



MONTANA

MINING

SUMMER/FALL 2025

A Year of **Big** Accomplishments for the Montana Mining Association

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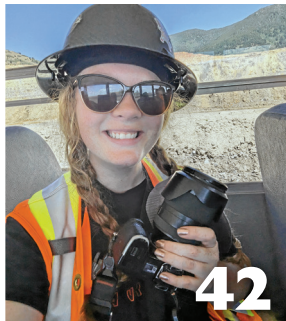
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ON THE COVER: Jess Scanlan, the founder and owner of MineLife Media, at the Montana Resources mine in Butte during the tour of the mine which was part of the Montana Mining Association's 2024 Annual Meeting. *Contributed photo*

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► LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

MMA Executive Director Report

*A mountain of
accomplishments*

Welcome to the 2025 Annual Meeting and the summer edition of Montana Mining magazine of the Montana Mining Association!



Matt Vincent

This year we've already moved a mountain of accomplishments, and we've got plenty more to push before the calendar expires on 2025.

We are coming out of one of, if not the most, active legislative sessions the association has ever had (see related story by our chief lobbyist on page 10), making some great strides towards supporting our mission "to protect and promote responsible mining in Montana."

The association had its drafting pen out and/or its political influence on over a dozen bills this session. With this year's annual meeting theme "Securing America's Critical Minerals Supply Chains," perhaps the best piece to start with is House Resolution 2. Sponsored by Rep. Randyn Gregg (R) out of the district that includes Sandfire's Black Butte Copper project, HR2 made its way out of the chamber and on to our federal government in Washington to clearly voice the legislative intent of Montana for "supporting the exploration, development, processing, refining, recycling and reuse of critical minerals" projects in our state.

The association now begins its work in the legislative interim period working with



Gregg

► see *Letter*, page 6



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Montana's Departments of Natural Resources and Conservation and Environmental Quality, key legislators on interim committees, and the governor's office to craft what sort of guidelines, incentives and regulations it will take to deliver our stated support of critical minerals activities.

One thing we've been able to confirm over the past couple of years is that – to no surprise – our "Treasure State" is loaded with critical minerals opportunities. Whether it's in the far western alkalic belt groups, the phosphoria of southwest Montana, the central mountains, or the coal beds in the Powder River Basin, targets for critical minerals including rare earth elements abound.

The other thing – which is even clearer – is our nation's dedicated interest in developing as many domestic projects as we can throughout the supply chain to increase our domestic sources.

As long as we remain dependent upon geopolitical adversaries to supply our critical minerals needs, our national security is at a risk America cannot afford. China has restricted the export of over a dozen critical minerals we need to win battles of both figurative and literal standing. We need metals like copper, cobalt and lithium to prevail in staying ahead in the AI race, quantum computing and other technological advancements for health care, not to mention energy storage and diversification.

Our national defense strategy, from maintaining our current munitions needs and battle equipment to developing the future of defense through better aircraft, undersea warfare and space defenses – all of it depends on rare earth elements like neodymium and praseodymium and a suite of critical minerals from antimony and germanium to yttrium and zinc.

Montana Mining has worked with a host of partners, including its members with critical minerals project potential, the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Montana Tech, and the Department of Defense to develop a Montana-based program to help our nation satisfy its most pressing mineral needs.

Though it was never formally announced, MMA was included in the FY25 budget for \$8 million to advance its critical minerals program, including a handful of projects—but alas, the political winds changed with the elections. While most everything appears to be for the better for the mining industry under Trump 2.0, our association's critical minerals program was



A Montana view



U.S. Sen. Tim Sheehy (left) and U.S. Rep. Troy Downing (right) addresses a joint session of the Montana Senate and House of Representatives on Feb. 17 in the state Capitol.



a casualty of the Continuing Resolution, leaving us working diligently to find a plan B for funding in the near term.

The good news is our new congressional delegates, Sen. Tim Sheehy and Rep. Troy Downing, are behind our efforts. The demand and need for our state's critical minerals is a growing concern, including efforts led by MMA to develop a strategy for our western states. We look forward to leading that discussion when we host our colleagues later this fall for the Western States Mining Collaborative.

Also in the realm of critical minerals, I represented our industry at the Critical Resources 3.0 Summit hosted by Montana State University in Bozeman in April, spoke to the American Society of Reclamation Sciences about our program,

and am set to share the stage with Hecla's Mike Satre talking about critical minerals and our relationship with Canada at the Pacific Northwest Economic Region (PNWER) annual summit later this month in Bellevue, Washington.

We have many of our defense and collaborative partners and project representatives at the annual meeting, so tune into the annual meeting agenda and track us down either at the event or online to learn more!

MONTANA MINING DAY

Another association bill that passed was HB203, establishing February 9th each year as Montana Mining Day. Sponsored by former underground miner and Billings district Republican Curtis Schomer, Montana Mining Day passed with all but a few votes in favor to commemorate and celebrate the day on the calendar in 1865 that Montana adopted its "oro y plata" state motto and the miner's pick and shovel as part of its state seal (see related op-ed on page 20).

While this day will be one of celebration and

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A group of 125 students and teachers from Emerson Elementary and Ramsay School took part in Montana Mining Day on March 20, 2024, at the World Museum of Mining and Montana Tech mining campus in Butte. This was a pilot mining day program. A Montana Mining Association bill was passed in the recent state legislative session establishing February 9 each year as Montana Mining Day.

commemoration of the importance mining has played in our state's heritage and all the way to its present where hard rock and coal mining is still a multi-billion dollar economic driver that supports thousands of Montana families, Montana Mining Day is as much if not more about the future of mining in our state.

If mining is to continue to improve its methods, its opportunities and the impacts it makes on our communities and landscapes, the industry is going to need two things.

The first one is more workers. Mining is a labor-intensive industry, from the mining of the rock itself to the mapping of where the deposits are found, how the metals are extracted from the ore, and how to manage the site environmentally, including when the land is reclaimed and reused once mining is complete. It takes a lot of different jobs – jobs that are exciting and high-paying – and right now there simply aren't near enough kids deciding to "go into mining." We need more miners if we're going to be able to keep mining.

The other thing needed for mining to flourish



Mark Thompson, the vice president of environmental affairs at Montana Resources, was the immediate past president of the Montana Mining Association and is currently serving as the interim president.

in the future is for more people, both young and old, to accurately understand what mining is in 2025 and why it's so necessary. For too long we've focused on the public outreach only during the required portions of permitting, or to try to correct the public record or media when some other organization attacks the industry or makes a statement that is wrong. There are so many interesting and exciting things to learn

about mining and our need for minerals, even if you don't want to become part of the mining workforce. We should be teaching and telling folks about it every day we can.

That's why it's the association's goal to start with at least one day: Montana Mining Day. In 2024, we piloted a "mining day" for Butte area schools and it was a resounding success. Over 120 students grade 5 through 8 from Butte and Ramsay schools came to Montana Tech and the World Museum of Mining to engage in mining centered activities and to learn more about the industry.

Now that we will have a day EVERY YEAR on the calendar, MMA wants to branch out and plan for mining day activities in as many schools and towns across our state as possible. We have started a Montana Mining Day Planning Committee to make sure we have a far-reaching public and K-12 education and outreach event ready for this year's first Mining Day in 2026. Please reach out to us on the website or to me at mvincent@montanamining.org if you or your company wants to get involved.



A NEW HOME

A new home is on the horizon for the Montana Mining Association. Last fall, a unique opportunity presented itself to us: how would the Montana Mining Association like the first right of refusal to purchase the Montana High School Association (MHSA) building located at 1 South Dakota Street in Helena? The building has served MHSA well since it was built in 1964, but the group had decided to move downtown into the gulch, as it's outgrown the footprint of the 4,200-square-foot location.

Aside from physically being a near-perfect fit for the long-term stability and presence of the association in Helena, the location is even better – only one and a half blocks away from the Montana State Capitol building!

Our board has thoroughly evaluated and deliberated on this opportunity and has decided we are in an appropriate budgetary and organizational position to move ahead with purchasing the building. It's also an opportunity that if we pass on it, will likely never happen again, particularly in such a good location.

So, if all goes well with the appraisal and financing, the Montana Mining Association will be closing on this building later this summer and hosting a housewarming party towards the end of the year – stay tuned for an invitation!

A CHANGING OF THE GUARD

As you likely read in our winter edition or heard through the grapevine, the association lost its president, Ben Raffety, at the end of last calendar year.

Ben hasn't gone far – he has been continuing to help guide the association as a contractor to both MMA and its executive team. In fact, he chaired the Annual Meeting committee again, and is responsible for putting on the great event at the Copper King. He's also kept the train steered and moving forward on the association's critical minerals project path while I and Jon Sonju tended to the priorities of a heavily active legislative session.



Raffety



A Sandfire Resources team looks at the water pond design for the Black Butte Copper Project north of White Sulphur Springs.



The road to the Stillwater platinum and palladium mine near Nye.

But with Ben's decision to start his own consultancy, Anvil Solutions, he needed to step down from his role as president. Stepping in was a face we all know and trust, Mark Thompson. Mark was also our immediate past president and thankfully was willing to step in and serve as the interim president until Ben's term expired this summer. And just as thankfully, Mark is willing to continue to do what's best for our association as it navigates its exciting but largely uncharted future.

One thing is for sure—while executive management and leadership has something to do with it, the recent and continued success of the association would be impossible without the

dogged persistence, unquestioned commitment and impeccable leadership of Ben. His interest in the association over the past five years as its president have been instrumental in its success.

While the organization is in arguably as exciting of a position as it's ever been – record membership and annual meeting attendance, a new building, and the inclusion of coal membership – the past few years have also been the most daunting and challenging in our history. Ben, we couldn't have made our way out of this without you, and for that we are grateful. **M**

Matt Vincent is the executive director of the Montana Mining Association

Montana's Mining Moment

A legislative session that delivered

As the 2025 Montana Legislature adjourned sine die on April 30, it closed the books on one of the most consequential sessions for Montana's mining industry in recent memory.



**JON
SONJU**

With over 4,500 bill drafts and nearly 900 bills passed, this session wasn't just busy—it was transformative.

And for the Montana Mining Association (MMA), it was a resounding success.

We didn't just watch from the sidelines. We helped write the playbook. Seven bills drafted with direct MMA involvement passed through both chambers—a 100% success rate. Beyond those, we testified, negotiated, and collaborated to support a host of industry-aligned policies and fend off proposals that would have added red tape and uncertainty for our members.

In a session defined by its sheer volume and complexity, the MMA government affairs team and Legislative Committee delivered clarity, momentum, and results where it mattered most.

