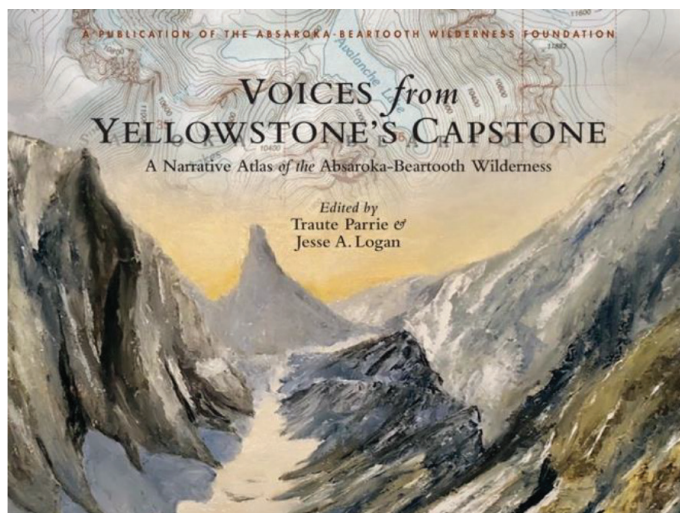


FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

I think you'll find this issue of the WilderNews a fun one! As you know we are largely a volunteer organization, so I have tried something new in this issue—to turn over the writing of these stories to the volunteers most closely connected to the subjects of those stories. Here you will find stories on: the NEW Atlas of the A-B Wilderness, Middle School kids building a footbridge, our Volunteer of the Year, one of our Artists-in Residence, a day in the life of a Trail Ambassador, and our most ambitious trail summer of projects yet! Enjoy! David

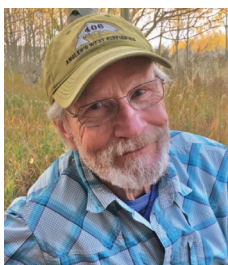
The ATLAS of the ABSAROKA-BEARTOOTH WILDERNESS has ARRIVED!

The ABWF is very, VERY proud of the recent publication of a NEW book all about the many unique facets of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. Entitled, **Voices from Yellowstone's Capstone: A Narrative Atlas of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness**, this informative and beautiful work is going to knock your socks off! It is on sale NOW on our website, just in time for holiday gift giving, and proceeds all benefit the ABWF. But read on about how it came to be!



The ABWF Celebrates A New Publication on the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness

Hundreds of books have been written about Yellowstone National Park over the years, but little ever written about the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness right in our backyard. Take away the thermal features of Yellowstone, and for my money, the A-B Wilderness is WAY more spectacular, wild, mysterious, rugged, and untamed than the National Park with which it shares a boundary. Many of us, long enamored with the 'A-B,' wondered out loud—"How cool



Jesse Logan

would it be to put together a multi-faceted book solely about the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness?" Enter **Jesse Logan**, a retired Forest Service entomologist and professor, and **Traute Parrie**, former Beartooth District Ranger and one of the co-founders of the ABWF. They developed the idea, took it to heart and ran with it! In their retirement the two of

them had found a project that would grab hold of them tightly for the next three years. Traute and Jesse both serve as editors of this incredible compilation, having chosen, written for, and pored over its content and its look. Additionally, Jesse, and a team he assembled, created the many maps that focus the geography onto the stories here, and Traute did the lion's share of the fundraising needed to make the production of this work a reality.

What came of their herculean efforts is a new work of essays and artwork that's truly a monument to their tenacity and creativity—a love story about the A-B Wilderness.

"Voices of Yellowstone's Capstone: A Narrative Atlas of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness" is a personal, scholarly, and beautiful book, that took advantage of the abundance of outstanding writers and artists in our region. Built around captivating maps of the wilderness area (hence our nickname, the 'Atlas'), and adorned with art and photography inspired by the natural beauty of the region, these essays reveal many facets of one of the largest and most spectacular wilderness areas in the world. Authors and scientists from around the region for whom the A-B Wilderness holds special meaning wrote about various topics integral to the A-B. All written works as well as all the artwork and

photography were submitted as generous contributions to the 'Atlas' Project. You will find in the 32 essays here, topics such as glaciers, the Crow (Apsaalooke) people, pikas, whitebark pine, Yellowstone cutthroat trout, and mountain climbing, among many others.

The artwork you see on the cover is by **Carol Hartman** who served as one of our Artists-in-Residence in 2018. One of her oil paintings was chosen to be the cover for the Atlas!

