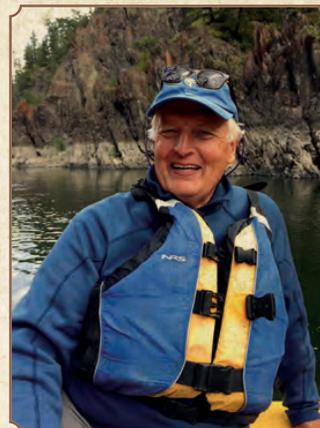


2022 INDUCTEE

## BRUCE BUGBEE

1948-



**B**ruce Bugbee, a professional conservationist since 1972, has a knack for seeing things no one else could see—until he showed them how.

He's the founder of the American Public Land Exchange in Missoula. APLE applies market-based strategies to create projects agreeable to landowners, environmental watchdogs, local communities, developers, and natural resource managers.

Throughout his career, Bruce worked to conserve over 900,000 acres in Montana. He completed more than 90 conservation easements, including some of the first deals cut in the Blackfoot River Valley in the 1970s.

In the 1980s, Bugbee trained Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to use conservation easements. As a result, FWP easements include about 500,000 permanently protected acres—mostly family farms and ranches—that are also available to hunters and anglers.

Bruce began a long-term relationship with The Conservation Fund in 1987. With a focus on environmental preservation and economic development, Bruce's insights helped the Fund complete projects on over 300,000 acres in Montana.

In addition, Bruce devised various conservation approaches for the 2003-06 bicentennial celebration of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. The public acquisition of Travelers' Rest, now a state park near Missoula, Crimson Bluffs on the Missouri River near Townsend, and Sacagawea Hot Springs near Great Falls link to Bruce's work.

Earlier, and close to home, Bruce untangled a way to shore up public ownership in what would become the prized Rattlesnake National Recreation and Wilderness Areas, with trailheads just

minutes from downtown Missoula.

Bruce's idea to transfer more than 20,000 acres owned by the Montana Power Company to the U.S. Forest Service tendered MPC fair compensation for lands it was not using. And that allowed USFS to connect formerly checker-boarded private ownership in the Rattlesnake. Congress officially designated the 28,000-acre RNRWA in 1980.

Several years later, Bruce proposed a mitigation project to MPC. The company agreed, and in 1999 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service established the 8,000-acre Lost Trail National Wildlife Refuge on the property west of Kalispell.

People enjoying the land is key to Bruce's conservation vision. Consider the staggeringly innovative Missouri-Madison River Fund Bruce helped create.

The Missouri-Madison River Fund is a trust of partners from the business sector, nonprofit organizations, and federal, state, and local agencies. Together, the partners donated more than \$11 million to the trust for grants to develop, operate, and maintain dozens of recreation sites on the rivers. A 2020 survey showed the improved sites accommodated more than 1 million recreation-group visits.

Accolades for Bruce's work include the Don Aldrich Fish, Wildlife and Conservation Award from the Missoula's Conservation Roundtable (1988); Wildlife Conservation Award from the Montana Chapter of The Wildlife Society (2002); Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Outstanding Contributor Award (2005); and Governor's Award for Excellence in Performance (2008).

