2018 FINAL REPORT

LOOKING BACK

So many leaders who took part in the inaugural year of programming at West Creek Ranch told us the experience was the most meaningful and transformative event of their professional lives.

That's a high bar, but it's exactly what Arthur Blank imagined when he opened West Creek Ranch in June 2018. Set on 6,600 acres in Paradise Valley, Montana, West Creek Ranch was designed to deliver one-of-a-kind experiences for small gatherings of leaders pursuing innovative solutions to issues of global and/or national significance.

In a launch year that required running programs as we simultaneously finished the facility, West Creek Ranch successfully hosted 24 groups. Across the board, participant feedback affirmed Arthur's big concept: to focus on relationships with guests—not transactions—combined with purposeful use of the natural environment and curation of high-capacity partner organizations, to enable these groups to extend and accelerate their accomplishments. In short, West Creek gatherings yield tremendously productive results.

With guidance by ranch staff who treat guests like family, the West Creek experience is a reminder that more indoor meetings don't equal more success. West Creek requires participants to spend half their time engaged in outdoor activities based on the belief that exponential learning is stimulated by connecting to nature, building relationships, and fostering self-renewal. Again and again, groups skeptical about less indoor programming found their participants raving about how much they achieved outside of the meeting space, immersed in games, hikes, horseback rides and more.

This publication provides thumbnail summaries of the Foundation programs we hosted in 2018. We know you will enjoy reviewing the highlights. We are confident 2019 will bring additional creative and impactful gatherings to West Creek, and we look forward to raising the inspiration bar even higher.

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IT IS MY HOPE THAT VISITORS TO WEST CREEK RANCH WILL BE

INSPIRED AND RENEWED BY THEIR SURROUNDINGS

WHILE CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER IN A RELAXED, FUN SETTING AWAY FROM THE PRESSURES OF DAILY LIFE.

-ARTHUR BLANK

JUNE 11-15

SPITFIRE STRATEGIES
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

DISCOVERING THE ACTIVATION POINT

To make progress on important issues, people must take action. Thanks to decades of study, there are tried-and-true techniques that increase the chances of producing proactive behaviors. This knowledge base includes the latest research from behavioral economics and brain science that tells us how to tap into both the conscious and unconscious thought processes of our target audience. Led by Kristen Grimm, president of Spitfire Strategies, this week-long workshop provided hands-on training that enabled participants to create a viable activation plan for real work crucial to their organization.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Participants learned how to apply communication best practices in their daily work, and developed their own tailored activation plans for engaging specific audiences through an intentional and authentic strategic approach.

The learning activities were based on the real work of the participants and designed so they could return home with clear communication goals, increased audience knowledge according to psychographics as well as demographics, and strategies that will help them best meet their organizational objectives.

One hundred percent of participants said they were able to achieve their goal of developing a tangible activation plan for their organization by the end of the week.

Attendees also felt that the generous amount of time in nature along with peer-to-peer interaction and feedback was a gift that fostered a productive learning environment.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“These types of opportunities are almost never provided to nonprofits. Focused reflection on working through current issues is critical to success for our organizations.”

“More than any other retreat like this I've attended, I have returned to work with a solid outline of a campaign that, if implemented and successful, will have an incredibly positive impact on the number of schools and kids we can partner with, AND on our bottom line.”

SPITFIRE
SPARK CHANGE

JUNE 25-29

VILLAGE CAPITAL

CREATING A COLLABORATIVE SOCIAL IMPACT

Village Capital was particularly excited to convene a unique group of entrepreneurs, investors, foundations and nonprofits that are using breakthrough innovations and ideas to increase economic opportunity and environmental sustainability across the world. How entrepreneurs can meet our planet's pressing resource challenges—water shortages, food insecurity, and renewable energy systems—was of particular focus. The spectacular setting and conservation mission of West Creek Ranch served as a fitting venue for one of our generation's most important conversations. Overall, it was a major success that created a pioneering collaborative endeavor focused on innovative approaches to American community development and impact investing.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Participants designed and committed to the "West Creek Accord"—a new, interdisciplinary approach to community development—with the goal of raising $100 million in funding commitments for five target neighborhoods. The West Creek Accord created the infrastructure for a new organization called Blueprint Local (an offshoot of host Village Capital) that launched in January 2019 as an interdisciplinary collaboration.

