DEQ Montana Department of Environmental Quality

2026 On-the-Ground Project Application Form

General Information

Project Name: West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration

Applicant Name: Trout Unlimited

Is your organization registered with the Montana Secretary of State? Y

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)? Y

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	Connor Parrish	Title	Project Manager				
Address	627 E Peach St.	City	Bozeman	State	MT	Zip Code	59715
Phone Number	406-223-9331	Email	connor.parrish@tu.org				

Signature: Connor Parrish — Digitally signed by Connor Parrish Date: 2026.02.12 07:48:57 -07'00'

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

Signatory	Casey Hackathorn	Title	Montana State Director				
Address	312 N Higgins Ave, Suit 200	City	Missoula	State	MT	Zip Code	59802
Phone Number	406-546-5680	Email	casey.hackathorn@tu.org				

Signature: DocuSigned by: [signature] 098BD0928F4E94D...

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	USFS Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest
Landowner Signature	JOSHUA CONNORS — Digitally signed by JOSHUA CONNORS Date: 2026.02.13 07:22:08 -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? | Y

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 non-profit working on restoration projects across the county. TU project manager, Connor Parrish, will lead this project with support from grant accountant manager, Catherine Redfern. Connor has 14-years of experience working in the field of fisheries including 8 years managing aquatic restoration projects. Catherine serves as the grant accountant for all TU employees across Montana. TU has secured federal funding to pay for project designs, and we plan to select a qualified contractor through an RFQ process during winter 2026. TU will also work with Sundog Ecological to coordinate the purchase of riparian plantings and weed treatment.

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. ¦ăŜ ŭKŜ Ŧ2ff2ǿλƴƎ ŜÈl·ƳǈłŜă ŭ2 KŜłǇ ŘŜŭŜƜƳλƴŜ ǿKŜƳŭ2 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: West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration

Required Attachments in Addition to This Form

- [x] 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)*.
- [x] Letter of support from EACH landowner associated with the proposed project area (*if applicable)*.
- [x] Budget Table (see Microsoft Excel Template).
- [x] **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
- [x] Preliminary Engineering Reports / Site Evaluations
- [ ] Landowner Agreements / Construction Permits / Floodplain Permits
- [x] Site photos
- [x] 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.

Madison 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/

HUC 12- 100200070604 West Fork Madison

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.

During 2023, in collaboration with USFS, TU project managers spent two days examining recreation impacts and identifying restoration opportunities along the West Fork Madison River. During this visit, TU identified over 20 dispersed campsites that were negatively impacting fish/wildlife habitat and water quality. Common issues include soil compaction, trampling of stream banks, lack of riparian vegetation, and lack of floodplain roughness (downed trees, vegetation, etc.). Of all the campsites identified, one clearly had the most urgent need to address habitat impairments and intervene before conditions become worse and more expensive to fix. The Identified project location occurs within a large 5-acre degraded floodplain. This floodplain has been the location of extensive dispersed camping. A large headcut and incised side channel is forming through the floodplain which is completely lacking floodplain roughness and woody vegetation. Working with the USFS, the proposed project was included in the West Fork Madison Watershed Restoration Plan (WRAP) as a priority action and TU has written a technical memo about the project (attached). TU then worked with the USFS to secure $ 78,000 in federal funding to develop designs and purchase materials to support a restoration project. If the headcut/side channel isn't addresses, the stream will soon vacate the current well shaded channel with complex in stream habitat. Instead, the river will run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the local water table. These results would further contribute to the West Fork Madison ' s temperature impairment and negatively impact fish and wildlife habitat. TU plans to hire a qualified engineer during winter 2026 to develop restoration designs for a constructed side channel and floodplain restoration project.

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)*

Madison Watershed Restoration Plan

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

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	West Fork Madison River
Probable causes of impairment to be addressed	According to the WRP, the temperature impairment is caused by alteration of stream side vegetation and floodplain habitat due to historic and current land uses including recreation, grazing, and low densities of beavers.
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	Madison River, Quake Lake to Ennis Lake
Description of identified threat	This section of the Madison is not listed as impaired. Restoration work on WF Madison would help prevent a future listing.
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?
USFS Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest	$78,000 for designs and project materials, technical/permitting support, etc.	☑
		☐
		☐
		☐

Project Partner	Contributions to Project	Letter of Support Attached?
Madison River Foundation	Up to $40k in funding, volunteer coordination and technical support.	☑
Northwestern Energy	Technical support and potential funding	☑
Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks	Technical support and potential funding	☑
Madison Conservation District	Technical support	☑
Madison Gallatin Trout Unlimited Chapter	Volunteers	☑

