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NEWS FROM THE MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL INFORMATION CENTER



IN THIS ISSUE

- 2** Elections Maintain Status Quo
- 3** Habitat Conservation Plan Challenged
- 4** Colstrip - a History of Violations
- 6** Signal Peak Coal Giveaway
- 7** PPL May Sell Montana Plants
- 8** Golden Sunlight Mine Expansion
- 10** Montana Futures Raffle

Elections Maintain the Status Quo

by Anne Hedges

The elections are finally over. Montana voters were able to see through an onslaught of negative advertising, record-breaking out-of-state secret money, and outright lies about who is responsible for the closure of the Corette coal plant in Billings (hint: it wasn't Sen. Jon Tester or Gov.-elect Steve Bullock). Montana elected a pro-environment governor and U.S. senator. And, although still anti-environment, the composition of the Montana Legislature improved slightly.

Despite the good news, this legislative session is bound to be rough on the environment. Gov. Brian Schweitzer vetoed a record number of bills last session. Early bill draft requests already

submitted by legislators indicate that most, if not all, of those unconstitutional and pro-pollution bills will be back this session.

Two days after the election there were already 612 bill draft requests submitted. Although it is difficult to say what those bills will do exactly, it appears that some are intended to undermine the renewable energy standard, energy efficiency measures, gravel mining laws, subdivision laws, the Montana Environmental Policy Act, the State's superfund cleanup law, and the public's right to appeal anti-environment decisions of State agencies. Anti-environment interests will probably have the votes to pass many of these regressive, pro-pollution proposals.

Once again it is likely to come down to the governor. MEIC hopes that newly elected Gov. Steve Bullock will show moderation and common sense, and reject short-sighted proposals that make big corporations a "quick buck" at the expense of clean air, clean water, and public health.

RIP Public Service Commission

MEIC is sorry to see the outcome of the Public Service Commission races. The pro-environment candidates all lost, plain and simple. MEIC will keep a close eye on what goes on at the PSC but we are not expecting it to be predictable, logical, or protective of the environment. ☹



MEIC lobbyists, from left to right: Kyla Maki, Anne Hedges, Jim Jensen, and Derf Johnson.

We Need Your Help at the 2013 Montana Legislature!

MEIC is the lead voice for the environment at the Montana Legislature. But it is absolutely critical that members like you are engaged at the legislature, and willing to contact legislators and the governor to encourage them to protect our clean air, clean water, and healthy landscapes.

MEIC will regularly update our Legislative Bill Tracker on our website (<http://meic.org/issues/legislative-session/>). You can use this tool to follow important legislation, contact legislators, and reach out to your friends and neighbors and encourage them to become involved.

Cover Photo: A grizzly bear in Montana.

MEIC to Challenge Federal Approval of State Habitat Plan

by Kyla Maki

MEIC, Friends of the Wild Swan, and Natural Resources Defense Council, all represented by Earthjustice, have filed a 60-day notice of intent to pursue litigation against the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). The reason is that FWS approved a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) that fails to protect endangered species on State lands in western Montana. The Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) developed the 50-year plan. It covers over half a million acres of State land that contains prime habitat for endangered grizzly bears, bull trout, and Canada lynx. Those lands represent some of the last remaining strongholds for these iconic species in the United States. The FWS approved the plan and issued DNRC a 50-year "incidental take" permit in 2011.

The 60-day notice letter says that the FWS violated the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) when it approved DNRC's HCP because the plan increases activities that do not protect species to the "maximum extent practicable." Instead of protecting species and conserving habitat, DNRC's plan would increase activities such as logging and road-building. Both DNRC and FWS admit that more logging and roads will further fragment grizzly bear habitat and increase sedimentation in important bull trout streams. The HCP also diminishes secure core protections for grizzly bears on over 39,000 acres.

The Endangered Species Act does not allow FWS to issue an incidental take permit when the applicant (DNRC) "rejected another alternative that would have provided more mitigation or caused less harm to the endangered species and FWS determined that the rejected alternative was feasible." FWS approved DNRC's plan without providing sufficient economic analysis of alternatives that could provide better protections

for grizzly bears and bull trout. Instead, FWS arbitrarily accepted DNRC's argument that it rejected a better conservation alternative, because it would not generate as much revenue for the State. Under this logic, any state or private landowner developing an endangered species habitat conservation plan could reject any alternatives that did not maximize revenue and profit.

DNRC's plan also does not propose adjusting intensive management activities to respond to climate change impacts. FWS acknowledges that the threats to grizzly bear and bull trout populations and their habitat will assuredly be exacerbated by climate change over the 50-year HCP term. For

example, global warming will raise temperatures in cold-water streams that bull trout rely on for spawning and survival. Grizzly bears will also suffer because they will be forced to seek out new food sources as pathogens and heat-tolerant species alter their foraging landscape. Instead of giving DNRC the ability to respond to climate change impacts, the HCP locks in an irresponsible management regime for the next 50 years.

If FWS does not take action to remedy the legal violation by the middle of November 2012, then MEIC and the other plaintiffs will file suit against the federal agency under both the Endangered Species Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. 🌀



Bull trout in Ram Creek, near Lake Koocanusa. Photo courtesy of Joel Sartore/National Geographic Stock with Wade Fredenberg.

Colstrip: A Saga of Expired Permits, Violations, and Contamination

by Anne Hedges

Pennsylvania Power's Colstrip plant. Photo by Montana Film Office.

