

A photograph of three people riding horses down a dirt path, herding a group of dark-colored cattle. The riders are seen from behind. The person on the left is wearing a white shirt and a dark cap. The person in the middle is wearing a light purple shirt and a tan cowboy hat. The person on the right is wearing a red shirt and a grey cap. The path is flanked by dense green trees and foliage. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION

DIVERSITY WITH A PURPOSE

ANNUAL REPORT 2009
PROGRAMS AND POSSIBILITIES



Les Gilman

Dear Friends and Supporters:

Every passing year marks significant achievements by the Ruby Habitat Foundation. I am delighted to be a part of such an innovative and effective effort to make a difference in our community by fulfilling the mission that we envisioned seven years ago. We continue to raise the awareness of a conservation ethic and demonstrate specific practices that have application in our area. Interest in and support of the foundation continues to grow in our community and around the country. To our amazement and delight, the first international delegation to visit the Woodson Ranch was a group from Mongolia.

Martha and Craig Woodson, the founders of the Ruby Habitat Foundation, continue their personal dedication to the efforts of RHF and hold a strong conviction that the work of the Foundation must have practical application. They have charged us with the responsibility of practicing "conservation and diversity with purpose". Their efforts have not been in vain and the Foundation is committed to practical habitat development and restoration in concert with ongoing agricultural operations at the Woodson Ranch. Craig & Martha's generosity in sharing with others continues to inspire us all.

Our relationship with the Montana Land Reliance continues to prove very rewarding. The staff, directors and friends of MLR have become invaluable friends to RHF and we look forward to many more years of working together. Their commitment to a conservation ethic extends to the natural and financial resources entrusted to them. Their dedication to Montana is unwavering and inspirational.

We are delighted to welcome to the Board of Directors another member of the Woodson family. Craig's nephew, Lance Woodson has a long standing relationship with the Ruby Valley and a passion for our natural world. He currently lives and works in the Salt Lake City area with his wife and family and travels to the Ruby as frequently as he can. He brings to the board experience in outdoor recreation management and a personal connection by family ties.

Please take some time to look through our annual report, revisit with us the highlights of the past year and consider our progress toward accomplishing our purposes. Dr. Samuel Corl III has once again volunteered his creative talent to assemble this brief summation of our activities. I applaud his skill and dedication.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I want to extend our heartfelt appreciation for the support of our many friends over these past seven years. We believe we are making a difference but there is much yet to achieve in our effort to preserve and enhance conservation values of this great area.

I hope you will choose to continue to partner with RHF as we strive to maintain the integrity of our western landscape and heritage.

Sincerely,

Southwestern Montana and the Ruby Valley in particular is a unique and beautiful part of our world. We who live here have a heart's desire for it to be preserved and protected and for the rural character not to be discarded. So how can a rustic community meet the discovery by the greater world? History would tell us that the discoverers will dominate and the uniqueness is lost. Ruby Habitat Foundation was established at an opportune time to help meet the new challenges facing this area. The generosity and vision of Craig and Martha continue to inspire and challenge anyone fortunate enough to meet them. Their passion and commitment to "habitat" is inspiring.

Ruby Habitat Foundation continues to explore ways to conserve and enhance our habitat. Being a rancher I get excited by the different cattle and grazing research projects that are ongoing. These have real value in preserving the agriculture base of this area. The more ranches that remain viable the more open space that will be preserved. A project that surprised me by its value is the twenty acre habitat around the Hill House. The diversity that can be created in a small acreage is surprising and the majority of the area is still in agriculture production.

The opportunities for education continue to increase with each year. I feel it is especially important to reach out to the youth and give them the vision of conservation with a purpose. Stewardship cannot be taken lightly and we need to begin preparing the next generation. You might be amused, as I am, with the notion that Ruby Habitat Foundation may have had some influence on conservation efforts in Mongolia this past year. We never know where the next opportunity will present itself.

If you are in the area I would encourage you to schedule a tour of the Woodson Ranch and see for yourself a unique conservation effort.