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	☐	☐	☑	☐
*Final Project Designs	☐	☐	☑	☐
Consultation With Potential Regulators	☐	☐	☐	☑
Necessary Permits	☐	☐	☐	☑
Cultural Resources Inventory *(if relevant)*	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐

***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).

TU has $29k in federal funding to design the restoration project. This funding needs to be spent prior to January 1st 2027. TU and USFS plan to select a qualified contractor through an RFQ process during winter 2026. TU will then lead a meeting at the project site with the selected consultant and project partners (FWP, NW Energy, USFS, and MRF) during spring 2026 to discuss project goals and potential funding opportunities to match to 319 funds. TU will then work with the consultant and collaborate with project parters to develop the restoration designs during 2026.

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

It is possible that the Army Corps Nation Wide 27 Permit may require a wetland delineation. However, the rules for this permit recently changed and we believe this project will be exempt from needing a delineation because it will be beneficial to wetlands. We haven't permitted a project yet under the new rules so we are still learning their process.

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)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Final Landowner Agreement(s)	☐	☐	☐	☑
Grazing Management Plan	☐	☐	☐	☑
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐
Other:	☐	☐	☐	☐

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 shall develop a reasonable method or set of methods for evaluating and reporting on the effectiveness of the project in addressing water quality issues including:

-Establish longterm photo monitoring points. Pre- and post-construction photo point monitoring will be consistent with the "Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board Guide to Photo Monitoring" methodologies, or a similar published photo point monitoring method accepted by DEQ.
-Conduct vegetation mortality surveys to monitor the success of riparian plantings

In consultation with the DEQ Project Manager, TU will collect additional data to be used in estimating project success including groundwater storage, wetland expansion, etc. The contractor shall complete a monitoring plan to guide monitoring activities.

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 Stated Forest Service Photo Point Monitoring Handbook".*
    - *[Riparian survey.]*
    - *[Other.]*

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

In addition to the previously mentioned monitoring, USFS and TU will electrofish the side channel before and after the project to see if fish are using the side channel. During two site visits during July 2023 and September 2025, TU didn't observe any fish using the side channel. Currently, the side channel only contains water seasonally with the exception of a few small isolated pools that remain after runoff. The channel currently has very little structure that would provide fish cover. Additionally, the current side channel outflow pours over a large head cut. While it likely isn't a full fish barrier, its unlikely that its attracting fish to seek out velocity refuge during runoff events. Similarly, the current side channel inlet receives shallow sheet flow during run off events before the channel cuts into a set of ruts. This shallow water reduces the likelihood that a larger fish would end up in the side channel. Its possible some small juvenile fish could be washed into the side channel but its unlikely the side channel is intentionally utilized by fish. The future constructed side channel should provide year round habitat and connectivity for fish and the electrofishing surveys should demonstrate their occupancy.

Project Implementation Task

Provide a d**etailed 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.*

Side Channel Construction- Channel migration is a natural process where a stream moves laterally over time to occupy new channels and side channels. However, when a floodplain has lost its riparian vegetation and roughness, it can result in unnaturally high rates of erosion and channel migration. To address this, TU will hire a qualified firm to take the current overflow channel and design a more stable side channel. This will likely include designing meanders and additions of woody debris to reduce the erosive forces of high flow events. Additionally, the headcut will need to be "stepped down" to prevent it from migrating further upstream. Converting the overflow channel into a year-round side channel would have the added benefit of creating year-round habitat for fish and wildlife. Once the designs and permits are completed, TU will hire a construction firm to implement the project during fall 2027.

Floodplain Roughness- Without floodplain roughness to slow overbank flows, a stream can more easily top its banks during a high flow event and quickly form a new channel. To address this issue, woody materials and riparian plants can be added to the floodplain. It is best to partially bury wood to both stabilize it and deter visitors from collecting it as firewood. Roughness structures also have the added benefit of deterring foot and vehicle traffic. Willow trenches are another great way to immediately add floodplain roughness and kick start riparian plant communities. These will be created throughout the 5-acre floodplain to slow overbank flows. Willow trenches and woody materials will be installed by the construction firm during fall 2027. Any soil disturbed during construction will be seeded with native grass and sedges.

Revegetation- The stream banks and floodplain will be planted with native riparian plants. Prior to planting, native species will be selected based on reference floodplains in the West Fork watershed. This will likely include native vegetation such as chokecherry, willow ssp., dogwood, aspen, cottonwood, etc. ~1,000 one-gallon potted native plants will be installed by TU and volunteers. ~1,000 willow livestakes will also be planted throughout the project area using cuttings from nearby healthy stands. Plantings will be installed during spring or fall of 2028 when the soil is moist. Fencing will also be constructed to protect riparian plantings from foot traffic and browsing.

