



Montana Pheasants Forever Team Update

Upland Game Bird Enhancement Program

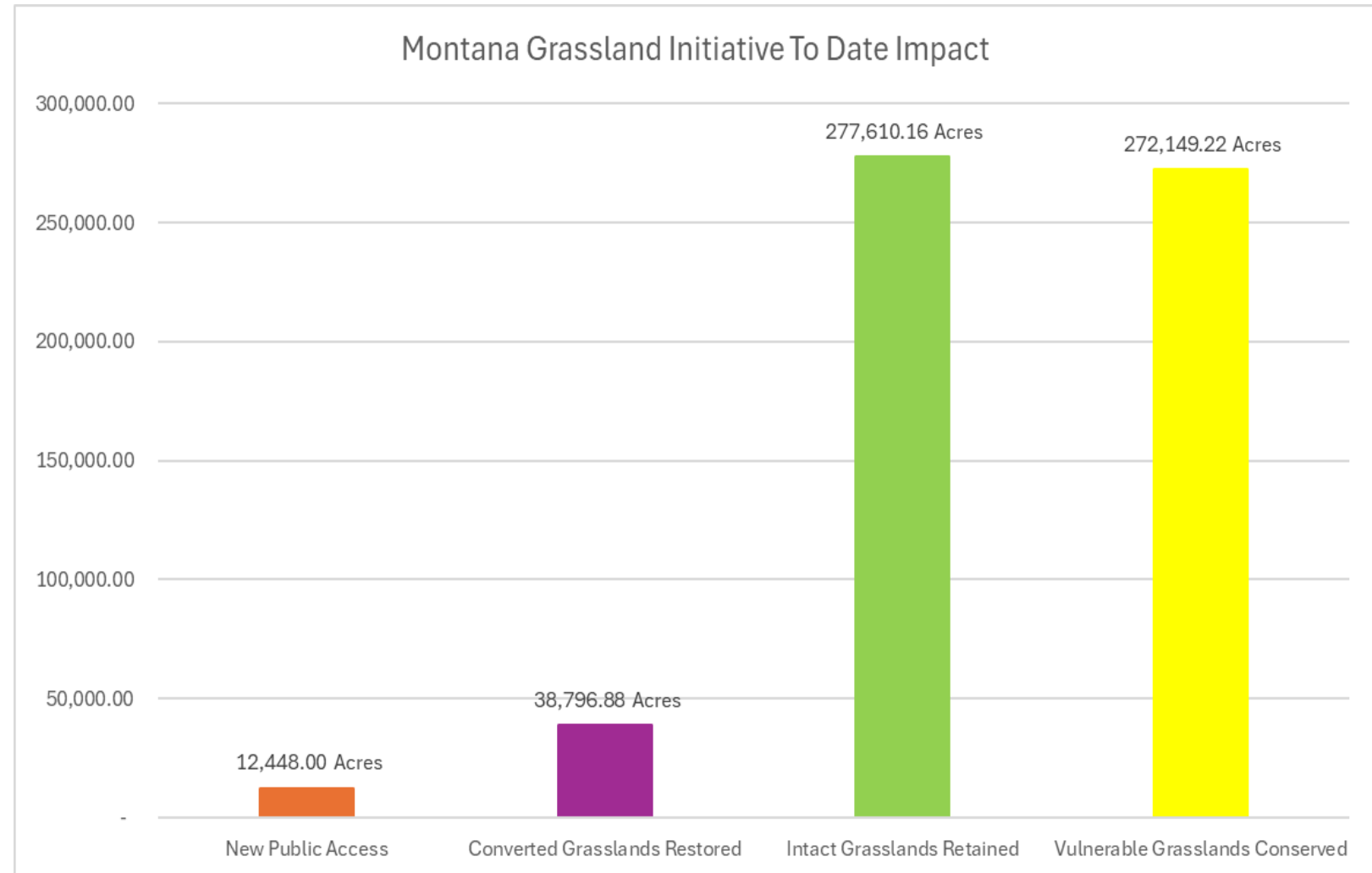
Advisory Council

March 23 – 24, 2026



Montana Grassland Initiative Update

- **We are just over half-way through the 5-year Montana Grassland Initiative.**
- 601,004 acres completed to date



Montana Grassland Initiative Update

- \$25 Million Montana Grasslands and Wildlife Corridors RCPP
 - First Producer batching period concluded January 15th, 2026.
 - Over 35 applications received.
 - Estimated \$5 million in project requests
 - 72,830 project footprint acres
 - 48,242 prescribed grazing acres
 - 2 Virtual fencing projects
 - 2,429 seeding acres
 - 50 miles of wildlife friendly fencing modifications/removals
 - 3,270 acres of land rental applications
 - Land Rental Payment Scenario Issue...



