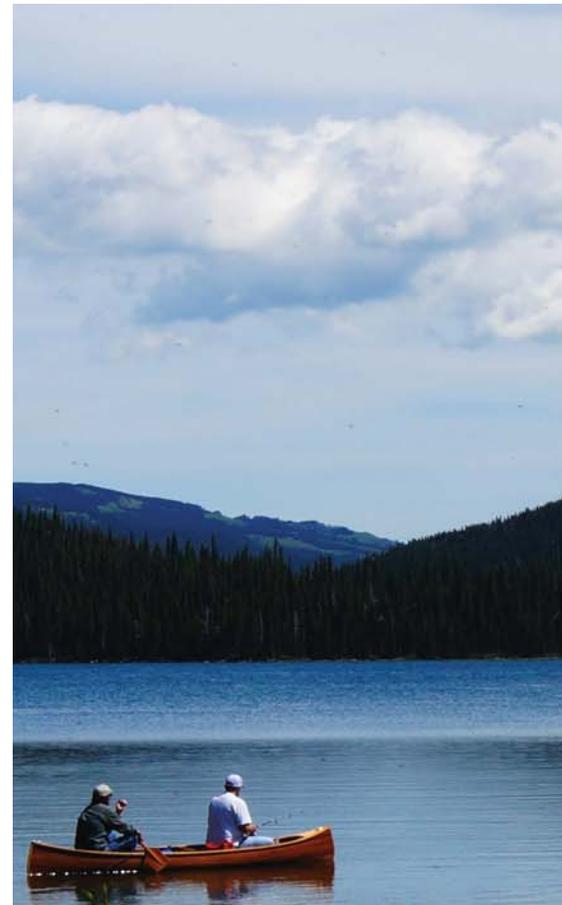
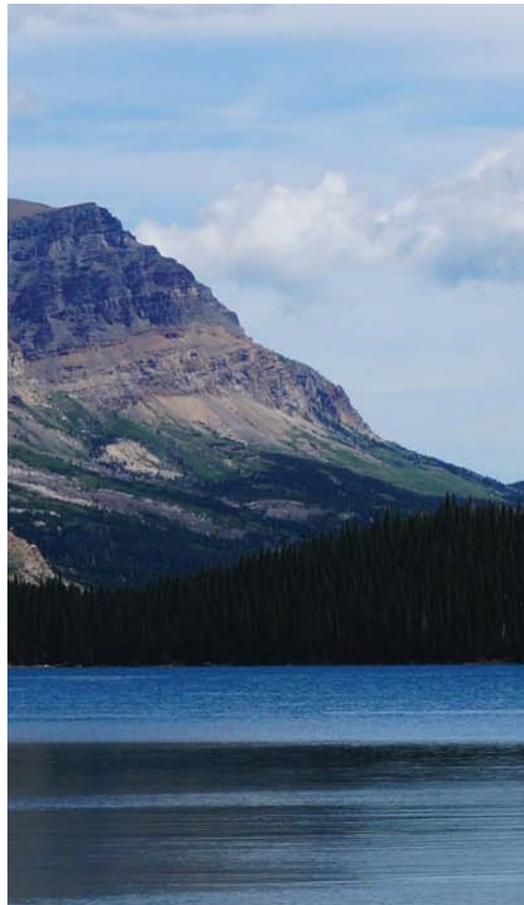


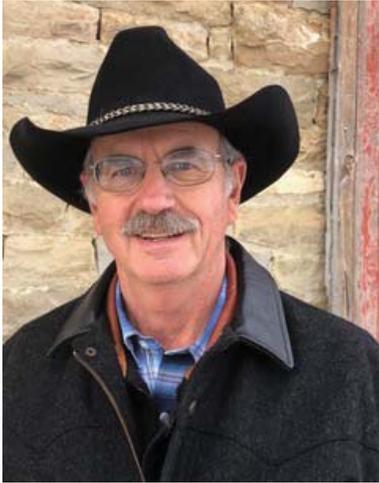
# Annual Report **2019**

**CONSERVATION. TOURISM. SERVICE**



**Protecting, enhancing and effectively representing the Montana Outfitting Industry since 1974.**

# Message from the Board President



This writing is my first opportunity to introduce myself to you as the president of MOGA. I am honored that you elected me to serve in this capacity. My commitment to MOGA is strong and with your support we will continue the mission started by excellent leadership of the past.