Neil Barnosky



Neil Barnosky



Mission Statement

The Ruby Habitat Foundation is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources and the social and economic makeup of the Ruby Valley and southwest Montana by, among other things:

- Supporting agriculture in the community and the diversification of agricultural operations to ensure the long-term viability of working ranches;
- Working with landowners, educational institutions, foundations and other entities to protect and enhance open space and wildlife habitat;
- Encouraging education and training to broaden the understanding of resource management issues and responsible management of private lands;
- Promoting the concept of resource accountability and developing examples of minimal impact resource management for agricultural and recreational uses while protecting the environment.

A 509(a)(3), Tax Deductible support foundation to Montana Land Reliance

Ruby Habitat Research Foundation TIN # 45-0487621

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Helena Students Learn the Value of Sustainable Agriculture in the Ruby Valley

As we walked through the native grasses that grow throughout the Ruby Habitat, we realized just what a gem this property is. The Ruby Valley is a great sight to behold. It reminded us of what Montana used to be, and looking around, it invited us to think back to the people and events this place has seen. The ranch encompasses 8.5 miles of streams, and its owners are researching new ways to create sustainable living conditions for people, fish, wildlife, plants and livestock. Craig and Martha Woodson, dedicated to helping preserve Montana's agricultural heritage, natural resources and open space, offered the students of Helena's High School Gifted Program an opportunity to explore and learn about the Ruby Habitat Foundation's work.



Photo by Seth Page

In 1805, Lewis and Clark passed through the Ruby Valley area. Already having named the Jefferson River, Lewis went on to name its tributaries after President Jefferson's key attributes. So the river was named the Philanthropy River. But the name didn't stick. Over time, the arrival of settlers wore on the land. Preserving and protecting natural habitats became harder with each passing decade, which is why the Woodsons' efforts are so important.

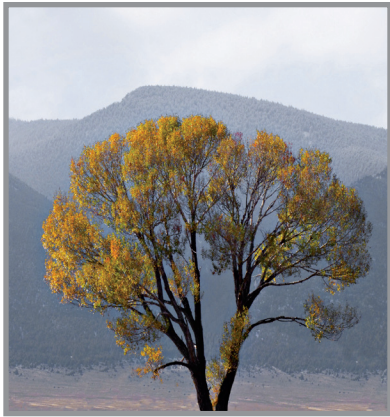


Photo by Kyle Matthews

The Woodsons purchased the property in 1992. They had big plans, which ultimately led to the creation of the Ruby Habitat Foundation. They revolutionized the property into a place dedicated to researching and experimenting with farming, ranching and conservation methods. Their goal was to make it possible for working ranches to be successful while also protecting open space. Efforts are being made to re-establish native plants, create biodiversity and enhance wildlife habitat. Safe nesting and foraging environments have been created for birds, and protected areas established for cottonwood groves to grow and thrive on their own. They've also experimented with unorthodox methods of ranching, such as raising all-natural-grass-fed cows and moving calving to June when the nutritional value of the plants matches the nutritional needs of the cows.

The ranch manager, Les Gilman, explained to us the importance of sustainable ranching and his interest in sharing the results of their efforts with others. Why is all of this agricultural research and conservation work important to Montana? This is a question that entered our minds during our two

days at the Ruby Habitat. The answer became clear to us. Montana is the Treasure State and a large part of what makes it so sacred is its agricultural heritage, open space and natural resources.

Even though we may think little about how our ranches affect us, we must realize that their work is important, and open land in Montana is precious. Finding ways to create sustainability is the answer to keeping our ranches and our heritage alive in Montana. We applaud the Ruby Habitat Foundation for its efforts in helping keep Montana the wild, beautiful, treasured state that it is. The Ruby Habitat is one of the most incredible places we've ever been to. This place is filled with Montana spirit!



