

East Rosebud off to good start

By Eleanor Guerrero
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U.S. Senators Jon Tester and Steve Daines' bipartisan bill to designate portions of the East Rosebud Creek as "wild and scenic" passed out of the U.S. Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources and is now heading to the Senate floor. The Montana made legislation will preserve the free-flowing condition of the East Rosebud Creek under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act.

Frank Anninghofer, of Friends of the East Rosebud, spoke recently of the bill's status to save the East Rosebud. "We are back in the game. The new Senate Bill 501 'The East Rosebud Wild & Scenic Rivers Act' passed the Senate Committee today unanimously."

"When Montanans work together, we get things done and this is a great example of on-the-ground collaboration," Senator Jon Tester said. "Montanans know we

need to protect the East Rosebud for our kids and grandkids—and we are one step closer to making that a reality."

Anninghofer said, "After our bills had expired (again) at the end of the last Congress our two Senators were quick to reintroduce the Senate bill on March 2nd. Senator Tester has introduced Bill 501 with Senator Daines as an initial co-sponsor. Senator Daines spoke in favor of our Bill in today's business meeting of the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources. S.501 passed unanimously."

"Protecting the East Rosebud Creek is important to the local community and ensures future generations can enjoy it," Daines stated. "I'm looking forward to making this Montana's first wild and scenic designation in over 30 years"

The bill designates two sections, totaling 20 miles, of the creek that run entirely though Forest Service land. East Rosebud Creek originates in the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness and flows out to

the prairie where it joins the Yellowstone River just west of Columbus. No private land will be impacted by this legislation.

In 1968, Congress passed the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act to preserve rivers with cultural and recreational value in their free-flowing condition for present and future generations.

Less than one-half of one percent of Montana's approximately 170,000 miles of river is designated as "wild and scenic."

The next step will be vote on the Senate floor, most likely as part of a package of bills. On the House side the Friends must wait for a new U.S. Representative to be elected by Montanans. Anninghofer said, "Hopefully our new Congressman can be convinced to introduce a House Bill for the East Rosebud. If you go to any of the campaign events you may want to talk to the candidates about the East Rosebud. Ask them if they will support it and soon."