

A Situation Assessment: Coordinated Habitat Conservation & Restoration in Montana

By John G. Munding, Consulting for Creative Solutions, llc.



Photos Courtesy of Carl Heilman



Photo Courtesy of Paul Sihler

A Situation Assessment: Coordinated Habitat Conservation & Restoration in Montana

By John G. Munding, Consulting for Creative Solutions, llc.



Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| Acknowledgement | 3 |
| Executive Summary..... | 5 |
| Introduction..... | 9 |
| Methodology | 9 |
| Description of the Current Situation..... | 10 |
| The New Conservation Model for Montana..... | 10 |
| CFWCS Development and Implementation | 11 |
| Partner Perceptions of the CFWCS..... | 11 |
| Points of Agreement..... | 15 |
| Partnerships..... | 16 |
| Lessons Learned from Local Working Groups..... | 17 |
| Obstacles to Partnerships..... | 19 |
| Threats to Landscape Conservation | 24 |
| Conservation Partnership Opportunities | 25 |
| Funding | 29 |
| Communication/Outreach | 30 |
| Success | 32 |
| Keys to Success | 33 |
| Recommendations | 37 |
| Potential Partners/Programs/Funding Sources..... | 39 |
| Workshop..... | 40 |
| Gaps | 41 |
| Capacity Issue | 41 |
| Coordination Issue | 42 |
| Communication Issue..... | 42 |
| Funding Issue..... | 42 |
| Web-based Tools..... | 44 |
| Next Steps | 44 |
| Appendix A: Persons Interviewed..... | 45 |
| Appendix B: Potential Action to Implement CFWCS..... | 49 |
| Potential Partners in Conservation | 52 |
| Appendix C: Inventory of Conservation and Restoration Programs..... | 53 |
| Appendix D: Summary of November 1, 2007, Workshop | 118 |

Acknowledgement

The development of this document was completed with the generous support of a grant intended to advance the implementation of priority actions of State Wildlife Action Plans. The grant award was made by the Wildlife Conservation Society's Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund, the funding for which was provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

The grant application was developed by a partnership among the Five Valleys Land Trust, the Heart of the Rockies Initiative and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The project was administered by Paul Sihler, with the Heart of the Rockies Initiative, and Chris Smith, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. The situation assessment was conducted and the report was prepared by John Munding, Consulting for Creative Solutions, llc. The workshop was facilitated and the workshop report was prepared by Virginia Tribe. Glenn Marx, Montana Association of Land Trusts, and Tom Palmer and Mike Aderhold, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, provided advice and assistance throughout this project.

The ideas expressed in this report reflect the thinking of many Montanans who are committed to habitat conservation and restoration in Montana. We are grateful to each person who participated in the project interviews and to everyone who attended the workshop.

Executive Summary

The Heart of the Rockies Initiative, working on behalf of the land trusts in Montana and in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was awarded a grant from the Wildlife Conservation Society's Wildlife Opportunities Fund, funded by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, to develop a coordinated delivery mechanism for the habitat conservation and restoration components of Montana's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS). This project proposed to build upon the CFWCS by reaching out and involving the individuals who administer key local, state, federal and nonprofit programs. The intent is to (1) better leverage those programs to achieve the habitat goals of the CFWCS; (2) identify unmet needs and opportunities for new programs and funding sources; and, (3) lay the groundwork for coalitions and individual organizations that will advocate for new programs and funding in the public policy arena. The project report summarizes conversations with 112 people, representing 88 different conservation programs administered by state, federal and tribal governments and non-governmental organizations.

A new approach to natural resource conservation has emerged in Montana. The new model reflects a transition from individual species management toward concern for species groups and conservation and restoration of habitats necessary to support those groups; a greater emphasis on sustaining the communities of people who depend on working landscapes as well as sustaining ecological systems; conservation as a result of local initiatives and partnerships; a more strategic approach, based on species and habitat objectives, in response to long term threats to conservation; and, a transition from conflict to a recognition that success requires cooperation.

Conservation partnerships already are happening in Montana and much of it has occurred without specific direction from either CFWCS or, in many instances, government. Examples include The Blackfoot Challenge; the work of several watershed groups, generally; the Montana Wetlands Legacy; the Joint Ventures; fish and wildlife mitigation, pursuant to the Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Program; the work of the various land trusts; and, the USFWS Partners with Fish and Wildlife program. There are opportunities to learn from these programs and opportunities to build upon these successes. Generally, successful local groups formed around inspired leadership, formed around the common ground and engaged all of the relevant players, including integration of landowners.

Generally, the CFWCS goals and objectives overlap with the conservation goals and objectives of other state and federal agencies and with Montana-based NGO's. This is not necessarily a blanket endorsement of CFWCS. But, there is general recognition that CFWCS is a good start to defining a shared conservation vision for Montana. Components of that shared vision include the understanding that:

- Montana is a special place and we have a responsibility to conserve it.
- Sustainable communities and sustainable ecosystems are interdependent. Working landscapes are important to our culture and important to maintaining open space.
- Implementation should be community based, with an emphasis on getting work done on the ground.
- To be successful, conservation will require people with multiple interests working together to achieve shared objectives.
- Effective communication must enfranchise people at the community level.

-
- The conversation about conservation in Montana must move from a debate to a dialogue.
 - There is a need for state level leadership. Effective leadership must be facilitative and supportive of local initiative. It cannot be directive.
 - Many Montana landscapes are intact. Protection of intact landscapes is less expensive than restoration.
 - Lack of adequate funding is an important obstacle to achieving the CFWCS objectives through conservation partnerships.

There are several challenges to achieving the goals and objectives defined by the CFWCS. Land uses and land values in Montana are changing as traditional working landscapes are converted to subdivisions. These changes often are occurring without sufficient forethought and in an environment that resists land use planning and regulation. There also is potential for land use that might conflict with traditional Montana values. Water is a critical issue and there are concerns related to stream degradation; dewatering; non-point source pollution; and, the proximity of development to streams. There is potential for conflict between energy development and the habitat requirements of sensitive species. All of these threats are occurring when there is broader concern for the consequences of climate change.

CFWCS offers an approach to think strategically in response to threats to conservation and to prioritize protection of important habitats. However, there is general agreement that inadequate funding is a challenge to achieving the goals and objectives outlined by CFWCS.

Effective communication is essential to developing a shared conservation vision and to the formation of functional conservation collaborations.

This project identified several obstacles to conservation partnerships. However, the project also demonstrated that there is general agreement about the factors that are essential to make conservation partnerships successful. Specific factors include:

- A Statewide conservation vision that embraces local priorities and initiatives:
- A conservation vision developed around principles of sustainability; the integration of ecological integrity, economic feasibility and social acceptance; and the interdependence of sustainable ecosystems and sustainable communities that depend on those ecosystems.
- A multi-disciplinary approach
- Leadership that is perceived as objective, reliable and committed;
- An identified champion for CFWCS, a person who is determined to get conservation done;
- Visible support for CFWCS from the Governor's office and the Natural Resources Sub-cabinet;
- Alignment within FWP and a commitment to integrate CFWCS into all department programs;
- Allocation of FWP staff time according to priorities defined by CFWCS;
- Shared vision among FWP, DNRC and DEQ and a commitment to landscape level conservation;
- FWP fully engaged with the partners and SWG fully integrated with the partner's programs;

-
- Effective integration of CFWCS into federal land management planning; models of agencies using CFWCS and using CFWCS for the right reason;
 - Frequent and thorough communication among the partners;
 - A better understanding of the respective strengths of the partners;
 - Inclusiveness; and,
 - A broad base of public support for landscape level conservation, including local buy in.

A workshop, attended by approximately 142 individuals, was held on November 1 to review and provide collective feedback on the draft situation assessment; define and explore “gaps” as evidenced by the draft situation assessment; and, provide topical input on “next steps”. The results of the workshop tend to validate the conservation direction defined by the CFWCS and the situation assessment. But, it also was noted that the CFWCS and the situation assessment only define a place to begin. To achieve the objectives defined by CFWCS, the attendees identified 1) the need for more leadership, preferably from a statewide steering committee; 2) the need for a communication strategy to provide timely and relevant implementation; 3) the need for leadership that empowers groups that work locally; 4) the need for an approach to conservation that functions inclusively; and, 5) the need for a conservation program that is focused on producing measurable conservation results.

The report identifies gaps between what is required to achieve the goals defined by CFWCS and current resources that might be used for that purpose. The report identifies potential actions to implement a coordinated delivery mechanism for the habitat components of Montana’s CFWCS, as suggested by persons who participated in interviews. The report also summarizes those programs as potential partners in the achievement of goals and objectives defined by the CFWCS.



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

Introduction

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks developed the Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS) pursuant to the State Wildlife Grant Program (SWG), which was established through a federal appropriation 2001 to implement some of the provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Act of 1980. The Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies have described State Wildlife Grants as “our nation’s core program for preventing wildlife from becoming endangered”.

Montana’s CFWCS identified over 53 million acres of land and 2,415 miles of rivers and streams as focus areas of conservation need. The focus areas represent those habitats in greatest need of conservation. If Montana is to be successful in conserving, enhancing and restoring the terrestrial and aquatic habitats within these focus areas, then the programs of local, state and federal agencies and nonprofit organizations must be enlisted in achieving the goals of the CFWCS. In order for the CFWCS to achieve its potential, the CFWCS must provide a vision and organizing context for local, other state, federal and non-profit habitat conservation and restoration efforts that deliver on-the-ground results in Montana.

The Wildlife Conservation Society established a Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund through a grant received from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation. The Wildlife Action Opportunities Fund provides competitive grants to conservation organizations that are focused on implementing priority actions and strategies identified in State Wildlife Action Plans. The Heart of the Rockies Initiative, working on behalf of the land trusts in Montana and in cooperation with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks was awarded a grant from this fund to develop a coordinated delivery mechanism for the habitat components of Montana’s CFWCS.

State and Federal agencies, landowners and non-profit organizations have come to realize the importance of forming partnerships for the purpose of achieving shared conservation objectives and several successful local efforts now are functioning in Montana. This project provided an opportunity to inventory existing local, state, federal and non-profit programs that can contribute to the habitat conservation and restoration needs identified in the CFWCS; to learn from many of those programs; to make more people aware of CFWCS; to work toward establishing a shared agenda for increasing the capacity of Montana to deliver the habitat conservation and restoration components of the CFWCS; and, to identify additional programs and funding that are needed to address unmet needs, and identify actions needed to establish those programs.

Methodology

This project proposed to build upon the CFWCS by reaching out and involving the individuals who administer key local, state, federal and nonprofit programs. The intent is to (1) better leverage those programs to achieve the habitat goals of the CFWCS; (2) identify unmet needs and opportunities for new programs and funding sources; and, (3) lay the groundwork for coalitions and individual organizations that will advocate for new programs and funding in the public policy arena.

Our approach was an exercise in learning from the potential partners. We met with 112 key individuals, representing 88 different programs, managed by state, federal and private organizations, to learn from them information about their current programs and projects; to hear their perspectives about their program objectives relative to the objectives in the CFWCS and corresponding opportunities for partnerships; to identify potential opportunities for



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

advancing new partnerships; and, to discover key factors in achieving conservation through partnerships. A list of people with whom we met is presented in Appendix A.

In selecting people with whom to meet, we strived to identify the more prominent conservation programs in Montana. We also understood the importance of reflecting on the diversity of conservation and restoration activity that currently occurs in Montana. Although we talked with many people, we know that we were not able to speak with everyone who might have shared good ideas. We did not intentionally exclude anyone. We are grateful to everyone who made the effort to share their perspectives with us.

We prepared a draft report that compiled the wisdom of those who met with us. The draft report and an excerpt of the recommendations included served as the focus for a one day workshop, held in Helena on November 1. The report that follows is a revision of the draft, based on the input received during the workshop. We assume that the participants were candid and that they honestly communicated their perceptions regarding conservation in Montana. Except for references to specific programs, the information is presented without attribution. Quotations are statements from the conversations. This report is not an exhaustive study, nor an end in itself. Rather, it is a place to continue a dialogue about advancing a shared conservation vision for Montana.

Description of the Current Situation

The New Conservation Model for Montana

It is apparent from the conversations that Montana is on the cusp of a significant change in its approach to natural resource conservation. The conservation model that has emerged reflects a transition from individual species management toward concern for species groups and conservation and restoration of habitats necessary to support those groups; a transition from using hunted and fished species as surrogates for sensitive species to using sensitive native species as the surrogates for other species, including hunted and fished species; a transition from an emphasis on sustaining populations to support hunting and angling toward sustaining

ecological systems/landscapes and sustaining the communities that depend on those landscapes; a transition from agency directed/agency led conservation toward local initiatives and partnerships; a transition from agency identity to project and community identity; a transition from a focus on responding to current crises, wherever they occur, to a more strategic approach, based on species and habitat objectives, in response to long term threats to conservation; and, a transition from conflict to a recognition that success requires cooperation.

CFWCS Development and Implementation

FWP developed the CFWCS in compliance with the following criteria, as defined by federal regulation: 1) Identify species in greatest need of conservation; 2) Identify essential habitats in greatest need of conservation; 3) Identify major problems impacting essential habitats; 4) Identify the actions necessary to conserve habitats and species in greatest need of conservation; 5) Identify the provisions for a monitoring program; 6) Identify a cycle for review of the strategy; 7) Develop a plan to identify potential partners and figure a program for coordination; and, 8) Document public involvement. The CFWCS was reviewed by a 13 member National Advisory Acceptance Team and approved by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in January 2006.

In developing the CFWCS, FWP evaluated 636 vertebrate species and 170 habitats. The document identifies 60 species in greatest need of conservation, including 1 mussel, 3 amphibians, 5 reptiles, 36 birds and 15 mammals. The CFWCS identified 30 habitats in the greatest need of conservation. These are the species and habitats that must be conserved to prevent further declines; to maintain Montana's rich fish and wildlife heritage; and, to help prevent future listings under the Federal Endangered Species Act.

Montana FWP recognizes this need, and has taken a very significant step towards engaging partners in the implementation of the CFWCS by designating a significant portion of its SWG funding (approximately \$1 million/year) for the next five years as matching funding for cooperative habitat conservation projects. The department is also committed to integrating funding from the Habitat Montana program (approximately \$5 million/year) and Future Fisheries Program (approximately \$1 million/year) into implementation of the CFWCS through cooperative habitat conservation projects. As one person observed, "FWP deserves a lot of credit for making the effort to include lots of people in the effort to develop CFWCS at the outset and for keeping them involved in the process."

To implement the CFWCS, FWP completed a five-year Action Plan in August, 2006. The Action Plan includes a schedule for receiving project proposals and criteria for reviewing project applications. FWP recruited a multi-interest Core Team to work with the Department's internal SWG Steering Committee to review applications and recommend projects to the Director for approval.

"CFWCS is not just about money. It is a different way of doing business among the natural resource management agencies and NGO's that also participate in conservation efforts."

Partner Perceptions of CFWCS

People have various perspectives about the nature and purpose of the CFWCS and they have engaged CFWCS at differing levels. CFWCS is well understood by those who participated in its development. Beyond that group, there is variable awareness of the document and its scope and intent. Although not its primary purpose, this project did provide an opportunity to introduce

CFWCS to a broader audience.

At one level, there are some people who either were not aware of CFWCS or had only a vague awareness of the document. In some cases, this resulted because we looked broadly and included people who had no involvement in the development of CFWCS. In a few cases, there are people who are involved in projects that include SWG funding but did not realize the relationship between CFWCS and SWG. Some people do not understand CFWCS and are intimidated by it. “What is FWP going to do to me as a consequence of CFWCS and ESA?”

Some people, including some who assisted in the development of CFWCS, think of CFWCS as the current version of the non-game program. They tend to think about it primarily as the framework for justifying and prioritizing projects for SWG funding, with a primary focus on projects intended to keep at risk species from being listed pursuant to the Endangered Species Act.

Some people think about CFWCS as the framework for comprehensive conservation. At a minimum, they think CFWCS should be the foundation for most FWP programs. “SWG provides for a more rounded approach to fish and wildlife management. FWP is bought into a broader conservation agenda.” One FWP employee suggested that “SWG has brought the game and non-game programs together.” “CFWCS should not be a SWG silo. Rather, it should be a driver for all FWP programs and a driver for other state agency programs that overlap with fish and wildlife.” “CFWCS should be institutional in FWP’s thinking.” “Native species are surrogates for a lot of other species.” While people support the idea of a more comprehensive approach to conservation, some people within FWP’s traditional constituency are concerned that game animals and game birds might get lost from the program during implementation. “CFWCS should not polarize the wildlife community.”

More broadly, some people think CFWCS, or a similar planning document, should be Montana’s vision for conservation. “CFWCS is not just FWP’s document.” “CFWCS provides an opportunity to focus all of the programs on conserving and restoring the best of what Montana has.” As such, they tend to view the CFWCS as the basis for the programs of other state and federal agencies whose mandates include responsibilities for fish and wildlife conservation. This perspective includes the idea that CFWCS ought to be the impetus for public/private conservation partnerships. As one participant noted, “If the emphasis is on native species, there are huge opportunities for partnerships.” CFWCS provides the direction. “The partners can bring conservation capacity – funding, political support and education – that helps the state achieve what otherwise might be beyond FWP’s capacity.”

One person noted that “conservation is consistent with Tribal culture.” Tribes feel a responsibility to “care for the grandchildren” and to “look out for the seventh generation”. Tribal governments manage 8 million acres on the seven reservations in Montana. Tribal participation in the successful implementation of the CFWCS is essential.

Irrespective of the level at which people have engaged CFWCS, most see value in the document or a similar planning tool. One participant suggested that “CFWCS could be used as a filter. It could be the framework for defining partnerships; the framework for identifying those places where partnerships can be most effective; and, the framework for sorting out competing interests.” At the same time, one person cautioned that “CFWCS provides information that people can use in making decisions. It is not the decision document for local groups.”

There is a measure of expectation that CFWCS could make a real difference in promoting conservation in Montana. “It is thrilling to see FWP interested in doing follow up for the purpose of implementing the CFWCS.” “CFWCS opens the gate for FWP to be more

comprehensive, including doing more work with non-game. FWP has an opportunity to learn from its partners, who already are doing this kind of conservation.” At the same time, however, there is a measure of skepticism regarding FWP’s commitment to CFWCS as a planning tool for anything other than SWG. There is uncertainty whether FWP is committed to a corresponding transition from a traditional focus on species management, especially management of game species, to a greater emphasis on comprehensive conservation. There also is uncertainty regarding the level of political support in Montana state government, at the cabinet level and in the Governor’s office.

The people with whom we met all have responsibilities for conservation. Most of the partners have completed some level of planning including the definition of objectives, priorities and strategies to achieve the purposes for their programs. However, there is not a single plan that



Photo Courtesy of CFWCS

embraces all of the plans and/or to which all of the plans respond. CFWCS could provide that function – but it does not yet serve that purpose.

On-the-ground conservation partnerships, consistent with the goals of CFWCS, already are happening in Montana and much of it has occurred without specific direction from CFWCS. As one person said, “Something is working for conservation because lots of people are pulling in more or less the same direction, even if they aren’t doing it together.” Examples include The Blackfoot Challenge; the work of several watershed groups, generally; the Montana Wetlands Legacy; the Joint Ventures; fish and wildlife mitigation, pursuant to the Columbia River Fish and Wildlife Program; hydropower re-licensing agreements; the work of the various land trusts; and, the USFWS Partners with Fish and Wildlife program. Several of the local partnerships formed at the initiative of the participants. Several people noted that there are opportunities to build on these successes. Although these programs may be supported at the state/national level, they are not coordinated under a shared vision. Although many of these successes may not have been

coordinated under direction from CFWCS, one person noted that “SWG has provided resources that facilitate the agencies working together toward common goals.” One person also cautioned that “FWP is not recognized as the leader for many of the people who currently are doing conservation work in Montana.”

CFWCS provides an opportunity to focus all of the programs on conserving and restoring the best of what Montana has. Several people noted that CFWCS needs more detail to guide implementation. The plan also needs a monitoring component.

While CFWCS identifies priorities defined by FWP, it may not adequately reflect the priorities of all of the partners. “CFWCS feels like an internal document. It is not responsive enough to the priorities of some of the other programs.” Some people are concerned that CFWCS does not put enough emphasis on riparian and wetland habitats. Some noted that CFWCS uses classifications that differ from classifications used by some of the partners. “Some of the specifics conflict because the focus area definitions were not responsive enough to the way that other groups think about ecosystems and habitats, e.g. the ecotypes are representative but not really functional systems. The ecotypes should step down a level to really focus on the areas of concern within the ecotypes.” Others suggested that CFWCS would be more useful if the focus areas included more detail. “Some of the focus areas include critical habitats that were obscured by the grouping of types (fens, wet meadows and small potholes).” “CFWCS is a good idea. It provides a template for future work. However, the fill-in-the blank stuff still needs to happen.” Some suggested that CFWCS could have put more emphasis on riparian and wetlands because water is critical to everything else. Some suggested that “CFWCS has a high prevalence of peripheral species and species with limited potential for conservation”. One person indicated that CFWCS is too general and does not put enough emphasis on non-game birds. Another person noted that there are some important species that also have high potential for conservation that aren’t referenced, e.g. the lark bunting. “Some species are listed as Tier 1, but their habitats are not designated as Tier 1.” “There is potential for spending too much money on obscure species rather than spending money more strategically.” Conservation of ponderosa pine on private forest lands is a priority for bird conservation in western Montana. This was not adequately referenced in the CFWCS. The document should have included the Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. It is a sensitive species and also has cultural significance for CS&KT. Some people noted that “CFWCS tends to emphasize the negative impacts of commercial land uses. Timber and range management can and should be part of the solution and not always criticized as part of the problem.” “The plan is good as far as it goes, but the plan could become a barrier if FWP is resistant to improvements that are responsive to the inherent differences in methodology and characterizations that other programs might use in working with ecosystems.” Although these criticisms were expressed, several people noted that these issues could be resolved in the transition to implementation.

USFS noted that the agency has adopted a policy of incorporating state action plans in the forest planning process. The agency has transitioned to doing projects based on landscape level analysis and resource integration. This transition includes the philosophy of doing the “right work at the right place, at the right time for the right reasons”. The agency understands that CFWCS provides a consistent framework incorporating that philosophy in forest and project level planning. BLM indicated that the next revisions to its Resource Management Plans will consider the CFWCS. BLM also has begun to use CFWCS to set priorities for implementation of the Resource Management Plans, as a source of information for NEPA analyses and to guide the development of wildlife stipulations for permits. NRCS used CFWCS when it updated its Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. NRCS also noted that they could use CFWCS to make decisions regarding allocation of funds from other programs defined by the Farm Bill.

CFWCS could provide a framework for responding to emerging issues. Several partners noted the relevance of CFWCS to environmental reviews pursuant to the Montana and the National Environmental Policy Acts. They also noted its relevance to local land use planning.

CFWCS needs a higher profile. “The plan can’t go on the shelf. FWP needs to own CFWCS.” Unless the FWP Director and the Governor communicate the importance of the document and FWP consistently uses it in making decisions, it will be difficult for others to take CFWCS seriously.

One person suggested that this project “is a positive sign that Montana is stepping out.”

Points of Agreement

People recognized that the CFWCS goals and objectives overlap with the conservation goals and objectives of every state and federal agency with conservation responsibilities in Montana and with every Montana-based NGO with a conservation purpose. “It is pretty hard to disagree with conservation of wildlife habitat.” This is not necessarily a blanket endorsement of CFWCS. But, there is general recognition that CFWCS is a good start to defining a shared conservation vision for Montana.

Several similar ideas were expressed by many of the people with whom we met. Although not everyone expressed these ideas, it is noteworthy that no one contradicted these ideas. Therefore, these ideas are offered as additional perspective to a shared conservation vision for Montana:

- Montana is a special place. We have a responsibility to conserve it.
- Sustainable communities and sustainable ecosystems are interdependent. Therefore, conservation of the communities and conservation of working landscapes are integral with ecological conservation. Working landscapes are important to our culture and important to maintaining open space.
- Implementation should be community based, with an emphasis on getting work done on the ground.
- To be successful, conservation will require people with multiple interests working together to achieve shared objectives.
- Effective communication must enfranchise people at the community level. The conservation programs must be responsive to priorities that have been identified at the local level. Approaches to conservation must respect the unique personality of individual communities.
- The conversation about conservation in Montana must move from a debate to a dialogue. There are real issues that separate people and those cannot be ignored. Resolving those issues requires dialogue.
- There is a need for state level leadership. Effective leadership must be facilitative and supportive of local initiative; it cannot be directive.
- Many Montana landscapes are intact. Protection of intact landscapes is less expensive than restoration. Therefore, conservation in Montana is cost-effective compared with conservation in other states. One participant also noted that restoration is easier in Montana than elsewhere because habitats are not as degraded. In degraded riparian habitats it may be necessary to restore vegetation and hydrology. But, the natural topography is still functionally intact.

-
- Lack of adequate funding is an important obstacle to achieving the CFWCS objectives through conservation partnerships.

Partnerships

There are many competent people committed to conservation and doing good work, within their respective mandates. However, much of the conservation work is occurring within the broader context of a history of conflict between and among agencies and organizations.

People understand the value of partnership and want it to happen. “Additional resources can be developed, if blended projects can be constructed to serve the shared interests of multiple programs.” “That notion of cooperation is out there. People understand that we have to cooperate to get conservation done.” Partnerships also bring shared expertise and a multi-disciplinary approach to complex conservation projects. At the same time, people are looking to FWP to be the catalyst to make partnerships happen. “FWP needs to appreciate that there are a lot of people who want to help with conservation and who want to do so in coordination with FWP.” Those partners with the capacity to implement conservation by themselves may not wait for FWP. “People are doing conservation work in Montana and could do it with or without FWP. FWP needs to be engaged.”

“Complex projects have to be structured so that all of the partners feel as though they are being faithful to their own objectives.” People understand that the task of comprehensive conservation is larger than the mandate of any one agency or organization. They also understand that success necessarily will require cooperation in projects that are supported with two or more sponsors and funding sources. People understand that cooperative projects must develop around shared objectives. However, the predominant attitude among many still tends to give primacy to the objectives of the individual programs rather than defining shared objectives first and then working from shared objectives back to the individual programs.

People understand that cooperative conservation projects can be done but complex projects are just that – complex. “Complex projects can be done but we have to know going in that it won’t be easy; that it will take time; and, that we have to respect one another’s mission.” Different programs and funding sources have different requirements. A single project may require identification of distinct components with each component attributable to a specific program and funding source. Complex projects are not easy and they take time to pull together. The projects also can be frustrating, especially for partners who are unfamiliar with the process, anxious to begin work on the ground, or uncomfortable with restrictions associated with funding sources.

“Partners are people who share interests in a conservation outcome; each with a discrete role in accomplishing that outcome. Partnerships serve all of the interests.” “There is a difference between friends and partners. Friends want you to do projects; partners bring resources to the table and want to work together.”

Participants understood that a partnership approach represents a fundamental change in Montana’s approach to natural resource conservation. “Partnerships are a collection of people who want to give something to the relationship. We all have to give a little so that we can all get more because we are doing something together.” “We can’t afford to keep fighting among ourselves.” “We need to fine tune partnerships in adverse environments.”

Successful local efforts have developed plans that reflect the shared objectives of all of the partners and those plans are the basis for defining local priorities, schedules and responsibilities.

The participants are able to find themselves as partners in the shared vision, without compromising their individual identities or the identities of the agencies whom they represent. Participants understand their respective roles and they follow through on their commitments.

Participants noted that it is important to focus on the common issues that bring people together. They noted that success begins with small projects for which it is easy to build agreement. In many communities, noxious weed projects could serve this purpose. Participants noted that, as they did smaller projects together, communications improved, relationships matured and, gradually, doors opened that allowed them to begin to address more complex conservation issues. And, as one person observed, “SWG programs have allowed us to interact with other agencies and pull together in the same direction.”

Natural resource management in Montana has a long history of confrontation among the various interest groups, among agencies and between environmental groups and ranchers. Disagreement regarding recreational access is a specific unresolved dispute that several people noted as a hindrance to formation of partnerships. Participants emphasized the importance of focusing on the common issues and stepping back from the issues which will take more time to resolve.

Money is not the only answer. In-kind contributions are important. Not only does it offset the need for more money but it also brings landowners into the project and, by working with it, they become committed to it. Participants noted that it is important to “value partners for what they are able to bring to the table.” Do not criticize them for what they don’t bring to the table.

Participants indicated that partnerships must be something more than just informing and involving the interested parties. “Everybody has to be at the table and sitting in chairs of the same height.” Partnerships are something more than just having all of the appropriate people at the table. People must be engaged. “There must be the expectation that people at the table have to be awake and ready to do their part.” And, in doing their part, the participants must be working for the benefit of the partnership “We have to have honest partners on all sides.” Partnerships are not about trade-offs. Rather, “We should focus on projects that everybody can buy into and from which everyone achieves something by working on the ground together.” Effective partnerships are also as much about the people as they are about the work of conservation. “Good relationships are important to good results.”

