



2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - Capacity Building/Education Outreach Projects

General Information

Project Name

Applicant Name

Is your organization registered with the Montana Secretary of State?

Explanation: Each applicant must be registered with the Montana Secretary of State to do business in the state of Montana. Registration with the Secretary of State may be completed via the following website: <https://sosmt.gov/business/>

Is your organization registered with the federal System for Award Management (SAM)?

Explanation: Each applicant is required to register with SAM. To register or check your organization's status, go to <https://sam.gov/content/home>. If you get an "Unsupported Browser" error, copy, and paste the link into a Google Chrome browser window.

Your organization's Unique Entity Identifier number (UEI #)

Explanation: Each applicant is required to have a current UEI number. The UEI number replaces the old DUNS number. If your organization had a DUNS number, you should have received a notification from the federal government indicating that your DUNS number has been changed to a UEI number. If you did not receive this notification, or if you never had a DUNS number, you will need to go to the federal government's System for Award Management (SAM - <https://sam.gov/content/home>) to obtain your UEI number. DEQ recommends starting this process early as it is very time-consuming, requires providing documentation-sometimes with follow-up requests for additional information, and can take up to 2 months to complete. If you need assistance, you may contact the federal help desk at 866-606-8220 Monday-Friday 8:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m. EST.

Does your organization have adequate liability insurance for the risks associated with your project?

Explanation: Each applicant must have or obtain liability insurance coverage meeting the requirements stated in the Draft Sample Contract and/or requirements negotiated based on the appropriate level of risk associated with the project.

Primary Contact Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature

Explanation: This is the person who DEQ would routinely contact to discuss project progress, billing, etc.

Signatory Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature

Explanation: This is the person who can legally sign contracts and other binding documents on behalf of the applicant (e.g., a board chair)

Note: The primary contact and the signatory must both sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and emailed.

Project Form

Project Type

Is this a Capacity Building Project, or is it an Education and Outreach Project?

Capacity Building Project

Explanation: DEQ supports education and outreach efforts that focus on changes in behavior that will prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution. Our goal is to encourage adoption of Community Based Social Marketing concepts to produce measurable, sustainable change. We also want to support activities that improve local capacity to develop and implement on-the-ground projects to prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution. In so doing, we are making a distinction between capacity building projects, and education and outreach projects. The selection you make above will be used to determine which questions on the Scoring Sheet reviewers will use to evaluate your project.

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

- Letter of support or from each organization critical to the project (*if applicable*)
- Letter of support from each landowner associated with any on-the-ground component of the project (*if applicable*)
- Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template)

Activity Location

List the watershed(s) where your proposed work will happen.

Flathead-Stillwater Watershed and Flathead Lake Watershed.

Activity Description

Describe your project goals, proposed activities and how the project will make progress towards addressing nonpoint source pollution. Explain why the proposed work is an appropriate next step towards preventing or reducing nonpoint source pollution.

Several tributaries within the Flathead-Stillwater watershed are listed on Montana's 303(d) impaired waters list. The DEQ-approved 2017 Flathead-Stillwater Watershed Restoration Plan (WRP) and the 2014 Flathead Lake WRP identify excess sediment, nutrient loading, and loss of riparian shade as priority nonpoint source impairments driven by erosion, livestock access, unpaved roads, shoreline and septic impacts, and urban stormwater. Both WRPs identify riparian restoration and septic and riparian buffer education as key strategies to address these impairments. Restoration efforts in the Flathead were active between 2003 and 2018 but have slowed in recent years. This project will reinvigorate restoration planning and collaboration by identifying priority restoration opportunities and initiating the mapping of stream reaches, property-level impairments, and potential landowner interest to support future projects. In 2025, the Flathead Conservation District (FCD) and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) convened the Local Working Group to identify natural resource concerns and funding priorities in Flathead County. Top priorities included water quality and water availability. These results provide a platform to revive riparian restoration efforts. The Lakers will invite past and new stakeholders to identify future restoration and collaborative opportunities. Activities will include assessing accomplishments, refining the stream-reach assessment methodology previously piloted along Ashley Creek, selecting the next stream reach for assessment, and contracting with a consultant to conduct a high-level stream and property assessment. The assessment will produce maps and a report showing properties, impairments, and potential landowner interest, providing partners with actionable information for future projects. Project screening will consider erosion severity, proximity to listed segments, permitting, match potential, and partner capacity consistent with WRP priorities. Results will be summarized in a Flathead-Stillwater WRP addendum identifying priority restoration sites, property-level impairments, and next steps for implementation funding. Alongside planning, we will begin building a volunteer network to support stewardship and assist partner-led restoration efforts. During the grant, we will initiate volunteer planting and stewardship at FWP's Somers Beach State Park, Evergreen Water and Sewers wetland restoration, and FCD's Cow Creek project.

