

FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM  
REVIEW PANEL MINUTES  
FOR SUMMER 2014

**Date:** June 19, 2014 @ FWP headquarters, Helena, MT

**Attendees:** Karin Boyd, Charlie Christman, Terry Chute, Chuck Dalby, Alan Johnstone, Marvin Miller, Greg Munther, and Clint Peck

**FWP staff:** Jim Darling and Jackie Windon

**Applicants and others in attendance:** Bruce Rich, Mike Ruggles, Terri Hice, Kevin Smith, Maddy Pope, Lisa Bay, Rich McEldowney, Ryen Neudecker, Stan Bradshaw, Beau Downing, and Eric Roberts

**Introductions** were made and the group approved the **agenda** as prepared.

**Jim Darling:**

1. Appointments to the Future Fisheries Review Panel – Introduction of new members appointed by Governor Bullock
2. General Housekeeping Info. Jim gave special thanks to Beau Downing and Jackie Windon for helping him prepare for this meeting in the absence of an FFI Program Manager. Michelle McGree will fill that vacancy as of July 1<sup>st</sup>.
3. Approved agenda as is. (Appendix-A)
4. Future Fisheries Improvement Balances as of 6/19/14 (Appendix-B)
5. How to determine if RIT \$ or License # (Appendix-C)

**Marvin Miller:**

Marvin directed the group in the review process and funding recommendations (Appendix-D). The results are as follows:

1. **FFI-011-2014: Bean Creek Channel Restoration.** Bean Creek, a tributary to the Red Rock River, Supports purestrain westslope cutthroat trout. The stream reach proposed for treatment has been channelized to accommodate irrigation and reroute flows during ice jams. An undersized culvert has exacerbated ice jam problems. This proposal is to restore 800 feet of Bean Creek on private property by increasing sinuosity, decreasing gradient, building 30 pools, improving riparian vegetation, and protecting the channel with riparian fence. It also includes replacing an undersized culvert at a county road crossing. The applicant is requesting \$14,945 for fencing, channel and headgate work, and willow installation, and is contributing \$12,656 cash and \$82,379 cash from other sources. We support the project as proposed (\$14,945); RIT eligible.

Amount Requested: \$14,945

Project Representative: None present

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$14,945

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Chuck Dalby

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$14,945 (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Is there public access? Yes via BLM.
- Is it the FFI panel's responsibility to inform folks for a need of a 310 permit? No, but is mentioned on those rare times the applicant is not already knowledgeable of their permitting requirements.
- Having matching funds is favorable.
- Are all in-kind matching funds in hand or approved already? No
- Having grazing and fence management agreements in place is favorable.

2. **FFI-012-2014: Deadmans Basin Diversion Dam Fishway.** Deadmans Basin Diversion Dam is located on the Musselshell River approximately 19 miles downstream from Harlowton. The diversion dam was damaged by the 2011 flood, and it and the canal headgate leak water to the canal reducing flow to the river by approximately 3,000 acre-feet annually. A pool/rock weir fishway would be constructed to improve passage for brown trout and (up to 500 cfs) several native species, including a hybrid dace species of special concern. Better water control and less leakage could improve instream flow, although no agreement for this provision accompanies this project. The applicant is requesting \$50,000 in Program funds for rock and grouted rock, and is contributing \$14,000 in cash and \$693,942 from outside sources. We support the project as proposed (\$50,000); RIT eligible.

Amount Requested: \$50,000

Project Representative: Mike Ruggles (FWP), Teri Hice (Deadmans Basin Water Users Assn), and Kevin Smith (DNRC)

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to approve \$82,400 contingent upon the building of the Full Fishway.

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Terry Chute

Panel action: Yes 7 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$82,400 (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Chuck Dalby recused himself from voting on this application due to his employment with DNRC.
- Are there any changes in Diversion Dams? No, just replacing headgates at this time.
- Applicant handed out new budget requesting additional funds in RIT \$.
- The application/budget showed 2 alternatives (Appendix-E): #1 Fishway allows both brown trout and red belly dace to pass. #2 only allows brown trout to pass. The panel pointed out that alternative #1 was the only one eligible for RIT \$.
- Panel would be in favor of approving an amount to cover the difference between alternative #1 and #2 to ensure the Full Fishway.
- Panel likes that this is a community project on a long watershed, located in eastern part of state and is slated as a showcase project to get others on board with future improvements.