Fencing or Rock Barriers- USFS plans to restrict or greatly reduce the dispersed camping opportunities near the project area. Fencing, such as jack leg, can be installed at dispersed campgrounds to help define the extent of the camping area. Similarly, large rocks can be installed to restrict vehicle traffic. Jack leg has a life span of 10-20 years which is typically enough time for restoration projects and plantings to become established. Rock on the other hand is permanent, which makes it a great option for restricting vehicles to a defined camping area. Recreators are typically camping at these locations because of the stream, and if they don't have defined access, they will make their own. If campers are provided with a defined area to access the water, they tend to stick to it and avoid sensitive areas like stream banks, wetlands, or meadows.

Maintenance- Weed treatment will need to occur for two years post construction to help plantings and grasses establish. If needed, TU will organize a couple of watering events during the summer or two following the installation of native plantings. TU will also use adaptive management approaches as needed to ensure project success. This could include supplemental plantings, additional grass seed, or installing additional roughness and instream habitat structures.

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.

TU will provide education and outreach opportunities emphasizing how dispersed camping and recreation can negatively impact water quality, trout fisheries, and wildlife. We will offer volunteer opportunities for project tours and hands on opportunities to get involved with plantings. TU will coordinate with the Madison-Gallatin TU Chapter and the Madison River Foundation to recruit volunteers and share educational materials. TU will also work with the Madison-Gallatin TU chapter to share project updates through our social media platforms and in annual updates to the local TU Chapters. TU will collect extensive photos and videos that will be combined with interviews to create a video summarizing the project. This will emphasize not only the benefits to the West Fork Madison but also to the greater Madison River Watershed.

TU will commit to a minimum of 4 volunteer plantings and a final project tour. However, we will off impromptu tours upon request.

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 will include the general public that recreates in the Madison Watershed. If we can help change the behavior of people that recreate in the area, we will reduce the impacts on riparian areas and floodplains, resulting in better water quality and improved habitat for fish and wildlife.

Additionally, TU hopes to work with project partners to learn from the issues encountered at this location and emphasize the importance of implementing actions to address recreational impacts early on. Investing funding to consolidate recreation impacts before they become a larger problem will benefit the health of our streams and reduce future costs.

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

During tours and volunteer events TU will have attendees sign in which will allow us to track in-person education opportunities. During public presentations, TU will do their best to estimate the number of people who attend the presentations and photos of the event. Project Manager Connor Parrish already runs Instagram and YouTube accounts for TU. He will be able to report to DEQ the number or views, likes, shares, and comments on each video or social media post about the West Fork Madison.

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.

The proposed project will have additional benefits beyond just water quality. First, the Madison River is a world class trout fishery which supports a thriving recreational economy. The health of this fishery is largely dependent on the health of the Madison's tributaries. Migratory trout from the Madison River utilize tributaries like the West Fork Madison to spawn. Their offspring then rear in the safety of tributaries before most of the juvenile trout migrate out to the main stem Madison River. Trout are a cold water species that are very sensitive to increases in water temperature. This project will help prevent the West Fork Madison River from moving into an open field where it would become a solar heat sink. Protecting the West Fork from increased stream temperatures will help insure the long-term health of the trout population and recreational fishery. Secondly, the proposed restoration will improve wildlife habitat within and adjacent to the project. Wildlife such as migratory songbirds, ungulates, bears, small mammals, and many others depend on riparian areas at some point in their life cycle. Restoring the floodplain will create quality habitat for these species to use.

