



MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY

www.missouririver.visitmt.com · 800.653.1319



Missouri River Country might be the last chance in the Lower 48 to explore vast stretches of pristine landscape. Here, elk, deer and pronghorn antelope still graze the prairie, even outside the region's many wildlife preserves.

Rarely glimpsed birds flock here, sending birding geeks scrambling for their binoculars. Refugees from the modern world come here to escape blaring sirens and traffic jams, losing themselves to the seemingly endless great wide open.

Which isn't to say there's no one here. Tiny, outlying towns offer oases of homegrown hospitality as they work hard to preserve their history. From the biggest city, Sidney (population almost 6,000), to tiny Hinsdale (population 217), most towns maintain their own historical museums and host annual historical jubilees, ranging from fully costumed trapper rendezvous to frontier-themed celebrations. Thanks to the strong preservation mindset, you can still stay at the 1930s Fort Peck Hotel and take in live summer shows at the Fort Peck Summer Theatre.

Embrace all the elbow room, which affords unparalleled hunting and fishing year-round (especially at Fort Peck, a mecca for both ice fishing and warm-weather angling). Powwows and rodeos unfold under the Big Sky, while cattle drives, wagon trains and ranch stays captivate anyone who didn't grow up in 4-H. From its abundance of dinosaur fossils to its real-deal Western bars, northeast Montana remains wild, peaceful and unchanging.



Left: Wildflowers and the Milk River

Above: Pioneer Town

AT A GLANCE

- + Fort Union, near Bainville, was a center of peaceful economic and social exchange between Euro-Americans and the Plains Indians from 1828 to 1867.
- + Rolling Hills Winery, in Culbertson, is eastern Montana's first winery, crafting wines from locally grown fruits like chokecherries, raspberries and rhubarb instead of grapes.
- + Just north of Malta, one of the best-preserved (and also one of the only mummified) dinosaurs was discovered, a 77 million-year-old Brachylophosaurus nicknamed Leonardo.
- + Fort Peck Dam is the world's largest hydraulic earth-filled dam.
- + Just a few miles from the Canadian border, Scobey is home to Pioneer Town with 35 historical buildings.

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

BEST TIME TO VISIT

The allure of summertime frontier festivals and hot dry weather is hard to beat, but some enthusiasts time their visit to northeast Montana based on the wildlife. In this part of the state, hunting counts as a season, bird watchers migrate here when the birds do, and anglers follow the hatches (and ice-ups). That said, some of the area's best draws (like antique-ing, museum hopping and scenic drives) are enticing any time of year.

Winters here aren't that snowy, but they can have cold temperatures. Fortunately, northeast Montana's museums and friendly communities offer a welcome diversion from the cold. Then again, most locals embrace a little frostiness—ice fishing is a major draw here.

HOW TO GET HERE

Hop a plane to Sidney, Wolf Point or Glasgow or ride the Amtrak Empire Builder to Malta, Glasgow or Wolf Point or cruise in on US 2 or MT 200. Take in the

enormous blue sky that covers vast reaches of plains, badlands and prairie wilderness. Gas stations may be hours apart, so watch your gauge and enjoy the view.

Also, it's time to perfect the common road courtesy known as the two-fingered wave. When you see approaching traffic, lift two fingers of your left hand off the steering wheel until the other vehicle has passed. The other driver will probably deliver the same low-key salute.

WHAT TO PACK

Bring your play clothes (including cold-weather garb) and nothing flashy. Consider rancher dress: tough comfy jeans, flannel shirts, ball caps and cowboy hats and work boots. Bring your own fishing and hunting gear if you like, but there are outfitters scattered here in this land famous for prime fishing and hunting.

GRAVEL ROADS NEAR FORT PECK & SURROUNDING AREAS

If you see a single raindrop on the back roads near Fort Peck, head back immediately. These roads tend to wash out easily and getting stuck is a real possibility.

PHOTOGRAPHING TRIBAL CEREMONIES

Powwows and dances have deep religious significance and typically do not allow flash photography. Be sure to have permission before snapping photos at tribal ceremonies. For more information on proper etiquette while visiting the reservations and how to best enjoy your experience, contact tribal offices at visitmt.com/indiannations.

