



2026 On-the-Ground Project Application Form

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.

Primary Contact Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature Digitally signed by Ashley Brubaker
Date: 2026.02.10 12:01:48 -07'00'

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, signatory and landowner must sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and sent electronically.

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature

Explanation: Landowner signatures are required. **Signing the application does not obligate the landowner to implement a project.** Instead, it is an indication that the landowner has read the application and agrees, in principle, with the project concept and goals.



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Primary Contact Title

Address City State Zip Code

Phone Number Email

Signature Digitally signed by Ashley Brubaker
Date: 2026.02.17 11:51:57 -07'00'

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 Digitally signed by Casey Hackathorn
Date: 2026.02.20 09:40:13 -07'00'

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, signatory and landowner must sign the application. Signatures must be either signed electronically, or wet-signed, scanned and sent electronically.

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature Digitally signed by ZACHARY FISHER
Date: 2026.02.18 14:18:39 -07'00'

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature

Landowner Name

Landowner Signature

Explanation: Landowner signatures are required. **Signing the application does not obligate the landowner to implement a project.** Instead, it is an indication that the landowner has read the application and agrees, in principle, with the project concept and goals.

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

051698132

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?

N

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.

Describe the technical and administrative skills your organization will use to effectively and efficiently complete your proposed project(s).

Trout Unlimited (TU) is a nationwide coldwater conservation organization that has been working to restore streams and protect fisheries since the 1950s. TU's Montana staff includes 10 project managers working across western Montana to implement on-the-ground stream restoration projects, plus other staffers with expertise in policy, water law, instream flow and water rights, grant administration and accounting. TU has a proven track record through projects including the Rattlesnake Dam removal, Ninemile Creek restoration, Phase I and II of Dry Creek Restoration, and the Reese Creek instream flow project. TU's Upper Yellowstone and Shields River Project Manager will leverage this organizational expertise, plus her 10-plus years working in stream restoration and fisheries research to achieve project objectives and ensure long-term success of the Shields Loop Campground Fencing and Riparian Planting project.

Budget Form

Please fill out the On-the-Ground 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.

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application. Use the following examples to help determine when to lump and when to split projects.

Splitting Examples (fill out multiple Project Forms)

- Stream restoration work occurring on two separate streams..
- Two projects with significantly different sets of project partners.
- Two projects that address substantially different pollution sources (e.g., one project move a corral off of a streambank, and another removes mine tailings, with both projects being on the same property).

Lumping Examples

- Contiguous stream restoration work spanning multiple land parcels.
- Three projects that address similar sources of pollution on a single land parcel (e.g., moving a corral off a stream, implementing a grazing management plan, and relocating a manure storage facility out of the floodplain, all on the same ranch)

Project Form

A separate Project Form (including providing separate attachments) must be submitted for each project included in your application

Project Name:

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

- Letter of support from the organization that created or sponsored the creation of the DEQ-accepted Watershed Restoration Plan or the Tribe that created the EPA-approved Tribal Nonpoint Source Management Plan (if applicable).
- Letter of support from EACH landowner associated with the proposed project area (if applicable).
- Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template).
- Detailed Project site map(s)** Attach a map or set of maps showing the location and size of proposed activity if a site has been predetermined. The map scale must be between 1:1,000 and 1:12,500. The map(s) must have an aerial photo background (e.g., USDA NAIP photography, Google Earth imagery, etc.). The map(s) must show the latitude, longitude, site name, and landowner for the activity site. The map(s) should also identify waterbodies affected by the pollution that the activity is designed to address. *(This is in addition to adding points of the project location to the website on page 4).*

Optional Attachments

Attach additional items and information that could help reviewers better understand your project. Information could describe public health risks, opportunities to leverage other funding sources, etc. However, application reviewers may have limited time available, and excessively long, optional attachments might not get reviewed. Do not attach copies of TMDL documents, TMDL implementation evaluations, Watershed Restoration Plans, Tribal Nonpoint Source Plans, or large comprehensive studies. The following attachments may be included. Please no more than 20 pages.

- Project Design Plans/Drawings
- Preliminary Engineering Reports / Site Evaluations
- Landowner Agreements / Construction Permits / Floodplain Permits
- Site photos
- Additional Letters of Support
- Other:
- Other:
- Other:

Project Area

Please provide as detailed a description of the project area as possible.

List the counties in which the project will be located.

