



# AMERICAN FISHERIES SOCIETY

## MONTANA CHAPTER



Lou Yost  
Executive Secretary  
U.S. Board on Geographic Names  
U.S. Geological Survey  
12201 Sunrise Valley Drive, MS 523  
Reston, Virginia 20192-0523

October 5, 2009

RE: Support for Proposal to Name 'Wally McClure Creek

Dear Sir:

I am writing this letter in support of the proposal by the Gallatin National Forest (GNF) to name a stream 'Wally McClure Creek' in recognition of Walter V. "Wally" McClure's professional contributions to both the U.S. Forest Service and to aquatic education and conservation. Our organization, the Montana Chapter of the American Fisheries Society (MCAFS) is particularly well qualified to speak to the latter. The American Fisheries Society (AFS), founded in 1870, is the oldest and largest professional society in North America representing fisheries scientists. Our mission is to improve the conservation and sustainability of fishery resources and aquatic ecosystems by advancing fisheries and aquatic science and promoting the development of fisheries professionals. AFS promotes scientific research and enlightened management of resources for optimum use and enjoyment by the public. The MCAFS was chartered in 1967 to further this mission in Montana. Our membership is comprised of professional fisheries scientists affiliated with state and federal agencies, universities, tribes and private industry, all dedicated to preserving and enhancing the fisheries resources of Montana. Wally McClure was a member of MCAFS until his untimely passing in 2003.

In his service to both MCAFS and to his profession at-large, Wally modeled dedication and professionalism, while seeking no personal recognition for his many successes. His leadership in native species conservation, particularly cutthroat trout conservation, forms the foundation upon which conservation actions continue today. His physical accomplishments in the field are legendary, but as important is the legacy he left in the biologists he mentored and public he educated. For these reasons, MCAFS post-humously honored Wally with both its Lifetime Achievement Award and by creating the Wally McClure scholarship, so that aspiring fisheries biologists could continue Wally's legacy of service.

The stream proposed for becoming Wally's namesake is very appropriate to that end. First, this stream is the last place Wally conducted fieldwork not long before his terminal cancer diagnosis. Second, that work discovered a population of rare, genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout, which have subsequently become important in conserving the species in the Madison River basin. As noted previously, cutthroat trout conservation was one of Wally's major professional contributions, and this stream symbolizes that. Finally, this stream, although representing something rare and priceless because of what it contains, does so in an unassuming way because it is small and remote. Similarly, Wally's contributions were largely made outside the limelight, and were certainly understated by him, but were extremely valuable to both the fish and fisheries communities in Montana.

For all of these reasons, MCAFS strongly supports the proposal to name this stream 'Wally McClure Creek'. Please do not hesitate to contact us for any further information regarding our support for this proposal.

With warmest regards.

Scott A. Barndt  
President MCAFS

