

APRIL 2025



STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

WELCOME TO THE SECOND ANNUAL STATE OF THE COUNTY ADDRESS

By The Board of Stillwater County Commissioners

Here, you will find a snapshot of our County's services, projects, fiscal status, and plans for the coming year. We are proud to share an overview of our challenges and successes, and where we're headed in 2025.

Stillwater County is one of the best places to raise a family, vacation, and enjoy some of the most majestic scenery in Montana!

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Commissioner Ty Hamilton concluded his term as Commissioner, Representing District 3, and handed over the reigns to Commissioner Webb. We want to thank Ty for his dedication and leadership to Stillwater County over the last six years. Good luck Ty on your future endeavors!

COMMISSIONERS' UPDATES

“ Here we are, another year in the books! I’m excited to share some significant progress we made in Stillwater County in 2024. The installation of an ADA-compliant elevator now grants everyone access to all four floors of the Courthouse, marking a fantastic step forward. This improvement will enhance how we utilize our space and make it easier for the public to access various county services. We remain committed to exploring future projects that the community has prioritized, ensuring we approach our planning, budgeting, and progress diligently. I want to extend my thanks to everyone for their hard work and dedication to the residents of Stillwater County. With optimism, I look ahead to the challenges and successes the coming year will bring! ”

Commissioner Riveland

“ As leaders of the county, it is our duty to uphold high-level service standards for our communities, and fulfilling this obligation necessitates capital investment. In the current climate of uncertainty, marked by declining tax revenues, we are confronted with the challenge of prioritizing and potentially postponing capital projects until conditions improve. We appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate these challenging circumstances. ”

Commissioner Ruffatto

“ If it were simple, everyone would be doing it—that’s the fresh perspective of a new Commissioner. We truly welcome a challenge and this is a fantastic one. Our county is made up of a dedicated team that collaborates effectively to meet the needs of all who choose to call this place home. The year 2025 presents a significant challenge, and as your elected representatives, we are eager to do everything possible in a responsible and professional manner. ”

Commissioner Webb

STILLWATER COUNTY BUDGET OVERVIEW

Kisha Cornell, Finance Manager

Stillwater County's 2025 budget represents a proactive fiscal management approach focused on community needs, employee retention, and infrastructure development for a strong economy and thriving future.

- **Budget Adoption:** Adopted on September 9, 2024, after public hearings, setting spending authority for the year.
- **Employee Compensation:** Total expenditure increase primarily supports wage and benefit enhancements for 91 full-time equivalent employees, keeping the county competitive with surrounding areas in employee retention.
- **Funding Structure:** Funds categorized for detailed management of programs and services as required by state law. Key levied funds, including General Fund, Public Safety Fund, and Road Funds, primarily rely on tax revenues, with property taxes constituting about two-thirds of the support. Other funds gain backing through grants, user fees, or assessments.
- **Mill Levy Calculations:**
 - Section 15-10-420, MCA, defines the method for calculating maximum tax revenue and mill levy, factoring in the previous year's maximum allowable levy and a growth factor.
 - -2.59% growth factor applied, based on the average rate of inflation for fiscal years 2022-2023, to adjust mill levies for county-wide funds to 106.01 mills and 25.75 mills for county-wide less the City of Columbus.
 - Maintains 31.74 carry forward mills in county-wide funds, No carry forward mills were utilized this year in county-wide less the city funds.

The county continues to support increased levels of cash reserves near the maximum allowed. As in previous years the county has set aside funds to provide Capital Improvements including the buildings, public safety and road funds.



SIBANEY-STILLWATER MINE LAYOFFS

The Sibanye-Stillwater mine layoffs, impacting approximately 700 workers, leading to a loss of roughly 13% of payroll jobs and a potential \$75 million annual wage loss, had a significant ripple effect on Stillwater County, impacting families, businesses, and the local economy.

Absarokee and Columbus school districts were expected to be significantly impacted by potential declines in student enrollment and tax revenues. Along with the anticipated lower than normal tax revenue and mine sharing proceeds, the county cut nearly \$2.5 million from the 2024-2025 budget.

Local leaders and organizations, including the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, are working to support laid-off workers through job training, skills matching, and career fairs.

