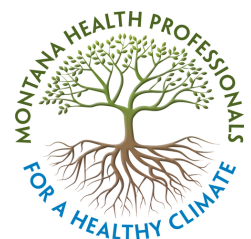




MONTANA HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR A HEALTHY CLIMATE

2020 IMPACT REPORT



INTRODUCTION

2020 has been an especially challenging year. COVID-19 has exposed many individual and public health needs. As Montana health professionals from all disciplines, we work together because the climate crisis threatens the health and future of Montanans, including our communities, our resources, and animals. We declare our commitment to addressing climate change as a public health issue.

The unique challenges we all faced in 2020 highlighted the need for a continued focus on the nexus of health and climate change. Committed to tackling these pressing issues, Montana Health Professionals for a Healthy Climate forged ahead, working with our local communities, contributing to policy and research, raising awareness through educational webinars and videos, and contributing to the public discourse via op-eds, interviews and public testimony before the Montana legislature. We are all in this together.



OUR VISION

We seek to promote the health of Montanans through education, science, advocacy and action.

OUR INCEPTION

Over the past several years, there has been increased organizing nationally and at the state level. A number of states now have formed health care professional climate groups. We care about the health of Montanans, therefore, in 2019 we combined our efforts, invited other concerned Montana health professionals to participate and obtained 501(c) 3 non-profit status. All types of health professionals and their patients and communities are affected by climate change, so this group is open to public and environmental health professionals, health care practitioners (nurses, doctors, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, midwives), allied health care fields, veterinarians, and alternative health practitioners. We hope to increase awareness amongst Montanans of this significant issue that threatens the health of our patients, wildlife, and communities in Montana.

Montana Health Allies



2020 HIGHLIGHTS

2 Special Events

4 Reports
and Publications

7 Testimonies

8 Stakeholder
Collaborations

21 Podcasts

30 Op-Eds

4 Television and
Radio Spots

6 Advocacy
Opportunities

7 Videos
and Webinars

16 News Stories
and Features

24 Presentations

100% of the Board
contributed
financially to MTHPHC



CLIMATE ACTION WORK

We accept climate change science and believe that the current disruption is human-caused, serious, occurring now, and requiring urgent action. The impacts on human, animal and environmental health are happening today and will increase into the future. To address these challenges, we advocate for healthy lifestyle changes and for a rapid transition to renewable energy and the cleaner air that will result. We work to educate other professionals and communities; advocate on local, state, and national levels; and provide leadership in Montana.

30 OP-EDS

COVID-19 shed light on the extreme inequity our communities face, but also the fact that climate solutions are pandemic solutions. Amid the pandemic, we continued to emphasize the need for resolve in improving human and environmental health.

**"WE CAN USE TECHNOLOGY AND BEST PRACTICES TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL AGRICULTURE; ADVANCE PUBLIC AND ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION; BUILD INFRASTRUCTURE TO WITHSTAND SEVERE WEATHER, IMPROVE COMFORT, AND BE NON-POLLUTING/ NET-ZERO; LESSEN POLLUTION; AND BOOST TREE PLANTING. THESE SOLUTIONS CAN CREATE JOBS, IMPROVE BOTH HUMAN HEALTH AND MENTAL HEALTH, AND LESSEN THE RISK OF FUTURE PANDEMICS."
- MTHPHC BOARD MEMBER, MISSOULIAN**

We met with DPHHS Asthma, The Trust for Public Lands, Climate Smart Missoula, MREA, MEIC, Stories for Change, Climate Resilience solutions MPRC, Helena Healthy Communities Coalition, MTPHA/MEHA Convention and presented to the Governor's Climate Solutions Council. We committed to working together now and in the future on the climate, energy and health issues facing our communities.

8

STAKE- HOLDER MEETINGS



CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH IN MONTANA

A Special Report of the Montana Climate Assessment

4

REPORTS AND PUBLI- CATIONS

- Dr. Rob Byron, Dr. Mari Eggers, and Dr. Lori Byron were 3 of 7 lead authors on [Climate Change and Human Health in Montana: A Special Report of the Montana Climate Assessment](#).
- Dr. Nick Silverman served on the Steering Committee for [Missoula's Climate Adaptation Plan](#) which was formally adopted in May 2020.
- Dr. Rob Byron and Dr. Lori Byron contributed to the 2020 Bitterroot Valley Climate Resilience Primer.