One person noted that resilience is one of the potential strengths of partnerships among people with diverse interests. “Get partners onto the same page to the point that the partners cover each others’ backs because these are the partnerships that get stronger in the middle of adversity.”

Participants in the workshop stressed the importance of inclusiveness. Successful partnerships require recognition of and effective participation by all the relevant stakeholders. Greater effort should be made to include legislators, local governments, land owners and Tribal governments.

Lessons Learned from Local Working Groups

Much of the conservation work, consistent with the strategies identified in the CFWCS, that currently is occurring in Montana has been implemented through the efforts of watershed committees. Generally, the groups came together around a locally identified problem. Residents may not have agreed on the solution, but they agreed that there was a problem. The problem usually was recognized because there was a pending crisis, e.g. the threat of litigation or the threat of agency regulatory action. Successful groups had external support and start up financing for organization; facilitation to assist with the development of operation agreements; technical

expertise; funding for projects to address issues related to the shared problem; and, an agency attitude that was supportive without being directive. Priorities and projects were generated from the ground up.

Local groups formed around inspired leadership. The leadership often came from people who were not functioning in designated leadership positions. Usually, the “leader” was a resident landowner who was respected by other members in the community. Sometimes leadership came from the agency representatives – staff who were willing and empowered to serve the partnership.

Local groups formed around the common ground, i.e. interests and values shared among participants who have serious disagreements about some issues. Rather than trying to solve the wedge issues, the “participants focused their efforts on establishing effective communication” and built trust by working on those issues about which they could agree. It often takes time, relative to opportune situations and inspired leadership for the partnerships to come together. Local working groups represent a change in attitude. But, no one wants to change first. “We all have to change together.” Partnerships cannot be forced. Trust is essential and “trust takes time and a lot of patience to build.” But, once relationships form, “cooperative projects can open other doors. One successful connection leads to another and pretty soon you have a cooperator.”

Successful local groups engaged all of the relevant players. All partners were involved in the planning process; participated in the definition of shared priorities; helped to write the grants; shared in decisions about project expenditures; participated in program outreach to the community; and, understood how these activities supported the shared objectives of the group’s action plan. Priorities were established in a way that enfranchised the people who would be affected by the decision. Decisions made sense to the people in the local community and the politics were taken out of the decision making process.

Participants noted that landowners are integral to successful local working groups. They have



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

to feel as though their perspective is heard and respected. The right agency people also have to be involved and they have to respect the opinions of the landowners and spend the time to nurture relationships with individual landowners. “Everything happens at the kitchen table.” It is important to be patient and deal with issues that are important to the landowner

Participants noted that some lessons are transferable from one community to another. However, several people cautioned that each of the groups is somewhat unique, defined by the personalities of the local participants and the character of the community.

Participants also noted that watershed groups have difficulty in thinking strategically. Sometimes the groups chased funding sources and then defined projects around the available money rather than first identifying their priorities and then figuring out how to get the work done. Those that have been the most effective have taken the time to develop a good game plan.

Local working groups are an exercise in thinking small. It is comparatively easy to build agreement around small projects. One person suggested that an agency sponsored BBQ at the end of a community weed management day can be a significant investment in building relationships that lead to cooperation in more complex projects.

Local working groups can also be an exercise in thinking big. Some people expressed the opinion that the watershed committee approach is the model for the future of conservation in Montana. The potential for achieving conservation through local working groups is wide open. If a group is organized, has developed a good plan, knows what it wants to accomplish and has a structure designed for achievement, anything is possible.

Obstacles to Partnerships

People identified a variety of issues that could hinder effectively achieving the CFWCS objectives through conservation partners. Many of the participants referenced problems with attitudes. They suggested that agencies tend to impose their missions and mandates on others. Institutional barriers include a “go it alone” philosophy and the established histories of not partnering. Many people referenced turf issues and each of the agencies was mentioned at least once. “Agencies operate in a compromise mode – they need to shift from compromise mode to collaborative mode.” One person mentioned problems that result from “traditions. CFWCS requires that we look for new ways of doing business.”

“Organizational cultures differ among state agencies. It is important to understand how those cultural differences affect how people do business and how they affect public perception.” “Traditional adversarial relationships are an obstacle. Agencies have to be more selective in picking their battles – don’t fight over everything. Fighting over the same issues everywhere reduces agency credibility.”

“FWP’s culture does not value partnerships.” “CFWCS is a good idea but it will be difficult to implement because it is inconsistent with FWP’s agency culture.” “Within FWP, many of the biologists are not familiar with the plan and there is internal resistance to CFWCS. There also is a resistance to using license revenue to match SWG funds.”

One person noted that, within FWP, “significant unresolved issues are whether SWG should be used to fund projects whose priorities are defined by other programs; whether other programs should be used to fund projects that primarily respond to priorities defined in the SWG process; and, how to meld SWG and existing programs.”

The perception of problems with agency attitudes is not just held by people in the private sector.

As one agency person said, “When I started this, I thought the challenge would be working with landowners. But, it really is the intra-agency and interagency work that is the challenge.”

One person noted that state government, generally, has not been “private land conservation friendly”. He went on to suggest that it is difficult for the private partners because the state’s philosophy of private land conservation changes with different administrations and turnover among legislators.

Participants indicated that it often is difficult for partners to navigate the state and federal agency bureaucracies. Participants noted that there may be some legitimate legal barriers to partnerships and conflicting agency regulations. “We need to find a way around conflicting regulations, i.e. one agency’s regulations that may not be compatible with the regulations of another.” However, they also suggested that legal issues may be used as excuses for the attitudinal resistance to partnering. “We need to be clear when it really is the regulations and not just attitudes that are in conflict.”

Administration of SWG can be an obstacle. The program currently requires a separate application for federal aid for each project. Thus, there is “a lot of administrative work for not a lot of money.” It is a challenge to be able to do several small projects under a single, comprehensive application and to structure the matching dollars so that the match corresponds with the way that the SWG dollars are spent. When FWP re-grants SWG funds, FWP is accountable for project compliance and reporting but may not have oversight for the work of the third party.

Participants indicated that private landowners have difficulty working with the agencies. They do not understand or appreciate bureaucratic process. They may not trust the agencies. “It’s a government program and there is a natural resistance among some landowners to work with government.” Some are very reluctant to consider conservation easements. And, for those who participate in CRP, payments for easements might not be a financial incentive.

There is a lack of understanding of what it means to work in partnership. It was suggested that some people come to the table because they have to be at the table or because they do not want to be excluded. However, they may not come to the table with the intent to participate as a partner or to commit resources to shared priorities. Participants suggested that there is a lack of regard for the legitimate needs of others and that lack of respect compromises trust. Some participants noted their own contribution to this problem.

Several participants noted the history of antagonistic relationships among agencies and organizations related to a variety of conservation issues. “It is hard to work with people on one issue when you are in litigation with the same people on another issue.” Others indicated that it is difficult for partnerships to mature in a low trust environment. “We devote too much time to fighting with one another. We have to build coalitions; build a bigger middle and dampen the influence of those on the extremes.” Some participants perceive litigation as an effective tool to achieve constructive change in policy, while other participants perceive litigation as an obstruction to achieving conservation on the ground.

Generally, it was noted that attitude can be an issue at all levels. However, several participants noted that overcoming this problem must begin with the state and federal agencies and at the state level.

Most of the participants noted that the lack of adequate funding is a significant impediment to achieving conservation objectives in Montana. “The conservation task is large and there are too few programs and too little money to get the job done.” “Too many people are operating and

trying to do too much with too few resources.” “For partnerships to work, all of the partners have to be able to follow through. Agency budget cycles sometimes can be an obstacle.” Competition for limited resources also is an impediment to partnerships. State funding sources are inadequate to address state priorities. One person suggested that Montana is too dependant on federal funds and those funds come with strings attached. At times, the federal strings can be impediments to partnerships.

Some participants suggested that the private groups could be more effective if they were getting more out of the partnership. They noted that agencies need to better recognize the NGO’s for what they can do and contract with them to do that work. Some people noted that FWP tends to allocate SWG funds in house. “SWG is too internal and the process for approving grants is too secret. People are not aware of the SWG cycle.” “It feels like there are insiders and outsiders in the SWG program and it is not comfortable for those who are on the outside. SWG feels more like another program to build the agency than a program to develop partnerships.” They suggested that committing a portion of the SWG funds to grants with private partners would demonstrate FWP’s commitment to working in partnership and might help the private organizations leverage other funds. FWP noted that it is reluctant to re-grant the SWG funds because the agency retains accountability for expenditure of the funds and also is responsible for the reporting requirements.

One person also noted that NGO relationships with agencies tend to be one way. “We are called to the table so that the (agency) person who called the meeting can figure out how to use us.” The agencies are interested in how the NGO’s can help the agencies but there is no reciprocation. “I don’t get the feeling that we are really sharing.”

Some people noted that there are different groups “competing to do the same projects, competing for the same funds, competing for recognition and competing for political support.” There is a lack of knowledge about how to more effectively leverage those funds that are available. It was noted that the federal agencies also are in competition for the limited Land and Water Conservation Funds. Currently, there is no framework for thinking strategically among the partners regarding the allocation of limited funds relative to shared priorities.

Some participants noted that organizational capacity is essential to effective partnerships. Some groups are better organized and have more staff than others. Those with fewer staff may not have the resources to search out, apply for and administer grants. One individual noted that all of the land trusts are working at capacity. “There are more opportunities than the land trusts have capacity to complete land deals.”

Several agency employees also mentioned limitations related to capacity. Most agency employees have responsibilities other than just cooperative projects. “Partnerships, grant accountability, monitoring, selection of contractors, technical support to others who are writing grants, approval of project designs, etc. all demand staff time.”

As with the agencies, NGO’s also tend to focus on their own programs and priorities. “People hold their cards close to the chest. Land trusts are in it to do the work but they also have to make money to remain as viable organizations. Sometimes, the two conflict.” “A challenge to FWP is to stimulate, inform and involve the other partners to engage beyond the level of organizational survival. We are all in this together and all have to be working for the shared objectives.”

One participant noted that jurisdictional issues in the contract language for funding agreements can hinder partnerships when one of the partners is an entity within tribal government. Tribal sovereignty also is an important issue. “The Tribe is interested in cooperative projects

but cooperation includes recognition of the Tribe's responsibility for management on the reservation." It also is important to recognize the each tribe is unique and each with different treaty rights.

A few people noted that cooperative projects are a challenge for the Tribes. Tribes do not have much money for funding projects and the amount of potential funding for conservation on reservations is limited. Tribes may not have the staff necessary to properly administer grants. Another person noted that it often is more difficult for the Tribes to get money for infrastructure than funding for projects. Tribes have "limited resources to fund base fish and wildlife management program and it is difficult for the Tribes to get additional resources to fund base operations."

Tribal staff also have limited authority for committing the Tribe. "Projects have to be approved through the Tribal Council and the Tribe does not perceive that Montana operates from the perspective of a government-to-government relationship." "It is important to keep the Tribal Council informed. They do not like secrets." Another person said, "Consultation with the Tribes means telling the Tribes about the issue and involving the tribes in the development of the decision – not just making a decision and telling the Tribes what the agencies did." It also was noted that "the State only comes to the Tribe when the State wants something from the Tribe – not because they have something to offer the Tribe." But, the CS&KT also noted that "The State/Tribal agreement has had positive spin-offs." Improvements in state/tribal relationships also were mentioned by other Tribes. But, one person noted that "it works well with the Region, but not with Helena."

One person noted that, in many basins, water rights have not yet been adjudicated. The process for transferring water rights is time consuming and cumbersome.

Several participants noted that partnerships don't just happen. They require time and patience. Agency turnover frustrates landowners. Relationships take time to build and whenever agencies bring in new field personnel, the new person tends to want to re-do existing plans and agreements that were developed with the landowner. One person noted that some of the partnership agreements are long-term commitments. "How do we maintain the commitments when personnel and leadership change?" Another person noted that the lack of consistent engagement is an obstacle. "Everyone has other jobs. It is not always easy to keep people engaged and to keep the energy going."

Many participants noted the importance of a community based approach to conservation. However, some participants noted that the agencies do not recognize the work that is being accomplished by the local groups. The agencies also do not appreciate the value of the relationships that the groups have developed at the local level. It also was noted that watershed groups are potentially in trouble because of reductions in some of the traditional funding sources for these efforts. Moreover, some participants noted the potential for tension between the watershed groups and the conservation districts. The watershed approach represents a change from the traditional way of accomplishing conservation at the local level. Watershed boundaries do not always correspond to conservation district boundaries. Moreover, watershed groups and conservation districts sometimes are in competition for the same funds.

Many of the participants indicated that working with individual landowners, especially traditional landowners, is essential to achieving the goals of CFWCS. But, attitudes about landowners can be an obstacle. "People want agriculture to be part of the solution. But, they don't always look at what it takes for agriculture to be viable." Some landowners perceive that others in the conservation community perceive traditional agriculture as a problem. One person noted that CFWCS "presents agriculture as a threat." But, as one person noted, "There isn't a rancher in



Photo Courtesy of Montana FWP

the state who gets up in the morning and asks, ‘how can I screw things up today?’” “Landowners do not want to see species eliminated. But, they also do not want to be unfairly burdened for the responsibility to conserving sensitive species.” “Conservation is happening because people think it is the right thing to do. But, people don’t get recognized for it.” Another person said, “Most farmers and ranchers want to do the right thing. The willingness is there. But, they may not know what the right thing is and they many not have the resources to do the right thing.” Another person said, “If we want to have conservation, we have to help the landowner get the job done. If we can help the landowner do the right thing, they will often do it.”

Another person observed that “CFWCS tends to emphasize the negative impacts of commercial land uses. Timber and range management can and should be part of the solution and not always criticized as part of the problem.”

One person noted that “There is a different dynamic when working with a traditional and a non-traditional landowner. Non-traditional landowners are more comfortable working with agencies, but they are not connected to the local culture, they are not connected to the land and they are not committed to the community.”

One person noted a discomfort that land trusts are making a “profit” when they participate as a third party in a transaction between the landowner and the government. At the same time, the federal agencies noted that third parties are invaluable to completion of many of the conservation easements in Montana. Federal projects take three years to complete and, when the project begins, there is uncertainty whether the federal funding will be there when the deal is complete. Participation by a third party makes it possible for the landowner to receive payment prior to completion of the project and for the third party to assume the risk. The third party also is able to assume the difference, if the purchase price differs from the appraised value of the easement. Another person said, “Land trusts are a blessing. They are doing the work on the ground and they are doing a lot to generate the match for federal funds.”

A few people noted that the “hunter conservationists are important players in achieving the goals of CFWCS.” The organizations with which the hunter conservations affiliate might be “uniquely positioned to bridge between the traditional hunter conservationist and management for sensitive species.” However, the organizations might have difficulty fully participating in partnership projects because their memberships are interested in supporting projects that enhance habitat for commonly hunted species. These are not sensitive species. But, much of the habitat that is important for hunted species “also is important habitat for sensitive species.”

Several people suggested that, while everyone is interested in conservation, there is not yet a shared vision for conservation in Montana. “We all are basically headed in the same direction, but we often disagree about how to get there.” One person defined success as, “Agency loggerheads have moved from disagreements over goals to disagreements about how to achieve the shared goals.”

Threats to Landscape Conservation

Participants noted several challenges to achieving the goals and objectives defined by the CFWCS. And, as one person cautioned, “Don’t lose sight of the fact that there is a lot of work left to do.”

Several people mentioned concerns related to land use planning. “There is an insatiable demand for property in Montana. Land values are increasing at a rate of 15 to 20% per year.” These changes often are occurring without sufficient forethought and in an environment that resists land use planning and regulation. “Real estate development is occurring without adequate subdivision regulation.” Water development in sub-divisions was mentioned as a specific issue related to land use planning. “Montana does not have the tools to accommodate growth with existing water rights.”

Important habitats in Montana are changing from traditional working landscapes to either subdivisions or to properties held by wealthy, non-residents. “Montana is losing 43 acres/day of agricultural land to other land uses.” Subdivision of agricultural land depletes wetlands and fragments important habitats.

Concerns were expressed about the potential for changing social values that might result from changes in land ownership and land use. “Private land conservation is essential to the quality of life in Montana.” Changes from traditional land uses might result in the loss of working landscapes with corresponding effects on agriculture, forestry, hunting, fishing, and, in general, the Montana lifestyle. These changes could also affect opportunities for using forest and range management tools to achieve conservation objectives.

Several people talked about the pace of change relative to the pace at which conservation can be achieved. “We can’t get out ahead of it and it is hard to match the dollar amounts of the development values.” “Habitats are degrading faster than we can protect and restore them.”

Concerns were expressed about the potential for land use changes that might be consistent with conservation objectives but might conflict with traditional Montana values. Some properties have been acquired for recreational purposes. The new owners often are interested in landscape conservation but may not understand Montana traditions. “There is value in keeping traditional landowners on the ground. There also is value in helping new landowners integrate into the community.”

One person talked about the potential for “conservation for profit”. This person mentioned the conversion of properties to free-based recreation. He also noted venture capitalists’ interest in investing in properties that have potential for conservation/restoration, could attract grant funding for conservation projects and then re-sold for a profit. “Such projects have potential for mitigation banking and can contribute to a restoration economy. However, they also represent a shift in social values and the lack of public access to the properties is of concern.” This person recommended developing a strategy to work with, rather than against, people who are involved in conservation for profit.

Concerns were expressed about the implications of Plum Creek's transition from a timber company to a real estate investment trust.

Several people expressed concerns about threats to water. Critical issues include stream degradation; dewatering; non-point source pollution; and, the proximity of development to streams.

Several people expressed concerns about the consequences of energy development on sensitive species and the ability to achieve objectives defined by CFWCS. Critical issues include coal bed methane, petroleum exploration and development in southwestern and northeastern Montana and policy changes that might be included in the new farm bill to promote ethanol production. It also was noted that "CFWCS provides a framework for addressing the threats."

Participants noted that, traditionally, FWP has responded to each threat as it arose, i.e. "the crisis du Jour". However, some people noted that CFWCS provides an opportunity to prioritize responses to threats based on habitat. They suggested using CFWCS to identify the "best of the best" among the conservation areas and focus protection activities on those habitats, rather than focus conservation efforts around concentrated development activities. It was noted that this approach would involve making tradeoffs, but that those decisions would have been made strategically, based on the value of particular landscapes to achieving long-term conservation objectives.

Several people mentioned concern for climate change and the inability to predict, with certainty, how climate change will affect the ability to achieve conservation objectives. However, some people suggested that conserving priority landscapes, as defined by CFWCS, offers the greatest potential for ensuring viable populations of sensitive species in that uncertain future. "Montana is a potential refuge in the face of climate change. It is critical to be attentive to restoration of damaged habitats and thereby enhance the resilience and survival of native species."

Conservation Partnership Opportunities

In addition to using CFWCS as a way to think strategically in response to threats to conservation, participants noted that CFWCS could be used to prioritize protection of important habitats. Some people suggested using CFWCS to prioritize conservation of riparian corridors and wildlife movement corridors and linkage zones. CFWCS also could serve as a catalyst to bring partners together to work toward these conservation objectives. "The best opportunities for partnerships are places where we can use funds from a variety of sources to pool resources sufficient to attract landowners." CFWCS, in many respects, provides a framework for working with agriculture to achieve conservation objectives on private lands. "The best opportunity for achieving the goals in the CFWCS is in the farm bill. The farm bill brings large sums of money into the state and several of the programs have a wildlife component."

Private land conservation has to be part of the CFWCS strategy. "The priority habitats identified by CFWCS are dominated by private land."

It was noted that CFWCS already provides valuable information to federal land managers in both developing and guiding the implementation of land use plans. Reference to CFWCS in Forest Plans and Resource Management Plans also increases the potential for funding projects related to plan implementation. It also was noted that CFWCS includes important information that could be used more comprehensively for land use planning by local governments. DNRC has incorporated CFWCS in the tool kit that it provides to private forestland owners. CFWCS

could be used as a “benchmark for the sale of school trust lands, land banking and development decisions on school trust lands.”

Several of the other participants expressed keen interest in working with Plum Creek and others to protect conservation values associated with the current Plum Creek holdings. Plum Creek indicated that, as their business model changes, they need to be able to work with FWP and other conservation partners earlier in the land use planning process, i.e. involvement when there is opportunity to build conservation measures into the design of developments rather than fighting about the project during the final phase. Plum Creek indicated a need for information



Photo Courtesy of CFWCS

from the partners and the partners need to be comfortable in how the information will be used.

There are opportunities for working with the fish and wildlife mitigation programs as the basis for conservation partnerships in northwestern Montana. Plum Creek also indicated that more could be accomplished for native fish species west of the continental divide by building conservation programs around its Habitat Conservation Plan for native fish species. “With the Native Fish HCP in place, there are opportunities to leverage Sec. 6 funding for land acquisitions that support the objectives of the HCP.”

There is potential for achieving CFWCS objectives in other management programs that otherwise are not related to SWG. Participants noted that CFWCS can be a catalyst for a different approach to land use planning/analysis/implementation. USFS participants indicated that there is a directive to incorporate state action plans into the forest plans. In Montana, USFS currently uses CFWCS to help set priorities for forest restoration, fuels reduction and other

projects. USFS has begun to use “Stewardship Contracting” as an alternative to traditional timber sales as a way to exchange goods for on-the-ground conservation services. If approved, pending legislation would authorize a pilot project for one Montana ranger district to employ stewardship contracting as the preferred approach to forest plan implementation. CFWCS could be used to guide the use of this tool for the restoration of fish and wildlife habitat. CFWCS could be used in the permitting process pursuant to the Major Facility Siting Act for identifying impacts and identifying opportunities for mitigation. In addition, survey information acquired for permits could be available for other priority conservation purposes, as identified by CFWCS.

Several people suggested that need for a more integrated approach to planning in priority areas with multiple land ownerships. Planning could be done jointly, focused on common objectives. But, implementation of the joint plans should be accomplished on a schedule and in a manner that corresponds with the mandates of the respective agencies and landowners.

Others noted the importance of local land use planning. They suggested that “CFWCS should be used to inform decisions by local planning boards and county commissioners as a tool in developing growth policies and land use regulations.” There is “potential to modify sub-division regulations to incorporate criteria that define critical habitats; establish buffer areas; and, require higher levels of review. There also is the potential to incorporate good wildlife information into growth policies.” It also was noted that CFWCS could be incorporated into educational brochures that offer guidance to landowners regarding development. At the same time, however, one person noted disagreements “within the wildlife community (including disagreements between FWP and some of the wildlife advocates) about what the wildlife assessment means and how to use the information in the review of proposed sub-divisions.”

Others referenced a need for more monitoring. Monitoring is necessary to demonstrate success of projects. It is easier to get funding for restoration projects than to get funding for monitoring. Yet, at some point, we will need the monitoring information to demonstrate the success of the restoration.

Two major and related landscape conservation initiatives, the “Crown of the Continent” and the “Heart of the Rockies”, are currently in progress in Montana. Several parties also are interested in ensuring long-term conservation on parcels in Plum Creek ownership if those parcels are sold to other parties. CFWCS provides one way to help clarify shared priorities in these project areas.

Several people stressed the importance of conserving wetlands, riparian habitats and adjacent native grasslands. “We can’t do wetland/riparian conservation without also doing prairie conservation.” Some people noted that wetlands, riparian habitats, water quality and water rights are interrelated issues and should be addressed together. In such situations, properties with senior water rights should be priority. People also noted that monitoring and evaluation should be an integral component of these projects.

One person identified the opportunity for “abandoned mine restoration in prairie habitats, with priorities for the work defined by the goals and objectives of CFWCS.” Another noted that streams impaired by previous mining are logical sites to consider for reclamation and funding is available for these projects. However, he cautioned that “it is difficult to do restoration projects at mines because of the resulting liabilities associated with hazardous waste.”

One person indicated that the Montana bird conservation partnership is active in the west and active in the extreme northeast. However, there is no active partnership for bird conservation in most of the rest of the state. There is a need for local groups working to identify bird habitat conservation areas and local habitat priorities. One person said, “Water makes the world go round, especially in a semi-arid environment. We can rally around the river systems in eastern

Montana.” “People can coalesce around the objective of conserving native grasslands and cattlemen are transitioning to being grassland conservationists.” Another person said, “We need more work in eastern Montana. We have to get the two joint ventures up to the same level as that of the Intermountain West Joint Venture.” Another person noted that “we need to develop priorities for the grasslands.” However, another person identified one unresolved issue related to bird conservation. “There is disagreement among advocates for birds. Some people advocate for protection of sensitive bird species. Other people are more interested in using birds, common as well as sensitive species, as indicators of landscape health.”

One person noted the importance of maintaining the cottonwood forest associated with the Yellowstone River in eastern Montana.

Several people suggested that there is a need for more outreach to landowners. One person suggested that “if we expect to include landowners in implementing solutions, they also need to be involved in the definition of the problem.” Another person suggested, “Landowners need to understand that they can participate in Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances without giving up that much.” It also was noted that landowners are becoming more aware of the non-agricultural value of their property and that improving riparian habitats adds value to their land and that awareness could be shared with others. “Projects have to include tangible benefits for the cooperating landowner.” The benefit could be monetary, but it does not have to be. Other benefits to landowners include technical support (“help the rancher understand and achieve benefits from a more efficient and sustainable operation”; assurances that the rancher won’t be impacted by new regulations; “don’t punish the landowners because they choose to participate and try to do things right”); and, respect. One person identified the need for a “mechanism for allowing partners to participate in landowners’ operations without the landowners feeling they are being abused for their participation.” Another person suggested that “Conservation Districts have an important role to play, especially in those places where there are not active watershed groups – particularly eastern Montana.”

One person noted the opportunity to include schools in community based conservation projects. Students, under the direction of a teacher, can assist with monitoring projects.

Several of the Tribes have established bison herds. The American Prairie Foundation is also working to establish a bison herd in the Missouri River Breaks. There is potential for working with several sensitive prairie species that occur in association with bison.

One person suggested the need to focus on “connecting CFWCS with sustainable economic development – CFWCS should connect with Montana’s future. CFWCS should nest well with initiatives for energy development and economic development.” Another person mentioned opportunities related to achieving conservation through promoting sustainable agriculture and related to changes in crops and farming practices. A few people mentioned concerns about energy development related to sagebrush and sage grouse restoration. They suggested that it will be important to “engage industry in restoration, monitoring and evaluation.”

There is an opportunity to structure conservation projects that also fulfill permit requirements for petroleum development. One BLM employee discussed the potential for working with the petroleum industry. Companies have an incentive to do conservation projects to fulfill the provisions of their permits. And, when companies agree to fund the work, projects can be accomplished quickly. Given the current interest in permitting and the related concerns about the impacts to sage grouse and sage brush habitat associated with energy development, there also is the potential for funding sage grouse work through the agency’s budget planning system. However, there could be a 4-year lag between the project proposal and receipt of the funding.

Some people suggested that stewardship contracting is one specific way to bridge conservation and economic opportunity in forested environments. Stewardship contracting is a way to develop a broader base of support for projects that have been developed through a landscape level planning effort. “Stewardship contracting is a way to keep industry viable in communities where traditional forest industry is no longer viable.” The concept has the potential to help break some of the traditional gridlock because it is being accepted by some in the environmental community. “People are accepting the temporary footprint that results from projects and they have greater confidence that the promised restoration work will actually get accomplished on the ground.” One person suggested a “DNRC/FWP partnership that allows for some timber harvest from lands acquired for conservation in exchange for standing timber left on school trust lands.”

Several people noted the importance of more effective communication among the partners. The three Joint Ventures have indicated an interest in helping to establish a steering committee in Montana specifically for the purpose of facilitating communication.

Funding

Most participants identified inadequate funding as a challenge to achieving the goals and objectives outlined by CFWCS. The need to effectively leverage existing funding sources can be a catalyst to effective conservation partnerships. However, competition for limited funding sources also can be an impediment to partnerships.

Participants suggested that there is the potential that the federal government might reduce the level of funding for SWG. Alternatively, if the federal government maintains or increases SWG funding, the availability of sufficient matching funds can be an impediment to effectively leveraging those funds.

One person suggested that “FWP needs to make important judgment calls about how to spend SWG funds. It is tempting to spend SWG funds in areas that already are being successful. However, it might be more important to focus the funds on groups that need a jump start to be able to begin to leverage funds from other sources.”

Some people noted that Montana, with the assistance of its Congressional delegation, has been successful in bringing Land and Water Conservation Funds into the state. However, Congress is likely to reduce the size of the program, with recent changes in the delegation, Montana likely will receive a smaller portion from this fund.

The Farm Bill currently provides a large source of money for conservation projects on agriculture lands in Montana. A few people noted that there is an opportunity to use CFWCS to influence priorities in the pending revisions to the Farm Bill.

Participants noted that, irrespective of the source, funds come with limitations on how the money may be used. Private groups who might be able to provide matching funds for state and federal funds might be reluctant to participate in cooperative projects because they are unwilling to accept the conditions that come with the funds. One person suggested that, because “federal funds with federal strings, we need to think in terms of what can be accomplished without federal money.”