My wife Pam and I, along with our son Charlie and his family operate a

ranch west of Melville on the east side of the Crazy Mountains. My Grandfather settled where we now live in 1893. Today we run a cow, calf, yearling operation and brand the calves with an Anchor on the left rib. Those of you who are old enough and operate farms and ranches remember the 1980's and the adverse weather and market conditions that challenged us. These conditions prompted us to start Anchor Outfitting in 1986.

MOGA's mission statement reads "To protect, enhance, and effectively represent the Montana outfitting industry in all its forms". The blueprint of how MOGA will carry out our mission is a work in progress but I will share with you my vision and expectations for the next two years.

MOGA must provide industry sustainability. Industry sustainability begins with knowing your clients are going to get a license. The preference point system works well for you who have followed the advice offered by MOGA leadership. But this system will likely one day become overwhelmed and thus ineffective in assuring license procurement. It is my intention to bring to you a licensing system that assures your clients will hunt with you as planned. This is a heavy lift for sure but it is attainable given we work diligently on your behalf. For the immediate future we will continue to give our members the competitive edge by offering continuing education in the licensing process.

To chart a course toward a sustainable future we must build relationships with the decision makers in the legislature, government agencies, non-government organizations and local communities. We will seek out people who have influence on our businesses and get to know them on a personal level. In doing so, these same people will have an opportunity to know and understand us. We know from past

experiences that relationship building works and we will continue to do so in an aggressive manner. Relationship building is key to success in implementing our legislative agenda concerning both hunting and fishing issues.

I am pleased to welcome all of our new members, both hunting and fishing guides and outfitters. We see your membership as a vote of confidence in the MOGA program. Every effort will be made to ensure that your investment will generate a positive return for your business. Never before have we seen so many fishing guides and outfitters on the membership rolls. The fishing industry is a major driver in the Montana economy. The impacts of the regulatory and legislative arenas are of critical importance to your livelihood and MOGA is committed to represent your interests to the utmost degree.

Because of excellent work by past MOGA officers, and especially by our Executive Director Mac Minard, MOGA's standing in the state and national government communities has risen to an all time high. But with the recognition from government officials that MOGA is an organization that is highly credible comes the responsibility to respond to issues at a higher level than we have had to, or were capable of, in the past. In short MOGA now has opportunities to influence policy makers like never before. With heightened opportunity comes increased operating costs. No longer are your dues dollars enough to cover the expenses MOGA incurs representing you and your business. The good news is you don't have to spend another dime to significantly better MOGA's bottom line. MOGA introduced the Hunter Angler Defense Fund (HADF) nine years ago and the financial impact for our association has been significant. We are now able to respond to potentially negative impacts to your business as never before. But as adversarial issues increase so does our need for additional resources. As your president I am asking you personally to help yourself and your association by integrating HADF into your pricing schedule. If you are not sure how to do so call me or Mac at the MOGA office and we will help you get started. HADF is critical to MOGA having an effective voice and in turn you having a viable business.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the 45th MOGA Winter Convention. Please feel free to share concerns, challenges, and opportunities with me anytime.

Chuck Rein  
MOGA President

## OUR MISSION

To protect, enhance, and effectively represent the Montana outfitting industry in all its forms.

## OUR VISION

MOGA will foster a vibrant professional outfitting industry focused on client safety while providing diverse and ethical customer services. We will promote the conservation and sustainable, scientifically-based management of Montana's natural resources, and the stewardship of our cultural heritage. We will be an active partner in Montana's tourism economy and advocate for minimal but responsible industry regulation.

## OUR CORE VALUES

- Professional Excellence
- Integrity
- Engaged
- Enthusiastic
- Respectful
- Decisive
- Effective



## OUR CORE FUNCTIONS

**Advocacy** - MOGA is a powerful voice representing Montana's outfitting industry in all its forms. We serve as a relentless and highly effective voice for outfitters across all levels of the industry by focusing on the association mission and representing the membership before the Legislature and other important boards and commissions.

