

RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2015



*Dedicated to Innovative, Insightful,
and Responsible Resource Management*

Comments from the Executive Director

Les Gilman
Executive Director
Ruby Habitat Foundation

The view from my office window and from anywhere within the Ruby Valley, reflects the struggles and hopes of spring. Snow dominates the mountain tops, blanketing the hibernating flora and fauna while storing precious water resources for seasonal delivery. Ever decreasing banks of snow hold on in the shaded places on the valley floor and hints of green begin to emerge along their borders. The wildlife that has wintered here seems as delighted as their human neighbors to soak up the sunlight availed by the lengthening days. Spring at the Ruby Habitat Foundation is no different. The planning and maintenance efforts of the winter, transition into a busy schedule of farming, planting and irrigating as well as the cultivating and nurturing of our educational outreach efforts. As we prepare this report, we are happy to say that we are well pleased with the expanding outreach efforts reflected in it and look forward to additional opportunities in the coming years. All of us here at the Ruby Habitat Foundation find a tremendous satisfaction in seeing Craig Woodson's vision fulfilled through our efforts and your support.



The generous support of our donors motivates us to continue to do the good work of the foundation. Our gates are always open to educational tours and outreach events featuring the work we have been doing. The Woodson Ranch is a spectacular example of agriculture, wildlife, recreation and education coexisting on the landscape. Some of our efforts are featured in this annual report and others you will just have to come see for yourself.

The "Clear Creek Project" remains high on our list of priorities. Clear Creek is an eleven mile long braid of the Ruby River which flows through the Woodson Ranch on the west side of the valley floor. Our plan calls for modifications, upgrades and enhancements to the man-made and natural features of the stream to better meet the needs of the wild trout fishery, the other wildlife, the irrigators and the recreationists. Ask us about the project next time you visit the ranch or watch for updates in future annual reports.

Our association with the Montana Land Reliance (MLR) continues to prove invaluable. The alliance forged by the Woodsons and the MLR directors is strong and our mutual interests benefit Montana's conservation efforts. We are grateful to Craig & Martha Woodson and to the Directors, the Board and the staff of the Montana Land Reliance for their foresight, determination and commitment to Montana.

Please take time to review this year's Annual Report in depth. The talented Dr. Samuel Corl III has again volunteered his creativity and time to assemble this summation. As you read it, revisit with us the highlights of the past year and consider our progress toward accomplishing our purposes.

On behalf of the Board of Directors I extend a heartfelt thank you for the support of our many friends over the years. We believe we are making a difference. There is however, much yet to achieve in our effort to preserve and enhance the 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.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Les Gilman".

Outreach Report

With a year of experience to reflect upon, several aspects of Woodson Ranch stand out as worthy of note and appreciation.

The space, the place itself, is special. And it is special by design. Two dozen years ago, Craig and Martha began to influence the land here with their remarkably perceptive vision of what could be. Cooperating with local landowners, businesses and agencies, they changed the landscape of this section of the Ruby Valley to the point where people driving by on the highway notice a difference here, even driving by at 70 mph!

Five years after Craig passed, Martha continues to carry the banner for conservation and continuous improvement of the ranch. The Woodson Legacy seems secure in the hands of the well-run Foundation Board along with guidance from our parent organization, the Montana Land



Dave Delisi and Friend

Reliance. It is truly an honor to be a part of such a place, and I will do my best to keep beating the drum for support and recognition of all that has been accomplished.

This year, 2015, saw the hatching of two Bald Eagles on the ranch. The nest stands at the north end of the ranch, and if you haven't seen it, let me know when you visit and I'll take you there. Known for their keen vision, it seems fitting to place a Bald Eagle on the cover of this report as it echoes the fact that excellent vision is why this ranch exists in the wonderful state it does today.

PS: as we move forward, we are attempting to save costs by transitioning to electronic delivery of our newsletter, the annual report, and other communications. If you have not seen our quarterly newsletter, it is because we do not have your email address. Please send drop me a note saying "please add me" and I'll get you on that list! Send to dave@rubyhabitat.org.