A few years ago MEIC began an intensive investigation of potential violations of public health and environmental protections at the Colstrip power plant operated by Pennsylvania Power & Light (PPL). That research revealed widespread violations that have resulted

admitted that the impoundments probably started leaking when they were built decades ago. The impoundments cover hundreds of acres and receive the plant's annual output of 1.6 million tons of coal ash. Unfortunately, knowledge of the contamination has not caused DEQ to require adequate containment or cleanup.

There was a brief moment of hope that DEQ might address the problem when it released a draft enforcement order in February 2010. But those hopes were dashed by the time it released its final order in August 2012. The final order contains no cleanup standards or schedule for cleanup. It simply requires PPL to continue to investigate the contamination and eventually provide DEQ with a proposed clean-up plan. MEIC and Sierra Club, with the help of Earthjustice, are challenging this order in court. These enormous impoundments are certain to result in the facility being a Superfund site in the future if the contamination is not addressed immediately and appropriately.

Similar water quality problems exist at the adjacent Rosebud mine, which supplies all of the coal for Colstrip. The mine, owned by Western Energy, a subsidiary of Westmoreland Coal Co., is one of the largest strip mines in the United States. Unfortunately DEQ has not required it to comply with either the federal Surface Mine Control and Reclamation Act or the federal Clean Water Act. DEQ has never properly analyzed the mine's impact on the area's hydrology, as it is required to do under state and federal law.

Despite its failures, DEQ just issued a new water pollution discharge permit to the mine. The mine's water pollution permit expired in 2004. Over two years ago MEIC submitted comments on DEQ's first draft renewal permit. MEIC expressed concern that DEQ proposed to allow additional water pollution discharges into waters that are already contaminated beyond maximum legal limits. DEQ denied there are any contamination problems. When MEIC showed DEQ the agency's own list that identified the waters as contaminated, DEQ



in water contamination and degradation of air quality. Colstrip, which is the 8th largest greenhouse gas emitter in the nation and the biggest polluter in

“Colstrip, which is the 8th largest greenhouse gas emitter in the nation and the biggest polluter in Montana, has received a free pass from state and federal regulators for far too long.”

Montana, has received a free pass from state and federal regulators for far too long. These regulators appear to be unwilling to correct the problems that exist without a court order

requiring them to do so. In order to protect public health and the environment, MEIC is working to obtain just that.

Water Contamination

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has known about ground water contamination from Colstrip's massive coal ash impoundments for at least a decade. DEQ has

said the streams had been “reclassified” and the listings no longer applied. When MEIC pointed out that DEQ did not go through the required reclassification process, DEQ said that because the mine was not going to increase its pollution discharges, the laws did not apply anyway. Of course, even if its legal argument was valid, the new DEQ permit authorizes more pollution discharges from many new discharge points.

The State’s water pollution permit also does not require the mine to monitor 80% of its water pollution discharge points during precipitation events, because it says the discharge points are remote and inaccessible. DEQ failed to go through any process to justify such a monitoring waiver, perhaps because it knows its permit does not comply with the requirements for a waiver. Instead DEQ is allowing remote areas to be sacrifice zones. That is illegal, and a bad policy in an area where water is the lifeblood of the agricultural operations that have been around for generations.

DEQ has a habit of ignoring public concerns. Apparently only court orders will make it protect water quality. To that end Earthjustice and the Western Environmental Law Center have filed separate suits on behalf of MEIC and Sierra Club to stop the State from continuing to allow contamination of water quality downstream from the coal ash impoundments and the mine.

Air Pollution

Each year the Colstrip plant releases about 17 million tons of carbon dioxide into the air and tens of thousands of tons of other air pollutants that directly harm public health.

This Summer the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) had an opportunity to require the installation of modern pollution controls on all four smokestacks at Colstrip, but it ignored federal law and refused to do so. EPA



Rosebud Coal mine. Photo courtesy of Kestrel Aerial Services, Inc.

made a decision that conflicts with its own rules and with similar decisions it has made in other states. It ignored the evidence provided by air pollution experts from the National Park Service, the medical community, and technology experts across the country. EPA could have significantly reduced pollutants that harm the respiratory system, but it failed to do so.

During EPA’s public comment period MEIC submitted evidence that Colstrip’s emissions are violating EPA’s health-based standard for sulfur dioxide (SO₂). This standard was adopted due to overwhelming scientific evidence showing that short-term exposure to high concentrations of SO₂ is extremely harmful to health. EPA ignored the evidence and adopted a rule that requires little improvement in air quality. Unfortunately public health is the casualty. Rosebud County, where the plant is located, has one of the highest asthma rates in Montana.

continued on page 9

Montana's Land Board Practically Gives Away State Coal - Again

Anne Hedges

The Montana Land Board did it again. It sold the State's coal for far less money than similar coal sells for in Wyoming. It ignored coal's overwhelming contribution to climate change. And it leased the coal with almost no discussion. The last time the Land Board made these errors it approved a lease for the coal in the Otter Creek tracts. This time it was coal near the Signal

Peak mine just north of Billings. And this time the Land Board made another error in its haste, it failed to even appraise its coal prior to leasing it at a bargain

on behalf of this mine. The legislature rejected the tax break twice but the Governor added it as an amendment to an unrelated bill over the objections of environmentalists and local governments. The amendment took millions of dollars out of local government coffers and gave it to Signal Peak. And now, once again, Schweitzer has orchestrated a sweetheart deal for this mine by leasing the coal for rock bottom prices. The Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) recommended leasing the coal for 30¢ per ton with a 10% royalty. The Land Board approved that proposal. In contrast, the federal Bureau of Land Management in June 2012 sold coal in Wyoming for \$1.10/ton and a 12.5% royalty.