Park County

List the 12-digit Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUCs), sometimes referred to as Sixth Code HUCS, in which the project will take place. Use the following link to help assist you in determining the HUCs: <https://apps.nationalmap.gov/viewer/>

Bennett Creek-Shields River, 100700030301

Project Location Map

In addition to providing your own project site map, please go to the following website and follow the instructions to add your project location to the map.

<https://gis.mtdeq.us/portal/apps/storymaps/stories/42f4a668285c4ef6aa94b1623f10df57>

Connection to a Previous or Ongoing Project

Is this project tied to a previous or ongoing project? If so, please describe the connection.

This project is part of an ongoing watershed-wide restoration effort. Benefits from this project such as decreased sediment and cool water temperatures will benefit downstream reaches of the Shields River, and will compound with the same benefits from other projects to increase overall watershed health throughout the basin. This is one of several revegetation projects proposed on the main stem of the Shields River. These projects will provide examples, materials, and trained volunteers for future revegetation work.

This project is closely connected to a Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT) conservation project led by FWP. The cutthroat project has been a decades long project to establish a secured population of non-hybridized YCT above a fish barrier constructed under the Shields Loop Road. Fencing the campground and increasing riparian vegetation will improve instream habitat for this important and hard-earned YCT population.

Project Purpose

Select the watershed restoration plan or tribal nonpoint source plan that your project will help implement (please type in if missing from list) (Not required for HAB reduction projects)

Shields River - Shields River Watershed Group

Letter of support from author, or if the author was contracted, the author sponsor, attached? (If no, explain why below.)

Bennett Creek-Shields River (100700030301)

IMPAIRMENT LISTINGS: Projects that address water quality impairments on Montana’s 2020 List of Impaired Waters are preferred though not a requirement. Funding may be used for projects that protect waterbodies that are demonstrated to be healthy.

Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters

Shields River (headwaters to Cottonwood Cr)

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed

Sedimentation/Siltation, low flow alteration; other habitat alterations: Alteration in streamside or littoral vegetative covers; Physical substrate habitat alterations.

Waterbody name from the 2020 List of Impaired Waters

Probable causes of impairment to be addressed

HEALTHY WATERSHEDS: While project funding is prioritized to addressing known impairments, funding can be used to protect healthy waters from becoming impaired.

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected

Description of identified threat

Name of healthy waterbody to be protected

Description of identified threat

Project Partners

Identify each of the project partners and describe their contribution to the project. Include landowners, land managers, project designers, funders, and your own organization. Indicate whether each partner, other than your organization, has provided a letter of support. *(Note: each landowner must provide a letter of support if project site(s) have been predetermined.)*

| Landowner | Contributions to Project | Letter of Support Attached? |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Custer Gallatin National Forest | Initial project plan, technical expertise, in-kind materials. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| Project Partner | Contributions to Project | Letter of Support Attached? |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Custer Gallatin National Forest | Will contribute fencing materials, designs, and ongoing guidance and support. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Joe Brooks Trout Unlimited Chapter | Will provide volunteers for revegetation work and additional funding as needed. Will help with education and outreach about the project through updates at chapter meetings and social media and newsletter posts. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Park Co. Water Initiative | Will provide ongoing support and coordination with group members. | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Project Coordination and Planning Task

This task would include completion of all applicable planning tasks from the list below, as well as coordination and oversight of the efforts of all project partners.

Identify the status of the following project planning tasks, where applicable.

| | Completed? | Copy Attached? | To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)? | To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable? |
|--------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| *Draft Project Designs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| *Final Project Designs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Consultation With Potential Regulators | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Necessary Permits | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Cultural Resources Inventory (if relevant) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

****See Call for Applications Section 5.1 for minimum design standards.**

Describe any additional project planning that will have been completed prior to execution of a contract (October 2026).

Describe any additional project planning and coordination that will need to be completed after the execution of a contract (October 2026).

Hiring a fencing contractor to build the fence and volunteer coordination for revegetation volunteer days will be conducted after contract execution. General planting areas have been identified, but the planting plan will be finalized and potted plants ordered after the execution of a contract.

