Blacktail Creek Corridor Trail Proposal
Small Restoration Project Grant

Prepared for the
Butte Natural Damage Resource Council
October 16, 2015

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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Butte, MT 59701

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PROJECT SUMMARY

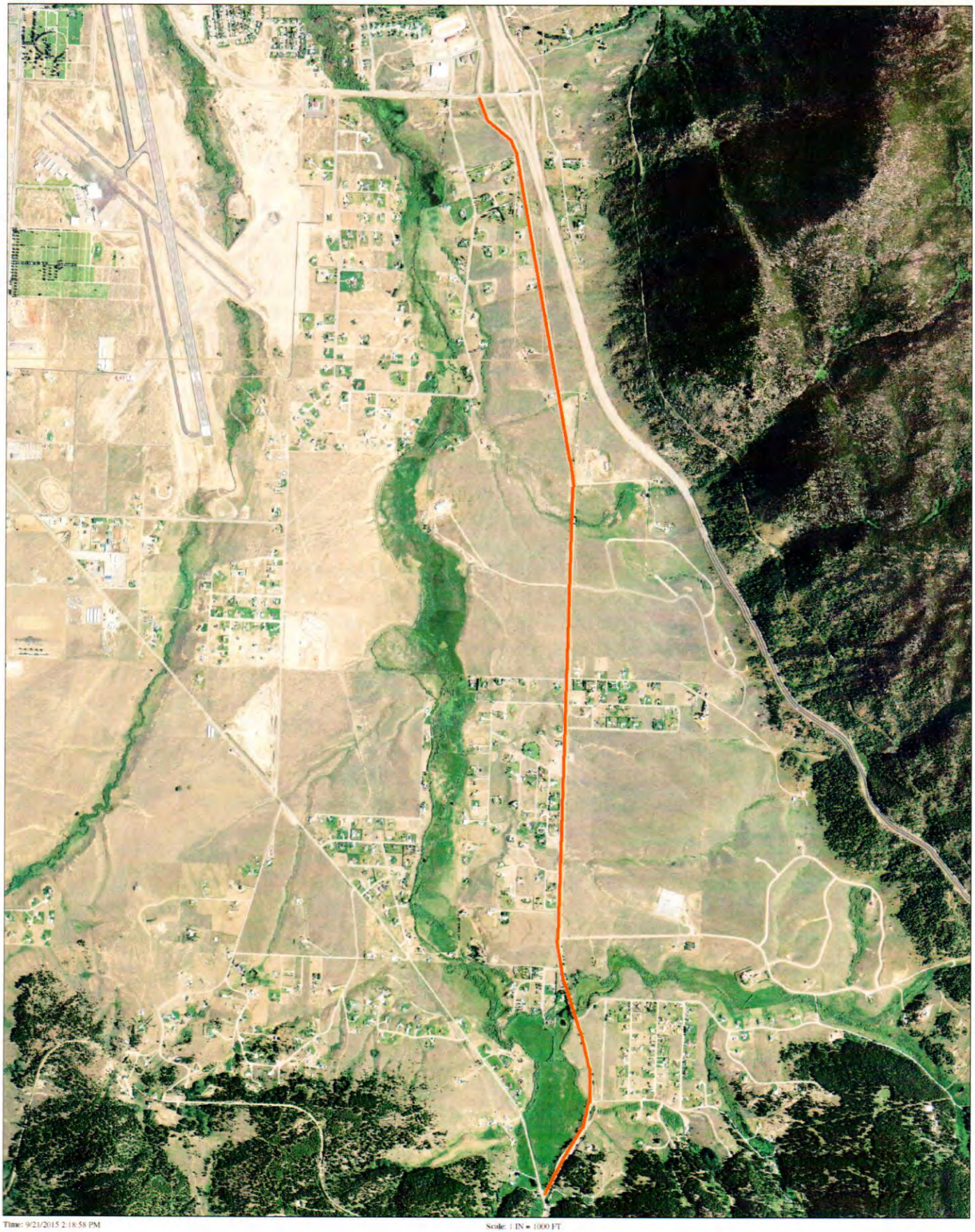
Phase I of this project proposes utilizing Butte Natural Resource Damage Council funds to acquire unimpaired lands and fund preliminary engineering assessments and construction estimates to construct a public trail that would provide access to the headwaters of Blacktail Creek, Thompson Park, and the Continental Divide Trail to replace recreation opportunities lost due to historic mining and smelting activities in Butte Area One. Based on local estimates, the amount of $30,000 is requested to fund the professional engineering of the trail. Information regarding construction costs, route, etc. from Phase I is a vital prerequisite to final construction of the trial planned in Phase II.

