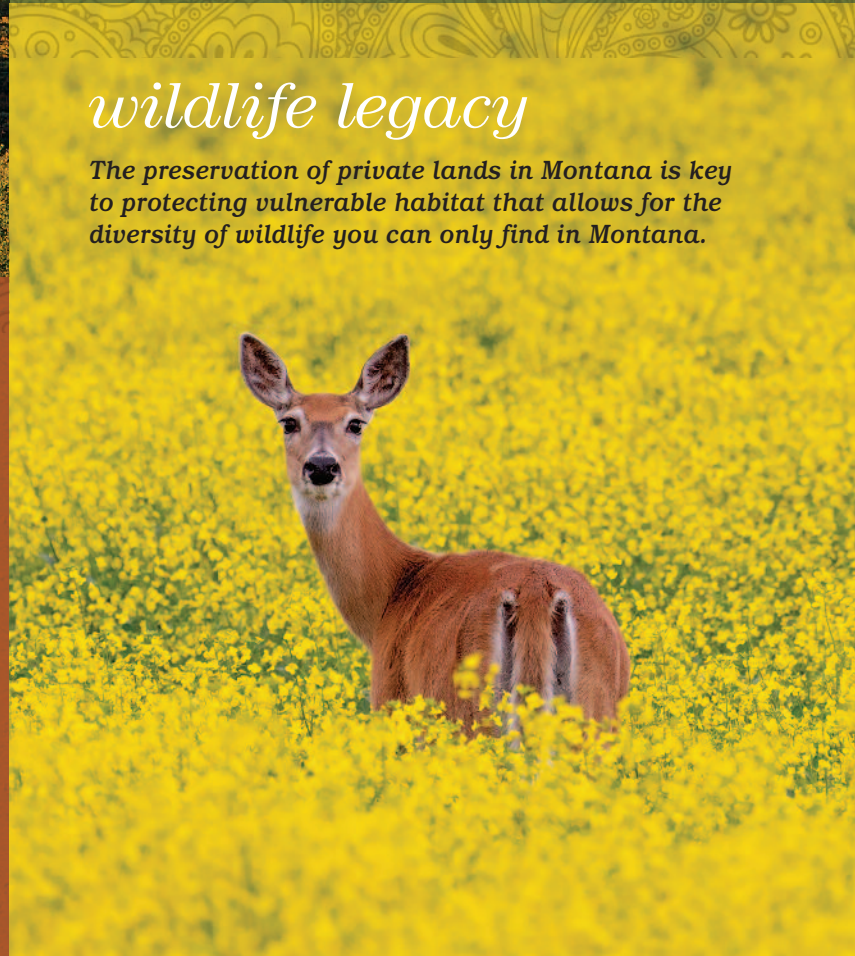
*Powder River near Broadus*



*Whitetail deer in Canola field*

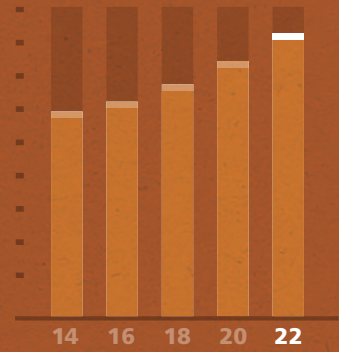
*wildlife legacy*

The preservation of private lands in Montana is key to protecting vulnerable habitat that allows for the diversity of wildlife you can only find in Montana.



**TOTAL CONSERVATION EASEMENT ACREAGE**

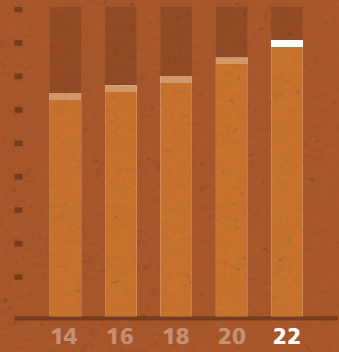
**1,286,862**



Private lands make up 18% of Montana's watersheds. Conserving watersheds supports family farms and ranches, a vibrant recreation industry, wildlife habitat, and miles of rivers and streams.

**TOTAL MILES OF STREAMBANK PROTECTED**

**1,957**





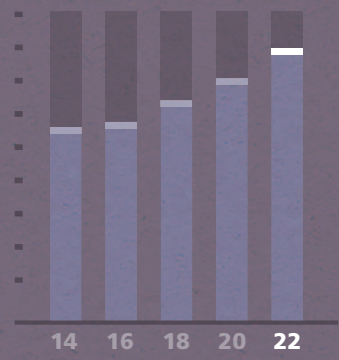
*agricultural heritage*

Near Avon

Fifty-eight million acres of Montana's lands are in agricultural production. The protection of these working farms and ranches is critical for the preservation of the state's rural communities and agricultural economy.

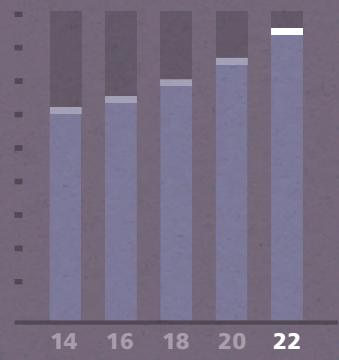
**TOTAL CROP/HAY/PASTURE ACREAGE PROTECTED**

**221,415**



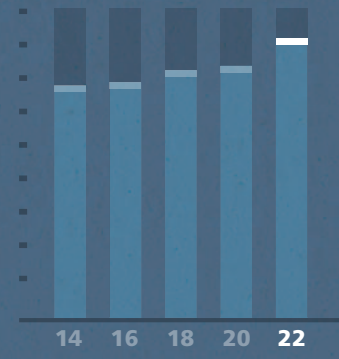
**TOTAL FOREST/RANGE ACREAGE PROTECTED**

**1,065,447**



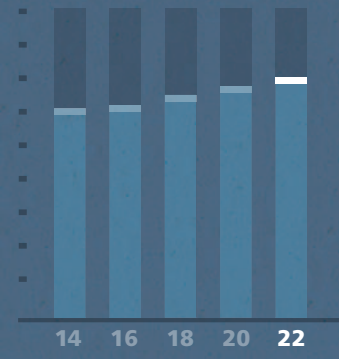
**GREATER YELLOWSTONE ECOSYSTEM ACREAGE PROTECTED**

**343,848**



**NORTHERN CONTINENTAL DIVIDE ECOSYSTEM ACREAGE PROTECTED**

**21,102**



Lower Red Rock Lake

*ecosystem protection*

Private lands contain some of the richest biodiversity found in Montana. Conserving these places is vital to ensuring our ecosystems remain healthy and intact.