Landowner Agreement Task

DEQ includes the following language in every nonpoint source contract involving on-the-ground activities:

Contractor shall submit signed landowner agreement(s) verifying that Contractor and DEQ staff may access the project site, at reasonable times and with prior notification, for the purposes of project planning, implementation, and post-implementation monitoring. The agreement(s) must ensure appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, and management measures for the life of the project (typically 10 years). If grazing will be allowed within the project area, the agreement(s) must include a sustainable management plan for livestock grazing, designed to protect and enhance riparian function. If a signed landowner agreement does not meet the above-stated minimum requirements, Contractor shall negotiate an amended agreement with the landowner that ensures appropriate operation and maintenance of all structures, vegetation, management measures, and includes a sustainable management plan for any livestock grazing for the life of the project (typically 10 years).

Identify the status of the following landowner agreement tasks, where applicable.

| | Completed? | Copy Attached? | To Be Completed Pre-Contract (Oct 2026)? | To Be Completed as Contract Deliverable? |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| Draft Landowner Agreement(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Final Landowner Agreement(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| Grazing Management Plan | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other: <input type="text"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task

If you will be conducting any on-the-ground implementation work, you will be required to complete the monitoring activities described in the task language below, as applicable. Describe below how you plan to determine the effectiveness of your project. Project effectiveness success criteria should be time-bound and assess each project objective quantitatively. Success criteria should clearly define adaptive management thresholds. Examples may include: a minimum 25% decrease in sediment/nitrogen/phosphorus load within 2 years; a 70% survival rate of containerized plantings after one year.

If you are applying for nonpoint source grant funding for project design only, and not for project implementation, you may either skip this task, or describe below which parts of this task you intend to complete:

TU will work with the Custer Gallatin National Forest and DEQ to develop a monitoring plan. Monitoring will include both fence condition and vegetation survival. Fence condition will be monitored through walking the fenceline and through establishing photo monitoring points. Vegetation condition will be assessed through photo monitoring points and vegetation survival rates in plots. Adaptive management based on monitoring data and observations will be conducted as needed.

Example Task Language

Contractor shall, in consultation with the DEQ Project Manager, develop a reasonable method or set of methods for evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues. Contractor shall complete a monitoring plan to guide monitoring activities. Contractor shall complete the following monitoring activities:

- *Estimate the sediment load reductions (tons/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the nitrogen load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *Estimate the phosphorus load reductions (pounds/year) achieved through implementation of the proposed restoration activities and management practices.*
- *For projects designed to address pollution from pollutants other than nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment, evaluate and report on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues.*
- *Contractor shall collect data, as directed by the DEQ Project Manager, to be used in estimating sediment, nitrogen, and phosphorus load reductions (and for harmful algal bloom reduction projects, carbon sequestration/emissions reductions) achieved through implementation of restoration activities and management practices designed to address these pollutants.*
- *Use the following measures to evaluate the sustainability of restoration activities and management practices:*
 - *[Vegetation mortality rate.]*
 - *Pre- and post-construction photo point monitoring consistent with the “Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Guide to Photo Monitoring” methodologies, or a similar published photo point monitoring method accepted by DEQ. The U.S. Forest Service provides additional photo point monitoring guidance in the “United States Forest Service Photo Point Monitoring Handbook”.*
 - *[Riparian survey.]*
 - *[Other.]*

Please describe any additional monitoring you intend to do as part of the project.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to describe any additional monitoring they intend to do as part of the project.

Project Implementation Task

Provide a **detailed description of the solution you are proposing** to implement to address a nonpoint source pollution problem.

- Describe the practices you intend to design and/or implement to solve the problem (what, where, when, how much or how many).
- Describe the anticipated maintenance needs (what, where, who, how long).
- Refer to the minimum design standards in the Call for Applications.
 - *Please fill out this section to the best of your ability, even if you are only seeking funding for project design.*

In 2021, the American Fork Fire burned much of the upper Shields River Drainage, including the Shields River Campground, which comprises this project area. Existing segments of fencing surrounding the campground and protecting wetland and stream areas were burned in this fire. In 2023 the Custer Gallatin National Forest, with assistance from the Montana Conservation Corps, cleared burned deadfall from the entire fence corridor and constructed approximately 0.7 mile of four-strand barbed wire fence and installed two livestock barriers across the Shields River. Due to capacity and funding limitations, 0.4 miles or 2,112 feet of fence on the south side of the enclosure area that had burned during the fire remains unfinished. This currently provides unrestricted livestock access to wetlands, the Shields River, and the campground within the enclosure area. This proposal would secure funding to reconstruct the 0.4 mile-long fence segment along the southern edge of the Shields River livestock enclosure that was destroyed in the American Fork Fire. When completed, this fence would protect approximately 3.5 acres of wetland and 1.4 miles of stream channel (main stem and tributaries) from livestock grazing impacts. Approximately 300 feet of the enclosure perimeter consists of topography that does not allow cattle access (i.e. "topographic fencing") and will not require constructed fencing. The completed fence will result in total exclusion of cattle and no grazing will occur within the project area.

