

## Becoming an Outdoorswoman (BOW)

### Overview

Nationally, Becoming an Outdoorswoman (BOW) is a non-profit educational program offering hands-on outdoor skills workshops to adult women ages 18 and older. The program began in 1991 in Wisconsin. Thirty-five states, including Montana, and three Canadian provinces now offer the program. The national BOW program approves one entity per state (mostly state agencies) to operate using the BOW logo. However, interaction with the national BOW program is minimal.



### Montana's BOW Program (since 1994)

#### *FWP staff and volunteers*

Montana has .35 FTE managing the BOW program. Regional Communication and Education Program Managers help on occasion, but their time is limited, given regular duties. All instructors are volunteers and FWP reimburses them for travel and per diem.

#### *Annual events*

Summer BOW workshop – Three days in August at Lubrecht Experimental Forest. Approximately 65 participants and 25 volunteer instructors. Priority is given to new participants (75% new participants in 2023) and registration is limited by facility capacity and number of instructors. In 2023, approximately 10 – 15 women were waitlisted.

“Beyond BOW” workshops – Typically four to 12 workshops per year with about 20 participants each. We average about 60 percent returning BOW participants.

BOW reaches approximately 100 – 300 women annually. Most are residents and average participant age is estimated at more than 50 years old.

### Future Plans

We continue to be open for new topics for workshops. These new opportunities often depend on instructors who are willing to teach the topic, or a venue where a new workshop can happen. We'll also continue to explore partnerships that might help bring new opportunities to our students.

