



2009 Excellence in Design  
**AIA Montana Design Awards Program**  
Honor Award



### **Kevin Mundy Memorial Bridge**

Drinking Horse Mountain Trail  
Bozeman, Montana

Big Kev's bridge is proof that great things are done in partnership. With the help of the Gallatin Valley Land Trust, the Mountain Sky Guest Ranch, the Montana Outdoor Science School (MOSS), Fish, Wildlife and Parks, and many others, this bridge and outdoor classroom is dedicated to the memory of Kevin Mundy, a Bozeman native, Bridger Bowl ski patrolman, and Montana State University student who passed away all too soon at the age of 26. Kev's love of the outdoors, interest in helping others, and overall impact on the lives of those fortunate to know him make the dedication a fitting tribute to his positive influences on the larger Bozeman community.

This unique addition to Bozeman's strong outdoor heritage provides a nexus where walkers meet hikers, where students meet to discuss ecology, where children explore and where loitering to enjoy conversation or the sounds of tumbling water is strongly encouraged.

The bridge, with a clear span of 50 feet across Bridger Creek, is located downstream from the U.S. Fish Technology Center. It provides a key link for pedestrian access to a new impressive trail system, but more importantly, the bridge acts as a focal point for passive and active education and recreation. The bridge is easily accessible from the trail head, yet secluded enough to create a destination and unique discovery.

The view up and upstream from one of the benches exposes the high, dry, mountainous environment and wildlife corridors that are concealed by thick vegetation from many other vantage points. From the other bench, looking down and downstream, the focus is on the braided riparian zones and valley below.

In theory, bridge is two halves made up of two opposing shed trusses, each with a high part and a lower part. The moment frame, accentuated by powder-coated orange steel in contrast to the wood and the rusted metal used on the rest of the bridge, joins the two wood halves together, forming the connection between the low and high halves. The bridge is open in this middle wide section which serves as the flexible and collective 'mixing space' and also functions to allow a higher level of experience beyond standard handicapped accessibility. Seating is designed to accommodate many and offer dynamic shelter to contemplate the art of the structure and the nature of the place. From various perspectives, including the winding approaches and from points high along the trail, the dynamic form continues to surprise and impress.

The poetry of the form comes from the straight lines that, when connected, create a graceful flowing curve.

Photography by Derek Olsen

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