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# WILD & SCENIC RIVER

ELIGIBILITY REPORT

LOLO AND BITTERROOT NATIONAL FORESTS

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**AMERICAN  
RIVERS**

Life Depends on Rivers<sup>SM</sup>

## THE MONTANA HEADWATERS LEGACY ACT

Healthy rivers and clean water are critical to Montana's outdoor recreation and agricultural industries, fish and wildlife populations, and unmatched way of life.

The made-in-Montana, Montana Headwaters Legacy Act is new Wild and Scenic River legislation designed to protect Montana's river legacy. The legislation is composed of iconic streams that flow through public lands in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and Smith River System. The streams in those regions are tributaries of the iconic Yellowstone and mighty Missouri Rivers. Legislation includes segments of 17 streams totaling 336 river miles, representing less than 0.25% of Montana's 177,000 miles of streams.

Montanans for Healthy Rivers (MHR) was formed in 2010 to keep Montana's rivers clean and free-flowing for future generations. We are a broad-based coalition of Montana businesses, conservation organizations, angling and hunting groups, watershed groups, land trusts, and riverside landowners who know that clean water and free-flowing rivers are important to our economy and way of life. Given the threats that our rivers face from climate change, future dams, energy development, floodplain development, mining and potential interstate water diversion schemes, we feel that now is the time to protect the streams that Montanans value the most.

Over the past decade, MHR has conducted extensive outreach with a broad cross section of Montanans to understand their river conservation concerns and provide literacy about the national Wild and Scenic Rivers Act. We have hosted 15 formal public river forums, five business roundtables, more than 25 targeted group presentations and nearly 50 public events. Annual gatherings like the Wild Rivers Film Tour have proven to be successful mediums to educate the public about new Wild and Scenic River protection opportunities in the region. Our outreach events have taken place in Billings, Big Sky, Big Timber, Bozeman, Butte, Columbia Falls, Condon, East Rosebud Lake, Roscoe, Emigrant, Ennis, Gardiner, Helena, Kalispell, Livingston, Missoula, Ovando, Red Lodge, Rock Creek, Seeley Lake, West Glacier and Whitefish. In addition, we spent a summer conducting targeted outreach at Fishing Access Sites within the proposed designation segments of the Gallatin and Yellowstone Rivers, as well as knocking on

residential and commercial private landowner doors along these rivers. We have also engaged hundreds of business owners from international companies like Sibanye Stillwater Mining to resorts like the Yellowstone Club and Big Sky Resort to energy utilities like Northwestern Energy to brick and mortar local shops. Where relevant, we have met with agricultural producers in places like the Gardiner Basin, Boulder Valley, Madison Valley, Paradise Valley, and Stillwater Valley.

To date, the draft legislation has garnered the support of nearly 3,000 official endorsements, including more than 1,000 businesses, the chambers of commerce in Big Sky, Gardiner, Mineral County, and trade groups such as Montana Outfitters and Guides Association, Fishing Outfitters Association of Montana (representing 700 outfitters and guides) and Business for Montana Outdoors (representing 140 businesses across 20 industries). We are also proud to have the support of the Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, the Carbon, Gallatin, and Park County Commissions, the Professional Wilderness Outfitters Association and the Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Commission. A complete list of our supporters can be found on our website at [healthyriversmt.org](http://healthyriversmt.org).

The passage of the East Rosebud Wild and Scenic Rivers Act in 2018 proved that river conservation unites Montanans. Now we have a Montanan born and bred Wild and Scenic Rivers bill to protect the next generation of streams that Montanans cherish.

## WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS ACT OVERVIEW

Congress passed the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act (WSRA) in 1968 at the height of the modern dam-building era in order to ensure that the construction of new dams on rivers is balanced with the protection of select free-flowing rivers that possess nationally significant values. This landmark law is the highest form of protection for rivers in the United States. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 (Public Law 90-542) in Section 1(b) expresses congressional policy for America's rivers as follows:

*"It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational,*

*geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.”*

Wildlife biologists, John and Frank Craighead, came up with the idea for the Act while fighting the proposed Spruce Park Dam on the Middle Fork of the Flathead River in the 1950s. These days the WSRA is often applied to headwaters streams that represent most of the best remaining clean, cold and connected rivers that remain in the U.S. The WSRA protects rivers in the following major ways:

- Protects and enhances a river’s “Outstandingly Remarkable Values” (ORVs) that can include fish, wildlife, recreation, cultural attributes, scenery, geology, scenery, or other regionally significant values.
- Protects existing uses of the river including recreational activities such as fishing and boating
- Protects a river’s free-flowing character and prohibits federally licensed dams and other harmful water projects
- Establishes a 1/4-mile corridor on both sides of the river representing the zone of management focus
- Requires the creation of a comprehensive river management plan developed through a public process that addresses resource protection, land development and facilities, public use, and overall management
- Can often help leverage federal funding for improved recreation access and restoration projects

To be eligible for designation under the WSRA, a river must be free-flowing and contain at least one ORV. Free-flowing means “existing or flowing in a natural condition without impoundment, diversion, straightening, rip-rapping, or other modification of the water.” To be considered as outstandingly remarkable, a river-related value must be a unique, rare, or exemplary feature that is significant at a comparative regional or national scale. While the spectrum of resources that may be considered is broad, all values should be directly river-related.

## **CLASSIFICATION:**

Rivers are classified as wild, scenic, or recreational.

- **WILD RIVER AREAS** — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with watersheds or shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted. These represent vestiges of primitive America.
- **SCENIC RIVER AREAS** — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds still largely primitive and shorelines largely undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- **RECREATIONAL RIVER AREAS** — Those rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some impoundment or diversion in the past.

Regardless of classification, each river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System (NWSRS) is administered with the goal of protecting and enhancing the values that caused it to be designated. Designation neither prohibits development nor gives the federal government control over private property. Recreation, forestry practices, and other uses may continue.

The NWSRS currently includes 226 river segments comprising 13,413 miles of river. That translates into approximately 0.25% of the river miles in the United States. Montana currently ranks 7th in the nation with a total of 388 Wild and Scenic River miles on five river segments: East Rosebud Creek, the Upper Missouri River and the three forks of the Flathead River. This amounts to about 0.2% of the river miles in Montana. Comparatively, Idaho has 22 Wild and Scenic Rivers covering 891 river miles, Wyoming has 14 Wild and Scenic Rivers covering 434 river miles, and Oregon has 68 Wild and Scenic Rivers covering 1,917 river miles.

We envision a series of legislative efforts to build the system of protected rivers that Montanans have been asking for, starting with the Montana Headwaters Legacy Act. This will be the first of hopefully several steps to protect pristine rivers across Montana and to build awareness about the critical role these tributaries play in powering our economy and outdoor heritage.

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## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The rivers and streams of the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests have been home to Indigenous People for over 10,000 years. These Tribes include but are not limited to the Séliš (Salish), Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d’Oreille), Kootenai, Ktunaxa, Nimíipuu (Nez Perce), and Schitsu’umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Peoples, who have been stewards of these lands and waters for generations. We acknowledge that the rivers and streams identified within this report are known by many names and that their values extend far beyond what is described here. We extend our utmost gratitude and respect to those who have shared stories, place names, and other information to help us create a more well-informed report.

## INTRODUCTION

The following report contains recommendations by American Rivers for new eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests. This project was developed and managed by American Rivers, with technical support from an independent contractor, and with financial support from the Wyss Foundation and The Pew Charitable Trusts. The report was created through a combination of field data collection by Jessy Stevenson of American Rivers and independent contractor, Sam Olson; Geographical Information System analysis and mapping performed by Conservation Geography; interviews with Tribal members, paddlers, business owners, and biologists; wildlife and fisheries data, ecological and climate models, peer-reviewed literature, scientific papers, and past Wild and Scenic Rivers eligibility reports.

The Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests span a total of nearly 3.8 million acres in northwest Montana and northeast Idaho. The Lolo National Forest, covering 2.2 million acres between the Continental Divide and the Montana/Idaho border, is made up of five ranger districts and is home to nearly 1,000 named rivers and streams, including the Blackfoot River, Clark Fork River, Clearwater River, Lower Flathead River and Rock Creek. The Forest also includes the Rattlesnake and Welcome Creek Wildernesses, portions of the Scapegoat and Selway-Bitterroot Wildernesses, and four Recommended Wildernesses. The Bitterroot National Forest, covering 1.6 million acres from the Idaho panhandle to Montana’s Sapphire Mountains, is made up of four ranger districts and is home to sections of the Wild and Scenic Selway and Salmon Rivers of Idaho. The Forest also includes portions of the Anaconda-Pintler, Frank Church-River of No Return, and Selway-Bitterroot Wildernesses, as well as two Recommended Wildernesses.