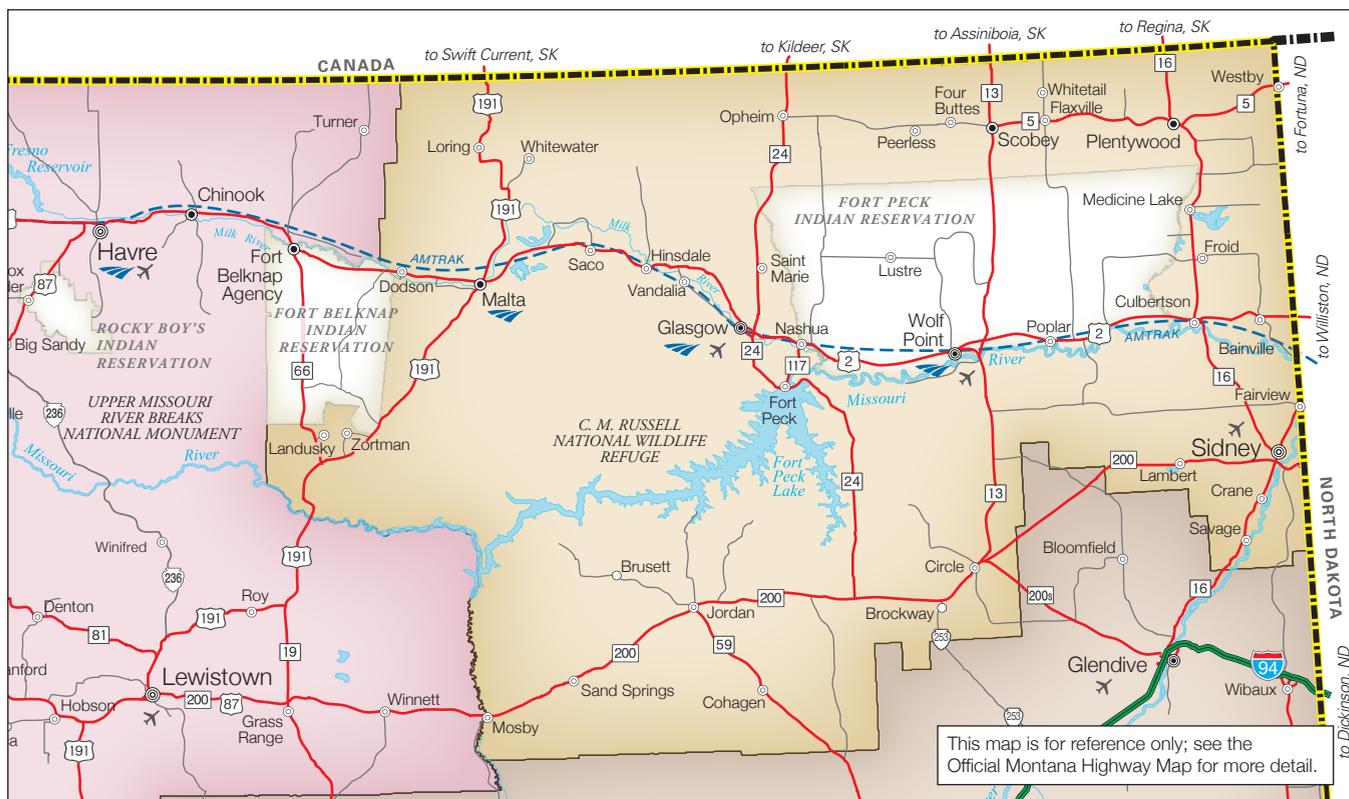
FOOD

In most of the little towns in northeast Montana, the local cafe or bar serves as restaurant and community meeting place. In many of these places you will not only get an amazing meal of steak, walleye or another local favorite, you will get a little bit of the local insight on where to go and what to do. Oh, and probably some amazing homemade pie to top it all off.

PLACES TO GO

COMMUNITIES

CIRCLE is located along the Big Sky Back Country Byway, which links the two major rivers in the state, the Yellowstone



MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY



Spring storm over Fort Peck Lake

and the Missouri. The town is very farm and ranch oriented. While in Circle visit the McCone County Museum, with thousands of interesting, historical items from the area. Its wildlife collection consists of over 200 birds and animals mounted and displayed in their natural settings. There are also eight concrete dinosaurs. An old schoolhouse, a church and a homestead house have been moved to the museum area. The old Northern Pacific Depot and an old caboose are also on the grounds. The museum is open May through September.

