



Ravalli County Fish & Wildlife Association

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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September 16, 2013

Ravalli County Commissioners
215 S. 4th St. Suite A
Hamilton, MT 59840

RE: KBK River Property Conservation Easement

The Ravalli County Fish and Wildlife Association would like to issue our support for the KBK River Property Conservation Easement. We feel it is extremely critical to conserve Bitterroot Riverfront acreage when opportunity presents itself. The Bitterroot River is an important driver behind the tourism in our community. Many of the visitors that choose the Bitterroot Valley as their destination do so for the excellent fishing and beautiful open spaces. In placing a conservation easement on the KBK River Property, both open space along the Bitterroot River will be conserved and this land will continue to contribute to high water quality and healthy fish habitat for the Bitterroot Valley's future.

In addition to the economic component of this project, this is also critical important wildlife habitat. The diversity of habitat on the property, which includes riparian, wetlands, open meadows, and forest allows for many species to make use of it. It is winter range for both mule deer and elk, as well as frequently visited by many other species including bear, moose, whitetail deer, fox, coyote, amongst others, and a numerous diversity of bird species.

Being a major conservation partner we have consistently support many conservation easement projects and we see this project as another positive step to preserving what we all love about living and recreating here in the Bitterroot Valley. With the assistance of the Open Lands Bond, this property will be conserved and wildlife habitat, important water resources, and agricultural uses will be conserved for future generations to enjoy.

Respectfully

David L. Harlacher
President