

**2011 Annual Report: *July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011***

*Contributions: Your investment in Gallatin Valley Land Trust makes it possible for us to create a lasting legacy of conservation and community trails. We are a membership-based organization and we deeply appreciate the broad-based support we receive from individuals and businesses throughout our region. Unfortunately, space limitations prevent us from listing the hundreds of supporters who contributed membership gifts below \$150. Thank you to all of our supporters!*

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# YEAR TWENTY-ONE: IN REVIEW



**T**his past year GVLT embarked upon its third decade of serving and enhancing the lives of all the residents of the Gallatin Valley and beyond. Who could have imagined, when our founder, Chris Boyd, first set us on the course of community trails and land conservation, that in a little over two decades we would have helped to catalyze and build 60 miles of trails in our Main Street to the Mountains trail system or have partnered with 86 visionary families to conserve more than 37,000 thousand acres of agricultural land, open space, and wildlife habitat. Thank you all for helping us to achieve these milestones. We couldn't have done it without you.

As you read our 2011 Annual Report and the lists of all the generous people, businesses, and volunteers that help us, it is clear that we truly are a community organization. It is the deep belief and loyalty of our supporters that make the vision of GVLT possible and that inspire us to continue to pursue new and innovative ideas and strategies, to strengthen partnerships and collaborations, and to continue to strive for excellence and on-the-ground results every day.

As we reflect back on the past year, we are so proud of all that GVLT accomplished thanks to our many generous friends who have been steadfast in their support through uncertain economic times. We have both learned so much and had the pleasure and privilege of meeting and working with so many of you who are integral to our past and continued success. We are awed and inspired by the commitment of our staff, board, volunteers, donors, and community to GVLT.

GVLT is your land trust, and without you it would not be possible to do the work we do to protect the things that make this such a remarkable place to call home—open land, working farms and ranches, wild life habitat, and a vast community trails system. Thank you for your unwavering and remarkable assistance to our mission and our work.

Just imagine where the next 20 years can take us with more trails that connect people to each other and to the land, and the legacy of land conserved for future generations. We look forward to continuing to share the journey with you.

Penelope Pierce, Executive Director

Mike Wheat, Board President



## On the Cover

### Chestnut Mountain

*This year, after nearly a decade of tireless work, GVLT and dozens of partners celebrated the completion of a significant trail and private land conservation project at Bozeman Pass. More than five miles of new trail on Chestnut Mountain now lead hikers, bikers, and equestrians past rugged Frog Rock (center), and connects them with several other trail systems in the Gallatin National Forest (background). Thanks go to the Schmidt family and to Gertrude Baker, who donated conservation easements to GVLT on critical wildlife habitat (foreground). The Schmidts also gave 775 acres to the Gallatin National Forest, where the new Chestnut Mountain Trail winds along the rocky ridge. In total, GVLT has helped conserve more than 4,000 acres of land in this important wildlife area. Read more about this project on pages 4-5.*

photo by:



# FINANCIAL REPORT: YOUR SUPPORT AT WORK

## Board of Directors

Mike Wheat  
*President*  
*Montana Supreme Court Justice*

Steve Schnee  
*Vice President*  
*Founder, Schnee's Boots & Shoes*

Mike Riley  
*Treasurer*  
*On Site Management, Inc.*

Valorie Drake  
*Secretary*  
*Greater Yellowstone Coalition*

Dotty Ballantyne  
*Consultant, Retired*

Micheline Bisailon  
*Greenspace Landscaping, Inc.*

Bill Cochran  
*Bozeman Area Bicycle Advisory Board*

Columbine Culberg  
*Montana Import Group*

Stuart Jennings  
*Reclamation Research Group, LLC*

Sally Sands  
*Management Consultant, Retired*

Alison Totten  
*Former local business owner*

## Mission

Gallatin Valley Land Trust conserves southwest Montana's heritage of open landscapes, working farms and ranches, healthy rivers, and wildlife habitat; and creates trails to connect people, communities, and the land.