Budget Form

Please fill out the Capacity Building and/or Education Outreach Project Budget Template (Excel file). Cells highlighted in yellow may be edited to fit the needs of your particular project. DEQ uses a template to construct nonpoint source grant contracts. The Budget Template contains tasks and typical deliverables that match up with the grant contract template. Please see the Example Contract and Scope of Work template for a more detailed look at typical task requirements and deliverables.

Capacity Building Projects

(only complete this page if you selected "Capacity Building Project" on the top of page 2; otherwise, leave this page blank)

Need and Opportunity

Describe your organization's need for increased capacity, and how the proposed project activities will help you meet those needs. Describe the local interest and opportunities for using the capacity you create to prevent or reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Between 2008 and 2018, the Flathead Lakers, in collaboration with FCD, FWP, and NRCS, coordinated the River Steward partnership, which implemented a dozen experimental restoration projects along the Flathead River and one along Ashley Creek. The FCD also prioritized projects along Ashley Creek, and partners conducted limited outreach. These efforts slowed after 2019 due to leadership transitions and limited landowner engagement along Ashley Creek. Currently, the Flathead Lakers do not have dedicated staff to coordinate restoration partners, work with landowners, or advance projects. The 2025 Local Working Group prioritized water quality and quantity, and there is renewed interest from FCD and NRCS to revisit riparian restoration needs and opportunities - creating a timely opportunity to reconnect partners, identify shared priorities, and accelerate watershed-wide nonpoint source pollution reduction. In recent years, the Evergreen Water and Sewer District has expanded its capacity to implement wetland restoration and septic education projects, creating additional opportunities for collaboration.

The Flathead Lakers propose to invite past and new stakeholders to review the WRP and identify priority restoration opportunities, including mapping stream reaches and property-level impairments, creating a high-level pipeline of potential projects for at least one additional impaired stream or river, collaboratively planning outreach, and building a volunteer network to strengthen stewardship and restoration readiness. The existing WRPs identify priority impairments and strategies but do not identify property-level restoration opportunities or landowner readiness. Thus, we propose to expand on the FCDs previous work on Ashley Creek, expanding our geographic scope to new stream reaches, allowing advancement across a wider portion of the watershed.

By improving communication, organization, and shared planning, this project will position partners to advance future restoration projects that address sediment, nutrient loading, and stream temperature impacts. By improving communication, organization, and shared planning, this project will position partners to advance future restoration projects that address sediment, nutrient loading, and stream temperature impacts.

Measurement and Sustainability

Describe how you will measure an increase in capacity and how you would sustain this in to the future

Increased capacity will be measured by the 1) number of partners engaged, 2) priority restoration opportunities identified for an impaired stream, 3) identification of at least two implementation-ready restoration projects, 4) the establishment of a volunteer network database, and 5) recruitment of at least 50 volunteers to participate in partner-led restoration and stewardship events.