Unfortunately the coal's true value will never be known even though the Land Board is required by law to receive fair market value for State coal. The 2011 Legislature passed a law that said the Land Board could set the fair market value for State coal based on an appraisal or by allowing the highest bid to constitute the fair market value. Of course when the State is leasing coal adjacent to an existing mine there will be only one bidder. Since that bid will be considered fair market value the bidder can easily submit a below market price and lease the coal for whatever it is willing to pay.

Because of the new law, DNRC and the Land Board can decide whether they want State coal to be appraised. The State justified its decision to skip the appraisal by saying that BLM recently sold its coal to the mine for a similar price and BLM did have its coal appraised. The problem is, no one, including the State, is allowed to see BLM's appraisal. BLM's leasing practices are currently under investigation by the Government Accountability Office and the Department of Interior's Inspector General.

No environmental analysis. No economic analysis. No meaningful discussion. It looks as if the Land Board's responsibility to prudently manage State lands for present and future generations is secondary to giving away Montana's coal for rock bottom prices. ☹

"And now, once again, Schweitzer has orchestrated a sweetheart deal for this mine by leasing the coal for rock bottom prices."

basement price.

In September 2012, the Land Board, which is made up of the State's top five elected officials, voted unanimously to lease nearly 640 acres of land containing 12 million tons of coal to Signal Peak Energy. The lease allows the Signal Peak underground coal mine to expand. The mine currently sells about 60% of its coal to Asian markets.

Gov. Brian Schweitzer has long been one of the mine's leading advocates. His office finagled one of the biggest tax breaks in the 2011 legislative session

Signal Peak mine. Photo by Larry Mayer/ Billings Gazette.



PPL Wants to be Rid of Its Montana Coal Plants – Deregulation is to Blame

by Anne Hedges

September was a busy month for Pennsylvania Power and Light (PPL). On September 19th, PPL issued a late night press release saying it was going to mothball Corette, its 44-year-old relatively small coal-fired plant in Billings. At about the same time an industry newsletter said PPL was looking for a buyer for its share of the much larger Colstrip coal-fired power plant, a report that PPL will neither confirm nor deny.

Last year PPL earned \$1.5 billion in profit and had one of the highest paid utility executives in the nation. Why would such a wealthy corporation want out of its coal investments in Montana? The answer comes in its recent filings with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), and a press release issued last May. It seems that old coal plants in Montana are having a difficult time competing in a deregulated market.

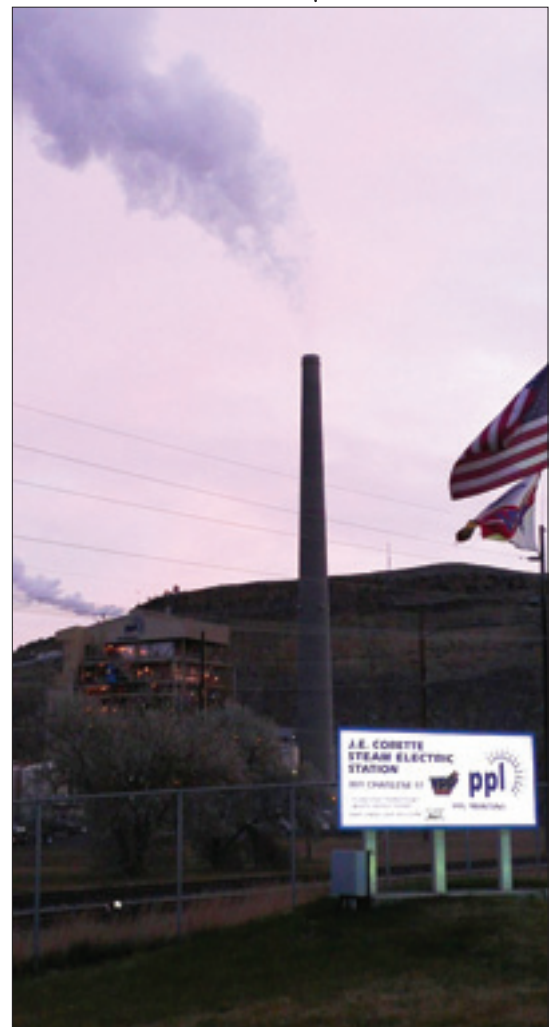
PPL's SEC filings show that over the last few years its utilization of Montana coal plants has declined dramatically (from 83% to 50%) while its utilization of natural gas plants has significantly increased (from 64% to 96%). According to **The Wall Street Journal**, utilities across the country have been switching from coal to natural gas because natural gas is cheap. Last May PPL announced its plan to switch from coal to natural gas at its regulated Kentucky utility.

PPL is a corporation that understands a shifting marketplace. PPL's chief executive officer, William Spence, said that PPL's recent investments in regulated utilities in the United Kingdom and Kentucky have fundamentally changed the company. Before those investments PPL was a company that made money from its deregulated energy sources like Corette and Colstrip. Now Spence says that 70% of PPL's earnings come from its rate-regulated utilities: "The bottom line is this: without the additional earnings from these rate-regulated operations,

PPL's earnings per share would be significantly depressed for 2012 and the foreseeable future." PPL sees its future in a rate-regulated market, not in deregulated markets such as Montana.

