

2008 WPAG Application Form

Date: 17 April 2008

WPAG Amount Requested: \$9,840

Type of Effort: New √ On-going

How long has this effort been in existence? 13 years

Does the group have liability insurance? Yes

Carrier: Payne Financial

Expiration Date: February 2009

1) Short Description: The purpose of this project is to provide coordinator salary to i) organize and facilitate monthly public meetings of the watershed group and to attend local conservation districts meetings ii) provide outreach and education to the watershed community and stakeholders about watershed improvement and conservation activities recently completed or in progress, and iii) provide the watershed group the ability to meet its obligation with respect to outreach and support of the drought management plan (refer to Big Hole Drought Management Plan – ATTACHMENT II). A small amount of this project funding will support printing, postage, and transportation expenses for outreach materials and watershed tours (refer to Work Plan – ATTACHMENT I).

2) Local Commitment: The Big Hole Watershed Committee (BHWC) was founded in 1995 by a group of concerned ranchers and conservationists who wanted to assure the economic and environmental integrity of the Big Hole River Basin. The BHWC is a multi-stakeholder, consensus-based organization composed of 22 governing members representing diverse interests. Half of our members are ranchers. Other members represent sportsmen, conservationists, outfitters and guides, recreationists, utilities, and local government. Our four-member board consists of two ranchers and two conservationists. In addition, local, state and federal agency participants serve as technical advisors to the Committee. Among these are Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources and Conservation Service, and Montana Department of Natural Resources Conservation. The BHWC holds monthly meetings that are advertised and open to anyone interested in Big Hole Watershed issues.

The Beaverhead CD Supervisor has served as a Governing Member of the BHWC since its inception. The Ruby Valley CD and the Mile High CD have also partnered with the BHWC on Big Hole projects..

The BHWC is a 501(c)(3) organization. A membership plan was instituted in 2005. Membership support increased in each the last two years, providing for approximately 12% of overall operational support in 2007. Membership renewal exceeds 75%. Of renewing member, 25% increased their giving. Our goal is to support one third of our operational needs via a membership program by 2010.

3) Proposed Activity Description: The monthly public meetings of the BHWC are a critical component of the watershed group's ability to engage and inform our stakeholders about watershed projects, activities, and planning efforts. These meetings also offer the watershed group the ability to discover the concerns, goals, and desires of our community. Collaboration between the watershed group and local conservation district is a high priority. Together, local CD's and the watershed group have accomplished many on-the-ground projects and educational forums. Participation of stakeholders in the watershed group's activities is growing. With four CD's, the commitment of the watershed group to meet with the various CD partners becomes financially burdensome to the group. Funding will support the ability of the watershed group to continue active participation with the CD's.

For 11 out of the last 13 years, summer flows of the Big Hole River have averaged approximately one-third of normal due to drought. Resolving conflicts around water requires community support, innovative problem-solving abilities, and highly developed collaboration skills. The BHWC serves that role. One of the group's first accomplishments was the development of a pioneering Drought Management Plan. The drought management plan relies on shared sacrifice among anglers and water users. It has been successful in improving stream flow conditions compared to years prior to the plan as measured by stream flows and water temperature thresholds. The BHWC drought management plan is the first of its kind in Montana and is the model used by all other watersheds in the state. In 1999, the BHWC was recognized with the State of Montana Watershed Stewardship Award for its innovative and successful approach to drought management. The BHWC has taken on the responsibility of implementing the DMP in perpetuity. This grant will permit the group to meet this obligation through the 2008 irrigation year.

Finally, because of increased participation of local stakeholders in the drought management plan and watershed activities, many projects have taken place which are benefiting the river. It is crucial that the local community is apprised of the activities and successes. This builds momentum by raising awareness. This grant will support production and distribution of two newsletters and support at least one watershed tour to showcase recent projects. These tours are a great way to inform our community about the steps their neighbors are taking to improve their management to benefit the river, educate our stakeholders about best management practices, and finally, to highlight the breadth of support for these activities from State funding sources including DNRC, Federal funding sources including Bureau of Reclamation, local governments including CD's, NGO's including TNC and TU, and businesses including Patagonia.

