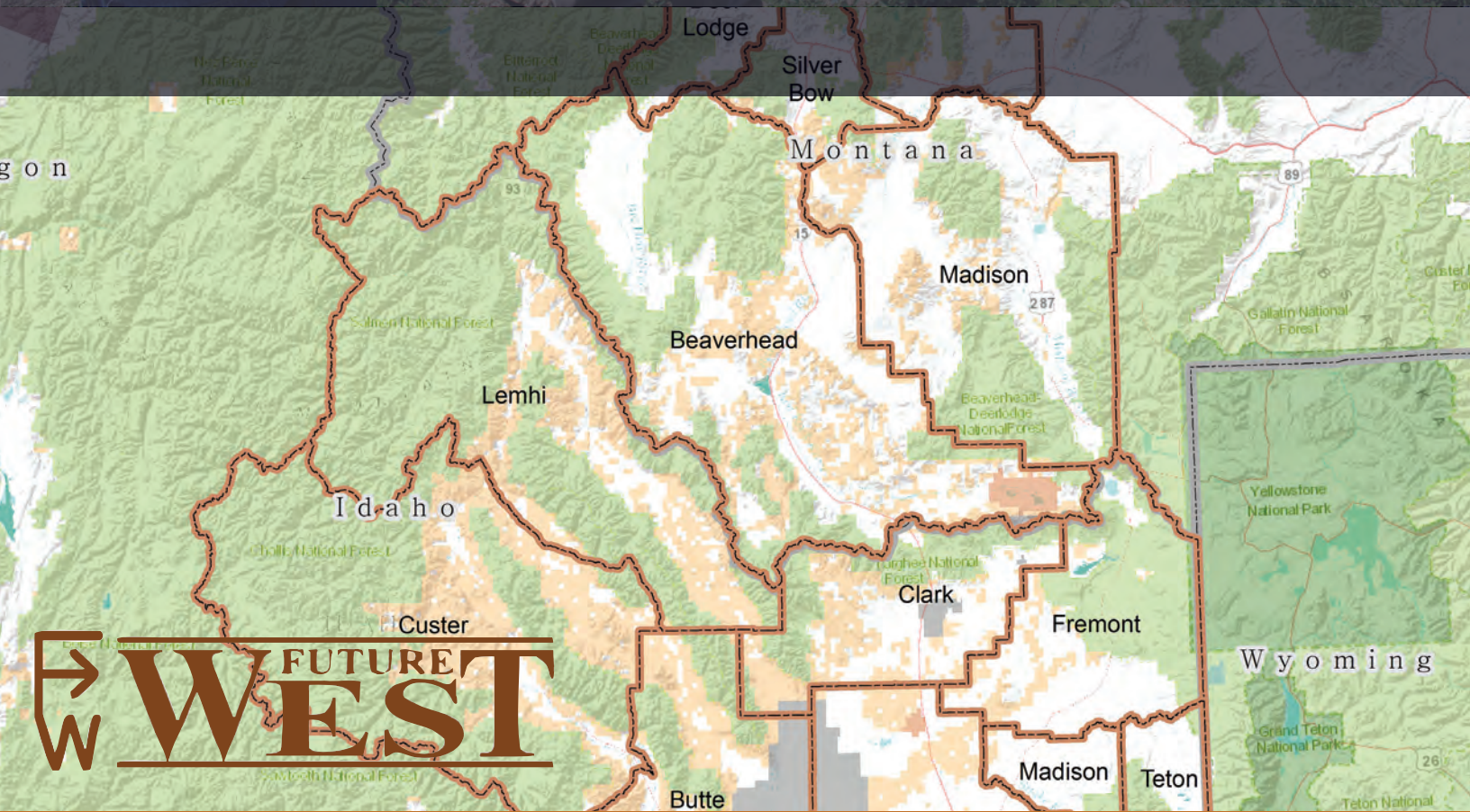




photo by Jennifer Boyer



HIGH DIVIDE MISSION STATEMENT WORD CLOUD



A word cloud is a visual representation of the frequency that action keywords are used in a document. The larger the font, the more frequently that word was used. This word cloud relates to the mission statements of the organizations that completed this survey. It provides insight on the conservation focus of many of the community based organizations operating in the High Divide region.



photo by Jack Ballard

INSIDE

The High Divide Survey: Project Description.....	3
Summary of Survey Results.....	4
Capacity Building Needs.....	7
Obstacles to High Divide Project Success.....	8
Recommendations.....	9
Conclusion.....	9
Case Study: Big Hole Watershed Committee.....	10
Case Study: Salmon Valley Stewardship.....	11
Case Study: Montana Headwaters Abandoned Mine Reclamation Project.....	12
Case Study: Henry's Fork Foundation.....	13
Case Study: Corder Ditch Abandonment Project.....	14
Survey Respondent List.....	15



photo by Jean Bjerke

The High Divide Region, a chain of Idaho and Montana counties that link Greater Yellowstone to the wildlands of Central Idaho, has been identified as one of the most ecologically important natural landscapes in the United States. Working ranches and farms, vibrant communities, abundant fish and wildlife, outstanding recreation and stunning scenery are all hallmarks of the region. Its clear rivers are world famous for their trout fisheries. Its mosaic of public and private land provide habitat for abundant wildlife, including elk and mule deer, big horn sheep, grizzly bears, wolverine, trumpeter swans, and many other species. In fact, the long term well-being of the wildlife often associated with national parks like Yellowstone and Glacier will depend upon the conservation, and where necessary, restoration of habitat in the High Divide.

