Montana Wetland Council
Strategic Framework for Wetland and Riparian Area Conservation and Restoration In Montana: 2008-2012

Restoration Working Group

Invitees, Volunteers, and Participants in Restoration Working Group and/or Topic Areas:

Tom Hinz, MT Wetlands Legacy Partnership, chair
Lynda Saul, MT Dept. Environmental Quality
Gael Bissell, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Carrie Mosley, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Tom Parker, Geum Consulting
Bonnie Steg, MT Department of Transportation
Mike Philbin, Bureau of Land Management
Sunni Knapton, Wetland consultant
Steve Kloetzel, The Blackfoot Challenge
Gates Watson, The Conservation Fund
Dave Smith, Intermountain West Joint Venture
Jim Stutzman, Coordinator, USFWS Partners for Fish & Wildlife
Mark Sommer, American Public Land Exchange
Andrea Silverman, Prickly Pear Land Trust
Sam Lawry, Teller Wildlife Refuge
Kelly Pohl, Gallatin Valley Land Trust
Pelah Hoyt, Five Valleys Land Trust
Jim Berkey, The Nature Conservancy
Bob Sanders, Ducks Unlimited, Inc.
Alex Diekmann, Trust for Public Land
Michael Downey, Montana Land Reliance
Rob Hazlewood, PPL Montana
Jeanne Spaur, Fort Peck Tribes Wildlife Program
Stacy Allen, Flathead Land Trust

Strategic Direction #4: Restoration
The MWC will support and continue to work closely with the Montana Wetlands Legacy Partnership – the Council's key partner that fosters on-the-ground wetland net gain – and with others engaged in wetland and riparian conservation and restoration.

Ideal Outcome: The state actively supports and encourages wetland restoration and conservation. Montana's conservation community has ample resources and works cooperatively to restore and conserve wetlands, riparian areas, and associated uplands.

To achieve this outcome, Montana Wetland Council participants will:

A. Support the Montana Wetlands Legacy Partnership by:

- ***Participating in the Legacy's mission and capacity building***
- ***Collaborating with all entities to identify priority conservation areas and focusing restoration efforts on those areas.***
- ***Developing an active wetland restoration program on state-owned lands.***
- ***Creating a wetland, stream, and other aquatic natural resource mitigation crediting program.***
- ***Encouraging participation in the Legacy's restoration tracking database.***
- ***Securing a sustainable funding base for the Legacy Partnership and its work.***

B. Support and encourage the work of all agencies, conservation organizations, and individual landowners engaged in restoration projects, and provide public outreach on the benefits of and opportunities for wetland riparian restoration on private land.

C. Document protection of wetlands and riparian areas in the conservation easement dataset housed in the Montana Natural Heritage Program's Stewardship database.

D. Evaluate the longer-term success and ecological effectiveness of restoration and compensatory mitigation in Montana.

E. Develop, publish, and distribute a wetland and riparian restoration handbook for landowners and resource professionals who focus on restoration techniques such as project planning, site assessment, restoration design, project implementation and monitoring, and management.

Annual Work Plan for 2009

Task 1. Continue to solicit partner input to continue to refine the Conservation Focus Area concept and prioritization process for delivery of on-the-ground wetland and riparian conservation projects in Montana.

Task 2. Organize meetings, facilitate communication, and engage partners in developing on-the-ground wetland/riparian restoration projects in conservation focus areas identified for expenditure of Farm Bill and other wetland/riparian conservation program funds.

Task 3. Continue partner engagement and discussion in developing an ILF program to provide another third-party compensatory mitigation option for 404 applicants impacting streams, wetlands, and other aquatic resources in Montana.

Task 4. Continue to engage and involve MT DNRC, FWP, and other state land management agencies in actively pursuing wetland and riparian restoration projects on their lands.