In 2016, 28 acres comprising the Shields River Campground were withdrawn from the Shields River Livestock Grazing Allotment to protect wetlands and riparian areas. With this project, Both the administrative change to permanently withdraw the wetland protection area from grazing and construction of the physical enclosure are in process. Because livestock grazing will no longer be permitted in this wetland protection area, a grazing management plan is not necessary.

Most large shade producing trees within the enclosure area also burned during the 2021 fire and were removed for public safety, and fire and cattle access through the unfinished fence has led to sparsely vegetated streambanks in several areas. To provide shade to the stream, aquatic complexity, and deep rooted vegetation for bank stabilization, TU and the USFS will engage volunteers to plant cottonwoods, willows, and other native riparian species on streambanks within the completed enclosure. A planting plan will be developed during the field season of 2026, and will be finalized post-agreement. Plantings will consist of a mix of willow stakes and potted trees, shrubs, and wetland vegetation. A gravity feed polypipe system may be installed to provide supplemental water to plantings. Wire enclosures will be installed around plantings to prevent wildlife browse until they become established.

Education, Outreach and Training Task

To get good projects on the ground, trained staff and board members and educated, enthusiastic landowners are required. To promote the development of future projects, DEQ encourages project sponsors to use up to \$5,000 per project of funding to support training and conduct education and outreach. Example training topics might include: project management, public procurement, technical writing, GIS, water quality monitoring, web design, public speaking, human resource management, photo journalism, UAV (drone) piloting, financial management, and restoration techniques. Education and outreach activities might include targeted landowner outreach, conducting project site tours for local landowners, tabling at community events, holding a watershed festival, providing stipends and travel reimbursements for speakers and participants to attend a nonpoint source pollution prevention workshop, or generating articles for social media. The primary requirement for training and outreach is clearly explaining how the activity generates behavior change to address nonpoint source pollution. Funding may not be used to pay for food and beverages, or for honorariums and gifts.

Describe the education and outreach activities or training you will complete to promote behaviors or facilitate future efforts to reduce nonpoint source pollution. Additionally, identify the goals of the training/education and outreach activities.

This project will rely heavily on volunteer participation and engagement of Joe Brooks TU chapter members for cottonwood and riparian vegetation plantings. An outreach goal of this project is to create a connected and trained volunteer network with access to necessary hand tools that can easily contribute to riparian planting projects in other locations throughout the Shields Watershed. This will also result in increased volunteer awareness of and participation in other stream restoration related projects. Additionally, the Joe Brooks TU chapter will conduct education and outreach around this project, sharing with the local community through chapter meetings, newsletters, and social media and with the wider community through blog posts, social media, and newsletter features.

Through this project, TU will be creating a strong volunteer base for future riparian planting projects. The fencing and revegetation components of the project will be shared with the Shields Valley Watershed Group through meeting presentations, and the group will be made aware of the existence of the volunteer revegetation crew for any potential planting projects in other locations.

Identify the specific target audience and method of delivery. Additionally, describe how the proposed training and/or education and outreach will increase local capacity and interest for addressing/promoting behavior change to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

The target audience of education and outreach about this project will include:

1. Local community members who are interested in becoming part of a connected volunteer network to volunteer on stream projects throughout the Shields basin.
2. Landowners and managers who might be interested in using volunteers to assist in a riparian revegetation effort on property elsewhere in the Shields basin.

The creation of a trained volunteer network will increase capacity for implementing non-point source pollution reduction projects. The existence of the volunteer network to provide labor assistance to landowners may generate increased interest in these projects.

Describe how you will evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed activities.

Effectiveness of outreach activities will be evaluated through number of volunteer hours spent working at the site, and through the creation of a volunteer network list to be contacted about other projects.

Project Administration Task

Please use the task description below as a guide when calculating your budget for project administration. DEQ typically includes these requirements in every nonpoint source grant contract, with only minor variation. Funding applied to the Project Administration Task on each project must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested, or \$12,000, whichever is lower.

