

THE RESTORATION OF THE UPPER BIG HOLE WATERSHED'S RIPARIAN AND INSTREAM HABITAT USING CANDIDATE CONSERVATION AGREEMENTS

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The Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for fluvial Arctic grayling (*Thymallus arcticus*) in the upper Big Hole watershed presents a unique opportunity to develop and implement comprehensive restoration and conservation projects on private land. During the preliminary sign-up in 2005, 40 landowners enrolled just under 220,000 ac of private land, representing nearly 70 percent of the private land in the project area. Site-specific restoration plans for each property, which addresses everything from instream and riparian restoration, grazing management, irrigation efficiency improvement, off-stream livestock water development, entrainment and fish passage, need to be developed with consideration of the unique physical and hydrologic characteristics of each property, as well as the agricultural goals and objectives of each livestock operation. The cumulative effects of restoration on one property upstream have tremendous ramifications downstream. The scale and complexity of this undertaking, the largest of its kind ever developed in the country, relies upon the dedication and creativity of many valuable partners.