John Lambing



*Judy's conservation goals include emphasis on areas with exceptional wildlife habitat.*

# motivation

## JUDY HUTCHINS' CONSERVATION LEGACY

**G**rowing up on an irrigated pig farm in western Colorado's sagebrush steppe, Judy Hutchins was surrounded by nature and wildlife. Her mother was a botanist and ornithologist who would often take her birding. Judy remembered walking the sloughs and drainage ditches on the farm, stalking ducks in knee deep water, and listening intently as Red-winged Blackbirds sang in the cattails in the spring. While working outside and exploring the landscape were a part of her daily life, there were times when she and her brothers were instructed to stay in. Judy remembered instances as a kid having to run indoors at the sound of a low flying airplane. "The crop dusters would fly right over our house," she recalled. "I remember going out after a crop-dusting flight and picking up a White-throated Swift in our flower garden. It couldn't move. It had been paralyzed by the insecticide."

Judy's experiences on the farm, both good and bad, instilled in her at a young age the tense relationship humans often have with the environment. She took those lessons

with her to high school in New York City and then on to college, where she studied Wildlife Biology and Botany at the University of Michigan and then the University of Montana. "I traded in shoveling pig pens for paperwork," Judy laughed, "I enjoyed college." In 1973, she had the opportunity to attend a summer field camp at Yellow Bay on Flathead Lake, where she fell in love with the northwest part of the state.

Judy had always had a soft spot in her heart for Montana. Her parents met while working at the Elk Horn Dude Ranch south of Big Sky and were married at the county courthouse in Bozeman. Judy recalled, "I grew up with an idealized view of Montana. When I moved here in 1973, I knew it would be my home."

Judy worked for the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) in her mid-twenties for five summers. She cruised timber for three summers then moved on to a special project where she was responsible for collecting specialized data on the Cabinet Ranger District. The USFS was just starting to use computers and was attempting to organize the

landscape into units by drainage for timber management purposes. Judy recalled that there were units all over the district that were a mystery. The Forest Service had little idea what was out there. It was her job to solve the mystery by completing timber inventories, mapping the units, and making management recommendations. "Working for the USFS was a grand introduction to being in the woods," Judy recalled. "The weather was occasionally ugly, but there was a lot of wildlife. That's where I learned a lot about trees."

**Judy fell in love** with Montana's old growth forests. In her work for the USFS, she was amazed at how much of the old growth, especially the cedar trees, had already been logged. "I came out of the USFS pessimistic," she stated. "Nothing was really natural anymore in the forests." While still believing in practical management, Judy became an advocate for protecting what was left of the big trees. "Those old growth trees will never come back," she said. "They are giant living fossils and carbon sinks and cannot be replaced."

*continued*



—  
*"If you live here  
because you love  
Montana, do  
something to  
protect this place  
you love."*  
—

With her heart and interests in the woods, Judy put down roots in Heron, Montana, and became involved in local conservation and land use issues. She was elected to the Green Mountain Conservation District board of supervisors in 1988 where she advocated for environmental protections for drainages in the lower Clark Fork River. Judy credits her mother's work on water rights in Mesa County, Colorado, for having an impact on her understanding of conservation. Of her mother, Judy recalled, "she was a tough

and determined woman who fought for what she believed in, and her passion for water was evident in everything she did." During her time in Colorado, Judy's mother Ruth Powell Hutchins took on the Bureau of Reclamation and Denver Water Authority when they proposed taking water from farmers near Fruita, Colorado. Her work helped keep water in the valley for agriculture, instead of seeing it pumped over the mountains to Denver. In recognition of her efforts, Colorado Mesa University created the Ruth Powell Hutchins

Water Center, with a mission to further research and education on water issues in the Colorado River Basin.

For Judy, whether it's water or trees, conservation isn't that complicated. "For me, conservation means being aware of the natural world and trying to preserve it, work with it, not destroy it." In her almost 50 years living in Heron, Judy has seen too many individuals and extractive businesses in Montana wanting to exploit some natural resource. "They see the natural world only in terms of dollar signs," she stated. "I had to do something. I only wish I could have done so much more."

Throughout her 30s and 40s, Judy spent a lot of her time on conservation issues. She was a founding board member of the Clark Fork Coalition and served on the boards of several other non-profits. Through her advocacy and community mobilization efforts, Judy had major impacts on issues ranging from logging in the northwest, to proposed mining in the Cabinet Mountain Wilderness. One of her projects involved persuading the Forest Service to keep Trout Creek in the lower Clark Fork roadless.

Trout Creek was one of several roadless drainages that the USFS listed for potential designation as Wilderness. By the 1990s, it was one of the only roadless drainages remaining in the ranger district. Judy went to work and

*Judy emphasized that protecting the right land, even smaller acreages, could have significant net-positive results.*

helped convince the USFS to keep Trout Creek undeveloped. She argued that it was too valuable as a hydrologic baseline drainage. Today, Trout Creek remains roadless, and is the control by which the USFS can measure the impacts of roads and development across the national forest.

In addition to formal conservation work, Judy was informally protecting land on her own. Beginning in the 1970s she began purchasing undervalued parcels in the Clark Fork River Valley. "When I started out, my goal was two-fold: I wanted to protect open space and foil subdividers," Judy recalled. She soon refined her parameters, placing emphasis on important wildlife corridors, areas with exceptional wildlife habitat or wetlands, and old growth forest. She developed a business model that involved purchasing a property, cleaning it up (which often involved removing dilapidated trailers and plenty of junk), protecting the land with a conservation easement, waiting a few years, then selling the parcel. With the proceeds from the sale, and the associated



*Ross Creek Cedars near Heron*

John Ruth

tax deduction generated by the conservation easement, she could then purchase another property and begin the process over.

After completing several conservation easements with The Montana Land Reliance (MLR), staff asked Judy to serve on the MLR Board of Directors. Judy served from 2007–2017, during which time she brought an important perspective to the organization. With much of MLR’s work focused on large agricultural and recreational properties, Judy emphasized the value of protecting smaller acreages. She argued that protecting the right land, even if small, could have significant net-positive results. Of her time serving on the MLR Board, Judy most enjoyed meeting new people and traveling around the state. “It was a great way to see Montana,” she recalled.

