

# Missoula County Media Release

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## **Missoula County Names New Community and Planning Services Director**

Missoula County has named Chet Crowser as the new director of Community and Planning Services.

Crowser will oversee operations of the three CAPS divisions: Grants and Community Programs, Planning, and Parks, Trails and Open Lands. He replaces Pat O’Herren, who’s retiring at the end of the month after serving several decades with the county, including seven years as chief planning officer.

Crowser, who will start Jan. 2, comes to Missoula County with an extensive background in parks management, most recently as the regional park manager for Montana State Parks in Missoula. In that role, he oversaw 10 state parks, ranging from heritage and National Historic Landmark sites to lake-based campgrounds and day use recreation areas. He also engaged in many planning, visioning and policy-development efforts for the agency.

County commissioners interviewed three finalists for the position and ultimately chose Crowser because of his impressive leadership capabilities.

“As CAPS evolves to focus more on broad community issues and services, we are thrilled to bring on someone with Chet’s relationship-building skills and knowledge of the public engagement process,” said Commissioner Nicole “Cola” Rowley. “We’re confident Chet will provide the leadership necessary to successfully guide the department as it fulfills the many roles it plays in our communities.”

Originally from Rapid City, South Dakota, Crowser earned a bachelor’s degree from Minnesota State University, Mankato, and a master’s degree from the University of Idaho, both in recreation management. He’s worked in a variety of city, state and federal recreation programs in South Dakota, Idaho and Montana over the years, spending the last 14 with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks.

“I’m excited to join CAPS and take part in the great work that staff do every day to maintain and enhance the quality of life we all value so much in Missoula County,” Crowser said. “I look forward to working with the commissioners, county staff, partners and the public to address the important issues our communities face now and into the future.”

For more information or to schedule an interview with Crowser, call Communications and Projects Director Anne Hughes at 406-258-3160 or email [ahughes@missoulacounty.us](mailto:ahughes@missoulacounty.us).

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