

# Bull River shorelines getting new look

by Brita Olson

Shoreline areas along the Bull River are getting a makeover.

A multi-year grant from Montana's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will allow the Green Mountain Conservation District to work with local landowners to plant native trees and shrubs in riparian (riverfront) areas along the river. This effort will strengthen the river's banks and restore healthy stream conditions for fish and wildlife.

Over many years, native trees and shrubs along the Bull River have been lost to land clearing. Remaining areas have succumbed to a takeover by non-native grass species, most notably reed canarygrass. Able to form solid cover over many acres, reed canarygrass has thrived, but its shallow root systems have reduced bank stability along the Bull River, which in turn has affected the river's water quality and habitat for fish and wildlife.

The goal of the Conservation District's project is to restore riparian areas along the river by planting native tree and shrub species that will stabilize soils and, through time, return riverbanks to a natural riparian forest.

In June 2015, on-the-ground implementation began on seven properties on the Bull River. A total of 8,860 feet of 15-foot wide heavy weed barrier fabric (over an acre) was laid down over reed canarygrass. These areas were also fenced to protect future plantings from wildlife browse while they are given a chance to establish.

After allowing for at least one year for the reed



Courtesy photo by Brita Olson

SHORELINE OF THE BULL RIVER in northwest Sanders County are getting a makeover as revegetation project takes aim at bank stabilization.

canarygrass to die and decompose underneath the fabric, these enclosures will be planted with a variety of native trees and shrubs. Once the plantings are adequately protected with weed fabric and fencing, rapid tree and shrub growth is expected. Past plantings in the area have exhibited growth of about 12 inches in the first year

with plant survivorship at nearly 95 percent. Cover is expected to double each year. Continuing monitoring and maintenance of each site will be an integral part of this long-term project.

The Conservation District is in the process of working with Bull River landowners to add more sites and expand the

project by another 7,000 square yards of re-vegetated area this year.

*Olson is the watershed coordinator for the Lower Clark Fork Watershed Group, based in Trout Creek, which serves as an umbrella organization for eight watershed councils engaged in protecting the water resources of the lower Clark Fork River.*

HAVE A HEART!!

## Furr Ball Valentine Party

\$20 includes drink, hors d'oeuvres, dancing, entertainment

Saturday, February 6

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The Naughty Pine - Trout Creek

Scrumptious Valentine Buffet by Chef Mark O Available

Entertainment



Dancing

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Proceeds benefit the Furrries at TRACS

## Dept. of Revenue seeks trainers for liquor education program

The Montana Department of Revenue is encouraging people to apply to the department's liquor education program as volunteer trainers. The volunteers work in Let's Control It, the agency's training program for responsible alcohol sales and service. They train Montana liquor license holders about the state's requirements for selling

and serving alcohol.

"We count on our volunteers to conduct these important trainings and we really appreciate their efforts and the time they invest," said director Mike Kadas, Montana Department of Revenue.

The department is accepting applications and supplemental questions until March 31. You can find the application, supplemental questions and the trainer requirements at AlcoholServerTraining.mt.gov. You can also call (406) 444-4307 to request application materials by mail. Send your completed materials to Department of

Revenue, Liquor Control Division, Education Unit, P.O. Box 1712, Helena, MT 59624. Or, email to AlcoholServerTraining@mt.gov or fax to (406) 444-0718.

"Our agency works to make sure liquor licensees have the knowledge and skills they need to ensure public health and safety and to comply with the law," said Lisa Scates, alcohol education coordinator for the department's Liquor Control Division.

For more information, contact Lisa Scates at (406) 444-4307 or LiScates@mt.gov

## Heron bridge update given

County Commissioner Tony Cox offered the following update on the construction of the new Heron Bridge that began late last year.

Dick Anderson Construction, Inc. and their subs have continued to mobilize equipment and materials to the project.

Construction of the north work bridge is complete and the drilled shafts for the north abutment have been placed.

Anticipated work for February includes installation of the permanent drilled shafts at the north river pier; construction of the cap on the north abutment and continuing the installation of the south side work bridge.

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Tues., Feb. 9  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Lake County CDC  
407 Main St. - Ronan

Wed., Feb. 10  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
State Building  
2405 Tradewinds Way  
Thompson Falls, MT

Thurs., Feb. 11  
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Mineral County Chamber  
102 River Street  
Superior, MT

Fri., Feb. 12  
Lincoln County Campus  
225 Commerce Way  
Libby, MT