



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Arts Council of Big Sky

- 1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?** The ACBS programs funded by Resort Tax include our summer events: Music in the Mountains (MITM), Bravo! Big Sky (formerly called the Classical Music Festival) and Mountainfilm. Of the three, MITM would be impacted the most. Resort Tax funding makes up 55% of the total MITM budget, including staff and administrative expenses. If we do not receive Resort Tax funding, we would have to rely entirely on sponsorships, vendor income, and merchandise sales, and this would not be enough to produce the same high-quality event that the community has grown to expect. Losing 55% of MITM funding would likely force us to host fewer concerts and present artists of lesser quality. Having to change the program that way would not represent the character and trajectory of Big Sky – a community growing in size and renown. In fact, the free concerts have come to represent what is best about Big Sky. Since we started them in 2008 they've become one of Big Sky's favorite events. Thursday night has become a gathering place for all segments of our community throughout the summer season – last season we hosted more than 35,000 people. The Music in the Mountains series has also won Best of Big Sky awards in 2015 and 2019, and the ACBS won Best Nonprofit in 2013 and 2017, in large part because of the success of the summer series.

The concerts are not only popular, but they are an important part of Big Sky's financial success. They are frequently used to market Big Sky as a desirable destination by entities including the Big Sky Town Center, Big Sky Resort, local private clubs, and many local businesses, all of whom frequently request photos of the concerts to use for marketing. Visit Big Sky even put a photo of one of the events on the side of the Skyline bus. The summer series is also an economic engine that drives business in Big Sky. A 2018 Economic Impact Study completed by Circle Analytics revealed that ACBS events have a Gross Economic Output of \$3.7 million, with \$2.2 million of that retained in the local economy. Our events support 56 total full-time and part-time jobs—including sound and lighting engineers, musicians, food vendors, maintenance personnel and security staff.

It's hard to imagine summer in Big Sky without free music—but that could be the case without Resort Tax funding. Our other programs (art workshops, school outreach, public art, etc.) are not funded in any way by Resort Tax and would continue uninterrupted. However, without the visibility of our summer concert series, it's conceivable that our donation income could decrease, putting those other programs in jeopardy.



As for Mountainfilm, we feel that we can keep this program going in some fashion if we don't receive any Resort Tax funding, since it's only a small amount and this program is relatively affordable to present. However, losing funding for Bravo! Big Sky festival would definitely have a negative impact. Without Resort Tax support, we could not present the high-quality orchestra that we have spent many years developing. While we would still be able to present some type of classical music, the overall quality would decrease, disappointing a donor base and constituency that has invested a lot of time, energy and funds into making it what it is today.

Finally, we recently revised our 2019-20 annual operating budget after we cancelled the concert series and now project a loss of \$47,492 for the year. While our original budget planned for a loss as well because our investment in a full-time Development Director, the new budget projects an even greater overall loss.

2. **Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?** The ACBS has done a few outside audits over the years, and was audited by the IRS in 2014 for the 2011 fiscal year, but we don't otherwise do annual audits for several reasons. For one, Montana has no state audit requirement for nonprofits. Second, we do not meet the \$750,000 in Federal funding that would require a financial audit. Third, our accounting firm, Andersen ZurMuehlen, does not recommend that we invest in a full audit now (they do suggest a compilation or review at some point in the future, which our board is planning). Fourth, our bookkeeper is a former CPA, and several of our board members have held senior financial management positions throughout their careers. Finally, audits are expensive—estimated by our accounting firm at \$10,000-\$12,000. Overall, the ACBS board feels confident in our expertise and in our financial documents, procedures and presentation, so we are therefore taking a more financially conservative approach regarding audits.
  
1. **Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?** We received a Payroll Protection Program loan for \$26,300, which will be forgiven if we meet the federal guidelines. However, this is not for any programs and can only be used for salary, payroll and operations. We also received an EIDL grant for \$3,000 and a Montana CARES grant for \$10,000, both of which will replace other lost income that we use to pay staff and operational costs. In other words, any relief funding we receive will not replace Resort Tax funding that we might lose.



2. **Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?** We can remove Projects 2 and 3 from our request, for a total reduction of \$47,500. Project 1 (\$185,500) is for the 2021 concert season, which could possibly be postponed to the new allocation cycle. One downside of postponing the allocation is that since our fiscal year runs November 1 to October 31 we typically complete our budget in October, well after we have been allocated Resort Tax funds. In addition, our Executive Director often starts booking for the summer season as early as October. If the second allocation cycle is later in the year, we would not be able to confirm bands until we know how much money we will receive.
3. **Who handles fundraising in the absence of the Development Coordinator (DC)?** The DC position is an administrative position that works with our Development Director. The DC supports fundraising by handling donor communications, data entry, appeal letters, email correspondence, etc. Our DC left in September of 2019 for maternity leave, but informed us in January 2020 that she would not be returning. We hired a full-time Development Director for fundraising in November of 2019. We were planning on hiring a new DC this spring but shelved that plan as the COVID crisis ensued. Currently the Development Director is also handling the DC duties as well, which gives her less time to focus on the fundraising activities we need to be doing right now. We do plan on hiring a DC as soon as we're confident that our finances can absorb the cost of the part-time position.
4. **Have you considered a fee-based program as a stop gap for revenue declines?** As you may know, our Thursday night Music in the Mountains (MITM) series started with a fee-based system, which was eliminated in 2008 to make it free. This decision, along with our move to the Town Center in 2010, enabled the series to expand and grow with our community. One goal of MITM is to not have any barriers for entry and to offer a live music experience that is accessible to all. The ACBS has had many fee-based concerts over the years, and that model has not proved successful, especially for a nonprofit community organization. Our board and staff are continually evaluating the Music in the Mountains program. We will be in a "new" park when the series starts in 2021, and we will be paying close attention to the series with regard to crowd size, audience and artist experience, alcohol sales, etc. In fact, in our recent organizational strategic plan update, one of our Key Findings was that we needed to develop a long-term plan for Music in the Mountains. This includes evaluating growth, park capacity, infrastructure, location, and vendor policies. Outside of the Thursday night concerts, we do charge a fee for our Mountainfilm program, and for one night of the Bravo! Big Sky festival. Both ticketed events bring in a small amount of income.



5. **How much of your “other” revenue is sponsorships?** In 2018-19, our total sponsorship income was \$73,300, which includes all ACBS events. Total sponsorship for the 2019 summer events was \$65,500.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Arts Council of Big Sky

1. **Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?** We will have some funds to release, and worked with BSRAD staff to determine the amount. As of now there is **\$160,396** left out of our original allocation of **\$173,750** that was designated for Music in the Mountains and the Classical Music Festival that will not be used for that purpose. *This includes funds that have already been allocated and can be returned, as well as funds yet to be allocated.* Here is a summary of what has been allocated so far:

- \$19,500 has been already received for the CMF, which the ACBS can return to Resort Tax immediately.
- \$20,500 has already been received for 2020 MITM artists, which the ACBS can return once band deposits have been returned.
- \$13,195 has already been received for 2020 MITM Operations, which the ACBS will retain since this was for work done November-April.

**Proposal:** We would like to roll over \$30,000 from our FY20 Allocation to cover anticipated expenses for *free* programming this summer. This could include pop-up concerts, outdoor movie nights, virtual/online programming, etc. We also remain hopeful that we could produce some type of concert experience later this summer that will benefit the community. If we receive this rollover, we could immediately relinquish **\$130,396** from our FY20 Allocation back to Resort Tax. We also could relinquish any unused funds from the rollover allocation by October 1.

- a. If yes how much can you release?
    - i. How much is from Music in the Mountains?
  - b. If this was reallocated could it fund your FY21 request? It would help fund the majority of our FY21 request, but it would fall short of our full requested amount of \$185,500.
2. Using the table below please provide us with an updated month by month budgetary breakdown for you 2021 Summer Programming Project:

### Project 1:2021 Summer Programming

Month	Predicted Resort Tax Request
July 2020	\$0
August 2020	\$0
September 2020	\$0
October 2020	\$0
November 2020	\$0
December 2020	\$10,000
January 2021	\$10,000
February 2021	\$30,000



March 2021	\$30,000
April 2021	\$20,000
May 2021	\$30,000
June 2021	\$50,000
July 2021	\$5,500

3. Is there any COVID safe way to still do fireworks for the 4th of July? At this time the ACBS board and staff feel there is not a suitable way for the Arts Council to host a community fireworks display in a safe, legal and healthy manner. Though we could light them off and people could gather where they want and celebrate on their own, we don't feel we should encourage gathering of large groups of people at this time. We've thought about doing something like a drive-in fireworks display and trying to limit group size to pods of 50 people, but this may be beyond what our volunteers and staff are capable of handling—especially without a suitable location. The other thing we took into consideration when removing this from our FY20 request is the fiduciary aspect of it—does it make sense to spend \$15,000 on fireworks when overall tax collections are down? Perhaps another entity could fund the fireworks if that is something the community wants.
4. Has the development coordinator position been effective?
  - a. What is the magnitude of money raised by this position? As mentioned previously, the Development Coordinator is not tasked with raising funds. The DC supports fundraising by handling donor communications, data entry, appeal letters, email correspondence, etc. The DC position has been very effective when filled, as it provides critical support to not only the Development Director but to the rest of the staff as well. The DC is also in charge of staffing our tent at the summer concerts, selling merchandise, collecting donations, etc. Having a point person each week has resulted in more income at our events. The DC is also our volunteer coordinator, which helps streamline our events and make them more successful. If you are referring to our Development Director, we invested in a full-time DD on December 1, and that person has been extremely effective in this short period of time. For example, our recent Give Big campaign raised more than \$13,000—nearly four times more than we have raised in the past. We also have applied for almost \$200,000 in grants so far this fiscal year, which is more than we've ever done—a direct result of having staff to spend time writing the grants. Our DD is



also currently juggling three public art capital campaigns to install more sculptures in the Town Center in the coming years.

5. Does the ACBS try to target "family friendly" artists? Fundamental to our mission and vision is providing accessible programming for our entire community. About 85% of our 2018-19 budget of \$564,138 was spent on family friendly events—meaning all ages are welcome, with many being free. The only event that is not specifically geared toward younger audiences is our Auction for the Arts fundraiser. As for selecting the artists themselves, we try very hard to make sure they are considered family friendly. Obviously, audiences have different tastes, and some artists may appeal to a certain demographic more than others.
6. How much funding did you receive from BSRAD in FY20 for the 2020 Music in the Mountains series?  
*Office Answered (Please Verify): \$153,750 was their Project Budget for 2020 Music in the Mountains but there was not an amount specified in the contract for just Music in the Mountains. We also were allocated \$20,000 for the classical music festival, bringing the total to \$173,750. For our FY21 Request, we lumped the two projects together under "Summer Programming" for a total of \$185,500.*
7. Have you considered requiring no alcohol to be brought in from outside for both safety and potential revenue source? The ACBS staff and board are continually monitoring the situation with regards to alcohol sales and the growth of the concerts. Since our move to the Town Center, we have had very few alcohol-related incidents, all of them minor to our knowledge. Banning outside alcohol would be a tremendous undertaking, as it would require a barrier around the venue to completely control access and additional crowd management personnel to man entry/exit points. Big Sky also has no open container law, which creates another layer of complexity to the issue. The financial cost of doing all of this might offset any additional income generated. However, we are working with our new landlords—the BSCO—to determine the best course of action as the concerts continue to grow each year. The ACBS also is in contact with the Gallatin Country Health Department on a regular basis to ensure proper cooperation when selling alcohol at large events. Finally, changing the alcohol policy would dramatically change the feel of the concerts (for better or worse, one could argue), something that could be difficult for the community to accept. One thing we've tried to maintain over the years is the "loose" feel of the concerts—which is rare, I think, and separates our series from many in the country. And we have done that successfully so far.
8. Do you have any plans to seek funding from Big Sky Town Center, or its merchants who benefit from your concerts? We've been partnering with Town Center businesses since we moved the concerts to that location in 2010. In 2018-19, TC businesses contributed \$47,000 in sponsorship income for our events, making up more than 64% of total annual sponsorships. We also seek out new relationships for other events when it makes sense. For example, we gained three new Town Center business sponsors when we hosted our first Artist Studio Tour in December of 2019. We also added two Town Center businesses as new sponsors for our 2020 Auction for the Arts fundraiser.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Country

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?  
We are working to restructure our budget to account for a 40% reduction in fundraiser funds. In the event that Resort Tax funds do not arrive, we will need to trim our school offerings, and cap student involvement.

2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

We have received PPE from the US Government and \$10,000 of Covid-Emergency funds for mental health development in Livingston.

3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

None of our projects will be removed, but we are able to postpone Teen Mental Health First Aid implementation, although removing mental health support and education during this particular collective experience in human history is not ideal.

4. Further explain your volunteer count: Does this number reflect all volunteers or just those in Big Sky?

We have 56 volunteers in the Big Sky program (including our Middle School Little Bigs) We have 180 volunteers across our service area.

5. How will your programming change if school continues to be virtual and social distancing guidelines are still in place?

BBBS works closely with BSSD #72 to develop a safe plan for interaction, including virtual options. Virtual meetings can include group projects, speakers for STEM sisters and distanced activities. Beyond School can utilize MentorU--a Nationally recognized virtual mentoring platform to facilitate meaningful connections and support.

## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of Big Sky Country

1. How much do you raise locally from the Golf Tournament, local Community Foundation Grants, and Big Sky donors?

In a typical year, golf and community donations net around \$78,000 a year. This year, with adjustments for player and community member safety we are expecting to net around 40K combined.



#### Local Community Foundation Grants

YCCF: \$5,000 (2019 Grant)

SPCF: \$2,100 (2019 Grant + 2020 Give Big Donation)

MCF: \$5,000 (2019 Grant)

WIA: \$1,376

2. How many kids are served in Big Sky directly each year?

100 kids from K-12 during the 2019-2020 school year

#### 2020-2021 Projections

- We anticipate 45 Bigs and Littles matches = 90 students + 10 Little Bigs = 100 students
- STEM Sisters - 5 current matches continuing and then 5 more matches = 20 students
- Beyond School - 5 current matches continuing and then 5 more matches = 10 students (5 overlap with Bigs and Littles) = 5 students

Anticipate 125 in 2020-2021 school year minimum

3. How does the cost per kid in Big Sky compare to the other communities that you provide programs for?

Overall Approximate Big Sky program cost = \$99k

Average Approximate Cost Per Match (For all Communities Served) = 2,800

Average Approximate Cost Per Child Served (All communities) = 2,600

Big Sky Approximate Cost Per Child Served = \$1,018

Big Sky Approximate Cost Per Match = \$2200

4. It seems like there are really two separate projects here. The Bigs/Littles and then the Mental Health First Aid Training. What is the cost for each?