In a highly cynical move, when it announced its plan to mothball Corette, PPL ignored these market forces and blamed the U.S. EPA's regulation of toxic air pollution. Republican candidates instantly jumped on the bandwagon and blamed Democrats who supported Clean Air Act protections for Corette's closure. But the fact is that PPL sent a letter to Montana's two senators in June saying it was "well-positioned" to comply with the EPA regulations. The senators took PPL at its word and refused to vote for Republican-led efforts to weaken these 22-year-old health-based requirements.

As former PSC commissioner and state senator Ken Toole said: "What's deplorable about this is that the Corette announcement was carefully timed to affect the election. They're stepping out of Montana no matter what, but they figure if they can step out of Montana and change the face of the U.S. Senate on their way out, then so much the better." 🌱



Corette power plant.
Photo by Anne Hedges.

The Copper Collar is Back, in Gold

by Jim Jensen

The Golden Sunlight mine (GSM) near Whitehall is seeking State permission to dig another open pit just north of its existing one. The company submitted the application to amend its current operating plan in September 2012. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has 90 days to

"In its application, the company says drainage from the new pit will require 'perpetual treatment' in order to prevent the poisoning of the Jefferson River aquifer."

determine if additional information is needed for the application to be deemed "complete" and ready for analysis under the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA).

In press coverage of the submittal, DEQ spokesman Herb Rolfes said the agency would move quickly, conducting the review in less than 90 days. No surprise there.

Sadly, DEQ has a history of complicity with mining companies in helping them to evade the State Constitution's requirement that "(a)ll lands disturbed by the taking of natural resources shall be reclaimed." In its application, GSM said: "With the exception of open pits and highwalls that would remain after closure, GSM's reclamation plan provides for returning disturbance areas

to post-closure land uses including grazing and wildlife." These exceptions leave a gaping hole (pun intended) in any reclamation plans.

Just as in the days of the Copper Collar, when the Anaconda Mining Co. had its way with the State legislature and various governors, now Golden Sunlight is hoping to do the same. The company and its allies in the legislature have succeeded in weakening MEPA and Montana's reclamation laws to the point that history is likely to be repeated.

However, there is one critical difference from the situation before 1973: MEIC now exists. We will fight with every tool available to prevent a repeat of mining's history of despoliation and corruption.

In its application, the company says drainage from the new pit will require "perpetual treatment" in order to prevent the poisoning of the Jefferson River aquifer. The application states that a minimum 200 feet of drawdown in the bedrock groundwater system would be needed to ensure dry mining conditions. This practice of mining below the water table in rock that chemically reacts with air and water to create highly acidic water is exactly what was allowed at the notorious Zortman/Landusky mines in Montana's Little Rockies. The same conditions are found at the existing Golden Sunlight pit.

Golden Sunlight's existing cyanide heap-leach gold mine is grandfathered under I-137, the citizen-passed measure that banned such mines in 1998. It will almost certainly become a toxic Superfund site in the future when mining is completed. Allowing more pollution now is clearly an economic liability to Montanans in the future.

This is exactly the situation that the writers of Montana's Constitution intended to prevent when they adopted the reclamation requirement in 1972. One Berkeley Pit was enough, they figured. Indeed. ☹

Golden Sunlight mine.
Photo by Lighthawk.



Colstrip *(continued from page 5)*

The State appears to be ignoring the same evidence. Colstrip's overarching air pollution permit expired in April 2010. DEQ is only now working on re-issuing that permit. As with the water pollution permits, MEIC pointed out during the public comment period that DEQ's proposed air pollution permit failed to guarantee compliance with the law, particularly air quality standards for SO₂ and particulates.

In regard to particulates, DEQ's proposed permit requires only three hours per year of monitoring data, even though the Colstrip plant must comply with both an hourly and a three-hour particulate limit. Three hours of monitoring per year at the largest air pollution source in the state is hardly sufficient to ensure compliance with a limit that is supposed to be met each and every hour. Plants all over the country continuously monitor their emissions to



guarantee compliance with emission limits. DEQ should require similar monitoring at Colstrip but so far has refused to do so.

Because of federal and state regulators' failures to require compliance with air quality laws, MEIC, with the help of Earthjustice and Sierra Club, is ready to ask the courts to step in and force these agencies to comply with the law and protect public health and the environment. 🌱

Ash ponds at Colstrip. Photo by Kestrel Aerial Services, Inc.

Montana's Largest Wind Farm is Up and Running

The Rim Rock Wind Farm located in Toole County between Cut Bank and Shelby, Montana, is now online. If you have ever spent time along Montana's "hi-line" you know that the wind almost never stops blowing. Montana's newest wind farm takes advantage of this tremendous resource. At 189 MW, Rim Rock is Montana's largest wind facility and could provide electricity for least 60,000 homes. The project will involve

more than 45 full-time jobs and \$2,000,000 in tax revenue annually to Toole County.

Naturener, an international wind energy development company, is the developer and primary owner of the project. San Diego Gas & Electric, a California electric utility, will purchase power from the facility to help meet California's 33% renewable energy requirement.

MEIC's 2012 Montana Futures Raffle

The raffle everyone wins!

Our thanks to all the raffle prize donors. We appreciate their generosity and hope you will support them when you can.

The 2013 legislative session is fast approaching, and it promises to be a very tough. Buy a Montana Futures Raffle ticket today, and you'll be directly supporting MEIC's critical lobbying efforts next year.

Here's how it works: 100 prizes. 200 tickets sold. You have a one-in-two chance of winning! The average prize value is \$160 with some worth more than \$500. Prizes valued at less than \$50 will be combined. Tickets are \$100. You can also buy half a ticket with a friend or let us pair you up. The deadline is Wednesday, December 12th, with winners announced on December 13th.

