

## Section I: General Information

Project Title Big Sky Watershed Corps Support

### Project Sponsor Information

Sponsor Name Montana Watershed Coordination Council

Registered with the Secretary of State? Yes

Registered with SAM? Yes

County Lewis & Clark

Website \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Identification # 46-154855

DUNS # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact Erin Farris-Olsen

Signatory Erin Farris-Olsen

Title Executive Director

Title Executive Director

Address 334 Fuller Ave

Address 334 Fuller Ave

City Helena State Montana Zip Code 59601

City Helena State Montana Zip Code 59601

Phone Number (406)475-1420

Phone Number (406) 475-1420

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

Fax Number \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address erin@mtwatersheds.org

E-mail Address erin@mtwatersheds.org

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Project Location

12 Digit HUC #(s) many

(1) Waterbody Name from 2014 List of Impaired Waters many

(1) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals) many

(2) Waterbody Name from 2014 List of Impaired Waters \_\_\_\_\_

(2) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals) \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Waterbody Name from 2014 List of Impaired Waters \_\_\_\_\_

(3) Probable cause(s) of impairment to be addressed (ex. metals) \_\_\_\_\_

Activity 1 Name many Latitude (1) many Longitude (1) many

Activity 2 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Latitude (2) \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude (2) \_\_\_\_\_

Activity 3 Name \_\_\_\_\_ Latitude (3) \_\_\_\_\_ Longitude (3) \_\_\_\_\_

### Nonpoint Source (NPS) Information

Which WRP does the project implement? Many What is the WRP status? DEQ-Accepted

Does the project address impairments identified in a TMDL? Yes Waterbody Type River/Stream

Functional Category

1st Pollution Category Silviculture (Forest Management) Percent of Total (%) 20

2nd Pollution Category Agriculture (Irrigated Crop Production) Percent of Total (%) 30

3rd Pollution Category Urban Runoff/Stormwater (Municipal) Percent of Total (%) 20

4th Pollution Category Hydromodification (Channelization) Percent of Total (%) 30

## Project Funding

319 Funds Requested	<input type="text" value="\$83,000.00"/>	Does the project sponsor have any open 319 contracts?	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>
Matching Funds		Project Title	<input type="text" value="Big Sky Watershed Corps Support"/>
State Cash Match	<input type="text"/>	DEQ Contract Number	<input type="text" value="214011"/>
Local Cash Match	<input type="text" value="\$56,000.00"/>	319 Award	<input type="text" value="\$55,500.00"/>
In-Kind Match	<input type="text"/>	Projected Closing Date	<input type="text" value="December 2015"/>
Total Match	<input type="text" value="\$56,000.00"/>	Project Title	<input type="text"/>
Other Federal Funds	<input type="text"/>	DEQ Contract Number	<input type="text"/>
Total Project Budget	<input type="text" value="\$139,000.00"/>	319 Award	<input type="text"/>
Administrative Fee	<input type="text" value="\$8,000.00"/>	Projected Closing Date	<input type="text"/>

## Section II: Project Description

### Goal and Objectives: Describe the overall goal and specific objectives for this project.

The overall goal is to help build or strengthen local capacity to improve watershed health and protection, and implement approved WRPs. Big Sky Watershed Corps AmeriCorps members work within targeted (DEQ accepted WRPs) host site organizations to focus on meeting watershed restoration goals. Activities will include objectives as defined by the BSWC programmatic goals of: (a) Watershed Health and protection, (b) Education and Outreach, and (3) Volunteer Management. Member activities may include: project design, coordination and implementation; stream, riparian and floodplain restoration; grant writing; data collection; school and community education/outreach even



### Methods: Describe the approach selected to address/correct the problem(s), e.g. types of BMPs to be installed, and other important activities.

MWCC has demonstrated efficiency in managing multiple sub awards of this nature to successfully leverage funding resources across a broader landscape. MWCC received and effectively executed a similar grant in the 2014-2015 grant cycle. This program will likewise generate cost share support to place Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) members within 10 or more qualified watershed groups and conservation districts across Montana. Each professional BSWC member will live and work in their host site community for 10.5 months and provide organizational capacity, project development, implementation and monitoring. The BSWC members will work under the direction of their host site supervisor on water quality activities and projects to decrease NPS pollution and meet TMDL targets as identified in their WRPs. Example BMP project activities may include riparian, floodplain and stream restoration, buffer strip plantings, off stream water tanks and fencing, or new culverts. Ongoing community and landowner education will be key components for success.

