FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

All sections must be addressed, or the application will be considered invalid

I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant Name: Montana Trout Unlimited

Mailing Address: 312 N Higgins Ave Ste 200

City: Missoula State: MT Zip: 59802

Telephone: 406 543 0054 E-mail:

B. Contact Person (if different than applicant): Ellie Ross

Address: 225 E. Reeder St

City: Dillon State: MT Zip: 59725

Telephone: 571 398 9308 E-mail: Bswc.mtudillon@gmail.com

C. Landowner and/or Lessee Name (if different than applicant): Dennis Rehse

Mailing Address: 2590 Carrigan Ln.

City: Dillon Province: Montana Zip: 59725

Telephone: 406 660 0847 E-mail: rehsejj@hotmail.com

II. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Project Name: Poindexter Slough Riparian Restoration

River, stream, or lake: Poindexter Slough

Location: Township: 8S Range: 9W Section: 3

Latitude: 45.173 Longitude: -112.686 *Within project (decimal degrees)*

County: Beaverhead County

B. Purpose of Project: *(high level, focus on why the project is important)*

Land use changes and management have affected aquatic ecosystems across Montana, degrading water quality and quantity. As previously undisturbed land is developed and managed for agricultural uses and temperature, snowpack, and precipitation patterns become more extreme and unpredictable, fish and wildlife face new threats. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) designated the Beaverhead River as an impaired waterway for sediment and temperature in their 2020 impaired waters list. This project will improve water quality and habitat for the Poindexter Slough, a historic side channel to the Beaverhead and one of three primary tributaries to the impaired Jefferson River. Poindexter Slough was specifically identified as a priority area by FWP in the Beaverhead River Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) because of the large wild trout population and recreation it supports (Beaverhead WRP, pg 28). This project aims to improve water quality in one of the most productive trout strongholds along the Beaverhead, described in FWP's Statewide Fisheries Management Plan (SFMP) as one of the "largest and most fished tributaries" on the Beaverhead with an average of about 1300 brown trout per mile (FWP SFMP 2023-2026, Section 2.13). Current degraded streambank conditions along the Slough are a source of sediment pollution that impairs fish and macroinvertebrate habitat by suffocating fish eggs, decreasing water clarity, and damaging stream bottom habitat. By stabilizing the streambank and replanting riparian vegetation, this project will reduce sediment and thermal pollution while improving habitat for fish populations. This project will also improve riparian habitat for birds, deer, mink, muskrat, and other mammal species.

C. Brief Project Description (attach additional information to end of application). Please include the anticipated construction schedule:

This project will focus on revegetating ~300 ft of streambank at four discrete locations within a reach of the Poindexter Slough. These streambanks will be reconnected to the floodplain by setting bank elevations at appropriate heights with an excavator to extend the floodplain. This will promote riparian and woody species to self-maintain. Revegetation and floodplain extension will be achieved by following FWP's Beaverhead-Ruby Program Manager, Matt Jaeger's recommendations and the agency's past work to create a matrix of alluvium and brush with three layers. Alluvium will be sourced from a nearby pond on the property that was previously used by FWP during their revegetation work on portions of the Slough. There will be two layers of live, dormant willow cuttings included in the matrix as the upper layer and between the top layer which will be harvested from existing willow populations on site. Five willow trenches totaling 50 ft will also be constructed with an excavator behind the newly stabilized bank using dormant, harvested cuttings to further improve bank stability and willow recruitment. To reduce the potential loss of willows from deer and elk browse, volunteers will salvage existing T-posts that are unused or no longer necessary and wire mesh fencing from previously planted riparian populations that either failed or have grown beyond the need for fencing. The riparian corridor is fenced off from cattle grazing by the ranch. They graze the riparian pasture occasionally when needed and will exclude cattle from that section for 5 years post-restoration which will allow the newly planted willows to grow.
Matt Jaeger has approved a construction window of October 15-November 1. Volunteers will salvage T-posts and harvest willow stakes just before construction.