Dave Delisi

Ruby Habitat Foundation 2015

As we move forward it is always good to reflect on what has happened in the past. Craig Woodson began Ruby Habitat Foundation with a thoughtful, generous vision of preserving and enhancing the Ruby Valley and Southwestern Montana. I believe he fully grasped the huge responsibility we as humans have to be good stewards of our environment. Woodson Ranch has become and is becoming a fine example of what the shape of good stewardship should look like. His vision, his passion continues to inspire us.



The Ruby Valley has been a beautiful area since time began, I am sure. As agriculture has developed, the beauty and productivity has really blossomed. Irrigation has transformed the amount of forage grown in our valley. This not only supports our rural economy but provides a rich habitat for our many wildlife neighbors. The large diversity of wildlife in the Ruby Valley is truly amazing as many of you that have visited this area can testify to. Our continuing commitment to supporting ranches through the various trials on Woodson Ranch is a benefit to each one that spends all or part of the year in this area. The importance of healthy productive open space cannot be over stated. The diversity of the wildlife in the Ruby Valley and on Woodson Ranch in particular speaks to the fact that we are moving in the right direction.

The message of resource accountability, whether in the agricultural arena or the recreational use, has been a priority at Ruby Habitat Foundation each year. Throughout the year many groups visit the ranch and are inspired and educated about the importance of careful use of all of our natural resources. I feel it is especially important for our youth to be exposed to true conservation practices and to begin to realize we are all dependent on this earth to be able to live and enjoy life. The school groups and others that visit Woodson ranch are gaining valuable knowledge in resource accountability.

Fly fishing has long been a popular form of recreation and relaxation at Woodson Ranch but something I think we are really beginning to realize is the large diversity of birds that are also enjoying the rich habitat here. It would be well worth your time to come and visit these flighty residents and listen to their opinions on the importance of resource management. They seem to be especially eager to express their views first thing in the morning.

I want to thank each of you that so generously support Ruby Habitat Foundation. You are so very important in getting out the message of good stewardship.

Neil Barnosky
Chairman, Ruby Habitat Foundation

Ruby Habitat is continuing to move forward with Craig & Martha Woodson's vision for the Foundation and the ranch's interaction with the greater Ruby Valley community. With Dave Delisi's arrival at the ranch, RHF is expanding the education programs on everything from bird life, ranching, to river education for the area's school kids. Moving forward, RHF is positioned to expand on community education efforts, agricultural experiments benefiting local agricultural operators and, of course, welcoming the fishing public from around the world. The Montana Land Reliance would like to congratulate all the folks at RHF on another great year of success.

Rock Ringling
Managing Director
Montana Land Reliance



Education on the Ranch

A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.

Oliver Wendell Holmes

A portion of the mission supported by the Ruby Habitat Foundation is “encouraging education and training to broaden the understanding of resource management issues, and responsible management of private lands.”

2015 saw the fulfillment of this mission in numerous ways:

Public School Students on the Ranch

Students from six to eighteen years old visited Woodson Ranch to experience the wonders of the place, to contribute valuable time and scientific data, and to benefit from the muse of nature as they wrote poetry.

The Sheridan High School Advanced Placement Biology Class “adopted” the Woodson Ranch as the focal point for their Fall Project. They conducted an analysis of the health of our four waterways, using aquatic insects as indicators of water health. Over several visits, these students donned waders and boots and gathered samples from each of the streams. The invertebrates from each stream were identified and the results were compiled and compared to the others.

The value of this partnership is immense, and can best be summarized by the school students themselves:

Being able to do actual field work in a high school class is rare. Being able to do field work where the results will have actual real world application is almost unheard of. The students put in more hard work on this project than on any other student project I have ever been a part of and I think a big reason for that was because they understood why they were doing the work. All of the kids had already been on the Woodson ranch before during earlier field trips and I think they felt flattered that they could actually do something that would be useful for the Ruby Habitat Foundation.

