

Environmental Assessment for the Conservation of Native
Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Reservoir Creek by Construction
of a Wooden Fish Barrier
Draft Environmental Assessment



10 February 2022
Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Region 3
1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718



**MONTANA FISH,
WILDLIFE & PARKS**

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Executive Summary

Since 1900, Westslope Cutthroat Trout *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi* (WCT) in the upper Missouri River basin (Upper Missouri) have been reduced to less than 5% of the habitat they once occupied. The primary cause of this decline is competition, predation, and hybridization with nonnative trout; all extant WCT populations not isolated from non-native trout will eventually be extirpated. In order to ensure the long-term persistence of this species, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) has established a goal of restoring the species back to 20% of its historically occupied habitat in each of the nine Upper Missouri sub-basins. Over the past decade, 18 projects to protect WCT from non-native trout were implemented in 5 sub-basins that increased WCT distribution by 250 miles; however, about 100 miles of genetically unaltered WCT were also lost during that period. The immediate priority must be to protect all remaining unaltered, at-risk populations of WCT (Jaeger et al. 2022).

In the Beaverhead River sub-basin, Reservoir Creek is one of seven remaining unaltered populations of WCT, and one of three remaining unaltered populations which is still unprotected (Jaeger et al. 2022). ~~Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)~~ proposes to construct a wooden barrier in Reservoir Creek on private land that will protect 5.3 miles of habitat for this unaltered population of WCT. Once protected, fish in Reservoir Creek can be used to repopulate future projects which will bring WCT closer to the overall goal of 20% of their historic distribution and ensure the long-term self-sustaining persistence of the subspecies in its historical range.

Environmental Assessments (EA) are a requirement of the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) which require state agencies to consider the environmental, social, cultural, and economic effects of proposed actions. This EA considers potential consequences of two alternatives to conserve fish in Reservoir Creek.

1. Alternative 1: No Action

2. Alternative 2 (Preferred): Conservation of Native Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Reservoir Creek by Construction of a wooden fish barrier

Alternative 2 is the preferred alternative. It would have short-term, minor effects on wildlife, recreation, and vegetation. This alternative would be highly beneficial to WCT and would be a substantial contribution to the long-term conservation of the species in the Beaverhead River sub-basin. MEPA requires public involvement and opportunity for the public to comment on projects undertaken by the act's agencies.

A 30-day public comment period will extend from February 10 to March 12, 2022. Interested parties should send comments to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks – Region 3
c/o Reservoir Creek Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation
1400 South 19th Ave
Bozeman, MT 59718
Email: rkreiner@mt.gov

1 PROPOSED ACTION and BACKGROUND

1.1 Type of Proposed Action

Conservation Action for Westslope Cutthroat Trout (WCT)

1.1.1 Agency Authority for the Proposed Action

Montana state law provides Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) with the authority for implementation of fish management and restoration projects (MCA § 87-1-702; § 87-1-201[9][a]). In addition, Montana state law authorizes FWP to manage wildlife, fish, game and nongame animals to prevent the need for listing under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and listed, sensitive, or species that are candidates for listing under the ESA must be managed in a manner that assists in the maintenance or recovery of the species (MCA§ 87-5-107).

Planning documents and strategies developed by agencies and collaborating entities also provide official justification for the proposed project (Table 1). These include conservation agreements among stakeholder groups, state and federal laws, and agency plans designed to conserve, secure and protect WCT within the Upper Missouri River basin (i.e., restore WCT to 20% of historic range).

Table 1. Planning and strategy documents with relevance to conservation of WCT in Reservoir Creek

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Citation</i>	<i>Website</i>
Montana Cutthroat Trout Steering Committee (MCTSC)	Memorandum of Understanding and Conservation Agreement for Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Montana (2007)	www.fwp.mt.gov
FWP	Statewide Fisheries Management Plan (2019)	www.fwp.mt.gov
FWP	Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation Strategy for Missouri River Headwaters of Southwest Montana	Available by Request

1.1.2 Estimated Commencement Date

The estimated commencement date is July-September 2022.