Example Task Language

Contractor shall oversee and be accountable for the completion of all tasks. Contractor shall maintain regular contact with the DEQ project manager. Contractor shall prepare and submit Status Reports, Final Reports and Attachment B Billing Statements according to the format and schedule described below.

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, and each time an Attachment B Billing Statement is submitted.*
- *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.*

Project Timeline

| | 4Q 2026 | 1Q 2027 | 2Q 2027 | 3Q 2027 | 4Q 2027 | 1Q 2028 | 2Q 2028 | 3Q 2028 | 4Q 2028 | 1Q 2029 | 2Q 2029 | 3Q 2029 |
|----------------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Project Coordination and Planning Task | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Landowner Agreement Task | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Project Effectiveness Monitoring Task | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Project Implementation Task | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ |
| Education, Outreach and Training Task | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |
| Project Administration Task | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ |

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.

This project has many benefits beyond non point source pollution reduction including fisheries and recreation benefits. This project overlaps and will benefit a multi-year FWP project to create a native Yellowstone cutthroat trout secured population in the Upper Shields River. Additionally, by excluding cattle and increasing shade and vegetation in the campground area, the project will have recreational benefits.

BUDGET

2026 Nonpoint Source Pollution Reduction Application - On-the-Ground Project Budget Template

| Project Title | | Funding Request* | Non-Federal Match** | Other Funding*** | Match Source | Match Secured? (Y/N) | Total Project Cost | Additional Information*** |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|------------------|---------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Project Planning</p> <p>This task includes completion of all planning tasks and coordination and oversight of the efforts of all project partners. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.</p> | Preliminary site investigation data and site maps | | | \$ 1,000.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | USFS staff time |
| | Required Permits | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Draft Project Designs | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Final Project Designs | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Total | \$ - | \$ - | \$ 1,000.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | |
| <p>Landowner Agreements</p> <p>This task includes costs for developing and managing landowner agreements and developing grazing management plans as applicable. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.</p> | Draft Landowner Agreement | | | \$ 2,000.00 | | | \$ 2,000.00 | Pre-agreement USFS and TU staff time |
| | Final Landowner Agreement | \$ 500.00 | | \$ 500.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | USFS staff time |
| | Grazing Management Plan | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Total | \$ 500.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,500.00 | | | \$ 3,000.00 | |
| <p>Effectiveness Monitoring</p> <p>This task includes costs for developing and implementing a monitoring plan to evaluate effectiveness to reduce nonpoint source pollution. See example contract template or application instructions for required monitoring activities. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.</p> | Draft Monitoring Plan | \$ 500.00 | | \$ 500.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | USFS staff time |
| | Final Monitoring Plan | \$ 500.00 | | \$ 500.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | USFS staff time |
| | Written Summary of all Monitoring Activities | \$ 500.00 | | \$ 500.00 | | | \$ 1,000.00 | USFS staff time |
| | On the ground monitoring | \$ 2,000.00 | | \$ 500.00 | | | \$ 2,500.00 | |
| | Total | \$ 3,500.00 | \$ - | \$ 2,000.00 | | | \$ 5,500.00 | |
| <p>Project Implementation</p> <p>This task includes all costs for implementation of the plans developed in the Project Planning task. If you are requesting funding for design only, leave this task blank. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.</p> | Materials | \$ 4,000.00 | | \$ 2,000.00 | | | \$ 6,000.00 | USFS-provided materials |
| | Labor for fence construction | \$ 13,000.00 | | | | | \$ 13,000.00 | |
| | Potted plants (cottonwoods and other riparian species) | \$ 8,000.00 | | | | | \$ 8,000.00 | |
| | Construction oversight | \$ 5,000.00 | | \$ 2,000.00 | | | \$ 7,000.00 | |
| | Travel | \$ 1,460.00 | | | | | \$ 1,460.00 | Twenty trips, 100 miles round trip @ 50.73/mile |
| | Photo documentation | \$ 500.00 | \$ 200.00 | | | Private contribution | \$ 700.00 | |
| | Landowner recommendation letter | | | \$ 300.00 | | | \$ 300.00 | USFS staff time |
| | Supplies | \$ 2,500.00 | | | | | \$ 2,500.00 | |
| | Revegetation equipment | \$ 1,500.00 | | | | | \$ 1,500.00 | |
| | Labor for riparian plantings | \$ 4,500.00 | \$ 10,000.00 | \$ 4,000.00 | | Volunteer Planting Crews | \$ 18,500.00 | |
| | | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Total | \$ 40,460.00 | \$ 10,200.00 | \$ 8,300.00 | | | \$ 58,960.00 | |
| <p>Education and Outreach</p> <p>This task includes costs to develop and improve organizational capacity and to incorporate education and outreach into each on-the-ground projects. Provide a detailed budget and add a row if needed.</p> | Volunteer Coordination | \$ 1,000.00 | \$ 250.00 | | Volunteer time from TU chapter | Y | \$ 1,250.00 | |
| | Event/Forum Planning | \$ 1,000.00 | | | | | \$ 1,000.00 | |
| | Outreach/Publication materials | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Total | \$ 2,000.00 | \$ 250.00 | \$ - | | | \$ 2,250.00 | |
| <p>Administration</p> <p>Funding applied to Project Administration task must not exceed 10% of the total amount of funding requested per project, or \$12,000, whichever is lower. Project admin includes normal business expenses and reporting requirements.</p> | Mid/Annual/Interim Reports and Billing Statements | \$ 2,600.00 | | | | | \$ 2,600.00 | |
| | Draft/Final Report and Billing Statement | \$ 2,500.00 | | | | | \$ 2,500.00 | |
| | Communication with DEQ | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | | | | | | | \$ - | |
| | Total | \$ 5,100.00 | \$ - | \$ - | | | \$ 5,100.00 | |
| Grand Totals | | \$ 51,560.00 | \$ 10,450.00 | \$ 13,800.00 | | | \$ 75,810.00 | |

