



## **Montana in the Balance** Out-of-State Money is Trying to Shape Montana's Future







## INTRODUCTION

Since 2012, a tsunami of money, totaling in the millions, has flooded into Montana in support of “Green Decoy” groups – self-proclaimed sportsmen groups that seem to exist primarily to attack conservative policies and policymakers.

As we have charted out in past reports, Green Decoys rely on funding from wealthy progressive foundations and the radical environmental movement. In return, they do the bidding of out-of-state progressive activists by adding a veneer of credibility in Montana and other Mountain West states to their agenda.

In the years since, out-of-state money has continued to flow into Montana, seeking to shape the state’s policies on environmental issues and land use. This report tracks the activist groups in Montana, how much money is coming in, and from whom.

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## THE GROUPS

### BACKCOUNTRY HUNTERS AND ANGLERS

Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) represents itself as good-ole-boy outdoorsmen who simply want to hunt and fish and be left alone. But don’t be fooled. As evidenced by both its sources of funding and current leadership, BHA is nothing more than a big green activist organization pushing a radical environmentalist agenda.

In a previous report, we highlighted how BHA launched a \$1.4 million ad campaign in 2017 targeting then-Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke over the issue of resizing national monuments, despite no national monuments in Montana being flagged for changes.<sup>1</sup> This expenditure equals nearly one-third of BHA’s \$4.2 million in contributions that year—and a significant increase from the \$1.7 million BHA raised in 2016.<sup>2</sup>

BHA’s president is Land Tawney, a liberal activist and the founder of Montana Sportsmen for Obama. He previously worked for the National Wildlife Federation and

Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP), a Green Decoy organization founded with seed money from the leftwing Pew Foundation. Pew has also funded BHA. (More information on TRCP is below.) Tawney was affiliated with the dark money group Montana Hunters and Anglers.<sup>3</sup>

BHA vigorously opposed President Trump’s nominee to head of the Bureau of Land Management, calling him a “zealot” whose “views and actions should repulse anyone who cares about our shared landscapes.”<sup>4</sup> Tawney promoted a Tweet comparing the President Trump to Joe Exotic, the infamous convicted criminal, animal abuser, and would-be-murderer.<sup>5</sup> Tawney also praised Representative Betty McCollum,<sup>6</sup> who ranks among the most far-left Members of the House,<sup>7</sup> and endorsed failed Democratic candidate for Montana State Auditor.<sup>8</sup> In August 2020, a former BHA board member even called Trump “a Pearl Harbor-like disaster for hunters, anglers, and anyone who cares about our great public lands.”<sup>9</sup>

Since President Biden’s election, BHA has repeatedly praised his administration, notably by lauding Tracy Stone-Manning, Biden’s controversial pick for director of BLM.<sup>10</sup> During Stone-Manning’s confirmation process, she was accused of lying under oath about her involvement in an eco-terrorist group and a federal investigation into threats she made against the U.S. Forest Service, warning “hundreds of metal spikes” had been hammered into trees set to be cut down.<sup>11</sup> Tree spiking is a particularly dangerous ecoterrorist tactic, and in one instance, resulted in the near-decapitation of a young mill worker.<sup>12</sup> As a result of Stone-Manning’s ties to eco-terrorism, a major hunting group withdrew their support for her nomination – but not BHA.<sup>13</sup>

At BHA, Tawney draws in about \$150,000 in compensation.

**Total Funding Received By BHA From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Hewlett Foundation	\$2,560,000.00
Western Conservation Foundation	\$2,292,925.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$859,275.00
Wyss Foundation	\$511,200.00
Pew Charitable Trusts	\$285,479.00
Kendeda Fund	\$240,000
New Venture Fund	\$156,350.00
New Land Foundation	\$75,000
Cinnabar Foundation	\$35,500.00
Brainerd Foundation	\$8,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,023,729.00</b>

## WILD MONTANA

Wild Montana (formerly the Montana Wilderness Association) is an environmental group that seeks to keep land off-limits to human economic activity. Wild Montana has previously admitted to having only 5,500 members, yet brings in millions of dollars in total revenue.

How? Wild Montana makes up for its sparse local support with the generous backing of out-of-state liberal groups; since 1999, Wild Montana has received more than \$10 million from the vortex of out-of-state money that is funding the larger Green Decoy ecosystem. More than \$2 million of this money was given between 2018 and 2021 alone.

Wild Montana strongly opposed President Trump’s administration, and heralded President Biden’s victory in 2020 as “a new day.”<sup>14</sup> Since then, Wild Montana has doubled down on its ‘federal government knows best’

ethos. The group continues to loudly opposes state control of public lands in Montana,<sup>15</sup> and has championed<sup>16</sup> a proposal to bring hundreds of thousands of acres of land in Montana under federal control and limit the public’s ability to enjoy them.<sup>17</sup> Like the other Green Decoys, Wild Montana strongly endorsed<sup>18</sup> Tracy Stone-Manning to be director of BLM, despite her ties to eco-terrorism.

