



## NEWS ADVISORY

March 8, 2018

For immediate release

---

### **Lower Rattlesnake Dam Project Open House Set for March 20**

The City of Missoula and Trout Unlimited invite the public to an open house for the Lower Rattlesnake Dam and Reclamation Project on Tuesday, March 20, from 7 – 8:30 p.m. at the Missoula International School at 1100 Harrison St. The event will have a drop-in format with experts on hand at various stations to answer questions.

Members of the public will be able to learn what we have learned based on research to date; learn about the existing options to enhance Rattlesnake Creek and the creek corridor in the area of the dam; view maps and graphs and options for preservation and recreation opportunities; and voice their priorities and preferences for the area after viewing the information.

The lower Rattlesnake Creek dam was built in 1904 and played a role in Missoula's water supply until 1983, when the water supply was transferred to solely groundwater wells. The dam is now inoperable and not essential. Since assuming ownership of the water utility, now Missoula Water, the City has formed a partnership with Trout Unlimited and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks to investigate a mitigation and restoration project at the dam to address fisheries, public recreation, public safety and liability.

Rattlesnake Creek is one of the major sources of trout for the Clark Fork River and a highly popular recreation area for the public. Removal of the dam would reduce Missoula Water's work on maintenance and operations, reconnect 26 miles of habitat for fish and wildlife, create new opportunities for trails and other recreation and reestablish a natural river connection between the Rattlesnake Wilderness at the headwaters and the Clark Fork River for the first time in more than 100 years.

The partners have secured the engineering and technical services of River Design Group and

Morrison-Maierle, Inc. to evaluate the dam and associated infrastructure and develop options for restoration. The open house will provide information on four options of various scopes for restoration and gather public comment. Principals from the partner organizations and the consultants will be on hand to answer questions and provide historical background. They will be available for interviews at the event.

**Questions?** Contact:

Morgan Valliant, Conservation Lands Manager, Missoula Parks and Recreation, 552-6263, [mvalliant@ci.missoula.mt.us](mailto:mvalliant@ci.missoula.mt.us)

Rob Roberts, Project Manager, Trout Unlimited, 540-2944, [rroberts@tu.org](mailto:rroberts@tu.org)

#

Ginny Merriam, Public Information/Communications Director, 552-6007 office; 546-7692 cell