

WILDLIFE TRUST APPROVES FIRST ROUND OF PROJECTS

GILLETTE, Wyo. – Wildlife and wildlife habitat in Wyoming will benefit from more than \$1.3 million worth of projects approved Thursday, June 8, 2006 by the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resources Trust.

The 2005 legislative session's Wildlife and Natural Resources Funding Act created a \$15 million trust fund to preserve and restore wildlife habitat and open spaces and placed the income from the trust fund into an account to supply grants to nonprofit and government groups for specific projects.

Thursday's approvals marked the first round of projects since the fund was established, and were allocated to 31 projects statewide, from an initial pool of 72 applicants. The board is already collecting applications for a second round of funding, which are due Sept. 30, 2006.

"The creation of this wildlife trust was a tremendous commitment to securing wildlife and wildlife habitat for generations of Wyoming residents and visitors," Gov. Dave Freudenthal said. "Today's actions translate that commitment to on-the-ground action through a range of projects, big and small but all important. My thanks go to board members for the careful consideration – and hard work – they have given these applications."

Members of the board, which administers the account, include: Mike Baker of Thermopolis, a farmer and former legislator; Delaine Roberts of Etna, a retired U.S. marshal and former legislator; Hardy Tate of Sheridan, an attorney and former legislator; Robert Anderson of Casper, a wildlife biologist and owner of Anderson Environmental Consulting and Heitzman Drill-Site Services; Ken Banister of Torrington, an educational diagnostician for the Goshen County School District; Kim Floyd of Cheyenne, the executive secretary of the Wyoming AFL-CIO; Gwyn McKee of Gillette, a wildlife biologist and co-owner of Thunderbird Wildlife Consulting; Steven Meadows of Jackson, a hotelier; and Deborah Smith of Laramie, the Albany County assessor.

"We received some truly remarkable proposals for wildlife and wildlife habitat work from folks all over the state," said Roberts, who co-chairs the board. "The projects we approved today will go a long way toward furthering the goals of the state in creating the wildlife trust."

For more information on individual projects approved, click on "projects."