Nearly every participant has taken part in a follow-up planning meeting ("West Creek Reunions") for Blueprint Local in Austin, New York, Atlanta, San Francisco, Boston and Kansas City. One participant at West Creek made an initial commitment of $5 million for Blueprint Local Texas—an implementation of a West Creek concept for distressed neighborhoods in Austin and San Antonio—with a goal of raising $100 million in 2019 for Texas alone.

Several participants also engaged in over 20 community meetings, city meetings, and private investor events to implement the West Creek design in Vine City in Atlanta, with a goal of mobilizing $25 million by the end of 2019. In addition, Village Capital's president, Ross Baird, and Blueprint Local have joined forces with Bruce Katz, founding director of the Brookings Institution's Metropolitan Policy Program, to help facilitate an Opportunity Zone planning process for the City of Atlanta.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"I cannot overemphasize how fantastic the week was. It was the best professional event I have ever attended—even better than Rockefeller's Bellagio—the food is fantastic, not at all spartan. You are made to feel like you are being invested in and respected, which we all appreciated. Additionally, the staff makes the entire experience what it is—deeply thoughtful and executed flawlessly. This, combined with the location and our mix of attendees, made it memorable. There could be something magical in repeating the week—review the big idea we developed perhaps six months to a year later, even in the winter."

VillageCapital

JULY 2-6

TRAGEDY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR SURVIVORS

RETREAT WITH FAMILIES OF THE FALLEN

Retreats bring families of fallen military service members together in unique outdoor settings. Each Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS) retreat includes physical and emotional movement, time for conversation and reflection, and unique travel experiences. Participants leave TAPS retreats with renewed confidence, a sense of triumph, and lifelong friends.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

West Creek Ranch hosted 15 survivors of a military loss along with 3 support members of the TAPS team (also survivors, themselves).

Survivors traveled from Washington, Colorado, Ohio, Virginia, California, Iowa, Massachusetts, Montana, North Dakota, New Jersey, Texas and Wyoming to be part of these special four days.

The West Creek Ranch program provided TAPS its first-ever dedicated retreat facility, which simplified traveling for participants. TAPS was able to give grieving families private, personal space.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“Soothed my soul, nourished my body, and I feel awakened. I didn’t know I was so thirsty for acceptance until I received it. Thank you.”

"I feel the vulnerability we shared out loud was a forward step in [a] grief journey for all of us. So raw and honest. Fun, fun, fun dancing, horseback riding, wrangling cattle, etc., making memories that will help me continue forward. I’m not stuck."

“I was finally able to say the things I had kept inside, as the normal population just doesn't want to hear that you are struggling. I connected with others and felt like I was part of a group that ‘got me.’”

"I found in many of the physical challenges that it is easy for our minds to tell us something is going to be hard and that we just shouldn't do it. Once we actually accept the challenge and move forward it is a lot easier than we thought. During my reflection time I compared this to my grief journey. I have felt stuck in my journey, not living life to the fullest. The retreat helped me to see this clearly and encouraged me to start taking steps in a direction."

KYLE BETH HARPER kyle@taps.org

JULY 16-20

THE WARRIOR ALLIANCE

FROM FRONT LINES TO CITY STREETS

The Warrior Alliance summit brought together veterans, community leaders, and experts to accelerate innovations to help more veterans achieve a healthy, empowered civilian life. The summit was designed to leverage best practices with leading organizations to benefit the 750,000 veterans living in Georgia, 160,000 of whom deal with service-related disabilities. The goal was to integrate and streamline these services within the state of Georgia and then scale the proven model nationally. Recent VA studies on veteran suicide have drawn significant media attention especially on a single statistic: 20 veterans commit suicide daily. The summit sought solutions that go beyond suicide prevention, driven by the belief that healing, intervention and rehabilitation can grant the men and women who served our nation the lives they deserve.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

West Creek helped The Warrior Alliance convene and mobilize a group of partners ready to lead Atlanta's comprehensive veterans services, thus accelerating the group's work by at least six months.

