



Lewis & Clark County

Water Quality Protection District

316 N. Park Ave Helena, MT 59623

Telephone: (406) 457-8927 Fax: 447-8398



December 19, 2008

Mr. Robin Rung
Montana Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 200901
Helena, MT 596200901

Dear Robin Rung & 319 Grant Review Committee,

The Lewis & Clark County Water Quality Protection District (WQPD) would like to offer our support for the request for funding of the Montana Watercourse grant application "Riparian and Wetland Buffer Education," from the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) 319 Non-point Pollution Prevention Grant Program. The Montana Watercourse proposes a program of riparian buffer education and resources for Montana's youth and their mentors that is needed to promote a culture that truly understands the value of these areas and works to restore and protect them. Healthy riparian and wetland buffers are a common sense, economical and effective way to protect Montana's water quality. Unfortunately they are vulnerable to development pressures and impacts by landowners who are unaware of their value and many environmental benefits provided by this important ecological zone.

The Watercourse's proposal is to target Montana's educators and students in areas that are experiencing development pressure. These areas are also targeted in a Riparian Campaign currently being funded by a 319 grant will provide resources and a continuing educational activities to residents of these areas with high potential benefits. By leveraging awareness generated through this campaign and the resources of local partners, the Watercourse will provide complimentary, on the ground, buffer-related resources and programs. As a partner of the Riparian Education Campaign, the WQPD will work with the Montana Watercourse to ensure that the programs are coordinated and relevant to the local community. We will support this effort by utilizing the resources developed by this grant funded proposal to continue to educate our youth and community of the need for protection and restoration of this resource so important to water quality of our watersheds.

We have worked cooperatively with the Montana Watercourse for many years and recognize that they have the technical understanding and expertise to produce and implement this type of educational program. Therefore, we hope your agency sees the value of this project and we encourage you to support its funding. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jim Wilbur
Coordinator