Restoration sites will be screened using a feasibility matrix evaluating their potential to reduce erosion, improve riparian shade to address temperature impairments, and intercept nutrient runoff consistent with watershed plan strategies. Implementation-ready projects will include site boundaries, permitting considerations, preliminary cost estimates, and potential funding sources. Outcomes include strengthened restoration planning and coordination, development of a prioritized restoration project list for an impaired stream, and establishment of a volunteer base to support riparian and wetland restoration. A volunteer base represents a long-term investment in stewardship and builds community understanding of how riparian areas protect water quality. Capacity built through this project will continue beyond the grant period through continued planning and advancement of restoration projects, maintenance and growth of the volunteer database, continued application of the prioritization/feasibility screening matrix, coordinated outreach, pursuit of DEQ 319, DNRC, NRCS and other funding.

Timeline

Describe your anticipated project timeline

Months 1-6: Partner Identification and Engagement- stakeholder list developed; meetings held; id accomplishments, opportunities.

Months 4-10: Identify Restoration Opportunities- consultant contract; project prioritization matrix; restoration projects list; feasibility screening; WRP addendum summarizing assessment results and project prioritization.

Months 4-14: Volunteer Recruitment and Coordination- volunteer network database; recruitment materials and outreach; volunteer retention strategy outlined.

Months 5 - 15: Volunteer-Supported Restoration - volunteers recruited; restoration/stewardship projects supported, volunteer appreciation gathering; volunteer participation documented.

Months 2, 8, 12, 16: Project Administration Progress reports; match documentation; evaluation; final report.

Education and Outreach Projects

(only complete this page if you selected "Education and Outreach Project" on the top of page 2; otherwise, leave this page blank)

Behavioral Change

Identify the behavior change you are targeting and the target audience. From a nonpoint source pollution perspective, why is the change in behavior important and what impact would it have?

Barriers

What are the existing barriers to changing the behavior? How will your proposed activities address the identified barriers and lead to behavior change?

Evaluation

How will you measure the extent of the behavioral change achieved because of your project?

Timeline

Describe your anticipated timeline

Project Partners and Roles

Identify the partners that will be working on the project, and their roles.

¾ The project will build on past partnerships among watershed organizations, agencies, and local governments involved in restoration planning and implementation.

¾ Flathead Lakers will lead the project by coordinating partners, facilitating meetings, conducting outreach, recruiting volunteers and organizing stewardship activities together with host organizations. We will work with established partners and engage additional organizations as appropriate to strengthen restoration coordination in the Flathead Watershed.

- ¾ The Flathead Conservation District will serve as a primary partner in identifying and guiding restoration prioritization, participating in feasibility discussions, and supporting landowner outreach when appropriate.

¾ Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will provide habitat restoration guidance at Somers Beach State Park and Diamond B. and coordinate stewardship activities for volunteers on those properties.

-¾ The Evergreen Water and Sewer District will coordinate with Flathead Lakers to identify opportunities for volunteer engagement in wetland restoration on its Whitefish River property.

¾¾ The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) will coordinate with Flathead Lakers to assess stewardship needs and opportunities for volunteers on a Tribal property along the mainstem Flathead River.

¾ Additional stakeholders have expressed interest in participating in project identification, including City of Kalispell and others.

Co-Benefit Considerations

DEQ is committed to carrying out nonpoint source pollution reduction projects within engaged communities where the impact stretches beyond improving water quality. DEQ will award additional points in the scoring form where co-benefits extend beyond the project. Below are a few examples of how projects might exemplify co-benefits.

- Project will reduce economic hardship such as from livestock mortalities, cost and energy needs to treat municipal drinking and wastewater treatment, or loss of income from recreation
- Project will benefit underserved markets
- Project will improve or create equitable access to a clean and healthy environment
- Project planning included consultation with Tribal Nations
- Project will improve flood and drought resilience of the landscape
- Project impacts will benefit a downstream community and other natural systems (e.g., drinking water sources, human health, wildlife habitat, etc)

Please use this section to highlight co-benefits your project may have.

