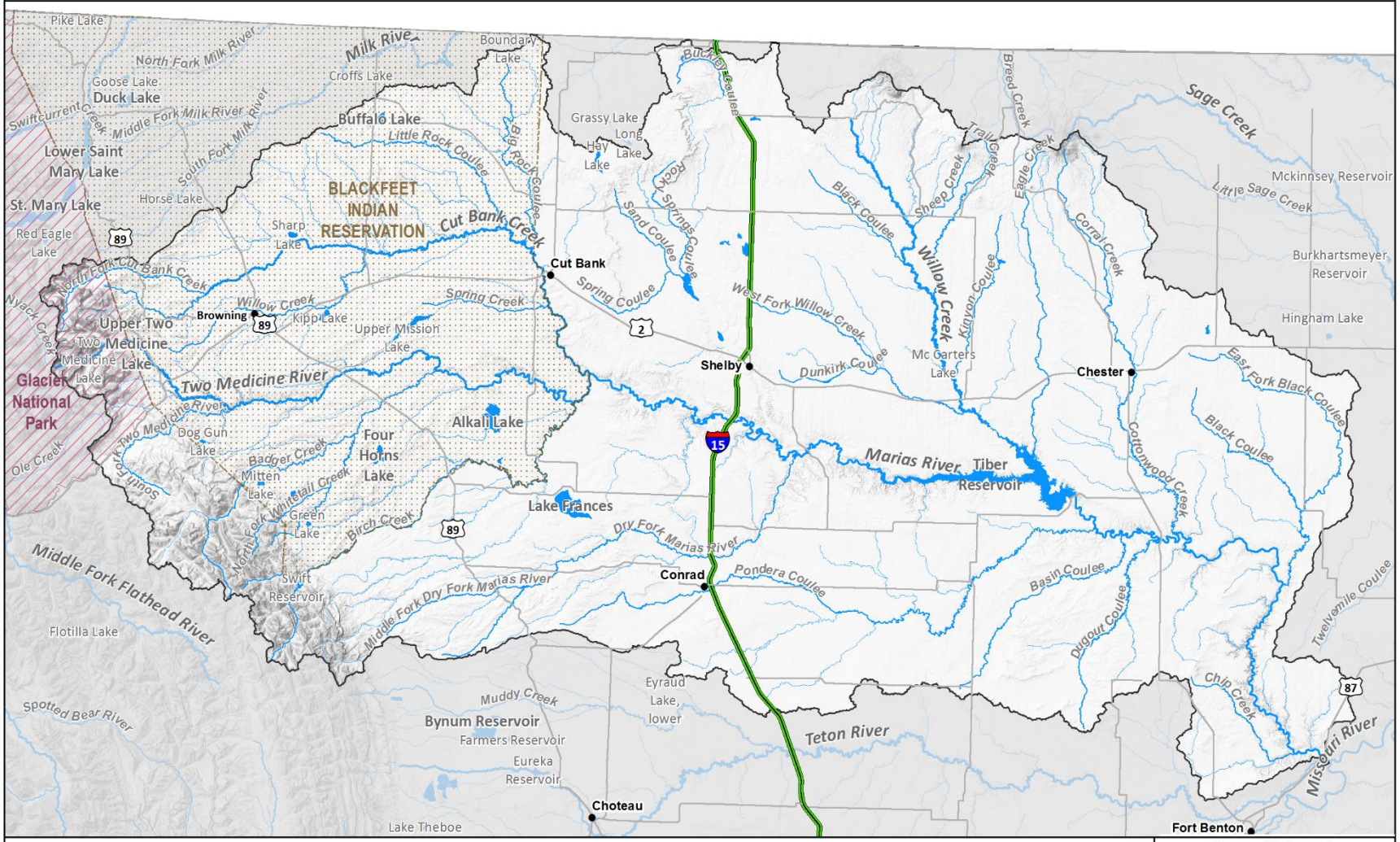
Marias River Drainage

MONTANA **FWP**



National Park Service

Tribal Lands

Drainage Boundary

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Area of Interest

Map Produced by:
ASP - Geographic Data Services
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Administrative boundaries and FWP Lands data from Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Helena, MT. Background Imagery from ESRI

