

Henry's Fork Watershed Council Field Tour – August 21, 2007

The Watershed Council field tour was held on August 21 and began with community building at the Henry's Fork Foundation conference room in Ashton. During community building Adrienne Keller from the Forest Service commented about recent bear activity in Island Park. Adrienne said that since more people are moving into the area, human and wildlife coexistence will require educating people on how to avoid problems. Three bears were removed from the ecosystem - a sow and two cubs. The cubs are now separated from the sow since they could not be placed together. If accommodations cannot be found for the cubs, they will have to be euthanized.

Kyle Babbit invited Council members to attend a Sheridan Creek tour on August 22 sponsored by Harriman State Park. The Council was instrumental in the Sheridan Creek project and initiated much of the work that was done nearly 10 years ago through a subcommittee of the Council. The tour will highlight some of this work and participants will have an opportunity to see how these enhancements have improved the stream.

After community building the group arranged car pools and drove west of Ashton to a location near the Ora Bridge. Peter Young from Outback Realty talked to the group during the Watershed Council field tour held on August 21. Peter spoke



about trends in the real estate market and about some of the property within the river corridor that is or has been for sale. According to Peter, land values in this area range from \$15,000 - \$17,000 per acre for river frontage but land values vary according to location, proximity to the river and scenic vistas.

The next stop on the tour was the farm of John and Sheila Nedrow. The Nedrows placed some of their land under a conservation easement with the Teton Regional Land Trust. A conservation easement is one alternative for farmers, one that allows them to continue to own and farm the land while also

providing options such as setting aside limited future home sites. Matt Lucia from the Teton Regional Land Trust explained the different options available through an easement, as well as how easements protect the resources of the land and maintain wildlife habitat, migration corridors, and scenic open spaces.



The Council also visited a parcel of land purchased by Stephen Loosli of Chester. Mr. Loosli anticipates developing the property, and discussed his tentative plans with the Council. Loosli underscored the benefits of developing this particular parcel of land, among them water conservation (compared to irrigated agriculture on this relative unproductive soil) and the fact that this is a plot of ground already adjacent to other developments.



The tour ended with a stop at the Chester Dam where Jim DeRito from the Henry's Fork Foundation updated Council members on the FERC licensing process at that facility.

The Henry's Fork Foundation and several agencies and organizations have been working with the project license

applicant and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to help develop protection, mitigation, and enhancement measures for the river and its fishery. Most of the emphasis of the reviewing parties has been on fish passage issues; screening canals, screening turbine intakes, and ensuring that adequate downstream and upstream passage opportunities are provided to the river's wild trout.

