



## Beaverhead County Commissioners

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January 17, 2023

68<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session – 2023  
Appropriations Subcommittee

Chairman – Representative Hopkins and members of the Committee ~

Good morning. My name is Tom Rice. I have been a Beaverhead County Commissioner for 17 years. Our family operates a 4<sup>th</sup> generation Ranch/Farm South of Dillon.

Beaverhead County is the largest county in Montana with 5600 square miles, 9000 + population and with a certified taxable value of \$26,140. There are 1580 miles of county roads and 129 bridges. There still will be 12 bridges listed in our CIP in need of repairs or replacement. Our Road Department consists of 10 members along with 1 mechanic.

Anderson Lane is the primary east to west connector route in the Beaverhead Valley North of Dillon. This lane has always been used as a school bus and mail route. There are upwards of 200 vehicles per day during the high use periods.

This MCEP grant will help replace Anderson Lane Bridge, a single lane bridge, originally built in 1924 across the Beaverhead River, located approximately 6.5 Miles North of Dillon. The New Bridge has pilings, with a 130' span and 24' width, that will provide excellent and safe traffic flow for all.

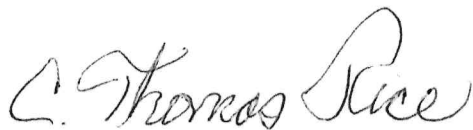
In 2020 Emergency repair using rip rap rock was completed to reinforce the deteriorating abutments. Currently the bridge load limit is 6 ton, restricting

hauling for local livestock, hay, grain, and potato producers. Also, restricting delivery of various construction materials and supplies.

- ❖ From Beaverhead County High School, "This bridge has been an issue for our route several times in the past and has caused us to reroute the bus. This causes increased costs that have not been budgeted for and prolonged travel time for students that live on either side of the bridge. The replacement of the bridge would certainly benefit the school, students, and families that live on Anderson Lane."
- ❖ Beaverhead EMS indicates, "The bridge that crosses the Beaverhead River located along Anderson Lane is old, uneven and rough. Traveling across the bridge requires a significant reduction in speed, in order to avoid being bounced around... the condition of the bridge is unsafe."
- ❖ Behind the scenes every year the Beaverhead River flows are recorded by the River Commissioner, on the reach of the river north of Dillon to Madison County (16 miles) there are 25-30 diversions. The River Commissioner travels back and forth on Anderson Lane/Bridge 4-6 days each week, monitoring the river flows. Information compiled aids irrigation, recreation, fisheries, Clark Canyon Dam and the Bureau of Reclamation.

Beaverhead County appreciates the MCEP Bridge Program and asks for your support.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "C. Thomas Rice". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

C. Thomas Rice  
Beaverhead County Commissioner