Volunteer engagement will occur at multiple public sites across the Flathead Valley, including potential opportunities in Evergreen, an unincorporated area in Flathead County that has limited local governance and resources. By engaging volunteers in a variety of accessible locations, this project helps expand environmental stewardship opportunities to residents across the watershed.

Building a collaborative volunteer network supports long-term understanding of how riparian forests protect water quality, reduce erosion, and support fish and wildlife habitat, while also increasing the capacity of local organizations to advance restoration and stewardship efforts. Project planning will include coordination with the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes, ensuring Tribal priorities and knowledge are reflected in restoration planning.

This project builds partnerships, a volunteer base, and project readiness to support future restoration efforts that improve water quality, enhance flood resilience, and strengthen habitat connectivity throughout the watershed.

Project Administration

Each contract will have a Project Administration Task. Take the requirements (listed below) into consideration when planning logistics and budget for your project. Project administration includes bookkeeping, invoicing, interim/annual/final report preparation, office supplies, rent, communications, etc. Nonpoint source funding applied to this task on each project must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested, or \$3,000, whichever is lower. Like all other tasks, payment is by reimbursement for actual expenses incurred.

Report Format:

- *Contractor shall submit each Attachment B Billing Statement, Status Report and Final Report using the most current reporting guidance and templates provided by the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure each Status Report and Final Report contains adequate documentation to justify accompanying reimbursement requests and match reporting, to the satisfaction of the DEQ project manager.*
- *Contractor shall ensure that the Final Report is a standalone document describing all contract activities and containing copies of all contract deliverables (even if the deliverables were previously submitted).*

Reporting Schedule:

- *Status Reports: Due June 15th and December 15th of each year the Contract is in effect.*
- *Draft Final Report: Contractor shall submit a complete draft Final Report for DEQ review and comment at least 15 days prior to the contract expiration date.*
- *Final Report: Contractor shall submit a Final Report, addressing DEQ comments on the draft Final Report, on or before the Contract expiration date.*
- *Attachment B Billing Statements: Contractor shall submit an Attachment B Billing Statement with each Status Report, or Final Report submitted to DEQ while the Contract is in effect. To maintain cash flow, Contractor may submit interim Attachment B Billing Statements as frequently as monthly during the term of the Contract. However, each interim Attachment B Billing Statement must be accompanied by an Interim Report.*

Additional Information

Use the space below to include anything additional for the review panel to consider. Attach additional items and information that could help reviewers better understand your project. Please be conscious of reviewers' time, as they may not have time to read lengthy studies and reports. Please do not attach copies of TMDL documents or watershed restoration plans. Please no more than 20 pages.

This capacity grant will support the implementation of the Flathead-Stillwater and Flathead Lake Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs). The Flathead Conservation District authored the Flathead-Stillwater WRP, and this application includes a letter of support from them. The Flathead Lakers authored the Flathead Lake WRP.

If additional funding is secured, we will document the steps used to identify, prioritize, and pursue funding for restoration projects to inform a repeatable approach that could be shared with other watershed groups. The Whitefish Lake Institute has expressed interest in working with us to develop a strategy for project identification and prioritization and documentation of lessons learned that could inform similar efforts elsewhere in western Montana.