### **Judy hasn’t taken a break!**

To date, she has completed ten conservation easements with MLR, one with Kanisku Land Trust (KLT) based in Sandpoint, Idaho, and one with Yampa Valley Land Trust in Colorado. Her work with KLT is of special note. In the late 1990s Judy came across a 76-acre parcel of what she described as “messy farmland” between Heron, Montana, and Clark Fork, Idaho. She was able to purchase the property, and over several years protect its beaver pond and related wetland features. In 2018, Judy partnered with KLT,

of which she was a board member, to permanently protect the land. With stunning views of the Cabinet Mountains, the property was formally named The Cabinet View Nature Area, but for locals, they continue to call it “Judy’s Place.” Today, the land is home to wildlife, as well as KLT’s blossoming education programs. The land is open to the public as a space for people to gather and learn about wetlands and woods, and to care for trees and trails, all things important to Judy Hutchins.

At almost 70, Judy is cautiously optimistic about the future of conservation in northwest Montana. Her conservation model, which had worked well, doesn’t really work anymore. “When I started out, I could find 80s (acres) and 120s that were coming off 320s,” she noted. “Now it’s down to 5s and 10s. The opportunity to buy larger parcels is just not here anymore. Any available land is being snapped up by folks moving in from out of state.” Before the pandemic, Sanders County would regularly have dozens of properties for sale at any given time. Today, quality properties rarely last longer than a few weeks on the market.

Despite growth, rising land prices, and a changing demographic, she still sees reasons to stay hopeful. As population grows, and pressure to develop increases, longtime landowners who have not had interest in conservation



John Lambing

### *Cabinet Mountains*

easements are now considering their options. In addition, recreation as an economic driver is also growing. Places like Thompson Falls are now touting access to the Clark Fork River and nearby trails for hiking and outdoor recreation. For better or worse, Judy is hopeful that the younger generation, which places value on recreation and access, will take up conservation, whatever that might look like.

For now, Judy is staying busy, like she always does. She has a few more parcels to conserve with MLR in the coming years, and she’s always on the lookout for another good opportunity. In her town of Heron, she recently built a much-needed general store to serve the growing community. And, she’s working on ideas to create

affordable housing for seniors, among several other projects. Judy is a person MLR is proud to recognize.

Her decades-long career in conservation has protected important places, habitat, and open space in Montana. Her motivation comes from a place of love for the land, something she learned as a young woman and never forgot. “If you love living in Montana do something for it,” she stated, frankly. “If you live here because you love Montana, do something to protect this place you love.” MLR is honored to have partnered with Judy Hutchins over the years to conserve the places we love, and we look forward to many more years of collaboration ahead!





## *perspective*

### 2022 CONSERVATION AWARD: CRAIG AND MARTHA WOODSON

*The Woodson Ranch story is full of connections with the land, wildlife, community, and agriculture, just as Craig and Martha would want it.*

**I**n the fall of 1992, the local NRCS District Conservationist introduced Craig and Martha Woodson to Les Gilman. Les, a fifth-generation Ruby Valley rancher, was hoping to get to know the Woodsons, who had recently purchased an 1,100-acre property along the Ruby River, not far from Alder, Montana. At 38 and looking to expand his family ranching operation, Les was excited about the potential of leasing the grazing on the Woodson's new property. When Craig told him that he had other priorities, and that what he really wanted was help improving the water and habitat on the ranch for fishing and wildlife, Les was initially disappointed. He recalled of that conversation, "Back then I believed grass was for grazing, and water was for irrigating. Period."

Thankfully, those initial differences didn't deter the two men from working together. Les remembered, "I had knowledge of the area and a background in agriculture, and Craig had the resources and inspiration to make some changes. There were no second thoughts about it."

Craig and Martha had initially bought the property as an early retirement project, something they could fix up and enjoy for 10 years, and then sell and return to Texas. Their plans were altered when Craig suffered a stroke shortly before taking possession of the ranch in 1993. With Craig unable to give direction, his attorney instructed Les to hire staff and take care of the place until Craig and Martha were able to be more involved. Overnight, Les was put in charge of running a ranch for folks he had only just met. He hired Juventino and Luisa Colado, to help run the day-to-day operations for the Woodsons and checked in with Craig and Martha when possible. Under Martha's care, Craig began the arduous process of recovery, re-learning how to eat and speak.

Craig had met Martha when they were both in their mid-fifties, and the two had wasted no time in launching their new lives together. Both divorcees, with grown families and successful careers, they had met in Fort Worth and were married in 1987. Craig was a newspaper publisher and avid outdoorsman who loved to hunt and



*The Woodson Ranch*

fish. Martha, a former retail manager with a degree in English and interest in art, was warm and easy to talk to. Martha quickly took up fly fishing and began accompanying Craig on fishing trips to southwest Montana, where they fell in love with the Ruby Valley. Purchasing a ranch along the Ruby River was a dream come true.

While the stroke had put a pause on Craig and Martha's dream, it was only temporary. It wasn't long before Craig was making phone calls to the ranch to see how things were progressing. He attributed his recovery, in part, to wanting to get back to Montana. Les recalled, that every Thursday morning, Craig would begin their weekly phone call with the opener, "What have you done for me today?" Les would give the report, and the meeting would end with Craig reminding the staff to always have his best interests in mind.

### **A Land Ethic**

Craig's interests had root in Aldo Leopold's Land Ethic. Craig was a student of *A Sand County Almanac* and would pass out copies of the book to friends, visitors to the ranch, and to his and Martha's grown children. According to Les, many of Craig's ideas about conservation came straight from Leopold, particularly his insistence that they do the right thing when it came to the natural resources on the ranch.

When *A Sand County Almanac* was published in 1949 it challenged the traditional view that nature was simply a resource to be exploited for human benefit. Leopold argued that nature was an end in itself, deserving of respect and protection, for its own sake. This view was in sharp contrast to the utilitarian approach of the time, which saw the natural world as a means to an end, with value only in terms of the benefits it provides to humans.

Leopold believed (as did Craig) that the human relationship with the land should be one of stewardship and that people have a responsibility to use the land in a sustainable way. While not a biologist or conservationist by formal training, Craig placed value on the interdependence of the living things on the ranch and tried to consider the effects of his management actions on the entire ecosystem.

For Craig, being an ethical steward meant doing the right thing, even when doing the wrong thing might still be legal. According to Les, this is something Craig took seriously. He recalled a conversation they shared about the burden of land ownership. Craig wasn't complaining, but rather reflecting out loud that doing right by the land was often the more expensive choice.

*continued*



*RHF opened the Hill House for visitors wanting to fish and enjoy the ranch.*

He conveyed to Les that the land was an extension of himself, something that he was responsible for and took pride in. Its success or failure was his success or failure. It was a weight he carried.

