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MISSOURI RIVER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS COUNCIL

February 6, 2007

City of Great Falls
Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 5021
Great Falls, MT 59403

RE: Natural Areas Program

Dear City Commissioners:

The Missouri River Conservation Districts Council, a coalition of the 15 Conservation Districts along the Missouri River in Montana, supports a Natural Areas Program for the City of Great Falls. Many of the areas proposed for enrollment in the Natural Areas Program lie within the Missouri River corridor; therefore, the program could enhance and sustain an important section of the river that would otherwise be subject to inappropriate management. We applaud your efforts to develop a long-range management plan that recognizes the unique needs of natural areas, including weed management, restoration of degraded land, and a holistic approach to sustainable ecosystems.

By recognizing the need to work with partners like the Cascade County Conservation District, you have set the program up for certain success. We encourage you to include the Conservation District; this Council; the local office of the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks; and the Cascade County Weed Control office in development of the Natural Areas Master Plan. Several incentive-based funding programs, educational grants, and technical assistance programs are available through the Conservation District and we urge you to take advantage of those to enhance the program. Additionally, the Conservation District and this Council have a history of community involvement and educational outreach that may be used to augment your program.

Gallatin Conservation District
Broadwater Conservation District
Lewis & Clark Conservation District
Cascade County Conservation District
Chouteau County Conservation District
Big Sandy Conservation District
Fergus County Conservation District
Blaine County Conservation District



Petroleum County Conservation District
Phillips Conservation District
Garfield County Conservation District
Valley County Conservation District
McCone Conservation District
Roosevelt County Conservation District
Richland County Conservation District

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Thank you for taking the initiative to more appropriately manage the City's natural areas. If we can be of any assistance, please contact our office by telephone at (406) 468-0056 or by e-mail at mrcdc@missouririvercouncil.info.

Sincerely,

Jim Beck
Chairman

cc: City of Great Falls Planning Office
Cascade County Conservation District
Region 4, Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Cascade County Weed Control Office