BUDGET

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

Project Title:								
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**							
	Culvert and diversion survey planning, prioritization, and landowner coordination	$ 3,000.00					$ 3,000.00	
	Attending meetings and general coordination	$ 500.00	$ 500.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 1,000.00	
	Outreach materials creation (e.g. flyers, presentations, etc.)	$ 500.00					$ 500.00	
	Funding opportunity identification and application for NPS projects	$ 3,000.00					$ 3,000.00	
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 7,000.00	$ 500.00	$ -			$ 7,500.00	
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**							
	Culvert and diversion surveys	$ 5,000.00	$ 2,000.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 7,000.00	
	Fish, beaver, and aquatic habitat surveys	$ 5,000.00	$ 2,000.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 7,000.00	
							$ -	
	Pre-project monitoring and data collection (e.g. fish surveys, habitat surveys, BHEI surveys)	$ 2,000.00	$ 500.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 2,500.00	
	Hosting and/or attending trainings and workshops (e.g. riparian grazing management workshop)	$ 1,500.00	$ 1,000.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 2,500.00	
	Desktop and field-based NPS project identification	$ 2,500.00					$ 2,500.00	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 16,000.00	$ 5,500.00	$ -			$ 21,500.00	
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**							
	Culvert and diversion survey data compilation, water rights analysis where applicable, and mapping	$ 2,000.00	$ 200.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 2,200.00	
	Fish, beaver, and aquatic habitat survey and desktop and field-based NPS project identification data compilation/organization, analysis, report compilation and landowner follow-up.	$ 2,000.00	$ 200.00		TU staff time, other contributions		$ 2,200.00	
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 4,000.00	$ 400.00	$ -			$ 4,400.00	
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	$ 1,500.00					$ 1,500.00	
	Draft/Final Report and Billing Statements	$ 1,500.00					$ 1,500.00	
	Communication with DEQ						$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
							$ -	
	Total	$ 3,000.00	$ -	$ -			$ 3,000.00	
		Funding Request*	**Non-Federal Match****	**Other Funding*****			**Total Project Cost**	
	Grand Totals	$ 30,000.00	$ 6,400.00	$ -			**$ 36,400.00**	

*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

****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

USDA United States Department of Agriculture | Forest Service | Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest, Madison Ranger District | 5 Forest Service Road, Ennis MT 59729, 406-682-4253

File Code: 2600
Route To:

Date: January 29th, 2026

To: Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

I am contacting you to provide the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest's (BDNF) support for Trout Unlimited's (TU) application to Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the West Fork Madison River is impaired due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. We believe that TU's *West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation resulting in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the water table. The results of this would further contribute to the West Fork Madison's temperature impairment.

In 2025, the BDNF designated the West Fork Madison River watershed as a priority watershed under our Watershed Condition Framework. This project is identified as an essential project to address existing impairments and to bring the watershed into properly functioning condition. The BDNF is committed to supporting TU with the development and implementation of the side channel and floodplain restoration. We are also supportive of the installation of fencing which will reduce both recreation and grazing impacts while allowing the restoration project to thrive. The BDNF is financially supporting this design of this project though the Keystone Funding partnership with TU.

The BDNF encourages you to fully fund the *West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project proposed by Trout Unlimited.

Sincerely,

JOSHUA CONNORS
District Ranger

Madison Conservation District
Local Common-Sense Conservation
222 E. Main Street Suite 2B | PO Box 606 | Ennis, MT 59729
406.682.3181

WWW.MADISONCD.ORG

Mrs. Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

I am contacting you to provide the Madison Conservation District's (MCD) support for Trout Unlimited's (TU) application to Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the West Fork Madison River is impaired due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. We believe that TU's *West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the water table. The results of this would further contribute to the West Fork Madison's temperature impairment.

As the author of the Madison Watershed Restoration Plan, MCD believes that restoration actions are needed to prevent further water temperature issues and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. The West Fork Madison is a critical spawning and rearing tributary to the Madison River, and the project would benefit both the water quality and fisheries of the Madison and West Fork Madison Rivers. For these reasons, MCD encourages you to fully fund the *West Fork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project proposed by Trout Unlimited.

Sincerely,

Madison Conservation District Board of Supervisors

Mrs. Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

My name is Jim Schonewise, and I am writing to you as Recording Secretary on the Board of Directors for the Madison-Gallatin chapter of Trout Unlimited (MGTU). I would like to relay MGTU's support for, and endorsement of, Trout Unlimited's (TU) application to a Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the Westfork Madison River is impaired due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. We believe that TU's *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, it is likely that the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the water table. Preventing these developments will help to mitigate further potential increases to the West Fork Madison's temperature impairment.

MGTU believes that restoration actions are needed to prevent further water temperature issues and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. The West Fork Madison is a critical spawning and rearing tributary to the Madison River, and the project would benefit both the water quality and fisheries of the Madison and West Fork Madison Rivers. For these reasons, MGTU encourages you to fully fund the *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project proposed by Trout Unlimited.

Thank you for your consideration and for the opportunity to support these important activities.

Sincerely,

/s/
Jim Schonewise
Recording Secretary
Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 52
Bozeman, MT 59771

Mrs. Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

I am contacting you to provide the Madison River Foundation's (MFR) support for Trout Unlimited's (TU) application to Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the Westfork Madison River is impaired due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. We believe that TU's *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the water table. The results of this would further contribute to the Westfork Madison's temperature impairment.

MRF believes that restoration actions are needed to prevent further water temperature issues and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. The Westfork Madison is a critical spawning and rearing tributary to the Madison River, and the project would benefit both the water quality and fisheries of the Madison and Westfork Madison Rivers. For these reasons, MRF encourages you to fully fund the *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project proposed by Trout Unlimited.

