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Partnership Reaches \$1 Million in Conservation for Wyoming

MISSOULA, Mont.—A partnership between the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation has reached the \$1 million mark in projects for elk, other wildlife and their habitat in Wyoming.

Trust funds are generated by a tax on oil exploration in Wyoming. A nine-member, governor-appointed board of directors administers contributions to groups like RMEF.

Since 2006, the Trust has supported Elk Foundation habitat projects such as prescribed burns, aspen restorations, water developments and more. Eleven counties in Wyoming have benefitted including Big Horn, Carbon, Converse, Crook, Hot Springs, Laramie, Lincoln, Natrona, Park, Sublette and Weston. Most of the work has enhanced Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service lands.

Additional funding commitments to RMEF have expanded the slate of projects for 2009.

Trust Executive Director Bob Budd said, “Habitat-based groups like the Elk Foundation are highly effective in a variety of ways, from building support for conservation to actually putting the torch to invasive conifers. We really enjoy seeing the passion of sportsmen translate to better habitat on the landscapes of Wyoming. It is an honor for us to work with this great organization.”

RMEF supplements Trust contributions through its own granting program, which is based in banquets and other fundraisers held across Wyoming. Partners like the Wyoming Game and Fish Department are often involved, too.

Jack Blackwell, vice president of lands and conservation for the Elk Foundation, said, “Bob Budd and everyone at the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust are among the most engaged people that we work with. Under board chairman Delaine Roberts’ leadership, they carefully review each project application and at least one board member visits every project to build their understanding of what we’re trying to accomplish. It’s very rewarding when they provide support and enable us to accomplish our mission. As an organization, we can’t thank them enough.”

At an April meeting, Blackwell and RMEF colleagues presented plaques recognizing the successful partnership with Budd and the Wyoming Wildlife and Natural Resource Trust.

About the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation:

Snowy peaks, dark timber basins and grassy meadows. RMEF is leading an elk country initiative that has conserved or enhanced habitat on over 5.5 million acres—a land area equivalent to a swath three miles wide and stretching along the entire Continental Divide from Canada to Mexico. RMEF also works to open, secure and improve public access for hunting, fishing and other recreation. Get involved at www.rmef.org or 800-CALL ELK.

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