



Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent
Connecting People to Sustain and Enhance Culture, Community and Conservation

8th ANNUAL CONFERENCE AGENDA
“Conversations that Matter: Connections and Tensions in the Crown”

September 25-27, 2017
Stage Stop Inn, Choteau, MT

Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/8th-annual-roundtable-on-the-crown-of-the-continent-conversations-that-matter-connections-and-tickets-35942808909>

About the Annual Conference

The annual conference serves as one of the primary vehicles to achieve the core mission of the Roundtable—to connect people to enhance culture, community and conservation in the Crown of the Continent. During the past seven years, this conference has moved around the Crown to feature and celebrate different regions. This year’s conference will focus on having the conversations that matter — conversations that advance our common interests, help us work through difficulties, and make progress on complex issues. The Crown contains a vast array of intersections: between urban and rural communities, between public and private land, between resource extraction and amenity-based economies, between indigenous and later-arriving cultures. These can be areas of challenge, but they are also full of opportunity. This year we will hone in on local governance and land use, agriculture and conservation, and the shifting economics of the Crown. Together and in small groups, we’ll look at how these topics are currently playing out in the landscape, and then provide the space to have conversations that work through the tensions — and explore the opportunities — that each of them represents.

Objectives and Expected Outcomes

- Exchange new information and ideas to connect people working on similar issues
- Foster a sense of regional identity
- Help people see themselves as stewards of the Crown, and guiding them in fulfilling that role
- Find inspiration and connection to place
- Generate a sense of fellowship and connection to each other
- Explore specific, relevant, and challenging issues in depth

About the Roundtable

The Crown of the Continent region is a remarkable, ecologically intact ecosystem rich in tribal history, natural resources, and thriving communities. This 18-million acre region is challenged by climate change, loss of traditional knowledge, growth, and development. The Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent addresses these challenges by providing a forum for collaboration and networking among Tribes/First Nations, land management agencies, local governments, private land partnerships, academia, conservation groups, businesses, and industry.

Large landscape conservation is participatory and inclusive and the Roundtable connects people

to enhance the culture, communities, and conservation of the region. Our transboundary, large landscape effort provides a platform for diverse perspectives to share information, build knowledge and capacity, celebrate success, and catalyze new efforts and partnerships. The Roundtable seeks to achieve a shared vision for people and nature in the region. For more information, please go to crownroundtable.net.

Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent Teams

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Len Broberg, University of Montana

Mike Bruised Head, Blood Tribe

Jean Curtiss, Missoula County

Ian Dyson, Alberta Environment and Parks

Rob Taylor, Oldman Watershed Council

Rich Janssen, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Shawn Johnson, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy

Todd Larson, East Kootenay Invasive Plant Council

Nic Milligan, Teck Resources

Jeff Mow, Glacier National Park

Sheena Pate, Crown of the Continent Geotourism Council

Melly Reuling, Center for Large Landscape Conservation

Anne Schwend, Department of Natural Resources Conservation

Mary Sexton, landowner and consultant

John T. Shannon, USDA Forest Service

Paul Travis, Flathead Land Trust

Melissa Weatherwax, Blackfeet Community College

SUPPORT TEAM

Peter Gurche, Coordinator

Sue Higgins, development and consulting

Lea Whitford, Tribal Liaison

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September 25-27, 2017
Choteau, MT

AGENDA

Monday, September 25: New and Old Economies in the Crown

- 10:00 AM **Conference Registration Begins**
Sponsor tables in entrance way
- 1:00 PM **Conference Convenes: Welcome**
Earl Old Person, Blackfeet Nation (*Invited*)
Jack Conatser, Choteau Mayor
- 1:15 **Conversations that Matter: What Brings Us Here?**
Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 1:25 **Keynote: The Shifting Economy of the South-East Crown**
The Rocky Mountain Front has seen dramatic changes in its economic base. This shift impacts everything from healthcare and education to public land management and water conservation. This plenary will lay out the challenges faced by Choteau and other towns in the region as their economies change, and the opportunities that exist within the current economic landscape.
- Ray Rasker, Headwaters Economics
- 2:25 **Moderated Discussion - Where to Now: The Economic Future of Communities in the Crown**
Regional thought-leaders will hold a public conversation on the themes from the previous plenary session. Moderated by Ray Rasker.
- Panelists:
Dan Clark, Local Government Center, MSU; former Choteau Mayor
Terry Tatsey, Blackfeet Nation
Bev Thornton, Alberta SouthWest Regional Alliance
Becky Garland, Lincoln, MT
- 3:30 **BREAK**
- 3:45 **Crown Café**
Quick updates about Crown news from conference participants
- 5:00 **BREAK**

- 5:30 **No-Host Bar (Livery Saloon at the Stage Stop Inn)**
- 6:00 **Dinner**
- 7:30 **Double Feature at the Roxy Theater (Downtown Choteau)**
“Badger Creek” chronicles the story of the Momberg family on the Blackfeet Reservation as they balance tradition and change across generations (27 min).
 Introduced by Executive Producer Rhea Ashmore.
- “On the Shoulders of Giants” reveals the scope and importance of private lands conservation efforts in Montana (21 min).*
 Introduced by Glenn Marx, Montana Association of Land Trusts