D. What was the cause of habitat degradation and how will the project correct the cause?

Overgrazing by former landowners, a change in irrigation practices from flood to pivot, and a lack of riparian vegetation have been the cause of habitat degradation along the Poindexter Slough. Existing streambanks are no longer held down by woody roots and have become unstable, eroding into the Slough. The banks are incised and steep and have replaced the natural slope of the floodplain with a steep unstable bank. This project will restore the natural slope of the floodplain by peeling back the bank to create a gentler slope made of a matrix of willows and alluvium. These newly sloped banks will then be replanted with native willow cuttings from source populations nearby on the property and their roots will help further stabilize the bank, while providing shade and woody debris to benefit in-stream habitat for trout and cover and food for riparian species.

E. Length of stream or size of lake that will be treated (project extent): 300 ft

Length/size of impact, if larger than project extent (e.g., stream miles opened): Will reduce sedimentation to all downstream waterways.

F. Project Budget Summary:

Grant Request (Dollars):	**$**	**6,950**
Matching Dollars:	**$**	**10,500**
Matching In-Kind Services:*	**$**	**17,524. 05**

**salaries of government employees are not considered matching contributions*

Other Contributions (not used as match)	**$**	**1,600**
Total Project Cost:	**$**	**36,574. 05**

G. Attach itemized (line item) budget – *see budget template*

H. Attach project location map(s) that include:

- ☐ Extent of the project, including context (relation to major landmark or town)
- ☐ Indication of public and private property
- ☐ Riparian buffer locations and widths (if applicable) and grazing locations

I. Attach project plans:

- ☐ Detailed sketches or plan views with the location and proposed restoration
- ☐ Pre-project photographs (GPS location strongly recommended)
- ☐ If water leasing or water salvage is involved, attach a supplemental questionnaire *(https://myfwp.mt.gov/getRepositoryFile?objectID=36110)*

J. Attach support letters or statements of (e.g., landowner consent, community or public support). For FWP statement, attach provided template. List any other project partners:

Montana FWP, Montana Trout Unlimited, Montana Conservation Corps - Big Sky Watershed Corp, Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Montana Watershed Coordination Council, Chuck Robbins Chapter TU Volunteers

III. MAINTENANCE AND MONITORING (attach additional information to end of application):

A. A 20-year maintenance commitment is required*. Please confirm that you will ensure this protection and describe your approach. Attach any relevant maintenance plans. Yes [x] No [ ]

**If it is a water leasing project, describe the length of the agreement.*

The landowner has agreed to restrict grazing on that section of his property for 20 years and it is already fenced off. No additional fencing is needed.

B. Will grazing be part of or adjacent to the project? If so, describe or attach land management plans, including short term and long term grazing regimes. If the landowner is not the applicant, please describe their involvement in the project. *If you want assistance with grazing plan development, note your need.*

The landowner rarely grazes this area of his property and has it fenced off from livestock. They agreed to restrict grazing in the area (see Landowner Agreement). The landowner committed $2,500 and in-kind donations of materials such as cobble, alluvium, and willow stakes. The landowner is the one who reached out with interest in restarting work on the Slough after working with FWP previously to improve bank conditions on other areas of his property.

C. Will the project be monitored to determine if goals were met? If so, what are the short-term and long-term plans to assess benefits and lessons learned? Were pre-project data collected? Will monitoring information be shared with FWP?

Pre-project data was collected by University of Montana Western students and professors in 2014, 2015, 2017, and 2018 through stream morphology, macroinvertebrate, riparian vegetation, stream habitat surveys and a flushing flow sediment transport survey in 2018. Pre-project monitoring information has been shared with FWP.

MTU will continue to monitor willow survival, recruitment of native riparian vegetation, and general bank stability for 5 years.

IV. PROJECT BENEFITS (attach additional information to end of application):

A. What species of fish will benefit from this project?

Brown trout will benefit from this project. There is already a strong population in the Slough and when this project is completed this population is expected to further increase. Rainbow trout, Mountain whitefish, longnose suckers, and sculpin species are also present in the Slough and will benefit from more shaded water and cleaner habitat resulting from this project.

