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# PRESS RELEASE

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## **Public Invited To Celebrate 19<sup>th</sup> Annual National Public Lands Day**

On Saturday, September 29, Missoulians are invited to volunteer at Fort Missoula Regional Park or Milltown State Park to celebrate the 19<sup>th</sup> annual National Public Lands Day, the largest, single-day volunteer event for public lands in the U.S. Local volunteers will spend a few hours sprucing up these local landmarks, and then they'll be treated to a celebration and barbeque lunch at Fort Missoula.

The Fort Missoula event celebrates the regional park's designation as a Signature Project of the America's Great Outdoors Initiative (AGO), a federal program establishing a community-based, 21st-century agenda for conservation, recreation and reconnecting Americans to the outdoors. The park was selected by U.S. Interior Secretary Ken Salazar as one of 101 projects throughout the country which represent the best investments in the nation to support a healthy, active population, conserve wildlife and open space, and create travel, tourism and outdoor-recreation jobs.

As part of the AGO Initiative, Missoula Parks and Recreation is collaborating with several agencies to build a new half-mile trail, plant 30 new trees, and construct 20 new picnic tables at Fort Missoula Regional Park. National Public Lands Day volunteers will be putting the finishing touches on these projects. The Civilian Conservation Corp Legacy, a group representing CCC alumni, will also be volunteering at the September 29 event, along with representatives of the Montana Conservation Corp. Mayor John Engen, County Commissioner Jean Curtiss and several state and local officials will be on hand for the festivities.

To volunteer for National Public Lands Day, meet at the Fort Missoula historic district or at Milltown State Park at 10:30 on Saturday, September 29. Volunteers will work until about 1:15 p.m. and then will join Mayor Engen for a celebration of the new trail at Fort Missoula and a barbeque lunch. Volunteers of all ages are welcome at Milltown State Park, and Missoula Children and Nature will host games and kids' activities at the Milltown event. At Fort Missoula, volunteers should be aged 14 and up. At both sites, volunteers should bring work gloves and water.

For more information about National Public Lands Day, visit [www.missoulaparks.org](http://www.missoulaparks.org), or phone 721-PARK. For more information about the Milltown State Park project, contact FWP Region 2 Headquarters at 542-5500 or visit <http://stateparks.mt.gov/milltown/>. Missoula's celebration of National Public Lands Day is hosted by Missoula Parks and Recreation, REI and Montana Conservation Corp. The City's partners in the Fort Missoula AGO project include Friends of Fort Missoula Regional Park, U.S. Forest Service, U. S. National Park Service, University of Montana Missoula College, Montana State Parks, REI, the Montana Conservation Corp and private donors.

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