

MALT Monday Update

Partnership Involving KLT Restores Land to Tribe

This is a story of conservation on 75 acres of land named the Moose Mountain parcel that shifted from a possible conservation easement held by Kaniksu Land Trust to a heritage site owned by the Kalispel Tribe.

The [story is well told in a publication named the Sandpoint Reader](#):

When William Haberman, managing member of Valiant Idaho, LLC, which owns The Idaho Club, approached Kaniksu Land Trust about placing a parcel of the company's land in a conservation agreement in the fall of 2021, the goal was to protect the property as open space and natural habitat from encroaching development.

The Moose Mountain parcel is about 75 acres and located on the west shore of the Pack River Delta. Located within a wildlife travel corridor and adjacent to an interconnected system of state and federal lands bordering the Pack River, it is valuable from a conservation perspective.

Considering that the land would never be commercially developed by The Idaho Club, Haberman suggested donating the land outright to KLT, reasoning that KLT would be in a better position to manage the land for conservation.

KLT staff had another idea. Through many conversations with Ray Entz, the Kalispel Tribe's director of Wildlife and Terrestrial Resources, KLT recognized that the tribe had been working to revive its canoe culture but was limited by a lack of suitable access points. Realizing that the parcel is part of the Kalispel Tribe's homeland and includes undeveloped access to Pack River, KLT proposed that Haberman give the parcel to the tribe instead.

On Dec. 27, the Kalispel reclaimed a portion of their traditional homeland fronting the Pack River Delta by means of the gift from The Idaho Club.

"KLT is honored to have served as a facilitator in support of this very meaningful gift. We recognize the value in returning this wild mountainside to its original caretakers," said KLT Conservation Director Regan Plumb.

For KLT and the Kalispel Tribe, the gift is less about a conservation movement and more about the value of meaningful connections.

"There is strength in partnership. We probably wouldn't have even been aware of the potential of this project if not for our relationship with KLT," said Entz.

The Kalispel Tribe's interest in the property goes beyond cultural and conservation value — the gift will help support development of canoe access and an interpretive site on the Pack River. The general public will benefit from use of the site as well, which will provide a safer access than the current pull-off at the Highway 200 bridge over the Pack River.

"We are pleased to have been presented the opportunity to donate a significant portion of The Idaho Club land holdings to the Kalispel Tribe with the professional guidance and encouragement of Kaniksu Land Trust," Haberman said. "What started as a collaboration with Kaniksu Land Trust, resulted in what we believe will be a 'best-case' scenario for the property and critical habitat in and around the Pack River Delta.



Photo: Kalispel Tribal members in a canoe on Lake Pend Oreille. E. Curtis, c. 1908



BRIEFS

SAVE THE DATE

HIGH DIVIDE
COLLABORATIVE
SPRING WORKSHOP

APRIL 6TH 2022

JOIN US FOR AN ENGAGING VIRTUAL WORKSHOP
FOCUSED ON CONNECTIVITY IN THE HIGH DIVIDE

The Heart of the Rockies Initiative has announced the virtual High Divide Collaborative Spring Workshop is set for April 6. More details coming soon.

The 12th Annual Montana Forest Landowner Conference is set for Friday, April 22, at the Delta Hotels Helena Colonial starting at 8:30 AM. The conference is sponsored by the Montana Forest Stewardship Foundation and the Society of American Foresters. The theme of the 2022 conference is Exploring Human and Ecosystem Response to Wildfire. A full agenda and signup information is available [here](#).

Quotes of The Week

“The Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation applauds the Senate for confirming Martha Williams to serve as the next Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, one of the most important federal agencies for America’s 55 million sportsmen and women. Director Williams is a pragmatic problem solver who thoroughly understands the nuances of fish and wildlife management, strongly supports sportsmen and women, and we look forward to working with her.”

CSF President and CEO Jeff Crane, in a statement after the Senate confirmed Williams on Feb. 17



“That’s really where Vital Ground comes into play, and other land trusts as well. The work we do on the conservation side lays the groundwork for some of these larger transportation projects down the road, knowing that the habitat is secure on both sides.”

