



The Mountain Pact

Meet Bryan von Lossberg--Missoula, Montana's City Council President!

The Mountain Pact works with nearly fifty mountain communities across eleven states in the West. We created the Community Highlight Project to interview elected officials that work with The Mountain Pact to learn more about their involvement and goals, while connecting communities across states with one another. Though our work is often one on one with local elected officials, our community is far-reaching and strong, and we hope these updates provide valuable insights and relatable stories.

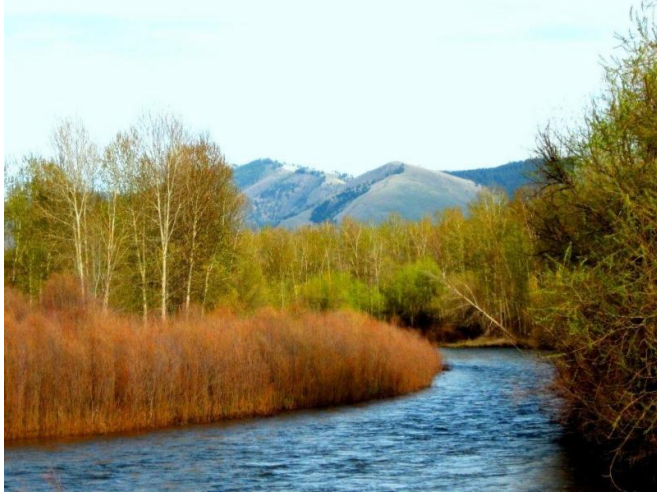
Meet Bryan Von Lossberg, City Council President of Missoula, Montana!

Bryan first fell in love with Missoula when he attended graduate school at the University of Montana earning a master's degree in [Environmental Studies](#). Following graduation, he moved away but quickly realized that his heart yearned for Missoula. Bryan and his wife missed the community and access to public lands; so eventually they made their way back to Missoula, and have called it home for over ten years. "The access to recreation activities with the mountains and rivers is exquisite," Bryan says. He also notes that Missoula is a great place to raise a kid.



Life as a City Council Member

Bryan first ran for [Missoula's City Council](#) in 2013, and currently serves as City Council President. He admits that it might sound corny, but he decided to run for City Council because of his love for Missoula. He wanted to make a contribution and keep it a great place to live.



Prior to running for office, he volunteered to work on the city's [Energy Conservation and Climate Action Plan](#). As City Council President, he continues his work as a longtime renewable energy advocate. Missoula is a leader in climate change mitigation, pledging to become carbon neutral by 2025. Reaching this goal requires a lot of work and education, but Bryan is

dedicated to finding solutions; he recently attended a weeklong "Renewable Energy Bootcamp" in Washington D.C.

Bryan believes that great places don't just happen by accident, they become great and continue to be great through efforts of countless people: government, nonprofits, the private sector--they all work around shared values to make a place unique.

Involvement With The Mountain Pact

Bryan was first introduced to The Mountain Pact when their founder, Diana Madson, reached out to Bryan and some of his colleagues about joining the voice of mountain communities across the West. They appreciated her effort to "aggregate the voices of these communities that have similar attributes" and so decided to add Missoula's voice to the mix. The focus on advocacy surrounding the importance of public lands, access, and climate change impacts seemed like an important step.

Working with The Mountain Pact in 2018, Bryan co-authored an [opinion editorial](#) with a member of the Montana State Legislature around Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) reauthorization and funding. He and other Missoula City Council members have also signed onto federal policy sign-on letters. As a member of Missoula's City Council, there is a lot to focus on day to day, and it's helpful when The Mountain Pact reveals and distills the high-level issues happening on the floor in D.C. and how those issues impact mountain communities like Missoula.

Why The Mountain Pact?

Bryan remains involved with The Mountain Pact because he feels it is important to work with other towns who have mutual interests and similar threats to their communities, "The more that we can aggregate voices, the more effective we can be in mutual advocacy."



In his opinion, The Mountain Pact does a great job and it should keep, "doing what it's doing." It's very helpful when The Mountain Pact can, "Sift through the noise in Washington,

while also drawing attention to issues that are particularly important." By passing along information and educating Missoula on focused opportunities at the federal level, Bryan finds it helpful to know when there is an opportunity to take action.

Missoula: A City Full of Energy

Missoula is special: it is located in a valley surrounded by snow-covered mountains, and water flowing through streams and rivers. Water is the lifeblood of this community, supporting agriculture, recreation, and ecosystems. As the climate changes, so does the annual water profile, which affects how long the mountains have snow, and whether there is water in the rivers for the fish to survive.

Bryan believes Missoula owes some of its intellectual energy, curiosity, and action to the University of Montana. The University is an integral part of the community and its culture. Bryan can't overstate the importance of outdoor recreation to the local community, economy, and quality of life in Missoula. Residents get to live and practice stewardship of these places and spaces on a daily basis because of their proximity to public lands and open spaces. The idea is tangible, "When we talk about river clean up or forestry practices in the Rattlesnake neighborhood and surrounding Wilderness area, these stewardship issues are not theoretical, they are a part of our residents' daily lives."



Looking Ahead: Resilience

Bryan notes it can be hard living in a town he loves, while also knowing the quality of life is under threat from climate change and public lands mismanagement. Fighting for these important issues will require lifetimes of work, but he believes it's important to find some joy in day to day life while confronting these long-term

issues. This is resilience. Resilience allows communities to find joy in the moment and still fight for tomorrow.

Look for monthly Community Highlights focused on introducing you to members of The Mountain Pact. If you are interested in being highlighted, please let us know by contacting Mountain Pact ED, Anna Peterson: anna@themountainpact.org.

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