CHARTING A COURSE FOR RESOURCE LEADERSHIP

Let's start with the bedrock: critical minerals. With national attention focused on securing domestic supply chains, Montana has an opportunity to lead. That's why **House Resolution 2** (Rep. Randy Gregg HD78) is so significant. It formally recognizes critical minerals as vital to both Montana's economy and U.S. national security. Copies have been sent to our Montana's Congressional delegation and key federal agencies. It's more than a resolution—it's a signal that Montana is ready to lead in restoring our nation's dominance in minerals security by responsibly tapping our "Treasure State" resources.

Meanwhile, **House Bill 203** (Rep. Curtis Shomer HD48) brought some overdue recognition to the men and women who power this industry. As of this year, February 9 is officially Montana Mining Day, a celebration of the people, the history, and the future of mining in our state.

But recognition alone doesn't move rock. Smart policy does.



The Montana State Capitol in Helena on March 5.



The Montana House of Representatives at work in the state Capitol on April 2

Senate Bill 520 (Sen. Tony Tezak SD35) updates and clarifies outdated leasing rules, aligning mineral lease procedures with those used for oil and gas. It's a modernization that puts Montana on equal footing with its surrounding states and encourages increased investment across Montana's energy sectors.

House Bill 736 (Rep. Steve Fitzpatrick HD24) allows for nutrient pollutant offset

trading within the same subbasin—a practical, science-based solution for managing water quality without stifling economic activity.

And in a move that strengthens responsibility and oversight in mining operations, **HB 717** (Rep. John Fitzpatrick HD77) empowers the Department of Environmental Quality to use eminent domain when a mine permit transfer stalls due to extenuating circumstances

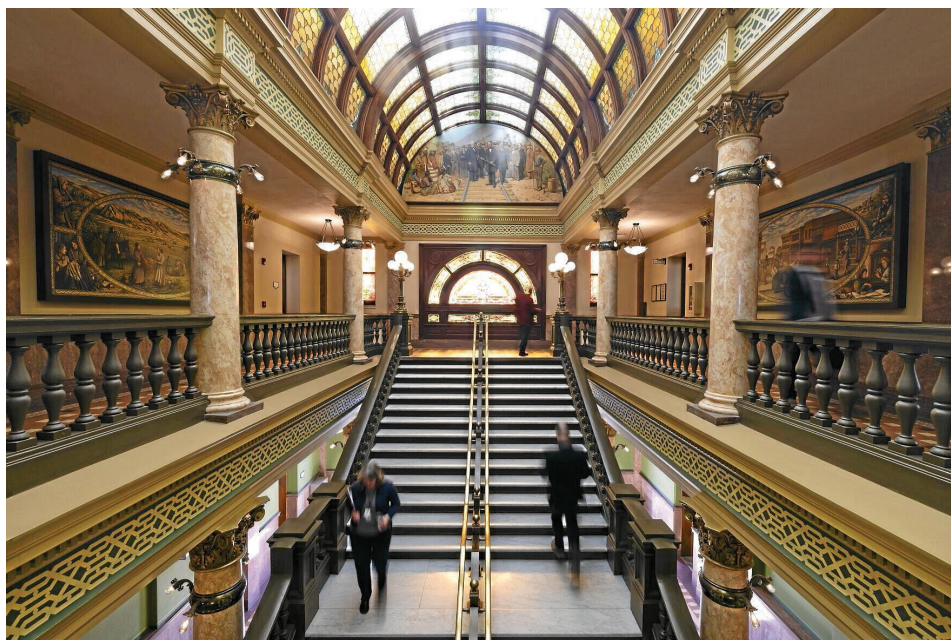
that go even beyond current bonding and “bad actor” protections. It’s a tool we hope is rarely needed—but it could be a crucial one when it is.

HB 699 (Rep. Bill Mercer HD46) makes important changes to Montana’s global-leading tailings storage facility regulations, namely to the facilities’ independent review panels, allowing qualified technical experts—not just licensed engineers—to lend their expertise to mine tailings evaluations. The bill passed unanimously, proof that good science still earns bipartisan respect.

And finally, **HB 685** (Rep. S. Fitzpatrick) clears up confusing and redundant permitting terminology, renaming the “authorization to degrade” to a “feasibility allowance.” Words matter, and this change reflects a shift toward clearer, more constructive environmental dialogue for permittees who may need this allowance.

REINING IN REGULATORY OVERREACH

While we advanced new policies, we also helped steer several key reforms to Montana’s environmental review framework—especially the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA).



People climb the Grand Staircase in the Montana State Capitol on March 4 during transmittal week for the 2025 Montana Legislature.

MEPA was never meant to be a regulatory cudgel, yet over time, it became exactly that.

Senate Bill 221 (Sen. Wylie Galt) reasserts the legislature’s authority over MEPA, clarifying when assessments are necessary and focusing reviews on local, measurable environmental impacts—not speculative or global ones.

House Bill 285 (Rep. Brandon Ler) underscores MEPA’s original purpose as a procedural tool, not a regulatory mechanism. It’s meant to inform decisions, not obstruct them.

HB 270 (Rep. Katie Zolnikov) reinforces this approach by removing greenhouse gas emissions from MEPA reviews unless federally



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People watch the Montana House of Representatives from the gallery during a floor session on Feb. 11 in the state Capitol.

required and by ensuring agencies operate within the limits of legislative intent.

Complementing these were additional measures like **HB 291** (Rep. Greg Oblander), which bars state and local agencies from adopting air quality standards stricter than federal baselines, and **HB 466** (Rep. J. Fitzpatrick), which grants categorical MEPA exemptions for specific state land and preservation projects. Together, they reflect a growing consensus: regulation should be predictable, balanced, and

science-based—not politicized.

PROTECTING PARTICIPATION, NOT PARTISANSHIP

We also worked behind the scenes on **HB 818** (Rep. Braxton Mitchell), which prohibits foreign entities from influencing ballot issue campaigns. The original language risked unintentionally barring legally operating foreign-owned companies from participating in Montana's political process. Thanks to input

from MMA and other stakeholders, the final bill strikes a careful balance—preserving the integrity of our elections while allowing responsible corporate voices to remain part of the conversation.

A STRONGER FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

What we accomplished this session is more than just a list of wins. It's a foundation for the future—a regulatory environment that's clearer, fairer, and more aligned with the realities of modern mining and manufacturing.

We're proud of the role the MMA played in shaping this policy landscape. But none of this would have been possible without the hard work of our members, the leadership of key legislators, and the support of a broader coalition that understands how vital mining is to Montana's past, present, and future.

We've proven that when industry and government work together, we don't just protect Montana's natural resources—we unlock their full potential. **M**

Jon Sonju is the chief lobbyist of the Montana Mining Association

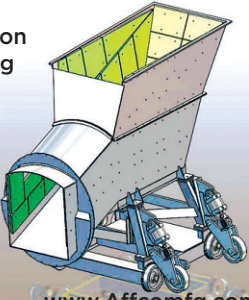


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A resolution in support of critical minerals

Here is the text of Montana House Resolution 2, a resolution supporting the exploration, development, processing, refining, recycling, and reuse of critical minerals in Montana.

HR 2 was drafted with Montana Mining Association involvement, and was sponsored by Rep. Randy Gregg, R-White Sulphur Springs.

The resolution passed on February 10, 2025, with a vote of 93-7, with support from all 58 House Republicans and 35 Democrats:

WHEREAS, critical minerals, including rare earth elements, are necessary for many vital applications, including but not limited to high-performance and quantum computing, renewable and traditional energy development, electric vehicles and batteries, medical imaging and technology, electronics, and high-strength magnets, and for use by our nation's military, from special forces gear and munitions to tanks and fighter jets; and

WHEREAS, the United States Geological Survey and the United States Department of Energy have designated lists of these critical



Sunlight shines through the skylights of the Montana State Capitol Rotunda on Feb. 10, the day the Montana House of Representatives passed House Resolution 2, a resolution supporting the exploration, development, processing and refining of critical minerals in Montana.

minerals and materials used for these purposes that are at risk of supply chain disruption; and

WHEREAS, the United States currently imports a majority of its critical minerals for these purposes, including from its geopolitical adversaries, mainly China, which controls

more than 50% of the mining and over 90% of the processing, refining, and recycling and reuse for certain critical elements; and

WHEREAS, China has restricted and/or banned the export of certain critical minerals and rare earth elements to the United States



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and its allies, including the technology used to produce them; and

WHEREAS, the White House and Congress have developed a myriad of programs, orders, and initiatives to address these supply chain risks and are investing billions of dollars in domestic and allied critical minerals mining, processing, refining, recycling and reuse, and manufacturing projects; and

WHEREAS, Montana has significant deposits of these listed critical minerals in its geology, both at existing mines and at abandoned legacy sites; and

WHEREAS, Montana is home to the nation's only platinum group metals-producing mines, the Stillwater and East Boulder mines, and has mines and processing facilities that produce or have historically produced critical minerals, including copper, molybdenum, nickel, manganese, zinc, tungsten, antimony, chromium, and aluminum, and is therefore uniquely poised to help America secure its critical minerals supply chains; and

WHEREAS, Montana desires to responsibly develop its mineral resources and to expand and establish mining, processing, refining, recycling and reuse, and manufacturing facilities for critical minerals, which



Rep. Randyn Gregg, R-White Sulphur Springs, speaks on the House floor on March 4 in the state Capitol.

would advance its economy and be for the mutual benefit of our nation's technological, energy, and economic advancements, and allow for our nation's continued security and defense; and

WHEREAS, critical minerals mining, processing, refining, recycling and reuse, and manufacturing done in Montana and domestically, in accordance with our global-leading labor, safety, public engagement, and environmental standards, provides responsible development assurances that result in major global environmental and humanitarian benefits when compared to projects if they are conducted in China, Russia, and many other developing countries; and

WHEREAS, the United States government, including its Department of Defense, and Montana's Congressional Delegation have continued to support the advancement of critical minerals projects in Montana.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

That the 69th Legislature urges the state, federal, tribal, and local jurisdictions across Montana to acknowledge the information provided here and to support the further study, identification, exploration, and responsible and appropriate development, processing, refining, and recycling and reuse of critical minerals and materials in Montana for the benefit of its local communities and economies and to strengthen America's domestic supply chains for achieving its technological, economic, and energy transition goals and to secure its national defense.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Secretary of State send copies of this resolution to the President of the United States and his cabinet, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, and the Montana Congressional Delegation.**M**



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New tools for nutrient regulation in Montana

Most mines end up with nutrients in their wastewater, specifically nitrogen and/or phosphorus, triggering the need to comply with nutrient water quality standards. This is often difficult because in 2014, Montana promulgated very stringent numeric nutrient standards, lower than the limits of technology.^[2]



VICKI MARQUIS^[1]

Despite recognition that all dischargers should be allowed a variance from the standards to account for the economic and technological limits of treatment,^[3] variances have not been approved for industrial dischargers. Even if they were, variances only delay compliance and must be reconsidered every five years.^[4] Another option is a compliance schedule, but that presumes compliance is possible.^[5] Both options have been and are likely to continue to be litigated.

