

# EXPOSURE

Montana Backcountry/By Josh Bergan



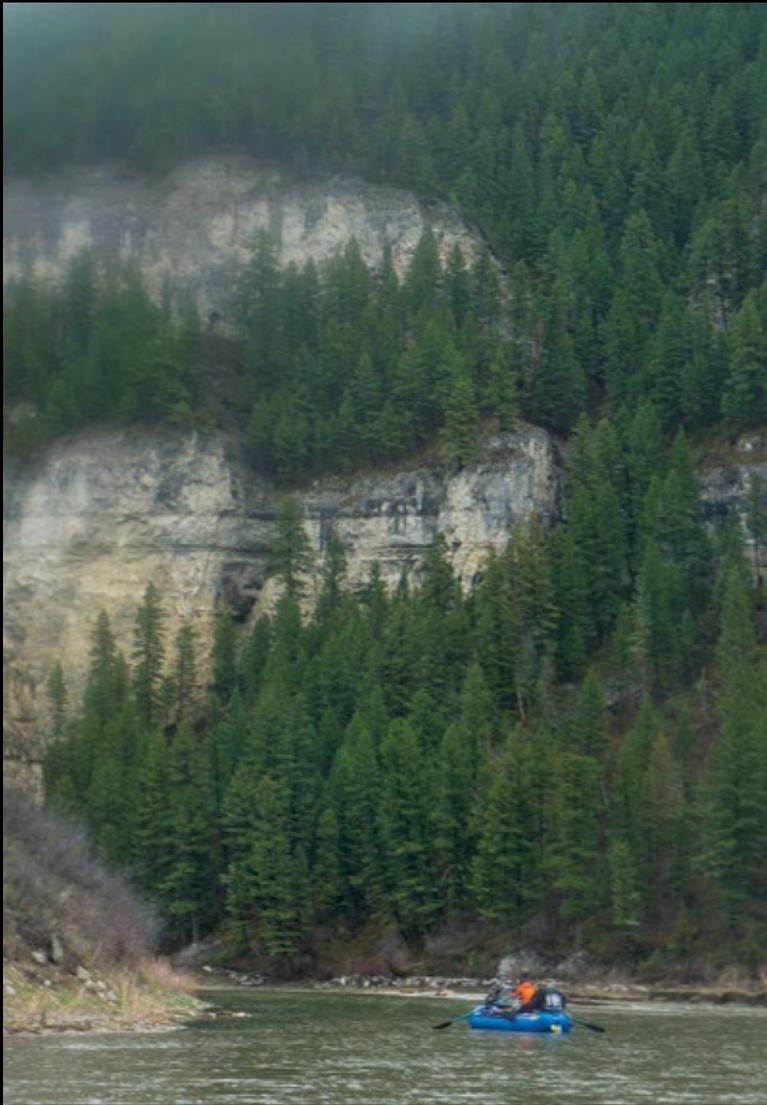
*Researching state fish surveys will give you some direction. This remote creek has produced browns to 28 inches in such surveys.*



*A black bear paw print along the upper Dearborn River in the Scapegoat Wilderness Area. In the Montana backcountry, where both blackies and grizzlies roam, stay alert and carry bear spray.*



*Take to the hills when the rivers get warm. This Yellowstone cutt was landed in the Gallatin Range, where you'll find many more.*



*The storied Smith River is genuine Montana backcountry. A little rain cannot stop campers on a four-day float, and usually improves the streamer bite.*

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*This Yellowstone cutthroat trout was taken on a white streamer during a spawning run in a creek recently opened at that time to encourage harvest of this nonnative species.*

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*An April snowfall may hardly be the worst weather you'll encounter. Prepare for extreme cold, icy roads, mountain lightning, extreme heat, and everything in between.*

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*In the so-called Land of 10,000 Haystacks, anglers come for big browns, rainbows, and fluvial arctic grayling. The Anaconda Range looms in the distance.*



*Middle Montana's trout water: prepare for a skunk, but hope for a toad. And if you find good fishing, keep it on the down low.*



*They're in there! This muscle-bound 25-incher was caught on a last cast in the upper Missouri River drainage. "Just one more cast" is a winning mantra.*



*If you love something, set it free.*

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*The stories of bull trout chasing hooked-up cutthroat are true west of the Continental Divide. Such surprises occur regularly in the Blackfoot drainage.*

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*The rewards of exploration at Bean Lake; we almost missed the show and were saved only by a late-night bathroom break.*

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Joshua Bergan, [www.joshuabergan.com](http://www.joshuabergan.com), is a freelance writer and photographer who lives in Belgrade, Montana.