Photo by Haransh Siongh

Editor's note: This article, which appeared in the Helena Independent Record on October 22, 2009, was written and photographed by Jessica Sheldahl, Hadley Schoderbek And Haransh Singh, 8th-10th grade students with the Helena School District's High School Gifted Program. Helena students learn the value of sustainable agriculture in the Ruby Valley

Another beautiful summer day, 2009, Doug Mitchell and I are driving down through the Jefferson Valley headed for the Ruby. We're to meet Craig and Martha Woodson to talk about the Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF), Montana Land Reliance (MLR) and how both organizations fit together; future goals and a long wish list of things we all want to see happen. MLR's relationship with RHF, Craig and Martha, Les Gilman, and of course, the Woodson Ranch continues to evolve and mature. This day Doug and I are discussing friendships, views concerning conservation, and having lively debates about things in general. All of our diversity allows us bring to the table discussions about RHF and how to move forward, using the ranch for education regarding conservation, while maintaining the ranch's agricultural base, riparian and wetland development; at the same time allowing for fishing and hunting. RHF really is about individuals and the larger, much more diverse community. As we drive, talk, and try to guess where we will be at by the end of the day, we know for sure that MLR and the Ruby Habitat will be a part of the Ruby Valley's future.

The Montana LAND RELIANCE

Rock Ringling
Managing Director

On Raising Lamas On the Woodson Ranch

On a brisk spring day in April, the world became slightly smaller and the reach of the Ruby Habitat Foundation expanded greatly. On that day, a delegation of Buddhist High Lamas and some environmental educators from Mongolia kicked off a 17 day tour of the United States by visiting the Foundation's home, the Woodson Ranch in the Ruby Valley.

Given the Ruby Habitat Foundation's commitment to natural resource diversity and conservation purposes, the delegation wanted to witness firsthand the practices and techniques being employed to accomplish those purposes. The Foundation is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural

resources and the social and economic climate of the Ruby Valley and Southwest Montana. The Mongolian delegation desires the same for their watershed. The U.S. tour focused on visiting specific sites to exchange ideas and methods for habitat restoration projects, along with trainings in grant writing, consensus building, wildlife management, and outdoor science education.

The brief visit with the delegation was an incredible experience for everyone involved, allowing "monks and ranchers" to intermingle, share information and experiences, and discuss methods of sustainable agriculture that apply to both the Eg-Uur Valley of Mongolia and the Ruby

Valley. Language was not a barrier, as the group held lively exchanges on topics of common interest such as irrigation methods, rotational grazing practices, wildlife habitat and riparian management.

Following their tour of the Woodson Ranch and a discussion of the purposes of the Ruby Habitat Foundation, the delegation enjoyed a delicious luncheon featuring the Foundation's own "Ruby Valley Grass Fed Beef" prepared by the Watershed Council's coordinator, Rebecca Ramsey and served at The Old Hotel in Twin Bridges.

The Ruby Habitat Foundation and The Ruby Watershed Council co-hosted the delegation's visit to the Ruby while the entire U.S. tour was facilitated by The Tributary Fund based in Bozeman, Montana. The Foundation has a strong working relationship with the Ruby Watershed Council and the Ruby Valley Conservation District. Each organization is committed to uniting agriculture, recreation, conservation and education to protect the land and preserve our heritage. You can find out more information about these partners at www.rvcd.org



The Tributary Fund

The mission of The Tributary Fund is "to engage communities in conservation solutions by connecting religious, scientific and local leaders." Since 2004, The Tributary Fund had been working in Mongolia with the Gandantegchinling Monastery, Khuvsgul Travel, The Taimen Conservation Fund, science teachers and community leaders from Mongolia's Eg-Uur Valley to help build an awareness of land and water conservation and economic sustainability.

The Tributary Fund received a grant to fund this exchange to facilitate dialogue among Mongolian and American scientists, educators and religious spokespersons to build on the collective work done to date. You can find out more about The Tributary Fund at www.thetributaryfund.org.



Photographs courtesy of The Tributary Fund

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Richard Gotshalk
Bud Kanouse
Phillis Massar
Lowell Sauerbier
Corky Subak
Scott Waldie
Lester Wessel

Ruby Habitat Foundation 2009 Financials

2009 General Fund

Income:	\$ 247,346
Expense:	<u>47,414</u>
Net Income:	\$ 199,932

General Fund Cash and Investments: \$ 76,409
(Pays the day-to-day expenses that finance the operation of the foundation.)

