

Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program

FULL APPLICATION FOR CONSERVATION FUNDING

Instructions

This form is used in the second phase of the Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program's ("Program" or "LWWP") application process to request funding. **Only projects with approved Pre-Applications in the first phase should be presented using this form.**

Landowners are the Program's most important partners and are invited to submit proposals using the Pre-Application to initiate a possible project. **This Full Application for Conservation Funding may be prepared by the Landowner or by the entity or agency responsible for either owning/stewarding the land or property interests acquired with funding from the Program or for implementing the proposed activities for a non-acquisition project.** These entities (including Blaine County itself, in the instances where it is taking the lead on a project) are referred to in this document as the Applicants and will work closely with the Landowner to ensure that the Application is complete and accurate.

If the project proposes to acquire a conservation easement, the Applicant must be qualified as described in Idaho Code 55-2101, Idaho's conservation easement enabling legislation, or have a partner that is a qualified easement holder. For other types of projects, the Applicant must be qualified under the Program's guidelines. Refer to the Program Guide for additional information on the entities that qualify as Applicants.

Prior to beginning work on the Application, Applicants should carefully review the LWWP Program Guide and complete the Project Evaluation Checklist. These two documents explain how the Program operates and describe the characteristics of priority conservation projects. Keep those characteristics in mind as you complete the Application. Be sure to review the Six Minimum Requirements required for Levy funding, listed at the beginning of the Project Evaluation Checklist.

Please complete the Application in its entirety. Use additional pages as necessary to provide complete responses to each question. A fillable version, for optional use, is available on the website. Instructions for each section are provided in *italicized text*. In order for the Application to be processed and reviewed, every question must be answered and all required materials must accompany the form. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted for consideration.

If you have questions, call the LWWP Program Coordinator at (208) 788-5570 for assistance. When your application is ready, please submit it to: Blaine County Land, Water & Wildlife Program, 219 1st Avenue S., Ste. 208, Hailey, ID 83333. There are currently three application deadlines per year, posted on the website. **Applications, together with the required attachments (described in Section IV below), must be submitted on digital media, accompanied by twelve (12) complete paper versions.**

Note: When submitted to the County, this application will become a public document and all information contained in it may be viewed by any member of the public who may request to do so.

SECTION I - PROJECT BASICS

1. PROJECT TITLE: *Enter the title of the proposed project. This title will be used in all press releases, reports, and other public documents.*

Warm Springs Preserve Revegetation and Creek Restoration

2. APPLICANT(S): *Provide the name of the primary Applicant.*

Applicant #1 (primary): City of Ketchum

Address: 191 5th Street West, Ketchum ID, 83340

Applicant is: *(Check one)*

Unit of Government:

Private/Non-Profit Organization:

Landowner

Applicant #2 (secondary, easement holder):

Address:

Applicant is: *(Check one)*

Unit of Government:

Private/Non-Profit Organization:

Landowner (if applicable):

3. CONTACT PERSON: *The person the County's representative should call if there are questions or issues associated with the application.*

Name: Aly Swindley

Title: Administrative Assistant

Address: 191 5th Street West, Ketchum ID, 83340

Phone: 208-727-5081

Email: aswindley@ketchumidaho.org

SECTION II – PROJECT/PROPERTY INFORMATION

1. PROPERTY LOCATION: *Give a brief description of the property location including the address, or if there is no address, a succinct description that will identify the general area. Attach additional pages, if needed. The full, current legal description of the property proposed for conservation should be included as an attachment.*

Address/Description: The 'Warm Springs Preserve' consists of 65 acres within the greater 'Warm Springs Ranch' on the west side of Ketchum – aligning with the base of Bald Mountain, with the Warm Springs Creek running through it.

Blaine County Tax Parcel number(s):

RPK057800200A0

RPK05780080000

RPK05780020000

RPK05780070000

RPK05780060000

RPK05780050000

RPK05780030000

RPK05780040000

2. PROPERTY OVERVIEW: *Give a description of the property and primary terms of the proposed transaction or objectives of non-acquisition projects. There is a section later in the application to provide more complete and descriptive information about the project's strengths and property's characteristics.*

a. Number of acres proposed for conservation action: *How much land will the project protect or restore? If known, provide the acreages or approximate percentages of the land or habitat types present on the property.*

65 acres of Warm Springs Ranch will be conserved as a passive preserve, including 1.3 miles of creekfront of Warm Springs Creek, and 8 acres of floodplain habitat to be restored. The restoration and revegetation will impact 80% of the property (52 acres) and Warm Springs Creek that runs along the property and is key the riparian corridor health of the area and the Big Wood River fishery. The acquisition and restoration of this property presents a key opportunity for lasting conservation outcomes not only for the 65-acres, but beyond. As of April 14, 2022, the site itself was purchased by the City of Ketchum.

b. Existing Structures/Facilities: *Describe the buildings and other improvements on the property proposed for conservation and the plans for their future care, if the project is an acquisition of a property interest.* There are currently no structures or facilities on the property beyond the existing irrigation system. Per the Deed Restrictions and Option Agreement, the city intends to construct a simple Forest-Service style sanitation facility along with a modest maintenance building. The city will also create a welcome signage area to include a donor recognition wall, history of the property, and educational information about the habitat and ecosystem. If we are granted funds to support the restoration efforts, we would include the LWWP in the sign. Depending on the amount of funding there may be additional Naming Opportunities available as well. The City of Ketchum will manage all aspects of the property in future.

c. Current use: *Describe how the property is being used. What conservation management techniques are presently employed? Are there management plans or agreements in effect?* Currently the land is affectionately referred to as 'the Dog Park' and is used as a passive recreational area for the community. With the property recently acquired, the property is now preserved in perpetuity for the entire community.

The seller's Option Agreement specifically outlined that the property will exist as a passive preserve for public open space. Deed Restrictions and easement documents were put into place in the acquisition process. Thus, the multitudes of visitors and residents will continue to use the beloved open space for recreation.

