



Future Fisheries Improvement Program
c/o Michelle McGree
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
P.O. Box 200701
1429 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Adam Geik
Fish Biologist - Region 4 - Great Falls
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
(406) 454-5855

SUBJECT: Future Fisheries Funding Request for Lower Hound Creek

DATE: May 4, 2026

Dear Panel Members,

The Smith River is a major recreational corridor that provides high quality angling and floating opportunities. Hound Creek is a tributary to the Smith River originating in the northern Big Belt Mountains in Cascade County that provides significant flow to the Smith River and is an important spawning tributary for fish in the Smith and Missouri rivers. Hound Creek is on the impaired stream list for alteration in stream-side vegetation, chlorophyll-a, excess algal growth, and total nitrogen. Future Fisheries Improvement Program funding would be used to implement Phase 1 of restoration on Hound Creek, realigning the stream away from high eroding banks and reconnecting the stream with the floodplain. These modifications to Hound Creek would result in direct benefits to anglers on Hound Creek, the Smith River, and the Missouri River, primarily through improved fish spawning habitat and improved access to spawning habitat upstream of the project.

FWP has been closely involved in the identification, design, and coordination of the project since its inception. Hound Creek is listed as a target area for restoration in the Smith River Basinwide Assessment and Watershed Restoration Plan (SWRP); this project would help to reach the objectives of the SWRP and provide benefits to anglers by improving water quality, water quantity, and fish habitat. Specific benefits to the stream and fishery include increased fish spawning habitat, improved access to upstream spawning habitat, reduced sediment input to the stream channel, reconnected floodplain, restored banks, and improved riparian conditions. As the organization responsible for the creation of the SWRP, we feel funding *Phase 1: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection* is a good use of funds and addresses resource issues identified in the SWRP that will provide benefits to the fishery and anglers.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Adam Geik
Fish Biologist - Region 4 - Great Falls

May 13, 2026

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 East 6th Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620

RE: Lower Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection Project

Dear Members of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding Review Panel:

I am writing in support of the High Plains Conservation District (HPCD) Lower Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection Project.

As a landowner within the Lower Hound Creek drainage, including the property where Hound Creek enters the Smith River, I have observed firsthand the impacts of channel erosion, loss of topsoil, and associated water quality concerns. These issues affect not only my property, but also downstream aquatic habitat and the broader Smith River watershed.

I believe this project is an important step toward restoring channel stability, slowing erosion, reconnecting floodplains, and improving both water quality and aquatic habitat. The collaborative effort between HPCD, the Smith River Habitat Project, federal and state agencies, recreational interests, and local landowners demonstrates a thoughtful, basin-wide approach to addressing these challenges.

I believe funding the HPCD Lower Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection Project represents a sound use of Future Fisheries Improvement Program funds and will provide long-term benefits to the Hound Creek and Smith River basins for years to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ken McKamey
McKamey Ranch Co.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ken McKamey", written in a cursive style.



May 7, 2026

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

RE: Phase 1: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection

Dear members of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding Review Panel:

Montana Trout Unlimited (MTU) is writing to support the High Plains Conservation District (HPCD) Phase 1: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection project. This is part of Smith River watershed restoration plan (WRP) and is highlighted as a target restoration area. The Smith River is a major recreational corridor and home to historic ranch operations. Hound Creek is a Smith River tributary originating in the northern Big Belt Mountains in Cascade County. Future Fisheries Improvement Program (FFIP) funding will be used to implement Phase 1 of restoration on Hound Creek, realigning the stream away from high eroding banks and reconnecting the stream with the floodplain. This project will restore the channel, slow erosion, reconnect floodplains and, most importantly for our mission, improve aquatic habitat. Hound Creek is an important flow contributor to the Smith River and is on the impaired stream list for alteration in stream-side vegetation, chlorophyll-a, excess algal growth, and total nitrogen.

MTU offers our support of this effort and FFIP funding on behalf of our more than 5,000 supporters in Montana, especially the Missouri River Flyfishers and Pat Barnes chapters of Trout Unlimited. The goal of improving water and habitat in the Smith is one of our organization's top priorities and the Hound Creek effort being proposed for funding via the High Plains CD fits squarely in the priority, as well as aligning with our mission to conserve, protect and restore coldwater fisheries and their habitats in Montana, a mission we have pursued for more than 60 years via our staff and 13 volunteer chapters across the state. We have collectively invested decades and untold funding in maintaining or improving the health of the Smith River watershed. Most recently that has included fully supporting the development and approval of the Smith River WRP, the first two projects implemented under that Plan, and the initial site assessment and development of the Hound Creek project.

Last July (2025), I (David Brooks) toured the lower reaches of Hound Creek as part of an initial assessment of project viability that identified the reach of stream being targeted in this proposal as the highest priority for improving the ecosystem elements herein identified, as well as protecting the landowner's property from further erosion. MTU funded that initial site assessment and has committed funds to the project design. The Missouri River Flyfishers and Pat Barnes TU chapters have also committed funding for this project. As part of a collaborative effort, MTU has working knowledge of the project basin and HPCD, and is confident this funding will contribute to a larger overall collaboration to restore and repair a resource that is valued for food production as well as recreational opportunities to all Montanans. Our organization (MTU, along with MRF and PBTU chapters) stand ready to provide non-governmental match funding for the a FFIP grant, should it be awarded.