1.1.3 Name and Location of the Project

Reservoir Creek Fish Barrier for Native Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation.

Reservoir Creek is in the Beaverhead River sub-basin and is a tributary to Grasshopper Creek. The project is in Beaverhead County, approximately 25 air miles southwest of Dillon, Montana (Figure 1). The legal description is T8S, R13W, section 15.

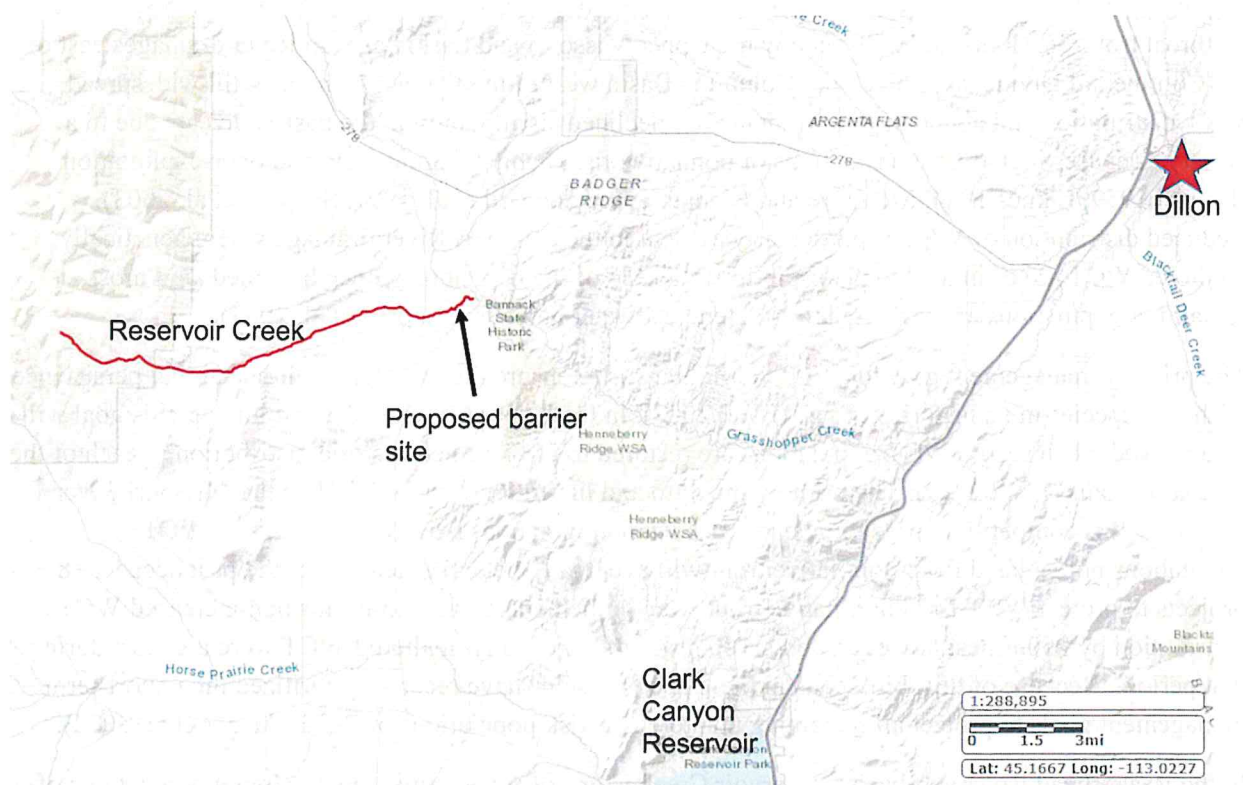


Figure 1. Map of Reservoir Creek, 25 miles southwest of Dillon MT, with proposed site of fish barrier.