## Fiscal Year 2011: July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

GVLT celebrated the close of its 20th anniversary at the end of 2010. While the year presented challenging financial conditions, we completed some incredible projects, including finishing the Chestnut Mountain Trail, installing Bozeman's first natural playground, and permanently conserving another 210 acres of prime agricultural land.

These successes were possible because of tremendous local support and outstanding leadership from the Executive Director and Board.

Operating income totaled \$559,257—an increase of \$42,198 over last year. Major donor gifts increased significantly, and I am delighted to report that we met 95% of our budgeted goal for major gifts. Individual gifts and membership appeals also increased, which is an incredible tribute to the folks who live and work in our communities! We are extremely grateful.

Overhead expenses were reduced significantly this year and the organization is running as lean as possible with expenses. There is no waste.

Last year the Board created the 20th Anniversary Fund. Thanks to generous contributions from the Board and community, this Fund is now approaching \$100,000. This money will smooth out the variability in our annual cash flow, giving us the ability to consistently focus on conserving land and building community trails for years to come.

The Board thanks you, our donors, volunteers, and supporters, and our truly dedicated staff, for all that you've done for GVLT and Southwest Montana in the past two decades.

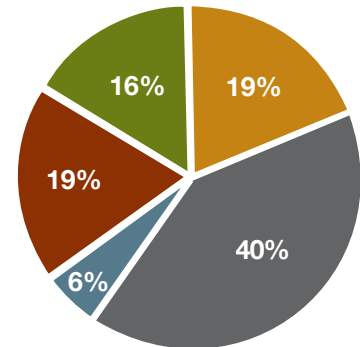
*Michael Riley*  
Mike Riley, Treasurer

*These charts depict unaudited financial reports. Audited financial statements may be obtained from GVLT in December. IRS Form 990 is available at [www.gvlt.org](http://www.gvlt.org).*

## Operating Expense by Program

Community Trails . . . . .	\$219,353
Land Conservation . . . . .	\$104,610
Finance & Operations . . . . .	\$101,000
Fundraising . . . . .	\$88,876
Education . . . . .	\$29,858

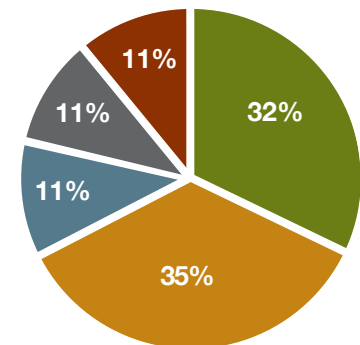
**Total . . . . . \$543,697**



## Operating Income by Source

Individuals & Foundations . . . .	\$179,067
Project-Related Grants . . . . .	\$199,277
Earned Income . . . . .	\$59,697
20th Anniversary Fund . . . . .	\$61,273
Events . . . . .	\$59,942

**Total . . . . . \$559,257**



# ON DECK: SOURDOUGH CANYON TRAILHEAD

GVLТ continues its work on one of our most ambitious and expensive trail projects to-date: improving the Sourdough Canyon Trailhead. Just minutes south of Bozeman, Sourdough Canyon Trail (also known as Bozeman Creek Trail) is one of Gallatin National Forest's most popular year-round trails and marks one anchor of our Main Street to the Mountains trail system.

Nearly five acres of land at the trailhead were generously donated to GVLТ in 2007 by Michael Delaney and Ileana Indreland. Since then GVLТ has been working with a diverse group of partners and stakeholders to design trailhead improvements with the goals of improving public safety, enhancing recreational amenities, and restoring the Sourdough Creek watershed.

With funding from the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Recreational Trails Program, GVLТ began the first phase of improvements in the fall of 2010, which included installing a permanent vault toilet and adding 15 parking spaces—nearly doubling the available parking.

