

# Volunteers Honored with Making a Difference Award



*From left: Bessie and Tom Evans, longtime campground hosts at Holter Lake Campground; State Director Jamie Connell; and Martha Vogt and Jim Greene, volunteers on the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. Photo by Alyse Backus*

Two Montana couples were honored on May 28 with the BLM's prestigious Making a Difference Lifetime Achievement Award.

Tom and Bessie Evans, longtime campground hosts at Holter Lake, and Jim Greene and Martha Vogt, volunteers for the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument, were among the eight winners nationwide.

Top BLM leaders recognized the volunteers during a national event held via live video teleconference that connected in Washington, D.C., with five states around the country.

The annual "Making a Difference" Award recognizes exceptional volunteers who have contributed thousands of hours improving the public lands. A national panel of BLM specialists and partner representatives selected the award winners from dozens of nominees submitted by BLM state offices. These hard-working volunteers have helped the BLM maintain recreation trails, protect archaeological sites, provide environmental education and other visitor services, and monitor and protect wildlife and other natural resources.

Across the nation volunteers are integral to helping BLM achieve its day-to-day responsibilities of public land stewardship. Last year alone, 32,000 BLM volunteers performed more than 1.2 million hours of service, valued at over \$27 million.

## **Lifetime Achievement:**

Throughout their 18 years and 20,000 hours of service, Tom and Bessie Evans have been the ultimate BLM campground hosts at the Holter Lake Campground and boat launch (Butte Field Office). They kept the facilities and grounds in excellent condition, pulled noxious weeds, helped to host Boy Scout camps, and taught children with disabilities how to fish. They are uniquely knowledgeable about the area and its conditions, able to advise visitors about the weather, river flows, even the best type of bait to use to catch "the big ones."

## **Lifetime Achievement:**

Jim Greene and Martha Vogt have been unfailingly cheerful campground hosts at two of the busiest campgrounds in the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument in Montana. But their lengthy service to the BLM doesn't end there. They've worked National Public Lands Day projects, hiked in darkness to monitor sage-grouse leks, and even paddled the length of the river corridor every year since 2006 to monitor campsites.

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