Thankfully, the 2025 legislative session provided two more compliance tools. House Bill 685 re-labels the former “authorization to degrade” to a “Feasibility Allowance” and



An algae bloom in the Big Hole River near Glen between Dillon and Butte. The Upper Missouri Waterkeeper filed a lawsuit in May seeking a district court's intervention in the advocacy group's latest effort to compel a state response to nutrients pollution in the Big Hole River. Waterkeeper asked the court to issue a judgement that DEQ must apply numeric nutrient criteria in every relevant Clean Water Act decision until the EPA approves a revision to nutrient water quality standards.

more closely aligns Montana's nondegradation requirements with federal rules by removing an extra cost-benefit analysis from the requirements. This process is often used in other states but has not been used in Montana for decades.

The second compliance tool, nutrient trading,

has also been part of Montana's regulatory scheme, but lacked detail and predictability. House Bill 736 helps solve this problem by specifying credit percentages for both downgradient and upgradient projects. It also instructs DEQ to establish methods to determine nutrient

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The Basin Creek Reservoir on June 4, 2025. Basin Creek Reservoir is about 10 miles south of Butte.

reductions from common nonpoint source projects. Presuming there are nutrient sources within the watershed that could be improved, an industrial discharger could work to lower those nutrient inputs, then receive credit applied to its discharge. The goal is a net decrease in nutrient loading within the watershed. ^[6]

Arguably, the stringent 2014 numeric nutrient standards should have automatically vanished when the variances fell apart, ^[7] or when Senate Bill 358 (2021) deleted the term “base numeric nutrient standards” from statute and directed repeal of the numeric standards, ^[8] or most recently when House Bill 664 (2025) again directed repeal of the numeric standards. ^[9] However, it is not entirely clear how either EPA or DEQ will approach nutrient regulation going forward.

EPA first signaled that a return to narrative nutrient standards would be appropriate if variances became unavailable, ^[10] but then criticized DEQ’s implementation of narrative standards ^[11] and disapproved portions of Senate Bill 358 (2021) that repealed the numeric standards. ^[12] EPA both supported and criticized DEQ’s most recent rulemaking proposal for narrative standards that heavily relied on numeric criteria. ^[13]

DEQ has applied both narrative and numeric standards in draft MPDES Permits, and its 2024 draft rulemaking package appeared to rely on numeric criteria similar to the 2014 standards, plus additional numeric thresholds. ^[14] In April, DEQ denied a petition to list the Big Hole River as impaired for nutrients, stating it “is unable to base nutrient assessment upon the numeric

nutrient criteria” due to Senate Bill 358 (2021). ^[15]

What is clear is that litigation will continue. Upper Missouri Waterkeeper challenged DEQ’s decision on the Big Hole River in state district court, seeking to have the court determine what nutrient standards DEQ must apply to all permitting and impairment decisions. ^[16] The court dismissed the case on procedural grounds, but the case could be brought again through the Board of Environmental Review.

Upper Missouri Waterkeeper also petitioned EPA to disapprove all of the 2025 nutrient legislation (House Bills 685, 736, and 664) and to “promulgate federal regulations applicable to Montana setting forth revised numeric nutrient water quality standards and a compliant antidegradation policy.” ^[17] Waterkeeper asks for EPA’s decision within the same deadlines for EPA to respond to DEQ’s submittal, which is August 4th.

This cycle of legislation and litigation, together with the history of EPA and DEQ actions, creates uncertainty about what nutrient standards will be imposed and how they will be implemented. It is more important than ever that industrial dischargers ensure they have accurate baseline watershed data, work with regulators to identify the appropriate water quality standards, and employ available tools to ensure compliance.

In addition to variances, compliance schedules, site-specific standards, and other provisions, dischargers now have better access to feasibility allowances and nutrient trading.

Whether that will be enough to allow reasonable regulation for nutrients remains to be seen, but ultimately, Montana must develop a nutrient regulatory scheme that “balance[s] the inalienable rights to pursue life’s basic necessities and possess and use property in lawful ways with the policy of preventing, abating, and controlling water pollution.” ^[18]

FOOTNOTES:

[1] This article reflects only the author’s views, provides general information, and should not be construed as legal advice.

[2] Compare DEQ, Department Circular DEQ-12A Montana Base Numeric Nutrient Standards, Table 12A-1 (July 2014) with EPA, Life Cycle and Cost Assessments of Nutrient Removal Technologies in Wastewater Treatment Plants, p. ii (August 2021).

[3] § 75-5-313, MCA (2011); ARM 17.17.30.619(2); ARM 17.30.715(5); Upper Missouri Waterkeeper v. U.S. EPA, 15 F.4th 966, 974 (2021) (holding that EPA “reasonably interpreted the Clean Water Act as allowing consideration of compliance costs when the agency approves water quality standards and variance requests”).

[4] ARM 17.30.662(8).

[5] ARM 17.30.1350.

[6] House Bill 736, § 1 (2025).

[7] § 75-5-313, MCA (2011); ARM 17.17.30.619(2); ARM 17.30.715(5).

[8] Senate Bill 358 (2021); see also Upper Missouri Waterkeeper v. U.S. EPA, Case No. CV-20-27-GF-BMM, Order (April 4, 2022)

(“the Legislature has repealed the [2014] numeric criteria” by passing Senate Bill 358 (2021).

[9] House Bill 664 was signed by Gov. Gianforte on May 1, 2025. On May 6, 2025, DEQ forwarded the bill to EPA for its approval as a changed water quality standard.

[10] EPA, Region 8 Ltr. to DEQ, EPA Action in Response to Court Order in Upper Missouri Waterkeeper v. EPA (D. Mont. No. 4:16-cv-00052-BMM) (February 24, 2020)

[11] EPA, Region 8 Memo to File, Implementation by Montana of its Narrative Water quality Standard in lieu of the Clean Water Act Applicable Numeric Nutrient Criteria (May 6, 2022).

[12] EPA, Region 8 Ltr. to DEQ, EPA’s Action on Montana’s water quality standards in Section 2(1), 3, 4, and 7 of Senate Bill 358 (May 10, 2022).

[13] EPA Ltr. to DEQ, Proposed Changes to Montana’s Numeric Nutrient Criteria (June 10, 2024).

[14] MAR No. 17-434; Montana League of Cities and Towns, Montana Petroleum Association, Montana Infrastructure Coalition, Montana Mining Association, Treasures State Resources Association, and Montana Chamber of Commerce Ltr. to DEQ, In the Matter of MAR No.



Fish, Wildlife & Parks fisheries biologist Jim Olsen walks along French Creek in 2023. French Creek is one of the tributaries of the Big Hole River.

17-434 (June 10, 2024).

[15] DEQ Ltr. to G. Alsentzer, RE: Petition Under MCA § 75-5-702 and 33 U.S.C § 1313(d) (1) to Assess the Big Hole River’s Upper, Middle, and Lower Segments and Determine That Chronic Exceedances of Numeric Nutrient Criteria Require Listing as an Impaired Water on Montana’s 303(d) List (April 14, 2025).

[16] Upper Missouri Waterkeeper v. Montana DEQ, Case No. BDV-25-2025-0000265-WM, Verified Complaint & Application for Writ of Mandate and Declaratory Relief (May 9, 2025).

[17] Upper Missouri Waterkeeper, Petition for Rulemaking Under the Clean Water Act (June 4, 2025).

[18] § 75-5-101(3), MCA. **M**

Vicki Marquis is a partner in the Natural Resource Litigation and Environmental and Energy Practice Groups at Crowley Fleck PLLP, Attorneys in Billings. She guides clients through the entire permitting process, including drafting and reviewing applications, responding to agency and public comments, and navigating MEPA and NEPA environmental reviews.

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Montana Mining Day *Honoring our past, securing our future*

MATT VINCENT AND CURTIS SCHOMER

February 9 marks a significant moment in Montana's history—the day our territorial government adopted “Oro y Plata” as the state motto in 1865. These words, meaning “Gold and Silver,” are more than just a nod to our mineral wealth; they are a declaration of our identity, woven into the very fabric of Montana's past, present, and future.

That is why House Bill 203, which designates February 9 as Montana Mining Day, deserves our full support. This bill is more than a symbolic gesture—it is an acknowledgment of the enduring role mining plays in shaping our state's economy, communities, and future prosperity.



Vincent



Schomer

From the moment gold was discovered in the 1850s, Montana became a beacon for those seeking opportunity. The mining camps of Bannack, Virginia City, and Silver Bow Creek weren't just boomtowns; they were the foundation of our state's early development. Our Great Seal, proudly displaying a miner's pick and shovel, reflects this history, as does our nickname, “The Treasure State.”

But mining isn't just our past—it remains a pillar of Montana's economy today. The industry generates billions of dollars annually, providing thousands of the highest-paying jobs and funding critical state and local programs through tax revenues. Our coal and mineral production powers homes, fuels industries, and ensures our nation's energy security. The men and



Governor Greg Gianforte held a signing ceremony in his office in February for HB 203 declaring February 9 as Montana Mining Day. From left are bill sponsor Rep. Curtis Schomer; Heather McDowell, Sibanye-Stillwater; Nancy Schlepp, Sandfire Resources, Black Butte Copper Project; Matt Vincent, Montana Mining Association executive director; Gov. Greg Gianforte; and George Harris, Montana Coal Council.

women who work in our industry live in every major city in Montana and drive the economies of towns from Butte to Columbus and from Dillon to Colstrip.

Montana's miners are not just resource extractors; they are innovators. The industry has made enormous strides in environmental stewardship, adopting cutting-edge technologies and best practices that uphold some of the strongest environmental protections in the world. Gone are the days of unregulated mining—today, Montana leads in responsible development, ensuring our rich natural resources are managed with care.

HB 203 is an opportunity to educate the public about this reality. Too often, discussions about mining focus only on historical impacts, failing to recognize the

modern industry's commitment to sustainability and safety. Mining in Montana is subject to stringent regulations, financial assurances, and world-class safety standards that protect both workers and the environment. The legacy of miners who risked their lives in the past has not been forgotten—it has driven the creation of stronger safety protocols and better working conditions.