The book is now published and has arrived! It is available for sale on the ABWF's website and at various bookstores and outlets around the region! **The 'Atlas' of the A-B Wilderness** (338 pp. 9" x 12" softcover-\$45) can be purchased at our online store at www.ABWilderness.org.

A book-launch tour will promote the Atlas across the region, featuring Jesse and Traute and various contributors reading from their work and signing copies for you.

"Voices of Yellowstone's Capstone: A Narrative Atlas of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness" is a self-published work by Traute, Jesse and the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation. Scott McMillion (of Montana Quarterly magazine) was hired as consulting editor, and Adrienne Pollard employed as the book designer. All proceeds from sales of the 'Atlas' benefit the ABWF (and therefore this amazing wilderness!).



Traute Parrie

All Nation's Middle School Trail Project

The middle school kids standing in a circle around the back of a Forest Service pickup were wide-eyed in disbelief. Allie Wood, Trails Supervisor for the Beartooth District, was standing high above these kids, astride two 8-ft. beams laying in the back of the truck, and telling them that today these 7th and 8th graders from Billings were going to carry these two beams—each weighing ~400 lbs.—down a 1/4-mile section of trail where they would be installed as a foot bridge over Loop 4 of the Silver Run Trail system, west of Red Lodge.

"Do you think you can DO it?" Allie asked...No one really said anything, including the adult leaders of the 12 kids they'd brought to the Custer Gallatin National Forest for a couple days in early August. These Native American kids are part of a collaborative partnership between the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) and Indian Education For All—a program in the Billings Schools—and they have come here on this particular day to help us, the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation, complete some trail work on a popular local trail up the W. Fork of Rock Creek. This is the 4th summer the ABWF has partnered with the "All Nations" youth programs that Tauzha Grantham of MCC in Billings has spearheaded for years. And this was easily the most intimidating project we had ever put before a group of kids. How could 80-110 lb. kids carry such heavy bridge beams down a quarter-mile section of trail?



Tauzha sent me her organization's list of desired outcomes for the All Nations program: "Students will connect with their peers in an outdoor service "course" of experiential learning, focusing on team, a sense of belonging, and a sense of place and new opportunities." Check! This project had all that and more! Plus an overnight campout that evening for the kids at M-K Campground! First, we practiced various methods of hauling the beam with 4 pairs of kids along its length, right there in the parking lot. They used heavy straps run underneath the beam, and ran pick-ax handles through the ends of the straps so each kid had a handle with which to lift. When it was possible in the parking lot, we headed for the trailhead! Ultimately, the kids succeeded because of teamwork. Every 50-100 feet, one group of kids would communicate, then set the beam down while a second group waiting in the wings stood ready to swap them out. In this fashion, with everyone involved to the max, we got the first beam down the trail, then hiked back up the trail for the second. With initiatives like these—in which you frame a significant challenge to a group when the outcome is not at all guaranteed, my experience with groups is



that they rarely fail, no matter how difficult the task at hand. When framed in terms of absolute faith in the group process and focusing on cooperation from everyone, the task is seen as a worthy & genuine challenge to be overcome. Deep down I had no doubt they could do it, but let the process play out. So it was incredible seeing these kids progress from quiet disbelief, to rapidly growing confidence they could do it, to finally seeing the pride on their faces that they had helped build a footbridge! They did it! While the ABWF always proudly reports on all the numbers and statistics behind the work that gets done by volunteers in the course of the summer, it's stories like these that speak to the real accomplishments of what we do. The goals the ABWF strives to achieve on every trail project are not just measured by the tangible accomplishments—i.e. 15 new waterbars built here, a footbridge there—but even more so by the intangible experiences and learnings derived from within each volunteer who helps us with such challenging work. The ABWF has led over 75 trail projects in the course of 8 years, but this 2-day project with a group of middle school kids from Billings was one of our coolest, proudest moments!

A Day in the Life of a Trail Ambassador: by Laurie Barnard

Best Volunteer Job Ever... It's a beautiful, sunny Saturday morning as I head out to the Lake Fork Trailhead wearing a bright green



'Trail Ambassador' T-shirt and cap, and I have my car loaded with a tub of paraphernalia to help me with my job. I quickly set up to greet folks as they begin their wilderness adventures by the trailhead kiosk.