B. How will the project protect or enhance wild fish habitat?

This project will reduce sediment pollution in the Slough and provide shade and woody debris from an increase in riparian vegetation. The Slough is influenced by cold groundwater seepage, so further enhancing habitat in the Slough and providing shade will create a strong coldwater refuge for wild fish as temperatures warm. An increase in riparian vegetation and a reduction in sediment pollution will also improve macroinvertebrate habitat and benefit the fish who feed on them.

C. What is the expected improvement to fish populations, both short term and long term? How might the project translate to angler success?

In the short term, fish populations will remain stable or increase. Potential spawning habitat in that section of the Slough will also increase as a result of the reduction in erosion from vegetated and sloping banks replacing bare, incised banks and no longer suffocating eggs or dirtying up the water for fish. In the long term, as the willows grow they will provide shade to further decrease temperatures in the Slough to create thermal refuge for fish while also providing organic debris in the form of leaves and branches to create macroinvertebrate habitat and complexity in the Slough and improve food sources for fish populations. Willow also provide a knick-point for pool formation. A healthier habitat for fish and an increase in potential spawning areas will translate to angler success as populations grow and produce healthier, larger fish.

D. Will the project increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish and, if so, how? Is public fishing allowed onsite? Is it allowed by permission? If not, describe how the public would benefit.

The public will benefit from and be able to access the project site from the Poindexter Slough Fishing Access Site located directly upstream of the project on the other side of the private land boundary. There is access to five miles of the Slough and the public would still be able to access the instream section of the Slough that is the focus of this project easily from the FAS in accordance with Montana stream access laws. An improvement in upstream habitat and a reduction in sediment loading on this private parcel would improve fishing opportunities at the FAS.

E. Aside from angling, what local or large-scale public benefits will be realized from this project?

A large number of wildlife species depend on riparian habitat for breeding, feeding, or rest. An increase in riparian habitat would benefit wildlife populations and hunters in the area who are able to access wildlife populations on nearby public land. Additionally, this project will result in a healthier ecosystem and cleaner water in the area, and less sediment in the Slough and Beaverhead River that could potentially clog irrigation pumps.

F. Will the project interfere with water or property rights of adjacent landowners? (explain):

This project will not interfere with water or property rights. No water will be diverted from the Slough and all materials, equipment, and construction will be sourced from, placed on, and occur on the landowner's private property without any need to access any property owned by neighbors.

G. Will the project result in the development of commercial recreational use on the site (including paid access)? Explain:

This project will not result in the development of commercial recreation use on the site. This project will occur on private property that the landowner has no plan to develop.

H. Is this project associated with the reclamation of past mining activity?

This project is not associated with the reclamation of past mining activity.

Each approved project applicant must enter into a written agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks specifying terms and duration of the project. The applicant must obtain all applicable permits prior to project construction. A competitive bid process must be followed when using State funds.

V. AUTHORIZING STATEMENT

I (we) hereby declare that the information and all statements to this application are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge and that the project or activity complies with rules of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program.

Applicant Signature:  Date: 5/15/25

Submittal: **Applications must be signed and received on or before November 15 and May 15 to be considered for the subsequent funding period**. Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

Mail to:	FWP Future Fisheries Fish Habitat Bureau PO Box 200701 Helena, MT 59620-0701	Email:	Future Fisheries Coordinator FWPFFIP@mt.gov (electronic submissions must be signed) For files over 10MB, use https://transfer.mt.gov and send to mmcgree@mt.gov

BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Both tables MUST be completed appropriately or the application will be invalid. Please see the example budget sheet for clarification.