Rural Heritage & Open Lands Fund: \$ 133,758
(Designed to provide funding for outreach and land conservation efforts.
General fund surpluses and designated gifts create the balance of this account.)

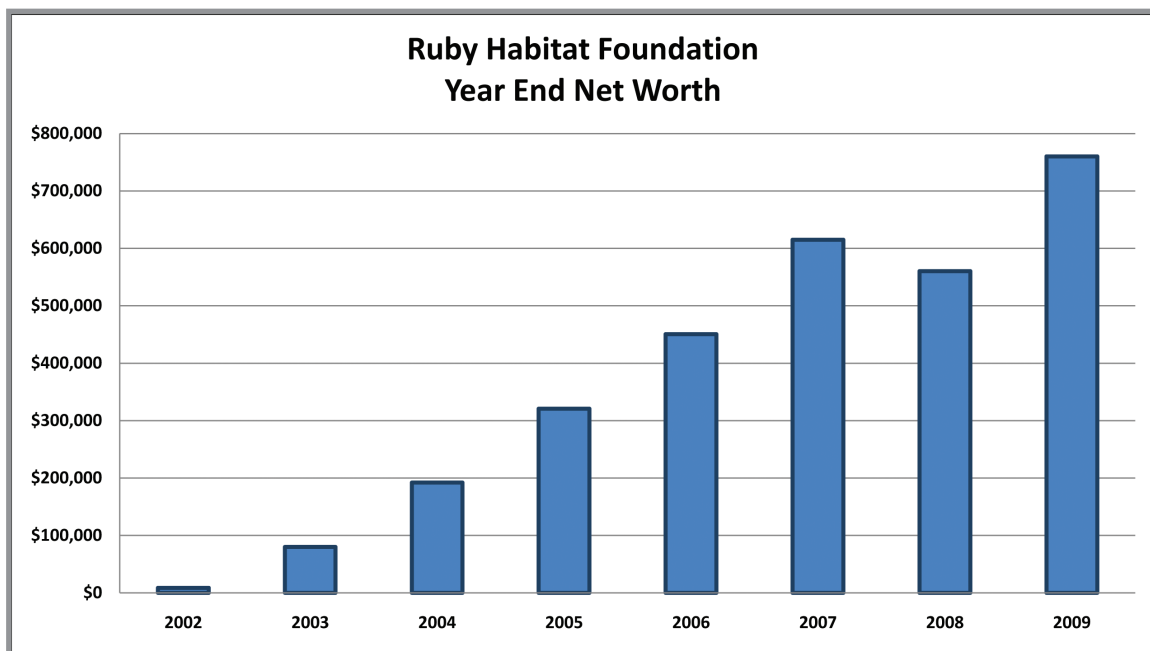
Hill Education & Outreach Endowment: \$ 13,908
(Income finances conservation education and outreach to landowners
and the general public. These funds come from specifically designated gifts.)

Woodson Ranch Endowment: \$ 474,414
(The income from the corpus will be used for operation and maintenance
of the Woodson Ranch, to ensure its protection and continued viability.
The ranch is home to the foundation and its research efforts.
The principal for this endowment, as well as current ranch operating capital,
is being provided by Craig Woodson.)

Other Assets (Visitor Center, Art & Books): \$ 61,733

Total Assets as of 12-31-09: \$760,222

RHF is a 509(a)(3) tax-exempt support organization to the Montana Land Reliance, a 501(c)(3) corporation.
Our Tax identification number is 45-0487621. Each entity is audited annually and independently.
Audit copies are available upon request.





RUBY HABITAT foundation

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www.rubyhabitat.org

Landowners and resource managers are inherently bound to a high level of resource accountability. We are bound by law to protect the environment and prevent resource degradation, but we have a higher obligation to be good stewards of our natural resources, sharing them today and preserving them for future generations. The decisions we make and the actions we take affect our own environment as well as that of the wildlife, our neighbors and future generations."

(Craig Woodson, founder RHF)