**Total Funding Received By Wild Montana From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Campion Foundation	\$2,231,147.00
Wyss Foundation	\$1,383,400.00
Ortenberg Foundation	\$1,345,000.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$1,029,000.00
Hewlett Foundation	\$1,025,000.00
Pew Charitable Trusts	\$985,769.00
Western Conservation Foundation	\$953,400.00
Brainerd Foundation	\$625,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$325,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$192,000.00
New Land Foundation	\$90,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$10,184,716.00</b>

## MONTANA WILDLIFE FEDERATION (MWF)

The Montana Wildlife Federation (MWF) is a self-declared conservation group that, like many other Green Decoys, attacked Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke over the issue of resizing national monuments.<sup>19</sup> MWF also supports the Land and Water Conservation slush fund<sup>20</sup> and endorsed Tracy Stone-Manning to be director of BLM,<sup>21</sup> despite her ties to eco-terrorism.

Interestingly, for a group that purports to speak on behalf of hunters, MWF has vigorously opposed efforts by Montana to expand the hunting of wolves and, in March 2021, authored a letter to Montana’s governor claiming such efforts cross “ethical lines.”<sup>22</sup>

MWF is a state affiliate of the National Wildlife Federation, which helped reintroduce wolves. Both MWF and NWF have argued that Montana should reduce its wolf hunting because, they claim, wolves play controlling Chronic Wasting Disease by preying on deer and elk.<sup>23</sup>

**Total Funding Received By MWF From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Western Conservation Foundation	\$1,513,448.00
Wyss Foundation	\$1,386,500.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$496,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$212,480.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$172,000.00
Ortenberg Foundation	\$146,100.00
Pew Charitable Trusts	\$87,244.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,013,772.00</b>

## HEADWATERS ECONOMICS

The Bozeman-based Headwaters Economics may bill itself as providing “independent nonpartisan research,” but its operations seem extremely dependent on one big source of income – the liberal foundations behind Green Decoys. To date, Headwaters Economics has received millions of dollars from liberal foundations, and since 2007, it has received nearly \$5.5 million specifically from those organizations identified as the Green Decoy funders. Understanding where Headwaters funding comes from explains why its research seems to primarily focus on the supposed benefits of removing all human presence from wilderness and lands.

Some examples of recent research from Headwaters Economics includes claiming we must spend millions more per year paying people not to use their private land (voluntary conservation easements);<sup>24</sup> and claiming the federal government is somehow more efficient at managing public lands than the state agencies where the lands actually reside.<sup>25</sup> A May 2019 report from Headwaters Economics even attacked resource development as a “curse,”<sup>26</sup> promoting an economic canard about how resource development somehow hurts local economies.<sup>27</sup>

**Total Funding Received By Headwater Economics From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Western Conservation Foundation	\$67,754.00
Campion Foundation	\$15,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$775,000.00
Hewlett Foundation	\$3,695,000.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$520,000

## MONTANA CONSERVATION VOTERS (MCV) AND MONTANA CONSERVATION VOTERS EDUCATION FUND (MCVEF)

Montana Conservation Voters (MCV) and its related 501c3 education fund are liberal environmental advocacy groups that have received millions of dollars in foundation money. MCV’s endorsements for legislative races in 2018 and 2020 were solely Democrats, and during the 2020 election, MCV even sponsored ads targeting Senator Daines.<sup>28</sup> Not only did MCV endorse Tracy

Stone-Manning to be director of BLM, despite her ties to eco-terrorism, but she served as treasurer for the group prior to her nomination.<sup>29</sup>

MCV has strong ties to several other Green Decoy groups as well. MCV’s current executive director, Whitney Tawney, previously worked for Democratic Senator Max Baucus and the Western Conservation Foundation<sup>30</sup> (a significant backer of the Green Decoy movement), and not only is her brother,<sup>31</sup> Land, president of BHA, but her mother, Robin, is president of the Cinnabar Foundation.<sup>32</sup> David Chadwick, who served as director of the Montana Wildlife Federation between 2013 and 2020,<sup>33</sup> concurrently sat on the board of directors for MCV,<sup>34</sup> a position he still holds.<sup>35</sup>

**Total Funding Received By Headwater Economics From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Brainerd Foundation	\$555,000.00
Western Conservation Foundation	\$541,300.00
Wyss Foundation	\$440,300.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$220,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$210,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$150,000.00
Hewlett Foundation	\$2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,118,600.00</b>

## MONTANA MOUNTAIN MAMAS (MMM)

Montana Mountain Mamas (MMM) is a group of just 15 women that bills itself as moms who simply like the outdoors. In the group’s only publicly available 990 tax return, it listed around \$110,00 of revenue for fiscal year 2018,<sup>36</sup> probably the entirety of which can be attributed to the same liberal foundations that gave MMM \$247,000 between 2019 and 2020. One of these foundations is the Western Conservation Foundation, which coincidentally has also done work with the consulting firm of MMM founder Becky Edwards.<sup>37</sup>