Tuesday, September 26: Agriculture and Conservation

- 7:30 **Coffee and Pastries**
- 8:00 **Preview of the Day**
 Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator
- 8:15 **Plenary: Agriculture and Conservation on the Blackfeet Reservation**
This plenary will showcase exciting new developments at the intersection of agriculture and conservation on the Blackfeet Reservation. Among other efforts, the Tribe is working to develop a Blackfeet Beef label and take advantage of the grass-fed niche, which gives produces a better price per pound and also encourages good stewardship of grazing lands; looking at beaver mimicry to improve the health of watersheds; working on an Indigenous Land Tenure project, which would establish protocols for doing research on indigenous lands that require fully fledged partnerships with tribes; and working towards increased food sovereignty and access to fresh, health food.
- Loren Birdrattler, Agricultural Resource Planner, Blackfeet Nation
- 8:45 **Ag and Conservation Lightning Round**
One person from each of four subject areas will give an introduction and preview of their breakout session.
 Wildlife and Ranching – Gary Burnett, Blackfoot Challenge
 Landscape Stressors – Anne Schwend, DNRC
 Private Land Conservation – Cole Mannix
 Innovative Approaches – Eric Bergman, organic farmer

9:20

Agriculture and Conservation Breakouts: 1st Session (55 minutes each)

These breakouts represent an opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners in the field, ask questions, and raise concerns.

WILDLIFE AND RANCHING: Conflict and Coexistence

Bryce Andrews, Blackfeet Nation,

Wendy Clark, USFS

Craig Ironpipe, producer *(Invited)*

Gary Burnett, Blackfoot Challenge

LANDSCAPE STRESSORS: Weeds, Water, and Wildfire

Carl Rappold, producer *(Invited)*

Mark Korte, RMF Weed Roundtable

Anne Schwend, DNRC

Vicki Baker, Teton Conservation District

10:15

BREAK

10:30

Agriculture and Conservation Breakouts: 2nd Session (55 minutes each)

These breakouts represent an opportunity to hear from experts and practitioners in the field, ask questions, and raise concerns.

PRIVATE LAND CONSERVATION

Paul Travis, Flathead Valley Land Trust

Glenn Marx, Montana Association of Land Trusts

Cole Mannix, Western Landowners Association

INNOVATIVE APPROACHES

Eric Bergman, organic farmer

David Oien, organic farmer

Andrew Bardwell

Jackie Heinert, AERO *(Invited)*

11:30

Breakout Session Report-Out

What was discussed? What are the most pressing needs in these areas, and what are some potential next steps?

12:00

LUNCH

1:00

Field Trips

There are three options for field trips; pick one. Also feel free to schedule your own meetings with other conference attendees during this time.

Option 1: Indigenous Presence on the Landscape

This field trip will explore Old Agency in Choteau, the Old North Trail, and archeological sites that reveal the legacy of indigenous people on the land.

Option 2: Agriculture and Conservation

This trip will feature stops at local ranches that are implementing innovative water conservation, weed management, and wildlife coexistence strategies, as well as ranches with conservation easements.

Option 3: Bison

This trip will visit a working bison ranch, and examine the ways that an animal with a long ecological history in a particular region impacts the landscape.

5:00

BREAK

5:30

No-host Bar (Livery Saloon, at the Stage Stop Inn)

6:00

Dinner

7:30

Buffalo Treaty Celebration

In 2014, tribes from across the Great Plains came together to sign a treaty to recognize and revitalize the ancient relationship between native people and buffalo. Efforts to reintroduce and recover buffalo populations like the Iinii Initiative have sprung from that treaty, and each year tribal members gather to celebrate its signing. This year the Buffalo Treaty Celebration will take place on the Flathead Reservation just before the Roundtable Conference, and after it wraps up some participants will join us to share the energy, ceremony, and ideas of the Treaty Celebration.

Wednesday, September 27: Local Governance and Conflicting Values in Land Use

7:30

Coffee and Pastries

8:00

Preview of the Day

Peter Gurche, Roundtable Coordinator

8:10

A Portrait of the Southeast Crown

Shawn Johnson, Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy

8:45

Land Use Issues Across the Crown

This series of short talks will profile specific land use issues, the tensions that characterize them, and ways in which they might be resolved

Jean Curtiss, Missoula County Commission

Ag-land conservation, urban and rural differences

Gary Krueger, Flathead County Commission

Bottling plant controversy

Chris Bryant, The Nature Conservancy (*Invited*)
Plum Creek settlement planning and the public-private interface

Mary Watson, Waterton (*Invited*)
Planning in the park

Gerald Wagner
Climate Planning on the Blackfeet Reservation

- 9:45 **Question and Answer**
Each table will have the chance to discuss the case studies presented and prioritize one question, which they will then ask to the group of experts
- 10:30 **BREAK**
- 10:45 **Leadership Team Panel: Approaching Tensions as Opportunities**
The Leadership Team for the Roundtable will reflect on the central theme of the conference—conversations that matter—and how this comes up in their work.
- 11:15 **Looking Ahead**
This is a final session for all conference attendees to provide input on the future direction of the Roundtable, including areas of focus and methods of work. What is the most valuable thing we can do for the region?
- 11:45 **Closing Prayer**
Earl Old Person
- 11:55 **Final Logistics**
Peter Gurche
- 12:00 **CONFERENCE ADJOURNS**

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Glacier National Park
US Forest Service
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