"More protective particle pollution standards are essential for not only reducing dangerous air pollution, but also addressing climate change and racial disparities."

-Montana Health Professionals, Missoulian

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TESTIMONIES

We actively testified at hearings and lobbied congressional members for our community and environmental health at Public Service Commission hearings and on issues relating to EPA particulate matter, ozone, and methane rollbacks, and the Rosebud Mine Expansion.

Our organization signed on to 6 advocacy pieces including:

- The US Health Insurance Divestment Campaign
- A Letter opposing the EPA Transparency Rule
- A Letter to Congress on COVID-19, Climate, and Health
- The Amicus Brief re: Juliana vs. US
- The PSR Letter about methane leak deregulation
- The US Call to Action on Climate Health and Equity

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CONTINUED ADVOCACY

UNBREATHABLE

THE FIGHT FOR HEALTHY AIR

"A POWERFUL AND IMPORTANT FILM ABOUT ONE OF MODERN
AMERICA'S MOST CONSEQUENTIAL LAWS."

- BETH GARDINER, AUTHOR OF *CHOKED*

SPECIAL EVENTS

UNBREATHABLE.ORG

In August, we hosted a virtual panel discussion and documentary viewing of the American Lung Association film, *Unbreathable*. This short film looks back on 50 years of the Clean Air Act, highlighting both the incredible progress made in cleaning up air pollution as well as the stories of communities that are still suffering from polluted environments. 65 people across Montana attended our discussion led by local panelists.



We also worked with scientists and faith leaders to produce the Fall virtual 2020 FSCA Conference: *Cultivating Soil, Soul, and Health* with the aim of empowering faith- and science-oriented individuals and communities to learn how to collaborate on climate change and environmental justice issues.

21
PODCASTS

4
TELEVISION
&
RADIO
SPOTS

- Dr. Beth Schenk hosts the Nurses for Healthy Environments podcast where she produced 18 episodes in 2020 talking with nurses around the US on the nexus of healthcare and climate action.
- The MT Climate Change and Human Health Report was featured on the Worm, available on Yellowstone Public Radio.
- Dr. Jennifer Robohm contributed to MTNPR's Smoke Got You Down? You're Not Alone

Our contribution to the state's climate change and health report was covered extensively by press outlets across the state last year. We also contributed regularly to columns in the Missoulian and the Lewiston News-Argus, as well as the Montana Public Health Association Newsletter.

16
NEWS
STORIES
&
FEATURES

“But rather than just conveying gloom and doom, the health organizations’ call to action views climate change as the greatest public health opportunity of the 21st Century.”

-Julia Ryder, Bozeman Daily Chronicle

24

PRESENTATIONS

7

VIDEOS & WEBINARS

Board members taught classes on human health and climate to nursing, medical, environmental, public students and other undergraduates at MSU, UM, and Montana Tech. We also worked hard to meet the moment and presented to audiences across the state at both virtual and small in-person events. Topics included:

- Clean air, pregnant moms, and climate action
- Pediatric Climate Advocacy
- COVID and climate change
- Proposed changes to cost/benefit analysis at the EPA
- Physical and mental health
- Community resilience, adaptation and mitigation
- Energy policy
- Changes in winter climate

TRAININGS AND ACCOLADES

Sarah Lorch was appointed Student Board Member of Montana HPHC

Dr. Lori Byron was reappointed to the EPA's Children's Health Protection Advisory committee

Dr. Marian Kummer and Dr. Beth Schenk attended the Climate Reality Leadership Corps Training

Dr. Beth Schenk was promoted to Executive Director of Environmental Stewardship for Providence Health

BOARD MEMBERS

LORI BYRON, MD, FAAP
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ROBERT BYRON, MD, MPH, FACP
vice chair

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SARAH LORCH, EMT, CNA

JENNIFER ROBOHM, PHD

MONTANA HEALTH PROFESSIONALS FOR A HEALTHY CLIMATE



Our Vision:

We seek to promote the health of Montanans through education, science, advocacy, & action.

Sign on with us at MontanaHPHC.org



Board members Sarah Lorch, Rob Byron, Lori Byron, Mari Eggers, Beth Schenk, Tom Roberts, Nick Silverman, and Julia Ryder in one of many zoom meetings

Connect with us



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