406.485.2741

www.circle-montana.com

CULBERTSON is one of the oldest towns in eastern Montana. It was founded in 1887 when Montana was still a territory. Visit the Culbertson Museum and Visitor Center for information on the area. It offers a great collection of artifacts and historical photographs.

406.787.5271

www.culbertsonmt.com

FAIRVIEW is divided by the Montana/ North Dakota border. Visit the nearby Fairview Bridge, a rare, vertical-lift bridge listed on the National Register of Historic Places for its past significance and unique engineering, and the Cartwright Train Tunnel. A developed walking trail goes over the bridge and the Yellowstone River.

406.742.5259

FORT PECK was planned and developed by government engineers as the headquarters for construction and operation of the huge Fort Peck Dam. The dam, built in the 1930s, is the largest hydraulic earth-filled dam in the world. The town offers big recreation and entertainment opportunities. Excellent fishing brings visitors to the lake year-round. A state-record walleye and world-record saugeye were caught here during the winter season. A scenic overlook just east of the dam on MT 24 offers views of Fort Peck Lake and interpretation of Lewis and Clark's journey through northeast Montana.

www.visitmt.com/fortpeck

GLASGOW was established in the late 1800s as a railroad town. It is now a regional shopping and trading hub and has the largest full-service motel in the region. The surrounding area is full of scenic rolling plains and open farmland. Roads from Glasgow lead to Fort Peck Lake through the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, home to bugling elk, herds of mule deer, red foxes, coyotes and songbirds.

406.228.2222

www.glasgowchamber.net

JORDAN is your entry to the most remote and beautiful mix of deep river canyons, badlands and prairie wilderness in the West. The most rugged of the terrain is part of the 1,100,000-acre Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge that

surrounds Fort Peck Lake in a 200-mile-long strip. Wildlife abounds out here. The terrain between Jordan and Fort Peck is famous among paleontologists for its fantastic fossil beds. In 1904, a *Tyrannosaurus rex* was discovered near Jordan in the Hell Creek Formation. A member of the Montana Dinosaur Trail, the Garfield County Museum has a full-size *Triceratops* cast from the original fossils excavated just north of Jordan.

406.557.6158

www.garfieldcounty.com

MALTA is home to ranchers, abundant wildlife and unlimited outdoor recreation. This town is one of the notable stops on the Montana Dinosaur Trail, with two excellent facilities—the Phillips County Museum, featuring a 33-foot-long skeleton of “Elvis” the *Brachylophosaurus*, and the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum and Field Station, displaying rare fossil fish, invertebrates, plants and a variety of dinosaur species. Nearby Nelson Reservoir is stocked with walleye, yellow perch and northern pike for excellent year-round fishing.

406.654.1776

www.maltachamber.com

PLENTYWOOD is the trading center for the people living in the extreme northeastern corner of the state. Visit the Sheridan County Museum, completed in 1968, where you'll find the historical flavor of Plentywood's and Sheridan County's early days. Thirty-one miles south of

FORT PECK RESERVOIR

Only the most senior anglers remember a time without man-made Fort Peck Lake (meaning before 1933), but most can't imagine Montana without the massive fishing mecca. The lake is Montana's largest body of water, swirling with over 50 different kinds of fish, including walleye, northern pike, paddlefish, sauger, lake trout, smallmouth bass and chinook salmon.



Boating on Fort Peck Lake

The lake's ragged shoreline gives anglers plenty of places to look—at 1,520 miles, Fort Peck Lake's shores are longer than the California coast. Beyond those shores, the Charles M. Russell (CMR) National Wildlife Refuge provides over one million acres of public land for fishing, hiking, hunting, camping, bird watching and other outdoor recreation.

Before you head out on the reservoir's dirt roads, check the weather—a simple dirt road can become an impassable bog when muddy.

406.526.3411

www.visitmt.com/fortpeckres

Plentywood lies picturesque Brush Lake State Park, which has a deep, clear lake with white, sandy beaches surrounded by grass fields and linear stands of spring wheat. A little farther south is the Medicine Lake National Wildlife Refuge, where thousands of migrating waterfowl make their summer home.