Not surprisingly the local economies are intrinsically linked to natural resources. Agricultural operations, for example, support a variety of other businesses and provide open space and wildlife habitat. There are also many other economic drivers directly related to the conservation values of the region. These include the forest products industry, the hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation industries and a growing number of other businesses that have located here, attracted by the quality of life and abundance of scenic and natural assets.

The High Divide is also home to a range of local conservation organizations many of whom have embraced a collaborative, community based approach to their work. It is clear that without these local organizations, the goal of conserving and restoring the natural and community values of the High Divide region will not be achieved. Local leadership in conservation is critical for success. Community based organizations are in a unique position to serve in this role as they understand their area and are working for multiple and related outcomes including those that benefit their communities. This diversification of goals and activities beyond just conservation can provide longevity and resiliency against the vagaries of funding



photo by Jennifer Boyer

and other challenges. Nonetheless, these groups need the time, money and resources to be successful in their conservation and community development efforts.



Not surprisingly the local economies are intrinsically linked to natural resources.

photo by Denver Bryan

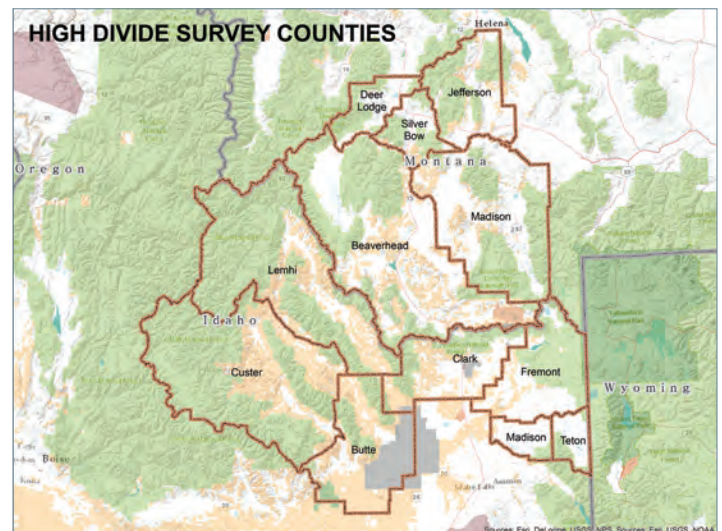
THE HIGH DIVIDE SURVEY: PROJECT DESCRIPTION

An incredible amount of conservation and restoration work is being accomplished in the High Divide. While the positive impacts both in terms of productive working relationships as well as acre by acre, on-the-ground progress are visible on a daily basis, a single survey seeking to quantify some of this work at the landscape-scale has never been done. Initiated by Future West, Salmon Valley Stewardship and Sustainable Northwest, this project is an effort to do just that.

“The goal of this project is to increase the environmental, economic, and geographic impact of local conservation and restoration projects in the High Divide Counties.”

Ultimately, the goal of this effort is to increase the environmental, economic, and geographic impact of local conservation and restoration projects in the High Divide counties of Idaho and Montana. The inventory focused on conservation organizations working in the Idaho counties of Butte, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Lemhi, Madison and Teton counties; and the Montana counties of Beaverhead, Deer Lodge, Jefferson, Madison, and Silver Bow.

The survey provides a compelling glimpse at the conservation activities taking place in the region, their on-the-ground results and contribution to local economies. It is important to note that this is not a comprehensive census of all the organizations working in the region, but rather a representative sample.

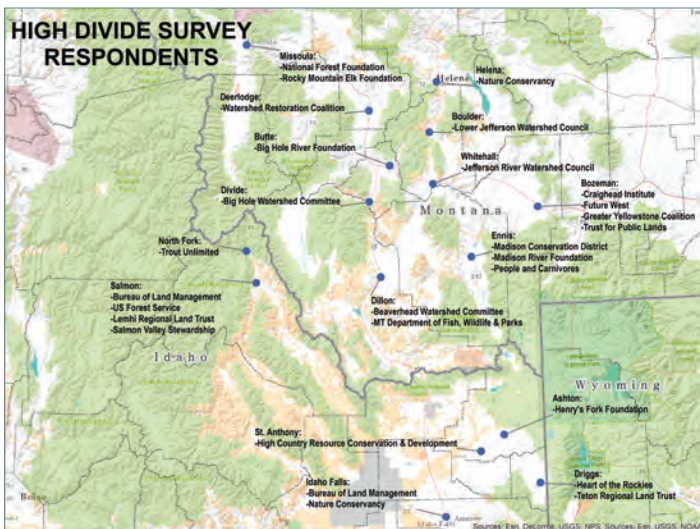


The objectives for this effort include:

- Identify conservation and restoration projects from 2008-2013.
- Identify the 1). Conservation activities and goals, 2). Economic and environmental benefits, and 3). Resources needed to ensure success.
- Identify the actions and strategies needed to support similar projects.
- Develop a capacity building and communications campaign to inform the public about these efforts.
- Attract additional conservation investment to the region.

Survey participants identified 436 projects worth almost \$111 million dollars in expenditures.

photo by Jennifer Boyer



It is hoped that ultimately this effort will help translate into a greater investment of funds and other resources for conservation in the High Divide.

SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Of 60 organizations contacted regarding the survey, 32 responded, a response rate of approximately 53 percent. 81 percent of the respondents were from nonprofit organizations.

The staff sizes of responding organizations ranged from just one person, to over 600 persons at Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. This dramatic range in numbers led to an average staff size of 41 persons per organization, although the vast majority of organizations are much smaller, generally between one and four employees. One thing to note is that a larger staff size did not necessarily translate into higher expenditures on project work in the High Divide. For example, seven of the organizations with expenditures in excess of \$2 million dollars have staff sizes of less than ten employees.

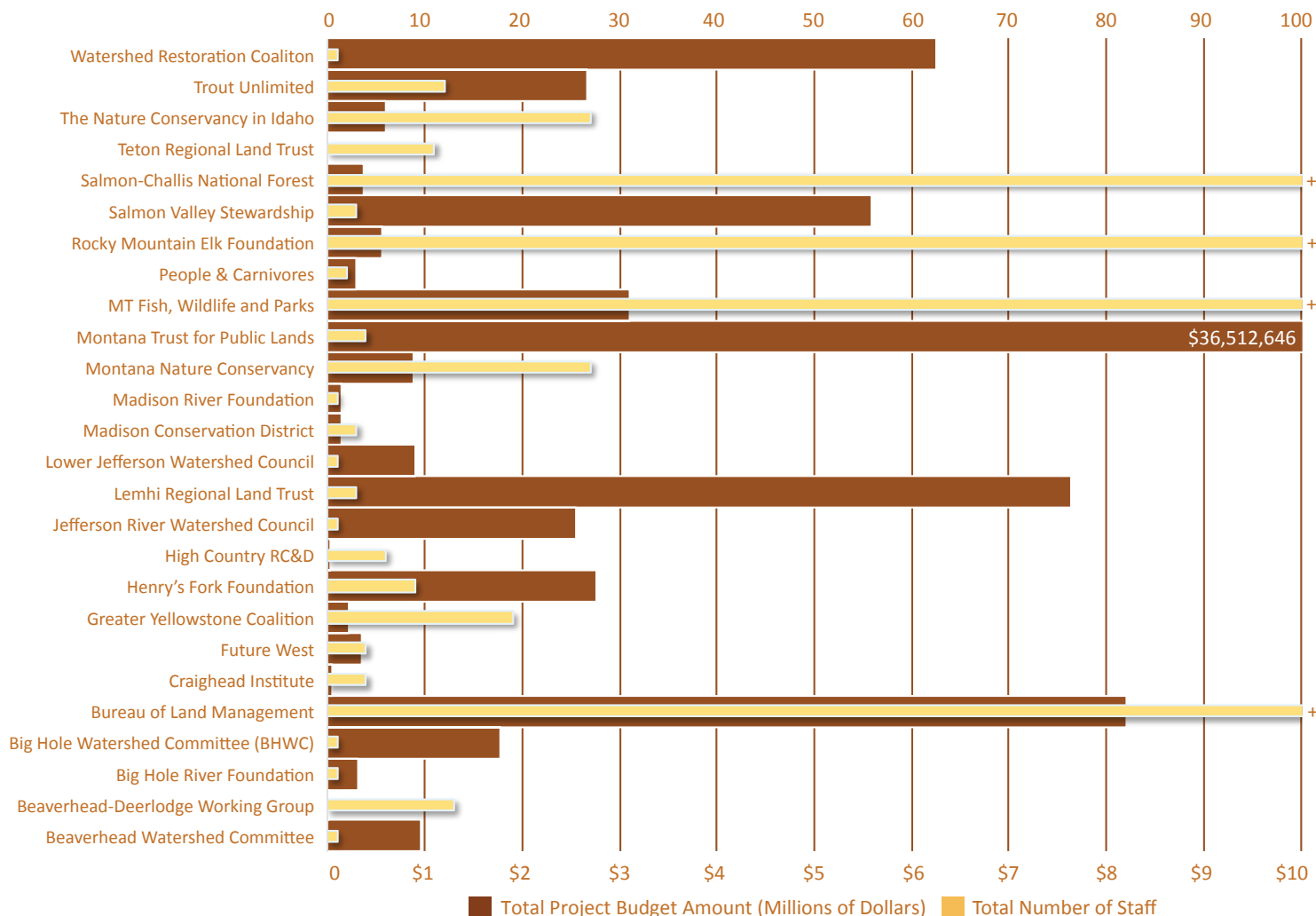
Survey participants identified 436 projects that they had completed or were in progress. The total cost of all the projects was \$110,577,783.*

** A single a mine reclamation project accounts for \$27,667,619 of this total.*

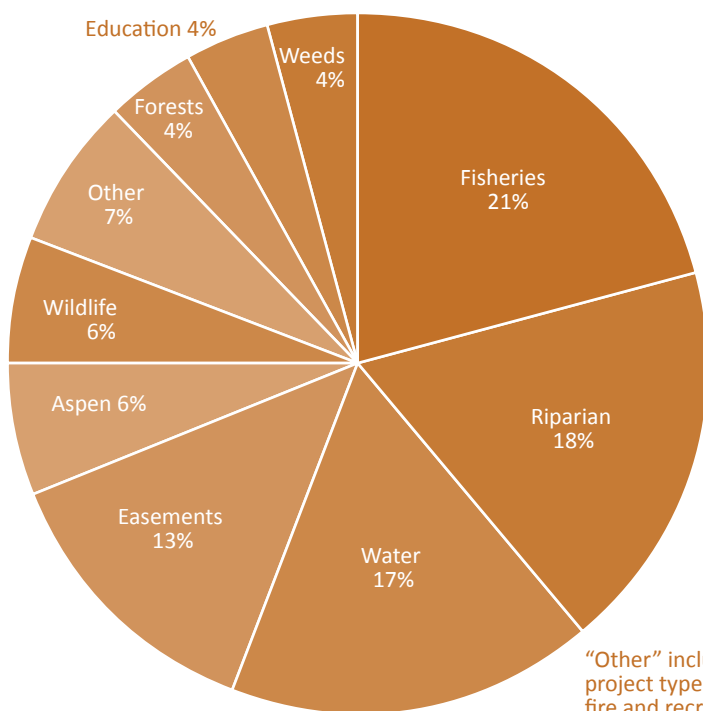
The results of this inventory are meant to provide participants, funders and other conservation organizations in the region with:

- A better understanding of where the organizations and projects fit in a regional context.
- Opportunities to network with organizations and practitioners in the region.
- Potential sources of financial and technical support for conservation efforts.
- Tips to overcome environmental, economic and policy challenges.
- Access to current information on the economic impacts of restoration activities.
- A greater appreciation of the significance of the region and the wide array of local conservation and restoration work being done.

HIGH DIVIDE PROJECT EXPENDITURES VS. NUMBER OF STAFF




HIGH DIVIDE PROJECTS BY PURPOSE



When looking at projects based upon the single word that best described their purpose, a majority of the projects focus on water resources. The top six types of projects by purpose were:

- Fisheries: 21.33%
- Riparian: 18.12%
- Water: 16.51%
- Easements: 12.84%
- Aspen: 6.19%
- Wildlife: 6.19%



A majority of the projects focus
on water resources.

photo by Jennifer Boyer

This emphasis on water related projects may come as a surprise in a landscape that many people associate with scenic views, elk and mountains, but for those who work there, it isn't. Water is the lifeblood of the ranching community, helping to grow the grass hay and alfalfa that ensures cattle herds make it through the winter. Water is also the essential ingredient for the blue ribbon trout fisheries of the Beaverhead, Big Hole, Henry's Fork, Madison and many lesser known streams and is critical to the Salmon and Lemhi Rivers which provide most of the country's inland habitat for anadromous salmon and steelhead. These same river and stream corridors also provide some of the most important wildlife habitats in the region.

Easements had the highest expenditures per projects; which makes sense as they are a real estate transaction and subject to market forces. Mine reclamation projects had the second highest expenditures per project type, but this figure was influenced by a single project (\$27,667,619) and thus was an anomaly compared to most of the types of work being done in the region. Fisheries projects had the third highest expenditures, which coincides with the fact that they were the most common project identified by survey participants.

BY THE NUMBERS: IDAHO TROUT UNLIMITED

Idaho Trout Unlimited's mission is conserving, and protecting Idaho's cold water fisheries and watersheds.

- 10 projects focusing on restoring and improving fisheries.
- Total project expenditures: \$2,663,000
- Average number of partners: 1.8
- Total match for projects: \$233,000
- Total volunteer hours: 1,365
- Local workforce earnings: \$458,000
- Average contractor earnings: \$70,667.00

photo by T. Reynolds



Funding was one of the main challenges that survey respondents faced.

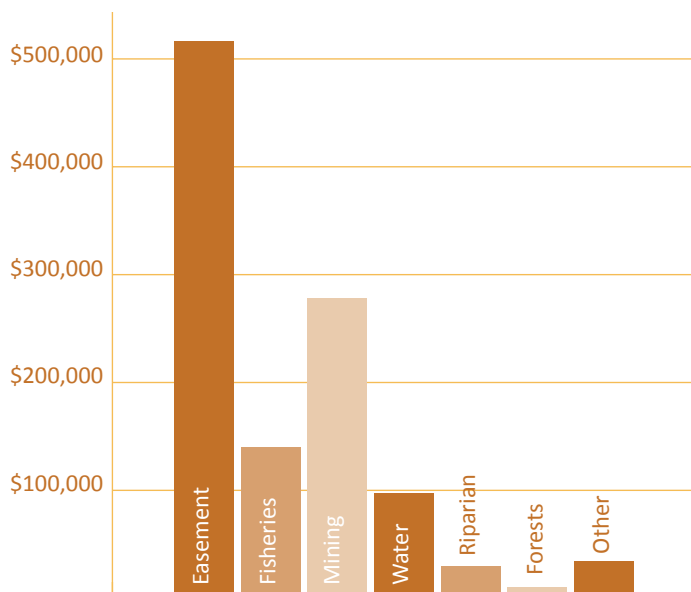
photo by Jack Ballard

The top project types by expenditure were:

■ Easements:	46.7%	\$51,634,509
■ Mining*:	22.65%	\$27,773,619
■ Fisheries:	12.7%	\$14,027,679
■ Water:	8.83%	\$9,760,856
■ Riparian:	2.67%	\$2,949,347
■ Forests:	0.95%	\$1,047,260

* A single a mine reclamation project accounts for \$27,667,619 of this total.

HIGH DIVIDE PROJECT EXPENDITURES BY PROJECT PURPOSE



CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS

With regards to capacity building, 18 of the 32 respondents identified one or more needs. In all, the respondents selected 76 categories of capacity building needs, many of which were similar in nature.

TOP SEVEN CAPACITY BUILDING NEEDS:

- Annual Summit
- Training in Collaboration Skills
- Fundraising
- Organizational Development
- Creation of a Formal Network
- Science & Collaborative Decision Making
- Training in Stewardship Contracting



photo by Monique DiGiorgio



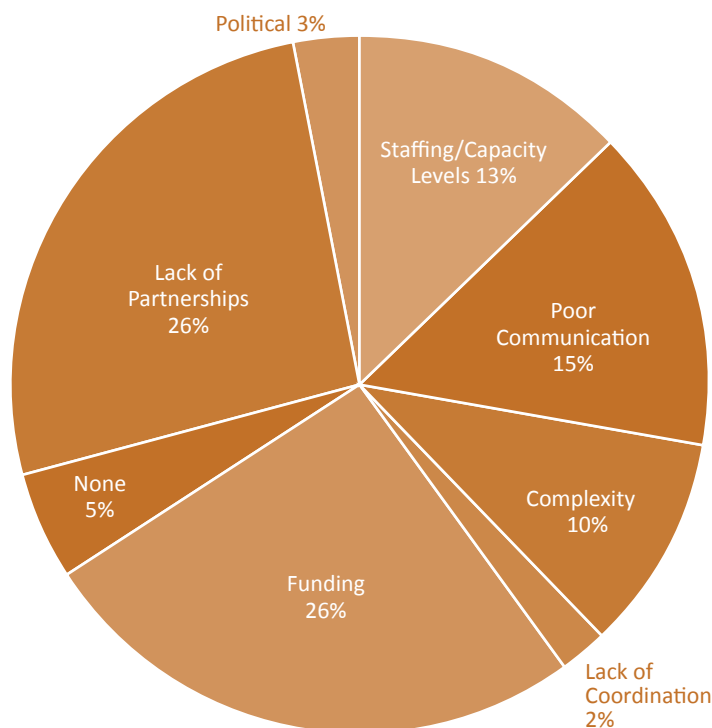
Strong and lasting community based organizations are critical to break through logjams and achieve real results.

photo by Jennifer Boyer

OBSTACLES TO HIGH DIVIDE PROJECT SUCCESS

Respondents to the survey identified a number of obstacles to the success of their various missions and projects. Not surprisingly funding was one of the main challenges, but of equal importance was the difficulty in creating partnerships. These were followed by issues related to poor communications and inadequate staffing levels.

OBSTACLES TO HIGH DIVIDE PROJECT SUCCESS



BY THE NUMBERS: LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUNDS

Since 1996, \$38,638,000 in Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars have been invested in the High Divide to secure public access, protect unique ecosystems of threatened and sensitive species, and increase management efficiency by consolidating public land ownership. These monies have been augmented by other federal and non-federal funds, and assistance from state agencies and conservation NGOs, particularly the land trust community. Since 2003, over \$128,639,000 in other federal investments have been made in High Divide land protection and restoration, for projects that include:

- Federal land exchanges to protect key habitats, White Bark pine, trails, and public access.
- Conserving vital working lands and protecting and restoring priority fish and wildlife habitats.
- Developing robust partnerships in wetland and riparian conservation and restoration.



photo by Monique DiGiorgio



Community based organizations often have limited budgets and staff, and are operating ‘on a shoe string.’

photo by Monique DiGiorgio

RECOMMENDATIONS

Strong and lasting community based organizations are critical to break through the hurdles that exist and to achieving results that are good for the environment, the economy and communities. There are many community based organizations across the High Divide that are providing local leadership and innovative solutions that work for their communities and the land. Unfortunately, these groups often have limited budgets and staff and are operating ‘on a shoe string’ in contrast to their regional and national peers. Several groups even cited their lack of capacity as the reason why they were unable to respond to this survey as quickly as they would have liked to.

Based upon the results of this survey and discussions with the staff of community based organizations in the region, the following are the highest priority needs identified to maintain and assist these organizations:

1. Investment in tailored organizational development and ‘back office’ training like accounting and bookkeeping to better prepare community based organizations to face the myriad of challenges in running an effective organization;
2. Solidifying a communication network across the High Divide to enhance peer-to-peer learning and mentorship, share best practices, and provide a venue for collective action (in communications and marketing, fundraising, conservation outcomes, and/or policy); and
3. Direct investment (small grants) to community based organization operations so that they have the financial stability to seek out additional investments.

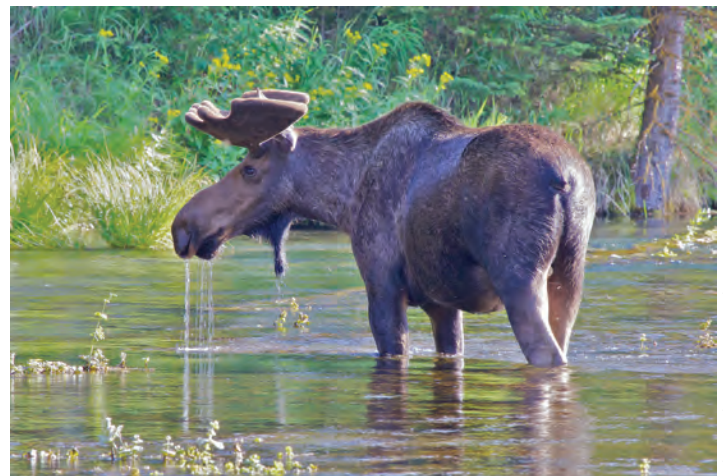


photo by Jean Bjerke

CONCLUSION

It is clear that the High Divide is a region of national conservation importance. It is also clear that across the High Divide, dedicated and hardworking people are achieving significant and lasting conservation and restoration work that benefits both their communities and the natural environment. But they are doing so in the face of many challenges, including limited funding, staff capacity and the reality that lasting results depend upon trusting and functional relationships, which take time to establish. Nonetheless, from an investment standpoint, it is these same people and their organizations who make conservation and restoration in the High Divide a “sure bet.” With this in mind, we hope that you will join us in assembling the resources necessary to build the capacity of these groups to be as successful as possible in achieving their ambitious goals.



photo by Mike Cline

The economic impact of local conservation efforts can be as significant as their environmental impact. Take the case of the extraordinary efforts of the Big Hole Watershed Committee. The mission of the Big Hole Watershed Committee is to seek understanding of/and agreement among individuals and groups with diverse viewpoints on water use and management in the world renowned Big Hole River watershed of southwest Montana. Besides being a blue ribbon trout fishery, the Big Hole also harbors rare fluvial arctic grayling and is an important source of water for large ranching operations and the City of Butte. The Watershed Committee has two paid staff members, a very active board, and many public and private project partners ranging from the Fish and Wildlife Service and Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks to the Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited and the surrounding County governments. According to their survey results, in just the past 7 years, they have completed 43 projects focusing on water, fisheries and education.

- Project expenditures have totaled:
\$1,779,877
- Average project budgets have been:
\$25,189
- Average number of partners: 3
- 24 projects (56%) had non-federal funding sources.
- Local funding accounted for 75% of funding in 18 of the total 43 projects.
- Workforce earnings accounted for 80% of expenditures in 23 of the total 43 projects.



photo by Jennifer Boyer



Salmon Valley Stewardship serves as the coordinator for the Lemhi County Forest Restoration Group, an organization with a diverse membership. Goals include making communities safer from the threat of wildfire and restoring forest resiliency.

In 2006, the group selected the Hughes Creek area of the Salmon-Challis National Forest's North Fork District as their first collaborative project. The purpose of the project was to reduce the density of forest vegetation and restore forest stand structure to more closely reflect historic conditions and to more effectively manage fire occurrence and the potential spread of fire.

Between 2008 and 2012, \$1,046,200 was expended on projects, which employed 250 private sector workers, more than half of which were from the local workforce and included 25 students. Ultimately, the project resulted in private sector earnings in Lemhi County totaling more than \$410,000.

To date the on the ground results of the project include:

- Hazardous Fuels Reduction: 1,275 acres of timber was harvested and 662 acres thinned.
- Weed Control: Private landowners engaged in a cost-share program to treat weeds.
- Stream Restoration: Approximately 1 mile of Hughes Creek was restored.
- Aspen Restoration: Crews inventoried aspen stands and removed competing conifers.



photo by Salmon Valley Stewardship

BY THE NUMBERS: SALMON VALLEY STEWARDSHIP

Salmon Valley Stewardship works to promote a sustainable economy and productive working landscapes in the Salmon River region of Central Idaho.

- 17 projects focusing on forests, range and fisheries
- Total project expenditures: \$164,850
- Average project budget: \$10,239
- Average number of partners: 2
- Total match for projects: \$19,920
- Average match: \$1,750
- Total volunteer hours: 1,112
- Local workforce earnings: \$28,529
- Average contractor earnings: \$4,625



The Montana Headwaters Abandoned Mine Reclamation Project is a coalition of public and private partners who are working to implement a landscape-scale abandoned mine reclamation initiative that restores degraded landscapes, improves water quality, addresses health and human safety issues, and creates jobs and a restoration economy for rural communities.

The partners include Barrick Gold Corporation, Jefferson and Madison County, Future West, the Craighead Institute, Trout Unlimited, state and federal agencies and many others. The partners came together around a unique opportunity to create local jobs and clean up Montana’s environment. Golden Sunlight Mine in Whitehall, Montana, is reprocessing third party ore from historic tailings, making it feasible to “re-mine” and reclaim tailings piles from abandoned mines. The re-mining results in gold ore, reclaimed landscapes, increased water quality—and it saves taxpayer dollars.

In 2013, the partnership conducted a comprehensive landscape scale analysis to prioritize 20 mine sites for reclamation and potential re-mining. The analysis identified significant opportunities for public-private partnerships in North Willow Creek area near Pony in Madison County, and in Alder Gulch near Virginia City, in Madison County.

Further investigation and discussion with partners have identified mine sites in the Willow Creek drainage around the town of Pony as a high priority for reclamation due to readiness of the projects and the environmental benefit. This partnership was recently awarded a \$50,000 grant from the Montana Department of Natural Resources to complete generalized site assessments in the Willow Creek drainage to determine which mine location(s) are feasible for the re-mining and reclamation.



photos by: Monique DiGiorgio



The Henry's Fork, located in the Henry's Fork Caldera of southeast Idaho, supports a world-renowned and economically important wild rainbow trout fishery. The success of this fishery is dependent on the ability of newly hatched, age "0" rainbow trout to survive their first winter. However, limited winter flow releases from the Island Park Reservoir and lack of access to tributaries that provide adequate winter habitat have negatively affected survival of young trout.

Collaboration among water users, government agencies and conservation groups has helped manage winter flow releases to benefit trout survival while also re-connecting fish passage to the Buffalo River. The spring-fed Buffalo River is the largest tributary of the Henry's Fork in the Caldera section of the watershed and plays an important role in the winter survival of age "0" rainbow trout. In 2006, the Henry's Fork Foundation and partners installed a 200 ft. fish ladder over a hydroelectric dam that had prohibited upstream fish passage since the 1930's. Since upstream fish passage between the two rivers has been restored, the Henry's Fork Foundation has observed over 30,000 rainbow trout migrate into the Buffalo River, with most of those being young-of-year. These fish migrate into the Buffalo River in search of over-wintering habitat that

is limited in the main Henry's Fork when flows from Island Park Reservoir decrease. Reconnection of this tributary, in addition to improved winter flow management, has increased the Henry's Fork rainbow trout population over the past decade.

This Buffalo River Fish Ladder was completed in the fall of 2005 as a result of successful collaboration between the Henry's Fork Foundation, Fremont Madison Irrigation District, Fall River Rural Electric Cooperative, the Caribou-Targhee National Forest, Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Northwest Power Services. Funding support was provided by the C. Walker Charitable Foundation, the National Forest Foundation, the Spruance II Foundation, private donations, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.



photos by the: Henry's Fork Foundation



photo by Jennifer Boyer

The Big Hole River is a prized gem in Montana, boasting a blue ribbon, wild trout fishery that is world famous. The river thrives due to widespread watershed stewardship by private and public land managers. While great progress has been made, the Big Hole is still at risk during drought years when flows are low and temperatures rise. This project took yet another conservation step forward and addressed flow and temperature concerns head on.

The project abandoned 2 1/2 miles of irrigation ditch along the Big Hole River. The abandonment allows more (3+ cfs) water to remain in the river on a daily basis. The Corder ditch is part of a larger ditch system that stretches for nearly 5 miles; however the lower portion is where the majority of the water losses occurred and what

water remained in the ditch reentered the Big Hole with a higher temperature. The geographic positioning of the ditch also contributed to its instability and the possibility of catastrophic sediment loads finding their way to the river. By abandoning this portion of the current ditch and replacing the existing irrigation infrastructure on two ranches with more efficient systems, water savings in the Big Hole River were likely realized and warm water returns to the river were eliminated.

The project was supported by the following partners:

- Big Hole Watershed Committee
- Future West
- Kalsta and Gainey Ranches
- MT Department of Environmental Quality
- MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

The project was initiated July 2011 and completed on July 31, 2013. The funding leveraged the private–public partnerships that have supported conservation in the watershed for decades. The funding support included: \$80,000 DEQ 319 funds and over \$278,700 matching cash and in-kind funds from private, state and federal partners.



photo by Jennifer Boyer



photo by Jean Bjerke

Katie Tackett
Beaverhead Watershed Committee
406 988 0191
k_tackett@bresnan.net
201 N. Parkview, Dillon, MT 59725

Mike Bias
Big Hole River Foundation
888 533 2473
bhrrf@bhrrf.org
Box 3894, Butte, MT 59702

Jen Titus
Big Hole Watershed Committee
406 370 7230
jtitus@bhwc.org
Box 21, Divide, MT 59727

Brent Brock
Craighead Research
406 585 8705
bbrock@craigheadinstitute.org
201 S. Wallace, Suite B2D,
Bozeman, MT 59715

Monique DiGiorgio
Future West
406 547 2974
monique@future-west.org
321 E. Main, PO Box 309,
Bozeman, MT 59771

Scott Christensen
Greater Yellowstone Coalition
406 586 1593
schristensen@greateryellowstone.org
215 S. Wallace, Bozeman, MT
59715

Michael Whitfield
Heart of the Rockies
208 354 2075
michael@heart-of-rockies.org
1790 East 2000 South, Driggs, ID
83422

Anne Marie Emery
Henry's Fork Foundation
208 652 3567
annie@henrysfork.org
Box 550, Ashton, ID 83420

Kim Ragotzkie
High Country Resource
Conservation &
Development
208 624 3200
rcdholdtheline@gmail.com
101 N. Bridge St., St. Anthony, ID
83445

Karen Rice
Idaho Bureau of Land
Management
208 524 7549
krice@blm.gov
1405 Hollipark Drive, Idaho Falls,
ID 83401

Ted Dodge
Jefferson River Watershed Council
406 491 4471
ted.dodge516@gmail.com
Box 585, Pony, MT 59747

Kristin Troy
Lemhi Regional Land Trust
208 940 1425
ktroy4@gmail.com
PO Box 871, Salmon, ID 83467

Bob Sims
Lower Jefferson Watershed Council
406 287 5117
sims@ixi.net
1554 N. Hwy 69, Boulder, MT
59632

Sunni Heikes-Knapton
Madison Conservation District
406 682 7289
mwc@3rivers.net
222 Main St., Suite 3B, Ennis, MT
59729

Richard Lessner
Madison River Foundation
406 682 3148
info@madisonriverfoundation.org
222 Main St., Suite 1H, Ennis, MT
59729

Emma Cayer
Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks
406 683 2675
ecayer@mt.gov
730 North Montana St., Dillon, MT
59725



photo by Jean Bjerke

Karen Dibari
National Forest Foundation
406 542 2805
kdibari@nationalforests.org
Building 27, Suite 3, Fort Missoula,
Missoula, MT 59804

Nathan Korb
Nature Conservancy
406 495 2261
nkorb@tnc.org
32 South Ewing St., Helena, MT
59601

Steve Primm
People and Carnivores
406 600 9481
sprimm25@gmail.com
PO Box 1483, Ennis, MT 59729

Laura Verhaeghe
Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
406 523 4500
lverhaeghe@rmef.org
PO Box 8249, Missoula, MT 59807

Bill Baer
Salmon Bureau of Land
Management
208 756 5419
wbaer@blm.gov
1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID
83467

Kyra Povirk
Salmon Bureau of Land
Management
208 756 5411
kpovirk@blm.gov
1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID
83467

Lucy Littlejohn
Salmon Bureau of Land
Management
208 756 5423
llittlejohn@blm.gov
1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID
83467

Gina Knudson
Salmon Valley Stewardship
208 756 1686
ginaknudson@salmonvalley.org
107 S. Center St., Salmon, ID 83467

Dan Garcia
Salmon-Challis National Forest
208 756 5237
dgarcia@fs.fed.us
1206 S. Challis St., Salmon, ID
83467

Russ Bacon
Salmon-Challis National Forest
208 865 2731
rmbacon@fs.fed.us
1206 S Challis St., Salmon, ID
83467

Chet Work
Teton Regional Land Trust
208 354 8939
chet@tetonlandtrust.org
Box 247, Driggs, ID 83422

Jordan Reeves
The Nature Conservancy
208 350 2204
jreeves@tnc.org
151 N. Ridge Ave. Suite 110, Idaho
Falls, ID 83402

Jerry Myers
Trout Unlimited-Upper Salmon
Project
208 394 2111
jmyers@tu.org
194 Indian Creek Rd., North Fork,
ID 83466

Deb Love
Trust for Public Lands
406 522 7450
deb.love@tpl.org
111 S. Grand, Suite 203, Bozeman,
MT 59715

Ted Dodge
Watershed Restoration Coalition
406 579 3762
ted.dodge516@gmail.com
1002 Hollenback Rd., Deerlodge,
MT 59722

HIGH DIVIDE PROJECT WORD CLOUD

Recreation
Restoration
Forests Aspen Range
Education Fire Sage
Plant Planning
Fisheries Weeds
Easement Wildlife
Mining Miscellaneous Grass
Riparian Floodplain
Water

This word cloud is a visual representation of the keywords that best describe the conservation focus of the projects identified by survey respondents. The larger the font size, the more common the word.

Compiled and published by Future West.



Communities that work. Communities that last.

To obtain additional copies of this report, please contact Future West at:

P.O. Box 1253, Bozeman, MT 59771

(406) 587-2974

www.future-west.org