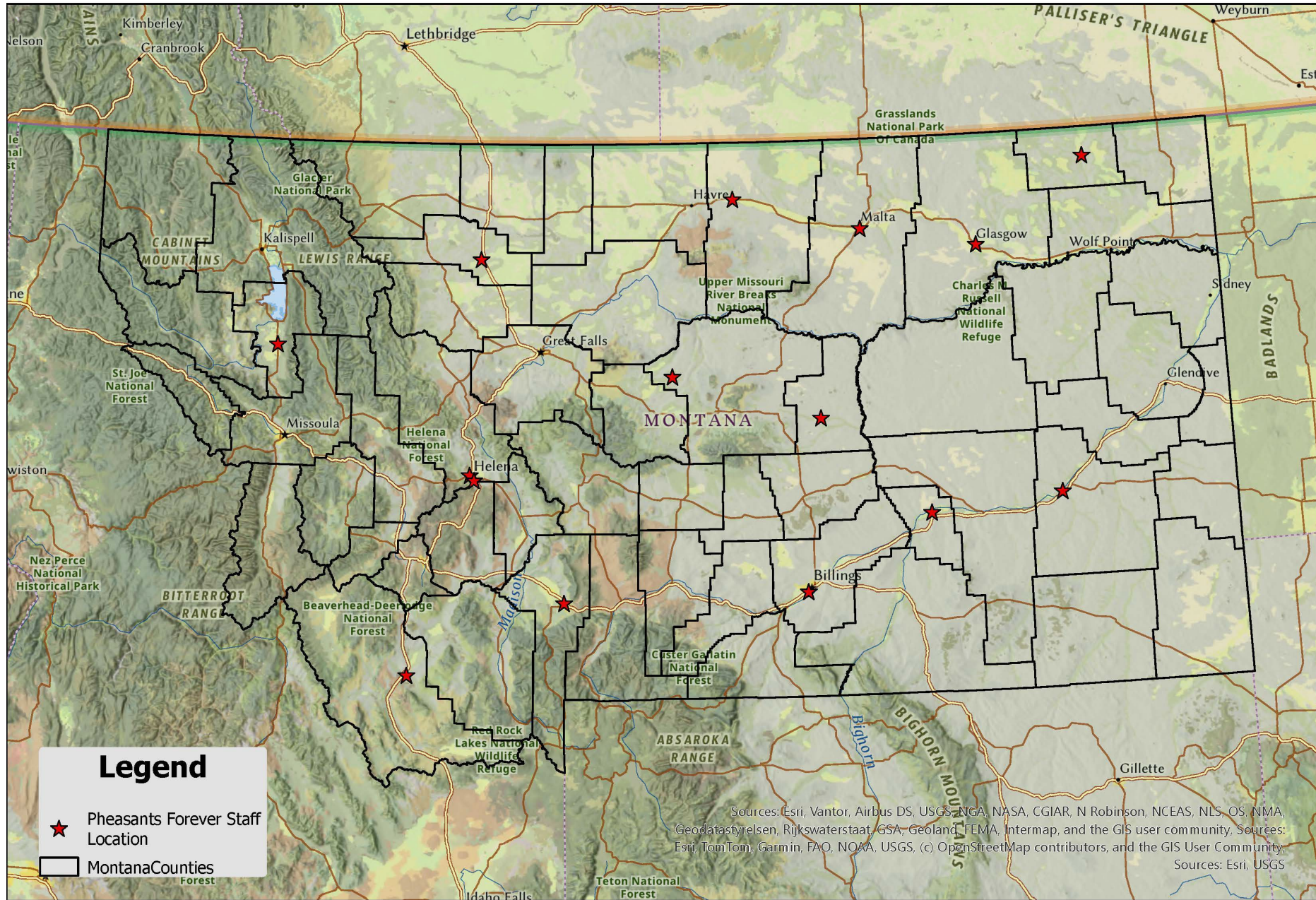
Montana Grassland Initiative Priorities 2026