Mentoring Program: \$1018 per child served (45 Bigs, 10 Little Bigs and 45 Littles) = \$2200 per match

Youth Mental Health First Aid: \$28 per person/ per manual (12 people per class = 336) \$207 per course instructor time = \$443 per course taught.

Teen Mental Health First Aid (if approved by school district): \$3,000 for Facilitator Training + 8.95 per instruction manual per student. Teen Mental Health requires that 10% of the teaching staff be trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid, and an entire grade of students. Have attached TMHFA powerpoint to this email. The Big Sky specific costs would be \$8.95 per student + \$1000 of instructor time

**FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1**

**Organization:** Big Sky Community Foodbank

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

Should we not receive Resort Tax funding, we would be faced with decisions to cut our service hours and/or support staff. Fewer service hours makes social distancing difficult, as all our customers are vying for space to receive their food boxes within the same timeframe. Without our support staff, we would be vulnerable should primary staff become ill (or have a mental breakdown from the stress of it).

With reduced hours and/or support staff, we become less safe for our customers and community. Because the food bank primarily supports the Big Sky workforce, who have regular contact with our tourists, it is imperative that we operate with the highest safety precautions so we do not become a site of transmission within our Big Sky community.

2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

Yes, we received emergency Big Sky Relief Funds end of March.

We've applied for the MT social services/food bank Relief Fund Grant, but as of end-of-day 5/21 our application is still pending.

3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

Should we receive the MT social services relief grant, we will probably be able to decrease our ask by \$21,150 and eliminate our "Project 2 – Operations/Admin & Food Purchase".



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Big Sky Community Food Bank

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. If yes how much can you release?

We have just been approved to receive \$15,000 through the MT Food Bank Assistance Grant through DPHHS. Therefore, BSCFB would like to reduce our ask accordingly.

Instead of requesting 50% of our expenses for Project 1 “Case Management & Outreach” come from Resort Tax, we are able to reduce that to 1/3 of our expenses.

That is a decrease from \$44,650 to \$29,766 for that project. Bringing our total request down from \$65,800 to \$50,916.

2. Using the table below please provide us with a month by month budgetary breakdown of all projects you applied for:

Month	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 1 CASE MANAGEMENT & OUTREACH	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 2 OPERATIONS/ADMIN & FOOD PURCHASE
July 2020	2480.5	1762.5
August 2020	2480.5	1762.5
September 2020	2480.5	1762.5
October 2020	2480.5	1762.5
November 2020	2480.5	1762.5
December 2020	2480.5	1762.5
January 2021	2480.5	1762.5
February 2021	2480.5	1762.5
March 2021	2480.5	1762.5
April 2021	2480.5	1762.5
May 2021	2480.5	1762.5
June 2021	2480.5	1762.5
July 2021	2480.5	1762.5



3. What is the year over year increase in people visiting the Food Bank?

Measured by food boxes going out the door (1 per HH shopping unit):

FY 2014

FY 2015 = + 35.5 %

FY 2016 = + 24 %

FY 2017 = + 6.5 %

FY 2018 = - 2 %

FY 2019 = - 20 %

FY 2020 = + 14 % (projected)

Measured by total people served:

FY 2014

FY 2015 = + 46 %

FY 2016 = + 24 %

FY 2017 = + 14 %

FY 2018 = - 2 %

FY 2019 = - 19 %

FY 2020 = + 21 % (projected)

Our interpretation of these two numbers (14% increase in food boxes vs. 21% increase in total people served) can be explained by the fact that, in general, people are shopping for a greater number of household members. The pandemic has certainly hit Big Sky families with children and those larger households are reflected here. Additionally, in keeping with social distancing, it seems reasonable that households would send



one person to do the shopping for their entire household, whereas before individual roommates might shop separately.

4. What has been the effect of the virus on demand for your services?

a. *Office Answered (Verified): To help to slow the transmission of COVID-19, the Big Sky Community Food Bank has changed several aspects of our day-to-day operations:*

*PRE-PACKED FOOD BOXES: we have altered the service delivery model to increase social distancing for the health and safety of customers, volunteers, and staff. Beginning on Tuesday, March 17th we implemented a pickup for pre-packed food boxes which includes a set menu for at least a week's supply for the household. Households will now be allowed to pick up TWICE each month, as opposed to one per month in past years. The lobby will be closed to the public.*

*EXPANDED HOURS: Until such a time as it becomes unnecessary, we have doubled our service hours adding two additional days.*

*DRIVE-UP SERVICE: Clients now accept their food box by driving up to the patio area in front of the food bank. Check-in/intake and case management is a part of the drive-through service.*

*HOME DELIVERY FRIDAYS: Those quarantined or of suspicious health status are encouraged to order a food box dropped off to their home.*

*VOUCHERS: We now can offer vouchers for produce, dairy and household necessities at local grocery stores.*

*VOLUNTEERS: We have largely moved away from utilizing volunteers to stop the spread to our group of volunteers who are mostly older adults. We have maintained a small, healthy group to help pack our food boxes and will gladly welcome back our volunteer force when it becomes safe to do so.*

*ADDITIONAL STAFFING: These operational changes result in a much more time-consuming process than our prior service model. In addition to needing additional hours to prepare food boxes, clean surfaces, do food deliveries/pickups, and provide case management, we've found it necessary to create redundancy within our operations, in the event that primary staff falls ill. Prior to these changes, we were maintained by one part-time staff who maintained all aspects of the food bank. This is no longer feasible, or advisable. As a result of doubling our hours of operation, expanding services, and changing our food delivery model, we have also nearly tripled our need for staff hours.*

5. Does the current utilization of the food bank validate the need for a request to BSRAD that is 205% of what you asked for last year?

Our ask of \$65,800 was a 99.4% increase from the \$33,000 we asked last year.

Our new ask of \$50,916 is a 54.3% increase from last year.



Our significant % increase is due, not necessarily to the increased utilization of the food bank, but to the new service model we have moved to in cooperation with CDC guidelines. To achieve greater social distancing we have chosen to limit access to our store, by utilizing a drive up, pre-packed food box model. These services take more time to prepare and execute, as we're thoughtfully and carefully preparing meals for clients and spending longer talking households through their other needs. Our customers certainly appreciate this extra effort, in an uncertain and tumultuous time. Estimated service time has increased from 20 hours to 55 hours per week (a 175% increase).

Food Bank utilization at 4 days per week, as opposed to 2 days per week (a 100% increase), also requires a significant % increase in spending. As our customers schedules have abruptly changed, we find it necessary to be open more days per week. Customers struggling to find hours at work are, in fact, less flexible with their schedules and appreciate the greater number of hours available to access food. Our increased request in funding reflects minimizing volunteer assistance (to maximize social distancing) and using paid staff to ensure a continuity of service (increase in hours) and the ability to cross train in the event one staff member becomes ill.

6. With this increase in funds, how many more individuals do you expect to serve during FY21?
  - a. At what point do you make changes if this increase is not needed?

We're on track for a 21% increase in total customers served this year. With the anticipated decline in summer hiring at the major employers in town, we don't know how to anticipate household needs. People may be feeling secure in their employment and we'll see a decrease in need to use the food bank, or we may simply maintain our elevated service numbers through the summer serving those households who have remained in Big Sky but have seen changes in employment.

Typical Seasonal Changes (FOOD BOXES):

Using 5 months of Winter Season as the average (Dec-April):

Spring off-seasons (May, June) = 0.7% increase

Summer seasons (Jul-Sept) = 60% decrease

Fall off-seasons (Oct, Nov) = 35% increase

FY20 Seasonal Fluctuation (FOOD BOXES):

Using Fall off-season (Oct, Nov 2019) as base:

Winter season (Dec - Feb 2019-2020) = 35% decrease

Spring off-season (March-June 2020) = 104% increase



In addition to individuals served, we must take into account the lbs. of food managed when considering this increase in funds. Our monthly lbs. of food managed in the time of COVID has gone from an average of 2888 lbs/month to 7520 lbs./month (160% increase). Managing this food takes time. We've had to increase our food backstock in order to maintain inventory as a reaction to ups and downs in the supply chain. Procuring, checking, and sorting our food can be a lengthy process. We're now managing a backstock which is approximately double our typical backstock, in the event of supply chain disruptions. Additionally, managing donations of produce and dairy has become a challenge, as we hope to move those items before spoilage and our storage capacity is limited. We've been accepting a huge increase in fresh items, as restaurants try to off-load goods, as a service to the community food network. But this service takes a great deal of effort to manage, as we try to creatively think through ways to utilize, store, and distribute these items to our households.

Our two new part-time staff (15 hours per week total) are currently on 6-month contracts. This contract gets us through September, when we will hope to know much more about how this pandemic might continue. If and when the risk of community spread passes (ie. mass community testing or immunity) we can talk about returning to fewer hours of operation (days open) which may include primary staff for 40 hours back to 20.

7. What data are you utilizing to justify the need for the additional cost of Project 1- Case Management & Outreach?

We are using several data points to account for Project 1- Case Management and Outreach:

- 1) Hours open: has gone from 8 to 16 hours per week to allow for maximum physical distancing between customers, and provide easier access for all.
- 2) Hours needed to complete customer food services: We've increased staff time from 20 to 55 hours per week to give us time to build meals (food boxes) for customers, do more thorough intake and case management and to manage inventory.
- 3) Our partnerships with other Big Sky nonprofits, grocers, restaurants: has increased our outreach needs. Managing calls from restaurants and grocers to off-load unneeded produce, dairy and other comestibles has taken time and planning that were previously unnecessary.
- 4) Additional services: In addition to providing our regular food boxes, we are now fielding a wide variety of other calls for help - for example, in just the past week (5/20-5/27) requests have included: housing (help finding a rental), tax assistance, flip phone/phone cards, diapers, food box delivery, unemployment filing/stimulus (spanish) outside of hotline hours, emergency housing (hotel for several nights), helping a client obtain a COVID test, helping a client obtain an ID card, a ride to Bozeman, a



clothing purchase, crockpots/cookware, assistance with intake at a rehabilitation facility, and coordination for transportation to Nevada.

8. What does the funding model look like at BSCFB "sister" Food Bank's in Gallatin County? Do those entities receive funds from their local public tax dollars?

The Gallatin Valley Food Bank has historically received \$10,500 from Gallatin County for senior services. Outside of this the GVFB is funded completely by local donations. There are a few instances that the HRDC Food and Nutrition Program Director applies for funds for all three Food Banks (Big Sky, Gallatin Valley Food Bank in Bozeman and Headwaters Area Food Bank in Three Forks). As a side, food donations are often shared between the GVFB to the BSCFB and HAFB to help reduce food costs.

## Jenny Muscat

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**From:** Sarah Gaither <sgaither@thehrdc.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 1, 2020 11:49 AM  
**To:** Jenny Muscat; Daniel Bierschwale; Jill Holder  
**Subject:** Supplementary Questions Round #2  
**Attachments:** BSCFB Resort Tax 20-21 Q & A Supplementary Questions.docx.pdf

Hi Danny & Jenny,

I've attached round 2 question/answers here. We're able to decrease our original request from 1/2 to 1/3 of case management expenses to be covered by Resort Tax (a decrease of around \$15K).

Additionally, we'd like to yield back to Resort Tax the remainder of our FY20 request (\$6,704) because we've been granted other COVID-related funds to cover our Q4 expenses. Please let me know if I need to do any sort of documentation to relinquish these funds back to Resort Tax.

See you Wednesday,

Sarah

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**Sarah Gaither Bivins**

Operations Manager & Services Navigator

995-3088 . [bigskyfoodbank.org](http://bigskyfoodbank.org) . [facebook.com/bigskyfoodbank](https://facebook.com/bigskyfoodbank) . [Sign Up for our Monthly Newsletter!](#)



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Big Sky Discovery Academy and Community Learning Center

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding? Our Early Childhood Education Preschool Program (EC), historically plans for 35% of its tuition income to be subsidized by Resort Tax in order to provide affordable, educational childcare for families with children ages 3-5. While we work hard to diversify our fundraising to support our entire organization, the loss of BSRAD funding would result in little to no needs-based tuition assistance for this demographic resulting in half of our families being unable to attend. Given that childcare options are limited to two programs in this community, it could result in a lack of adequate child care in Big Sky, as it would lead to the closure of our program.
2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited? As a relatively new non-profit preschool through high school and community learning center in its 5th year, we have worked to build comprehensive staffing, board development, strategic planning, and infrastructure in our non-profit while experiencing rapid growth. Each year, we have added a new program based on identified community need or interest, stretching staffing and resources. During our first 4 ½ years we have established a diverse board, put the policies and procedures in place to create sustainability, both programmatic and financial, added staff, and developed programming, and just this year developed and approved our first three year strategic plan: as we take our strategic plan to an operational plan an audit will be included as part of financial management.
3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19? We received a PPP loan to sustain two months of payroll, rent, and utilities impacted by school and program closure. We received BSRAD relief funds helping to support the organization for the two months following the PPP loan, bringing us through the end of our fiscal year (July 31, 2020). We applied for Montana Coronavirus Relief, but have received no further information at this time.
4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed? Our request is a single project request. While we increased the anticipated need for assistance from 35% to 40% of EC tuition income, due to the anticipated impact on area families' incomes related to the pandemic, we already removed the second project request in light of the COVID-19 community-wide impacts- funding towards our Community Learning Center program and operations.
5. Can you provide us with results of Give Big and how does this compare to last year? Our goal this year was to double our number of participants, in lieu of setting a dollar amount goal. We more than doubled our participants in the event, from 96 donors in



2019 to 230 donors in 2020. In addition, we successfully raised \$85,835 during this year's event, as compared to \$109,418 in 2019. This is a reduction of 22% in donations . We work hard to achieve our overall tuition assistance goals for our preK through high school programming through Give Big, individual donor cultivation, Holiday Home Tour and other events, and utilizing additional resources such as Resort Tax and ACE Scholarships. Our overall tuition assistance fundraising target for the 2020-2021 school year is \$290,000. These diverse fundraising efforts are integral to our spring 2020 tuition assistance allocations in order to inform all families, who demonstrate need, of their assistance during our critical enrollment window from March through June for the coming school year. Without these funds, we anticipate losing up to 50% of our current enrollment, effectively closing our school year, academic, summer, and community learning center programs.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Big Sky Discovery Academy and Community Learning Center