1.1.4 Project Size (Affected Area)

1. Developed/residential	0 acres
2. Industrial	0 acres
3. Open space/woodlands/recreation	0 acres
4. Wetlands/riparian	approximately 100-125 linear feet of stream
5. Floodplain	0 acres
6. Irrigated cropland	0 acres
7. Dry cropland	0 acres
8. Forestry	0 acres
9. Rangeland	0 acres

The project area includes approximately 100-125 linear feet of Reservoir Creek and will provide benefit for WCT in 5.3 miles of stream.

2 Narrative Summary of the Proposed Action and the Purpose of the Proposed Action

2.1 Summary and Background

Westslope Cutthroat Trout, *Oncorhynchus clarkii lewisi* (WCT) were first described by the Lewis and Clark Expedition in 1805 near Great Falls, Montana, and are recognized as one of 14 interior subspecies of Cutthroat Trout (Behnke 2002). The historical range of WCT includes Idaho, Montana, Washington,

Wyoming, and Alberta, Canada. The original distribution of WCT was the greatest of all sub-species of cutthroat trout. In Montana, WCT occupy the Upper Missouri and Saskatchewan River drainages east of the Continental Divide, and the Upper Columbia Basin west of the Divide. Although still widespread, WCT distribution and abundance in Montana has declined significantly in the past 100 years due to a variety of causes including introductions of nonnative fish, habitat degradation, and over-exploitation (Hanzel 1959, Liknes 1984, McIntyre and Rieman 1995, Shepard et al. 1997, Shepard et al. 2003). Reduced distribution of WCT is particularly evident in the Missouri River drainage where genetically unaltered WCT are estimated to persist in less than 5% of the habitat they once occupied, and most remaining populations are restricted to isolated headwater habitats (Shepard et al. 2003).

The primary management goal for WCT in Montana is to ensure the long-term self-sustaining persistence of the subspecies in its historical range (FWP 2007). In the Upper Missouri River drainage, this goal will be achieved when secure WCT populations are restored to 20% of their historic distribution in each of the nine sub-basins (FWP 2019). The primary threat to and limiting factor for WCT in the Missouri River Headwaters is competition, predation, and hybridization with non-native trout; all extant WCT populations not isolated from non-native trout will eventually be extirpated. Over the past decade, 18 projects to protect WCT from non-native trout were implemented in 5 sub-basins that increased WCT distribution by 250 miles; however, about 100 miles of genetically unaltered WCT were also lost during that period. Because of this, biologists in the Upper Missouri have recently prioritized their short-term management goals to protect all remaining unaltered, at-risk populations of WCT (Jaeger et al. 2022).

In the Beaverhead River sub-basin, Reservoir Creek is one of seven remaining unaltered populations of WCT, and one of three remaining unaltered populations which is still unprotected (Jaeger et al. 2022). The population in Reservoir Creek exists in approximately 5.3 miles of stream above a seasonal intermittency barrier induced by irrigation. This has so far protected the population from non-native salmonids, but a more permanent solution is necessary. Many unaltered populations in the Upper Missouri believed to be protected by seasonal intermittency have recently been invaded by nonnative trout and have become hybridized or lost to competition with brook trout (e.g., Cottonwood Creek, Stone Creek, Buffalo Creek).

Construction of a wooden fish barrier in Reservoir Creek will secure the non-hybridized WCT by preventing upstream movement of nonnative trout. ~~Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP)~~ proposes to construct a wooden barrier in Reservoir Creek on private land that will protect 5.3 miles of habitat for unaltered WCT. Once protected, fish in Reservoir Creek can be used to repopulate future conservation projects as managers work toward the overall goal of restoring WCT to 20% of their historic distribution. This will ensure the long-term self-sustaining persistence of the subspecies within its historical range.