This fall, GVLТ will be widening the trailhead's access road to improve safety, moving the road away from the creek to reduce sedimentation, installing a turn-around for emergency vehicles, expanding parking further, and restoring sections of Sourdough Creek with native vegetation. With vital funding from the Gallatin Resource Advisory Committee, National Forest Foundation, Montana Import Group (MIG), Recreational Equipment, Inc. (REI), DA Davidson, Bridger Feeds, Patagonia, and dozens of individual donors like you, GVLТ is working to keep Sourdough Canyon a healthy, accessible, and fun recreational destination.

*Skiers enjoy one of Bozeman's most popular trails at Sourdough Canyon. Photo: Bridger Ski Foundation.*



*A new, permanent vault toilet was lowered into place at Sourdough Canyon Trailhead last fall.*

## Staff

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Gallatin Valley Land Trust is a member of the Montana Association of Land Trusts and the Land Trust Alliance.



# CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN & BOZEMAN PASS: TWO DECADES OF HARD WORK PAY OFF

Project Partners:



Above: The stunning view from the top of Frog Rock.  
Photo: Ted Lange

Below: Hugo Schmidt, who helped make this project possible, hikes the new Chestnut Mountain Trail with Bill Dockins of the Southwest Montana Climbers Coalition.



## A History of Trails & Open Lands

In July of 1805, Sacajawea guided Captain William Clark over the Bozeman Pass trail on his way to rejoin the rest of the Lewis & Clark expedition. It was the most logical way to cross the steep, forested mountains more than two centuries ago, and remains the best way to move across this part of Montana today—and not just for people.

For wildlife, Bozeman Pass provides the easiest passage between the Gallatin Range in the south and the Bridger and Bangtail Ranges to the north. Wide-ranging species including bear, moose, wolves, elk, and deer rely on wildlife corridors like Bozeman Pass, where the dark cover of forest pinches down to the valley bottom, providing safe cover and plenty of room to roam.

But as the Gallatin Valley was developed, this important wildlife corridor became fragmented. The railroad, Interstate 90, and subdivision developments springing up in the foothills outside of Bozeman divided and infringed on this important habitat. By the 1990s, Bozeman Pass became the Greater Yellowstone region's most threatened wildlife corridor.

In 1991, the Gallatin Valley Land Trust was an all-volunteer organization, just getting started under the vision of founder Chris Boyd. Our mission then, as now, was to partner with private landowners to conserve working farms and ranches, wildlife habitat, and river corridors and to help build trails to connect communities. Two decades later, Bozeman Pass has become one of GVLT's proudest accomplishments, highlighting the importance of partnerships, the generosity of private landowners, and the critical need for an organization like GVLT.

## Conservation of the Bozeman Pass Wildlife Corridor

In 1991, Gertrude Baker created GVLТ's first conservation easement, protecting nearly 200 acres of important habitat in the heart of the Bozeman Pass wildlife corridor. She later donated her land to the Montana Outdoor Science School.

In 2006, the Schmidt family created a conservation easement on their land across I-90 from the Baker easement, protecting another 1,225 acres of significant wildlife habitat. In total, GVLТ has conserved more than 4,000 acres of wildlife habitat and scenic open space at Bozeman Pass.

The Schmidt family also owned land adjacent to the Baker easement. Partnering with the Trust for Public Land, the Gallatin County Open Lands Program, the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and the U.S. Forest Service, the Schmidts donated and sold an additional 775 acres to the Gallatin National Forest. This land will never be developed, ensuring that people and wildlife can enjoy it in perpetuity. Today this land provides access to two popular rock climbing areas and allowed for creation of the new Chestnut Mountain Trail.

## Creation of the Chestnut Mountain Trail

This year, GVLТ was proud to help celebrate the opening of the Chestnut Mountain Trail. The new trail is a result of nearly a decade of hard work by dozens of partners, including the Gallatin National Forest, Trust for Public Land, the Schmidt Family, Montana Outdoor Science School, Southwest Montana Climber's Coalition, and countless volunteers and community groups.