Sincerely,

Mia Cignoni
Conservation Programs Manager
Madison River Foundation
(413) 320-8004
mia@madisonriverfoundation.org

NorthWestern Energy
Delivering a Bright Future

Mrs. Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

February 9, 2026

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

I am contacting you to provide Northwestern Energy's (NorthWestern) support for Trout Unlimited's (TU) application to Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the Westfork Madison River is impaired due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. We believe that TU's *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel could also significantly drop the water table. The results of this would further contribute to the Westfork Madison's temperature impairment.

NorthWestern manages a program to mitigate for the impacts of hydroelectric operations on fisheries in the Madison River as part of its license to operate the Missouri-Madison Project issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). In the last 25 years, NorthWestern has invested significant time, resources, and funding to maintain and improve native and recreational fisheries in the Madison River drainage by contributing to research and monitoring, mainstem and tributary habitat restoration, and other active management actions. We have been on the site of this restoration project and fully support the proposed solution to alleviate the current and future potential issues this would have on salmonid habitat.

NWE believes that restoration actions are needed to prevent further water temperature issues and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. The Westfork Madison is a critical spawning and rearing tributary to the Madison River, and the project would benefit both the water quality and fisheries of the Madison and Westfork Madison Rivers. For these reasons, NWE encourages you to fully fund the *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project proposed by Trout Unlimited.

Sincerely,

Jon Hanson
Hydro Compliance Professional
Jon.Hanson@NorthWestern.com
O 406-542-5961
C 406-240-7328

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

February 20, 2026

Mrs. Hannah Riedl
Watershed Protection Section
Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mrs. Riedl,

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) supports Trout Unlimited's application to the Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) 319 non-point source grant opportunity. According to DEQ, the West Fork Madison River is impaired because of elevated water temperatures, which impact aquatic life and recreation. Trout Unlimited's *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project would help address this impairment by preventing a large headcut and overflow channel from becoming the primary river channel. If left in its current state, the river will eventually run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the water table. The results of this would further contribute to the West Fork Madison's temperature impairment.

FWP believes that restoration actions are needed to prevent further water temperature issues and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. The Westfork Madison is a critical spawning and rearing tributary of the Madison River, and the area is frequently used by recreationists and anglers. When combined with the US Forest Service plan to close the riparian area along the project area to camping and vehicular use, the restoration efforts would benefit the water quality and fisheries of the Madison and Westfork Madison rivers by proactively addressing habitat impairments. For these reasons, FWP encourages full funding of the *Westfork Madison Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration* project.

For further questions or concerns, please contact the following FWP personnel.

Keith Wellstone, fisheries biologist (406-581-5568, keith.wellstone@mt.gov)
Jen Smitham, R3 comment coordinator (406-495-3262, jsmitham@mt.gov)