While the property is already preserved as open space, no conservation management techniques are currently employed, and the property is in great need of restoration. The property has undergone years of degradation, reconstruction of the landscape for a golf course and other uses, and damage to the riparian corridor. Because of this, significant restoration and conservation management efforts are necessary for the preserve to be properly stewarded and to ensure lasting conservation outcomes.

The City of Ketchum is committed to the ongoing master plan process. We are honored to be working with the Wood River Land Trust as a partner in the planning process. With their demonstrated expertise and experience for conservation, we are grateful to have their support and participation.

The City of Ketchum is putting together the master plan team, but with previous review of the site, we have a concept for your consideration. The conservation efforts envisioned for the master plan and shown in this concept align with the LWWP's priorities. Pending public comment and approval, the activities outlined on the plan will start this fall (2022).

d. Zoning: *What is the current zoning on the property proposed for conservation or restoration?*

The current zoning designations for the property are T-Tourist and RU-Recreational Use. The zoning would have allowed for significant development including the following: Blocks 3 & 8 - each allowed one single-family home with an accessory dwelling unit. Blocks 4, 5, & 6 - allowed unlimited density within permitted zoning and development standards. Block 2 & 7 - open space that allowed access roads and infrastructure to support the development. Fire code allowed up to 200 units with one fire access road. The Deed Restrictions put into place through the acquisition process formally removed this development potential and the city will rezone the property to reflect the property as a preserve.

e. Original Parcel Determination: *Has one been completed? If so, when and what were the results?*

As part of the approvals for the Warm Springs Ranch Subdivision, a Large Block Plat was prepared and recorded in October 2021 for the property. The 65 acre property consists of 7 Blocks in the Large Block Plat (Lots 2-8).

f. Surrounding land uses: *How are the adjoining properties currently used and managed? Are the current uses of adjacent lands compatible with the conservation objectives of the project?*

There are private properties located along the north and west boundaries of the preserve (with the creek between the preserve and those properties along the north and south sides). The western border of the preserve is Forest Service and BLM land. For the full length of the creek up to, and beyond, the subdivision on Block 1, the preserve spans both sides of the creek. Along the boundary of Block 1 subdivision, the preserve property is on the south side of the creek and the north side of the creek is private property. However, as part of the subdivision approvals, an easement was recorded to allow the city access to restore the creek and riparian area in collaboration with the adjacent owners.

g. Public land or protected properties that adjoin or are within ¼ mile of the property: *List any lands owned, leased, or managed by the federal, state, or local governments or conservation organizations. Include brief description of known conservation easements.*

The US Forest Service owns parcel number RP04N170110030 which runs along most of the western boundary of the property. BLM owns parcel number RP04N170130000 along the southwest boundary of the property. There are also several public properties owned by the city:

- City of Ketchum (Atkinson Park)
- City of Ketchum, Bigwood River waterway (city owns river channel from 3rd Ave upstream to Northwood Way and Blue Grouse Lane)
- City of Ketchum, Warm Spring Creek waterway (city owns river channel from west end of Cimino upstream to 315 Skiway Drive))

h. Water features: *Provide the name (if any) and brief description of any lake, pond, conveyance, river or stream that is on the property or borders it, and lineal feet of frontage. (In the narrative section there is a place to describe un-named but important water bodies, wetlands, or springs.)*

Warm Springs Creek runs through the property. It is 23.8 miles long and originates at Dollarhide summit. It's a tributary of the Big Wood River. The creek is fed by snowmelt, other minor creeks feeding into it (South Fork of Warm Springs, Castle Creek, Red Warrior Creek, Thompson Creek) and geothermal springs along the river, hence the name Warm Springs Creek. The property includes a 1.3 mile stretch of Warm Springs Creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat.

3. PROJECT OVERVIEW

a. Ownership: *Unless you are proposing a purchase of land in fee title, does the landowner/applicant own all the property proposed for this project? If not, what are the plans and timeline for securing ownership?*

Yes, the City of Ketchum owns Warm Springs Preserve.

b. Conservation mechanism: *Summarize the conservation purposes of the project and the legal tool or land management technique that will be used to accomplish those objectives. If a conservation easement, will it be perpetual?*

The Warm Springs Ranch will be preserved in perpetuity as a passive preserve for the public. The deed restrictions are in place and now we seek to move forward with a more comprehensive master plan addressing the conservation and restoration goals.

The reach of Warm Springs Creek where the golf course and Warm Springs Ranch development existed has been severely altered over the years due to land use actions which have resulted in the creek functioning as a diversion canal. Essentially the creek has been altered and channelized so the water moves through this reach without impacting the golf course or previous ranch development. The river lost its natural floodway and floodplain resulting in little natural river function and poor habitat for fish and wildlife. The Warm Springs Preserve is the last opportunity to provide large-scale restoration to this section of Warm Springs Creek.

Most of the restoration opportunities are on the south side of Warm Springs Creek. Restoring floodplain connectivity on this parcel could also decrease flooding impacts on adjacent and downstream properties. Reducing the flooding impacts is not a primary goal of the restoration, but it will demonstrate that these restoration efforts can have secondary benefits to landowners as well.

The City of Ketchum has purchased this parcel and will oversee the restoration work and land management improvements. The city is working closely with the Wood River Land Trust during the master planning progress and looks forward to continuing that relationship into the implementation phase. Because the land has not been actively managed as a preserve previously, significant creek restoration, irrigation work, revegetation to restore the natural flood plain, and trail management is needed.