If there were a soundtrack to this job, it would be "Happy" by Ferrell Williams. Everyone approaching the trailhead is smiling and eager to experience the Wilderness. I greet them and ask where they are headed. Some have been on this trail multiple times and let me in on their destination. For first-timers, I show them various destinations on an area map... waterfalls, lakes, mileages... and tell them some highlights. Hikers, backpackers, trail runners, and horseback riders of all ages arrive, infants on their parent's back, children carrying their own packs, and often-times grandparents along for the hike. It is heartening to see how many parents are bringing their children out on the trail. Research has found that spending time in nature positively affects our physical AND emotional well being, and that kids whose parents take them out tend to continue to go out when they are adults. I offer the kids a yellow Leave No Trace for Kids card that has pictures and info such as, "Act like a cat, and bury poop in a small hole 100 BIG STEPS away from water." Then they are instructed to teach their parents how to take care of the Wilderness as well.

The visitors are predominantly day hikers, some with very happy dogs, some with fishing poles. Some are with college friends enjoying a reunion, some are with friends and family for a wedding. Some are with a significant other, while others are hiking solo.

For those with dogs, I offer a dog waste bag. Most of the time they tell me they already have them (yay!); some take an extra..."just in case".

For backpackers I meet, I hold up a trowel (generously donated by Sylvan Peak in Red Lodge and Timber Trails in Livingston) and ask them if they have one for burying human waste? They usually accept. When I offer them trash bags or a length of cord for hanging food, they usually tell me they've "already got 'em". I offer some an informative camping pamphlet on tips to keep the wilderness beautiful. (One conscientious hiker told me about finding a dirty pan and other garbage at Lost Lake, which he bagged up so he could take it out the next day). Frequently asked questions pertain to wildlife to be encountered. I let them know that they will see birds, probably squirrels, maybe a moose, and possibly a bear. Carrying bear spray is praised and highly encouraged!

I received training from the ABWF prior to volunteering, so when asked what

I'm doing here or what this organization is I explain that the ABWF partners with the Forest Service to promote stewardship of the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness. We have volunteers to help maintain trails and encourage people to keep our trails 'Clean', 'Serene' and 'Pristine'. I offer brochures if folks want more information on the ABWF, want to donate in some way, or are interested in volunteering. I was surprised how many people thanked me for being there and were thankful for the work of ABWF.

You can see why this is the best volunteer job ever! I leave the gloom and doom of news reports behind the moment I step into this wilder place to find that people are actually happy and caring and value the presence of wild places. Volunteer and spend a little time as a Trail Ambassador for the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness!

Special Thanks this summer to Jerry Ladewig, Laurie Barnard, Keith Kolstad, Mary Ellen Mangus, Molly Schmidt, Heather Briggs, David Kallenbach, & Debbie and John Miller for helping as Trail Ambassadors in the summer of 2019.

HERE'S A SUMMARY OF THE TRAILWORK WE ACCOMPLISHED TOGETHER IN 2019!

- The ABWF accomplished **5 Single-Day Projects** with **94 volunteers** (half of them teenagers!); all total these volunteers contributed **827 total hours** working on trails!
- We ran **8 Multi-day Volunteer Projects** this summer (a record for us!). A total of **61 Volunteers** joined us on these projects and cranked out a whopping **1753 hours** of work on the trails!
- Three Wilderness Interns (**Isabel, Jack, Sarah**) contributed **1430 hours of trailwork** working side-by-side with the Forest Service trail crews for the summer. Cost to the ABWF = **\$5500 each**. The Interns get a tiny stipend of \$100 per week, so we still consider them Volunteers.
- Combine all these efforts, including the work of our Interns, and the ABWF employed **158 volunteers** working on trails in the A-B Wilderness, and completed a grand total of **4800 hours** of trailwork!

Our Most Ambitious Summer of Trail Projects!

In 2019, the ABWF put together a summer schedule of projects like no other, and when all was said and done, we completed more trailwork projects (13) and more multi-day projects than ever before! If you wonder where the money comes from to make these projects happen, one place to look is funding from two grantors that provide key funding for the ABWF. This year, we received **\$17,500** from the **National Forest Foundation (NFF)**, and an **\$11,500** grant from the **National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance (NWSA)** to

pay for the essentials needed for every trip we lead: Staff to lead the volunteer projects; money to purchase food to feed the volunteers; camp and trail supplies like water filtration and fuel for the stoves, tools and protective equipment; gas to transport everything and everyone to the trailheads. Without these funds, our volunteer projects simply **could not** happen. Thank You to the National Forest Foundation and the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance for granting these import federal funds.