PROJECT COSTS					GRANT REQUEST AND FUNDING			
Work Items (Itemize by Category)	**Number of Units**	**Unit Description***	**Cost/Unit**	**Total Cost**	**FUTURE FISHERIES REQUEST**	**Matching Contributions (Cash or In-Kind)*** **	**Other Contributions (Funds not used as match)**	**Total Funding**
**Units = feet, hours, cubic yards, etc. Do not use lump sum unless necessary.*								
Personnel								
Survey	6	hours	$42.50	$ 255.00		255.00		$ 255.00
Design	10	hours	$150.00	$ 1,500.00	1,500.00			$ 1,500.00
Engineering				$ -				$ -
Permitting				$ -				$ -
Maintenance**				$ -				$ -
Project Management	80	hours	$20.00	$ 1,600.00			1,600.00	$ 1,600.00
Education and Outreach	20	hours	$42.50	$ 850.00		850.00		$ 850.00
			Sub-Total	$ 4,205.00	$ 1,500.00	$ 1,105.00	$ 1,600.00	$ 4,205.00
Travel								
Mileage	100	miles	$0.70	$ 70.00		70.00		$ 70.00
Per diem				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ 70.00		$ 70.00	$ -	$ 70.00
Construction Materials								
Willow Cuttings	6000	stakes	$1.00	$ 6,000.00		6,000.00		$ 6,000.00
Cobble Fill	350	cubic yards	$20.00	$ 7,000.00		7,000.00		$ 7,000.00
Wire mesh fencing	100	linear ft	$0.70	$ 70.00		70.00		$ 70.00
T-posts	15	posts	$6.50	$ 97.50		97.50		$ 97.50
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ 13,167.50	$ -	$ 13,167.50	$ -	$ 13,167.50
Equipment, Labor, and Mobilization								
Mobilization	1	lump sum	$2,500.00	$ 2,500.00		2,500.00		$ 2,500.00
Excavator	55	hours	$150.00	$ 8,250.00	250.00	8,000.00		$ 8,250.00
Haul truck	40	hours	$130.00	$ 5,200.00	5,200.00			$ 5,200.00
Volunteer labor	95	hours	$33.49	$ 3,181.55		3,181.55		$ 3,181.55
				$ -				$ -
								$ -
								$ -
				$ -				$ -

(Revised 5/16/2025)

BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
				$ -				$ -
			Sub-Total	$ 19,131.55	$ 5,450.00	$ 13,681.55	$ -	$ 19,131.55
			OVERALL TOTALS	$ 36,574.05	$ 6,950.00	$ 28,024.05	$ 1,600.00	$ 36,574.05

OTHER REQUIREMENTS:

**For projects that include a maintenance request, it cannot exceed 10% of the total project cost.

***Match can include in-kind materials or labor. Justification for in-kind labor (e.g. hourly rates used) can be noted below. Do not use government salaries as match.

Additional budget detail:

APPLICATION MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Total should equal match listed above; do not include requested funds

CONTRIBUTOR	IN-KIND	CASH	TOTAL	Secured? (Y/N)
Montana Watershed Coordination Council	$ -	$ 8,000.00	$ 8,000.00	Y
Montana Trout Unlimited	$ 1,175.00	$ -	$ 1,175.00	Y
Landowner (HJ Ranch)	$ 13,167.50	$ 2,500.00	$ 15,667.50	Y
Volunteer Labor	$ 3,181.55	$ -	$ 3,181.55	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
TOTALS	$ 17,524.05	$ 10,500.00	$ 28,024.05	

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

Total should equal other contributions listed above; these are funds not specically matched to the Future Fisheries application

CONTRIBUTOR	IN-KIND	CASH	TOTAL	Secured? (Y/N)
Big Sky Watershed Corps Member	$ 1,600.00	$ -	$ 1,600.00	Y
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
	$ -	$ -	$ -	
TOTALS	$ 1,600.00	$ -	$ 1,600.00	

Poindexter Slough Supplemental Information:

