

Flathead, Helena-Lewis and Clark, and Lolo National Forests | R1-22-22 | April 2022

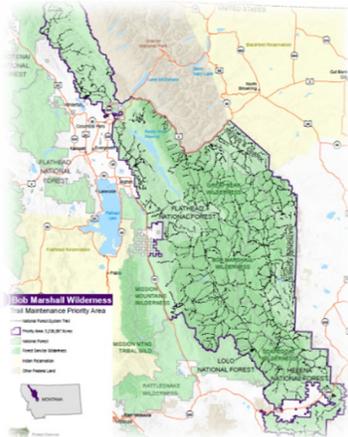
# Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex and Adjacent Lands Priority Area Trail Maintenance Project

Funded by the Great American Outdoors Act Legacy Restoration Fund

The Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex Trails Project is a multi-year, \$5.4 million project focused on reducing deferred maintenance on 3,247 miles of trails within the Wilderness Complex and the Adjacent Lands Priority Area. This is one of only 15 Priority Areas nationwide (established under the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Act of 2016) that were identified as a priority for increased trail maintenance. The project is a combined effort between the Helena-Lewis and Clark, the Lolo, and the Flathead National Forest.

The Forests have partnered with the Montana Conservation Corps (MCC), the Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation (BMWF), Flathead Area Mountain Bikers (FAMB), and Backcountry Horsemen of the Flathead (BCHF) to implement maintenance on hundreds of miles of trail as part of the project.

Over the 2021 season, the three forests were able to complete over 1,000 feet of turnpike repairs, 500 feet of puncheon replacements, 6 miles of retread, 220 feet of retaining wall restoration, 6,400 feet of ditch/drainage structure repairs, 5,000 feet of braided trail repairs, 31 miles of brushing, 535 feet of puncheon running board repairs, 40 feet of puncheon approaches/stair repairs, 98 miles of re-establishing cleared corridor, 6,000 feet of trail rerouting projects, and 50 feet of multi-tier crib wall repairs. GAOA funding was also used to invest in project area stock programs and primitive trail maintenance activities across the complex.



Above: Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex & Adjacent Lands Priority Area



Above: Bringing in supplies with stock

All of this work occurred in addition to the Forests' regularly scheduled maintenance projects. The additional funding provided by GAOA has allowed the Forests to address vital deferred maintenance tasks which otherwise would not have been completed.

The upcoming 2022 field season is also quickly taking shape. The Lolo intends to have 4 MCC hitches in the Scapegoat Wilderness. The Flathead expects to continue to improve clearing width across the trail system and focused work on the Bull Creek, Morrison Creek, and Big River Trails. The Helena Lewis and Clark is planning puncheon reconstruction on a couple of trails, as well as reroutes, turnpike work, and trail brushing.

Over the next four years, additional trails work is planned which will significantly improve the experience of forest visitors and provide enjoyment for many years to come.



Right: Forks Patrol Trail No 452 before and after MCC brushing and tread work