



PO Box 7186 Missoula, MT 59807 (406) 543-0054

12 August 2015

Dr. David Lawrence, Director
Freshwater Fish Conservation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
1133 Fifteenth Street, Suite 1100
Washington, D.C., 20005

Dear Mr. Lawrence:

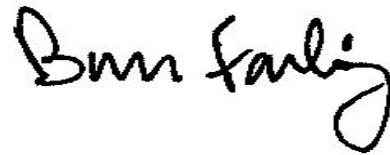
Montana Trout Unlimited strongly endorses Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks' proposal to construct a fish screen on Mulherin Creek, a key spawning tributary for native Yellowstone cutthroat trout in the Yellowstone River near Emigrant, Montana. We urge the foundation to give serious consideration to FWP's funding request to help implement the project. Montana TU represents 4,000 individual TU members, many who have an abiding conservation interest in native coldwater species and in particular those inhabiting the Yellowstone River. Our support for this project is in addition to that you have received from the Montana Water Project, an important conservation venture of our parent organization.

Montana Trout Unlimited has more than 25 years experience helping identify, design, fund or implement fish screen projects. This project is important because it is crucially located in a large tributary that provides spawning and rearing habitat for cutthroats, and also because it compliments a national TU negotiated project that conserves instream flows in Mulherin Creek. We have worked to put water back in the stream, and the fish screen will ensure that the fish benefitting from improved streamflows do not continue to be entrained in a large irrigation ditch. The project works for both fish and the local agricultural producers.

Montana TU is also familiar with the type of fish screen to be employed on Mulherin Creek. We have successfully helped fund or install Farmer's screens on tributaries of other well-known coldwater streams in Montana, including the Clark Fork River, Blackfoot River and Rock Creek, a nationally acclaimed blue-ribbon stream near Missoula. The projects have completely eliminated entrainment of native westslope cutthroat trout and threatened bull trout. This screen design is appropriate for the site. It also minimizes maintenance costs.

The Mulherin Creek fish screen project is a good investment of foundation resources. It will benefit an important native species in one of its most important strongholds, the Yellowstone River.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bruce Farling". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Bruce Farling
Executive Director