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# NEWSLETTER *of the* HABITAT COUNCIL

## HABITAT COUNCIL TIDINGS A MESSAGE FROM YOUR CO-CHAIRS

### 2023 NATIONAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

**PBR Team Championships**  
October 19-22  
Las Vegas, NV

**RMEF Hunter and Outdoor  
Christmas Expo**  
December 7-16, 2023  
Las Vegas, NV

**NFR**  
December 7-16, 2023  
Las Vegas, NV



Tom and Sue Meehl  
RMEF Habitat Council Co-chairs

Traveling to this year's Habitat Council event in Missoula was nothing short of spectacular! We like driving to these events whenever possible, and this time the trip from western Pennsylvania to western Montana took us through eight very diverse states. We enjoyed the opportunity to leave the hustle and bustle of life on the farm, enjoying the transition of landscapes, vistas of the countryside and wide-open ranges. On our drive, we couldn't help but reflect on all of RMEF's conservation projects and the phenomenal support the organization has from its members, donors and partners. This year's retreat solidified even further the deep desire to continue supporting this organization.

Our Habitat Council retreat felt more like a long-awaited family reunion than a

routine business meeting. Shared hugs and greetings were common, while new friends were heartily welcomed into the group. Still, there was much to learn.

First on our agenda was introducing and hearing from our executive staff about the 'State of Our Union.' The excitement over what has been carried out on the ground and hearing the enthusiasm for what still is in the works was exhilarating! Seeing the videos of those completed and ongoing projects reinforces the fact that we are doing even more than we ever could have imagined. Head on over to our RMEF website to watch these same world-class videos. We guarantee you will be as amazed as we were! Our staff does an outstanding job keeping us informed when attending in person isn't possible.

Saturday's tour of the Bearmouth project took us to the pinnacle of one of our successes. The 3,450-acre acquisition was completed in the closing hours of 2019. That phenomenal donation blocked up 10,000 acres of public land for elk and other wildlife while making it accessible for us to enjoy as well. This tour allowed us to see our mission dollars at work.

Nothing compares to the feeling you get standing on a mountaintop while hearing the story of how this all came together. You take it all in; and realize, without a doubt, that we are in good hands. Keeping God's incredible creation open and accessible only happens when we strive to work together. Whether you are actively working on a project or your thoughtful giving paves the way for this to be accomplished, these contributions matter; for that, we're so grateful. It's why we continue to do what we do!

*Tom Meehl*      *Sue Meehl*

Tom & Sue Meehl  
RMEF Habitat Council Co-Chairs



“Have you ever...”

Have you ever seen the silhouette, of a majestic mule deer buck at sunrise? Or have you heard the trumpeting of a bulging bull elk in the woods?

Have you ever witnessed two separate herds of antelope, each herd with well over 100 head, run right towards each other at 40 m.p.h., only to merge and become one super herd, only to disappear over the ridge and never to be seen again?

Have you had the privilege of watching the dancing of the aurora borealis? How about listening to the blues played by coyotes at last light?

Have you been hunting and some of the best days weren't about “the kill”, but rather just being immersed in nature and watching all she does?

Maybe you were lucky enough to share a moment like this with your son or daughter, or maybe even your best friend...

These were the experiences that help form my soul. Fuel my passion for conservation. How do we make it better? Better for all of the animals. Better food, better water, better cover. That became my passion.

I have been lucky enough to do many many conservation projects across this beautiful state. But I am most honored to have donated this parcel of land to the RMEF... Why you might ask?

Because we are like-minded in our passion for conservation. What good is all the efforts put forth for habitat and wildlife, if it can't be sustained? That's where the RMEF helped me, they were the conduit to make my conservation efforts last for generations to follow.

So, I would like to thank Kyle, Jennifer and all of the other people at the RMEF who help make sustainable/meaningful conservation happen. They are a great resource to help make conservation happen.

And lastly, I would also like to thank each one of you, for your contribution and passion for the pursuit of conservation.