- 3. FFI-013-2014: East Gallatin Restoration at Story Mill.** The Story Mill site is located at the confluence of Bozeman Creek and the East Gallatin River within the City of Bozeman. These streams, within this vicinity, support primarily brown and rainbow trout and longnose suckers. Both streams have been modified over the years for agricultural and industrial uses, with evidence of channelizing, vegetation removal, bank armoring, and floodplain fill. This proposal includes removal of concrete debris, auto/machinery parts, etc.; removing some floodplain fill; and revegetating banks. The applicant is requesting \$51,953 in Program funds mainly for revegetation materials and for equipment rental, and is contributing \$120,341 in in-kind services. (The contribution of \$106,350 for design and planning appears disproportionate and likely relates to the overall site restoration.) We support the project as proposed (\$51,953).

Amount Requested: \$51,953

Project Representative: Maddy Pope (The Trust for Public Land), Lisa Bay (Budget Manager) and Rich McEldowney (Project Manager)

Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$51,953

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Clint Peck

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$51,953 (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- This project expands public access with new city park currently being designed, so will there be any onsite educational opportunities? Yes, several interpretive programs are being developed.
- The need to balance bank armoring with the messy movements of a dynamic river was pointed out by the panel. The project manager stated the plan was “functional” driven and gave a walk-through of the map(s).
- Are there any plans to manage human traffic on re-vegetated streambeds? The restoration part of the project will be done a season or two before the Park development begins and potentially opens in 2016.
- Who will be the landowner? Land Trust? Or the City of Bozeman? The City of Bozeman is in the process of purchasing the land from the Trust by 2014 year end.
- Ann McCaulley (DEQ 319 Program) is in support of this “wholistic” project.
- Great opportunity for Bozeman City kids; Boys-n-Girls’ Club is adjacent to the property.

- 4. FFI-014-2014: Keep Cool Creek Fish Passage Improvement.** Keep Cool Creek is a spring creek that enters the upper Blackfoot River just north of Lincoln. It supports primarily brown trout, with westslope cutthroat trout found mainly in headwater tributaries. The proposed project involves replacing a pair of 24-inch culverts with a timber bridge designed to allow full channel function and aquatic organism passage. The applicant is requesting \$8,500 in Program funds for bridge parts, equipment rental, and labor, and is contributing \$2,932 in in-kind services and \$16,790 in in-kind cash. We support the project as proposed (\$8,500).

Amount Requested: \$8,500

Project Representative: Rylen Neudecker (Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited) & George Liknes (USFS)

Motion Made by: Clint Peck made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$8,500

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Charlie Christman

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$8,500 (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- Is this project part of a bigger restoration plan? Yes, potential Conservation project, Stream Management, etc. Those projects are started, but not developed enough for presentation yet.
- Are the landowners in favor of this project? Yes
- How do we know it's a "below passage level"? We know this based on velocity, data and impairment to sediment flow.
- Is this RIT \$ eligible since it is focused on westslope cutthroat? No because it is located next to a brown trout dominated fishery.
- There was discussion about the size of culvert pipe and Corp of Engineers specifications as part of the Clean Water Act. George Liknes of USFS stated there are 6 smaller pipes above this one, which will eventually be replaced with the larger pipes like this one. One opportunity at a time, said Greg Munther.

- 5. FFI-015-2014: Little Blue Joint Creek Culvert Replacement.** Little Blue Joint Creek flows into Blue Joint Creek, which enters Painted Rocks Reservoir. It supports primarily westslope cutthroat trout, with some brook trout and a few bull trout. This proposal calls for replacing a culvert that represents a partial fish-passage barrier to allow better access to 2.5 miles of suitable habitat, and perhaps increase recruitment to the reservoir. The applicant is requesting \$15,000 in Program funds and is contributing \$101,000 in in-kind services, and anticipates another \$5,000 in cash from outside sources. We support the project as proposed (\$15,000); RIT eligible.

Amount Requested: \$15,000

Project Representative: None present

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to deny the application as presented and inform the applicant that they may reapply with more details to support the concerns of the panel.