Currently, conservation populations ($\geq 90\%$) of WCT occupy 9.9% of their historic range within the Beaverhead sub-basin while unaltered populations (100%) of WCT occupy only 3.4%. As large-scale repopulation projects for the species are completed in the future, multiple source populations of unaltered fish are necessary as donors. Reservoir Creek WCT must be protected to ensure they can contribute to the repopulation of new streams in the Upper Missouri River basin. This project is unique compared to many other barrier construction projects in that a nonhybridized population currently resides as the only fish species upstream of a seasonal intermittency barrier. If the barrier is constructed before invasion of nonnative trout, no additional and costly restoration activities (e.g., piscicide treatments to remove nonnative trout) would be needed.

2.2 Proposed Action

The proposed action is to construct a wooden fish barrier in Reservoir Creek. This fish barrier will protect 5.3 miles of habitat for unaltered westslope cutthroat in Reservoir Creek from nonnative trout invasion. The barrier will be a treated wood structure with a 6' of drop onto a splash pad and can pass at least the 20-year hydrologic event through the structure (Figure 1) and have a lifespan of 40-50 years in Southwest Montana.

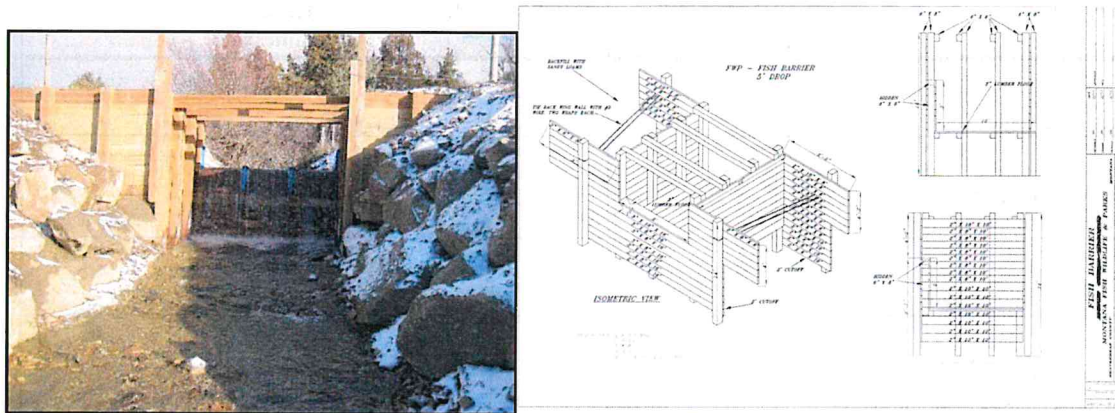


Figure 1. A 6' drop treated wood barrier on Ramshorn Creek and design for a similar 5' structure.

2.3 Project Area

The project area encompasses a 100-125 ft reach of Reservoir Creek approximately 25 miles Southwest of Dillon, MT and will protect 5.3 miles of habitat for unaltered WCT.

2.4 Duration of Project

The proposed action would occur following runoff in Reservoir Creek in summer (when the proposed site is dry) and conclude by November 2022.

2.5 Monitoring

Effectiveness of the proposed project would be determined through continued genetic and demographic monitoring of the Reservoir Creek WCT population.

2.6 List of agencies consulted:

United States Forest Service (USFS)
United States Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Montana Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

3 Environmental Review

3.1 Physical Environment

Land Resources

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic			X		Yes	1a
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would			X		Yes	1b
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or			X		Yes	1d
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes,		X				
f. Other:						

Comment 1a, 1b, 1d

If the proposed action is implemented, a barrier would be constructed across the channel of Reservoir Creek on private land. Construction activities would occur when Reservoir Creek at the proposed site is dry there is no connectivity with Grasshopper Creek. The project would be implemented based on conditions stipulated by permitting agencies as well as the use of Construction Best Management Practices (BMPs) designed to reduce erosion and sedimentation and would include but may not be limited to the following measures:

- Work will occur in the dry channel.
- Erosion control measures would be installed to control erosion and sediment release into the stream.
- Disturbed areas would be mulched and reseeded with a native plant mixture as soon as possible following construction.

