# **Stakeholder Newsletter**

# **August 2024**

(HEADER IMAGE, ELK RIVER OUTFITTERS)

Hello everyone!

Boy, when summer hit, it came with a vengeance! We're thinking about those around the state affected by wildfires and are hopeful for everyone's safety, a swift recovery for businesses and local economies.

On the topic of navigating natural events such as wildfire and flooding, Montana State University Assistant Film Professor Hugo Sindelar announced an upcoming documentary, "One in Five Hundred, on the flooding events of 2022."

MSU says of the documentary, "The film will delve deeper into how these changing weather and climactic patterns led to the flood event, how it affected both Yellowstone National Park and the surrounding gateway communities, and what can be done to both rebuild and help them adapt so that future flooding events are not as catastrophic." Screenings will be held in the affected areas when the documentary is completed.

We also congratulate Big Timber, which has been awarded one of the state's Pilot Community Tourism Grants. We've included an overview of their exciting plans.

It's a big month with several festivals, live outdoor concerts, farmers' markets, art walks and outdoor adventure competitions. (Pro Tip: Red Lodge is the place to race.)

Enjoy these dog days of summer!

Robin and Kali

(Photo of Big Timber, possibly rendering of Sheepherder Square, might not be high enough quality.)

## Big Timber Awarded a $1.25 million Pilot Community Tourism Grant from the Montana Department of Commerce

The Crazy Mountain Collective (CMC), a collaboration between non-profit organizations, businesses and city and county governments in Big Timber, were recently awarded one of seven of the State's Pilot Community Tourism Grants. The $1.25 million will be used for several projects including developing a tourism plan as a component of economic development.

Other projects include work on Sheepherder Square, the Big Timber Trails Network, wayfinding and downtown improvements, the Crazy Mountain Museum expansion and fairground improvements. The Collective also plans to develop marketing plans to support these projects and expand their agritourism offerings.

The funding will be awarded over the next 60 months and managed by CMC. Congratulations on the hard work it took to apply for the grant. We look forward to the continued vitality of Big Timber!

Photo: NPS / Jacob W. Frank

## Voices of Yellowstone: First People's Celebration comes to YNP Aug 4-10

### This week-long event, hosted by [Yellowstone Forever](https://www.yellowstone.org/) in partnership with [Yellowstone National Park](https://www.nps.gov/yell/index.htm) and in collaboration with the [Pretty Shield Foundation](https://www.psfmt.org/), [Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council](https://www.rmtlc.org/) and [Gardiner Chamber Of Commerce and Visitor Center](https://www.visitgardinermt.com/about/gardiner-chamber-of-commerce), aims to honor and celebrate the diverse cultures of the Indigenous Peoples of Yellowstone — past, present and future.

Each evening, visitors can experience the installment "Building Bridges of Peace," the nightly lighting of the illuminated teepees. Other events include a Native Art Market, Cultural Ambassadors and Tours, Traditional Native Games, a community potluck, and a closing ceremony.

For more information, go to [www.yellowstone.org](https://www.yellowstone.org/voices-of-yellowstone/).

(CAN WE FIND A PHOTO FROM THE FLOODS?)

## Montana State Professor Soon to Complete Documentary on 2022 Floods

After the historic flooding in June 2022, Montana State University Assistant Professor of Film Hugo Sindelar set to work creating a documentary chronicling the devastating floods that affected Yellowstone National Park and its gateway communities. Once considered a 1-in-500-year event, changing climate conditions are making events like this more common. The film will delve deeper into how these changing weather and climactic patterns lead to these events and what can be done to both rebuild and help adapt.

Sindelar has also published an accompanying article titled "[Lessons from the 2022 Yellowstone Floods: The Power of Documentary Film Interviews](https://hazards.colorado.edu/quick-response-report/lessons-from-the-2022-yellowstone-floods?fbclid=IwAR00tdhyM3kaVHev-3V7W0NW2jtZuPtYHZ2s8U9k1vd3k-olZ_jm5seZ2SI)," in which Sindelar relays what he learned from stakeholders about the flood's impact and how preparedness and responses can be improved for future natural disasters. "The paper makes it easier to relate actionable guidance and lessons learned," Sindelar said. "You don't have the ability to delve into the details in the film."