These landscapes are home to some of the most pristine headwaters of the Columbia River Watershed, providing clean water, cultural resources, recreational opportunities, and irrigation to hundreds of thousands of people downstream. The expansive national forests also host a wide array of habitat types that support species including lynx, wolverine, grizzly and black bears, elk, Bull Trout, and Westslope Cutthroat Trout, among many others. They are the traditional homelands of numerous Tribes, including the Séliš (Salish), Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d’Oreille), Kootenai, Ktunaxa, Nimíipuu (Nez Perce), and Schitsu’umsh (Coeur d’Alene) Peoples, and boast a long list of significant historical sites.

American Rivers conducted an inventory and analysis of rivers and streams across the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests during the summer and fall of 2020 and 2021. Based on that field work, we recommend that the Lolo National Forest manage 28 streams, totaling 348 miles, as eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers, and that the Bitterroot National Forest manage 29 streams as eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers, totaling 290 miles.

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive determination of eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers on the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests by combining in-depth field analysis with scientific literature, datasets and models, and communications with experts in an array of fields pertaining to the ecological and cultural significance of these rivers and streams. From iconic mountain ranges and blue-ribbon trout streams to Wilderness and places steeped in cultural history and significance, the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests are truly unique. These Forests also happen to be located in a region experiencing unprecedented population growth, increased recreation, and resource use, making conservation of the area’s waterways absolutely critical. The 57 rivers and streams included in this report deserve the highest form of administrative protection and inclusion into the NWSRS to safeguard their future.

## THE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS SYSTEM

The WSRA was passed by Congress in 1968 (Public Law 90-542; 16 U.S.C. 1271 et seq.) to preserve clean, free-flowing rivers with ORVs for the enjoyment of present and future generations.

*“It is hereby declared to be the policy of the United States that certain selected rivers of the Nation which, with their immediate environments, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values, shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they and their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations. The Congress declares that the established national policy of dams and other construction at appropriate sections of the rivers of the United States needs to be complemented by a policy that would preserve other selected rivers or sections thereof in their free-flowing condition to protect the water quality of such rivers and to fulfill other vital national conservation purposes.”*

*(WSRA, October 2, 1968)*

Under the WSRA, agencies are charged with determining which rivers and streams within their jurisdiction are eligible for designation. To be considered eligible, a river or stream must be free-flowing and possess one or more ORVs. These values may include fish, wildlife, culture, recreation, geology, botany, scenery, history, literary significance, or other values that are considered outstanding within a region of comparison.

When found eligible, a river or stream is preliminarily classified as either wild, scenic or recreational, based on criteria including access and development in the river corridor.

- **Wild Rivers** – rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments and generally inaccessible except by trail, with shorelines essentially primitive and waters unpolluted.
- **Scenic Rivers** – rivers or sections of rivers that are free of impoundments, with shorelines or watersheds largely primitive and undeveloped, but accessible in places by roads.
- **Recreational Rivers** – rivers or sections of rivers that are readily accessible by road or railroad, that may have some development along their shorelines, and that may have undergone some limited impoundment or diversion in the past.

Eligible waterways may be designated Wild and Scenic through an act of Congress. Both eligible and designated Wild and Scenic Rivers must be managed to protect and enhance their ORVs. Existing uses of the river are allowed to continue, and future uses may be considered, given they do not pose a threat to water quality, the river’s free-flowing character, or protected values.

The free-flowing character of designated rivers and streams is protected from the licensing and development of hydropower projects under the WSRA, including the construction of dams, reservoirs, diversions, and other projects.

## WILD AND SCENIC ELIGIBILITY IN MONTANA

The U.S. Forest Service (USFS) is responsible for creating and updating Forest Plans which direct the management of natural resources, land, water, recreation, and other elements and activities on national forests. These plans are revised every 15 to 20 years, or so, to ensure that management practices are up-to-date and reflect the current needs of the Forest. Reviewing rivers and streams for potential inclusion as Wild and Scenic Eligible Rivers is a mandatory component of the Forest Plan revision process and requires the agency to identify ORVs associated with rivers and streams in its jurisdiction. If the USFS determines a river or stream segment to be eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS, it must then be managed to protect and enhance the stream’s water quality, free-flowing nature and ORVs.



