

MYSTERY
 **RANCH**
Bozeman MT USA

Fire Program Manager
Recruitment Profile
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The Mystery in MYSTERY RANCH

"The idea was to do something that matters. Not just to build some great stuff, but to build it in a way that made a difference." – Dana Gleason

At its core, Mystery Ranch builds packs for men and women on a mission. Mystery Ranch packs are built for folks with a job to do, heading to extreme locations carrying heavy loads. Their customers are their first priority – whether they're on the front line, the fire line, the sickest line or the cleanest line. The team at Mystery Ranch thinks through every detail to make sure the gear performs as well as the users do and never gets in the way.

Mystery Ranch is built on a heritage of function, comfort, quality and durability. Since 2000, Mystery Ranch has been designing and manufacturing packs and load carriage systems for military, hunting, wildland fire and mountaineering customers, with a focus on use-specific designs and hand-built quality. Based in Bozeman, Montana, Mystery Ranch is a global brand with worldwide production and distribution.

History

In 1985, Dana Gleason and Renée Sippel-Baker founded Dana Design, the backpack company that would become recognized as the industry standard in load carriage technology. Dana's ArcFlex internal frame was the first pack system that integrated different kinds of materials to maximize the benefits of each for more effective load transfer. By the early 90's, Dana Design was the pack to own and the name became synonymous with comfort and quality.

Prompted by the need for capital to expand into wider markets and manage a growing company, Dana and Renée accepted an offer to sell Dana Design to the K2 Corporation in 1995.

After a few years of what they thought would be a skiing- and backpacking-filled early retirement, both Dana and Renée realized they still wanted to be in the business. When Dana's daughter, Alice, asked him to design her a new hip sack, he went back to the design room and found there were still some great packs that needed to be built.

Dana and Renée founded Mystery Ranch in 2000; they were officially back in the pack business. The hip sack Dana built for Alice was the beginning of what would become Mystery Ranch's patented Lumbar Wrap, and the designs for the NICE frame and SATL would soon follow. Though firmly entrenched in outdoor retail, Dana was approached by the Navy SEALs for custom packs in 2003, and Mystery Ranch began a relationship with the military that would significantly alter its business model and design strategy.

Dana and Renée decided to move the company to a direct sales model so they could focus on designing products for specialized customers with a new capacity for customization and rapid prototyping. The feedback from the military and Special Forces users provided a better understanding of what their customers wanted and how best to give it to them. Dana and Renée took what they learned from these relationships and applied it to design and construction of all product lines; regardless of the mission, a Mystery Ranch pack is up to the job.

This was a move away from the traditional wholesale model in the outdoor industry, but one that provided Mystery Ranch an opportunity to design for high-level customers in military, wildland fire, backpack hunting, and mountaineering. The innovation that followed allowed Dana the creative freedom to push the boundaries of what was possible in pack design and materials technology, while building on his history of designing durable, comfortable, user-centric packs.

Mystery Ranch has expanded significantly over the years and continues to grow into new markets. Every product built is steeped in a history of innovation that spans four decades and which is rooted in a dedication to designing the most functional, comfortable and highest quality packs on the market. With both domestic and international sales and production, as well as direct to consumer and a burgeoning wholesale business, Mystery Ranch maintains their standard of quality around the globe.

Product

Great packs don't just happen, they evolve. Mystery Ranch packs begin as ideas from which prototype packs are born. These prototypes are then tested on the backs of users who usually destroy their gear. Their input helps to shape several rounds of prototypes until the team at Mystery Ranch reaches a product that meets their industry-leading quality standards. Mystery Ranch's amazing production team then takes over, with employees dedicated to making the highest quality backpacks available. It takes a designer with a history of innovative pack design and a dedicated team to orchestrate this evolution.

Simply put, Mystery Ranch packs are designed to help a person (a soldier, hunter, firefighter, etc.) carry heavy loads with as little strain on the body as possible. To that end, packs are uniquely designed to support unusually shaped and unbalanced loads, like large weapons, firefighting gear, or elk carcasses.

Mystery Ranch exists to serve people in the field who have real needs as users, users that work Mystery Ranch packs hard every day on the job. Distinctly made to serve a purpose, Mystery Ranch currently breaks down and focuses their product into four different categories:

Military:

The military line of Mystery Ranch packs makes up half the revenue for the brand. The team works closely with top-tier groups of the military such as all elements of Special Operations Command (SOCOM), the Marine Corps, British SAS, and the Presidential Guard from the UAE. Mystery Ranch

packs are well known in military circles for their superior quality and framing technology as well as their specialized design solutions for unique missions.

Fire/Rescue:

Mystery Ranch introduced real load carriage to the Wildland Fire community in 2008 with its innovative hip-loaded packs that kept the weight low and off the back and shoulders. This was especially significant for the hand crews, working bent over on trails. With continual development and focus on users' needs, Mystery Ranch has become the dominant pack system in the Federal Wildland segment. The Hotshot crews who take Mystery Ranch packs with them into the most extreme conditions are some of the hardest users of all the brand's packs, carrying up to 50 lbs of water, gear and fuel. They put Mystery Ranch's load carriage designs to the test each and every time. These packs do not disappoint and are continually sought after by Wildland crews. Mystery Ranch achieved ISO 9001 certification in 2015, largely to facilitate sales into CalFire. Since then, Mystery Ranch has achieved NFPA 1977 certification for all of the primary pack offerings and most of the accessories in the fire line, which has significantly broadened the customer base for Hotshot and IA/Engine offerings.