If approved, the LWWP grant would provide critical funding for the revegetation and restoration of Warm Springs Preserve, including addressing the following conservation goals:

- Protect water quality, rivers and streams, riparian corridors, flood plains, wetlands and water rights. (Providing restoration to Warm Springs Creek)*
- Protect and preserve wildlife, habitat, and transit and migration corridors. (Restoring over 52 acres to native vegetation and rebuild/improve trails to encourage use of certain areas of the property.)*

- *Preserve or enhance trail corridors. (Re-build/enhance existing trails on Warm Springs Preserve)*
- *Provide public access to water bodies in the Big and Little Wood River watersheds. (Permanent public access to the 65-acres of public land that is now the Warm Springs Preserve including a 1.3 acre stretch of Warm Springs Creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat.)*
- *Support public/private partnerships. (The City of Ketchum partnered with Spur Community Foundation and the community to acquire the property. Over 1000 donations made the acquisition possible. Additionally, the Wood River Land Trust serves as a partner on the project and donated \$500,000 toward the property's acquisition.)*
- *Conserve, restore, or maintain and otherwise provide for proper stewardship of lands and waters. (This project will include floodplain restoration, revegetation of native plants, and maintenance/stewardship of the property in perpetuity)*

The approved plan is anticipated to include:

1. Rehabilitate .5 miles of Warm Springs creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat will be restored. The majority of adjoining acreage will be restored by:

- *sloping and stabilizing the bank along the north boundary of the property to improve riparian habitat*
- *removing existing rip-rap along the south side of the creek*
- *maintaining and improving existing creek diversion above the pond*
- *building a new stream connection below the pond in order to improve circulation and pond water quality*
- *removing and regrading old and ineffective abutments*

2. Improve irrigation to decrease water use and restore flood plain by:

- *replacing the outdated irrigation system including piping and pump station*
- *expanding the pond to increase irrigation storage and reduce water usage*
- *restoring the floodplain and revegetating with riparian grasses and fescues*

3. Revegetate property with native species and improve trails to ensure land conservation by:

- *providing general clean up and removal of noxious weeds and non-native vegetation*
- *planting native vegetation and restoring and planting riparian vegetation*
- *designating improved river access points and trail maintenance to maintain vegetation from foot traffic*
- *rejuvenating the dog fairway area by aerating and reseeding grasses (this will be important as we encourage dog access in certain areas of the preserve)*

These improvements will help to restore the Warm Springs Preserve and the adjoining stretch of Warm Springs Creek to a more natural state, rehabilitate the riparian ecosystem on the 65 acres, improving fish and wildlife habitat which benefits the Big Wood River Fishery, decreasing water usage to allow more of the creek water to remain in the natural flow, and have a more natural floodplain.

This project will have a multitude of lasting conservation outcomes and will be a legacy for our community.

. There is a section later in the application to provide more complete and descriptive information about the project's strengths and property's characteristics.

c. Development rights to be reserved and/or subdivision contemplated: *If the project is not a fee title acquisition, are there specific development rights the applicant intends to reserve? If so, please describe them below.*

The project is a fee title acquisition by the City of Ketchum. There will be no subdivision of or development activities on the property. The City of Ketchum purchased the land and the Deed Restrictions are in place to ensure the property remains protected as a passive preserve.

i. Does the project include a division of land? If so, please provide a map and explain the circumstances.

No.

ii. Have you contacted Blaine County Land Use Department to discuss the division of land? Has Blaine County considered any subdivision, site plans or permit requests related to the proposed project? If yes, please explain.

Not Applicable.

d. For restoration projects: *How will you determine whether the project has met the goals? How will you know if/when the project results are stable (within the context of changing natural systems)? How will you measure success in terms of broader conservation values (performance standards)? Please be specific.*

There will be extensive monitoring and evaluating of the project during and after implementation.

i. What are the risks associated with the project?

Going through a master plan and community engagement may bring opinions beyond the conservation outcomes of the property. It will be important to find a balanced approach that ensures conservation and revegetation, but also provides certain areas for shorter grasses and off-leash dog access. The creek restoration will require appropriate review and permitting. We foresee this work being approved and would be happy to hold any grant in our restricted Warm Springs Preserve Trust account only to be used upon approval and permitting. We can designate grant funding with specified use for revegetation and creek restoration through the Warm Springs Preserve Trust account.

ii. What factors beyond the scope of the project may threaten its long-term success (e.g., changes in adjacent land use, changes in management, reduction of stream flows)?

There are no known factors that may threaten the long-term success. This property benefits from the public land connected to the south and west boundaries of the property. Another benefit is the 1888 water rights that will provide water for irrigation of the preserve. With this in mind, we view Warm Springs Preserve as a tremendous conservation opportunity with relatively few threats to the long-term success.

iii. What evidence do you have that this project will succeed, either from your own experience or that of others? Please attach relevant reports or studies, or links.

The city has successfully managed over a dozen community parks including natural areas that are protected. As a municipal government, the property benefits from a robust organizational structure and maintenance support. Additionally, having the Wood River Land Trust as a partner in these efforts brings the additional expertise and experience specific to conservation outcomes. They have not only been a demonstrated expert and leader in this area, but they have multiple conservation projects previously supported through LWWP.

We are confident that this conservation effort will be successful. There have been extensive studies measuring the effects of stream alterations due to land development on the Big Wood River and are applicable for Warm Springs Creek. Idaho Department of Fish and Game surveyed fish by habitat type and did a detailed literature review of the effects of stream alterations. Thurow (1990) found that habitats with cover components such as large woody debris or a healthy riparian zone trout densities (fish/100m) were eight to ten times higher compared to habitats with no cover or rip-rap. A total of 2,224 trout were observed in 37 sites of the Big Wood River, 71% of fish observed were associated with cover components. To show that stream alterations negatively affect trout populations not only in the Big Wood River; Irizarry (1969) found that out of 45 streams totaling 1,830 km, undisturbed compared to altered stream reaches had increased biomass of game fish from 1.5 to 112 times higher.

Alterations of rip-rap and fill material disconnecting the floodplain not only decrease habitat and fish productivity but also has negative hydrologic impacts. Williams and Krupin (1984) observed downstream bank cutting, erosion, and bank failure can occur following construction of rock investment such as rip-rap. These downstream bank failures caused by disconnection of the floodplain increase flooding impacts to downstream landowners.