The layoffs were primarily due to a decrease in the price of palladium, and the company is hoping for a recovery in palladium prices to allow for a return to full operations.

DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY SERVICES UPDATE

David Stamey, Director

Stillwater County Department of Emergency Services (SC DES) strives to provide the best possible emergency response, recovery, preparedness, and mitigation services for emergencies and disasters in our county. Over the past year we have continued to expand and enhance the services we are providing. Planning and real-life experiences make a significant difference in how we prepare, respond, mitigate, and recover. We have certainly had our share of real-life experience during 2022 and 2023. SC DES led the response and recovery process for two presidentially declared flooding disasters and a train derailment in the Yellowstone River. These were some of the most impactful disasters in Montana's history. While response is difficult, managing recovery is the big lift and certainly was during 2022 and 2023. Because of the experience and training we made it through and recovered.

2024 allowed SC DES time to reset and accomplish many things that we did not have time for in 2022 and 2023. We continue to respond to local emergencies, update our local emergency plans, conduct hazard surveys, provide training and exercises, and manage ongoing grant funding. We have also enhanced our services and built new partnerships throughout 2024. Below we have summarized how SC DES is advancing the level of service we provide to the citizens of Stillwater County. Our full 2024 summary can be found on the Department of Emergency Services home page [DES STRATEGIC PLAN & SUMMARY REPORT | Stillwater County, MT](#)

SC DES realizes the importance of response and coordination to help manage disasters and emergencies. Effective response and coordination help reduce the impacts of disasters. SC DES partnered with "I am Responding", our county first responder alerting system, to enhance these services. We are now one of seven counties in the United States that is being provided near real time alerting and that information is delivered to every first responder in the county. SC DES continues to partner with the FirstNet Authority for enhanced cellular communications. In 2024 SC DES Chief David Stamey was selected to be part of the FirstNet Emergency Manager Cohort. This cohort was made up of emergency managers from across the United States and helped design a guide for emergency managers across the country.

Wildland Fires are always at the top of the list of concerns for our county and citizens. SC DES has collaborated with MT DNRC Fire, Columbus Fire and Rescue, Stillwater Valley Watershed, US Forest Service, and others to form a fuels mitigation workgroup, known as Fire Safe Stillwater. This workgroup coordinates fuels mitigation projects across the county and provides education to the public. In November of 2024 Fire Safe Stillwater held the first ever home hardening workshop. This workshop provided our citizens with fire safety and home hardening education.

SC DES applied for and received a Homeland Security Grant (HSG) that allowed for the purchase of active shooter response equipment and training for a multi county region. During 2024 Stillwater County used that funding to purchase and distribute active shooter equipment to Stillwater, Carbon, Sweetgrass Counties, and the City of Laurel. This standardizes the equipment that is used during an active shooter/ hostile event. SC DES and Carbon County partnered to contract with the National Tactical Officers Association (NTOA) to deliver three active shooter/ hostile event training courses in our region. These courses were delivered in Columbus, Red Lodge, and Laurel. These courses were well attended, and we now have a more standardized response to these types of incidents.

SC DES is managing nearly \$285,000 in grant funding to help reduce the cost of operating and save taxpayer dollars. This funding continues to enhance our ability to provide the best disaster and emergency response for Stillwater County.



Fire Safe Stillwater Members at the November Home Hardening Workshop



Wildland Fire Response

STILLWATER COUNTY SHERIFF UPDATE

Randy Smith, Undersheriff

In 2024, the Stillwater County Sheriff's Office marked significant accomplishments while managing transitions. Deputy Renzel Crain retired after several years of dedicated service as the school resource officer for the county's educational institutions. Additionally, Deputy Wyatt Duncan departed to rejoin the Montana Highway Patrol. We successfully recruited Carson West to fill the vacancy, and his local upbringing and youthful energy promise to make him a valuable asset to our team. Carson is set to graduate from the Montana Law Enforcement Academy in 2025 and will be assigned to Columbus. Deputy Cole Waltner transitioned from his Corporal role to take on the responsibilities of the school resource officer, where he has excelled in serving our rural county schools. Furthermore, Deputy Toby Reissig and Deputy Cactus Anderson were both elevated to Corporal positions, where they will supervise the nightshift patrol deputies. We were thrilled to appoint Russ Dewell as our Chaplain this year; he has made a remarkable impact by providing support during tragic incidents. At our annual Christmas party, Deputy Branden Timm was honored as Deputy of the Year, while Dispatcher Candice Ward received the Dispatcher of the Year award. Looking ahead to 2025, we are committed to maintaining our high standards of service despite being short one deputy and two dispatch positions.