A few participants suggested that Montana is too dependent on federal funding for doing conservation work. There is a need to develop a state funding source that is dedicated to landscape conservation. There is reluctance by some FWP staff and within some constituency

groups to use license revenue to match federal funds for conservation programs that do not directly benefit hunting and fishing. “There is a need for strategy to enfranchise non-hunters/non-anglers in providing financial support to fish and wildlife conservation.”

Until recently, there was no dedicated source of state matching funds for SWG. This issue was addressed, but only for the current biennium, during the 2007 special session, when the Montana Legislature approved \$1M per year as a general fund match for SWG. A few members of the Montana Teaming with Wildlife Core Team help to develop this proposal and supported it during the session. Teaming with Wildlife is a national coalition of organizations that supports implementation of State Wildlife Grants. The Core Team includes representatives from several Montana conservation organizations and was formed to assist FWP with implementation of SWG.

Longer term, there is a need for a “stable and predictable statewide funding base for CFWCS”. One person indicated that, as the effort is made to develop stable, long-term funding, the conservation partners need to be included in the conversation.

A few participants suggested that large foundations are an untapped resource. “We are doing good work but the projects are too small to attract their interest.” These people identified the need to aggregate several local projects into a single, statewide project and thus be able to market to large foundations. “The money is out there. We have to look for it and we have to get creative to be able to leverage it.” “Montana can attract private funding for conservation work tied to watersheds. We have to think strategically to get it.” “We have to think strategically in order to convert \$1million of SWG and \$1million of match into \$20million.”

One person noted that the stronger the state plan, the easier it is for NGO’s to get foundation funds for projects. Agreement among stakeholders regarding priorities helps to leverage private conservation money. “Funders like synergy, partnerships, shared priorities and specific objectives.”

One person noted that “different organizations are competing for the same funds, during the same funding cycle and sometimes for doing the same work.” This person suggested the need for more cooperation in setting statewide priorities for how best to use limited resources; submitting fewer proposals during any one granting cycle with broad support for those proposals which are submitted; and, sequencing otherwise competing proposals over several granting cycles.

One person suggested that “a variety of funding sources adds financial resilience.” But, another person suggested that “Money is not the only answer. In-kind contributions are important. Not only does it offset the need for more money but it also brings landowners into the project and, by working with it, they become committed to it.”

Communication/Outreach

Participants noted the importance of effective communication to developing a vision for conservation shared by a broad diversity of people in Montana. Effective communication also is essential to the formation of functional conservation collaborations. “The biggest need is an effort to bring the partners together.” “People need to understand the significance of the program. To understand that CFWCS is the solution, people first need to understand the problem.” “Communication must be sufficient to ensure that all players understand their respective roles.” One person identified the need for a “larger, grassroots media campaign that

promotes the importance of water resources and engages a broader public in that conversation. There is a need to shift social expectations regarding watersheds, landscapes and conservation issues.”

Teaming with Wildlife is a current effort to develop broad understanding of SWG and CFWCS among FWP’s traditional constituents. However, there is not a similar understanding among people who either are not part of that constituency or who did not participate in the development of CFWCS. Thus, there is a need to bridge Teaming with Wildlife with the communication networks of others who are doing conservation work in Montana. “We need a community conservation discussion – a strategy to bring people into the conversation and then use the conversation to build an effective coalition.”

Participants specifically noted the lack of communication with landowners, except for those individuals who are actively involved with current conservation projects. “When working with FWP, first we have to build trust if we are serious about getting down to business.” “If the objective is long-term, on-the-ground conservation, FWP has to reach out to agriculture.” People suggested that agriculture could participate in CFWCS. “But, CFWCS has to be presented to them in a way that they can buy in.” “Conservation land management benefits agriculture. It is important to use the right educational tools to help landowners understand that conservation also sustains their operation.” One person suggested working with the Northern Ag Network to disseminate information related to CFWCS to the agriculture community. One person suggested that CFWCS could help FWP bridge with MSU Extension Service and, in turn, Extension could help with communication with the agriculture community. Another person suggested scheduling community meetings in the priority conservation areas identified in CFWCS.

Participants also noted that effective communication is essential for developing a broad base of political support for new initiatives and funding, at both the state and national level. Further, it was suggested that, at state level, support should be broad enough to minimize potential for strong political opposition. “Comprehensive conservation is not a partisan issue and is not



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

caught up in partisan politics. There is potential for broad support if we are able to deliver on the idea that no other species need to be listed under the Endangered Species Act if we are able to identify and protect the most important habitats.” “Marketing of CFWCS is critical. Good ecology and community stability are marketable for building coalitions.”

One person noted the importance of having a consistent message regarding private land conservation. Regardless of which of the agencies or private organizations provide the message, it should be the same. This person also noted that agency field staff should be prepared to share this message because they regularly interact with people at the local level. However, he also cautioned that, if the message is communicated, the agency also has to be prepared to follow through.

Success

Partners thought of success at various levels, from the perspective of individual projects and programs, to a sustainable SWG program and to a long-term, comprehensive conservation perspective. People expressed their understanding of success in terms of achieving the objectives of their own programs, achieving the objectives of CFWCS and achieving conservation through partnerships in a variety of ways. Some tended to focus more on the conservation results. We are making “demonstrable improvements in discrete places that are identified as priorities in the CFWCS.” “We have maintained a full representation of native wildlife and we have maintained open space in Montana and the adjacent northern Rockies.” We are “keeping grass on the landscape”. “Keep the common species common.” “Protect what we have and restore as much as we can.” Success is a “dynamic equilibrium such that, over time, we maintain functioning ecosystems and we meet the needs of sensitive species.”

Others talked about the processes through which conservation is accomplished. “All landownerships must contribute to the mutual conservation goals, in a manner that is appropriate to their primary management purpose. Public lands are a key component, but working ranches and working private forest lands should also complement the conservation objective.” “We want to keep the ranchers viable and maintain healthy habitats.” “Agency loggerheads have moved from disagreements over goals to disagreements about how to achieve the shared goals.” “Historic adversaries are working together to accomplish things on the landscape.” “Partners are vested more in the resource than in their respective programs.” “The agencies can walk away because the landowners are able to do it on their own. We have grown out of the need for an organized program.” “We are making progress – conservation is happening through legislation; the acquisition of interests in lands; and, through informed individuals voluntarily doing conservation on their own land.” “All of us who have a part can stand back and say, ‘Wow! Look what we got done, proving that wildlife conservation and maintaining working landscapes are compatible’.”

“Partnerships promote a more timely response and ensure that more areas are protected.” “We (NGO’s) are able to do the best job that we can, with the things that we are best positioned to do and there is support for us doing it and the results are appreciated.” “The SWG piece is a small amount of the necessary funds to achieve the conservation objectives. Success is the ability to leverage that small amount of money into a much larger pot of money.” “We have brought new financial resources into Montana – money from new sources, not just more money from existing sources.” “Attributes of success include coordination at the local level; grants that are well managed; good upfront watershed planning; a focus on identified restoration targets; and, monitoring to demonstrate the outcomes.”

Others reflected on changing social attitudes regarding conservation. “We have defined what conservation really means so that people are able to buy into the definition.” “Many things divide active Montanans. However, most people support fish, wildlife and clean water. We have focused on the commonalities rather than the related management questions that divide us. We have translated the common interest in fish and wildlife into a vision that works on the ground and made it a priority to disseminate that vision.” We have destroyed “the myth that environment and good jobs are mutually exclusive.” Montana has a brand. We are not just the Big Sky Country. “Montana is the Serengeti of North America”. This brand and the values associated with it are shared with non-traditional partners and all of Montana – not just those in the conservation community. The Montana culture values stewardship.”

For some people, success means that changing social attitudes translate into broader political support for conservation. Success means that “CFWCS is politically acceptable to the governor and the legislature and that it provides a foundation for management of fish and wildlife resources.” Changing social attitudes also translate into reduced appeals and litigation for public land management programs and broader public acceptance of what USFS and BLM are doing and the reasons they do what they do.”

Keys to Success

Participants identified a variety of factors that they thought to be essential to make success happen. Many of these factors are reflected in the discussion of partnerships. Specific factors include:

- A Statewide conservation vision that embraces local priorities and initiatives;
- A conservation vision developed around principles of sustainability; the integration of ecological integrity, economic feasibility and social acceptance; and the interdependence of sustainable ecosystems and sustainable communities that depend on those ecosystems.
- A multi-disciplinary approach
- Leadership that is perceived as objective, reliable and committed;
- An identified champion for CFWCS, a person who is determined to get conservation done;
- Visible support for CFWCS from the Governor’s office and the natural resources sub-cabinet;
- Alignment within FWP and a commitment to integrate CFWCS into all department programs;
- Allocation of FWP staff time according to priorities defined by CFWCS;
- Shared vision among FWP, DNRC and DEQ and a commitment to landscape level conservation;
- FWP fully engaged with the partners and SWG fully integrated with the partner’s programs;
- Effective integration of CFWCS into federal land management planning; models of agencies using CFWCS and using CFWCS for the right reason;
- Frequent and thorough communication among the partners;



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

- A better understanding of the respective strengths of the partners;
- Inclusiveness; and,
- A broad base of public support for landscape level conservation, including local buy in.

People noted that sufficient funding is important. Funding should be available to those groups who are expected to participate in projects. Moreover, “the agencies have to be sufficiently staffed so that the programs are approachable and useable by the groups who want to participate.” One person suggested establishing a funding source to support the general operating expenses of local groups. “Don’t support the groups just to have the groups. But, if the groups are functional and getting work accomplished on the ground, there should be some recognition of the group and support for the group to be able to function.”

Some people stressed the importance of good planning. “Dollars spent on planning, if the plan is well written, developed collaboratively and responsive to the priorities of all partners, is a good investment.” One person referenced the important of “smart planning – not just a bunch of freckles on the map.” Collaborative plans can be a very effective tool for leveraging grant

funds to do projects. The plan must be a living document. The planning document also has to empower the individual agency plans upon which the planning document is developed. It also is important to translate the strategic plan into “a simple action plan that responds to shared priorities.” “CFWCS has to be elevated above the level of just another plan by another agency.”

Several people mentioned the importance of actually doing good work on the ground. Also, beyond starting projects, it is important to see the projects come to completion. It is easier for people to support projects and programs when they are able to see real accomplishments. “If you show success, you will be better served in the long run.” “Use the 5-year action plan to target the low-hanging fruit; build success stories around those project results; and, then use those stories to market success.”

Several people suggested that the agencies have to figure out a different way of leading the conservation effort in Montana. “We have to answer the question, “What is the appropriate role for agency people? How do we distinguish agency influence from agency power?” Several people indicated that the agencies have to be engaged but that the leadership should come from the community. One person noted the importance of “flexible leadership. Leadership occurs at multiple levels, in the community and in the agencies.” Another person suggested that the agencies should “approach the groups with understanding and with resources that the groups need to be successful”.

While leadership is important, there also needs to be a “broad coalition that understands CFWCS, wants to follow the leadership and is committed to following through. It’s going to take a lot of shoulders to move this rock.” The diverse mix of people that comprises the coalition has to be meaningfully involved in the conservation effort.

People suggested that the agencies need to develop a framework for partnerships. Although the framework is defined at the state level, it should provide direction to the field that encourages partnerships. “The partnerships have to be real. It is not just a case of FWP helping other people spend their money. There has to be a real give and take.”

It was noted that “we need to break barriers among agencies at the state level.” “Value the people who think outside of the box – even if they have to be reined in once in awhile.” It also was noted that different agencies and organizations have different constituencies. For example, “DNRC has established relationships with industry folks. FWP has relationships with the conservation community. Both agencies work together to bring those people to the same table.”

A new perspective also is essential for agency people who work at the field level. There needs to be “a local face on the bureaucracy”. “Partnerships can’t work without a presence in the local community.” In the words of one long-term career field person, “Field biologists need to think outside their traditional roles. The job is changing and field personnel have to change if they want to be successful.” Another noted that staff have to be flexible. You have to be willing to work strange hours – not the normal agency schedule. No agency logos, etc. “This is not a uniform-wearing, 9-5 job.” “Landowners are often busy during the day. It is not possible for 9-5 employees to build relationships with them.” In this context, a few people also mentioned the importance of having agency field staff whose primary responsibilities are doing partnership projects.

A new perspective also relates to how agencies do work. “There is a fine line between the need to spend money on survey and inventory and the potential to spend all of the money on studies. Be content with lower quality data and, instead, spend the money doing projects on the ground, including on-going monitoring after the fact, i.e. adaptive management.” Good project planning includes defined goals and objectives; articulated uncertainties; a monitoring framework;

and, implementation that includes a decision tree that anticipates change in response to new information obtained through monitoring.

Several people talked about the importance of building trust and the consequences of breaking trust. “People can buy into the plan if they trust the people who are responsible for the plan – not because they have read and understood the plan.”

In many respects, CFWCS outlines a strategy for private land conservation. “Success includes results that work for agriculture.” “When working with agriculture, it is important to remember that the landowner, not the agency, is the decision maker.” The agency should be there to help. The agency should be there to inform regarding appropriate conservation practices and which practices the agency will and will not support. But, the agency should not tell the landowner what to do because the landowner is the decision maker. “Listen to the landowners and trust them to offer solutions that will work for them. You cannot go in with a formula. Learn from them what their ranch is all about.” “If we want to have conservation, we have to help the landowner get the job done. If we can help the landowner do the right thing, they will often do it.”

“There is value in keeping traditional landowners on the ground. There also is value in helping new landowners integrate into the community.” “Maintaining working landscapes, protecting the county tax base and providing jobs are important considerations to successful land projects.”

Several people emphasized the importance of team work. “It is about conserving the resource, not about who gets the credit.” It also is important that everyone understand their respective roles, respect the roles of the other partners and follow through on their respective responsibilities. “If we all work together and bring our respective niches to the table and we are willing to compromise a bit, we can achieve a lot of conservation in Montana.” “Each partner is faithful to its mission while respecting the missions of the other partners.” Teamwork also includes making efficient use of one another’s time and involving partners early in projects so that they really have opportunity for meaningful involvement. “Live up to the commitments that you make. Don’t overextend yourself because it puts at risk your ability to follow through on the commitment.”

One person noted an important distinction between “collaboration” and “partnership”. If the expectation is that industry must be a partner in the solutions, then “industry can’t collaborate its way out of business.” Solutions are not about trade-offs. “We should focus on projects that everybody can buy into and from which everyone achieves something by working on the ground together.”

It was noted that conservation is not really about managing the resource. “Most natural resource decisions are social decisions – not technical decisions.” “Natural resource people generally are not good at working with people.” “99% of watershed management is people management.” “Science has to inform the decisions. But, science does not make the decisions.” “There is a fine line between success and failure and that fine line can be a barbed wire fence. Science tells us where to work and what to do. Art tells us how to work with people. The science and the art are transferable but those still have to be applied with respect for the personality of the local community.”

Recommendations

Potential actions to implement a coordinated delivery mechanism for the habitat components of Montana's CFWCS, as suggested by persons who participated in interviews, were compiled for the workshop and are presented in Appendix B. Further discussion of some of the specific suggestions follows.

One person suggested that CFWCS should have a higher profile. "Somebody of note (the Governor) has to make CFWCS a priority and must be consistent with that message." It also was suggested that the Governor should sponsor a forum to feature CFWCS and encourage Montana to look forward to a new era of conservation.

One person suggested that the State of Montana needs a state land use plan and that CFWCS should be part of that larger state plan. The plan should be developed by FWP, DNRC and DEQ, working cooperatively and thinking strategically, together. The plan then would be the



Photo Courtesy of CFWCS

framework for evaluating priority issues around the state and provide an umbrella for planning at the watershed level. Another person suggested that the state and federal agencies reinstitute MOU's at either the state level or specific to each of the CFWCS focus areas, as a framework for empowering local working groups.

Several others expressed similar ideas. One person suggested that Montana must "function like a watershed group at the state level" and develop programs around shared priorities. Another person suggested that "we need a unified voice for water in the state – a group that is able to think strategically and that promotes a common message at local, regional and statewide levels." This approach would enable the state to work with the watershed model at a broader scale. "CFWCS is a logical framework for aggregating smaller projects." By doing so, partnerships

among several watershed groups could develop and the state would be better able to leverage big dollar amounts with then could be reallocated to several smaller projects and implemented by the partner groups.

Several people mentioned issues related to the lack of capacity in local communities. More communities might be interested in community based conservation, but they need help to get started. One person identified the need more designated local leaders, including agency staff, who have the responsibility for leading partnerships written into their job descriptions.

Another person suggested that FWP should look at those places where SWG funds have been spent. Identify the community leaders associated with those projects, engage them, learn from them and discover what information can then be transferred to other communities.

Several people commented on difficulties associated with the process for applying for project funds, especially when partial funding comes from more than one state agency. One person suggested that the agencies should “streamline the process for applications and develop models that make it easier for partners to apply.” Another suggested that “There should be a logical mechanism for getting resources from the agencies to the groups who are getting work done on the ground. That doesn’t mean that every proposal gets funded – but a logical process that serves reasonable expectations.” Another person recommended that the state agencies should establish a partner task group and charge the group to develop a seamless, common project application process.

A few people mentioned that the Montana Wetlands Legacy is working to achieve the goals of CFWCS. This program could do more and it was suggested that FWP should do more to support it. “Wetlands Legacy should be a showcase program for FWP.” One person suggested “expanding the Wetland Legacy into a Habitat Legacy and then use it as the framework for advancing Farm Bill initiatives.”

A few people mentioned that Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is working to achieve the goals of CFWCS. However USFWS has not been able to staff all of the Partners focus areas. It was suggested that FWP and USFWS should cooperate in staffing those vacant focus area positions. Similar suggestions were made regarding positions jointly funded by FWP and NRCS to assist in aligning expenditures pursuant to the Farm Bill with CFWCS.

A few people mentioned the need for more effective coordination specific to conservation of sensitive bird species. They suggested establishment of a jointly funded position, supported by agencies and NGO’s and housed either at FWP or with one of the partner’s. This position would have specific responsibilities for coordinating work with sensitive bird species.

One person suggested that FWP needs to define more wildlife projects that can be implemented like future fisheries, i.e. smaller projects that have opportunities for including multiple partners and showing some immediate on the ground improvements. This could start with pilot projects for habitat restoration.

Several people mentioned that SWG functions like a re-granting program in other states. They suggested that FWP would be more effective in developing partnerships with NGO’s and in leveraging political support if FWP were they do re-grant a larger share of the SWG funds. “FWP could open doors if it were willing to share the SWG funds with NGO’s.” One person suggested that \$60,000/year should be set aside for small project grants.

Several people mentioned possible legislation that could be enacted to promote more conservation work in Montana. The need for a dedicated state funding source, committed to conservation, was mentioned often. Variations on the concept included re-authorizing and

funding the Montana Agricultural Heritage Program; re-introduce legislation similar to SB 452 and SB 534 during the 2009 session; and, re-introduce legislation related to promoting Montana's restoration economy. "The Montana Agricultural Heritage Program was a well designed program and had the capacity to leverage \$8 for each \$1 in state funds. This program should be reauthorized." People also suggested that existing state and federal laws should be amended to require the use of state action plans in decisions regarding allocation of funds from various state and federal programs.

A few people suggested the need for a planning document that steps down from CFWCS and is responsive to the planning efforts of the other agencies and organizations. One person suggested establishing a partner task group, charged with the responsibility for articulating shared vision and values and developing a shared action plan, including: shared objectives; shared priorities; agreement on implementation framework and schedule; and expression of mutual support for projects.

Prerequisites for state participation in SWG include each State's provisions for coordination during the development, implementation, review, and revision of its Strategy with Federal, State, and local agencies and Indian Tribes that manage significant areas of land or water within the State, or administer programs that significantly affect the conservation of species or their habitats. USFWS encouraged continued efforts to inform and involve Tribes during the implementation of CFWCS. A similar perspective was expressed by a person who said, "the State needs to work on developing communication with the Tribe."

In response to the threats to comprehensive landscape conservation, another person suggested establishing a partner task group to answer the unresolved and interrelated big questions:

- How do we define partnerships?
- How do we focus all of our energy in one direction?
- How does each partner find itself in a bigger scheme/shared vision?
- How do we set priorities that serve a shared vision?
- Where is the money, how do we find it and how do we spend it in a way that serves the shared vision?
- In the face of significant development pressures, how do we define "responsible"? Where is it appropriate to take a stand, where do we let go and where do we work for collaborative/balanced approaches?

Potential Partners/Programs/Funding Sources

Agencies and organizations who administer programs that overlap with the CFWCS goals and objectives are potential partners in the implementation of the Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy. In addition to sharing conservation objectives, they have relevant expertise. Some have funding that could be committed to shared projects and all are potential supporters for new programs and funding sources. These agencies and organizations are listed in Appendix C. We acknowledge that the list is incomplete. But, it is a place for people to be looking for potential partners and a place to begin a more comprehensive and dynamic list of potential partners. We also caution that inclusion of an agency or organization in this list does represent a commitment by that entity.

Workshop

We advised each person with whom we met of the proposed workshop, which was held in Helena on November 1. Subsequently, an invitation was mailed to each of them and to a broader list of potentially interested people. The invitation included a reference to the CFWCS website, a summary of the draft situation assessment, the list of recommendations and the workshop agenda. We also distributed an op-ed regarding the workshop which was published in several of the major Montana newspapers. Approximately 142 people participated in the workshop. Participants included representatives from state and federal agencies, local government, tribal government, watershed groups, land trusts, private conservation groups, agriculture, trade groups and interested individuals.

The draft report and the recommendations served as the focus the workshop. The purpose of the workshop was to review and provide collective feedback on the draft situation assessment; define and explore “gaps” as evidenced by the draft situation assessment; and, provide topical input on “next steps.”

Workshop attendees were asked to provide feedback on the accuracy, completeness and usefulness of the situation assessment. The results of the workshop tend to validate the conservation direction defined by the CFWCS and the situation assessment. But, it also was noted that the CFWCS and the situation assessment only define a place to begin. Both documents lack sufficient detail in the identification of obstacles to conservation; priorities; and, in the commitment to specific action items. Additional work, building upon the situation assessment, should be accomplished to make CFWCS more operational. Although diverse interests were represented in the workshop, attendees noted the under-representation of landowners, Tribes and local governments, both in the workshop and the representation of their concerns in the situation assessment.

Before beginning the discussion of the recommendations, we encouraged the participants to individually think about their vision for a future Montana and whether that vision, relative to current reality, was sufficient to call people to action. We reminded them that local watershed groups already are doing conservation work, looking to a future Montana. We asked people to think about actions that might be required to support the work of the watershed groups. We asked them to think about ways to align Montana’s conservation and restoration work with the scale of the challenges to long-term conservation.

Workshop attendees then participated in one of seven small groups. Each group was assigned



Photo Courtesy of Montana FWP

one of the topic areas from the list of potential action items (Appendix B) and asked to provide feedback regarding objectives, important principles, stakeholder involvement and recommended actions. Five themes were apparent from all of the small group reports. Attendees identified 1) the need for more leadership, preferably from a statewide steering committee; 2) the need for a communication strategy to provide timely and relevant implementation; 3) the need for leadership that empowers groups that work locally; 4) the need for an approach to conservation that functions inclusively; and, 5) the need for a conservation program that is focused on producing measurable conservation results.

Representatives from the Big Hole Watershed Committee were invited to share their experiences during the workshop. The Madison Valley Ranchlands Group and the Sweetgrass Conservation District also addressed the workshop. They indicated that their group formed in response to a crisis, which, in their situation, was a low water year and the potential for the loss of irrigation. The committee initially was two separate groups but gradually came together as the members began to realize that they needed one another. As that happened, members also began to appreciate that “other people love the land as much as I do”. With that realization, the group also began to develop a sense of community. The members of this committee emphasized that, if solutions are going to work, the ideas have to come from the people in the watershed who have to live with the solution. The Big Hole Watershed Committee is working on drilling wells as an alternative to irrigation diversions; river restoration projects; and, helping the local planning board implement stream set-backs.

A summary of the workshop is presented in Appendix D.

Gaps

Participants in the interviews and the workshop noted several specific “gaps” between the current situation in Montana and a functional partnership approach to achieving landscape conservation in Montana. Generally, these gaps relate to capacity, coordination, communication and funding.

Capacity Issue

Conservation partnerships require each partner to commit staff resources to planning, communication, coordination and the various administrative activities necessary to support the on-the-ground conservation and restoration work. Individual partners often lack the personnel and the expertise to assume these responsibilities. Larger agencies might have staff with the ability to do this work. But, those people already have existing responsibilities. If the agencies are unable to hire additional staff, they face the dilemma of whether to re-direct staff and choosing which priority to work to leave undone. Smaller agencies typically are understaffed even for existing responsibilities. For them, re-direction probably is not an option.

Local watershed groups function primarily with volunteers. Staff to local groups is either provided by an agency or supported with capacity grants from either DNRC or private sources. The Watershed Coordination Council also is a bridge and provides limited support for the local groups. Generally, the local watershed groups compete for the same sources to fund staff. Participation by local partners is diminishing because state and federal funding to support local participation also is diminishing.

Coordination Issue

Participants in the interviews reminded us that there is not a single, shared vision for conservation and restoration in Montana. People might see themselves in the CFWCS but the document was not prepared specifically to embrace the conservation plans of the potential partners. Thus, individuals may not yet be bought into the broader vision or they may lack confidence that others are bought into it. As a result, Montana lacks a process for collectively establishing statewide priorities that are agreed to by several partners. The task for coordinating a statewide, multi-interest conservation coalition has not yet been defined and assigned. If such an effort is undertaken, it must to more than just identify the shared priorities. It also must identify specific approaches to support those who share the vision but who are working in the lower priority areas.

Participants identified a specific need for more coordination among those who have responsibilities for conservation and restoration in central, south-central and southeastern Montana.

Several of the partners are using GIS capability. Participants identified the need for more coordination among the various efforts.

Communication Issue

The op-ed that we used to announce the workshop referred to the Montana Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy as “a long title for what’s probably the most important wildlife management program you’ve never heard of.” It is apparent that many Montanans are interested in a long-term vision that embraces conservation. But, there also are many Montanans who have limited understanding of CFWCS and how it relates to achieving long-term conservation and restoration. Teaming with Wildlife has been effective in communicating CFWCS, but primarily to FWP’s traditional constituents and to those who agencies and organizations represented in the development of the document. However, the message has not yet reached a broader audience.

Private landowners are essential to achieving landscape conservation. However, the agriculture community has not been involved in the development of the CFWCS and, except for producers who are actively involved in projects that receive SWG funding, the agriculture community generally is unaware of the program. County Commissioners are another group who are vital to successful implementation but have only limited awareness of CFWCS. The assessment provided an opportunity to introduce CFWCS to the agriculture community and County Commissioners. However, further effort will be required to keep them engaged.

One participant noted that the “lack of political power is the Achilles heel for the program. It is critical to pull all of the interests under the same umbrella.” Several others emphasized the importance of effective communication as the foundation for maintaining a broad base of support for the conservation and restoration effort.

Funding Issue

Participants consistently identified lack of sufficient funding as the critical obstacle to achieving the goals defined by CFWCS. Several of the people who mentioned concerns for funding also referenced the large acreage that is required to support the conservation objective relative to the



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

pace of change in Montana. They also suggested that, with increasing land values, there is a brief window of opportunity for completing a significant conservation effort in Montana.

CFWCS identified over 53 million acres of land as the focus for conservation. But, that analysis was completed at a coarse scale. At a statewide level, it is not possible to quantify acres of need for conservation until further analysis at a finer scale is completed. More detailed work has been completed for specific locations, e.g. the Rocky Mountain Front. One person who is working in that area described the Front as a “crisis of opportunity”. Priority areas have been identified and landowners have expressed willingness to work with the land trust community. However, funding is the immediate obstacle. “If the state could put up \$5 million, the private sector could quickly come up with \$15 million to do conservation easements on the Rocky Mountain Front.”

The funding issue is more complex than the problem of not having sufficient resources to fund identified priority projects. It also is a matter of using existing funding sources in the most efficient manner. The description of the various potential conservation partners (Appendix B) identifies several of the existing state and federal funding sources. Although the primary purpose for most of these programs is something other than CFWCS, they overlap with the purpose that could be used to accomplish some of the activities defined by CFWCS. More effective communication and coordination among these programs is essential to align priorities with those in CFWCS.

It should also be noted that several of the potential partners, especially the local groups are competing for funds from the same sources. Some of the participants suggested that competition was healthy to ensure that funds were being used for the best projects. However, others suggested that, with limited organizational capacity, it is difficult for some of the local groups to compete for those funds. Moreover, local groups cannot afford to develop grant applications without a reasonable expectation that the application will be approved.

A few participants noted one additional funding issue. Few of the funding sources are interested in supporting monitoring efforts. But, “the science of restoration is still evolving. It is important to watch what is happening, monitor, acknowledge mistakes and learn from them.” Also, without good monitoring information, it is difficult to predict outcomes and, without that predictability, it can be difficult to prepare a competitive grant application. “The inability to predict results is not a justification for inaction.”