The space, team building and dedicated time together in and out of the classroom were the most positive aspects for this new working team.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"We created a direction for the Alliance in a collaborative way that would not be possible in a traditional conference setting. We were able to put thoughts to paper and experience team building, and better understand our partners. The space provided the opportunity for everyone to get creative and be inspired. The comfort and thrill of having so many options to do something new with fellow team members was refreshing."

THE WARRIOR ALLIANCE

SCOTT JOHNSON sjohnson@thewarrioralliance.org

JULY 23-27

BABSON COLLEGE
EXECUTIVE EDUCATION

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP IN THE SOCIAL SECTOR

This new program integrated Arthur Blank's six core values, the idea of entrepreneurship as a generative contribution to the world, and facilitated lessons from nature and living systems. It was designed to help nonprofit and social sector leaders develop critical thinking, entrepreneurial leadership, and personal resources to advance their organizations and solve problems to benefit youth, families and communities. The program accomplished this by incorporating Babson College's Entrepreneurial Thought and Action® methodology, as well as the principles and process of Social Design, plus on-site recreational programming that made nature a key component of experiential and values-based learning. The week was designed for senior leaders whose organizations are facing critical moments of growth or transition. To ensure lessons learned were applied, each organization accepted into the program sent two senior staff members. The program met Babson standards for Executive Education and offered participants a Babson Certificate of Completion.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Twenty-one social sector leaders from eleven different organizations in Atlanta and Montana came together to learn new ways to address their challenges and aspirations. They left as a tight-knit support group of creators and problem solvers who adopted a common language that fosters change activation, growth and new opportunities for their organizations and communities.

A few months after the program ended, the Babson faculty hosted a strategic session with six members of the Georgia cohort. Attendees described how critical ideas and relationships that were outcomes of West Creek were put into action.

For example, Metro Atlanta YMCA is now working with: Common Market on free monthly fruit and vegetable stands; Chris 180 on trauma-informed care training for YMCA early learning staff; Community Guilds on a framework for STEAM infusion across youth programs from early learning to after-school to teen programs; and TAG Education Collaborative on STEAM and a career readiness session for teens in February 2019.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"I have never had an experience like it before—it changes you in the most positive and generative way. It was a true gift. I feel so fortunate to have been able to 'inspire, renew and connect' and meet so many incredible and passionate community leaders and advocates."

"None of these great and collaborative partnerships would have occurred without the Foundation creating an opportunity to get us all together to brainstorm and consider ways to add value to one another's organizations. I am deeply appreciative of the foresight that you had in selecting this group, and helping us build relationships that will benefit so many in our community."

BABSON

CHERYL KISER ckiser@babson.edu

JULY 30-AUGUST 3

NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION

PROTECTING SIGNIFICANT PLACES REPRESENTING OUR DIVERSE CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

A senior team of 22 associates came together for a focused, multidisciplinary discussion about nationally scaling ReUrbanism—the work to increase significantly the rates of building conservation and reuse in America's communities. The belief is that civic leaders, developers and decision makers can create inclusive, healthy and resilient cities by conserving and re-using older, historic buildings. The goal was to make this work more focused, relevant and impactful for all communities and stakeholders as well as for the Trust staff who lead the project.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

National Trust used their West Creek Ranch experience to produce a theory of change map for ReUrbanism, with two goals: 1) reuse as the default; and 2) demolition as the last resort for American cities and towns. This work included the development of a three-year strategic plan based on a recently completed analysis/business plan for this program.

Building on two years of pilot work, participants reassessed and refined expansion plans while building a shared lexicon for the ReUrbanism initiative. Trust staff had the opportunity to gain insights and forge working relationships across departments and divisions for ongoing collaboration.