3.2 Water

2. WATER Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen, or turbidity?			X		Yes	2a
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount		X				2b
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of flood		X				2c
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related		X				
f. Changes in quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. Will the project affect a designated floodplain?		X				
m. Will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations?		X				

Comment 2a

Construction will occur when the channel is dry. All required permits would be obtained prior to construction including: Montana Stream Protection Act (SPA 124), Short-Term Water Quality Standard for Turbidity (318 Authorization), and Federal Clean Water Act (401, 404) permits.

Comments 2b and 2c

The proposed action would not affect the rate or amount of surface water or flood flows; however, by design it would alter the drainage pattern by having a barrier in the stream. The barrier may create ponding, but only for a short distance and at the site of an existing diversion dam. The ponding upstream of the structure would eventually be eliminated by the accumulation of stream sediments and the new formation of a channel. This process typically takes between one and five years depending on the watershed characteristics and flow years. Once constructed, the same amount of flow would pass below the barrier as prior to construction.

3.3 Air

3. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality?			X		No	3a
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X		No	3b
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				

Comment 3a and 3b

Use of heavy equipment could impact air quality and create objectionable odors during construction in the immediate area. These impacts would be limited to when equipment is operating during construction (approximately 1-3 months). Impacts to the air from pollutants and odors are expected to be short-term and minor. The project location occurs on private land and the landowner is supportive of the project.

3.4 Vegetation

4. VEGETATION Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grasses, crops, and aquatic plants)?			X		Yes	4a
b. Alteration of plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4e
f. Will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		X				

Comment 4a

During construction there would be localized impacts to vegetation for gaining access to the construction site and at the immediate construction site. Impacts to vegetation would be limited to staging areas and ground immediately adjacent to the construction site. Access to the site will be on a previously existing two-track. Following construction, all disturbed areas would be mulched and reseeded with a native plant mix. Woody riparian species may also be planted to help stabilize banks.

Comment 4e

Temporary and localized disturbance to the ground during construction may create an environment conducive to noxious weed recruitment and growth. In addition, machinery and equipment used during the project may inadvertently carry noxious weeds to the project site. Proposed mitigation includes: 1) washing all equipment and vehicles prior to work on the construction site to ensure the removal of mud, dirt, and plant parts; 2) inspection of the project area for noxious weeds after the project is completed. If noxious weeds are found in the project area after completion, integrated weed management methods, including bagging or spraying and appropriate disposal, would be implemented. Inspections would continue for at least three years after weeds are observed.

3.5 Fish/Wildlife

5. FISH/WILDLIFE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?			X			5a
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?				X		5e
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5g
h. Will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat?		X				
i. Will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location?		X				

Comment 5a

Construction will occur when the channel is dry. However, erosion on streambanks may impact the stream during the next runoff. The area will be seeded ~~as quickly as possible~~ ^{after construction} to stabilize the bank. Implementation of BMPs and erosion control measures should make any alterations to fish habitat short term with minor to negligible impacts. This action will preserve unaltered WCT by preventing upstream access of nonnative salmonids.

Comment 5e

The goal of the proposed action is to create a migration barrier that prevents the movement of non-native trout upstream to protect the WCT population above the barrier. The action reduces the risk of extirpation of WCT in Reservoir Creek.

Comment 5g

During construction, noise levels in the immediate area would be elevated. However, the project is located on private land with abundant agricultural activities. Construction activities would occur during base flow conditions (summer/fall) after most breeding and nesting seasons and prior to most hunting seasons.

4 Human Environment

4.1 Noise/Electrical Effects

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increase in existing noise levels?			X			6a
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				

Comment 6a

During construction, there would be heavy equipment operating in the immediate area which would increase ambient noise levels. However, the landowner is supportive of the project.

4.2 Land Use

7. <u>LAND USE</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or probability of the existing land use of an area?			X			7a
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				

Comments 7a

The proposed barrier site is located on private property in an agricultural area. The landowner supports and has agreed to construction of the barrier. The barrier would not interfere with the productivity or profitability of the area.