### Summary: Provide a brief summary of the project.

Successful long term WRP implementation depends on broad stakeholder commitment, local leadership and strong organizational capacity to ensure sustainability. MWCC will coordinate with MT DEQ to identify community based organizations across Montana (WS groups and CDs) that have DEQ approved Watershed Restoration Plans (WRPs) and are ready to get work, but lack the organizational or financial capacity to develop and complete projects. BSWC members are college graduates serving an AmeriCorps service term in a Montana host community. Each host site is required to provide a \$10,000 cash cost share for a BSWC member but many of these sites lack the financial resources to provide the full \$10,000. This proposal builds on the previous grant (2014-15) to: provide up to \$5,000 of the host site cost share for BSWC members at WRP qualified sites; create a small pot of readily available project dollars, and provide professional development opportunities to help BSWC hone their water quality restoration skill sets. Through the provision of a BSWC member, host sites will have the dedicated capacity to identify potential projects, work with the stakeholders, develop project implementation and monitoring plans, and hopefully leverage the resources to implement the project during their community service term. This proposal also requests a small pot of project dollars to provide quick access for the BSWC members that are ready to implement a project and either don't have the time during their term to wait for traditional grant cycles, or have the ability to leverage other funds quickly.

### Statement of Project Need and Intent

As we all strive to sustain or improve watershed health and water quality, locally based organizations are the first line of defense to assist with the identification, implementation and sustainability of water quality protection activities. These important community based organizations are the local leaders committed to protecting and maintaining their community economic vitality and resources. They have the desire, but not necessarily the skill set, capacity or resources to develop, coordinate, fund, oversee and maintain water quality restoration projects. The BSWC Program has been meeting this need for the last four years by placing well-educated and dedicated Corps members directly with watershed groups. Many of the worthy organizations simply do not have the resources to provide the \$10,000 cost share necessary to participate in the program. This application seeks to provide a source of funds for MWCC to manage and distribute \$5,000 cost share match. This proposal includes capacity support and project dollars as a "complete package" for restoration. Small project dollars will enable groups to take full advantage of increased capacity to engage the community in restoration.

### Describe the pre-project planning that has already occurred.

MWCC has maintained a similar contract with DEQ for the 2014-2015 funding cycle. The 2013-2015 grant will serve as a framework for implementing this proposal. However, the addition of project dollars is a new program element. The MWCC Board is comprised of watershed groups, many of whom are BSWC host sites. Board members provided feedback in developing the proposal. Multiple groups currently participating in the BSWC program were also consulted and share the desire to have small scale project funds available.

### Collaborative Effort: Describe the collaborative effort you have engaged in to ensure support from all appropriate partners.

MWCC serves as a hub for communication and collaboration for the over 60 watershed groups, the state and federal partners, and the conservation NGOs that are working on natural resource issues across Montana. We strive to be inclusive and encourage a community based approach of all stakeholder in all of our work. We have discussed this proposal with our BSWC program partners (MCC and SWCDM) and with our current and potential host sites. Since the funding will become available in 2016, we are optimistic that some of the current host sites with BSWC members will be able to take advantage of project dollars during the 2016 service term.

### Partners and Roles: Identify the project partners and their roles.

Partner	Role
Montana Association of Conservation Districts	Help identify and coordinate potential host sites and BSWC professional development opportunities such as the MACD annual convention, Watershed Wednesday, and regional meetings.
Montana Conservation Corps	Administer the CNCS grant and all BSWC member administrative and payroll services. Coordinate with MWCC and MACD for all program and host site activities.
Montana DEQ	Identify and recommend potential host sites that are seeking technical and organizational assistance in implementing WRPs.
Montana DNRC	Provide staff time, travel and assistance to support the BSWC program and host site coordination.
Local Watershed Groups, Conservation Districts and community based conservation organizations.	Provide a minimum of 10 or more hours per week in supervision, mentoring and support of the BSWC members. Also participate in trainings and monthly site supervisor calls for the BSWC program.

### Technical and Administrative Qualifications

For nearly over 20 years, MWCC has provided the statewide network, connecting locally based organizations to state and federal agencies to help deliver the resources and technical and professional support they need to improve watershed health and water quality protection in their communities. MWCC has managed multiple similar pass through grant opportunities, including current and the pending DEQ contract. MWCC's Water Activities Working Group (WAWG) has been involved in the 319 grant review process for many years. MWCC staff and board have also assisted in grant program administration for the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation as well as the Bureau of Land Management. MWCC has also been asked to assist in the review of NPS mini-grant program applicants administered through the Montana Association of Conservation Districts.