406.765.8500

www.sheridancountychamber.org

SCOBEY, located 15 miles from the Canadian border, is a clean, peaceful and family-oriented place. This area has some of the best hunting in the U.S. Big game and bird hunters from all over the world flock to northeast Montana seeking white-tailed and mule deer, antelope, pheasants, grouse, ducks and geese.

406.487.2061

www.scobeymt.com

SIDNEY, nicknamed the "Sunrise City," is the largest town in northeast Montana. This agricultural community is situated on the banks of the Yellowstone River, a short distance from the North Dakota line, and is your base for roaming the southeastern sector of Missouri River Country. Sidney's MonDak Heritage Center (named for its location on the Montana/North Dakota border) features area history and includes an extensive street scene of the early 1900s.

406.433.1916

www.sidneymt.com

WOLF POINT is part of the Fort Peck Indian Reservation. The same blend of tribal and non-tribal residents (about 50/50) exists today as did in the early 1900s. The Fort Peck Reservation is home to the Dakota-Lokota-Nakota (Sioux) and Dakota (Assiniboine) nations. Today Wolf Point is a trade hub for local farmers and ranchers and a center for the Sioux and Assiniboine. Montana's oldest pro rodeo, the Wild Horse Stampede, is held every July. Even before the term "rodeo" was coined, this was an event staged by American Indians for wild riding skills and celebration.

406.653.2012

www.wolfpointchamber.com

NOTABLE SITES

CHARLES M. RUSSELL NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

You'll find bugling elk, herds of mule deer, bighorn sheep, red foxes and coyotes in this scenic refuge that stretches along the Missouri River. Songbirds, like the mountain bluebird and black-capped chickadee, are here in abundance as well. And bring your fishing pole. You'll find walleye, trout, salmon, pike and the flat-billed paddlefish, native to the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers. Easiest access to the area is through the Pines Recreation Area, 30 miles southwest of Fort Peck. Accessibility is dependent upon weather and road conditions.

406.538.8706

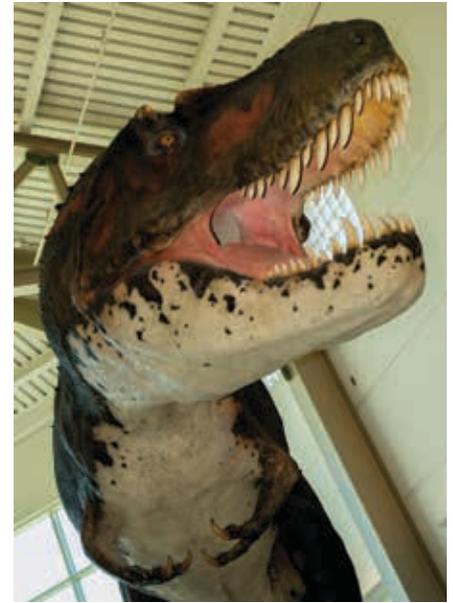
www.fws.gov/refuge/charles_m_russell



Elk bugling at Slippery Ann Elk Viewing Area, Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge



Fort Union Rendezvous at Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site



Fort Peck Interpretive Center, Fort Peck

DANIELS COUNTY MUSEUM AND PIONEER TOWN sits on 20 acres just west of Scobey and includes 35 buildings that have been developed or restored to depict turn-of-the-20th-century businesses and homes. The museum's purpose is to collect, preserve and display Daniels County history in all its forms.
406.487.5965
www.scobeymt.com/museum.html

FORT PECK FISH HATCHERY With hundreds of valves, miles of water pipes and panels of computer circuitry, this 22,000-square-foot facility will amaze your whole family. As the largest and most technically sophisticated hatchery in Montana, it features 64 rearing tanks and incubation capacity for up to 125 million walleye eggs and 500,000 chinook salmon eggs. Open all year.
406.526.3689
www.visitmt.com/fishhatchery

FORT PECK INDIAN RESERVATION Learn about the Assiniboine and Sioux tribes at the Fort Peck Culture Center and Museum in Poplar. It features cultural exhibits and arts and crafts.
406.768.2300
www.fortpecktribes.org