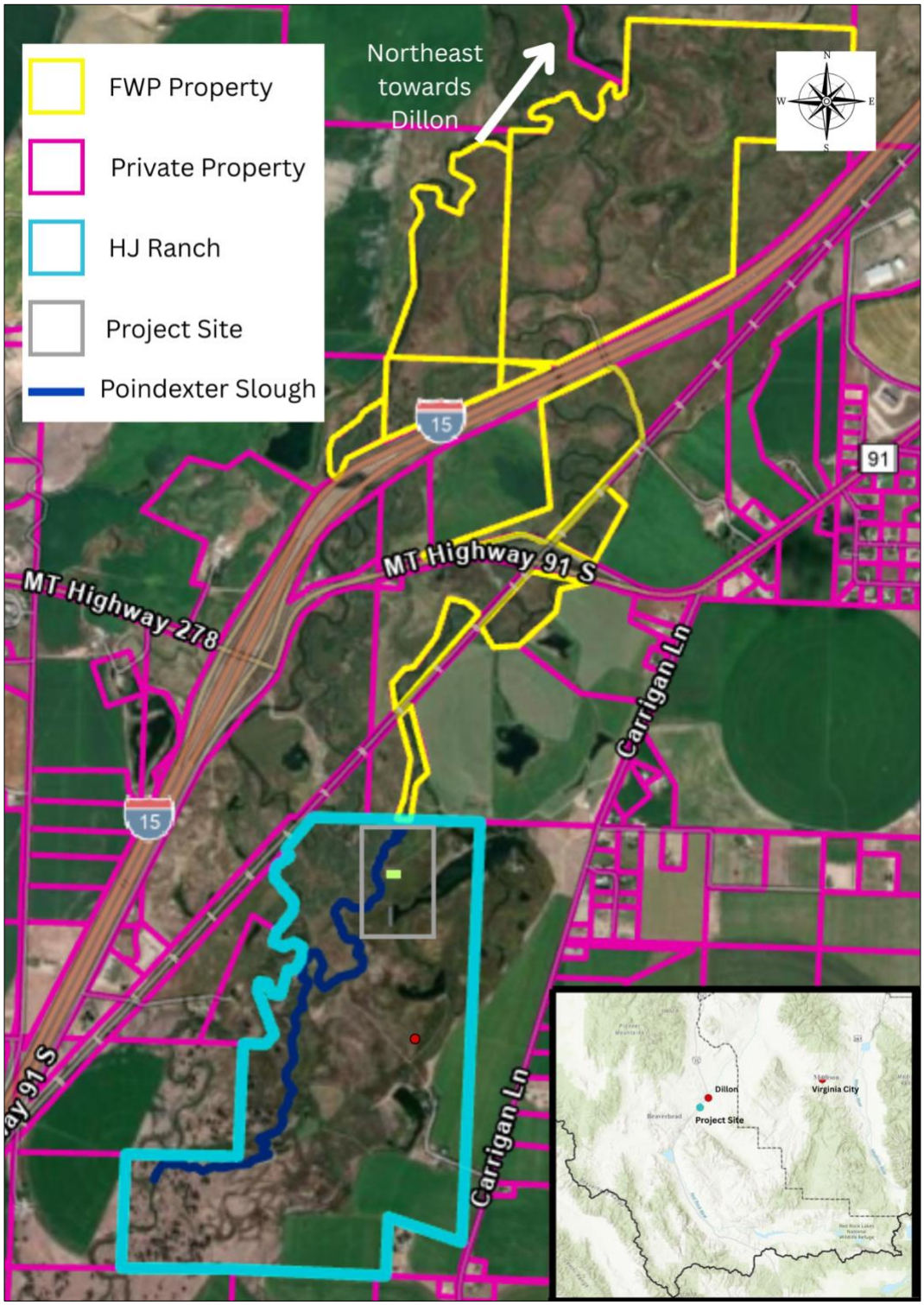

Figure 1. The Poindexter Slough Project is on the southern edge of Dillon. It is a popular sport fishery, with public access on over 500-acres at the Poindexter Fishing Access Site (FAS). The project is on private land immediately upstream of the Poindexter FAS.