*Funding Request - Must not exceed \$300,000 and must be at least \$125,000 for harmful algal bloom reduction projects

**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**

File Code: 2600

Date: February 13, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
319 Nonpoint Source Project Program
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

Dear Selection Committee:

The Yellowstone Ranger District of the Custer Gallatin National Forest (CGNF) expresses its support of Trout Unlimited's proposal to complete the construction of a 40-acre stream and wetland grazing enclosure and post-fire riparian revegetation therein.

The Shields River drainage in the Crazy Mountains is a stronghold for Yellowstone cutthroat trout (YCT) and is of strategic importance for the range-wide conservation of the species. This is because it has well connected, high elevation habitat at the northern extent of the species range, which provides resistance to long-term stream warming trends. Including side channels, the enclosure area will protect 1.4-miles of Shields River YCT habitat and four acres of wetlands from livestock grazing.

Riparian vegetation including willows and cottonwood trees provide several functions that contribute to the quality of YCT habitat and its resilience to flood and drought. Cottonwoods have binding root masses that stabilize streambanks, they provide shading that moderates stream temperature, and they create deep scour pools when they die and fall into streams. Because all planting will occur within the enclosure area, they will be protected from livestock grazing. When mature, planted cottonwoods will serve as a seed source for colonizing adjacent reaches of the Shields River.

The CGNF fully supports Trout Unlimited's proposal because it would provide vital funding to complete the last 0.4 miles of the 1.3 mile-long wetland protection enclosure and would establish black cottonwoods thus enhancing YCT habitat. The CGNF is signatory to state and interstate Yellowstone cutthroat trout agreements and values projects like these that contribute to the long-term conservation of the species.

Trout Unlimited has been a key partner of the Forest Service and their capacity and expertise would ensure the success of this project.

Sincerely,

ZACHARY FISHER
District Ranger





Local, Common Sense Conservation

5242 Highway 89 South
Livingston, MT 59047

(406) 223-1048

www.parkcd.org

parkcd.310permitting@gmail.com

January 15th, 2026

MT Department of Environmental Quality
319 Nonpoint Source Program
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

Re: 319 Grant Program Proposal- Letter of Support for cottonwood plantings in Shields

Dear Montana DEQ staff,

The Park County Conservation District and Shields Valley Watershed Group would like to extend support for Trout Unlimited's DEQ 319 funding proposal for a cottonwood planting project in the Shields River watershed in Park County, MT. This project will have joint benefits of increasing cottonwood trees in the Shields River Valley and creating a network of trained volunteers to continue projects like this into the future.

The Conservation District has worked with TU on other projects throughout Park County and has found they have the capacity and technical expertise to plan and execute effective on the ground stream restoration projects that benefit the fish, the watershed, and the local community. Thank you for your ongoing support of non-point source reduction projects in the Shields River Valley.