Hopefully one day, when someone asks you, “Have you ever...” you can say why yes, yes I have!

—John Greytak  
Donated Bearmouth Property to RMEF



HELPING ELK, MULE DEER AND MOTHER NATURE IN ARIZONA



As near as anyone can tell, the last natural or human disturbance within portions of the Arizona Game and Fish Department's (AZGFD) GMU 23, one of the most coveted public elk hunting locations in the state, was in the 1950s! Because of that, the landscape in the Payson Ranger District on the Tonto National Forest is crowded with thick, overgrown vegetation susceptible to catastrophic wildfire.

The U.S. Forest Service, AZGFD, City of Phoenix and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation supplied funding for five boom-mounted masticators to treat 1,571 acres about 150 miles northeast of Phoenix. Crews hand-treated another 182 acres with the lop-and-scatter approach of removing lesser amounts of slash, cutting it into smaller pieces and leaving it on the forest floor to decompose.

The result mimics natural fire by leaving fewer trees and allowing herbaceous grasses to receive more sunlight and water. And that's good news for elk, mule and whitetail deer, black bear and other wildlife.

HONORING THE PAST & PRESENT CO-CHAIRS  
HONORARIA CELEBRATING INDIVIDUALS THROUGH A GIFT FOR WILDLIFE HABITAT



Kent & Cyndie Johnson Honorarium  
PAST HABITAT COUNCIL CO-CHAIRS

“I would like to recognize the passing of the gavel from Kent & Cyndie Johnson, two of the finest individuals I have known”  
—Jim Wagner



Tom & Sue Meehl Honorarium  
PRESENT HABITAT COUNCIL CO-CHAIRS

“Sue and Tom have been decades-long supporters of RMEF and our volunteers. Stepping up to the leadership role with the HC is just another feather in their caps that Kathleen and I want to honor...”  
—Mike Post

If you would like to contribute to an honorarium, you can visit the memorial and honoraria section of the RMEF website at:

(800) 225-5355 | [www.rmef.org/donate/memorials-honoraria](http://www.rmef.org/donate/memorials-honoraria)







**RMEF**  
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Missoula, MT 59808

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The Exclusive Newsletter for RMEF Habitat Council Members

# NEWSLETTER *of the* HABITAT COUNCIL



HUNTING  
IS  
CONSERVATION

**RMEF.ORG**

## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT



### **“Making Hay” Consider a Planned Gift**

From summer into the fall at the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, and quite literally here in Montana, it’s time to make hay. Projects and activities such as a 239-acre acquisition in the Black Hills of South Dakota, an elk calf survival study in Tennessee, wildlife crossings in Utah and much more, were all designed

and funded from past year’s planning and past year’s member support.

It’s not too early to look at 2024 and beyond. In fact, it’s exactly the right time.

When the Habitat Council was created more than 30-years ago, the foresight of RMEF leadership and the generosity of donors “made hay” for years and decades to come. In fact, since 1992, Habitat Council donors have contributed more than \$150 million. Those pure cash donations have leveraged exponential private and public grants, partner organization funding and supported volunteer activities.

Preparing for the future is critical to ensure that the organization stays on sound footing, which is why I ask you to

consider placing RMEF in your estate plans. “Planned giving,” as it is known, is not as complicated as some make it out to be and can be carried out in many ways.

1. Consider including RMEF as a percentage of your will or living trust - simply contact an estate planning attorney to reflect your wishes.
2. Consider naming RMEF as a beneficiary of an asset such as a retirement account, bank account, or life insurance policy - simply complete a form from the respective institution that holds that asset.
3. Contact us, we can help.

Perhaps the best thing I heard from a planned giving donor was, “Hey, it won’t cost me a dime while I’m alive!” Funny, and mostly true, but we’re here to help you, help us, to do more for elk and elk country.

And of course, thank you.

Anderson Smith  
RMEF Director of Development