Although Butte Area One is the result of our community's proud mining history, the surface water contamination resultant of years of heavy metal mining and smelting has led to forfeiture of community centered recreational activities along historic Silver Bow Creek. Fortunately Butte Area One (BAO) lies juxtaposed to miles of accessible, uninjured riparian habitat at the headwaters of Blacktail Creek south of town. My vision for the community of Butte, and the driving force behind proposal to build a safe, sustainable, pedestrian friendly path that connects Butte Area One to the headwaters of Blacktail Creek in Thompson Park, a municipal park within the Beaverhead Deer Lodge National Forest.

A direct connection from Silver Bow Creek convergence with Blacktail Creek at Montana Street is an attraction and gateway to the splendor of Butte and Silver Bow County's unimpaired natural areas. A trail connection from the central city to Thompson Park would replace lost recreation opportunities once provided by Silver Bow Creek and offer Butte residents and visitors unparalleled access to National Forest and the Continental Divide Trail. Imagine a path of transformation, the development of a biking and walking route which transports locals and tourists from the slag wall canyon of historic Silver Bow to the lush, flourishing headwaters of Blacktail Creek. Dare yourself to access native forests through the riparian habitat of Blacktail Creek from our local, accessible national forest lands. Community members from all walks of life would embrace the ability to walk, roll, or pedal themselves through Butte's unimpaired natural resources. Such a trail would create, enhance, and replace public hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, native plant viewing, hiking, and biking opportunities lost to the community due to mining and smelting at Butte Area One.

BNRC Small Project grant funds would support an engineering assessment of a multi-use pedestrian path along Urban Route 1807 from reference post 5.78 to reference post 9.47

PROJECT MAP



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Scale: 1 IN = 1000 FT

PROJECT GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of Phase I is to identify the most successful route of access for the community of Butte from BAO to the headwaters of Blacktail Creek located in Thompson Park. Four planning alternatives to establish public access to the headwaters of Blacktail creek include:

1) No change: This plan would allow for public access along current routes. The Butte Silver Bow Parks and Recreation Department has pedestrian routes from Montana Street to Father Sheehan Park, and from Skyline Park to the intersection of Mount Highlands Drive and Continental Drive. No pedestrian connection exists between the intersection of Mount Highlands Drive and Thompson Park along Continental Drive. Access is limited to unsanctioned four-wheeler trails in the burrow pit or the narrow shoulder of Continental Drive with a speed limit of 60MPH. This route poses safety hazards for pedestrians and motorists.
2) Along the Blacktail Creek Corridor: This area has been analyzed by multiple engineering, design, and environmental groups for channel encroachment and erosion restoration to enhance riparian habitat, instream habitat, fish passage and water quality. A route through the Blacktail Creek Corridor would be constrained by flood plain geomorphology and anticipated restoration projects. (See Attachment 1, correspondence with Senior Ecologist Amy Chadwick of Great West Engineering, Inc.)
3) Within Continental Drive Right of Way: The burrow pit along the side of the Continental Drive would serve as a direct route from Mount Highlands Drive to Thompson Park. This route provides excellent direct access. Safety concerns for pedestrians, ADA compliance, and Butte Silver Bow liability issues are potential constraints for utilizing this route.
4) Procuring Access to Private Property (Acquisition and Easements): A route through private property along Continental Drive would ensure safe distance for pedestrian travel along a high speed road. This would provide a direct route from Mount Highlands Drive to Thompson Park. The process of dealing with multiple private property owners would be challenging, but Butte-Silver Bow could potentially assist with the process for land acquisition or easement establishment.

Determination of the ideal alternative route option or combination of above options will be a primary task of the contracted engineering firm hired with grant money, to fund Phase I, from the BNRC Small Project Grant Program.

