

CINNABAR FOUNDATION

**2025 FINAL GRANT REPORT
to CINNABAR from HHAA
May 26, 2026**

**LAZYMAN-BLACK MOUNTAIN
INVENTORIED ROADLESS AREA**



Follow Up: Inventoried Roadless Areas on the Helena portion of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest: Monitoring, Reporting, Advocating

Applicant:

MS Gayle Joslin

Organization:

[Helena Hunters and Anglers Association](#)

81-0544196

2763 Grizzly Gulch Dr

Helena, MT 59601-9667

Due by 06/15/2026 11:59 PM MST.

Program/Project Name*

Inventoried Roadless Areas on the Helena portion of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest: Monitoring, Reporting, Advocating

Interim/Final Report*

****If this is your Final Report, no additional reports will be needed for this grant.***

Interim

Final

Amount Awarded

\$4,500

Program Area Alignment

As selected in your Application.

Adapt to a Changing Environment
Conserve Wildlife and Wildlands **X**
Preserve Public Lands
Restore Air and Water Quality and Fisheries

Accomplishments and Impacts*

Use the space below to describe your project's accomplishments and impacts as they relate to those articulated in your 2025 grant application. Please aim to make these specific and measurable when possible.

As noted in our Interim Report, it is important to recognize that without HHAA's previous legal intervention on the Tenmile-South Helena Project proposed by the HLCNF, and with the expertise of the Western Environmental Law Center, the Lazyman-Black Mountain IRA would no longer be roadless and its ecological integrity would have been seriously compromised. The Cinnabar Foundation was instrumental in supporting our efforts that led to a positive court resolution for the Lazyman-Black Mountain IRA, protecting its roadless integrity. And for that reason, HHAA is able to continue defending this ecologically valuable and locally treasured area.

During 2025, HHAA continued monitoring of the Lazyman, Jericho, and Nevada Mountain Inventoried Roadless Areas (IRAs) and initiated field work in the Electric Peak IRA. The Nevada Mountain report was completed in November 2024 but was printed and distributed to the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest and the media in 2025. The version of the Nevada Mountain IRA Assessment that will be posted online will be edited to remove sensitive wildlife information.

Because 2025 was a rough year for HHAA resulting in set-backs that delayed our work, we intend to catch up by extending our 2025 work into 2026. Therefore, HHAA decided to submit a final report (here in June 2026) for our 2025 grant – thus skipping the 2026 grant cycle. HHAA will continue the Inventoried Roadless Area Monitoring project into the foreseeable future in order to assess the 22 Roadless Areas in the Helena area: two areas have been completed and two others are underway.

Work on the Lazyman IRA Report occurred throughout 2025 and into 2026. The final report is complete and involves the main report (and five supporting Subunit reports). The Lazyman-Black Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area Assessment will be available on the HHAA website by

June 12, 2026 (new website manager is helping with web updates). In addition, the granular data synthesized in the 5 Subunit reports are digitized and occur in 56 surveys including 43 field survey reports, 10 incident reports, and 3 flight reports, all of which are sorted into their respective Subunits and are available on-line. Monitoring of the area is on-going.

(As each IRA monitoring report is completed, it will be publicly available on the HHAA website.)

Scoring criteria for the IRA were applied which has resulted in a less than desirable score for the Lazyman-Black Mountain IRA due to violations of roadless integrity that call for immediate attention by the Forest Service.

In addition to being available from the HHAA website, the Inventoried Roadless Area Assessments will be archived at the State Library. HHAA is striving to document the status of our local IRAs in case the 2001 Roadless Rule is rescinded, as is being attempted by the current federal administration (H.R. 7695).

HHAA has had a substantial positive effect on reducing/removing/reclaiming circumstances occurring on the ground within the IRA. We discovered, reported on, and requested follow-up by the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest (Helena Ranger District) on ten Incident Reports that we filed. Most of those Incidents involved boundary intrusions by mechanized or motorized users, although some involved semi-permanent structures:

- Unauthorized road construction by the HLCNF to access the east side of the Lazyman IRA for the Tenmile-South Helena Vegetation Manipulation Project
- E-bike/mountain bike trail construction in Travis Creek
- Trail clearing via motorized use in a non-motorized area of Nelson Gulch leading up to and extending into the IRA boundary
- Documentation of at least 21 miles of unauthorized trails in the Willow Creek and Colorado Gulch areas of the IRA
- Motorized intrusion by UTV side-by-side into the Willow Creek area subsequent to sign installation (9/2025)
- Unauthorized road/route construction with machinery proposed for a livestock watering tank (12/2025)
- Additional e-bike usage and trail clearing in the Willow Creek area subsequent to sign installation (01/2026)

- Illegal structures, trail construction, and water diversions associated with a hunting camp in Colorado Gulch
- Quantification of historic and current mining activity that is impacting the Colorado Gulch stream channel
- Trapping that resulted in capture of a domestic dog hiking with its owner.