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Chuck Dalby

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$-0- (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Map 1 of the packet shows the road is located in a badly burned landscape, so what is the need for this road? Should the panel be granting funds to replace a culvert on this road when the road itself is not a priority road?
- Could be a valid reason, but no representative is present to ask.
- Replacing culvert with same size. The problem may be a vertical issue vs culvert issue.

**6. FFI-016-2014: Liverpool Creek Fish Passage/Entrainment/Flow.** Liverpool Creek is a tributary to Keep Cool Creek, which enters the upper Blackfoot River just north of Lincoln. Beginning where the creek leaves the mountains, it is disrupted by two irrigation diversions that lack headgates and require boards being placed in-channel to divert flows. A nearby stream crossing is undersized, representing a fish migration barrier. The project proposal involves replacing the undersized crossing (paired culverts) with a fish- and channel-friendly bridge, eliminating the upper irrigation diversion, upgrading the lower diversion with a fish screen, and pursuing a long-term water lease for instream flows. The applicant is requesting \$11,255 for bridge and diversion construction materials and equipment rental, and is contributing \$44,442 (\$3,655 cash and \$8,532 in-kind, and well as \$21,000 from outside sources). We support the project as proposed (\$11,255); RIT eligible.

Amount Requested: \$11,255

Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker (Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited) & Stan Bradshaw (Montana Water Project, Trout Unlimited)

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$11,255

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Terry Chute

Panel action: Yes 7 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$11,255 (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Are there maintenance issues with the proposed screens? Being as there are no moving parts, maintenance is minimal. The only maintenance would be the need to brush off organic material a couple times a week.
- Question about headgate size was addressed by Stan Bradshaw. The new headgates are being set to a size equal to the landowner's water rights. Current headgates exceed that amount. New headgates can be maneuvered to stop year round diversion.
- Have all other funding sources been secured to date? Yes, all of them.
- Was there an entrainment study? Yes, completed by FWP Biologist, Ron Pierce.
- Chuck Dalby recused himself from voting, as he is the landowner.

**7. FFI-017-2014: North Fork Blackfoot River Instream Flow Enhancement.** The North Fork Blackfoot River is the largest tributary to the Blackfoot River, with its confluence near Ovando. The North Fork is a bull trout core area stream and also supports westslope cutthroat trout. The river frequently goes dry in the late summer below the lowest diversion in the drainage. This proposal calls for replacing an existing open ditch with a pipeline that will serve systems upgraded from flood to sprinkler irrigation, resulting in flow savings that could be realized in the river; however, no instream flow agreement accompanies this project. The applicant is requesting \$35,000 in Program funds for pipe and installation, and is contributing \$182,319 cash from outside sources and \$43,600 cash and \$5,190 in-kind. We support the project as proposed (\$35,000); RIT eligible.

Amount Requested: \$35,000

Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker (Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited) & Stan

Bradshaw (Montana Water Project, Trout Unlimited)

Motion Made by: Clint Peck made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$35,000

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Charlie Christman

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$35,000 (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Where is the loss of 90% of water going? Underground. No wetlands? No.
- Is landowner OK with 18 cfs and a 12" pipe? Yes. Landowner is converting to sprinkler system vs irrigation due to rocky terrain.

- 8. FFI-018-2014: North Willow Creek Riparian Fence.** North Willow Creek (near Harrison) is a tributary to Willow Creek, which is tributary to the Jefferson River. The stream supports brown, rainbow, brook, and westslope cutthroat trout. Livestock grazing at the project site is causing loss of riparian vegetation and streambank erosion. This proposal calls for installation of riparian jack-leg fencing along .26 miles of North Willow Creek. The applicant is requesting \$7,232 in Program funds for fence materials and is contributing \$7,232. We support funding this project at a more conventional rate of \$2.00 per foot or \$2,746.

Amount Requested: \$7,232

Project Representative: None

Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby made the motion to table the application and encourage applicant to come back next cycle and address the concerns of design/placement of fence, fencing costs and grazing management plan.

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Alan Johnstone

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$-0- (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- Why jack leg fence? Applicant told Jim Darling he wanted to use jack leg fence due to ease of removal to get equipment in to do other stream restoration projects. Plus there is a lot of moose traffic and the damage would be more manageable than with wire.
- Maybe wire fence with gates would be just as effective for equipment passage.
- You can always lower an electric fence for equipment passage.
- Panel has a historical measure of only supporting up to \$2/foot for fencing.
- Where does the fence attach to the neighbor's?
- Where is the grazing management plan?