More recent studies prove and build upon research from Thurow and others on the negative impacts associated with poor riparian habitat and development in the floodplain. Biota Research and Consulting Inc. (2015) observed that 52% of the Big Wood River is disconnected from its floodplain. Cardno (2020) provided aerial imagery of flood extents during high water years on the Big Wood River. Both studies analyzed the Big Wood River from the North Fork Big Wood River to Stanton Crossing and provided habitat recommendations for individual reaches of the river. The overall theme of recommendations were to reconnect the floodplain where there is no infrastructure to provide natural river processes to create diverse habitats to the greatest extent possible.

Thurow (1989) found that trout abundance is not evenly distributed and that higher abundance was observed in reaches below Warm Springs Creek. It's the Land Trust opinion that restoring this portion of Warm Springs Ranch will have a positive impact to trout of the Big Wood River.

e. Agreements: *Do the parties have in place any agreements, binding or not, such as letters of intent or contracts demonstrating commitment to do the project? If so, what are the general terms of each?*
The city purchased the property on April 14th, 2022 and the deed restrictions are in place. A MOU is also signed and in place with the Wood River Land Trust.

f. Estimated closing date: *If the County agrees to be one of the funders, when will all steps likely be completed and other funding secured for the proposed project?*

The City of Ketchum closed on the purchase of Warm Springs Preserve on April 14, 2022. Additionally, \$998,822.44 has been raised toward the restoration and revegetation work, including replacing the dated and wasteful irrigation system.

g. For restoration projects: *When do you want to begin on-the-ground work? Recognizing some projects can only be done during certain times of the year, when must you have approval in order to begin work when you want to?*

The City of Ketchum anticipates completing the draft master plan and public outreach this summer (2022). Once the plan is completed, the regulatory approvals will be processed through the oversight agencies and funding will be secured. Once all approvals and funding are in place, the restoration work will begin. We are seeking to raise the need funds at this time to ensure that work can begin when the plan is approved and permits are received.

The following schedule and phased implementation approach have been established by the city:

- **May 2022 – retain design team for Master Plan**
 - **Summer - Fall 2022**
 - o **Complete master plan**
 - o **Conduct public engagement opportunities**
 - **Winter 2022 to Spring 2023**
 - o **Prepare engineering and hydraulic studies and analysis required for permitting of Phase III improvements**
 - o **Prepare materials and apply for permits for Phase II improvements**
 - **Spring 2023 to Spring 2024**
 - o **Obtain all regulatory approvals for Phase III work**
 - **Implementation (funding dependent)**
 - o **Phase I: Fall 2022 – donor recognition elements (donor wall, signage, benches)**
 - o **Phase II: 2023 – public restroom/maintenance building, new irrigation system, and modest revegetation**
- Phase III: 2024-2025 – trail, flood/stream restoration**

4. OWNERSHIP STATUS *(Refer to the list of Required Application Attachments and Due Diligence requirements in Sections IV and V for additional information needed to supplement the responses to these questions):*

a. Current Owner(s): *What are the names and addresses of the owners of the property? Please provide a copy of the deed or other record that shows the names of the owner(s) of the property proposed for conservation. Note: this form must be signed by the owner or someone with legal authority to sign on the owner's behalf.*

City of Ketchum
P.O. Box 2315
191 5th St., West
Ketchum ID 83340

b. Encumbrances: *Describe all mortgages, liens and other encumbrances affecting the property. If the project proposes to use a conservation easement, have you contacted the mortgagors/lien holders about this project? Do you have a commitment letter that they will subordinate to an*

easement? *The commitment letter will be required prior to the LAB's considering your Full Application.*

No, please see title report.

c. Known title issues: *To the best of the knowledge of the landowner and Applicant, are there any disputes, encroachments, or other issues affecting the property? Has a title search been performed recently? If so, please provide a summary of any available reports.*

Please see title report.

d. Known environmental hazards issues: *To the best of the landowner or Applicant's knowledge, are there any issues with the environmental condition of the property? Has a records search or other investigation been conducted? If yes, please provide a summary of any available reports.* We are not aware of any environmental hazards beyond being in the flood plain and an avalanche zone. All plans for the property will keep those factors in mind.

e. Mineral rights: *Indicate whether or not the landowner owns the subsurface rights associated with the property. If the rights are owned by another person or entity explain, to the degree known, what that owner's plans are for exploiting the minerals. Describe the rights below.*

None

f. Water rights: *Describe the type of water rights associated with the property, the ownership status of the associated rights, priority date and any available delivery history to the best of landowner and Applicant's knowledge. Be sure to include whether the right has been decreed. (See the list of information required regarding water rights in Section IV – Required Application Attachments).*

The purchase included two water rights associated with the property:

37-212A: Irrigation right allowed to be used between April 15th and October 31. It's a surface water right (water pulled from the creek) and extremely valuable because of the amount of water that is allotted and the priority date of June 1888. This water right allows for the irrigation of the entire grassy area to be pulled from sources other than municipal water.

37-2621: Irrigation right allowed to be used between April 15th and October 31. It's also a surface water right (priority date is August 1959).

g. Do the property's conservation values depend on the continued delivery, application and beneficial use of the water rights? *For example, are there irrigated hay meadows that are important for wildlife?*

Our goal is to reduce the dependence on these water rights by revegetating most of the property. However, we envision the conservation values being supported by these senior water rights. The two water rights that will remain associated with the property allow for proper irrigation of the entire grassy area to be pulled from the surface water from the creek. This means irrigation will not require water to be pulled from municipal water and the water use should be reduced drastically through the revegetation and replacement of the dated and wasteful irrigation system.