To buy a ticket, visit www.meic.org or call Sara Marino at (406) 443-2520. **Thank you!**

SPECIAL FEATURES

- Gary and Dona Aitken, Ovando:** sturdy toy box, made of local Ponderosa pine, clear or blue stained, inlaid with the name of your choice. Value: \$250.
- Helén Edwards, Helena:** jade, crystal, and sterling silver necklace. Value: \$225.
- R. Tom Gilleon, Cascade:** 28 in. x 19 in. limited edition giclee print: Red Day Butte. Value: \$575.
- Roger Sullivan and Lucy Smith, Kalispell:** summer evening sail for 2, with wine and hors d'oeuvres, on Flathead Lake. Value: \$250.
- Sarah Jaeger, Helena:** porcelain covered casserole and pitcher. Value: \$245.
- Wilbur Rehmann, Helena:** duet jazz concert in the Helena-area location of your choice by saxophonists Wilbur Rehmann and Sarah Dramstad, and a copy of their new CD. Value: \$300.
- Gary and Judy Matson, Milltown:** Ruana hunting knife made in Montana. Value: \$265.
- Linda Holding, Arlee:** Tiny Tot miniature (14 in. x 6 in. x 7 in.) wood stove made of cast-iron. Value \$250.

- John Wachsmuth, Kalispell:** 1 day guided float-fishing trip for 2, with lunch, on the Flathead River. Value: \$500.
- Custer Tours, Billings:** two half-day guided tours in your vehicle of the Custer Battlefield site with noted historian and retired Park Service superintendent of the site. Value: \$250 each.
- Yellowstone Alpen Guides, West Yellowstone:** snow coach tour for 2 to Old Faithful or the Grand Canyon in Yellowstone National Park. Value: \$200.
- 3 Circle Ranch, Birney:** 35 pounds of all-natural prime beef. Value: \$250.
- Great Divide Ski & Ride, Marysville:** 10 adult all-day lift tickets (split into 3 prizes). Value: \$160 each.
- Sara MacCalman, Missoula:** framed 16 in. x 21 in. original stilllife painting. Value: \$500.
- Allegra Print & Imaging, Helena:** 2 gift certificates to Chico Hot Springs. Value: \$250 each.

VACATIONS AND FINE DINING

- Boulder Hot Springs, Boulder:** pass for 10 visits to indoor and outdoor hot pools. Value: \$60.
- Community Food Co-op, Bozeman:** gift certificate. Value: \$50.
- Good Food Store, Missoula:** gift certificate. Value: \$10.
- Beverly Magley, Helena:** choice of winter harvest dinner or garden party for 4, in Helena, with locally grown and harvested venison and vegetables. Value: \$200.
- Sanders Bed & Breakfast, Helena:** 1 night's lodging and breakfast for 2. Value: \$140.
- Great Harvest Bread Co., Missoula:** 2 gift certificates. Value: \$50 each.
- Windbag Saloon, Helena:** dinner for 2, including drinks, an appetizer, and a dessert. Value: \$75.
- Blackfoot River Brewery, Helena:** gift certificate for 10 growlers of beer, and a growler coozie. Value: \$90.
- Crazy Mountain Inn, Martinsdale:** 1 night's lodging for 2, with dinner and breakfast. Value: \$150.
- Lifeline Produce, Victor:** selection of either organic winter storage vegetables or spring bedding plants. Value: \$100.
- Mill Creek Lodging Bed & Breakfast, Anaconda:** one night's lodging for 2, with breakfast. Value: \$85.
- Taco del Sol, Helena:** 3 prizes of a 12 in. burrito each month for a year. Value: \$60 each.
- Good Earth Market, Billings:** gift basket. Value: \$50.

- Real Food Market and Deli, Helena:** Basket of green cleaning products proving safety and performance can play nice together. Value: \$65.
- Bozeman Brewing Co., Bozeman:** growler of beer, gift certificate, and a T-shirt. Value: \$50.
- Montana Ale Works, Bozeman:** gift certificate. Value: \$50.
- Murry's, Helena:** gift certificate. Value: \$50.

OUTDOOR EQUIPMENT

- The Base Camp, Helena:** North Face Cat's Meow sleeping bag. Value: \$160.
- Crazy Creek Products, Red Lodge:** 2 Crazy Creek original chairs. Value: \$50 each.
- Harold Dramstad Production & Design, Helena:** wildland firefighter's personal gear backpack. Value: \$140.
- Montana Outdoor Sports, Helena:** Fujinon 7 x 50 PCF waterproof binoculars. Value: \$200.
- Freeheel and Wheel, West Yellowstone:** 2 full-day Nordic ski rentals, and 2 coffee drinks. Value: \$70.
- Patagonia Outlet Store, Dillon:** women's fleece Re-Tool jacket. Value: \$139.
- Blue Ribbon Flies, West Yellowstone:** outdoor clothing. Value: \$200.
- Red Ants Pants, White Sulphur Springs:** hooded sweatshirt. Value: \$39.
- Patagonia Outlet Store, Dillon:** men's Synchilla jacket. Value: \$119.
- MEIC, Helena:** MEIC logo ball cap and t-shirt of your choice. Value: \$30.
- Rocky Mountain Outfitter, Kalispell:** Backpack. Value: \$75.

FINE ARTS

Jeanette Barnes, Butte: framed original watercolor and ink hand-lettered quotation from John Muir. Value: \$125.