This cross-organizational team developed plans for funding the expansion of their work in cities through the ReUrbanism initiative. Their West Creek collaboration has led to the development of case statements and preliminary funding proposals.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"West Creek provided an incredible opportunity for us to connect individually with one another and as a team, which was important since most of us work in different locations across the country. Having the luxury of five days to be together in a single place gave us the chance to get to know one another better. We accomplished more in terms of strategic planning than we thought would be possible, and left with a clear path forward for the National Trust on our ReUrbanism initiative. The beautiful setting and delicious meals also allowed us time to relax together, which promoted collegiality and dialogue."

National Trust *for* Historic Preservation
Save the past. Enrich the future.™

DAVID J. BROWN dbrown@savingplaces.org

AUGUST 13-17

ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE
CENTER FOR TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

ENSURING JUSTICE AND FAIR TREATMENT FOR ALL IN A DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) Center for Technology and Society convened a group of virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) content providers to work closely with ADL's experts on cyber and civil rights, as well as on education, to design and build a prototype of an interactive VR experience. The time together promoted civil liberties using new technology to advance deeper understanding and empathy. Building on work carried out in 2Q and 3Q 2018, the week-long West Creek Ranch meeting contributed to a working prototype of the VR experience. This prototype will go to ADL's network of 27 domestic and international offices and to its partners, and the final product will be publicly deployed across the country.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The retreat assembled 24 creators, educators, scholars, playwrights and activists to design a narrative for "A Classroom Through Time"—a VR civil rights experience focused on social issues beginning in the 1950s through today.

The experience at West Creek Ranch deepened and expanded connections between ADL's Center for Technology and Society and the VR community. As a result of their week working together, the team created a timeline for turning the narratives into a final VR experience along with a fundraising plan.

ADL's Center for Technology and Society is currently collaborating with VR creators who attended the retreat, to build a prototype of the civil rights VR experience, which was envisioned at West Creek. ADL expects to complete the prototype by end of spring 2019.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"The work we are doing was so heavy, dealing with systemic oppression, coupled with the challenge of collaborating with people you do not know, but the outdoor activities allowed us to let all of that go—it gave us a chance to decompress and come back more refreshed and focused."

"West Creek Ranch provided ADL with the ideal setting to bring together a diverse group of professionals to create, write and collaborate on a virtual reality project to promote empathy and understanding among people around civil rights issues. Teams came together and brainstormed on porches, by the pond, and on the deck, and ideas were explored and refined, and now this project is in a position to be finalized and produced…The ranch was creatively stimulating and provided us with a social and professional setting to think outside the box and write and envision this VR experience."

ADL®

DANIEL KELLEY dkelley@adl.org

SEPTEMBER 4-7

COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION

LESSONS FROM THE YELLOWSTONE WATERSHED

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation and partners convened a conference focused on collaborative conservation and lessons learned from the Upper Yellowstone Watershed. The Yellowstone River is one of the nation's most well-known rivers, yet little attention has been centered on its status, trends and outstanding management needs. A broad set of researchers, managers and other watershed stakeholders gathered to focus on topics including water use and administration, impacts of growth and climate change on water supply and demand, a water budget for future planning and management, and the practical lessons to be drawn from current understanding. In addition to its spotlight on the Upper Yellowstone Watershed, the conference conveners examined the utility of organizing an annual conference that would look at collaborative conservation, where a broad range of expertise and experience are brought together to address solutions, not conflict, with the goal of preserving highly functional landscapes.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation hosted more than 60 participants including landowners, business owners and scientists, as well as agency, community and land management leaders to examine the current state of the Upper Yellowstone Watershed and chart a sustainability plan for its future.

The convening marked the first time many of the participants had ever had the opportunity to discuss these issues directly with the experts and stakeholders all in one room, which helped break down barriers among historically contentious groups.

Outcomes included: 1) a concise treatise on the state of the watershed; 2) lessons for the larger region; 3) agenda-setting for the emerging Upper Yellowstone Watershed group; 4) initiation of new research and monitoring projects; and 5) an increase in the cooperation and energy devoted to management of the Upper Yellowstone Watershed.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"Perhaps the most significant accomplishment was bringing together all parties (landowners, farmers, ranchers, recreational users, managing agencies, academics) with an interest in maintaining Upper Yellowstone River qualities in the face of increasing use pressure and competition for water. The issues can be very volatile, but the setting was both calming and inspiring, and encouraged frank but respectful discussion of problems and potential solutions."