More than five miles of new trail provide expanded access to the Gallatin National Forest just minutes from Bozeman. The trail begins just east of the Trail Creek Exit of I-90. It crosses the Baker conservation easement for the first half-mile before entering the new Gallatin National Forest land (donated by the Schmidts). At 1.2 miles a spur trail diverges, constructed by the Southwest Montana Climber's Coalition to provide access to rock climbing on Frog Rock. The main trail continues



*GVLТ president Mike Wheat (left) helps with the ribbon cutting at the grand opening for the Chestnut Mountain Trail, along with project partners Terry Johnson (trail builder), Alex Diekmann (Trust for Public Land), Lisa Stoeffler (Gallatin National Forest), Deb Love (Trust for Public Land), Mayor Jeff Krauss (City of Bozeman), Jennifer Madgic (staff for Senator Jon Tester), Hugo Schmidt (landowner), and Brianne Dugan (staff for Senator Max Baucus).*

for more than four miles where it connects to the Bear Canyon and Goose Creek trail systems.

Rising to 7,640 feet in elevation, hikers, bikers, and equestrians will be rewarded with unparalleled views of Bozeman Pass, the Gallatin Valley, and the surrounding mountain ranges. Equally important, wildlife are guaranteed room to roam on permanently protected lands in Bozeman Pass.

## Project Statistics:

**4,054**

*Acres of private land conserved in GVLТ's 20-year history at Bozeman Pass*

**775**

*Acres of new public land in the Gallatin National Forest*

**5.6**

*Miles of new trail constructed in FY 2011*

**2,200**

*Feet of elevation gain on the new Chestnut Mountain Trail*

**\$6.77 million**

*Total value of land permanently protected for people and wildlife through this project*

# CONSERVATION: A LEGACY OF OPEN LAND

86

*Total number of  
GVLТ conservation  
easements*

37,064

*Acres of working  
farms and ranches,  
wildlife habitat,  
and river corridors  
conserved by GVLТ*

1,132

*Hours of staff  
time in support  
of conservation  
easement  
landowners through  
stewardship  
activities in FY 2011*

## GVLТ Land Conservation Committee Members

Mike Riley, Chair  
Joe Bateson  
Bill Cochran  
Deb Kmon Davidson  
Russell Davis  
Mark Dobrenski  
Valorie Drake  
Andy Epple  
Steve Forrest  
Jeremy leFeber  
Eva Patten  
Jim Smith  
Alison Totten

## The Braaksma Family Farm: 210 acres

In 2011, GVLТ was honored to partner with the Braaksma family and the Gallatin County Open Lands Program to create a conservation easement for the 210-acre Braaksma farm in central Gallatin Valley south of Churchill. The Braaksma family has been farming in the region for more than a century and acquired this land in 1938. More than 85% of their property contains agriculturally significant soils, which produce hay and grains. Yellow Dog Creek headwaters on this land; when combined with other area conservation projects, nearly four miles of this waterway are now protected. The Braaksma conservation easement combines with nine other GVLТ easements within a five-mile radius to conserve more than 5,000 acres of critical farmland in the Churchill area.



*Barley fields on the Braaksma Farm. Photo: Amy Robinson.*

## Mud Lake Parcels: 1,920 acres

This year, GVLТ partnered with the Trust for Public Land and the Solso family to help protect three sections of high subalpine forest near the Gallatin divide. GVLТ will hold deed restrictions that prevent any future road building on these parcels, limiting the potential for any future residential or commercial development. The land is critical habitat for grizzly bear, black bear, wolves, elk, and deer.