**Communication** - We keep our membership informed about critical issues affecting their businesses and alert them when their action is required. By coordinating a thoughtful and timely response, we maximize our impact.

**Legislation** - MOGA advocates for responsible yet minimal state and federal regulation of the industry.

**Education** - We share the outfitting industry's contribution to public service, conservation and tourism with decision-makers and the Montana public. We conduct focused training opportunities that aid MOGA members in compliance and educate them on best practices.

**Industry Sustainability** - MOGA promotes, encourages and assists with the outfitter succession process by helping guides become outfitters. We seek stability for the industry in statute, regulation and market share.

**Marketing** - We market and promote members and their businesses, and provide them with tools to do the same.

**Ethics Advocacy** - MOGA promotes the highest standards with its membership and expects them to be upheld.

## Members and Friends,



2019 was a year of terrific accomplishment and growth for the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA) Due to focused leadership and disciplined adherence to strategic goals, we enjoyed one of the most successful legislative sessions in the history of MOGA. Looking ahead, we have mapped out a legislative framework for the outfitting industry that will bring sustainability to this industry like never before.

Outfitted tourism is a driving force across the state. In many rural communities the bond between the services you as an outfitter provide and the economic health of local businesses has begun to emerge in ways that can no longer be ignored. Outfitted tourism is the fourth-largest direct expenditure by non-resident visitors and brought in \$400 million to Montana in 2018. In some counties, outfitted tourism is the number one non-resident expenditure. At a time when there are few options available to enhance rural economies, outfitting provides jobs, drives commerce to other businesses and brings new money to Montana communities. And why wouldn't it when the average guided client is spending over \$3,000 per trip!

MOGA membership is at a record level and our commitment to you and your business has never been stronger. I am proud to represent this industry and look forward to 2020 with enthusiasm and focused dedication.

*- Mac Minard  
Executive Director*



# 2019 Year in Review

2019 was a year of significant accomplishment for MOGA. We focused largely on our legislative agenda, where we advanced pro-outfitter legislation, supported sound conservation and defeated bills that would harm the industry. Thanks to the efforts of the Taylor Luther Group and the leadership of the MOGA legislative committee, our lobbying efforts garnered incredible results for the industry.

## Advocacy

- Worked with FWP to resolve issues with the Big Game combination license drawing by honoring applicants, creating an estimated benefit to the industry of \$1.5 million to \$2 million.
- Moved deer portion of the Big Game combination license to the alternate pool, which resulted in successfully licensing 100+ additional clients.
- Launched the MOGA Fishing Advocacy Initiative, an effort that was done in response to requests that we bring stronger representation to the fishing side of the industry. Results: new memberships to MOGAS, including 35 business, 12 outfitters and 15 guides.
- Montana Board of Outfitters guide and outfitter renewal fee decrease, which delivered an estimated savings of \$1.45 million over a five-year period.
- - Ongoing work with the Madison River Fishery. MOGA continues to lead efforts to resolve the targeting of guided anglers that would have an estimated local economic impact of approximately \$5 million annually.
- Working with Montana FWP on Big Game tentative regulations.
- Briefed Secretary of Interior and Secretary of Agriculture (at their request) on key permitting and trails issues the industry faces. MOGA leadership have had personal meetings with top officials in the Trump administration to identify and resolve issues related to permit administration and public land access.

## Communication

- Enhanced the MOGA website to better help fill seats and saddles and to share the association's message and mission.
- Weekly newsletters were issued to provide informative and poignant analysis to MOGA members, provide regular communication and keep all parties informed on critical issues and events.
- Bolstered MOGA's social media presence on Facebook and Instagram to deliver newsworthy, educational and informative content. Today, MOGA's social channels reach thousands of followers.
- Created educational materials and communications around non-resident licensing issues, drawing success and resolution. Those who followed the MOGA-led system of using preference points enjoyed a 90% draw success; those who did not realized less than 60% or less draw success.