Shawn Regnerus, AP Biology Instructor, Sheridan High School

We live in Mt were (sic.) we have river and streams and this is the type of research that is actually done here.
High School Biology Student

This project showed us what biology is actually like which some of the kids might not have known about.
High School Biology Student

It exposed us to biology as a real career option which we might not have considered before.
High School Biology Student

If you live in a big city you would only get to read about the result of a project like this, but we actually got to do the research.
High School Biology Student

Sheridan High School English Students also visited Woodson Ranch this past Fall, and spent a few hours connecting with their muse. The resulting poetry reflects the fact that these students were able to go deep and create memorable works. One of these poems is on page 15 of the Annual Report.

We also hosted young students from the Glen, MT school district. These intrepid youngsters got their hands wet and dirty as they studied pond ecology with a visiting biologist from Montana Watercourse. They identified all kinds of insect life in our pond, and also took a trek on our Nature Trail. The Spring storm was two steps behind, and they managed to get back on the bus just before the hail hit.

continued

Summer Intern Program

For the past few years, Woodson Ranch has employed a Summer Intern. This past year, we were fortunate to host Augusta Clarke who provided some invaluable assistance in multiple areas. A recent Brown University Graduate, “Gusty” was there for us when we needed help, whether it was assisting with Outreach Programs like the Wildlife Speaker Series or continuing our never-ending efforts at noxious weed control. When you visit us this Summer, one of her projects will be on display in the Visitor Center: the Woodson Ranch time-line is the result of Gusty’s considerable research into the history of this place, going back in time to the prehistoric days of yore, and highlighting significant events that happened between then and now.

The Intern Program here at the ranch is yet another example of how we try to take the “long view” of things. Hiring a young person to come spend time here allows us to influence a young mind, providing education in agricultural best practices and conservation ethics. Change happens when minds change, one at a time. Gusty benefited from the experience, too:

My experience at Ruby Habitat Foundation confirmed my suspicion that meaningful and lasting conservation is as much about the people involved as it is the land itself. Those contributing to the Foundation are among the best people I know, and I am so profoundly lucky to have met the families invested in the Ruby Habitat experiment. I know that no matter the stage of my life, returning to the ranch will always be synonymous with coming home, and I'd like to thank everybody for the opportunity to get to know the extended Ruby Habitat family.

Augusta Clark



“Gusty”



Martha Woodson, front, fourth from left, and Les Gilman, back left, with visitors from China

International Outreach

In July, a contingent of young adults from Northern China visited to learn about agricultural practices here in Southwest Montana. Our Nature Trail afforded a wonderful opportunity for the students to learn about everything from the decline of cottonwoods in the West, to the value of integrating wildlife into a ranch management program. These students came with wide eyes, open minds and asked questions about life on a Montana ranch. It is comforting to know that somewhere, on the other side of the planet, there are young folks whose memories include a special day on Woodson Ranch.

Hill Education Endowment

Many of these educational opportunities are facilitated through the earnings provided by our Hill Education Endowment. This money gives us a bit of cash to pay for the fuel or other incidental charges a school may incur when traveling to Woodson Ranch. We are actively seeking donors who wish to contribute to this fund. If this resonates with you, contact dave@rubyhabitat.org.

Acres on Woodson Ranch: 1100 . . . Acres in NY’s Central Park: 843

Woodson Ranch Soil Health Trial Update 2015

Dan Durham, NRCS

It is hard to believe that 5 years have passed since we started experimenting with cover crops and no-till at the Woodson Ranch. In the beginning many folks told us no-till won't work here due to the climate, soils, thick sod, etc. They also laughed at the idea of planting turnips and radishes, and joked about our "weed patch" after seeing the diverse mix of species in our cover crop cocktails. Today it is a much different story. After a relatively short time these soil building practices have become fairly common throughout Madison and Beaverhead Counties, and we would like to think this project has played a role in encouraging this change.