If you have any further questions don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,



David Brooks
Executive Director
Montana Trout Unlimited
david@montanatu.org



Tracy Wendt
President
Missouri River Flyfishers Chapter TU
mrftu406@gmail.com



Kiel Midtlyng
President
Pat Barnes Chapter TU
KMidtlyng@valleybankglacier.com

307 State Street
P.O. Box 1956
Hamilton, Montana 59840
Phone: 406-363-2353, Fax: 406-363-3015
<http://www.geumconsulting.com>



May 6, 2026

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

RE: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection

Dear members of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding Review Panel:

Geum Environmental Consulting (Geum) is writing to support the High Plains Conservation District (HPCD) Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection project. Our firm, a Montana-based small business established in 2003, is currently assisting with the design and development of the project and strongly support efforts to advance its implementation. Hound Creek is identified as a target restoration area in the recently completed Smith River Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP). The Smith River is a major recreational corridor and home to historic ranch operations. Hound Creek is a Smith River tributary originating in the northern Big Belt Mountains in Cascade County. Future Fisheries Improvement Program funding will be used to implement Phase 1 of restoration on Hound Creek, realigning the channel away from actively eroding streambanks to restore diverse aquatic habitat and increase connected floodplain area for long-term woody riparian vegetation establishment. Hound Creek is an important contributor of both flows and trout to the lower Smith River.

Geum worked closely with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) to develop the Smith River Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) in 2023 and 2024. Through that process, we conducted extensive stakeholder outreach and identified several projects to begin addressing issues in the watershed. In the last year, FWP has completed habitat and floodplain restoration work on the North Fork Smith River, South Fork Smith River, and addressed erosion issues at several boat camps in the Smith River State Park float corridor using soil bioengineering techniques. Up to that point, very little restoration had occurred in the Smith River drainage. The Hound Creek floodplain restoration project represents an important opportunity to continue restoring the Smith River basin and create landowner advocates for long-term resource protection. Our firm has designed numerous restoration projects that have received Future Fisheries Improvement Program funding over the years and we strongly believe funding this work is a sound use of program funds.

Sincerely,

Amy Sacry, Vice President and Senior Project Manager
Geum Environmental Consulting, Inc.
(406) 381-0858
asacry@geumconsulting.com



Montana State Legislature
MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Jane Weber
House District 19

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State Capitol Building
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Helena MT 59620-0400
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Web: legmt.gov

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Human Services

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Great Falls, MT 59403
(406) 781-0741
Jane.Weber@legmt.gov
<https://weberforhd19.com/voting-info/>

May 7, 2026

To: Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding Review Panel
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection

Dear Review Panel Members,

I write in support of the High Plains Conservation District (HPCD) Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection project. As part of the Smith River watershed restoration plan, this section of river system needs restoration. As a retired Forest Service employee, I have hiked and camped along "The Smith." This river is a major recreational corridor for backpackers, hunters and of course, river floaters; as well as a water source for many ranches. The Hound Creek tributary originates on the Helena-Lewis and Clark National Forest in the northern Big Belt Mountains in Cascade County.

Funding from the Future Fisheries Improvement Program will allow Phase One of the Hound Creek restoration to proceed. Phase One involves realignment of the stream from the existing and actively eroding banks and reconnection to the floodplain. This project will improve aquatic habitat and riparian conditions, restore the stream channel, decelerate streambank erosion, and reconnect the creek to the floodplain.

Hound Creek is important to the Smith River waterway, which is a main tributary to the Missouri River. As you are aware, the downstream section of the Missouri River provides drinking water for the community of Great Falls where I represent the citizens of HD19. Hound Creek is listed as an impaired stream due to alteration of the stream-side vegetation, chlorophyll-a, excess algae growth, and total nitrogen. Clean water is the new "gold" in states like Montana, and we must do everything possible to ensure a clean and healthful environment for the citizens of our state. This proposed project will improve a critical tributary to our drinking water source.

As a member of the Legislature, I have attended many meetings of the HPCD and have been thoroughly briefed on this restoration project. The realignment plan appears to satisfy the intent of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program. Additionally, there are several collaborators who see the value of this project and are assisting with partner input. I ask that you consider the broadscale benefits of restoring this resource which contributes to the recreational value, food production, and drinking water source for many. Thank you, in advance, for your positive consideration of this worthy project.

Sincerely,



REPRESENTATIVE, JANE WEBER

HD 19

MT State Legislature



May 13, 2026

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200701
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RE: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection

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SRHP, a nonprofit organization represented by local landowners, outfitters, and community members, has worked with local, state and federal agencies for the benefit of the Smith River corridor's natural resources for over twenty years.

As part of a collaborative effort, SRHP has a working knowledge of the project basin and HPCD and is confident this funding will contribute to a larger overall collaboration to restore and repair a resource that is valued for food production as well as recreational opportunities to all Montanans. Overall, we feel funding the *HPCD – Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection* is a sound use of Future Fisheries Improvement Program funds. If you have any further questions don't hesitate to reach out.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Sherry K Meador".