TREASURER'S OFFICE

Jerry Friend, Treasurer

The Montana Motor Vehicle Division (MVD) has introduced a new system known as CARS (Credentialing and Registration System) aimed at enhancing driver services and streamlining operations. This system will facilitate online scheduling, license renewals, and vehicle titling and registrations. Once we get the bugs worked out and get over the training curve, customers should expect a wider range of online services, electronic payment options, and faster processing times for all vehicle-related transactions.

Despite being short-staffed and facing less-than-ideal conditions due to the courthouse elevator construction, the team at the treasurer's office has embraced their training on the new system with positivity and continue to provide the excellent customer service that Stillwater County residents have come to expect.



Candice Ward, 2024 Dispatcher of the Year and
Branden Timm, 2024 Deputy of the Year

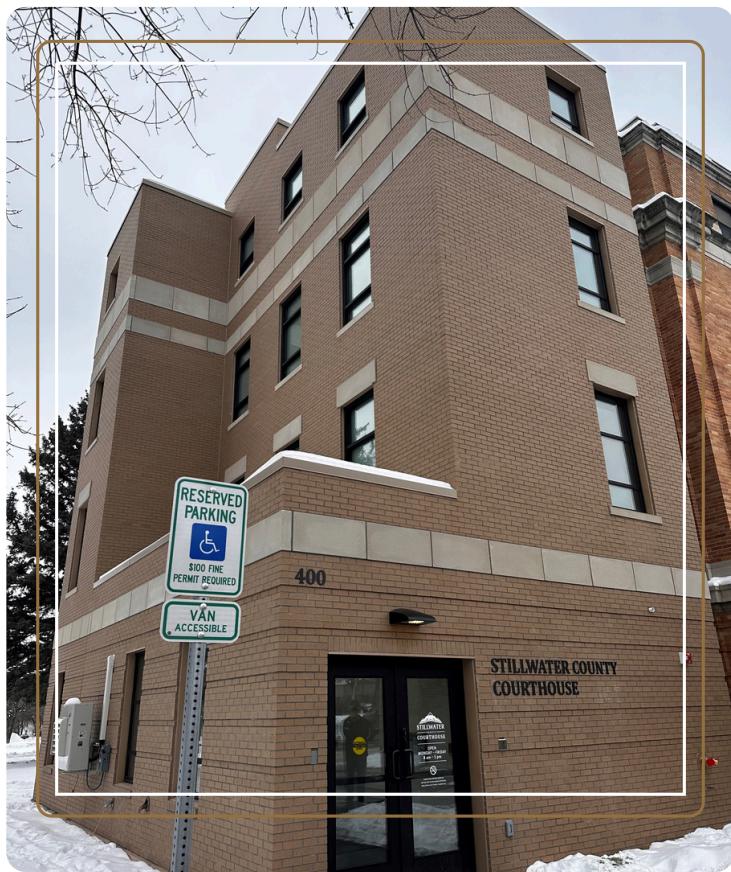
CLERK & RECORDERS OFFICE

Heidi Stadel, Clerk & Recorder

In 2024, the Clerk & Recorder/Elections office, along with the other 55 counties in the State of Montana, conducted one of the largest elections in the history of the county and state. The election clerks and judges did an outstanding job during the days leading up to and including election day. The Federal Primary was held in June and the Federal General was held in November. The magnitude of this election cycle was unlike any I have seen since working in this office. This election cycle, although extremely busy, ran smoothly. Thank you for all the hard work and time the election judges have dedicated to help us make this a successful election cycle.

