

UGBEP Advisory Council Meeting Program Updates – Debbie Hohler



**Double Tree Hilton, Helena
March 23, 2026**

Photo © Alan Krakauer (CC)

UGBEP Highlights (Nov 2025 – March 2026)

- Annual Payment Cycle (ongoing)
- UGBEP Proposal ranking –
Completed: November, March
Scheduled: April
- All Habitat staff meeting –
Training and Work Planning
(12/2025)
- Prep for CRP Add-on Lease (CAL)
mailing
- Review / edit Field Manual
- 2026 UGBEP Pheasant Release
enrollments = 2 applied
(contracted)



Budget Updates - Tentative

- UGBEP (Habitat and Bird Planting)
 - Review biennium budget
 - Available balance
 - Current obligations (through March 2025)
- Voluntary Public Access & Habitat Incentive Program (VPA-HIP)
 - Fed. grant \$ - UGBEP's Open Fields and Habitat Management Leases (HML)
 - New access



UGBEP Biennial Budget – FYs 2026 & 2027 July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027

HABITAT Fund (License dollars): **Part 1**

- Beginning Balance: **\$2,321,000 (July 1, 2025)**
- (Most) 2025 UGBEP contracts had funds allocated
- **FWP Budget Report Jan. 2026**
 - FY 2026 expenditures to date: **\$131,482**
 - Available UGBEP habitat funds: **\$1,345,253**



UGBEP Biennial Budget – FYs 2026 & 2027 July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027

HABITAT Fund (License dollars): **Part 2**

• **FWP Budget Report Jan. 2026**

- FY 2026 expenditures to date: **\$131,482**
- Available UGBEP habitat funds: **\$1,345,253**
- Pending allocations Nov 2025 proposals: **\$388,250**
- Pending allocations Mar 2026 proposals: **\$787,861**
- Total pending: **\$1,186,111**
- Available balance to obligate: **\$159,142**



UGBEP Biennial Budget – FYs 2026 & 2027

July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027

HABITAT Fund (License dollars): Part 3

- Available balance to obligate: **\$159,142**
 - April proposal period: CRP Add-on leases
 - UGBEP will likely have a Fall Proposal, enrollment expenditures will hit FY 28 (new authority/money!)
 - Need to figure partner contributions (future slide)
 - We have approximately \$60,000 VPA-HIP (next slide)
 - Program is operating lean – no padding



VPA-HIP Grant – Budget recap

Budget for 25/26 field season: \$440,556

\$371,370 (direct costs)

\$69,186 (indirect costs)

2025 enrollment obligations: **\$309,764**

2026 available balance: **\$61,606**



UGBEP Biennial Budget – FYs 2026 & 2027 July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027

BIRD-PLANTING Fund (License dollars)

- Beginning Balance: **\$107,354.16 (July 1, 2025)**
- FY 2026 expenses: **\$2,400.20**
- Available funds: **\$104,953.96 (FWP Budget Report Jan. 2026)**

2026 (FY 2027) pen-raised pheasant releases (pending)

2 contracts: approximately 162 birds, expenditures ~\$2,400.20



2025 - 2026 Program Enrollment Summary



UGBEP Habitat Projects Proposed (Nov '25)

	Project Descriptors									
Reg	Prj	Pvt	BMA	State	Fed	Renewals	New	Habitat	Access	Obl \$
4	5	3	3	1	1	2	3	485	3,012	52,830
6	2	2	1				2	94	471	32,600
6W	1			1			1	116	2,277	25,362
7	13		10			10	3	1,313	23,229	277,458
	21	5	14	2	1	12	9	2,008	28,989	388,250



UGBEP Habitat Projects Proposed (Mar '26)

	Project Descriptors									
Reg	Prj	Pvt	BMA	State	Fed	Renewals	New	Habitat	Access	Obl \$
3	1	1				1		5,200	5,200	12,578
4	7	5	1	2		2	5	601	15,736	146,626
6	11	11	5			8	3	1,269	8,667	166,748
7	19	17	6	3	1	10	9	1,598	37,843	461,909
	38	34	12	5	1	21	17	8,668	67,446	787,861



UGBEP Habitat Projects Proposed (Summary)

Prj	Pvt	BMA	State	Fed	Renewals	New	Habitat	Access	Obl \$
21	5	14	2	1	11	9	2,008	28,989	388,250
38	34	12	5	1	21	17	8,668	67,446	787,861
59	39	26	7	2	32	26	10,676	96,435	1,186,111



2026 CRP Add-on Lease Mailing (Mar)

- FSA/FWP MOU CRP data-sharing
- Statewide mailing (~1,200) to generate interest
- PF Partners will assist with outreach
- Deadline to apply April 1
- *Opportunity to expand leases on public lands & Block Management*
- *Approx. 35 applications so far....*



UGBEP & Partner Contract Renewals

Region 1 USFWS/FWP/PF Mission Valley (Vacant)