Over the past decade, most national forests in Region 1 have conducted Forest Plan revisions. The table below shows that during recent Forest Plan revisions on four national forests in Montana, the USFS significantly increased the number of rivers and river miles found to be eligible for inclusion in the NWSRS.

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE PROTECTIONS FOR ELIGIBLE WILD AND SCENIC RIVERS IN MONTANA</b>			
<b>NATIONAL FOREST</b>	<b>WILD &amp; SCENIC ELIGIBLE RIVERS</b>	<b>WILD &amp; SCENIC ELIGIBLE RIVER MILES</b>	<b>ACRES OF RIVERSIDE LAND PROTECTED</b>
<b>CUSTER GALLATIN NATIONAL FOREST</b>			
2022 Forest Plan <sup>1</sup>	30	258	82,560
1987 Forest Plan	12	174	55,680
<b>FLATHEAD NATIONAL FOREST</b>			
2018 Forest Plan <sup>2</sup>	24	284	90,884
1986 Forest Plan	10	128	40,960
<b>HELENA - LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL FOREST</b>			
2021 Forest Plan <sup>3</sup>	45	361	115,520
1986 Forest Plan	11	114	36,480
<b>KOOTENAI NATIONAL FOREST</b>			
2015 Forest Plan <sup>4</sup>	14	150	48,000
1987 Forest Plan	5	112	35,840
<b>TOTAL FORMER PROTECTIONS</b>	38	528	168,960
<b>TOTAL NEW PROTECTIONS</b>	113	1053	336,960
<b>GAIN IN PROTECTIONS (%)</b>	<b>297%</b>	<b>200%</b>	<b>200%</b>

<sup>1</sup>ROD (Record of Decision) signed in January 2022

<sup>2</sup>ROD signed in December 2018

<sup>3</sup>ROD signed in October 2021

<sup>4</sup>ROD signed in January 2015

With a 200% increase in eligible Wild and Scenic River miles and acres of riverside land protected, and a nearly 300% increase in eligible Wild and Scenic River segments, it is clear that the USFS is becoming more aware of the value of our last remaining free-flowing rivers. We hope the Lolo and Bitterroot National Forests will continue to build upon Montana's legacy of protecting one of our most valuable resources - our wild, free-flowing rivers and streams.

## ORGANIZATION OF MATERIALS

The report is organized by national forest and then, within each forest, organized alphabetically by ranger district. Within each ranger district, rivers and streams are organized alphabetically by name. If a river or stream is referred to as a fork of a larger waterway, it will be listed alphabetically according to the name of the main waterway. For example, the West Fork Bitterroot River will be listed as a river starting with the letter “B”, rather than with the letter “W”.

Each river or stream segment description includes the following information:

### Name of river or stream

**Reach:** This field describes the start and end points of the segment. These are often listed as the stream’s headwaters or source, confluences, national forest boundaries, or other landmarks.

**Mileage:** This field lists the length of the segment in river miles and is measured to the nearest mile.

**Watershed:** This field lists the larger watershed of which the segment is a tributary.

**USFS Eligible:** This field indicates whether or not the segment is currently managed as an eligible Wild and Scenic River by the USFS.

**ORVs:** This field lists the ORVs which qualify the segment as an eligible Wild and Scenic River. A list of values and abbreviations can be found in the Overview section below.

**Classification:** This field indicates the recommended classification of the segment as either wild, scenic, or recreational.

**Description:** This field provides details regarding the river or stream, ORVs, and other pertinent information.

A list of sources can be found at the end of the report, on pages 64-66.

