



## **Wetland Program Capacity Building Workshop Field Trips, Tuesday, September 21, 2010**

The following descriptions provide an overview of the two field sessions on Tuesday, September 21. Both trips are scheduled to depart from the Hilton Garden Inn in Bozeman at 8:00 AM and return to the same location by 5:30 PM. Be prepared for the field: Bring waterproof field boots, and layers appropriate for wind, sun, rain, heat and cold! Both field sessions travel through Montana's scenic Gallatin and Madison Valleys to locations near Ennis, Montana. Mark your registration form for the trip of your choice. Cost for field trips is \$20, which includes bus transportation, lunch and breaks.

### **FIELD METHODS FOR MONITORING & ASSESSMENT**

This workshop will take place on the Granger Ranch south of Ennis. Focus will be on the O'Dell spring creek wetlands (see below for more information), and will introduce participants to some of the challenges involved in field-based monitoring and assessment. We will discuss how to select points for assessment, using GIS and/or aerial photography; navigating to points in the field; how and when to move points; assessment area delineation; setting up photo plots; identification and characterization of buffers; and QAQC for field data. We will also demonstrate field methods currently being used in the Rocky Mountain ReMAP study and methods that will be used in the National Wetlands Condition Assessment next year, including soil pits and intensive vegetation plots. Depending on participant interest, we may test out some specific metrics from these or other assessment methods.

### **WETLAND RESTORATION & MITIGATION PROJECTS: Madison River Conservation Focus Area**

Visit two premier wetland areas southwest of Bozeman. The Madison River conservation focus area is home to some of southwest Montana's wildest and most biologically diverse lands in the state. Populations of grizzly and black bears, elk, deer, antelope, moose, trumpeter swans, greater sandhill cranes, brown and rainbow trout, and other wildlife thrive in this largely rural landscape. The first stop is the Granger Ranch south of Ennis. The Andrew Laszlo Family, owners of the Granger Ranch, received the 2010 National Wetlands Award for Landowner Stewardship. The Granger Ranch project has restored approximately 500 acres of wetlands. Since its inception in 2005, researchers have documented a ten-fold increase in bird diversity along O'Dell Creek, the focus of our visit to the Ranch. Next stop is a stream and wetland restoration project on the Jack Creek Ranch that produced mitigation credits for the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT). The project was developed in summer/fall of 2003 by Jack Creek Ranch LLC in partnership with then Aquatic Design and Construction of Livingston, Montana. The heart of the restoration area is a large wetland complex that was ditched during the 1940s and has since 2003 developed into a vibrant emergent marsh and wet meadow area. Stream restoration on the site has further enhanced fish and wildlife habitat. Participants will enjoy the sweeping vistas of the Gravelly and Madison Ranges, explore the varied fish and wildlife habitats along Jack and O'Dell Creeks, and see wetland restoration on a watershed scale in the middle Madison. There will be ample opportunities to talk with landowners and managers to learn how these landmark projects began and how monitoring/assessment, management, and future plans are progressing!