# Legislation

## National Issues

- Filed formal objection to provisions of the Custer Gallatin Forest Plan revision that would have unnecessarily capped outfitted service days.
- Supported Administrative and Congressional Gray Wolf Delisting. MOGA joined many other organizations expressing support for this critical step.
- Supported S.2335 – the Guide and Outfitter Act – sponsored by Senator Daines, with a request to Senator Tester to support as well.
- MOGA signed on to a letter of support for S. 3172, The Restore Our Parks Act. The fund established by this act will cover about half of the \$11.6 billion in deferred National Park maintenance of trails, visitor centers, campgrounds, water and sewer services and visitor facilities backlogs. This act will create a dedicated fund that may be used by the NPS year after year without further appropriation to enable the planning and completion of multi-year projects.
- Advocated for adjustments to proposed guidance for outfitter trail stewardship credits.

## State Issues

- State legislative issue were a major focus for MOGA and occupied much of our time and resources.

### MOGA-Sponsored Bills (2019 Session)

*Purple Heart* – HB 275 by Representative Frank Garner (R-Kalispell). Revises hunting privileges for purple heart recipients; simplifies the qualification criteria for Active Duty Purple Heart recipients to receive donated hunting privileges and to limit such transfers to once in a lifetime. Bill was signed by Governor Bullock; effective date is March 1, 2020.



*Governor Bullocks signs HB 275 Purple Heart after passing both chambers without a single Nay vote. HB 275 was sponsored by Rep Garner, (R) Kalispell*

*Hound Handler* – HB 311 by Representative Kerry White (R-Bozeman). Establishes nonresident hound handler license for those hunting Montana mountain lions; creates a license and drawing mechanism that puts a structure and limit on the number of non-resident hound handlers legally authorized to hunt with dogs in Montana for mountain lions. The law creates a new license, with a limit of 45 licenses issued, and requires a draw that includes specifying what district the non-resident houndsman chooses to use. The nonresident houndsman is also required to possess a nonresident lion license for the district they are hunting with a dog. The law prohibits the nonresident houndsmen from using the dogs hunting in assistance of another lion license holder. Proceeds from the new license and drawing fees are specifically earmarked to fund the new lion conservation management and monitoring program being proposed for implementation. Effective March 1, 2020.

*Preference Points* – HB 397 by Representative Matt Regier (R-Columbia Falls). Revises nonresident preference points laws and provides a small amount of latitude for a hunter who may not be able to use his/her preference points due to illness, emergency, etc. which renders them unable to make their planned hunting trip for one year. Effective March 1, 2020.

*Board of Outfitters* – SB 222 by Senator Jill Cohenour (D-East Helena). Revises rulemaking authority of the Board of Outfitters. Corrects certain technical aspects of the statute to conform to the practice of the Board of Outfitters, as well as clarifies statutory language regarding private land access and reporting. Effective October 1, 2019.

*Harvested Game Transfer* – SB 256 by Senator Jason Ellsworth (R-Hamilton) Authorizes the transfer of harvested game animals; creates a legal pathway for any licensed hunter to transfer carcass, meats or antlers to another licensed hunter for purposes of transport to butcher, taxidermist and/or for fulfilling biological check in according to FWP rules. Effective October 1, 2019.

*Public Access Land Act* – SB 341 by Mark Blasdel (R-Somers). Establishes a significant opportunity for the sporting public to partner with landowners to access public lands that have previously been landlocked. Effective July 1, 2019.

*Bighorn Sheep Skulls* – SB 344 by Mike Lang (R-Malta). Authorizes recovery/possession of horns/skulls of mountain sheep that died naturally. Effective May 2, 2019.

### **Other Bills Supported by MOGA (2019 Session)**

*Nonresident License* – HB 143 by Representative Neil Durham (R-Eureka). Removes sunset on three-day nonresident bird license. Effective February 2019.

*Game Warden Searches* – HB 348 by Representative Mark Noland (R-Bigfork). Revises search powers of game wardens and requires game wardens to get a search warrant under same statutory and constitutional guidelines as other law enforcement. Effective October 1, 2019.

*AIS Funding* – HB 411 by Representative Willis Curdy (D-Missoula). Revises laws related to AIS funding; requires an aquatic invasive species prevention pass for nonresident vessels; decreases prevention pass fees for nonresident anglers; increases registration fees for resident motorized vessels (\$10 non-motorized, \$30 motorized); extends and revises fees for hydroelectric facilities; reallocates lodging tax revenue; most sections effective July 1, 2019.