THE ARTHUR M. BLANK FAMILY FOUNDATION

SEPTEMBER 10-13

WHAT PRICE TO PLAY

HOW DO WE FUND OUTDOOR RECREATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY?

Americans have unrivaled opportunities to recreate on millions of acres of public lands. The public's ability to access these lands represents an important component of the American model of conservation. But America's portfolio of public land assets is at risk. Increasingly large numbers of outdoor recreationists bear little or no cost for public land management. As a result, traditional sources of funding are falling behind the needs of public land agencies to continue providing outdoor recreation opportunities, as well as basic land management functions. The Property and Environment Research Center (PERC) and The Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation co-sponsored the gathering of 20 executives from the outdoor retail industry, hunting and fishing groups, conservation organizations as well as state and federal land agencies to consider creating a collaborative group focused on quality recreation and conservation.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

One key accomplishment was bringing together a diverse group of outdoor recreation and public land stakeholders with different perspectives, for an unlikely conversation both to explore potential funding streams and to set an agenda for addressing the issue by 2020.

Participants began the week with opposing views on potential solutions to the issue of land users funding conservation. By the end of the week, all participants gained a better understanding of the opinions and perspectives of each group and silos began to break down.

Outcomes included: 1) commitment to conduct further research on the state of recreational funding for public lands; 2) development of a more granular slate of potential alternatives to increase funding; and 3) the need to continue the conversation and conduct follow-up gatherings with a wide range of conservation, industry and agency partners.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

"We met people from different backgrounds; got to know and understand one another better; and found our shared values, and also our lingering differences. It could create a way for us to work together in the future notwithstanding our differences, provided there's follow-through on the part of the organizers."

PERC
PROPERTY AND ENVIRONMENT RESEARCH CENTER

HOLLY FRETWELL holly@perc.org

SEPTEMBER 24-28

BLUE SKY FUNDERS FORUM

EXPANDING OPPORTUNITIES TO PLAY, LEARN AND GROW OUTDOORS

Blue Sky convened members of its board, expert advisors, and partners at West Creek Ranch to develop and implement a strategy for expanding equitable access to play, learn and grow outdoors. Funders and nonprofit leaders working at the intersection of people and environment defined the importance of their work and its impact on a diversity of issues including conservation and education. This gathering focused specifically on: 1) a shared narrative of common values and approaches to environmental education that will resonate with a wider audience and garner greater financial support; and 2) an implementation strategy to unify the field around the collective goals of health and wellness, social justice, and youth development.

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

There were 22 people in attendance representing 20 different organizations focusing on environmental education. A key differentiator of this event's success was the opportunity for many different stakeholders to work together.

Participants noted that the progress made on the shared narrative could not have happened elsewhere. The opportunity to convene and connect at West Creek accelerated the process of identifying common values/goals and allowed attendees to deepen and strengthen their partnerships.

The critical conversations, relationship building, and overall experience provided by West Creek continue to drive the shared narrative forward, and participants continue to stay deeply engaged as leaders in the work.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“For Blue Sky, this gathering felt like a pivotal moment—a chance to make real progress on a common goal and begin to develop a plan that could truly transform the field. The space, activities and services at West Creek allowed us to cohere rapidly as a group and make quick strides toward meeting our goal. I can’t imagine a better space in which to convene!”

Blue Sky FUNDERS FORUM

CHRISTINA JAMES christina@blueskyfundersforum.org

MONTANA LOCAL & REGIONAL PROGRAMS

STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY IN MONTANA: September 13-14

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The goal of this program was to bring together donors and board members to educate them on best practices in strategic philanthropy to advance investments and organizational programming.

The engaged participants learned about the many challenges to philanthropy in Montana and the need for increased dialogue to foster greater collaboration.

Many of the participants who met for the first time at the gathering continue to stay connected and discuss how they can collectively address some of the key issues in the state, like mental health.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“The entire ranch experience was cozy and warm and led to wonderful conversation, which helped us achieve our objectives for the program. The addition of the campfire and downtime was critical to making it a success. The ranch team was also super positive, accommodating and helpful, which made our jobs that much easier.”