MMM was previously listed as a project of Resource Media, a liberal PR firm that supports liberal and environmental causes. Even more coincidentally, Edwards also previously counted Resource Media as a client.<sup>38</sup> Sara Busse, a communications consultant who also lists having done work for MMM,<sup>39</sup> is married to Ryan Busse, a former director of BHA who served as an advisor to Joe Biden’s 2020 presidential campaign.<sup>40</sup>

Examples of MMM's activism includes having taken out a newspaper ad—not an inexpensive endeavor—demanding U.S. Senator Steve Daines support the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a federal land-purchasing slush fund that Green Decoy groups love. MMM was also a big fan of Tracy Stone-Manning for BLM director,<sup>41</sup> and helped develop the Lincoln Prosperity Proposal,<sup>42</sup> which would impose new regulations and land-use restrictions on “some 200,000 acres.”<sup>43</sup>

**Total Funding Received By MMM From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Western Conservation Foundation	\$215,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$30,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$247,000.00</b>

### AMERICAN PRAIRIE RESERVE (APR)

Founded in 2011, American Prairie Reserve wants to alter land use across a huge swath of Montana—3.5 million acres in total. The group’s goal is to establish a private reserve for bison and other wildlife. To do so, however, will fundamentally alter the landscape by buying up ranchland and converting it to “re-wilded” land.

American Prairie Reserve has met with strong resistance in Montana. “I see them coming in with big money, buying up ranches and walking over the top of the people who are already here,” one ranch owner. “For them to be successful in their goals, we can’t be here, and that’s not OK with us.”<sup>44</sup>

Writing about APR, Mountain Journal noted “a growing sense in the rural communities of eastern Montana that wealthy environmentalists and coastal elites — with the help of the federal government — are eager to kick them off the land. That fear is not without justification.”

APR has raised millions of dollars and has secured some land already, including \$2.5 million from the Wyss Foundation and \$1.5 million from the Packard Foundation, which also has funded the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership and Izaak Walton League of America.<sup>45</sup>

**Funding Received By APR From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Wyss Foundation	\$2,500,000.00
Packard Foundation	\$1,520,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$25,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,045,000.00</b>

### HEART OF THE ROCKIES INITIATIVE

The Heart of the Rockies Initiative is a pro-conservation “a land trust partnership.”<sup>46</sup> The Heart of the Rockies Initiative is both a partner of the Land and Water Conservation slush fund,<sup>47</sup> and unsurprisingly also has been a public proponent of its re-authorization.

In May 2021, the Heart of the Rockies Initiative released a joint report with The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (more on them below), arguing that conservation groups must build alliances with rural communities like “farmers, ranchers, and private landowners.”<sup>48</sup> The report also cited Headwaters Economics among its “other conservation partners” and specifically the groups “examples and reports that can support community engagement.”<sup>49</sup>

**Total Funding Received By Heart Of The Rockies Initiative From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Hewlett Foundation	\$705,000.00
Wilburforce Foundation	\$600,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$100,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$17,000.00
Western Conservation Foundation	\$9,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,431,500.00</b>

### WESTERN ORGANIZATION OF RESOURCES COUNCIL (WORC)

The Western Organization of Resource Councils (WORC) is a “network” of self-proclaimed “grassroots organizations” working for “stewardship and conservation.”<sup>50</sup> The group is a huge beneficiary of leftwing foundation money – particularly from the Hewlett Foundation, who has given the group more than \$4 million to date – and is a fierce defender of many common Green Decoy issue positions.

WORC unsuccessfully sued Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke, seeking to thwart coal mining on federal lands. In June 2018, a federal appeals court rejected the suit.<sup>51</sup> Later on, WORC accused the Trump administration of “gut[ting]” environmental protections in the U.S.<sup>52</sup>

WORC still has an ongoing lawsuit against the National Coal Council, an advisory body to the Department of Energy that supported increased coal production.<sup>53</sup> In

September 2021, WORC wrote to the Biden administration, arguing the council's past support for domestic energy in America is proof the advisory board should be dismantled entirely.<sup>54</sup>

**Total Funding Received By WORC From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Hewlett Foundation	\$4,190,000.00
Ford Foundation	\$300,000.00
New Venture Fund	\$255,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$101,500.00
Brainerd Foundation	\$70,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,916,500.00</b>

### GREATER YELLOWSTONE COALITION (GYC)

The Greater Yellowstone Coalition (GYC) is a nonprofit conservation group with a history of opposing economic activities like all mining. GYC is a particularly well-funded Green Decoy group, and to date, has received more than \$11 million from the leftwing foundations identified in this report. In 2020 alone, GYC received \$880,000 from the Hewlett Foundation.

GYC has bragged about “fighting inappropriate gold mines [its] entire existence,” and in May 2020, warned about the continued “threat of gold mining” on private land.<sup>55</sup> GYC has repeatedly opposed the hunting of grizzly bears,<sup>56, 57</sup> and more recently, attacked Montana for allowing wolf hunting.<sup>58</sup> Like many other Green Decoy groups, GYC also endorsed Tracy Stone-Manning for BLM director.<sup>59</sup>

**Total Funding Received By GYC From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Hewlett Foundation	\$8,209,700.00
Wyss Foundation	\$1,601,202.00
Ford Foundation	\$700,000.00
Kendeda Fund	\$415,300.00
Pew Charitable Trusts	\$215,571.00
New-Land Foundation	\$105,000.00
Brainerd Foundation	\$70,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,316,773.00</b>

### YELLOWSTONE TO YUKON CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (Y2Y)

The Yellowstone To Yukon Conservation Initiative (Y2Y) is an international environmental organization that is working to create a serious of connected wilderness lands, stretching as much as 2,100 miles.<sup>60</sup> Not too shockingly, Y2Y also wants most human activities barred in such areas.