PROJECT BENEFITS

Implementation of Phase I will lead to future enhanced access to Butte-area natural resources and the public's use and enjoyment of surface water resources located at within Thompson Park. The establishment of the trail corridor will replace lost recreation opportunities once provided by Silver Bow Creek at Butte Area One. The trail will provide the public with safe, pedestrian access to the headwaters of Blacktail Creek and miles of recreational trails in the Beaverhead Deer Lodge National Forest as well as the Continental Divide Trail.

Construction of a trail from the intersection at Mount Highlands Drive to Thompson Park along Continental Drive will establish a link from the broad trail system within Butte Silver Bow to trails in the Thompson Park municipal recreational area and meet a primary goal of the Butte-Silver Bow Parks and Planning Departments. In addition, Thompson Park's proximity to the Continental Divide Trails provides direct access of citizens and tourists of Butte Silver Bow. Access to these trails will increase public opportunities to enjoy our diverse environment in the form of hiking and biking.

Fishing opportunities exist along upper Blacktail Creek. Access to clean, thriving streams will replace lost fishing opportunities in Silver Bow Creek. This trail would also provide a connection from the stocked fishing ponds at Skyline Park to fresh water stream ecology and fishing resources.

Native flora and fauna grow naturally along the banks of upper Blacktail Creek. Connectivity from the restoration efforts in BAO to Thompson Park would allow the public to appreciate the natural beauty of the environment in the greater Silver Bow area, prior to anthropomorphic changes, such as mining degradation and surface water contamination.

Providing adequate modes of transportation to disabled persons to enjoy and recreate in the local environment is essential to healthy community growth and promotion community participation. An appropriately constructed ADA compliant trail will provide such opportunities for all community members.

See attachment 2: Letters of Support.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AND SCHEDULE:

A preliminary engineering assessment of a pedestrian route from Mount Highlands Drive to Thompson Park is the first objective to determine \trail installation feasibility. Ultimately, implementation will occur in three phases. The estimated time for project completion is approximately 2 years. Subsequent phases are contingent of completion of the prior phase, none of which can begin until a feasible route is identified, land is secured, and a design is developed.

A substantial amount of interdisciplinary coordination communication and interaction is required for project completion. Such a project cannot account for all independent variables, but potential obstacles have been identified and accounted for in the timeline. Unforeseen obstacles will be addressed by the appropriate entity as they arise.

Phase I: Trail Design and Engineering **6 Months**
Phase I will consist of a Request for Qualifications to select an engineering firm familiar with hiking and biking trail design. The successful applicant will assist with an alternatives analysis, recommendation and selection of an optimal route. The firm will then survey, identify areas of conflict, identify constraints and design the project to comply with the American Disabilities Act Universal Design[1].

Phase II: Land Acquisition and Trail Construction **6-18 Months**
Pending multi-disciplinary approval of trail designs in Phase I, the project will transition to trail construction. Bid documents, prepared by the consultant, will be utilized to solicit a contractor. The estimated costs will be utilized for applying for and securing additional funding through grants and private donations.

Trail construction will occur as part of this phase. In addition to BNRC small projects funds, additional sources of financial support (yet to be secured) include the U.S. Forest Service, Superfund Advisory and Redevelopment Trust Authority, NRDP Program, Federal Highway Administration Transportation Alternatives program, Fish, Wildlife and Parks Recreational Trails Program, and others.

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[1] Universal design is 'an approach to creating environments and products that are usable by all people to the greatest extent possible." **Designing Sidewalks and Trails for Access Part II or II: best Practices Design Guides**. Beneficial Designs, Inc. et al. September 2001

Phase III: Transfer of Trail to Butte Silver Bow **1 Month**
Phase III will involve the transfer of the completed trail to the Butte-Silver Bow Parks and Recreation Department. Trail maintenance and upkeep is vital to the sustainability of this project. The Butte Silver Bow Parks and Recreation Department will absorb this trail as part of the county wide trail system. Estimated match to the project is estimated at $10,000 per year for the 10 years, following trail completion. The estimated $100,000 from Butte Silver Bow is promised as a matching fund source for BNRC Small Project Grant funds. Pending design approval, the BSB Parks and Recreation department, in collaboration with the Department of Public Works, has agreed to donate signage and barriers as a supplemental matching fund donation.

MONITORING ACTIVIES

Project implementation will require coordination between the various agencies within the City and County of Butte-Silver Bow, the Montana Department of Transportation, private contractors, land owners, and local citizens (not excluding other governmental and non-governmental entities).