Furthermore, mining is vital to our technological future. Montana holds significant deposits of critical minerals essential for everything from renewable energy to national defense. Without mining, there is no path forward for electric vehicles, solar panels, high performance computing or countless other innovations that drive the modern economy.

Montana Mining Day will not

only celebrate our heritage but also inspire future generations. Montana Technological University is one of just 14 recognized mining schools in the nation, yet the industry faces a looming workforce shortage. By encouraging young Montanans to pursue careers in mining and STEM fields, we can ensure that our state remains a leader in responsible resource development.

House Bill 203 was about more than commemorating our past—it's about securing our future. Thanks to the governor signing this bill, Montanans now have an annual opportunity to reflect on and appreciate the industry that has helped build our great state. **M**

Matt Vincent is the executive director of the Montana Mining Association, the state industry's trade association representing over 150 members protecting and promoting responsible mining in Montana.

Curtis Schomer is the Representative (R) for District 48 (Billings), the bill sponsor for HB203 and a former underground miner at the Sibanye-Stillwater operations near Columbus.





Fess Foster points to a geologic map of Western Montana which has project locations and all metallic mineral occurrences according to data from the U.S. Geological Survey MILS (Minerals Industry Location System) Database.

Hard to say goodbye

Fess Foster hangs it up after 22 years on MMA's Board of Directors

MATT VINCENT

For a guy who says he's "trying to retire," the walls and spaces around Fess Foster's home tell a conflicting story. Nestled perfectly at the base of the foothills in the Tobacco Root Mountains and looking west for an arguably even more perfect view of the Highlands, the hallway from one of the entry doors leading to his office is covered in multicolored geologic maps, large and small. So are the walls of the office itself, and truth be told, there are additional maps and diagrams – including the reports they come from – sprawled out across tables in rooms that maybe weren't initially planned as "office space."

Maybe that's just the way retirement works for an old Montana exploration geologist, or maybe that's just Fess. Either way, they're

one and the same. Foster has been at it now for over 45 years, and up until his departure earlier this year, he has been a member of the Montana Mining Association board of directors for over 20 of them. The reluctance of the association to let him resign – like his retirement, his resignation from the board has dragged on for over a year – is just the tip of the iceberg of evidence on how highly he's thought of by his peers in the mining industry.

"Fess is one of a kind, a really great geologist, but even rarer, one that knows more about the economic geology of our state than almost anyone," said Mark Thompson, the association's current president and a past president who's well familiar with Foster – both his knowledge and his quirky yet magnetic personality. "He's also a great friend and an even greater one to the industry.

"But what kind of a bonehead gets a PhD in geology and likes it?" Thompson playfully concluded.

Originally a transplant from "colorful, crowded" Colorado, Fess first came to Montana as a mule packer working the mountains of southwest Montana and central Idaho back in the 1970s. He expanded upon the B.S. in geology he brought with him from Colorado State by getting a PhD from the University of Montana. He has been a practicing exploration geologist all over the state, the West and well beyond, including overseas. But Montana is where he truly feels at home.

A gleam ignites in Foster's eyes and one can hear the enthusiasm in his words when he begins to talk about his work, both past and present. He describes his "absolute paradise" when recalling his days working for

PHOTO MATT VINCENT

months at a time in wild places like the Selway Wilderness and Salmon River Mountains in Central Idaho, where he lived in a wall tent with nothing but canned and dry goods and a footlocker full of books and maps. Visits with mountain goats were his only social interactions.

“The neatest feeling is to walk around the mountains and know how and why they formed,” he said.

In geologic time, 45 years is but a nanosecond, if that, but Foster has seen a lot of changes in the past 45 years. Over the course of his multi-faceted career, Foster said worker safety and environmental protections are the biggest changes he’s seen in the industry.

“On the environmental side, I saw the transition,” he said. “Back in the day, companies didn’t pay a lot of attention to environmental protection. Our generation, we were the ones protesting a lot of the things that were going on (in the ‘70s era) and changed that.”

He continued that once he and others from the same generation had risen into positions of authority in mining companies and on projects, “Boy, we used to piss off the old guard when we’d insist on doing things differently.”

Having lived through and contributed to that transition, Foster is also a complete pragmatist when it comes to mining and minerals.

“I used to challenge people sometimes if I’d be presenting or having a discussion—‘I’ll give you \$20 if you can find something in this room that wasn’t made from or made by mined materials. Rarely someone would say air or sunlight, and I’d lose’” he chuckled.

“The United States is the largest consumptive user of minerals, and we have some of the highest environmental standards,” Foster strongly believes. “Having worked internationally, I’ve seen how it’s done in other places. It makes no sense at all to be importing these minerals – that’s ‘false environmentalism.’”

Another reality that Foster points out – one that’s equally concerning – is the shortfall of workers needed in the industry. At a time when our society is going to need more and more mined materials, from rare earth elements to critical minerals like copper, Foster sees an alarming lull in the number of qualified exploration geologists in the prime of their careers.

“There are very few of the younger

geologists who know how to do – or even want to do – good old field mapping,” he laments. “It’s becoming a lost art.”

When asked what his message would be to students interested in exploration geology, Fess said he’d caution them to think hard about doing it.

“The upsides are you get to spend a lot of time outside and travel to some really cool, faraway places,” he says are on the one hand. On the other: “It’s a lot of work, a lot of travel, and it’s hard on raising a family.”

As far as the most rewarding thing about his work with the association, Foster didn’t need to think too long before coming up with this answer: “I would have to say passing legislation. One person really can make a difference.”

And when it comes to what he feels about the current direction of the association at the time of his departure, he needed even less time, which is encouraging at a time when the organization faces some daunting changes to navigate amid record growth.

“I’ve been around the association for about 40 years, and this is the best I’ve seen it,” he said. “You are doing a great job.” **M**

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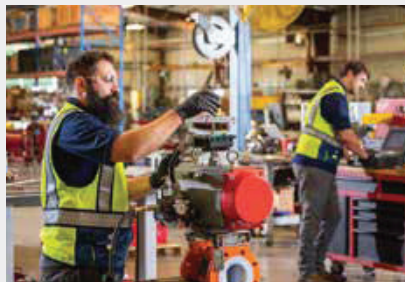


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A tour of the Montana Resources copper mine in Butte during the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.

Montana Mining Association 2025 Annual Meeting



2025 Annual Meeting
July 14-16
Copper King Hotel & Convention Center
Butte, Montana



The registration table at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.

MONDAY		
July 14		
START	END	SESSION: REGISTRATION OPENS, EXHIBITOR SET-UP AND KICK-OFF SOCIAL
2:00 PM	5:00 PM	Registration & Exhibitor Set-Up
1:00 PM	4:00 PM	Anaconda Smelter Site (Elective Tour; *Limited Space – Must Pre-register) SPONSOR: Atlantic Richfield-BP
5:30 PM	8:00 PM	Meeting Kick-off Social & Exhibitor Showcase; Welcome to "The Mining City" by Butte-Silver Bow CEO, J.P. Gallagher; Dr. Johnny MacLean, Chancellor of Montana Technological University Orediggers; Music by Kyle Rife SPONSORS: Northwest Pipe Fittings, Sundt Construction



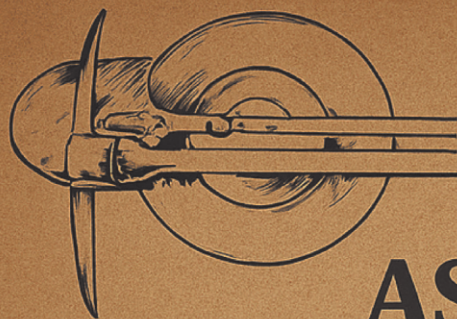
A Cat truck in front of the Copper King during the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting. **Middle:** Montana Mining Association Executive Director Matt Vincent at the MMA 2024 Annual Meeting. **Right:** Making a bid at the auction at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.

TUESDAY

July 15

START	END	SESSION: ANNUAL MEETING PROGRAM
7:00 AM	7:40 AM	Breakfast and Registration Opens
7:45 AM	7:55 AM	Welcoming Remarks and Morning Prayer: Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen
7:55 AM	8:25 AM	Call to Order: MMA Annual Business & Executive Director's Address
8:25 AM	8:55 AM	Morning Keynote: Tom Schultz, Chief, United States Forest Service SPONSOR: Hecla Mining
8:55 AM	10:00 AM	Producer Updates: Sibanye-Stillwater; Montana Resources, High Divide Minerals, GSM-Barrick, Graymont
10:00 AM	10:30 AM	Zoom LIVE Discussion with U.S. Senator Steve Daines
10:35 AM	11:30 AM	Morning Break-Out Session Exploration and Development: King Ballroom: Hecla Mining Libby Exploration, Mike Satre; Black Butte Copper Project update and Workforce Training Program for Underground Miners, Nancy Schlepp, Sandfire America; Brooke Samson, Highlands College; and Chris Roos, Montana Tech Mining Engineering Department Regulatory: Copper 4: Nutrient Water Quality Standards and Regulatory Updates – What's Next?, Greg Bryce, Hydrometrics; Vicki Marquis, Crowley Fleck; Kelly Lynch, Montana League of Cities and Towns; Lindsey Krywaruchka, DEQ (Moderated by MMA) Exhibitor Showcase: Copper 3: Highlighting Montana's Mining Industry Exhibitors!
11:40 AM	12:30 PM	Lunch Buffet & Exhibitor Visits
12:30 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch Keynote: Emily Arthun, CEO, American Coal Council SPONSOR: Westmoreland Mining

1:00 PM	1:10 PM	Zoom LIVE Remarks from US Senator Tim Sheehy
1:10 PM	1:40 PM	Jerry Mullins, National Mining Association: A View From the Swamp – Executive Orders and the One, Big, Beautiful Bill
1:40 PM	2:30 PM	Producer Updates: Westmoreland, GCC, Magris, Ash Grove
2:30 PM	3:20 PM	Collaborating on Critical Minerals Efforts and Opportunities: U.S. Department of Defense, Montana Bureau of Mines & Geology, Montana Tech, Academia, Research and Industry Partners (Moderated by MMA)
3:20 PM	3:40 PM	Break & Exhibitor Visits
3:45 PM	4:25 PM	AFTERNOON BREAK-OUT SESSION Exploration and Development: King Ballroom: Travis Naugle, Silver Bow Mining; Michael Rowley, Stillwater Critical Minerals Project Technical: Copper 4: Coal and Critical Minerals Panel: Dr. Courtney Young, Montana Tech; Ryan Eastman, Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology; Scott Sturm, Westmoreland; (Moderated by Emily Arthun) Exhibitor Showcase: Copper 3: Highlighting Montana's Mining Industry Exhibitors!
4:30 PM	5:00 PM	Panel Discussion: Near-Term Outlook for Montana's Mining Future: Policy and Regulatory Changes. Mike Freeman, Governor's Office; Amanda Kaster, DNRC; Dan Walsh, DEQ (Moderated by MMA)
5:00 PM	6:00 PM	Banquet Prep- Cocktail Hour: Music by John Stenson
5:30 PM	6:00 PM	Dinner Buffet SPONSOR: Hunt Energy, WRH Nevada
6:15 PM	6:30 PM	Banquet Special Guest: EPA Region 8 Administrator Cyrus Western
6:30 PM	8:30 PM	Evening Live Auction, Raffle, Calcutta



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WEDNESDAY

July 16

6:30 AM	9:30 AM	Exhibitor Tear Down
7:30 AM	8:15 AM	Golf Registration
8:15 AM	1:30 PM	Golf Tournament: Butte Country Club (3400 Elizabeth Warren Ave) SPONSOR: Western States Equipment
8:30 AM	1:30 PM	Trap Shoot & Awards: Butte Trap Club (70 Basin Creek Rd) SPONSOR: The Archibald Company
1:30 PM	3:00 PM	Lunch and Golf Awards @ Butte Country Club



Doug Stiles of DA Stiles LLC, Greg Bryce of Hydrometrics, and Nancy Schlepp of Sandfire Resources' Black Butte Copper Project, from left, talk about mine planning during resource definition at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.