A third project by Sindelar, a podcast titled "[Bison Jam](https://www.bisonjam.com/)," covers a wide range of topics related to Yellowstone National Park and the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem.

(No photo)

## Additional Funding Announced for Montana Coal Endowment Program's Infrastructure Planning Grants

2025 biennium applications for the Montana Coal Endowment Program Infrastructure Planning Grants are now being accepted and will remain open until the funding is allocated. Grants have a maximum amount of $40,000 with a minimum match of 20% of the total project cost.

The grant program encourages cities, towns, counties and water and sewer districts to engage in long-range infrastructure planning.

For the 2025 biennium only, applicants can apply for and may be awarded up to four grants:

* Two (one per type) for a water, wastewater, stormwater and solid waste system Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) (e.g., an application for a water system PER and a stormwater PER but not for two water system PERs),
* One comprehensive Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), and
* One bridge system CIP OR bridge PER.

For more information, go to [comdev.mt.gov](https://comdev.mt.gov/Programs-and-Boards/Montana-Coal-Endowment-Program/Planning-Grants).

(Photo of Cooke City)

## Get to Know Your Neighbors: Cooke City and Silver Gate

Tucked into the mountains at the Northeast Entrance to Yellowstone National Park, the towns of [Cooke City and Silver Gate](https://cookecitychamber.org/) remain uniquely remote and a wonderful place to escape the bustle of everyday life.

Cooke City began as a mining town in 1869-1870 when gold was discovered. While most mining towns were remote, Cooke City was even more so, given that the nearest settlement was 130 miles away in Bozeman. Silver Gate came into existence in 1932 when the Park County Commissioners approved the townsite to serve the tourist population in Yellowstone and as a site for potential buyers to build summer resorts.

When mining was no longer a viable option, the towns shifted gears and promoted their rich snowmobiling, backcountry and Nordic skiing, hunting, fishing, hiking and off-road riding to keep the tourism trade alive. Today, the area is known for its deep powder and late-season snows.

Visitors base out of this entrance due to its proximity to the Lamar Valley in Yellowstone, where most of the wolf packs reside, and to drive the famous Beartooth Highway to Red Lodge. Summer events include the Forget Me Knot Fest, the Beartooth Rally Poker run, and the Fireman's Street Dance.

For those who prefer to get away from the crowds and into some big mountain experiences, Cooke City and Silver Gate do not disappoint.

## Upcoming Events

### [Forget Me Knot Fest 2024](https://forgetmeknotfest.org/)

The second annual Forget Me Knot Fest, a community benefit, music, and arts festival in Cooke City and Silver Gate takes place August 16-17. Set against a beautiful mountain backdrop, eight bands will take the stage, along with an artist marketplace and plenty of food and beverage vendors!

### The Fairies are Coming!

Livingston and Bozeman communities welcome temporary art installations/pixie communities to the natural environment. [Wishberry Hollow](https://eubankcreative.com/wishberry-hollow/) in Livingston, located on a portion of Myers' River View Trail, will run through August 11, and [Bumblewood Thicket](https://www.randomactsofsilliness.com/2024-bumblewood-thicket), a fairy village at Glen Lake Rotary Park, will be on display from August 30 to September 22. Enjoy the work of local artists who create intricate fairy homes in hopes of luring their fairy friends to stay.

### Races in Red Lodge and Cooke City

It's a big month for those who love competitions in the mountains. Red Lodge and Cooke City are hosting several different races, with scenery so gorgeous it's hard not to get caught up in it! Prospectors 50K and 30K Race in Cooke City is August 10-11; The Nitty Gritty Off-Road Race is August 17; Big Sky Gravel Bike Tour is August 25; Fun Run for Charities is August 31, and the Whistle Pig Adventure Race is September 7. More information can be found at [redlodge.com](https://www.redlodge.com/montana-calendar-of-events.asp).