



2022 INDUCTEE

KATHLEEN HADLEY

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Kathy Hadley has been a sentinel of leadership, management, and protection for Montana’s natural environment for over 40 years.

Her fondness of the outdoors took root near her Grand Island home, an idyllic spot on the Niagara River in western New York.

Things slipped from idyllic to vigilant in the 1970s when Kathy’s sister, Lois Gibbs, uncovered that her Niagara Falls neighborhood was built atop a ghastly toxic dump. Kathy helped Lois organize the sickened community to mount the historic “Love Canal” campaign.

That struggle led to the federal environmental law known as “Superfund,” which forces those responsible for contamination to clean it up or reimburse the government for the work.

After moving with her family to Montana in 1979, Kathy came upon the Upper Clark Fork River, then a 56-mile-long toxic quagmire that needed an advocate. So, Kathy cofounded the Clark Fork Coalition, which won Superfund designation for the river in 1985.

The Upper Clark Fork River restoration was launched with a \$200 million Superfund settlement to clean up mining and smelting wastes linked to Anaconda Company operations in Butte, Anaconda, and Milltown.

Kathy served on the Clark Fork River Basin Restoration Council and Clark Fork River Technical Assistance Committee overseeing the multimillion-dollar cleanup.

The effort restored streambeds, banks, and uplands. Additionally, the removal of Milltown Dam near Missoula reestablished the confluence

of the Clark Fork and Blackfoot rivers, which overnight had cutthroat trout and bull trout returning to upstream spawning grounds.

Her kinship to hunting and fishing drew Kathy into often-rancorous exchanges during the 1980s and ‘90s among landowners, hunters, anglers, outfitters, and state officials.

In response, Kathy volunteered to help develop a series of landowner/sportsman civil-communication confabs.

With that experience, in 1995, Gov. Marc Racicot appointed Kathy to the first Private Lands/Public Wildlife Committee. The committee worked for 30 months to craft a law that gave rise to Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks’ Block Management Program, which opened more than 7 million acres of private land to public hunting.

Kathy’s art of persuasion, backed by bachelor’s and master’s degrees in biology, was shared with the Montana Wildlife Federation and the National Wildlife Federation, including turns as president of both boards and chair of the National and Montana Wildlife Federation Board of Directors.

Now retired—Kathy was executive director of the National Center for Appropriate Technology for 20 years—she spends her time hunting and fishing with her husband, Wayne. They have two sons, Erik and Liam.

But she’s not done organizing. In 2017, Kathy cofounded the Artemis Sportswomen Alliance, a women’s outdoor hunting and fishing organization.

“You see more and more women coming along where it was just me and the guys for a long time,” she said. “I think women have a natural affinity for protecting this heritage.”