Insert: When the last morning of a Montana Mining Association Annual Meeting rolls around, it's time to golf.
Above: The Montana Mining Association Annual Meeting wraps up with a trap shoot at the Butte Trap Club.



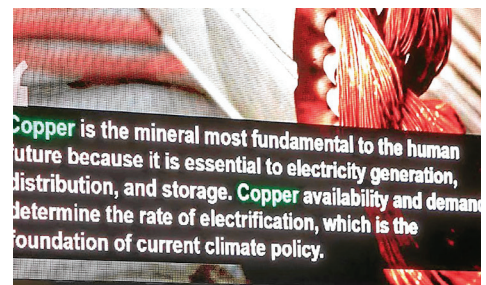
Listening to a keynote address at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.



Visiting at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.



Visiting at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.



Taylor Melvin, the president, CEO and director of Ivanhoe Electric, speaks at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.

MONTANA MINING ASSOCIATION Welcomes Arthun “home” to speak at its 2025 gathering

MATT VINCENT

“Coal is Cool” with American Coal Council CEO Emily Arthun, and so is providing the lunchtime keynote at the 2025 annual meeting of the Montana Mining Association. In fact, it’s a homecoming of sorts – and in more ways than one.

“I would be honored to speak at your conference,” Arthun replied to the invitation – and the feeling is mutual for the association.

For starters, Arthun is born and raised in the Treasure State, hailing from the Hi-Line hotbed of Malta, where she grew up working on a ranch and competing in rodeo. After graduating from high school, she became a Montana State University Bobcat in Bozeman and graduated with a degree in business management.

It was at this point Emily made the choice that first got her into the mining industry, so to speak. She fell in love with and ended up marrying a guy from Absarokee. And when in Absarokee, chances are you work for the mine.

Stillwater Mine, that is. Now owned by South African company, Sibanye, the Stillwater Mine is the U.S.’s only primary producer of platinum group metals and one of the state’s largest employers.

While Arthun’s husband Scott was a school teacher, Emily got a job working in human resources at the mine. So began a happy marriage and a career in mining that has extended for over 20 years in both the hard rock and coal industries.

During her work with Stillwater (2001-08), she first got to go to Washington, D.C., when the mine’s board of the directors at the time met to vote in Russian company Norilsk as a majority owner. That trip may have offered a glimpse of



American Coal Council CEO Emily Arthun poses for a photo during a visit to Signal Peak coal mine in the Bull Mountains near Roundup. Arthun is a Malta, Montana native, a Montana State University Bobcat graduate, and a former employee at both the Stillwater Mine and Signal Peak before making her home in Gillette, Wyoming.



Reclamation activities at the Rosebud Mine near Colstrip. The mine is owned and operated by Westmoreland. The steam rising over the horizon is from the Colstrip power generating station. You can also see the contrast between the cover soil and the ground being reclaimed.

what was to come later in Arthun’s career, as she now regularly travels to and interacts with the D.C. players in her role with American Coal. Before that, to a lesser degree, she traveled to D.C. when she worked with the Women’s Mining Coalition.

“This is a very positive

administration for coal,” Arthun said of the current Trump administration. “With how much energy we’re needing and all of the innovations going on, it’s an exciting time for the industry. In fact, my new hashtag is ‘coal is cool.’”

In mid-June, the American Coal Council announced its strong



support for the reestablishment of the National Coal Council.

“As a keystone resource, coal significantly contributes to the health, welfare, national security, and economic stability of the United States,” Arthun said when the American Coal Council announced its support for the reestablishment of the National Coal Council. “We appreciate the administration’s recognition of coal’s ongoing contributions to a resilient, sustainable, and prosperous future for our nation.”

In addition to her tenure leading the American Coal Council, Arthun also had a stop at one of the trona mines in Wyoming, and then worked for Cloud Peak Energy, now owned by Navajo Transitional Energy Company (NTEC), from 2009 to 2019.

She and her husband are settled for good now in Gillette, which is arguably the best place to be leading one of the nation’s top coal advocacy groups.

“It’s very large and very diverse,” she said, particularly in comparison to where Arthun came from on Montana’s Hi-Line.

MMA is again honored and pleased to welcome Arthun back to her home state, if only for a few days. The association is excited to hear how coal can play a pivotal role in the theme of this year’s meeting – “securing America’s critical minerals supply chain” – and at a time when the association is branching out into serving the coal industry with new member Westmoreland, and with plans for more coal companies to join. **M**

The audience listens to a speaker at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting.

MMA 2025 Annual Meeting Keynote Speakers

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Tom Schultz is the Morning Keynote speaker on Tuesday, July 15 at 8:25 a.m.

Schultz is chief of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service, leading a workforce of approximately 33,000 employees that sustainably manages 193 million acres of national forests and grasslands, supports the world's largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations, and works with tribes, states and other partners to manage America's forests for the benefit of all people, today and into the future. Under his leadership, the Forest Service actively manages national forests and grasslands for the benefit of communities, promotes economic opportunities, increases outdoor recreation access, and works diligently at suppressing wildfires with all available resources, emphasizing the safety and importance of protecting resource values.

As the 21st chief of the Forest Service, Schultz leverages his extensive expertise in the science of forestry, his on-the-ground



Schultz

experience with the Idaho Department of Lands and Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, and his experience as a former U.S. Air Force officer. His time in industry also gives him a deep understanding of markets and the role that raw material availability, quality, and price have in supporting a successful forest products industry.

Schultz believes in building relationships and trust by soliciting feedback from visitors to our public lands, tribes, states, and industry, as well as hunters, ranchers, recreators, and more. He is committed to the core mission of the Forest Service and leveraging his relationships to expand agency partnerships and build consensus. He feels strongly that actively managing our national forests and grasslands to improve their health, productivity and accessibility are key to enhancing economic opportunities in the counties and states where they are located.

Prior to serving as chief, Schultz served as vice president of resources and government affairs at the Idaho Forest Group, where he led timber procurement operations and managed relationships with government officials

at all levels. Schultz also served as director of the Idaho Department of Lands, overseeing the management of several million surface acres of endowment lands and minerals. He held leadership roles in Montana's Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, managing the Trust Lands and Water Resources Divisions.

Schultz holds a bachelor's degree in government from the University of Virginia, a master's degree in political science from the University of Wyoming, and a master's degree in forestry from the University of Montana.

Schultz is a consummate outdoorsman and an avid fly fisherman, with a deep appreciation for the many benefits and resources public lands provide. He and his wife have three grown children.

Jerry Mullins is talking on Tuesday at 1:10 p.m. on "A View from the Swamp – Executive Orders and the One, Big, Beautiful Bill."

Mullins is the senior vice president of government affairs and external relations



Mullins



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for the National Mining Association.

Mullins has spent his career leading and implementing political, public affairs and education campaigns that influence targeted audiences as well as the public at large. By combining his experience as a former reporter, producer and campaign consultant, Mr. Mullins has been active in national elections for 25 years.

His work in the political arena included four years with the Republican National Committee and the National Republican Congressional Committee creating over 2,000 radio and television advertisements as well as producing hundreds of hours of programming from the 1996, 2000 and 2004 Republican National Conventions. Mullins also serves as the spokesperson for the Pentagon Memorial

Fund.

Mullins is a graduate of North Carolina State University where he received bachelor of arts degrees in communications and finance. He and his family reside in Annapolis, Maryland.

Cyrus Western is the keynote speaker for the Tuesday evening banquet, which starts at 5:30 p.m.

Western is the regional administrator for Region 8 for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. He is leading the implementation of the administration's environmental agenda priorities in Colorado, Utah, Wyoming, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and with



Western

28 federally-recognized Tribes.

When Western was appointed to his role with the EPA in February, he said, "I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve the people of the region and foster human health and environmental protection while encouraging sound economic growth. As a Wyoming native, I understand some of the unique challenges and opportunities this region faces and am committed to ensuring we meet the needs of the people while implementing the Administrator's 'Powering the Great American Comeback' Initiative."

Prior to joining the EPA, Western served as the House Majority Whip in the Wyoming State House of Representatives, serving District 51. While there, he served on the Minerals, Business and Economic Development Committee, chaired the Oil and Gas Bonding Working Group and was vice chair of the Tourism, Recreation and Wildlife Committee.

He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Environmental Studies from Washington and Jefferson College in Pennsylvania, as well as a Master of Liberal Arts in Environmental Studies from the Harvard Extension School in Massachusetts. **M**



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At this year's Annual Meeting, the Montana Mining Association will be auctioning off 10 incredible trips, experiences, and Montana-made treasures, all generously donated by members and supporters of our industry. Proceeds benefit the MMA Montana Tech Scholarship Fund and help support the association's ongoing advocacy and operations.

From guided fishing trips and luxury getaways to custom-crafted gear and unforgettable dinners, each item represents the best of our state and the strength of our community. Bid high to support the next generation of miners, celebrate our shared legacy, and make a lasting investment in the future of mining in Montana.

1) THE RANCHES AT BELT CREEK STAY

Escape to the heart of Big Sky Country with a two-night, three-day getaway at the stunning Montana Sporting Club in Belt, Montana. Settle into one of their luxury log cabins and soak in the fresh air, wide-open views, and peaceful beauty of the countryside. This exclusive package includes your choice of one round of sporting clays or a creekside trail ride, plus a gourmet dinner for up to four guests. Whether you're unwinding fireside or exploring the landscape, this is Montana at its finest.