- 9. FFI-019-2014: Piney Creek Fish Screen Leak Prevention.** Piney Creek is a small, spring-fed tributary to Sage Creek that emerges along the west flank of the Pryor Mountains and flows  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles before being diverted into an irrigation system. It harbors a small, pure-strain Yellowstone cutthroat trout population. Fish screens were installed in 2009 to prevent entrainment into the

irrigation system; however, water still leaks from pond headgates, wasting scarce water in an arid environment. According to a letter of support, the project consists of installing a synthetic liner and bentonite seal in the reservoir. The applicant is requesting \$25,000 for materials and excavation and is contributing \$5,000 in cash. Lack of design and minimal description of fishery benefits make this application difficult to evaluate. We recommend tabling the request for later submittal.

Amount Requested: \$25,000

Project Representative: None

Motion Made by: Charlie Christman made the motion to table the application and encourage applicant to come back next cycle and address the concerns of design and fishery benefit.

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Greg Munther

Panel action: Yes 8 No 0

Amount Approved: \$-0- (License \$ or RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- Carol Endicott (FWP) agreed that the application was incomplete due to lack of response from those contributing design and planning details. Thus she supported tabling the request for later submittal.

**10. FFI-020-2014: Prickly Pear Spring Creek Bank Stabilization.** This unnamed spring creek enters Prickly Pear Creek approximately 6.5 miles upstream from the latter's confluence with Lake Helena. It supports brown and rainbow trout. Habitat in the spring creek has been degraded by livestock grazing, an undersized culvert at a road crossing, and intrusion by Prickly Pear Creek. The latter has channel alignment and debris issues. The project calls for improving pool and riffle habitat in selected meander bends of the spring creek, replacing the culvert with a bridge, and reconnecting the original confluence with Prickly Pear Creek. Prickly Pear would receive some realignment, juniper/willow/rock revetments, and debris cleanup. The applicant seeks \$49,837 (materials and equipment) and is contributing \$14,800 in cash, \$750 in in-kind services, and \$12,500 cash from other sources. It appears that the budget sheet for another project (Tenmile Creek) was submitted with this application. The application also lacks detailed designs for the stream restoration. We recommend tabling this request pending a more complete application.

Amount Requested: \$49,837

Project Representative: Eric Roberts

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to grant \$6,323 to cover just the bridge and Spring Creek portion of the project.

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Terry Chute

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$6,323 (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- Applicant handed out correct budget sheet, map & veg-designs (Appendix-F) for the

project.

- What is the significance of Prickly Pear Creek intrusion at Spring Creek? The goal is to promote a 600 foot spawning area up Spring Creek. Yes, this part is a treatment of a symptom, but it dovetails into a future 319 project to address the causes on Doug Ludtke land to reduce erosion, and enhance fish habitat and fish passage.
- Is there any 319 \$ for this project? Yes, eligibility issues are being addressed at this time.
- Is Spring Creek fed by Ag Community/Drain Ditch? No, it's a natural spring, where livestock access has diminished water quality. FWP's FAS program will be providing fencing to address livestock issues.
- Looks like the site is already covered in vegetation, so why more? The existing vegetation is not successfully preventing erosion. The addition of juniper and willow vegetation has proven to be more successful historically.
- Panel allotted applicant time to adjust the bridge and Spring Creek costs to reflect the panels wishes to only support that amount of funding. The applicant figures were \$1,144 for the bridge and \$5,143 for the Spring Creek work; totaling \$6,323.

**11. FFI-021-2014: Sauerkraut Creek Phase 2 Channel Restoration.** Sauerkraut Creek, a tributary to the upper Blackfoot River, supports genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout. To accommodate placer mining, upper reaches of the stream were confined to the toe of the hillslope, resulting in a channel with long, extended riffles and lacking pools, vegetation, and large wood. An existing ford has damaged and lowered streambanks, altering channel morphology and causing sediment deposition. Project specifics involve relocating 770 feet of Sauerkraut Creek and restoring riffle-pool and step-pool channel morphology within a sloping, well-vegetated riparian corridor and restored floodplain. The ford crossing will be rehabilitated. The applicant is requesting \$34,500 in Program funds for plant-related materials and equipment rental, and is contributing \$4,730 cash and \$100,850 from outside sources (\$87,450 cash; \$13,400 in-kind). We support the project as proposed (\$34,500); RIT eligible and mining-related.