### Past and Current Projects

Funding Organization	Award Amount	Project Description	Project Status	Contact Information
BLM	\$125,000.00	Capacity Building in eastern Montana communities.	Ongoing	Alden Shallcross ashallcross@blm.gov (406) 896-5044
Montana Conservation Corps	\$10000.00	BSWC Program, host site coordination. Provide 5,000 in professional development match dollars for the members serving at host sites that do not qualify for support under the current DEQ grant.	Ongoing	Wendy Wigert Wendy@mtcorps.org (406)587-4475
MT DEQ	\$15,000.00	Communication Support	Complete	Robert Ray rray@mt.gov (406)444-5319
MT DNRC	\$20000.00	Big Sky Watershed Corps and Drought Planning, support BSWC members working on drought planning activities in selected host sites. Up to 2,000 per qualified site.	Ongoing	Ann Schwend aschwend@mt.gov (406)444-1806
MT DEQ	\$55500.00	Big Sky Watershed Corps Support, support host site cost share match for sites with a DEQ approved WQRP during the 2015 service term	Complete December 2015	Robert Ray rray@mt.gov (406) 444-5319

### Section III: Scope of Work

Task 1 Title Host Site Cost Share Support

#### Description

This project will provide up to \$5,000 in cost share match dollars for 10 or more qualified watershed groups or conservation districts to support BSWC members during the 2017 service term. The members provide the additional organizational capacity to work within their host site communities to: develop projects to restore and improve impaired waters; to implement watershed protection activities for unimpaired waters; and to increase awareness and active engagement of community members to improve watershed conditions.

In 2015 and 2016 approximately ten of the twenty BSWC host sites have watershed restoration plans which qualifies them for this funding opportunity. MWCC works closely with watershed groups and coordinates with the conservation districts to promote and support the BSWC program and will widely distribute this opportunity to ensure program success.

#### Deliverables

Ten qualified watershed groups hosting BSWC members. Quarterly reports summarizing member activities as they pertain to non point source pollution and the watershed management plan for their watershed.

#### Task 1 Funding

319 Funds	<input type="text" value="\$50,000.00"/>
Non-Federal Match	<input type="text" value="\$40,000.00"/>
Other Federal Funds	<input type="text"/>
Total Cost	<input type="text" value="\$90,000.00"/>
Is Match Secured?	<input type="text" value="Yes"/>

Timeline January 2017-December 2017

Match Source Local cash match from each selected, qualified host site

Task 2 Title Professional Development Support for BSWC members

#### Description

BSWC members are young professionals that are academically prepared but may lack the specific hands-on experience, practical knowledge or understanding to tackle complex water quality improvement projects. There are many professional development opportunities, such as workshops, conferences or symposia that are topic specific and extremely valuable for emerging watershed professionals. The workshops also provide networking opportunities for the BSWC members to personally connect with the state and federal agencies that may be involved in current or future projects and may provide additional assistance. Financial support for the members to attend these opportunities is often limited, so this funding will provide up to \$500 per member (total) to attend relevant conferences or workshops and improve the knowledge and skills for the BSWC member and their watersheds.

#### Deliverables

BSWC members that are knowledgeable, connected and better prepared to address, fund and implement watershed restoration related activities in their watersheds.

#### Task 2 Funding

319 Funds	<input type="text" value="\$5,000.00"/>
Non-Federal Match	<input type="text"/>
Other Federal Funds	<input type="text"/>
Total Cost	<input type="text" value="\$5,000.00"/>
Is Match Secured?	<input type="text"/>

Timeline January 2017-December 2017

Match Source

### Task 3 Title Project Dollars for BSWC Site Projects

#### Description

In order to take advantage of positive restoration and community building opportunities, watershed groups need readily available project funds. For example, a landowner may reach out to a watershed group for a specific restoration activity. The ability of the watershed group and BSWC member to obtain quick project funds through this program will reduce the delay that could otherwise derail projects. Approved project proposals must: (1) address nonpoint source pollution, (2) address impairments identified in Montana's 2014 List of Impaired Waters, (3) implement goals and objectives identified in the 2012 Montana Nonpoint Source Management Plan, (4) be completed within time period required by the 2015 319 grant cycle, (5) provide education and outreach directly related to the project or Watershed Restoration Plan, (6) include monitoring to evaluate project success at reducing nonpoint source pollution, (7) include monitoring to evaluate the effectiveness of education and outreach in reaching the target audience and achieving the desired outcomes, (8) include reporting measures that are reasonable and relevant to the scale and duration of the project, and (9) participate in grantee feedback survey upon project completion. Approved Projects may include: (1) riparian and wetland plantings, (2) stream bank stabilization, including soft techniques, (3) removal of invasive plants, coupled with native plantings, (3) stream bank fencing, (4) rain garden, swale installation, or other passive storm water treatments, or (5) catchment and passive treatment of multiple malfunctioning on-lot septic systems.

