RESORTTAX
— BUILDING BIG SKY SINCE 1992 —

2015-2016 APPLICATION FOR RESORT TAX FUNDS

Applicant's Official Name: Gallatin / Big Sky Weed Committee

Project Name: Gallatin / Big Sky Noxious Weed Project

Project Start Date: July 1, 2015 **Project Completion Date**: June 30, 2016

Representative: Jennifer Mohler, Coordinator GBSWC; Mike Jones, Chair GBSWC

Address: Gallatin County Weed District, c/o Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee, 901 N. Black Bozeman, MT 59715

Telephone: 406-209-0905 **Email**: bigskyweeds@gmail.com

Total Funds Requested $ 55,950

State your estimated payment request schedule for the coming year; amounts should total funds requested. Please enter dollar amounts.

	July '15	Aug '15	Sep '15	Oct '15	Nov '15	Dec '15
Payment Request $	8,500	6,500	6,500	4,500	4,500	2,000
	Jan '16	**Feb '16**	**Mar '16**	**Apr '16**	**May '16**	**Jun '16**
Payment Request $	2,000	2,000	2,000	4,500	6,450	6,500

I certify that the application and its attachments are correct to the best of my knowledge.

Michael Jones
Signature

CHAIR
Title (Board Chair or Governing Officer)

MICHAEL JONES
Printed Name

4/2/15
Date

2015-2016 APPLICATION FOR RESORT TAX FUNDS

1) **Provide a description of the entity and the Mission Statement.**
   State the entity's tax status/legal identity and when it was initiated.
   What is the personnel makeup of your office; specifically how many are employees, how many are contractors and what are their duties? What is the full time equivalent (FTE) of each: ¼ , ½, ¾ or full time?
   Unless previously provided to the resort tax office, please include a copy of the Articles of Incorporation.
   (200 words max)

The Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee is a local 501c3 non-profit working to combat invasive plants and promote sustainable land stewardship in the Big Sky community and along the Gallatin River corridor, in Gallatin and Madison County, Montana. While the Committee has been assisting the community since 2004, it recently reorganized under its own entity; receiving 501c3 status on February 24, 2014 (articles of incorporation have been previously submitted).

The mission of the Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee is to protect natural resources in the Gallatin River Watershed, including the Big Sky area, by promoting the management of invasive exotic plant species (noxious weeds) through integrated pest management.

The Committee contracts with an independent consultant, Jennifer Mohler of Bridger Scientific, Inc. Duties include project development and implementation, bookkeeping, community education and outreach, on-site landowner assistance, grant writing and administration, coordination with the board and board committees, and other partners as needed to promote, educate, assist and provide guidance for program and project implementation and awareness.

From 2011-2014, the Committee's Coordinator has averaged approximately ¼ FTE (for details, please see attachment 1). Hours are adjusted seasonally, and the Committee is asking for increased funding to meet ½ FTE for 2015-2016.

2) **Provide a complete description of the project(s). Include the project(s) purpose, goals and objectives. For each project provide measurable objectives, i.e. how you will do something and in what timeframe. The information provided here should be specific regarding what the entity is requesting to be funded by resort tax. If requesting funds for Operations, identify the categories and assign a dollar amount (salaries, software, etc.) If permits are required, please specify what permits are required and what projects they apply to. Please be succinct.**

<u>Gallatin / Big Sky Weed Project</u>
The presence of noxious weeds in the Gallatin Canyon and Big Sky area is directly attributed to human activity, such as construction, recreation, and travel (i.e. roads, trails, and water ways). Continued spread of noxious weeds negatively impacts wildlife, fisheries, water quality, downstream agricultural water users, scenic beauty, and property values. In essence, our love of wilderness and wildlife unfortunately can have a direct impact on their health, and working to address the negative effects of our actions is a reflection of our core community values. Protecting native ecosystems and natural resources is a tangible way to reduce our impact on the land.

<u>Purpose</u>
The purpose of the Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee is to protect and conserve native ecosystems from invasive exotic plant species in the Big Sky community and the Gallatin River watershed. These invasive plants affect all Montanans directly or indirectly through impacts on agricultural and forest economies and on other resources such as fish, wildlife

habitat, recreation, and overall watershed health. Working collaboratively with federal, state, county, and local partners, the Committee promotes the management of invading noxious weeds by focusing on education, prevention, early detection, and rapid and timely response.

Goals

The Big Sky Weed Committee has four primary goals:

1) Educate the local community about noxious weeds and their impacts;
2) Provide technical assistance to private landowners;
3) Coordinate and assist with noxious weed management activities; and
4) Advocate for native plant and wildlife species to maintain ecological and economic health.