STILLWATER COUNTY FACILITIES UPDATE

Chad Coles, Facilities Supervisor



Stillwater County Courthouse

STILLWATER COUNTY COURTHOUSE

One of the biggest accomplishments this year was the addition of the elevator, stairs, and ADA restrooms to the Courthouse. Although this work was completed by an amazing team of architects, engineers, contractors, and subs, the Facilities Dept had daily involvement in this project. We also accomplished several related projects that were outside of the scope of work, but related to the successful completion of this much-needed improvement. Some of the larger projects included the remodeling and relocation of the Clerk and Recorder's office, several carpeting projects, internal painting, LED lighting upgrades, building and installing secure storage cabinets for election materials, and working to keep the courthouse offices working during this large construction project. The Courthouse staff was amazing despite the noise and interruptions to their work space. Thank you so much! We made improvements to the steam boiler that serves to heat the 100+-year- old historic building, ensuring safe and efficient operation for years to come.

ABSAROKEE SEWER DISTRICT

- Outside of the normal operations and daily improvements, the largest success at the Sewer Treatment Plant was the fulfillment of the Montana DEQ Consent Order. We have completed the corrective actions as instructed and have brought the facility back into compliance.

WORK ORDER SYSTEM

- We continue to make improvements to our Computerized Maintenance Management System. This system gives us the ability to track, schedule, report, and record all maintenance activities associated with our buildings and equipment. We have created a significant amount of periodic maintenance work orders (HVAC, Vehicle, Fire Extinguisher, AED) that auto-generate when scheduled. This system also provides a maintenance request portal that gives building occupants the ability to make maintenance requests directly through this system and keeps all of our maintenance records in one location. Over the last year, we have completed over 550 scheduled (PM) and requested (DM) work orders.

WEST ANNEX / MEADOWLARK / CIVIC CENTER / FAIRGROUNDS / LIBRARY / SOUTH ANNEX

- The rest of our county buildings have all seen their fair share of activity, but to highlight a few projects. The West Annex and Meadowlark saw the replacement of aging HVAC equipment. The Civic Center, along with a flurry of community use, had some improvement in the remote operation and scheduling of the large air handler that allows us to run the building more efficiently. We had some demolition at the old fairgrounds to make room for future growth and the Library will be seeing a much needed new roof this spring.

“ Thank you for your efforts in keeping our facilities in great condition and for the quick notification when something needs attention. Your feedback is critical for the quick resolve of needed maintenance! Thank you for your partnership and we look forward to another successful and productive year. ”

ROAD & BRIDGE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Ben McVittie, Superintendent

2025 is an exciting year for the Road & Bridge Department. We will have great impacts on our road systems improvements for years.

WHAT TO EXPECT WITH YOUR ROADS IN 2025:

GRAVEL ROAD STABILIZATION PLAN

With the exciting purchase of a Wirtgen WR 200 XLi road reclamation machine, the Stillwater County Road & Bridge department will be implementing a Gravel Road Stabilization Plan (Plan), beginning in the year 2025. The Plan entails completing an annual inspection of all county maintained gravel roadways for consideration on that year's stabilization project list. Prioritized roadways will be estimated for overall costs for improvements, and the miles of project road reconstruction completed will depend on available funding for that year. Work on selected roadways will be scheduled for completion during summer months of July and August. Stillwater County Road & Bridge department look forward to completing 24 miles of road stabilization in the year of 2025.

ANNUAL STRIPING & ROAD MARKINGS

Stillwater County has successfully secured a service agreement to have a local county striping contractor complete 20 miles of centerline striping throughout the county. Additionally, the road and bridge staff will be starting to refreshing road markings (crosswalk, stop bars...) within our local communities utilizing our newly acquired walk behind striping machine.

CONTINUOUS MAINTENANCE EFFORTS

Roads, bridges, culverts, cattle guards, and signs are tirelessly maintained by our field crew, as well as general road maintenance to ensure safe and efficient transportation throughout the county.



RDO-Commissioner Reclaimer



Reclaimer

Necessary resources for ongoing road maintenance are secured through a competitive bid process.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND PLANNING OVERVIEW

Stephanie Ray, Director

Through intentional long-range planning and fiscal conservancy, Stillwater County's 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) has successfully identified and made a significant progress on a number of priority projects, including roads, bridges, existing public buildings, and new facilities. This indicated it was time to kick off an amendment to the CIP, laying the foundation for future investments over the next three-to-five-year period. An updated CIP will be completed in 2025, reflecting departmental priorities, areas for improvement, and a foundational framework for fiscal investment over the next three to five years.

