



**Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent**  
*Connecting People to Sustain and Enhance Culture, Community and Conservation*

**8th ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA**

**“Conversations the Matter: Connections and Tensions in the Crown”**

September 25-27, 2017

Choteau, MT

**About the Annual Conference**

The annual conference serves as one of the primary vehicles to achieve the core mission of the Roundtable—to connect people to enhance culture, community and conservation in the Crown of the Continent. During the past seven years, this conference has moved around the Crown to feature and celebrate different regions. This year’s conference will focus on having the conversations that matter — conversations that advance our common interests, help us work through difficulties, and make progress on complex issues. The Crown contains a vast array of intersections: between urban and rural communities, between public and private land, between resource extraction and amenity-based economies, between indigenous and later-arriving cultures. These can be areas of challenge, but they are also full of opportunity. This year we will hone in on local governance and land use, agriculture and conservation, and the shifting economics of the Crown. Together and in small groups, we’ll look at how these topics are currently playing out in the landscape, and then provide the space to have conversations that work through the tensions — and explore the opportunities — that each of them represents.

**Objectives and Expected Outcomes**

- Exchange new information and ideas to connect people working on similar issues
- Foster a sense of regional identity
- Help people see themselves as stewards of the Crown, and guiding them in fulfilling that role
- Find inspiration and connection to place
- Generate a sense of fellowship and connection to each other
- Explore specific, relevant, and challenging issues in depth

**About the Roundtable**

The Crown of the Continent region is a remarkable, ecologically intact ecosystem rich in tribal history, natural resources, and thriving communities. This 18-million acre region is threatened by climate change, loss of traditional knowledge, growth, and development. The Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent addresses these challenges by providing a forum for collaboration and networking among Tribes/First Nations, land management agencies, local governments, private land partnerships, academia, conservation groups, businesses, and industry.

Large landscape conservation is participatory and inclusive and the Roundtable connects people to enhance the culture, communities, and conservation of the region. Our transboundary, large landscape effort provides a platform for diverse perspectives to share information, build knowledge and capacity, celebrate success, and catalyze new efforts and partnerships. The

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Roundtable seeks to achieve a shared vision for people and nature in the region. For more information, please go to [crownroundtable.net](http://crownroundtable.net).

## **Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent Teams**

### **LEADERSHIP TEAM**

Len Broberg, University of Montana

Mike Bruised Head, Blood Tribe

Jean Curtiss, Missoula County

Ian Dyson, Alberta Environment and Parks

Rob Taylor, Oldman Watershed Council

Rich Janssen, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Shawn Johnson, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy

Todd Larson, East Kootenay Invasive Plan Council

Nic Milligan, Teck Resources

Jeff Mow, Glacier National Park

Sheena Pate, Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council

Melly Reuling, Center for Large Landscape Conservation

Mary Sexton, landowner and consultant

John T. Shannon, USDA Forest Service Northern and Intermountain Regions

Paul Travis, Flathead Land Trust

Melissa Weatherwax, Blackfeet Community College

### **SUPPORT TEAM**

Peter Gurche, Coordinator

Sue Higgins, development and consulting

Lea Whitford, Tribal Liaison

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**AGENDA**

**Monday, September 25: New and Old Economies in the Crown**

- 10:00 AM     **Conference Registration Begins**  
*Sponsor tables in entrance way*
- 1:00 PM     **Conference Convenes: Welcome**  
Terry Tatsey, Blackfeet Nation *(Invited)*  
Jack Conatser, Choteau Mayor *(Invited)*
- 1:15         **Conversations that Matter: Why Are We Here?**  
Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 1:25         **South-East Crown Snapshot**  
*Where are we in terms of ecology, culture, geography, politics, economy, etc?*  
Shawn Johnson, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy
- 2:00         **Crown Café**  
*Quick updates about Crown news from conference participants*
- 3:00         **Break**
- 3:15         **Keynote: The Shifting Economy of the South-East Crown**  
*The Rocky Mountain Front has seen dramatic changes in its economic base. This shift impacts everything from healthcare and education to public land management and water conservation. This plenary will lay out the challenges faced by Choteau and other towns in the region as their economies change, and the opportunities that exist within the current economic landscape.*  
  
Ray Rasker, Headwaters Economics
- 4:00         **Moderated Discussion: Where to Now?**  
*Regional thought-leaders will hold a public conversation on the themes from the previous plenary.*  
  
Panelists:  
Dan Clark, Local Government Center, MSU; former Choteau Mayor *(Invited)*  
Jane Weber, Cascade County Commission *(Invited)*  
Terry Tatsey, Blackfeet Nation *(Invited)*  
Bev Thorton, Alberta Southwest Regional Alliance  
Moderator:  
Ray Rasker, Headwaters Economics