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Kelly Proffitt

Kelly Proffitt
Region 3 Supervisor

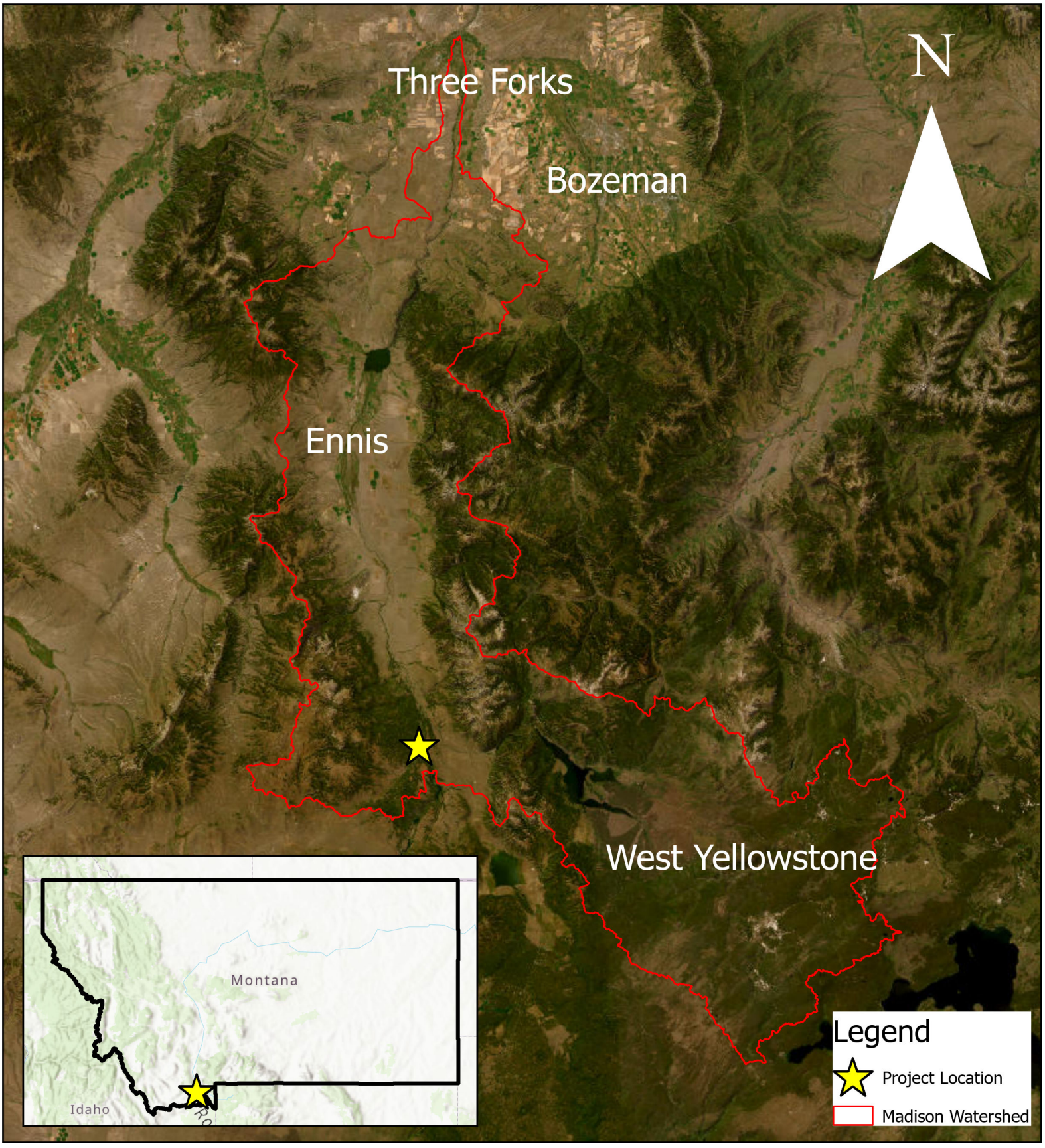
MAPS/ DESIGNS

West Fork Madison River
Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration
44.83617, -111.59288

TROUT UNLIMITED

FOREST SERVICE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

0 0.04 0.07 0.15 Miles



MADISON WATERSHED

West Fork Madison River
Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration
44.83617, -111.59288

0 25 50 100 Miles

OTHER ATTACHMENTS

West Fork Madison

Side Channel and Floodplain Restoration

By Connor Parrish, Project Manager

Created for

USFS Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest

Background

The West Fork Madison is a left bank tributary joining the Madison River approximately 10-miles downstream of Quake Lake. The watershed is a stronghold for wildlife, and its streams provide important spawning and rearing habitat for fish including large fluvial rainbow and brown trout that seasonally migrate from the mainstem Madison River to spawn. The Madison River is split into distinct sections by hydroelectric dams. Draining 157 square miles of the Gravelly Mountain range, the West Fork is the largest tributary of the middle section of the Madison River. Unlike other major tributaries to this section, the West Fork is almost fully contained within national forest and lacks the annual dewatering issues prevalent amongst many tributaries in the Madison watershed serving agricultural needs. This results in favorable conditions for juvenile trout to mature in the West Fork before migrating downstream to the Madison River. Unfortunately, the West Fork Madison River is listed as impaired by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality due to elevated water temperatures which impact aquatic life and recreation. This impairment is primarily due to degraded streamside vegetation caused by historic land use as well as current recreational and grazing impacts. For this reason, Trout Unlimited is invested in preserving and improving stream and floodplain function that will support the long-term health of the West Fork and its contributions to the world-renowned trout fishery of the Madison River.

The West Fork Madison River is a popular recreation area within the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest. During the spring and summer months the area receives recreational pressure from camping, off-roading, hiking, horseback riding, and fishing. The proximity of the West Fork to the mainstem Madison River also makes it an ideal location for anglers who want to set up a base camp to fish for extended periods of time. Similarly, the access to extensive trail networks and quality big game hunting attracts hunting camps that occupy dispersed camping sites along the West Fork from September through November. Once snow begins to accumulate, the West Fork becomes a popular destination for snowmobilers. Due to ease of access, the floodplain surrounding the West Fork tends to bear the brunt of the recreational impacts as it provides ample dispersed camping opportunities adjacent to the stream. These impacts contribute to degraded water quality and habitat.