5th Year Soil Health Results

In this part of the world old hay stands are typically plowed under every so often, seeded to grain for a couple years, and then planted back to alfalfa and/or grass. Unfortunately, the use of heavy tillage leads to soil degradation and soil loss. The intent of this project was to "renovate" 45 acres of grass hay/pasture without touching it with a plow (except on the comparison plots) and to use a more diverse species mix in the

annual cropping years. By avoiding tillage we hoped to preserve or improve existing organic matter levels, soil structure, and biological activity. The diverse cover crop would ideally speed up soil development and create a more resilient biological community.

Most of the trial field has now been seeded back to alfalfa, after rotating through a cover crop or forage grain, without ever being plowed. From a production standpoint the results are excellent. A short walk through the plots demonstrates that no-till can indeed be used to establish a beautiful hay crop. The clipping data supports this assertion and indicates yields are as good (or better) than conventional techniques, all at a lower cost. This spring, when the soil thaws, we will take our final set of soil samples and compare nutrient levels, organic matter, infiltration rates and biological activity between the various treatment plots to see if differences have emerged. Regardless of these findings, there is abundant science indicating our implementation of no-till and cover crops has helped preserve soil integrity rather than destroy it.

We are also hearing encouraging reports from local livestock producers that have incorporated these techniques into their operations. Often times they made these changes for a healthier bottom line, but the soil benefits have come as a welcome surprise.

Even when slight reductions in yield have occurred, most folks are happy with the result due to reduced fuel and labor costs, better water infiltration and the elimination of soil erosion. Cover crops are also proving to be quite valuable as a fall forage resource. Having a lush green field of turnips, annual rye and radishes when cattle come home from the forest delays feeding hay and puts pounds on calves or yearlings before they head to market. These cover crops remain green into November, when other forage resources are much lower quality, meaning the tractor isn't running and the cows are working for a living rather than standing in the bread line.

Several questions have emerged from this experiment that will hopefully fuel future efforts at the Woodson Ranch. One of these is whether or not we can go no-till without glyphosate herbicide. Another difficult question is how to implement no-till in situations where rodent pests are a major problem and tillage is used to keep fields smooth. We also need to figure out ways to keep valuable nutrients and carbon on our fields rather than exporting them in the form of hay. Solutions to these problems will surely help make local agricultural operations more economically and environmentally viable going forward. We hope to have helped answer these questions in another 5 years.

Of Hunting and Raptors

It should come as no surprise that Montanans are proud of their tradition of hunting. The magnificent bird on the right is a Golden Eagle. These birds are frequent visitors to the Ruby Valley. If you have been fortunate enough to spot one of these raptors, you know how impressive they are. Our Golden Eagle presentation last August, in spite of the rain, was a great success largely because of the Golden Eagle ambassador, Aquila, who paid us a visit along with her handler, Erik Johnston.

Raptors of numerous species, including the Bald Eagles we have nesting on site for the second year in a row, use the riparian area of the ranch for their own hunting purposes. We enjoy seeing them, and we often host visitors from Audubon and other birding groups who want to come and enjoy just watching them.

One thing we learned from Erik

is that a high percentage of raptors suffer from blood lead levels higher than what biologists consider healthy or normal. Numerous studies have concluded that a likely vector source of the lead is from spent ammunition from high-velocity rifles. Rifles have evolved over the years and the modern, high-velocity rifle will shoot a lead, or copper-clad lead bullet so fast that it shatters inside its target. The small, sometimes pepper-flake-sized pieces of lead end up scattered in the gut piles that hunters leave behind, creating a health hazard for raptors and other scavenging critters.

For this reason, Ruby Habitat Foundation has taken the lead in requiring hunters on the ranch to switch to non-lead alternatives, including copper which is increasingly available, affordable, and effective. If you visit our website, rubyhabitat.org, you can read some additional information about the rationale for this recent decision.



We encourage all hunters to do their own research and make their own decisions regarding what ammunition to use when hunting elsewhere, but we are convinced that lead ammunition fired from a high-velocity rifle is causing issues for our feathered friends. This policy change is just another way of ensuring that the habitat here continues to allow these marvelous members of our environment to thrive.