#### Deliverables

Completion of small and medium scale restoration projects. Quarterly Status Reports to DEQ which will include: (1) Summary of Awards granted, (2) Summary of overall program effectiveness, and (3) description of financial status. Grantee feedback survey.

#### Task 3 Funding

319 Funds	<input type="text" value="\$20,000.00"/>
Non-Federal Match	<input type="text" value="\$16,000.00"/>
Other Federal Funds	<input type="text"/>
Total Cost	<input type="text" value="\$36,000.00"/>
Is Match Secured?	<input type="text"/>

Timeline January 2016-December 2017

Match Source

### Task 4 Title Program Administration

#### Description

Provide all aspects of project coordination, communication, fiscal administration and reporting requirements as needed for the grant management.

#### Deliverables

Accurate accounting, timely reports and adherence to state and federal guidelines for project oversight and administration.

#### Task 4 Funding

319 Funds	<input type="text" value="\$8,000.00"/>
Non-Federal Match	<input type="text"/>
Other Federal Funds	<input type="text"/>
Total Cost	<input type="text" value="\$8,000.00"/>
Is Match Secured?	<input type="text"/>

Timeline January 2016-December 2017

Match Source

## Section IV: Supporting Documents

### Detailed Project Budget

<b>Task Number and Specific Action</b>	<b>319 Funds</b>	<b>State Cash Match</b>	<b>Local Cash Match</b>	<b>In-Kind Match</b>	<b>Federal Funds</b>	<b>Total Costs</b>
Task 1 Host Site Cost Share Support	\$50,000		\$40,000			\$90,000
Task 2 Professional Development	\$5,000					\$5,000
Task 3 Project Dollars for BSWC Identified Projects	\$20,000		\$16,000			\$36,000
Task 4 Administration	\$8,000					\$8,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	\$83,000		\$56,000			\$139,000

**Project Milestone Table:** Complete the following Project Milestone Table by entering task numbers and titles in the left hand column, then check the box(es) for the appropriate quarter(s) and years(s) in which you will be working on the task.

Milestone	Spring 2016	Summer 2016	Fall 2016	Winter 2016	Spring 2017	Summer 2017	Fall 2017	Winter 2017	Spring 2018	Summer 2018	Fall 2018
Task 1: Host Site Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Identify and contract with Host Sites	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
BSWC Support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Task 2: BSWC Member Professional Development Funds	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Task 3: BSWC Project Dollars Available	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Submit **project map(s)** and **letters of support (at least 3)** along with the Final Project Proposal form. If your organization is not the author of the WRP you hope to implement, you must request a letter of support from the original authoring entity. If the authoring entity refuses to provide a letter of support, use the additional space at the end of the application to describe their response. If design drawings are available, provide those as well. For on-the-ground work, include copies of applicable permits if available.

- ☐ Project Map
- ☒ Letters of Support
- ☐ Design Drawings
- ☐ Applicable Permits
- ☐ Draft of amended WRP (if applicable)
- ☐ Photos
- ☐ Landowner Agreements

**Use the space provided for any additional information that may not have been captured elsewhere in this Final Project Proposal**



P.O. Box 70 · Polson, MT 59860  
(406) 883-1346  
Fax (406) 883-1357  
lakers@flatheadlakers.org  
www.flatheadlakers.org



**Flathead Lakers:**  
*Working for clean water, a healthy  
ecosystem, and lasting quality of life in  
the Flathead Watershed*

September 23, 2015

Robert Ray, Watershed Protection Program Supervisor  
Water Quality Planning Bureau  
Department of Environmental Quality  
P.O. Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RE: Montana Watershed Coordination Council DEQ 319 Grant

Dear Rob,

The Flathead Lakers support the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's 319 Grant application to assist conservation districts and nonprofit organizations host Big Sky Watershed Corps (Corps) members to help advance watershed conservation, restoration, and education activities and implement projects identified in Watershed Restoration Plans.

The Big Sky Watershed Corps program engages young watershed professionals and provides them with excellent on-the-ground learning opportunities. The program also allows nonprofit organizations and conservation districts to expand their capacity for a year, when a long term funding commitment for full time staff may be challenging, and to test the needs and capabilities of a group or program to address new issues. The infusion of young professionals into collaborative watershed restoration project development and implementation can be invigorating and more cost-effective than committing to hiring new staff.

