

Baucus finishes trek with 'new insight'

By The Associated Press

Democratic congressional candidate Max Baucus, a youthful state legislator from Missoula, says his 631-mile campaign trek from Gardiner to Yaak has given him new insight — physical and political.

His final day's walk covered 42 miles. That's physically tiring for anyone, even a congressional candidate.

Politically, the candidate said the walk greatly "improved my perception of the needs and concerns of the people of western Montana."

He said the trip was fun but walking into Yaak, a primitive area known best for its sometimes rough-house loggers and Dirty Shame Saloon, "reminds me that we have to return to the basic principles of openness and integrity in government. I think I can bring those qualities to the people of Montana." Yaak is as basic as Montana communities get.

Baucus' seven-week walk, during which he hoofed an average of 17 miles in 37 "working" days, began near Yellowstone National Park and ended near the Idaho border, just south of the Canadian border. Baucus hopes it eventually will end in Washington, D.C.

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