



**ROCKY MOUNTAIN
ELK FOUNDATION**

July 6th, 2026

Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
Attn: Evan Klein
1420 E. 6th Ave
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Evan,

Thank you for the opportunity for the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) to apply to assist Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks in the sale of the 2026 Montana Elk Tag. To partner with FWP on the sale of this license, fits within our mission of ensuring the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat, and our hunting heritage. RMEF was awarded the Montana Statewide Elk this previous year and it sold for a record price of \$158,000. RMEF also sold the tag in 2025 for \$90,000, in 2024 for \$126,000 and 2023 which sold for \$81,000.

RMEF again hosted a successful online tag auction for this last year, in April, that featured similar tags from several states across the country and promoted it nationally to targeted audiences and past buyers. This again led to very high sale prices for a majority of the tags that RMEF offered within this auction.

I am writing on RMEF's behalf to ask for the opportunity to assist in the sale of the 2027 Montana Statewide Elk Permit. Seeing the online sale format continue to be very successful, RMEF plans to continue to coordinate with other State Agencies to bring similar high-profile tags together from across the country for sale within a single focused online auction. RMEF would plan to retain 10% of the sale price to put towards expenses related to the auction of this license. We are excited for this opportunity again this upcoming year and hope that this will lead to more money generated for wildlife in 2027.

Thank you once more for the opportunity to assist in raising funds for wildlife. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Chris Doyle

RMEF Regional Director- Eastern, MT
406-565-7346
cdoyle@rmef.org

Enclosures: Proposal for 2027 Montana Statewide Elk Permit
RMEF Bylaws & 501C3 Letter
Auction Permit History List
2025 Project History
Montana Project History Summary

MONTANA RMEF AUCTIONED SPECIAL STATE PERMITS

Total Dollars Raised \$1,215,000

Montana Elk Permit

\$20,000 Reno '04
\$23,000 Portland '05
\$36,000 Reno '06
\$27,000 Reno '07
\$17,000 Reno '08
\$16,000 Ft Worth '09
\$12,000 Reno '10
\$19,000 Reno '11
\$23,000 Las Vegas '12
\$27,000 Las Vegas '13
\$30,000 Tucson '14
\$28,500 Tucson '15
\$40,000 Tucson '16
\$20,000 Tucson '17
\$35,000 Tucson '18
\$47,500 Tucson '19
\$54,000 Tucson '20

\$74,000 Tucson '21

\$48,000 RMEF Online Auction 22'
\$81,000 RMEF Online Auction 23'
\$126,000 RMEF Online Auction 24'
\$90,000 RMEF Online Auction 25'
\$158,000 RMEF Online Auction 26'

Montana Moose Permit

\$13,500 Reno '96
\$17,000 SLC '97
\$20,000 Reno '02
\$19,000 Reno '03
\$14,000 Ft Worth '09
\$11,000 Reno '10
\$16,000 Reno '11
\$21,000 Las Vegas '14

Montana Mountain Goat

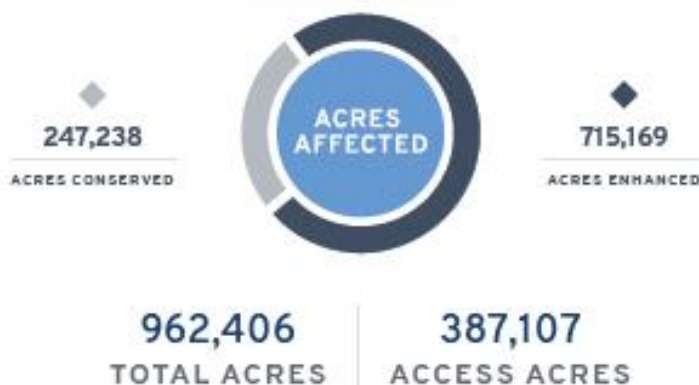
\$13,500 Reno '06
\$9,000 Reno '07
\$9,000 Reno '08