Web-based Tools

The status assessment will be integrated with FWP's Conservation Tracking Database that tracks accomplishments in Montana and tiers them to the national data base of State Wildlife Action Plan accomplishments. CFWCS is accessible through the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' website (<http://fwp.mt.gov/specieshabitat/strategy/default.html>). Prior to the workshop, documents related to this situation assessment were posted at that site, and were accessible from the "resources" link at that webpage. The site will be updated to include the final report, including the appendices. The site will also be used to communicate information related to the work of the proposed steering committee.

The assessment also provided participants an opportunity to suggest web-based tools that would be useful to people involved in conservation work in Montana. Suggestions included:

maps of partner priorities; a project tracking tool; a project reporting tool; a project query tool; information regarding potential project funding sources; a primer for grant applications; and, handbooks relevant to a variety of conservation and restoration issues.

Next Steps

A mailing list, including approximately 350 Montanans with a known interest in comprehensive conservation, was developed for this project. We mailed the workshop summary and a brief description of SWG to everyone on this list. In addition, the cover letter announced FWP's intention to follow up on this project and the workshop by appointing a statewide steering committee. The cover letter also requested people to express their interest in serving on either the steering committee or a work group that functions under the direction of the steering committee. The steering committee will be asked to continue to develop a shared conservation and restoration agenda for Montana and prioritize develop proposals to implement the recommendations in Appendix A. Based on the results of the workshop, we anticipate that work groups will be formed to address issues related to communication, coordination and funding. We anticipate that a final decision regarding composition of the steering committee will be made in January 2008, with the first meeting to be held shortly thereafter. FWP also intends to seek funding to support a coordinator for the steering committee.



Photo Courtesy of Carl Heilman

APPENDIX A

Persons interviewed during the conduct of the Situation Assessment.

AGENCY/PROGRAM

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks

| | |
|---|--|
| Big Hole River Initiative | Dick Oswald, Pete Lammothe and Jim McGee |
| Fish, Wildlife and Parks Foundation | Spence Hegsted |
| Fisheries Mitigation Program | Brian Marotz and Joel Tohtz |
| Forest Legacy Program and Habitat Montana | Steve Knapp |
| Future Fisheries | Glenn Phillips |
| Milk River Initiative | Pat Gunderson |
| Montana Wetlands Legacy | Tom Hinz |
| Native Fish Species | Travis Horton |
| Special License Auction | Quentin Kujala and Caryn Amacher |
| State Wildlife Grant Program | Mike Aderhold and T.O. Smith |
| Upland Game Bird Program | Rick Northrup |
| Wildlife Division | Ken McDonald and Jeff Herbert |
| Wildlife Mitigation | Alan Wood and Gael Bissell |

Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Conservation Districts | Steve Schmitz |
| Forest Management | Lowell Whitney and David Groeschl |
| Trust Land Management | Tom Schultz |
| Water Management | Rich Moy |

Montana Department of Environmental Quality

| | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| Major Facility Siting Act | Tom Ring |
| Water Protection Bureau | Bonnie Lovelace |
| Watershed Protection Program | Robert Ray |
| Wetland Protection Program | Lynda Saul |

Montana Department of Agriculture

| | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Weed Management | Dave Burch and Kim Johnson |
|-----------------|----------------------------|

Montana Department of Transportation

Bonnie Steg

| | |
|--|---|
| Montana Governor's Office | Hal Harper |
| Montana State University | |
| Extension and Undaunted Stewardship | Jeff Mosely |
| University of Montana | |
| Avian Science Center | Dick Hutto |
| Natural Heritage Program | Sue Crispin and Bryce Maxell |
| Department of Forestry | Jim Burtchfeld |
| Madison County | |
| Planning | Doris Fischer |
| Bureau of Land Management | |
| Land and Water Conservation Fund | Craig Haynes |
| Wildlife Program | Gayle Sitter and Fritz Prellwitz |
| Bureau of Reclamation | |
| Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust (Canyon Ferry) | Gary Sullivan |
| Corps of Engineers | Alan Steinle |
| Environmental Protection Agency | Julie DalSoglio |
| Natural Resource Conservation Service | Ronald Nadwornick and Peter Husby |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service | |
| Habitat Conservation Plans | Tim Bodurtha |
| Landowner Incentive Program | Otto Jose |
| Land and Water Conservation Fund | Gary Sullivan |
| Partners Program | Greg Neidecker, Randy Gazda, Jeff Everett |
| Native American Fish and Wildlife Society | Ron Skates |
| Great Plains Joint Venture | Ken Sambor |
| Intermountain West Joint Venture | Dave Smith |
| Prairie Pothole Joint Venture | Casey Stemler |

U.S. Forest Service

Wildlife Program

Skip Kowalski

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Ron Erickson

Tribal Governments

Blackfeet Nation

Gayle Skunkcap and Dan Carney

Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Tomm McDonald and Dale Becker

Ft. Belknap

Jeff Stiffarm, A.J. Bigby and Tom Jones

Ft. Peck

Robbie Magnan

Rocky Boy's Reservation

Leland TopSky and Tim Vossberg

Non-governmental Organizations

American Bird Conservancy

Dan Casey

American Prairie Foundation

Dick Dolan

American Wildlands

Tony Povilitis

Avista Corporation

Tim Swant

Big Hole River Foundation

Mike Bias

Big Hole Watershed Committee

Noorjahan Parwana

Blackfoot Challenge

Jim Stone and Tina Bernd-Cohen

Defenders of Wildlife

Minette Glaser and Jonathon Proctor

Ducks Unlimited

Robert Sanders

Five Valleys Land Trust

Wendy Ninteman

Flathead Land Trust

Marilyn Wood

Greater Yellowstone Coalition

Craig Kenworthy

Montana Association of Counties

Harold Blattie and Sheryl Wood

Montana Association of Conservation Districts

Sarah Carlson

Montana Association of Land Trusts

Glenn Marx

Montana Audubon

Janet Ellis and Steve Hoffman

Montana Farm Bureau Federation

John Youngberg

Montana Land Reliance

Rock Ringling

Montana Stockgrowers Association

Jay Bodner

Montana Water Trust

John Ferguson and Brianna Randall

Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Jennifer Boyer

Montana Wildlife Federation

Rich Day

Montana Wood Products Association

Ellen Engsted-Simpson

National Wild Turkey Federation

Jared McJunkin

National Wildlife Federation

Land Tawney

Pheasants Forever

Dan Hare

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| Plum Creek Timber | Lorin Hicks and Brian Sugden |
| PPL Montana | Jon Jourdannais |
| Pyramid Lumber Company | Gordy Sanders |
| Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation | Mike Mueller and Al Christopherson |
| Sonoran Institute | Jennifer Boyer |
| Sun River Watershed Committee | Alan Rollo |
| The Nature Conservancy | Jamie Williams |
| Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners | Bill Geer |
| Trout Unlimited | Mike Gibson and Stan Bradshaw |
| Turner Endangered Species Fund | Mike Phillips |
| World Wildlife Fund | Steve Forrest |

APPENDIX B.

Potential actions to implement a coordinated delivery mechanism for the habitat components of Montana's CFWCS.

Improve Communication and Outreach

- Develop a higher public profile for the CFWCS.
- Host a forum to promote a new conservation era in Montana and CFWCS as one component of the new approach to conservation.
- Enhance communication and coordination between Montana and Tribal governments.
- Engage landowners in the conservation dialogue. Private landowners are essential to achieving landscape conservation. However, they have not yet been involved in the development and implementation of the CFWCS.
- Engage the Conservation Districts and the County Extension Agents in the conservation dialogue.
- Work with the Northern Ag Network to disseminate information related to CFWCS to Montana's agriculture community.
- Develop a framework for consistent and effective communication among the conservation partners.
- Develop and distribute a conservation media campaign.
- The conversation about conservation in Montana must move from a debate to a dialogue.
- Host agency-sponsored community conservation days, e.g. a weed management day and BBQ.

Improve Coordination Among the Conservation Partners

- Define and assign the responsibility for coordinating a statewide, multi-interest conservation coalition.
- Use CFWCS as a framework for defining partnerships; identifying shared priorities; sorting out competing interests; and, thinking strategically among the partners regarding the allocation of limited funds relative to shared priorities.
- Establish a state level conservation coordination group.
- Develop a process for Montanans to collectively establish statewide priorities for habitat conservation and restoration and, thereby, function like a watershed group at the state level.
- Develop a framework for partnerships.
- Promote a statewide approach to bird conservation.

Conservation Leadership

- FWP must consistently demonstrate its commitment to CFWCS.
- Establish effective state-level leadership that is facilitative and supportive of local initiative. Leadership must be objective, reliable and committed
- Identify, support and encourage the community conservation leaders.
- Develop a broad coalition that understands CFWCS, wants to follow the leadership and is committed to following through.

Update the Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy

- Involve a broad coalition in developing a shared conservation vision for Montana, a vision that embraces local priorities and initiatives.
- Develop a Montana State land use plan which incorporates CFWCS as a significant component and also incorporates the planning efforts of the conservation partners.
- Develop a CFWCS implementation plan, including a CFWCS monitoring plan, that also is responsive to the priorities of the conservation partners.

Implement the Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy

- FWP alignment and allocation of staff time that is consistent with CFWCS.
- Establish FWP/USFWS cooperative position(s) related to Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program
- Establish more FWP/NRCS cooperative positions related to Farm Bill.
- Expand the Montana Wetlands Legacy program (Expand the Wetland Legacy into a Habitat Legacy and then use it as the framework for advancing Farm Bill initiatives)
- Develop FWP/DNRC timber exchange agreements related to Wildlife Management Areas and School Trust Lands.
- Establish a cooperative position, supported by two or more partners, to promote bird conservation.
- Develop solutions that work for agriculture.
- Implement small wildlife restoration projects that have opportunities for including multiple partners and showing some immediate on the ground improvements.
- Set aside a portion of the SWG funds, dedicated to re-granting to projects sponsored by private partners.
- Integrate CFWCS into local land use planning
- Integrate CFWCS into planning for School Trust Land and federal land management.
- Integrate CFWCS into the permitting process for energy development, facility siting, etc.
- Integrate monitoring into conservation and restoration projects.

Support for Local Conservation Initiatives

- Develop a one-stop grant application process.
- Develop and enhance community capacity and leadership.
- Develop a protocol for including schools in community based conservation initiatives

Establish a Sustainable and Predictable Funding Base for Conservation Partnerships

- Promote legislation to reauthorize the Montana Agricultural Heritage Program.
- Promote legislation to establish a dedicated fund for land conservation in Montana.
- Promote legislation to enhance Montana's restoration economy.
- Aggregate several local projects into a single, statewide project in order to market to large foundations.

Potential Partners in Conservation

Many agencies and organizations administer programs that overlap with the goals and objectives that are outlined in Montana Fish Wildlife and Park's Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy. In addition to sharing conservation objectives, all have relevant expertise. Some have funding that could be committed to shared projects and all are potential supporters for new programs and funding sources. Many already are engaged in community-based conservation and restoration projects. Appendix C provides a brief description of the programs and contact information, current at the time of printing. The list may be incomplete. The inclusion of an agency or organization in this list does represent a commitment by that entity.

APPENDIX C

A Partial Inventory of Programs, Potential Partners, Technical Assistance, Possible Funding Sources and Contact Information for Conservation Projects in Montana.