Craig did not carry the weight alone, however. Martha, Les, the Colados, and the local community were behind him. Being from Texas, Craig and Martha would be considered outsiders, but that didn't last long. They were intentional in becoming a part of the Ruby Valley community. They began attending the local church and Martha joined a bridge club.

Craig engaged local contractors and businesses for projects on the ranch. They set up a scholarship fund at the high school and invited their new friends to visit the ranch. While they had initially bought the property as a private fishing retreat, Craig and Martha soon began welcoming people onto the ranch.

Craig put value on the importance of community and the role that people play in shaping relationships with the land. His time on the ranch had led him to a deeper appreciation and understanding of the place. He had found great satisfaction in participating

in agricultural work, hunting, and fishing and wanted others to have that experience. In that way, by engaging with the natural world, he believed his friends and family could also develop a sense of place and of responsibility to care for the land as he did.

Craig's recovery progressed and he was soon fishing with Martha again. With his legs back under him he set out with Les to continue improving the ranch. With Craig engaged in projects, Martha went to work creating a place both of their families could enjoy.

She took the lead in overseeing the construction of the human spaces on the ranch. The residences became an extension of her warm demeanor and love of family. Carved out bunkbeds in the cabin walls for grandchildren, tall windows to capture natural light, and comfortable mosquito-proof gazebos for evening barbecues along the Ruby, were a few of Martha's touches. And for visitors, she transformed an outdated, unused house on the ranch into a beautiful guest lodge, with comfortable beds and a practical kitchen, aptly called the Hill House, after her maiden name. And, as a way of saying thank you, Craig and Martha built a home for Juventino, Luisa, and their children, with a life estate on the ranch.

### **Preserving the Ranch**

For many Americans the events of 9/11 invited deep reflection. For the Woodson family, the attack on the Twin Towers inspired a desire for more certainty. That Christmas the family gathered in Texas, and everyone agreed that preserving the ranch should be a priority. Over the following months, Les and Craig talked about what that might look like. They had already enhanced miles of Ruby River streambank, made major improvements to the agricultural operations, and Craig had plans to embark on a major restoration of Clear Creek, returning the cold Ruby River tributary to its original channel. Craig and Les courted several conservation organizations who had interest in the ranch, but their proposals didn't fit with Craig and Martha's long-term vision for the property. After meeting with staff from MLR, they felt that their interests aligned with MLR's mission of permanently protecting open space and wildlife habitat, while still allowing the land to be available for agriculture.

Soon after, Craig and Martha created Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) as a 509(a)(3) support organization to MLR, with Les becoming its executive director. The foundation ensured that the ranch would be permanently protected and remain available for educational and agricultural purposes.



*Craig placed value on the interdependence of the living things on the ranch and tried to consider the effects of his management actions on the entire ecosystem.*



To support the new foundation, Craig created the Woodson Ranch Endowment and contributed \$5 million in cash and investments. Wanting to also contribute, Martha created and funded the Hill Education Endowment, with funds to be used for educational activities, scholarships, wildlife-focused speaking events, and community outreach. Under Les's leadership, RHF began sponsoring annual wildlife speaking events, Kids River Resource Day, and opened the Hill House for visitors wanting to fish and enjoy the ranch.

Craig provided insight and inspiration for another nine years after RHF was created, attending every meeting. He was influential in making sure things were going the way he envisioned. He had great satisfaction watching the foundation grow from an idea into a thriving organization.

In 2011, Craig Woodson passed away at the age of 77. He left a profound legacy of conservation in the Ruby Valley. His children quoted Aldo Leopold in describing their father, "There are some who can live without wild things and some who cannot."

After Craig's passing, Martha continued as a member of the RHF Board. She was an enthusiastic supporter of RHF's restoration of Clear Creek and the creation of a heritage apple orchard on the ranch, made up of

grafts from century-old apple trees found throughout the Ruby Valley. Martha was proud of the diversity of wildlife found on the ranch as well as the sustainable grazing practices that Les had put in place. Each spring she returned, excited, with a glow of energy that was contagious. During her last few years, Martha most enjoyed spending time with friends and family, viewing wildlife and watching cattle graze in the meadows. Martha Woodson passed away in February 2022 at the age of 90, leaving behind her own mark on the land and the people who knew her.

**Turning the Page**

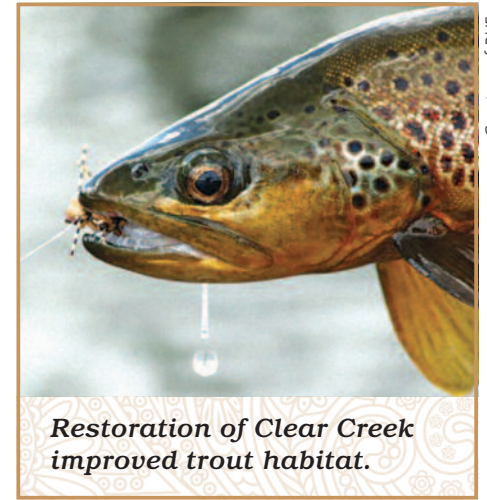
For Les Gilman, 2022 was a year of transition. It marked 30 years on the job, 10 as ranch manager/consultant to Craig and Martha, and 20 as Executive Director of Ruby Habitat Foundation. Les decided that 2022 would also be the year he retired.

He recalled of the early days, "Nobody knew exactly what we were going into,

but the success of taking something from concept to reality in a 20-year period is amazing. Being in on the ground floor at young adulthood and being able to retire now is a source of great satisfaction."

Two accomplishments stand out for Les. First, in the early years he put in place grazing trials and soil health projects on the ranch, which had tremendous appeal to the agricultural community. The second was the completion of the decade-long restoration of Clear Creek in 2021. The project restored the stream and reconnected the cold-water tributary of the Ruby River to its floodplain, which was also a goal that the local conservation district had had for over 50 years.

Les will miss the challenge but is happy to pass on the mantle. "I'm not going to miss the burden of responsibility," he said with a smile. "For the past 30 years, if something went wrong, I was responsible." In talking about his relationship with Craig and Martha, Les emphasized that he misses having them around. "Working with Craig opened my eyes to different perspectives," he said. "Ranches must have conservation in mind to be sustainable." That perspective found its way into the mission of Ranch Resources, Inc., an ag-focused consulting firm Les founded in 1995. Many of the management



Courtesy of RHF

practices that yielded success on the Woodson Ranch are now being put to work on ranches across Montana, Wyoming, and Oregon.