The water rights support the successful restoration of the property, but should be a smaller factor in the success of this ecosystem once revegetation is completed.

h. Will any or all appurtenant water rights be tied to the project in perpetuity? *What legal instrument will be used? Please specify, as necessary.*

The water rights go with the property. There is no intention to sell or give up these water rights. The city is exploring the best way to ensure the water rights are attached to the property in perpetuity.

i. Use of water rights: *How will water rights be used in the project? Are any changes to existing water rights necessary for the proposed project?*

The two water rights allow for surface water rights which is how the property will be irrigated in the future. Our goal is to keep as much water as possible in the flow of the creek. No changes need to be made to the water rights for this proposed project.

j. Need for additional water rights: *Will any new water rights be required for the project? If yes, what type and amount? Have you initiated the process to try to acquire them?*

No, new water rights will not be required for the project.

k. TDR Certificate: *If this is a TDR project, please attach the TDR Certification. Who do you propose shall be the buyer of the TDRs?*

No

l. Permits/Approvals: *List any permits or approvals required in order to complete the project, and the status and estimated completion date of each application if not already received.*

The City of Ketchum will go through a master plan process and then the appropriate approval and permitting process, which primarily relate to the revegetation, irrigation replacement (Phase II improvements) and creek/riparian restoration (Phase III improvements). Depending on the scope of the landscape and irrigation improvements, a city floodplain development permit will be required for approval by the Planning and Zoning Commission. Phase III improvements will require regulatory approvals from Army Corps of Engineers, Idaho Department of Water Resources, FEMA (if there are alterations to the floodplain or floodway), and the Ketchum Planning and Zoning Commission. The schedule for approvals is outlined in 3g above.

As noted previously, we can hold any grant funds to be used contingent upon the permitting approval process. Our projected timeline is as follows:

Summer 2022 – conduct public engagement opportunities

Implement the Master Plan in phases (funding dependent)

Phase I: Fall 2022–donor recognition elements (donor wall, signage, benches)

Phase II: 2023–public restroom/maintenance building, new irrigation system, and modest revegetation

Phase III: 2023-2024–trail, flood/stream restoration (this may be able to occur in conjunction with Phase II)

5. SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONSERVATION VALUES: *Explain in a narrative form why the project should be a priority for funding and how the project will conserve important resources targeted by the Program. Describe how each of the property’s conservation characteristics will be protected or improved through the project and how the project will provide lasting conservation for the property’s existing or anticipated resource values. For non-acquisition projects, proponents will generally be required to actively maintain and monitor the project for three years. **Please limit the description to two pages.** Review the Project Evaluation Checklist and the Program Guide to the Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program prior to preparing this site description.*

6. CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY:

Would the opportunity presented in this application be forfeited if the project is not funded at this time? Please describe the nature and immediacy of the opportunity.

While the City of Ketchum successfully raised \$8M to acquire this property and has budgeted for annual maintenance, the revegetation and restoration efforts demand additional funding and can only occur if the funding is obtained. This is a one-time opportunity to preserve this land, restore Warm Springs Creek, and rehabilitate the surrounding riparian habitat.

The Warm Springs Ranch (WSR) is the last opportunity to provide large scale restoration to this section of Warm Springs Creek. Most of the restoration opportunities are on the south side of Warm Springs Creek. Without funding, this last restoration opportunity will be lost forever and the creek will continue to act as a canal conveying floodwaters rapidly to the Big Wood River and the community beyond.

7. FUTURE PROPERTY USE AND MANAGEMENT:

Describe how the property will be used and managed if the project is funded as requested. Be as specific as possible so that the County can evaluate whether the conservation values of the property will, in fact, achieve lasting protection if the project is completed. If development rights will be retained explain how they may affect the conserved areas.

The City of Ketchum is managing this property as a passive preserve for public use. As an entity that manages 17 parks and natural areas throughout the city, we have the infrastructure and have demonstrated our ability to manage open spaces. Additionally, our partnership with the Wood River Land Trust brings further expertise to our Warm Springs Preserve team to ensure the lasting conservation values of this property.

The deed restrictions and option agreements specify that development will never happen on the Warm Springs Preserve property. Both the deed restrictions and the Option Agreement specifically outline that the property will exist as a passive preserve for public open space. Deed Restrictions and easements were put into place in the acquisition process.

The property will be used in the following ways:

1. Passive park for open space in perpetuity
2. Off-leash dog access (recognizing that the master plan will likely encourage off-leash dog access in certain areas to support revegetation and restoration of the creek.
3. Informal activities (i.e., disc golf, dog walking)
4. Informal gatherings (i.e., picnics)
5. Public restroom
6. Restoration of Warm Springs Creek and its riparian zone and floodplain
7. Connector trail
8. New irrigation system to preserve water/reduce maintenance costs
9. Nordic ski trails in the winter

8. EASEMENT STEWARDSHIP CAPACITIES

***Please complete the Partner Evaluation Form** referenced in Section IV and attach it to this Application. It covers basic legal, organizational and financial information. For the project you are proposing, please answer:*

a. Easement Stewardship Capacities (Answer if project will create a conservation easement or other less-than-fee property interest):

What entity will hold the proposed easement, if different than the Applicant? Will the proposed transaction provide funds to ensure perpetual stewardship? Detail plans for monitoring and enforcement.

See attached large block plat that identifies the easements on the preserve property

There are three public access easements within ¼ mile of the preserve:

- 8-foot public access trail across the Schernthanner Property to get to the Heidelberg Hill Trail (see plat map)
- 10-foot public river access easement at the end of Broadway Blvd to reach Warm Springs Creek (see plat map for Creekbend Subdivision). This easement provides direct public access to the most southern end of the Preserve.
- 6-foot public river access easement at the end of Parkway Drive to reach the confluence of Bigwood River and Warm Springs Creek (see Parkway Drive Plat)

Along both sides of Warm Springs Creek and Bigwood River within ¼ mile of the Preserve, there is a 10-foot public access easement for fishing and walking.

b. Fee Title Ownership and Land Management Capacities (Answer if the project will transfer fee title):

What entity is proposed to own the property, if different than the Applicant? What is the proposed holder's experience and track record for owning and managing conservation lands? Provide information about the entity's financial and personnel capacities. How will the entity ensure lasting protection of the property?

N/A

c. Restoration and Rehabilitation Capacities (Answer if the project is primarily a restoration or other non-acquisition project).

What entity will be responsible for initial work proposed, if different than the Applicant? Will the same entity be responsible for ongoing monitoring and land management to ensure that the improvements are maintained? Provide information about that entity's capabilities and experience with comparable projects. Give specifics about long-term plans and the ability to fund monitoring and maintenance.

