

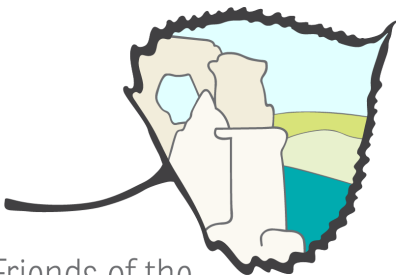
Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument *Summer Newsletter*

Protecting and preserving the
Upper Missouri River Breaks
National Monument through advocacy,
education and stewardship.



Spring 2020: A Lesson in Adaptability

Like everyone else, the Friends have had to adapt to changed conditions over the past couple months in response to the current health crisis related to COVID-19. As a result of the health crisis, we were unable to hold our annual cottonwood planting event this spring to help supplement natural cottonwood regeneration within the monument's riparian zones. Moving forward, we are saddened to announce we will not be holding the event this fall and, instead, will postpone the planting until next spring to provide the young trees with the best chance for survival. Additionally, the Friends have been compelled to reconsider and re-plan many of our summer events to best provide for the health and wellbeing of volunteers and staff. Rest assured that any events in the coming months will be held with the utmost regard for safety as directed by the prevailing directives and regulations at the time of the event.



Friends of the
**MISSOURI BREAKS
MONUMENT**

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A Message from the Friends' Board of Directors

Dear Friends,

In these uncertain and difficult times, we hope you're able to find some solace in the beauty and tranquility of our public lands, including our beloved Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument.

We here at the Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument are providing an abundance of opportunities to do so, while maintaining a safe distance from others. These volunteer activities (see the schedule elsewhere in this newsletter) are part of our efforts to revitalize our organization and strengthen its position as the foremost protector of the Missouri Breaks Monument.

Last fall we hired a new executive director, Joe Offer, a familiar face to many of you who have enjoyed our volunteer activities in the past.

Since then, we've added three new energetic and committed members to our board of directors, **and we're looking for a few more.** *Please contact us if you're interested.*

We've created the Breaks Action Team, partnering with the Montana Wilderness Association and the Montana Wildlife Federation to share information about threats to the monument and other public lands in central Montana and to coordinate a response. The Breaks Action Team will be holding a series of meetings in local communities, so please attend if you can. Look for announcements in your email or via social media.

We're making plans to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the monument in 2021, which is also the year that the Friends of the Missouri Breaks Monument has its 20th anniversary. We're planning a triathlon, a speaker series and other events.

We are grateful for your interest in our organization and your financial support. We hope to see you soon at our events. In the meantime, take care and be safe.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,
Karen Datko
President

Welcome to Mikayla

For the fourth year running, the Friends have partnered with Montana Conservation Corps to host an AmeriCorps Big Sky Watershed Corps member. This year's corps member is Mikayla Moss.

Mikayla comes to the Friends after spending the past couple years working as an animal protection officer in Durango, Colorado. Prior to that, Mikayla spent time with the Bureau of Reclamation as a biological science technician in New Mexico. During college, Mikayla spent time at Montana State and is excited to be back in Montana.

This year, Mikayla will be taking the lead on most of the Friends' stewardship work, having already put on a great National Trails Day event. Keep an eye out for her on the monument this year and be sure to say hi.



National Trails Day

The Friends' first stewardship event of the year was held on June 6 at the Old Army Trail near the McClelland-Stafford Ferry. Twelve volunteers, two Friends staff members, and two BLM recreation leads took part in rejuvenating the Old Army Trail's parking area, trailhead, and the first half mile of trail. There is still much to be done to bring the trail up to a safer and more resilient state, but the first event was a great success. In the future the Friends plan to hold an annual stewardship event on National Trails Day to maintain and bring the trail up to standard. We hope you'll visit the trail this year to experience a new part of the monument.



Summer Volunteer Events

Looking ahead to the rest of the year, we have many more volunteer events still to come! Our volunteer events will be happening throughout the monument and will help improve visitor experiences and ecosystem health.

Mark these dates on your calendar and join the Friends in making a difference on the monument.

Interpretive Center Beautification Day

Fort Benton – Saturday, July 18

Wilderness Study Area Monitoring Float

Judith Landing to James Kipp – July 24-27

Summer Astronomy Night

Wood Bottom Recreation Site – Friday, Aug. 28

Confluence Campout

Wood Bottom Recreation Site – Saturday, Aug. 29

River Clean-Up Day

Coal Banks Landing – Saturday, Sept. 12

National Public Lands Day

James Kipp Recreation Area – Saturday, Sept. 26