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| State Wildlife Grants | <p>Programs Administered by Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks</p> <p>The State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program is a strategy for keeping unlisted species off the endangered species list. Fish, Wildlife and Parks has selected a subset of priorities from the Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CFWCS) and developed a SWG action plan for the period 2005 – 2011 (http://fwp.mt.gov/specieshabitat/strategy/actionplan.html). SWG grants provide about \$1 million in federal funding per year. SWG grants require a 1:1 match with non-federal funds. For FY2008-2009 the match was provided by a state general fund appropriation. Over the next five years, \$300,000 will be allocated to the Big Hole River Initiative and another \$300,000 will be allocated to the Milk River Initiative.</p> | <p>Mike Aderhold (406) 453-2459 Montana FWP maderhold@mt.gov</p> <p>http://fwp.mt.gov/specieshabitat/strategy/default.html</p> |
| Big Hole River Initiative | <p>SWG funds have been used to document populations of westslope cutthroat trout, identify potential habitats for population restoration, summarize threats to known restoration populations, and provide recommendations for addressing those threats; survey and inventory of burbot and lake trout populations in Elk Lake and Twin Lakes, and burbot populations in Clark Canyon reservoir; evaluate the reproductive status of adult arctic grayling in Red Rock Lake and Rogers Lake, and, document the spawning and stocking success, as well as efforts to establish a conservation brood in Red Rock Reservoir. SWG funds have been used to restore fluvial Arctic grayling in the upper Missouri River basin in Montana. SWG funds also are being used to inventory freshwater mussels.</p> <p>The state and federal agencies also are working with 30 landowners on approximately 146,000 acres of habitat on a variety of projects</p> | <p>Dick Oswald (406) 683-9310 Montana FWP oswalddick@mt.gov</p> <p>Peter Lamothe (406) 683-9310 Montana FWP plamothe@mt.gov</p> <p>Jim MaGee (406) 683-9310 Montana FWP mageejames@mt.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| <p>Milk River Initiative</p> | <p>related to maintaining instream flow and restoring stream and riparian habitats. Funding is provided from a variety of sources through FWP, DNRC, USFWS and NRCS. Private conservation groups also are working cooperatively with the agencies to achieve the objectives of this initiative.</p> <p>SWG funds have been used to implement the Montana Glaciated Plains Milk River Conservation and Restoration State Wildlife Grant. The number one objective of this grant is to place 10,000 acres within the Milk River Riparian Zone under conservation easements or other appropriate strategies to conserve fish and wildlife communities including game and non-game species groups. FWP is currently working with four ranches to develop those easements.</p> | <p>Jeff Everett (406) 683-3893 U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service jeff_everett@fws.gov</p> <p>Pat Gunderson (406) 228-3709 Montana FWP pgunderson@mt.gov</p> |
| <p>Future Fisheries</p> | <p>The Future Fisheries Improvement Program has worked to restore rivers, streams and lakes to improve and restore Montana's wild fish habitats. About \$600,000 are available each year for costs to design, construct, and maintain projects that restore, enhance or protect habitat for wild fishes. Preference is given to projects that restore habitats for native fishes. FWP, working with an independent review panel, reviews grant applications twice per year. Applications must be received by January 1 and before July 1 for consideration during the current grant cycle. Applications may be obtained from any FWP office. A copy of the application is also available on-line.</p> <p>Program funding may be provided for costs of design, construction, and maintenance of projects that restore, enhance or protect habitat for wild fishes. Preference will be given to projects that restore habitats for native fishes. Since its inception, about \$8 M has been spent on approximately 400 projects. Work includes riparian fencing; riparian enhancement; stream bank stabilization; channel restoration; irrigation diversion screens; fish passage; reefs in lakes; and, water leases.</p> | <p>Glenn Phillips (406) 444-5334 Montana FWP gphillips@mt.gov</p> <p>http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/futurefisheries/default.html</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| | <p>In 1999, the Legislature expanded the Program by adding funding from the Resource Indemnity Trust Fund and directing a portion of the funding to projects that specifically enhance bull trout and cutthroat trout, with emphasis on mineral reclamation projects. It is difficult to do restoration projects at mines because of the resulting liabilities associated with hazardous waste.</p> | |
| Native Species | <p>The Fisheries Native Species Program supports projects that include both research (primarily survey and inventory) and habitat protection and enhancement. Program funds may be used to match SW/G funds. Funds are also being used in coordination with other federal funding sources, e.g. the Landowner Incentive Program.</p> | <p>Travis Horton (406) 444-3364 Montana FWP thorton@mt.gov</p> |
| Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Program for Montana | <p>The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation program provides funding to entities of local government for the design, construction, and installation of fish screens, fish ladders, and other fish passage devices associated with water diversions. The intent of the proposed diversion improvements must be to reduce fish mortality, reduce entrainment of fish in water distribution systems, or increase subsequent survival and reproductive success of fish species native to and present in the project area. In Montana, this program is specific to areas west of the continental divide. Annual federal funding for the program is approximately \$400,000. A 35% match of non-federal funds and/or in-kind contributions. Department matching funds typically come from the Future Fisheries program. FWP has experienced difficulty in using all of the federal funds available to it for this program because it is voluntary and there are no specific incentives for individual landowners to participate in the program.</p> | <p>Mark Lere (406) 444-2432 Montana FWP mlere@mt.gov http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/fisheriesrestoration.asp</p> |
| Habitat Montana | <p>The purpose of Habitat Montana is to preserve important habitats that are severely threatened. The program focuses on the protection of</p> | <p>Steve Knapp (406) 444-4717</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>three habitat types: 1) Intermountain grasslands – important habitats that are threatened by sub-divisions; 2) Riparian habitats; and, 3) Sagebrush-grasslands. Habitat priorities for Habitat Montana overlap with those of CFWCS. And, CFWCS validated the habitat priorities. Habitat Montana projects all occur in Tier 1 and Tier 2 areas.</p> <p>According to FWP Commission guidance, Habitat Montana projects must protect habitats; must provide a public benefit of recreation opportunities; and, must be distributed statewide. FWP typically uses these funds to purchase conservation easements from willing sellers. Projects implemented under this program typically require a management plan and hunting access.</p> <p>Habitat Montana has a focus to conserve intact, native habitats. It does not have a restoration component. Habitat Montana funds may be used to match SWG funds. Habitat Montana is funded a \$6,180,000 for the FY 08/09 biennium.</p> | <p>Montana FWP sknapp@mt.gov</p> |
| <p>Forest Legacy Program</p> | <p>Montana's Forest Legacy Program is designed to conserve forest lands and to maintain natural and public values by assisting with the purchase of conservation easements or fee-title on private forest lands. The program emphasizes maintenance of working forests, while protecting watersheds and water quality and promoting sustainable forestry, recreation, forest habitats, and T&E species. Landowner participation in the program is completely voluntary. Their lands must be forested and fall within designated forest legacy areas.</p> <p>Since 2000, the Forest Legacy program has brought \$26 M into Montana. The program is funded nationally, through competitive grants. The funds come to FWP and are then re-granted to the partners. FWP works with an advisory committee to evaluate proposals, but retains responsibility for the final recommendation. Easements acquired with these funds are held by FWP. FWP retains reporting and</p> | <p>Steve Knapp (406) 444-4717 Montana FWP sknapp@mt.gov http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/forestlegacy.asp</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|--|
| | <p>accountability responsibilities. The program requires a 25% match, which typically is offered by a land trust or donated by the landowner.</p> | |
| <p>Upland Game Bird Program</p> | <p>The Upland Game Bird Program provides cost-shared funds to private landowners to develop upland game bird habitat. These projects may include establishing and maintaining shelterbelts, planting nesting cover and food plots and implementing improved grazing management systems. Projects must be open to some free public game bird hunting and usually involve at least 160 contiguous acres of land.</p> <p>FWP also funds sagebrush leases through this program. Sagebrush leases are 30-year agreements that preclude sagebrush spraying and burning. The lease pays a one-time payment of \$12/acre. The program is intended to benefit sage grouse, but the program provides benefits for all sagebrush obligate species. 175,000 acres are enrolled in the program. Working in cooperation with NRCS and the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, funds from this program also have been used to support work with private landowners to conserve wetlands.</p> <p>The upland game bird program is funded a \$1,258,000 for the FY 08/09 biennium.</p> | <p>Rick Northrup (406) 444-5633 Montana FWP rnorthup@mt.gov http://fwp.mt.gov/wildthings/uplandgamebird/brochure.html</p> |
| <p>Special License Auction</p> | <p>The Montana Legislature authorized the Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission to sell, through public auction, one each bighorn sheep, moose, goat, elk and mule deer license per year. As prescribed by enabling legislation, funding is to be used for the beneficial management of the identified species. Funding is typically allocated for specific survey work to deal with localized issues, capture and relocation efforts, research efforts, habitat enhancement and herd health issues or in the case of bighorn sheep, a portion of the funding is allocated to a capital account for habitat protection. The sheep auction is funded at \$250,000 for the FY 08/09 biennium.</p> | <p>Quentin Kujala (406) 444-5672 Montana FWP qkujala@mt.gov http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/dollars.html</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Migratory Bird Stamp | Revenues generated from the sale of waterfowl licenses are earmarked for the protection, conservation and development of Montana wetlands. This program is funded at \$360,000 for the FY 08/09 biennium. | Rick Northup (406) 444-5633 Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks rnorthup@mt.gov |
| Montana Wetlands Legacy | The Mission of this program is to create a Wetlands Legacy for Montana by protecting, restoring, and enhancing Montana's wetlands, riparian areas, and associated uplands through a fully integrated, voluntary partnership. The Legacy is a partnership among state and federal agencies and non-governmental organizations, coordinated by FWP. Each year, the Legacy works to protect 50,000 acres of ecologically important wetlands, riparian areas, and associated watershed lands. The program is funded from a variety of existing funding sources. | Tom Hinz (406) 994-7889 Montana FWP thinz@mt.gov www.wetlandslegacy.org |
| Wildlife Mitigation Trust | <p>The Wildlife Mitigation Program for Libby and Hungry Horse Dams initiated in 1987 aims to replace wildlife and habitat lost during the dams' development. The Wildlife Mitigation Agreement signed by the State of Montana, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and Bonneville Power Administration transferred \$12.5 million to a state trust account with both principal and interest earmarked to finance the program. Projects may include habitat enhancements, leases, conservation easements or fee-title acquisitions agreed to by willing landowners.</p> <p>The mitigation program has the ability to leverage funds from NAWCA grants, HCP grants, Forest Legacy and Farm & Ranch grants to accomplish larger land transactions. Wildlife mitigation in northwestern Montana also is fully integrated with the Avista re-licensing agreement.</p> <p>The mitigation trust balance is currently more than \$11M. Currently, the program spends \$200,000/year in trust revenue with an additional \$100</p> | Alan Wood (406) 751-4595 Montana FWP awood@mt.gov http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/wildlifemitigation.asp http://fwp.mt.gov/habitat/wildlifemitigation.asp |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|--|
| | to \$150k/year accumulating in the trust. The trust supports 2 staff people. The focus of their work is partnerships with land trusts; doing habitat enhancement with USFS; and, paying for fixed costs (title work, appraisals, etc.) for projects completed in cooperation with the land trusts. | |
| Fisheries Mitigation | <p>The Fisheries Mitigation Program aims to protect, mitigate and enhance fisheries and fish habitats affected by Libby and Hungry Horse Dams. Sub-basin plans have been developed for the Kootenai and Flathead river drainages. These plans define the needs for all of the fisheries and wildlife resources that have been impacted by hydro-electric power development in the sub-basins. These plans have been amended into the Northwest Power Planning Council's Columbia Basin Fish and Wildlife Plan. These sub-basin plans and CFWCS are compatible, especially in the identification of core areas and corridors between core areas for protection.</p> <p>FWP, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and Bonneville Power Administration are developing memoranda of agreement regarding fisheries mitigation for the Flathead River. This program provides \$15 million over the next three years to FWP and the Tribes for fisheries mitigation.</p> | <p>Brian Marotz (406) 751-4546 Montana FWP bmarotz@mt.gov</p> |
| | <p>Programs Administered by Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation</p> | |
| Conservation & Resource Development Division | <p>The Conservation Districts Bureau Loan and Grant Program provides technical and financial assistance for various conservation programs. Loans and grants are issued to the Conservation Districts which sponsor the project applications. Loans and grants are available to support local administration, watershed planning, education and range improvements.</p> | <p>Steve Schmitz (406) 444-6691 Montana DNRC sschmitz@mt.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Renewable Resource Project Planning grants are authorized by the Montana Legislature to assist public entities in the planning and development of renewable resource grant applications for projects that measurably conserve, develop, manage, or protect Montana's renewable resources.</p> <p>Reclamation and Development project planning grants are authorized by the Montana Legislature and provide up to \$50,000 per project to local governments to procure consulting/engineering services for the design of natural resource projects.</p> <p>The Reclamation and Development Grants Program is designed to fund projects that compensate Montana citizens for the effects of exploration and mining on Montana lands and projects that serve the public interest and the State of Montana. Funding for this program is derived from interest income from the resource Indemnity Trust Fund. This fund receives proceeds from taxes levied on mineral production. The Legislature has allocated \$3 million of the interest income from the Resource Indemnity Trust Fund to the Reclamation and Development Grants Program. Grants are limited to \$300,000 per project.</p> <p>The Montana Legislature established the Renewable Resource Grant and Loan Program to fund the conservation, management, development and preservation of Montana's renewable resources. The program provides both grant and loan funding for public facility and other projects that conserve, manage, develop or protect Montana's renewable resources. Grants are limited to \$100,000 per project; loans are limited by the applicant's debt capacity.</p> | <p>Pam Smith (406) 444-6839 Montana DNRC pamsmith@mt.gov</p> <p>Greg Mills (406) 444-6668 Montana DNRC gmills@mt.gov</p> <p>http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/default.asp</p> |
| Forestry Division | The mission of the Forestry Division is to ensure sustainability of Montana forests, rural lands, and communities through cooperative wildland fire protection, sound forest management practices, and by | <p>Lowell Whitney (406) 542-4256 Montana DNRC</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>promoting a viable forest-based economy.</p> <p>The Forestry Division is able to incorporate information from CFWCS into its strategic planning and spatial analysis processes. The Division is developing a Habitat Conservation Plan. CFWCS will be referenced in that document. The Forest Stewardship Program provides consultation services to private landowners. There are opportunities to disseminate information about CFWCS through stewardship workshops and to incorporate information from CFWCS into forest stewardship plans.</p> | <p>lwhitney@mt.gov http://dnrc.mt.gov/forestry</p> |
| <p>Trust Land Management Division</p> | <p>The mission of the Trust Land Management Division is to manage the State of Montana's trust land resources to produce revenue for the trust beneficiaries while considering environmental factors and protecting the future income-generating capacity of the land.</p> <p>The Trust Land Management Division has developed a Real Estate Management Plan. The plan identifies the need to conserve development rights on trust lands that have high value for development and includes a framework for compensation to the school trust for conservation. The Montana Legislature has authorized a State Land Bank Fund. The fund allows the Trust Land Management Division to sell parcels of state land and use the proceeds from the sales to purchase other land, easements, or improvements that are likely to provide greater or equal trust revenue. Land bank also provides the opportunity for the Trust Land Management Division to work with other agencies and conservation groups to exchange lands in a manner that both benefits both the school trust and protects state land parcels that have high conservation value.</p> | <p>Tom Schultz (406) 444-4978 Montana DNRC tschultz@mt.gov http://dnrc.mt.gov/trust/default.asp</p> |
| <p>Water Management Bureau</p> | <p>The Water Resources Division promotes and coordinates the wise use and conservation of Montana's water resources for current and future generations. The Water Management Bureau supports that mission with ground and surface water studies, planning to maintain water</p> | <p>Rich Moy (406) 444-6633 Montana DNRC rmoy@mt.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|----------------------------------|---|--|
| | quality and quantity and support for watershed planning. | http://dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_mgmt/default.asp |
| | Programs Administered by Montana Department of Environmental Quality | |
| Major Facility Siting Act | <p>A certificate of compliance may be required from the Department of Environmental Quality for certain major pipelines and electric transmission lines. Exploration for geothermal resources is also regulated. Associated facilities such as transportation links, transmission substations and other facilities associated with the delivery of energy are included. Federally owned or controlled facilities must satisfy the substantive criteria of the Major Facility Siting Act (MFSA). The MFS application process requires applicants to consult with other agencies. The process also requires the applicant to submit mitigation measures that have been proposed by the agencies with whom they consulted. Permitting requires applicants to minimize adverse impacts. Therefore, there are opportunities for using mitigation funds in a way that also achieves the purpose of the CFWCS. Mitigation for potentially significant impacts provides opportunity for partnership projects. Examples include Avistacorp, Lake Broadview project, Madison/Missouri relicensing and the Express Pipeline.</p> | <p>Tom Ring (406) 444-6785 Montana DEQ tring@mt.gov</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/MFS/index.asp</p> |
| Water Protection Bureau | <p>Water Permitting Program permits the discharge of polluted waters into public water ways. Water Quality Act does not include any reclamation requirements. Permits are issued according to standards and the purpose of the standards is to protect beneficial uses of water. Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's) require a permit if they are actively discharging. The Farm Bill and 319 funds can provide funding to remove feed lots out of the stream. Farm Bill funded projects also can be used as an alternative to a CAFO permit. CFWCS should be integrated in the design of those projects.</p> | <p>Bonnie Lovelace (406) 444-4969 Montana DEQ blovelace@mt.gov</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/mpdes/cafo.asp</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Watershed Protection Program | <p>The Clean Water Act has guided water quality improvement for over 30 years. Montana was successful in limiting pollution from industrial and municipal discharges through point source permits. Now the challenge is to protect and restore water quality affected by nonpoint source pollution. The Nonpoint Source Pollution Program is designed to encourage voluntary pollution control activities, provide guidance, and match local funding. DEQ has completed a non-point source management plan that incorporates a watershed approach.</p> <p>The Watershed Protection Program administers grants through the 319 program. This program provides about \$2.3M/year to Montana to fund agency activity, program administration and on-the-ground planning and projects. Approximately half of the funds are available for local projects include I&E, planning, restoration and ground water projects. The 319 program requires a 60/40 match. A portion of the match is provided with state general fund. Local projects require local involvement and local matching funds. Each contract has a DEQ project officer assigned to the project, but the work is accomplished at the local level. DEQ retains responsibility for compliance with the federal requirements and reporting.</p> | <p>Robert Ray (406) 444-5319 Montana DEQ rray@mt.gov</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/NonpointSourceProgram.asp</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/2007NONPOINTPLAN/Final/NPSPlan.pdf</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/nonpoint/Grants/319Grants.asp</p> |
| Wetlands Protection Program | <p>The Department of Environmental Quality staffs and provides leadership to the Montana Wetland Council. The Council meets quarterly and acts a forum for all stakeholders to participate in wetland issues. With DEQ leadership, the Council developed a draft Conservation Strategy for Montana's Wetland and Situation Assessment, which guides the Council in pursuing wetland conservation activities. Wetland conservation priorities are funded by an Environmental Protection Agency grant program administered by the DEQ Wetland Coordinator. Currently, there are 20 active grant projects involving state and local governments.</p> | <p>Lynda Saul (406) 444-6652 Montana DEQ Lsaul@mt.gov</p> <p>www.deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Wetlands/Index.asp</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Montana Department of Transportation</p> | <p>Programs Administered by Other Montana State Agencies</p> <p>The Department of Transportation's Highway Program requires mitigation for projects that will impact wetlands. DOT is required to mitigate within the watershed prior to the impact occurring. Mitigation is included within the cost of the project. DOT tries to accomplish a greater level of mitigation that the degree of impact, contributing to its "mitigation reserve system". The State Transportation Implementation Plan identifies the wetland impacts that will be associated with bridges and major reconstructions; communicates to potential partners funding that could be available to assist with wetland projects, in exchange for the mitigation credits that would accrue from the project; and, specifies that the use of transportation funds for wetland mitigation require perpetual easements, water rights and fencing. DOT's current priority is Watershed 12, the lower Missouri Watershed in northeastern Montana.</p> | <p>Bonnie Steg (406) 444-9205 Montana DOT bsteg@mt.gov</p> |
| <p>Montana Department of Agriculture – Noxious Weed Trust Fund</p> | <p>The Montana Noxious Weed Trust Fund grant program was established by the 1985 Montana Legislature to provide funding for the development and implementation of weed management programs; provide for research and development of innovative weed management techniques, including biological control; and to support educational and other research projects that benefit Montana citizens. The grant program is designed to assist counties, local communities, researchers, and educators in their efforts to solve a variety of weed problems in Montana. The program provides cost-share funding for local cooperative weed management areas and education and research projects, including non-chemical research and demonstration programs. Funding is generally through a government entity (local weed district, conservation district, extension office, or university). Approximately \$500,000 is available to fund these projects. Weed management is a critical element in many conservation projects, especially those that</p> | <p>Dave Burch (406) 444-3140 Montana Dept. of Agriculture dburch@mt.gov</p> <p>Kim Johnson (406) 444-1517 Montana Dept. of Agriculture kjohnson@mt.gov</p> <p>http://agr.mt.gov/weedpest/trustFund.asp</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|
| | include restoration. Weed management projects also can be a catalyst to bring people together around local conservation issues. | |
| Governor's Office | <p>Governor Schweitzer sponsored a forum in June 2006 focused on the topic of restoration and promoting a restoration economy in Montana. Participants in the forum identified opportunities, obstacles and potential policy changes in eleven different thematic areas related to the issue of restoration. From that list, two priorities were identified for each of the themes. The Governor's Restoration Forum established the emergence of a new Montana economy, one that's providing new business opportunities based largely on work to restore landscapes and ecosystems. One result of the forum was the Governor's Restoration Initiative, introduced to the 2007 Legislature as HB388. This legislation would have funded grant programs, but the legislation did not pass. As an alternative, the Governor's Office has committed \$300k in the Governor's emergency quality protection fund as a catalyst for doing restoration work and a coordinator position has been established in DNRC. The Governor's Restoration initiative also is linked with a broader effort by the Western Governor's Association which, if adopted, would provide federal funding for restoration of areas in the west that have previously been degraded by projects that contributed to the national economy.</p> | <p>Hal Harper (406) 444-4456 Governor's Office hharper@mt.gov www.restoration.mt.gov</p> |
| Montana Department of Justice – Natural Resource Damage Program | <p>Decades of mining and mineral processing operations in and around Butte and Anaconda released substantial quantities of hazardous substances into the Upper Clark Fork River Basin between Butte and Milltown. These hazardous substances extensively degraded the area's natural resources. In 1983, the State of Montana filed a natural resource damage lawsuit against the Atlantic Richfield Co. (ARCO) to recover damages for injuries to the water, soils, fish and wildlife in the basin and the public's lost use and enjoyment of these injured resources. The 1999 partial settlement earmarked about \$130 million to restore</p> | <p>Carol Fox (406) 444-0209 Montana Dept. of Justice cfox@mt.gov www.doj.mt.gov/lands/naturalresource/</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>or replace the injured natural resources in the Upper Clark Fork River Basin. In early 2000, the state finalized the criteria and procedures for spending these settlement funds. The state elected to establish a grant process administered by NRD. Government agencies, private entities and individuals are all eligible to apply for restoration funds. In general, restoration funds can be used on projects that will improve water, fish and wildlife resources; public drinking water supplies; and, natural resource-based recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, hiking and wildlife watching.</p> | |
| <p>Montana State University Extension Service</p> | <p>The Montana State University Range Extension program provides public education about conservation and some assistance to help people make it happen. The range extension program includes about 25 workshops a year around the state. Extension can provide support to local watershed groups – either by local agents or the work of the specialists. The range extension program currently works directly with the Rancher’s Stewardship Alliance, the Blackfoot Challenge and the Madison Valley Ranchlands Group.</p> <p>Extension has an established level of trust with landowners. Extension should be able to help identify the “early adopters”, “local champions”, etc. and, thus, help to be a bridge to the local community for local conservation initiatives.</p> <p>One specific program, The Undaunted Land Steward Certification program, implemented cooperatively with the Montana Stockgrower’s Association, recognizes farms and ranches that sustain the long-term productivity and health of Montana’s grazing lands. Certification also demonstrates that Montana’s farm and ranch families are preserving Montana’s open space and scenic beauty while producing food and fiber using agricultural practices that are environmentally sustainable. The program works with individual landowners to certify those who are practicing conservation. The program also includes 10-year term</p> | <p>Jeff Mosley (406) 994-5601 Montana State University jmosley@montana.edu www.undauntedstewardship.montana.edu/certificate.htm</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| | <p>easements that keep land in open space. Educational information then may be developed around these properties. The program has been used to protect historical sites on private property and included interpretation around those sites.</p> <p>Undaunted Stewardship receives federal funding that pass through BLM to MSU. Although future funding for this program is uncertain, MSU has sufficient funds to continue the program for another three years without additional funding and the extension portion of the program will continue, regardless.</p> | |
| <p>University of Montana Avian Science Center</p> | <p>The mission of the Avian Science Center is to promote ecological awareness and informed decision making through the collection, synthesis, and dissemination of science-based information on western birds. The Avian Science Center contributes to bird conservation efforts through coordinating and conducting research and monitoring to determine population status and causes for observed population declines. The Avian Science Center also is interested in increasing public awareness of current bird conservation issues. The Avian Science Center has developed a monitoring plan for neo-tropical migrants, based on a lat/long grid. The project includes a data base for 150 to 200 species. Land descriptions are attached to each of the monitoring points. The project provides an opportunity to use bird distribution relative to habitat types and an opportunity to evaluate the effects of land use, using birds as indicators. This program provides basic information that is accessible and can support various land management decisions.</p> | <p>Dick Hutto (406) 243-4292 U of M Avian Science Center hutto@mso.umt.edu http://avianscience.dbs. umt.edu/</p> |
| <p>Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Foundation</p> | <p>The mission of the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation is to provide private support for preserving and enhancing Montana's natural, cultural and recreational resources.</p> | <p>Spence Hegstad (406) 444-6759 Montana FWP Foundation fwpfoundation@mt.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Among its other programs, the Foundation administers the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust. This program was funded through the sale of federal cabin site leases at Canyon Ferry reservoir. The program is restrictive – funds may be used only for the purchase of land or purchase of interests in land, with of the revenue spent for projects in the portion of the Missouri River watershed, from Three Forks to Holter Dam. Screening criteria for projects include protection of important wildlife habitat, protection of important fish habitat, opportunities for public recreation and public access. Matching funds are not required, but encouraged. Often, these funds are sufficient to provide seed money and additional funds are necessary to complete the projects.</p> <p>The Foundation also will administer a similar trust that will be established as a result of the sale of cabin site leases by the Corps of Engineers of leases within CMR. These funds may only be spent on the CMR and within a 5-mile buffer of CMR.</p> | <p>www.mfwpfoundation.org/ www.mfwpfoundation.org/trust.html</p> |
| Montana Natural Heritage Program | <p>The Montana Natural Heritage Program was established by the Montana State Legislature in 1983. The program is operated by the University of Montana, is located in the Montana State Library and functions as part of the Natural Resource information System. MHP is the Montana's source for information on the status and distribution of our native animals and plants, emphasizing species of concern and high quality habitats such as wetlands. MHP collects, validates, and distributes information, and assists natural resource managers and others in applying it effectively.</p> | <p>Sue Crispin (406) 444-3019 Montana Heritage Program scrispin@mt.gov http://nhp.nris.state.mt.us/</p> |
| | Programs Administered by U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service | |
| Partners for Fish & Wildlife | <p>The mission of the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is to efficiently achieve voluntary habitat restoration on private lands,</p> | <p>Jim Stutzman (406) 727-7400 ext. 24</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|----------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>through financial and technical assistance, for the benefit of federal trust species. The Partners Program provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners and Tribes who are willing to work with USFWS and other partners on a voluntary basis. Within Montana, this program has identified 10 focus areas. The focus areas are not all currently staffed and one program goal is to locate a biologist within each of those areas who then will be responsible for developing conservation plan specific to each area.</p> <p>The Montana Partners Program assists private landowners to restore wetlands and riparian habitat by offering technical and financial assistance; restores native prairie habitats and other habitat types of special importance to Federal trust species; emphasizes partnerships among private landowners, conservation organizations, and other government agencies; and, focuses on threatened ecosystems and imperiled watersheds. In addition to providing technical support, the Montana Partners Program as an annual budget of about \$200,000 as seed money to support on-the-ground projects.</p> | <p>U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service jim_stutzman@fws.gov http://ecos.fws.gov/partners/viewContent.do?viewPage=home www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/pfw/montana/mt1.htm</p> |
| Habitat Conservation Plans | <p>The HCP Land Acquisition Grants program provides funding to States and Territories (and nongovernmental organizations through their States and Territories) for land acquisitions that are associated with approved Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP). The HCP Land Acquisition program has three primary purposes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) to fund land acquisitions that complement, but do not replace, private mitigation responsibilities contained in HCPs, 2) to fund land acquisitions that have important benefits for listed, proposed, and candidate species, and 3) to fund land acquisitions that have important benefits for ecosystems that support listed, proposed and candidate species. Proposed land acquisition must complement, but not replace, private mitigation responsibilities contained in the HCP. The HCP Land Acquisition Grants are one of three grant programs authorized | <p>Tim Bodurtha (406) 758-6882 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service tim_bodurtha@fws.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| | <p>by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act. HCP grants are currently funded at a level of \$45 million/year nationally and are awarded on the basis of competitive applications. Grants required a 25 percent non-federal match.</p> <p>An approved HCP and Incidental Take Permit are necessary pre-requisites for an application for an HCP grant. Currently, there are two approved HCP's in Montana, one held by Plum Creek Timber Company and one held by Stimson Lumber Company. The Montana Department of Natural Resources is in the process of developing an HCP for its lands in western Montana. It is anticipated that the HCP will be approved in 2009. BNSF Railway also is in the process of developing an HCP for railway operations in the Middle Fork Flathead River corridor. It is uncertain when this HCP will be completed.</p> | |
| Land & Water Conservation Fund | <p>Land and Water Conservation Fund projects are comprehensive land purchases for a conservation purposes, including threatened and endangered species, recreation and access to public lands. The program is administered through several federal agencies. Project proposals typically are initiated through the sponsoring agency's planning process. Interested third parties may assist in developing the project proposals and may assist by securing the property until the LWCF funds are awarded to complete the project. But, the projects still must be consistent with the objectives of the agency that sponsored the project.</p> <p>USFWS, USFS, BLM and NPS all compete for the same pool of LWCF funds. There is no formal coordination among the agencies related to this program. Coordination happens as a consequence of a third party working with more than one agency in specific project areas.</p> <p>Montana has received \$125M in LWCF funds since 1998. During FY07, a total of \$28M in LWCF funds was available, nationwide. Of that, Montana received \$2M for the Blackfoot and \$4.6M for Selway</p> | <p>Gary Sullivan (406) 727-7400 ext. 25 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service gary_l_sullivan@fws.gov</p> <p>Ron Erickson (406) 329-3623 U.S. Forest Service rmerickson@fs.fed.us</p> <p>Craig Haynes (406) 896-5040 Bureau of Land Management chaynes@mt.blm.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>Creek. The anticipated funding level for FY 2008 is \$16. Generally, the federal agencies anticipate that fewer LWCF funds will be available in the future and that Montana will be less competitive for those funds than it has been in prior years.</p> | |
| <p>Landowner Incentive Program</p> | <p>The primary objective of the Landowner Incentive Program is to establish or supplement State landowner incentive programs that protect and restore habitats on private lands, to benefit species identified in the State's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (State Wildlife Action Plan) or classified as Special Concern by the State, or Federally listed, proposed, or candidate species or other species determined to be at-risk, and provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for habitat protection and restoration.</p> <p>LIP funds grants of two types which are awarded to state agencies. The purpose of the Tier-1 grants is to fund staff and associated support necessary to develop a new, or enhance an existing, landowner incentive program. The objectives of the Tier-2 grant place a priority on the implementation of State programs that provide technical and financial assistance to the private landowner. Programs should emphasize the protection and restoration of habitats that benefit species-at-risk on private lands. LIP grants require a 25% non-federal match.</p> <p>Montana has received \$2,207,439 in LIP funds since FY2003. Montana was eligible for up to \$1,089,510 from this program in FY2007. Montana received \$180,000 that year. This program was not funded in the FY2008 budget.</p> | <p>Otto Jose (303) 236-8156 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service otto_jose@fws.gov http://federalasst.fws.gov/lip/lip.html http://federalasst.fws.gov/lip/LIP%20MT%20project%20highlight.pdf</p> |
| <p>North American Wetland Conservation Act</p> | <p>The North American Wetlands Conservation Act of 1989 (NAWCA) provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico for the benefit of wetlands-</p> | |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|---|
| | <p>associated migratory birds and other wildlife. There is a Standard and a Small Grants Program. Both are competitive grants programs and require that grant requests be matched by partner contributions at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio. Funds from U.S. Federal sources may contribute towards a project, but are not eligible as match.</p> <p>The Congressional appropriation to fund the Act's Grants Program in FY 2007 is approximately \$39.4 million. Montana has received about \$3 million annually from this program. Coordination through the joint ventures is essential.</p> | |
| <p>Intermountain West Joint Venture</p> | <p>The Joint Ventures are an outgrowth of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The JV's are the primary mechanism for the plan to restore waterfowl populations. The plan has a strong science foundation which then drives habitat efforts that are implemented through partnerships. The program is self directed at the local level. The federal government funds the infrastructure for each of the 14 joint ventures, but funding for projects comes primarily from the partners. The IWJV includes portions of 11 states, including western Montana.</p> <p>The mission of the Intermountain West Joint Venture is to facilitate the long-term conservation of key avian habitat including planning, funding, and developing habitat projects that benefit all biological components of Intermountain ecosystems. IWJV achieves its mission by developing partnerships with private and public landowners who support habitat conservation. The Joint Venture promotes the restoration and maintenance of all bird populations; fosters the protection, restoration, and enhancement of wetlands, riparian habitats, and the widely diverse uplands characteristic of the region. IWJV has an annual budget of \$250,000 for small projects and seed money for larger projects.</p> | <p>Dave Smith (406) 493-0925 Intermountain West Joint Venture dave@iwjv.org www.iwjv.org/</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| Northern Great Plains Joint Venture | The Northern Great Plains Joint Venture is focused on the Great Plains in Montana, Wyoming, North Dakota and South Dakota. The Joint Venture provides a forum for bringing the partners together to exchange information, to identify project needs and to provide science, planning and consultation from the region down to the partners. | Ken Sambor (701) 328-6326 Northern Great Plains Joint Venture mountainprairie@fws.gov www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/nawm/ngpjv.htm |