2024 PROJECTS INCLUDED

Valley Creek Bridge

Construction began in 2024 and is substantially complete. Minor construction will be done in Spring 2025. The bridge is open to the traveling public. The county received a \$340,550 Montana Coal Endowment Program grant and \$340,550 in Montana Department of Transportation funding, making county contribution an anticipated zero dollars.

Law & Justice Center

Discussion continues around the programming and service needs for the county's law enforcement team. Historic 2021 escalation in construction costs created a funding gap, but strategies are in place to continue progress. The county remains committed to addressing these needs.

Stillwater County Courthouse Renovation Project

The courthouse was identified by the county and the public as a high priority facility for continued renovation, allowing for the county to continue to provide essential services on all four floors of the building.

The contribution of a \$500,000 Montana Historic Preservation Grant helped offset some of the construction costs associated with renovation of this historic building.

Construction started in the Spring 2024 with a ribbon cutting on the facility in January of 2025.

The project highlights include:

- ADA compliant access to all four floors of the building
- A secondary egress required by code for safety purposes
- ADA compliant restrooms for county offices and the public
- A more secure access to court services on the third and fourth floors
- Access to additional square footage within the building, allowing for improved county services
- The project was completed on time and under budget with no debt obligation on behalf of the county.



Project Facilitators



Elevator Ribbon Cutting / Grand Opening

Economic Development is another important focus for our office. Our team understands that economic development relies on a robust infrastructure, which is fundamental to community growth and job diversification. With the completion of the Business Park/Feasibility Study, Stillwater County is in the position to grow.

The completion of the new Stillwater County Civic Center marks a significant milestone for investment in Stillwater County. The Civic Center calendar continues to fill up with a diverse set of activities, enriching the community experience by drawing outside activities and events, bringing people together under one roof. Our economic development team is excited to continue to expand the programming for this facility and our community.

Geographical Information System (GIS)

How to break down GIS into simple terms...think pictures, mapping, and visual keys. Stories are better understood through visual tools. GIS can touch every land use activity by assisting with data collection and mapping to better tell the story. We ask ourselves 'what information are we trying to convey?' and then turn it into a visual. Check out our GIS website for public facing data such as:

Floodplain Administration

Stillwater County participates in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which is administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This program allows all residents within the county to purchase flood insurance.

"Floods are the nations most common natural disaster and the most costly. Local communities that participate in the NFIP are tasked with managing flood-prone areas and communicating risk awareness to the public. Mapping, permitting, insurance, and mitigation are the cornerstones of a community program to better protect public health, safety, and welfare". (<https://dnrc.mt.gov/Water-Resources/Floodplains>)

Community members can determine if their property is within a regulated flood hazard area by utilizing the FEMA website (link below) or meeting with the planning office. All work in a flood regulated area requires a Joint Application and review process, not only by the floodplain office, but other affected agencies such as the Conservation District, Army Corp of Engineers, Department of Environmental Quality, Fish Wildlife and Parks. The county floodplain permit is the last permit issued after all other agencies have reviewed and signed off on the application.

As a result of the historic flooding in 2022, Stillwater County's floodplain and floodplain maps are currently being updated. This effort is a multi-year process with finished maps not being available to the county until possibly 2026. In the meantime, the floodplain is regulated utilizing the current maps.

To find out if your property is in the floodplain go to: <https://www.fema.gov/flood-maps>

Environmental Health

The sanitarian is responsible for maintaining quality ground and surface water, and protecting the health of citizens through septic permitting and non-degradation review, subdivision review (DEQ contracted reviewer, health inspections wholesale, retail food, public accommodations, swimming pools, campgrounds, trailer courts, body art facilities, and piercing facilities), water collection for testing (water quality or home refinance), compliance with public health laws, and regulation of public health and safety laws. The sanitarian is also responsible for safe housing and facilities after emergency events, epidemiology investigations, school safety, daycare safety, food transportation safety, environmental clean-up work plan approvals, and Brownfield Project approvals. The sanitarian may also assist with emergency response (from airplane crashes-yes, it has happened- to boat accidents to semi-truck accidents), and chemical spill reporting.

