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## **BIOLOGISTS AND BIOLOGY IN MONTANAGONIA: PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION AT THE END OF THE WORLD**

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The Montana-Patagonia Chapter of the Partners of the Americas in both Argentina and Montana was established during the 1980s. Rick Douglass, Department Head and Biology Professor at Montana Tech, has been largely responsible for keeping this volunteer organization active and viable for the last 20 yrs. The Partners of the Americas program was initiated nationally during the Kennedy administration. Each State in the U.S. is paired with a Central or South American Country. During the last 20 yrs a host of wildlife and fisheries biologists have volunteered to travel back and forth from Patagonia to Montana. Culture and education exchanges have focused on biology and have been completed in the areas of fisheries management, electro-shocking, wildlife survey and inventory, grazing systems, hunting systems, puma conflicts, environmental education and more. Patagonia biologists in Argentina have implemented groundbreaking research and management programs that have promoted the conservation of endemic species at the southern tip of the South American continent. Participation in the Partners of the Americas Program has enriched the careers and lives of professional biologists in both hemispheres.