RMEF IN MONTANA

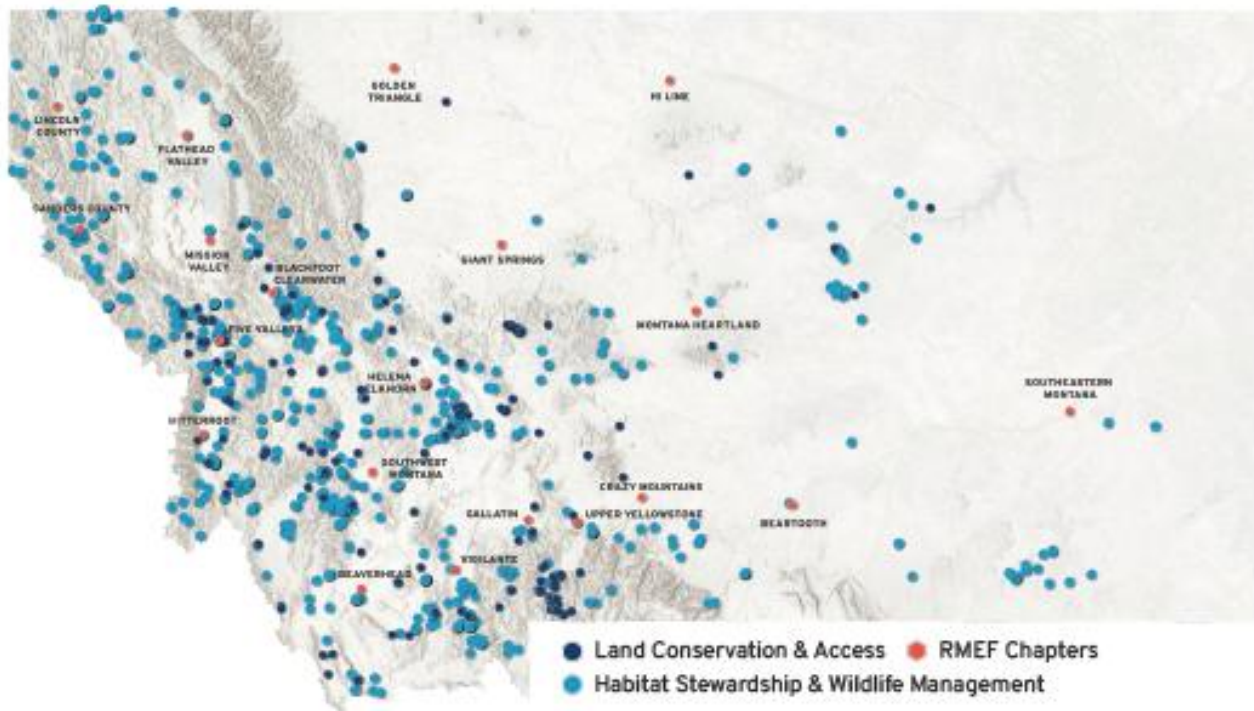


FUN FACT

In 1985, RMEF completed its first habitat stewardship project, a prescribed burn in northwest Montana to rejuvenate elk winter range. Fittingly, the burn took place in Elk Creek on the Kootenai National Forest near Libby, Montana.



* Projects reflect value of lands conserved at time of transaction rather than expenditures.




CHAPTERS
20



2025 HIGHLIGHTS MONTANA

Quality habitat—food, water, cover and space—is essential to the future of elk, other big game and countless wildlife species. RMEF and its partners fund and carry out habitat enhancements like prescribed burns, forest thinning, weed treatments and wildlife water developments. RMEF also provides grants for wildlife management and research to keep herds healthy and thriving.



HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

MOUNT JUMBO WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA

The 118-acre Mount Jumbo Wildlife Management Area was established in 1996 on the outskirts of Missoula to protect elk winter range. In 2025, RMEF contributed over \$10,000 to reduce tree density, improve forage and lower wildfire risk on the WMA. Contractors thinned 23 acres in March and April to increase sunlight and reduce ladder fuels. This work benefits black bears, mule deer, grouse and white-tailed deer in addition to elk. Building on these efforts, managers plan to treat invasive weeds and conduct prescribed burns in the future.



HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

REESTABLISHING CONIFERS

In 2017, a wildfire burned about 75% of the Kootenai West Wildlife Management Area's forest habitat. Wintering elk and deer rely on mixed canopy forest during heavy winter snowfall. RMEF granted \$35,000 to help Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks plant nearly 64,000 ponderosa pine, western larch and Douglas fir seedlings in 2025 on 228 acres that were severely burned and unlikely to regenerate on their own. Strategically reestablishing conifers will provide long-term benefits for elk and other wildlife.



HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

PRESCRIBED BURN REJUVENATES FORAGE

Elk, mule deer, pronghorn, wild turkeys and game birds living in the Missouri/Musselshell River Breaks northeast of Winnett have more to eat thanks to a 3,100-acre prescribed burn conducted by the Bureau of Land Management on federal, state and private lands in 2025. The effort opened forest canopy and reduced fuel loads across ponderosa pine habitat, rejuvenating forage and browse for year-round populations of elk and mule deer while reducing the risk of severe wildfire. RMEF contributed \$30,000 to the project.



BEFORE



AFTER

HABITAT STEWARDSHIP

ENHANCING VITAL FORAGE AND WATER RESOURCES

In 2025, the Southwest Montana Sagebrush Partnership (SMSP) completed the first phase of the Cream Creek Winter Range Restoration Project. This project aims to restore and maintain elk winter range within the Cream Creek watershed, located directly adjacent to the Robb Leford Wildlife Management Area in southwest Montana. This area is incredibly ecologically diverse: on the valley floor, a spring-fed stream supports a swath of aspen and willow, while in the hills above, high elevation mountain sagebrush meadows are intermixed with conifer forest and stands of mountain mahogany that provide valuable forage for ungulates throughout the winter months. The Cream Creek area supports a wintering herd of approximately 200-800 elk as well as other big game species such as mule deer, moose and bighorn sheep. Summer 2025, the SMSP coordinated the mechanical removal (top and scatter) of 352 acres of encroaching conifer trees that were threatening to take over the diverse mountain mahogany, aspen and sagebrush steppe habitat that makes up the Cream Creek watershed. This conifer removal work is part of a larger landscape effort. Since 2019, RMEF has supported approximately 1,902 acres of conifer removal within Cream Creek and adjacent watersheds. Additionally, the SMSP worked with American Conservation Experience and volunteers from the local community to build 59 large wood structures within 1.6 miles of Cream Creek designed to slow and spread water during runoff, capture sediment and ultimately raise the water table and facilitate the expansion of riparian vegetation. Over time, these actions are expected to enhance and maintain vital forage and water resources critical to elk and dozens of other wildlife species.

IN 2025, WE COMMITTED \$415K TO 12 NEW HABITAT STEWARDSHIP PROJECTS IN MT.



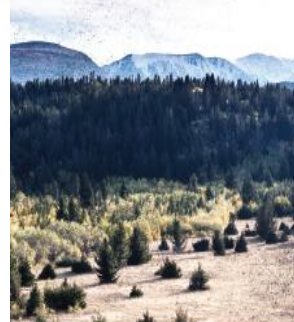
WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT

TRACKING ELK MOVEMENTS

The South Fork Flathead River drainage, which is predominantly in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, is experiencing declining elk numbers and poor calf recruitment. With funding support from RMEF, researchers are deploying GPS radio collars to track elk movements, survival rates and habitat use to identify factors influencing elk numbers and inform management decisions aimed at the long-term health of the area's herds.



IN 2025, WE COMMITTED \$246K TO 6 NEW WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT PROJECTS IN MT.



RMEF works to conserve critical big game habitat, migration corridors and calving grounds while expanding and improving public access opportunities. Our conservation tools include land acquisitions, voluntary conservation agreements, contributions and other strategic actions.



LAND CONSERVATION & ACCESS

STANLEY CREEK

In 2025, RMEF acquired a 54-acre land donation of yearlong elk habitat 12 miles southwest of Roundup, Montana. The property hosts yearlong elk habitat in close proximity to RMEF's Red Hill and Big Snowy Mountains acquisitions. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks has designated the area as a migration corridor for pronghorn antelope.

RMEF funds wildlife management and research projects that benefit big game across the country. This includes disease surveillance, wildlife-friendly fencing and scientific studies that expand our understanding of big game habitat, movement, interactions and overall herd health.

RMEF NATIONWIDE SINCE 1984

9.2 MILLION
ACRES CONSERVED
& ENHANCED

1.6 MILLION
ACCESS ACRES

15,184
PROJECTS

\$1.7 BILLION
TOTAL VALUE