The Flathead Lakers hosted Corps members for the past three years to expand *Flathead River to Lake Initiative* partners' capacity to advance landowner outreach, encourage riparian restoration, collaboratively implement, maintain and monitor restoration projects, and regularly communicate with landowners to ensure project success. Hosting Corps members allowed *Initiative* partners to test and evaluate the effectiveness of the River Steward position in helping achieve common riparian restoration goals. The pilot project was such a success, that this year partners successfully established a long-term River Steward program and position to sustain our collaborative restoration effort.

Our experience with the Big Sky Watershed Corps program and our pilot River Steward project has been constructive in building our collaborative outreach and restoration program while strengthening our partnership. We are impressed with the program's rigorous Corps member and sponsor training and mentoring efforts that help ensure the program is effective in meeting its

goals of building capacity for watershed protection and restoration and providing a learning opportunity for young professionals.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Constanza". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letter 'C' being particularly large and stylized.

Constanza von der Pahlen  
Critical Lands Program Director



Gallatin River Task Force  
PO Box 160513  
Big Sky, MT 59716  
[www.gallatinrivertaskforce.org](http://www.gallatinrivertaskforce.org)

September 23, 2015

Water Activities Work Group 319 Review Committee  
Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
1520 E. Sixth Avenue | P.O. Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

RE: 319 Grant Application Support Letter

Dear 319 Review Committee:

On behalf of the Gallatin River Task Force, a nonprofit watershed group dedicated to health of the Upper Gallatin Watershed, I would like to express our support for the 319 application from the Montana Watershed Coordination Council for cost share for the Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) Program and project dollars for BSWC site projects. Our organization has been fortunate to have participated in the BSWC program as a host site for the four years and we just received notification of a fifth year starting in January. The BSWC program has been a game changer for our organization. The addition of a full-time, energetic, passionate college graduate on board has afforded us the ability to significantly expand our program work, our outreach capability, and our fundraising capacity. This has had major impacts on our capability to make efforts to address nonpoint source issues in the Upper Gallatin Watershed.

As a previous host site, we can testify that it is difficult to raise the \$10,000 cost share to support a BSWC member. With a reduction in cost share requirement, organizations will not have to take time away from the important watershed work outlined in their watershed restoration plans to fundraise. In addition, having readily available funds to support small projects, would be extremely valuable to take advantage of opportunities that arise throughout the year to address nonpoint source pollution.

The Gallatin River Task Force offers its enthusiastic support for the MWCC application for cost share of the BSWC program and associated project support and urges you to approve this proposal for funding. Thank you for your consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

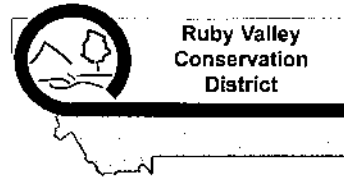
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kristin', is located below the 'Sincerely,' text.

Kristin Gardner  
Executive Director, Gallatin River Task Force



**Ruby Watershed  
Council**

**Ruby Valley  
Conservation District**



P.O. Box 295  
Sheridan, MT 59749  
(406) 842-5741

Robert Ray  
Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
Watershed Protection Section,  
Water Quality Planning Bureau  
PO Box 200901  
Helena, MT 59620-0901

September 24, 2015

Dear Robert and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Ruby Valley Conservation District (RVCD) and Ruby Watershed Council (RWC) I am writing to support the Montana Watershed Coordination Council's 2015 proposal for support for the Big Sky Watershed Corps (B5WC) Program.

As a Big Sky Watershed Corps Host site, I have experienced first-hand the need for financial support in hosting a member. In addition to providing equipment, space, and match funds for the member, the program requires my time as a supervisor, which my District has no budget to accommodate. It's this type of arrangement that makes programs like B5WC unobtainable for some Conservation Districts and watershed groups. Small, underfunded organizations like ours have a true need to build capacity because our tiny staff is limited in both time and expertise, though the Board and Council Members are very ambitious, but our funding is so limited, we "lack the capacity to build capacity." This is a common theme not only with our organization, but with small, ambitious Districts and groups around our state who are trying to get good, collaborative projects done around the state.

319 Funding through MWCC has been critical to our success in hosting a member and we hope to see these funds continue. We support the addition of project dollars which will help groups like ours implement small-scale projects that are critical to maintaining community relationships and getting work done within our impaired watersheds.

We sincerely hope you will consider fully funding the proposal. Please do not hesitate to contact me at any time if you have questions or concerns

Sincerely,

Rebecca Ramsey, Ruby Watershed Coordinator