4.3 Risks/Health Hazards

8. RISKS/HEALTH HAZARDS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X		Yes	8a
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. Will any chemical toxicants be used?		X				

Comment 8a

During construction, BMPs will be in place to minimize the effects of accidental fuel or oil spills by construction personnel.

4.4 Community Impact

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X		No	9e

Comment 9e

During mobilization and construction, there would be heavy equipment operating at the construction site and movement of equipment and materials on Reservoir Creek Road.

4.5 Public Services/Taxes/Utilities

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy resource?		X				
e. Define projected revenue sources		X				
f. Define projected maintenance costs		X				

4.6 Aesthetics/Recreation

11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?			X			11a
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and setting?		X				
d. Will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted?		X				

Comment 11a

The outcome of the proposed project is the construction of a wooden fish barrier in Reservoir Creek. The proposed barrier site is located on private land in an area that is not highly visible to the public. The landowner is supportive of the project. Any areas disturbed during construction activities would be recontoured and revegetated as soon as possible following construction.

4.7 Cultural/Historic Resources

12. <u>CULTURAL/HISTORIC RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, or paleontological importance?	X					12a
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Will the project affect historic or cultural resources?		X				12d

Comment 12a and 12d

No impact on cultural resources is expected. The site is on private land used heavily for agriculture.

5.8 Summary of Evaluation of Significance

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total).		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. Is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		X				
g. List any federal or state permits required.		X				13g

Comment 13g

The following permits would be required for the proposed project:

SPA 124 Permit—Montana Stream Protection Act (FWP)

318 Authorization—Short-term Water Quality Standard for Turbidity (Montana DEQ)

Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification (Montana DEQ)

Section 404 Permit—Federal Clean Water Act (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

5 Alternatives

5.1 Alternatives Evaluated

Alternative 1 – No Action

The no action alternative would keep Reservoir Creek seasonally vulnerable to upstream migration of non-native fish. As has been observed elsewhere in the Upper Missouri River basin and Beaverhead River sub-basins, non-native fish would eventually colonize Reservoir Creek. The establishment of non-native trout in Reservoir Creek would eventually lead to the extirpation of this unprotected population. This goes directly against conservation goals set by FWP and its partners.

Alternative 2 – Conservation of Native Westslope Cutthroat Trout in Reservoir Creek by Construction of a Wooden Fish Barrier

The proposed action involves construction of a fish barrier on Reservoir Creek that would prevent non-native trout from moving upstream into Reservoir Creek as water quality improves. The predicted benefits of Alternative 2 include:

- Protection and conservation of one of seven remaining nonhybridized WCT populations in the Beaverhead sub-basin.
- Would protect 5.3 miles of habitat for this species.
- Would preserve unique genetics of Reservoir Creek WCT to be used in the recolonization of future projects in the Upper Missouri to restore the species to approximately 20% of its historic range.
- Reduction in the risk of potential listing of WCT under the Endangered Species Act.

6 Public Participation and Comments Instructions

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this current EA, the proposed action, and alternatives:

1. Public notices provided to all the daily and weekly newspapers in the region.
2. Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks webpage: <http://fwp.mt.gov> *make smaller remove bold*
3. Draft EA's will be available at the FWP Region 3 Headquarters in Bozeman and the Dillon Area Resource Office.
4. A news release will be prepared and distributed to a standard list of media outlets interested in FWP Region 3 issues.
5. A news release posted on the FWP R3 Facebook page.

This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having limited impacts, many of which can be mitigated.

A 30-day public comment period will extend from February 10th to March 12th, 2022. Interested parties should send comments to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks – Region 3
c/o Reservoir Creek Westslope Cutthroat Trout Conservation
1400 South 19th Ave, Bozeman, MT 59405

Email: rkreiner@mt.gov

Prepared by: Ryan Kreiner

Date: 2/10/2022

7 Literature Cited

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