For example, Y2Y has been criticized as a radical environmental group that supports reducing “human use of the West,” and the group’s website previously refused to endorse (even conceptually) the hunting of carnivore species like bears, wolves and cougars.<sup>61</sup> Of course, Y2Y proclaims they actually do not oppose human activities like development, hunting, or off-roading, provided they are done “sustainably.”<sup>62</sup> Yet the group simultaneously claims the greatest threats to the Yellowstone to Yukon region include “resource extraction,” “mining, logging and oil and gas projects,” and most shockingly, “roads.”<sup>63</sup> In fact, Y2Y’s explicit goal is to destroy roads,<sup>64</sup> which would have the convenient effect of making it difficult or impossible for humans to use those areas.

**Total Funding Received By Y2Y From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Wyss Foundation	\$900,000.00
Cinnabar Foundation	\$25,000.00
New Land Foundation	\$17,000.00
Ortenberg Foundation	\$15,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$957,000.00</b>

### THEODORE ROOSEVELT CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIP (TRCP)

The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (TRCP) bills its mission as “guaranteeing you a place to hunt and fish.”<sup>65</sup> Described in the press as “Republican-leaning,”<sup>66</sup> in reality TRCP seems to be little more than a camouflaged advocacy front for an alliance of environmental and left-wing interests. TRCP’s partners include labor union groups such as the AFL-CIO, environmentalists, and other environmentalist front groups like Trout Unlimited, the Izaak Walton League of America,

and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers. Since 2006, TRCP has received more than \$12 million funders of the Green Decoys movement, and specifically the Hewlett Foundation, who alone gave or announced more than \$9 million in funding. In July 2021, the Hewlett Foundation announced a staggering \$1.5 million grant to TRCP for “general support/organization.”<sup>67</sup>

TRCP was closely tied to Biden’s campaign during the 2020 election. In September 2020, Biden’s campaign announced the launch of the pro-Biden coalition “Sportsmen and Sportswomen for Biden.”<sup>68</sup> The coalition included several TRCP members, including Eric Washburn, who co-founded the group; George Cooper, a past president; and two current members of the board of directors, Tod Sedgwick and Elizabeth Storer.<sup>69</sup> Since President Biden was sworn in, TRCP has been an enthusias-

tic cheerleader for his administration. TRCP applauded the Biden administration for rejoining the Paris Climate Agreement,<sup>70</sup> and supported Tracy Stone-Manning for BLM director.<sup>71</sup> In March 2022, TRCP called on the Biden administration to waive “match requirements”<sup>72</sup> for conservation projects, meaning these conservation groups would no longer need to raise their own money in order to qualify for federal grants. In other words, a tacit admission that groups like TRCP rely on taxpayer money, not support from the communities where they operate.

**Total Funding Received By TRCP From Green Decoy-Linked Foundations Through 2021**

Organization	Total Contributions To Date
Hewlett Foundation	\$9,192,500.00
Pew Charitable Trusts	\$2,544,269.00
Western Conservation Foundation	\$438,245.00
Packard Foundation	\$1,010,163.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12,185,177.00</b>

## THE FUNDERS

### WESTERN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION (WCF)

Western Conservation Foundation (WCF) is a secretive organization that is funded by environmental groups and passes money through to many Green Decoy organizations, such as Backcountry Hunters and Anglers. Since 2017, WCF alone has given about \$6 million to Green Decoy groups.

WCF is not only a key component of the Green Decoy funders network, but WCF itself has also received many tens of millions of dollars from other funder groups, like the Hewlett Foundation and the Wyss Foundation. This likely serves to further obfuscate where the funding for Green Decoy groups is coming from.

As one example of WCF’s obvious progressive bent, consider that its longtime chief of staff, Shara Kaplin,<sup>73</sup> endorsed Tweets calling President Trump a white supremacist<sup>74</sup> and comparing Trump to Adolf Hitler.<sup>75</sup>

In recent years, WCF has given out nearly \$6 million to Green Decoy aligned groups, most notably to Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, who received nearly \$2.3 million.

