

Aquatic Conservation Focus Areas in Greatest Need (Tier I)

Middle Missouri River (540 River Miles)

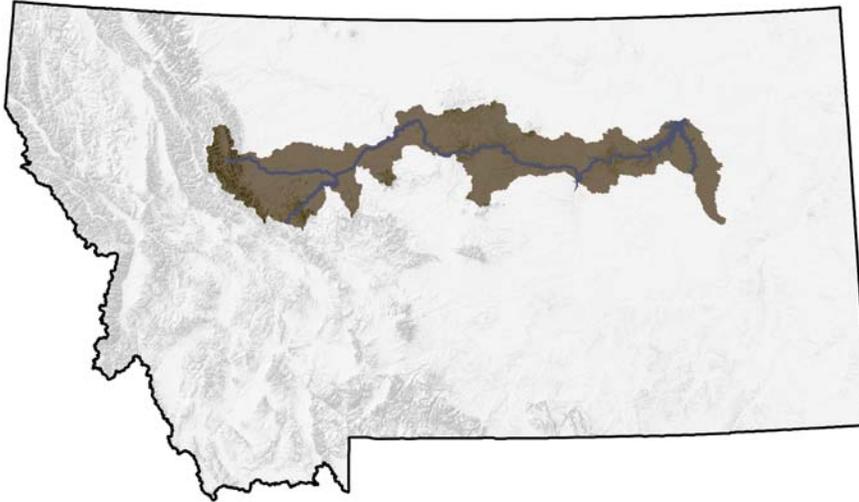


Figure 35. Middle Missouri River and Tributaries Focus Area

Once the Missouri River reaches the confluence with Hardy Creek, it becomes wide and slow for the next 60 miles and then turns into whitewater as it flows over the falls at Great Falls. Although dams have effectively covered the falls, the original cascade posed a tremendous obstacle for Lewis and Clark. From here downstream for more than 200 miles to the Fort Peck Reservoir is the longest free-flowing section of the entire Missouri River. One hundred and fifty miles of this stretch has been designated as Wild and Scenic and flows through cottonwood forests and canyons.

Associated Habitats

Habitat Type	Habitat Tier	Acres	Miles
Intermountain Valley Streams	II		2,170
Lowland Lakes	III	281,756	
Lowland Reservoirs	III	4,505	
Mixed Source Rivers (Intermountain and Prairie Flow)	II		438
Mountain Lakes	III	1,139	
Mountain Reservoirs	III	1,445	
Mountain Streams	I		2,289
Prairie Rivers	II		148
Prairie Streams	I		8,909

Associated Species of Greatest Conservation Need (Tier I Species)

There are a total of 63 aquatic species that are found within the Middle Missouri River and Tributaries Focus Area. Tier I species are listed below. All associations can be found in Table 38.

Fish: Pallid Sturgeon, Paddlefish, Sturgeon Chub, Sicklefin Chub, Blue Sucker, Burbot, and Sauger

Conservation Concerns & Strategies

Conservation Concerns	Conservation Strategies
Culverts, dams, irrigation diversions, and other instream barriers that fully or partially impede fish movement and reduce connectivity of habitat	Removal or modification of barriers in a manner that restores fish passage to ensure full migratory movement
Modification and degradation of stream channels caused by various construction or land management practices	Restoration of stream channels or streambanks to a condition that simulates their natural form and function
Riparian vegetation effected by range and forest management practices and streamside residential development (such activities destabilize streambanks, increase sediment inputs, reduced shading, and remove woody debris)	Support government and private conservation activities that encourage and support sustainable land management practices in riparian areas
	Modification of riparian management practices such that riparian vegetation is allowed to recover
	Develop statewide riparian best management principles
Entrainment of juvenile and adult fishes by irrigation diversions or other water intakes	Screening or modification of irrigation diversions or other water intakes in a manner that prevents entrainment of fishes
Alterations of the quantity or timing of stream flows, causing dewatering or unnatural flow fluctuations that diminish the quantity or quality of essential habitats	Implementation of various water conservation or flow management practices that restore essential habitats and simulate the natural hydrograph
	Protect Instream flow reservations

Water chemistry problems that arise due to municipal discharge, irrigation return water, and other sources	Work with municipal government and private landowners to reduce point source pollutants
Unnatural hydrograph and water temperatures associated with the presence and operations of large dams	Work with appropriate authorities to restore hydrograph that mimics the natural regime
Non-native fish species	Support activities to promote natural habitats that support native species