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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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HRDC Secures \$5 Million for New Youth Behavioral Health Campus, Transfers Ownership to YBGR

BELGRADE, MT – HRDC, Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch (YBGR), and Lighthouse Ranch announce that ownership of the Lighthouse Ranch campus transferred to YBGR in September 2026. The transfer marks a major milestone in the effort to expand behavioral health care for Southwest Montana youth and families.

The project responds to an urgent need to prevent youth suicide and expand access to care close to home. A 2025 Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services report found that Montana's suicide rate among youth ages 10–17 consistently exceeded twice the national rate. For families in Gallatin and Park counties and across Southwest Montana, Lighthouse Ranch will expand options for treatment and support when young people need them most.

HRDC helped move the project from a community vision toward a permanent resource by acquiring the property, providing project management, and securing and stewarding \$5 million in funding. That support is part of the \$6.5 million project partners have raised toward an \$8.5 million campaign to secure the property, complete renovations, and expand services.

The campus includes more than 30 acres and 10 buildings near Belgrade. YBGR now owns the property and leads operations and the next phase of development.

"Youth suicide is an urgent concern in our communities, and families cannot afford to wait for more care close to home," said Heather Grenier, HRDC President/CEO. "We knew this campus could fill a critical gap, but it would take more than a shared vision to make it happen. HRDC took on the early risk of acquiring the property and brought partners and funding together so experienced providers can build the services young people need."

When the former Bootstrap Ranch property became available in 2024, HRDC worked alongside YBGR, the Gallatin Behavioral Health Coalition, Gallatin County, and community partners to advance the acquisition. Liberty Place made the purchase possible by selling the property to HRDC for \$4 million below its appraised value. Significant project support also came from Gallatin County, Bozeman Health, Yellowstone Club Community Foundation, Dennis & Phyllis Washington Foundation, the Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch Foundation, as well as many other private foundations and individual donors.

“From the beginning, Lighthouse Ranch has been about bringing people together around a shared vision for children and families,” said Kirsten Smith, Executive Director of Lighthouse Ranch. “Today’s announcement reflects years of collaboration and generosity, and we’re proud to see Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch carry that work forward.”

YBGR brings 70 years of experience serving Montana youth with mental and behavioral health needs. It already provides outpatient and community-based services to approximately 80 young people in the Gallatin Valley.

“This community has spent years building something remarkable, and we’re honored to carry that work forward,” said Mike Chavers, CEO of Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch. “This is the result of years of dedication from many people, and we’re grateful for the opportunity to help bring that vision into its next chapter.”

Planned renovations will bring additional services onto the campus, including short-term residential care for teens stabilizing after a crisis. Future phases are expected to add longer-term residential treatment, day services, recreational therapy, educational programming, and housing for youth and members of the behavioral health workforce.

HRDC will continue stewarding the grant and foundation funding it helped secure as campus renovations move forward. With the property now in YBGR’s hands, the partners are one step closer to building more options for young people to receive care near their families and communities.

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About HRDC - HRDC is a private, nonprofit organization focused on building a better community by fighting poverty and offsetting the high cost of living in Gallatin, Park, and Meagher Counties. Our work spans a network of programs that create access to food, housing, early childhood education, transportation, energy assistance, and volunteer opportunities. Every day, we help neighbors move from crisis to stability and toward long-term well-being. To learn more about us, visit www.thehrdc.org.

About Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch - Founded in 1956, Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch is one of Montana’s leading providers of children’s mental health services. Headquartered on a 410-acre ranch west of Billings, the nonprofit serves thousands of kids and families each year through a statewide continuum of residential and community-based care. To learn more about Yellowstone Boys and Girls Ranch, visit www.ybgr.org.

About Lighthouse Ranch - Lighthouse Ranch is a community-created 501(c)(3) nonprofit helping bring a first-of-its-kind youth mental health campus to Gallatin County. Through community-based fundraising, engagement, and advocacy, Lighthouse Ranch is building the support needed to expand local care for young people and families experiencing behavioral

health crises. The campus will weave together accessible home- and community-based services with innovative post-crisis care, residential treatment, and day programs—creating a more seamless and compassionate continuum where young people and families can find help, healing, and hope close to home. To learn more about Lighthouse Ranch, visit www.lighthouse ranch.org.