Completed Document Audit Report
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Document ID: af5057f7-fd47-4de2-a650-4d45ff168711




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Files

F4_CapacityEOAppForm-LakersCapacityGrant.pdf - 6 pages

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Activity

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BUDGET

2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - Capacity Building Education & Outreach Budget Template

Project Title:	Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building									
Instructions	Tasks and Potential Deliverables	Funding Request*	Non-Federal Match**	Other Funding***	Match Source	Match Secured? (Y/N)	Total Project Cost	Additional Information****		
This task may include the initial stages of, for example, developing the Plan, demonstration project, outreach program, educational materials or planning project tours. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Project and Program Development									
	Staff time: Partner identification & convening meetings	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 100.00	Partners, Flathead Lakers, NRCS (other funding)	N	\$ 4,600.00	Develop partner and stakeholder list, convene meetings to discuss collaboration opportunities, identify additional stakeholders, review Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs), and assess restoration accomplishments and remaining restoration/stewardship needs. Match includes partners participation in prioritization meetings, discussions, and document reviews. Partners match not secured, but partners have expressed interest in participating in Letters of Support (LOS). USDA NRCS staff participation expected and included as federal non-match.		
	Staff time: Volunteer recruitment & coordination	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 500.00		Partners, Volunteers	N	\$ 4,000.00	Discuss volunteer recruitment and coordination strategies with stakeholders and volunteer groups; conduct outreach; develop volunteer retention strategies. Match includes partner and volunteer time to support implementation.		
	Volunteer recruitment materials & database setup	\$ 1,200.00	\$ 200.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 1,400.00	Develop volunteer network database; create recruitment materials; conduct volunteer communications; select partner-led restoration and stewardship projects and identify opportunities for volunteer participation. Match includes Lakers contributions secured through member donations.		
	Travel	\$ 800.00	\$ 400.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 1,200.00	Travel to partner meetings and volunteer recruitment events; mileage reimbursed at the federal rate. Match includes Lakers funding for travel expenses.		
Total	\$ 9,000.00	\$ 2,100.00	\$ 100.00				\$ 11,200.00			
This task would include, for example, the time getting stakeholder involvement and writing the Plan, leading the project tours or outreach program, and coordinating volunteers. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Implementation									
	Staff time: feasibility screening matrix development, site visits & documentation, project pipeline development	\$ 7,500.00	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 200.00	Partners, Flathead Lakers, NRCS (other funding)	N	\$ 9,700.00	Review property-level prioritization matrix used on sections of Ashley Creek and the Clark Fork River (comparison); collaboratively develop/review matrix and select new stream reach for assessment. Contract with consultant; review draft and final results. Assess restoration opportunities and develop restoration project pipeline; conduct site and landowner visits when feasible; id projects suitable for future funding. Prepare WRP addendum summarizing assessment results. Match includes partner staff participation in matrix development, consultant selection/contract review, document reviews, project identification, prioritization, and assessment. Partner match not secured, but partners have expressed interest in participating through LOS. USDA NRCS staff participation expected and included as federal non-match.		
	Professional Services (GIS support / technical review of screening matrix)	\$ 4,000.00						\$ 4,000.00	Contract with consultant for GIS-based prioritization mapping and stream reach assessment report identifying candidate restoration sites and property-level impairments. Deliverables include spatial analysis of candidate sites and mapping proximity to listed stream segments.	
	Volunteer restoration supplies (tools, materials, handouts, printing)	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00		Partners	Y	\$ 3,000.00	Print and mail volunteer materials; purchase planting, weeding, and other materials, including work gloves, shovels/spades, pick-ax, loppers, mulch, weed mat, staples, bare root trees, and other planting supplies. Match includes partner materials and tools used or borrowed on-site.		
	Volunteer-supported restoration events	\$ 1,000.00	\$ 4,000.00		Partners, Volunteers	N	\$ 5,000.00	Engage volunteers in two partner-led restoration and stewardship projects, including planting, site maintenance, and invasive species removal; document participation. Volunteer time valued at the federal volunteer rate.		
	End-of-year volunteer gathering (venue, materials, staff time)	\$ 800.00	\$ 500.00		Businesses, Partners	N	\$ 1,300.00	Organize and hold volunteer appreciation gathering. Match includes volunteer time (valued at the federal rate) and swag donations provided by local businesses and partners.		
	Travel	\$ 900.00	\$ 400.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 1,300.00	Travel to partner meetings and volunteer recruitment. Mileage reimbursement federal rate used. Match includes Lakers funding for travel expenses.		
Total	\$ 16,200.00	\$ 7,900.00	\$ 200.00				\$ 24,300.00			
This task includes costs for evaluating the success of your project or program. This may include surveys, community readiness factors, landowner buy in for projects, completion of a Plan, etc. Please include anticipated deliverables and a detailed budget.	Effectiveness Monitoring									
	Staff Time: tracking metrics, database management, project readiness	\$ 2,200.00					\$ 2,200.00	Staff time to track and evaluate project results.		
Total	\$ 2,200.00	\$ -	\$ -				\$ 2,200.00			
Funding applied to Project Administration must not exceed 10% of the total amount of nonpoint funding requested, or \$3,000, per project whichever is lower. Project includes normal business expenses and reporting requirements.	Administration									
	Mid/Annual/Interim Reports and Billing Statements	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 300.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 2,300.00	Staff time to write progress reports, deliverables, match documentation, finances, and administration. Match includes Lakers administration and oversight of financial reports development and review.		
	Draft/Final Report and Billing Statements	\$ 400.00	\$ 100.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 500.00	Staff time to write final reports, deliverables, match documentation, finances, and administration. Match includes Lakers administration and oversight of financial report development and review.		
	Communication with DEQ	\$ 200.00					\$ 200.00	Staff time for communications with DEQ about reports, deliverables, finances, and other questions.		
	Office expenses		\$ 1,000.00		Flathead Lakers	Y	\$ 1,000.00	Match includes office expenses such as pro-rated rent, internet, phone, and utilities to support approximately 25% of staff time during the contract period.		
Total	\$ 2,600.00	\$ 1,400.00	\$ -				\$ 4,000.00			
Grand Totals	Funding Request*	\$ 30,000.00	Non-Federal Match**	\$ 11,400.00	Other Funding***	\$ 300.00	Total Project Cost	\$ 41,700.00		