Measurable Objectives: The Committee has submitted with this application a business and work plan that provide extensive details (timeframe, expected outcome, partners, etc.) on Committee work.

Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee Programs:

1) The Community Program goal is to raise awareness and educate the public about noxious weeds and their impact on the ecosystem through community events, partnerships, and programs.

   From educating kids at summer camps or Ophir School, to reaching residents and visitors at the Big Sky Farmers Market, the community program aims to raise awareness and educate the public about noxious weeds and their impact on the local ecosystem. In addition to educational efforts, the Committee's Community Program assists and coordinates noxious weed control activities and efforts among existing weed control entities (local, state, and federal agencies), such as cooperative treatment days.

   Success is evaluated by the quantity and quality of Committee events, the number of people attending events, and requests from other organizations to assist with and participate in events.

   The Community Program comprises approximately 27% of programming and $15,324 of Resort Tax funds.

2) The Education Program goal is to raise awareness and educate the public about noxious weeds and their impact on the ecosystem through various public relations outlets.

   The composition of residents and visitors in the Committee's project area requires a constant and consistent message to increase awareness and initiate active management of noxious weeds. The nature of a resort community is marked by a high turnover of property owners, many of whom lack knowledge and familiarity with local natural resource issues. Prevention, early detection, and rapid response are core tenants of effective noxious weed management, and this message needs to be conveyed to the parties most closely associated with the development process, including developers, realtors, property management companies, and homeowners associations. Finally, increasing development, high turnover rates of land ownership, and the increasing rates of visitors and recreationalists in the area require a sustained and visible campaign about noxious weeds, their impacts, and best management practices.

Success is evaluated by the quality of educational material produced, the amount that is distributed and disseminated throughout the community, and response by the public in receiving the message.

The Education/PR Program comprises approximately 18% of programming and $9,992 of Resort Tax funds.

3) The Habitat Improvement Program goal is to protect and enhance vital and/or compromised habitat for plants, fisheries, and wildlife within the Committee's project area in partnership with pertinent organizations, groups, or agencies.

The Committee's project area encompasses some of the most ecologically and economically important resources in the state, which provide vital habitat and water for plants, wildlife, and the people who live and recreate in the area. Yellowstone National Park identified the spread of noxious weeds as the #1 threat to the Park's health, and the U.S. Forest Service recognizes invasive species as one of the top threats to landscape integrity and function. Noxious weeds can impact every facet of the ecosystem – water, soils, plants, wildlife, etc. Habitat improvement projects are tangible ways to directly mitigate our impacts upon the natural landscape and provide an invaluable avenue to educate the public of the importance of healthy ecosystems.

Success is evaluated by the participation of cooperating agencies, along with a reduction of noxious weeds and an increase in native species in treated areas, leading to improvement of overall habitat health.

The Habitat Improvement Program comprises approximately 9% of programming and $4,840 of Resort Tax funds.

4) The Landowner Assistance Program goal is to educate landowners about the ecological impacts of noxious weeds and provide information and guidance on noxious weed management.

The greater Big Sky area is comprised of 50,000 acres of private land surrounded by National Forest, and encompasses some of the most ecologically and economically important resources in the state. The lack of resource management knowledge combined with the nature of a resort community (high turnover rates of property ownership, non-resident ownership, and development of vacant land) creates an environment conducive to noxious weed invasion and spread.

To address this, the Committee provides free on-site landowner education and technical assistance, along with a cost share program to provide a financial incentive for landowners to treat noxious weeds. Easy and timely access to noxious weed management information, along with follow-up support, is the primary way to ensure major economic and environmental impacts of noxious weeds are most effectively mitigated.

Success is evaluated by the number of site visits, the response by the landowner in receiving the information, the number of referrals to friends and neighbors, follow-up questions and visits, and the action taken by the landowner to manage noxious weeds.

The Landowner Assistance Program comprises approximately 34% of programming and $18,824 of Resort Tax funds.

5) The Mapping/Monitoring Program goal is to maintain ecological health and diversity by assisting and supporting partner agencies responsible for noxious weed management in early detection of and rapid response to noxious weed populations in the Committee's project area.

   The presence of noxious weeds in the Gallatin Canyon and Big Sky area is directly attributed to human activity, such as construction, recreation, and travel. The primary route to Big Sky, Highway 191 in the Gallatin Canyon, is heavily traveled (4,397 cars / day in 2013), and ongoing road improvements and construction (including the power line upgrade and underground cable installation in the right of way) create a prime opportunity for noxious weeds to take hold and spread. Of specific concern is the use of out of state construction equipment, as that is a known vector for spreading new species of noxious weeds that do not currently exist in the area.