| Prairie Pothole Joint Venture | <p>The mission of the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture is to implement conservation programs that sustain populations of waterfowl, shorebirds, other waterbirds and prairie landbirds at objective levels through targeted wetland and grassland protection, restoration and enhancement programs. These activities will be based on science and implemented in collaboration with multiple stakeholders. PPJV states include Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and Iowa. The PPJV's focus has primarily been on waterfowl and most of the partner funds came to the PPJV related to waterfowl conservation. PPJV is transitioning to more of a focus on all birds, especially with the additional focus on grasslands.</p> <p>The USFWS Strategic Habitat Conservation initiative includes a proposal for the Montana Hi-Line. The Strategic Conservation initiative is a proposal for landscape scale conservation, implemented through partnerships, with the potential for inclusion in the federal budget.</p> | Casey Stemler (701) 328-6326 Prairie Pothole Joint Venture Casey_Stemler@fws.gov www.ppjv.org/implement2.htm |
| | Programs Administered by Other Federal Agencies | |
| USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service | The Natural Resources Conservation Service administers several programs, authorized by the Farm Bill, with conservation objectives that complement CFWCS: | Peter Husby (406) 587-6902 NRCS |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|----------------|--|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program for people who want to develop and improve wildlife habitat primarily on private land. The FY 2007 WHIP allocation for Montana was \$427,567. The program requires a 25% non-federal match. • The Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) is a voluntary conservation program for farmers and ranchers that promotes agricultural production and environmental quality as compatible national goals. This program focuses on conservation of working lands and encourages management practices that promote sustainability. The FY 2007 EQIP allocation for Montana was \$31,370,259. This program requires a 25% non-federal match. • The Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP) is a voluntary program offering landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance wetlands on their property. This program uses a combination of 15 year restoration contracts; 30-year and permanent easements; and, the purchase of wetlands at the appraised value for agriculture. The FY 2007 WRP allocation for Montana was \$3,628,938. • Grassland Reserve Program (GRP) – this program focuses on keeping rangeland in rangeland and has been used to conserve sagebrush/grasslands in Montana. The FY 2007 GRP allocation for Montana was \$35,484. But, the acreage objective for this program currently is capped. • The Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program (FRPP) provides matching funds to help purchase development rights to keep productive farm and ranchland in agricultural uses. To qualify, farmland must: be part of a pending offer from a State, tribe, or local farmland protection program; be privately owned; have a conservation plan for highly erodible land; be large enough to | <p>phusby@mt.nrcs.usda.com</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/whip/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/PROGRAMS/EQIP/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/GRP/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/frpp/</p> <p>www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/csp/</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>sustain agricultural production; be accessible to markets for what the land produces; have adequate infrastructure and agricultural support services; and have surrounding parcels of land that can support long-term agricultural production. The FY 2007 FRPP allocation for Montana was \$1,504,268. This program provides up to 50 percent of the fair market easement value of the conservation easement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservation Security Program (CSP) is a voluntary program that provides financial and technical assistance to promote the conservation and improvement of soil, water, air, energy, plant and animal life, and other conservation purposes on Tribal and private working lands. This program supports transition to “green” methods of crop production. The FY 2007 CSP allocation for Montana was \$9,223,496. The target area for those funds is Judith Basin County. <p>Reauthorization of the Farm Bill currently is under consideration by Congress. The nature and funding levels of these programs, therefore, are subject to change.</p> | |
| USDA Farm Service Agency | <p>The Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) is a voluntary land retirement program that helps agricultural producers protect environmentally sensitive land, decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and safeguard ground and surface water. The non-federal match for this program in Montana is provided by PPL Montana’s license for the Madison-Missouri project. Expenditure of the funds therefore is limited to the Madison-Missouri corridor from Hebgen Lake to the Fred Robinson Bridge. The emphasis of this program is riparian restoration within a one-mile buffer of the corridor.</p> <p>State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE) SAFE provides an opportunity to develop grassroots cooperative conservation projects</p> | <p>Glenn Patrick (406) 587-6880 U.S. Farm Services Agency</p> <p>www.fsa.usda.gov/FSA/webapp?area=home&subject=copr&topic=cep</p> <p>www.qu.org/content/news/press_room/crp_560_SAFE.pdf</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------------------|--|--|
| | <p>to address high priority wildlife needs through habitat restoration. It allows producers to install practices that benefit high priority State wildlife conservation objectives through the use of targeted restoration of vital habitat. This program authorizes the retirement of approximately 20,000 acres of cropland in Montana for the purpose of sagebrush restoration.</p> | |
| USDA Forest Service | <p>The Forest Service has a policy that each National Forest will incorporate the state action plans in into USFS planning documents and will be referenced in NEPA analyses. Although all alternatives might not achieve CFWCS goals, the expectation is that many will. The Forest Service uses CFWCS data sets in developing the layers in the assessment of watersheds. The assessments include four layers: Watershed restoration needs; Fire risk; Wildlife habitat; and, Municipal watersheds. The Forest Service also uses CFWCS helps to set priorities for land adjustment strategies and zoning areas for aggregations of habitats.</p> <p>The Forest Service also has developed an Open Space Conservation Strategy to identify how the agency can best help conserve open space, with an emphasis on partnerships and collaborative approaches. The agency is interested in addressing the effects of the loss of open space on private forests; on National Forests and Grasslands and the surrounding landscape; and on forests in cities, suburbs, and towns. The strategy charts a path forward to work in partnership with states, local governments, landowners, and non-profit organizations to address the loss of open space threat. The strategy provides a framework to strengthen and focus existing and new Forest Service conservation actions across the agency.</p> | <p>Kate Walker (406) 329-3287 Northern Region USFS kpwalker@fs.fed.us</p> <p>Jon Haber (406) 329-3399 Northern Region USFS jhaber@fs.fed.us</p> <p>www.fs.fed.us/r1</p> <p>www.fs.fed.us/openspace</p> |
| USDI Bureau of Land Management | <p>The Bureau of Land Management has a directive to use state action plans in the development of Resource Management Plans. However, it</p> | <p>Gayle Sitter (406) 896-5024</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>may be several years before the RMP's are updated. The BLM is using CFWCS to set priorities related to implementation of existing RMP's; as one source of information for NEPA analyses; and, as a source of information to support permit stipulations and other mitigations. There is the potential for structuring conservation projects around petroleum development projects, i.e. achieving conservation objectives in a way that allows the energy companies to also fulfill their permit requirements.</p> <p>When the RMP's are updated, the RMP's will provide a framework for proposals to fund projects that are consistent with CFWCS. BLM's Budget Planning System is a competitive funding system and, if a project is approved, it might take four years to get the funding. There is good potential for getting funding for sage grouse projects. The BLM has provided funding to the Heritage Program to augment survey projects that also are funded with SWG.</p> | <p>Bureau of Land Management gayle_sitter@blm.gov www.blm.gov/mt/st/en.html</p> |
| <p>Environmental Protection Agency</p> | <p>EPA administers a regulatory program for point source water pollution. EPA has regulatory oversight and permitting review for water quality permits. The permits must comply with water quality standards. The permitting program is fee-based and operated by the states.</p> <p>The Clean Water Act, section 303, the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) program, a voluntary, non-regulatory program for controlling the discharge of non-point source pollutants. Non-point source pollution accounts for more than 80% of the water pollution in Montana. Section 319 of the Clean Water Act authorizes EPA to grant funds to the State and Tribes which support a wide variety of activities including technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects, and monitoring to assess the success of specific nonpoint source implementation projects. Previously, the majority of these funds in Montana have been used for on-the-ground demonstration projects, e.g. fencing, grazing systems,</p> | <p>Julie DalSoglio (406) 457-5025 United States EPA dalsoglio.julie@epa.gov www.epa.gov/Region8/about</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>alternative watering sources, timber practices, etc. The TMDL approach is putting a greater emphasis on a more holistic, watershed based planning approach. Montana also is required to assess whether water bodies are meeting water quality standards, including identification of the causes of impairment, and to complete a TMDL plan for each of the listed water bodies by 2012. To date, Montana has completed 400 plans. These are available on DEQ website.</p> <p>Montana receives approximately \$3M per year in 319 funds through DEQ. Of those, \$2.6M are used for watershed/TMDL planning and \$400k for on the ground work. These funds require a 40% match.</p> | |
| U. S. Bureau of Reclamation | <p>The U.S. Bureau of Reclamation seeks to protect local economies and preserve natural resources and ecosystems through the effective use of water. Current Bureau activities that relate with the CFWCS include efforts to maintain flows to support passage for Pallid Sturgeon below Ft. Peck Reservoir and in the lower Yellowstone and to maintain flows for Bull Trout in the St. Mary's drainage.</p> | <p>Justin Kucera (406) 247-7304 U.S. Bureau of Reclamation jkucera@gp.usbr.gov www.usbr.gov/gp/mtao</p> |
| U. S. Army Corps of Engineers | <p>Section 404 of the Clean Water Act requires approval from the Corps of Engineers before placing dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Project applicants may use one of three approaches to mitigate impacts to wetlands - Direct mitigation; Purchase properties from a wetland mitigation bank; or, participate in the In-Lieu-Fee program. The latter approach allows an applicant to pay a fee to a third party who then assumes responsibility to implement appropriate mitigation to offset the consequences of the permitted activity. Of these options, the In-Lieu-Fee program probably is the most flexible and, therefore, offers the greatest potential for coordination with other local wetland restoration projects. Regardless of which mitigation method is employed, applicants should be encouraged to coordinate with other community based conservation initiatives.</p> | <p>Alan Steinle (406) 441-1375 United States Army COE Allan.E.Steinle@usace.army.mil www.nwo.usace.army.mil/html/od-rmt/mthome.htm</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| | Programs Administered by Tribal Governments | |
| Native American Fish & Wildlife Society | <p>The Native American Fish & Wildlife Society (NAFWS) is a national tribal organization incorporated to develop a national communications network for the exchange of information and management techniques related to self-determined tribal fish and wildlife management. Its mission is to assist Native American and Alaska Native Tribes with the conservation, protection, and enhancement of their fish and wildlife resources.</p> <p>USFWS provides support to NAFWS to organizes and conducts the Conservation Law Enforcement training for tribal resource programs.</p> | <p>D. Fred Matt (303) 466-1725 NAFWS fmatt@nafws.org</p> <p>Ron Skates (406) 585-9010 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service ron_skates@fws.gov</p> <p>www.nafws.org</p> |
| Montana/Wyoming Tribal Fish and Wildlife Commission | <p>The Montana and Wyoming Tribal Fish and Wildlife Commission (MWTFWC) was begun in recognition of the importance and respect accorded to fish and wildlife by Native Montana and Wyoming people, and of the need for a regional native organization to aid in development and protection of Indian fish and wildlife resources. Formation of the Montana and Wyoming Tribal Fish and Wildlife Commission incorporates more than a present-day commitment to these resources. It represents a dedication to the earth that began with our own beginning, and a pledge to our fellow creatures that cannot be broken.</p> | <p>www.fws.gov/ montanafishandwildlife/ MTWYTFWC.html</p> |
| Apsaalooke Nation – Crow Tribe | | <p>Henry Rides Horse (406) 638-3752 Apsaalooke Nation – Crow Tribe henryr@crownation.net</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| Blackfeet Nation | The Blackfeet have use SW/G grants to purchase bear proof dumpsters and to support a graduate study of swift fox. | Gayle Skunk Cap (406) 338-7202 Blackfeet Nation kyi_yo60@hotmail.com |
| Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead Reservation | The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribe's fish and wildlife program is supported with funds from a variety of sources including hydro-power mitigation, mitigation for reconstruction of Highway 93, Tribal Wildlife Grants and the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program. Several projects have goals similar to those in CFWCS, including surveys for Canada lynx; peregrine falcon and trumpeter swan reintroductions; amphibian surveys; participation in cutthroat trout and bull trout partnerships; and, riparian and wetland conservation and restoration. | Tomm McDonald (406) 883-288 Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes tomm@cst.org |
| Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation Gros Ventre & Assiniboinne Tribes | Ft. Belknap has developed a bison management plan. Ferrets, prairie dogs, plovers and owls occur in the buffalo pasture. Ft. Belknap is a cooperator in ferret surveys. Ft. Belknap also has implemented a Wetlands Program with an overall goal of developing a comprehensive program to develop the administrative, programmatic, legal, and regulatory framework that will allow Ft. Belknap to assess, monitor, control, and protect reservation wetland resources. | Jeff Stiffarm (406) 353-4801 Ft. Belknap Indian Reservation fibelfnw@TTC-CMC.net |
| Ft. Peck Indian Reservation Assiniboinne & Sioux Tribes | Ft. Peck's fish and wildlife program is transitioning from a subsistence approach to a sporting hunting approach and a greater emphasis on management. Tribal projects that overlap with the goals of CFWCS include its bison management plan, swift fox re-introductions and the Manning Lake migratory bird refuge. | Robbie Magnan (406) 768-5305 Assiniboinne & Sioux Tribes robertm@nemontel.net |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|--|
| Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation | | Jason Whiteman (406) 477-6503 Northern Cheyenne Indian Reservation nresources@mail.ncheyyenne.net |
| Rocky Boy's Indian Reservation Chippewa Cree Tribe | The Tribe has developed a comprehensive wildlife management plan for the reservation. The plan emphasizes management of game species. | Leland Top Sky (406) 395-4207 Chippewa Cree Tribe warden@cct.rockyboy.org |
| | Programs Administered by Land Trusts | |
| Montana Association of Land Trusts | <p>The Montana Association of Land Trusts' mission is to promote and support excellence in private voluntary land conservation in Montana through leadership, collaboration, education and outreach.</p> <p>The Montana Association of Land Trusts is comprised of 12 member organizations. Together, they hold 99% of the private land easements held by non-profit organizations in Montana. The Association has a coordination function, providing an opportunity to focus more on policy, communication, legislation and emerging issues. The Association provides the opportunity for the land trusts to collectively think big picture. It also provides a scouting function, looking for new opportunities to do private land conservation.</p> | Glenn Marx (406) 490-1659 Montana Assoc. of Land Trusts malt@jeffersonvalley.net www.montanalandtrusts.org |
| Bitter Root Land Trust | The Bitterroot Land Trust is a local organization, focused specifically on conservation in the Bitterroot Valley. BRLT formed out of concern for the rapid rate of growth in Ravalli County. | Grant Kier (406) 375-0956 Bitterroot Land Trust grant.kier@BitterRootLandTrust.org |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| | | www.bitterrootlandtrust.org |
| Clark Fork-Pend' Oreille Conservancy | The Clark Fork-Pend' Oreille Conservancy is a land trust organized in 2002 to work with landowners to protect the land, water and wildlife in Bonner County Idaho and Sanders County Montana. | Robb McCracken (208) 263-9471 Clark Fork-Pend' Oreille Conservancy CFPOConservancy@sandpoint.net www.cfpoconservancy.org |
| Five Valleys Land Trust | Five Valleys Land Trust works to protect and preserve western Montana's natural legacy – our river corridors, wildlife habitat, agricultural lands and scenic open spaces. FVLT believes that protecting wildlife habitat, scenic open space, agricultural land, and river corridors benefits our community now and in the future. FVLT works in five valleys and 8 counties – Bitterroot; Upper Clarkfork; Blackfoot; south of Flathead Lake and the lower Clarkfork. FVLT's has defined the Deerlodge Valley and Rock Creek as priorities. | Wendy Ninteman (406) 549-0755 Five Valleys Land Trust fvlt@montana.com www.fvlt.org |
| Flathead Land Trust | The Flathead Land Trust is dedicated to helping protect the wildlife, scenery, water quality, and traditional way of life in Montana's unique and spectacular Flathead Valley through preservation and stewardship of land. FLT works with local landowners, community members and organizations to protect the important scenic and working landscapes through voluntary conservation agreements. FLT has developed a land conservation plan for the Flathead Valley. The current focus is on the Flathead River to Lake Initiative, with an emphasis on bull trout, riparian habitats and wetlands. | Marilyn Wood (406) 752-8293 Flathead Land Trust flt@bigsky.net www.flatheadlandtrust.org |
| Gallatin Valley Land Trust | Gallatin Valley Land Trust is a non-profit membership organization | Stephen Johnson |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| | dedicated to the conservation of open space, agricultural land, wildlife habitat, and the creation of public trails in southwestern Montana. GVLTI works with private landowners to conserve working farms and ranches, river corridors and critical wildlife habitat, scenic views, and urban open space in Gallatin, Park, Madison, Broadwater, and Jefferson counties. | (406) 587-8404 Gallatin Valley Land Trust stephen@gvlt.org http://gvlt.org/ |
| Heart of the Rockies Initiative | Heart of the Rockies Initiative is a collaboration of 21 national, statewide, and local land trusts working along the Continental Divide in Alberta, British Columbia, Montana, Idaho, and Wyoming. | Michael Whitefield (208) 354-8939 Heart of the Rockies Initiative |
| Montana Land Reliance | <p>The Montana Land Reliance is as an open space land trust, with an emphasis on agricultural lands. MLR has 684 easements, with 700,000 acres total under easement of which 125,000 acres are timber lands, and is working toward a goal of protecting 1,000,000 acres and 1,500 miles of stream by 2010.</p> <p>MLR prefers to work in “neighborhoods”. Once an easement has been established, it then works to add on the existing acreage around that easement. MLR is interested in doing more conservation in eastern Montana, including conservation projects associated with energy development and maintaining intact cottonwood forests in eastern Montana.</p> | Rock Ringling (406) 443-7027 Montana Land Reliance info@mtlandreliance.org www.mtlandreliance.org |
| Prickly Pear Land Trust | The Prickly Pear Land Trust is an association of community-minded individuals committed to protecting the open space in Lewis and Clark, Broadwater and Jefferson Counties in Montana. Its mission is to protect the natural diversity and rural character of the Prickly Pear Valley and adjoining lands through voluntary and cooperative means. The Land Trust is dedicated to perpetuating the recreational, wildlife, scenic, agricultural and historic values of the land. | Andy Baur (406) 442-0490 Prickly Pear Land Trust andy@pricklypearlt.org http://pricklypearlt.org |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------|--|--|
| The Conservation Fund | <p>The Conservation Fund is national environmental nonprofit dedicated to protecting America's most important landscapes and waterways for future generations. The Conservation Fund pioneers a balanced, non-advocacy, non-membership approach to conservation, one that blends environmental and economic goals and objectives. Working closely with private landowners, public agencies and local conservation groups, the Fund has protected more than 81,000 acres of wildlife habitat, working ranchland and historic sites in Montana.</p> | <p>Gates Watson (406) 541-8555 The Conservation Fund gwatson@conservationfund.org www.conservationfund.org/mountainwest/montana</p> |
| The Nature Conservancy | <p>The Nature Conservancy has worked with Montana landowners and communities since 1979 to conserve almost 500,000 acres of important ranchland and wildlife habitat. The Conservancy focuses its work on six broad landscapes. Staff are based within communities in or near these landscapes. The program based in Bozeman includes the Centennial, Upper Madison and Big Hole Valleys. The program based at the Matador Ranch in south Phillips County is focused on the northern prairies. The program based in Billings focuses on southeastern Montana and the Yellowstone River. The program based in Choteau is focused on the Rocky Mountain Front. The program based in Missoula is focused on the Blackfoot River Valley.</p> <p>TNC also acts as the steward for several natural preserves in Montana, including the Pine Butte Swamp Preserve; Comertown Pothole Prairie Preserve; the Dancing Prairie Preserve, near Eureka; the Safe Harbor Marsh Preserve, in the Flathead Basin; the Swan River Oxbow Preserve; Lindbergh Lake Pines Preserve in the Swan Valley; and, the South Fork Madison Preserve.</p> | <p>Bee Hall (406) 443-0303 The Nature Conservancy bernie_hall@tnc.org www.nature.org/herework/northamerica/states/montana/</p> |
| Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation | <p>The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation protects and enhances elk country, supports conservation education and restores wild elk herds. Working in cooperation with its Project Advisory Committee,</p> | <p>Mike Mueller (406) 523-4533 Rocky Mountain Elk</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>comprised of agency, university and industry personnel and volunteers, RMEF makes funds available for cost-shared projects related to research, management and conservation education. RMEF also participates in major land conservation projects. These projects are supported with special fund-raising initiatives.</p> <p>RMEF works with Pyramid Lumber to implement stewardship contracting on forested National Forest and BLM lands. RMEF has an established network to help communicate the conservation story.</p> | <p>Foundation mmueller@rmef.org www.rmef.org</p> |
| Trust for Public Land | <p>The Trust for Public Land (TPL) is a national, nonprofit, land conservation organization that conserves land for people to enjoy as parks, community gardens, historic sites, rural lands, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come. Across the Northwest, TPL is protecting farms, ranches, and forests that support land-based livelihoods and rural ways of life. TPL conserves places of natural beauty that preserve wilderness for our children's children to explore and that support other species with whom we share the planet. TPL also is working with tribes to reacquire and conserve lands to protect natural resources and significant historical sites that are vital to the traditional land-based culture of Native Americans.</p> | <p>Eric Love (406) 522-7450 Trust for Public Land eric.love@tpl.org www.tpl.org/ tier2_rl.cfm?folder_ id=678&submit. x=5&submit. y=9&submit=Submit</p> |
| Vital Ground Foundation | <p>The Vital Ground Foundation is a wildlife conservation organization whose mission is to protect and restore North America's grizzly bear populations by conserving wildlife habitat. Operating as a land trust, Vital Ground focuses on protecting lands that grizzlies need to survive – not only for the great bears themselves, but for elk, moose, wolves, lynx, salmon, trout and all the other creatures that share their world. At present, Vital Ground's efforts are focused on the designated grizzly bear recovery zones in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming.</p> | <p>Gary Wolfe (406) 549-8650 Vital Ground info@vitalground.org www.vitalground.org/main. php</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|--|
| | | |
| Montana Watershed Coordination Council | <p>The Montana Watershed Coordination Council serves as a statewide coordination network for Montana's natural resource agencies and private organizations and a forum for local watershed groups to help enhance, conserve, and protect natural resources and sustain the high quality of life in Montana for present and future generations. MWCC encourages local people to take a proactive, collaborative approach that will address natural resource issues and concerns. MWCC is a resource for equipping groups with basic organizational structure, functions and skills. The Watershed Coordination Council could be a forum to help promote CFWCS.</p> | <p>Jennifer Boyer (406) 587-7331 Sonoran Institute jboyer@sonoran.org</p> <p>Susan Higgins (406) 994-1772 Montana State University shiggins@montana.edu</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/default.asp</p> |
| Beaverhead River Watershed Committee | <p>The Beaverhead Watershed Committee was formed to seek an understanding of the watershed – how it functions and supports the human communities dependent on it – and to build agreement on watershed planning issues among stakeholders with diverse viewpoints.</p> | <p>406-683-2713 jnhoyrup@bmt.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=39</p> |
| Big Hole Watershed Committee | <p>The Big Hole Watershed Committee was established in 1995 to address resource and community concerns in the Big Hole Watershed. The BHWCC was formed in response to concerns about dewatering. The BHWCC is a consensus driven, multi-stakeholder entity that works closely with other conservation organizations, local, state and federal agencies on watershed restoration and management plans.</p> <p>BHWCC is involved in several grant funded projects for the purpose of restoration, These include fencing, headgates, diversions, channel</p> | <p>Noorjahan Parwana Big Hole Watershed Committee (406) 782-3682 nparwana@bhwc.org</p> <p>http://bhwc.org/Drought%20Management%20intro.htm</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| | restoration, stockwater wells, project design, irrigation infrastructure, willow plantings, etc. | |
| Big Muddy Creek | This program was developed to address TMDL concerns, along with the need for resource information to document resource conditions, and the desire for a long-term planning tool for Big Muddy Creek, a third order tributary of the Missouri River located in Daniels, Roosevelt, Sheridan Counties. | <p>Mickey McCall (406) 765-1801 Sheridan Conservation District mickey.mccall@mt.nacdn.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=36</p> |
| Big Spring Creek Watershed Committee | The project was begun by 7 th Grade Science Students for Lewistown Junior High, in cooperation with state and local officials. A major stream restoration project plan was started in the early 1990's. Water was turned into the new stream bed on 9/11/2000. Trails and new fishing sites were part of the restoration project. | <p>Steve Paulson (406) 538-5419 Lewistown Junior High School spaulson@lewistown.k12.mt.us</p> |
| Bitter Root Water Forum | <p>The Bitter Root Water Forum considers the entire Bitterroot River drainage, from its headwaters in the Sapphire Mountains to the east and Bitterroot Mountains to the west, to the confluence with the Clark Fork River near Missoula, the mainstem and all tributaries, as our watershed address. To date, there is a greater emphasis placed upon those lands that lie within Ravalli County.</p> <p>The Forum has three general objectives that guide on-the-ground initiatives: 1) understand the basic hydrologic cycle of the Bitterroot River Basin (monitoring); 2) identify the water issues in the basin and facilitate communication among all interested parties (education); and,</p> | <p>Laurie Riley (406) 375-2272 Bitter Root Water Forum brwaterforum@bitterroot.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=3</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|---|
| | 3) search for and implement solutions to water quality and quantity problems to achieve a balance between resources and users (policy and implementation). | |
| Blackfoot Challenge | <p>The Mission of The Blackfoot Challenge is to coordinate efforts that will enhance, conserve and protect the natural resources and rural lifestyles of the Blackfoot River Valley for present and future generations. Three words guide the Blackfoot Challenge. Here, private landowners take the lead and public agencies follow in a shared goal-to keep large landscapes intact and rural lifestyles vital. The Blackfoot Challenge is a landowner-based group that coordinates management of the Blackfoot River, its tributaries, and adjacent lands. It is organized locally and known nationally as a model for preserving the rural character and natural beauty of a watershed.</p> <p>The Blackfoot Challenge focuses on improving impaired streams; improving diminished water quality; increasing flows in dewatered streams; and, improving fisheries in the Blackfoot Watershed. It operates with a simple action plan that responds to shared priorities.</p> | <p>Gary Burnett (406) 793-3900 Blackfoot Challenge info@blackfootchallenge.org</p> |
| Blue Water Task Force | <p>The Blue Water Task Force is a locally-led non-profit watershed group headquartered along the famous Gallatin River in Big Sky, Montana. Its mission is to protect and preserve the health of the Gallatin River Watershed. The Task Force operates primarily in the Upper Watershed, covering the mountainous terrain upstream of the Gallatin Valley.</p> | <p>Kristin Gardner (406) 993-2519 Blue Water Task Force kristin@bluewatertaskforce.org www.bluewatertaskforce.org</p> |
| Boulder River Watershed Association | <p>The Boulder River Watershed Association is a group of landowners that reside within the drainage basin of the Boulder River working to maintain and/or improve the health of their land and water resources.</p> | <p>Dan Rostad (406)932-5160; Ext. 106 Boulder River Watershed</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>The group was formed with the vision of: 1- identifying/researching resource issues and concerns within the watershed; 2- helping willing landowners/land managers to plan and implement innovative solutions; and 3- educating the general public about the efforts of landowners in the valley to care for the resources that provide for their way of life.</p> | <p>Association dan.rostad@mt.nacdn.net http://mwcc.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=125</p> |
| <p>Bozeman Watershed Council</p> | <p>The Bozeman Watershed Council is focused on all of the tributaries of the East Gallatin River.</p> | <p>John Montagne (406) 587-2406 Bozeman Watershed Council montagne@mcn.net Cindi Crayton (406) 585-2789 iwc@integratedweedcontrol.com http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=44</p> |
| <p>Clarkfork Watershed Education Program</p> | <p>Using the upper Clark Fork basin as an outdoor laboratory and professional scientists as instructors, CFWEP works with students and their teachers to foster environmental stewardship and science-based decision-making. This education program is located within the Clark Fork Basin Superfund area. CFWEP reaches middle and high schools in communities along the mainstem of the Clark Fork River and all tributaries above Milltown dam, including the Rock Creek, Flint Creek, Big Blackfoot, and Little Blackfoot Rivers.</p> | <p>Colleen Elliott (406) 496-4143 Montana Tech celliott@mtech.edu www.cfwep.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Flathead Basin Commission | The Flathead Basin Commission was established in 1983 by the Montana Legislature to monitor and protect the water quality of the basin. The mission of the Flathead Basin Commission is to protect the existing high quality of the Flathead Lake aquatic environment; the waters that flow into, out of, or are tributary to the lake; and, the natural resources and environment of the Flathead Basin. | Mark Holston (406) 752-0081 Flathead Basin Commission fbc@mt.gov www.flatheadbasin.commission.org |
| Flathead Lakers | The Flathead Lakers provide leadership in the protection of Flathead Lake and its tributaries through our Stewardship Program. The group encourages individual and collective stewardship and a watershed approach to resource management, land use planning, and water quality protection. The Critical Lands Project is a collaborative project to identify, protect and restore lands and waters critical to water quality and is the centerpiece of the Flathead Lakers' stewardship program. | Constanza von der Pahlen Flathead Lakers (406) 883-1341 constanza@flatheadlakers.org www.flatheadlakers.org |
| Greater Gallatin Watershed Council | The mission of the Greater Gallatin Watershed Council is to promote conservation and enhancement of our water resources while supporting the traditions of community, agriculture and recreation. The Greater Gallatin Watershed Council serves as an umbrella organization to provide technical and administrative assistance to existing and newly formed groups that focus on specific areas within the watershed. | Tammy Crone (406) 582-3145 Greater Gallatin Watershed Council tammy.crone@gallatin.mt.gov www.greatergallatin.org |
| Haskill Basin Watershed Council | The Haskill Basin Watershed Council has been in existence since June of 2000. The mission of the Haskill Basin Watershed Council is to maintain and enhance the chemical, biological and physical integrity of Haskill Creek by a voluntary and cooperative effort. Haskill Creek is a tributary to the Whitefish River. | Patti Mason (406) 752-4220 Flathead Conservation District fcd3@centurytel.net http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=12 |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Jefferson River Watershed Council | <p>The mission of the Jefferson River Watershed Council is to coordinate efforts, through a spirit of community cooperation and sharing, that will enhance, conserve, and protect the natural resources, quality of life, and economic vitality of the Jefferson River watershed. The group is pursuing that mission by developing a drought management plan, improving communication among water users and natural resource managers in the Jefferson, Beaverhead and Ruby Valley watersheds, facilitating a coordinated approach to problem solving, providing educational opportunities for basin residents, supporting cooperative research projects, supporting floodplain planning, and promoting opportunities to enhance the health of wild fisheries in the Jefferson River and its tributaries.</p> | <p>Jeff Erickson and Mary Vandenbosch Jefferson River Watershed Council (406) 449-3229 Headwaters@q.com www.jeffersonriverwc.org</p> |
| Kootenai River Network | <p>The Kootenai River network (KRN) is a cooperative international partnership of individuals, agencies, and diverse citizen groups dedicated to the utilization, restoration, promotion, and protection of water resources in the Kootenai River watershed. The primary purpose of the Kootenai River Network is to foster communication and implement collaborative processes among private and public interests in the watershed. These cooperative programs lead to improved resource management practices and the restoration of water quality and aquatic resources in the basin. We seek to empower local citizens and groups from two states, one province, two countries and affected tribal nations to collaborate in natural resource management in the basin.</p> | <p>Kootenai River Network (406) 295-5834 director@kootenairivernetwork.org www.kootenairivernetwork.org</p> |
| Little Missouri Watershed | <p>The Carter County Conservation District has established and leads a formal stream monitoring program that is done annually. The District coordinates the stream monitoring with DEQ and NRCS.</p> | <p>Carter County Conservation District (406) 775-6355 ext. 101 gbruski@mt.nrcs.usda.gov http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=4</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Lolo Watershed Group | The mission of the Lolo Watershed Group is to understand and conserve the unique characteristics of the Lolo Creek Watershed, including its wildlife, and fisheries, scenic and rural character, local agriculture, and recreational opportunities while supporting private property rights. Detailed work plans for the future include streambank stabilization work, help local land owners control noxious weeds, installation of fish screens on irrigation diversions, and offer local people a voice on issues facing our watershed. | <p>Wendy Sturgis (406) 273-2446 Lolo Watershed Group wendysturgis@bresnan.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=73</p> |
| Lower Clarkfork Watershed Councils | There are currently seven active watershed councils in the lower Clark Fork, including Elk, Prospect, Rock, Whitepine, Trout, and Pilgrim Creeks and Bull River. In an effort to streamline the process for administering and managing these seven watershed councils, a new “umbrella” watershed council has been recently formed. The formation of this group will benefit all lower Clark Fork watersheds by expanding funding opportunities and maximizing administrative efficiency. | <p>Jean Dunn (406)827-4833 Green Mountain Conservation District gmcd@blackfoot.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=15</p> |
| Lower Ten Mile Watershed Group | <p>The mission of the Lower Ten Mile Watershed Ggroup is to protect, improve, and maintain the Tenmile watershed and to promote the voluntary and cooperative resource management of the lower Tenmile Creek watershed in Lewis and Clark County. The three goals for the organization are 1) Enhance or maintain water quality and quantity within the basin with consideration of physical,chemical, and biological parameters; 2)</p> <p>Promote action plans that benefit drought management, flood management, and overall watershed health; and, 3) Provide educational opportunities for both the public and stakeholders regarding watershed issues.</p> | <p>Jim Wilbur (406) 457-8927 jwilbur@co.lewis-clark.mt.us</p> <p>www.co.lewis-clark.mt.us/index.php?id=716</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|---|
| Madison Valley Ranchlands Group | <p>The Madison Valley Ranchlands Group works to keep the ranching way of life in the Madison Valley Area. The Group accomplishes this by developing ways to enhance the economic viability of family ranches; preserving traditional rural community and family ranch values; ensuring productive agriculture through the protection of private property rights and open space, as well as maintaining healthy grasslands, wildlife habitat, and watersheds; working cooperatively with groups, agencies, and individuals who share our goals and commitment to the land.</p> | <p>Lane Adamson (406) 682-3259 Madison Valley Ranchlands Group mvranch@3rivers.net www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org</p> |
| Marias River Watershed | <p>The Marias River Watershed is a collection of landowners, citizen groups, individuals, businesses, industry and tribes with a common goal of protecting and improving the land and resources of the Marias River. The Watershed includes seven conservation districts — Glacier, Toole, Liberty, Hill, Pondera, Chouteau, and Big Sandy, plus two Indian reservations—the Blackfeet and Rocky Boy, that have taken a proactive approach in processing a watershed plan for the Marias River drainage.</p> | <p>Roger Zentzis (406) 292-3594 Marias River Watershed rzentzis@mariasriver.org www.mariasriver.com</p> |
| Missouri River Conservation Districts Council | <p>The mission of the Missouri River Conservation Districts Council is to represent natural resource and environmental interests on the Missouri River. This Council believes the conservation of the river and its corridor and the sustainability of its various uses can best be accomplished through grassroots collaboration, education, incentives, and voluntary action. It is the goal of the Missouri River Conservation Districts Council to provide leadership, assistance, and guidance to conservation districts along the Missouri River Corridor in order to present a unified front and collective voice when addressing natural resource issues, opportunities, and challenges and to become a forum for Missouri River stakeholders to share perspectives, solve problems, and exchange information on Missouri River resource management.</p> <p>In anticipation of the passage and pursuant to the authority of the</p> | <p>Vicki Marquis (406) 468-0056 Missouri River Cons. Dist. Council mrcdc@missouririvercouncil.info www.missouririvercouncil.info</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|---|
| | <p>Water Resources Development Act of 2007, the Council is convening the Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee is convened under the authority of the or as it may be amended. This Committee will provide a collaborative forum to develop a shared vision and a comprehensive plan to help guide the prioritization, implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of recovery actions in the upper Missouri River basin.</p> | |
| <p>Mosby Musselshell Watershed Group</p> | <p>The Mosby Musselshell Watershed Group was formed in January, 2005 and includes about 32 producers plus some small landowners. It includes about 100 river miles and extends from the south Petroleum County line, north to the Fort Peck Reservoir.</p> | <p>Diane Ahlgren (406)429-6851 Mosby Musselshell Watershed Group diane.ahlgren@mt.nacdn.net http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=121</p> |
| <p>Rancher's Stewardship Alliance</p> | <p>The mission of the Ranchers Stewardship Alliance is to promote the ecological, social and economic conditions that will sustain the biodiversity and integrity of America's northern mixed-grass prairie for present and future generations.</p> | <p>Lynda Poole (406)658-2504 Ranchers Stewardship Alliance info@ranchersstewardshipalliance.org www.ranchersstewardshipalliance.org/index.asp</p> |
| <p>Redwater River Watershed Group</p> | <p>The McCone Conservation District and local landowners with the help of DEQ, NRCS and several other agencies are assessing the impaired</p> | <p>Jeanne Kirkegard (406)485-2744</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|---|
| | streams in McCone County. | McCone Conservation District http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=35 |
| Ruby River Watershed Council | The charge of the Ruby Watershed Council is the general watershed health of the Ruby Valley. The Council looks at the entire watershed before bringing a program in place. Our mission is to: “Assist Family Agricultural Operations by Improving Production, and Enhancing and Protecting Natural Resources.” The Ruby Watershed Council (RWC) was created and empowered by the Ruby valley Conservation District for the purpose of advising the District with regard to 1) Coordination of watershed planning; 2) Education and Outreach; 3) Identification of projects; 4) Acquisition of funding to implement plans and projects; and, 5) Community collaboration to share information, education and concerns for consideration. | Ann Schwend (406) 842-5741 ext. 106 Ruby Watershed Council rwc@rvcd.org www.rvcd.org |