- Grassland Restorations – Seedings
- Expired CRP Grazing Systems
- Implement MT GWC RCPP projects and leverage funding
- Increase relationship building with private foundations
- Increase outreach and communications with landowner testimonials, blog posts, and a grasslands quarterly newsletter





Pheasants Forever Montana Staff



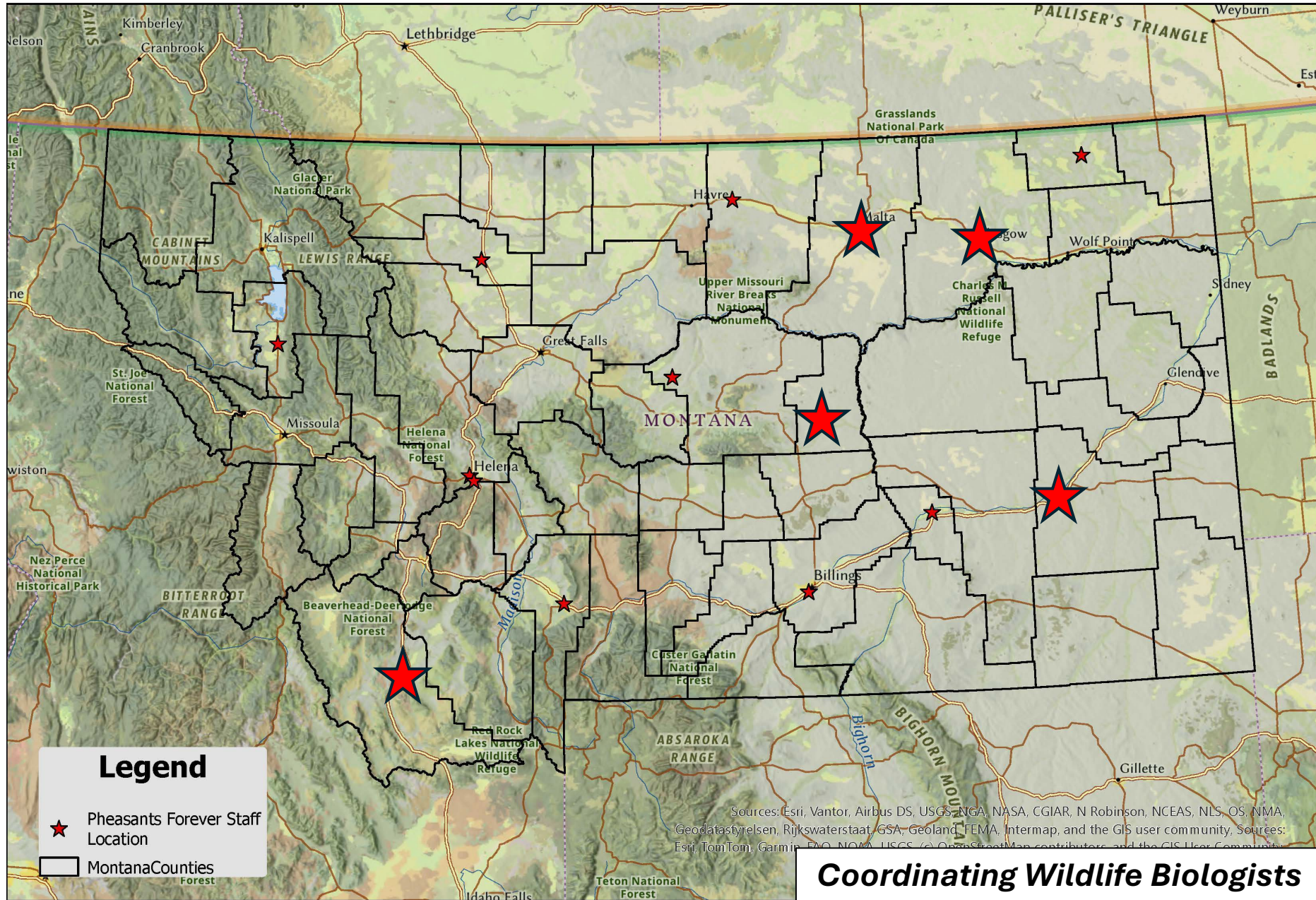
Legend

-  Pheasants Forever Staff Location
-  Montana Counties

Sources: Esri, Vantor, Airbus DS, USGS, NGA, NASA, CGIAR, N Robinson, NCEAS, NLS, OS, NMA, Geodastylelsen, Rijkswaterstaat, GSA, Geoland, FEMA, Intermap, and the GIS user community. Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, (c) OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community. Sources: Esri, USGS