2) BRAWL OF THE WILD FAN PACKAGE

Score big with this unforgettable Cat-Griz Football Weekend package in Missoula, generously donated by Northwest Pipe Fittings! This prize includes two tickets to the 2025 Brawl of the Wild, a two-night hotel stay, and a dinner-for-two gift card—everything you need for the ultimate fan experience. Whether you



bleed maroon or blue and gold, don't miss your chance to be part of Montana's most electric sports weekend. Tailgates, touchdowns, and a town buzzing with energy, this is one weekend you'll never forget.

3) MINING IN MONTANA—FRAMED IN STEEL

Three custom metal-framed prints, generously donated by Pacific Steel & Recycling, will showcase powerful images that capture the grit, grandeur, and spirit of Montana's mining industry. Each 18" x 24" photograph will be professionally printed and mounted in a hand-crafted steel frame, making for a bold and lasting tribute to the legacy of mining in our state. Whether you're a miner, supporter, or collector, these pieces are a striking addition to any space! (Please note, each frame is custom made and will have its own unique look. Image shown is only representative of the final product)



4) ROCK CREEK CABIN GETAWAY

Unplug and unwind with two nights at the 5-star-rated Stony Creek Lodge, a stunning log cabin located on the banks of Montana's world-famous Rock Creek. Generously donated by Secretary of State Christi Jacobsen and her husband Eric, this high-end riverside retreat sleeps six and features handmade log furnishings, a full kitchen, hot tub, fire pit, and a covered deck with breathtaking views. Whether you're casting lines, soaking in the scenery, or exploring nearby Philipsburg, this is Montana at its finest.



5) HIGGINS BROTHERS RANCH (RINGLING) GOPHER HUNT AND BBQ STEAK DINNER

Ready for a true Montana adventure? Spend a day gopher hunting and enjoy a hearty steak dinner for up to six guests at the expansive Higgins Brothers Ranch near Ringling, Montana. This authentic Big Sky experience offers some of the best varmint-hunting habitat in the state, so bring plenty of ammo and get ready for nonstop action. After a day in the field, kick back with a classic Montana BBQ and take in the wide-open views. Access and dinner graciously donated by MMA Board Member Nancy Schlepp, Sandfire Resources America, Black Butte Copper, and family.

6) HANDCRAFTED CUSTOM-MADE MMA LOGO HUNTING KNIFE WITH LEATHER SHEATH

This heirloom-quality hunting knife is the work of Brad Watkins, founder of Brad Watkins Knives and Technical Services Manager at High Divide Minerals. A fifth-generation Montanan, Montana Tech engineering alum, and lifelong outdoorsman, Brad fuses precision craftsmanship with real-world functionality. His handmade Elkhorn Clipped Point Hunter features a MagnaCut stainless steel blade, copper bolsters and pins, green handle liners, and a stunning mammoth ivory handle, all paired with a hand-carved leather sheath. Finished with the Montana Mining Association logo laser engraved, this knife is a rugged, refined piece built to serve in the field and be treasured for generations. (Please note that each Brad Watkins knife is custom crafted and one-of-a-kind. While the photo is representative, the final piece will



Outfitters, donated by Lacey Morrison. This premium experience for one to two people includes expert guiding, lunch, and shuttle service. Whether you're chasing trout in the golden glow of August or the crisp calm of early fall, this is your chance to reel in unforgettable memories.



differ in appearance from the image)

7) BIGHORN RIVER 1-DAY GUIDED FISHING TRIP WITH THE BIGHORN TROUT SHOP

Enjoy a fully guided, all-inclusive fly-fishing escape on the legendary Bighorn River with The Bighorn Trout Shop, generously donated by Westmoreland Mining. This premium package for two includes one day of guided fishing (gear provided), two rooms for one night, dinner for two, complimentary breakfast, and lunch on the river—everything you need for an unforgettable Montana adventure. Perfect for anglers of any level, just bring a guest and get ready to cast into one of the most renowned trout waters in the West!

8) BIG HOLE GUIDED FISHING TRIP

Enjoy a full-day guided fishing trip on the legendary Big Hole River with Great Divide

Book for August–September 2025 or any time April–October 2026 (first come, first served). Don't miss this opportunity to experience one of Montana's most iconic rivers with some of the best guides in the business!

9) R.L. WINSTON FLY ROD

Take your angling to the next level with a high-quality fly rod from R.L. Winston, one of the most respected rod makers in the world. Known for their craftsmanship, performance, and smooth action, Winston rods are built for serious fishermen who appreciate both tradition



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and precision. Generously donated by Mark Thompson and Montana Resources, this top-tier rod is ready to elevate your time on the water.

10) MMA EXECUTIVE TEAM DINNER

Enjoy a memorable evening of great food and conversation with the Montana Mining Association's Executive Board and Management Team, hosted at Lydia's Supper Club in Butte or another Montana restaurant of your choice. Bring up to six guests and experience a true

Mining City-style dinner at Lydia's, a beloved local institution known for its Italian dishes, steaks, and seafood served for over 75 years. Join Mark Thompson (Montana Resources), Paul Liner (Graymont), Tina Nolevanko (Pacific Steel & Recycling), Chuck Buus (Barrick Golden Sunlight), John Babbitt (GCC), Stephen Frazee (WET) and MMA Executive Team Matt Vincent (Executive Director) and Jon Sonju (Chief Lobbyist) for an evening of industry insights, personal connections, and classic Montana hospitality. **M**




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Butte grew as an early urban industrial center in the Rocky Mountain West to become legend as The Mining City. Montana Resources, one of The Washington Companies, has operated in Butte since 1985, continuing the mining tradition here.

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The Yankee Doodle Tailings Pond above the city of Butte on April 30. Montana Resources says it wants to increase the facility's storage capacity by raising the elevation of the dam. The pond includes tailings from both the Berkeley Pit and the active mine.

Butte mine says it needs bigger dam to store tailings

DUNCAN ADAMS,
THE MONTANA STANDARD, BUTTE

The Yankee Doodle Tailings storage pond above Butte sequesters tailings from both the Berkeley Pit and the Continental Pit.

Montana Resources wants to raise the elevation of the pond's rockfill dam that restrains, by one very approximate estimate, more than a billion tons of tailings.

The mine says it needs additional capacity to store tailings to continue mining for copper and molybdenum in the decades ahead.

Thus, Montana Resources, part of The Washington Cos., has applied to the Montana Department of Environmental Quality to amend its Hard Rock Mining Operating Permit to approve the work on the tailings impoundment that is about two miles northeast of Butte.

The impoundment is located within the

drainages for Yankee Doodle, Silver Bow and Dixie creeks. Contaminants in the tailings include heavy metals and arsenic.

Mark Thompson is vice president of environmental affairs for Montana Resources.

"We have ore reserves into the 2050s or so, but we don't have a place to put the tailings," Thompson said during a recent interview. "We're also looking at where are we going to put all the non-ore rock, or what we just call waste rock."

Without the permit amendment, Montana Resources would run out of tailings storage around 2032, he said, ending work at the open pit mine in Butte.

Tailings are the waste materials left after valuable minerals or metals are extracted from ore.

The Anaconda Copper Mining Co. began

open pit mining at the Berkeley Pit in 1955 and operation of the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment began in 1963. The initial embankment was constructed using rockfill from the Berkeley Pit.

Mines like the one in Butte also produce waste rock — rock that is removed during mining operations but does not contain enough valuable minerals to be considered economically viable

"What we've determined, what we've decided to do, now and into the future, is that all the waste rock goes to the embankment (at Yankee Doodle Tailings)," Thompson said. "Make it wider, thicker, bigger, better."

The permit would allow Montana Resources to raise the embankment crest by 110 feet — high enough to provide tailings storage into 2045. Thompson said an elaborate drainage



Left: The Montana Resources copper and molybdenum mine in Butte is an important employer, taxpayer and source of community philanthropy. Its tailings are stored in the Yankee Doodle Tailings pond above Butte. **Right:** Mark Thompson, vice president of environmental affairs for Montana Resources, said the mine has both a professional and personal commitment to safe storage of mine tailings.

system prevents water build-up and enhances the dam's strength.

Thompson said the design process for adding to the structure's elevation has required years of work and analysis.

The design document has been reviewed by an Independent Review Panel, or IRP, whose members are experts about tailings storage. Thompson said the panel recommended no changes to the design document.

If and when Montana Resources receives a draft permit, the stage will be set for public involvement. DEQ develops a draft environmental impact statement, or EIS, harvests public comment and then issues a final EIS.

Public comment will likely inquire about the ability of the Yankee Doodle Tailings dam to withstand a strong earthquake. A breach could send the tailings downhill toward Butte.

"Montana statute says you have to design

your facility to take the maximum credible earthquake," Thompson said.

He said analysis estimates the Yankee Doodle Tailings facility could withstand a magnitude 7 earthquake at the Continental fault without loss of containment of the tailings or stored water.

"The state statute says you have to be able to design to absorb that and not lose containment," Thompson said.

"If the dam were to fail today, nothing goes

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off site,” he said. “All of it goes to the Continental Pit or Berkeley Pit. Nothing gets out into the community.”

The design must also demonstrate Montana Resources would be able to manage the probable maximum flood event, which, Thompson said, “is essentially more than a year’s worth of rain in 24 hours.”

He said the mine maintains a sophisticated monitoring and surveillance system at the tailings impoundment. He said experts have praised the system.

But catastrophic failures of tailings dams have occurred.

David Chambers, Ph.D., is the founder and president of the Center for Science in Public Participation in Bozeman. He has studied and written about the failure of tailings dams.

Chambers has observed that tailings dams must “stand in perpetuity.” More specifically, he has observed tailings dams must maintain integrity over thousands of years.

“If a catastrophic release of tailings were to occur, it could lead to long-term environmental damage with huge cleanup costs,” Chambers has written. “Tailings dams have failed at a rate that is significantly higher than the failure rate for water supply reservoir dams.”

Thompson readily agreed that perpetual maintenance and monitoring will be required for the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment, as will be true for the Berkeley Pit’s water level, weed control, Horseshoe Bend area water and more.

DEQ and EPA hold financial assurances for long-term care and maintenance at the site, he said.

The risks at Yankee Doodle will lessen over time, he said.

“In arid climates, like Butte, closed and reclaimed (tailings storage facilities) become more stable over time as the tailings mass further consolidates and dewater,” Thompson said. “Additionally, the amount of water stored in the post-closure Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment pond is far less than during operations, which exponentially reduces the consequence from a dam breach.”