FORT PECK INTERPRETIVE CENTER AND MUSEUM Bring the whole family and enjoy interpretive programs, theater presentations and nature hikes, all covering a wide variety of topics, at this fascinating museum located immediately downstream of the immense Fort Peck

Dam and overlooking the Missouri River. The center features exhibits on wildlife of the C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, paleontology (including a cast of the *Tyrannosaurus rex* known as Peck's Rex), Fort Peck Dam construction and homesteading. Open April through November.
406.526.3493
www.visitmt.com/ftpeckinterp

FORT PECK SUMMER THEATRE Built in 1934 as a temporary structure by the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers, this building is home to the Fort Peck Summer Theatre. In 1983 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places. Take note of the handcrafted light fixtures and the massive, hand-hewn beams along with the Arc movie projector originally used in the 1930s.
406.228.9216
www.fortpecktheatre.org

GREAT PLAINS DINOSAUR MUSEUM AND FIELD STATION No trip through Montana is complete without a tour of the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum and Field Station in Malta, one of the stops on the Montana Dinosaur Trail. On display are spectacular dinosaur specimens, stunning invertebrates, fossil fish and rare fossil plants. The museum also offers lectures, educational programs and a unique gift store with a variety of special gifts and souvenirs for all ages. Open May through October.
406.654.5300
www.greatplainsdinosaurs.org

THINGS TO DO

EVENTS

For exact dates and a complete listing of all events go to visitmt.com/events.

MONDAK AG DAYS AND TRADE SHOW – SIDNEY, JANUARY

This two-day trade show has livestock judging, seminars, farm video tours and Ag in the Classroom displays, topped off by a banquet on Saturday night featuring popular entertainment.
406.433.1206

ICE FISHING TOURNAMENT – FORT PECK, FEBRUARY Competition ice fishing in the Dredge Cuts Trout Pond at Fort Peck Lake! Top prize is \$2,000, with other cash and merchandise prizes. Any fish caught could be the winner, from northern pike to walleyes. Bring the whole family, dress warmly and expect to have a lot of fun. The holes are pre-drilled, so just bring a scoop, a bucket, your fishing equipment and whatever you need to spend three hours on the ice.
406.228.2222

SCHMECKFEST – LUSTRE, MARCH The Lustre Christian High School hosts a German festival of tasting where cooks use authentic German recipes, making sure the food is the real deal. See table displays of model airplanes, quilts, leather crafts, dolls, pottery and more.

DINOSAUR DIGGING

Can you dig it?

Yes, you can. But make that a qualified yes, because you shouldn't head out on your own with a shovel and pick. For starters, it's unlikely you'll find anything. But more importantly, it's illegal to dig for fossils on public lands without a permit.

Fortunately, there are dig opportunities where you can actually become a part of unearthing important fossil finds, in the proper manner.

So if you want to dig for dinosaurs, ask at any of the Montana Dinosaur Trail facilities.

They'll provide information about dig opportunities in their area...but please note, there may be participation fees.

All Montana Dinosaur Trail members adhere to and support the current code of ethics established by the Society of Vertebrate

Paleontology, which prohibits the illegal collection and sale of paleontological resources.



Educational program at the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum and Field Station

*Great Plains Dinosaur Museum & Field Station, Malta
www.greatplainsdinosaurs.org*

*Phillips County Museum, Malta
www.phillipscountymuseum.org*

*Garfield County Museum, Jordan
www.garfieldcounty.com/our-museum.html*

*Fort Peck Interpretive Center and Museum, Fort Peck
www.visitmt.com/ftpeckinterp
www.mtdinotrail.org*

Don't miss the evening's silent auction and live auction.

406.392.5735

FORT PECK SUMMER THEATRE – FORT PECK, MAY-SEPTEMBER

The Fort Peck Summer Theatre provides live theater with a company of professional performers and technicians, along with a host of regional performers of all ages.

406.228.9216

FORT UNION RENDEZVOUS –

SIDNEY, JUNE Fort Union Trading Post comes alive with an encampment of traders, craftsmen and Native Americans that allows visitors a glimpse of history.

New experiences each year with demonstrations, speakers and storytellers.
701.572.9083

MONTANA DINOSAUR FESTIVAL –

MALTA, JUNE A wild weekend of fun that includes displays, dino presentations, kids' crafts, activities, games, food, a car show and the Phillips County Motor Sports Drag Races.