The Projects, The Volunteers:

September Morn Lake:

Heather and 6 volunteers worked alongside a Forest Service crew above September Morn Lake for five days in July. Thanks to **Caleb Gardner**, **Geoff McKnight**, **Jay Colclazier**, **Kirk Spang**, **Markus Isaacson**, and **Ryann Spang** for their efforts! Here they are with some down time hiking up to Sundance Pass!

Taking some time off to see Sundance Pass.



MCC/All Nation's High School project:

Fourteen (14) kids and their adult leaders joined Heather for three days of trail work and education on the Willow Creek and Palisades Trail west of Red Lodge. The kids are part of an Indian Education for All program through the Billings Public Schools who work in tandem with Montana Conservation Corps (MCC) to get kids outdoors and doing service-learning work. The group also camped out on the Custer Gallatin National Forest as part of the overall experience. This is such an important partnership for the ABWF, gets kids outdoors, and gets some trailwork done to boot! Thanks everyone!



Nora Zager sprays while Pat Clark pulls weeds.

Bassett Creek Weeds Weekend:

Many thanks to **Audrey Hoen** (S. Calif), Gail Goehring (ND), **Nora Zager** (Bozeman), **Pat Clark** (Glen, MT), and **Sadie Schopp** (Bozeman) for helping the ABWF get rid of bales and bales of houndstongue seedheads, & spraying bull-thistle and toadflax with chemical. The good news is that our efforts are really paying off! This is our third trip up Bassett Creek (6 miles north of Gardiner) over the past 6 years, and in that time the amount of houndstongue (and there's acres and acres of the stuff...) has diminished dramatically! Also big thanks to the Yellowstone District's Sherri Renck and her two MCC weed interns who joined us in killing weeds over a hot weekend in July! Three members of our group were older teenagers: it's great to have young people also helping and to see our efforts really paying off!

The Projects, The Volunteers:

Red Lodge Creek Plateau:

This year we went up and over to the Crow Lake side of the plateau where we camped and worked on the Senia Creek/Crow Lake trail. Eight volunteers were on hand to help with the trail—**Ava and Jess Nelson** (teenage daughter and mother from Mantorville, MN), **Bruce and Sheryl McCandless** (Billings), **Joe Elliott** (Madison, WI), **Jim Merring** (former volunteer of the year, Rochester NY), **Dan Mulligan** (Vancouver, WA), and **Julian Startzman** (teenager from Berea, KY). Great group of out-of-staters!

Volunteers take

a breather at 10,000ft. on Red Lodge Creek Plateau.



High School volunteers only!

West Boulder Trail Clearing:

This was the Summer of the Teen for the ABWF, and that's a really exciting thing! For years I have been actively recruiting more and more high school aged kids to come help with trailwork in the A-B Wilderness. This year the stars aligned and we welcomed a whole bunch of teens to our projects. Eight high school kids from the Billings and Red Lodge areas joined in on 3 days of hacking out thousands of saplings smothering the trail in order to reestablish a pathway up the W. Boulder River southwest of Big Timber. Thanks go to **Ellen Pender**, **Gentry Lamb**, **Jack Ladd**, **Joshua Sullivan**, **Julian Startzman**, **Margot Kuntz**, **Molly Schmidt**, and **Rosamarie Roccasano** for giving up a little summer vacation to help on trails. The future of volunteerism is looking bright!

Kersey Lake/The start of the Cooke City to E. Rosebud Trail:

ABWF was back again installing turnpike through the swampy sections in the first two miles of the famed "Beaten Path" trail. We stayed at the Cooke City Forest Service cabin while we worked for five days. Joining Heather and David were **Amanda Obery** (Billings), **Jack Buck** (MN), **James Childre** (Bozeman), **James Howe** (Red Lodge), **Jason Coleman** (Miles City), **Neil Matthews-Pennanen** (Red Lodge), **Paloma Serna** (Billings), **Suzanne Purtee** (Billings), and **Terez Smith** (Billings)! Thanks to all the Montana locals who volunteer to work on A-B Wilderness trails! **Sam Hansen** and **Jeremy Zimmer** of the Gardiner District (USFS) coordinated.



American Hiking Society Volunteers.

Fourmile & Meatrack Creek Trails with the American Hiking Society:

This was a smorgasbord of trailwork featuring the experienced help from this year's AHS volunteers from all over the country (esp. Ohio!): **Arnold Fujioka** (Hawaii), **Daniel Snyder** (North Carolina), **Howard Sherman** (Philadelphia), **Kathleen Shanahan-Aughe** and **Kyle Aughe** (Dayton, OH), **Lisa Curl** (Cleveland), **Mark Huffman** (Toledo, OH), **Rick Schlauderaff** (Oakes, ND), and **Trevor Rapp** (Cleveland). **Lawson Maclean** of the Yellowstone District (USFS) and **Heather Briggs** led this trip!