4) Timeframe

Timeline	Task	Measurable Results
7/01/08-7/01/09	1. Prepare for and facilitate public monthly meetings of the watershed group, attend local conservation district meetings, and participate in CD activities. Local Conservation Districts include the Beaverhead CD, Ruby Valley CD, Mile High CD, and Deerlodge CD	# watershed meetings facilitated and CD meetings attended; Partnership with CD's in watershed projects and activities
7/01/08-7/01/09	2. Outreach and Education – Inform stakeholders about projects, activities, strategies in progress on the Big Hole Watershed through newsletters and watershed tours. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interview, research gather materials, and prepare two newsletters. ▪ Organize and guide watershed tour(s) 	Minimum Two Newsletters Minimum One Tour
7/01/08-3/31/09	3. Implement Drought Management Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Preparation and distribution of weekly flow reports (~June –September) as per DMP requirements. ▪ Facilitate annual DMP subcommittee to review and make recommendations for improvement of DMP based on experience of previous irrigation season (required as part of DMP process) 	# Weekly updates; # News Releases Annual review of Irrigation season experience and adoption of improved standards in DMP

5) Itemized Budget:

Task	Request	Match Activity	Amount
1.a. 17 meetings x 5hrs/ mtg x \$30/hr	\$2,550	Mileage ~ 1,730 miles/year	\$850
2.a. Newsletter preparation 20 hours x \$30/hr 2.b. Printing and Distribution of Newsletters 2 Newsletters @ 1,200 @ \$1.25 each 2.c. Provide tour transportation (Bus)	\$600 \$3,000 \$400	Stakeholder interviews and news article preparation ~15 hrs @ \$15/hr Agency, community leader, landowner and NGO participation in watershed tour(s) ~6 partners @ 8 hours @ \$20	\$1185
3.a. Prepare and distribute weekly drought updates 4 hrs/week ~15 weeks 3.b. Organize, prepare for and facilitate annual DMP Subcommittee review meeting - ~ 20 hours	\$1,800 \$600	Postage to distribute weekly flow reports to non-wired stakeholders Printing and distribution of data, maps, minutes & other hard copy documentation. Discussions, recommendations at BHWC meetings –Stakeholder participation ~35 participants @ 2 hrs @ \$15/hr	\$1,200 \$250 \$1,050
Subtotal	8,950		
CD Administration (10%)	\$890		
TOTAL	\$9,840		

Demonstrate Need: Operational funding to support the work of the watershed group is lacking. We are running in the red. Without continued support for our operations, we will delay or hold off on activities not directly related to seeking operational funding and core watershed activities such as monthly watershed meetings, drought management activities, subcommittee meetings, and developing capacity. Activities that may be delayed or curtailed include: implementation of new projects, organization or participation in state-wide meetings, attendance at conservation district meetings, etc.

DNRC Funding History

2005/2006	WPAG	Work Plan Development/ Weed Intern Salary	\$4,000/\$6,000	Completed
2007	HB 223 – 07- 2968	Willow Bank	\$13,500	In Progress
2007	RITP – 08 - 0012	Design	\$12,260	In Progress
2007	RITP – 008-0006	Watershed Survey & Prioritization	\$40,836	Final Billing in Progress
2008	HB 223 – 08 – 267	NAI Conference	\$3,500	Completed
2007	RRG-08-1300	Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement	\$100,000	Final Billing in Progress
2007	HB 223 – 07-2947	Irrigation Infrastructure Improvement	\$14,000	Final Billing in Progress
2007	WPAG	Hub & Spoke Collaboration; Lower Big Hole Planning Efforts	\$8,600	Final Billing in Progress

Attachments : The following attachments provide additional information to the application.

- Attachment I – BHWC 2008 Work Plan
- Attachment II – Big Hole Drought Management Plan