406.654.5300

PIONEER DAYS, DIRTY SHAME SHOW AND ANTIQUE SHOW – SCOBAY, JUNE

Take in a Thresherman's Breakfast then stroll down the boardwalks of Pioneer Town to explore more than 35 preserved buildings. Antique cars and equipment are on display all weekend. Enjoy entertainment at the Dirty Shame Saloon, featuring the Dirty Shame Belles, comedy skits and the Dixieland Band. Don't miss the antique car and tractor parade.

406.487.5965

RED BOTTOM CELEBRATION –

FRAZER, JUNE Red Bottom Celebration has been an annual powwow for over 100 years, celebrating native culture and traditions through dancing, food, crafts and fellowship with one another.

All members of the general public are welcome to participate or watch.

406.768.2300

MONTANA GOVERNOR'S CUP WALLEYE TOURNAMENT – FORT PECK, JULY

Anglers from all over Montana, 18 states and Canada gather at Fort Peck Lake to try for the \$15,000 first-place prize. Events include a fish fry, barbecue, Gals and Guys Tournament and youth fishing festival.

406.228.2222

SUNRISE FESTIVAL OF THE ARTS – SIDNEY, JULY Enjoy artists' and crafters' booths under colorful canopies, pottery demonstrations, a food fair, children's activities in the Kids Korner and live entertainment on the pavilion stage all day.
406.433.1916

WOLF POINT WILD HORSE STAMPEDE – WOLF POINT, JULY

A three-day event including a PRCA-sanctioned rodeo that brings the best cowboys to town. There is a parade each day, along with a carnival, the Human Stampede Run/Walk, the world-famous wild horse race and more.

406.650.7142

NORTHEAST MONTANA THRESHING BEE AND ANTIQUE SHOW – CULBERTSON, SEPTEMBER

The Northeast Montana Threshing Bee and Antique Show is a two-day show held each year the fourth full weekend in September that features threshing bundles, sawing logs, a parade of old tractors and machinery, a small engine display, a shingle saw, a lumber planer, a flea market space, a car show and a free barbecue Saturday evening.

406.787.5265

CULTURE/HISTORY

DINOSAUR TRAIL Montana's Dinosaur Trail in Missouri River Country is a mecca for dinosaur hunters—thanks to its fossil-rich formations and its unique dinosaur attractions. Explore museums with Montana dinosaur discoveries and visit field stations (fossil preparation labs). Highlights of the Montana Dinosaur Trail in this region include the Fort Peck Interpretive Center and Museum, Garfield County Museum, Phillips County Museum and the Great Plains Dinosaur Museum and Field Station.
www.mtdinotrail.org

FORT UNION TRADING POST NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE The Missouri River's preeminent fur-trading post from the 1820s to the Civil War, Fort Union was a colorful mix of river boaters, fur traders, Plains Indian tribes and frontier capitalists. Bourgeois House, once the setting of elegant dinners for distinguished guests, is now a visitor center. Fort Union straddles the Montana-North Dakota border, east of Bainville. Open daily all year.
701.572.9083
www.nps.gov/fous



Fort Peck Summer Theatre



Red Bottom Celebration in Frazer

GARFIELD COUNTY MUSEUM

This museum in Jordan is a stop along the Montana Dinosaur Trail and features area history rich in fossils and homesteading. Open Memorial Day through Labor Day. 406.557.2517
www.visitmt.com/garfield

MONDAK HERITAGE CENTER MUSEUM

View all types of professionally produced art, ranging from contemporary to Western. A re-created 1890s homestead-era museum occupies the lower floor. This is one of the region's premier museums and art galleries, with the largest available exhibit space of any such combined facility in the area. The center hosts about 18 different shows every year, meaning you'll always find something new and interesting at the MonDak, located in Sidney. Open all year. 406.433.3500
www.mondakheritagecenter.org

PHILLIPS COUNTY MUSEUM is located in Malta. The museum was established to preserve the natural, historical and cultural heritage of the Phillips County region. Historical exhibits include mining, Native Americans, dinosaurs, outlaws and farm/ranch/homestead items. The Phillips County Museum is one of the Montana Dinosaur Trail stops. Open all year. 406.654.1037
www.phillipscountymuseum.org

