



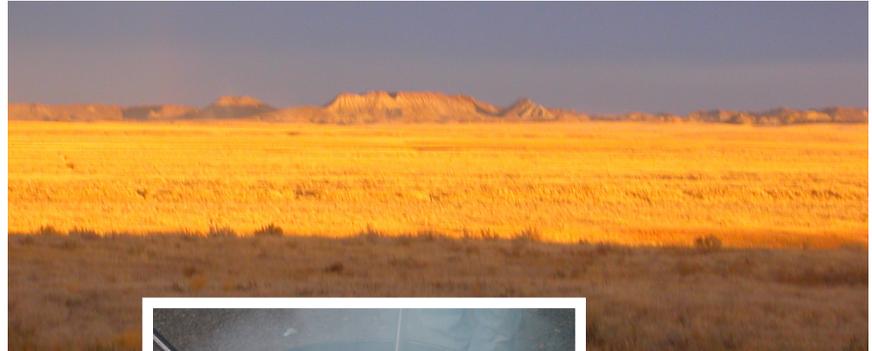
## Welcome to Dawson County

The Yellowstone River and Interstate 94 cut through the eastern third of this eastern Montana county. Glendive, the county seat, sits astride the Yellowstone River 35 miles from North Dakota and 150 miles south of the Canadian border. The county encompasses 1,523,387 acres with 1.38 million acres in farmland, producing mainly dryland wheat and barley, irrigated corn, sugarbeets, and cattle. With the recent collapse of the oil economy in western North Dakota and eastern Montana, the latest census estimates have set the county's population at 9,327, a 3.1% drop from 2015 levels. The city of Glendive and unincorporated West Glendive comprise 84.1% of the county's population. The county's main employers include the Glendive Medical Center, BNSF Railway, and the Glendive Public School system. Dawson County is home to Montana's largest state park, Makoshika, Dawson Community College, and the Makoshika Dinosaur Museum. The county offers excellent recreational activities and tourist attractions.

### 2017 State 4-H Leaders Forum

After a 28-year hiatus, the Montana 4-H Leadership Forum returned to Glendive in 2017. From September 29 to October 1, over 80 4-H leaders, Extension agents, and state 4-H staff converged on Glendive for three days of learning, camaraderie, and fun. The forum also provided a needed boost to the local economy suffering from the downturn in the oil economy by filling local hotels rooms and restaurants.

The 2017 event, whose theme was 'Snapshots of Leadership,' was a collaborative effort of Montana 4-H District IV Extension offices and county 4-H councils from Sheridan, Valley, Daniels, McCone, Roosevelt, Richland, and Dawson Counties.



Badlands sunrise



Pitchfork fondue.  
Photo by Judy Heupel

The program began with registration, local tours, and a pitchfork fondue meal at the Dawson County Fairgrounds on Friday, September 29. Tours included the Glendive Dinosaur & Fossil Museum; a trip to Beaver Creek Brewery; a tour of several downtown Glendive businesses; the Prairie County Museum and Evelyn Cameron Gallery; a local ag tour; the Farm-to-Table Project and community garden; and even featured a dinosaur dig. The pitchfork fondue, partially-funded by local community partners, included steaks fried to perfection on the tines of pitchforks, hayrides, and a make-your-own smores bar. Over 100 forum participants and local 4-H leaders and their families attended the fondue.

Activities resumed Saturday morning on the campus of Dawson County Community College. Training modules, set up in a concurrent workshop format, included web-based 4-H orientation; livestock nutrition; using food to teach animal quality assurance; painted barn quilts; how to support new volunteers; building your community through clubs, projects, and service; marketing 4-H at the local level; traditional German/Swiss cooking; and developing small animal projects. The

most popular workshop was the “STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) for Your Club” workshop where participants were able to build their own solar bugs.

Saturday evening’s semi-formal banquet was well attended. In addition, 15 participants took advantage of the 4-H Leader’s College the next day after closing ceremonies. The state shooting sports leadership team also took advantage of participants already gathered by holding a shooting sports training. Fourteen volunteer leaders from across the state were trained in archery, shotgun, western heritage, and air rifle. Volunteers will take this knowledge to their communities and clubs to educate people within their individual areas.

### Glendive Community Garden

The Glendive Community Garden is alive and thriving. The Highland Park site features 42 20-by-20 foot plots surrounded by a deer-proof fence, situated on a previously unused piece of county-

owned property. For a \$20 per-plot fee, participants have access to a 400 square foot chunk of tilled ground, gardening tools, hoses, and irrigation water. Scholarships are available to those who cannot afford the \$20 fee. For the 2017 season, a \$500 Paddlefish Caviar Grant was procured to cover some of the expenses and purchase additional equipment for the garden and its participants.

Currently, many program participants have been able to garden more than one plot. Participation increased enough in 2017 that we expect to limit the number of plots to one per family in 2018. We are already on the hunt for additional garden space within the community that could provide for additional community gardens once the current garden location becomes full.

Benefits to the community extend beyond garden participants. Local residents who helped set up the garden also planted and tended a large pumpkin patch and then donated pumpkins to a local grade school. Several gardeners donate produce to the community food bank and some sell their produce at the two local farmer’s markets.



contact us:



**EXTENSION**

**Dawson County**

207 W. Bell Street  
Glendive, MT 59330  
(406) 377-4277

dawson@montana.edu

www.msuextension.org/dawson



**Bruce Smith**  
Extension Agent



**Jackie Stinnett**  
Program Assistant/4-H Assistant