Mystic Lake:

Tempting the fate of mid-September weather, the ABWF persevered and pulled off our first multi-day trip in September. Volunteers **Casey Rifkin** (Livingston), **Jim Howe** (Red Lodge), **Julian Startzman** (Berea, KY), and **Shaun Durkee** (Bozeman) helped **Heather Briggs** of the ABWF, and **Oliver Scofield** of the Custer Gallatin NF work on the trail for 5 days around Mystic Lake.

Thompson Lake:

This trip was more than a little bit cursed! We had last-minute defections by those who signed up, a Forest Service horse-trailer fire (and therefore no horse support), and really awful rainy weather. Despite all that, **Julian Startzman** (KY), **Will Jones** (Bozeman), **Zachary Rinehart** (Livingston), and **Heather Briggs** got as much done as they could done on this 3-day trip in September.

Artist in Residence - “Beartooth Beauty” By Matt Witt, 2019 Artist in Residence

It was 8:30 p.m. on a late July evening in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness when an hour-long barrage of one-inch hailstones finally stopped pounding my tent above Native Lake.



Sunset after an intense hailstorm near Native Lake. Matt Witt Photography

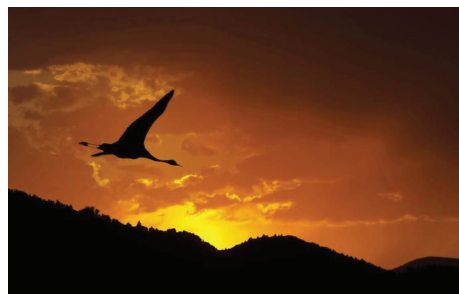
The lightning, which had been so close I couldn't finish saying “one, one-thousand” before thunder boomed, had finally moved about five miles away.

Hearing only a slight drizzle, I grabbed my camera and crawled out of the tent. The light was low, but pink sunset clouds were still reflecting in nearby tarns that were surrounded by the newly fallen hail. In the other direction, dense clouds and the lake itself were glowing with the most vibrant purple I'd ever seen.

This scene was just one of the highlights of nine days I spent as an Artist in Residence for the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation (ABWF) this past summer. In partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, ABWF sponsors several Artists in Residence each summer to spend seven to ten days in the wilderness, drawing inspiration from the beauty and solitude for their painting, writing, musical compositions, or other work.

For me, the artist residency in an ecosystem very different than where I live in rural Oregon gave me unusual opportunities to apply my “Closer to Nature” approach to photography, focusing in on simple details and uncluttered images in an attempt to see nature's beauty with fresh eyes. I photographed a sandhill crane silhouetted against a dramatic yellow sunset. An intensely yellow-orange

lily flower was reflected in a lake. A rainbow appeared above trees colored with red sunset light. Textures caught my eye on big boulders that I later learned were fossilized coral. I had a relatively rare encounter with a pika and photographed a lone whitebark pine – both species in jeopardy as climate change threatens the cold environments they require. As a follow-up to this artist residency, I'm now sharing these and many other images with ABWF to use in its educational work promoting and maintaining wilderness, as well as posting them for the public at MattWittPhotography.com.



Sandhill crane silhouetted against the sunset. Matt Witt Photography

With the high-altitude weather sometimes turning harsh, and no one else around for much of the time, I had plenty of time to think about the people who survived in this wilderness for thousands of years without having a car at a trailhead or housing to go back to with electricity and heat. Given how much time most of us spend sheltered by those comforts, it seems more important than ever to protect wilderness and all the living things that depend on it.

This summer, two other artists took part in ABWF's program. One was Stephanie Rose (StephanieRoseArtist.com), a painter who used a Forest Service cabin as her base of operations:

“I painted a collection of field studies, each of which seared into my memory my impressions of a particular place,” Rose said. “I will use these field studies to grow paintings in the studio, where I am able to

further distill the motif I want to communicate to other people.” The other artist was Marc Beaudin (CrowVoice.com), a poet and theater artist who worked from a remote Forest Service cabin up the Boulder River south of Big Timber: “I finished a manuscript of poetry called Life List, where each poem honors a different bird species that has made an impact on my life and writing,” Beaudin said. “Having several days and nights without electricity, and all the disruptive technologies that come with it, meant there was nothing to take me away from my work, and having the power and beauty of the mountains, forest and river around me meant constant inspiration to keep at it.”