Sincerely,

Dustin Homan
Board Chair
Park Conservation District



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 3 Headquarters
1400 S 19th Avenue
Bozeman, MT 59718

February 18, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Nonpoint Source Project Program
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
Helena, MT 59620

Dear DEQ 319 selection panel,

This letter is to express Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) support for Trout Unlimited's (TU) project proposal to the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 funding program. TU's project proposal for the Upper Shields River Campground Fencing and Cottonwood Planting project will contribute to increased watershed health throughout the Shields basin, including non-point source pollution reduction and native Yellowstone cutthroat trout conservation.

FWP is working closely with TU on the proposed project. It is in the headwaters of the Shields River, within a large native Yellowstone cutthroat trout conservation and restoration project that FWP is currently working on completing. This project will complete fencing around the campground to exclude cattle from accessing the area, which has been an ongoing problem. Cottonwood planting will occur along the river within the fencing enclosure to help restore and enhance the riparian area.

TU has worked with FWP on other projects in the Shields River to improve the health of the watershed and benefit native Yellowstone cutthroat trout populations. TU has extensive stream restoration experience and has been a valued partner with FWP and other state and federal agencies, local landowners, and partner organizations to ensure these projects are successful.

FWP encourages funding this request for TU. Thank you for considering this request for funding.

For further questions, please reach out to the following FWP personnel.

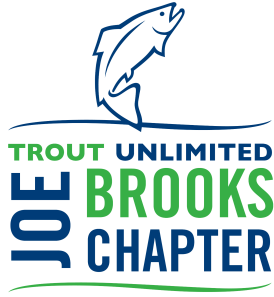
Scott Opitz, fisheries biologist (406-223-3951, sopitz@mt.gov)

Jen Smitham, R3 comment coordinator (406-495-3262, jsmitham@mt.gov)

Sincerely,

Kelly Proffitt

Region 3 Supervisor



Joe Brooks Chapter #025
Trout Unlimited
PO Box 88
Livingston, MT 59047
www.jbtu.org

February 18, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
DEQ Headquarters
1520 E 6th Avenue
Helena, MT 59601

OFFICERS

To whom it may concern,

John Roseberry
President

Joe Brooks Trout Unlimited (JBTU) is pleased to partner with Trout Unlimited (TU) on the Upper Shields River Cottonwood Revegetation Project.

Clifford David
Vice President

Our chapter has a long history of partnering with TU on projects that enhance water quality on our local streams and rivers. We believe this project will contribute to improved water quality on the Shields River by reducing sediment and give this project our full support.

Tom Coleman
Treasurer

John Ryan
Secretary

JBTU is committed to providing financial and in-kind matches for this project. Through our chapter, we will conduct community outreach to identify and mobilize volunteers to implement this project. In the past year, we have supplied volunteers for several projects for TU, Montana Freshwater Partners, and the Salmonfly Project. Our financial matches may be sourced from a combination of our existing funds, additional grants that JBTU seeks, and from fundraising activities specific for this work.

DIRECTORS

Ashton Bunce
John Mills
Ashley Mitek
Melissa Stock
Tim Sullivan

In addition to providing volunteers for this project, JBTU offers opportunities to perform outreach to the local recreation community through our monthly chapter meetings and other events. Our chapter engages with both TU members and others in the community interested in water resources, and will provide updates through our email list (~200 people) and through more detailed presentations at meetings and events (~20-80 people attending).

We are excited about this prospect of implementing this project in the and appreciate your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Roseberry
Chapter President
Joe Brooks Trout Unlimited

File Code: 2600

Date: February 13, 2026

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
319 Nonpoint Source Project Program
1520 E. Sixth Avenue
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620