Once closed, the tailings impoundment will feature a spillway to prevent breaches tied to major flood events, he said.

Tailings dam failures in recent decades have included the February 2025 Sino-Metals Leach Zambia dam disaster. A catastrophic failure of a tailings dam built for copper extraction dumped millions of liters of acidic and highly toxic wastes into the Kafue River ecosystem.

In January 2019, an iron ore containment dam in Brazil failed, releasing about 12 million cubic meters of toxic waste in a muddy flood that killed more than 270 people, including mine employees having lunch in a company canteen. The mudflow caused profound environmental and economic damage.

Numerous other failures of tailings dams have occurred worldwide.

Two distinguished mining experts, Dirk van Zyl, P.E., and Peter Robertson, Ph.D., have

served on the Independent Review Panel for the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment. Each man’s career has included investigations of catastrophic failures of tailings dams.

Matt Vincent is executive director of the Montana Mining Association and once served as chief executive of Butte-Silver Bow County. He expressed support Wednesday for Montana Resources’ application to amend its mining permit.

“Montana has global industry-leading regulations regarding the safe design and management of tailings storage facilities — regulations that the Montana Mining Association updated and further improved this past legislative session, in large part thanks to Montana Resources’ leadership,” Vincent said.

House Bill 699 revises Montana’s laws regarding the Independent Review Panel for metal mine tailings storage facilities. The bill expands who can serve on an IRP to include not just licensed engineers but also experts in disciplines related to tailings storage facility design.

Vincent said Montana Resources has a track record of doing things right.

“MR is a bastion of transparent and responsible mining in Montana for going on almost 40 years,” he said. “This well-planned and vetted amendment is necessary and prudent to allow them to continue that relationship safely into the future.”

Fritz Daily, a former legislator and longtime watchdog of environmental projects in Butte-Silver Bow County, expressed mixed

Mark Thompson, left, talks about tailings storage management efforts with a visitor while standing on the beach of the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment at Montana Resources’ copper and molybdenum mine in Butte.



feelings about the permit application.

"I trust Mark Thompson and Mike McGivern (of Montana Resources) and believe they are transparent and good people and will do their best to do the right thing," Daily said. "I have always been a supporter of the mine and believe it is the 'economic engine' that runs the town.

"While I wish the Yankee Doodle Pond was never there, the reality is it is, and the water in the dam is an integral part of the mine operation," he said.

Daily said raising the dam gives Montana Resources decades more of mining.

"While I have mixed feelings about raising the dam, the reality is if they do not receive the permit the mine will close within a short period of time," he said. "It puts Butte in a Catch-22 situation."

Daily said he worries about what the future holds.

"When the mine finally closes, or when Mark and Mike are no longer there, that's the point where I have a major concern," he said. "At that point — either in 30 years or within a short period of time if they don't receive the permit (amendment) — the final reclamation of the mine begins.

"And the EPA and state Department of



A satellite view of the Montana Resources mine, the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment, the Berkeley Pit, and the city of Butte.

Environmental Quality will then be in total control of Butte's future," Daily said. "For me that is scary and that is the issue. Because sadly, I have lost total faith in the EPA and state DEQ to do the right thing."

Meanwhile, the permitting process will take some time.

Thompson guessed that a draft environmental impact statement comment period might occur during the second quarter of 2026.

And what will happen to the Yankee Doodle Tailings Impoundment once mining ceases?

"It would be capped with topsoil and seeded,"

Thompson said. "End land use would probably be wildlife habitat."

Durf Johnson, deputy director of the Montana Environmental Information Center, declined to comment about the permit application by Montana Resources. He said MEIC has not tracked the proposal.

Thompson said Montana Resources' commitment to safe storage of tailings is both professional and personal.

"Everyone here has family in this community. The last thing we want is for this thing to let loose." **M**

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The power of social media

MineLife Media helps mining companies and organizations use social media to connect with their communities

TIM BURMEISTER

Nowadays, with all the social media options, it's easier than ever for businesses to share their stories with lots of people.

And mining companies and mining service companies have a lot of stories to share. Mines can let stakeholders know about what is going on at the mine site, and their community support and engagement, and they can counter misconceptions and help people to get a better picture of what mining is all about.

But mining companies are often reluctant to dive into the pool of social media.

Jess Scanlan started MineLife Media two years ago to help mining companies establish their social media presence and share their stories.

"The industry and the work that we do is so cool, and people want to know about it, and being transparent I think is going to be better for the industry," Scanlan said.

MineLife Media offers a variety of different kinds of services, but Scanlan said that "the bread and butter of what I do is social media management."

"One of the things I find in the mining industry that is so difficult when it comes to social media, is just getting started," Scanlan said. "It's hard for our industry, especially junior miners, to really put themselves out there on social media."

"A lot of people still think that staying quiet is the way to go. I disagree with that wholeheartedly. I'm a big believer in transparency and connection."

She acknowledged that on the internet there are trolls and people who are always going to be opposed to mining, but MineLife can help provide guidance in dealing with that.

"We offer management services to create a consistent presence."

Those services include helping to set up a social media presence and deciding what to put out on social media, and also involve discussions of "how we talk to people, what kind of wording we're using, the color schemes" – all of the things that go into creating brand recognition.

Scanlan commented that one way mining



Jess Scanlan was named one of Women in Mining UK's 2024 "100 Global Inspirational Women in Mining," selected from over 570 nominations worldwide. The women selected for the honor were recognized at a celebration held in London in November.

companies can share their positive message is by giving their employees opportunities to share their stories. She said companies can have employee advocacy programs with some basic and clear social media posting guidelines.

To help guide this type of program, Scanlan said, "I think there should be a communication segment in all aspects of leadership training."

She said this type of communication training would look at "how we communicate internally as well as externally to the public, to our stakeholders, etcetera."

"Communication is no longer a soft skill," Scanlan said. "We hear that time and time again. So I think alongside leadership training, there should be communication training that would empower team members to share their authentic stories."

Scanlan said this type of training is something that she is working on.

"It's not in place yet for MineLife Media specifically, but it is something that we highly encourage at all opportunities."

Scanlan said that some mining companies primarily focus on communicating with professionals through LinkedIn, but they should also look at ways to communicate with the wider public through other platforms.

She commented that one way mining companies can communicate with a wider audience is through partnerships with other organizations.

"There are a lot of different kinds of organizations or influencers that the industry could partner with, such as environmental groups, local community organizations, and educational institutions, whether that be colleges or high schools or groups like Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts."

"I'm a huge believer in that," Scanlan said. "It's about meeting your community where they are."

RECOGNITIONS

In November Scanlan was named one of Women in Mining UK's 2024 "100 Global Inspirational Women in Mining," selected from over 570 nominations worldwide.

"This recognition is incredibly humbling," Scanlan said. "The mining industry is full of remarkable people doing important work, often without recognition. Many are quietly implementing innovative community programs, improving safety practices, and finding ways to be better neighbors."

The announcement of the honor explained that Scanlan's MineLife Media "helps mines share their stories more effectively on social media – from highlighting environmental initiatives and community partnerships to showcasing the dedicated professionals behind the operations."

"Modern mining is about more than just extracting resources," Scanlan said. "It's about building trust with communities through transparency and open dialogue. Social media gives us a powerful tool to share behind-the-scenes looks at mining operations, highlight our environmental commitments, and most importantly, showcase the amazing people



Left: Jess Scanlan at the World Museum of Mining in Butte, Montana. The museum is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, and Minelife Media is working with the museum on its social media presence to promote both fundraising efforts and tourism promotion efforts. **Right:** Jess Scanlan at the Montana Resources copper and molybdenum mine in Butte.

who make it all possible.”

At the 43rd Annual American Mining Hall of Fame Awards Banquet and Fundraiser, sponsored by the Mining and Minerals Education Foundation, Scanlan will receive the Medal of Merit for Young Professionals. The banquet will be held on Dec. 6, 2025, in Tucson, Arizona.

The Mining and Minerals Education Foundation says that each year it honors several individuals who have made notable

contributions to the advancement of the mining industry. In the announcement of this year’s nominees, it said that Scanlan “is a passionate advocate for improving mining’s public perception and regularly creates educational mining and geoscience content through her ‘Rock Record’ series and geotourism initiatives. Jess combines her technical background with modern communication strategies to help bridge the gap between the mining industry and the public, while advocating for positive

industry change.”

ORIGIN STORY

Scanlan has had a longtime love for rocks and geology, but when she went to Montana Technological University in Butte, she did not intend to go into mining. The plan was to study geological engineering and have a career doing geotechnical work on things like highway tunnel design and slope stability.

“But of course, going to school in Butte, it’s



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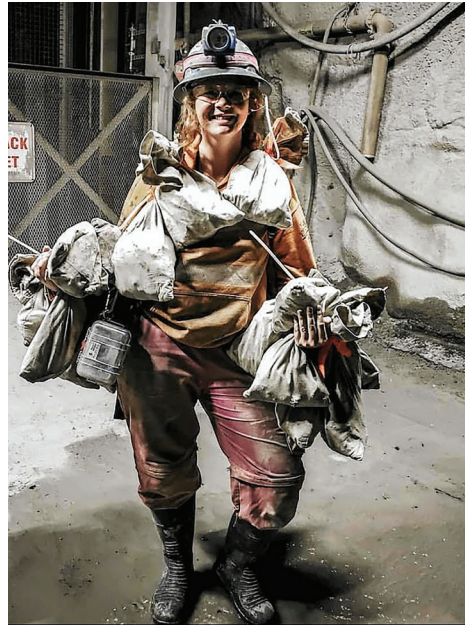
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Left: Jess Scanlan at the Montana Resources copper mine in Butte last August. On the day of the Copper Game at Montana Tech she led a “Copper Game Instagram Takeover.” She said “That was like dream gig. I got to go hang out at the mine all day, post on Instagram, and go to the football game. It was so much fun.” **Middle:** Jess Scanlan at the Stillwater Mine in Montana. Scanlan interned at the mine for two years while she was a student at Montana Tech, and she worked at the mine as an underground mine geologist for five years after graduating from college. **Right:** Jess Scanlan competes in the gold panning event at the Intercollegiate International Mining Games in Butte, Montana. Scanlan competed in the games three times while she was a student at Montana Tech. The first year the Butte Tech team went to Australia, the second year Montana Tech hosted the games, and the third year the team went to Kentucky.

the mining city and they kind of hit you upside the head with it, and I just fell in love with it.”

Montana Tech has an underground mine on campus, and Scanlan said the first time she went underground she almost cried “because it just was so scary.”

“The thought of going into this hole that students are maintaining—you know, how much trust did I have in it?”