WCF has also given money to more outright radical environmentalist groups, like the Sierra Club.<sup>76</sup>

**Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By WCV (2017 To 2021)**

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$2,292,925.00
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$1,513,448.00
Montana Wild	\$953,400.00
Montana Conservation Voters	\$541,300.00
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	\$438,245.00
Montana Mountain Mamas	\$215,000.00
Heart of the Rockies Initiative	\$9,500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,963,818.00</b>

### NEW VENTURE FUND (NVF)

The New Venture Fund (NVF) is a dark money behemoth. NVF offers itself as “creative problem-solvers”<sup>77</sup> who provide advice and support to projects, including in conservation. Founded in 2006, NVF raised more than \$460 million in 2019<sup>78</sup>—an astronomic increase from the \$545,00 it raised its first year.<sup>79</sup>

Like the Western Conservation Foundation, NVF raises money from many of the other funders in the Green Decoy network, such as the Champion Foundation, the Hewlett Foundation and the Wyss Foundation. It also has received backing from other noteworthy leftwing foundations, like the Packard Foundation and the Tides Foundations. Alongside the money it provides to Green Decoy groups, NVF also has given substantial sums of money to more extreme environmental groups like Earthjustice (founded as the legal arm of the Sierra Club).

The New Venture Fund is the “sister”<sup>80</sup> organization to the Sixteenth Third Fund, alongside two other groups, the Hopewell Fund and the Windward Fund. Together, these four groups have been called a “liberal dark money network,”<sup>81</sup> and have funneled hundreds of millions of dollars to the progressive movement.

In fact, NVF’s very operating model shrouds its funding in secrecy. Activist projects go to NVF for “fiscal sponsorship,” which allows them to immediately take in tax-deductible donations.<sup>82</sup> These donations are routed through NVF, so it is impossible to know from public records which donors to NVF are financing these projects (outside of voluntary self-reporting). For the Green Decoy movement, NVF and its sister organizations “do not disclose their donors.”<sup>83</sup>

In recent years, NVF has given hundreds of thousands of dollars to Green Decoy aligned groups, including the Western Organization of Resource Councils and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Western Organization of Resource Councils	\$255,000.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$156,350.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$411,350.00</b>

## BRAINERD FOUNDATION

The Brainerd Foundation is a Washington-based foundation that worked “to protect the environment of the Northwest and build broad citizen support for conservation.”<sup>84</sup> In 2020, the Brainerd Foundation closed down after spending the entirety of its endowment, motivated by “urgent” “ecological challenges.”<sup>85</sup>

In recent years, the Brainerd Foundation has given tens of thousands of dollars to both Montana Conservation

Voters and Headwaters Economics. Beyond the Green Decoy groups, the Brainerd Foundation has also awarded grants during its lifetime to Earthjustice, the Natural Resources Defense Council, and World Wildlife Fund.<sup>86</sup>

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Montana Conservation Voters	\$70,000.00
Headwaters Economics	\$60,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$130,000.00</b>

## CAMPION FOUNDATION

The Champion Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit that was founded in 2005 and calls for “throwing everything we have at our mission” to “protect public lands & climate.”<sup>87</sup> The Champion Foundation’s political arm, the Champion Advocacy Fund, has given millions of dollars to exclusively Democratic campaigns<sup>88</sup> and in 2014, Tom and Sonya Campion (the founders of the fund), attended a \$25,000 per person fundraiser with President Barack Obama.<sup>89</sup>

In recent years, the Champion Foundation has been a generous supporter of Wild Montana (formerly the Wild Montanaerness Association). The Champion Foundation has also made grants to environmental groups like Earthjustice, as well as Green Decoy aligned foundations like the New Venture Fund and Pew Charitable Trusts.<sup>90</sup>

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Wild Montana	\$375,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$375,000.00</b>

## NEW LAND FOUNDATION (NLF)

The New Land Foundation (NLF) is a 501c3 nonprofit “devoted to protecting the environment.” NLF has a self-proclaimed “strong focus on protection of public lands, rivers, and wildlife,” as well as a history of support for Green Decoy groups. To date, NLF has given nearly \$300,000 to Green Decoy groups, including more than \$100,000 to the Greater Yellowstone Coalition.

In November 2020, the president of NLF’s board of directors, Hal Harvey, called on President-elect Biden to push through a complete transition away from fossil fu-

els as soon as possible, proclaiming “electrify (almost) everything.”<sup>91</sup>

In recent years, NLF has given at least \$150,000 to Green Decoy groups, including the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers.

Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The New Land Foundation (2017 To 2021)

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$90,000.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$60,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$150,000.00</b>

## FORD FOUNDATION

The Ford Foundation is one of the most powerful and progressive foundations in America. The foundation has a \$14 billion endowment, gives out thousands of grants each year,<sup>92</sup> and is credited with helping decide what American progressives should “think or discuss or support.”<sup>93</sup>

To date, the Ford Foundation has given \$1 million in support of Green Decoy groups, split between the Greater Yellowstone Coalition and the Western Organization of Resource Councils. As a sign of the Ford Foundation’s resources, consider that in one year alone, it gave \$600,000 to the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The Ford Foundation is also a significant contributor to more unabashedly extreme environmental groups like Rainforest Action Network, World Wildlife Fund, and Environmental Defense.<sup>94</sup>

More recently, the Ford Foundation has focused on providing significant funding support for the New Venture Fund, a liberal dark money group (discussed above) that is tied to many Green Decoy groups.

Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The New Ford Foundation (2017 To 2021)

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
New Venture Fund	\$40,478,100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,478,100.00</b>

## ORTENBERG FOUNDATION

The Liz Claiborne & Art Ortenberg Foundation is a 501c3 nonprofit “dedicated to the survival of wildlife and wildlands.”<sup>95</sup>

The Ortenberg Foundation has strong staff ties to the larger environmental movement: the group’s executive director previously spent more than three decades at The Nature Conservancy, and its operations manager and a program associate both previously worked at the Wildlife Conservation Society.<sup>96</sup> The Ortenberg Foundation is also connected to the Cinnabar Foundation, another influential funder of the Green Decoy network, through Grant Parker, who sits on the board of directors for both groups.<sup>97</sup>

To date, the Ortenberg Foundation has given more than \$1.5 million to organizations in the Green Decoy network, a large majority of which is contained in the more than \$1.3 million given to Wild Montana. More recently, the Ortenberg Foundation has continued to focus on supporting Wild Montana. Beyond the Green Decoy movement, the Ortenberg Foundation has also supported environmental groups like the Wilderness Society, Defenders of Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy, and the Environmental Defense Fund.

Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The Ortenberg Foundation (2017 To 2021)

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Wild Montana	\$315,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$315,000.00</b>

## KENDEDA FUND

The Kendeda Fund is a Delaware-based nonprofit that is trying to “build a more just and equitable world.”<sup>98</sup> The fund claims to be “small,”<sup>99</sup> though it is not clear how – in 2019 alone, the Kendeda Fund brought in more than \$80 million in revenue.<sup>100</sup>

One of the Kendeda Fund’s major focuses is the environment: the group proclaims that its Montana-focused grant-making “prioritizes...improved connections to the natural environment.”<sup>101</sup> To date, the Kendeda Fund has given more than \$2.8 million to Green Decoy aligned groups, including Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation, who has received more than \$1.1 million alone since 2010. In addition to being a major source of money for the environmental activist movement, the Kendeda Fund also bankrolls efforts to restrict Americans’ access to guns. For example, the Kendeda Fund is currently partnering with the extremely influential

liberal thinktank the Center for American Progress to understand “why certain gun violence prevention interventions succeed where others fail.”<sup>102</sup>

The Kendeda Fund has several ties to progressive causes. The Kendeda Fund’s advisor for Montana and Veterans previously worked for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition,<sup>103</sup> a Green Decoy group that has received more than \$415,000 to date from the Kendeda Fund. Past work experience for other advisors at the Kendeda Fund advisors including having been a deputy press secretary for a Democratic Representative,<sup>104</sup> and working as a program officer at the Tides Foundation.<sup>105</sup>

More recently, the Kendeda Fund has focused its Green Decoy-related grants to Headwater Economics, which the Kendeda Fund lauds for playing “a vital and unique role in Montana,”<sup>106</sup> while still maintaining support to several other Green Decoy groups like Wild Montana.

**Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The Kendeda Fund (2017 To 2021)**

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Headwater Economics	\$370,000.00
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$170,000.00
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation	\$153,120.00
Wild Montana	\$120,000.00
Heart of the Rockies Initiative	\$100,000.00
Montana Mountain Mamas	\$30,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$943,120.00</b>

## THE WYSS FOUNDATION

The Wyss Foundation is the namesake of Hansjörg Wyss, a Swiss billionaire who The New York Times called a less well known George Soros or Tom Seyer.<sup>107</sup> Wyss’ massive political contributions, numbering in the hundreds of millions, were credited with helping Democrats win the White House and Congress in the 2020 U.S. election.<sup>108</sup> Wyss also sits on the board of directors for the influential, liberal think tank the Center for American Progress.

The Wyss Foundation, which has assets of more than \$2 billion, is a major backer of the progressive moment in America and particularly the Democratic Party and its aligned entities.<sup>109</sup> Case in point, the Wyss Foundation has also bankrolled several Green Decoy groups, including the Greater Yellowstone Coalition (more than \$1.6 million to date) and the Wild Montanaerness Association (more

than \$1.3 million to date). In sum, the Wyss Foundation has given at least \$6.2 million to Green Decoys in total. The Wyss Foundation is also a huge backer of the New Venture Fund, the dark money group that has also been tied to the Green Decoy movement – between 2016 and 2019, the Wyss Foundation gave me more than \$27 million.<sup>110</sup>

A recurring theme of the Wyss Foundation’s granting is that it has the effect of reducing human use of land. The Wyss Foundation credits itself with having pushed conservationists to acquire more than 300,000 acres in Montana’s Plum Creek,<sup>111</sup> which the groups admitted at the time would lead to roads in the area no longer being maintained.<sup>112</sup> The Wyss Foundation’s website also boasts about the role its hundreds of millions has played in “Quietly Protecting Western Lands From Oil and Gas Drilling.”<sup>113</sup> The Wyss Foundation also played a key role fighting efforts by President Trump to expand development around the Bears Ears National Monument.<sup>114</sup>

Since 2017, the Wyss Foundation has given more than \$1.1 million to Green Decoy groups, notably the Yellowstone to Yukon Initiative Conservation, who received \$900,000 in that time period.

**Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The Wyss Foundation (2017 To 2021)**

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation	\$900,000.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$105,600.00
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$20,000.00
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$40,002.00
Wild Montana	\$52,800.00
Montana Conservation Voters	\$52,800.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,171,202.00</b>

## PEW CHARITABLE TRUSTS (PCT)

Pew Charitable Trusts (PCT) may claim to be “nonpartisan,”<sup>115</sup> but its grant making record shows the left-wing foundation is anything but. PCT has a long record – as far back as 2000 – of “pouring millions of dollars into environmental groups”<sup>116</sup> with the goal of imposing usage restrictions on federal land.

PCT has played a large role in backing the Green Decoys movement, notably by having bankrolled the founding of the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (then known as the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Alli-

ance) with a \$2.5 million grant.<sup>117</sup> Including that grant, PCT has given more than \$6.6 million to Green Decoy groups in sum.

PCT is open about wanting to ban essentially all human activities on many federal lands. In December 2021, they called on the Biden Administration to classify vast areas of the country as “areas of critical environmental concern (ACEC)” and ensure stronger protections for the 20 million acres of land already designed as ACEC.<sup>118</sup> As PCT admitted, an ACEC designation not only can result in banning economic activities like mining for oil, gas, and minerals, but even “grazing.”<sup>119</sup> In fact, environmentalists have called on BLM to be more aggressive about banning grazing on ACEC lands,<sup>120</sup> and environmental groups have used the courts to force BLM to ban grazing in ACEC areas.<sup>121</sup> PCT has even called on BLM to create explicit land use plans for the entirety of BLM’s 100 million acres of land.<sup>122</sup> It is not difficult to imagine which direction PCT wants those land use plans to skew.

Since 2017, PCT has given more than \$600,000 to Green Decoy groups, particularly the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, which received more than \$300,000, and Wild Montana, which received just under \$200,000.

**Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By Pew Charitable Trusts (2017 To 2021)**

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	\$309,418.00
Wild Montana	\$198,369.00
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$62,294.00
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$40,002.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$36,943.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$647,026.00</b>

## HEWLETT FOUNDATION

The Hewlett Foundation has been called the “[liberal] mega-funder that you’ve probably never heard,”<sup>123</sup> and for good reason: the foundation has more than \$13 billion in assets and gave out grants totaling 471 million in 2020.<sup>124</sup> The Hewlett Foundation’s giant pool of annual grant has consistently gone towards supporting “socially liberal and environmentalist organizations,”<sup>125</sup> such as Planned Parenthood or the New Venture Fund (a dark money group also connected to the Green Decoys movement).

In fact, the Hewlett Foundation has a long history of bankrolling the Green Decoys movement, dating back to the year 2000, when the foundation began making annual grants of \$100,000 and more towards the Greater Yellowstone Coalition. The Hewlett Foundation has given the Green Decoy groups identified in this report nearly \$30 million in total. This includes the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership (\$9,192,500.00), the Greater Yellowstone Coalition (\$8,209,700.00), and the Western Organization of Resource Councils (\$4,190,000.00), among others.

The Hewlett Foundation is an outspoken proponent of land use restrictions and throwing taxpayer money at conservation efforts. The best summation of the Hewlett Foundation’s views on land use can be found in their proclamation that population growth has “taken a harsh toll on the natural beauty”<sup>126</sup> of the West. One of the main focuses of the Hewlett Foundation’s grantmaking is also to explicitly “reduce fossil fuels”<sup>127</sup> use, and the foundation has given millions of dollars to extreme environmental groups like the Sierra Club.<sup>128</sup> The Hewlett Foundation also praised the permanent authorization of the Land and Water Conservation Fund, a conservationist slush fund, as “the crown jewel”<sup>129</sup> of the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act.

Since 2017 alone, the Hewlett Foundation has given a staggering \$14,002,700 to the Green Decoy groups identified in this report, including the Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership, who received more than \$4.1 million, the Western Organization of Resource Councils, who received more than \$2.5 million, and the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, who received more than \$2.2 million.

**Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The Hewlett Foundation (2017 To 2021)**

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership	\$4,135,000.00
Western Organization of Resource Councils	\$2,510,000.00
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$2,210,700.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$2,110,000.00
Headwater Economics	\$1,670,000.00
Heart of the Rockies Initiative	\$705,000.00
Wild Montana	\$660,000.00
Montana Conservation Voters	\$2,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,002,700.00</b>

## WILBURFORCE FOUNDATION

The Wilburforce Foundation is a Washington-based nonprofit that supports “conservation efforts in Western North America.”<sup>130</sup> Rose Letwin, the founder of the Wilburforce Foundation, is a committed environmentalist<sup>131</sup> who donated \$1 million in support of Democratic governor Jay Inslee’s campaign.<sup>132</sup> Tim Greyhavens, the former, longtime executive director of the Wilburforce Foundation and a continued board member of the organization,<sup>133</sup> previously worked for the the Humane Society of the United States,<sup>134</sup> an extremist animal rights group whose senior management includes a former spokesman for eco-terrorists.<sup>135</sup>