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Miles

Marias River Drainage

Physical Description

The Marias River is the largest tributary of the Missouri River between Canyon Ferry and Fort Peck dams. This north-central prairie stream drains about 7,100 square miles of the Rocky Mountain Front and Lewis Mountain ranges. The Marias begins 12 miles north of Valier (elevation 3,280 feet) and flows 170 miles east and south to its confluence with the Missouri River near Loma (elevation 2,550 feet). Major tributaries include the Two Medicine River, Cut Bank, Badger, and Birch creeks. The Teton River joins the Marias about one mile upstream from the Marias River's mouth and is discussed in its own section. Within this geographic area there are 40 lakes or reservoirs, totaling 24,227 surface acres.

The upper Marias River basin is situated in the mountainous area of the Lewis and Clark National Forest and Glacier National Park. Its upper tributaries originate at an elevation of about 10,000 feet and flow out onto the prairie. There is little development in the foothill transition zone between the mountains and prairie. The Marias River originates at the confluence of the Two Medicine River and Cut Bank Creek about 35 miles east of the mountain zone. The upper mainstem reach flows 60 miles before entering the headwaters of Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell). Within this reach, the Marias flows through a rolling prairie landscape while entrenched in a well-defined valley about one mile wide. Soft shale and sandstone bluffs flank the river, rising 200 to 400 feet above the valley floor. The riparian vegetation consists of deciduous woodlands dominated by an overstory of cottonwoods and an undergrowth of willows, rose, and buffalo berry. The overall stream gradient is 5 feet/mile and varies from 11 feet/mile in the upper portion to less than 2 feet/mile in the lower end of the reach. Channel substrate consists primarily of cobbles and gravel with moderate amounts of siltation.

The lower Marias mainstem extends from Tiber Dam and flows for 78 miles to its confluence with the Missouri River. It lies in the semi-arid prairie lands at elevations between 3,000- and 4,000-feet elevation. This area is moderately dissected with drainages that collect lowland runoff chiefly from March through June. Apart from the Teton River, there are no perennial tributary streams joining the Marias River in this reach. In fact, due to water management upstream, the lower Teton River has also not been perennial during many recent years. Flow regimes of the lower Marias River are completely regulated by the operations of Tiber Reservoir. Tiber Dam was completed in 1955 and is operated by the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR). This reservoir stores the high spring runoff and augments base flows of the lower river.

Throughout its entire course, the lower Marias River is entrenched in a well-defined river valley. The valley is about 3/4 mile wide at the upper and lower ends and narrows in the middle to form a scenic canyon less than 400 yards wide. Shale and sandstone bluffs border the river and rise 200 to 400 feet above the narrow floodplain. The riparian vegetation is dominated by older cottonwood trees with a moderate undergrowth of rose and buffalo berry. Islands and lower floodplain areas support stands of willow. The floodplain throughout the lower river is in a static condition because of the regulated flows and the absence of regular flooding events. This has limited the abundance of early-aged cottonwood stands and other riparian vegetation dependent on flooding. The overall stream gradient is 3.5 feet/mile and varies only slightly from 3.0-4.5 feet/mile. Channel substrate is mostly composed of cobbles and gravel. Siltation increases in a downstream progression from Tiber Dam.

Land uses in the Marias River drainage are diverse. In the forested areas of the upper basin, a considerable portion is in designated wilderness that includes the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area and Glacier National Park. U.S. Forest Service (USFS) lands outside the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area are managed for semi-primitive recreation, livestock grazing, and minor amounts of timber harvest. A significant part of the upper basin is contained within the Blackfeet Indian Nation, where fisheries resources are managed by the Blackfeet Tribe in cooperation with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). Grain and hay production and livestock grazing are principal uses which occur in the prairie lands of the upper and lower basins. Most of the land in this area outside the Blackfeet Nation is privately owned. There are a few scattered parcels of federal land managed by either the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) or BOR. These lands are primarily located along the perimeter of Tiber Reservoir and areas adjacent to the lower Marias River. The river and surrounding lands are important recreation areas. Fishing, hunting, picnicking, and floating are popular activities associated with the river environment.