VALLEY COUNTY PIONEER MUSEUM

in Glasgow is home to a chronological history of the region from the age of dinosaurs to the present day, and includes one of the largest Assiniboine Indian material culture collections in the world. Open daily Memorial Day to Labor Day. Spring, fall and winter hours are limited. 406.228.8692
www.valleycountymuseum.com

ZORTMAN HISTORIC MINING TOWN

Gold established the community of Zortman. Many mines were sunk into the mountainsides, the most prosperous being the Ruby Gulch Mine in 1904. Today, Zortman has switched its role from a bustling and prosperous mining town to a quaint and nostalgic village. Visitors to this eastern Montana town can enjoy the nearby Little Rocky Mountains and the UL Bend National Wildlife Refuge within the C.M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, 40 miles southeast of Zortman. 406.654.1776
www.visitmt.com/zortman

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

FISHING In Missouri River Country, you'll spend your time wetting your line, not spinning fish tales. Trolling for walleye at the celebrated Fort Peck Reservoir or trying your luck from the shores of the Missouri River will give you ample opportunity for great fish stories. Fort Peck

boasts over 1,500 miles of shoreline, and you'll find peace and quiet, accompanied by a few friends and plenty of walleye, northern pike, smallmouth bass, ling and chinook salmon. Nelson Reservoir, covering 4,500 acres about 17 miles from Malta, is also home to record-size walleye, yellow perch and northern pike. Visit both reservoirs in winter for premier ice fishing. The Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers offer excellent opportunities for catching paddlefish and shovelnose sturgeon—prehistoric monsters that still live here today. For fishing regulation's information, contact Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 406.444.2535 or the Glasgow office at 406.228.3700.
www.fwp.mt.gov/fishing

HUNTING Antelope, white-tailed and mule deer, elk, turkeys and other game birds are all quarry for hunters in Missouri River Country. Pheasants and grouse are abundant. Sage hens and ducks are also hunted here, in addition to sharp-tailed and sage grouse and Hungarian partridge. Wild geese land by the thousands along the Missouri River in the fall, making this area a goose hunter's paradise. Medicine Lake is famous for the flocks of geese that land there. The wide-open spaces provide ideal hunting country, and the communities of Missouri River Country enthusiastically welcome hunters from near and far. Guest ranches and guided hunting trips are available. Remember, you must have permission to

DRIVING TOURS IN MISSOURI RIVER COUNTRY

Fort Peck Lake Drive

Follow a portion of giant Fort Peck Lake, which has more shoreline itself than the California coastline. Start at Fort Peck Dam, one of the world's largest dams, and head south on MT 24 to its junction with MT 200.

Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge

A 15-mile self-guided Auto Tour Route winds through a variety of wildlife habitats. Keep your binoculars and camera ready for views of pronghorns and Baird's sparrows, American avocets and black-necked stilts, yellow-headed blackbirds and muskrats. Stop by the Bowdoin National Wildlife Refuge headquarters for a brochure on the self-guided tour. Open all year. 406.654.2863 www.fws.gov/refuge/bowdoin

Medicine Lake National

Wildlife Refuge A 14-mile Wildlife Drive winds through prairie and wetland habitats, providing opportunities to view a wide array of wildlife typical of the northern Great Plains. A foot trail leads to a viewing platform equipped with all-season binoculars overlooking the white pelican nesting colony. Entrance to the Wildlife Drive is adjacent to the refuge headquarters and is open daily from dawn to dusk, all year. 406.789.2305 www.fws.gov/medicinelake

Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge

This is one of America's greatest wilderness regions. Some of the canyons are 1,000 feet deep and harbor elk, bighorn sheep, pronghorn antelope, deer and prairie dog towns. More than 200 species of birds and 40 species of mammals have been identified on the refuge. The self-guided tour takes you out near Lewis and Clark's 1805 campsite and in the vicinity of the site of two historic frontier towns—Rocky Point and Carroll. Accessibility is dependent on weather and road conditions.

For maps and information call the CMR at 406.538.8706, ext. 221. www.fws.gov/refuge/charles_m_russell

Leo B. Coleman Wildlife Exhibit

Off MT 117 is a loop drive around 230 acres that are home to bison, pronghorn antelope and mule deer.

hunt on private land. Maps of public land and access can be obtained from Bureau of Land Management area offices. A BLM map of the area you are in is essential in northeast Montana. Contact BLM, Malta, at 406.654.5100 or BLM, Glasgow, at 406.228.3750. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks offers a cooperative program between private landowners and FWP called Block Management, which helps landowners manage hunting activities and provides the public with free hunting access to private land, and sometimes to adjacent or isolated public lands. Block Management addresses fall hunting only—spring bear and turkey hunting access are typically not included in the program. For more information about hunting in Missouri River Country, contact Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 406.444.2535 or the Glasgow office at 406.228.3700. www.fwp.mt.gov/hunting

MILK RIVER OBSERVATION POINT

East of Fort Peck on MT 24, just east of the spillway, a gravel road leads you to the bottom of a hill. Hike to the top and see for miles and miles. This is where Lewis and Clark sat and gazed down at the river below that looked “milky,” and therefore was named the Milk River. 406.526.3411

NORTHEASTERN PLAINS BIRDING

TRAIL has some of Montana's best bird watching locations. The trail provides an up-close-and-personal look at the grasslands, badlands and wetlands of northeast Montana. The grasslands have remained relatively intact compared to much of the Great Plains, while the wind- and water-sculpted hills of the badlands provide a unique landscape for rock wrens, Say's Phoebes and ferruginous hawks. The wetland trail wanders through prairie potholes, home to Nelson's sharp-tailed sparrows and yellow rails. All of these areas provide important breeding and nesting habitats for a full range of species. www.nemontanabirdingtrail.org

SLEIGH RIDES

All those Christmas carols were right. You may not exactly remember the lyrics, but you always remember riding a sleigh through the woods, watching the winter dusk unfold to the tune of jingling sleigh bells. Catch a sleigh ride at the Sand Creek Clydesdales Ranch in Jordan. 406.557.2865 www.sandcreekclydesdales.net

SNOWSHOEING If you can walk, you can snowshoe. Montana's easiest-to-learn winter sport can take you up spectacular trails just about any place there's snow,



Lazy day in Zortman

with minimum equipment and a negligible learning curve. Missouri River Country's many wildlife refuges are a great place to start shoeing this winter.

TRAILS OF OUTLAWS The likes of Kid Curry, Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, members of the Hole-in-the-Wall Gang (aka the Wild Bunch), Dutch Henry and others stormed a trail of devastation through eastern Montana. The Outlaw Trail, an intricate, loosely defined route of escape for turn-of-the-20th-century outlaws, wound through eastern Montana on its way from Canada to Mexico.
406.653.1319

SCENIC & WILDLIFE

AMERICAN PRAIRIE RESERVE is a growing wildlife reserve that provides abundant wildlife watching, outstanding scenery and a true sense of the wide open. Stunning vistas make a great backdrop for camping, hiking, hunting, biking, bird watching or a driving tour. South of Malta. Open all year.
877.273.1123
www.americanprairie.org

BIG SKY BACK COUNTRY BYWAY Traveling through the Great Plains section of Montana, the Big Sky Back Country Byway traverses the vast expanses of land and sky that has earned Montana its nickname. With the Missouri River and Wolf Point at the byway's northern end, and the Yellowstone River and the town of Terry at the southern end, this 105-mile byway is a great place to fish, hunt, hike and sightsee.
406.233.2800

WILDLIFE VIEWING The driving tours listed on page 76 offer excellent wildlife viewing. In addition, hundreds of elk congregate in the Slippery Ann Wildlife Viewing Area on the Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge each fall (September and October). This area is along an excellent 20-mile-long self-guided tour, which can be accessed from two points along US 191. The tour takes about two hours to complete.
800.653.1319
www.visitmt.com/watchablewildlife

PISCINE PURSUITS, ON ICE

What's more fun than luring reluctant fish up from under the ice? Having oodles of other similarly minded folks out there with you to clink cocoa cups with. Ice fishing tournaments attract winter anglers to swap tales, raise funds for worthy causes and win bragging rights (and major cash) with a grand prize. At tournaments with pre-drilling, you don't even have to cut your own hole. But you do have to bring your own fur (or faux fur) hat.



Ice fishing on Fort Peck Lake

For more information visit fwp.mt.gov, search "fishing contest" or call 800.653.1319.



Hell Creek badlands