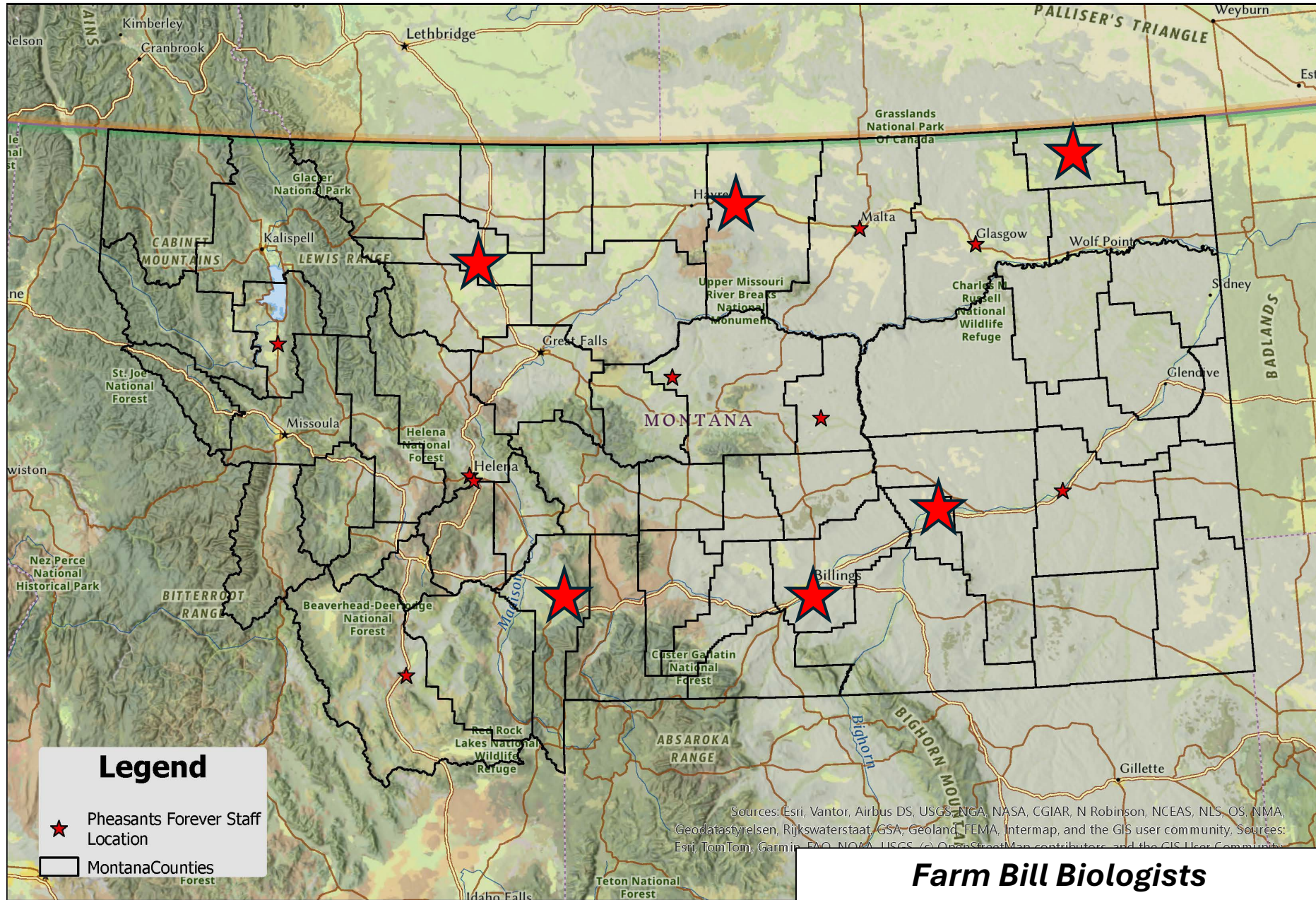


Pheasants Forever Montana Staff





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Shaun McCabe

Farm Bill Biologist III, Chinook MT

- 2025 impacted acres: 17,314
- Worked on projects that helped retain 3,058 acres of CRP
- Promoted FWP programs (Open Fields, Habitat Lease Program, Mig Bird)
- Currently working on Sweetgrass Migratory Bird access project
 - 207 acres perennial seeding
 - 237 acres of new public access



Crystallina White

Farm Bill Biologist III, Billings MT

- 2025 impacted acres: 43,366
- Developed and had approved for funding a new wildlife-based NRCS Targeted Implementation Plan:
 - Reducing Conflict with Wildlife Through Sustainable Ranching TIP
- Coordinated multiple youth educational events & low-tech restoration education projects
- Working with FWP and other agencies for Billings 2nd Annual Pollinator Fair



Ali Marschner

Farm Bill Biologist II, Conrad MT

- 2025 impacted acres: 25,000
 - 7 Open Fields site visits, 1,855 acres
- Beartooth WMA projects including conifer encroachment & sagebrush seedings
- Developed conifer encroachment plans on 3 Rocky Mountain Front WMAs
- Habitat management work on BMA #193
- Partnering with Mig Bird and several landowners around Cascade on large-scale habitat improvement and grazing management



Loren Ruport

Senior Coordinating Wildlife Biologist, Malta MT

- 6,280 acres of Grassland Restoration 2025
- Wetland Restoration on FWP easement Pintail Flatt 2016
- Helped on FWP Access easements in 2017 & 2019



Ethan Kalinowski

SW Montana Restoration Specialist, Dillon MT

- 2025 impacted acres: 8,418
- Specializes in cross-boundary work coordination with agency partners
- 4,489 acres planned for spring 2026 Rx burning



Joshua Hobbs

Coordinating Wildlife Biologist III, Central MT

- 2025 impacted acres: 36,159
- Beaver dam analog projects in Garfield County
- Nearly complete 880 acres of conifer mastication in Fergus County
- Planning 17 miles of updated Wildlife Friendly fencing
- Planning a willow workday on a previous project



Neil Vruno

