

RUBY HABITAT FOUNDATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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

Comments from the Executive Director

It is hard to believe a year has passed since Les Gilman handed over the reins at the Ruby Habitat Foundation. I am pleased to report that we survived the transition and had a very successful year at the ranch. We produced an exceptional hay crop in partnership with local ranch families. The Heritage Orchard rebounded from a hard winter and shows much promise for the coming year. Clear Creek continues to mature as a fishery and will soon provide important riparian habitat for all manner of creatures. We welcomed guests from around the country to enjoy some fishing, birding, hunting, education, and solitude. The Woodson Family spent time with us on the land sharing their ideas for the future. We continued to strengthen our relationship with the Montana



Land Reliance and support their efforts to maintain open space across Montana. And now, we are planning for the year ahead as we strive to fulfill Craig and Martha Woodson's vision for the ranch and our community.

Theodore Roosevelt once told the Colorado Livestock Association that "The nation behaves well if it treats the natural resources as assets which it must turn over to the next generation increased; and not impaired in value". I believe Craig would have agreed whole-heartedly with President Roosevelt's assessment. And while I cannot say the entire country has embraced this ideal, it is clearly woven into the fabric of the Ruby Valley as so often demonstrated by the thoughtful actions of local water users, livestock producers and land managers. I am confident that the creation of the Ruby Habitat Foundation, and the work Les did to pursue our mission for so many years, helped solidify this conservation ethic throughout the valley and increase the value of our natural assets. As we move into a potentially tumultuous year around the world, I take heart in Teddy's wise words, and remain confident that the most productive thing we can do for our country is to continue to steward the soil, water, agricultural lands, and wildlife that sustain our communities. To that end we have a big year planned at the Woodson Ranch, including the creation of trout spawning habitat on Cattail Creek, experiments with emerging soil health practices, continuation of our agricultural endeavors and a push to expand our education programs.

Earlier this fall, we were replacing a tangle of ancient livestock fence on the ranch. While walking the new route, I spotted a chunk of obsidian laying on the soil. It had clearly been worked by indigenous hands many generations ago. This rudimentary but effective tool had been uprooted by equipment that was burying fiber optic lines through the valley. I was struck by the many layers of human activity that had occurred on that single patch of soil in the Ruby Valley, from hunting with rock tools, to feeding mining families, to commercial cattle and hay production and now high-speed communications. I am encouraged that the land is still feeding livestock,

local hunters and moose. I am also reminded that my tenure here will only be another layer on this piece of ground. I can only hope that our turn at the wheel will be viewed kindly by future farmers, ranchers, hunters, and fisherman.



I greatly appreciate your friendship and support as we attempt to honor the legacy created here by the Woodsons, Les and the Montana Land Reliance. Please reach out any time to say hello or discuss what's happening on the ranch. Take good care.

Dan Durham
Executive Director



From the Chairman's Desk

As I think back over 2023, we have just experienced an Arctic blast of cold. We had 35 degrees below zero at our place and, in areas not too far from here, there were temperatures of over 40 degrees below zero *plus* wind. We raise livestock, so our main focus during a severe storm is to make sure they have food and shelter to survive. My thoughts, though, are toward the wildlife that call the Ruby Valley their home. The habitat that is available determines how well they will be able to weather the storm. If they survive, will they be weakened or will they still maintain their condition and strength? Did this storm draw down their reserves and strength, did they come into the winter with enough body condition and vitality to make it through the winter? Each of these winter-hardy animals is dependent on the habitat that is provided for them. In the Ruby Valley, agriculture has produced an abundance of habitat as a byproduct of good stewardship of our natural resources. A part of the Ruby Habitat Foundation mission statement says, "promoting the concept of resource accountability." I have thought much about this concept for years, but the last few months it has been on my mind constantly as I think about the Ruby Valley and as Gloria and I have driven many miles this fall and throughout the year. I recently read the term "land ethic". Land ethic is a term that makes a person stop and think about what that means. How do we define terms like resource accountability and land ethic? What does that look like when we make decisions on the management of our natural resources? How do we provide food and fiber for a growing population and do it in a way that is attuned to our natural resources? The responsibility we have to actively manage our natural resources is both humbling and a privilege.



Ruby Habitat Foundation is looking forward to continuing to being a place to try new methods and techniques, experimenting to enhance the tried-and-true methods and gaining knowledge of how so many variables involved in production and management can fit together to be more effective. You will read in this annual report about the Cattail Creek project that will create more fish habitat, and the bio-char trial led by our very own soil expert and Executive Director, Dan Durham. I am very excited about both of these projects.

Education and outreach will continue to be a priority at Ruby Habitat Foundation. It is positioned well to reach out to many groups of people, from the youth both in the area and far away to adults that are local and adults from all over the United States. There is no way that education about our natural resources and the stewardship of them can be over-emphasized.

2023 was our twenty-first year. Both of our founders, Craig and Martha Woodson, have now passed on. We will always be so very grateful for the gift and inspiration they have given to the Ruby Valley and far beyond. The vision they had continues to reach out further and further to a broad scope of people. Ruby Habitat Foundation's outreach continues to grow and expand, always looking for new opportunities.

This has also been a time of new beginnings. Craig's grandson, Michael Arslanian joined the board in 2023. He joined Martha's granddaughter, Catherine Mitts as third-generation board members. We also have a new Executive Director, Dan Durham. He follows long-time Executive Director, Les Gilman, who retired at the end of 2022 after an outstanding job of leading Ruby Habitat Foundation for 20 years. Dan is proving to be more than capable in his new role, and I am looking forward to the new viewpoint he will bring.

I want to end my comments by thanking our many supporters and donors. Without each of you, we would not be able to do the good work we do. The concept of resource accountability is so very important and can easily be lost in the many voices calling for our attention. Again, thank you.

*Neil Barnosky
Chairman*



A Word From Our Parent Organization

In an era defined by rapid change, the partnership between The Montana Land Reliance (MLR) and Ruby Habitat Foundation (RHF) remains as strong as ever. As a longtime RHF Board Member, it's been my privilege to watch RHF grow into a thriving organization doing important work in the Ruby Valley.

RHF continues to be a forward-thinking organization, leading the charge in shaping tomorrow's success stories. MLR is proud to support RHF's Cattail Creek Project, which will create an important riparian habitat and contribute to the recovery of brown trout in the Ruby River. MLR is also excited to see progress on the Bio-Char Trial Project, which will address conifer encroachment and mitigate fire and drought risk in the area. These projects, among others, will benefit wildlife and agriculture and add to RHF's conservation legacy in the Ruby Valley.

I am pleased to report that 2023 was another excellent year for conservation in Montana. MLR staff partnered with twenty families to complete conservation easements on 32,885 acres. These completed easements bring the total acres conserved by MLR to 1,319,876, keeping us on track to realize the long-term goal of conserving two million acres by 2040. The completed projects span the state, from Creston Bench in the Flathead Valley to the sagebrush sea of Carter County in the east. The lands protected represent working farms and ranches, wildlife habitat, streambanks, and importantly, an assurance that the Montana we love will remain in place long into the future.

As we look to that future, MLR continues to make it our priority to anticipate shifts, proactively address challenges, and capitalize on emerging opportunities in land conservation. As Montana experiences pressure from growth and development, landowners across the state are reacting with an increased interest in conservation easements. Never has the demand for conservation easements been greater. To meet this demand, in 2023, MLR hired Chad Klinkenborg as the new Southwest Manager, Melanie Brock as MLR's first Philanthropy and Communications Manager, Tony Smith as MLR's first Southwest Land Steward and Mark Szczypinski as MLR's first Eastern Land



Steward. These new hires add to our capacity to partner with families desiring to conserve their properties.

While MLR experiences positive change, our mission remains the same: to work with private landowners to permanently protect agricultural lands, fish and wildlife habitat, and open space. As we move into 2024, I look forward to the new opportunities that await both MLR and 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 who make MLR and RHF such wonderful organizations.

George Olsen
MLR Board President



Outreach Report

*Study the science of art. Study the art of science. Learn how to see.
Realize that everything connects to everything else.*

Leonardo da Vinci

The above quote, ascribed to da Vinci, is rich with counsel. The last sentence, the one about connecting, is so commonly stated that it is almost *cliché*, but it is also at the core of some Eastern philosophies. It seems unlikely that da Vinci was a practicing monk on the side, but he certainly saw things in a different way from those around him. Had he taught himself to see?

When Craig Woodson purchased what is now his eponymic ranch, he certainly saw potential for this 1200-acre plot of ranching bottomland. He spent the next decade after purchasing the ranch improving the place, restoring damaged portions of the riverbank that had been stabilized with automobiles, and working to effect the kind of lasting change that he believed would stand as his legacy. The 1800 cottonwoods he planted, the restoration of those rip-rapped riverbanks, the acres of Great Basin wildrye he planted, and the deliberate and time-consuming protection of hundreds of trees from the deleterious effects of *Castor canadensis* (beavers!), all stand as examples of how his vision reached far beyond the average person's time horizon.



And then, in his greatest gift to the future of all, he enshrined Woodson Ranch for managed public use under the Ruby Habitat Foundation's umbrella. The mission statement for the Foundation includes echoes of Craig's long view of things as it calls not just for protecting and enhancing open space and wildlife habitat, but for influencing other entities to do the same. Leveraging our own efforts here through influencing others is one way to expand the effect of his vision.

No greater example of his far-reaching sight exists than this place which stands as an example of what clear vision can create. His vision is encapsulated in the quote on the back of this Annual Report, and it's a continual source of delight and da Vinci-like counsel to read that he felt 'obligated' to be a good steward of the natural resources here while sharing them today and preserving them for future generations.

Entering now my 10th year as the Outreach Coordinator here, the retrospection urge is strong. One thing has become clear. Ruby Habitat Foundation has succeeded in many of the ways Craig envisioned. Our programs welcomed over 1800 people in 2023, and the diversity of reasons people visited would, I believe, have made Craig happy. Twenty percent of the visitors came to flyfish, and a nearly identical number came to learn something new. That would have made Martha, Craig's wife, happy as she placed a heavy emphasis on education. Ten percent came to hunt, and others came for exercise and the sheer joy that comes from being outside. Others came to experience the wildness a place like Woodson Ranch affords by walking on our Nature Trail. Each visitor's feedback expressed appreciation that such a place exists--a place where one can find an approximation of silence and a temporary slice of solitude.



Learning to see, to *truly* see, seems to involve contemplation and time in equal measure, and such focused thought helps one to learn how everything connects. Craig and Martha Woodson both understood and did this, and we are all better for their vision.

*Dave Delisi
Outreach Coordinator*



Bio-char Trial

Since its inception in 2002, Ruby Habitat Foundation has run experiments to test novel approaches to agricultural challenges. We have conducted soil health comparisons, analyzed organic vs. inorganic fertilizers, compared glyphosate-treated fields with mechanical weed control methods, and, one year, trained cattle to assist with weed control.

2024 will bring our focus to an emerging process that holds promise as a way to sequester carbon, improve soil health, and even retain moisture which is certainly important in our dry climate.

Bio-char. If you haven't heard of this approach to soil health, here's a primer. First, think back to a campfire you once roasted marshmallows over. The fire had to be just right, with coals glowing gently and not flaming. The best coals were buried under a light coating of already-burned ash, thereby inhibiting oxygen from making its way to the unburned fuel underneath and causing flameups. Still oxidizing to some extent after your marshmallow achieved its ideal golden, slightly crispy, exterior (not to mention its delightful flavor when blended with that inimitable combination of chocolate and graham cracker), those coals were probably reduced to white ash by morning. But, if your fire didn't have the residual heat to keep the fire alive, or if enough ash covered the coals to prevent oxygen from getting to them, those coals might be seen in the morning as unburned, black-as-last-night, chunks of charcoal. If you've seen that, you've seen bio-char.

Essentially, bio-char is the result of burning wood under low-oxygen conditions so that the bulk of the carbon remains in the form of chunks of blackened carbon, often still in the shape of the sticks and logs which were placed in the fire to begin with. In a word, it's charcoal.

Numerous studies have indicated that this black material, when applied to soils in certain, prescribed ways, may bring long-term benefits not just to the soils where it rests, but to the local ecosystems and, indeed, the global climate. When presented with such a potential panacea, it's tempting to ask, "well, why isn't everyone doing this?"

The answers stem from some logistical hurdles and lots of unanswered questions. We hope to contribute to the body of knowledge about this problem by conducting a trial with a relatively small quantity of bio-char on a field on the west side of Woodson Ranch. We'll apply the bio-char this spring and monitor that plot while comparing it to the untreated areas adjacent.

This product has some interesting potential benefits when applied properly. What that means is that the bio-char should be inoculated prior to being worked into the soil. The reasons for this include:

- Bio-char is not fully oxidized yet; the fire that created it was prevented from burning the wood completely. If one places this material directly in the soil, it will "rob" the surrounding soil of the microbes in the soil that are busy performing other functions. This will actually result in a temporary decline in soil health while the microbes begin to populate the porous pieces of biochar.



Bio-Char prior to spreading



Bio-char Trial, Continued

- Un-inoculated bio-char is relatively inert—it contains little in the way of beneficial nutrients for the soil. Inoculating the bio-char with beneficial nutrients accelerates the process of improving soil health.
- Inoculation can be tailored to the purpose. Introducing certain bacteria to the bio-char can make it great for composting, nitrogen-fixing, or perhaps better for disease suppression. In fact, inoculating bio-char with certain microbial species that are known to create a sticky biopolymer may further enhance bio-char's ability to retain water. As we head into what, at the time of this Annual Report's authorship, appears will be a dry year, this has a lot of appeal.

To inoculate bio-char, several techniques have shown promise. These are divided into passive and active methods. The passive methods include mixing biochar in compost or cow manure which, over time, causes transfer of beneficial microbes into the pores of the biochar. Another passive technique is to place it directly into the soil. As mentioned above, this may cause a temporary decline in soil health, but eventually things catch back up. Active methods include soaking the bio-char in a compost tea—this is a bit faster than the passive composting method. Sprays can also be applied that have the desired beneficial microbes.

Our trial method, because our operation is small enough to do it this way, will involve the use of manure. You can see, though, that this is somewhat impractical for large-scale operations, and this brings us to some of the logistical challenges. At another site in Montana, several organizations including The Blackfoot Challenge are conducting an experiment with some 300 tons of biochar. Having enough inoculant available, as well as the equipment necessary for mixing the compost with such an enormous quantity of black and dusty material, is a challenge.



We plan to use cattle to both inoculate the bio-char and work it into the soil

Another challenge is creating and transporting the product in a cost-effective way. In this sense, “cost-effective” means two things. First, the bio-char must be affordable to the entity applying it. There is a transportation cost from the location where the bio-char is created, and there is the cost of the material itself. Regarding the transportation costs, if part of the purpose of bio-char use is to assist with mitigation of the effects of climate change, the transportation costs include the use of fossil fuels, so the shorter the transportation distance, the better.

Recent efforts to reduce conifer encroachment in the mountains and foothills around the Ruby Valley have provided an ample supply of burnable wood suitable for the creation of bio-char. With a few procedural adjustments, it may be possible to create the bio-char nearby, and that will reduce both financial and carbon-footprint costs. For our 2024 trial, we have access to a source from the Bureau of Land Management in neighboring Beaverhead County. They have recently purchased a couple of kilns and are doing demonstration projects as part of a larger regional effort looking at alternative uses for otherwise wasted logging biomass and finding ways to make it economically feasible to harvest smaller diameter trees in conjunction with commercial timber harvest projects. But, before it is deemed worthwhile to implement those adjustments, we feel it is necessary to prove the concept that bio-char is beneficial; our trial will help answer some of those questions. If you have questions about our trial, or, better yet, would like to see the site of the trial, simply contact us and we'll arrange a time!



Cattail Creek Conversion

The steady drumbeat of negative news about the state of trout in Southwest Montana has reached the whining pitch of an engine about to blow. Montana's agency responsible for managing this outdoor recreational pursuit, Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP), has been collecting data about fish numbers, size, and health for well over 20 years. The most recent data point toward an historic decline in fish numbers on several nearby waterways, including the Ruby River.

In July of 2021, FWP hosted a meeting to discuss some of their data and to obtain input from stakeholders in fish health. This group included guides, outfitters, and other interested parties, including representation from Ruby Habitat Foundation. At that meeting, the data shared with the group indicated a dramatic downturn in fish numbers as determined by the annual shocking procedure on these waterways. The group approved of an approach to limit fishing if numbers showed continued decline the following year.

The numbers did, indeed, decline, and in a substantial fashion.

At present, the cause of this decline is unknown but FWP and other entities, including the Big Hole Watershed Committee, have begun to apply resources to determine the cause and to identify possible solutions.

Always eager to be a part of the solution, Ruby Habitat Foundation has begun a project we have reason to believe will increase fish populations in the lower Ruby River, and perhaps beyond.

Cattail Creek, our often-fished, picturesque spring creek-like system of ponds and runs, installed in the 1990s

by Craig Woodson as a place where one could catch a rainbow during runoff because of its always-clear water, was somewhat overdue for a make-over. Its banks had widened, slowing the water down; it had avulsed through one bank; and it had a propensity to grow a quantity of surface algae and sub-surface sago pond weed sufficient to make fishing far less productive during summer months.



Cattail Creek late in the summer season--notice the algae

Further, the system adhered to fishing philosophies no longer viewed favorably by FWP. In order to stock hatchery rainbow trout in this system, spinning-wheel fish barriers were installed when the system was created. This created two issues we wished to address. First, those spinning wheels not only kept the hatchery fish in, but they also prohibited fish from the main river from travelling up into the system,



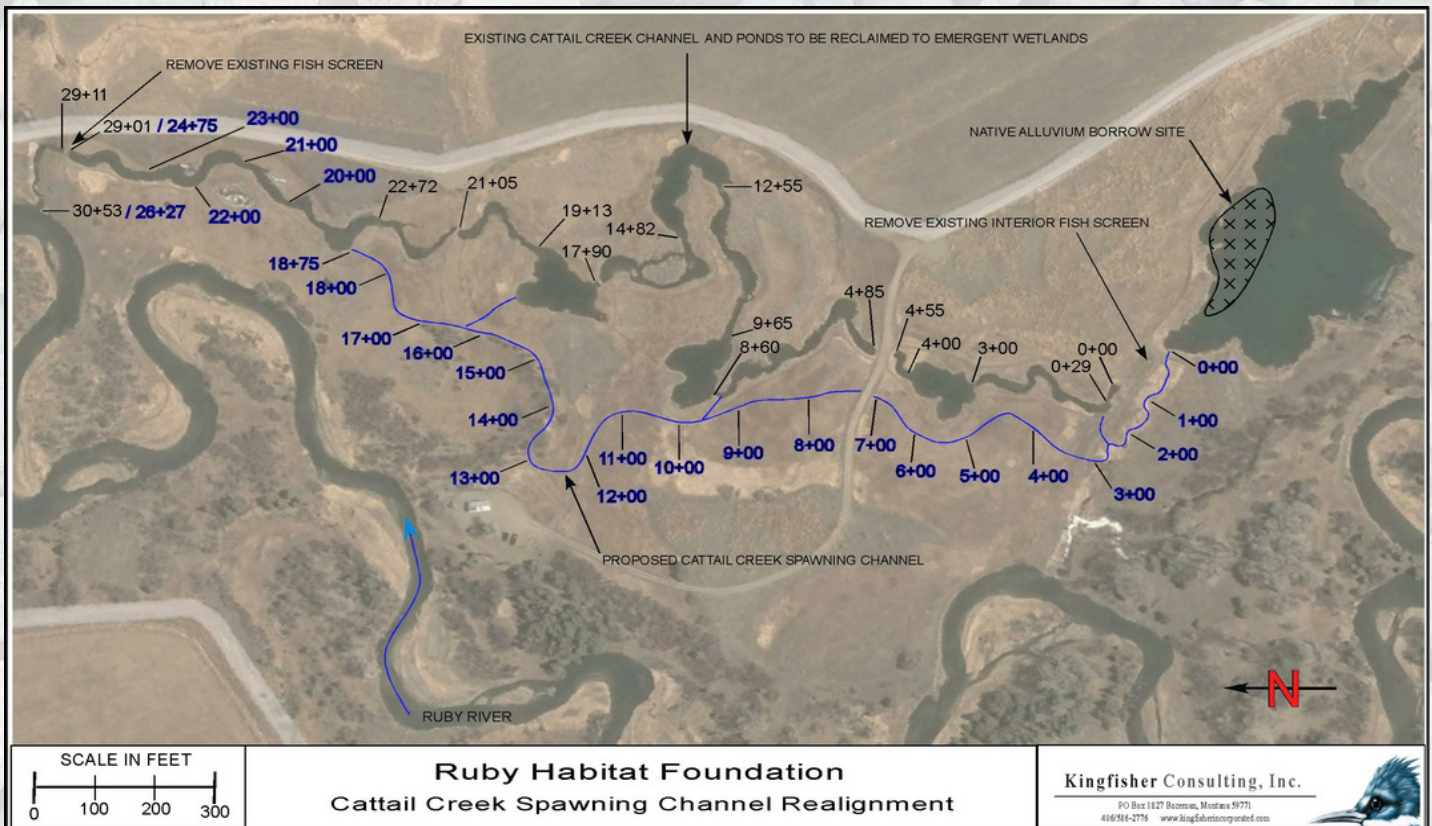
Cattail Creek Conversion, Continued

whether for refuge from summer heat or to spawn in the fall. And second, the practice of moving fish from a remote hatchery to this location carried risks we deemed less acceptable than in the past.

Our solution is to undo this system and replace it with a new one. The new one will contain no fish barriers and will be designed with fish biology as the higher priority over fishing. This not only fulfills several portions of Ruby Habitat Foundation's mission, but also has the potential to improve fish numbers in the area. A new channel, just about a half-mile in length, with gravels ideally sized for the creation of spawning beds, will be installed just to the west of the existing system. It will connect to the existing big pond at the upper end and directly into the Ruby at the lower end.

This work, costing somewhere north of \$200,000, is being funded by a "Future Fisheries" grant from Fish, Wildlife and Parks as well as by the generous support from several Ruby Habitat Foundation donors. At the present time, we are navigating the tangle of permitting necessary to accomplish this system conversion; if the bureaucratic cogs operate as they should, we will install the new system this winter, meaning that by the time you are reading this report, it will be accomplished.

We invite you to come see this work! Simply get in touch with us (contact information for Dave is on the back of this report) and we will set up a time for a tour.



Cattail Creek Plan: The "old" channel is just above the blue "new" channel in this diagram. The numbers indicate distance in 100' increments...so, 1+00 is 100 feet from the start of the channel. Another feature of this map is that you can see it was created by Kingfisher Consulting in Bozeman. Clint Campbell, the owner, has been our go-to designer for over 25 years, even designing the "original" Cattail Creek!



Lead, Eagles, and Us



The lead-blind bird just prior to her capture

In January of this year, our Executive Director, Dan Durham, noticed a bald eagle acting in an unusual way. It would not fly, and it allowed us to get quite close to it. Dan, in spite of the late hour and bad road conditions, captured the eagle and took it to the Montana Raptor Conservation Center.

The Raptor Center ran some tests, and unfortunately, this poor symbol of our nation was poisoned with lead. The lead caused blindness, and this is at least one reason the bird would not fly. They are working to nurse this eagle back to health, but it is “touch and go”. They did provide some reason for hope as the eagle has begun to eat again and its sight seems to be coming back, but its fate is still uncertain. We will keep you apprised of the eagle’s status as things progress. If you are interested in this topic, you may want to check out the most recent edition of Mike McTee’s most recent “Montana’s Nonlead Newsletter” by looking that phrase up in your browser of choice.

In 2016, Ruby Habitat Foundation hosted a public event about the topic of lead ammunition and its potential impact on raptors and other

scavengers. The wealth of information available about the link between lead consumption and adverse consequences for raptors is compelling. For these reasons, we continue to allow hunting on the property only if the hunter’s ammunition is non-lead (generally, these days, that means copper). If you are a hunter, search for “hunters for eagle conservation” and you’ll find a site that will give you a \$20-off coupon toward the purchase of non-lead ammunition.

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Epilogue: In early March, Doily was increasingly uncomfortable and unresponsive. After agonizing of the decision, this poor eagle had to be euthanized, yet another unfortunate casualty of lead. If you hunt, and you still hunt with lead ammo, it’s time to join the many who have already made the switch from lead to a non-lead option. Such ammunition is equally effective and does not have a negative effect on raptors like Doily.



Dan Durham and the eagle--we nicknamed her “Doily” for the artistic array of neck feathers that reminded us of something hand sewn for artistic effect.



Mark Your Calendar!

What: Ruby Habitat Foundation’s Wildlife Speaker Series Event

Topic: MOUNTAIN LIONS!

Speaker: Joshua Lisbon, Education Director with MPG Ranch

Date: August 1, 2024

Location: Ruby Habitat Foundation’s Waldie/Kanouse Visitor Center (~2 miles northwest of Laurin, MT on Ruby River Dr.)

Time: 5:30 pm dinner (BBQ from PigOut BBQ provided--the rest is a potluck, so bring a side dish, salad, or dessert, please!)

6:50 pm Presentation

For more on all the Wildlife Speaker Series events, check out our website’s Wildlife Speaker Series page.



Join our Legacy

As Craig and Martha Woodson well knew, good land stewardship requires keeping one eye on the present while simultaneously watching the future. The decisions we make today, as Craig said, affect not only our own environment, but that of wildlife, our neighbors, and future generations.

Quite simply, Ruby Habitat Foundation would not exist without the long sight of the Woodsons whose donation of this place secured it as a valuable community resource while cementing their own legacy in the hearts of many. Additionally, donations and bequests from others who included us in their estate plans have helped to ensure this place, this very special source of solitude and delight, of managed public access that has welcomed tens of thousands of guests for various purposes, is available for future generations to experience.

Please consider including Ruby Habitat Foundation in your own estate planning. Imagine the feeling of leaving a vibrant haven for future generations. Through Ruby Habitat Foundation, your legacy can reach far beyond your lifetime. By including Ruby Habitat Foundation in your will, you join a community of passionate individuals who have secured the future of this precious land and the lives it sustains.

Your planned gift, no matter the size, will have a ripple effect, leaving an enduring mark on the environment and in the hearts of countless individuals.

Don't underestimate the power of your "future vote" for conservation. By planning for the future, you ensure a lasting voice for the land you love, ensuring it continues to thrive for generations to come. Planned gifts, such as bequests, gifts of real and personal property, gift annuities, charitable trusts, life estate gifts, and more will help you to leave a meaningful legacy of conservation and may carry a greater impact than you thought possible. Your planned gift may, for example, reduce your income tax and capital gains liability, provide useful gift tax and estate tax reductions, and provide an income stream for yourself and others.

Ruby Habitat Foundation welcomes the opportunity to work with advisors of clients who are considering planning a gift. We are happy to provide further information or to offer our fully confidential assistance in finding the best fit for a gift that matches the donor's financial, philanthropic, and estate planning objectives. One of the best ways we can thank our generous supporters is to ensure their gift is structured to make the maximum possible impact for conservation, while ensuring donors receive the full tax benefits to which they are entitled.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to Dave, our Outreach Coordinator, to start a conversation about how we can help during the gift planning process.



2023 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

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.

Abernethy, Sam
Adamo, John
Adams, William
Alder Creek Enterprises LLC, Henry Hoffman
Allen, Anita and James
Anderson, J & M
Andrews, Kim and John
Anne and Alex Bernhardt Foundation-
North Carolina Community Found.
Anonymous
AOGF
Aplegate, Elizabeth
Artis, Brandy & Daufel, Doug
Arvanites, Gale and Dokson
Ashworth, Sarah
Barker, Brian
Barnosky, Gloria & Neil
Bartoletti, Laurie & Tom
Bates, Patty and Hafenfeld, Rick
Beam, Rosanne and William
Beauchamp, Margaret and Peter
Bell Enterprises- Bell, Harvey
Bennett, Elizabeth and Walter
Bennison, Rob
Bernhardt, Anne and Alex
Berry, Mary Ruth and James
Berry, Sharon & Michael
Best, Betsy and Larry
Bias, Michael
Birdsong, Penny and Warren
Bokeko, Sue and Chris
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Bombassaro, Jeannie & Savinski, Mark
Bowler, Tom
Brackett, Glenn and Lambert, Christine
Bradley, Elizabeth and Crockett, Daniel
Bradley, Patricia and Rand
Brim, Jacob
Brim, Michael
Brim, Sue and Patrick
Broadie, Doug
Brooks, David
Brosier, Marjorie
Brosier, Sarah and Cunningham, William
Brown, Jonathan
Burgos, Gloria and John
Campbell, Beth
Caravan Trust- Austen Cargill
Carlson, Kurt
Carr, Heather and Scott
Cherry, Mary Kay and James
Childrey, Elizabeth and William
Cholnoky, John
Christensen, Scott
Clark, John
Clark, John
Clarke, Sara and James
Clausen Law Group

Cochran, Arwen and Reuben
Coggins, Allen
Colwell, Kay and Frank
Connelly, Sawyer
Corl, R. Brooks
Cowles, Evelyn & Reynolds
Cox, James
Cramer, Sabine and Michael
Crandall, Janet and William
Crockett, Daniel & Bradley, Elizabeth
Cunningham, William and Brosier, Sarah
Cutter III, Edward
Dale, Cheryl and John
Daufel, Doug and Artis, Brandy
Davison, Daniel
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DeWitt, Peter
Dillard, Debby and Greg
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Dixon, Julie and John
Donnelley Family Foundation
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Doyle, Thomas
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Field, Timothy
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Geary, Laura and Mike
Geise, Bobbi and Scranton, Eric
Gerhart, Mike
Gilman, Donna and Les
Giordano, Linda and Mark
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Goldberg, Frederick and Lakewold, Carolyn
Goldberg, Paul
Goldthwait, Ann and Glenn
Gottwald, Bruce
Graff, Rita and Richard
Granken, Renee and Greg

Grant, John
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Hafenfeld, Rick and Bates, Patty
Hanneman, Debra and Wideman, Charles
Harbison, Anne and Ruedisili, Stephen
Hardy, P. and H.
Harmon, Laurel and Sanchez, Edwin
Hart, Elizabeth and Douglas
Hells Canyon Creek LLC
Higgins Family Charitable
Higgins, Gretchen and Cory
Hilles, Rick
Holland, James
Holland, Jim
Holland, Yvonne and Noel
Hoover, John
Hutchins, Judith
Hutchins, Ward F
Jack Creek LLC
Jacobs, Cecelia and Hill, Robert
Jakubowski, Walter
James, Brooke and David
James, Tony
Janik, Nancy and Joe
Jellinek, Jane
Johnson, Mildred and Richard
Johnson, Steven
Johnston, Lynne & Craig
Joiner, Vicki and Henry
Jones, Amy & Ringle, Rob
Joys, Sandra and David
Kambich, Corrine and John
Kannon, Barry
Kasai, Nobuya
Kaufman, Katherine "K.C.", and Robert
Morgan Stanley Gift
Keifer, Thomas
Kelly, Kathryn
Kenworthy Electric
Kenworthy, Heather and Dan
Kiefer, Paul
Kimberly, Karen and George
Kirk, Fred
Klaumann, Martha
Kleinsasser, Peter
Kramer, James and Smrcka, Nancy
Kruer, Kathy and Curtis
Kruzan, Erin and Ted
Lakewold, Carolyn and Goldberg, Frederick
Lamb, Cheryl & Mike
Lambert, Christine and Brackett, Glenn
Landes, Paul
Laszlo, Paulette and Andrew
Leaf, David
Leary, Kathryn and Thomas
Legg, William
Levin, Dora and Mark
Lewallen, Katherine
Lewis & Clark Expeditions, Mike Geary
Liebmann, Steve
Lininger, Rob
Loeb, Ed
Loeb, Margaret and Jeffrey
Loebl, Claire and Dave
Lorman, Mark
Love, Sandra and Jewell



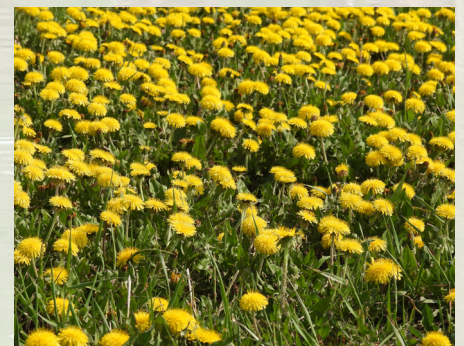
2023 RHF SUPPORTERS (Continued)

Lowry, Scott
 Luckel, Hildy and Raymond
 Lukas, Mary Beth and Tom
 Lynch, Waltraut
 Madison Valley Women's Club
 Malloy, Leslie and Tim
 Marshall, Ellen and Rose, Stephen
 Masuda, Linda and Kuni
 Mathews, Shirley
 McAlister, Susan and Alex
 McCarty, Bert
 McCormick, Bruce
 McFadden, Donnie
 McGuire Family Foundation
 McGuire, Jack
 McKeever, Christine and Frank
 McLaren, Jack
 McNeill, MC
 Mending Waters, Montana
 Mergenthaler, Daniel
 Messel, Gregg and Declue, Anita
 Messersmith, Alicia and Donald
 Meyer, John
 Miller, Katherine and Logan
 Miller, Megan and Lindley
 Mills, Charles
 Mitchell, Julie & Doug
 Mitts, David
 Mitts, Lisa and Doug
 Mitts, Robin
 Moll, William
 Montag, Kim and Jeff
 Montford, Robert "Monty"
 Morad, Pamela and Joe
 Morgan, Constance and Michael
 Moseley Family Fund
 Moseley, Paul
 Moss, Charles
 Mueller, Derrick
 Mummert, Jenny and Marquis
 Munday, Jan and Pat
 Nash, Shannon
 National Christian Foundation
 Nicholson, Trish and Walter
 Nicolaou, Linda and Jim
 Nielsen, Norman
 Niles, Kenneth
 Nix, Joe
 Noonan, William
 Oglietti, Patrice and Bernard
 Ollenburger, Hannah and Mark
 Olsen, George and Vogelsang, Ellen
 Olsen, Christina and Stephen
 Ossner, Jim
 Pacific Real Estate Partners
 Packwood, Jan
 Pappenfus, Pamela and James
 Parks, Gail and Harry
 Parks, Judith and Steve
 Pearce, Julie and Michael
 Pelo, Tyler
 Peltier, Catherine
 Peterson, Steven
 Phelps, Shean
 Phillips, Janis and Terry
 Plourde, Christine & Roger
 Poett, Cynthia

Prange, Carrie & Richard
 Pruitt, Thomas
 Przonek, Janice and John
 Querna, Christine
 Rahlves, Sally & Dennis
 Ratcheson, Peggy and Robert
 Rathert, Ginger and Terry
 Reed Family Foundation
 Reed, Ken
 Reeves, Marguerite and Les
 Richards, Suz & Bruce
 Riggins, Michael
 Ringle, Robert and Jones, Amy
 Ringling, Paul and Uecker, Roberta
 Romkema, Adam
 Rose, Stephen and Marshall, Ellen
 Rozell, John
 Rubin, Judith and Robert
 Ruby Valley Bourbon Society
 Ruedisili, Stephen & Harbison, Anne
 Rumberger, Barbara
 Saltchuk
 Sanchez, Edwin & Harmon, Laurel
 Sasser, Phillip
 Savinski, Mark & Bombasaro, Jeanne
 Sawczuk, Stephen
 Sayer, Thomas
 Saylor, Deborah and William
 Schroeder, Michelle and Thomas
 Schwab Charitable
 Scott, Rachel and Charles
 Scranton, Eric and Geise, Bobbi
 Seale, Michael and Robert
 Seidel, Judith and Robert
 Selbach, Renada and Teesdale, Bill
 Shaffer, Kathleen Thomas
 Sheets, Laurie and Frank
 Shennan Family Fund-James and Janna Shennan
 Shennan, Janna and James
 Shore, Dominique
 Shore, Stephen
 Shuttleworth, Estelle
 Siana, Carol and Stephen
 Sisson, Carole and Gary
 Smith, Lanty
 Community Found of Greater Greensboro
 Smith, Susan and Ben
 Smrcka, Nancy and Kramer, James
 Snyder, Jana Jill and Donald
 Stein, Lori and Carl
 Stephans, Mary Kay
 Sterbis, Sharon and Michael
 Stevens, Kathy
 Stockton, Leslie and Daniel
 Stringfield, Margo and James
 Sutherlin, Bradford
 Sutherlin, Anne
 Swan, Elizabeth
 Taylor Family Fund-
 Taylor, Susan and William
 Taylor, Sandra and Boyd
 Teesdale, Bill and Selbach, Renada
 The Blackbaud Giving Fund, Cheveron Matching
 Employee Funds
 The Braewold Fund (Jim Wood), Sam Wood
 The Braewold Fund (Jim Wood), Steve and
 Jenny Wood

The Braewold Fund- Wood, James
 The Levin Family Trust
 Thomas Warren Inc,-
 Warren, Christine and Tom
 Toldness, Marie and Loren
 Trimboth, Brittani and William
 Trivette, Jaime
 Twiddy, Ross
 Uecker, Roberta and Ringling, Paul
 UK Online Giving Foundation
 VanBeek, Edward
 Vogelsang, Ellen and Olsen, George
 Voigt, John
 Wallace, Stephanie and Jim
 Walter, John
 Waring, Judith and Thomas
 Wellman, Janet
 Wells, Pamela and John
 Wenger, Lynda and James
 White, Ron
 Whitefish Community Foundation
 Wideman, Charles & Hanneman, Debra
 Willey, Elizabeth and Larry
 Woodard, Kimberly and Charles
 Wright, Andrew
 Zeff, David
 Zimmerman, Susanne and Allen

Each year, we strive to recognize our generous donors by acknowledging them here. We aspire for perfection, but sometimes miss someone. If that someone was you, know that we did not omit you deliberately. Just let us know so we can get it right next time!



"The earth laughs in flowers."
 Emerson



Ruby Habitat Foundation 2023 Financials

	Income & Expense (\$)
Income from operations:	441,700
Income from investments:	414,437
Expenses:	357,254
Net Income:	498,883

	Assets (\$)
Rural Heritage & Open Lands Fund	121,403
Hill Education & Outreach Endowment	174,754
Woodson Ranch Endowment	9,220,670
General Funds	266,720
Gilman Scholarship Fund (ask us how to contribute to this!)	106,004
Fixed Assets	
Improvements & Equipment	426,582
Land	9,058,168
Art , Visitor Center Bldgs	48,731
Total Assets as of 12/31/23	19,423,034

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

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

Rock Ringling
Retired, The Montana Land Reliance
Helena, Montana

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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 8400 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

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Sheridan, MT 59749

P: 406-660-2709

www.rubyhabitat.org

Email:

Dave Delisi: dave@rubyhabitat.org

Dan Durham: ddurham@ranchresources.net



Ruby Habitat Foundation is a Type 1, 509(a)3 Support Organization for The Montana Land Reliance, a 501(c)3