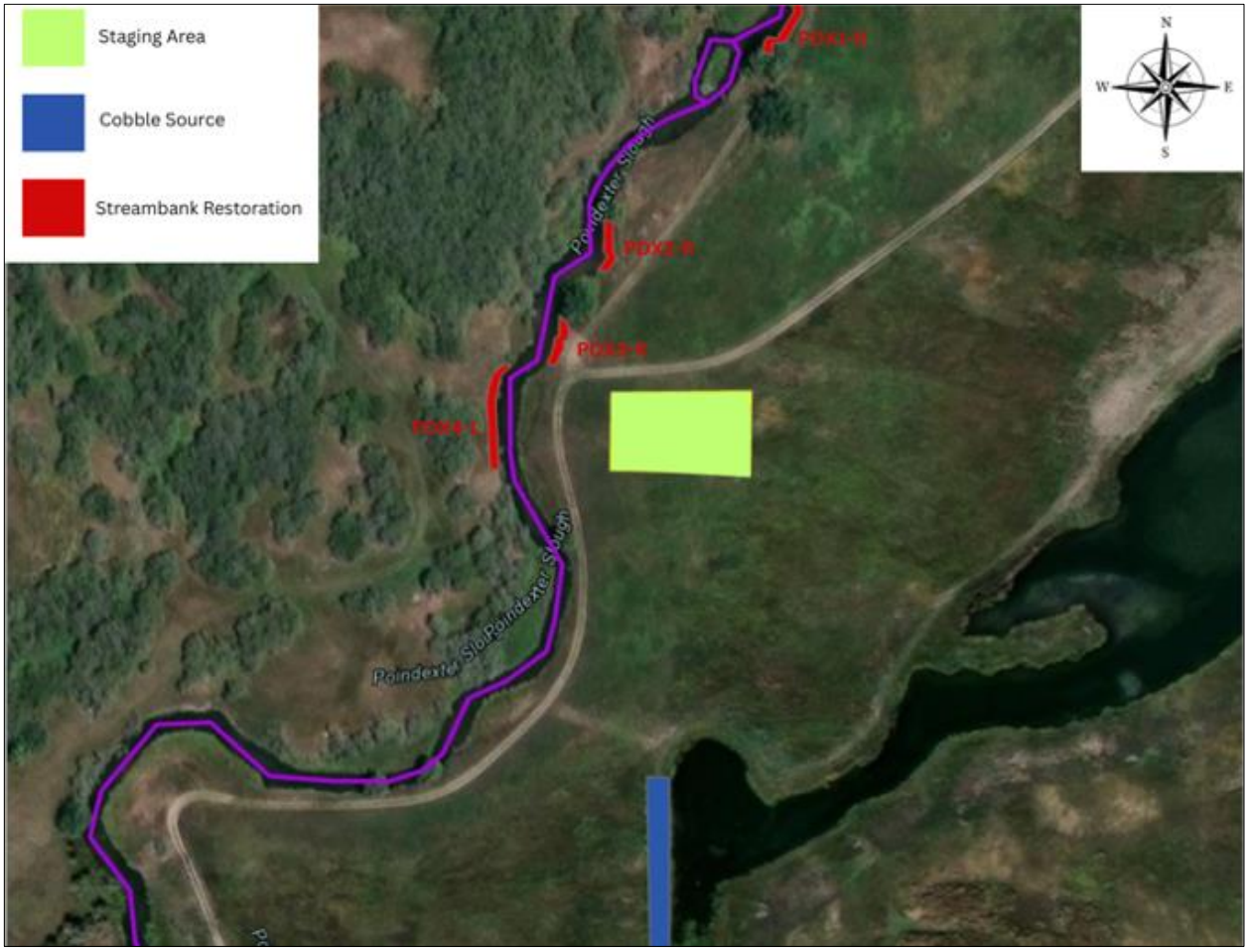

Figure 2. Plan view of the project site including the staging area, cobble source, and four streambank restoration sites. The project will restore ~300’ of unstable banks causing excess sediment in the stream.

Figure 3. Site PDX1-R (112.68562 °W, 45.17399 °N), a 56.5 ft section of degraded bank with a bank height of 3.1 ft at the midpoint. Site recommendation is to excavate the bank by approximately 9 ft to create a new, sloping floodplain.