Hunting:

Mystery Ranch hunting packs are made to handle heavy, potentially awkward loads for the Western Backpacking hunter. The adaptability between frame and bag enable the hunter to carry their camping setup, optics, a weapon, as well as their harvest. Hunting has become Mystery Ranch's fastest growing category as the Hunting community has rallied around the innovative load carriage systems that Mystery Ranch is so well known for.

Outdoor / Mountain:

With rapid growth internationally over the last 10 years, specifically in Asia Pacific, the Mystery Ranch Mountain line is beginning to see strong adoption across the globe, including here in North America. While the Mystery Ranch brand has become a household name in Japan and Korea, the brand is also beginning to see traction in the North American wholesale market in both technical load carrying backpacks, as well as urban/everyday styles.

MYSTERY RANCH Culture

The team at Mystery Ranch is youthful in age and spirit. They have been described as well-educated and eccentric outdoor aficionados who crave the expanse of wide open spaces (many are athletes/former pros). It is safe to say that being in Bozeman is a huge draw for Mystery Ranch employees. In the summer, everyone is out taking in the endless opportunities for activities like hiking and mountain biking while winters have put Bozeman on the map for the "Best of" skiing and other mountain adventure activities.

The design and development team has real, hands-on experience actually sewing the packs together. In the past, all pack prototypes were hand-made right on site, a tradition that continues today with the pack designs. There is a deep respect for the quality and functionality of the packs made at Mystery Ranch and a true devotion to a pack built for the mission.

Bozeman, MT

Bozeman might have the feeling of an outpost town but keep in mind it is the third largest city in Montana. It is the principal city within Gallatin County and makes up one of the largest metropolitan areas in the state with a combined population of over 100,000 people in the valley. Relocating to Montana hints at a person's desire to get away from the crush of urban life and immerse themselves in the great outdoors; places that don't really exist in many states in this country anymore. Bozeman has been experiencing a rapid population boom over the years as people realize what the wide-open spaces have to offer; it makes city life pale in comparison. Bozeman offers up a bustling hub rich with an international and college town vibe; Montana State University has lured many tech start-ups to the area and is an adventurer's gateway to the true Montana experience. Bridger Bowl ski area is 16 miles from downtown Bozeman; Big Sky Resort is 45 minutes from town. Seven Mountain Ranges surround the area, and world class ice climbing resides in Hyalite Canyon. Rock climbing, mountain biking, hiking, and fishing are all literally minutes away from town, and there is plenty more all over the state and region.

Here's a synopsis of the key elements that define the Montana experience:

Spectacular Unspoiled Nature – Montana is home to some of our country's greatest landscapes – a place where mountains and prairies come together to create more spectacular unspoiled nature than anywhere else in the lower 48.

Vibrant and Charming Small Towns – Peppering their vast, wild landscapes, Montana has many vibrant, authentic small towns that serve as gateways to the state's natural wonders.

Breathtaking Experiences – Montana is a storied place filled with unscripted, off the beaten path adventures. In short, Montana is known for breathtaking experiences by day and relaxing hospitality by night.

Montanans consider themselves:

- Simple but not unsophisticated
- Confident but not arrogant
- Genuine not old fashioned
- Grounded but not stuck in their ways
- We do it our way

If these elements of life resonate with you, and if you are someone who enjoys the great outdoors, Montana welcomes you with open arms.

The Opportunity

Summary

The Fire Program Manager's primary responsibility will be the planning and execution of the company's revenue targets.

Responsibilities

General

- o Create and update annual Sales Plan with quantifiable goals in alignment with long-term company strategy
- o Maintain and further develop a deep understanding of the Fire community: from Wildland and Wildland-Urban Interface, to Structure/Municipal, EMS, and SAR: roles, hierarchies, key personnel, and purchasing methods
- o Fully understand existing MR family of Fire and related Medical products: specific field use, fitting and adjustment, construction, pricing, specs, and alternate applications
- o Business Development: Initiate and vet new business opportunities and concepts
- o Develop relationships with key personnel in the Fire community
- o Expand MR contacts and customer base in Federal, State, Local, and Private Fire agencies nationwide
- o Travel to tradeshow and station visits, as necessary

Marketing

- o Assist marketing dept in campaigns and initiatives with a knowledgeable, strategic, careful approach that is relevant to the intended audience

Operations

- o Support forecasting and production planning so MR is able to deliver complete and on-time to our customers

Product Development

- o Assist Mission Product Mgr with relevant market intelligence to inform development and product pricing of next generation Fire packs
- o Knowledge and analysis of Fire pack repairs seasonally

Customer Service

- o Work with the Customer Service team to ensure adequate knowledge of Fire product and customer base, including regular product training.

Qualifications and Skills:

Required

- High attention to detail

- Creative problem solving skills
- Excellent communication, time management and organizational skills both written & verbal
- Accurate grasp of the English language, both verbal and written
- Knowledge of Microsoft Word, Excel, email applications, and web browser platforms
- Excellent interpersonal skills, ability to connect with customers and coworkers
- High School Diploma, GED or higher
- Significant domestic travel in excess of 60%
- Trips may include weekends and could extend for weeks at a time
- Wildland Fire experience with Handcrew, Engine, or Helicopter operations
- Ability to relocate as necessary
- Able to lift 50+ lbs.

Preferred

- Sales experience
- College degree
- Leadership or Management experience

For additional information, please contact Adam Forest, Mary Maliff, or Deb Mason at:

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