With the passing of Martha Woodson and the retirement of Les Gilman, RHF and the Woodson Ranch turn a page in its history. The Montana Land Reliance is proud to honor Craig and Martha Woodson as recipients of the 2022 Conservation Award. Their conservation ethic and efforts to preserve the Woodson Ranch encapsulate the mission of MLR.

We would also like to recognize Les for his years of service as RHF Executive Director and acknowledge his role in helping turn Craig and Martha's ideas into reality. We all look forward to the next chapter in the Woodson Ranch story, a story full of connections with the land, wildlife, community, and agriculture, just as Craig and Martha would want it.



# trust

## WILLIAM F. LONG CONSERVATION AWARD: MITCH AND JEN ROEN FAMILY

“**M**ontana ain’t what she used to be.” It’s a phrase heard frequently across the state when talking to ranchers and longtime Montana residents. In some places, change is happening at breakneck speed. The once sleepy college cowtown of Bozeman, for example, is now one of the fastest growing urban areas its size in the U.S., with a median single-family home price of \$950,000. It’s not just urban areas experiencing change. Agricultural land values across the state have doubled and, in some areas, tripled from pre-pandemic levels. As companies shifted to remote work during the pandemic, people looked to get out of congested urban centers and relocate to smaller communities. Thanks to shows like Paramount’s *Yellowstone* that romanticize ranch life and the American West, Montana is in the midst of a modern-day land rush, with no part of the state escaping the crosshairs.

A recent University of Montana tourism study noted that more than 12 million viewers have now experienced the scenery of Montana via watching *Yellowstone*. Of those viewers, 2.1 million have visited Montana in person, some deciding to permanently relocate or buy land in Big Sky Country.

2019–2022 saw more ranches bought and sold in Montana than at any other time. Real estate data suggests that the majority of out of state buyers are looking for recreational property, with many looking for property that also includes a working cattle operation. Buyers are willing to pay a premium, which is keeping land values high for every type of ranch property. This is good news for ranchers looking to sell, but creates new challenges for ranchers and farmers still operating in the industry, and makes it next to impossible to break in.

Buying land and paying for it with cows is a tough proposition. When cowboys talk about the “good old days,” what they really mean is when the value of land was tied to its ability to produce some commodity, whether it be cattle, hay, crops, or timber. In Montana’s current real estate climate, more and more of the state is now almost exclusively valued for non-production qualities like privacy, hunting/fishing, investment, and recreation. Young ranchers are having to get creative to stay in business. Mitch and Jen Roen are an example of a young ranching family finding success, despite these challenges.



Courtesy of Jen Roen



**Mitch and Jen** grew up in central Montana and met in high school. Originally from North Dakota, Mitch’s grandfather had moved to Montana in the 1960s to start a commercial Hereford operation. Jen’s family hails from the Musselshell and Mosby areas, with roots in agriculture dating back to the early 1900s. After graduating, Mitch took a job as a farrier in Richmond, Virginia. Of his time on the East Coast he recalled, “I didn’t know there could be so many people in one place. After living in Virginia, I couldn’t get back to central Montana quick enough!” Mitch and Jen were married in 2006 and began ranching together. Their three children, Will, Jack, and Jocie (who happens to be a pole bending and team roping state champion), are also involved in the family business.

Mitch and Jen will be the first to tell you that ranching in Montana, especially the last 10 years, has been tough. “It’s a grind,” Mitch plainly stated. “A lot of younger people don’t want to do it, but the opportunity is

out there.” The Roens have found a healthy balance of leasing ground from out-of-state landowners and purchasing their own acres and putting that land into conservation easements.

It’s been the Roen’s experience that when it comes to leasing out grazing, absentee landowners are looking for someone they can trust. The key to their success has been keeping an open mind and building relationships. “It takes time to build trust,” Mitch said. “But once you’ve got it, that landowner is going to back you on anything.” Over the years, the Roens have been intentional in seeking out landowners to work with. They have gone into business with landowners from Montana, Florida, and Georgia to name a few. The arrangements work to both party’s advantage. The Roens benefit from the grazing while the landowner has someone they trust managing the ranch. “You don’t cut corners or take advantage of things,” Mitch pointed out. “I try and save landowners money whenever I can. They appreciate someone looking out for their interests.”

While leasing ground is an important component to the Roen's operation, adding to their own home ground has always been a priority. They have found success in seeking out what they view as undervalued land. In 2008, a fire burned through parts of Musselshell County leaving the landscape black and ashy. Soon after, some of the charred acres came up for sale. Seeing the long-term potential, The Roens were able to purchase acreage at a discount. Not needing to use the land immediately, they were able to let the rangeland heal and the grass return. Again, in 2016, an undervalued ranch in the area came up for sale. The Roens were able to secure financing and purchase additional home ground.

Utilizing Natural Resource and Conservation Service (NRCS) programs, they made several improvements, installing underground storage tanks, pipelines, and stock watering tanks. In addition, they built corrals and installed a new irrigation pivot to take advantage of the underutilized water rights that came with the property. The pivot produces healthy stands of alfalfa and forage, which are used to supplement winter grazing. As a result of their improvements to water infrastructure on the ranch, the Roens are able to spread out grazing across the landscape and rest overworked rangeland and riparian areas.



*Management changes on the ranch have benefitted wildlife, particularly upland birds like sharp-tailed grouse.*

The management changes have benefited wildlife, particularly the upland birds on the ranch. The Roen Ranch is considered critical sage grouse habitat, with an active lek (nesting site) on the property. As a result of their thoughtful management, many of the intermittent streams on the property have returned. These areas are critical for young sage grouse and sharp-tailed grouse, who hide in the thick grass and feast on insects during early spring and summer. To benefit the sage grouse, the Roens refrain from grazing cattle during the spring, removing any potential conflict between livestock and the birds.

**In 2020**, the Roens reached out to MLR about the potential of enrolling their ranch in the NRCS Agricultural Lands Easement (ALE) Program. After discussion, it was evident that their goals for the ranch aligned with the program's purpose, which is to protect croplands and grasslands on working farms and ranches by limiting non-agricultural uses of the land.

The ALE Program is a useful tool available to ranchers that can help even the playing field with recreational buyers. When done right, the ALE program helps ensure that active farms and ranches stay in business, keeps rural Montana communities alive, and the land available for the next generation rancher. MLR was able to secure funding through NRCS, and

*“It takes time to build trust,” but once you’ve got it, the landowner is going to back you on anything.”*

the conservation easement closed in December 2022. In conjunction with the funded easement, the Roens also donated a conservation easement on additional acreage they own, allowing for a charitable tax deduction. Combined, the two conservation easements protect close to 5,000 acres of greater sage grouse and upland bird habitat in central Montana.