Vital Ground Foundation Conservation Director Mitch Doherty speaking about wildlife crossings in an article on the [Vital Ground website](#)

Numbers of The Week

15,000

Number of acres conserved within five miles of [The Montana Land Reliance 230-acre Casey](#)



Farm project approved last week by Gallatin County Commissioners

RMEF Partners for Conservation, Public Access, in the Big Hole

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has teamed up with the BLM and a conservation-minded landowner to do what RMEF does best: **Conserve wildlife habitat and enhance public access.**

Using the Land and Water Conservation Fund Emergency Inholding Program, RMEF and the BLM worked to secure a 40-acre Big Hole area inholding, which enhances public access to 1,600 acres of public land.

“No matter the size, every piece of elk habitat counts,” said Kyle Weaver, president and CEO of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

“The Johnson Creek acquisition will maintain important habitat connectivity for wildlife and improve public land access for recreationists,” added Lindsey Babcock, Butte field manager of BLM’s Western Montana District.



PHOTO: The RMEF and BLM teamed up with landowners to acquire a parcel about 10 miles northwest of Wise River that is important winter range for elk, mule deer and moose. RMEF Photo

Photo of the Week

The Nature Conservancy in Montana spread some love around Valentine’s Day with a series of social media posts saluting partners.

An example is this post from Feb. 18:

Thank you to The Conservation Fund for bringing much needed resources to our work – from the Northern Great Plains to the Rocky Mountain Front! #LoveOurPartners



PROFILE IN MONTANA CONSERVATION

In 2016, during the celebration of the 40th anniversary of Montana's first conservation easement, MALT produced 52 different Profiles in Montana Land Conservation, highlighting the people who make Montana private land conservation so successful. Last week Pat Bousliman was announced as the incoming MALT executive director. Here's a further introduction to Pat, who was kind enough to provide the Profile in Montana Conservation information on short notice.

NAME: Pat Bousliman

TITLE: Executive Director

ORGANIZATION: Montana Association of Land Trusts

YEARS EMPLOYED/VOLUNTEERED WITH ORGANIZATION:

Start full-time with MALT on May 23

FAVORITE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES: Floating and hiking. And while it might be a stretch to call it recreation, I love getting in the car and driving through Montana, including the wide open expanses of eastern Montana. That may or may not include the purchase of a can of chew, as long as my wife doesn't read this profile.

FAVORITE RECREATIONAL AREAS: My buddies and I have floated the North Fork of the Blackfoot River most every year for the last 15 or so years. That's a special part of Montana for me. And when I'm home, it's tough to beat the 90 miles of trails in and around Helena.

FAVORITE MONTANA CONSERVATION PROJECTS: The Montana Legacy Project, which I had a small hand in during my time as a staffer at the US Senate Finance Committee.

FAVORITE MONTANA BOOK: "Names on the Face of Montana: The Story of Montana's Place Names." It's a great road trip companion for driving through the state, with a primer on how places from Alzada to Zortman got their names.

FAVORITE MONTANA ROAD OR ROAD TRIP: Going-to-the-Sun and Beartooth highway are tough to beat for scenery. But for a beautiful drive with fewer people, I love the route between Wise River and Polaris.

I WILL BE INVOLVED IN MONTANA PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION BECAUSE: My wife and I are Helena natives, and we're finally coming home. I'm thrilled to be working for MALT as its new executive director.

SOMEONE IN PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION I ADMIRE AND WHY: Glenn Marx, who's passing the torch to me after 15 years as MALT's executive director. Glenn leaves big shoes to fill, but he's already taught me a great deal about MALT and the work its members do. I'm excited to get started, and I hope to maintain the excellent standard Glenn has set for Montana land conservation.

A FINAL PERSONAL QUOTE: He might not be our nation's greatest statesman, but Calvin Coolidge had a quote that has always stuck with me: "We cannot do everything at once. But we can do something at once." That quote seems fitting of land conservation in Montana over the last four or five decades. What started with a handful of projects and a small amount of acreage in the 1970s has grown to a legacy of more than 3 million acres of protected land in Montana now. Not all at once, but certainly something.

