

Livingston Enterprise

March 19, 2010

Fleshman Creek project gets \$98,000

By Enterprise Staff

The Fleshman Creek Urban Restoration Project got a major funding boost when it was recently awarded \$98,100 from the Future Fisheries Improvement Program managed by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

The program's citizens' review panel recommended the grant, and the FWP Commission approved it on March 10, according to a news release from Nittany Grant Works, which works on behalf of Park County.

The Fleshman Creek Restoration Project goals include creating a community resource; protecting, enhancing and creating stream, riparian and wetland habitat; improving water quality; and mitigating risk to property and life.

The project has also spurred interest among Park County educators and students. The well-situated outdoor learning environment offered in and around Fleshman Creek correlates well with Livingston School District educational lessons and curriculum goals, the release said.

Just outside the doors of the schools, teachers and students have conducted several studies and performed volun-

teer work on much of Fleshman Creek. In 2003, the lowest stretch of Fleshman Creek was restored, which has provided trout spawning and rearing habitat. Students from Sleeping Giant Middle School held revegetate the adjacent floodplain areas for native plant colonization.

And recently, in collaboration with FWP, OASIS Environmental, Dr. Dan Vóyich, Trout Unlimited, the City of Livingston, Park County and the Montana Department of Environmental Quality, Livingston Public School students completed several non-point source water quality studies and participated in stream restoration projects on Fleshman Creek.

Second-, fourth-, seventh- and 10th-grade students sampled macro-invertebrates, quantified and identified riparian plant species and measured physical and chemical parameters of water quality. Advanced agriculture students collected grab samples for analysis as part of a sampling plan funded by the DEQ.

On Tuesday, the public is invited to join Trout Unlimited, Livingston schools and students, and NRCS from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., for a few hours to cut and

collect willow cuttings for the upper Fleshman Creek project. For more information, contact Kerry Fee at 579-7734, or e-mail kerry86303@yahoo.com to sign up.

Future projects involving Park County students will include installation of remote sensing equipment for pH, conductivity, turbidity, temperature, and dissolved oxygen; and rearing of native wetland plants for future revegetation needs.

The Future Fisheries Improvement Program was established in 1995 to implement a statewide voluntary program to promote fishery habitats and spawning areas for the rivers, streams and lakes of Montana's fisheries to enhance fisheries through natural reproduction.

In addition to FWP funds, several other state and federal agencies have committed financial and in-kind equipment and labor resources toward the Fleshman Creek Urban Restoration project. They include United States Federal Emergency Management Agency, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Park County Road Department and Joe Brooks Trout Unlimited Chapter #25.