| Sage Creek Watershed Alliance | The Sage Creek Watershed Alliance (SCWA) was formed as a result of residents’ increasing alarm over the quality of the water in Sage Creek (Liberty and Hill Counties). The primary environmental, agricultural and community concern of the Alliance is salinization of cultivated cropland, natural drainageways and surface waters as a result of excess shallow saline groundwater moving to the surface. | Marlene Moon (406) 759-5778 ext. 102 Liberty County Conservation District marlene-moon @mt.nacdnet.org http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=23 |
| Southern Crazy Mountain Watershed Group | The Southern Crazy Mountain Watershed is a collection of landowners and citizens of the community with a common goal of protecting | Jay Bailey (406)222-2899 |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| | <p>and improving the land, water, and resources of the watershed. The purpose of the Group is 1) to educate landowners and the public on natural resource issues; 2) to inventory and document changes in the resource base; 3) to develop solutions to problems, which will protect agriculture and not damage but strive to improve the natural resources within the area; 4) to work with Federal, State, and County agencies to coordinate watershed improvement activities in a feasible and economical manner; 5) to work with agencies and other organizations to help secure funding to improve the natural resources in the watershed area; and, 6) to work with neighboring Groups on common problems in bordering and overlapping areas.</p> | <p>Park Conservation District http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=25 www.parkcd.org/scmwg.html</p> |
| <p>Sun River Watershed Committee</p> | <p>The Sun River Watershed Committee is focused on water quality, water quantity, noxious weed management and development issues within the watershed. The Committee is concerned addresses issues related to wildlife habitat; stream stabilization; sediment controls from Willow Creek and Gibson Reservoirs; fire management relative to sedimentation; erosion problems; Elk Creek drainage habitat and stream flow; and, potential reservoirs re-regulation to conserve water.</p> | <p>Allan Rollo (406) 727-4437 Sun River Watershed Committee arollo@mcn.net http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=27</p> |
| <p>Swan Ecosystem Center</p> | <p>Swan Ecosystem Center (SEC) is a nonprofit community group in the Swan Valley of northwestern Montana. People with diverse perspectives learn about the ecosystem and participate in land management decisions on public and private land. Its mission reflects that the citizens of Swan Valley, Montana, have a self-imposed sense of responsibility to maintain a strong, vital community, one involved in setting its own destiny through partnerships that encourage sustainable use and care of public and private lands. SEC was formed because its people here care deeply about the land. They want to protect the environment and continue making a living. Residents also have intimate knowledge of the area ecosystem.</p> | <p>Anne Dahl (406) 754-3137 Swan Ecosystem Center swanec@blackfoot.net www.swanecosystemcenter.com</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|---|--|
| Teton River Watershed Group | The Teton River Watershed Group is concerned about noxious weeds, water quality and water quantity in the Teton River drainage in Choteau and Teton Counties. | <p>Allan Rollo (406) 727-4437 Teton River Watershed Group arollo@mcn.net http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=28</p> |
| Tri-State Water Quality Council | The non-profit Tri-State Water Quality Council is a successful partnership of diverse community interests—including citizens, business, industry, tribes, government, and environmental groups—working together to improve and protect water quality throughout the 26,000 square mile Clark Fork-Pend Oreille watershed. | <p>Ruth Watkins (208) 265-9092 Tri-State Water Quality Council tristatecouncil@sandpoint.net www.tristatecouncil.org/index.html</p> |
| Upper Clark Fork River Basin Steering Committee | The Upper Clark Fork River Basin Steering Committee was formed to establish a collaborative watershed based planning effort to address the water reservation process in the Clark Fork. Subsequently, the 1991 Montana Legislature approved legislation to implement a voluntarily negotiated agreement by Upper Clark Fork water users and manager and formally recognized the Steering Committee as a watershed group. Thereafter, the group developed a water basin management plan, several provisions of which have been implemented through additional legislation. The group continues to address issues, primarily related to water and policy, in the watershed. | <p>Gerald Mueller (406) 543-0026 Upper Clark Fork River Basin Steering Committee gmueler@in-tch.com http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=18</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Upper Shields Watershed Association | <p>The Upper Shields River Watershed Association is a collection of land owners and citizens of the community that share the vision that ranching, as a way of life, can and must be preserved. This group has been drawn together for the purpose of protecting and improving the land, water, and the resources of the land since these represent the very foundation of ranching. The purpose of the Association is 1) to educate landowners and the public on natural resource issues; 2) to inventory and document changes in the resource base; 3) to develop solutions to problems, which will protect agriculture while positively improving natural resources within the area; 4) to work with Federal, State, and County agencies to coordinate watershed improvement activities in a feasible and economical manner; and, 5) to work with agencies to help secure funding to improve the natural resources in the watershed area.</p> <p>Watershed members want to preserve and enhance Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout populations throughout the Shields Watershed while maintaining flexibility in ranch management decisions. Although the Yellowstone Cutthroat Trout is a highly visible species, the Watershed members also wish to improve the habitat throughout the watershed area for other wildlife and fish species that inhabit this area.</p> | <p>Alan Johnstone (406) 578-2186 Park Conservation District johnstoneranch@hughes.net</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=30</p> <p>www.parked.org/uswa.html</p> |
| Upper Tenmile Steering Group | <p>The Upper Tenmile Steering Group was formed in March 1996 to address issues related to water quality and water quantity in the Tenmile Creek drainage, Lewis & Clark County. Water quality in the drainage is affected by the presence of nine abandoned mines.</p> | <p>Jesse Aber (406) 444-6628 DNRC Water Resources Division jaber@mt.gov</p> <p>http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=29</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|--|
| Upper Yellowstone Basin | <p>The Upper Yellowstone Watershed Basin is a collection of people who appreciate, or support, or participate in Agricultural endeavors on any scale. The group believes that agriculture involvement, as it is lived out by diverse individuals and operations, can and must be enhanced, preserved, and valued now and for posterity. The group proposes to safeguard its agriculture environment by protecting, improving, developing, harvesting, and efficiently using land, water, timber, and rangeland.</p> <p>The purpose of the Watershed is 1) to educate landowners and the public on issues facing Agriculture; 2) to inventory and document changes in the resource base; 3) to develop solutions to problems, which will protect agriculture while positively improving natural resources within the area; 4) to work with Federal, State, and County agencies to coordinate Watershed improvement activities in a feasible and economical manner; and, 5) to work with agencies to help secure funding to improve the natural resources in the Watershed area.</p> <p>The key natural resource issues of concern for the Upper Yellowstone Watershed Basin are; stream stabilization, weeds, rangeland, irrigation, water quality and endangered/threatened species.</p> | <p>Marty Malone (406) 222-4156 Upper Yellowstone Watershed Basin mmalone@montana.edu http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=66 http://parkcd.org/uwb.html</p> |
| Yellowstone River Conservation District Council | <p>The Yellowstone River Conservation District Council (YRCDC) addresses concerns along the entire main stem of the Yellowstone River. The Council is made up of representatives from twelve conservation districts bordering the main stem of the Yellowstone River and one representative from the Montana Association of Conservation Districts.</p> <p>The Council's purpose is to provide local leadership, assistance, and guidance for the wise use and conservation of the Yellowstone River's natural resources. This purpose is founded on three fundamental precepts: 1) The need for scientific information on which to base</p> | <p>Nicole McClain (406) 223-5702 Yellowstone River CD Coordination Council NmcClain@mt.gov http://watersheds.montana.edu/groups/details.asp?groupID=17</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-----------------------------|---|---|
| | <p>management decisions; 2) The need for broad-based local, regional, and national input; and, 3) The need for technical and financial assistance to address sustainable use issues on the Yellowstone River.</p> <p>The Council is currently focusing on four areas in which conservation districts traditionally work: 1) Bank stabilization (310 permitting issues); 2) Irrigation water impacts, availability, and water reservations; 3) Livestock, grazing, and farming issues; and, 4) Water quality and stream impairment.</p> | <p>http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/yellowstonerivercouncil/default.asp#</p> |
| | <p>Programs Administered by Other Non-Governmental Organizations</p> | |
| American Bird Conservancy | <p>The American Bird Conservancy is partnered with the Intermountain West Joint Venture to facilitate bird conservation in bird conservation region 10, which includes all of western Montana. The core vision of the joint ventures is to empower partnerships at the ground level.</p> <p>ABC established the Important Bird Area Program (IBA). Within these areas, conservation is designed to identify priority project areas based on priority habitats, priority bird species, threats and opportunities. The goal of the IBA program is not just to recognize the sites as important, but to mobilize the resources needed to protect them.</p> | <p>Dan Casey (406) 756-2681 American Bird Conservancy dcasey@abcbirds.org www.abcbirds.org</p> |
| American Prairie Foundation | <p>The American Prairie Foundation is devoted to creating a prairie-based wildlife reserve that will protect a unique natural habitat, provide lasting economic benefits and improve public access to the prairie landscape. APF is partnered with the World Wildlife Fund, who provides the science, in prairie restoration.</p> <p>Currently, APF is focused on lands contiguous with the Charles M. Wildlife Refuge, primarily in south Phillips County. It's eventual goal is to establish a 3 million contiguous acre reserve, comprised of a</p> | <p>Dick Dolan (406) 585-4600 American Prairie Foundation dick@americanprairie.org www.americanprairie.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------|--|--|
| | <p>combination of federal and private lands, which are managed for prairie wildlife species first. Lands would be accessible to the public for wildlife viewing and hunting.</p> <p>Current projects include restoration of prairie dogs and bison; restoration of native vegetation; restoration of prairie streams; and, baseline studies of native vegetation and native fish.</p> | |
| American Wildlands | <p>American Wildlands is working to develop collaborative initiatives to protect corridors that are regionally important. American Wildlands priority is the area between the GYA and the Salmon/Selway (190 south to the Centennials) and the Cabinet/Purcells to the Northern Continental Divide. The Priority Lands Assessment is a series of interviews with land managers to identify the most important habitats and movement corridors within that area.</p> <p>American Wildlands also has Safe Passages program, related to highways and transportation corridors; promoting collaborative efforts to reduce collisions with wildlife and improve safety; doing assessments; etc.</p> | <p>Tony Povilitis (406) 586-8175 American Wildlands tpovilitis@wildlands.org www.wildlands.org</p> |
| Avista Corporation | <p>The new Clark Fork Project License, including both the Noxon Rapids and Cabinet Gorge hydroelectric developments, is the result of the successful efforts of representatives from nearly 40 organizations, who worked together for several years to create the Clark Fork Settlement Agreement. The Settlement Agreement, contains 26 protection, mitigation and enhancement (PM&E) measures addressing impacts of continued operation of the project. The agreement also adopts the term "Living License," a concept that promotes ongoing problem solving through adaptive management. The license was approved in 2001 and is valid through 2046. The agreement includes a Montana tributary acquisition and enhancement fund (\$500,000/year) that is specific to Montana and a terrestrial habitat acquisition and</p> | <p>Tim Swant (406) 847-1282 Avista Corporation Tim.Swant@avistacorp.com www.avistautilities.com/resources/hydro/clarkfork</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| | <p>enhancement fund (\$200,000/year) and a native salmonid restoration fund (\$1 million/year) that support projects in both Montana and Idaho. Generally, projects are limited to the area affected by the operation of the dams. However, if there are compelling reasons, projects beyond those limits may be approved. There are 27 signatories to the agreement, including state, federal and tribal governments and NGO's. A collaborative process is used to approve projects.</p> | |
| <p>Big Hole River Foundation</p> | <p>The mission of the Big Hole River Foundation is to understand, preserve, and enhance the free flowing character of the Big Hole River and to protect its watershed, culture, community and excellent wild trout fishery. The Foundation is working to develop science-based conservation strategies that will protect this magnificent resource, and enhance critical habitat for native trout, grayling, and a multitude of other species.</p> <p>The Foundation's projects include Education and Outreach; Technical Guidance; small restoration projects; monitoring of benthic macro-invertebrates in support of Candidate Conservation Agreements with Assurances; and, partnerships with other organizations to assist in the acquisition of conservation easements and to assist with wetlands mapping. The Foundation also participates in other management efforts in the basin, including river recreation, land use planning, drought management, water quality and weed management.</p> | <p>Mike Bias (866) 533-2473 Big Hole River Foundation mikebias@3riversdbs.net www.bhrf.org</p> |
| <p>Boone & Crockett Club</p> | <p>Permanent protection of critical wildlife habitat is a major focus of the Boone and Crockett Club's Habitat Partnerships program. The focus of this program is land conservation facilitated by conservation easements, land donations, and land exchanges that result in permanently protected wildlife habitat.</p> <p>The Boone and Crockett Conservation Education Program strives</p> | <p>William Demmer (517) 321-3600 Boone & Crockett Club bdemmer@demmerc corp.com www.boone-crockett.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| | to offer perspectives that will foster shared use of natural resources, conservation, sustainable development, and stewardship of the land to build a common ground for sustaining healthy ecosystems. | |
| Corporation for the Northern Rockies | <p>The Corporation for the Northern Rockies advances sustainable choices that enhance economic opportunities and preserve Western lands and quality of life. CNR has trained producers in sustainable agriculture and markets Montana-grown products that result from sustainable agriculture and production methods that protect open space, promote habitat conservation and protect water quality.</p> <p>CNR has published a <i>Welcome to the West Guide</i> helps newcomers channel their affection for wildlife and open space into vacation and real estate choices that protect nature.</p> | <p>Lil Erickson (406) 222-0730 Corporation for the Northern Rockies info@northrock.org www.northrock.org</p> |
| Defenders of Wildlife | <p>Defenders of Wildlife promotes progressive land-use strategies on federal state and private lands that safeguard key habitats such as wetlands, deserts, forests and grasslands from development and degradation. Habitat projects in Montana focus on prairie habitats, with an emphasis on bison restoration, swift fox reintroductions, protection of prairie dog colonies and support for black-footed ferret reintroductions. Current projects focus on Tribal lands. Defenders is working with the Blackfeet, Ft. Belknap, Ft. Peck, Northern Cheyenne and the Crow.</p> | <p>Minette Glaser (406) 549-4103 Defenders of Wildlife mglaser@defenders.org</p> <p>Jonathon Proctor (303) 825-0918 Defenders of Wildlife jproctor@defenders.org</p> <p>www.defenders.org/ programs_and_policy/ habitat_conservation/ index.php</p> |
| Ducks Unlimited | Ducks Unlimited's habitat interests in Montana include wetland protection and restoration. DU functions as a "general contractor", | Bob Sanders (406) 492-2002 |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| | <p>responsible for the front end administrative work, related to wetland conservation. Its primary focus in Montana is on the hi-line. DU delivers conservation easements for USFWS.</p> <p>DU administers its Revolving Land Acquisition Program – the program acquires properties for protection and restoration and then re-sells the properties to maintain funds for repeating the process with other properties.</p> | <p>Ducks Unlimited rsanders@ducks.org www.ducks.org</p> |
| <p>Greater Yellowstone Coalition</p> | <p>The Greater Yellowstone Coalition is a nationally known advocate for the idea that ecosystem level sustainability should guide the management of the region's public and private lands. It's mission is: <i>People protecting the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, now and for future generations.</i> GYC is involved in advocacy and education. GYC is involved in local working groups in the Madison and Centennial Valleys.</p> | <p>Craig Kenworthy (406) 556-2803 Greater Yellowstone Coalition ckenworthy@greateryellowstone.org www.greateryellowstone.org</p> |
| <p>Montana Association of Conservation Districts</p> | <p>Montana's 58 conservation districts (CDs) utilize locally-led and largely non-regulatory approaches to successfully address general natural resource issues. CDs have a decades-long history of conserving our state 's resources by helping local people match their needs with technical and financial resources, thereby getting good conservation practices on the ground to the benefit of all Montanans.</p> <p>CD's are the conduit for DNRC grants and loans. They also influence the distribution of dollars through the Farm Bill. MACD can help build bridges with the landowners; help do catch-up with landowners. But, it is important to know that CD Supervisors have an interest in taking care of the landowners. Landowners want sensible approaches, sustainable approaches and approaches that will work within their operation. Solutions have to work in the long run.</p> | <p>Sarah Carlson (406) 443-5711 Montana Association of Conservation Districts mail@macdnet.org www.macdnet.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| Montana Association of Counties | <p>Montana Association of Counties (MACo) enhances the public service mission of counties by promoting integrity and providing proactive leadership while acknowledging and respecting Montana's diversity.</p> <p>There are opportunities to with MACO committees, especially the Public lands, Agriculture or Land Use Committees, to promote communication.</p> | <p>Sheryl Wood (406) 444-4360 Montana Association of Counties swood@maco.cog.mt.us http://maco.cog.mt.us/</p> |
| Montana Audubon | <p>Montana Audubon promotes appreciation, knowledge and conservation of native birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. Montana Audubon has identified Important Bird Areas in Montana. This information is available for planning purposes. Local Audubon chapters provide a resource for citizen science and assistance with monitoring; help to identify important bird areas; help to rally political support; and, participate in local planning efforts. Montana Audubon is interested in helping to support a cooperatively funded non-game bird coordinator for Montana.</p> | <p>Janet Ellis (406) 443-3949 Montana Audubon mtaudubon@montana.com http://mtaudubon.org/</p> |
| Montana Cattlemen's Association | <p>The Montana Cattlemen's Association's Mission is: To actively participate with Montana cattle producers to protect our industry's future; To address market interests, serve to support Montana's environmental, cultural and historical heritage, and protect the interests of Montana cattle producers in international markets and trade issues; and, The Montana Cattlemen's Association shall be true environmentalists in protecting and advancing their environmental positions in water rights, mineral rights and natural resources.</p> | <p>Jeremy Seidlitz (406) 259-5433 Montana Cattlemen's Association mca@montanacattlemen.org www.montanacattlemen.org</p> |
| Montana Coal Council | <p>The Montana Coal Council is a nonprofit industry association whose membership includes all major coal mine operators, holders of Montana coal reserves, those who ship the coal, utilities who use the coal, and numerous suppliers and businesses directly and indirectly involved in the coal industry.</p> | <p>Bud Clinch (406) 442-6223 Montana Coal Council mtcoal@aol.com http://montanacoalcouncil.com/index.html</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| Montana Farm Bureau Federation | <p>The mission of the Montana Farm Bureau Federation is to correlate and strengthen the member county Farm Bureaus; support the free enterprise system and protect individual freedom and opportunity; promote, protect and represent the business, economic, social and educational interests of farmer/rancher members and their communities; and to enhance the agricultural industry in Montana.</p> <p>The Farm Bureau believes that Landowners have an important role in conservation. Landowners control the land, feed the wildlife and keep the land in open space. Conservation happens on private land because the individual landowner believes that it is the correct thing to do.</p> | <p>John Youngberg (406) 587-3153 Montana Farm Bureau Federation johnny@mtbf.org http://mtbf.org.preview.s3.amazonaws.com/controller/home?_load=default</p> |
| Montana Petroleum Association | <p>The Montana Petroleum Association, Inc. is a voluntary, non-profit trade association, whose members include oil and natural gas producers, gathering and pipeline companies, petroleum refineries and service providers and consultants. MPA's government affairs program strives to maintain a positive business climate for the petroleum industry in Montana, and its education program fosters public awareness of the industry's contributions to the state and nation.</p> | <p>David Galt (406) 442-7582 Montana Petroleum Association mpa@montanapetroleum.org www.montanapetroleum.org/index.php?pr=Home_Page</p> |
| Montana Stockgrowers Association | <p>The Montana Stockgrower's Association is one of the sponsors of the Environmental Stewardship Award Program. The goal of this program is to acknowledge producers who go the extra mile when it comes to preserving and enhancing the resources on their land. While the program highlights industry stewardship, it also provides cattlemen with examples and ideas which may be useful on their own farms and ranching operations.</p> <p>The MSGA is a cooperator in the Undaunted Stewardship Program, a voluntary program that certifies individual ranchers whose operations incorporate stewardship principles in their ranch planning, grazing management and monitoring. MSGA assists with education and outreach.</p> | <p>Jay Bodner (406) 442-3420 Montana Stockgrower's Association jay@mtbeef.org www.mtbeef.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|
| Montana Water Trust | <p>The Montana Water Trust is a private, nonprofit organization that works cooperatively with farmers, ranchers, and other landowners to develop incentive based agreements that benefit landowners, streamflows and communities. The mission of the Montana Water Trust is to partner with landowners to keep our celebrated streams alive and flowing. The Montana Water Trust works cooperatively with water rights holders, especially senior water right holders, securing water rights for the purpose of maintaining in-stream flows.</p> <p>The Montana Water Trust can provide expertise, capacity building; and, an interest to protect in-stream flows in areas where habitat protection/ restoration projects already are in place.</p> | <p>Rankin Holmes (406) 721-0476 Montana Water Trust info@montanawatertrust.org http://www.montanawatertrust.org/</p> |
| Montana Wildlife Federation | <p>The Montana Wildlife Federation is an organization of conservation minded people who share a mission to protect and enhance Montana's public wildlife, lands, waters, and fair chase hunting and fishing heritage.</p> <p>MWF serves as a co-chair of the Steering Committee for the Montana Teaming with Wildlife Coalition, a coalition comprised of organizations and businesses working together to support the Montana Wildlife Action Plan and the State Wildlife Grant Program. In cooperation with the Coalition, MWF works with its affiliates and other volunteers to advocate for the State Wildlife Grant Program and facilitate implementation on the ground.</p> | <p>Rich Day (406) 494-8661 Montana Wildlife Federation rday@mtwfw.org www.montanawildlife.com http://statewildlife.nwfw.org/MT/</p> |
| Montana Wood Products Association | <p>The Montana Wood Products Association is a voluntary nonprofit association whose purpose is to promote wise long-term management of Montana's forests, furnish opportunities for open discussion and lawful interchange of information concerning all facets of the wood products industry and accumulate and disseminate information regarding the wood products industry in order to foster the best interests of the industry and the public.</p> | <p>Ellen Engstedt (406) 443-1566 Montana Wood Products Association MWPA@MontanaForests.com www.montanaforests.com</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|--|
| National Center for Appropriate Technology | The National Center for Appropriate Technology helps people and communities with technologies that save energy and resources. NCAT helps government agencies, businesses and non-profits learn and spread information about sustainable energy, agriculture and community development. | Kathy Hadley (406) 494-8637 NCAT kathyh@ncat.org www.ncat.org |
| National Parks and Conservation Association | The National Parks and Conservation Association's mission is to protect and enhance America's National Parks for present and future generations. In Montana, NPCA is involved in policy issues that affect National Parks. They also cooperate in restoration of bull trout habitat in the North Fork of the Flathead River. | Tony Jewett (406) 495-1559 National Parks and Conservation Association tjewett@npca.org www.npca.org/northernrockies |
| National Wildlife Federation | The National Wildlife Federation inspires Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future. NWF is interested in helping to involve a broader array of interests in support of the State Wildlife Grant Program. Through its support for Teaming With Wildlife, it advocates for and helps to build support. Through its local affiliates, it can help provide grass roots support and enlist a cadre of volunteers to assist with local, on-the-ground projects. Volunteers who participate in projects are vested in conservation. | Land Tawney (406) 721-6705 National Wildlife Federation tawney@nwf.org www.nwf.org |
| National Wild Turkey Federation | The National Wild Turkey Federation supports scientific wildlife management on public, private and corporate lands as well as wild turkey hunting as a traditional North American sport. In Montana, NWTf's work is focused on conserving turkey habitat and protecting hunting access. It is willing to assist with conservation easements to achieve those objectives. They are particularly interested | Mr. Jared McLunkin (605) 255-5979 National Wild Turkey Federation jared.nwtf@yahoo.com www.nwtf.org |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>in projects to restore riparian habitat in the northern plains and to conserve ponderosa pine in eastern Montana.</p> <p>NWTF works with individual landowners who winter large numbers of turkeys. They also have some funds available to assist with education, habitat projects and transplants.</p> | |
| <p>Northern Plains Resource Council</p> | <p>To help citizens make a difference in their community, Northern Plains Resource Council coordinates several statewide and regional campaigns in two general areas of focus: protecting our water and land, and building Montana's rural prosperity.</p> | <p>Teresa Erickson (406) 248-1154 Northern Plains Resource Council teresa@northernplains.org www.northernplains.org</p> |
| <p>Pheasants Forever</p> | <p>Pheasants Forever is dedicated to the conservation of pheasants, quail and other wildlife through habitat improvements, public awareness, education and land management policies and programs.</p> <p>PF is a potential player in any cooperative project accomplished at the local level in any community where PF has a presence. Contributing to local habitat enhancement projects is the typical PF approach in Montana. Individual chapters raise funds and then use those funds for habitat projects within their area. PF also has an interest in cooperating in acquisition projects but such projects are a bit unusual in Montana because of the state's size and the distance between local chapters. These projects typically are funded through PF's land/loan program with the funds then repaid by the local chapters.</p> | <p>Dan Hare (701) 250-9921 Pheasants Forever dhare@pheasantsforever.org www.pheasantsforever.org</p> |
| <p>Plum Creek Timber Company</p> | <p>As a large landowner, Plum Creek recognizes that some of our lands have "special" values to the people who live in communities that surround them. With this in mind, Plum Creek continues to seek</p> | <p>Lorin Hicks (406) 892-6368 Plum Creek Timber</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--------------------|---|---|
| | <p>opportunities to protect land that has visual, historic, recreation, forestry, wildlife habitat and other significant attributes through long-term conservation sales, easements and land exchanges.</p> <p>Plum Creek Timber Company has developed a Habitat Conservation Plan to ensure conservation of native fish on 1.3 million acres of land in their ownership in northwestern Montana. With the Native Fish HCP in place, the HCP can be used to leverage Sec. 6 funding for land acquisitions that support the objectives of the HCP. This also is an opportunity for working with the fish and wildlife mitigation programs and other partners for native fish monitoring and conservation in northwestern Montana.</p> <p>Plum Creek also entered into a conservation agreement regarding grizzly bears on 75,000 acres of their ownership in the Swan Valley. Plum Creek participated in the grizzly bear agreement. As part of this agreement, all of the company's land sales in the linkage zones in the Swan Valley include deed restrictions to ensure that these are conservation transactions.</p> <p>Plum Creek's business model is changing. In Montana, the model puts more emphasis on selling land and on developing land. Plum Creek needs to be able to work with FWP and other conservation partners earlier in the land use planning process to build conservation measures into the design of developments.</p> | <p>Company Lorin.Hicks@plumcreek.com www.plumcreek.com/ downloads/factsheets/ conservationfactsheet.pdf</p> |
| PPL Montana | <p>PPL Montana has considerable discretion to cost-share conservation projects within the Missouri-Madison corridor. It provides annual funding to three technical advisory committees: Madison fisheries; Missouri fisheries; and wildlife, system wide. Project proposal are reviewed by the corresponding Technical Advisory Committee. Projects must occur within a mile of the corridor and be consistent with the mitigation objectives defined by the 2188 license for the Madison-</p> | <p>Jon Jourdannais (406) 533-3443 PPL Montana jjourdannais@ppl.web www.pplmontana.com/ environment/our+environ ment/restoring+habitats.htm</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|-------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>Missouri corridor. Within the past 10 years, PPL has contributed \$23M which has leveraged a total of \$76M for conservation in the project area. PPL expects to contribute another \$10M during the decade beginning in 2008.</p> <p>In addition to the fish and wildlife mitigation program, PPL funds a system-wide comprehensive program for recreation. This program includes the potential to acquire open space for recreation which could, secondarily, benefit the objectives in CFWCS.</p> | |
| Pyramid Lumber | <p>Pyramid Lumber's professional forestry staff promotes forest stewardship and active forest management to achieve sustainable forestry.</p> <p>Pyramid Lumber has worked closely with the Forest Service and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation to implement the concept of Stewardship Contracting. Stewardship contracting is an exchange of goods (forest products) for services (various conservation/restoration related activities). Stewardship contracting is a way to achieve multiple benefits for a variety of issues. Revenues generated from the projects are reinvested back on the district to achieve stewardship objectives, e.g. reducing road densities, improving stream crossings, fish and wildlife objectives, forest health, fuels reduction, recreation, etc. Stewardship contracting is a way to develop a broader base of support for projects that have been developed through a landscape level planning effort and provides greater opportunities to identify and build solutions around common ground. Stewardship contracting also is a way to keep industry viable in communities where traditional forest industry is no longer viable.</p> | <p>Gordy Sanders (406) 677-2201 Pyramid Lumber Company gsanders@pyramidlumber.com www.pyramidlumber.com</p> |
| Ruby Habitat Foundation | <p>At the Ruby Habitat Foundation, we use the word "habitat" in its broadest sense — the living environment that sustains people, livestock, fish, wildlife and plants. We believe that no single land</p> | <p>Les Gilman (406) 842-5010 Ruby Habitat Foundation</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| | <p>holding is large enough to be an ecosystem of itself or yard too small to have some impact on its neighbors. Therefore we believe that we are all in this together and that our management decisions make our environment what it is and what it will become.</p> <p>The focus of the Ruby Habitat Foundation includes the Ruby River watershed ecosystem and with some adjustments all of Southwest Montana. The goal is to gather a body of practical knowledge about the Ruby River watershed in particular and Southwest Montana in general, to use and to share. To achieve this we are conducting a number of applied research projects in both vegetative and management choices. We invite your comments and participation.</p> | <p>lgilman@3rivers.net www.rubyhabitat.org/default.php</p> |
| Sonoran Institute | <p>The Sonoran Institute is a resource for land use planning. The Institute provides information, training, etc., targeted to local land use planning groups and County Commissions. It provides information and case studies to help the planners decide which planning tools are most appropriate for their community, e.g. zoning, regulations, incentives, standards, etc. The Institute also helps communities to develop a community vision and help them plan development consistent with that vision.</p> <p>The Sonoran Institute could help promote partnerships between watershed groups and the county planners.</p> <p>The Sonoran Institute could help develop a set of model ordinances that incorporate measures to address habitat and species priorities defined by CFWCS.</p> | <p>Jennifer Boyer (406) 587-7331 Sonoran Institute jboyer@sonoran.org http://sonoran.org/</p> |
| Teaming with Wildlife Coalition | <p>The Teaming with Wildlife Coalition includes state fish & wildlife agencies, wildlife biologists, hunters, anglers, birdwatchers, hikers, nature-based businesses and other conservationists who support the goal of restoring and conserving our nation's wildlife. The coalition</p> | <p>Mike Aderhold (406) 453-2459 Montana FWP maderhold@mt.gov</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|---|---|
| | <p>formed in the early 1990s and has led efforts to fund wildlife conservation aimed at preventing wildlife from becoming endangered. Nationally, the coalition includes more than 5,000 organizations, businesses, and agencies. The coalition is the leading advocate for the State Wildlife Grants program and the implementation of state wildlife action plans. Montana has established a Teaming with Wildlife Core Team to assist Montana FWP with implementation of the Comprehensive Fish and Wildlife Conservation Strategy and to promote awareness and support for the program. The Core Team includes members from the Montana Wildlife Federation, the National Wildlife Federation, Montana Auburn, Trout Unlimited, Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners and the Montana Association of Land Trusts.</p> | <p>Rich Day (406) 494-8661 Montana Wildlife Federation rday@mtwfw.org www.teaming.com</p> |
| <p>Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partners</p> | <p>The Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership is a coalition of leading hunting, fishing and conservation organizations, labor unions and individual grassroots partners working together to preserve the traditions of hunting and fishing by a) expanding access to places to hunt and fish, b) conserving fish and wildlife and the habitats necessary to sustain them, and c) increasing funding for conservation and management.</p> <p>TRCP is a partner organization in the Teaming With Wildlife coalition, and is an active member of the Teaming With Wildlife National Steering Committee. TRCP has produced videos, brochures and tabletop displays for sportsmen's organizations that explain State Wildlife Grants and State Wildlife Action Plans to hunters and anglers. They tell hunters and anglers why they should support State Wildlife Grants and what they can do to support the implementation of their own State Wildlife Action Plan. TRCP has a 3-year grant and is working in all 50 states to education, outreach and advocacy for the purpose of building support for the State Wildlife Grant program.</p> | <p>William Geer (406) 396-0909 Theodore Roosevelt Conservation Partnership bgeer@trcp.org www.trcp.org</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| Trout Conservancy of Montana | <p>The mission of Trout Conservancy is to conserve and improve Montana's wild trout populations through habitat restoration, education and outreach. The organization provides needed funding for wild trout conservation, habitat restoration and education projects. These projects generally originate with partners. Montana Trout seeks to coordinate and enable, rather than design and implement, our projects and programs. Current programs and activities include restoration work with the U.S. Forest Service, BLM, City of Missoula and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks on Westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout spawning and rearing habitat in Belmont and Chamberlain Creeks, both tributaries of the Blackfoot River in western Montana. Montana Trout is also working to restore natural and productive habitat conditions to parts and Pattee Creek in Missoula, Montana and to Lolo Creek south of Missoula.</p> | <p>John Zelazny (406) 542-7445 Trout Conservancy of Montana mt@montanatroutrout.org www.montanatroutrout.org</p> |
| Trout Unlimited | <p>Montana Trout Unlimited's mission is to conserve, protect, and restore Montana's world-class coldwater fisheries and their watersheds.</p> <p>Trout Unlimited is interested in helping to involve a broader array of interests in support of the State Wildlife Grant Program. Through its support for Teaming With Wildlife, it advocates for and helps to build support. Through its local affiliates, it can help provide grass roots support and enlist a cadre of volunteers to assist with local, on-the-ground projects. Volunteers who participate in projects are vested in conservation.</p> | <p>Michael Gibson (406) 543-0054 Trout Unlimited michael@montanatu.org www.montanatu.org</p> |
| Trout Unlimited - Western Water Project | <p>TU is shifting its focus, generally, to putting more emphasis on native salmonids. Its Work in the Big Hole is driven by a concern for the arctic grayling. TU has been involved in the watershed group and participated in the development of the on the drought response.</p> <p>TU currently is working cooperatively with FWP to incorporate water rights issues in the Candidate Conservation Agreements Assurances</p> | <p>Stan Bradshaw (406) 449-9922 Trout Unlimited</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|--|--|--|
| | <p>that are being used in the Big Hole drainage. It is important that all of the water rights issues be addressed in a long-term, strategic perspective and balance short-term opportunities with long-term needs. It also is critical to integrate water rights and restoration.</p> | <p>www.tu.org/site/c.kkLRJ7MSKtH/b.3022905/k.9521/Conservation.htm</p> |
| <p>Turner Endangered Species Fund</p> | <p>The Turner Endangered Species Fund is dedicated to conserving biodiversity by ensuring the persistence of imperiled species and their habitats. TEF's efforts focus on carnivores, grasslands, plant-pollinator complexes, species that historically ranged onto properties owned by R. E. Turner, and dissemination of reliable scientific and policy information on biodiversity conservation.</p> <p>TESF is working in partnership with FWP and USFS to restore west slope cutthroat trout on the Flying D Ranch. TEF employs a biologist who works with FWP and USFWS to promote wolf conservation.</p> <p>Turner properties are managed to promote biodiversity, as an exercise in responsible land stewardship.</p> <p>TESF is a source of good information regarding the science of restoration. TEF does not focus on education but is a credible source of information, much of it available as peer reviewed publications.</p> | <p>Mike Phillips (406) 556-8500 Turner Endangered Species Fund tesf@mon@montana.net www.tesf.org/turner/tesf/</p> |
| <p>Walleyes Forever</p> | <p>Walleyes Forever is a non-profit organization dedicated to promoting walleye fishing, walleye conservation, family recreation and hands-on, grassroots efforts to improve the warm water fisheries of Montana. Although "walleye" is in their name, the organization is dedicated to fish of all species. They strive to work with other groups and FWP for the betterment of fish and wildlife for the future of Montana. Recent projects have included sponsoring kids fishing programs, litter control, and assistance to FWP in purchasing equipment for the native fish study in the Yellowstone River.</p> | <p>Nathan McClenning (406) 371-5165 Walleyes Forever nmcclenning@msn.com www.walleyesforever.com</p> |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|---|--|---|
| Walleyes Unlimited of Montana | | Bob Gilbert Walleyes Unlimited elkbug@hotmail.com www.montanavalleyesunlimited.com/index.htm |
| Western Environmental Trade Association | The mission of Western Environmental Trade Association (WETA) is to establish and maintain coalitions to promote conservation-minded economic development in Montana. | Don Allen (406) 443-5541 Western Environmental Trade Association weta@weta-montana.org http://weta-montana.org/ |
| World Wildlife Fund | <p>The World Wildlife Fund is working with local, regional and national partners to preserve native prairie and to foster biodiversity. One key goal is to expand the number and extent of conservation areas, from 1.5 percent to 10 percent of the region, with large, intact areas of native habitat. We will also endeavor to promote sustainable farming and ranching practices that are compatible with the natural environment.</p> <p>WWF has completed an eco-regional assessment of the northern Great Plains and identified 10 areas of mixed grasslands as priority areas for conservation – based on sensitive prairie species and the habitats to support them. Each priority area has high bio-diversity and good potential for restoration of 2 to 5 million acres of prairie habitat. In Montana, these areas include the area in south Phillips County addressed by the American Prairie Foundation; the Transboundary area (Bitter Creek/Frenchman Creek) on the Canada-Montana border;</p> | Steve Forrest (406) 582-7571 scforrest@earthlink.net www.worldwildlife.org/wildplaces/ngp/index.cfm |