*Shoulder Season Elk* – HB 497 by Representative Wylie Galt (R-Martinsdale). Allows additional elk to be harvested during shoulder season. Immediately Effective.

*Mandatory AIS Decontamination* – HB 608 by Representative Joe Read (R-Ronan). Requires mandatory AIS decontamination of certain vessels with ballasts/bladders; allows certification of private entities, tribes, and conservation districts. Immediately Effective.

*Shoulder Season Regulations* – HJ 18 by Representative Wylie Galt (R-Martinsdale). Resolution urging enhancement of elk management/shoulder season regulations.

*Standalone Conservation License* – SB 44 by Senator Jill Cohenour (D-East Helena). Makes conservation licenses a standalone prerequisite license; requires the purchase of a wildlife conservation license prior to applying for other hunting or fishing licenses; commensurately reduces the price of certain licenses. Effective March 1, 2020.

*Tax Credit Extension* – SB 111 by Senator Mark Blasdel (R-Kalispell). Extends termination date of qualified endowment tax credit until 2025; presents an opportunity for endowment giving to Big Hearts Under the Big Sky.

*Combo Hunting Licenses* – SB 144 by Senator Tom Jacobsen (D-Great Falls). Revises mandatory date of sale for certain combination hunting licenses from March 15 to April 1. Effective March 1, 2020.

*Proof of Sex* – SB 333 by Senator Jill Cohenour (D-East Helena). Revises requirements for retention of evidence of sex for harvested animals. Effective March 1, 2020.

- Completed an exhaustive review of the issues and legislative challenges facing the industry and mapped a 10-year strategic legislative agenda to address the top priorities.

## Education

- Economics of outfitted tourism – MOGA presented findings from the University of Montana on the impact outfitted tourism has on rural communities in Montana, helping to educate lawmakers, policy officials and decision makers.
- Maximizing client draw success - Provided comprehensive education materials to MOGA members on how to make the most of preference points to maximize client-drawing success. Those that used them realized a 100% draw success. Those who did not, saw a 75% or less success.

## Ethics Advocacy

- Supported Hunters Against Hunger and the Livingston and Helena Food Banks with donations and material support.
- Supported the addition of CPR requirement for guide and outfitter licensing to improve the service to clients.
- MOGA's Big Hearts under the Big Sky program served five families on Big Hearts therapeutic adventure trips.
- Provided donated meat to VFW posts across the state.

## Industry Sustainability

- Worked with FWP to resolve licensing issues that interrupted the outfitter/client service, including ALS look up and tracking of client-draw success. This is an ongoing process and MOGA will maintain a leadership role in this area.
- Members helping members, with outreach in wake of summer fires.
- Passed the first outfitter and guide fee reduction in over 20 years through the Board of Outfitters. This action is expected to save the industry over \$1.45 million over five years.
- Opposed antlerless-only restrictions for HD 400 and 500, saving eight outfitter businesses from going out of business and defusing a volatile situation between FWP, landowners and sportsmen.

## Marketing

- Upon completion of a MOGA member survey, we saw a significant need for a travel insurance program (featuring Global Rescue) as a member benefit. This program is now available to members.
- Created a MOGA member-exclusive Fishing and Wing shooting insurance program with partner CBIZ.
- Developed the electronic concierge service to enhance hotelier's ability to link guests with MOGA member guides and outfitters.



