

Miller Cattle Co
158 Upper Ruby Road
P.O. Box 184
Alder, MT 59710

To whom it concerns,

I'm writing this letter to explain why we are looking at relocating the river back to its original location.

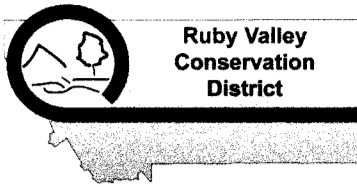
Since the 1960's or before this stretch of the Ruby River has been straighten with rip rap(the state of the art for that time) which has in turn caused problems both above and below us with head cutting and greater velocity. We recently hired Scott Gillilan to give his assessment of what could be done to put the river back to a more natural state thus slowing the river and creating better habitat for the fishery, and giving a more natural wetland habitat.

We feel that at the end of the project we would have an enhanced stretch of river that would be a great education piece for the entire Ruby River and would welcome being part of that learning experience.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Miller', with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Robert O. Miller, President
Miller Cattle Co.



Ruby Valley Conservation District | Ruby Watershed Council

P.O. Box 295
Sheridan, MT 59749
www.rvcd.org



November 25, 2009
Re: Miller Ranch Ruby River Channel Restoration

Water Quality Bureau, DEQ
Attn: Robert Ray
PO Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

Dear Mr. Ray,

I am writing in support of the 319 grant application titled Miller Ranch Ruby River Channel Restoration. The Ruby Valley Conservation District (RVCD) and the Ruby Watershed Council (RWC) are committed to uniting agriculture, recreation, conservation & education to “protect the land and preserve our heritage.” The Miller family has historically committed to the same concept through their responsible cattle ranching and hay production, as well as management of recreational/working ranchlands in the Ruby Valley. They are known for being outstanding members of the community as citizens, ag producers and conservationists.

Jeremy Miller has been a member of the Ruby Watershed Council for a number of years, and first approached the Council in 2008 to garner support from RWC & RVCD for researching restoration techniques for a straightened, hardened stretch of the Ruby River, which had been done some 60+ years ago in an attempt to make easier work of irrigation. This was a common practice along the lower Ruby below the Ruby Reservoir. The RVCD regularly sees 310 permit applications to repair these riprap sections, as well as for new permits to mitigate the damage done up and downstream from the hardened areas, due to increased velocity of the water, water eroding the soils from the edges of the riprap, increased sediment, etc. The RVCD favors “soft” bank stabilization techniques, and restoring and maintaining natural conditions whenever possible. Thus, we encouraged Jeremy and his family to continue their research into the project. When he came to the RWC/RVCD in 2009 with a complete engineered pre-proposal, we gave the project full support, including authorization for Rebecca Ramsey, Ruby Watershed Coordinator to help identify and apply for funding to assist with the project.

The Ruby River and several of her tributaries have been identified as “impaired” in the completed TMDL for the Ruby Watershed. This section was identified by now retired FWP biologist Dick Oswald for being practically devoid of fish to the lack of vegetation, lack of sinuosity, sediment and warming trends. The restoration plan that the Millers are working on will alleviate these issues. That is why the RWC & RVCD support this project fully, as we apply for assistance with the final design and permitting for this project, as well as in the future for the ultimate construction of this project down the road. We see this as an opportunity for other landowners to be led by example, and ultimately encourage those landowners to do similar projects and ultimately improve the water quality and habitat of the Ruby River for generations to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gary Giem".

Gary Giem, chairman, Ruby Valley Conservation District and member of the Ruby Watershed Council



Natural Resources Conservation Service
Sheridan Field Office
402 S. Main Street
PO Box 295
Sheridan, MT 59749

Rob Rung
Water Quality Bureau, DEQ
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, Mt, 59620-0901

Dear Rob,

November 25, 2009

I am writing in regards to the Ruby River Channel Restoration project located on the Miller Ranch. Historically this portion of the river was straightened which has compromised fish habitat and increased soil bank erosion. Restoring this portion of the Ruby River will reduce bank erosion which is a major concern to the Ruby River. Fish habitat will also drastically improve in this section. This project is a great benefit to the Ruby Valley.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marni Thompson".