Project sponsor will monitor contractor progress, report project phase deliverables, and submit quarterly reports to the Butte Natural Resource Restoration Committee.

I am excited to bring this project to the Butte Natural Resource Damage Committee. I believe this project is another step forward toward replacing lost recreational opportunities in Butte and Silver-Bow County and promoting greater connectivity, enhanced access to unimpaired natural lands, and most importantly unimpaired surface waters within Butte-Silver Bow. Please see attachment 3: Residents and Stake Holder Contacted Appendix (see attachment 3).

BUDGET

U-1807 Trail Budget Proposal			Projected Cost
PHASE I **Planning Engineering Cost Estimate**	-	-	**$30,000**
PHASE II Construction Cost Estimate			$120,000
PHASE III Prolonged Maintenance	$10,000 per year	10 years (2017-2027)	($100,000)
Project Oversite & Coordination and Quarterly Report	200 hours per year at volunteer rate of $25/hour	3 years (2014-2017)	($15,000)
Potenial Grants and Donations		Various Entities (sources listed in grant)	($50,000)

*Gross estimates from local engineering firms: $90,000-$220,000

Total Project Cost	$150,000
Matching Funds	$115,000

Grant and Donation sources include, but are not limited to: State and Federal Multi-Modal pedestrian Grants, United States Forest Service, the Clark Fork Watershed Education Program, Superfund Advisory and Redevelopment Trust Authority, Local Businesses, Private Citizen Donations

Attachment 1: Correspondence with Senior Ecologist Amy Chadwick of Great West Engineering, Inc. (Firm contracted for stream ecology restoration and improvements of lower Blacktail Creek)

Amy Chadwick **achadwick@greatwesteng.com** Oct 14)

to me

Hi Jenny,

This email is in response to your inquiry about the feasibility of extending a trails system along Blacktail Creek through the Ninemile loop area. I have interviewed many of those landowners and have visited most of the properties adjacent to the stream. Much of that land is wet and sees occasional flooding. The properties are long and narrow, to fit many parcels along the stream, and I think getting agreement from all of those landowners would be very unlikely, and onerous to attempt. To add to the complexity of the problem, that area is within a detailed floodplain, and has a "zero rise" constraint, meaning that any activity that could raise the level of the 100-year flood may not be approved, and would have to go through an expensive modeling process to verify and potentially revise the floodplain map. The modeling process and analysis generally costs around $20,000, give or take. Given that a trail is a linear feature, and to some extent would act like a berm, I think the odds of getting a trail bed approved in that area are low anyway. It could be possible to build it upslope outside the 100-year floodplain, but that would put the trail closer to people's houses, and I doubt all would go for it. Numerous patches of wetlands exist in that stretch, some from sidehill seeps, so the trail would have to avoid those as well.

I would recommend putting the trail along Continental Drive, where there is already a user-created trail along the road and there is room in the road easement. Even if you have to get outside the easement you would probably have fewer private properties on which to gain easement, and the trail would not pose much new disturbance. Additionally, Continental Drive provides a straight shot to Thompson Park, so even if the route is further out, I doubt it would end up being much longer, at least in time.

Those are my thoughts – hope that's helpful.
Thanks!

Amy Chadwick
Sr. Ecologist
Great West Engineering, Inc.
Direct: 406-493-0312
cell: 406-250-4024
www.greatwesteng.com

Attachment 2: Letters of Support.

1) JP Gallagher- Butte Silver Bow Parks and Recreation Director
2) Julia Crain- Butte Silver Bow Planning Department
3) Paddy Stoy- Butte Idea Exchange
4) Susan Mackey- Butte Walk and Roll
5) Jeff Ebert- District Administrator of Butte, Montana Department of Transportation

Butte-Silver Bow
Parks&Recreation

J.P. Gallagher
126 W. Granite Street
Butte, MT 59701
(406) 497-6571

10/13/2015

To whom it may Concern:

This letter is designed to inform the committee of Butte Silver Bow Parks and Recreation department support of the Land Acquisition and Trail Development proposed by Jennifer Heglund on Continental Drive Urban Route 1807. The Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the current trail system in Butte Silver Bow County. The addition of this short trail will benefit all of our citizens and fits within the long range plan of having a connected trail system in Butte Silver Bow. We are in total support of Jennifer Heglund in her pursuit of funding for this new trail.