Amount Requested: \$34,500

Project Representative: Ryen Neudecker (Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited)

Motion Made by: Clint Peck made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$34,500

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Karin Boyd

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$34,500 (RIT \$)

Discussion Points:

- On the map, it appears the foot path will be deleted, is that so? It's actually a road that will be decommissioned and not easily accessed as it is inside 7 miles of private property. The reason is evidence of ATV damage to wetlands above the Ford. Eventually the wall section will become part of a walking interpretive trail.
- Is the placer area being re-graded? The applicant is working with a design group and residents to reconstruct the channel using small fines over placer area.
- Are there any plans to monitor ground water levels? Not at this time.
- The panel was reminded that mining related projects were sought by legislature for RIT \$



- Why using willow cuttings and small diameter wood as bank stabilization, when they are not as visually aesthetic? The banks are not conducive to sod-n-fiber. While willows are more pleasing to the eye, they are also more expensive and labor intensive.

**12. FFI-022-2014: Spokane Creek Riparian Fence.** Spokane Creek is a tributary to Hauser Lake in the Missouri River drainage near East Helena. It supports primarily rainbow and brown trout. Livestock currently have access to 190 feet of stream channel adjacent to a newly constructed bridge project. The applicant is requesting \$1,400 in Program funds for fencing materials and shows no contributions in the submitted budget. We support the project at \$2.00 per foot of fencing for a total of \$800.

Amount Requested: \$1,400

Project Representative: Eric Roberts

Motion Made by: Greg Munther made the motion to approve the application as presented for the full amount of \$1,400

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Charlie Christman

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$1,400 (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- Is the bridge in? Yes.
- What is the grazing plan? Landowner historically uses a rest-rotation system and this section is a seasonal area.
- Is there fencing on the other side? Yes.
- Same landowner? Yes.
- Is there public access? Yes landowner allows public access.

**13. FFI-023-2014: Tenmile Creek Bank Stabilization and Fencing.** Tenmile Creek is a tributary to Prickly Pear Creek that enters the latter 2.3 miles upstream from Lake Helena. The stream supports brook, brown, and rainbow trout. Livestock grazing has removed riparian vegetation and accelerated erosion at two areas along the stream. This proposal calls for stabilizing 430 feet of streambank using juniper, willow, and rock, and fencing both sides of the stream (5,350 feet total) to exclude livestock. The applicant is requesting \$36,587 in Program funds for construction materials and equipment rental, and is contributing \$4,720 in cash. Without a design, it is difficult to determine the fishery benefits of the bank revetments and stream relocation. We recommend funding 5,350 feet of fencing at \$2.00 per foot (\$10,700), along with gravel and logs for water gaps (\$550) for at total of \$11,250.

Amount Requested: \$36,587

Project Representative: Eric Roberts

Motion Made by: Chuck Dalby made the motion to approve \$15,100 for fencing and armoring of stream banks

Motion 2<sup>nd</sup> by: Greg Munther

Panel action: Yes 8 No -0-

Amount Approved: \$15,100 (License \$)

Discussion Points:

- Applicant handout (Appendix-G)
- Why Juniper? Juniper was chosen for availability and effectiveness.
- Fence is set back 50 feet on each bank; is the landowner OK with that? Yes.
- Where did the channel fill come from? The fill resulted from a blowout of a barrow site upstream.
- Conversation about heavy duty rock vs soft engineering. Hard wiring streams prevents diversity. Soft armoring allows for time to watch and plan future designs. The alternative is just putting up the fence and let the stream take its course. Fences on both sides of stream create a corridor in which to manage stream banks.

**Budget Balances Following Review Panel Action**

\$178,100	RIT \$
<u>83,279</u>	License \$
\$261,379	

This leaves approximately \$389K of RIT \$ and \$45K of License \$ for the last of 4 grant cycles.

**Selection of Review Panel Member for Project Ranking Process**

Terry Chute volunteered to work with Jim Darling and Michelle McGree to rank projects.

**Schedule 2014 Winter Meeting**

Winter meeting has been scheduled for December 11, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned.