

Southern Montana RAC Accomplishment Report

The Southern Montana RAC convened 5 times during its term. Members were elected in 2019. The first meeting was an orientation to the RAC in November of 2019. The second meeting in June 2020 led to the awarding of \$469,209 dollars spread across 24 projects. That round of RAC funding was a compilation of multiple years of funding, which was why the available amount was so high. The third meeting held in December 2020 was for the purpose of reviewing proposed fee increases for various recreation fee sites across the east side of the Custer Gallatin. This meeting resulted in the approval of increases at 29 sites (more details below on how these funds have benefitted our programs). The RAC met again in October 2021, approving \$188,645 across 11 projects. Lastly, the RAC's final meeting in December 2022 resulted in the awarding of \$158,105 across 8 projects. In total, The Southern Montana RAC has recommended \$815,959 of Title II funds to project that have benefitted National Forest lands.

Below is a break-down by County of the projects awarded by the Southern Montana RAC. The most recent awards that have yet to be spent are included on the last page

Park County

2020:

- Park County Jardine Road Improvement: \$25,000 Complete
- Livingston Bike Club North Dry Road Improvements: \$25,000 Complete
- Livingston Peak Road Improvements: \$15,000 complete
- Smith Creek Road Improvements: \$50,000 Complete
- Gallatin Valley Backcountry Horsemen-Gardiner RD: \$5,000 in progress
- AB Wilderness Foundation Kersey Lake/Russell Trail Maintenance: \$19,621 Complete
- AB Wilderness Foundation Lake Abundance Trail Maintenance: \$21,090 complete
- Soda Butte Toilet: \$10,000 complete
- Gardiner RD Cooke City/Colter Campground Water Systems \$5,000 in progress
- Cooke City Winter Recreation Area Education and Enforcement: \$15,000 in progress (snowmobile purchased, staff time for winter 21/22)
- Park County Sheriff's Office patrols: \$32,176 in progress

2021:

- Beartooth RD Lake Creek Trail Maintenance and Improvement: \$25,000 no started, flood-related delays
- Cooke City Community Council Trailhead Vaulted Toilet: \$22,000 in progress; in contracting
- Livingston Bike Club Porcupine Trailhead Improvements: \$2,500 complete
- Smith Creek Road Users Assoc Road Improvement \$11,171 complete



Clockwise from upper left: Weed Treatments, Smith Creek Road, Soda Butte toilet, Lake Fork puncheon removal, Slough Creek Corral re-build, Kersey Lake trail maintenance

SWEETGRASS COUNTY

2020:

- Sweet Grass County Sheriff: \$20,000 in progress
- Sweet Grass County Weed District project: \$22,000 complete
- Yellowstone RD Water Systems Project: \$10,000 in progress
- Yellowstone RD Deer Creek/Bridger Creeks Weeds Project: \$40,000 in progress

2021:

- Sweet Grass County Weed District project: \$17,027 largely complete

STILLWATER COUNTY

2020:

- Beartooth Ranger District Meyers Creek Trail Improvements: \$10,000 complete
- Beartooth Ranger District West Rosebud trail improvements: \$10,000 in progress, delays due to Robertson Draw fire
- CGNF/Stillwater County weed control: \$10,000 in progress

2021:

- AB Wilderness Foundation Stillwater River Trail Maintenance: \$7,863 complete

POWDER RIVER COUNTY

2020:

- Ashland Ranger District Travel Plan Signage: \$10,000 in progress (signs purchased)
- Powder River County Weed District: \$64,902 in progress, delays due to fire
- Powder River County Sheriff's Patrol: \$4,000 in progress
- Ashland Ranger District Road Maintenance: \$17,500 complete
- Ashland Ranger District motorized trail maintenance: \$17,000 complete
- CGNF/All County Aerial patrols: \$11,280 complete

2021:

- Ashland Ranger District Saturation Patrol and Travel Management Assistance: \$19,960 in progress
- Ashland Ranger District Noxious Weed Management: \$9,000 in progress
- Ashland Ranger District Road Maintenance: \$16,200 complete
- Powder River County Sheriff's Office Forest Patrol: \$4,300 in progress
- Powder River County Weed District Noxious Weed Management and Training: \$53,624 in progress.

2020 FEE REVIEW

The RAC Recommended increasing fees at 29 developed recreation sites on the Ashland, Beartooth, Gardiner and Yellowstone Ranger Districts. The recommendations included increasing the fees at 26 sites, implementation of new fees at two campgrounds and adding the Sage Creek cabin as a new rental opportunity. This has resulted in additional revenue, a 95% of which comes directly back to the Custer Gallatin National Forest. These funds have helped improve our recreation programs in some of the following ways:

- Staffing
 - \$217,500 goes into salary for permanent and seasonal employees
 - Money helps fund the conversion of permanent seasonal employees to permanent full time. This gains our programs huge capacity and helps with employee retention.
 - Funds go toward hiring summer MCC interns to perform work at our developed recreation sites
 - Funds go toward funding the necessary vehicles for the program
- Examples of Cabin/Campground Improvements Include:
 - Purchasing firewood supply for cabins (YRD)
 - Painting of outhouses in developed recreation sites (GRD)
 - Bulletin board improvements (Beartooth, GRD)
 - Install new gates (Beartooth)
 - Additional gravel to developed sites (GRD)
 - Toilet pumping and water sampling (All)
 - New firerings (YRD)
 - New chinking at Crandall (YRD)
 - Porcupine repair of windows, door and trim (YRD)

- New mattresses (Ashland, YRD)



Fees Collected Across the Forest from fee sites:

- 2019: \$316,248
- 2020: \$331,569

Fee Increase Implemented spring 2021

- 2021: \$471,819
- 2022 \$535,143

* note: numbers are for collections forest-wide and were impacted by variables like covid and 2022 flooding. We also still have one cabin and campground to open with a fee next year, so we anticipate even higher collections in the future.

**FY23 So Montana RAC Project Submissions-
Approved on 12/14/22**

County	Funds Available per County	Total Request per County
Sweet Grass County-	\$26,280	\$26,600
Stillwater County-	\$9,804	\$12,240
Powder River County-	\$47,413	\$65,523
Park County-	\$74,608	\$89,047
Totals	\$158,105	\$193,410

(mix of Sweet Grass and Stillwater proposal)

Project Name	Project Submitted By	County Benefitted	District Location	Title II Requested Amount	Amount Approved
1) Beartooth Face Noxious Weed Treatments	Chauntell Rock, AB zone weeds	Sweet Grass, Stillwater	Beartooth RD	\$12,240	\$12,240.00
2) Sweet Grass County Noxious Weed Project	Connie Weston (Sweet Grass County)	Sweet Grass	Yellowstone RD	\$26,600	\$23,844.50
3) Powder River County Weed District Noxious Weed Management and Training	Tammy Van Time (PRC Weed District)	Powder River	Ashland RD	\$35,522.96	\$23,706.96
4) Mud Turtle Reservoir Road Resurfacing	Ashland RD	Powder River	Ashland RD	\$30,000	\$23,706.96
5) Dry Pine Connector Trail	Livingston Bike Club	Park	Yellowstone RD	\$33,000.00	\$30,000.00
6) Shepherder Peak Trail #32 Erosion Control	Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness Foundation	Park	Yellowstone RD	\$17,031.00	\$12,755.58
7) Specimen Creek Trail #84 Flood Damage Repairs	Absaroka Beartooth Wilderness Foundation	Park	Gardiner RD	\$16,516	\$14,000.00
8) Shields River Area Noxious Weed Treatments	Yellowstone RD	Park/Meagher	Yellowstone RD	\$22,500	\$17,851.00
				\$193,410	\$158,105.00