Fisheries Management

The headwaters of the Marias River include Cut Bank Creek and the Two Medicine River, which join to form the Marias River just south of Cut Bank. Cut Bank Creek, from where it leaves the Blackfeet Nation and forms the eastern reservation boundary, is primarily a cool-water stream with rainbow trout, brown trout, and mountain whitefish in its lower 19 miles, however there is historical evidence of a warmwater species assemblage comprised of sauger, goldeye, black bullhead, and river carpsucker prior to the construction of Tiber Dam. FWP has limited data on the current assemblage within this reach and will work with the tribe and agency partners to obtain updated information. The Two Medicine River flows approximately 40 miles from west to east, much of it on the Blackfeet Nation. The Two Medicine River drainage contains larger tributaries, which are Badger, Birch, and Dupuyer creeks, and consists of about 773 miles of perennial streams. Approximately 123 perennial streams are named within the Two Medicine subbasin. The headwater tributaries to the Two Medicine River are generally cold and unproductive with low densities of trout.

The headwater drainage currently supports habitat for brook trout, rainbow trout, and westslope cutthroat trout. Forty-one miles of habitat support genetically unaltered westslope cutthroat trout in 12 streams, and 33 miles of stream containing genetically altered (hybridized) westslope cutthroat trout in 11 streams. The brook trout and rainbow trout are managed as recreational fisheries with consumptive harvest, while the unaltered westslope cutthroat trout are managed to maintain or enhance their populations to reduce the risk of extirpation. The genetically altered populations are managed to maintain or enhance their populations as well, although harvest of robust populations is allowed.

The reach of the Marias River above Tiber Reservoir includes both coldwater and warmwater species and becomes primarily a warmwater fishery near Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell) where walleye are the most abundant game fish. Coldwater game fish, including rainbow trout and mountain whitefish, also inhabit this reach, but in lower numbers. Northern pike, yellow perch, and burbot are other resident fish species of interest to many anglers. In addition, nongame fish present include common carp, flathead chub, lake chub, emerald shiner, fathead minnow, longnose dace, Rocky Mountain sculpin, mountain sucker, white sucker, and longnose sucker. Walleye use the upper Marias for spawning and a segment of the population remains in the river throughout the summer. Young-of-year walleye have been sampled during the summer, indicating that the river provides rearing habitat. Larger-sized rainbow trout are

found in the river mainly in the spring and early summer. The upper Marias River has a moderate fishery, averaging 587 angler days from 2011 to 2019.

Below Tiber Dam 21.6 miles downstream to Highway 223 (Circle Bridge), the cold-water releases from the dam have altered the aquatic environment to favor coldwater salmonid species. Mountain whitefish exist in high numbers and are the most abundant game fish in the reach. Rainbow trout and brown trout occur in fair numbers, exhibiting excellent growth rates. Warmwater game fish, including sauger, walleye, northern pike, and burbot also inhabit this reach, but in lower numbers. Fourteen species of nongame fish have been sampled in this reach, including goldeye, common carp, flathead chub, lake chub, emerald shiner, western silvery minnow, fathead minnow, longnose dace, river carpsucker, shorthead redhorse, longnose sucker, white sucker, yellow perch, and Rocky Mountain sculpin. The reach has a good fishery primarily because of improved water management by the BOR, which maintained minimum instream flows. This tailwater fishery is the only trout stream within a 50-mile radius and receives a moderate amount of angler use. Because of limited natural reproduction, the population is supplemented by stocking both brown trout and rainbow trout.

