COUNTY
OF
RAVALLI

STATE
OF
MONTANA

The Bitterroot Valley

Hamilton, Montana 59840

October 20, 2021

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Attn: Kim Antonick, WHIP Coordinator
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620

The Ravalli County Commissioners fully support the "Bitterroot Big Three" WHIP grant proposal in Ravalli County.

The approximately 430,000 acres of the Project Area include private lands, DNRC state lands, a Fish, Wildlife and Parks Wildlife Management Area and Bitterroot National Forest Lands. We are pleased to see these land owners and agencies working in concert to effectively protect and enhance the priority wildlife habitat areas listed within in the proposal.

Our Noxious Weed Department Coordinator has an excellent record in working with private landowners in our community and in furthering the Department mission of preventing and controlling the noxious weed problem. Her success in building private land partnerships has delivered a substantial amount of hard dollar cash match for the purposes of this WHIP proposal.

We see this as a tremendous opportunity to leverage these private cash match contributions with other partners of the proposal in a way that will create a multiplier effect and produce a greater amount of cumulative significant gains in the noxious weed battle.

This multi-year grant potential is important for the local economy with individual hunters, outfitters and recreation experiences that involve these three important big game species, as well as other wildlife species that will benefit from noxious weed control. We also know and appreciate that effective weed control results will benefit water quality in our world class blue ribbon trout fishery in the Bitterroot River and drainages.

The focused effort on noxious weed control over a several year period will also have spin off benefits for our important agricultural sector in the county, the farms and ranches that depend on competitively producing their products without the substantial burden and added cost of runaway noxious weed control problems.

We urge you to award the Bitterroot Big Three WHIP proposal at the full amount requested.

Sincerely,

Ravalli County Commissioners

Jeff Burrows, Chairman

ABSENT
Greg Chilcott, Member

Dan Huls, Member