“The sessions also reinforced the emerging shared urgency around the issue of mental health. I believe our sessions together may serve as a launch pad for truly transformative leadership in this arena.”

CHILD TRENDS/YOUTH SUICIDE PREVENTION: October 2-3

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In partnership with Child Trends, this convening was held to foster coordination and collaboration among community stakeholders to address issues related to youth suicide.

The main goal was to understand challenges faced by youth and to learn strengths and gaps among youth-serving organizations, with a specific focus on the growing rates of teen suicide.

The take-aways from this gathering were essential both to craft the 2019 AMB West Community Fund’s Suicide Prevention grant guidelines and to identify project investment target areas.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“It was encouraging to hear so much consensus among diverse interests as to the nature of the community's core challenges and some root causes of those problems. That will help us focus our scope in current discussions among the county, city, Park County Community Foundation and several private citizens to develop a data-supported community profile exercise to better evaluate core problems that merit the bulk of our attention.”

"We really made progress toward more comprehensive and collective community work to prevent suicide and improve socio-emotional health and wellness.”

LANDOWNERS FORUM: October 8

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In partnership with the Western Landowners Alliance, West Creek Ranch convened "Private Working Lands - A Public Legacy" to initiate conversations among five area landowners who rarely have a chance to meet. The day focused on the opportunities and challenges of maintaining and enhancing private working lands, building partnerships, and understanding best practices.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

The most positive aspects of the meeting were “intelligent conversation about western issues,” and “the ability to gather people of diverse backgrounds and interests in an atmosphere that invites open discussion and cooperation.”

PARK COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION: October 9

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

This one-day meeting gathered senior-level leaders from area nonprofits to collaborate and introduce the Park County Community Vision and Profile Development Project, which officially launched in 2019 and serves as a growth guide for Park County government and nonprofits over the next decade.

There were 50 participants from 31 local nonprofit organizations in attendance. The meeting achieved the goal of networking among attendees and setting the stage for the Community Profile and Vision Project's well-being indicators for Park County.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“Our agency has struggled with connecting with our rural community leaders, and I was able to connect with some Gardiner folks at this meeting, which has been a goal for me.”

“The meeting room was a bit crowded, the tables too close together, the parking instructions a bit unclear, the walk from the parking area longer than expected."

FUNDERS FOR MONTANA’S CHILDREN: October 10-12

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Funders for Montana’s Children convened 20 private sector leaders and stakeholders in partnership with the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis to gain support for a statewide coalition to tackle the issue of insufficient early childcare resources for children 0–3 throughout Montana.

The ultimate goal was to encourage the private sector to offer family-friendly business practices and educate their peers regarding the importance of quality early care efforts. These businesses can then serve as community models and galvanize public officials to invest more resources for MT families.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“Because we were able to draw Montana's top business leaders together into one location, we have now onboarded them as ambassadors of young children and have a fantastic opportunity to make Montana the children's state.”

“I think there was a great foundation set regarding what needs to be done in order to bring our mission to the public for gaining the best reaction for meeting our goals of availability, quality and affordability to child care.”

ENHANCING EDUCATION ON PUBLIC LAND: October 15-17

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

More than 20 federal and state land managers, businesses and outfitters gathered to address existing Forest Service policies and the opportunities/challenges for youth organizations working to increase education on public lands.
The ultimate goal is to increase the number of youth utilizing public lands, by providing unencumbered access to education organizations.

Participants agreed to continue to push the local Forest Service to review current policies and conduct the necessary needs assessment as the first step to increasing and/or reallocating use permits.

Montana Wilderness School (MWS) and Montana Outfitters and Guides Association (MOGA) agreed to undertake a pilot program where MOGA and MWS establish a business relationship allowing MWS to run youth programs on public land under existing outfitter permits.

The creation of a cooperative network was also explored among outfitters, schools, nonprofits and agencies to share needs/opportunities and provide increased educational opportunities for youth on public lands.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“The space provided a setting in which we could have difficult discussions on sensitive environmental issues, and do so effectively, with humor and grace and support of one another.”