Youth Business Fair

The 2024 Stillwater County Youth Business Fair, hosted by the Economic Development Department was a tremendous success in its first year. Our goal was to empower young entrepreneurs by providing them with an opportunity to engage with customers, sell their products and gain hands on experience handling transactions. The event exceeded our expectations, with 46 vendors ranging in age from 5 to 17 showcasing an impressive variety of products and services. The creativity, dedication, and business sense displayed by these young participants made the fair an inspiring and rewarding experience for all involved.

Website/Administrative Boards

Stillwater County has hired a Web Content Specialist to revamp our website and social media presence. Our goal is to provide citizens with accurate, up-to-date information and resources in a clean, user-friendly format. We're committed to making government processes and decision-making procedures clear and accessible to everyone, including individuals with disabilities, to foster trust and understanding between citizens and county representatives.

Citizen engagement with elected officials often happens through boards, districts, and committees. As a board member, you play a vital role representing community interests. The "Boards" section of our website offers a comprehensive overview of all county boards, including meeting times, membership terms, and information on how to get involved.

COMMUNITY LAND PLANNING UPDATE

Stephanie Ray, Director

Stillwater County provides comprehensive land planning services, supporting all types of development across the county. Notably, we are among the few counties in Montana to offer comprehensive zoning for a broad spectrum of uses beyond just residential. Our priority is to reduce confusion and streamline the land use process. Coordinating the land use team and permitting process provides as close to a one-stop-shop experience as possible.

Key land planning services provided include:

- Addressing / E911 coordination
- Septic permitting
- Exempt survey processing
- Subdivision
- Conditional use permitting for non-residential purposes
- Coordination with other county departments such as Road and Bridge and County Weed Departments.

As our county continues to grow, we must do our best to guide development and strategically minimize impacts where possible.

SOLID WASTE DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

Pam Cunningham, Supervisor



30-yard roll-off trash bin

An extra compactor has been set up at the Reed Point location to handle the increased activity. This strategy improves cost efficiency by removing the necessity to transport uncompacted waste to the Transfer Station for compaction before it goes to the City of Billings Landfill. We can now transport directly from the site.

Shortened hours:

The operating hours at the Rapelje Site have been reduced by one hour on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays. The new hours are from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM, bringing it in line with two other sites that have a similar volume of activity.

Equipment Acquisitions:

The solid waste district has added four more 30-yard roll-off boxes available for public rental. However, there is still a shortage of boxes as the demand for roll-off rentals continues to grow.

STILLWATER COUNTY SCHOOLS SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE

Mark Ranstrom, Superintendent

This past year has been somewhat calmer compared to my inaugural year in office. The student enrollment figures have remained relatively stable across all schools. However, we are uncertain about how this will shift in the upcoming year, especially with the mine reducing its workforce. Recent legislation included a bill mandating schools to document and begin covering costs for out-of-district students. These payments are set to commence this spring, which may pose a financial challenge for some schools.



Fishtail, MT Elementary School

STILLWATER COUNTY WEED DISTRICT OVERVIEW

Dana Weatherford

As invasive plant species spread rapidly across the United States, noxious weeds have become a major economic and ecological concern for Montana, and Stillwater County is no different. Noxious weeds have become a serious issue with the people of Montana; constituents with both agricultural and non-agricultural interests. Private landowners in Montana have been declared responsible for the control of noxious weeds on their property, while public lands and roads are the responsibility of federal, state, and local authorities. Therefore, leadership, coordination, education, and support of private landowners in controlling noxious weeds are as much a concern of this county's program as is attention to the public areas.

Without pursuing effective noxious weed management, present infestations will continue to spread throughout the county and new invasive species will gain a foothold. Native wildlife and vegetation communities will come under increasing strain, vital watersheds will be damaged and the economic, environmental, and social costs of noxious weed control will become prohibitive.