“But as soon as I got underground, it was a whole different world, and I totally fell in love with it.”

She called her parents and told them she thought she was going to switch from geotechnical to mining and start taking more mining classes.

“The mining department is a ton of fun,” Scanlan said.

She joined the Montana Tech team that competes in the annual Intercollegiate/International Mining Competitions. The year she joined the team, they went to Australia for the competition, and she figured, worst case scenario, it’s a cheap trip to Australia. It turned out to be a fun trip to Australia and a fun competition. The next year, she helped organize the competition in Butte, and the following year, the team went to Kentucky.

“I was not any good at it, but I had a blast,” Scanlan said.

In 2017 Scanlan earned her degree in geological engineering with a mining option and a geophysics minor. When she graduated, the mining industry was not doing much hiring,



Above: Jess Scanlan takes a group photo at the Montana Resources mine in Butte during the tour of the mine that kicked off the Montana Mining Association’s 2024 Annual Meeting. **Below:** Jess Scanlan at the Stillwater Mine in Montana.



and she went to work as a civil engineer in the Seattle area for about six months. Then she was hired by Sibanye-Stillwater to be an underground mine geologist at the Stillwater Mine.

As a geologist at Stillwater “I was at the face with the miners,” she said.

She loved having the opportunity to move back to Montana and to return to the Stillwater Mine.

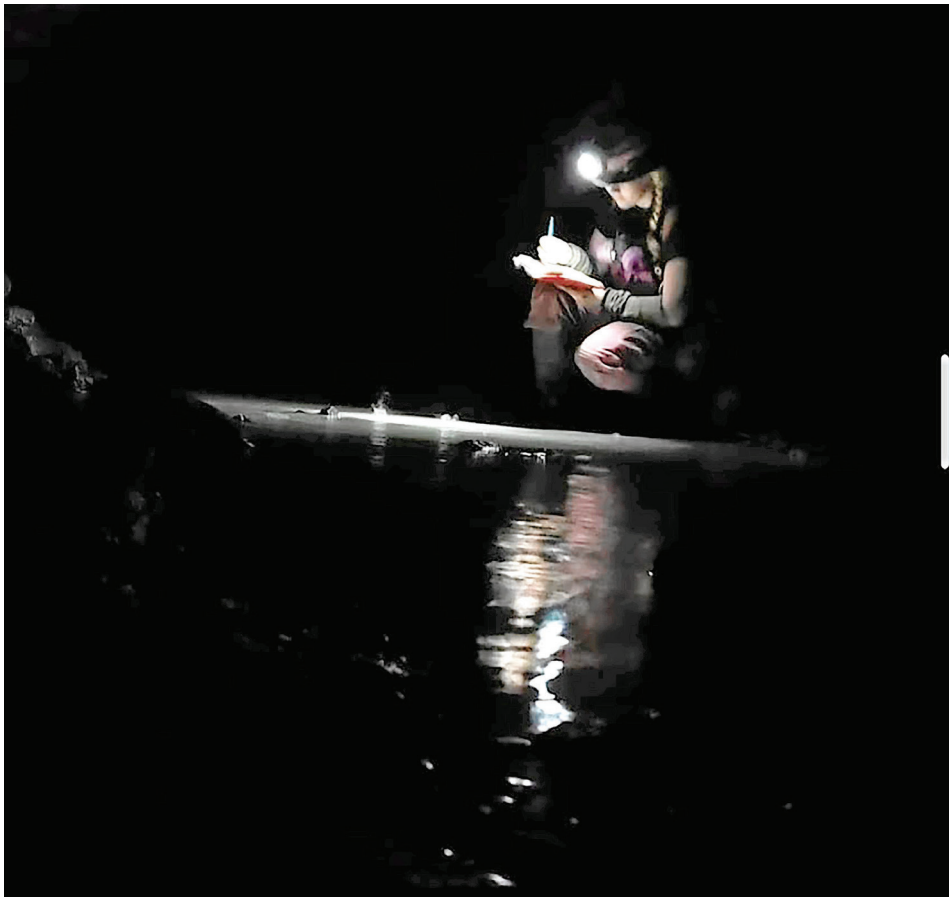
“It’s a great deposit,” Scanlan said. “I interned at the Stillwater Mine for two years during my college experience, and that was where I wanted to work. I loved everything that they did.”

She commented that Stillwater has a Good Neighbor Agreement, a legally binding contract between Stillwater Mining Company and local community organizations which has been in place for more than 20 years. When Scanlan was at Stillwater, the mine was working on its IRMA assessment. The Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance provides an internationally recognized standard for assuring that a mine is practicing a more socially and environmentally responsible mining.

Scanlan said she was fortunate that Stillwater was quite open about letting her post things on social media, as long as the activities in the posts were following workplace guidelines.

She said that some companies “don’t allow you to post at all or share at all if you’re anywhere on site.”

Although there was a lot she liked about



Jess Scanlan at the Stillwater Mine in Montana.



Jess Scanlan at an aggregates operation in Arizona.

working at Stillwater, after being there around five years she decided it was time for a change. She went to a technology company in the mining space and worked on their marketing.

“But of course, technology isn’t more stable than mining, by any means,” Scanlan said.

The company asked their full-time employees to work for them as freelancers.

“So I started taking on clients just to kind of pay the bills while I was looking for another mining job,” Scanlan said. “And it very quickly grew into a full-time business.”

LAUNCHING A BUSINESS

Starting her own company focused on social media “definitely was not something I thought I would be doing with an engineering background and a geology background,” Scanlan said. “It’s been an adventure learning to be a business owner. It’s been quite the experience.”

There have been positives and challenges as a business owner, but it has given her the opportunity to build a life around a lot of the things that she loves – rocks, geology, mining, and travel.

One of her inspirations was Aaron Witt, who got a job in construction after high school, and later started sharing photos on social media of his work in heavy construction. Eventually he quit his job and started his own company, BuildWitt, and he now visits construction and mining operations worldwide and makes social media posts “to educate people on what it takes to keep the world moving.”

“He travels around the world and looks at mines,” Scanlan said, “and I was like, ‘How do I do that as my job?’”

She felt she did not have the photography background that Witt has, but she does have a mining background, and she saw an opportunity to meet some needs with her business.

Scanlan asked herself, “how can I educate the public, share the stories, talk about mining and reach people and talk to them on their level, without the jargon?”

She decided that “I want to share the stories and talk about mining in an approachable way that can help us better engage with our communities and the public and our investors and stakeholders.”

In her introduction video on her TikTok and YouTube pages, Scanlan says, “Now, I kind of have the coolest job in the world. I get to travel, showcase cool geology through my YouTube series, The Rock Record, share stories from mine sites, and the amazing people

working in the industry, and I get to see a lot of really cool rocks, from abandoned mines to active open pits, from towering mountains to deep canyons.

“I’m on a mission to uncover Earth’s secrets and share them with you. So welcome to my world of geological adventures.”

MineLife Media’s services and mission have evolved as the business has developed. Scanlan has been keeping busy working on social media management and related activities with mining companies, mining industry supply and support companies, and mining organizations and mining museums.

DOING THE WORK

One of Scanlan’s first paid gigs was with Juno Jones, a company that was launched to provide safety footwear designed for women, and which now provides options for both women and men. MineLife Media conducted a month-long “TikTok Takeover” to jumpstart Juno Jones’ presence on the platform.

Scanlan said she has been a big advocate for personal protective equipment designed for women.

One of Scanlan’s favorite clients has been the World Museum of Mining in Butte.



Jess Scanlan works from her laptop at Glacier Bay National Park in Alaska.

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Jess Scanlan at the Montana Resources copper mine in Butte the day of last summer's Montana Tech's Copper Game that starts the college football season in Montana.



Jordan Ewen and Steve Smith of Xylem Dewatering Solutions and Jayce McCurry of Mountain View Co-op, from left, at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting. Jess Scanlan worked with the MMA to provide content coverage and social media management for the Annual Meeting.

"They're like my heart and soul," Scanlan said. "I have a huge thing for mining history and mining museums."

Scanlan worked as an underground tour guide at the World Museum of Mining for two summers when she was going to Montana Tech, taking visitors down into the historic Orphan Girl underground mine.

"I still try to go as often as I can," she said.

The World Museum of Mining is celebrating its 60th anniversary this year, and MineLife Media is working with the museum on its social media presence to promote both the fundraising efforts and the tourism promotion efforts. The social media posts showcase the museum and Butte, letting people know about these great travel destinations.

"I do a lot with historic mine sites," Scanlan said. She said mining museums and historic mine sites are great places for people to become more interested in and to learn more about mining, and these travel destinations can also highlight the differences between the mining of the past and the mining of today.

Last summer Montana Resources, which operates an open pit copper and molybdenum mine next to the city of Butte, had Scanlan lead a Copper Game Instagram Takeover the day of the Copper Game, the big event at Montana Tech that marks the start of the college football season in Montana. Scanlan spent the day sending out social media posts to showcase the mine, the importance of copper, and the community support for the big game.

"We got to talk about Butte copper, its history, and of course its future with Montana Tech," Scanlan said.



Mark Compton, the executive director of the American Exploration & Mining Association, speaks at the Montana Mining Association 2024 Annual Meeting. MineLife Media helped provide content coverage for the event.

"That was like dream gig," she said. "I got to go hang out at the mine all day, post on Instagram, and go to the football game. It was so much fun."

Also last summer, MineLife Media worked with the Montana Mining Association to provide comprehensive content coverage and social media management for the association's annual meeting in July.

"That was such a cool opportunity, as well," Scanlan said.

MineLife Media reported that with the

coverage from the annual meeting, the Montana Mining Association saw a significant increase in impressions and engagement on Facebook and LinkedIn.

MineLife Media has been working with the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology on both their professional and public outreach. They have been helping the bureau share information about studies and events for the professional audience on LinkedIn. Also, MineLife started an Instagram account for the bureau within the past year, where they share information about Montana geology and what's going on at the bureau's Mineral Museum at Montana Tech.

Recently Scanlan went to Arizona and visited two mines to work on YouTube videos. She also visited Bisbee and went to the Copper Queen Mine Tour and a hotel which was a mining office back in the town's mining heyday, to work on social media promotion of these historic mining tourism sites.

Recently, Scanlan said, she has had opportunities to do some work with several tourism companies on their social media presence. She said this has not only helped to diversify income, but it has also given her some different perspectives.

"I think it's been so valuable working within the tourism industry for this last year or so, and really understanding the different audiences," Scanlan said. She has thought about, "How do we take that kind of storytelling and talk about mining in that way? It's been really cool to get outside of my own head in my bubble, and to use this tourism kind of viewpoint to think about how we talk about mining." **M**

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