Dee Linnell Blank, Whitefish: informally framed 12 in. x 18 in. photograph: Blanket flowers and Lupine in the Many Glacier Valley. Value: \$85.

Ivelone Hodges, Helena: framed copy of Winslow Homer's: On the Beach - Two are Company, Three are None. Value: \$500.

Nancy Erickson, Missoula: framed 12 in. x 15 in. watercolor painting of a landscape by Don Mundt. Value: \$155.

Ghost Art Gallery, Helena: framed hand-colored etching by Christa Malay: Poppies. Value: \$205.

Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Bozeman: unframed giclee print by Jennifer Lowe. Value: \$250.

Lava Jazz Pottery, Polson: porcelain baking dish. Value: \$100.

Buckskin Clothier, Kalispell: 9 in. deerskin shoulder purse with 3 pockets, a braided shoulder strap,

and an antler concho. Value: \$139.

Lindy Miller, Helena: ceramic vase. Value: \$100.

Larry Weinberg, Oregon: limited edition art print by Rod Frederick: High Country Harem. Value: \$185.

Marjorie Reck, Cameron: 9 in. Red Chimney gourd with turquoise and brass beads and philodendron sheaths. Value: \$120.

Adam Koltz, California: 13 in. x 17 in. framed watercolor painting: Summer Clouds Over Rocky Mountain Front. Value: \$275.

George McCauley, Helena: stoneware goblet. Value: \$100.

Linda Christensen, Kalispell: watercolor on clayboard: Avalanche Lake Morning Reflection. Value: \$100.

Turman Larison Contemporary, Helena: 2 watercolor gift cards handpainted by Doug Turman. Value: \$100.

Jim Barrett, Livingston: 14 in. x 18 in. fine art reproduction of an original drawing: Bear. Value: \$175.

Ivelone Hodges, Helena: print of

limited edition framed color drawing by Diana Weathersby: Unlimited Man - Saint Basil. Value: \$300.

Saunders Jewelry and Design, Helena: silver earrings. Value: \$25.

Claire O'Connell, Helena: 17 in. x 21 in. black and white woodcut print: Drippy. Value: \$75.

Larry Weinberg, Oregon: limited edition art print by Rod Frederick: Point of View. Value: \$235.

Birds and Beasley's, Helena: Framed drawing of an eagle by Jane Shull Beasley. Value: \$25.

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Stan and Glenda Bradshaw, Helena: guided canoe trip for 2 on the Missouri River, with lunch. Value: \$200.

Steve Gilbert, Helena: 1 day guided float-fishing trip for 2, with lunch, on the Missouri River. Value: \$450.

Ron Stirling, Missoula: 1 day guided float trip for 2 on a Missoula-area river. Value: \$400.

Montana Raft Co. and Glacier Guides, West Glacier: half-day whitewater raft trip for 2 on the Flathead River. Value: \$105.

B Bar Ranch, Emigrant: 2 prizes of 1 day of cross-country skiing for 2, with lunch. Value: \$50 each.

Steve Braun, Whitefish: 1 day float trip for 2 or 3, with lunch, on the Middle or North Fork of the Flathead River. Value: \$250.

Glacier Raft Company, West Glacier: Half-day guided whitewater trip for 2. Value: \$111.

Bohart Ranch Cross Country Ski Center, Bozeman: 4 one-day passes. Value: \$60.

Great Divide Cyclery, Helena: one bicycle tune-up. Value: \$60.

Marshall Friedman, Whitefish: Enjoy loops and rolls or just a beautiful sight-seeing flight over the Flathead Valley in a world-class competition stunt plane. Value: \$350.

Phil Campbell and Judy Fay, Helena: Guided trip for two, with lunch, by kayak, sailboat, or motorboat to Wild Horse Island on Flathead Lake. Value: \$250.

... AND MORE!

Barnstormers, Helena: 5 pounds of Cafe Mam organic "Fair Trade" coffee, and a Cafe Mam coffee mug. Value: \$70.

Purple Frog Gardens, Whitefish: one dozen raspberry canes. Value: \$25.

Windflower Native Plants, West Glacier: selection of Montana native plants grown from ethically collected local seeds. Value: \$75.

Fact and Fiction Books, Missoula: 5 contemporary books selected by the store's staff. Value: \$119.

Globe Pequot Press, Helena: 5 outdoor-themed books. Value: \$72.

Amy Budke, Helena: one-hour therapeutic massage. Value: \$60.

Nelson Hardware, Whitefish: Stanley 24 in.

portable work center, and gift certificate. Value: \$50.

Sage Mountain Center, Whitehall: private tour for 5 of the Center, which is off-grid and has many eco-friendly features. Value: \$50.

Carol McEvoy, Clancy: four-hour session, with refreshments, with a professional licensed family therapist revisiting your family of origin and learning about unwritten rules that govern your choices. Value: \$400.

Thirteen Mile Lamb and Wool Co., Belgrade: small crocheted and felted wool rug made with natural-colored and plant-dyed wool. Value: \$100.

Radiance Skin Care Salon, Helena: custom facial. Value: \$65.

Globe Pequot Press, Helena: 4 nature-themed books. Value: \$61.

Wild Wind Foundation, Big Sky: 2 prizes of a book, a DVD, and 4 music CDs by the late Walkin' Jim Stoltz. Value: \$80 each.

Thirteen Mile Lamb and Wool Co., Belgrade: two skeins of organic wool. Value: \$39.

Exploration Works, Helena: 2 one-year family memberships. Value: \$70 each.