The Stillwater County Weed District (SCWD) strives to serve all the people of Stillwater County by:

- Controlling noxious weeds on all county right-of-ways within four management areas
- Entering into contracts and cooperative agreements with state and federal agencies,
- Securing cost-share funds for cooperative weed management areas.
- Administrating non-compliance procedures
- Providing noxious weed education to youth and adults

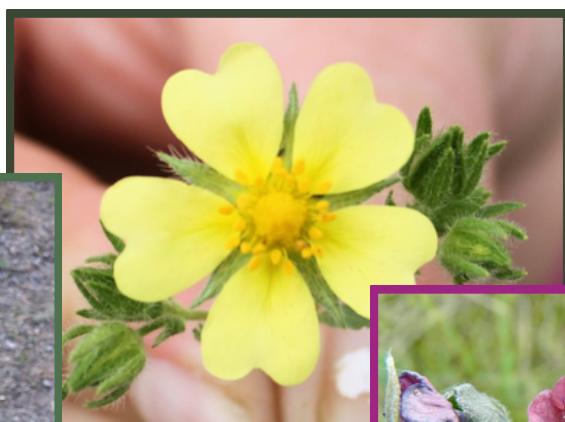
Every spray season brings its own successes and challenges for the Weed District. The 2024 season began with ample moisture but dried up midway through, resulting in hot and dry conditions. Despite these challenges, the motivated spray crew worked early mornings to ensure the Stillwater County Weed District (SCWD) completed all spray contracts and covered all county roads within a single season resulting in the treatment of 2,345 acres.

Additionally, the SCWD is administering three cooperative weed management areas funded by grants from the Noxious Weed Trust Fund. The Weed District has partnered with several agencies, the Stillwater Valley Watershed Council, commercial ground and aerial applicators, and, most importantly, private landowners. These partnerships have enabled the successful treatment of noxious weeds on private property with a 50% cost-share.

Lastly, the SCWD participated in several educational events over the past year, including the MATE show, the Stillwater Valley Watershed Knapweed Float and Pull event, and the NILE Stock Show and Rodeo. The numerous involvements of the Weed District would not be possible without the support of an exceptional seasonal crew, the Weed Board, and the Commission



Dalmatian Toadflax



Sulfur Cinquefoil



Houndstongue



Leafy Spurge

STILLWATER COUNTY LIBRARY UPDATE

Jennifer Ball, Director

Our Library in 2024

- 22,280 people walked through our doors
- 37,688 total checkouts
- 2,951 uses of public computers
- 712 total programs offered with 9,970 people in attendance

Mission:

Stillwater County Library provides education, inspiration, innovation, and support.

Vision:

Stillwater County Library expands access to knowledge, collaboration, connection, and creativity throughout the county.

Visits & Programs:

In the 2023-2024 fiscal year, there were 22,280 visits to the physical library building. The library held 712 programs for ages pre-k to adult with 9,970 in attendance

Youth:

- *Schools*: The Youth Programs Coordinator regularly went to Park City, Rappleje, Absarokee, Fishtail, Nye, and Columbus Schools.
- *Daycares*: Storytime at Park City, Columbus, and Absarokee daycares were regularly held.
- *Homeschools*: Storytime and crafts were held for Crossblades homeschool during their homeschool co-op meetings.
- In all, we had 230 total visits to schools, preschools, and the homeschool group with 2,993 interactions with students county-wide.



Received the Excellent Library Service Award (ELSA) for the third consecutive year

Highlights:

- Awarded a \$5,000 grant to update the young adult section
- Hosted the Montana State Library Commission for their October 2023 meeting
- Two mystery events held where sleuths raced against each other to solve the cases
- Partnered with Beth Korth from Tippet Rise for professional art classes
- Conducted our second annual Cowboy Poetry event
- Partnered with Beartooth Humane Alliance to help locate foster families for animals in need
- Hosted multiple Humanities Montana programs to include: A writing workshop, a Crow Tribe education program, a cowboy/musician/storyteller, a veteran-focused program,
- Award-winning author, Craig Lancaster presented
- Displayed the art of talented students from schools throughout the county



Edgar Allan Poe Mystery Night



THANK YOU FOR READING!

Stillwater County

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