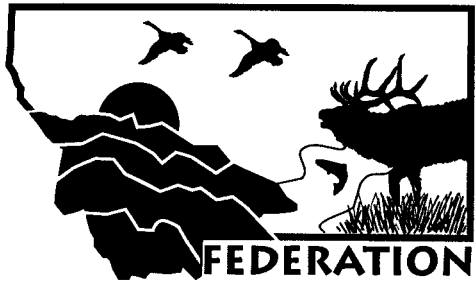


MONTANA WILDLIFE



Over 30,000 acres in Madison County, many just south of the confluence of the Beaverhead and Ruby Rivers identified in the small numbered squares-- are up for lease. The area known as the east bench, which is immediately south of the town of Twin Bridges, is a long, narrow bench that supports diverse wildlife populations, agricultural operations and public hunting for whitetail, mule deer and upland game birds. Perhaps even more important than the abundant terrestrial wildlife is the riverine system that surrounds this area. Two of Montana's premier 'Blue Ribbon' trout streams, the Beaverhead and the Ruby, flank the proposed lease sale just south of Twin Bridges. Maintaining habitat functionality of this area should be as much of a concern to the State of Montana as it is to MWF. Currently, the stipulations placed on these parcels only meet the minimum requirements to ensure that some of the habitat would be protected. This area includes incredibly sensitive wild land habitats, and riparian areas and water quality is a major concern. Drilling for oil and gas without more strict guidelines, including No Surface Occupancy for wells within the confluence zone that have direct drainages into the rivers, and not properly timing the stipulations for both wildlife, hunters and anglers could be a disaster for the wildlife resource, hunters and anglers and the local businesses that rely on sportsmen and sportswomen revenues.