MEIC Rendezvous and Board Elections Successful

by Sara Marino

MEIC Rendezvous

On September 28th, 150 MEIC members and friends enjoyed a fun evening of food, drink, and conversation at the Baxter Hotel in Bozeman for MEIC's 2012 Rendezvous.

Dr. Steve Running speaking at the MEIC Rendezvous. Photo by Molly Severtson.



MEIC was honored to present the evening's keynote speaker, Nobel laureate Dr. Steve Running, with MEIC's Conservationist of the Year award for his groundbreaking climate research, and his dedication to educating the public about climate change's impacts and the possible solutions.

Running is a Regents Professor of Ecology and the director of the Numerical Terradynamics Simulation Group at the College of Forestry and Conservation of the University of Montana. He has received several awards for his climate research. Most notably, Running was a co-recipient

of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007 for his role on the board of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

MEIC's Rendezvous is a wonderful opportunity to catch up with friends old and new who share your passion for preserving Montana's environment. 2013 will mark MEIC's 40th year of keeping Montana "clean & healthful," and we are going to celebrate! Plan ahead and mark your calendar for September 21, 2013, for our 40th Anniversary Rendezvous at the historic Kleffner Ranch in East Helena.

Board Elections

MEIC's most heartfelt thanks go out to Ken Wallace, who has retired from MEIC's Board of Directors. His thoughtful insight and dedication to the strengthening the work of MEIC has been appreciated and will be missed.

Happily, MEIC welcomes board members Paul Edwards, Mark Gerlach, Stephanie Kowals, Steve Scarff, Roger Sullivan, and Zack Winestine back for another term. We are looking forward to working with them to advance MEIC's mission to protect Montana's natural environment for generations to come.

Thank you to all the MEIC members who cast their votes in the election. ☺



MEIC board and staff at the 2012 Planning Retreat.

A Variety of Ways You Can Help MEIC

1. Help match MEIC's challenge grant

Double your money, and impact, by responding to MEIC's challenge grant appeal. MEIC has the exciting opportunity to receive a \$10,000 grant, but only if members match it dollar-for-dollar by December 31st.

2. Give an MEIC gift membership

Give an MEIC membership to friends, family, or co-workers. This is a gift that will "keep on giving" all year long to protect clean air, water, and healthy landscapes. Members are the heart and soul of MEIC — the larger our numbers, the stronger we are!

3. Shop MEIC

Check out MEIC's new online store at www.meic.org (click on Support Us). There are MEIC logo ball caps and t-shirts that would make great Holiday (or any day) gifts!

4. Join MEIC's monthly giving program

The Pledge Program is a simple but very effective way you can support MEIC. You design the program to best fit your budget and lifestyle. You can pledge any annual amount you choose and make payments in 12 or fewer installments. You could pledge \$240 for the year, and pay just \$20 a month—**that's only 66 cents a day!** And it gets even easier. You can sign up to pay monthly with your credit card, or by automatic withdrawal from your bank account, and MEIC will take care of the rest. Pledge members help provide the staying power that keeps MEIC at the forefront of environmental advocacy in Montana.

5. Leave a bequest to MEIC

You can provide the financial security and long-term stability MEIC needs to weather unpredictable and cyclical funding by contributing to MEIC's Permanent Fund, our endowment. All gifts to the Permanent Fund are invested. Only the income earned on these investments is spent, and all of it goes to MEIC. Here are two ways you can contribute to MEIC's endowment:

- 1) The Permanent Fund accepts cash or property including stock, real estate, and life insurance. These contributions can be made directly to MEIC and are deductible as charitable contributions.
- 2) MEIC also has an endowment account at the Montana Community Foundation, which greatly expands the ways you can help MEIC while taking advantage of a Montana State income tax credit. Call the Montana Community Foundation at 406-443-8313 for more information.

6. Encourage others to join MEIC

Members are the heart and soul of MEIC, and who better to spread the word than you. Tell your friends and family why you joined MEIC and about the difference they can make for Montana's environment by joining with you. Every member means a lot. **Ask about our 2-for-1 gift membership program when you renew your MEIC membership!**

I want to help protect Montana's environment by:

- Joining MEIC.
- Renewing my MEIC membership.
- Donating to MEIC's endowment.
- Giving a gift membership.
- Making a special contribution.

Here are my dues or gift membership:

- \$250 (Sustainer) \$45 (Contributor)
- \$120 (Donor) \$30 (Basic)
- \$60 (Supporter) Other \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Mail this form to:

MEIC
P.O. Box 1184
Helena, MT 59624

Thank you!

Join or Renew Today.

(406) 443-2520 • www.meic.org

Or use the postage-paid envelope enclosed.

Donate NOW by
Smartphone:



President's Letter



by Roger Sullivan

Out Spent but Never Out "Valued"

By the time you read this column the year's elections will be decided. No matter the results, I anticipate that there will be a historic urgency to MEIC's core mission of protecting Montana's clean and healthful environment. This historic urgency is the result of the confluence of humankind's long history of industrial devastation of Earth's ecological systems, as is painstakingly documented by scientific evidence, joining with the dominant paradigm of our contemporary political system, which is based on toxic fictions whereby corporations are recognized as persons, and freedom of political speech is equated with the unfettered right to spend unlimited amounts of money to affect the outcome of elections.