   Mapping noxious weeds helps pinpoint infestations (including new invaders) and provides a framework for prioritizing our limited resources. Monitoring existing populations aids managers in evaluating the efficacy of treatments.

   Success is evaluated by the quantity and quality of data collected and shared with Committee partners, the use of data to initiate (or modify) noxious weed management by the responsible party, identifying new invaders and reporting to the appropriate partner for immediate treatment, and creating a data set that can be used by multiple agencies/cooperators in long term monitoring.

   The Mapping/Monitoring Program comprises approximately 4% of programming and $2,420 of Resort Tax funds.

6) Operations - The Committee is requesting $4,450 (8% of budget) for the following: $500 for accounting, $500 for bookkeeping, $1,800 for insurance and fees, $1,000 for office expenses (cell phone, printing and copying, supplies, etc) and $750 for training and travel.

3) Is the project within the resort tax district? (25 words max)

Yes, the Committee's project area encompasses the resort tax district and the Gallatin River canyon, which is the sole route to and from Big Sky.

Please note: Not every project will fulfill questions #4 through #8. Applications will not be rated on the ability to fulfill multiple questions.

Does the entity and/or project…

4) Benefit the community at large including residents, visitors and tax collectors/the business community? (50 words max)

The Committee's efforts benefit the entire community as its focus is to maintain a healthy ecosystem. Residents benefit from one-on-one assistance. Businesses benefit from a community invested in preserving the environment. Finally, visitors become educated about the threat of invasive species and are inspired by the community's commitment to stewardship.

5) Promote tourism and development, help make Big Sky a world class resort community and increase resort tax revenue? (50 words max)

The draw of a pristine and wild area is the primary reason people visit and reside in Big Sky. Recreation, tourism, and real estate drive the economy, which benefits directly from a healthy and sustainable ecosystem. The Committee's work offsets negative impacts that are a direct result of ongoing development.

6) Support or improve critical infrastructure, public health, safety and/or welfare in the world class community? (50 words max)

The Committee's project area encompasses some of the most ecologically and economically important resources in the state, which provide vital habitat and water for plants, wildlife, and the people who live and recreate in the area. Most importantly, this project directly mitigates our impacts upon the natural landscape.

7) Involve collaboration among entities in the community to meet common goals? (100 words max)

From Ophir School's second grade class field trip, to improving winter range for Big Sky's resident bighorn sheep, the Committee's focus is coordinating local environmental protection efforts. The Committee's partners include, but are not limited to:

Big Sky Community Corporation
Big Sky Natural Resource Council
Big Sky Owners Association
Big Sky Resort
Blue Water Task Force
Gallatin County Extension
Gallatin County Weed District
Greater Gallatin Watershed Council
Gallatin National Forest
Jack Creek Preserve
Madison-Gallatin Trout Unlimited
Montana Department of Transportation
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks
Montana Noxious Weed Control Association
Moonlight Resort
Montana State University
Spanish Peaks Resort
Yellowstone Club

8) Fill a community need not currently or adequately being satisfied? (50 words max)

The Committee has been the sole local advocate in addressing invasive plant species in the greater Big Sky area since 2004. We have developed numerous successful partnerships with federal, state, and local agencies, resulting in a cost effective program that preserves native ecosystems and promotes sustainable land stewardship.

2015-2016 APPLICATION FOR RESORT TAX FUNDS

Provide the following financial documents:

9) Copy of the entity's complete operating budget for the period 07/01/15 through 06/30/16.

If your fiscal year does not coincide with this time period, please provide complete budgets for the entity's fiscal year that covers the aforementioned time period. For example, if the entity's fiscal year corresponds with a calendar year, provide two budgets 1) 01/01/2015 through 12/31/2015 and 2) 01/01/2016 through 12/31/2016.

10) Organization's Profit and Loss Report, Budget vs. Actual Report and Balance Sheet from your previous completed fiscal year.

** Please note: Because the "Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee" is technically a new organization, we initiated bookkeeping in June of 2014 in preparation for receiving our first grant, the 2014-2015 BSRAD appropriation. Thus, the Committee's previous completed fiscal year is the same as the current fiscal year to date.

Also, the submitted P&L, Budget vs Actual, and Balance Sheet include June of 2014 to reflect rollover funds from our prior umbrella organization (Northern Rocky Mountain RC&D) and payment of insurance for the July 1, 2014-June 30, 2015 timeframe.

11) Organization's Profit and Loss Report, Budget vs. Actual Report and Balance Sheet from your current fiscal year to date.

Again, since the organization is newly formed, the previous completed fiscal year is the same as the current fiscal year to date.

12) For applicants with mill levy authority please provide the following:

a. A map of your district's boundaries

b. The current taxable value of your district

c. If applicable, the current mill levy rate

d. **Using the information above, provide a detailed budgetary breakdown of the potential tax burden per $100,000 value, for property owners within your district if mill levy authority would be used to fund this project rather than resort tax funds**.

Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee
Annual Operations Budget
July 2015 through June 2016

	Budget* Annual Total	BSRAD 2015-2016	In Kind Funding	Secured Funding	Unsecured Funding	Percent BSRAD
INCOME						
Contributions/Donations						
In Kind	$43,610		$43,610			
Membership/Sponsorship/Donations	$1,000				$1,000	
Restricted Grants						
District Grants*	$55,950	$55,950				
State Grants*	$6,950			$6,950		
Foundation Grants*	$15,000				$15,000	
TOTAL INCOME	**$122,510**	**$55,950**	**$43,610**	**$6,950**	**$16,000**	46%
EXPENSE						
Professional Fees						
Accounting	$500	$500				100%
Bookkeeping / Admin	$500	$500				100%
Contracted Coordinator	$38,400	$38,400				100%
Technical Services	$500		$500			0%
Operations						
Insurance & Fees	$1,800	$1,800				100%
Office Expenses	$8,960	$1,000	$7,960			11%
Program Expense						
Community Program	$9,000	$1,500	$6,500		$1,000	17%
Education / PR Program	$25,250	$5,000	$14,800	$3,950	$1,500	20%
Habitat Improvement Projects	$18,500	$1,000	$11,000	$1,000	$5,500	5%
Landowner Assistance Program	$3,500	$2,000	$1,500			57%
Cost Share	$8,000	$3,000			$5,000	38%
Monitoring/Mapping Program	$6,000	$500	$500	$2,000	$3,000	8%
Fundraising	$500		$500			0%
Training & Travel	$1,100	$750	$350			68%
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$122,510**	**$55,950**	**$43,610**	**$6,950**	**$16,000**	46%

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Accrual Basis

Gallatin/Blg Sky Weed Committee
Profit & Loss
June 2014 through March 2015

		Jun '14 - Mar 15
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
Direct Public Support		
Corporate Contributions	1,773.93	
Individ, Business Contributions	1,021.85	
Total Direct Public Support		2,795.78
Grants		20,387.00
In Kind		37,304.63
Program Income		950.00
Total Income		61,437.41
Expense		
Administration		32.48
Business Expenses		15.00
Community Program		1,041.19
Contract Services		
Accounting Fees	1,063.00	
Coordinator		
Community Program	5,250.00	
Education / PR Program	1,690.00	
Habitat Improvement Program	1,210.00	
Landonwer Assistance Program	4,670.00	
Mapping/Monitoring Program	280.00	
Program Admin & Bookkeeping	1,760.00	
Total Coordinator	14,860.00	
Total Contract Services		15,923.00
Education & PR Program		460.92
Habitat Improvement Program		332.82
In Kind Expense		37,304.63
Landowner Assitance Program		1,817.84
Operations		635.48
Other Types of Expenses		1,750.00
Program Administration		55.76
Travel and Meetings		354.62
Total Expense		59,723.74
Net Ordinary Income		1,713.67
Net Income		**1,713.67**

Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee
June 30, 2014 - March 30, 2015*
Budget vs Actual

*The budget vs actual report includes June of 2014 to reflect roll over funds from previous 501c3 umbrella organization. Those funds helped pay for the inititation of insurance in June of 2014.

	2014-2015 Budget	2014-2015 Actual
INCOME		
Contributions/Donations		
In Kind	$35,000	$37,304
Donations		$1,022
Restricted Grants		
District Grants	$45,000	$20,387
State Grants	$5,400	
Foundation Grants	$23,000	
Rollover from NRMRC&D	$600	$1,774
Program Income		$950
TOTAL INCOME	**$109,000**	**$61,437**
EXPENSE		
Professional Fees		
Accounting	$1,500	$1,063
Bookkeeping / Admin	$1,500	$1,848
Contracted Coordinator	$35,000	$13,100
Operations		
Insurance & Fees	$1,800	$1,765
Office Expenses	$7,000	$635
Program Expense		
Community Program	$5,200	$1,041
Education / PR Program	$8,000	$461
Habitat Improvement Projects	$3,000	$333
Landowner Assistance Program	$4,000	$1,082
Cost Share	$3,000	$736
Monitoring/Mapping Program	$3,000	
Training & Travel	$1,000	$355
In Kind	$35,000	$37,304
TOTAL EXPENSES	**$109,000**	**$59,723**

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Accrual Basis

Gallatin/Blg Sky Weed Committee
Balance Sheet
As of March 31, 2015

	Mar 31, 15
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
GBSWC Checking	1,713.67
Total Checking/Savings	1,713.67
Total Current Assets	1,713.67
TOTAL ASSETS	**1,713.67**
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
Unrestricted Net Assets	1,039.78
Net Income	673.89
Total Equity	1,713.67
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	**1,713.67**

2015-2016 APPLICATION FOR RESORT TAX FUNDS

TOTAL ORGANIZATIONAL BUDGET

(to include all organization projects and programs; not only those requesting funding for in this cycle)

Total budget for the year the entity is requesting funding $122,510

What percentage of the above budget is the entity requesting from resort tax? 46 %

PRINCIPLE	ITEM		AMOUNT
Revenue	Private Donor Contributions Total		$1,000
	Private Donor Contributions In-kind		$43,610
	Public Grants		$77,900
	Fundraising Events		
	Sub Total Revenue		$122,510
	Other*		
	Total Revenue		$122,510
Expenses	Paid Personnel (not including volunteer time)	# FTE Personnel 1/2	$38,900
	Operations		$13,360
	Programming		$70,250
	Other*		
	Total Expenses		$122,510
Income	Net Income		0

***Other Description**: _____

_____

*Other Description: _____

_____

Capital Reserves	On Hand Restricted**	0
	On Hand Unrestricted**	$1,713.67
	Goal	$3,000

****Purpose of Restricted and Unrestricted Capital Reserves**: Funds in our bank account to serve as cash reserves.

2015-2016 APPLICATION FOR RESORT TAX FUNDS

TOTAL CASH FLOW 3-YEAR REQUIREMENT

(to include all organization projects and programs; not only those requesting funding for in this cycle

ITEM	2015	2016	2017	Total Cash Flow 3-Yr Requirement
Paid Personnel (not including volunteer time)	$38,900	$40,845	$42,887	$122,632
# of FTE Personnel	1/2	1/2	1/2	**NA**
Operations	$13,360	$14,028	$14,729	$42,117
Programming	$70,250	$73,762	$77,450	$221,462
Capital Expenditures	$0	$0	$0	$0
Other	$0	$0	$0	$0
Total	$122,510	$128,635	$135,066	$386,211

RESORT TAX REQUEST	$55,950	$58,748	$61,685	$176,383

Describe financial increases and decreases and the projects for which resort tax funds may be requested.

2015 Total funding for the Committee has either decreased or stagnated over the last several years, while the need for our services has only continued to increase. From 2008 to 2014, the Committee experienced an increase of Community Events by 333% (from 6 to 20 events). Noxious weed invasion and spread is directly related to ongoing growth and development in the community. To adequately address noxious weeds in a developing community, and to meet the demand for assistance, funding must mirror that growth.

2016 A five percent increase to expenses is included to account for inflationary impacts on operating costs. In addition, the Weed Committee will be working to secure funds for the Bighorn Sheep Winter Range Restoration Project and possibly initiate a Porcupine Elk Habitat Improvement Project, but the budgets for these projects are unknown at this time. We expect to develop budgets for these projects as the scope of work is better known.

2017 A five percent increase to expenses is included to account for inflationary impacts on operating costs. In addition, the Weed Committee will be working to secure funds for the Bighorn Sheep Winter Range Restoration Project and the Porcupine Elk Habitat Improvement Project, but the budgets for these projects are unknown at this time.

Attachement 1

Gallatin/Big Sky Weed Committee

Average Coordinator Hours 2010-2015

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	Avg Hours Per Month	FTE Aprroximate
July	31	85	73	99	115	80	1/2
Aug	71	115	89	98	90	93	>1/2
Sept	110	93	56	55	25	68	<1/2
Oct	19	63	21	27	54	37	<1/4
Nov	46	32	0	21	28	25	>1/8
Dec	3	29	0	25	7	13	<1/8
Jan	18	88	1	27	65	40	1/4
Feb	11	32	65	28	86	44	>1/4
March	13	37	33	30		28	>1/8
April	32	14	32	80		40	1/4
May	80	42	66	80		67	<1/2
June	74	97	62	71		76	<1/2
Total	**507**	**726**	**497**	**639**	**469**	**610**	