



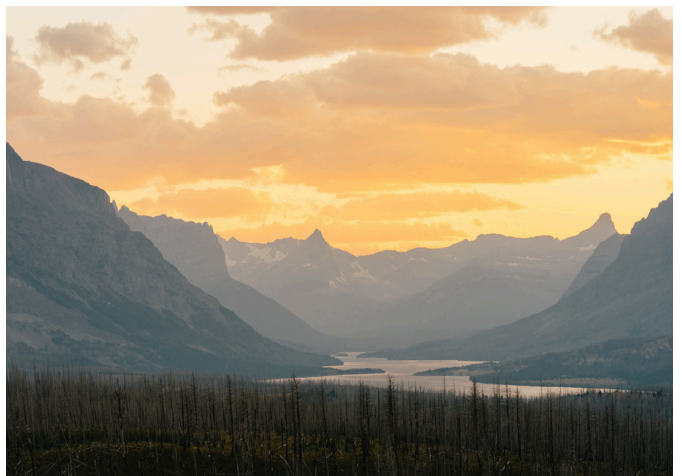
MONTANA LAND & RANCH REALTORS

ERIK ERICKSON, LAND BROKER



THE NO B.S. GUIDE TO BUYING LAND IN MONTANA

WHAT THEY WON'T TELL YOU UNTIL IT'S TOO LATE



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Erik Erickson



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WHY YOU NEED THIS GUIDE

Buying land in Montana is a dream for many — but it can quickly become a nightmare if you don't know what you're doing. This guide isn't here to sell you fluff or paint a picture of some fantasy homestead. It's here to tell you the truth about land ownership in the Big Sky state, straight from someone who actually lives it.

Whether you're a first-time land buyer or an investor looking for your next recreational or ranch property, this guide will give you a straight-shooting breakdown of what matters, what to avoid, and how to make sure your land deal doesn't come with regrets.

1. You Don't Own the Water — Montana Does

Montana land buyers are often shocked to learn that owning land does not mean you own the water on or under it. Water rights are controlled by the state. Just because you “own” a right to the water, does not mean that guarantees that there will always be water available.

If you plan to irrigate, run livestock, or even just ensure your home has running water, you need to know:

- The flow rate of local wells
- Whether there's a water right attached to the parcel
- What your realistic access will be year-round

Don't rely on “just dig a well” advice. It's not that simple.

2. Wells, Septics, and County Red Tape

You'll need approval from the county for both a well and a septic system — and if the land is near a river, your chances go down. In some areas, you won't be allowed to install either due to environmental restrictions.

Buyers who assume they can subdivide or build wherever they like are often in for a rude awakening. Zoning laws, soil saturation, and previous land use all factor into what's allowed. Talk to someone who knows the county rules — before you spend a dime.

3. Grazing Reality Check

Think your 100-acre parcel will support a full herd of cattle?
Think again.

Montana's dry soil and low annual moisture mean you may need 20+ acres per cow. Buyers from wetter states like Kentucky or Missouri often underestimate how much land it takes to support livestock here.

Before you buy for ag use, ask about:

- Carrying capacity
- Water access and storage
- Pasture health (watch for noxious weeds!)

4. Just Because You Own the Land Doesn't Mean You Can Hunt It

Montana's hunting regulations are strict. Owning land doesn't guarantee you an elk or deer tag. Tag allocation depends on the district — some are general, some are permit-only, and some have landowner preference programs that still don't guarantee an annual license.

If hunting is your motivation, work with someone who knows the regs and where the best hunting corridors are.

5. Open Range: Fence to Keep Them Out

In parts of Eastern Montana, we operate under open range law — which means livestock can legally roam. If you don't want cows on your land, you have to fence them out.

That also means if someone hits a cow on the road, in many cases it's their liability — not the rancher's.

Open range is part of our way of life, but it's a foreign concept to many buyers. Understand the herd districts in each county.

6. Mineral Rights, Surface Rights, and What You're Really Buying

You might own the topsoil — but someone else may own what's under it. In Montana, mineral rights are often long-since sold off. And while fossils or gravel may be considered surface rights, oil, gas, and coal are usually not.

Ask the tough questions:

- Who owns the mineral rights?
- Are there any existing leases?
- Can this land be quarried or drilled — with or without your say?

7. The Right Broker Changes Everything

Too many buyers rely on agents who've never run cattle, irrigated a pasture, or hunted elk. You need a land broker who knows how to walk the land — not just list it.

Look for someone who:

- Knows how to read a topo map
- Understands wells, water rights, grazing, and wildlife
- Lives the life, not just sells it

MEET ERIK ERICKSON: Eastern Montana's Trusted Land Expert

Erik Erickson isn't just a land broker — he's a lifelong rancher, combat veteran, and strategic advisor with boots-on-the-ground experience in every corner of Eastern Montana.

Specializing in recreational land, farm and ranch properties, development parcels, resort site selection, and timber tracts, Erik brings unmatched insight to buyers and sellers alike.

Born and raised on a cattle ranch in North Dakota, Erik knows the value of land — not just by the acre, but by the life lived on it.



He grew up working cattle, managing pastures, understanding soil, and hunting the backcountry. That early appreciation for wide-open space evolved into a career centered on land, wildlife, and generational stewardship.

After high school, Erik enlisted in the U.S. Army, serving with distinction for 23 years in the infantry. His combat experience taught him discipline, clarity under pressure, and the power of listening — all qualities he now channels into every land deal he handles. Erik treats every client's goal like a mission: clear, strategic, and executed with integrity. Just as he served to protect the country we love, he now protects his clients' interests with that same strategic advisory -- anticipating what's ahead, and keeps each transaction one step ahead of the curve.

After retiring from the military in 2015, Erik returned to the land — settling outside Joliet, Montana, where he raises Performance Quarter Horses, runs a nationally known taxidermy business, and acquired Forbidden Ridge Outfitters, offering guided outdoor experiences across Eastern Montana. When he's not helping clients buy or sell land, you'll find him riding the range, giving land tours, or enjoying quiet time with his children — the kind of life that reflects exactly what so many of his clients are chasing.

Erik is part a coast-to-coast network of land brokers and is known as a marketing-savvy advisor with deep local knowledge. Serves all of eastern Montana, from Livingston to Fort Peck, to the North Dakota and Wyoming lines. Whether he's advising a retiring rancher, helping friends co-invest in hunting land, or guiding a developer through site selection, Erik brings laser-focused strategy, honest guidance, and hard-earned trust.

As a father and lifelong steward of the land, Erik knows what it means to protect your legacy. If you're buying or selling land in Montana, he's not just a broker — he's your advocate, your strategist, and your connection to the land.

Reach out today at www.mtlandandranch.com or call 406-861-5558.

Thinking about buying land in Eastern Montana?

Whether you're looking for a recreational escape, a working ranch, or a place to build your dream home, make your first call to someone who lives the life — not just sells the land.

Erik Erickson helps buyers like you avoid costly surprises, spot high-potential properties, and make confident, informed decisions from start to finish.

Contact Erik at **Montana Land and Ranch Realty of Landmark Realtors** by calling **406-861-5558** or visiting **mtlandandranch.com** to start your Montana land search the right way.