*Funding Request - Must not exceed \$30,000

**Non-Federal Match - Can include in-kind materials.

***Other Funding - Include federal match here, or, for example, other funding that is supporting the project but cannot be reported as match on this grant because it is matching another funding source.

****Additional Information - Use to specify non-federal match and other funding sources, or use to justify cost if needed (e.g., hourly rates, rental costs, etc.)

**LETTERS
OF
SUPPORT**

February 11, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Water Quality Planning Bureau

RE: Letter of Support – Flathead Watershed Capacity-Building Grant

To Whom It May Concern:

The Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes (CSKT) Fisheries Program supports the proposed Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity-Building Project and welcome the opportunity to collaborate on identifying restoration needs on a CSKT fisheries mitigation property along the mainstem of the Flathead River north of Kalispell.

This project's emphasis on capacity building aligns closely with the CSKT Fisheries Program's goals for watershed health and nonpoint source pollution reduction. We appreciate the opportunity to discuss ways to engage volunteers in supporting riparian health.

The CSKT Fisheries Program anticipates contributing to in-kind staff time through meetings and participation in site visits, restoration planning should a project be identified, and coordination of volunteer activities.

Sincerely,



Rusty Sydnor
Restoration Botanist
CSKT Natural Resources Department, Fisheries Program



Evergreen
Water & Sewer
DISTRICT 1

Flathead County Water District No.1
108 Cooperative Way
Kalispell, MT 59901
P: 406-257-5861

Ⓞ E: info@evergreenwaterdistrict.com

February 17, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Water Quality Planning Bureau

RE: Letter of Support - Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building

Dear Grant Review Committee,

As General Manager of the Flathead County Water District #1- Evergreen ("EWSD"), I am pleased to express our strong support for the Flathead Lakers' *Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building* grant application.

