

RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2022

*BALANCING WILDLIFE,
AGRICULTURE,
EDUCATION, AND
RECREATION
SINCE 2002*

Comments from the Executive Director

The Ends of Eras:

An era, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is “A period marked by distinctive character or reckoned from a fixed point or event.” For me personally and for Ruby Habitat Foundation, 2022 saw the ends of eras.

- To her friends and family, Martha Woodson’s passing on February 3, 2022, marked the end of the nearly 90-year “Era of Martha”. It began with her birth in Grand Rapids Michigan on April 29, 1932. Though that era has ended, her life remains an inspiration and fond memory to many.
- Martha’s passing also ended the 29-year era of my relationship with Martha and Craig. They were dear friends to me, and I miss my time with them.
- For Donna and me, and for our family, the tragic passing of our eldest grandson in July marked the end of an all too brief era, memories of which are sacred.
- September marked the end of a 68-year era of my medical emergencies being handled on the ground, when I took a helicopter ride to Bozeman for that purpose. All is now well.
- October marked the 30th anniversary of my involvement with Woodson Ranch and the 20th anniversary of my time as Executive Director of Ruby Habitat Foundation. Those two eras ended with my retirement on December 31, 2022. The Foundation and the Ranch will always be sources of pride to me.
- One of the greatest achievements of the Ruby Habitat Foundation, relates to the rehabilitation of the eleven-mile-long braid of the Ruby River known as Clear Creek. In the fall of 2010, just before leaving his beloved Ruby Valley for the last time, Craig put the wheels in motion for the project. Those efforts were officially closed with the partners at USDA on December 31, 2022, ending the 12-year “Era of Clear Creek Restoration”.



The “Era of Ruby Habitat Foundation” on the other hand, is just beginning. The foresight and generosity of the creators and founders, Craig & Martha Woodson, have seen to that. Ralph Waldo Emerson, in his essay entitled “Nature”, suggests that “Nature stretches out her arms to embrace humanity, humanity’s response should be of equal greatness.” From the moment they purchased the Woodson Ranch property, in the fall of 1992, Craig & Martha endeavored to enhance the property’s natural characteristics while continuing to operate an agricultural enterprise and maximize the recreational opportunities there. I believe their response to nature has been of equal greatness to nature’s embrace.

The most popular project undertaken by RHF continues to be the Heritage Orchard. That era is also just beginning, and if the genetics of those Ruby Valley heritage trees hold true, it may be an era that lasts for a century. Every spring will hold hope of blossoms and fruit.

Ruby Habitat Foundation has had a proud relationship with The Montana Land Reliance over these 20 formative years. We support them in their outstanding achievements in meaningful land conservation. Their encouragement and wise counsel have been vital to the Foundation’s financial and operational success. You, the loyal supporters, donors, and volunteers have also participated in assuring RHF’s sustainability. The Foundation’s outreach and education efforts rely upon your generosity, and you are looked upon for inspiration and recommendations.

It is pleasing, that over the years, so many of you have enjoyed the amazing natural wonders of this unique place. You may have come to the ranch to fish, hunt, or commune with nature in some other form, but undoubtedly, you departed in awe and with a desire to return. Whether recreating, working, learning, or just observing, there is something about this place that personalizes Emerson’s “embrace by out-stretched arms” and elicits from us a response.

Thank you and farewell, perhaps I’ll see you around the valley, or somewhere on the road, in 2023 or later!

Les Gilman, Executive Director from 2002 through 2022



From the Chairman's Desk

Ruby Habitat Foundation completed its twentieth year in 2022. Looking back over the last twenty years I must first say that I feel honored to have been part of this special, unique organization and am grateful to Craig Woodson for including me. In thinking back, I remember sitting at the meeting as Craig formalized the agreement with Montana Land Reliance and at that time Ruby Habitat Research Foundation and having no understanding of what Craig was wanting to create. I was a young rancher thrown into a place where I would come to be acquainted with people I would never have had contact with otherwise. My understanding of good stewardship of our natural resources began to be broadened and the need for innovation in agriculture and education of resource management issues to those near and far being of great importance. My life has been greatly enriched because of Craig.



I remember the days of Craig coming to Montana in the spring, full of new ideas and projects he had researched during the winter months, and making sure they happened. The “cows eating weeds” project seemed to bring out a lot of local interest and quite frankly, some skepticism. As it turns out cattle *can* be trained to eat weeds and seem to enjoy the challenge of chewing on a thistle. They even teach their friends how to devour weeds.

I was privileged with the opportunity to tour Woodson Ranch with a group of monks from Tibet. Their colorful dress really stood out in rural Montana. The time spent together was fascinating with conversation about their culture and conservation issues, while we explained the ideas we were working on, all through an interpreter. RHF may have influenced conservation decisions thousands of miles from the Ruby Valley.

One of my memories I have to smile at is the first year that Craig held a dove hunt. Apparently this is a Texas tradition and he wanted us Montanans to experience it. Knowing nothing about dove hunting I got out my old 16 gauge and grabbed a handful of shells. I was expecting to walk about the ranch for the day and maybe see a few doves, but I knew that breakfast would be good. I was surprised to find that he had planted wheat fields and hundreds of doves had found out about it. The morning sounded like a shooting range. I even had BB's rain down on my hat more than once. The thought that then came to mind was with all the shooting there was no way the game warden would not show up and it was going to be really awkward as I had not purchased a hunting license. The next year I came much better prepared and even had a hunting license.

I think of the years of looking forward to the summer meeting when Andy Laszlo would give us an amazing presentation about investing and the economy. The deer in the headlights moment when George Swan, a strong community leader and personality, retired and the decision to make me the chairman of the board had already been made is something I won't forget.

2022 has seen our last founder pass on, Martha Woodson. I always saw her as an inspiration and a light where ever she was at. Our 20 year Executive Director, Les Gilman, retired at the end of 2022. RHF would not be what it has become without his strong leadership and vision. He will be sorely missed but has also positioned RHF to continue forward as a strong voice and example in the Ruby Valley. Thank you Les!

As I think over the memories from the last twenty years I am very appreciative of the many supporters of RHF. Each one is an important partner in continuing on with Craig's vision. My gratitude goes out to each of you.

Neil Barnosky, Chairman



A Word From Our Parent Organization

The partnership between The Montana Land Reliance (MLR) and Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) began 20 years ago with the founding of RHF and continues to be strong and vibrant. MLR's mission to work with private landowners to permanently protect agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open space is still the core purpose of our organization, and we are proud to be a part of the good work RHF is doing in the Ruby Valley.

With the passing of Martha Woodson in February 2022, the direct involvement of the RHF founders ended. Craig and Martha were stalwarts of conservation and their impact on the mission of RHF will continue through the participation of their family members and community members on the RHF Board. MLR is pleased to recognize Craig and Martha as the recipients of the 2022 MLR Conservation Award. An essay on their lives will be featured in the MLR Annual Report.



2022 was MLR's second-best year for conservation on record. MLR staff completed 27 conservation easements, adding 66,778 new acres to our portfolio of protected lands across the state. These new projects bring MLR's total protected acres to 1,286,862 and keeps the organization on track to realize the long-term goal of conserving two million acres by 2040. The completed projects span the state, from Heron and Polebridge in western Montana, to Musselshell and Forsyth in the east. The lands protected in 2022 include core sage grouse habitat, native grasslands, riparian zones, forests, and working farms and ranchlands. With each protected acre, MLR ensures that the Montana we all love will continue to be available for future generations to benefit from and enjoy.

In 2022, Christine Torgimson and Barbara Rusmore were inducted into the Montana Outdoor Hall of Fame. Christine and Barbara founded MLR in 1978, with the goal of slowing what they saw as unchecked development in Montana. Over the past 45 years, MLR has done just that. Christine and Barbara's legacy is much more than the founding of a land trust, it is the creation of a community of conservation minded landowners and protected landscapes across Montana. I am pleased to count RHF as part of that community!



Les Gilman is retiring as the Executive Director of RHF. We will miss his expert leadership over his 20 years of service. A poignant event for Les was overseeing the thoughtful memorial for Martha, held at RHF during the spring of 2022. Thank you, Les, for your dedication and hard work ensuring that Craig and Martha's vision continues long into the future.

As we move into 2023, I look forward to the new opportunities that await RHF. MLR is ready to lend a helping hand wherever needed. I'd like to thank the RHF and MLR board members, local community members, the Woodson family, and all those supporters that make RHF such a wonderful organization.

Sincerely,

George Olsen, MLR Board President



Outreach Report

Two decades, a generation, a length of time sufficient to go from birth through most of college: that is how long Ruby Habitat Foundation has been making good things happen in and for the Ruby Valley.

When Ruby Habitat Foundation was created, the world was a different place. Cell phones were available, but comically one-dimensional in comparison to today's pocket-'puters. Microsoft dominated computer manufacturing and Apple was an afterthought. Michael Jackson received the "Artist of the Century" award at the American Music Awards ceremony. 9/11 was a recent and raw memory prompting the US to enter into conflict with bad actors in foreign lands—again—and those at home were on edge. Elon Musk founded SpaceX in 2002; the movie "Bowling for Columbine" premiered at Cannes and the crime-drama, "The Wire" premiered this year, too. Lance Armstrong was disqualified from his "win" at the Tour de France for his use of performance enhancing drugs. "Dr. Phil" debuted on TV, and both "The West Wing" and "Friends" won Emmy's. An active sniper in DC, nicknamed "The Beltway Sniper" was active for a few weeks starting in October and two were later arrested for the crimes.



Meanwhile, in a small, agricultural valley in southwest Montana, a family chose to do an amazing thing. With an eye toward both conservation and education, Craig and Martha Woodson and a handful of others created the Ruby Habitat Research Foundation. With a mission focused on agricultural experimentation, stewardship with an eye toward wildlife, educational outreach, and recreational pursuits through managed access, the Foundation is a community benefit whose reach extends around the globe today.

Now twenty years old, the Foundation is a mature entity that welcomed over 2000 visitors to the ranch in 2022 for a diverse range of purposes. Approximately 25% of those visitors came to learn something, whether that was through the Wildlife Speaker Series, outreach to new agricultural producers, or the Kids' River Resource Day. 20% came to flyfish in the 9 miles of fishable waters, 12% came to hunt turkeys, ducks, or whitetail deer, and another 12% came to observe nature on our Nature Trail and west-side ranch roads.

The world keeps turning, and time marches on. Craig and Martha have both passed, but their legacy will live on as the Woodson Family continues to be a vital part of the organization. The Montana Land Reliance, that phenomenal force for conservation in Montana, provides counsel and assistance. Ruby Valley resident ranchers also provide a critical voice to the mix of perspectives on the Foundation's Board of Directors. The land itself, improved over the past couple decades, continues to amaze us all with its resilience, its diversity, and its wonders.



To be a part of such an organization is an honor. Woodson Ranch, through its outreach programs, provides a place for folks to connect with the outdoors, DSCN0012 to experience solitude, and to marvel at things "bigger" than ourselves. It will continue to do so, thanks to an idea bigger than all of us that was implemented by good people some two decades ago!

Dave Delisi, Outreach Coordinator



The Year In Review

It is only by looking backwards in time that we can see clearly what is in front of us. This abridged review of 2022 is just such an effort.

February 3: Martha Woodson passed this year, bringing to a close the pattern of her spring return to the ranch each year, usually not long after the sandhill cranes arrive.

March 23: On this cold and muddy day, we installed some 45 lengths of drill stem in the Heritage Apple Orchard, in rows, to be the fixtures to which we will attach high tensile wire for the trellis system.

May 21: We held a memorial service for Martha Woodson today. Many family and community members attended this service.

May 28: We had begun to wonder if it would happen, and today it did: the Ruby Reservoir filled up entirely and began to spill over the top.

June 1: Our Wildlife Speaker Event, on the topic of songbirds, took place today. Some 225 people of all ages came out for an evening of food, community, and learning.

June 14: Spring rains had been substantial to this point, but when 2" of rain fell in the upper Ruby, the lower Ruby--already full--crawled out of her banks and went for a flood-walk.

July 19: The Ruby Reservoir finally stops spilling over the top of the dam, ending weeks runoff, and bringing summer fishing opportunities to all, just in time for hopper season.

August 13: Last day for this year's summer intern, Alexandra Clarke. Ali did a great job this summer!

August 15: In what has become an annual event, but one that takes less and less time each year, we grafted the apple trees in the orchard that needed a new graft. Our thanks goes out to the Western Agricultural Research Center in Corvallis, MT, for their help.

August 17: We hosted a group from Missoula called the Community Food & Agriculture Coalition. This group came to learn about all sorts of agricultural projects, from weed prevention to orchard installation.

September 9: We received our first frost of the season, a bit later than in some years, but foretelling the cold and snowy winter to come nonetheless.

September 22: The Kids' River Resource Day welcomed over 100 elementary school kids for a day of outdoor science and exploration.

September 23: The High Divide Collaborative is a group of conservation oriented folks who take a tour each fall to explore some of the issues affecting this area. This year, they chose the Ruby Valley as their destination, and used Ruby Habitat Foundation's Woodson Ranch as a place to gather.

November 27: The last day of big game hunting season in Montana is today. We welcomed approximately 130 hunters this season, including 20 youngsters for the Youth Hunt at the beginning of the season. By the end of the season, we had successfully harvested 64 deer, one of which tested positive for Chronic Wasting Disease. While any positives are not good, our prevalence rate is lower than areas north of the ranch.

December 31: Today is Les Gilman's last day as our Executive Director. Having been deeply connected to this space since Craig and Martha Woodson purchased it in 1992, and then having been designated as Executive Director from the commencement of the Ruby Habitat Foundation in 2002, Les' stewardship has been an instrumental part of our successes since the start. All of us who work here, and all of us who recreate here, and all of us who appreciate this special place, owe Les a heartfelt "thank you!!"



20 Years Ago

The times have changed, but Ruby Habitat Foundation's direction remains the same, thanks to the foresight of those who helped establish our mission, vision, and goals. Here are some reflections of those who were actually there 20 years ago when the nascent Foundation was formed.

ANDREW LASZLO, Former Financial Advisor to Ruby Habitat Foundation

Although I was not involved in all phases of the creation of The Ruby Habitat Foundation, I enjoyed meeting with Les Gilman to map out the investments. I have fond memories of discussions with Craig and Martha Woodson to share their vision. In spite of health limitations, Craig was fully involved in all aspects of the project. This moved me--his detailed level of engagement after such a debilitating stroke. I treasure the many visits with Martha. My wife, Paulette, and I truly enjoyed her company! At the end of the day, I was honored to be part of such a noble endeavor.

ROCK RINGLING, Former Managing Director with the Montana Land Reliance, and current Board of Directors member with Ruby Habitat Foundation

Looking back over twenty years, twenty years of friendships made, projects started, meetings held and fish caught. It's hard to know where to start. Maybe at the beginning with my first meeting with Craig and Martha....

My first meeting with Craig and Martha began with a call from their Attorney, Phill McCrury, and a subsequent batch of legal papers covering a potential gift agreement for review by the Montana Land Reliance. Bill Long, myself and George Olsen looked over the agreement and, needless to say, made an appointment to meet Craig and Martha at their home on the Ruby.

After the usual introductions and "midwest pleasantries", as Craig, was known to do, he asked, "If we (meaning Craig and Martha) were to give this property to MLR, what would you (The Montana Land Reliance) do with it?" Bill and I looked at each other, and then asked this fateful question: "What would you like to see happen?" With great detail Craig and Martha shared their vision for the ranch with us. Again Bill and I looked at each other and said, "We can do that!" and the journey began. But, just to make sure that we were well hooked, Craig took us on a tour of the ranch, stopping at a spot on the Ruby. Bill and I



Rock Ringling

sauntered over to the bank and looked down to see two massive brown trout...now the deal was done for we were well and truly brought to hand.

Twenty years--the years do go by, but the memories stay fresh, the friendships continue, and Woodson Ranch is a gift to all of us who have walked upon it.

Sam Rogers brings a brown trout to hand; photo courtesy of his brother, Sawyer.



20 Years Ago, Continued

DOUG MITTS, one of Martha Woodson's 3 Sons

I was on my way to Hungary when the news of the attack on the World Trade Center occurred (September 11, 2001). Little did I know how that event would influence my Mom and Craig to focus on family. The sense of the need for each other heightened in their hearts, and this apparently impacted how they were thinking about Woodson Ranch. They wanted to share their thoughts regarding a vision they had for the ranch, and whether all their children and grandchildren would want to be a part. They asked us to fly in from Poland and be with them for the New Year and said that they had something they wanted to share with the whole family at once. The Vanderpools, the Matthews, and the three Mitts men with all their children gathered to hear what Martha and Craig were pondering. We were first asked a question, "would you all like to continue to enjoy the ranch after we are gone?" Children and grandchildren all replied with a resounding "yes." Craig then shared that he and Martha would love to give us, as an inheritance, enjoyment of the ranch. They also shared their desire to steward well all the natural resources for agricultural, recreational, conservation and educational purposes. At the time we didn't know what that would mean, but within the next number of months, the Ruby Habitat Research Foundation was established, and the Woodson-Mitts descendants had a way to enjoy the beauty of the Ruby Valley, Sheridan, its community, the RHF and the Woodson Ranch, all of which we have grown to love over the last 30 years. As Lisa and I reflect, we rejoice in this gift and the benefit it brings to us and the community, and our amazement at the profound wisdom that Martha and Craig had to see into the future.



Douglas Mitts

BILL LONG, Former Managing Director with The Montana Land Reliance

I remember the first phone call so clearly. On vacation from the Montana Land Reliance (MLR) in early June 2002, I was sitting in a car in a parking lot in Corvallis, Oregon. My wife and I were waiting for our son to complete his last first-year exam at Oregon State University so we could drive back to Montana. I got a phone call from an attorney in Texas who said: "I have a client who owns a ranch in Montana and is interested in pursuing the idea of joining forces with the Montana Land Reliance to maintain the ranch for a variety of purposes. Those purposes include a working ranch, enhancing the open space/wildlife values, research and use by the public for education and recreation. The family has looked at a number of nonprofit groups, yours seems to be the best fit. If you are interested, I will send along more details and contact information for the owners." It was unclear exactly what this meant as a land project, but it seemed to be an exciting new direction for MLR. Yes! We were interested.



Bill Long

We followed up with a call to Craig, and over the course of the next month, Rock Ringling and I made several trips to the Ruby Valley. Craig and Martha shared their vision for the ranch; Rock and I spoke of the mission and work of MLR. They gave us a tour of the comprehensive rehabilitation work they had completed throughout the ranch, including extensive attention to the river corridor. We developed lifelong friendships as we explored how we might work together. Our discussions culminated in the establishment of Ruby Habitat Foundation in the fall of 2002. This was the beginning of what is now a twenty-year partnership with MLR.



20 Years Ago, Continued

DAVID MITTS, one of Martha Woodson's 3 Sons

After dinner, Craig wanted to show us where Martha and Craig's remains would rest. So, we drove up to the spot where they are now buried. As Robin, Matthew, Catherine and mom walked around the graveyard, Craig and I stood on top of their burial spot looking over the ranch. It was a calm clear sky. You could see the whole ranch and, as we stood there, he spoke about leaving a gift for people, so that the community could come and enjoy the blessings that nature has to offer. He spoke of fishing, hunting, birds, ducks, and how the community and visitors could enjoy it all. Craig spoke about helping the ranchers by trying different methods of ranching. This all took place before the family meeting about whether we wanted to keep the ranch and enjoy the resource and beauty of the ranch. Craig and mom had ideas brewing well prior to the founding of the RHF and its connection to The Montana Land Reliance.



Roy O'Connor

ROY O'CONNOR, Former Chairman of the Board with The Montana Land Reliance

Hard to believe it has been 20 years. I was involved from the start, meeting with Craig and Martha to define just what they wanted on the Woodson Ranch, both for the near term and long term. Craig was very focused, in spite of his many physical ailments. He soldiered on for many years longer than the doctors were giving him. Hopefully, these meetings and his time on the Ranch helped to keep him going. My favorite story was told first by Rock Ringling, and later confirmed by Craig and Martha.

Rock sat down with the Woodsons when they were interviewing various groups, including the Nature Conservancy and MLR. One of Craig's first questions, I assume given to all the NGOs he interviewed, was basically "what would you do with the Ranch if we donated it to you?", to which Rock replied, "what do you want us to do with the Ranch?" This is what I believe

set up the foundation for our joining forces, the eventual transfer of the Ranch to MLR, and its present-day operation to protect and enhance the environment and the agricultural values and sharing what we learned with the community.

As always thanks to the Woodsons, Les Gilman, Neil Barnosky, and the support the community has given to make this partnership a great success.



20 Years Ago, Continued

NEIL BARNOSKY, Current Chairman, Ruby Habitat Foundation

One of the memories I have from twenty years ago that always makes me smile about Craig is this. I really didn't know Craig very well at that time. We had rented pasture from him some but that was mostly done through Les Gilman. My memory of that time was at a few social functions where we had gotten together and visited. The conversations always ended up with us talking about our views on how to best use and take care of the land. He was always very interesting and challenging to have a conversation with. He approached me about being on a board for a foundation he was starting through Les. It was arranged for him and Martha to take Gloria and me along with Les and his wife, Donna, to dinner at *The Old Hotel*. It was of course a very enjoyable evening, but the part that always makes me smile was that Craig spent the whole time we spent together convincing Gloria that it would be a good idea for me to be on the board. His focus for the evening was on her.

I must say that I really didn't understand what he was wanting to accomplish at that time. The day we got together to sign the papers for the foundation to begin, I recall Craig being quite intense that everything, and I mean everything, be completed. I think of him as a man of vision and I feel he was able to infuse that vision into the Ruby Habitat Foundation and it continues to flow in its veins today. I feel very privileged to have been a part of RHF for these twenty years. It has enriched my life in ways I could have never imagined and I am so grateful to Craig for allowing me to be a part of his life.



Gloria & Neil Barnosky

ROBIN MITTS, One of the Foundation's First Board Members

The last 20 years have seen life happen: babies born, grandchildren grow into adults, marriages, lives lost but through it all, the land endures. Craig and Martha Woodson knew this and persevered to provide for their families, friends, acquaintances and future relationships a haven for relaxation, nature, vistas and friendships. That haven is the Woodson Ranch known as the Ruby Habitat Foundation since 2002.

How did we get here? Craig and Martha spent their first 10 years cleaning up the ranch, adding living quarters, bridges and researching native grasses while watching their families grow and prosper. Always in the back of their minds was the question, "what next?" Inspired by the Lewis and Clark expedition journals in which the grasses were tallied, ideas germinated that came to fruition after endless hours spent golf-carting on every inch of the ranch to evaluate how well the reintroduced grasses such as great basin wild rye, Sherman blue grass and Indian rice grass would adapt and thrive in the Ruby Valley. Talking to the family members, Craig and Martha set out to see how they could pay back the valley for their welcome and friendships. Already in motion, believing that anywhere they lived they needed to support the local economy, over the years, many hours had been spent at Chicks, the Shovel & Spoon, Walter's IGA, and many treasures were purchased from The Serendipity.

Yet one question remained. How do we enhance and preserve what was started? Many folks put their heads together and the Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) was born. Crop experiments, cow thistle eating projects, the never-ending weed control, fence repair, soil health, crop rotations, river and stream bed health are some of the things that were investigated and are still ongoing. The partnership with the Montana Land Reliance gave RHF a pathway forward and support. Board members from the local ranches gave RHF credibility, insight and a connection to the valley and the land. Family member oversight and participation in RHF gave a linkage to the future, and grandchildren working the ranch over numerous summers provided intimate knowledge so that what was gained in all of those golf cart rides, and in-depth conversations, would not be lost.

Craig and Martha, here in spirit, are looking down and cheering us on for the next 20 years; may it be even more fruitful than the first 20!



20 Years Ago, Continued

LESLIE VANDERPOOL, One of Craig Woodson's daughters

I have many memories from the earlier years of the Ruby Habitat Foundation. There is one memory that stands out from the rest. I think it is because it was one that recurred many times over the years. In fact, it was repeated multiple times upon any visit to the ranch. If you knew my dad, or visited the ranch while he was there, you might have guessed already what memory I am talking about.

It was the daily ride around the ranch either in the golf cart, Polaris or car. My dad would corral any and everyone and we would pile into a vehicle and drive the roads and trails. And often he would direct you along what looked like barely a path because he wanted to show you something over there. I remember many a stream crossing that we made with fingers crossed. And all the while dad was talking about various grasses and stream flows and habitats.



Clear Creek Sunset

The standout part of all this was how much he loved this piece of land and how well he knew this piece of land. He was constantly visioning how to restore or improve or experiment with something. Ruby Habitat Foundation was his vehicle for bringing his ideas, and the ideas of others, into being. It was a way for him to leave his family, the land, and the valley a little better because he had been there.

(Incidentally, Lisa Matthews, Craig's other daughter, concurs with her sister about these memories, and said that they continue to take these ranch tours whenever they are in town...Ed.)

JAY ERICKSON, Former Managing Director with The Montana Land Reliance



Jay Erickson

When Bill Long and Rock Ringling met with Craig Woodson when MLR was being considered for participation in the creation of Ruby Habitat Foundation, Craig already knew what he wanted. He screened the potential participants by asking them what they would do with the place, and only MLR came up with the correct response that resulted in the handshake. The response was, "What do you WANT us to do with the place?"

And I conclude that Craig not only appreciated that response, but had already considered things enough to know how to answer that question. Craig wanted a place focused on many complex and interrelated concepts. A place that allows hunting and fishing; a ranch focused on demonstrating conservation principles and preservation of the environment; a space known for its thoughtful agricultural experiments that use innovation to come up with new best practices; and a place where one significant pillar is "education", and that means education of children as well as adults.

From MLR's perspective, this was familiar territory, but it raised questions of viability of the vision. How could one afford to do all those things especially when the ranch itself, as a conventional ranch, costs significant amounts of money to run? Fortunately, Craig's response to that was to create an endowment that covered the costs of running the ranch itself, and that allayed our biggest concern. In fact, as I look back on those early days, we were so new to such an idea that it seemed as if success was not assured; all I can say now is that in spite of our "best efforts", we did not screw it up, and now, 20 years later, we see the fruits of those decisions, conversations, and thought exercises.



2022 RHF SUPPORTERS

Our thanks to all who have supported our efforts financially and otherwise over the past year.

Quite simply, we could not do this alone.

Donors--Individuals & Organizations

Allison, Kristi
Anderson, J. or M.
Anderson, Laurie & Richard
Andrews, Emily
Andrews, Kim & John
Anonymous
Artis, Brandy and Daufel, Doug
Ashworth, Sarah
Ball, Robert & Nugent, Sandra
Barker, Sally & Brian
Barnosky, Gloria and Neil
Bartoletti, Laurie & Robert T.
Bates, Patricia & Hafenfeld, Richard E.
Beam, Rosanne & William
Beauchamp, Peter
Bedayn, Mary-Jo & Richard
Bell & Anderson, LLC
Bell, Caroline
Bell, Harvey
Bellotti, Laura & Gerald, M.D.
Benevity
Bennett, Elizabeth & Walter Jr.
Bennison, Robert
Bernhardt, Anne & George Alexander
Berry, Mary Ruth & James
Berry, Sharon & Michael
Bertram, Daniel A.
Birdsong, Warren Lee
Blackbaud Giving Fund, The
Blair, Grace L., M.D.
Block, Jule
Bloom, Tonia & Marshall, M.D.
Blue Spruce Charitable Trust
Bokeko, Susan & Chris
Bombassaro, Donna R.
Bombassaro, Jeanne & Savinski, Mark
Booth, Douglas M.
Bowler, Thomas P.
Boyer, Jennifer and Chris
Brackett, Glenn
Bradley, P. & R.B.
Braewold Fund, The
Brewer, Karen & Edward
Brim, Arlyne & Michael
Brim, Sue & Patrick
Brosier, Marjorie
Brosier, Sarah & Cunningham, Bill
Brown, Jon
Bucklin, Linda Hale
Burgos, Gloria & John
Burke, Shelly and Steve
Caldwell, S.M.
Caravan Trust, The
Carlson, Kurt
Carr, Heather & Scott
Chan, Steven
Cherry, Mary Kay & James W.
Childrey Family Fund, Elizabeth & Bill
Cholnoky, Amy & I. John
Christensen, Scott
Christofferson, Michele and Robert
Clark, John W.
Clark, John
Clarke, Sara & James
Clausen Law Group
Clausen, Ron
Cleary, Sandra & Paul, Jr.

Cochran, Arwen & Reuben
Colado, Daniel C.
Colado, Luisa and Juventino
Colwell, Kay & Frank
Corl, R. Brooks
Cowles, Evelyn & R. Reynolds Jr.
Cunningham, Bill & Brosier, Sarah
Cramer, Sabine & Michael
Crockett, Daniel
Crockett, Harry
Cutter III, Edward A.
Dale, Cheryl and John
Davison, Daniel Jr.
Daufel, Doug & Artis, Brandy
Davis, William W.
Davison Jr., Daniel P.
Declue, Anita & Messel, Gregg
Delisi, Carol & Dave
Delisi, Steven
Dietrich, Gary W.
Dillard, Debby & Gregory
Ditchfield, Michael
Dixon, John
Dobkin Family Foundation
Donnelley Family Fund, The Thomas E. II & Barbara C.
Donnelley Foundation, The
Dotts, Duane
Downey, Daniel Dr.
Downey, Michael & Hedges, Anne
Doyle, Sandra & Thomas
Dyke, Nancy
Eckhardt, Mark
Engbretson, Carol & Mark
Ethen, Janet & John
Fast, Sherrie & Richard
Faw, Susan
Ferguson, Tara & Clint
Ferry, Pascal
Field, Henry W.
Fischer, N.J. & C.H.
Fischer, Doris L.
Fleming, Martha & Wohl, Charles
Florsheim, Trish & David
Flynn, Linda and Bob
Ford, Beverly & Frank, Jr.
Fordyce, Linda & James
Froboese, Suzy & Chris
Gardner, Steven
Garland, David
GBM Enterprises, LLC
Gilman, Anita & James
Giordano, Linda & Mark
Glenn, Edward Vernon
Glickman, Michelle & Clark
Gockel, Cindy & Richard
Goldberg, Fred & Lakewald, Carolyn
Goldberg, Paul
Goldthwait, Ann & Glenn
Gomez, Lucky Rae & Sal
Gottwald, Bruce
Graff, Rita & Richard
Granken, Renee & Gregory
Green, John
Griffin, Kathleen & Clark
Griffith, Tyler
Griffith, Virginia & Thomas MAJ GEN, USAF

Hafenfeld, Richard E. & Bates, Patricia
Hamill, William & Leita Family Foundation
Harbison, Anne and Ruedisili, Steven
Hardy, H. F. & P. A.
Harmon, Laurel & Sanchez, Eddie
Hart, Douglas
Headwaters Realty, LLC
Hedges, Anne and Downey, Michael
Hells Canyon Creek, LLC
Higgins, Gretchen & Cory
Higgins, Tyler
Hill, Ben
Hill, Bill
Hillendahl, Carl M.
Hoban, Paul
Hoffman, Henry
Holland, Jim
Holland, Yvonne & Noel
Holmes, Bonnie
Hoover, John David
Hoschouer, Jim
Hurwitz, Mark
Hutchins, Judith
Hutchins, Mrs. Loyd
Inman, Joyce D.
Jakobsen, Dale
Janik, Joseph & Nancy
Johnson, Jared
Johnson, Richard J.
Johnson, Jeanne & Steven
Johnston, Lynne Y.
Jones, Dr. Amy J. and Ringle, Robert
Jordan, Sara & Bob
Joys, Sandra & David
Kannon, Barry
Karanas, Angela
Keifer, Thomas F. II
Keller, Barbara & Robert
Kenworthy, Heather & Dan
Kiefer, Paul H.
Kimball, Janie & Fred
Kimberly, Karen & George Jr.
Kirk, Fred
Kramer, Jim & Smrcka, Nancy
Kruer, Curtis
Kurschat, Janis & Marcus
Lakewald, Carolyn and Goldberg, Fred
Lane, Tad R.
Laszlo, Paulette & Andrew
Leary, Kathryn & Tom
Lee, Jan & Marshall
Legg, William M.
Leonard, John
Levin, Dora and Mark
Levin Family Trust, The
Lewallen, Katharine
Lewis & Clark Expeditions
Liebmann, Steve
Loeb, Margaret and Joseph
Losby, Anne & Ben
Love, Sandra & Jewell
Luckel Family Trust, The
Ludington, Sharon & Robert
Lukas, Tom
Lynch, Craig
Marshall, Ellen & Rose, Steve
Masuda, Linda & Kuni



2022 RHf SUPPORTERS (Continued)

McCarty, Bert
 McClelland, Elizabeth & Douglas
 McClure, Eva
 McGowen, Alexandra Weber
 McGuire Family Foundation
 McKeever, Christine & Frank
 McLaren, PhD., Jack
 McNeill, M. Collins, IV
 Mending Waters Montana
 Mergenthaler, Danny
 Messel, Gregg & Declue, Anita
 Messersmith, Beth & Don
 Miller, Kim & Charles
 Miller, Lindley
 Mills, Charles W.
 Mitts, Robin
 Moll, William R.
 Montag, Kim & Jeff
 Montford, Robert
 Moore, Jessica
 Morad, Pamela and Joseph
 Moran, Ellen & R. Matthew
 Morgan, Michael
 Morris, Louise D.
 Moseley, Paul
 Mumme, Christopher
 Munday, Pat & Jan
 Nichols, James
 Nicholson, Patricia & Walter
 Nicolaou, Linda & Jim
 Nielsen, Norm
 Nieman Marcus Group Associate Giving Prog.
 Nienstedt, Susan & Michael
 Niles, Kenneth
 Nix, Joe F.
 Noonan, Bill
 Nugent, Sandra & Ball, Robert
 O'Connor, Roy S.
 Olsen, George S. & Vogelsong, Ellen
 Ossner, Jim
 P & J Ranches
 Packwood, Shery & JB
 Pappenfus, Pamela & James
 Park Professional, LLC, The
 Parks Ranch, LLC
 Parks, Gail & Harry Jr.
 Parks, Judy & Steve
 Pearce, Julie & Michael B.
 Pederson, David
 Peterson Ranch, LLC
 Peterson, Julie & Bruce
 Peterson, Liz & Steve
 Plourde, Christina & Roger
 Poett, Cynthia & Henry
 Poggione, Leo
 Polcyn, Dave
 Prescott, Barbara H.
 Prough, Jean & Jim
 Pruitt, Thomas A.
 Przonek, Janice & John
 Querna, Christine
 Radloff, Beverly
 Rahlves, Dennis
 Rahlves, Shannon
 Ratcheson, Peggy & Robert
 Rathert, Ginger & Terry
 Reeves, T. Leslie

Rice, Fred
 Richards, S.F. & Bruce
 Riggins, Chris & Michael
 Riggs, Thomas
 Ringle, Robert & Jones, Dr. Amy J.
 Ringling, Paul & Uecker, Roberta
 Robbins, Mary & John
 Roberts, Tom
 Thomas Rogers Trust
 Rose, Steve & Marshall, Ellen
 Rowberry, Billie Jo
 Rozell, Kay & John C.
 Rubin, Judith & Robert
 Ruedisili, Steven & Harbison, Anne
 Rugheimer, Lynn & Peter
 Rumberger, Barbara MD
 Saba, Mary
 SaltChuk Resources, Inc
 Sanchez, Eddie & Harmon, Laurel
 Sandru, Rick
 Saroyan, Annette & J. Phillip
 Savinski, Mark & Bombassaro, Jeanne
 Sawczuk, Patricia & Stephen
 Schendel, Sally Behr & Logan
 Schroeder, Michele & Thomas
 Scott, Chuck
 Seale, Nancy & John Richard
 Seale, Michael & Robert
 Segal, Betsy & William
 Selbach, Renada & Teesdale, Bill
 Shafer, Katherine & Curtis
 Shaffer, Kathleen & Tom
 Shane, W. John
 Sheets, Laurie & Frank
 Shennan Family Fund
 Shennan, Janna & Jamie
 Shepherd, Katherine & John
 Shore, Dominique M.
 Shore, Stephen & Renata
 Shuttleworth, Estelle
 Siana, Carol & Stephen
 Sisson, Carole & Gary
 Smith, Michael & Webster, Dolly
 Smrcka, Nancy & Kramer, Jim
 Snyder, Jana Jill & Donald
 Stein, Lori & Carl
 Stephens, Mary
 Sterbis, Sharon & Michael
 Stevens, Kathy A.
 Stockton, Leslie & Daniel
 Sutherlin, Anne Reily
 Sutherlin, Bradford
 Swan, Elizabeth & George
 Taylor, Sandra & Boyd
 Teesdale, Bill & Selbach, Renada
 Thomas Rogers Trust
 Tilt, Sarah & Whitney
 Tracy, James
 Tremblay, Catherine & Normand
 Tribble, Waring Jr.
 Saroyan, Annette & J. Phillip
 Trimbath, William W.
 Twiddy, Ross
 Uecker, Roberta & Ringling, Paul
 Urell, Thomas
 Van Dyk, Christina & Kendall
 Vana, Jordan

VanBeek, Edward
 Vogelsong, Ellen & Olsen, George
 Voigt, John G.
 Wallace, James C.
 Walters, Ann & Jeffrey
 Waring, Judith and Thomas
 Warren, Christine and Thomas
 Wayt, Jason M.
 Webster, Dolly & Smith, Michael
 Welch, Patricia & David
 Wells, Pamela & John
 Wenrich, Carolyn & Thomas (Estate of)
 West, Marie & Bruce
 Willey, Elizabeth & Larry
 Wilson, Betsy & Doug
 Wimberly, John David
 Whol, Charles & Fleming, Martha
 Wood, Sam
 Wood, Jenny & Steve
 Woodard, Kimberly & Charles
 Woodson, Shirley A.
 Zeff, Nicole & David
 Zimmerman, Suzanne & Allen

Memorials

When we receive donations in memory or in honor of someone, we list the honored person's name here:

Debby Dillard
 Elise Donohue
 Coleman Gilman
 Edward Rumberger
 Paul Roos
 Martha Woodson

We thank you all from the bottom of our hearts. It is possible that we have omitted someone, and if that someone is you, we sincerely apologize. Do let us know so that we can list you in future reports.



"The earth laughs in flowers."
 Emerson



Ruby Habitat Foundation 2022 Financials

Income	\$654,376
Expenses	<u>\$390,586</u>
Net Income	\$263,790

Rural Heritage & Open Lands Fund	\$107,431
Hill Education & Outreach Endowment	\$151,453
Woodson Ranch Endowment	\$8,035,219
General Fund	\$323,542

	Fixed Assets	
Improvements & Equipment		\$494,572
Land		\$9,052,427
Visitor Center Building & Donated Art		<u>\$50,271</u>
Total Assets as of 12-31-21		\$18,214,915

Ruby Habitat Foundation is a Type 1, 509(a)(3) tax-exempt support organization to The Montana Land Reliance, a 501(c)(3) corporation. Our Tax ID is 45-0487621.



Ruby Habitat Foundation Board of Directors

The Montana Land Reliance

George Olsen

President, The Montana Land Reliance
& Retired CPA--*Helena, Montana*

Rock Ringling

Retired, The Montana Land Reliance
Helena, Montana

Vice-Chairman, Kendall Van Dyk

Managing Director, The Montana Land
Reliance--*Helena, Montana*

Ruby Valley Community

Chairman, Neil Barnosky

Rancher--*Sheridan, Montana*

Bruce Peterson

Rancher--*Alder, Montana*

Steve Wood

Rancher--*Sheridan, Montana*

Woodson Family

Lisa Matthews

Jarrell, Texas

Catherine Mitts

Nashville, TN

David Mitts

Conroe, Texas

Secretary/Treasurer, Leslie Vanderpool

Georgetown, Texas

Executive Director

Daniel Durham

Sheridan, Montana

Founders

Charles Craig Woodson (1933-2011)
and

Martha Hill Woodson (1932-2022)

RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION 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.

Support Us If You Can!

Over the past 5 years, Ruby Habitat Foundation's managed access program has **welcomed over 7000 people**--let that sink in--for a myriad of purposes including flyfishing, birding, education, hunting ducks & deer, among other aims. Few private properties can say the same. Your financial support will ensure that these efforts continue.

To make a donation, just write us a check payable to Ruby Habitat Foundation and send to:

Ruby Habitat Foundation

PO Box 638

Sheridan, MT 59749

You may also donate through our website, www.rubyhabitat.org. Just look for the Donate Now button. Ruby Habitat Foundation is a Type 1, 509(a)3 tax exempt support organization to the Montana Land Reliance. Our tax ID is 45-0487621. **THANK YOU!!**





Landowners and resource managers 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 (1933-2011), Founder

Ruby Habitat Foundation
PO Box 638
Sheridan, MT 59749
P: 406-660-2709
www.rubyhabitat.org

Email:
Dave Delisi: dave@rubyhabitat.org
Dan Durham: ddurham@ranchresources.net