Figure 4. Site PDX2-R (112.68644 °W, 45.17334 °N), a 69 ft long section of degraded bank with a bank height of 3.5 ft at the midpoint. Site recommendation is to slope the bank back by approximately 10.5 ft.

Figure 5. Site PDX3-R (112.68665 °W, 45.17297 °N, a 64.8 ft section of degraded bank with a bank height of 4.3 ft. Site recommendation is to bring back the bank by approximately 12.9 ft.

Figure 6. Site PDX4-L (112.68679 °W, 45.17283 °N) is a 145 ft section of degraded stream with a bank height of 4.7 ft. The site recommendation is to slope the streambank back by approximately 14 ft to create an inset floodplain.

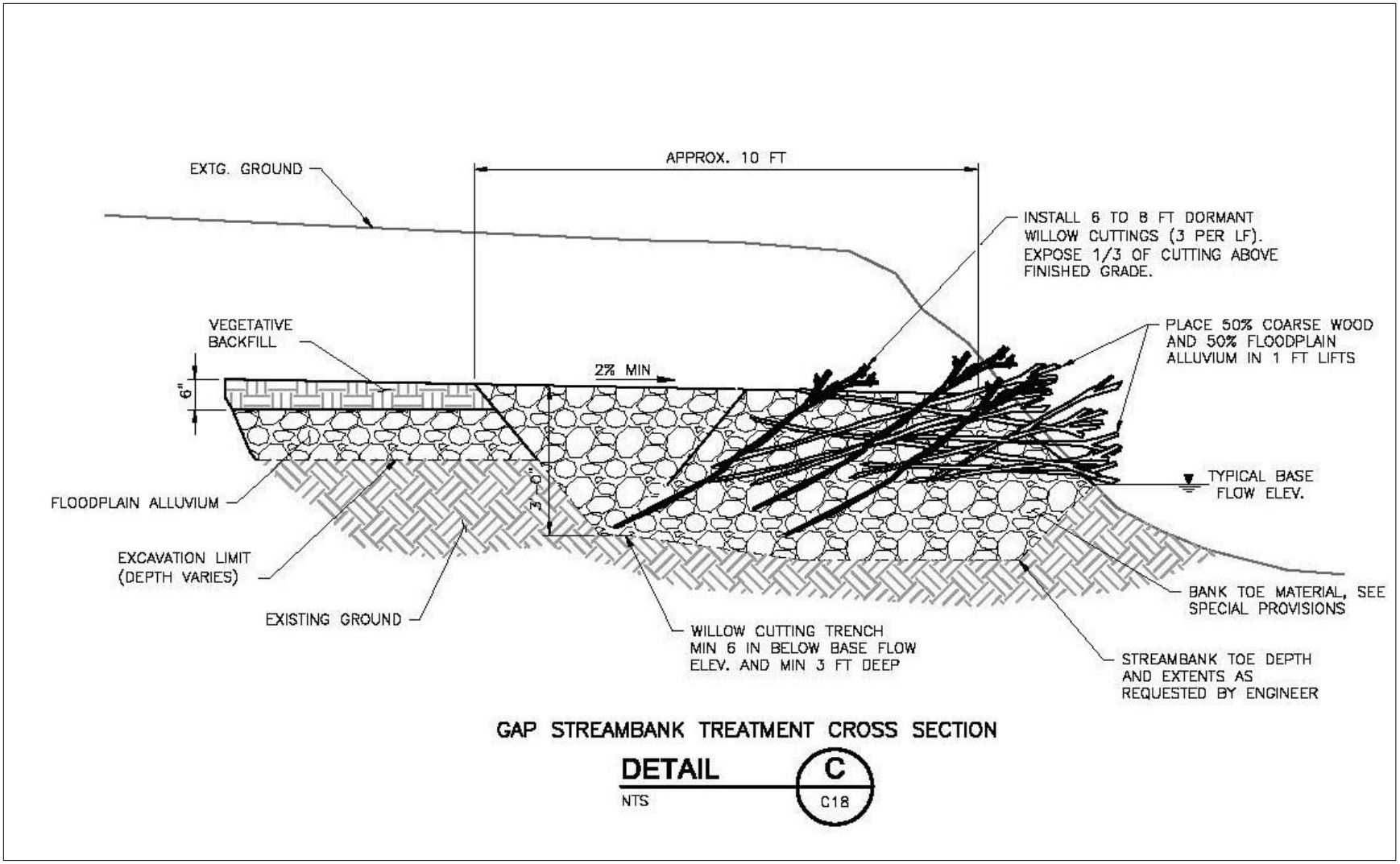

Figure 7. This design typical will be updated with funding from FFIP and MWCC following the Beaverhead Conservation District's specifications, which will be developed with FWP biologist Matt Jaeger.

STREAM RESTORATION AGREEMENT

This Agreement dated MARCH 31, 2025 between MONTANA TROUT UNLIMITED and THE HJ RANCH (Landowner) is entered into to authorize restoration work on POINDEXTER SLOUGH as it flows on or adjacent to Landowner's property. This restoration project is located in Section(s) 03, Township(s) 08, Range(s) 09 in BEAVERHEAD County. Work performed will be as described in the grant applications.

The Landowner agrees to supply in-kind material and **$2,500** in cash towards the restoration project.

This restoration project is intended to make improvements to the stream and riparian area, which are enduring in nature. Therefore the Landowner agrees to protect and maintain the investment in restoration for a minimum of 20 years following project completion. This includes the restriction of grazing from riparian areas in a manner consistent with NRCS grazing standards, and elimination of other land use practices or activities that would negatively affect the restoration project.

Notwithstanding the forgoing, it shall not become the Landowner's responsibility to repair or replace project improvements should they become damaged, changed or destroyed by natural means. The Landowner guarantees ownership of the above-described land and warrants that there are no outstanding rights that will interfere with this cooperative Agreement. Further, if land ownership is transferred, this Agreement will remain valid for the period of this Agreement.