Sherry K Meador, Director
Smith River Habitat Project
(406)431-7638



Future Fisheries Improvement Program
c/o Michelle McGree
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
P.O. Box 200701
1429 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Adam Geik
Fish Biologist - Region 4 - Great Falls
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(406) 454-5855

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DATE: May 4, 2026

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Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Adam Geik
Fish Biologist - Region 4 - Great Falls

May 13, 2026

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 East 6th Avenue
P.O. Box 200701
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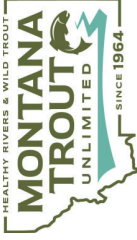
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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ken McKamey
McKamey Ranch Co.



May 7, 2026

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

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Thank you,

David Brooks
Executive Director
Montana Trout Unlimited
david@montanatu.org

Tracy Wendt
President
Missouri River Flyfishers Chapter TU
mrftu406@gmail.com

Kiel Midtlyng
President
Pat Barnes Chapter TU
KMidtlyng@valleybankglacier.com



Montana State Legislature

MONTANA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Representative Jane Weber
House District 19

DURING THE SESSION
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Phone: 406-363-2353, Fax: 406-363-3015
http://www.geumconsulting.com

May 6, 2026

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Fisheries Division
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Sincerely,

Amy Sacry, Vice President and Senior Project Manager
Geum Environmental Consulting, Inc.
(406) 381-0858
asacry@geumconsulting.com

May 7, 2026

To: Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding Review Panel
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

RE: Hound Creek Realignment and Floodplain Reconnection

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Sincerely,



REPRESENTATIVE, JANE WEBER

HD 19

MT State Legislature



May 13, 2026

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Division
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
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Thank you,



Sherry K Meador, Director
Smith River Habitat Project
(406)431-7638



Photo 3



Photo 4

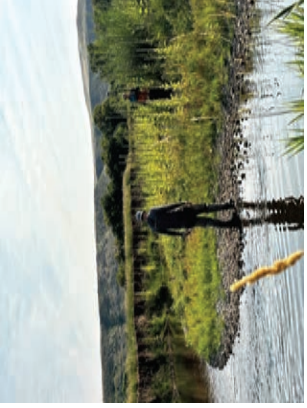


Photo 5



Photo 6



Photo 7

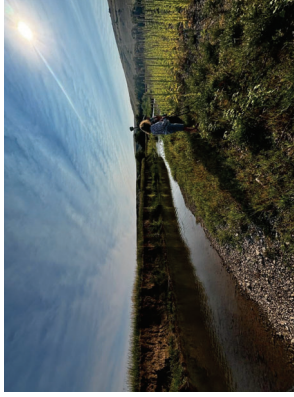


Photo 8

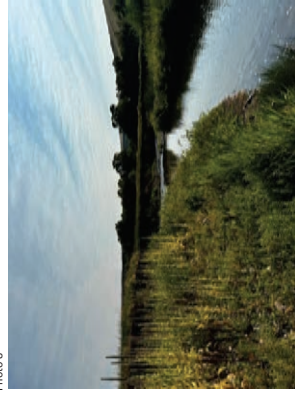


Photo 9



Photo 10



Photo 11

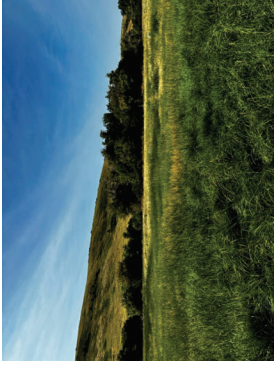


Photo 12



Photo 13

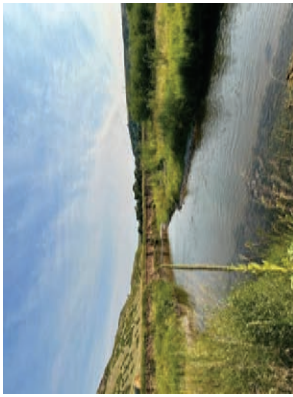


Photo 14

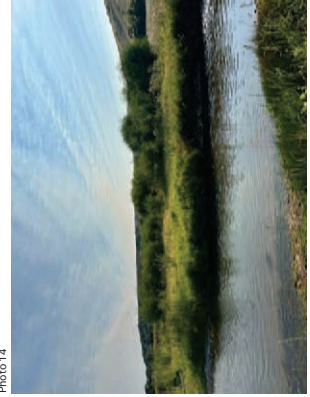


Photo 15



Photo 16



Photo 17



Photo 18

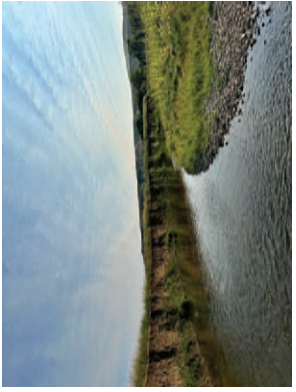


Photo 19



Photo 20



Photo 21