Coordinating Wildlife Biologist , Miles City MT

- 2025 impacted acres: ~25,000
- Assisted FWP with PALA enrollment and BMA setups
- Completed ~60 Sharp-tailed & Sage Grouse Lek Surveys in Region 7
- Grassland & Riparian Restoration projects planned for 2026
- Starting 2026 lek surveys last week of March, goal is 80





Sawyer Reagan

Senior Farm Bill Biologist, Bozeman MT

- Originally from Missoula, MT
- Received a Bachelor's Degree from Montana State University in Rangeland Ecology & Management, and worked as a Rangeland Management Specialist with NRCS prior to joining Pheasants Forever
- My work spans across 14 counties in south central Montana
- I serve as a technical point of contact for NRCS staff and work directly with producers to implement conservation through UGBEP and other programs hosted by Pheasants Forever and our partners.



Maddisen Schmader

Farm Bill Biologist II, Scobey MT

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- My education background consists of a bachelors in biology and animal science with a chemistry minor from the University of Findlay.
 - I am an avid outdoor enthusiast and enjoy everything from working on the farm to whitewater rafting.
 - My passion for conservation is driven by the hope that future generations will be able to experience and enjoy all the beauty the natural world has to offer.



Nathan Tavaglione

Farm Bill Biologist II, Forsyth MT

- I originated from the Southern Plains state of Oklahoma. After a childhood full of outdoor adventuring, I graduated from Oklahoma State with a degree in Wildlife Management.
- Transferred from Kansas working as a PF/QF Habitat Specialist.
- My passion for hunting, fishing, and everything outdoors has led me into the profession of conservation, so that I may be a part of the work being done to keep the things I am passionate about around for generations to come.



2025/2026 Farmer of the Year



Team Montana Contact Information

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2025/2026 Farmer of
the Year



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