## OVERVIEW

VALUES	
VALUE	ABBREVIATION OF VALUE
Botany	B
Culture	C
Climate Refuge	CR
Fish	F
Geology	G
History	H
Recreation	R
Scenery	S
Wildlife	W

## RECOMMENDED RIVER AND STREAM SEGMENTS

### LOLO NATIONAL FOREST

RANGER DISTRICT	NAME	MILEAGE	ORVs	WATERSHED	CLASSIFICATION
Missoula	Alder Creek	6	CR,F	Clark Fork	Wild
	South Fork Lolo Creek*	12	CR,FR	Bitterroot	Wild
	Ranch Creek	10	CR,F	Clark Fork	Scenic
	Rattlesnake Creek*	19	C,CR,F,H,R,S	Clark Fork	Scenic
	Rock Creek*	35	C,F,H,R	Clark Fork	Recreational
	Welcome Creek	7	CR,FR	Clark Fork	Wild
Ninemile	Cache Creek*	11	CR,FR	Clark Fork	Wild
	Fish Creek	4	B,F,G,R	Clark Fork	Scenic
	North Fork Fish Creek	10	CR,F,G,R	Clark Fork	Wild
	South Fork Fish Creek	7	F,G,R	Clark Fork	Scenic
	West Fork Fish Creek*	9	CR,F,G,R	Clark Fork	Wild
	Straight Creek*	8	CR,FR,S	Clark Fork	Wild
Plains/Thompson Falls	Graves Creek*	13	CR,FR	Clark Fork	Scenic
	Prospect Creek	20	CR,F,G,R,S	Clark Fork	Scenic, Recreational
	Thompson River	12	F,G,R,S	Clark Fork	Recreational
	West Fork Thompson River	9	CR,FR, S	Clark Fork	Recreational
	Wilkes Creek	9	CR,FR,S	Clark Fork	Scenic
Seeley Lake	North Fork Blackfoot River*	20	CR,FR,S	Blackfoot	Wild, Scenic
	Clearwater River*	16	C,F,R,W	Blackfoot	Recreational
	Dunham Creek	15	CR,FR,S	Blackfoot	Wild, Scenic
	Lodgepole Creek	4	CR,F,G,S	Blackfoot	Scenic
	Monture Creek	19	CR,FR,S	Blackfoot	Scenic
	Morrell Creek*	12	CR,F,G,R,S	Blackfoot	Wild, Scenic, Recreational
Superior	Cedar Creek	14	CR,FR	Clark Fork	Scenic
	Clark Fork River*	15	C,F,R	Clark Fork	Recreational
	Lost Creek	7	CR,F,G,R,S	Clark Fork	Scenic
	St. Regis River	4	F,R	Clark Fork	Scenic
	Trout Creek	21	CR,FR	Clark Fork	Scenic

\* Currently deemed eligible by the Forest Service.