Number and Species of Birds Spotted During the Audubon Society's Annual Bird Count This Year*

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Canada Goose (24). | 12. Downy Woodpecker (2) |
| 2. Mallard (138) | 13. Hairy Woodpecker (1) |
| 3. Common Goldeneye (22) | 14. American Kestrel (1) |
| 4. Common Merganser (2) | 15. Black-billed Magpie (2) |
| 5. Hooded Merganser (1) | 16. Common Raven (1) |
| 6. Wild Turkey (1, at dusk going to roost in a tree) | 17. Black-capped Chickadee (5) |
| 7. Rough-legged Hawk (1) | 18. American Robin (1) |
| 8. Red-tailed Hawk (2) | 19. Bohemian Waxwing (265) |
| 9. Bald Eagle (2 Ad, one vocal) | 20. Northern Shrike (2) |
| 10. Northern Harrier (2 Ad male) | 21. American Tree Sparrow (5) |
| 11. Belted Kingfisher (2) | |

*Our first Audubon Bird Survey was done in early January of 2016. If you have visited the ranch, you will remember the majestic presence of the Sandhill Crane, also our featured logo friend. Another favorite of many visitors is the Yellow Headed Blackbird who appears on page 5. These birds, as well as many others that visit the ranch during the spring, summer, and fall are migratory and would not have been counted. Fear not. We did not neglect our feathered friends. But the survey did.

These people and organizations contributed significantly to the vision and the work of the Ruby Habitat Foundation in 2015. Our gratitude is genuine, and inadequate as a measure of their loyalty and support.

Hwe Chu Tu & Arthur Frank Ackerman
 Nancy & John Acuff
 Joseph Anderson
 Kim & John Andrews
 Patricia A. Baldwin
 Gloria & Neil Barnosky
 Denise Selden & Bruce Bauman
 Rosanne & William Beam
 Gregory R. Belcamino
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 Luana & Gregor Campbell
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 Austen Cargill
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 J. Dean Chavooshian
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United Way
Upper Canyon Outfitters
Vibrant Enterprises Assc. Inc.
YourCause, LLC

In Memoriam

Frank Andrews
Arlene Barnosky



Yellow-Headed Blackbird

What our Visitors are Saying

Thanks so much for a great day fishing! We were fishing streamers, so didn't end up using your (bamboo)rods. 15 fish caught in Clear Creek and #2 (beat). We love this place! We feel blessed to have the opportunity! Saw heron, cranes, deer, rabbits and a moose! Many blessings to all of you! Thanks!—The Fishers

*Just got home ..cold and windy .. North wind.. But tough..it was a dry dropper
Kind of day..up higher took a bit to get going .. Once the blue wings came out the fishing was incredible !!!
Strong , healthy Browns ,everything was on a size 10 prince dropper..we traded off and had a great time..1 hour off for lunch.. Thanks so much for making it available to me...we agreed it was best ever day on the ruby...best!!!!
Thanks again.—Freddie Goldberg*

I thought today was great. I think the kids got a little bit more out of the bug collecting. I think the idea of being quiet and patient while you look for sometimes small obscure birds, (marsh wrens) is not always up their alley. I do think they all enjoyed looking at the eagle nest though.

I think going forward, I'd like to schedule 3-4 such trips a year. We were out there in October with English teacher. The ranch is close, convenient, the idea of a 2-3 hour field trip is very doable.—Ed Burke, Science Teacher at Sheridan High School after we took his students through a course on aquatic insects and birds.