## GVLТ Welcomes New Stewardship Manager

The Gallatin Valley Land Trust welcomed Peter Brown to our team of professional staff this year. Peter is our new full-time Stewardship Manager and comes to GVLТ from western Montana, where he had been working with the Blackfoot Challenge to develop a wolf and livestock coexistence



model. Peter was born and raised in the Helena Valley on a family farm that continues to produce cattle, sheep, hay, and small grains. He is excited to be joining GVLТ at a time when locally produced food is making a comeback. As Stewardship Manager, Peter works with conservation easement donors and successive owners to find the most efficient and effective methods of stewarding conservation properties while continuing to provide food, recreational opportunities, and wildlife havens for the vibrant Gallatin Valley community.

*Peter Brown, GVLТ's new Stewardship Manager.*

# COMMUNITY TRAILS: CONNECTING THE VALLEY

## At Play

Bozeman's first natural playground in a public park was dedicated on National Trails Day in June 2011. Located in Langohr Park along the Gallagator Trail, the playground offers an underground tunnel and landscaped rock climbing area for the young at heart. GVLT partnered with the City of Bozeman through a Parkland Improvement Grant and Greenspace Landscaping, Inc. generously donated the playground's design and installation. Other project donors included Anderson Precast & Supply, Big Sky Masonry, Montana Crane Service, Spring Hill Sod Farm, Inc., and TMC, Inc.



*Families enjoy exploring Bozeman's new natural playground on Trails Day, June 2011.*



*Ben's friends, architect Ken VanDeWalle, and GVLT staff celebrate the installation of the Ben Lyster memorial ski bench. Photo: Rebecca Helms.*

## Take a Swing on the Ben Lyster Ski Bench

Thanks to generous donations from the family and friends of Ben Lyster, a new memorial ski bench has been added to our trail system. Ben passed away on May 1, 2010, doing what he loved: backcountry skiing on Mount Ellis. Ben's friends acquired a Bridger Bowl ski lift chair and partnered with the Gallatin Valley Land Trust and architect Ken VanDeWalle, who designed and fabricated a kinetic swinging structure for the ski lift chair. The City of Bozeman Parks Department approved a great location overlooking Mount Ellis and the sledding hill and Nordic ski trails

east of the Lindley Center. Ben's friends installed the bench. Take a swing on the bench and enjoy the mountain scenery that meant so much to Ben.

## Main Street to the Mountains Trails Receive \$35,000

GVLT was honored to receive a \$35,000 Recreational Trails Program Grant for trail maintenance and improvements in the Bozeman area. The grant, which is administered by Montana Fish, Wildlife &



Parks has already created two new connector trails at the Regional Park and helped fund this season's trail boss, Josh Olsen. The grant funds will also help repair flood damaged trails at the East Gallatin Recreation Area, improve trail signage, and fund general trail maintenance and improvements.

*Representatives from Gallatin Valley Land Trust, the City of Bozeman, Gallatin County, and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks celebrate GVLT's fully funded Recreational Trails Program grant.*

60

*Total miles of trail in  
Main Street to the  
Mountains*

9.25

*Miles of trail re-  
surfaced in FY 2011*

135,000

*Pounds of gravel  
spread in FY 2011*

900

*Number of dog bags  
provided in FY 2011*

## GVLT Trails Committee

Stuart Jennings, Chair

Anne Banks

Tenara Blood

Steve Bracken

Bill Cochran

Katie Cady

Sandy Dodge

Micheline Bisailon

Don Jackson

Michael McCormick

Chris Nixon

Rick Reese

Steve Schnee

Bob Wade

2,200

*Hours of time  
donated by GVL  
volunteers in  
FY 2011*

**Outstanding  
Volunteers  
Deserving Special  
Recognition**

- Mary Anthony
- Anne Banks
- Michael Anne Beighley
- Rebecca Belou
- Steve Bracken
- Katie Cady
- Zac Cavaness
- Bunny & Jim Gaffney
- Girls for a Change
- Bill Halpin
- Mike Harris
- Janne Hayward
- Bill Hopkins
- Mark Hoza
- Terry Johnson
- Bill Klenn
- LigoCyte  
Pharmaceuticals, Inc.
- Montana Conservation  
Corps
- Montana Import Group
- Derik Olsen
- REI Employees
- Christopher Spogis
- Justin Salpes
- Alison Totten
- Ken VanDeWalle
- Shannon Willoughby