## RECOMMENDED RIVER AND STREAM SEGMENTS

### BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST

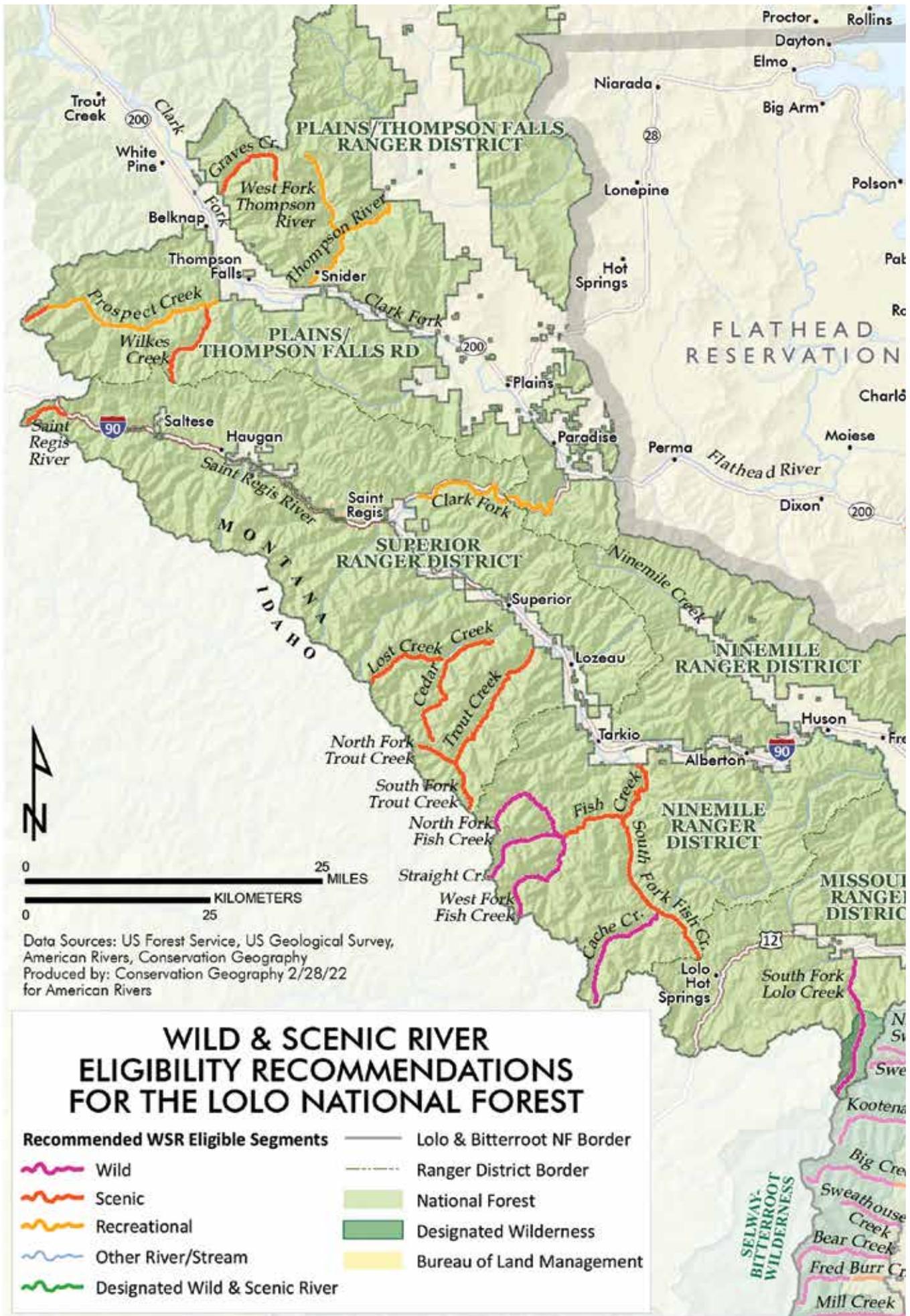
RANGER DISTRICT	NAME	MILEAGE	ORVs	WATERSHED	CLASSIFICATION
Darby	Chaffin Creek	10	CR,F,G,R,S	Bitterroot	Wild, Scenic
	Daly Creek*	11	CR,F,R,S	Bitterroot	Scenic
	Lost Horse Creek	15	F,G,H,R,S	Bitterroot	Scenic
	South Fork Lost Horse Creek	10	F,S	Bitterroot	Wild
	Rock Creek	12	R,S	Bitterroot	Wild
	Skalkaho Creek	11	C,F,R	Bitterroot	Scenic
	Sleeping Child Creek	19	C,CR,F,G,R	Bitterroot	Wild, Recreational
	Tenmile Creek	3	F,R	Bitterroot	Wild
	Tin Cup Creek	11	CR,F,R,S	Bitterroot	Wild
	Trapper Creek	12	CR,F,R	Bitterroot	Wild, Scenic
	North Fork Trapper Creek	8	CR,F	Bitterroot	Wild
Stevensville	Bear Creek	9	CR,F,G,R,S	Bitterroot	Wild
	Big Creek	10	F,R	Bitterroot	Wild, Scenic
	Blodgett Creek*	14	F,G,H,R,S	Bitterroot	Scenic
	Fred Burr Creek	10	F,R,S	Bitterroot	Wild, Scenic
	Kootenai Creek	7	F,G,R,S,W	Bitterroot	Wild
	Mill Creek	11	F,G,R,W	Bitterroot	Wild
	Sweathouse Creek	5	C,CR,G,R	Bitterroot	Wild
	Sweeney Creek	10	CR,S	Bitterroot	Wild
Sula	East Fork Bitterroot River	13	C,CR,F,R,W	Bitterroot	Wild
	Moose Creek	10	CR,F,R	Bitterroot	Wild, Scenic
	Reynolds Creek	4	CR,F,R	Bitterroot	Scenic
West Fork	West Fork Bitterroot River*	7	C,F,G,R	Bitterroot	Recreational
	Upper West Fork Bitterroot River*	13	F,W	Bitterroot	Scenic
	Blue Joint Creek	9	CR,F,G,R,S	Bitterroot	Wild
	Boulder Creek	8	F,G,R	Bitterroot	Wild
	Deer Creek	13	CR,F	Bitterroot	Wild
	Nez Perce Fork	8	C,CR,F,R	Bitterroot	Scenic
	Woods Creek	7	CR,F,R,W	Bitterroot	Scenic