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release? **No**
  - a. If yes how much can you release? **We do not have reserves from FY20.**
2. Is the tuition assistance for all students or is it needs based? **Our tuition assistance is needs based.**
  - a. If the tuition assistance is not applied to all students, what qualifies a family for this program? **We utilize School and Student Services (SSS), a third party reviewer of family financials. From the SSS website: "SSS provides a comprehensive need-based financial aid solution for you to collect the data you need with a time-tested fair and equitable approach, so you can reach the families that most need your help."**
3. If all students benefit equally from tuition assistance from BSRAD, what percentage per child per day is covered from the BSRAD tuition assistance?**N/A**
4. What is the cost/child/day for early childhood preschool program?  
**Five days: \$71.18. Four days: \$83.11. Three days: \$86.30. This reflects an extended day, 8:15am to 5:15pm**
5. If the tuition assistance is not applied to all students, what qualifies a family for this program? **See number two.**
6. Are you a licensed childcare provider? **We are not a licensed childcare provider; before school, drop-in, after school and preschool programs are not required to be licensed in the state of Montana. The definition of "preschooler" as defined by the State of Montana DPHHS is a child between 36 months of age and the age the child will be when he or she initially enters a public or private school system. However, as an academically focused preschool program that also offers extended day childcare, we have begun the process of determining the steps and timelines for licensure. One of our major challenges is our location and facility, which is a shared space which we do not own.**
7. Do you receive funds from DPHHS for families that are income eligible for state childcare assistance?
  - a. If not, why? **Our non-profit is not eligible to receive state or federal funding.**
8. How much money on average are you funding per kid a school year through your scholarship program?  
**Per eligible family, we are currently funding: \$6383 on average or 50% of five day tuition.**
9. How many families are currently receiving scholarship funding through BSRAD funding? **Currently, 10 Early Childhood preschool students (ages three through school age) out of 20.**
10. How many students comprise your Early Childhood program? **20 preschoolers**
11. What will be your average enrollment in this period? **On average, 16 students per day. However, we have three, four, and five day options and therefore serve up to 25 students ages three through school age.**
12. Why are private donations decreasing? What will you do about this? **In 2018-19 we received a one-time and unanticipated \$100,000 donation. Outside of that we raised \$183,804 through fundraising events including Give Big which targets private donors, and through other donor cultivation**



efforts. In 2019-2020, we raised \$198,622 through fundraising events including Give Big, and other donor cultivation efforts. We lost a significant spring donation at the onset of the global pandemic. We continue to broaden our outreach, and our community programs to maximize our visibility. We have created a three year strategic plan specifically targeting financial sustainability and expanding our donor base and grant-writing efforts.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** The Big Sky Rotary Foundation

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?
  - a. If Resort Tax is unable to provide funding for this project, it would be put on hold. We would not be able to remove recyclable materials, and therefore would not be able to provide this service to the community.
2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?
  - a. No, the additional grants we have received – or that are pending – are not a result of COVID-19.
3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?
  - a. The collective requests, from Resort Tax as well as from the other entities and foundations identified, are all necessary to make the full scope of this project successful. Each funding source contributes a critical piece to the big picture of a successful recycling and composting operation, from on-site collection, to the holding bins, to the removal of the materials out of Big Sky. If one piece is omitted, the full project does not work.
4. Is there a difference in the cost to remove recycling vs compost?
  - a. Yes; the cost to remove composting is more than the cost to remove recycling. The annual cost for removal of recycling fees is \$1200 and the annual compost servicing fees is \$2835.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** The Big Sky Rotary Foundation

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. No, we have no funds from FY20; no funds were requested.
2. Why do you think the current canyon recycling station is not adequate for our community?
  - a. There are multiple inadequacies with the canyon site we found in researching this project. The location is not suitable to the larger community; many people expressed the challenge of it being too far to make recycling habits convenient. The location is posted for non-commercial use. In addition, the receptacles become full and inaccessible quite frequently, especially during high seasons. The site is adequate for smaller amounts of residential recycling, but does not accommodate the commercial recycling opportunities of associations in and around the Town Center, and does not offer the composting that we hope to introduce through these new bins as well.
3. Is composting going to be a bear attractant?
  - a. We don't believe that these new bins will be any more of a bear attractant than current recycling and garbage bins that are currently located throughout Town Center and in the Community Park. The bins are bear proof, and we don't believe they pose any greater risk than current receptacles or any residential garbage that currently present an even greater risk than these commercial units we are proposing.
4. Are you talking with the BSSWD about utilizing their existing composting facility?
  - a. We have reached out to the BSSWD about their composting, and have confirmed that their composting is solely for the repurposing of their water treatment sludge, and is not an option for food and compostable container waste composting, as we are recommending.
5. Is this a onetime ask for this project?
  - a. The cost for removing communal waste is typically born by a municipality. In our case, and as an unincorporated community, we believe the BSRAD is the logical source for funding of this low cost necessity. Given the high priority shown in resident surveys for Sustainability in Big Sky plus the expectations of visitors who typically arrive from areas with easy recycling, this is a project aligned with the stated priorities of the BSRAD. Further, this project dovetails with other current projects focused on sustainability such as reducing/eliminating single use plastics by replacing water bottled in plastic with reusable and easily recyclable metal cans, switching food and beverage takeout containers to compostable materials, the addition of water bottle filling stations in the Town Center, and the long term plan development of a community carbon footprint reduction (the baseline measurement project is underway) and Mountain IDEAL green



destination certification. We see these sustainability measures as ongoing in the Big Sky Community, some of which will require funding that we believe falls under priorities stated through BSRAD's community visioning process.

Organization: Big Sky Search and Rescue

What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

--In the event we do not receive funding we will attempt to utilize our reserve funds to subsidize a recertification course so that we may maintain our basic level of service of providing a certified Wilderness First Responder on every call.

Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

--We choose not to have our financials audited because as a 501 c (3) org. with gross receipts under \$50,000 each year we are not required to file a tax return or have an audit performed.

Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?-- We have not received any grants or proper PPE for that matter.

Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

-- None, we have already drastically reduced our ask for this year.

How has COVID affected your call volume?

--According to Gallatin Cty, SAR call volume has decreased since April 1st throughout the county.

How much of your revenue is supplemented through Gallatin County & Madison Counties?

--Big Sky SAR's revenue last year from donations, service for events (Biggie, Rut, ski-joring) was under \$5,000. Gallatin county budget for Big Sky SAR was \$15,270 which covered costs associated with our building, utilities, fuel, medical supplies, vehicle licensing, etc.

What is your agreement with Madison County? -- Big Sky SAR does not have an independent agreement with Madison county. The Gallatin County Sheriffs office has a mutual aid agreement with Madison county, much like how Gallatin county deputys will respond inside Madison county (Big Sky resort area)

What is your service area? -- Our general service area is the north end of Gallatin canyon to the Yellowstone park boundary (going south along hwy 191) and and east/west along Hwy 191 as they stretch into wilderness areas best accessible from the Gallatin River side.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

**We do not know for sure because more than 50% of our funds come from sources other than Resort Tax and we do not yet know what we will receive from these sources. We do believe, however, that the funds we will receive from these other sources are likely to be much less than normal and, as a result, we believe that not receiving full funding of our Resort Tax request could severely impact our organization and our ability to serve the Community and our stakeholders, both this year and in the future. It is important to note that use of our rink and our programming is made available at very little cost to those who use it and, as a result, our projected program revenues, even if increased over last year, will provide less than 15% of our budgeted expenses. Since we do not see any way to cut our expenses without seriously impacting the extent and quality of what we provide, our only alternative to shutting down would be to dip into our financial reserves. Unfortunately, much of that reserve has been set aside for future improvements that we believe are needed in the future. Also, as we learned last year when we had nearly \$20,000 of unanticipated expenses, diminishing our reserves could possibly prevent us from being able to operate in the future, especially in years where our fundraising falls short. For example, a combination of not receiving our request monies from Resort Tax (\$42,052), a \$15,000 reduction in donations/board sponsorship revenues, and having only \$10,000 of unexpected expenses (a total of \$67,053), would nearly eliminate our cash reserves, potentially could jeopardize our operations in future years. We do see a possibility, however, of helping Resort Tax in this unusual year by postponing our funding, if done in a way that will avoid diminishing our reserves long-term, as we will explain.**

2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19? **No.**
3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed? **As for removal, none. We operate on a shoestring as it is, depending heavily upon volunteers. Because we have already anticipated that our financial support could be reduced this year because of the effects of COVID 19, we did not include in our budget any non-essential items or new purchases. Of the amounts we have budgeted, our two largest expenses are for contract labor and energy costs to refrigerate the rink and cutting either of them would seriously compromise what we have to offer and likely reduce**



revenues. Eliminating refrigeration, though it could reduce expense for the Season by \$25,000, is not a good option for several reasons: First, based on past experience, not having refrigeration will likely result in us losing over 30 days of operation. Second, the expense savings will likely be offset by reduced revenues. This is because not having the ice quality and consistency which comes from refrigeration, will likely cause us to cancel our curling program, which eliminates our largest program revenue producer by far. Cutting the number of days we operate also will likely alienate some of our best private financial supporters, who have been very generous because they very much want a refrigerated rink. As for contract labor, we believe all of the \$42,999 budgeted is essential if we are to keep the rink operating in a proper way (we hire these people to clear snow and ice, operate our Zamboni, provide a rink manager at key times, do clean-up, etc.). We see no way that we can operate without using the budgeted amount for those purposes. As to Postponement, we do believe that Resort Tax could postpone our funding by asking us to temporarily use some of our financial reserves until they can be replenished by Resort Tax once they have more funds, either at a second funding cycle for FY21 or in early FY22. Though a significant portion of our reserves are intended for future projects, including long-term improvements, we believe we can postpone those projects and temporarily “borrow” a portion of these allocated funds for FY21 without impacting our organization.

4. When are you merging with BSCO? That is not known nor is merger a certainty. We have engaged in several meetings with BSCO to discuss possibilities and I believe both sides have been encouraged by the results, but merger will depend upon finalizing the details in a manner which is acceptable to the Boards of both organizations and which will result in approval by the Attorney General of the State of Montana. BSCO did ask us to talk with our Board and confirm their interest in a merger based upon preliminary assumptions as to terms. Our Board did confirm their interest and BSCO was so notified. It is also our understanding that BSCO Board similarly confirmed an interest from their Board. As we understand it, the next step is for BSCO’s counsel to put into writing the specifics of a merger proposal, consistent with the discussions in our meetings, but we have not yet received that document, although we believe that will occur by the end of the Summer. The parties believe that, if negotiations go well and the parties are satisfied with the terms of an agreement, a merger could take place within a year, but that is not a certainty.
5. Can the Parks & Trails District fund your operation? Assuming you are asking about the Big Sky Trails, Recreation & Parks Special District, we assume that this is a question about



possibilities for the more distant future. This is because we understand, from reviewing their minutes and talking with others, the District to date has not yet created a mechanism for consistent public funding of their entity and their mission. If a tax or other funding mechanism is created in the future, however, and the use of those funds can include regular support of operating expenses for organizations such as the BSSHA, the BSCO, etc, then it would make logical sense for them to provide organizations such as BSSHA with regular and consistent funding for the operation of their facilities and programs. Ice rinks, especially those providing a consistent, high quality ice surface through refrigeration and consistent maintenance, typically cannot survive without some form of consistent tax based financial support (private donations normally can cover only part of the costs).

6. If you were to merge with BSCO how much costs savings would there be? **This is unclear. We believe both organizations would agree that a potential for a merger is less about saving money and more about being better able to fulfill the missions of our respective organizations and stakeholders over the long-term. We do believe that, initially, there could be some minor cost savings, but at this point we have no reason to believe that they will be very significant. Also, such savings could be offset if a merger somehow reduces our private donations and other funding. We do see that, after the Community Center is completed and staffed, there is a possibility of more significant financial savings if some of the Community Center staff can be used during the Winter to perform tasks for which we currently pay contract labor. At this point, however, the parties are still evaluating the likely financial effects of a merger and whether BSCO, without negatively impacting their finances, can maintain at least the level of facilities and programming currently being provided by the BSSHA. The BSSHA is optimistic that there will be a favorable answer to these financial concerns, but it is currently premature to know this.**



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Big Sky Skating and Hockey Association, Inc.

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release? **No. We used all of the allocated funds. In fact, because of a number of unexpected expenses, we ended up going well beyond our budget.**
  - a. If yes how much can you release? **N/A**
2. Using the table below please provide us with a month by month budgetary breakdown of all projects you applied for:

**\*\* Note: We for “Project 2 Replacement”, anticipate with our FY22 Assuming we those funds in anticipate \$30,000 to we anticipate of the purchase quality set of (probably \$80,000 upon**

Month	Predicted Resort Tax Request <b>PROJECT 1 OPERATIONS ASSISTANCE</b>	Predicted Resort Tax Request ** <b>PROJECT 2 BOARD REPLACEMENT</b>
July 2020		N/A—see note to the
August 2020		Right
September 2020		
October 2020		
November 2020		
December 2020		
January 2021	5,000	
February 2021	10,000	
March 2021	10,000	
April 2021	15,227	
May 2021		
June 2021		
July 2021		

**did not apply Board but do applying for it application. do apply for FY22, we asking for \$40,000, which will be one half price for a used board \$60,000 and depending availability).**

**We will fund the remaining half of the costs. Assuming we receive the requested funds, we would likely need the money by September of October of 2021.**

3. Do you expect next winter use to decrease? **We do not expect a decrease in participants in our youth programs, open hockey, broomball, or curling, although the numbers for our youth hockey program could be down a little because of a probable conflict with the scheduling of boys’ basketball at Ophir (which will change after next year). We do believe there could be a decrease in our open skating participation if there is a decrease in the number of Winter visitors to Big Sky. Because we are an outdoor activity, however, the numbers might even increase because we believe that skating,**



hockey, etc. , as an outdoor activity, would likely be attractive to those who want to maintain social distancing.