EWSD manages property along the Whitefish River that includes an active wetland restoration project currently underway. This project is intended to improve water quality, enhance riparian and wetland function, and provide long-term ecological benefits to the Whitefish River and downstream waters. As a utility with a strong interest in protecting receiving waters and supporting watershed health, we see clear alignment between our ongoing efforts, potential future activities, and the goals of the proposed project.

We look forward to exploring opportunities to collaborate with project partners on wetland and riparian restoration activities associated with our Whitefish River site and nearby waterways. We are interested in participating in discussions that address nonpoint source pollution threats associated with new septic systems and help identify opportunities for future projects.

We also support the proposal's emphasis on volunteer engagement and capacity building to support nonpoint source pollution reduction and watershed restoration efforts. We are interested in exploring opportunities to engage volunteers in appropriate restoration and stewardship activities associated with our wetland restoration efforts.

Additionally, we see significant value in the proposal's focus on water quality and wetland education. EWSD is well positioned to contribute to conversations around water quality protection, the role of wetlands in nutrient reduction and habitat improvement, and public understanding of watershed stewardship.

We look forward to continued dialogue and exploration of collaborative opportunities as this project moves forward. Thank you for the opportunity to support this important work.

Sincerely,

Mimi Waldeman for Cindy Murray

Cindy Murray, General Manager EWSD



Nonpoint Source and Wetlands Section
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

February 9, 2026

RE: Support for Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building

Dear Agency Review Panel and To Whom It May Concern:

The Flathead Conservation District is pleased to express support for the proposed Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building project and appreciates its emphasis on collaboration, planning, and volunteer engagement to address nonpoint source pollution concerns in the Flathead Watershed.

This capacity-building approach aligns with outcomes of Flathead Conservation District's strategic planning processes and outcomes. Flathead Conservation District and the Natural Resources Conservation Service convened the 2025 Local Working Group to identify natural resource concerns and priorities for future funding in the Flathead. Water quality and availability were identified as the top priority among a large and diverse group of stakeholders. Additionally, Flathead Conservation District authored the Flathead–Stillwater Watershed Restoration Plan which identifies and prioritizes impaired streams and streams of concern. We anticipate using these outcomes and guiding documents as a starting point for collaboration with the Flathead Lakers to review restoration needs and opportunities, support landowner outreach where appropriate, and coordinate with partners to strengthen stewardship and restoration readiness across the watershed.

To support this project, Flathead Conservation District is prepared to share information and contribute in-kind staff time through participation in meetings, coordination activities, and technical discussions related to restoration planning and prioritization. Thank you for the opportunity to express our support and for your consideration of the application.

Sincerely,

Samantha Tappenbeck
Resource Conservationist
Flathead Conservation District





February 9th, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Water Quality Planning Bureau

RE: Letter of Support - Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) is pleased to support the application for the Flathead Watershed Restoration Capacity Building project under the Montana DEQ 319 Capacity Building Grant program.

FWP worked with the Flathead Lakers on several riparian restoration projects in the past and appreciates the opportunity to continue collaborating to manage and enhance these projects as needed by engaging volunteers in stewardship activities. This collaboration has proven to be highly effective in achieving restoration work that would otherwise not be possible. The proposed projects to conduct habitat restoration work in coordination with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks represent an important investment in the long-term health of our watershed and aquatic resources.

FWP intends to collaborate on volunteer-based restoration assistance at Somers Beach State Park and at the Diamond B project. These projects will provide benefits beyond immediate habitat improvements, including increased public awareness, enhanced recreational opportunities, and long-term protection of Montana's natural resources. At Somers Beach State Park, these restoration efforts will be highly visible to park users and present a unique education and outreach opportunity.

FWP will contribute in-kind staff time to support coordination on restoration activities. I strongly encourage you to fund this proposal.

Sincerely,

Tony Powell

Tony Powell | *Recreation Manager, R1 Columbia Falls District*
Parks & Outdoor Recreation Division
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Office: (406) 751-5423 | Cell: (406) 471-7911

OTHER ATTACHMENTS