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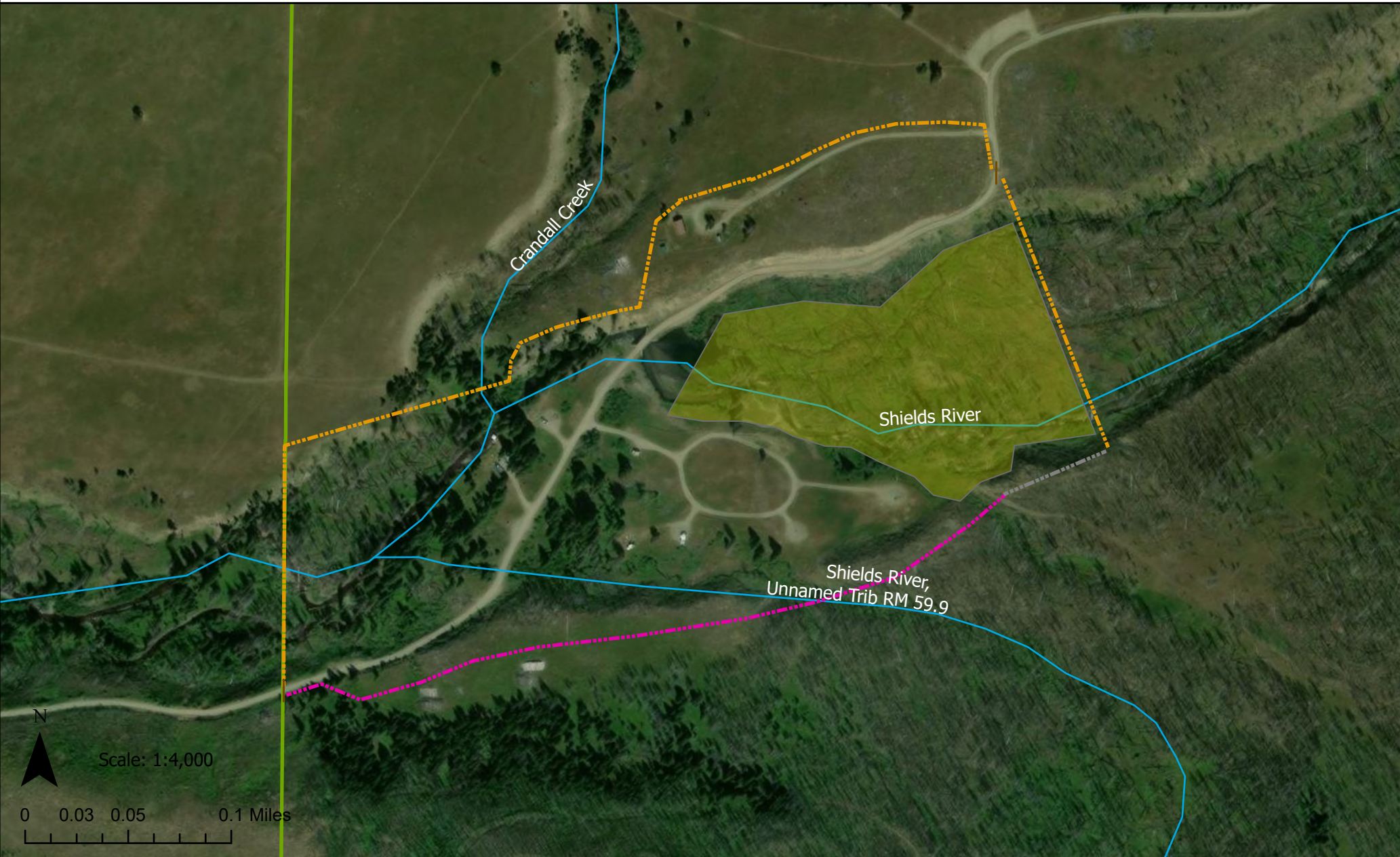
Sincerely,

ZACHARY FISHER
District Ranger



MAPS/ DESIGNS

Shields Loop Campground Fencing and Riparian Planting Project



Upper Shields Campground
 Project Coordinates
 Upstream: 46.18449, -110.40096
 Downstream: 46.18244, -110.40922

- | CattleGuards
- Existing Fence
- Proposed Fence
- Topographically Inaccessible
- Riparian Planting Area
- Montana Public Lands



OTHER ATTACHMENTS

Title**Shields Campground Exclosure and Revegetation****Project Description**

The proposal is to replace barbed wire fence segments that have not yet been rebuilt after they were destroyed during the American Fork Fire. The project also includes hand planting of trees on the periphery of campsites and shrubs and cottownwoods along the Shields River.

Heritage Guidance

Proceed

Stipulation

None

Rationale

The high potential portions of the project area (9 ac) were inventoried for R2019011104009 Shields AOP Culverts and 2017011104007 Smith Shields Restoration Project. The remaining APE is of low potential, consisting of steep slopes, significant post fire deadfall, and braided stream bottom. Additionally large portion of the Shields Loop was inventoried during the American Fork fire (not in NRM), in the area of the campground no historic resources were found during those inventories. The area around the Crandal cabin was inventoried for American Fork, the Cabin is not historic.

The APE has been sufficiently covered, the proposed undertaking will have no effect to historic resources as none are present.