This Agreement may be terminated in writing by either party by providing thirty (30) days advance notice. If terminated by the Landowner or the restoration site is degraded due to purposeful or negligent activities of the Landowner, the Landowner agrees to reimburse the MONTANA TROUT UNLIMITED for the costs of the needed repair work or the original cost of the project.

MONTANA TROUT UNLIMITED does not assume jurisdiction over the property as a result of this Agreement. The Landowner retains all normal property right including the right to control trespass.

By: Glen Rumpel _____ 3/31/2025

Glen Rumpel — Date
HJ Ranch

BY: Chris Edgington _____ March 31, 2025

Chris Edgington — Date
Montana Trout Unlimited

TROUT UNLIMITED
CHUCK ROBBINS
CHAPTER #656

May 14, 2025

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Michelle McGree and the Future Fisheries Citizens Review Panel,

Please accept this letter from the Chuck Robbins Chapter of Trout Unlimited (CRTU) in support of Montana Trout Unlimited's (MTU) proposal to restore and revegetate degraded banks along a portion of Poindexter Slough.

The Beaverhead River has struggled with sediment pollution and warm water for years. Poindexter Slough continues to be a place where brown and rainbow trout flourish. The Slough is one of the most heavily fished tributaries to the Beaverhead and valued by both the locals that grew up around these waters and the tourists who bolster our local economy. Habitat this important is habitat worth improving. This project would positively impact people, fish, and wildlife.

This project will revegetate and rehabilitate 300 feet of degraded, incised banks at four distinct locations to reduce sediment erosion, provide shade and woody debris for the stream, and expand riparian habitat for birds and wildlife. 6,000 willow stakes will be planted by our grassroots volunteers where the banks will be restored to expand the floodplain. Wild fish will have access to cleaner and colder water, and anglers will have access to a healthier and more productive trout population.

As anglers who are passionate about protecting wild trout and the habitat that they depend on, we strongly support and recommend funding for this project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of this project.

Mike Geary

Mike Geary
President, Chuck Robbins Chapter of Trout Unlimited
270 ~~Tuke~~ Ln. P.O. Box 581
Twin Bridges, MT 59754
406 459 2030