The City of Ketchum will be responsible for completing the work proposed and for ongoing management of the preserve.

The city is well-equipped to manage the Warm Springs Preserve. With a history of maintaining public parks, the city has partnered with Blaine County School District at Atkinson Park, manages the pump park, and previously accepted a donation of Farnlun Park (to remain a park in perpetuity).

The city is going through a master plan process through which exact project priorities and relevant partnerships will be determined.

9. PROGRAMMATIC VALUE: *Is the property associated with a larger conservation program or initiative? Provide the name of the program or initiative (if one exists) and describe its objectives. How does the proposed project fit into the program and contribute to the larger program's success? How does being part of the program maximize the public benefit for Blaine County residents?*

While this project is not formally associated with a larger conservation program, it absolutely relates to conservation efforts throughout the valley, both for habitat and ecosystem health and

specific riparian corridor health. We are partnering with the Wood River Land Trust to ensure that conservation efforts are complementing each other. We are always open to partnering with other organizations for shared goals. The property and Warm Springs Creek in particular can be part of long-term conservation goals for the entire county. From improving the Big Wood Fishery or keeping more water in the stream given the extreme droughts, this conservation project will positively impact Blaine County residents whether people enjoy the space as recreation or experience the "trickle down" positive impacts throughout the Big Wood watershed.

As demonstrated by the 1,000+ donations received throughout the acquisition campaign, our community wants to see this iconic piece of open space preserved. Throughout the campaign, we heard not just from community members seeking a passive park, but broad support for the conservation goals of the property.

10. AGREEMENT WITH COUNTY-REQUIRED PREDATOR CONTROL LANGUAGE. *For conservation easements, Blaine County requires the following: "Hunting, Trapping and Fishing: As landowner, the City of Ketchum reserves the right to hunt, fish and trap on the Property in compliance with state law, provided that trapping is consistent with the Conservation Values and preservation of habitat conditions. In addition, in controlling predatory and problem animals, the City of Ketchum shall comply with all applicable laws and use selective and humane control techniques, including, where practicable, non-lethal deterrents and management practices."*

a. *Will all signatories to the conservation easement agree to this language? Yes*

SECTION III – PROJECT FINANCES

The following information will allow the Program to assess the financial value presented by the proposed project. Securing maximum public benefit from the Levy funds is a high priority for the County. Accordingly, the Program is seeking as much leverage as possible from the transactions it supports.

Funding from the Program may be used only to pay for conservation of natural resources. Acquisition costs will be the responsibility of the landowner and Applicant, including, but not limited to appraisal, hazards assessment and title insurance. For non-acquisition projects such as restoration and habitat improvement projects, the Program will fund costs described in Attachment #4 of the Program Guide.

1. Estimated total value of the project.

i. For fee title or conservation easement acquisitions, please provide the fair market value of the rights to be acquired or extinguished through this project. Prior to disbursement of Program funds this value will have to be substantiated with an appraisal. The figure provided in this section should represent the anticipated appraised value of the conservation easement or other rights that would be conveyed if the proposed transaction is completed.

The property is currently owned by the City of Ketchum and is dedicated open space in perpetuity.

ii. For TDR projects, please provide the same information as above, as well as how the estimated value will be calculated if not through an appraisal.

Not applicable

iii. For non-acquisition projects, provide a budget that identifies the actual cost of the proposed work to be performed and what part(s) you are requesting Levy funds for. Provide a figure or a range, based on the best possible information. A detailed scope of work and other information will be required prior to closing; please see Sections IV and V below.

\$3,085,089.30 (Please see attached budget breakdown.)

2. Basis for Estimate: *Explain how the Applicant determined the total value provided above. Explain how the project may be impacted if the final appraisal, required as part of the Due Diligence phase, does not substantiate the estimate provided. (Be sure to attach documentation as required in Section IV):* We enclosed a budget for the proposed revegetation and restoration project based on an existing quote for the work. It does not include staff time for the project and depending on the final approved plan, this budget could fluctuate. However, we are specifically requesting that LWWP fund a portion of the revegetation and restoration work. The City of Ketchum will raise/provide (through donations) the first \$1M for the project and requests the remaining \$500,000 from LWWP. Any additional funds required will be raised by the City of Ketchum through philanthropic donations.

Note: *For acquisition projects, the County prefers that application packages include an opinion letter or initial appraisal from a qualified appraiser familiar with the market and the type of interests being acquired. However, it will accept and evaluate applications with data from similar transactions, together with an analysis from the Applicant. A full appraisal is required in the Due Diligence phase of the Land, Water and Wildlife Program's project selection process.*

3. Total dollar amount, and percentage of total project cost requested from Blaine County:

The total dollar amount requested from Blaine County is \$500,000. This amounts to 16% of the total estimated restoration and revegetation projects and 5% of the total project including the property acquisition cost.

4. Funding strategy: *Describe how the remainder of the funding for the project will be secured.*

Remaining funding for this project will be funded from additional grants as well as individual donations from community members. The entire purchase price of \$8M was already funded through more than 1000 donations. An additional \$998,822.44 has already been raised for the restoration and revegetation work. Your grant will help complete the funding required to ensure the revegetation and restoration can happen as soon as the plan is approved and permitted.

i. *What sources are anticipated?*

We anticipate working with individuals and foundations to fund the remaining costs of the restoration efforts and capital improvement projects related to the master plan. The City of Ketchum has approved a budget for ongoing maintenance. To date, over 1,000 donations have been made in support of Warm Springs Preserve which reflects very positive and broad community support.

ii. *Do you have the funds secured or in hand? Currently \$8,986,782 has been raised or committed for the project with over 1,000 donations. \$8M of these funds were used for the property acquisition on April 14th.. If not, when do you expect to know if you will receive them? If there is a date by which you must use the funds, what is it?*

iii. *Is the landowner providing matching funds through a partial donation or in-kind support? The landowner provided a donation of \$1M of value against the original purchase price of the property, which reduced the property acquisition price to \$8M.*

iv. *Please list any other non-cash match below, including volunteers, if applicable. A volunteer committee has led the fundraising efforts for the entire campaign. Beyond the campaign, the "Friends of Warm Springs Preserve" will be an advisory and engagement committee serving as community liaisons and ambassadors.*

Note: *Matching funds and/or bargain sales are strongly encouraged because Blaine County has very limited funds and multiple objectives for every dollar. Accordingly, projects that offer high leverage will be higher priorities and more likely to receive funding.*

5. Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA). *What is the status of the PSA?*

The Option Agreement was executed and the City of Ketchum closed on the 65-acre piece of land on April 14, 2022.

SECTION IV- REQUIRED APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

Items a-l MUST accompany the application. An application missing any of these items will be considered incomplete and returned. The date for delivery of Due Diligence items will be negotiated among the parties.

a. Site Location Map: On a Blaine County base map, clearly identify the location of the proposed acquisition. In the digital version of the application, provide a jpeg or pdf of the same map and location information.

b. Project Boundary Map: On a map of sufficiently large scale to see the property, identify the boundaries of the proposed project. Provide a digital version of this map. If reserved building sites are proposed, identify their locations and approximate size. Similarly, if the proposal contemplates excluding or subdividing land, please indicate. *Note: The County may require that reserved building sites be surveyed as part of Due Diligence.*

c. Legal description

d. Color Photos: Provide at least six (6) digital color photos (jpeg format) of the property proposed for acquisition. The photos should show important terrain, waterfront, man-made features, access roads, wetlands, unique characteristics, or other elements that make the property a good candidate for funding. Also include the most recent aerial photo available.

e. Project Evaluation Criteria Checklist: Complete the form by identifying the property's conservation characteristics on the Checklist. Sources of data or links to the data are provided in the Checklist.

f. Documentation related to value estimate: If an opinion letter or initial appraisal is part of the package, provide information about the appraiser's qualifications. If an estimate from the Applicant is being used, explain how the value estimate or range was developed. Provide as much information as possible about the data and analysis used. For non-acquisition projects, provide a draft scope of work and draft budget to substantiate the cost estimate.

g. Water Information: *If there are appurtenant water rights, provide a report from the Idaho Department of Water resources with the following information:*

- Water right number or permit number or license number (if not yet decreed)
- Owner
- Priority Date
- Source
- Diversion Rate (cfs)
- Point of Diversion (legal description)
- Place of Use "POU" (legal description and acreage)
- Purpose of Use
- Season of Use
- Any and all combined use limitations (acreage and volume)
- Conditions of approval, including any and all combined use limitations (acreage and volume)
- Ten years of delivery records as available (water master delivery records, pump records, water assessments, etc.)
- What is that actual place of use?

h. Partner Evaluation Form: *Please complete each time you request funding from the Program, if you have a Partner.*

i. Letter(s) from committed Partners *(if any).*

j. TDR projects: *Please provide copies of all TDR Certificates.*

k. Plans for restoration and other non-acquisition projects: *To the extent they currently exist, please provide engineering or other drawings, project budget, scope of work, timeline, maintenance plan, monitoring plan, and other information such as a re-vegetation plan required for the project. Also include a list of permits/approvals required and the status of each. Finals of all these materials, as well as Performance Guarantees with the County, will be required during the Due Diligence Phase, prior to the LAB's Final Review.*

l. Purchase and Sale Agreement (PSA): *For fee acquisitions, the PSA is required prior to LAB's consideration of the Full Application. For TDRs, the PSA is required prior to LAB's Final Review.*

Application Attachments cont'd:

The items listed below are considered to be Due Diligence investigations. However if they are available at the time the Application is submitted, please include them. Otherwise, provide a proposed schedule for their completion. See Section V, below, for a full list of Due Diligence investigations. Closing procedures can be found in the Program Guide.

m. Template Conservation Easement: *If a conservation easement is the proposed legal tool for this project, provide any standard easement language that the Applicant intends to use as the basis for the document created in association with the proposed transaction. Be sure to include any language that may be used to tie the water rights to the property. Any draft document already negotiated between the landowner, Applicant and/or easement holder (if that is a different entity) should also be included with the Application.*

n. A summary of the most recent title report.

o. A survey of the property.

p. A summary of any hazardous material evaluations.

SECTION V – DUE DILIGENCE INVESTIGATIONS NOTE

The actual list of Due Diligence requirements may vary from project to project. Landowners and Applicants should anticipate that most, if not all, of these items will be required for all projects involving an easement, TDR, transfer of fee title or other property interest. If the Full Application is given conceptual approval by the BCC, the County will work with the landowner and Applicant to decide on a schedule for delivery of these items.

- Title commitment for the subject property and resolution of any title issues.
- Final appraisal validating the anticipated value or range of values stated in the Application.
- Phase I Environmental hazard survey, or some equivalent and previously approved type of investigation, and resolution of any significant problems revealed.
- A Mineral Rights Statement.
- Evaluation of information on water rights and their ownership and status provided with the Application for Conservation Funding.
- The actual conservation easement (or other previously-approved legal instrument) with all of the terms as proposed in the Application. Needs to include language about the easement-holder and County responsibilities.
- A baseline documentation report, as customary for conservation easements, or a description of current property condition for other types of projects.
- A plan for managing the conserved or restored property
- Purchase agreement between the County and the Landowner and/or Partner.
- Grant agreement, if responsibilities have not been adequately covered in other documents.

For non-acquisition projects:

- Copies of all approved permits not previously submitted.
- A “build to” set of plans.
- Evidence of Performance Guarantees with Blaine County.
- Copies of Construction Agreements between applicant and contractors.
- Final budget and justification for the figures.
- A plan for monitoring and reporting to the County (length to be agreed upon), including who will do the monitoring and reporting, when you will submit reports to the County, and whether there is any government agency involvement.