The Montana Land Reliance is pleased to recognize the Roen family as this year's recipient of the William F. Long Conservation Award. The award is given annually to a landowner who has gone above and beyond in conserving upland bird habitat. For the Roens, the decision to conserve the ranch made sense.

“We have a love for the land,” Mitch and Jen noted. “Being able to preserve it and keep it from being broken up is a good thing. Keeping it in production is important, even if it's not in our family.” MLR is proud to have partnered with the Roen family to protect their ranch, and hope that the land remains in their stewardship as long as possible.



## FOREVER MONTANA SOCIETY

**The Forever Montana Society exists to honor those who have left a lasting legacy of conservation, and to inspire others to do the same.**

With perpetuity in mind, the Forever Montana Society is open to all consenting MLR easement donors and to those who have provided for MLR's mission in their overall financial and estate plans. Their gifts will help sustain agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open space for generations to come. This list recognizes those who have agreed to be listed as Forever Montana Society members.

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**Learn more about the Forever Montana Society at [mtlandreliance.org](http://mtlandreliance.org).**

*Sunrise on the Rocky Mountain Front*

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 White, Sara  
 Whitney, Arthur J. & Sandra L.  
 Wilkerson, Jessica  
 Wilkins Family  
 Williams, Burton & Joan  
 Williams, Conrad "Duke"  
 Wilson, Kendrick R., III, & Ann Jackson  
 Wilson, Jacob  
 Wilson, John L. & Jan  
 Wilson, Suzanne  
 Woodsum, Steve & Anne R. Lovett  
 Wortman, Kirk  
 Wright, Theodore M. & Elizabeth H.  
 Wrinkle, Guy Curtis & Cynthia  
 Yorchak, Nick & Molly Bauchmann  
 Zackheim, Hugh & Karen  
 Zagel, Ellie Frey & Chad Zagel  
 Zaideman, Robert & Julie  
 Zovickian, Stephen & Jan

## IN MEMORIAM

### Remembering friends who passed in 2022 and friends recognized with memorial gifts in the last year.

Broadbent, William	Kmon, William Stanley	Samardich, Donald
Bucklin, Bill	Mclvor, Dr. William	Sauber, Greg
Campbell, Sara	Micks, Wiley	Schaub, Joyce
Cosgriff, Frank	Nelson, Helen	Taylor, Jean
Crawford, Tim	Nussbaum, Bradley	Taylor, Lu
Gannett, David, Sr.	Ottey, Mark	Thisted, Ralph
Grundhofer, Patti	Owen, David	Wilson, John
Johnson, Jim	Rand, John "Jack" Franklin	Wilson, Penelope
Joyce, John	Rosenthal, Nancy	Woodson, Martha

*Bitter Creek area in northeastern Montana*

## FOUNDATIONS, COMPANIES, & ORGANIZATIONS

1111 Foundation  
Acts 20:35 Fund  
Adirondack Foundation –  
Paine Family Fund  
AGL Foundation  
Linda & Barry Allen Foundation, Inc.  
Amazonsmile Foundation  
American Public Land Exchange Co., Inc.  
Michael D. & Susan H. Arneson  
Family Fund  
Avis Charitable Fund  
B Bar Ranch  
Anne & Alex Bernhardt Foundation  
Bibler Resources Company  
Big Sky Resort Area District  
Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation  
The Broadbent Family Foundation, Inc.  
Burnham Family Foundation  
C. Stone Foundation  
Cadeau Foundation  
Cenex Pipeline, LLC  
Cherbec Advancement Foundation  
The Cinnabar Foundation  
Clausen Law Group  
The Coulter/Weeks  
Charitable Foundation  
Coxe Family Fund  
Davis Family Charitable Trust  
Gary W. Dietrich Family Foundation  
The Dovana Foundation, Inc.  
Driggers Foundation  
Dykstra Electric, LLC  
East Rosebud Fly & Tackle Company  
Eaves Family Foundation  
Eddy Foundation  
Emmett Foundation  
The Charles Engelhard Foundation  
Farwood Foundation  
Feldman Frater Charitable Account  
The Folley Family Foundation  
Geraldine C. & Emory M. Ford  
Foundation  
Gates of the Mountains Foundation  
Grey Rocks Foundation, Inc.  
Gulch Distillers  
The Guyette Family Fund  
Heart of the Rockies  
Helena Home Team  
Huppert, Swindlehurst & Woodruff, PC  
Hutchins Family Foundation  
Robin & Ron Karp Family  
Philanthropic Fund  
J C Kennedy Foundation, Inc.

Robert Wood Johnson  
1962 Charitable Trust  
Larsson Danforth Family Foundation  
The Andrew & Paulette Laszlo  
Foundation  
Lechner & Stauffer, Inc.  
Lewis & Clark Expeditions, Inc.  
Little-Kittinger Foundation  
Mattson Farms  
Middle Fork Land & Livestock  
Montana State Employee  
Charitable Giving  
Moonlight Community Foundation  
Morgan Stanley  
The Nalen Foundation  
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation  
Parker Law Firm  
Patagonia.com  
PGN Foundation  
Pleiades Foundation  
The Pocket Foundation  
Pond Family Foundation Trust  
PTJ Operations, LLC  
Rahr Foundation  
Rao Family Giving Fund  
Real World Design  
Reed Family Foundation  
Rolfing Family Fund  
Round Grove Ranch Company  
Ruby Habitat Foundation  
The Schlinger Family Foundation  
Mike & Andrea Scholtz Family Fund  
Sieben Live Stock Company  
SLF Foundation  
Slaton Newton Philanthropic Fund  
The Stake Foundation  
The Tapeats Fund  
John & Carry Thacher Family Fund  
The Leroy Thom, Jean Thom  
and T-L Foundation, Inc.  
Tordik Wildlife Foundation  
Trayer Travel  
Treeline Coffee Roasters  
Trust for Public Land  
Vroon Family Gift Fund  
Matthew A. & Susan B.  
Weatherbie Foundation  
James Wellington & Family Gift Fund  
Western Conservation Foundation  
The Wildwood Foundation  
Willie's Distillery, Inc.  
Willinphila Foundation  
Woodson Ranch

## THE MONTANA LAND RELIANCE

**Thanks to the continued support of its generous donors,** MLR was able to build on its land conservation legacy by partnering with landowners to conserve significant new acreage in key landscapes across Montana.