After submitting these incidents, HHAA assisted (or has offered assistance to) the HLCNF in rectifying several damaging situations that were/are occurring on the ground, including:

1. Pressing for abandonment and blockage of the illegally constructed massive road constructed by the HLCNF for timber harvest, which terminated only a few feet from the IRA boundary. HHAA is urging full reclamation of that "Feature Road." The HLCNF claimed the road was not a "road" but a "feature", so HHAA has dubbed it the "Feature Road."
2. E-bikes and extensive illegal trail network in the Willow Creek area (07/2022) resulted in Action: signage installed by HHAA volunteers and the Forest Service. Signs reference regulations that ban trail construction/maintenance.
3. Regulation fliers were distributed and posted regarding trail prohibitions in the Willow Creek area.
4. Community meetings for the Willow Creek-Colorado Gulch area were attended by HHAA where historic perspectives about wildlands and IRAs were provided.
5. Establishment of a steel gate occurred in the Lazyman Gulch area next to the Tenmile picnic area subsequent to HHAA's documentation of access violations.
6. Offer of HHAA's assistance in removal of building materials, piping and tanks used to redirect stream flows, and trash from the hunting camp site that HHAA found, photographed, and reported. The perpetrator had also cut down several large trees, built several illegal trails and bridges, and had dumped gravel into creek crossings. HHAA efforts resulted in fines to and expulsion of the camp creator.
7. Probable unauthorized mining was discovered by HHAA and we offered to try to locate the equipment which may be hidden on-site, and if disturbance continues, to research whether permits have been issued by the State for such activity.

In addition, HHAA has offered our labor to the HLCNF with:

- Signage and gates at several entrance point to the IRA
- Marking the perimeter of the IRA on the ground and digitizing its location.

Because of Cinnabar’s support for Helena Hunters and Anglers premier project, monitoring and advocating for Helena National Forst Inventoried Roadless Areas, we have been able to utilize other funds to contract with a website maintenance firm, Daylight Design, Inc., to begin refreshing our website. Unfortunately, when our previous web manager (Enhancing Montana’s Wildlife Heritage) became ill and could no longer work, our website fell into disarray. Completed Inventoried Roadless Area Assessments are available on the HHAA website.

Without the previous support of the Cinnabar Foundation, Helena Hunters and Anglers efforts to protect, defend, and promote good stewardship of Inventoried Roadless Areas in the Helena area would not even be a possibility. HHAA intends to continue this work. So, thank you.

Changes and Challenges*

Did your organization or project face any significant changes, challenges, or opportunities while implementing your programs/project? Is so, please explain.

Members of the Helena Hunters and Anglers IRA Monitoring team encountered a host of personal challenges in 2025 which led to delays in data collection and reporting. One of our group had to withdraw from the Board at least temporarily but continued to assist with GIS and mapping needs; the primary author of the Lazyman IRA report moved residences in 2025 and navigated some health issues; three other IRA committee members also dealt with more serious health concerns as well as deaths in their families. It was a tough year.

We hope to apply for future grants beginning in 2027 in order to continue the monitoring and expansion of our Inventoried Roadless Area oversight on the 22 IRAs that occur on the Helena portion of the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest. Because of impediments encountered in 2025, HHAA will be using funding in 2026 that otherwise would have been used in 2025.

In February 2026, we requested that Cinnabar allow us to modify our 2025-26 budget so we could be more nimble if circumstances were to prevent us from pursuing a particular monitoring approach in the future -- such as not being able to procure a suitable airplane for surveys, as happened in 2025. We are grateful that Cinnabar allowed that budget adjustment and we have since been able to conduct two spring aerial surveys for each of four IRAs: Lazyman-Black Mountain, Nevada Mountain, Jericho Mountain, and Electric Peak and are able to report that except for one access point at Nevada Mountain, boundary closures are currently being honored. The one intrusion into Nevada Mountain was reported to the Forest Service.