This was the sixth year the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation has operated its Artist in Residence Program, according to David Kallenbach, ABWF's executive director. “I've been astounded by how many people have found out about the opportunity and by the diverse qualities of the artists who have participated in the



A lily is reflected in Vernon Lake. Matt Witt Photography

program – from a videographer to a paper-making artist to a composer, as well as painters, writers, and poets,” Kallenbach said.

To learn more about the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness Foundation and how to get involved in its many volunteer opportunities, see www.ABWilderness.org.

Matt Witt is a photographer and writer from rural Oregon. His work may be seen at MattWittPhotography.com.

Julian Startzman - Our Volunteer of the Year!



That's Julian in the center at Mystic Lake!

Now that all of our trail trips have wrapped up, it is time to announce our Volunteer of the Year! Congratulations and a huge thank you to **Julian Startzman!**

Before seventeen-year-old Julian left the humid, rolling hills of Berea, Kentucky to spend the summer with his uncle in

Billings, his mom signed him up for two ABWF trail trips. When he returned home after learning about Wilderness and lopping in West Boulder's burn corridor, he signed up for two more. While the sheer number of trips he volunteered on definitely qualified him for the Volunteer of the Year, we chose Julian for his work ethic, good nature, and dry sense of humor.

Whether we were sawing trees tucked away in spiky raspberry bushes, digging 100 feet of lateral drains in rocky soil, hiking in the sweltering sun, swatting away mosquitoes at lunch, hauling water through thick grass and thistles, or huddling in the kitchen tent while rain and hail pounded down, Julian kept us laughing. Thank you, Julian, for your enthusiasm for trying new things, for only referring to restored campsites



Clearing trees with abandon!

that are too close to water as "impacted areas," and for always finding a good stick for Beans (official ABWF mascot for the 2018-19 seasons) to fetch.

We appreciate your efforts, and hope to see you on the trail again next summer!

**Heather Briggs -
Crew Leader**

The ABWF's Summer Staff

Heather Briggs, Program Director and Trail Crew Leader, and the three interns—**Sarah Lillie** (AZ), Yellowstone District; **Isabel Amos-Landgraf** (WI), Beartooth District; and **Jack Buck** (MN), Gardiner District, all shown here on National Trails Day on the Suce Creek Trail south of Livingston.

Thanks for a great summer and all your hard work!



The 2019 FUN RUN FOR CHARITIES was a HUGE Success!



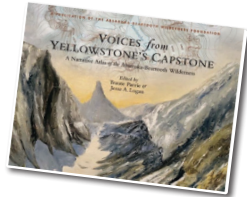
Executive Director, David Kallenbach representing the ABWF.

Labor Day was the 16th running of the Fun Run for Charities, and the whole experience was fruitful for the ABWF! This year the Match Fund matched all of your gifts by an additional 24%! All in all, you helped us raise **\$11,000** for boots on the ground efforts helping the A-B Wilderness! That's simply incredible! Thanks all of you who donated and made the Fun Run our biggest fundraiser of the year!



Book Launch Events

For the Atlas
of the A-B Wilderness

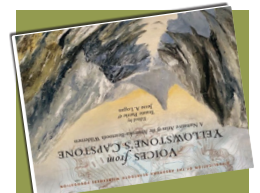
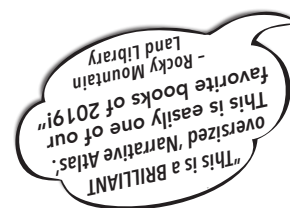


- **Thursday, Nov. 14th, 6-8 p.m.** at Honey's Café in Red Lodge, with John Clayton & Marci Dye.
- **Saturday, Nov. 16th, 5:30-7:30** at This House of Books in Billings, with Ed Kemmick & Kayhan Ostovar.
- **Wednesday, Nov. 20th, 6-8 p.m.** at the Lindley Center in Bozeman, with Gary Ferguson, Doug Chabot, & Shane Doyle.
- **Thursday, Nov. 21st, 7-9** at Elk River Books in Livingston, with Todd Burritt, Scott McMillion, & Dan Tyers.
- **Friday, Dec. 13th, 6-8 p.m.** at Tumbleweed Bookstore & Cafe in Gardiner, with Hank Rate & April Craighead.

WE ALL WISH TO THANK THE AMAZING DONORS WHO MADE THE PRODUCTION AND PUBLICATION OF THIS BOOK A REALITY:

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