- a. Does a decrease in visitors change your application request? **No. The costs to operate our facility will be the same. That is because the need for snow removal, trash pickup, operators for our Zamboni, rink management, etc. utility costs, and people to set-up and take down our rink, generally will be the same irrespective of how many people show up to use our rink.**
4. Will the existing refrigeration system work with the permanent solution you are contemplating? **We are not sure what you mean by “the permanent solution you are contemplating” but, if you are asking about the plan to install a concrete slab upon which our rink can be placed, the answer is Yes. The pipes for our refrigeration system were designed to create an option for encasing the plastic pipes in concrete, although there may be some special fittings which will need to be added. Assuming a concrete slab is to be built by BSCO, our current intention is to have the pipes encased in that slab as part of that process. That is because of the following benefits that are likely to occur: (1) it will reduce the labor spent each year putting up and taking down the system, (2) it will likely reduce maintenance costs (the pipes are less likely to tear, spring leaks once in concrete), and (3) it will likely reduce the amount of energy used to refrigerate the ice surface.**
5. What is the minimum BSRAD funds you need now to set you up for success next winter?
  - a. *Noting there will be a FY21 Fall Allocation* **Because our Season does not began until roughly December 1, and most bills to us will not be received until after the first of the year, we can get along without any funds until February 2021. As previously indicated, if it will help BSRAD, we can use some of our allocated reserves to pay our early expenses—so long as we have reason to believe that these will eventually be replenished with a grant from BSRAD. If that cannot happen, however, then we have to consider the possibility of cancelling our entire Season, which we believe would be a major setback for our programs and a deep disappointment to many in the Big Sky Community.**
6. How many participants do you have in your programs? **Unfortunately, we do not know the total number of participants because, mostly due to operating cost concerns, we do not keep records regarding our informal programs, especially “open skating”, which we believe accounts for the heaviest use of our rink. We know our open skate sessions are regularly used by locals and there is also substantial usage by visitors to Big Sky. We do keep information about the number of participants in our formal programs (curling, youth hockey, broomball, 3-on-3 adult hockey) which we will provide. Anyone who goes by our rink during most days and evenings, however, cannot help but observe that our rink is in constant use all day and evening.**
  - a. *Office Answered (Please Verify): 5000 people served answered on LOI.*
7. Approximately how many hours of service do you provide to the community of rink operations each season? **We usually operate from Noon until 11:00 each day, seven days a week, which means people are using our rink around 70 hours a week. Our typical season lasts between 16-18 weeks, which means that our rink operations are likely available to the community 1120-1260 hours a year.**



8. What amount of your reserves, if any is the Board willing to utilize this next season to support operational funding shortfalls? **As previously indicated, we could probably use around \$40,000 of our reserves, but only if we have a strong likelihood of having them being replenished once the COVID19 situation is over. The problem for us is that the greatest portion of our operating budget is paid for by private donations/foundation grants and, if the amount of those donations decrease significantly in any one year, which we believe is more likely this year because of the impact of COVID-19, and we also experience unexpected expenses coupled with no operating expense funding from BSRAD, it could wipe our operating reserve and jeopardize our ability to operate in future years.**
9. Please provide a list of your programs and the amount of people that participated per program over the last 2 years.

**Open skating and hockey:** We estimate thousands of participants each year.

**Youth Ice Hockey:** FY 20: 58                      FY 19: 52

**3 on 3 Adult Hockey:** FY 20: 72    FY 19: 40

**Adult Drop-in Hockey:** We do not have statistics on this because there is no formal registration and money collected from players is dropped into our donation box. We estimate 120 players each in FY 20 and FY 19.

**Curling League:** FY 20: 100 players (only one season b/c early rink closing).  
FY 19: 195 (we had two seasons)

**Learn-to-Curl:** FY 20: None this year (because our Curling League was overbooked)  
FY 19: 40 participants

**Budah Youth Hockey Camp:** FY 20: 30 participants (75% from Bozeman, 25% from Big Sky)  
FY 19: N/A (FY 20 was the first year for the camp)

**Exhibition Games:**

--Junior A hockey game (Bozeman Stingers vs. Sun Valley, Idaho)  
FY 20: 40 players, 200 spectators  
FY 19: N/A

--Pavelich Invitational                      FY 20: 36 players, 120 spectators  
FY 19: 32 players 100 spectators

Do you anticipate a decrease in your programming numbers due to COVID-19? **If you are asking about our formal programs, the answer is No. We believe that, because we provide outdoor activities, COVID-19**



is unlikely to affect our numbers with one possible exception: If COVID-19 results in a reduction of visitors to Big Sky this Winter, it could result in a corresponding reduction in the number of participants in our open skating sessions. Also, since most participants in our broomball program are temporary Winter employees of the Mountain, the number of participants in that program could decrease if the Resort decides to hire less people.

10. What are your plans for fundraising and private donations? **We plan to pursue several avenues to raise funds. First, we will do our usual board sponsorship campaign, which is targeted at businesses and accounts for the largest amount of our regular funding. Second, we plan to approach some individuals who have been very generous in the past and see whether they will consider making a special donation to help us with our operating expense. Third, we are investigating whether some of the local foundations will consider helping us with our operating expenses—although, in the past, they typically do not provide grants for operations expense. Last, we will do our golf tournament, which typically nets three to five thousand dollars.**

11. Considering BSRAD is having a second allocation process in November. Are you able to withdraw your June application?

**We will strongly consider doing that if Resort Tax requests that we do that. That is because BSRAD has indicated that we could reapply for an allocation in November. We believe it is important to note, however, that if operations funding does not occur in the November allocation, we may find it necessary to cancel our entire 2020-21 season. This is because we think it would be a bad idea to permanently dissipate the cash reserve we currently have for operating expenses and for our board replacement. By the time of the November process, however, we should have a better idea as to the success of our 2020-21 fundraising results and, depending upon that outcome, it is possible that we will ask for a lesser (or greater) amount than we are now requesting. If BSRAD suggests we withdraw our current application, let us know, and we come to a prompt decision.**



## **FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1**

**Organization:** Warren Miller Performing Arts Center

**1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?**

It would be a substantial loss for us. We have developed a model that balances contributed revenue from resort tax, individual donors, community foundations, earned income from ticket sales, and in-kind contributions. With no resort tax funding, we would have to redesign our entire year of programming, and the quality and consistency of the programming would be reduced. Ultimately, it affects our brand promise of delivering excellent, world-class content to our entire community. In order to respond, we would most likely diversify our cuts into marketing expenses and production fees. Our largest line item year-over-year is artist fees, which ensures that we provide our community with the best possible programming. Since we are competing in a national marketplace, we would essentially need to move into a different style of presenting, which would happen less often.

**2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?**

We are still waiting to hear back from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Western States Arts Federation, and the Montana Department of Commerce for emergency relief for arts funding. We know that all of these grants are highly competitive, with limited funds in each. While we are optimistic, we are not counting on receiving any of these grants, as the presenting and producing arm of the arts have been widely affected across thousands of organizations across the U.S.

**3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?**

As decisions are made daily surrounding the safety of crowds and gatherings in Montana, we are focusing on adapting relationships to move into parallel paths for presentation. In an ideal world, we would maintain all of our programming, and focus on alternate plans across the board for virtual proxies in place of in-person performances. The good news is that virtual programming is much more affordable than in-person programming. So while we will likely transition most, if not all, of our summer programming to a virtual format, we would prefer not to remove anything from the schedule in order to continue serving our audiences. Since this question can be assumed to be related to financial implications, we can answer affirmatively that with virtual adaptations, our ask from Resort Tax will be considerably less for summer artist fees.

**4. What will your winter season look like if large group gatherings are still prohibited?**



We are working on building up inventory and a skill-set to present and produce shows virtually to an audience that tunes into the broadcast. We have already made major strides in this arena, engaging over 1,200 people for a meaningful amount of time (40 minutes on average) these last six weeks. If we needed to continue to limit gatherings of individuals, we would still commit to programming as we laid out in our application, and build out our digital infrastructure to watch shows live from the safety of our audience's homes. We believe this is entirely achievable with the available technology. A challenge we'll have to address is the changing nature of how artists present themselves, and whether or not they are comfortable with virtual presentations and digital broadcasting. That is going to take some time, but we remain optimistic, as many artists have already agreed to do virtual presentations with us.

**5. What are your commitments for the winter season? Are refunds possible?**

We have not signed a single contract for the year ahead, and we are taking this day by day, project by project. We do have our Winter Season tentatively lined out with artists and their representatives. That being said, engaging in a contract with an artist is difficult due to the logistics and refunds surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. There will come a time in the next six months in which we must begin signing legally binding agreements.

As the pandemic is now a known event, the FORCE MAJEURE clause in the contracts likely won't hold water in litigation were we to cancel events after executing a contract. The standard contract policy is to put down a non-refundable deposit of 50% of the artist fee. We will work with agencies to negotiate more flexible policies that allow for postponements and specific clauses related to COVID-19, wherein if we're unable to postpone, the non-refundable portion of the fee will be a lower percentage of the total fee.

Ultimately, this is an ongoing discussion with many unknowns and a complete lack of precedent. At this time, we are merely making offers and engaging in conversations across the board with artists and their representatives. While we assume that artists will be relatively flexible in signing contractual agreements, we won't know until we actually cross that bridge.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Friends of Big Sky Education dba Warren Miller Performing Arts Center

- 1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?**
  - a. If yes how much can you release?**

Per conversation and exchange with Resort Tax Staff from late March and early April, WMPAC has agreed not to request any remaining funds from its FY20 allocation of \$211,191. To date, we have received \$184,100, and we can hold off on remaining capital needs for the time being.

- 2. What amount of your reserves, if any, is the Board willing to utilize this next season to support operational funding shortfalls?**

The leadership team at WMPAC has agreed not to spend more than 1/3<sup>rd</sup> (just over \$30,000) of our current reserves to support operational funding shortfalls in the coming year.

- 3. How much on average does each of your virtual events cost you to provide to the community?**

In the initial phase, our events ranged from \$500 - \$2,500 to produce from a strict artist fee perspective. This does not take into account the amount of labor and volunteer time it took to promote and produce the events. Moving forward, this number will likely be more in the range of \$3,000 - \$7,500 per event to produce, as audience expectations will grow and our continuing needs to innovate. Again, however, this is a big unknown, so we are hesitant to put an exact number on this. This also depends on the type of virtual programming we use. The possibilities for virtual programming are vast. These numbers represent what we have learned thus far, but the technology and demand for it is growing across presenters and organizations around America and the world right now. We anticipate next month to look different than this month.

- 4. How do you anticipate adjusting based on current social distancing requirements?**

To get right to the point, it means that our audiences must be limited, both in number, and the way in which they can engage at WMPAC. While we do believe that our audiences will still be excited about programming at WMPAC, we simply cannot assume that the theater will be able to fill up responsibly for the near future. That means less earned revenue, a likely drop in corporate sponsorship, and, pending grants and donor/patron buy-in, a scaling up of differentiated virtual programming. We are optimistic about the latter. From our initial experiences with virtual programming, we had a very positive response that has warranted further exploration of possibilities in that arena. But as we move forward, we need to be clear in saying that the virtual experience will **never** replace an in-person experience at WMPAC. People will accommodate in the short-term because of the immediacy and shock of the public health emergency, but it is not a long-term solution. Virtual programming, if done well, could have supplementary benefits down the road, but it will still be very much ancillary to our live, in-person programming. As Montana responds and learns more about the COVID-19 pandemic, we will slowly get back to the way things were with audience sizes and expectations. That could happen as early as this fall, or not.



**5. Is there an opportunity to run each show twice (matinee and then evening) without any major cost increase for you if you need to stay at less than full capacity?**

This will depend on contracts and artists. We anticipate flexibility in this regard, and it is something that we have considered. But again, it is something that we would have to take on a case by case basis. Thank you for the suggestion. Typically, to add a second show, the artist expects an additional 50% of their previously negotiated fee. Sometimes there is no discount (with more famous individuals for example), and a second show costs the same as the first. Since we are in new territory, there is a possibility that this is something we can explore. Again, this is a case by case basis, and it is not something that we can assume will apply across the board.

**6. What is your long-term goal for percentage funding by BSRAD?**

To maintain a program of world-class programming that continues to put WMPAC on the map in the State of Montana and the greater Rocky Mountain territory, we will always need to balance our earned income, private and corporate donations, foundation funding, and Resort Tax. Based on analyses of over 200 programs, we find that the best route forward is to maintain a percentage of between 25% - 30% of our funding to come from Resort Tax. In recent years, we have noticed a really wonderful uptick in our ticketing potential, but with the COVID pandemic, that number is now very difficult to track and predict.

**7. How do you intend to implement social distancing in your operations?**

Please see our attached seating charts and our COVID response. In addition to limited audiences, we are highly engaged in developing infrastructure for digital participation in our events. The basic strategies are as follows while we remain in Phase II of Governor Bullock's reopening the Big Sky Plan. These plans are pending Department of Health approval and best practices among theater managers in Montana, which are still in development.

A. Audiences will be limited to 50 people, which will likely be smaller in order to accommodate event staff and artists. Everybody will be required to sit according to a strict seating chart that allows flexibility with congregates (immediate family and household members) to sit in assigned spots.

B. Audience members will be required to wear a mask anytime they are standing and moving around WMPAC. Once they get to their seats, they will be allowed to remove their masks. We will provide masks to individuals and families who do not have them.

C. Ingress and Egress will take place at the side door of WMPAC instead of the lobbies, so audience members will be able to go directly to their seats. Additionally, we will keep all doors open in the facility to best avoid bottlenecks at doors.

D. No intermissions.

E. Shorter performances (averaging between 40 – 70 minutes rather than 80-120).



F. To the best of our abilities, communication around and encouragement to avoid using the restrooms while at our facilities. While obviously we can't control this, we can communicate policy in advance and encourage social distancing and best practices.

G. Enhanced sanitation protocols in collaboration with the Big Sky School District.

**8. Considering BSRAD is having a second allocation process in November. Are you able to withdraw your June application?**

The short answer to this is no. We must have a clear sense of what our funding by July so that we can negotiate and contract with artists for this coming season. We are already behind (like everybody is), and because artist tours must be negotiated across large regions with other collaborators, there must be months of advanced notice and planning. If we were to wait until November without a clear sense of our funding, we would not be able to successfully plan and implement a Winter Season. It would simply be too late.