Region 2 USFS/FWP/NWTF (Bridger Line)

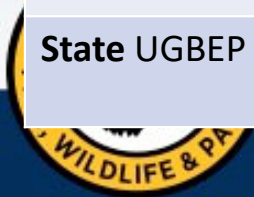
Region 4 CMCPF/FWP/PF (Virg Gluth)

PF Team (~14 positions)



UGBEP & Partner Contracts [New Slide]

Partnerships	Term	# Years	UGBEP OBL	Notes
R1 USFWS / UGBEP / PF	July 2023 – Sep 2025	2.25	28,150	New Contract in 2026 UGBEP Obl TBD
R2 USFS / UGBEP / NWTF	July 2022 – July 2026	4.0	160,000 PR 120,000 UGB 40,000	New Contract in 2026 UGBEP Obl TBD
R4 CMC PF / UGBEP / PF	July 2022 – June 2026	4.0	200,000 PR 150,000 UGB 50,000	New Contract in 2026 UGBEP Obl TBD
R5 BLM / UGBEP / PF	Aug 2023 – Sept 2025	2.0	135,000 ***** UGBEP 58,448 WMA 71,743	Partnership ended 2025
State UGBEP / MBWF / PF	Nov 2023 – Oct 2026	3.0	30,000	New Contract in 2026 UGBEP Obl TBD



UGBEP & Partner Contracts [New Slide]

UGBEP Obligations/Expenditures

July 2022 – October 2026: \$206,598 (average is ~51,650/year)



UGBEP & Partner Contract Renewals

Challenges

- UGBEP available funds for remainder of year: \$159,142
- CAL enrollment review and selection
- Looking at options
 - Adjusting proposed contract lengths
 - Other FWP funding sources



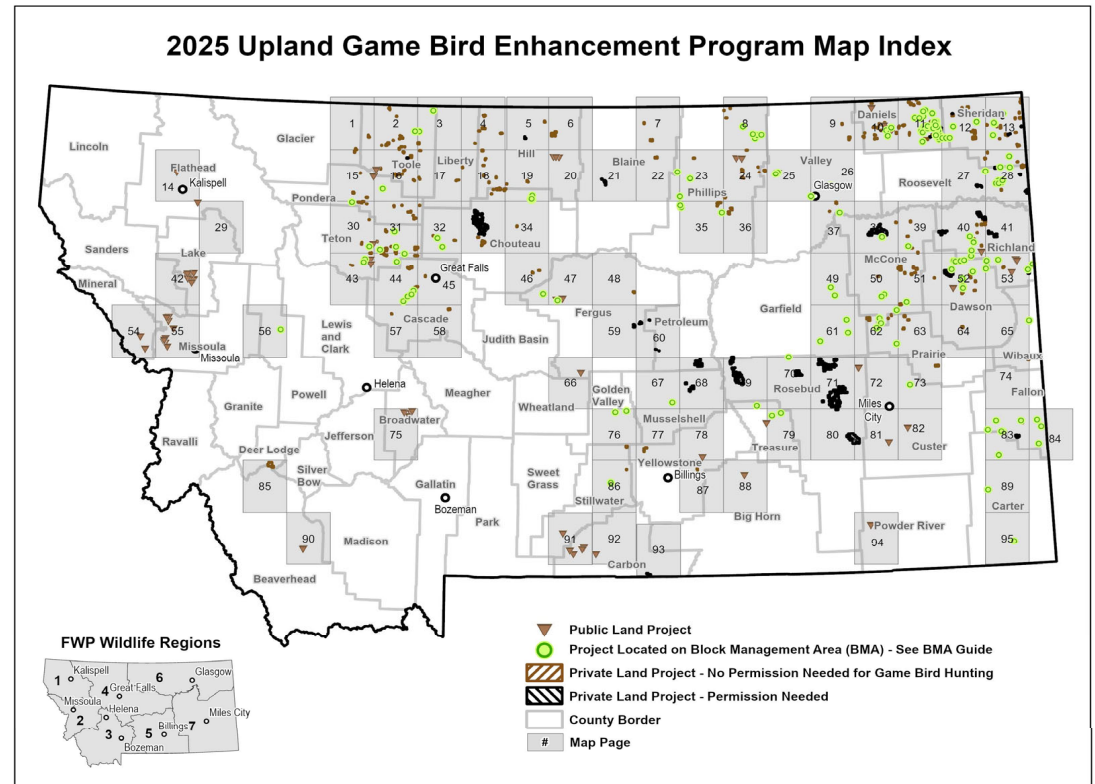
UGBEP Updates

- Field Manual
- Field Visits
- Increase efficiencies
 - Program Calendar
 - Proposal forms
 - Contract forms
 - Budget strategies
 - We're still thinking!



UGBEP Enrollments

- Active: 600 projects
- Habitat acres: 350k
- Access acres: 774k



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Thank you!

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