- 5:00 **BREAK**
- 5:30 **No-Host Bar**
- 6:00 **Dinner**
- 7:30 **Film Double Showing at the Roxy Theater**  
*“Badger Creek” chronicles the story of the Momberg family on the Blackfeet Reservation as they balance tradition and change across generations.*  
*“On the Shoulders of Giants” Reveals the scope and importance of private lands conservation efforts in Montana*
- 8:30 **Native Skies/Pikuni Astronomy**  
*Stars and stories from an indigenous perspective with Helen Carlson. Location TBD (outdoors).*

**Tuesday, September 26: Agriculture and Conservation**

- 7:30 **Coffee and Pastries**
- 8:00 **Preview of the Day**  
 Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 8:15 **Plenary: The Intersection of Agriculture and Conservation**  
*Agriculture and conservation are deeply connected, but have not always coexisted easily. Water, weeds, wildlife, easements, and innovative approaches are all critical factors playing out at the nexus of these two critical forces.*
- Loren Birdrattler
- 8:45 **Ag and Conservation Lightning Round**  
*One person from each of four subject areas will give an introduction and preview of their breakout session.*  
 Wildlife and Ranching – Gary Burnett, Blackfoot Challenge (Invited)  
 Buffalo – Sheldon Carlton, Blackfeet Nation  
 Landscape Stressors – Anne Schwend, DNRC (Invited)  
 Private Land Conservation – Dave Carr, The Nature Conservancy (Invited)  
 Innovative Approaches – Eric Bergman, organic farmer (Invited)
- 9:20 **Agriculture and Conservation Breakouts: 1<sup>st</sup> Session** (55 minutes each, pick 1)  
*These breakouts represent an opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners in the field, ask questions, and raise concerns.*  
**WILDLIFE AND RANCHING:** Conflict and the Possibility of Coexistence  
 Dona Rutherford, Blackfeet Nation,  
 Wendy Clark, USFS (Invited)

Mary Stein *(Invited)*  
Gary Burnett, Blackfoot Challenge *(Invited)*

LANDSCAPE STRESSORS: Weeds, Water, and Wildfire  
Cole Mannix, Western Landowners Alliance *(Invited)*  
Dylan Desrosier, TNC *(Invited)*  
Carl Rattolz *(Invited)*  
Jean Curry *(Invited)*  
Anne Schwend (Moderator) *(Invited)*

10:15      **BREAK**

10:30      **Agriculture and Conservation Breakouts: 2<sup>nd</sup> Session** (55 minutes each, pick 1)  
*These breakouts represent an opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners in the field, ask questions, and raise concerns.*

**PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION**

Paul Travis  
Gary Sullivan *(Invited)*  
Dave Carr *(Invited)*  
Joe Dellwo *(Invited)*

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES**

Eric Bergman *(Invited)*  
David Oien *(Invited)*

11:30      **Breakout Session Report-Out**  
*What was discussed? What are the most pressing needs in these areas, and what are some potential next steps?*

12:00      **LUNCH**

1:00      Field Trips

5:00      **BREAK**

5:30      **No-host Bar**

6:00      **Dinner**

7:30      **Celebrating the Literary Legacy of the Rocky Mountain Front**  
*This region has a rich literary history, and has been lived in and written about by a wide array of authors: A.B. Guthrie, James Welch, Ivan Doig, Pete Fromm, and others. We'll hear selected readings and get a chance to hear work from some of the authors themselves.*

**Wednesday, September 27: Local Governance and Conflicting Values in Land Use**

- 7:30           **Coffee and Pastries**
- 8:00           **Preview of the Day**  
Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 8:15           **Land Use Issues Across the Crown**  
*This series of short talks will profile specific land use issues, the tensions that characterize them, and ways in which they might be resolved*
- Jean Curtiss, Missoula County Commission  
*Ag-land conservation, urban and rural differences*
- Gary Krueger, Flathead County Commission  
*Bottling plant controversy*
- Chris Bryant, The Nature Conservancy (Invited)  
*Plum Creek settlement planning and the public-private interface*
- Mary Watson, Waterton (Invited)  
*Planning in the park*
- Gerald Wagner  
*Climate Planning on the Blackfeet Reservation*
- 9:45           **Table Discussions and Question and Answer**  
*Each table will have the chance to discuss the case studies presented and prioritize one question, which they will then ask to the group of experts*
- 10:30           **BREAK**
- 10:45           **Leadership Team Reflective Panel**  
*The Leadership Team for the Roundtable will reflect on their role, and how this effort influences their work beyond the borders of the conference.*
- 11:45           **Final Thoughts and Logistics**  
Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 12:00           **CONFERENCE ADJOURNS**
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