# MOGA LEADERSHIP

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**President: Wagner Harmon**  
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**Vice President: Dusty Cray**  
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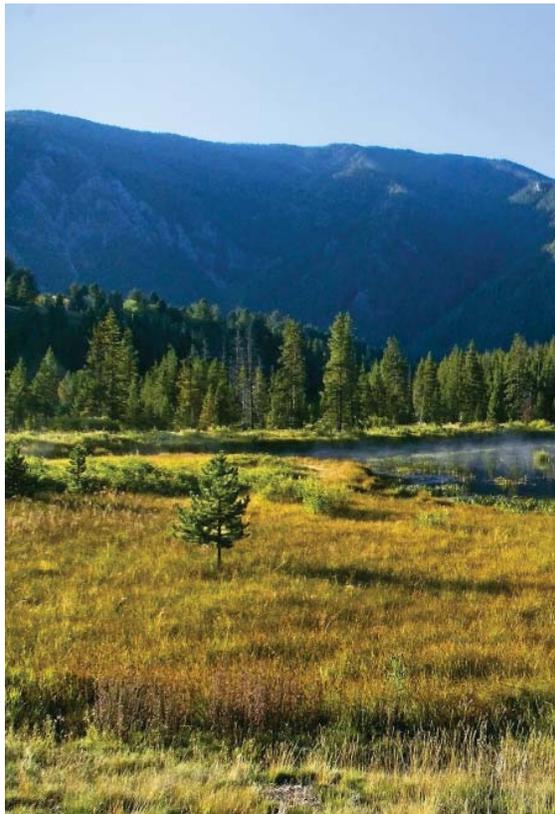
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# Hunter Angler Defense Fund

## When Dues Are No Longer Enough

There are few businesses that operate on as thin of a margin as outfitting. The costs and risks are high, and every dollar is hard-earned. MOGA's leadership knows that, as they are outfitters too. They also know that being a MOGA member and paying your dues each year has helped preserve the industry and a way of life that is distinct in the West.

Unfortunately, the challenges to the industry and cost of effectively representing your interests and providing wins for the outfitting industry is not cheap. So, in 2012, when the MOGA Board of Directors adopted Hunter Angler Defense (HADF) as a funding tool for MOGA, they applied it to themselves first. Every board member committed to HADF and the results? Well, they were astounding. Now, eight years later, we invite you and urge you to join your fellow outfitters in implementing HADF fully and supporting your industry.

## HADF RATES, COLLECTION AND PAYMENT

For fishing clients, the HADF rate is \$5 per fishing client day or a max payment of \$25 per client. For hunting clients, the HADF rate is \$50 per client. MOGA members are responsible for collecting HADF payments, which they hold in trust for the association with all HADF payments being made to MOGA by each outfitter each year by December 31.

Outfitters who include the following wording in their contract have had great success with their collections:

*Hunter Angler Defense Fund\* \$50*

*\*Hunter Defense Fund is a fee collected on all outfitted clients of outfitter members of the Montana Outfitters and Guides Association for the purpose of defending nonresident hunting and fishing rights in the state of Montana.*



**MOGA is the only voice fighting for the rights of non-resident hunters and anglers. Support Montana's hunting industry by participating in HADF.**

## 2019 HADF Participants\*

Hawley Mountain Ranch  
Cedars and Sage Outfitters  
M.A.D. Outfitting  
Scott Vollmer Outfitters  
West Slope Outfitters  
Doonan Gulch Outfitters  
Linehan Outfitting Company  
Upper Canyon Outfitters  
Majestic Mountain Outfitters  
Anchor Outfitting  
Billingsley Ranch Outfitters  
Jumping Horse Outfitting  
C. Francis & Co. Sporting Agents  
Dog Creek Outfitters  
Slide Rock Outfitters  
Black Mountain Outfitters  
Cayuse Hills Outfitters  
Ford Creek Guest Ranch  
Northern Rockies Outfitters  
Montana High Country Tours, Inc.  
Landwehr Outfitters  
Dome Mountain Ranch  
Sunday Creek Outfitters  
Iron Wheel Guest Ranch  
Walker Outfitting  
M&M Outfitters  
DL Elk Outfitters Inc.  
Absaroka Beartooth Outfitters  
Montana River Ranch  
7 Lazy P Outfitting  
Cottonwood Outfitters  
Wilderness Connection, Inc.  
Montana Whitetails  
Cody Carr's Hunting Adventures  
Milk River Outfitters  
Rich Ranch Outfitting & Guest Ranch  
Gardner Ranch Outfitters  
J&J Guide Service  
Montana Hunting Company  
Swan Mountain Outfitters  
A Lazy H Outfitters

\* This list is current through Dec. 16, 2019



# Join MOGA

JOIN TODAY AT  
[WWW.MONTANAOUTFITTERS.ORG](http://WWW.MONTANAOUTFITTERS.ORG)

MOGA relentlessly advocates for the outfitting industry in the political arena and provides ongoing support to its members for marketing and other services