As Greg Tollefson noted in his fine opinion piece in the October 25, 2012, issue of the *Missoulian*, entitled "Saving Nature is Good," much of this money is spent bashing the likes

of you and me. As Tollefson explained: "It's not that long ago that we Montanans were freed of the 'copper collar' that controlled the politics of our state, channeled the news to us, and wrought havoc upon the air and water of Big Sky Country. And it was and continues to be through the work of those who are labeled today as 'radical environmentalists' that the tide was turned away from wanton exploitation of our precious natural resources toward a more thoughtful, sustainable approach to the way we exercise our stewardship of those natural blessings." Indeed, this describes MEIC's successful efforts since its inception in 1973.

Unfortunately, the "copper collar" of our past has been replaced by a more insidious "corporate collar" that uses all manner of media and marketing to sell to citizens, turned uncritical consumers, the devastation of the Earth from which they amass their massive corporate profits. What these manipulators of the truth have found is that if you can name an issue, you can own the issue. This was the cogent observation of *The New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman in his October 27, 2012, column, "Why I am Pro-Life." Pointing out the huge distortions increasingly relied upon by the radical right Friedman stated: "You

Thoughts from the Executive Director



by Jim Jensen

The upcoming lame duck session of the U.S. Congress will be a breeding ground for mischief. An example is the Coal Ash Recycling and Oversight Act of 2012 (S. 3512). Sen. Max Baucus (D-MT) is a co-sponsor of this hideous little measure that is a favorite of the coal industry. Sen. Jon Tester (D-MT) opposes it.

Currently, the U.S. EPA has authority to

regulate toxic coal ash at coal-fired power plants. Under this measure EPA would be prohibited from doing so. Instead, the bill would give all regulatory power and oversight to the states.

Perhaps you will recall the massive December 2008 coal ash dam failure in Kingston, Tennessee. Over 1.1 billion gallons of sludge, enough to fill 1,660 Olympic-size swimming pools, were released. That amount is about 101 times larger than the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill. Thousands of fish were killed in the Emory River, and many homes and hundreds of acres of private property destroyed.

In Montana the unlined (that is right,

don't get to call yourself 'pro-life' and want to shut down the Environmental Protection Agency, which ensures clean air and clean water, prevents childhood asthma, preserves biodiversity and combats climate change that could disrupt every life on the planet." Certainly I agree with Friedman that the "pro-life" moniker should apply to the protection of the environment that keeps all living creatures healthy. Nevertheless, through the unfettered expenditure of money, issues are increasingly "owned" by those that calculatedly distort our sources of information, which results in the seeming entrancement of our industrial-driven consumer society.

While the scale of this purchased entrancement has recently increased, students of history will recognize this as a pattern throughout our history. Fortunately, that same history also provides us with avatars that have periodically appeared to break the spell. September of this year was the 50th anniversary of the publication of Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring," which lyrically marshaled scientific data and case studies to document the effects of synthetic chemicals, especially pesticides that were being ever more widely disseminated into the environment. The chemical industry reacted by launching an aggressive and

personal attack against the book and its author. Carson simply responded by speaking truth to power, offering Congressional testimony and making public appearances where she laid out the scientific facts on the chemical contamination of our environment, all of this while suffering from terminal breast cancer.

Rachel Carson made a difference. Much of the progressive environmental legislation of the early 1970s was inspired, at least in part, by Carson's willingness to speak truth to power. Here in Montana many citizens have likewise spoken truth to power in courageous efforts to protect our environment from senseless devastation. A number of those individuals, including leading scientists, have been recognized by MEIC with our "Conservationist of the Year" award (see the story on page 12 about this year's honoree).

As an organization, MEIC has three core values: to protect Montana's clean water, air, and land; to support the development of sustainable, minimally polluting, energy sources; and to speak and act with complete honesty. So, now that the dust has settled from the recent elections, let us continue to forge ahead in engaging in the critical environmental issues of our time, where we will always be out spent but never out "valued." 🌱

unlined) coal ash ponds at Colstrip have been leaking into the ground water for decades. The State has both the authority and duty to prevent this pollution, but lamely refuses to do so. For Sen. Baucus to say that the states should regulate this toxic sludge, given this experience, shows just how corrupting the influence of the coal industry is, both generally and specifically in the case of Pennsylvania Power and Light.

Sen. Baucus has a long record of trying to let Montana polluters off the hook for toxic wastes, beginning with his attempt in 1987 to exempt mining waste from the federal Superfund toxic waste clean-up law.

I urge you to contact Sen. Baucus immediately (www.baucus.senate.gov) and tell him to take his name off the bill and to

vote against it.

He should follow Sen. Tester's leadership on this one. 🌱

Get social with MEIC!



MEIC regularly updates its social media with the latest news about Montana's environment. We also offer unique action suggestions for ways that you can help protect Montana's air, land, and water. Friend or follow us, whichever you prefer, and keep in the loop!

MEIC - a nonprofit
environmental advocate

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MEIC's purpose is to protect Montana's clean and healthful environment. The words "clean and healthful" are taken from the Montana Constitution, Article II, section 3 - Inalienable Rights, which begins: "All persons are born free and have certain inalienable rights. They include the right to a clean and healthful environment . . ."

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Stay up-to-date. Send us your e-mail address.

You want to ensure that your voice is heard at the Capitol regarding Montana's environmental policies. You're interested in following what's happening at the 2013 Legislature—but how? Hundreds of bills, last-minute hearings, little-to-no coverage of what you might consider important bills in the media. . . .

WE CAN HELP.

Send us your e-mail address and we'll add you to our e-Activists list.

You'll receive updates on the status of bills we're lobbying and e-alerts when important bills need the extra push from citizens speaking out by contacting their legislators.

KEEP IN TOUCH!

Send your e-mail
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