Signatures and Certifications

I/we have prepared this application to the best of our ability and knowledge and request that Blaine County evaluate this request for funding based on the information contained herein. I/we understand the project selection process described in the Blaine County Land, Water and Wildlife Program Guide. I/we understand that a recommendation that this project move to the Due Diligence Phase is not a guarantee of funding. If any information or circumstance changes substantially the project may be subject to reconsideration or reapplication, as described in the Program Guide. Furthermore, I/we:

- Support this project as proposed
- Intend to complete the project if Blaine County authorizes funding
- Understand that the Levy Advisory Board (LAB) is a recommending body only
- Acknowledge that a recommendation from the LAB or the BCC that this project move to the Due Diligence Phase is not a guarantee of funding; nor is a LAB recommendation to the BCC for Final Review and Funding a guarantee of funding, and
- Have discussed the project and this application with our legal advisor, accountant and/or decision-maker(s) within our organization, as applicable and appropriate.

I am legally authorized to sign this application as a representative of the Applicant.

Applicant signature



Date

5/19/22

I am the landowner, or legally authorized to sign on his/her behalf.

Landowner or representative signature



Date

5/19/22

Warm Springs Preserve, a 65-acre parcel of open space nestled between Forest Service and BLM properties on Bald Mountain and Warm Springs Road is a legacy opportunity for our community. This area is a treasured part of the Wood River Valley – one that was recently acquired to protect permanently as a passive public space. We now have the important opportunity to enhance the conservation value of the property and Warm Springs Creek – something that will have lasting conservation impacts throughout the valley.

With the Spur Community Foundation as the custodian of funds, the City of Ketchum raised \$8 million to purchase the 65-acre parcel and an additional \$998,822.44 in additional funds for revegetation and restoration on the property, which includes a 1.3 mile stretch of Warm Springs Creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat.

The lower reach of Warm Springs Creek has been severely altered over the years due to land use actions which have resulted in the creek functioning as a diversion canal. The creek's function within this lower reach is to move water through the heavily developed areas along its banks and floodplain ultimately providing little natural river function and poor habitat for fish and wildlife (see Attachment I, Figure 1). The Warm Springs Preserve is the last opportunity to provide large-scale restoration to the lower section of Warm Springs Creek. Along with the purchase of the parcel, the City of Ketchum is partnering with the Wood River Land Trust to develop a project that will enhance stream and floodplain habitat to benefit fish and wildlife. Most of the restoration opportunities are on the south side of Warm Springs Creek opposite dense residential neighborhoods. Restoring floodplain connectivity on this parcel will also decrease flooding impacts on neighboring residents. Reducing the flooding impacts is not a primary goal of the restoration, but it will demonstrate that these restoration efforts can have secondary benefits to landowners as well.

The City of Ketchum will manage the parcel as a passive park and provide modest recreational amenities (bathroom, trails, and a small maintenance building). The City of Ketchum is partnering with the Wood River Land Trust because of its 26 years' experience with land and water restoration implementation. As the recipient of the 2021 National Land Trust Excellence Award from the Land Trust Alliance, the Wood River Land Trust is recognized as a leader within and beyond our valley. The Wood River Land Trust, the City of Ketchum, and the team hired for the master plan process will use past studies to determine the best restoration treatments that will involve naturalizing this altered system and enhancing the landscape with native riparian and floodplain plant species.

In addition to enhancing stream and floodplain habitat and modest recreational opportunities, the WSP Master Plan will include reducing its water use footprint by upgrading efficiencies for the irrigation system and incorporating native plants to reduce water needs. We see this as an opportunity to use excess water from irrigation efficiencies to increase instream flows in the Big Wood River. Opportunities like this should be a priority for enhancing the Big Wood River due to the increase in water use valley-wide and extreme drought conditions.

With support from LWWP, we will address the following conservation goals:

- Protect water quality, rivers and streams, riparian corridors, flood plains, wetlands and water rights.
 - Providing restoration to Lower Warm Springs Creek
- Protect and preserve wildlife, habitat, and transit and migration corridors.

- Restoring more of the 65-acres to native vegetation and rebuilding/improving trails to encourage use of certain areas of the property.
- Preserve or enhance trail corridors.
 - Rebuilding/enhancing existing trails on Warm Springs Preserve
- Provide public access to water bodies in the Big and Little Wood River watersheds.
 - Permanent public access to the 65-acres of public land that is now the Warm Springs Preserve including a 1.3 acre stretch of Warm Springs Creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat.
- Support public/private partnerships.
 - The City of Ketchum partnered with Spur Community Foundation and the community to acquire the property. Over 1,000 donations made the acquisition possible. Additionally, the Wood River Land Trust serves as a partner on the project and donated \$500,000 toward the property's acquisition.
- Conserve, restore, or maintain and otherwise provide for proper stewardship of lands and waters.
 - This project will include floodplain restoration, revegetation of native plants, and maintenance/stewardship of the property in perpetuity.

The scope of the restoration portion of the Master Plan is large and has the potential to enhance approximately 1.3 miles of Warm Springs Creek and 8 acres of floodplain habitat (see Attachment I, Figure 2). The floodplain enhancement will entail removal of fill necessary to achieve floodplain connectivity and enhancement prior to building the golf course. Stream restoration will investigate treatments that will increase cover and complex habitats by using large woody debris structures and treatments to allow for adequate sediment transport capacity. The total cost for design, permitting, and construction of the restoration components are currently an estimate until the Master Plan is approved. However, we have an estimate and LWWP's support will help ensure the identified revegetation and restoration efforts and immense habitat will be implemented.

The city is well equipped to manage the Warm Springs Preserve as it is committed to serving through public and has demonstrated its ability to manage public protected spaces. With the Wood River Land Trust as a partner, we will protect and restore the only significant undeveloped property in the city where the floodplain and native riparian corridor can be restored.

Warm Springs Preserve Project



Figure 1. 2019 aerial imagery of the lower reach of Warm Springs Creek. The WSP is the last opportunity to provide large-scale restoration efforts in the lower reach of Warm Springs Creek.



Figure 2. 2021 aerial imagery showing stream restoration opportunities on WSP. Restoration potential in enhancing 0.5 miles of the stream (blue) and 8 acres of floodplain habitat (red).