



2025 INDUCTEE

## JEANNE-MARIE SOUVIGNY

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The University of Montana's Environmental Studies Master's Program drew Jeanne-Marie Souvigny out west in 1980 after she earned a business degree in operations analysis at Western New England University. After graduating from UM, she began her conservation career working as a community organizer for the Northern Plains Resource Council in Billings in 1983. Starting in 1990, she became the Greater Yellowstone Coalition's National Parks Program director, serving 11 years.

During that time, Souvigny dealt with two of southwestern Montana's thorniest environmental issues—Yellowstone National Park's migrating bison and vulnerable geothermal features. She organized a coalition of organizations to work on bison management, leading to the interagency Yellowstone bison plan that stopped the bison slaughter of the late 1980s and allowed more bison to migrate outside the park.

Souvigny also advocated for federal and state geothermal protections at a time when people were pushing to develop geothermal energy. She testified before Congress on park-related legislation, including the Old Faithful Protection Act in 1994, sponsored by Montana's Rep. Pat Williams, to protect the hydrothermal resources of Yellowstone Park.

She continued to lobby the Montana Legislature on behalf of conservation and public policy organizations, including the Montana Conservation Voters, Northern Plains Resource Council, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, and Sierra Club, and was recognized as a knowledgeable voice on wildlife, climate change, water and air protection, and civic engagement.

In 1990, she joined a handful of other Livingston residents to establish the Park County Environmental

Council, giving a voice to supporters of local wild places, initiating recycling efforts, and addressing county environmental issues. The council is celebrating its 35th anniversary this year.

Souvigny saw a need for an organization that could actively recruit and endorse politicians who cared about conservation issues. She also knew that voters and elected officials needed better information about key environmental issues. So in 1999, she helped found Montana Conservation Voters to build conservation voices and votes. In 2003, she signed on as the Conservation Voters' program director for three years. After that, she worked independently in Livingston serving as a consultant on climate change, voting rights, and other conservation issues, including the Clean Air Act protection campaign. After retiring in January 2018, she joined the board of directors of the Montana Conservation Voters Education Fund.

In 2005, she was appointed to the Livingston-Park County Trails and Greenway Committee that developed a proposal for a trail network throughout Park County. Her earlier efforts included planning a bike path through Livingston along Highway 89S. She also spearheaded a volunteer effort to clean up a former landfill adjacent to Mayor's Landing Fishing Access Site, raising more than \$50,000 in grants for cleanup and restoration of that area and lower Fleshman Creek. The area is now a popular dog park.

In 2015, Souvigny was appointed to Livingston's Parks and Trails Committee to improve walking and biking access to public land and around town. She served on the committee for eight years and was chair for five of those years. During that time, she initiated an Adopt-A-Trail program with seven volunteer teams.