The Wilburforce Foundation is so opposed to human activity that its founder has proclaimed that designating lands as “protected status” is not enough because sometimes those areas still permit activities like “grazing.”<sup>136</sup> In fact, the Wilburforce Foundation has bought out, at “significant” cost, grazing permits to prevent ranching from taking altogether.<sup>137</sup> The Wilburforce Foundation has also strongly opposed transferring authority over federal lands to the states where they are based, absurdly calling such efforts a “public land heist.”<sup>138</sup>

Unsurprisingly given their track record, the Wilburforce Foundation has been a prominent supporter of the Green Decoy movement. In sum, the foundation has given \$6,248,275 to the groups identified in this report, and notably given nearly \$2 million to the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative. In fact, the bulk of the Wilburforce Foundation’s funding to these groups, more than \$4 million, has taken place in recent years. The largest recipients of this massive flow of recent grants has been the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative (\$1,138,500), the Heart of the Rockies Initiative (\$600,000) and Backcountry Hunters & Anglers (\$595,000).

Recent Green Decoy Grants Made By The Wilburforce Foundation (2017 To 2021)

Organization	Total Recent Contributions
Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative	\$1,138,500.00
Heart of the Rockies Initiative	\$600,000.00
Backcountry Hunters & Anglers	\$595,000.00
Headwater Economics	\$520,000.00
Greater Yellowstone Coalition	\$380,000.00
Wild Montana	\$325,000.00
Montana Wildlife Federation	\$320,000.00
Montana Conservation Voters	\$180,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,058,500</b>

## CINNABAR FOUNDATION

The Cinnabar Foundation is a Montana-based nonprofit focused specifically on supporting conservation efforts in the state.<sup>139</sup> The Cinnabar Foundation is acutely plugged into the Green Decoy network, not only because it is based in Montana, but also through its foundation president, Robin Tawney. Tawney’s son, Land, is president of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers,<sup>140</sup> and her daughter,<sup>141</sup> Whitney, is executive director of Montana Conservation Voters and formerly worked for Democratic Senator Max Baucus and the Western Conservation Foundation.<sup>142</sup>

While the Cinnabar Foundation is not as rich as some of the other liberal foundations identified in this report, its funding is laser focused on the Green Decoy movement. Consider that the Cinnabar Foundation in the last several years has only brought in around \$200,000 per year in revenue. At the same time, it has given \$695,000 in total to Green Decoy groups in sum, and since 2017 alone, more than \$270,000. Some groups, such as the Montana Wildlife Federation, Montana Conservation Voters, or the Western Organization of Resource Councils, have received grants from the Cinnabar Foundation almost every single year since 2004.

Like the rest of the groups identified in this report, the Cinnabar Foundation’s long-term goal appears to be to minimize economic development and human use of the land. For example, the Cinnabar Foundation has ominously warned Montana’s governor will “encourage all fossil fuel development.”<sup>143</sup> The Cinnabar Foundation has also locked more than a million acres of land under conservation easements, with the goal of “permanently” restricting what activities can take place on those lands.<sup>144</sup> Philosophically, the Cinnabar Foundation has championed the use of easements to keep land “open and undeveloped.”<sup>145</sup>



## MONTANA'S FUTURE IS IN THE BALANCE

A new dark money group recently formed in Helena, Montana. Calling itself the Secure Elections Project, it is helmed by the former Secretary of State—of Kentucky, who still lives in Kentucky. The group advocates for automatic voter registration in Montana, a policy that is the product of leftwing advocacy groups and politicians.<sup>146</sup>

Where did the seed money for the Secure Elections Projects come from? Tax records show the New Venture Fund gave over \$2 million to the group. It is unclear who exactly gave the seed money to New Venture Fund.

These pop-up groups are a favored model of activists looking to push leftwing policies—and the environment is a top issue.

Montana has a rich history and culture. And many forces from outside Montana want to shape how Montanans use land—and who can use it.

Broadly speaking, these interests want to see more wilderness and fewer people using the land—whether for logging, grazing, mining, fracking, or anything else. Ironically, much of this advocacy would reduce access for sportsmen, not increase it.

Consider the American Prairie Reserve. The project consists of buying up Montana ranches and converting the land into a private national park for bison. It's a permanent conversion of the land from being conserved and stewarded as ranchland, to being a reserve.

Significant amounts of early funding for the Reserve came from the same organizations funding the Green Decoy movement. The Wyss Foundation gave \$1.5 million to the project in 2008 and \$1 million in 2006. The California-based Packard Foundation, another major funder of radical environmentalism, gave \$1.5 million between 2005 and 2011. Smaller amounts came from the Pew and Cinnabar foundations, as well as donor-advised funds.

American Prairie Reserve has met with much local resistance in Montana. "I see them coming in with big money, buying up ranches and walking over the top of the people who are already here," one ranch owner told NPR. "For them to be successful in their goals, we can't be here, and that's not OK with us."<sup>147</sup>

As Montanans see new advocacy groups and campaigns form, they should ask themselves: Do they speak for Montanans, and do they have the state's best interests at heart?

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