
SPORTSMEN’S ENGAGEMENT IN CONSERVATION IN MONTANA

Jeff Herbert, Retired MT FWP wildlife biologist, Helena

Montana represents a very successful and effective model of conservation relative to its fish, wildlife and habitat resources. It is nationally recognized as such. Foundational to this model of conservation is the public trust doctrine and the premise that these resources are to be managed in perpetuity for the benefit of all. It includes an underpinning of rigorous science to guide management decisions and actions and a democratic opportunity for the citizens of this state and our guests to participate in a variety of regulated recreational opportunities. Montana provides a blend of public and private lands including the presence of two significant national parks, several major wilderness areas and working landscapes that contribute to the physical and economic well being of this state. Most importantly, the people of Montana have been committed to the support of this model, uniquely so when it comes to local and statewide engagement. Montana hunters, anglers and conservationists have a history of participation in decisions relative to population management, habitat conservation and access issues.