“I wish I had been more forthright about the challenges that outdoor leaders face in accessing Forest Service lands in USFS Region 1. I do not think the Forest Service personnel took the issue as seriously as I think they should have.”

“I'd like the ranch to figure out how to accommodate our agency partners so they can stay without getting into trouble with federal/state rules around accepting gifts.”

LEADERSHIP MONTANA: October 17-19

KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Celebrating its 15th year, Leadership Montana has been very successful with its statewide flagship program that annually brings together a cohort of 40 leaders to learn about the diverse issues facing Montana communities. The organization is looking at strategic ways to expand its programming and address the growing needs of the state.

Leadership Montana held a strategic planning session with 23 funders and board members to review Montana’s leadership gaps and develop a plan for the organization to address those gaps over the next 15 years.

One important outcome was a dedicated opportunity to focus on civility and cooperation for individuals already in leadership roles as well as those working with legislators.

PARTICIPANT QUOTES

“It was a wonderful setting in which to think and dream big and to plan for the future. It was comfortable and inspiring. And because every detail was attended to, everyone was able to enjoy that experience, including staff.”

SPONSOR & ASSOCIATE WEEKS

JUNE 4-8

MERCEDES-BENZ

HANS LUPOLD hans.lupold@mbusa.com

AUGUST 6-10

DELTA

TIM MAPES tim.x.mapes@delta.com

SEPTEMBER 17-21

COCA-COLA

TONY PHILO tphilo@coca-cola.com

JUNE 18-22 &
AUGUST 27-31

BFOB ASSOCIATES

KAREN WALTERS kwalters@ambse.com

AUGUST 20-24

HOME DEPOT ASSOCIATES

TIM HOURIGAN tim_hourigan@homedepot.com

ARTHUR BLANK

I have always envisioned West Creek to be an idea incubator, somewhere that people can get away from the traditional limits of everyday life in an inspiring, natural and different setting. I've found that being outdoors in this rich physical beauty where the world slows down allows you to take a moment to reflect on what's really important to you personally. For me, that's enriching the lives of the people we serve in our businesses and the communities around us, and I'm proud of our efforts to do that with West Creek.

As we build upon the inaugural season, my desire is to expand our impact and bring together problem solvers, idea generators, and influencers to have meaningful discussions about the important issues that are facing our society. I'm hopeful that the unique experience we offer at West Creek will inspire organizations grappling with topics like social justice and wellness to focus on their true purpose and do more than they could have without being here.

With deep appreciation and respect,

Arthur M. Blank

WEST CREEK RANCH
2018 SCHEDULE

WEEK 1	MERCEDES-BENZ	JUNE 4-8
WEEK 2	SPITFIRE STRATEGIES	JUNE 11-15
WEEK 3	BFOB ASSOCIATES	JUNE 18-22
WEEK 4	VILLAGE CAPITAL	JUNE 25-29
WEEK 5	TAPS	JULY 2-6
WEEK 6	THE WARRIOR ALLIANCE	JULY 16-20
WEEK 7	BABSON COLLEGE	JULY 23-27
WEEK 8	NATIONAL TRUST FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION	JULY 30-AUG 3
WEEK 9	DELTA	AUG 6-10
WEEK 10	ANTI-DEFAMATION LEAGUE	AUG 13-17
WEEK 11	HOME DEPOT ASSOCIATES	AUG 20-24
WEEK 12	BFOB ASSOCIATES	AUG 27-31
WEEK 13	COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION	SEPT 4-7
WEEK 14	WHAT PRICE TO PLAY / STRATEGIC PHILANTHROPY	SEPT 10-13 / 13-14
WEEK 15	COCA-COLA	SEPT 17-21
WEEK 16	BLUE SKY FUNDERS FORUM	SEPT 24-28
WEEK 17	MONTANA LOCAL & REGIONAL PROGRAMS	OCT 1-5
WEEK 18	MONTANA LOCAL & REGIONAL PROGRAMS	OCT 8-12
WEEK 19	MONTANA LOCAL & REGIONAL PROGRAMS	OCT 15-19