

Bighorn National Forest

2023 Partnership Opportunities

Connecting the Forest Service and partners through
shared stewardship of the Bighorn National Forest



About this Partnership Opportunity Guide

The Bighorn National Forest is filled with special places. With over 1 million acres of national forest, the Cloud Peak Wilderness area, historic guard stations and fire lookouts, developed campgrounds, 1,200 miles of trails, and spectacular scenery, the Bighorn National Forest has something for everyone.

To steward this unique landscape, the Forest Service engages with partners in the development, implementation, and evaluation of our recreation, restoration, resource enhancement and stewardship activities. Partners offer unique opportunities to build public support and goodwill, accomplish increased work on the ground, and leverage resources. The Bighorn National Forest uses partners to share in the stewardship of the forest, and seeks innovative, meaningful opportunities for collaboration throughout all program areas. We value the ideas and contributions gained from building and strengthening our relationships with communities, tribal organizations, and private and public entities.

This opportunity guide is the result of a joint effort between the Bighorn National Forest, the National Forest Foundation (NFF), and the National Partnership Office (NPO) to understand the strengths, challenges, and opportunities to build meaningful and sustainable partnerships. This process identified communication of forest project priorities as an important opportunity to build partnerships with organizations and agencies that have a connection to the forest. The Partnership Opportunity Guide aims to serve as a communication tool to connect Bighorn NF project priorities with existing capacity.

Thank you for all that you do to steward the Bighorn National Forest and its abundant resources. My staff and I look forward to continuing our partnerships and engaging with our community on a meaningful level.

Andrew Johnson Forest Supervisor
Bighorn National Forest

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Kids Fishing Day

Saturday, June 24, 2023

The Bighorn National Forest and Wyoming Game and Fish Department are hosting Kid's Fishing Day Saturday June 24 at Porcupine Ranger Station Pond (located in the Bighorn Mountains on Forest Road 13, north off Hwy 14A).

- Children aged 13 years and under who are Wyoming residents do not need a Wyoming fishing license. Non-resident children 13 and under must have an adult with a valid Wyoming fishing license on site. State regulations and creel limits apply.
- This event is free. Volunteers from the Forest Service, Trout Unlimited, and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department will be there to answer questions and provide instructions on casting techniques, knot tying, angler ethics, and fish conservation and ecology.
- Prepare for mountain weather with rain gear, layered clothing, food, water, sunblock and insect repellent. Please bring your own fishing tackle, and coolers with ice for transporting fish.
- Fishing bait and rods for children who do not own one will be provided.

Please let us know if you would like to contribute to the event.

Project Contact

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North Tongue Cleanup and Fishing Access Enhancement

Bighorn National Forest and the Powder River Basin Chapter of Trout Unlimited will be hosting a clean up day to remove trash along the North Tongue and repaint signs. Additional volunteers are welcome to attend.

A Clean-up Day is coming summer 2023

Porta-potties needed

The Forest Service, in coordination with Wyoming Game and Fish, need assistance with funding porta potties to be placed along the North Tongue River at key access points during the summer months to reduce human waste impacts. Assistance in cleaning and pumping facilities is also needed.

Project Contact

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Bighorn Fence Initiative



Fences are an essential part of our landscape, yet where wildlife and fences intersect the results can be costly. The Bighorn Fence Initiative (BFI) is comprised of agencies, including the Bighorn National Forest and non-governmental groups, brought together with a common goal to reduce the impacts that fences have on wildlife.

BFI's mission is "Partnering with willing landowners and land managers, Bighorn Fence Initiative works to ensure fences are functional for livestock management and facilitate wildlife movement on private and public land in the Bighorn Mountains and foothills through public fence removal and modification projects and educational outreach to area communities."

BFI will meet in the spring to prioritize about three fence modification or removal projects around the Bighorn mountains to be implemented in 2023. If you would like to participate in these volunteer projects or would like to participate in the BFI in anyway, please reach out to the BFI coordinator Meghan Kent with Sheridan Community Land Trust.

Project Contact

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Weed Pull Day and Bounty

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Help prevent the spread of invasive species, join us and our partners at Johnson County Weed and Pest for the 2023 Johnson County Weed Pull and Bounty Kick Off Day June 14, 2023.

Please meet at the Mentock Overflow Parking area in Buffalo, WY. The Weed Pull Day will focus on pulling weeds on the Grouse Mountain Archery Range and the Mentock Trail. The Bounty will continue through mid-July.

There are apps now available for the public to report weed locations, if you're interested in helping, contact us for details.

Project Contact

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Bighorn Trail Program

2023 Events

National Public Lands Day- Saturday, September 23, 2023

National Trails Day- Sunday, June 3, 2023

If you're interested in helping throughout the summer, we are looking for volunteers to report trail conditions, issues or concerns, as well as great experiences.

Montana Conservation Corps is scheduled to work on the Solitude Loop Forest System Trail (FST) 038 in the Rock Creek area on FST 039, 040, 041, and 401.

Wy State Trails is working on Parallel FST 117, Medicine Lodge Basin FST 180, Kinky White FST 116, and will complete smaller projects on the Tongue District near Woodrock Guard Station and in the Big Goose area.

Project Contact

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Dispersed Camping Management



For decades, dispersed camping has been noted as an issue in the Bighorn National Forest. To protect natural resources and recreational opportunities for all, camping regulations were changed in 2023. The changes get at the root of the issue, which is campers being left on the Forest all summer and in some cases all year, making it difficult for others to enjoy their public lands. This continued use also contributes to resource damage.

Monitoring, more informational signs, and assistance with education is still needed. Contact us if you're interested in helping.

Project Contact

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Citizen Science Opportunities





Wilderness Rapid Campsite Assessments

Over 190,000-acres of scenic peaks and lush glacial valleys are preserved in Cloud Peak Wilderness. This area houses the highest points in the forest, drawing thousands of annual visitors who explore the hundreds of miles of trail and popular mountain summits. In order to understand the use levels and monitor wilderness character, surveys and campsite assessments are being conducted with Wyoming Wilderness Association. If you are interested in joining the effort, please let us know.

Project Contacts

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Bighorn Ebird Project

There is still a lot that land managers don't know about how some bird species use certain habitat types in the Bighorns (such as aspen, willow, sagebrush, old forest, cliffs). In 2022, 50-100 bird species were observed in each eBird hotspot. Help us learn more. Join Bighorn National Forest staff and submit bird observations through the eBird community science application today!

www.eBird.org

Project Contact

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Bighorn iNaturalist Project

Join Bighorn wildlife and botany staff in documenting the biodiversity of the Bighorn National Forest! Through the iNaturalist app you can upload photos of plants and animals you see on the Forest that are then collected in a project that we track to help with identification and gaining an understanding of where different species occur. In 2022, 5,660 observations and 879 species were recorded in the Bighorn iNaturalist Project. More than half of these observations were plants, help us add more information.

www.iNaturalist.org

Under the “community” tab, select projects, then search for:



Bighorn National Forest Biodiversity
Inventory

Project Contact

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Monarch Butterfly Monitoring

The Monarch is currently a Candidate Species under the Endangered Species Act. Monarch caterpillars rely on milkweed as their food source until they pupate and transform into butterflies. There are many species of milkweed in Wyoming, two of which likely occur on the Bighorn NF (showy milkweed and green comet milkweed).

Photos of milkweed, monarch butterflies and caterpillars and their locations can be uploaded at the following website as part of a larger effort to understand their distribution in the western United States.

Monarch and Milkweed Mapper

<https://www.monarchmilkweedmapper.org/>

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