Sincerely,

J.P. Gallagher

J.P. Gallagher
Parks & Recreation Director

Butte-Silver Bow Planning Board

October 16, 2015

Natural Resource Damage Program
Butte Natural Resource Damage Restoration Council
Small Projects Program
65 E Broadway
Butte, MT 59701

RE: Project Proposal of Jenny Heglund

Dear Council Members,

Please accept this letter as Butte-Silver Bow Planning Department's support for Jenny Heglund's Butte Natural Resource Damage Restoration Council Small Project application.

Ms. Heglund's goal to connect Butte and its urban trails with Thompson Park and the Continental Divide from Mt. Highland Drive via Continental Drive assists Butte-Silver Bow in achieving its long-term endeavor to connect our urban trail systems with the native landscape surrounding the community via a trail to Thompson Park. In addition, the proposal leverages the Butte-Silver Bow and State of Montana Natural Resource Damage Program investments in Thompson Park which enhance quality of life for residents living in Butte. Furthermore, it supports local initiatives to promote tourism to and enjoyment within our natural landscape.

Butte-Silver Bow Planning Department pledges its support and its willingness to assist where necessary. We appreciate the proposal's balanced, phased approach to implementation. We look forward to the outcome of the engineering evaluation and analysis to determine a safe and accessible route for enjoyment of all user types.

We are excited about the opportunity to work with Ms. Heglund to implement this project and continue to enhance access to unimpaired native lands and continue to support development of access options for our community and its visitors.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Julia M. Crain

Julia M. Crain
Special Projects Planner
City and County of Butte-Silver Bow

Butte Idea Exchange
P.O. Box 137
Butte, MT 59701

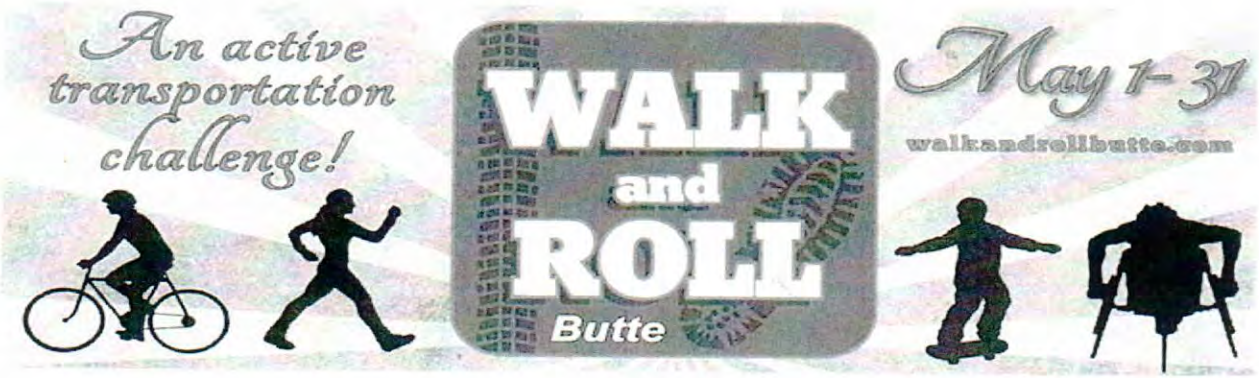
10/14/2015

To whom it may Concern:

This letter is designed to inform the committee of the Butte Idea Exchange's support of the Land Acquisition and Trail Development proposed by Jennifer Heglund on Continental Drive Urban Route 1807. The Butte Idea Exchange is a local non-profit that strives to act as a catalyst for change in our community. We wish to make our town a more attractive destination for young professionals through developing and directing projects to improve the quality of life in Butte and Southwest Montana. The addition of this trail fits within the community's long range plan of having a trail system that connects our world class mountain bike trails with an in-town bike route system and will be a great asset to BIE's objective of recruitment and retention of young professionals. We whole heartedly throw our support behind Jennifer Heglund in her pursuit of funding for this new trail.