Although we have a wildland pilot on our board, because we had difficulty getting access to a suitable airplane, we requested a budget alteration to expand monitoring options by purchasing ten trail cameras that would be used to document the occurrence of rare species and monitor areas of likely access violations. Cinnabar allowed HHAA to make that adjustment and we are in the process of carefully deploying those cameras. Aerial surveillance will continue to be a top priority from June 2026 to March 2027. We plan seasonal aerial surveys of the following IRAs: Lazyman-Black Mountain, Jericho, Electric Peak, and Nevada Mountain.

Unfortunately, 2025 was the year that the current federal administration proclaimed that the 2001 Roadless Rule would be rescinded. HHAA is never-the-less determined to stay engaged with monitoring, maintenance, oversight and reporting of the Roadless Areas present on our local public lands. Now that the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest has abandoned a host of what had been enforceable natural resource maintenance standards, IRAs are the entity holding together what remains of wildlife habitat, connectivity, and natural resource protection buffers. For that reason, Helena Hunters and Anglers is steadfast in our commitment to the continuing function of IRAs, as well as our advocacy for the Roadless Rule.

Communications*

Are there any audiences to whom you have communicated your organization's work (e.g. conferences, community events, media)? If so, please describe these engagements.

Annually, Helena Hunters and Anglers collaborates with the Montana Conservation Elders and their Montana Matters Youth Outdoor Experience event at the Helena Fairgrounds where HHAA sets up "hands on" tables of wildlife specimens with which school children of all ages can interact. Once captured by the specimens, we explain the concept of "habitat", "wildlife security", and the importance of wildlands -- specifically in the form of Inventoried Roadless Areas and their value to wildlife not only on a daily and seasonal basis, but for the generational genetic linkages they provide to rare, threatened, and endangered wildlife. Our tables are always busy and well attended by the students (and their parents).

HHAA has attended community meetings regarding the status of public lands that occur adjacent to landowner properties. Often these landowners are distraught when they learn that there are regulations attached to the public lands that they have used (and sometimes abused) and have taken for granted. HHAA members have shared our knowledge of wildland history, specifically the designation of Inventoried Roadless Area in a particular place, and the regulations that accompany that status. Such interactions have not come without push-back. However, we find that our patience and persistence tend to prevail.

We continue to host monthly meetings where our IRA monitoring project is explained and opportunities to engage in reclamation efforts or monitoring are offered. The engagement process of cataloguing the

status of IRAs is valuable for at least 3 reasons: (1) engaging people in public land advocacy, (2) holding the policy line on behalf of Inventoried Roadless Areas, and (3) gathering field information that will be archived at the Montana State Library for future generations.

We continue to reach out to print media but find that venue more challenging since outdoor newspaper staff have diminished. HHAA's Facebook page and website provide our best connection to the public and as a result we have seen a slight increase in attendance at our regularly scheduled meetings.

Compliance*

Did your organization comply with the previously submitted project budget and grant agreement?

Yes

No

If you answered "No," to the above question, please explain why.

Unforeseen circumstances prevented HHAA from meeting our original time frame. We will expand IRA monitoring by using cameras to capture rare wildlife and potential boundary violations.

Share Your Story/Video (optional)

Please submit a story or share a link to a short video illuminating how Cinnabar's 2025 grant enabled you to achieve your stated goals (please use text box to type your story or paste a video link).

Support from the Cinnabar Foundation has enabled the Helena Hunters and Anglers Association to undertake a BIG project to monitor and advocate for Inventoried Roadless Areas within the Helena area.

In 2025, the United States Congress introduced H.R. 7695 to strip Inventoried Roadless Areas of their roadless status. After having already removed all forest planning standards that ensure consideration of wildlife habitat on national forest lands during Forest Service projects, the status of these islands of wild country is all that is holding together our natural landscapes and their functional role for watersheds, wildlife, fisheries, carbon capture and quiet places -- *because* they are classified as Inventoried Roadless Areas.

The die has not yet been cast as to the legal status of these areas. But regardless, Helena Hunters intends to continue our monitoring and advocacy.

Hundreds of volunteer field hours have been invested in documenting the status of the first three of 22 IRAs that are holding these wild landscapes together. The most recent focus of our attention has been the Lazyman-Black Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area, for which we compiled a main report: Lazyman-Black Mountain Inventoried Roadless Area Assessment, and five Subunit reports. The status of this IRA can be viewed in those reports by mid-June, 2026, on the Helena Hunters and Anglers Association website:

<https://helenahuntersandanglers.org/our-impact/habitat/>

The Cinnabar Foundation has enabled our efforts and infused our enthusiasm. We are enormously grateful.