

"Missoula is the Hollywood of the Mountain West," says leading producer

Leading factual drama producer Paul Epstein believes Missoula is the perfect location to create Western film and TV productions.

MISSOULA, UNITED STATES, July 17, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Emmy-nominated producer, director, and writer [Paul Epstein](#) has today urged the Montana state legislature to take steps to keep its position as the Hollywood of the Mountain West following a resurgence in Western films and television programs.

The announcement follows research from the University of Missoula, which found that Yellowstone brought an

estimated 2.1 million visitors to the state of Montana and contributed an extra \$730 million in spending in 2021, demonstrating the economic benefits of encouraging film crews to the state.

Epstein argues that, while filming in Montana already has multiple benefits, the state can do more to attract major TV and film production, particularly from any international production companies seeking to shoot in the US. In particular, he believes the western Montana city of Missoula is perfectly positioned to be the "Hollywood of the Mountain West."

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Paul Epstein



Paul Epstein is an Emmy-nominated Producer, Writer, and Director

Epstein is executive producer and showrunner of the factual drama "Into the Wild Frontier", now in its third season, which was produced by Warm Springs

Productions, based in Missoula. The show airs on INSP and documents the lives of explorers, hunters, and traders who travelled westwards across America during the frontier era.

Paul Epstein said: "Missoula and the surrounding area is the best place in the world to create authentic Western films and TV shows. It's incredibly convenient to use Missoula as a production hub. There are direct flights into Missoula International Airport from all over the US, and the city has a charming downtown with fine dining and boutique shopping alongside extensive lodging and travel infrastructure.

"Best of all, everything we associate with the Western ideal – either the Old West, or contemporary Westerns like "Yellowstone" is within an hour's drive of Missoula – stunning mountain and river landscapes, ghost towns, epic unspoiled wilderness, and contemporary small-town America. A rich influence of Native American culture rounds out the picture. It's truly a unique place to film for any show or movie that doesn't take place in New York, London or any major urban center.

As an early trading hub, travel corridor for Native Americans, and major gold mining location, Missoula is an established home for Western culture. Many towns inhabited by European settlers at the time are still intact today.

The wider Mountain West has similar historical connections to the American frontier period, including Southern Arizona, Idaho, and New Mexico.

Paul Epstein said: "Missoula is the Hollywood of the Mountain West – but more should be done to keep it that way. The local government should attract more major studios to the area through marketing campaigns that play on Westerns' popularity."

Several popular Westerns have chosen Missoula as their base, including Paramount's "Yellowstone", "Love Like Gold", and "Bella Vista". However, the city isn't first choice for all productions. Critically acclaimed Sci-Fi Western "WestWorld" shot in Utah, California, and Arizona, overlooking Montana as a filming location.

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