Sincerely,

Padraic Stoy
Butte Idea Exchange Board Member



Walk and Roll Butte
2027 Garrison Ave.
Butte, MT 59701

October 15, 2015

To whom it may concern;

We support the proposed trail system from the intersection of Continental and Mount Highlands Drive to Highway 2 (U-1807) for access to Thompson Park Recreational Area. This addition to the trail system is greatly needed. The proposed trail allows safe, vital connectivity to Thompson Park. Currently the only 2 routes have no shoulder with increased speed rates. The Continental road has become a cycling/walking corridor as people often choose active transportation to travel to Thompson Park Trails and beyond. This proposed trail system would offer a healthy, practical, and protected option for travel to Thompson Park.

Bicyclists and hikers accessing The Continental Divide Trail could use the safe, proposed trail connection to guide them to and from town. The local community as well as tourists benefit. For the health of our county and added tourism features, this makes sense. As active travel vacations increase the trail system adds to the ease of mountain biking or hiking the Continental Divide with a convenient, innocuous route from Butte that makes economic sense. The proposed trail system is a practical, affordable answer to maximize recreational opportunities for Butte Silver-Bow residents and an attractive tourist feature.

Please consider our endorsement for funding this essential trail connection to Thompson Park. As advocates of walking and biking this is a necessary step to further the recreational and tourism opportunities of Butte Silver-Bow.

Most Sincerely,

Susan Mackey
Walk and Roll Butte Organizer
Promoting active transportation in Butte-Silver Bow

Montana Department of Transportation
Butte District Office

3751 Wynne Avenue

Michael T. Tooley, Dire
Steve Bullock, Gove

October 16, 2015

Butte Natural Resource Damage Restoration Council
BNRC Small Project Grant Committee
65 East Broadway 5th Floor
Butte, MT 59701

Subject: Land Acquisition and Trail Development on Continental Drive

The Montana Department of Transportation is providing this letter of support for the Land Acquisition and Trail Development proposed by Jennifer Heglund on Continental Drive (Urban Route 1807) in Butte.

The addition of this short trail will benefit all of our citizens and fits within the long range plan of having a connected trail system in Butte Silver Bow. This trail will provide a safe option for moving pedestrian and cyclists through this corridor.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of our support of Jennifer's application for trail funding.

Jeffrey M. Ebert, P.E.
Butte District Administrator

Phone: (406) 494-9600
Toll-free: (800) 261-6909

TTY: (800) 335-7592
Web Page: www.mdt.mt.gov

Attachment 3

Residents and Stake Holders Contact Appendix	
Amy Chadwick, Great West Engineering Inc.	(406)493-0312
Bill Hollow, Hollow Contracting	(406)490-3644
Bob Everly, Every and Associates	(406) 782-1738
Cassie Wick, Montana Independent Living Project	(406)581-7323
Chris Hafer H&H Contracting Inc.	(406)490-4418
Dave Shultz P.E., Director of Public Works Butte Silver Bow	(406)497-6515
Dori Skrukrud, Butte Silver Bow Community Development	(406)497-6469
Elizabeth Erickson Water and Environmental Technologies	(406)782-5200
George Freeze, Gilman Construction	(406)490-9438
Jeff Ebert District Administrator-Butte Montana Department of Transportation	(406)494-9625
Jeremy Sally, Dowl Engineering	(406)723-8213
Joe Walsh, Montana Department of Transportation Butte Division	(406)494-9622
Joslin Dodge Recreation Forester for Butte, Jefferson and Pintler Distrcit	(406)494-0246
JP Gallagher Butte Silver Bow Parks and Recreation Director	(406)497-6571
Julia Crain, Butte Silver Bow Planning Department	(406)497-6255
Kevin Heglund, Northwestern Energy	(406)490-3034
Kim Snodgrass, Water and Environmental Technologies	(406)782-5200
Laurie Casey, Butte Silver Bow Planning Department	(406)497-6255
Leonard Hunter, Hunter Brothers Construction	(406)491-2497
Matt Moore, Metro Ops Butte Silver Bow	(406)497-6475
Mike Borduin, Pioneer Technical Services, INC	(406)782-5177
Paddy Stoy, Butte Idea Exchange	(509)570-6571
Pat Cunneen, Butte Natural Resource Damage Program	(406)533-6882
Susan Mackey, Butte Walk and Roll	(406)490-7944
Ted Dodge, Watershed Restoration Council	(406)579-3762