During 2023, TU project managers spent two days examining recreation impacts and identifying restoration opportunities. During this visit, TU identified over 20 dispersed campsites that were negatively impacting fish/wildlife habitat and water quality. Common issues include soil compaction, trampling of stream banks, lack of riparian vegetation, and lack of floodplain roughness (downed trees, vegetation, etc.).

West Fork Headcut and Degraded Floodplain

Of all the campsites identified, one clearly had the most urgent need to address habitat impairments and intervene before conditions become worse and more expensive to fix. At river mile 4.7, a large 5-acre floodplain has been the location of extensive dispersed camping. Here the West Fork Madison has recently received abundant wood accumulations forming multiple channel spanning log jams. The wood accumulations have created high quality complex fish habitat and helped to aggrade the stream channel. Unfortunately, as the stream interacts with high spring flows, water is being pushed onto the 5-acre floodplain. The water quickly found a flow path through ruts created by vehicles accessing dispersed camping areas. Without floodplain roughness such as downed trees and woody riparian plants the shallow overflow water began to pick up speed and erode into the ruts. Over a couple of spring runoff events, the channel has formed a large headcut and a high flow side channel has begun to form (figure 1). In response, USFS has closed the dispersed campsite to reduce any additional impacts from recreationists.

Figure 1:Photos from July 2024- Some of the small, incised channels forming in ruts from vehicles accessing dispersed campsites (top photos). The downstream end of the overflow channel is forming a large headcut (bottom photo).

Unfortunately, the headcut continues to march upstream and without intervention, it is likely that the entire West Fork Madison River could jump into the channel (see attached). If this occurs, the stream will vacate the current well shaded channel with complex habitat. Instead, the river will run through a large open field with no riparian vegetation. This would result in an incised stream channel completely exposed to the sun with no shade, high erosion rates, and little instream structure. The incised channel would also significantly drop the local water table. These results would further contribute to the West Fork Madison's temperature impairment and negatively impact fish and wildlife habitat. Currently, the overflow channel is ~620 ft in length, but with a lack of structure and

floodplain roughness, it's likely the channel will migrate further to the west and increase its length (figure 2).

