



Protecting Montana's wildlife,
land, waters and hunting & fishing
heritage for future generations.

Sept. 9, 2016

Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission
1420 E. Sixth Ave.
P.O. Box 200701
Helena, MT 59620-0701

Dear Commissioners,

The Montana Wildlife Federation expresses its strong support for the proposed Specimen Creek addition to the Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area northwest of Helena. This is an excellent project that adds to the public estate, improves wildlife habitat for numerous game and non-game species and increases public hunting access and opportunity. MWF is appreciative of the work of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) to facilitate this important wildlife habitat project.

The Canyon Creek WMA offers excellent hunting for elk and other species. This project area of 729 acres is primarily coniferous forest that has historically been logged. It also contains some upland grassland that provides important forage for elk, deer and other wildlife species. It is habitat for numerous bird species, including mountain grouse but also non-game species of migratory birds and raptors. In addition, the property includes some important fisheries habitat, with several creeks that flow into Canyon Creek offering the potential to benefit native westslope cutthroat trout.

The donation of this property by RMEF will add to the amount of contiguous wildlife habitat in the area by bringing land previously owned by Stimson Lumber Co. into the public domain. It includes parcels on both sides of state Highway 279 and will greatly benefit public access into adjoining public lands, including U.S. National Forest lands and the Canyon Creek WMA. The addition of this 729 acres will expand the efforts in that area to conserve important wildlife habitat in perpetuity for the people of Montana.

The benefits of this project are numerous and the donation of the property is generous. This project illustrates why it is so important to maintain strong conservation programs like Habitat Montana so we can act when opportunities arise. Just as important, it shows that Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks needs the ability to accept donations of land when a landowner wants to make wildlife conservation part of his or her legacy. We wholeheartedly support this project to grow the Canyon Creek WMA and ensure future generations of Montanans ample hunting, fishing and wildlife watching opportunities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Dave". The letters are cursive and fluid, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dave Chadwick

Executive Director