**9. How much funding do you need in the next 6 months to book next winters talent?**

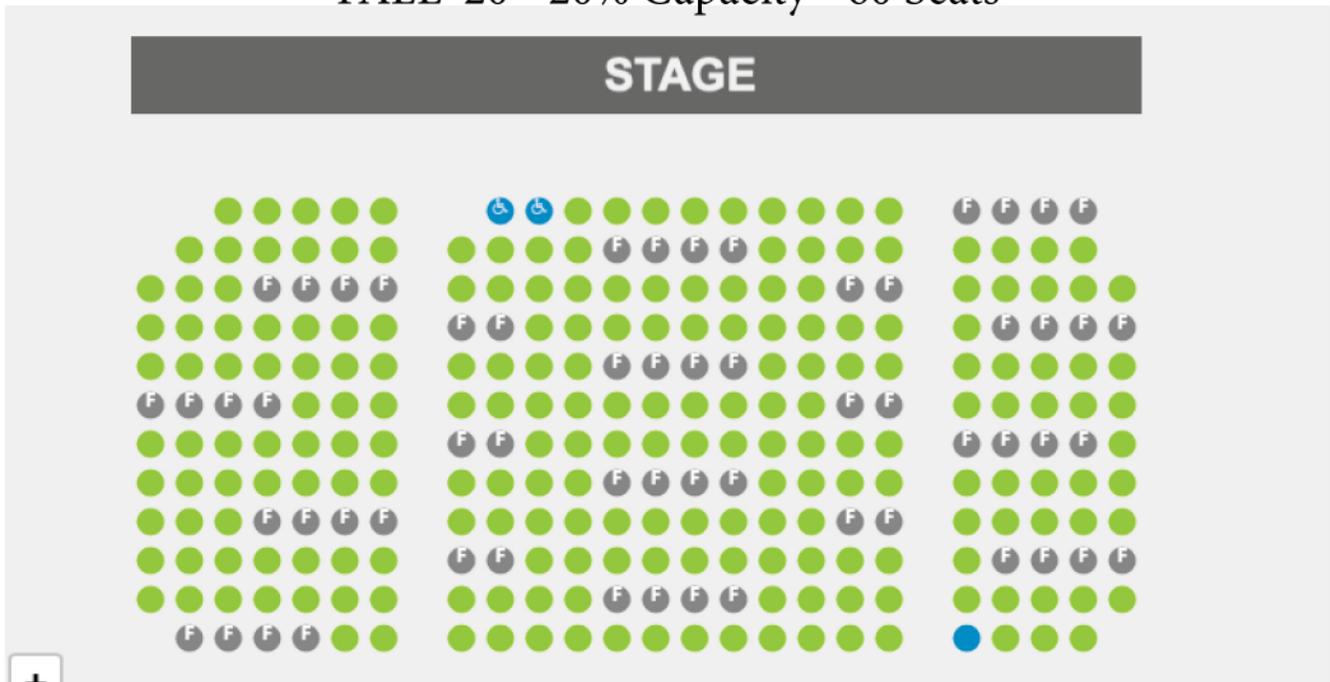
**a. How much would be refundable if performances get canceled due to COVID-19?**

At a bare minimum, we would need \$57,500 to book next winter's talent, which is an estimated 50% of our reduced budgeted season artist fees. Given so many unknowns at this point, and a chicken/egg dilemma, this is our best guess. What will be refundable will be a case by case basis again. Some groups will work to keep the entire 50% deposit typical of an engagement, while others might be more lenient. However, it should be said that within our ask this season, we need at least \$100,000 to securely book the Winter Season. If we were to receive only \$57,500 to book these acts in this June session, booked the contracts, and then did not receive anything else in November, we would be left with a hole that would be nearly impossible to fill based on previous year baselines. That level of risk makes us extremely uncomfortable. Lastly, I should also say that this question only refers to our Winter Season, and we have answered as such. As we outlined in our application, we ask for support for our year-round engagements, which include winter, summer, fall, and now an ongoing exploration of virtual programming, which each have their own associated costs.

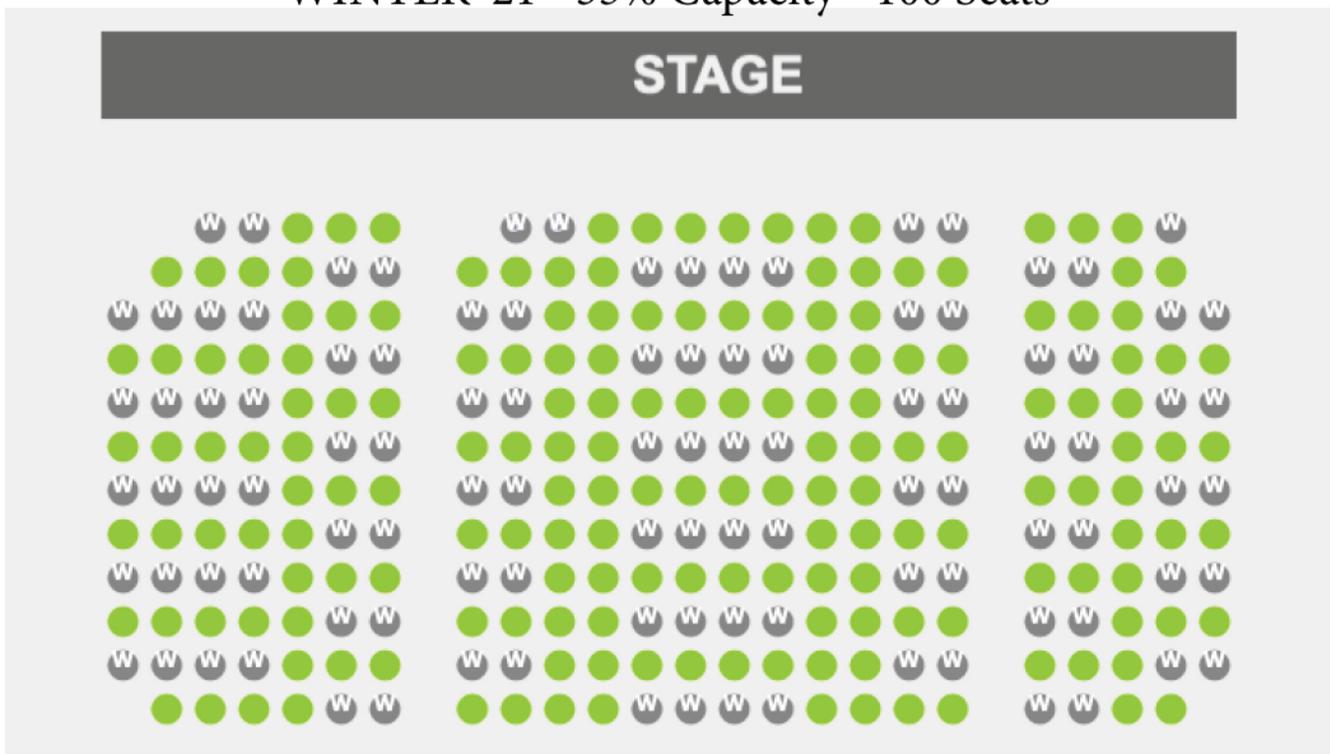
# REDUCED SEATING CAPACITY AT WMPAC



FALL '20 - 20% Capacity - 60 Seats



WINTER '21 - 35% Capacity - 100 Seats





## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Friends of the Library

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding? *The Library relies on 85% of funding from Resort Tax dollars for basic operations, therefore we could not manage to keep our doors open without RT dollars.*
2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited? *Our Board is of the opinion that the size of our organization doesn't justify the \$\$\$ thousand(s) in expense for an independent audit. We track income and expenses carefully through QuickBooks and maintain solid segregation of duties procedures. We use the services of a bookkeeper for payroll and tax filings. A CPA prepares our annual 990 and assists us with any accounting issues we have.*
3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19? *No*
4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed? *Our request is for the basic operation cost of running the library. We would have to make cuts from the individual line items.*
5. How has COVID-19 affected your hours of operation? *We closed our doors to the public on March 15th. The librarians have used this time to cull obsolete and outdated books and resources, completed inventory on the collection, and have transferred our weekly story times to virtual format. We are answering multiple emails regarding online resources as we have seen a large increase in usage of our databases and eBooks.*
6. What are the roles & responsibilities of your 3 PTE's?

**Library Director**

*Oversees all aspects of the library: Budget, programming, databases, ordering of all materials, public relations, website, grant writing, collection maintenance, inventory, liaison with school and community and Friends of the Library, donations, implementation of new programs, training and employee hiring.*

**Assistant Librarian**

*Automates and catalogs all materials and shelves all returned items. Works the 20 hours the library is open to the public. Assists patrons in all aspects of the library: circulation checking in and out, computer use, Adult and YA reading programs, database and e-book questions, printing, repairing books, story time coordinator, 1,000 Books before Kindergarten, inventory, and reading advisor.*

**New Hire**

*Intern and train with Kathy House for a smooth transition when she retires June 2021. Community outreach for virtual programming: story times, book clubs, and development of educational zoom videos for using on-line resources and databases.*



Establish a social media presence for the library, coordinate Books for Babies program, assist in developing stronger STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math) story times, educate parents and patrons in using iPad and Kindles. Outreach to Morningstar for story time visits. \_\_

7. What will the roles & responsibilities of the additional PTE be? Interning with Kathy House. See above for additional responsibilities.
8. What is the justification of hiring an additional PTE, when COVID is limiting operations? Throughout the 20 years, as the library has grown and the technology world has changed drastically, we have not added any additional employees, yet the responsibilities and job duties have greatly increased. Kathy House is retiring in June 2021 and in order to have a smooth transition period and to ensure that current programs are sustainable and continue to grow, we believe it is essential to make this positive addition to our staff. In this COVID crisis more than ever, we have seen a need for more community outreach to educate the public on using the on-line resources as well as the importance of communication through virtual and social media. It is our goal to develop a greater presence in the community and increase awareness of the services available. To accomplish this, extra hours are needed to help us achieve this objective.

On June 1st, we will begin curbside pickup for library materials and we are assuming that by July 1st, the new fiscal year, the library will be operating with regular hours. Extra time will be needed to sanitize all returned materials, computers, counters etc. to ensure the safety of all. As mentioned in our application this is a one-year transition position and the FOL is paying the additional PTE hours, and obviously if we do not fully open we will make adjustments to the hours.

9. Does your people served include virtual visits? If not, what would the new total be? We tallied 4,607 patron visits to the library, not virtual visits. It is difficult to determine the actual virtual visits with several of the databases but we do know all the usage has grown significantly because of the emails regarding log in passwords to Kanopy (our streaming movie service), New York Times, Rosetta Stone, and the amount of books checked out from OverDrive.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Friends of the Big Sky Community Library

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release? **No, we have used all the funds that we were allocated for this fiscal year.**
  - a. If yes how much can you release?
2. Can you please provide year over year usage data? **Patron visits have increase over the past three years. 2017: 4,360 patrons, 2018: 4,400 patrons, 2019: 4,594 patrons, does not include virtual visits..**

**Materials circulated have remained consistent over the years. In 2017, a total 21,749 items were circulated through the library. In 2018, a total of 22,738 items were circulated through the library and finally in 2019, a total of 21,868 materials were circulated through the library. This data includes the circulation of our books, eBooks, music, audiobooks and video. This data does not include the amount of database use.**
3. What is the need for additional staffing this year? **Intern and train with Kathy House for a smooth transition when she retires June 2021. In addition, we will use this year to plan and develop additional digital services including community outreach for virtual programming: story times, book clubs, and development of educational zoom videos for using on-line resources and databases. Establish a social media presence for the library, coordinate Books for Babies program, assist in developing stronger STEM (Science Technology, Engineering and Math) story times, educate parents and patrons in using iPad and Kindles. Outreach to Morningstar for story time visits.**
4. How many hours are you open weekly? **20 hours to the community**
5. What is your FTE when you combine your 3 PT staff? **8 hours for Library Director, 20 hours for Assistant Librarian (works the hours we are open) and 8 hours for Intern for a total of 36 hours for an FTE = .9**
6. Have you ever asked Gallatin County for funding? **No, because we are a 501c3 not-for-profit organization funded through Friends of the Library. We are not a legal public library.**
7. Please describe your sources and plans for Private Donations and Other Revenue. **We are funded through membership dues, used book sales, shelf dedications and resort tax funds.**

**\*Just recently we were granted a \$15,000.00 grant from Three Rivers Coop and will receive funds after July 1<sup>st</sup>. An option is to reduce our Resort Tax request by \$15,000.00 if need be.**
8. While your additional staff do not affect your request for this year, is it safe to say that it will affect future year requests? **No, this is a one-year transition job as Dani Kabisch will take over as Library Director next fiscal year.**



9. Did you have to furlough any employees due to not being open? No, fortunately the librarians have used this time to cull obsolete and outdated books and resources, completed inventory on the collection, and have transferred our weekly story times to virtual format. We are answering multiple emails and telephone calls regarding online resources as we have seen a large increase in usage of our databases and eBooks.
10. If the library must shut its doors again how will you adjust your funding needs based on not being open to the public? Obviously hours will be cut for our employees but the wonderful thing about the library is so many resources can be accessed through our website, hence the need for community outreach and social media presence. We will continue with doing our curbside pick-up (starts June 1<sup>st</sup>), our virtual story times and Book Club. As mentioned before, sanitizing books and vestibule will also take additional time. We also have a 6-week virtual summer reading program planned for the children and students in the area. All programs are free and open to the public and funded by the Friends of the Library. A few of these include Birds of Prey, a Puppet show, and Maker Day. If we find that there is a need to reduce hours for librarians, we will make those adjustments and payroll would decrease.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

The Alliance will utilize half of our reserve funds (approximately \$11,000) to pay for one year of necessary expenses to keep the organization solvent (insurance, website, cell phone, etc.) and using remaining funds to ensure existing grant commitments are honored (which will consume most of the remaining reserves). At that point, the board will have to furlough our contracted staff so she may apply for unemployment insurance.

Without staff, the Alliance will not be able to pursue additional grant funding and existing annual projects will be terminated. Without reserves, the Alliance may have to close permanently. To be clear, most grants related to invasive species pay for little to no staff time, thus resort tax funding is essential to our operations. We are a local organization addressing the area's natural resource issues to the benefit of the entire community.

2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

GISA does not conduct an annual audit as neither the state nor any prior funders have required it. Given our small size and staff, the cost of an audit would be quite prohibitive and limit our programming. We do endeavor to maintain accurate and transparent financial statements, which are attached and can be made available at any time upon request. These statements are regularly reviewed by the board and recently reviewed by Jennifer Lammers of the Philanthropy Hub.

3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

We have received \$1,000 from the Economic Injury Disaster Loan.

4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

We have proactively removed all unessential funding requests from our application. The request from the Alliance represents the bare bones for our organization's survival and execution of ongoing projects.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release? **No, we do not. But in recognition of current conditions, we requested less than a fifth of what we requested last year.**
  - a. If yes how much can you release?
2. Using the table below please provide us with a month by month budgetary breakdown of all projects you applied for:

Month	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 1 ADMINISTRATION	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 2 ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 3 EDUCATION & AWARENESS	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 4 COMMUNITY OUTREACH
July 2020	\$2,342	\$1,400	\$775	\$925
August 2020	\$372	\$1,250	\$750	\$925
September 2020	\$322	\$500	\$300	\$650
October 2020	\$1,134	\$400	\$0	\$300
November 2020	\$294	\$150	\$0	\$0
December 2020	\$594	\$75	\$0	\$0
January 2021	\$1,505	\$75	\$0	\$0
February 2021	\$294	\$150	\$0	\$0
March 2021	\$750	\$200	\$250	\$100
April 2021	\$844	\$500	\$2,200	\$200
May 2021	\$320	\$500	\$500	\$650
June 2021	\$347	\$1,300	\$775	\$1,150
July 2021	NA	NA	NA	NA

3. How would you describe “survival funding?”

“Survival funding” is the minimum amount needed for this organization to keep the “lights on” (e.g. insurance, cell phone, website, state registration, etc). It does not include any funding for staff or programs (whereas “survival +” funding does).

4. What existing grant requirements must you meet this year beyond your "survival" mode of operations?

Requirements are specific to each grant and agreement and include execution of the project, accurate accounting, record keeping and submission of reports. Some of our projects are cooperative partnerships



(not technically grants) which still require accounting, record keeping and reporting for successful execution. The Alliance has commitments or existing/awarded grants with the following:

#### Community Outreach Projects:

- Native Demonstration Garden at Crail Ranch: Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Moonlight Community Foundation, Spanish Peaks Community Foundation, Big Sky Rotary, Big Sky Owners Association, Big Sky Water & Sewer, Gallatin River Task Force, Gallatin Canyon Women's Club, and Gallatin Conservation District
- Community Weed Pulls: Gallatin National Forest, Gallatin County Weed District, Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited, Big Sky Community Organization, Yellowstone Club, and Big Sky Owners Association

#### Education & Outreach Projects:

- CleanDrainDry: Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Gallatin County Weed District, Gallatin County, Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Moonlight Community Foundation, and Spanish Peaks Community Foundation
- PlayCleanGo: Moonlight Community Foundation, Big Sky Owners Association, and Big Sky Community Organization

#### Environmental Stewardship Projects:

- Bighorn Sheep Habitat Improvement: Gallatin County Weed District, Gallatin National Forest, Montana Department of Transportation, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Montana State University, and Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Conserve Our Canyon: Gallatin Conservation District, Gallatin Resource Advisory Committee, Gallatin County, Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Moonlight Community Foundation, and Spanish Peaks Community Foundation
- Cooperative Treatment Efforts: Gallatin County Weed District, Madison County Weed District, Big Sky Resort, and HOA's participating in the effort

#### 5. How are you using your partners to find additional funding sources to better diversify?

The Alliance has been successful in leveraging partnerships to bring resources (both funding and actual on the ground weed management) to this community. Since 2004, when we first began our work, the Alliance has received the following funding:

- 1- Resort Tax: \$481,960
- 2- Other grants and public support: \$253,416
- 3- In-kind: \$597,152

\* A good portion of in-kind represents on the ground management of noxious weeds (e.g., \$72,835 in cooperative treatment efforts in public parks and HOA open space and \$138,505 in bighorn sheep habitat treatments) that would *not* have happened without the Alliance's efforts.



For every \$1 of resort tax funding received, the Alliance has matched that with \$1.75.

The Alliance has always worked diligently to source funding for our programs with the resources we have. We exploit every opportunity, including taking advantage of free courses and workshops, like those of the Bozeman Area Community Foundation. Our list of partners is diverse and numerous. Three points for your consideration:

1. Leveraging partnerships (networking, developing partnerships, attending meetings, etc.) and the pursuit of additional funding requires staff time. Resort Tax funding has allowed us to support one *less* than 0.5 FTE.
2. Funding specific to “invasive species” is very limited (both in sources and dollars) and highly competitive. To be blunt, the Alliance often scores low or is rejected as our competitors are more in need (i.e., ranching/agricultural communities) and our project area is a well-known affluent community.
3. Funding available for invasive species projects does not provide much, if any, support for staff. While the Alliance has been successful in getting grant awards, a limited amount can be used for staff. Without adequate funding for staff, the Alliance is constrained in the pursuit of other funding.

6. How many properties and acres did you treat through your program last year?

Important points to understand:

1. The Alliance does not “treat” private property, as only the landowner or private contractor they hire can legally do so.
2. The Alliance is an educational not-for-profit organization that provides free on-site assistance to landowners related to weed identification, management recommendations and follow-up support. Site visits are at the request of the landowner, and all successful weed management starts with education.
3. The Alliance facilitates noxious weed management on public lands and HOA open space for the public and resource’s benefit, but it is those landowners (i.e., Gallatin National Forest or Antler Ridge HOA) that conduct the actual treatment (often with us physically assisting).

In 2019, the Alliance assisted 20 landowners via on-site assessments, which represents 143 acres. Since 2008, we’ve helped 761 landowners, representing 10,089 acres. These numbers *do not* include the hundreds of calls, emails, or in-person questions / follow up conversations that we field. Noxious weed management is complicated and dynamic, thus having a trusted independent source available for assistance is critical for success.

In addition, the Alliance:

- Facilitated treatment of approximately 317 acres annually of heavily used recreation sites in the Gallatin Canyon in 2017-2019 via our Conserve Our Canyon project (funding is secured for a repeat effort in 2020)



- Removed 17,900 pounds of noxious weeds from the banks of the Gallatin River, Big Sky Community Park, and other public lands (2008-2019)
- Facilitated annual treatment of approximately 36 acres of critical bighorn sheep (a threatened species) winter range for the past 9 years
- Coordinated cooperative treatment of approximately 20 acres of HOA open space in Antler Ridge and Ramshorn (2018 & 2019) while educating those residents.

Our recent survey showed that 97% of landowners we've assisted actively manage noxious weeds on their property, 71% do it themselves, and only 14% think this community does enough to address the threats of invasive species.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

GVSA grooms 10-11 snowmobile trails in the Gallatin, Madison and Bridger Mountains. Funds are mainly provided by the Montana State Grooming program grant. Resort tax funds allow the Buck Ridge trail to be groomed two additional times per week. Without Resort Tax funding, the Buck Ridge trail will be groomed once per week using State funding.

2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

It was never viewed as something necessary. We do have an independent accountant that looks at our financials and does our taxes every year.

3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

No.

4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

None. GVSA grooms the Buck Ridge trail as a service to the Big Sky community. A reduction or elimination of Resort Tax funds for the grooming program will see a commensurate decrease in the number of times the Buck Ridge trail will be groomed during the snowmobile season.

5. How did the avalanche impact your operation?

This past season, after the accident, most grooming of our trails ceased. The exception was Buck Ridge trail. Because of our relationship with Canyon Adventures (and their groomer), the Buck Ridge trail was groomed twice per week through the end of the season.

We are currently working with the State to either repair the machine or find another groomer. Our expectation is to be up and running by next season.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Gallatin Valley Snowmobile Association

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release? Yes.
  - a. If yes how much can you release?
    - i. We did not use about \$110 of our allotted funds.
2. Considering BSRAD is having a second allocation process in November. Are you able to withdraw your June application?
  - i. The majority of our funding is spent from December – March of each year. It would be possible to delay our application.
3. Please provide the last 5 years, by year, of trail usage data:
  - i. 2016 – 13799
  - ii. 2017 – 11433
  - iii. 2018 – 20523
  - iv. 2019 – 15383
  - v. 2020 – 20889
  - vi. 5 yr avg – 16405
4. How much funding could potentially come out of the state snowmobile association to Big Sky from the groomed trail pass sticker program?
  - i. None. The revenue from the pass sticker program goes directly into the State snowmobile trail grooming program. The snowmobile clubs in the State do not request a specific amount of money in the State grant application. The State has predetermined how much funding each club will receive. And it is about the same amount every year.
5. "How many hours of time does it take to groom this trail each time?"
  - i. It typically takes 9 – 10 hours to groom Buck Ridge trail. This includes transportation time, unloading/loading and time on the trail.
6. BSRAD funds provide an additional approx. 25-30 grooming laps each year, correct?
  - a. If so, what does the \$1,000 per groom pay for?
    - i. These funds pay groomer operators, fuel, equipment usage, repair cost, parts, etc
7. What is the year over year data on number of riders?
  - i. See #3 above.
8. Please clarify, in the application you indicated that this would allow for 2 additional groomings of the trail. Later in the Goals you mentioned that this would allow for the trail to be groomed 26-30 times more than it would have. Can you explain?
  - i. If the only funding we received for grooming was from the State, we would groom Buck Ridge one time per week. Big Sky funding provides 2 additional groomings per week, which works out to 25 – 30 in total additional groomings over the entire season.
9. What funding do you receive from the State?



- i. Annual state funding for our club is around \$25,000. Specifically for this year, we should receive \$25,434.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Habitat for Humanity Gallatin Valley

- 1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?** *If we do not receive funding, we would have to seek an outside loan to cover completion of the project. Habitat would have to engage in conversation with the School Board to find alternative funding sources.*
- 2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?** *Habitat has received a PPP loan to cover the cost of staff payroll and benefits only.*
- 3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?** *This remains uncertain. We need to request an extension for completion of the project according to the terms of the HOA. We had one year to complete the construction. Due to COVID-19 we are behind our original timetable due to a loss of volunteer labor. This volunteer labor force had signed up beginning late May and had been committed through September. However, these volunteers have been postponed this year, again because of COVID-19. If an extension can be obtained, we would delay the completion of landscaping and the creation of the berms. However, that also might add to the cost since we would be pushing that expense into late 2021*
- 4. What portion of your extra costs were unbudgeted vs how many were project overages?**  
*Overages items experienced were in two areas. One, the infrastructure cost of a second well and pump (\$15,000) and the cost of rental equipment (\$8,000). Unbudgeted costs were in the cost of labor and equipment to fly the trusses (\$25,000) and the loss of volunteer labor which accounts for \$53,760.00. We have had to secure an additional outside (local) contractor to replace the loss of our core volunteer labor.*



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Habitat for Humanity Gallatin Valley INC

- 1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?**
  - a. If yes how much can you release? *We do not anticipate any funds going unused from our FY 20 request. Our original plan was to begin using the balance from the Resort Tax Board late March early April of 2020 and complete the request for funds by the end of June. Due to COVID-19 our construction schedule changed dramatically. We anticipate using the remaining funds; however they may not be requested by the end of June 2020.*
  
- 2. What is the completion schedule and when will final costs be known?** *We are looking for a completion date of early 2021 for the second triplex. The first triplex is scheduled to be completed for occupancy by the end of August 2020. Depending on funding, there may be some aspects of the project that may be completed by June of 2021. Landscaping and the building of the berms are two that come to mind.*
  
- 3. What portion of the additional costs about budget is your others funding partners in this project covering?** *Big Sky School District is projected to cover approximately 70% of the additional funds needed to complete the project as planned.*
  
- 4. What percent of the overall budget are you over on the project as a whole?** *Our calculations show approximately an 8-10% overage at this time. One has to consider the portion of the School District funds were required to cover the cost of the bond and were not available for direct payment of construction activities when we did our initial planning.*
  
- 5. What other sources have you looked at to help fund this overage in budget?** *We have looked at various fundraising activities from the local community. However, with the business community only beginning to recover from COVID-19, we see this as a limited resource at this time. We are requesting an extension from the HOA to postpone some aspects of the total project, (i.e. landscaping and berms.) so those costs might be able to be paid for by rental income. We have reached out to NorthWestern Energy for additional funds for solar panels, however, that has been limited in their response. We have reached out to the Habitat Building community for volunteers for the remainder of this year and into 2021 to contribute their building skills to help with any construction activities. The Habitat Building community and teachers/school employees continue to provide support and we hope to use these groups to cover the majority of labor that we missed out on between the months of March and June of this year. We have also looked at the possibility of obtaining a loan to cover the additional anticipated costs.*



6. **How much of the request do you guess is related to COVID-19 vs higher cost of construction due to the wells and Big Sky?** *Our request represents 80% of the loss of labor due to COVID-19. We had volunteers scheduled from May through October, coming from around the country to work on this project. The loss of this labor force between May and June alone amounts to \$65,00.00.*

## Organization: Morningstar Learning Center

### 1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

Resort Tax allows Morningstar to remain affordable to our local families while still paying our overhead. If Morningstar does not receive funding (which goes directly to offset the cost of our service), local Big Sky families may no longer be able to afford Morningstar's childcare due to financial constraints. In some cases, one parent may be forced to quit their local jobs to stay home to care for their children. In other cases, families that cannot afford Morningstar may have only one income and could be forced to relocate. This could result in a reduction in the number of available employees in Big Sky.

Morningstar would also be forced to look at ways to lower the cost of tuition if it did not receive funding. This would include cutting staff wages and benefits to reduce tuition. However, Morningstar historically has had a difficult time retaining staff due to already low wages. It would be even more challenging to retain staff if Morningstar had to drop wages lower than they already are.

### 2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

Morningstar doesn't need to get an audit because they are not subject to audit requirements. Audits can be required when the assets are at a certain level or a non-profit expends a certain amount of federal funding, which doesn't apply at all to Morningstar.

### 3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

Yes. Morningstar received a Paycheck Protection Program loan, which we are hoping will be turned into a grant.

### 4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

None. Our only project is tuition reduction. Morningstar continues to charge tuition monthly.

### 5. Have you seen a change in demand for the Resort Tax scholarships with COVID?

There were fewer enrollments in March, April, and May this year than there were in 2019. However, Morningstar is on track to be close to 2019's enrollment numbers for the summer quarter (June, July, and August).

**6. Your growth is outpacing Resort Tax collections (enrollment has increased by 3% but your request grew by 20%), please explain:**

Morningstar is facing difficulty retaining staff. We currently need 14 full time staff. In the last year, we saw a 114% turn over from staff. Morningstar employed an average of 14 people per month between March 2019 and March 2020. In that time, 16 staff left Morningstar. Our exit interviews show that the main reason for leaving is that the employees could make more elsewhere, including stocking shelves at the local grocery stores. In order to retain our staff, we must increase their wages. If the request is funded, Morningstar plans to raise tuition if we are granted the full request. The funds received from Resort Tax will offset the tuition raised, so that our parents will not see a change in tuition (we raised tuition for them already by \$2.00 per day per child on June 1, 2019). If we raise tuition, we will be able to pay staff better. If we pay staff better, we hope they will stay longer. Parents will not be affected by the increased tuition if Resort Tax offsets the cost.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Morningstar Learning Center

- 1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?**
  - a. If yes how much can you release?**

Morningstar operated at a loss during the Coronavirus pandemic to serve the needs of first responders in our community. Morningstar lost around \$17,000 in April. Morningstar applied for Relief Funds from Resort Tax. Resort Tax discussed reallocating funds designated for Tuition Reduction to the Morningstar Relief Funds. Morningstar will use all the money allocated to it for the Financial Year 2020.