Marni Thompson
District Conservationist

Helping People Help the Land

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer





**Wild Trout
Restoration**

**Board of
Directors:**

John Zelazny
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Missoula, MT

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The Missoulian Angler
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Lynda Wightman
Treasurer
Irrigation Systems
Consultant;
Missoula, MT

David Berkoff
At-Large
Board Member
Attorney;
Missoula, MT

*"Who knows what
admirable virtue of
fishes may be below
low-water-mark,
bearing up against a
hard destiny, not
admired by that
fellow creature who
alone can appreciate
it! Who hears the
fishes when they cry!
It will not be for-
gotten by some
memory that we were
contemporaries."*

- Thoreau

The Trout Conservancy OF MONTANA

P.O. Box 8871 · Missoula, MT · 59807-8871 · (406) 542-7445 · Website: www.troutconservancy.org

November 2009

Montana Department of Environmental Quality
Water Quality Planning Bureau
1520 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RE: Miller Property restoration, Ruby River

I'm writing to voice the support of the Trout Conservancy for the proposed restoration of channel form and riparian area in a 2,000 foot reach of the Ruby River within the Miller Ranch property.

I have reviewed the project pre-proposal prepared by Gillilan Associates, Inc., and I agree with the general concept of restoring sinuosity, re-activating historic meander channels, and re-vegetating riparian vegetative communities in order to address the multiple impacts caused by channel straightening for the benefit of agricultural use. The targeted section of the Ruby River is an impaired water body on the DEQ's 303(d) list, which can be linked to the straightening of this reach and consequent erosion. The proponents of this restoration are to be commended for their efforts to address some of the common land use issues that translate into many of Montana's nonpoint source water quality problems, and also trout habitat problems.

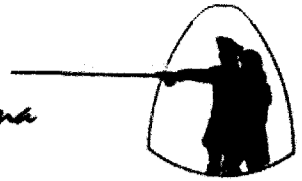
I share the hope of Gillilan Associates and the Ruby Watershed Council that this project, if successfully implemented, will serve as an example of appropriate stream restoration for other landowners adjacent to similarly straightened reaches of the Ruby River.

Sincerely,

John Zelazny
Executive Director, the Trout Conservancy

LEWIS & CLARK CHAPTER TU of Southwest Montana

PO Box 903 - Sheridan MT - 59749-0903



November 21, 2009

Reference: Miller Ranch Ruby Rechannelization Project

Water Quality Bureau, DEQ

Attn: Robert Ray

PO Box 200901

Helena, MT 59620-0901

RECEIVED

NOV 30 2009

DEQ
Planning Division

Dear Mr. Ray,

The purpose of this letter is to document the support that The Lewis & Clark Chapter of Montana's Trout Unlimited is providing for the Miller Ranch Ruby Rechannelization project near Alder, Montana.

The result of this project will be a net improvement in the structure of the Ruby River, and therefore an improvement in fish habitat in that stretch of the river. This project affects a significant length of the Ruby river, one of the "home waters" of our Trout Unlimited chapter.

We have demonstrated our support by applying for and obtaining a grant from the State offices of Trout Unlimited. This grant required a majority vote of the State Council which is comprised not only of State officers, but also the voting members of each chapter throughout the state. In this way, support for the project is demonstrated not only at the local chapter level but also through the support of the State Council of Montana's Trout Unlimited.

It is our sincere wish to see this project completed in a timely fashion so that the river can begin to heal as soon as possible.

Please contact us should you have any questions regarding our support for this important project.

Sincerely,

David A. Delisi, LCTU President

406-842-5475

www.lctu.org

cc: Ruby Watershed Coordinator