



**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks**

Region One
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March 18, 2013

Scott Eggeman
Swan Ecosystem Center
6887 MT. Highway 83
Condon, MT 59826

Dear Scott,

Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks (FWP) would like to express our support for the Owl Creek Restoration project. This project proposes to eliminate a fish passage barrier that obstructs connectivity of native westslope cutthroat trout and reconstruct a reach of stream that has been previously straightened and channelized. Removal of the barrier will allow native trout to access potential spawning and rearing habitat both above and below the current existing barrier. Owl Creek supports one of only 16 westslope cutthroat conservation populations in the Swan valley. This project will improve fish passage and connectivity, reduce sedimentation and increase sediment transport, and will increase pool habitat and stream bank vegetation leading to colder water temperatures and increased in-stream cover. Protecting and enhancing westslope cutthroat populations in the Swan valley is important to FWP and this project will certainly further those efforts. Please feel free to contact me if you need additional information or have any questions regarding this project.

Sincerely,

Leo Rosenthal
Fisheries Biologist