- 2. What is the expansion plan when/if you meet maximum capacity in 2023?**

Morningstar plans to build staff housing prior to expanding our childcare facility. We plan to build staff housing within the next five years. If/when we meet maximum capacity in 2023, Morningstar would cap attendance and serve families on a first come, first serve basis and then look at the next phase of build out for the Morningstar Center.

- 3. Has your board discussed going to a "needs based" scholarship program rather than providing everyone a 20% reduction with BSRAD funds?**

The board has not considered a "needs based" scholarship. Morningstar offers the Tuition Reduction Scholarship to locally employed families. Based on the best information that we have, everyone who has a child in Morningstar "needs" the tuition help.

- 4. Would the increase in BSRAD per child per day decrease the cost to parents per day?**

No

- a. If not, are you also raising the parent daily fee the same percentage as your request to BSRAD outlines?**

Yes. Morningstar would in turn raise staff wages to provide competitive wages. By providing competitive wages, Morningstar hopes to hire and retain employees more easily. Last year, Morningstar had a 114% turnover rate in staff.

- 5. Do you receive funds from DPPHS for families that are eligible for state childcare assistance?**
  - a. If not, why?**

I believe that you are asking about the Best Beginnings Child Care Scholarship program. If so, it is not the childcare facility that applies for the funds, but the parents. The scholarships are available to families that are at or below 150% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines and families who get cash assistance through the TANF program. At this time, none of the Morningstar families have this scholarship, but we are aware of the program and have the information of it available for our families.



**6. Are you expecting to serve the same number of children as last year?**

No.

**a. If not what will your number of children served be this year?**

Morningstar will have had approximately 9,912 enrollments from July 2019-June 2020. We serve approximately 70 families throughout the year.

**7. What was the amount per day you ended up receiving last year?**

Morningstar received \$13/day in 2020.

**8. How do you ensure that only Big Sky residents receive this funding?**

Morningstar asks parents for their address at enrollment.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Parkview West Homeowners Association

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding? **We will have no choice but to shoulder the total burden.**
2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited? **We are a small organization, and this has just never been an issue.**
3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19? **No**
4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed? **There are no component parts that can be separated. If we are to reduce the size of the bond it is best done at the time of creation which is this fall according to the county treasurer.**
5. How many "non-members" live in the area? **Approximately 10. The greater canyon neighborhood on the 191 corridor 1 mile north and south would all greatly benefit from fire truck accessibility to hydrants for refilling. There are approx. 37 properties along in this corridor who are not part of Parkview West HOA. Many of these properties have multiple homes/families on each property for a total of approx. 150-200 residents.**
6. Please quantify how the general public is served by this project? **This is a public bridge on a public road used by the general public to access a public trail, and everyone living here and in the region is a member of the general public.**
7. How does the general public benefit from fire trucks with water being able to cross the bridge? **We have installed hydrants on the western side of the river for the fire department to draft water directly from the river. This benefits the homeowners on both sides of the bridge for some distance up and down the canyon. Prior to strengthening the bridge, the fire trucks used by Big Sky Fire had to empty their tanks prior to crossing the bridge, and then refill on the other side. This is a critical time delay of a minimum of 20-30 minutes to dump and fill. A house fire or wildland fire anywhere in this canyon corridor is threatening for many homes and can easily get blown north or south toward Big Sky quickly. The ability to fight fires immediately is imperative to saving homes and lives and for the safety of the Big Sky community.**

The hydrants were used several years ago when a home burned across 191 from Parkview West. At that time, they were filling trucks only partially so they could cross the bridge with some water. Luckily, that evening was calm winds and only one home burned.

8. Why are dues and fees decreasing? **Because of the RID, the burden has shifted from annual dues to increased property taxes.**



## NFY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Parkview West Homeowners Association

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. If yes how much can you release? **No FY20 Resort Tax funds granted**
2. Can cars cross the bridge without it being rebuilt? **Yes**
3. How is non-resident crossing affected by not having the ability for a fire truck to cross? **Not affected in the short-term; had the bridge not been rehabilitated, non-residents would've been affected, if the bridge could no longer pass inspection.**
4. Why would the Resort Tax pay for a bridge to access a specific homeowners association?

First, the founding charter of the Resort Tax Board states that resort tax is to be used for infrastructure and public safety, among other things.

Second, Big Sky is made up of individual HOAs. Resort tax funds benefit many HOAs. For example, large sums are rightly given to the Big Sky Fire Department which benefits many HOAs, but not the people living in Karst--if fire trucks cannot cross the bridge--even though we pay resort taxes.

Third, the reason this request for funding is in the name of an HOA is because Parkview West is the only entity in the area able to be held legally responsible, as required for receiving tax funds. This request is made on behalf of everyone using the bridge, not just those in the HOA--homeowners not belonging to the HOA, as well as the public in general.

Forth, people living in this area pay resort tax and are part of the resort tax district. Our infrastructure is just as important.

Fifth, resort tax is used to fund many recreational activities which are nice to have but not as important as the saving of lives and property, which we believe should be the highest priority.

5. How many non-residents cross the bridge for the trails, dog walking, fishing access, etc.? **There is no feasible means of measuring this, but residents observe hikers, dog-walkers, fishers, hunters, etc. on a daily basis.**
6. If it is access to a National Forest trail, why wouldn't you request funding from them? **We have requested their assistance but were told no funds are available. We also asked Gallatin County for assistance, but they stated they because they do not maintain the road, the bridge is not their responsibility.**



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Montana Land Reliance

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

If MLR's efforts are not funded it will affect the ability of the organization to focus conservation efforts in the Big Sky community.

2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

MLR has received a federal PPP loan. MLR also received an increase in funding from one foundation in response to the Covid emergency.

3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

MLR only has applied for one project and that project cannot be removed or postponed.

4. Will a decrease in tourism affect your operation?

A decrease in tourism should not affect MLR's operations.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** The Montana Land Reliance

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. If yes how much can you release?

MLR does not have funds to release. Most of the \$19,500 has been spent and it is anticipated that the remainder will be spent by year-end.

2. Why do you project increases in expenses yet decreases in revenues in your application?

Since the application was submitted, MLR has reduced budgeted expenses by over 10% to balance expected reductions in revenue. Due to the timing of the application, MLR was not able to include these budget expense reductions in the original application as the discussions and decisions on what expenses would be reduced was still in progress. MLR has now completed these budget expense reductions to prudently and responsibly manage for sustainability.

3. Does MLR receive any other public tax dollars for operations, other than BSRAD?

MLR does not received any other public tax dollars for operations.

4. Are there examples of other land trusts across the country that receive public tax dollars for operations?

MLR is not aware of other land trusts that receive public tax dollars for operations. However, much like MLR is requesting from the BSRAD, a number of public funders provide capacity grants to land trusts to develop and complete new conservation projects. For example, the [California Department of Conservation](#) uses bond funds to provide capacity grants of up to \$75,000 to land trusts to increase agricultural land conservation around the state. Eligible costs include staff time, travel, outreach/engagement, and overhead. Similarly, the [New York State Conservation Partnership Program](#) uses funds from real estate transfer taxes to provide “capacity and excellence” grants to land trusts to build organizational capacity to increase impact. Eligible costs include staff time, travel, materials and supplies, etc. Capacity funding like this is an efficient way for public funders to partner with nonprofits to conserve the natural amenities that support jobs and drive economies in places like Big Sky.

5. What percentage of the Big Sky MLR office operating funds would this request fund?

This request would fund 13.9% of MLR’s Southwest Montana budget.



6. What percentage of your local SW Montana Region budget comes directly from Big Sky events, community foundations, donors, and BSRAD?

Using 2019 income information:

15% came from full time residents;

6.6% came from resort tax;

10% came from community foundations; and,

32% came from part time residents whose primary address is out of state, and/or own farms or ranches in other parts of MT.

7. How much of your time is spent securing easements in the BSRAD District?

MLR opened an office in Big Sky specifically to pursue conservation opportunities due to the incredible ecological values of the area. The time spent securing easements depends on the number of active projects that are current in Big Sky. Right now MLR is working on three easements in the Resort Tax boundary, taking approximately 30% of staff time. Over the last four years between 25% and 40% of staff time has been spent in Big Sky. Some of these conservation projects take longer to come to fruition due to complexity. Big Sky is a major focus of MLR's efforts and is a hub and home of many folks who are moving the needle for conservation in Montana.

8. Are there other organizations doing land conservation within the District?

Gallatin Valley Land Trust (GVLT) is the only other organization that MLR knows of that currently works in the Resort Tax boundary. GVLT has conserved approximately 800 acres in Big Sky. MLR has conserved over 11,927 acres. The breakdown of the acreage and management within the Resort Tax parcel are below.

### **TAX PARCEL BREAKDOWN**

**Total Resort Tax acreage: 168,552 acres**

**Private Land Total: 62,305 acres**

MLR Easement Total: 11,927 acres (19% of all private land)

Other CE Total: 814 acres (1.3% of all private land)

Designated Parklands Total: 867 acres (1.4% of all private land)

**Public Lands Total: 106,247 acres**



US Forest Service Total: 104,663 acres (98.5% of all public land)

State of Montana Total: 2 acres (<1% of all public land)

Montana FWP Total: 1,577 acres (1.5% of all public land)

Local Government Total: 5 acres (<1% of all public land)

9. What amount of your organizations reserves, if any, is the Board willing to utilize this next season to support operational funding shortfalls?

MLR is willing to use reserves, as the mission demands it, up to 75% of MLR's total current reserves.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** The Post Office LLC

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

If we do not receive Resort Tax funding we would be forced to submit our 60-day notice to the USPS to cancel our contract to provide postal services in Big Sky. Currently the USPS does not provide adequate funding to satisfy the operating costs of the Big Sky Post Office. For example, in 2019 the USPS provided 87.5% of the funding for operations and BSRAD provided 12.5%.

2. Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

To date we have not been asked nor required by either of our funding entities to provide any audited financial statements. We are neither a 501c3 nor a publically traded entity. However, we do have our bookkeeping and income tax returns prepared by a third party, Lindell and Associates, who also prepares the 6-month Profit and Loss Statements that are provided as backup with our allocation requests. With a fairly simple budget, of which nearly 85% is payroll, payroll related expenses and rent, our financial detail data would be fairly easy to review if BSRAD would like supplemental data for the budget to actual reporting provided.

An audit would add additional expense to our annual budget, which we would need to increase our Resort Tax ask to absorb. In my opinion, the added cost to perform this service is not worth the any potential added confidence that BSRAD would gain in the financial information.

3. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

The Post Office, LLC did receive a PPP loan in the amount of \$44,100.00. Since the rules for forgiveness are still being established, we do not know whether any portion of this loan will be forgiven.

4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

Our request is only for operations which have continued through the COVID-19 pandemic – if fact, we are busier than we would normally be at this time of year. None of our request can be removed or postponed.



5. What are the future plans for expansion, if any?

I believe there is dissention within the USPS as to the future direction of postal delivery in Big Sky. For this reason, and our shortage of staff, I have not made much progress on the issue of a larger facility and what services it may provide. However, I do believe it will require a community effort to get the attention of the USPS to provide an analysis and long-term plan for mail delivery in Big Sky.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** The Post Office LLC

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. If yes how much can you release?

At this time I do not anticipate releasing any additional funds besides the \$30,000.00 that was previously released to the Big Sky Relief Fund

2. Hours are being reduced at the PO. Does that affect your funding request?

No. The 5 hour per week reduction in retail hours is a temporary measure in response to a shortage of experienced labor. On May 10, 2020, our longest tenured employee resigned with no notice citing a concern of contracting COVID-19. In response to that resignation, we have reduced the retail hours by one hour per weekday, which allows our remaining staff to process more incoming mail, and train new staff. We anticipate returning to our regular retail hours once we have adequate trained employees. Any unlikely cost savings would likely be realized in the 2019-20 funding cycle.

3. What is the status of relocating to a larger facility?
4. What is the status of annexing the canyon area of Big Sky into the 59716-zip code?
5. What is the status of having a federally operated facility?

The answers to questions 3-5 are related. Without first knowing what the future operations will look like, it is difficult to design a new facility. The decisions to absorb the canyon into the 59716 zip code, to potentially implement home delivery in other portions of Big Sky, and establishing a federally operated post office would all impact the size and design of a new facility, or whether a new location was even necessary. The authority to make changes to the operations of the Big Sky postal service area belongs solely to the USPS. To date, besides our local Bozeman contacts, USPS administration has shown little interest in addressing any of these concerns. They have also not provided a plausible reply to my concern that the deficit between the cost to operate the current facility and the amount of funding provided by the USPS (which is the amount funded by BSRAD), continues to grow substantially.

In my opinion it will take pressure from the Big Sky community to motivate the USPS administrators in South Dakota and Colorado to consider some of these changes to improve the service provided in Big Sky. As a long-time partner in the funding of the Big Sky Post Office, I believe it may be time for the BSRAD to express conditions by which it would be willing to provide future funding. Without these conditions, I believe the USPS is willing to continue operating under the current arrangement.



6. Do you have year over year package numbers you can share?

We are not provided that data by the USPS and prior efforts to “count” packages manually have been both labor intensive and unreliable. However, we are provided retail revenue figures on a monthly basis. Both March and April 2020 retail lobby sales were historical records for those months.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

**Organization:** Wildlife Conservation Society

1. What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

If we do not receive Resort Tax funding, our Rocky Mountain Program overall will continue with our planned activities, but the Bear Smart Big Sky (BSBS) project would be on hold. Seventy-two percent of our coexistence funding comes from sources outside of Big Sky and these funding sources like to see a community commitment to leveraging their funds. With an active BSBS presence we have seen a steady decline in conflict trends even as visitation has increased in Big Sky. Currently, we fulfill a role as a liaison between trash companies and residents, Montana, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) and those experiencing conflict. We also coordinate and implement the work of the Bear Smart Big Council (BSC) including messaging via an active social media presence, ads, and signs. The work of the BSC is also to explore and implement innovative ideas like neighborhood watch groups to increase uptake and aid in enforcement. We also will share the BSBS model with other neighboring communities, as part of a regional working group, to ensure other communities are not food conditioning bears whose territories may include Big Sky. Representatives on the BSC include, Big Sky Community Organization, Big Sky Owners Association, Big Sky Resort, Lone Mountain Land, Montana Land Reliance, Moonlight Basin, Spanish Peaks Mountain Club, Town Center, and Yellowstone Club. Technical advisors include FWP, US Forest Service, and L&L Site Services.

2. Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

No, this project has not received any grants due to COVID-19.

3. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

WCS submitted only one project proposal. If we removed our request or postponed the BSBS program, our lack of presence as described in question #1 could result in a shift from declining trends in conflict to one of increasing trends, especially as the human footprint increases with new construction.