I was so impressed with your outreach to the school kids. They are the future of conservation & flyfishing! — Val Monroe

Also, wanted to say thank you for arranging the day at the Ranch for McAdoo's birthday Saturday. I had the best day of fishing I've had in years – and better than the last three times I've fished at Woodson's. I walked downstream from the fishing cabin to the confluence of the spring creek and fished a parachute caddis upstream on the Ruby and caught 5 nice cookie-cutter browns, and later a rainbow in the spring creek just above the confluence. As always, the Ranch is an amazing place of peace and wonder. Thank you for all the diverse, and amazing work you and your board do! — Rebecca Ramsey

The Ruby River....is a truly beautiful area, and you and your staff have done a great job of making it a model of habitat restoration and agricultural best practices. — Bryan David, Land Trust Alliance

Thank you very much for one of the nicest fishing days I've had in Montana. The property is beautiful, the river was perfect and I had a most enjoyable day. I couldn't have had more fun in a more beautiful place. — Mark Robinson

Number of Fishermen Visiting Woodson's 8 miles of Water Over 211 Days in 2015: 520

Number of Non-Fishermen visiting Woodson's for Hiking, Hunting, Cycling, Bird-watching, Nature Observing, and Educational Opportunities in 2015: 650



The Tetons say, "come look at me"...this place says, "come be with me." — Tricia Baldwin
(Photo Courtesy of R. L. Winston Rod Company)



Future Ecologists

A Message from Martha Woodson



It doesn't seem possible that 24 years have gone by since Craig and I started Woodson Ranch here in the beautiful Ruby Valley, and 14 years since we founded Ruby Habitat Foundaion. It has progressed beyond my wildest imagination (I don't think Craig would be surprised with Les Gilman at the helm!) Les has carried out Craig's vision so well. I

feel that we are managing the resource as Craig wished.

It is important to continue as we have—to further education of children and adults, to welcome guests from other colleges, schools, and organizations and countries, to manage the fishing as we have, to experiment with different forages, or anything else that would enhance the Ruby Valley's progress.

None of this could have been done without the superb, dedicated staff that we have—Dave Delisi, Dave Reintsma, and of course, Joe and Louisa Colado who have been with us from the very beginning.

What would we do without Buffy at Ranch Resources to handle all the details and keep us on our toes? Sara's garden has been a special treat for all of us. And each year our Annual Report would not be possible without the tireless and

artistic efforts of Sam Corl.

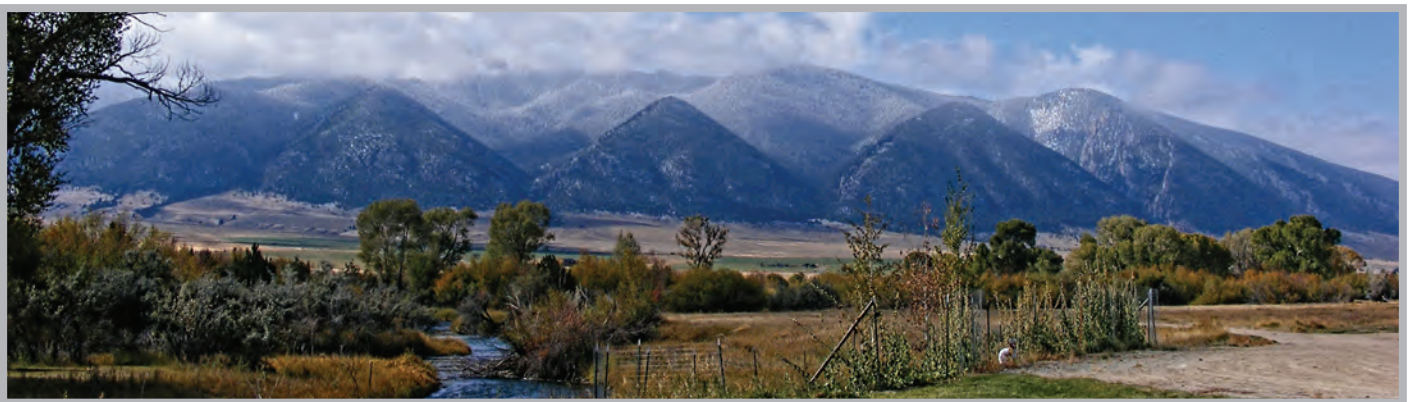
I do hope that the intern program will continue. I hope it has been as valuable to the interns, with their fresh ideas, as it has been to us.

