

# MWCC and Wetland Council Joint Meeting

## *Riparian Area Panel*

*Aka*

*RAP Session*

*Hearing from those on the Front Line*

Thursday May 7<sup>th</sup> 1:15 pm - 3:45 pm  
Room 317 Montana State Capital

Protecting our wetlands and riparian areas is an extremely challenging and often controversial task. Throughout Montana there are many local and county led efforts that are either supporting or opposing mandated protection standards for these critical water related areas. We have invited a diversity of individuals, representing a variety of positions and experiences, to share their observations and perspectives from the field on what is, or is not, working in the area of riparian protection. The purpose of the panel presentations is to provide a broad perspective on how we might manage or protect our riparian, wetland and aquatic resources. Questions/topics to consider:

Overview of personal role and history in riparian related activities  
(planning/policy/opponent/proponent, etc)

Within your area, what do you feel is working or has worked and what has not?

What are the primary concerns? How can they be mitigated?

Are there points of agreement?

How can we do this more effectively at the local level?

How can state agencies help and/or participate? (Technical resource, education, facilitation, etc.)

How, or do we, effectively promote the need for riparian protection? What might that look like?

Panel Moderator, Ann Schwend, MWCC Co-chair.

Panelists – Perspectives and Observations:

**Brianna Randall**, Clark Fork Coalition

**Traci Sears-Tull**, DNRC Floodplain Coordinator

**Jim Jarvis**, Madison County Planner, Madison River Setback Steering Committee

**Dustin Stewart**, Montana Homebuilders Association (invited)

**Laurie Riley**, Coordinator Bitterroot Water Forum

**Senator Verdell Jackson** Senate District 5 (invited)

### **Please join MWCC and the Wetland Council for all the events on May 7.**

9:00 am Stewardship Award Presentations - State Capitol Room 317

11:00 am Wetland and Watershed Stewardship Award Ceremony - Rotunda

12:15 pm Complimentary Luncheon Celebration - Rotunda

1:15 pm MWCC and Wetland Council Joint Meeting - State Capitol Room 317

**2009 Wetland and Watershed Stewardship Awards  
May 7, 2009 Montana State Capitol**

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

**Stewardship Award Presentations**

State Capitol Room 317

- 9:00 am Gather and Convene**  
Welcome and Introductions
- 9:15 am Presentations by Wetland Stewardship Award Recipients**  
Jim and Cindy Kittredge, Bird Creek Ranch  
Tim Griffiths, NRCS Bozeman Area Biologist
- 10:15 am Presentations by Watershed Stewardship Award Recipients**  
Yellowstone River Conservation District Council
- 10:45 am Move to Rotunda**

**Wetland and Watershed Stewardship Award Ceremony**

State Capitol Rotunda

- 11:00 am Opening Remarks**  
Lynda Saul, Wetland Council Chair  
Traci Bignell, MWCC Co-Chair
- Governor, Brian Schweitzer**  
**Wetland Stewardship Award Recipients**  
Jim and Cindy Kittredge, Bird Creek Ranch  
Tim Griffiths, NRCS Bozeman Area Biologist
- Watershed Stewardship Award Recipient**  
Yellowstone River Conservation District Council  
**Tom Elliott, Rancher, Conservationist, Sustainability Advocate**  
Keynote: Strange Attraction and Complex Interactions--  
Taking Full Measure of Our Presence in Watersheds
- 12:15 pm Complimentary Luncheon Celebration in the Rotunda**

**MWCC and Wetland Council Joint Meeting**

State Capitol Room 317

- 1:15 pm Riparian Area Panel: hearing from those on the front line.**  
Panel Moderator - Ann Schwend, DNRC Watershed Coordinator  
Panelists – perspectives and observations  
Brianna Randall, Clark Fork Coalition  
Traci Sears-Tull, DNRC Floodplain Program  
Jim Jarvis, Madison County Planner  
Dustin Stewart, Montana Home Builders Association (invited)  
Laurie Riley, Bitterroot Water Forum  
Senator Verdell Jackson, SD 5 (invited)
- 3:00 pm Facilitated Discussion – finding common ground.  
3:45 pm Adjourn.

**Wetland Stewardship Award Winner**  
**Jim and Cindy Kittredge, Bird Creek Ranch**  
**Cascade Montana**

The Kittredge's have shown an extraordinary level of commitment and stewardship on the Bird Creek Ranch. They worked with multiple partners to install 8 miles of riparian fencing, restore 118 acres of wetlands, and place conservation easements on the entire 2,293-acre ranch including over 300 acres of wetlands. The Kittredge's also have a strong interest in educating youth and showcasing a stewardship ethic for other working landowners. They have continued a valued tradition of allowing public hunting. In addition, the Kittredge's have encouraged scientific monitoring; demonstrating a truly comprehensive approach to wetland and riparian restoration and conservation.

**Wetland Stewardship Award Winner**  
**Tim Griffiths, NRCS Bozeman Area Biologist**

Tim Griffiths has a keen ability to work with private landowners on wetland conservation in Southwestern Montana. He has completed 11 wetland restoration projects with 4 additional projects in progress involving over 51,000 feet of streams and 807 acres of adjacent wetlands. Within NRCS he developed the use of technical service providers to expedite stream and wetland project implementation. Tim has also worked with two school districts to involve students in the long term monitoring of restored aquatic systems. Tim's passion for wildlife and wildlife habitat is evident in his work and approach to partnerships and resulting restoration success.

**Watershed Stewardship Award Winner**  
**Yellowstone River Conservation District Council**

The Yellowstone River Conservation District Council is being recognized for outstanding contributions toward promoting the health and viability of the Yellowstone River through broad community collaboration. The Council's purpose is to provide local leadership and assistance, and guidance for the wise use and conservation of the Yellowstone River's natural resources. The YRDC is developing planning and management tools that will culminate in voluntary best management practices that minimize impacts to the river corridor. The YRDC is embarking on a restoration initiative that will result in substantial ecosystem and recreation benefits along the entire river in Montana and North Dakota.

## **Joint Award Ceremony**

### **Wetland and Watershed Stewardship**

Every two years, the Montana Watershed Coordination Council and the Montana Wetland Council jointly honor their stewardship award recipients. The Montana Wetland Stewardship Award Program recognizes individuals who exemplify excellence, innovation and extraordinary commitment in wetlands protection, restoration and conservation. The Montana Watershed Stewardship Award recognizes innovative, locally led approaches to restoring and enhancing Montana's watersheds.

### **The Montana Watershed Coordination Council**

The Montana Watershed Coordination Council (MWCC) is a network of citizens, natural resource professionals, agencies, and elected officials. For over ten years, MWCC has been cultivating a broad-based voluntary network supporting community-driven approaches for managing complex land and water issues. For more information, visit our website at <http://mwcc.montana.edu>. You may contact co-chairs Traci Bignell (406) 793-3900 or Ann Schwend (406) 444-1806 or send an email to [info@mwcc.org](mailto:info@mwcc.org).

### **The Montana Wetland Council**

The Montana Wetland Council is an active network of diverse interests that works cooperatively to conserve and restore Montana's wetlands and riparian ecosystems. The Council involved over 500 Montanans in a planning process to create "A Strategic Framework for Wetland and Riparian Area Conservation and Restoration in Montana 2008-2012." Council participants actively work to implement the Strategic Framework, and meet three times each year. All are welcome and encouraged to get involved. For more information, contact Lynda Saul at (406) 444-6652 or [lsaul@mt.gov](mailto:lsaul@mt.gov) or <http://deq.mt.gov/wqinfo/Wetlands/Index.asp>