4. Do you subsidize for the extra cost of Bear Proof trash cans in Big Sky?

In past years, the Council did spend some time investigating a subsidy program. We came up with these constraints: 1. It would require a long-term mechanism to fund subsidies and someone to manage the program, and 2. The stigma of subsidies may result in poor participation. As a result, we chose not to pursue a subsidy process.

Instead, BSBS worked with the trash companies to make the cost to change to a bear-resistant trash can affordable. The current price to switch from a bear-resistant trash can is only \$5-\$6/mo by both L&L Site Services and Republic Services a 23-26% discount had we not negotiated this rate.

5. Have you considered working with the County to enforce people are compliant and are being "Bear Safe" with their dumpster?

Yes, it is one of the activities the Council will primarily cover this year. We recently re-engaged with Madison County to discuss adopting a regulation (ordinance) to require bear-resistant trash. This ordinance would be the first in the County. They also see a growing need for this ordinance as other communities, including Virginia City and Sheridan, are experiencing trash-related conflicts with bears. We are providing the County with information on conflict rates and ordinance and enforcement strategies other communities have used as a guide to develop a County ordinance. This regulation would give more teeth to enforcement officers including Montana, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) bear specialists, game wardens, and the sheriff's department when they respond to conflicts involving trash. You are correct that the cost of enforcement is a hurdle. The regional working group that we seek BSBS representation on will be working to identify innovative ways to build capacity to enforce regulations to reduce attractants and conflicts.



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Wildlife Conservation Society

- 1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?**
  - a. If yes how much can you release?**

The funds that we have remaining are allocated for salary and office expenses, graphic design needs, printing, and installing of a bear activity sign in Town Center and at Kiosks at trailheads. We would still request support in FY21 to ensure we continue to meet Bear Smart Big Sky (BSBS) project deliverables and our goal to keep people safer and bears wild.

- 2. What specific actions, outcomes and results do you plan to achieve with this funding?**

In light of Memorial Day's unfortunate encounter between a grizzly bear and mountain biker, the Bear Smart Council (BSC) has had early discussions and agreed to focus our work on increased messaging on how to stay safe while recreating and managing trails to minimize conflict. We are planning to reach out to and partner with recreational groups, e.g., southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association, to share and increase messaging. In Big Sky, we will develop bear safe outreach materials, including ads, signs, and social media posts. We will look to offer viable solutions to improve the noise made by the quiet activity of biking. BSBS has also discussed developing maps. These maps will "light up" areas, at a spatial and temporal scale, where there is an increased risk of encountering a bear, e.g., natural foods (berries), vegetation cover, proximity to elk calving areas, etc. to guide decisions that increase the safety of recreationists. Also, because this trail is not far from several subdivisions, we feel it is especially critical to continue messaging proper storage of trash and other bear smart actions you can take at your home (e.g., keeping garage doors closed, vehicles locked, etc.) to ensure we are not habituating bears presence to people.

This year, we also plan to wrap up efforts to work with the County to secure ordinances that make bear-resistant trash the only option in Big Sky, ensuring the consistent use of bear-resistant trash cans and overcoming issues of trash company turnover that can result in spikes in conflicts.

We also plan to have a representative from BSBS participate in a newly formed working group. This group makes up local stakeholders and agencies working to find innovative practices, policies, and market solutions that reflect and address local situations as grizzly bears recover and expand beyond Yellowstone into communities. One of the aims of this group is to find innovative ways to sustain the costs of proactive strategies to reduce conflicts because this need will not go away, as people and bears continue to increasingly share our most wild places.

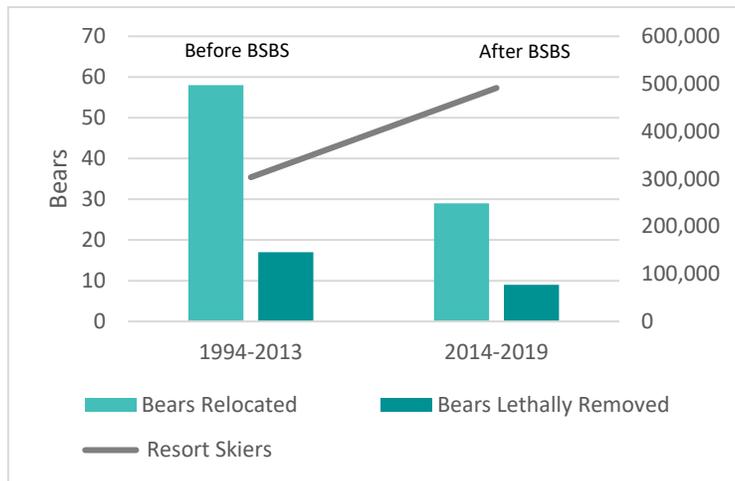
It is our aim that recreationists, homeowners, and workers are more informed and empowered to change behaviors at home, work, and play to keep the community safer while living in bear country. If successful, we expect to see a continued and steeper decline in conflicts even as visitors and construction grows. We will also have a County ordinance in place capturing those HOAs that have held



out in HOA-level requirements for bear-resistant trash and streamlining trash companies' work and increasing their efficiencies through only allowing bear-resistant trash cans.

**3. Please provide the last 5 years, by year, of FWP data on bear conflicts in Big Sky.**

Year	Bears Relocated	Bears Lethally Removed
2015	3	3
2016	1	0
2017	10	2
2018	6	2
2019	5	1



Conflict trends help BSBS to understand issues, adaptively manage our activities, and measure progress. The peak in 2017 conflicts reflects a few things that guided adapting activities and priorities. Quick staff turnover at Republic Services resulted in no succession training, and new staff on the frontlines were unaware of Big Sky HOA ordinances. WCS delivered maps and a list of subdivisions that require bear-resistant trash cans to their frontline staff to reference when speaking with customers. A further complication was the exponential increase in visitation and new residents, which Council members indicated was seen in resident turnover with the sales of homes, a more substantial VRBO presence, new construction, and increased visitation as Big Sky moved towards offering year-round recreational opportunities. In response, BSC members increased messaging bear-resistant ordinances through HOA newsletters, and BSBS launched the Bernadette Bear outreach campaign with the tag line for visitors, new residents, and the workforce to "Do Their Part and Be Bear Smart." As seen, these efforts to inform and empower the community is working. To facilitate quicker change in these numbers, we are strengthening our presence in Big Sky – our AmeriCorps member's sole function will be on this program and will not be shared with other projects as our AmeriCorps members have done in the past. We are also increasing messages to reach the recreation community, as described in question 2. We will do this *not* by increasing our ask to BSRAD, but by restructuring our team's priorities. Coexistence is WCS's primary goal in this region of the Rockies.

**4. How does BSBS engage the construction industry?**

The BSBS framework is about educating and empowering those in the position of authority over the contractors. With this in mind, representatives on the BSC include the six major developments where new construction is occurring, Big Sky Resort, Moonlight Basin, Yellowstone Club, Spanish Peaks, Town Center, and Big Sky Owners Association. Each of the BSC representatives shares the issues that they see on-the-ground. As a team, we collectively develop strategies to overcome challenges. Plans include adding bear-resistant trash requirements to the design review process with contractors. In the best-



case scenarios, contractors are required to bring trash home with them, removing this attractant from Big Sky. Other good options require separate bear-resistant trash for disposing of food waste.

**5. What is the progress on county ordinance revisions for requiring bear proof trash containers?**

BSBS program has pulled together information from other resort towns, including ordinance, penalty, and enforcement language, and recently submitted it to the County planner, recommending preferred language to incorporate. We are working with the planner to introduce an ordinance to the planning board at their June 2020 meeting. Because this is the first ordinance in the County, we anticipate this will cover a few planning board meetings before it can go to the Commissioners for approval. Thus far, in our initial conversations with the planner and Big Sky's Commissioner, Jim Hart, they are supportive of this process.

**6. What percentage of the Rocky Mountain team budget is expended directly in the BSRAD District?**

Approximately three percent of the WCS Rocky Mountain Program budget is expended in the BSRAD district. This distribution of funds reflects the Rockies team's scale. We work from the Canada border to the Mexican border, and our projects include bear coexistence, a grasslands initiative, an Indigenous-led conservation initiative, bison and jaguar restoration effort, and a riparian restoration program.

**7. Are the funds being requested for new activity or continued programming from the years prior?**  
**a. If for continued programming what success indicators do you have from FY20 to justify continued support?**

In the coming year, we aim to strengthen our existing program, building on our platform, which utilizes the proven bear smart model developed in Canmore Alberta. In Canmore, it is not unusual to see a grizzly bear in town. They are keeping people safer through a three-prong approach: education and outreach, attractant management, and regulations and enforcement. The bear smart model recognizes that negative interactions need all of these components. Reducing negative interactions requires an informed and empowered community of visitors, residents, workforce, and businesses that are using the tools available to manage attractants. Regulations guide changes in behaviors and provides enforceable language. We are also meeting new deliverables, as discussed in question 2, focusing on informing recreationists that Big Sky is surrounded by bear habitat, and you can expect to and need to be prepared to encounter grizzly bears.

**8. Are there any additional funding sources you can utilize for this project?**

Yes, we have raised 70% of the funds needed for this project from funding sources outside of Big Sky, allowing us to allocate more of BSRAD funds towards implementing work and our other sources of funds towards operating expenses. We have also focused our AmeriCorps Members' time solely on this project so we can deliver stronger outcomes quicker and keep people safer. Only 25% of her contract is paid from BSRAD funds. We are able to secure these outside funding sources because they see a local



commitment from BSRAD that supports a plan they can get behind - Our Big Sky Plan's interest in creating a sustainable community that takes stewardship actions to protect wildlife and our natural resources as visitation and construction grows.

**9. Should this project move under another local group that can fund it from fees?**

While BSBS is not formally under another local group, HOAs that receive fees are represented on the BSC and contribute to the work of BSBS. For example, Moonlight's new bear-resistant trash site and Town Center's compacted trash are outcomes of their engagement on the BSC. The BSBS model is a decentralized one, in which we empower people to make good decisions. WCS is an integral part of the success of the BSBS program. WCS facilitates and coordinates the Council, where they collectively formulate ideas to address conflict. WCS then implements the plans of the Council. WCS is responsible for increasing outreach and education to inform and empower visitors and new and residents to take actions that keep people safe. An informed community becomes especially critical as we begin to see an increase in grizzly bears as they continue to spill out from Yellowstone. WCS is also the point of contact for working with the County for ordinance changes and partnering and engaging with trash companies to honor their commitment to make bear-resistant trash cans an affordable option in Big Sky. WCS also is a trusted broker of information by agencies. When the agencies are busy responding to conflicts across SW Montana, it impacts their capacity to meet with the community to share information. An excellent example of how WCS works with agencies to meet this capacity gap is the upcoming Explore Big Sky Town Hall on June 1, 2020, where WCS is working with agencies to message bear-safe behaviors for mountain bikers.

## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 1

Organization: Women In Action

What happens to your projects/programs or organization if you do not receive Resort Tax funding?

*WIA's programming will be funded through existing relationships with individual donors, family, and community foundations. WIA also has a healthy cash reserve, which we maintained for organizational security. However, in these unprecedented times, WIA can rely on those funds to ensure the continuance of the vital behavioral health programming we support.*

Why do you choose not to have your financials audited?

*The WIA Board believes the cost of an independent audit outweighs the benefit to our small organization. We make excellent use of QuickBooks to track expenses and income, including rigorous segregation of restricted contributions, and to compile our financial statements. We use the services of a CPA for consulting on financial questions and the preparation of our annual 990. We have a Finance Committee of the Board that prepares and presents financial reports, including the check register, for review and approval by the full Board on a quarterly basis. Finally, we produce and distribute an annual report for our donors in which we summarize the impact and identify sources and uses of funds for the prior year.*

Have you received any grants due to COVID-19?

*The Big Sky Relief Fund pledged up to \$10,000 to provide free counseling to any Big Sky resident seeking care through the month of April. WIA provided \$3,915 of free counseling, and will be submitting a request from the fund for around \$2,000 once all of the invoices have been processed.*

*WIA received a \$5,000 grant from the Morgridge Family Foundation to extend free counseling services through the month of May.*

4. Which projects can be removed from this year's request or postponed?

*Unfortunately, none of the programming that we are requesting BSRAD fund can be postponed. WIA's partner practitioners have seen a significant increase in demand for behavioral health services. This increase will likely continue as Big Sky residents cope with the emotional and financial strain brought on by the COVID -19 pandemic.*



## FY21 QUESTIONS: ROUND 2

**Organization:** Women In Action

1. Do you have any funds from FY20 you are able to release?
  - a. If yes how much can you release?  
WIA has \$2,808 remaining from our FY20 allocation. Due to the increased need for behavioral health services brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, WIA is unable to release any funding.
2. Using the table below please provide us with a month by month budgetary breakdown of all projects you applied for:

Month	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 1 DIRECT BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES	Predicted Resort Tax Request PROJECT 2 INDIRECT BEHAVIORAL HEALTHCARE SERVICES
July 2020	\$3,250	\$916,67
August 2020	\$3,250	\$916.67
September 2020	\$3,250	\$916.67
October 2020	\$3,250	\$916.67
November 2020	\$3,250	\$916.67
December 2020	\$3,250	\$916.67
January 2021	\$3,250	\$916.67
February 2021	\$3,250	\$916.67
March 2021	\$3,250	\$916.67
April 2021	\$3,250	\$916.66
May 2021	\$3,250	\$916.66
June 2021	\$3,250	\$916.66
July 2021	\$3,250	\$916.66

3. What amount of your reserves, if any is the Board willing to utilize this next season to support operational funding shortfalls?

\$36,150 of WIA's cash reserves was approved by the board to cover operating expenses in CY20.

4. Is there a reason you are budgeting a loss?

The decision was made to use cash reserves that was dedicated grant and individual funding from previous years to cover behavioral health expenses, rather than seeking that amount in new grant funding. This may change depending on the increased need for behavioral healthcare, and the number of people who are eligible for WIA's sliding fee scale due to job loss and the economic downturn.



5. How many people utilized the services paid for by BSRAD last year?

WIA's partner practitioners provided 554 client hours to 110 Big Sky residents

6. What do you anticipate for number of people in the upcoming year to be served?

WIA has expanded behavioral health services in 2020 by adding two new partner practitioners who are providing care to 32 additional Big Sky residents. Later this year, one more mental health practitioner will offer up to 24 client hours/week.

WIA is estimating providing close to 1,000 hours of behavioral healthcare to around 200 Big Sky residents in need.