*GVL volunteers assist a "Kids Fest" participant at Bohart XC Ski Ranch. Photo: Erik Lehnhoff.*

**2011 Community Events**

GVL organized many impressive events in 2011. More than 100 skiers came out to Bohart Ranch in zero-degree weather in February to help raise more than \$20,000 for GVL's annual **Make Tracks for Trails**. The BWAG team reclaimed the Golden Ski trophy for raising the most money and skiing the distance. The Bridger Ski Foundation entertained 35 children with snowy activities in the second annual "Kids Fest." All participants relaxed after the ski event with a party and prizes provided by many generous local businesses. We celebrated **National Trails Day** on the first Saturday in June with more

100 volunteers at Burke Park. The fifth annual **Longest Day of Trails**, headquartered at Montana Ale Works, celebrated another summer solstice by bicycling our community trails from sunup to sundown. In partnership with the G.A.S./Intrinsic Cycling Team and the Gallatin Valley Bicycle Club, we led more than 100 cyclists on guided spins around the Main Street to the Mountains trail system. The event generated 150 new and renewed members. Many thanks to the local businesses and volunteers who donated time and money to make these events so successful!

**Volunteers Help Improve Miles of Trails**

In June, GVL was honored to host National Trails Day with the greatest attendance we've ever seen. More than 100 volunteers successfully resurfaced the main trail loop at the top of Burke Park (Peets Hill). Throughout the year GVL accumulated more than 1,500 hours of volunteer trail service on projects including trail resurfacing, erosion control, and noxious weed mitigation. These volunteers hailed from as far away as Egypt, and completed projects from the East Gallatin Recreation Area to the Triple Tree Trail. The result: an improved and expanded Main Street to the Mountains trail system.

*More than 100 volunteers turned out on National Trails Day to improve trails at Burke Park.*



**20th Celebration Food Donors:** Gallatin Valley Botanical • Gray Davidson & Deb Kmon Davidson • Field Day Farms • Kimm Potato Farm • Rocky Creek Farm • Sweet Pea Bakery • Tad & Tanja Tsukamoto • Willow Spring Ranch

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*All donor listings reflect contributions received between July 1, 2010 and June 30, 2011. If your name is missing or incorrect, we apologize for the error. Please contact us with corrections: 406-587-8404 ~ info@gvlt.org*

## ONE MORE THING: KEEP IN TOUCH

### GVLT Introduces a New Field Guide to Local Wildflowers

GVLT celebrates the publication of a new field guide to local wild flowers, *Flora of Montana's Gallatin Region: Greater Yellowstone's Northwest Corner*, by local author and long time GVLT supporter Whitney Tilt.

Designed for easy use, this guide presents a clear overview of each species, complete with photos and illustrations, botanical descriptions, preferred habitats, and interesting tidbits on the plant's ecology and cultural use. Whether you are hiking, camping, enjoying a walk, or just driving through, *Flora of Montana's Gallatin Region* is the one field guide to take along.

All proceeds of book sales benefit the Gallatin Valley Land Trust.

Books may be purchased for \$25 at the Gallatin Valley Land Trust office located at 25 North Willson Street, Suite E, and at the Country Bookshelf, Vargo's Jazz City and Books, Schnee's, and the Powderhorn.



### Have Truck, Will Travel!

GVLT is enormously grateful to have received a donated truck from Montana Import Group this year. GVLT staff put thousands of miles on our vehicles visiting conserved properties, completing trail projects, and meeting with landowners. This truck will help us go the distance!

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