

# How Misinformation Threatened a Montana National Heritage Area | The New York Times

By Reid J. Epstein

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GREAT FALLS, Mont. — In the summer of 2020, as pandemic shutdowns closed businesses and racial justice protests erupted on American streets, Rae Grulkowski, a 56-year-old businesswoman who had never been involved in politics but was alarmed about what was happening to the country, found a way to make a difference.

The connection to the turbulence of national politics might not have been immediately clear.

Ms. Grulkowski had just heard about a years-in-the-making effort to designate her corner of central Montana a national heritage area, celebrating its role in the story of the American West. A small pot of federal matching money was there for the taking, to help draw more visitors and preserve underfunded local tourist attractions.

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Source: [How Misinformation Threatened a Montana National Heritage Area | The New York Times](#)