MLR's operations continue to be amazingly efficient, with expenditures for the year running under budget. Revenues for the year exceeded expenditures – as they have for the past 44 years.

### FINANCIAL REPORT

Income	\$ 3,374,202
Expenses	\$ 2,152,668
General Fund	\$ 5,499,412
Accounts Receivable/Payable	\$ 225,844
Land Acquisition Fund	\$ 6,427,688
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 12,152,944</b>

*as of 12-31-22*

John Lambing

*Near Adel*



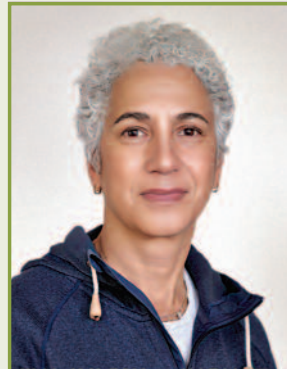
## THE MONTANA LAND RELIANCE FOUNDATION

**In 2022**, the Montana Land Reliance Foundation\* (the Foundation) kept a focus on preserving the mission and long-term vision to ensure investments can earn the income required to support MLR’s perpetual conservation efforts, despite volatile markets. The Foundation provided \$344,546 in support to MLR for stewardship and easement monitoring. Additionally, the Foundation granted \$119,844 to MLR for education and outreach work to enhance local support for private land conservation.

The Foundation Board works with investment managers to steward the investment portfolio in a conservative manner while maintaining compliance with investment policies. Total realized and unrealized investment earnings for 2022 were a net loss of 19%, however the Foundation is keeping its focus on a long-term investment horizon, and the

Board is working with investment managers on strategies that will protect the assets during volatile markets.

The Foundation Board members – Skip Olinger, Karen Kress, John Heyneman, Chris Montague, and I – are honored to serve and steward the Foundation’s investments to perpetuate MLR’s mission of open space conservation for many years to come.



*Kirsten Feldman,  
MLR Foundation  
President*

### FINANCIAL REPORT

<b>Land Protection Fund</b>	<b>\$ 17,219,978</b>
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*The corpus is available to defend and protect land already under easement. Income is used for stewardship projects, monitoring of easements, and completing easements for donors who cannot cover these costs.*

<b>General Fund</b>	<b>\$ 10,520,587</b>
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*Account used for day-to-day operations of the Foundation and MLR.*

<b>Conservation Fund</b>	<b>\$ 2,565,097</b>
--------------------------	---------------------

*A permanent, irrevocable endowment designed to accept gifts from individuals or direct gifts from corporations, partnerships, or estates.*

<b>Traditions Fund</b>	<b>\$ 51,585</b>
------------------------	------------------

*A permanent, irrevocable endowment designed to accept planned gifts from individuals or direct gifts from corporations, partnerships, or estates.*

<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$30,357,247</b>
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*as of 12-31-22*

\*a 509(a)(3) support organization to The Montana Land Reliance



Each of you is an  
important partner  
in continuing  
Craig and Martha's  
vision.

Chestnut-collared Larkspur

donaldmjones.com

## RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION

**The Ruby Habitat Foundation\* is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources and social and economic makeup of the Ruby Valley and southwestern Montana.**

Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) completed its twentieth year in 2022. Looking back over the last 20 years, I must first say that I feel honored to have been part of this special, unique organization and I am grateful to Craig and Martha Woodson for including me.

Thinking back, I remember sitting at the meeting as Craig formalized the agreement with The Montana Land Reliance and at that time, Ruby Habitat Research Foundation, and having no understanding of what Craig was wanting to create. I was a young rancher thrown into a place where I would come to be acquainted with people that I would never have had contact with otherwise. My understanding of good stewardship of our natural resources began to be broadened and the need for innovation in agriculture, and education of resource management issues to those near and far being of great importance. My life has been greatly enriched because of Craig.

I remember the days of Craig coming to Montana in the spring, full of new ideas and projects he had researched during the winter months and making sure they happened.

The cows eating weeds project seemed to bring out a lot of local interest, and quite frankly, some skepticism. As it turns out cattle can be trained to eat weeds and seem to enjoy the challenge of chewing on a thistle. They even teach their friends how to devour weeds.

I was privileged to have had the opportunity to tour Woodson Ranch with a group of monks from Tibet. Their colorful dress really stood out in rural Montana. The time spent together was fascinating, including conversations about their culture and conservation issues, and us explaining the ideas we were working on, all through an interpreter. Perhaps, RHF may have influenced conservation decisions thousands of miles away from the Ruby Valley.

\*a 509(a)(3) support organization to The Montana Land Reliance

One of the memories that always makes me smile is the first year that Craig held a dove hunt on the ranch. Apparently, this is a Texas tradition and he wanted to have us Montanans experience it. Knowing nothing about dove hunting I got out my old 16 gauge and grabbed a handful of shells. I was expecting to walk about the ranch for the day and maybe see a few doves, but I knew that breakfast would be good. I was surprised to find out that he had planted wheat fields and hundreds of doves had discovered the fields. The morning sounded like a shooting range. I even had BBs rain down on my hat more than once.

As I think back on the years of looking forward to the summer meeting, when Andy Laszlo would give us an amazing presentation about investing and the economy, I remember the “deer in the headlights” moment when George Swan, a strong community leader and personality, retired and the decision to make me the chairman of the board had already been made. It is something I won’t ever forget.

2022 has seen our last founder pass on, Martha Woodson. I always saw her as an inspiration and a light wherever she was.

Our 20-year Executive Director, Les Gilman, retired at the end of 2022. RHF would not be what it has become without his strong leadership and vision. He will be sorely missed but has also positioned RHF to continue forward as a strong voice and example of stewardship in the Ruby Valley. Thank you Les!

As I think over the memories from the last 20 years, I am very appreciative of the many supporters of RHF. Each one is an important partner in continuing Craig and Martha’s vision. My gratitude goes out to each of you.