The reach of the Marias River from Highway 223 (Circle Bridge) 60.4 miles downstream to the mouth contains a warmwater fishery in which sauger are the most abundant resident game fish. Walleye occur in fair numbers and are more numerous in the lower portion of the reach. Channel catfish are found in moderate numbers throughout the lower Marias. Game fish that migrate from the Missouri River into the Marias to spawn include shovelnose sturgeon, sauger, walleye, and channel catfish. Shovelnose sturgeon have been sampled throughout this reach during their spawning period, late-May through June. A moderate population of mountain whitefish, and an occasional brown trout, are the coldwater game fish found throughout the lower river. Sizes of sauger and walleye are about average for Montana river populations. The sizes reported for shovelnose sturgeon surpass most other records and underscore the value of this high-quality population. Sixteen resident nongame fish species have been sampled in the lower Marias River, including goldeye, common carp, flathead chub, lake chub, emerald shiner, plains minnow, western silvery minnow, fathead minnow, longnose dace, river carpsucker, shorthead redhorse, longnose sucker, white sucker, mountain sucker, stonecat, and Rocky Mountain sculpin. Blue sucker, smallmouth buffalo, bigmouth buffalo, and freshwater drum are migratory species found in the river during their spawning seasons but reside in the Missouri River during the rest of the year. This reach of the Marias River, especially the lower six miles, receives intensive angling pressure during the spring spawning season (April through mid-July). During the rest of the season, there is a moderate amount of angler use. The entire reach below Tiber Dam to the mouth averaged 3,965 angler days per year from 2011 to 2019.

Both Lake Frances and Tiber Reservoir support fisheries where anglers focus angling on walleye, yellow perch, and northern pike. Fisheries monitoring is focused on these species and forage species to provide an adequate forage base for the top-level predators. While Lake Frances has been stocked to maintain walleye numbers, Tiber Reservoir walleye have provided adequate recruitment through wild reproduction after stocking that occurred back in the early 1970s and again in 1986 and 1988. The frequency of stocking in Lake Frances is being evaluated to provide high walleye growth rates and a desirable size structure. Hatchery walleye stocking may be considered for both reservoirs based on trends in forage abundance, reservoir water levels, growth, recruitment, relative weight, and reservoir wide abundance. Angler use has averaged 9,238 angler days per year on Lake Frances and 20,003 angler days on Tiber Reservoir for the 37-year period from 1982 to 2019. Creel surveys will be completed as

funding is available. Catch rates, harvest rates, angler origin, and morphometric data collection from creel surveys aid in the management of these popular fisheries. The department has developed management criteria based on long term fishery trends to maintain quality fisheries in Tiber and Lake Frances (see Special Management Issues below).

Habitat

Long-term U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) flow records are available for the Marias River near Shelby (river mile 140.6) and below Tiber Dam near Chester (river mile 80.1). The mean annual flow near Shelby for a 112-year period of record (107 years of data) from 1903 to 2021 was 878 cfs; the peak flow was recorded in 1964 at 241,000 cfs and was associated with a dam failure during a flood. The mean annual flow below Tiber Dam for a 65-year interrupted period of record (58 years of data) between 1945 to 2011 was 800 cfs. Extreme flows since Tiber Dam was completed in 1955 have ranged from a low of nearly zero to a high of 10,400 cfs. A shorter period of record (13 years) for the Marias River near the mouth at Loma between 1960 to 1972 showed a mean annual flow of 977 cfs, with a low of 45 cfs and a high of 10,800 cfs.

The largest user of water in the Marias Basin is irrigated agriculture. A total of 206,696 acre-feet or 34% of the average annual flow was consumed during 1980, a typical year. Including Tiber Reservoir, four other reservoirs in the basin have storage capacities greater than 1,000 acre-feet. All except Tiber are used primarily for irrigation. These reservoirs have an estimated total storage capacity of 1,542,158 acre-feet.

Water temperatures downstream of Tiber are also affected by the operation of the dam. Deep cold-water releases from the reservoir significantly reduced the river's summer temperatures at least 20 miles below the dam. The 7.5 MW hydroelectric generating facility added to Tiber Dam in 2005 mitigates these temperature modifications to some extent.

Special Management Issues

Blackfeet Nation Coordination

FWP continues to cooperate with the Blackfeet Fish & Wildlife Department on fisheries issues, particularly projects involving native westslope cutthroat trout on streams that traverse both Blackfeet Nation and adjacent public lands such as Badger Creek, Little Badger Creek, and Birch Creek. The long-term goal of cutthroat trout conservation in the Marias River drainage is to have approximately 20% of the historically occupied habitat restored to secure conservation populations of cutthroat trout. See Part I, 1.6.8(1) Westslope Cutthroat Trout.

Flow Modification Studies

FWP will continue to provide technical advice and work with BOR to manage flows downstream from Tiber Dam to maintain flows designed to benefit the native fish assemblage and migratory fish in the lower Marias River and in the Middle Missouri River. During high-water flows in spring 2018, mature hatchery-origin pallid sturgeon were observed in the Marias River 30.7 miles upstream of the mouth. This observation provided a potential flow template to stimulate pallid sturgeon spawning in the lower

Marias. Current research efforts are focusing on how reproductively active pallid sturgeon respond to experimental releases from Tiber Dam that mimic the shape of the natural hydrograph. The objective of this work is to work with BOR and USFWS to develop flow criteria that attracts spawning pallid sturgeon up the Marias River. Many other native species make spawning migrations from the Missouri River into the Marias River including shovelnose sturgeon, blue sucker, bigmouth buffalo, smallmouth buffalo, and sauger. These modified flows are expected to provide a benefit to species found in the mainstem Missouri River. Response to test flows will be evaluated via sampling efforts, radio telemetry, and passive integrated transponder (PIT) telemetry. Planning and development of modified flows will occur annually. Modified flows will only occur based on water availability, environmental conditions, and considerations of downstream impacts.

Fish Movement Studies

FWP works with BOR, NorthWestern Energy (NWE), Montana State University, BLM, and USFWS to conduct telemetry (PIT and radio) studies on the lower Marias River. These efforts monitor habitat use, migration patterns, and reproductive timing of important species as they relate to environmental and biotic conditions in the mainstem Missouri River and larger tributaries such as the Marias, Teton and Judith rivers. These efforts will continue into the foreseeable future with additional radio and PIT tags implanted into various fish species and additional stations installed along the river corridor. Radio and PIT telemetry will play a vital role in pallid sturgeon recovery efforts. Both tools will allow for FWP to identify spawning locations, describe spawning habitat, and are vital for evaluating the response of reproductive pallid sturgeon to the flow modification studies described above.

Larval Drift Studies

A pallid sturgeon spawning event in the Marias River has the potential to result in natural recruitment for the first time in the past 60 years. This hypothesis will be tested in the next four years by conducting larval releases of hatchery origin pallid sturgeon in the Marias River. Larval releases will occur over multiple years to examine a range of Missouri and Marias River discharges and water temperatures on the dispersal rate and dispersion of drifting larvae. Following release FWP will monitor the drift rates and dispersion of free embryos, conduct beam trawling to look for young-of-year, and look for any survivors during future sampling efforts.

Sicklefin Chub and Sturgeon Chub

Sturgeon chub were petitioned to be listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2016 and a 90-day finding in 2017 indicated that listing might be warranted. USFWS has begun a Species Status Assessment (SSA) with a 12-month finding expected in 2023. Since 2019, FWP has collected additional data for sturgeon chub and sicklefin chub to inform the USFWS SSA. Sturgeon chub have been sampled in the lower 2 miles of the Marias River, which represents the furthest upstream they have been sampled in the Missouri River basin. Management direction for this species will depend on the outcome of the SSA, however FWP will play a vital role in keeping sicklefin chub and sturgeon chub from becoming listed under ESA or will assist recovery efforts should they become listed.

Blue Sucker Investigations

As with many long-lived native species in this reach, blue sucker populations are comprised of old, larger sized fish, which is indicative of limited recruitment over several years. Very little is known about blue sucker early life history and FWP staff rarely see blue sucker under 24-inches in length. It is known that spawning blue sucker utilize the Marias, Teton, and Judith rivers during the spawning season. Not much is known about the fate of fertilized embryos or the subsequent larvae, young-of-year, or juveniles. A research project that looks to address these knowledge gaps and others will be pursued in the next few years.

Roving Creel Survey

The Missouri River is an important recreational fishery, and Marias River provides seasonal angling opportunities for several game fish including shovelnose sturgeon, channel catfish, sauger, smallmouth bass, and walleye. FWP conducts a roving creel survey of the entire reach, including the lower 1 mile of the Marias River, from April through October every four years. This creel survey is funded by NWE and provides important information regarding angler catch rates, trends in river usage, trends in angler satisfaction, and angler demographics. This survey will occur next in 2023.

Tailwater Trout Stocking Evaluation

The Marias River below Tiber Dam is currently the only river in Montana that is stocked with hatchery trout. The reasons for stocking include limited recruitment by wild fish and as a means to alleviate predation on wild juvenile trout. FWP will assess the need for continued stocking and identify necessary changes to stocking efforts, identify potential habitat improvements, and continue to adipose clip hatchery-origin trout to determine any benefit the current hatchery augmentation has for the tailwater trout fishery.

Tiber Reservoir Habitat Improvements

FWP will continue to artificially improve spawning habitat for forage fish within Tiber Reservoir through the Pines for Perch habitat project. Additionally, evaluation of improving shoreline vegetation will be pursued. This may include coordinating with BOR to manipulate reservoir elevations to improve the establishment of shoreline macrophytes.

Swift Reservoir Fishery Establishment

FWP will coordinate with the Blackfeet Nation Fish & Wildlife Department to develop a management plan that identifies shared values and long-term goals for Swift Reservoir. Road access to Swift Reservoir lies on the Blackfeet Nation while the southern boundary of the reservoir is on Pondera County and USFS land. This split jurisdiction has led to no management action on Swift Reservoir since the late 1970s. In coordinating with the Blackfeet Nation Fish & Wildlife Department, new recreational and conservation opportunities are in development. Future goals may include the addition of Arctic grayling and burbot and the improvement of recreational access to the reservoir.

Upper Marias River Sampling and Habitat Improvement

FWP has limited fisheries data above Tiber Reservoir. In the coming years, FWP will establish a long-term monitoring site above Tiber Reservoir to evaluate and assess the status of the fishery and identify strategies to improve species composition and relative abundance. The department will also Identify opportunities for habitat or access improvements and build partnerships with agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), Blackfeet Nation, and landowners to implement habitat improvements.

Upper Marias Tributary Monitoring

FWP plans to collaborate with the Blackfeet Nation to complete baseline monitoring for the South Fork Two Medicine, Cut Bank Creek, Badger Creek, North Fork Birch Creek, and Birch Creek. As drainages that have split jurisdiction or downstream impacts to FWP managed waterbodies, coordinating management action will improve long-term goal development for the recreational and conservation fisheries. Minimal population or habitat monitoring has occurred on these waterbodies. Establishing initial baselines will allow for the development of future habitat and fishery goals and projects.

Walleye Fisheries Management

Tiber Reservoir and Lake Frances hold highly valued walleye fisheries. To improve management of the fisheries and meet angler expectations, FWP developed management goals based on long term monitoring data. These goals will provide clearer insight on performance of the fishery in relation to angler satisfaction. Ideally, the utilization of these goals will lead to better discussions on abiotic and biotic factors that drive ecosystem dynamics. The three metrics that will be used are proportional stock density (PSD), relative abundance, and relative weight (W_r). These goals are flexible in nature and may change through additional public input. Tools to help achieve these goals include but are not limited to: stocking, harvest regulations, reservoir elevation management, forage fish management, and habitat improvement. Walleye goals for Tiber Reservoir and Lake Frances are listed in the tables below.

FISHERIES MANAGEMENT DIRECTION FOR THE MARIAS RIVER DRAINAGE

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
Cut Bank Creek – from the Blackfeet Reservation boundary to the mouth	19 miles	Rainbow trout, Brown trout, Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild/ Hatchery	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
		Mountain whitefish (N), Burbot (N), Walleye	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 75 cfs.					
South Fork Two Medicine River and important tributaries – headwaters to Blackfeet Reservation boundary	15.5 miles	Rainbow trout, Brook trout	Wild	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest. Promote harvest.
		Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population to reduce extirpation risk. Manage to prevent additional hybridization.
		Mountain whitefish (N)	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
Sidney Creek	1.5 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
Woods Creek	2.4 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild/ Transfer	Conservation	Maintain population and expand densities to occupy all habitat above barrier.
Summit Creek	6.7 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
		Brook Trout	Wild	General	Monitor population and evaluate effects on westslope cutthroat trout population.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
Box Creek	5.5 miles	Brook Trout	Wild	Removal	Explore opportunities to remove non-native trout above natural bedrock barrier.
Hyde Creek	5 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild/ Transfer	Conservation	Maintain population and expand densities to occupy all habitat above barrier.
Pocket Creek	1.1 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
		Rainbow Trout	Wild	General	Monitor population and evaluate effects on westslope cutthroat trout population.
Lost Shirt Creek	3.3 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 16 cfs within South Fork Two Medicine. Evaluate sites for a major barrier to conserve westslope cutthroat trout populations. Explore opportunities for additional wild fish transfer of nonhybridized westslope cutthroat trout into Woods Creek. Explore opportunities to remove non-native trout above bedrock fish barrier and establish conservation population of westslope cutthroat trout in Box Creek. Explore opportunities for additional wild fish transfer of nonhybridized westslope cutthroat trout into Hyde Creek. Updated genetic and demographic monitoring needed for Pocket Creek.					
North Fork Little Badger Creek	1.2 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population to reduce extirpation risk. Manage to prevent additional hybridization.
North Badger Creek	20 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population to reduce extirpation risk. Monitor to ensure non-native species are not illegally introduced.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 14 cfs.					
South Badger Creek and important tributaries	10.9 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest. Prevent competition or hybridization with westslope cutthroat trout.
Elbow Creek	4.7 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population to reduce extirpation risk.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
Muskrat Creek	4 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population to reduce extirpation risk. Monitor to ensure non-natives do not ascend barrier at high magnitude flows.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 40 cfs in South Badger Creek. Explore opportunities for genetic rescue of westslope cutthroat trout population in Muskrat Creek. Explore opportunities to establish westslope cutthroat trout conservation population in fishless 5.2-mile headwater reach of South Badger Creek above Crucifixion Falls.					
Badger Creek and important tributaries-from confluence of North and South Badger creeks to Blackfeet Reservation boundary	6.5 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout, Westslope cutthroat trout hybrids	Wild/ Hatchery	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
Lonesome Creek	1.2 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild/ Transfer	Conservation	Maintain population and expand densities to occupy all habitat above barrier.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 60 cfs in Badger Creek. Explore opportunities to expand westslope cutthroat trout population to fishless 3.5-mile headwater reach above bedrock slide within Lonesome Creek					
North Fork Birch Creek	5 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Explore opportunities to establish westslope cutthroat trout conservation population in headwaters.					
Middle Fork Birch Creek	5 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Explore opportunities to establish westslope cutthroat trout conservation population in headwaters.					
South Fork Birch Creek	5.3 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain population and expand densities to occupy all habitat above barrier.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
		Brook trout	Wild	Suppression	Monitor population and if determined that brook trout are negatively influencing westslope cutthroat trout, evaluate opportunities for suppression or removal.
Habitat needs and activities: Explore opportunities to expand westslope cutthroat trout conservation population in Phone, Crazy, My, and upper South Fork Birch Creek above waterfall barriers.					
Swift Reservoir and important tributaries	450 acres	Rainbow trout, Rainbow x cutthroat trout hybrids	Wild	General	Marginal fishery with low fishing pressure and split jurisdiction with the Blackfeet Nation. Maintain wild population for a recreational fishery with some consumptive harvest. Evaluate establishing additional native fish species in collaboration with the Blackfeet Nation.
Phillips Creek	5 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Explore opportunities to establish westslope cutthroat trout conservation population in 4.2-mile fishless reach above waterfall barrier.					
Birch Creek – Swift Reservoir to Highway 358	43 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout, Walleye	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
		Burbot (N)	Wild	General	Maintain or enhance recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 64 cfs.					
North Fork Dupuyer Creek	10.5 miles	Brook trout	Wild	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
		Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance population to reduce extirpation risk. Monitor to ensure hybrids do not ascend barrier at high magnitude flows.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 12 cfs. Evaluate possible modification of barrier to maintain isolation at all flows.					
Middle Fork Dupuyer Creek	0.6 miles	Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
South Fork Dupuyer Creek	8.8 miles	Brook trout	Wild	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
		Westslope cutthroat trout (N)	Wild	Conservation	Maintain or enhance populations to reduce extirpation risk.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 6 cfs.					
Dupuyer Creek	37.4 miles	Brook trout, Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Manage as recreational fishery with consumptive harvest.
		Mountain whitefish (N)	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 12 cfs. Identify opportunities for improving streambank health.					
Lake Frances	3,618 acres	Walleye	Hatchery/ Wild	General	Manage for consumptive harvest based on monitoring data. Continue to evaluate the contribution of walleye plants and adjust if necessary to maintain a balance with the forage base. Manage for goals of: 5 to 9 walleye/net 30 to 60 PSD W_r >90 and no less than 85
		Northern pike, Burbot (N)	Wild	General	Manage for a consumptive harvest.
		Yellow perch	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels to provide a major component of the forage base and contribute to recreational fishery. Prohibit as a species in any fishing contest to optimize forage reproductive potential.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
		Rainbow trout	Wild	General	Manage as an occasional species available for a consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Manage forage base using the forage species currently present.					
Marias River – confluence of Two Medicine River & Cut Bank Creek to the headwaters of Tiber Reservoir	60 miles	Rainbow trout, Northern pike	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery for consumptive harvest.
		Mountain whitefish (N)	Wild	General	Maintain populations within historic levels.
		Burbot (N)	Wild	General	Maintain populations within historic levels.
		Walleye	Wild	General	Maintain a recreational fishery for consumptive harvest and maintain access for adfluvial spawning populations within historic levels.
		Yellow perch	Wild	General	Maintain populations within historic levels with some consumptive harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 200 cfs.					
Tiber Reservoir (Lake Elwell)	14,842 acres	Walleye	Wild	General	Manage for a consumptive harvest with an opportunity for a trophy fish. Manage based on monitoring data. Emphasize natural recruitment. Manage for goals of: 2.5 to 4.5 walleye/net 30 to 60 PSD W_r >85 and no less than 80
		Yellow Perch	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels and provide a major component of the forage base and contribute to recreational fishery.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
		Cisco	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels and provide a major component of the forage base for large predatory species in Tiber.
		Lake trout	Wild	General	Manage for a consumptive harvest.
		Northern pike	Wild	General	Manage for a consumptive harvest with the potential for a trophy fish.
		Burbot (N)	Wild	General	Manage for a consumptive harvest.
		Rainbow trout	Hatchery/ Wild	General	Manage as an occasional species available for consumptive harvest.
		Shovelnose sturgeon (N)	Wild	General	Maintain existing small population present. Consider potential for reestablishing a larger population.
Marias River – Tiber Dam to Highway 223 (Circle Bridge)	21.6 miles	Brown trout, Rainbow trout	Wild/ Hatchery	General	Maintain a recreational fishery with some consumptive harvest.
		Mountain whitefish (N)	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
		Burbot (N), Walleye, Northern pike	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 500 cfs. Examine how spring pulses for native warm water species impacts salmonid spawning substrate.					
Marias River – Highway 223 (Circle Bridge) to mouth	60.4 miles	Sauger (N)	Wild	Restrictive Regulations	Maintain and enhance the population while maintaining a recreational fishery with some consumptive harvest.
		Mountain whitefish (N)	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.

Water	Miles/acres	Species	Recruitment Source	Management Type	Management Direction
		Shovelnose sturgeon (N)	Wild	General	Maintain spawning run population within historic levels.
		Walleye, Channel catfish (N) Burbot (N), Brown trout	Wild	General	Maintain population within historic levels.
		Smallmouth bass	Wild	General	Maintain existing population levels if no observed impacts to native species.
Habitat needs and activities: Maintain habitat and instream flows of 560 cfs. Conduct experimental flow releases in the spring to evaluate migratory spawning response of native species including pallid sturgeon, shovelnose sturgeon, bigmouth buffalo, smallmouth buffalo, and blue sucker.					
Private/public ponds with public access		Trout Warmwater species	Hatchery/ Wild	General	Maintain existing pond fisheries available to the public for harvest.
Habitat needs and activities: Enhance structure in ponds when possible and needed. Seek additional opportunities.					