| AGENCY/PROGRAM | PROGRAM DESCRIPTION | CONTACT INFORMATION |
|----------------|---|---------------------|
| | <p>the “Big Open”; the Terry Badlands; an area in northwestern South Dakota, with some adjacent land in Montana; and, the Tongue River drainage. WWF is involved in prairie stream restoration, with an emphasis on restoring the ecological functionality of prairie streams and removal of fish passage barriers in prairie streams. WWF also is involved in a sage grouse project in Valley County.</p> <p>In the areas where WWF is working, the organization can provide technical expertise; assistance with restoration work; fund raising; and, advocacy.</p> <p>WWF recently established a position to work on climate change.</p> | |

APPENDIX D.

EVALUATING THE SITUATION; PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

COORDINATING HABITAT CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION IN MONTANA.

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

OBJECTIVES

1. Review and provide collective feedback on the Situation Assessment.
2. Define and explore “gaps” as evidenced by the Situation assessment.
3. Provide topical input on “next steps”.

COMPLETED AGENDA ITEMS

Feedback on the Situation Assessment:

Completeness

- Overall – the Assessment is good.
- There are no glaring holes in the Assessment – just a bit fuzzy in places.
- This is a good handle on where we need to go – it’s on the right page.
- What is the State’s overall conservation goal? What are the outputs that the public desires? If we are talking about a change to an ecological approach, what are the resource outputs that will come from this? What are the metrics? A landscape approach is a strong selling point and should be emphasized.
- There should be measurability and reporting for a host of benefits from landscape-scale conservation and that is missing from the document.
- The project is so big it is hard to know if it is complete – but this is surely a good start. The Assessment, like the Strategy, does not reflect all the detail that will be necessary to achieve the goals and objectives.
- The Assessment does a good job in identifying trends and what we need to consider to make this happen. It outlines components to implement the Strategy.
- The Assessment is not complete because it does not have enough detail. It’s a good overview but needs more specific priorities. Priorities need to be set regionally.
- Identification of problems should be part of the Assessment because we are not sure what they are. Problems should be defined by science and there needs to be local agreement.
- The Assessment touches on all issues but needs emphasis on certain areas – need effective communication; need to highlight certain points in the Assessment and then fill in as we go.

The document is passive – develop action items. We should focus on landscape management overall – not just certain species.

- There should be stronger focus on habitat conservation and restoration and a broader perspective to include hunters/anglers and their influence on species and wildlife management. Hunters and anglers are not mentioned in the document in terms of management of habitat/wildlife and people.
- There should be further discussion on the challenge of aligning federal and state agencies and plans. How will decisions be made on tradeoffs that benefit species versus users? Who decides what's equitable? We need better engagement of federal land management agencies.
- How do we get people together to develop broad goals? Where is the network? We need to recognize the structures that are out there – Conservation Districts, etc. How can we engage better with the existing structures? Develop a menu with examples. The Assessment should discuss replicating models like the Blackfoot Challenge.
- There's not clarity on the challenge is and how limited a timeframe. There should be discussion on what will happen if we don't work on this and fairly quickly.
- How do we engage/work with non-traditional partners?
- "Tribal" is not mentioned much. We need to get all Tribes on Board (some didn't think they received an invitation). There should be more discussion related to Tribal lands and importance of Tribal participation – they manage 8 million acres. Tribal perspectives should be more thoroughly incorporated.
- Montana values need better articulation. Lifestyle that we want to maintain needs to be broadened and clarified. Are values clearly stated? At the same time, explain that some land use "do's" conflict with traditional values. There is a need to emphasize sustaining the rural lifestyle and a huge component of that is access. There should be more discussion about the agricultural base and a viable economy in Montana.
- The Assessment needs to show Montana's relevancy to regional landscapes
- There should be integration of private and business interests in conservation goals.
- Question – What are the criteria by which we judge situations? What are the local government issues? Watershed groups need to address vision regarding the landscape – they bring a different perspective.
- There should be a mechanism for prioritization between watersheds – how to include interrelationship and coordinate. Questions – Would a local watershed group have capacity to expand its focus to address multiple issues?
- There cannot be state prioritization and funding without local discussion.
- How are NGO's addressed at other than the local watershed group level?
- The discussion needs to include invasive species – plants, fish and animals.
- All resource values in Northwestern Montana are not recognized in the State Wildlife Plan (Rivers) impacts. There is a need to recognize support and commitment to international migratory bird conservation. There were bird experts included in development of the Strategy – but some of the information didn't get included. The document is not science-based with respect to birds.

-
- There should be discussion of wetlands – depletion of wetlands is leading to fragmentation of habitat; wetlands from agricultural lands are being subdivided.
 - Acknowledge the hundreds of lawsuits by environmental groups on more conservation efforts ahead.
 - The federal lands partners’ role is not recognized or emphasized but rather puts the majority of the burden on private landowners.
 - We need greater focus on urban planning. We need to address conflicts between wildlife and humans in the urban/wildlands interface.
 - There should be a better assessment of the full picture. Why should landowners care and how does it help them? Recognize the differences in areas – landowner driven where there is overlap. There should be more explanation on local direction – not just involvement. What are the avenues for sharing information about benefits – how can we show benefits on the ground? Locals probably won’t be motivated to move ahead unless they see the benefits – not just the problem.
 - There should be more emphasis on communication of the collective message in a manner that all parties can relate to.
 - How are we going to fund this? There are not enough resources to get the job done – spread around to address the overall goals/objectives in a fair and equitable way. We have an opportunity to expand dollars available so we can carry out the Strategy by working together.
 - There should be definitions of words like “sustainability”, “working landscape”, “conservation”, etc. – consider a glossary.
 - Multiple interests need to be addressed so it’s a win-win situation. By working together, we can build capacity and that needs more emphasis. Did the Assessment really cover all partnerships? Could a document like this cover them all? Partnerships have been going on for a long time through many different iterations. There is a good, strong emphasis on partnership. Have we included non-resident landowners? We need to account for the changing personality of the new rural Montanan.
 - The Assessment does not include a list of who was interviewed. Were Conservation Districts interviewed for the Assessment? The size of the group here today may indicate that many have not had a chance to provide input. The interview process was not focused enough – What are we trying to do?
 - We need to figure out a way to do monitoring effectively. The Assessment does not address adaptive management – compare what is going on and see what’s working – so they we can adapt if appropriate.
 - We have an opportunity to do some habitat enhancement work on private lands and we can demonstrate that wildlife habitat protection and agriculture can work together. We have an opportunity to integrate wildlife values across both public and private lands. There should be more discussion about this in the Assessment.
 - The Assessment doesn’t address potential impacts of climate change on land use and conservation – we need to incorporate potential impacts into conservation planning (e.g., will wetlands be there?). We need to seriously discuss potential impacts of climate change.
 - The Assessment should include discussion about policy to support incentives rather than

just presenting complexities. Discussion of energy development should include the conflict with habitat requirements.

- Integrate tools like inundation models, channel migration, and zones, etc., into the planning process.
- The Assessment should include discussion about access and conservation.
- There should be discussion about water rights and Irrigation Districts.
- How do we reach out to the general population in all areas?
- The Assessment doesn't mention the need for fee requirements as a result of impacts – need to have some compensation for habitat loss or fragmentation.

Accuracy

- It generally looks thorough and accurate.
- The key word is “shared”. Actually, FWP might be part of the problem – a bottleneck. They want to accomplish this but don't take local input under serious consideration.
- “State” as a group partnership should be “statewide”.
- Find the right people and leaders – a “council of elders”.
- “Emerging” should be replaced with already emerging or has emerged language.
- The private sector is not just landowners – it needs to include corporate interests and Tribal lands.
- Single species may still be a focus or target/indicator.
- “Agency leadership” from behind is not accurate; state agencies have regulatory responsibilities that require leadership from the front. But collaboration is necessary. Agencies vary in their culture to collaborate.
- Strategy is done – but will there still be discussion about the strategy?
- The Assessment is accurate enough to get the ball rolling.
- Agriculture interests and concerns are somewhat “watered down” or under-represented.
- Landowners must be involved in decisions on conservation easements to capture “local knowledge” on the value of habitats.
- The Assessment needs to reflect a respect for private landowners' rights and emphasize incentives and benefits to their operations.
- Eco-tourism is a double-edged sword.

“Real World” Usefulness

- How will we move forward – make it real-world? How will implementing happen?
- General habitat information is not specific enough to provide assistance to real-world situations.
- There are significant differences between the culture of Eastern and Western Montana. How

do we have a statewide program when we essentially are “3 different states” in one? We need local programs developed and adopted according to local culture. How do we get past the social conflict?

- How do we deal with economic value versus ecological value in the real world? What is the appropriate balance?
- How do we prioritize in the real world? What benefits one species and what happens if that is at the cost of another species? How do we balance these from an ecosystem approach?
- FWP needs to ask more for partnerships – we need to be asking and get better organized about projects.
- Funding levels are inadequate to fund the CFWCS. Funding is matched to issues/species rather than more desirable “holistic”. The biggest limiting factor is not having resources to accomplish all the priorities and species addressed in the Plan. Bringing everyone together to combine resources ability may be difficult because of turf and jurisdictional issues. “Partnerships cannot be found and we all have to change together.” Leverage cost-share funding arrangements.
- Change is coming fast in the real world and we don’t have time to delay in implementation.
- How do we take advantage of existing information to plan and make decisions?
- Implementation is like a ballgame – we have all the players, a couple of referees but everybody’s got a whistle.
- The Legislature has not empowered local government in terms of subdivision rules, flood plain development, etc. Legislative support with policy is critical.
- State Legislators and County Commissioners are missing from the process – to address growth. It’s important to bring County and municipal governments along – they are partners we need to engage. How can we make the Strategy relevant to some local partners (i.e., a County is most interested in economic value).
- The “Partnerships needed” section does not include all appropriate state and federal agencies (e.g., MDT, Tribal governments) in terms of collaboration.
- Under priorities – Landscape objectives: Where can we achieve those objectives (e.g., Big Hole versus Paradise)?
- How does the document address the issue of realtors/developers? Big money is taking over the ability of locals to continue to “live the life”.
- The Plan and Assessment can’t move ahead because “on the ground” there is a block at the federal level - Lawsuits that obstruct the ability for “on the ground” efforts to be successful.
- If local partnership groups are going to help implement the strategy, they need to have a say in what the strategy is – they need to be part of developing the strategy. Locally based partnerships – not top down – are the key. Capacity to support local leadership is critical.
- Avoid jargon and put things in terms you can understand.
- There is a big issue regarding energy development that may have more clout, funding and ability to impact habitats. Politics and money may jeopardize the CFWCS.
- The Assessment is very broad and general – we don’t know if it will be real world useful

-
- for that reason. The Assessment doesn't speak enough to revision and the need to get more accurate information included.
- How is the vision going to happen? Is the vision specific enough for the real world?
 - We are concerned about FWP's ability to implement non-game portions. There is also a concern about losing attention to species by looking at a more general habitat level.
 - It would be more helpful to discuss usefulness of the Strategy itself.
 - A helpful sign is that landowners are leading the way in some areas.
 - Science-based information is critical in the real world.
 - How does sustainability play into this?
 - Fish and wildlife serve as surrogates for other values – rural way of life; economics; subdivision, etc. There is a risk of partnership - need to flesh out what partnership means.
 - Implementation seems fuzzy. We need improved communication.
 - What is “conservation land management” and what does it mean to people in the real world?
 - How do we bring various partners to the table to do something new? FWP should be a leader in the effort by bringing people together. We need to find new ways to develop “buy-in” to the process.
 - Success builds on success – tap on those relationships that are working.
 - Highlight those models that really work – some don't.
 - How do we bring people who are not engaged in conservation to the table?
 - How do we explain/bring real, direct benefits to people? Explore how to facilitate on-the-ground improvements as opposed to more process.
 - Usefulness depends on recommendations – how will recommendations be used? It needs to be compelling.
 - Address marketing, target a variety of audiences, and expand discussion of incentives and benefits. Further discuss the value of education and integration of local landowners and state and federal agencies – outreach is the key.
 - Who is the leader?
 - The CFWCS can and should be part of growth plans.
 - Can the Comprehensive Strategy serve as an umbrella for local groups to springboard from? One size does not fit all – need to consider differences to be “real-world”.
 - More management is required of game animals regarding interference with agriculture. What will landowner incentives be?
 - Is the document a springboard for implementation by identified personnel positions?
 - How are we going to make it work – access is key. Conservation without access is not going to work.
 - The Assessment needs to make sense to “Joe Montana”.

Feedback on Potential Actions to Implement a Coordinated Delivery Mechanism for the Habitat Components of Montana's Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy (MCFWCS)

I. Conservation Leadership

Objectives

- Introduce “conservation” into all dialogues/processes/education among Agencies, NGO's, etc.
- Redefine/define “conservation leader” and communicate it.
- Encourage communities to be conservation leaders.
- Actively cultivate conservation leadership at all levels through all processes.

Important Principles

- We believe that conservation leadership occurs at all levels in all places at all scales and that it doesn't have to be hierarchal. We can all be leaders and start by leading by example.
- We recognize that leadership is often issue-driven.
- We believe that successful leadership needs to encompass and respect all perspectives.
- We believe that leadership expands capacity, builds connections, and breaks down barriers.
- We believe that active leadership can result in integration of conservation into land use planning.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- All levels, all organizations, communities, etc

Suggested Actions

- Through an integrated effort, identify and implement strategies that encourage leadership at all levels through inclusion, not exclusion.
- Nurture new leaders in State and federal agencies, NGO's, and other sectors including tourism, County Commissioners and City leaders, those involved in economic development, youth, etc.
- Consider a conservation “champion” or steering committee at the State level:
 - Develop and conduct a “conservation” campaign involving lots of partners.
 - Empower organization leaders by sharing information and strategies.
 - Develop and advance policy and incentive-based programs.
- Find ways to actively promote the link between conservation and economic development.
- Use the media and other communication tools to “share your story”.

-
- Use the principles in the Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy as an information and education tool; as education; and as a guide to expand the Strategy's value and credibility.

2. Coordination and Conservation Partners

Objectives

- Define “success” – Determine how to identify conservation groups and other interests to help them understand the CFWCS and get them to work together to meet the objectives of the Strategy..
- Identify all stakeholders especially at the grassroots and landowner level and determine their interests, needs and wants.
- Encompass and expand existing groups.
- Increase awareness of the CFWCS to all levels of agencies, NGO's, stakeholders, and the general public and publicize the benefits.
- Identify spokesmen/decision makers/local leaders.

Important Principles

- We believe that to be successful, we must be inclusive, not exclusive.
- We relate and record successes in context of the CFWCS.
- We use good communicators to spread the word.
- We believe in sharing information among all groups to find how they could most successfully fit into and contribute to the Strategy.
- We recognize and use expertise and experience that's available.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Everybody
- Different levels within agencies; agencies at local, state, federal levels and Tribes
- Conservation groups, general public, landowners, multiple generations, especially youth, government leaders at all levels

Suggested Actions

- Hold forums (like this one) at specific times and locations for regional issues to communicate and plan objectives and actions for 5, 50 and 100 years.
- Establish a state-level conservation coordination group.
- Implement strategies that get the “grassroots” involved – “what's in it for me?”
- Facilitate regional coordination to get SWCD and Watershed groups together – two way communication to inform and get input.
- Keep moving forward on communication, funding and partnerships – don't wait.
- Harvest the “low-hanging fruit” first so we can get demonstrable success quickly.

3. Support for Local Conservation Initiatives

Objectives

- Identify and achieve tangible benefits and establish an issue to rally around.
- Facilitate a “grassroots” effort by creating a climate of inclusiveness.
- Build and achieve a level of trust to overcome negative relationships.

Important Principles

- We believe in the value of small successes based on a collective vision.
- We believe in restoration of an ecological area – not just wildlife.
- We believe that passionate leadership is necessary for success and we have passion, patience and persistence.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Residents and willing volunteers with long-term commitment/continuity
- Agencies (not leadership) and NGO’s with a role in the particular watershed.
- Local people most impacted
- People who can broker agreements among all participants because they are respected by the local community

Suggested Actions

- Vote in politicians who understand the issue and support conservation.
- Do active public outreach.
- Develop partnerships with similar groups and establish relationships.
- Find funding/grants to start with something everyone agrees on (e.g., weeds).
- Identify and establish infrastructure (staff, volunteers, offices, contacts, etc.).
- Provide a webpage of grant/funding resources and opportunities.
- Use ground rules and convene stakeholders to create common vision and focus.
- Consider a disinterested facilitator.
- Identify clear vision, goals and benefits and start with doable projects.
- Establish timelines to achieve results and clear measures of success.
- Identify, define, and address problems and issues to build relationships.
- Provide clear incentives for landowners.
- Determine what would go wrong with no action and create a bias for action.
- Promote/celebrate successes.
- Eliminate the fear of dictating from above (ESA, etc.).

4. Outreach and Communication

Objectives

- Explain the MCFWCS in lay terms.
- Determine our message:
 - It needs to engage Montanans.
 - It has to go beyond the choir.
 - It should be positive rather than a threat (i.e., may prevent listing, etc.)
 - Don't put different interests on the defensive (e.g., energy development).
 - Get the right people to participate.
 - Focus on areas of agreement.
 - It needs people who work on the land to see how to plan and achieve their goals alongside fish and wildlife goals.

Important Principles

- We honor private property rights.
- We believe in maintaining and fostering the importance of working landscapes and communities.
- We recognize the importance and value of maintaining fish and wildlife populations in Montana.
- We include stakeholders in development of outreach efforts early in the process.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Local spokespeople (i.e., identified stakeholders, community leaders, industry, etc.; federal and State agencies and NGO's should participate.)
- Spokespeople from other partnerships that work – use established networks
- Reluctant landowners (“ox is gored”) – find who they listen to...

Suggested Actions

- With leadership from FW&P, develop a package and use it to facilitate networks through established groups (i.e., watershed groups; Conservation Districts; RAC's; collaborative working groups on other issues; planners, etc.). Create an “outreach team” and provide technical support.
- Develop/advertise/communicate incentive-based programs that include money and/or other benefits of participating in the CFWCS.
- Using NRIS, create a (or use an existing) neutral data warehouse where people can get information in a non-threatening but informing way.
- Seek the endorsement of the Governor and publicize it.

-
- Do media outreach focusing on specific projects and joint partnerships in different geographic areas in Montana.
 - Involve education at all levels (Kindergarten through University) – Institute for Rural Landscapes; curriculum at various levels; outside funding for specific projects.

5. Sustainable and Predictable Funding Base

Objectives

- Identify existing funding sources.
- Establish clear goals and anticipated accomplishments.
- Identify plan components and find matching funding sources.
- Prepare and manage a budget.
- Work to get one million dollars from the Montana general fund next biennium.
- Look for matching opportunities.
- Look for new funding sources.

Important Principles

- We don't rely on one source – we use multiple sources.
- We believe that success includes stability – avoiding peaks and valleys.
- We believe that those who impact the landscape have some responsibility for funding. At the same time, we believe in getting funding from those who share the vision.
- We make it easy to get funds to the ground.
- We believe in leveraging funds through partnerships.
- We believe in cutting costs by reorganizing and not funding harmful strategies or projects (e.g., planting Russian Olive trees).
- We avoid subsidies that harm fish and wildlife.
- We believe that development costs should not be externalized (e.g., wells, septic leaking, etc.).
- We use partnerships to maximize entities that can get funds working on the ground.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Traditional partners
- Industry leaders; realtors and developers; large corporate landowners
- Private foundations and their trustees
- The Governor's Office; legislators; local governments; Economic Development
- FWP; DNRC
- Oil and Gas industry

-
- Local taxpayers
 - Power companies
 - Commercial recreation and non-commercial recreation
 - Carbon trading market
 - Tribes
 - Department of Defense
 - Watershed groups, Conservation Districts and local “grassroots” organizations
 - Chambers of Commerce
 - NGO’s; “Teaming with Wildlife”
 - Agriculture producer groups
 - Any established coalition of conservation-minded groups

Suggested Actions

- Establish a Montana Heritage Program (Agriculture, Forest and other habitat)
- Promote legislation for land conservation through a dedicated fund.
- Promote open space bonds.
- Promote legislation to enhance Montana’s restoration economy.
- Work with the University system to promote restoration technology ethics.
- Look for private funding sources.
- Allocate lottery money to support conservation in the State.
- Build on current relationships.
- Explore tradable fish and wildlife impact credits.
- Use a Governor’s fish and wildlife funding coordinator.
- Create a coalition of groups to coordinate funding.
- Explore a conservation tax.
- Expand impact/user fees to cover impacts on fish and wildlife.
- Explore models in other states.

6. Implementing the Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Objectives and Important Principles

- Get local people and groups involved in implementation and use local resources.
- Prioritize at the watershed level for species and habitat.
- Gather information as you go and use it to adapt as you learn.

-
- Create incentives for local governments to apply their money to achieve goals.
 - Maximize the benefit of money available.
 - Help create “implementation capacity” at local levels.
 - Find ways to link/integrate the CFWCS with agency or government programs.
 - Take a “landscape” approach to embrace a broad range of interests.
 - Recognize the effects of climate change (e.g., change in Big Hole hydrology and snowmelt).
 - Get people excited about implementation with a compelling statement.
 - Things should be locally driven and respectful.
 - Clarify what “partnership” might mean in a variety of aspects.
 - Consciously seek to identify real benefits to various interests.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Everyone...so... Don't assume anyone doesn't have a stake.
- Business and developers whose profit is based on “selling” amenity values.
- Err on the inclusive side.
- FWP has leadership responsibility but can't “drive” it.
- Leadership will vary with size and nature of the effort.
- Leadership equals communication, facilitation, support, prioritizing, creating realistic expectations, and seeking resources.

Suggested Actions

- Create a larger “buzz” about the CFWCS.
- Don't just focus on Western Montana or a few “high profile” species.
- Recognize 3 phases for each project and do each thoroughly:
 - Brainstorming (scope both the project and PAI's)
 - Implementation
 - Assessment and adaptation
- Create a framework for communication among conservation partners.
- Expand the Montana Wetlands Legacy partnership as an example.
- Find ways to support/empower more local groups.
- Engage agricultural interests and use Farm Bill provisions – follow the money!
- Engage in State and federal land use planning processes (e.g., BLM's Resource Management Plans).
- Document success and look for aspects that can be applied elsewhere.

7. Updating the Comprehensive Fish & Wildlife Conservation Strategy

Objectives

- Standardize reporting.
- Assure local involvement.
- Utilize NHP or another interactive web application.
- Use local workgroups as a feedback mechanism for adaptive management.

Important Principles

- We believe in empowering local groups (i.e., watershed groups, Conservation Districts, etc.) to:
 - Identify projects
 - Implement projects
 - Monitor and report findings.
- We believe in local investment and developing “buy-in”.
- We believe in minimizing “bureaucracy” while recognizing and considering everyone’s input.
- We believe in providing equal access to the process.

Who should be involved and how should leadership occur?

- Steering committee
- Local watershed groups
- An “updating steering committee”
- Local groups, communities
- Invested partners

Suggested Actions

- Evaluate implementation strategies.
- Solicit feedback on evaluation findings.
- Map, inventory and record outcomes.
- Facilitate local involvement.
- Assure funding for the monitoring and updating process.
- Set up a broad-based advisory council.
- Establish a coordinating council and local coordinating committees to review and recommend.
- Consider the following:
 - An annual review with a 5 year full review leading to adaptive management

-
- An implementation plan, an annual work plan, and a results document to reflect priorities
 - Reference other plans
 - Clearly identified gatekeepers relative to this plan (coordinating function)
 - Local implementation to “put a face to it”
 - A “clearinghouse” concept
 - “Keep it simple” method

What Happens Now?

- The facilitator will prepare a summary of the input received from participants.
- John will use the summary to adjust/edit/complete the Assessment.
- The final product will be shared by the end of the year with the participants, those interviewed and the general public through a variety of ways.

Meeting facilitated and summary report prepared by Virginia Tribe