*Neil Barnosky,  
RHF Chairman*

## FINANCIAL REPORT

Income	\$ 654,376
Expenses	\$ 390,586
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>\$ 263,790</b>
Rural Heritage & Open Lands Fund	\$ 107,431
Hill Education & Outreach Endowment	\$ 151,453
Woodson Ranch Endowment	\$ 8,035,219
General Fund	\$ 323,542
Fixed Assets	
Equipment & Improvements	\$ 494,572
Land	\$ 9,052,427
Visitor Center & Donated Art	\$ 50,271
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$18,214,915</b>

*as of 12-31-22*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**Group A:  
The Montana Land Reliance**  
George Olsen  
Kendall Van Dyk,  
Vice-chairman  
Rock Ringling

**Group B:  
Woodson Family**  
Leslie Vanderpool,  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Lisa Matthews  
Catherine Mitts  
David Mitts

**Group C:  
Ruby Valley Community**  
Neil Barnosky, Chairman  
Bruce Peterson  
Steve Wood

**Executive Director**  
Les Gilman

**Outreach Coordinator**  
Dave Delisi

## DIRECTORS, STAFF, & TRUSTEES

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**George Olsen**  
President  
Retired CPA  
Helena, MT

**Rick Berg**  
Vice President  
Rancher  
Martinsdale, MT

**Phil Rostad**  
Secretary-Treasurer  
Rancher  
White Sulphur Springs,  
MT/Bozeman, MT

**Shane Colton**  
Attorney  
Billings, MT

**Taya Cromley**  
Behavior Health  
Consultant  
Clyde Park, MT

**Kirsten Feldman**  
Businesswoman  
Nye, MT/New York, NY

**Caroline Kurtz**  
Writer/Editor  
Missoula, MT

**David Leuschen**  
Founder/Senior  
Managing Director,  
Riverstone  
Holdings, LLC  
Roscoe, MT/  
New York, NY

**Chris Montague**  
Business Owner  
Billings, MT

**Julie Pribyl**  
Landowner  
Great Falls, MT

**Jerry Sorensen**  
Retired Land Asset  
Management  
Bigfork, MT

**Jerry Townsend**  
Rancher  
Highwood, MT

**Judy Tureck**  
Landowner  
Coffee Creek, MT

**Dan Vermillion**  
Business Owner  
Livingston, MT

### COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

**John Carron, PhD**  
Hydros Consulting  
Boulder, CO

**John S. Dale**  
Retired  
Ovando, MT/  
Waubay, SD

**Bob & Joanie Hall**  
Businesspeople  
Livingston, MT/  
New York, NY

**Sidney (Skip) Herman**  
Managing Partner  
Bartlit Beck Herman  
Palenchar & Scott, LLP  
Big Timber, MT/  
Chicago, IL

**Judy Hutchins**  
Landowner  
Heron, MT

**Hamilton E.  
"Tony" James**  
Chairman,  
Jefferson River Capital  
Twin Bridges, MT/  
New York, NY

**David S. Joys**  
Retired  
Nye, MT/New York, NY

**Jim Messina**  
President & CEO  
The Messina Group  
Clyde Park, MT/  
Washington, D.C.

**David R. Paoli**  
Partner,  
Paoli & Leisher, P.C.  
Missoula, MT

**Monica Conrad Paoli**  
Businesswoman  
Missoula, MT

**William Taylor, III**  
Partner,  
Zuckerman/Spaeder, LLP  
Emigrant, MT/  
Washington, DC

**Kendrick R. Wilson, III**  
Retired Businessman  
Hobe Sound, FL

**Kirk Wortman**  
Businessman  
Jackson Hole, WY

### STAFF

**Matt Bell**  
GIS Coordinator/  
Land Steward

**Paul Burdett**  
General Counsel

**Kim Cook**  
Administrative Assistant

**Brad Hansen**  
Eastern Manager

**Kathryn Kelly**  
Greater Yellowstone  
Manager

**Bri Nottingham**  
Stewardship  
Coordinator

**Mark Schiltz**  
Western Manager

**Becky Stearns**  
Bookkeeper

**Katie Stokes**  
Managing Director

**Will Trimbath**  
Stewardship Director

**Kendall Van Dyk**  
Managing Director

**Jordan Vana**  
Managing Director

**Jessie Wiese**  
Southwest Manager

### LAND STEWARDS

**Terry Althaus**  
**Louise Bruce**  
**Don Carroll**  
**Andrea Darling**  
**Pat Flanary**  
**Cathy Hardin**  
**Ron Hvizdak**  
**Jerry Iverson**  
**Skip Kowalski**  
**Gayleen Malone**

**Maria Mantas**  
**Tom Maxwell**  
**John Moorhouse**  
**Brian Neilsen**  
**Dan Reinhart**  
**Jim Roscoe**  
**Erin Shanahan**  
**Kevin Suzuki**  
**Denise Wade**

### FUTURE MONTANA COMMITTEE

**Kori Anderson**  
Corvallis, MT

**Freddy Avis**  
Los Angeles, CA

**Nick Bucklin**  
Mill Valley, CA

**Augusta "Gusty"  
Clarke**  
New York, NY

**Ben Christensen**  
Bozeman, MT

**Parker Corbin**  
Greenwich, CT

**Steven Davis**  
Bozeman, MT

**Brian McCurdy**  
Bozeman, MT

**Jess Peterson**  
Billings, MT

**Errol Rice**  
Bozeman, MT





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in determining the most  
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your financial needs.*

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or visit [mtrandreliance.org](http://mtrandreliance.org)*



## HOW YOU CAN HELP

**There are many ways that families, individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations can provide financial support for MLR's conservation work.**

Because MLR is a non-profit corporation, contributions made to MLR are tax-deductible. Planned gifts are one way to make a meaningful impact on MLR's mission, but there are many ways that families, individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations can provide financial support for MLR's conservation work.

Stock gifts are welcome and MLR has a very streamlined process in place through its investment team to assist donors to ensure a smooth, well-documented transaction.

Your gift goes directly to MLR's work with private landowners to protect Montana's open spaces and working landscapes.

### How to Give

- Cash contributions
- Securities, land, vehicles, and other property

### Gift & Estate Planning

- Bequests
- Gift annuities
- Charitable trusts
- Life estate gifts
- Life insurance policies
- Beneficiary designations
- Retirement assets

MLR's tax identification number is 81-0369262.

*Swan Valley*



**HELENA OFFICE**

Post Office Box 355 • Helena, Montana 59624-0355  
406-443-7027 • info@mtlandreliance.org

**GLACIER/FLATHEAD OFFICE**

Post Office Box 460 • Bigfork, Montana 59911-0460  
406-837-2178 • mlrnw@mtlandreliance.org

**GREATER YELLOWSTONE OFFICE**

Post Office Box 10843 • Bozeman, Montana 59719-0843  
406-579-5481 • mlrgy@mtlandreliance.org

**SOUTHWEST OFFICE**

3701 Trakker Trail Ste. 1 B 161, Bozeman, MT 59718  
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