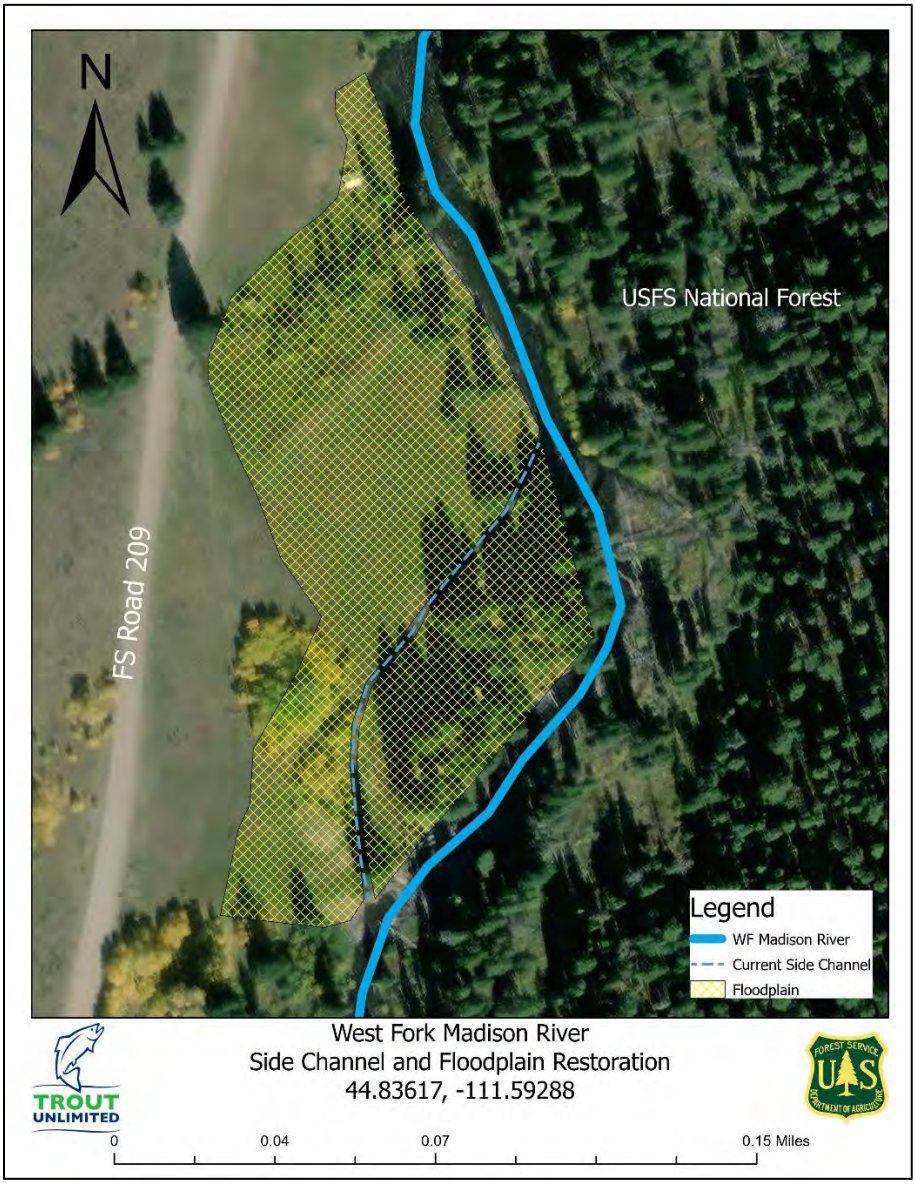


Figure 2: Overview map of the proposed project area.

Potential Restoration Actions

Side Channel Construction- Channel migration is a normal process where a stream moves laterally over time to occupy new channels and side channels. However, when a floodplain has lost its riparian vegetation and roughness it can result in unnaturally high rates of erosion and channel migration. To address this, TU suggests hiring a qualified firm to take the current overflow channel and design a more stable channel. This will likely include designing meanders and additions of woody debris to reduce the erosive forces of

high flow events. Additionally, the headcut will need to be “stepped down” to prevent it from migrating further upstream. If possible, converting the overflow channel into a year-round side channel would have the added benefit of creating year-round habitat for fish and wildlife.

Revegetation- Streambanks and floodplains lacking woody vegetation should be planted with native riparian plants. Prior to planting, native species should be selected based on reference floodplains that can easily be found in the West Fork watershed. This will likely include native vegetation such as chokecherry, willow ssp., dogwood, aspen, and cottonwood. Any soil disturbed during construction should be seeded with native grass and sedges. Some of these plantings will need to be purchased, however willows can be planted using cuttings from nearby healthy stands Planting right up against roughness structures can help protect new plants from foot traffic while they become established. Similarly, fencing should be used to protect restoration areas. Plantings should be installed in the spring or fall when the soil is moist and rain is still expected. Additionally, it will be important to spray weeds that would otherwise establish on the disturbed soil and compete with the native plants.

Figure 3: Willow livestakes (left) and potted native plants (right) can be used in conjunction to increase species diversity and maximize the success of revegetation efforts.

Floodplain Roughness- Without floodplain roughness to slow overbank flows, a stream can top its banks during a high flow event and quickly form a new channel. When deep road ruts exist, as in this case, it can often speed up the formation of a new channel. To address this issue, woody materials and riparian plants can be added to the floodplain. It is best to partially bury wood to deter visitors from collecting it as firewood. Roughness structures also have the added benefit of deterring foot and vehicle traffic, which can allow vegetation to establish and provide additional floodplain roughness. In addition to individual plantings, willow trenches are also a great way to immediately add floodplain roughness and kickstart riparian plant communities.

Figure 4: A willow trench is installed to address the absence of woody riparian vegetation and increase floodplain roughness (left- photo by Leah Swartz). A former user-built road that was de-compacted, covered with logs and slash, reseeded with native grass seed, and then covered with straw mulch (right).

Jack leg fencing installed to restrict the expansion of a campground into a sensitive

Fencing or Rock Barriers- Jack leg or other types of fencing can be installed at dispersed campgrounds to help define the extent of the camping area. Similarly, large rocks can be installed to restrict vehicle traffic. Jack leg has a life span of 10-20 years which is typically enough time for restoration projects and plantings to become established. Rock on the other hand is permanent, which makes it a great option for restricting vehicles to a defined camping area. If campers are provided with a defined area, they tend to stick to it and avoid sensitive areas like stream banks, wetlands, or meadows. Physical barriers can be installed to keep recreators from damaging an area that is being actively restored, or as a preventative measure to avoid future degradation. When using fencing or rock to limit degradation of a floodplain it is critical to leave gaps or "go downs" so that campers can reach the creek. Recreators are typically camping at these

locations because of the stream, and if they don’t have defined access, they will make their own.

Attachments:

Progress of Lower West Fork Overflow Channel

Photos by Patrick Luckenbill, USFS Fish Biologist

June 2020:

May 2021:

August 2025: