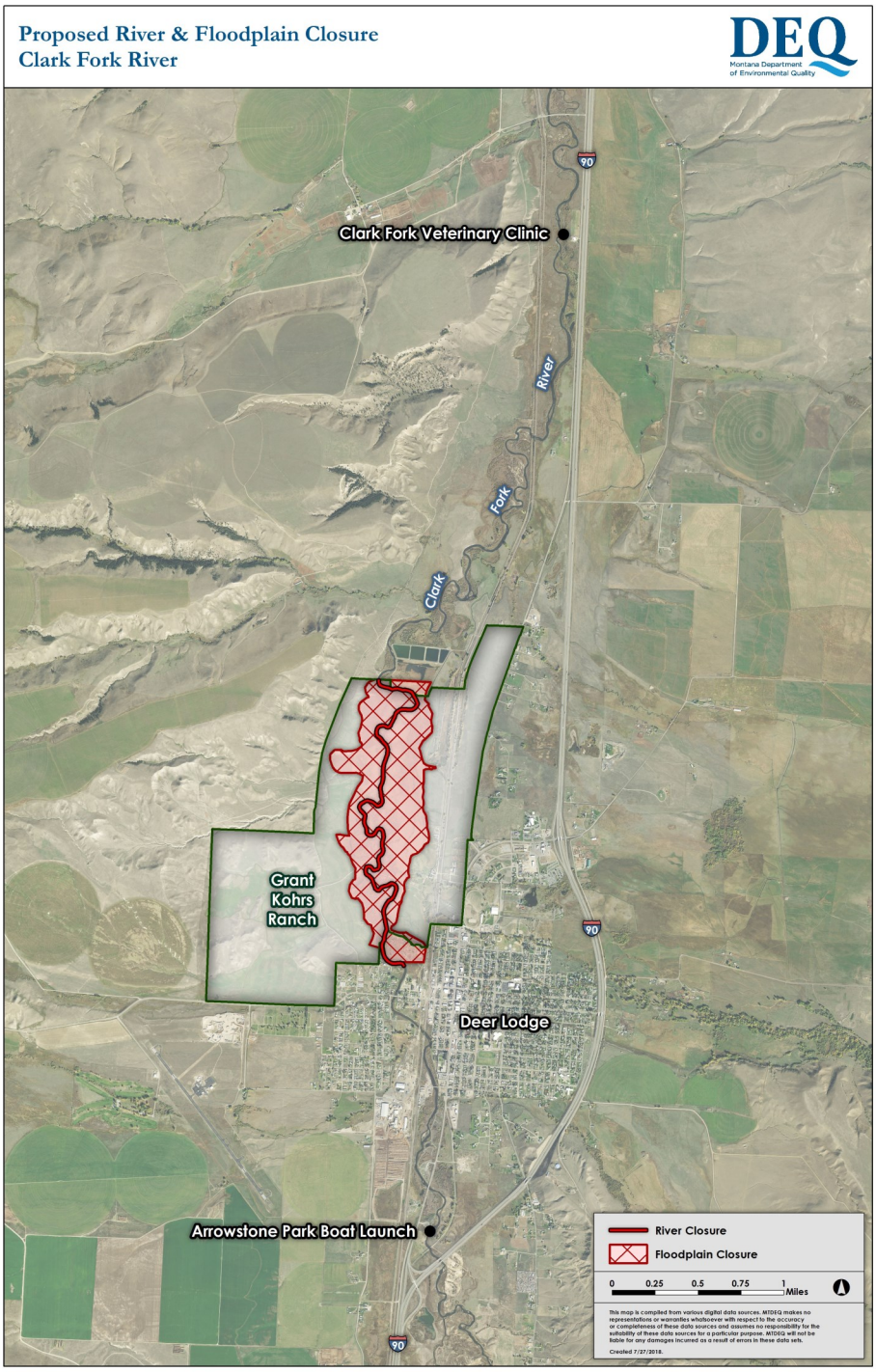
Clark Fork River Closure for DEQ Cleanup of Grant-Kohrs Ranch

Clark Fork River Milltown Reservoir Superfund Site



The Department of Environmental Quality is conducting a cleanup project to remove contaminated soils in the streambanks and historic floodplain within the Upper Clark Fork River drainage. The next phase of this project involves the area in and around Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site. DEQ will begin cleanup in October 2018.

Public safety is a concern during the construction period due to heavy equipment working in the area. DEQ is requesting a river closure from October 2018 to October 2020 to protect the public while allowing the cleanup work to occur. DEQ is requesting that approximately 2.6 river miles of the Clark Fork River be closed to all public occupation and recreation including, but not limited to, floating, swimming, wading, and boating through the Grant-Kohrs Ranch (see map).

DEQ will conduct outreach to the recreational communities of Deer Lodge, Butte, Helena and Missoula to keep the public aware of the closures. This will include signs at Arrowstone Park and closer to the Grant-Kohrs Ranch. DEQ will publicize the closure on its website as well as through local advertising, posters, social media and at community events.

SAFETY HAZARDS

Temporary bridges crossing the Clark Fork River and temporary dams are impassable to floaters. Portage would be extremely dangerous and will not be allowed due to a National Park Service Floodplain Closure.

Excavators removing tailings from the banks of the Clark Fork present a hazard to floaters. Large equipment operators have limited visibility and may not see people within reach of the swinging excavator arm.

During excavation, the banks may be steepened, the floodplain may be rough and sloughing can be dangerous to untrained personnel.

Excavations such as dewatering trenches present hazards to people walking across the site even when equipment is not present. These trenches can be slippery and have unknown depths as well as unstable banks.

The DEQ requires strict adherence to health and safety plans from its construction contractors. These health and safety plans include site security, site access restrictions, and extensive safety training. Allowing the public access to a construction site puts the public and site workers in danger.

For More Information: **deq.mt.gov/Land/fedsuperfund/cfr**

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