I am particularly grateful for our association with MLR. They have been invaluable with their advice and counsel.

Going forward, I do hope that RHF will continue, as it has, creating a place for new ideas, education and excellent management of the resources, including the native plants, trees and birds.

Craig really put it so succinctly when he said, "The decisions we make and the actions we take affect our own environment as well as that of the wild life, our neighbors and future generations."

Martha Woodson



This past summer, I was once again fortunate enough to visit the Ruby Habitat and spend a day fishing your amazing waters and seeing all the work that's been (done) since last I was there. My first visit was in 2013, when Donna McDonald and my friends at Upper Canyon Outfitters introduced me to the Habitat and gave me a glimpse of the many ongoing stewardship programs being done, and the positive impact those projects are having in both agriculture and wildlife. I'm always happy when Donna includes a day at Ruby Habitat in our annual itinerary and look forward to coming back next year to learn, fish, and enjoy the day. — Todd Lepley



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Founder

Craig Woodson 1934-2011
Sheridan, Montana

Mission Statement

The Ruby Habitat Foundation is dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural resources, and 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.

Ruby Habitat Foundation 2014 Financials

Foundation Operations:

Income	\$ 133,897
Expenses	106,162
Net Income	\$ 27,735

General Fund Cash and Investments: \$ 199,214

(Pays the day-to-day expenses that finance the operation of the Foundation)

Rural Heritage and Open Lands Fund: 213,639

(Designed to provide funding for outreach and land conservation efforts.

General fund surpluses and designated gifts create the balance of this account.)

Hill Education and Outreach Endowment: 50,520

(Income from this endowment finances conservation education and outreach to landowners and wthe general public. These funds come from designated gifts.)

Visitor Center Building and Office Cabin: 114,389

Foundation Operations Assets as of 12-31-15: \$ 577,762

Woodson Ranch and Endowment

Income	\$ 265,392
Expenses	202,465
Net Income	\$ 62,927

Fixed Assets

Improvements and Equipment	\$ 644,888
Land	7,564,311 ¹
Woodson Ranch Endowment	5,930,043 ²

Ranch and Endowment Assets as of 12-31-15: \$ 14,139,242

¹ Restricted land donation subject to life estate

² The income from Woodson Ranch Endowment is used for the operation and maintenance of the Ranch, to ensure its protection and continued viability.

Ruby Habitat Foundation Copmbined Total:

Net Income, 2015	\$ 90,662
Total Assets as of 12-31-2015	\$ 14,717,004

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 avavailable pon request.



My Home

I am from a country song playing in the background
 I am from a mountain road that leads to nowhere
 I am from a place where you can feel 70 degrees and ten degrees in the same day
 I am from a tunnel full of hopes and dreams
 I am from a truck that we don't know what it can do but we're sure as hell going to find out
 I am from a perfect meadow where a herd of elk mosey across
 I am from a place where we are all family and your mom is mine
 I am from a place where everyone hunts (or tries)
 I am from a place where trucks are part of your life whether you like it or not
 I am from a place where we are "diesel junkies riding in a ford focus"
 I am from a place where the buck you missed grew ten points overnight
 I am from the most beautiful place on earth
 I am from the only place I want to be
 I am from Sheridan Montana

Sheridan High School Student, poem written on Woodson Ranch

Does this image look exactly like anywhere on Woodson Ranch? Of course not, nor does the poem represent the image most of us have in our minds when we think of the ranch. The picture is a high dynamic resolution image of the Ruby River at sundown, with the colors and the details exxagerated to create an artistic reality — much like the poem creates a mental image unique to the poet. What a wonderful experience it is to share both images with others, and to appreciate the love of a place in the sun expressed by both the poet and the photographer. SSC

“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.”

Charles Craig Woodson, Founder, 1933-2011



The Thanksgiving guests grew restless while waiting for dinner to come out of the oven.



P.O. Box 638
Sheridan, MT 59749
P: 406-842-5010 F: 406-842-5910
www.rubyhabitat.org