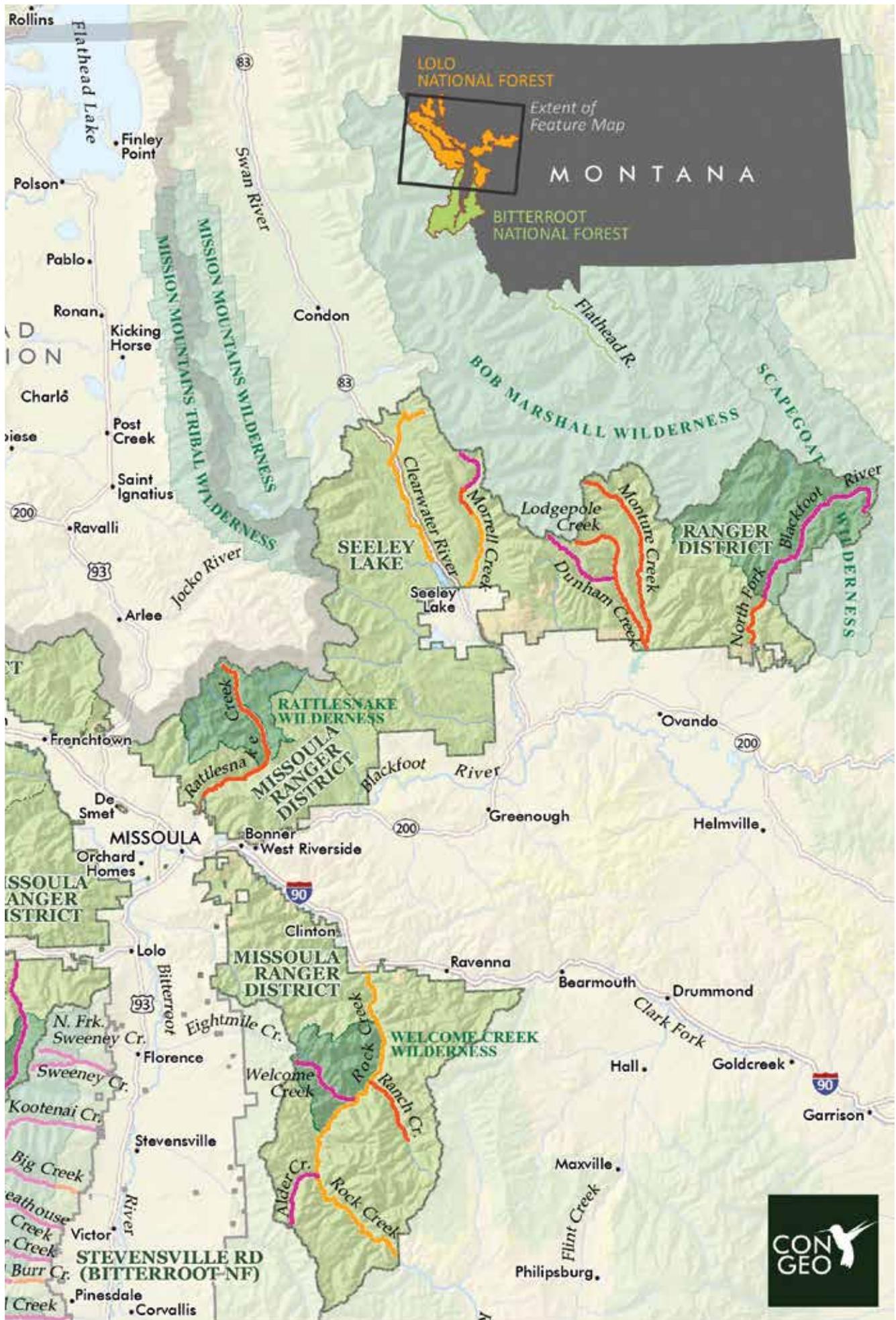
\* Currently deemed eligible by the Forest Service.



# WILD & SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE LOLO AND BITTERROOT NATIONAL FORESTS





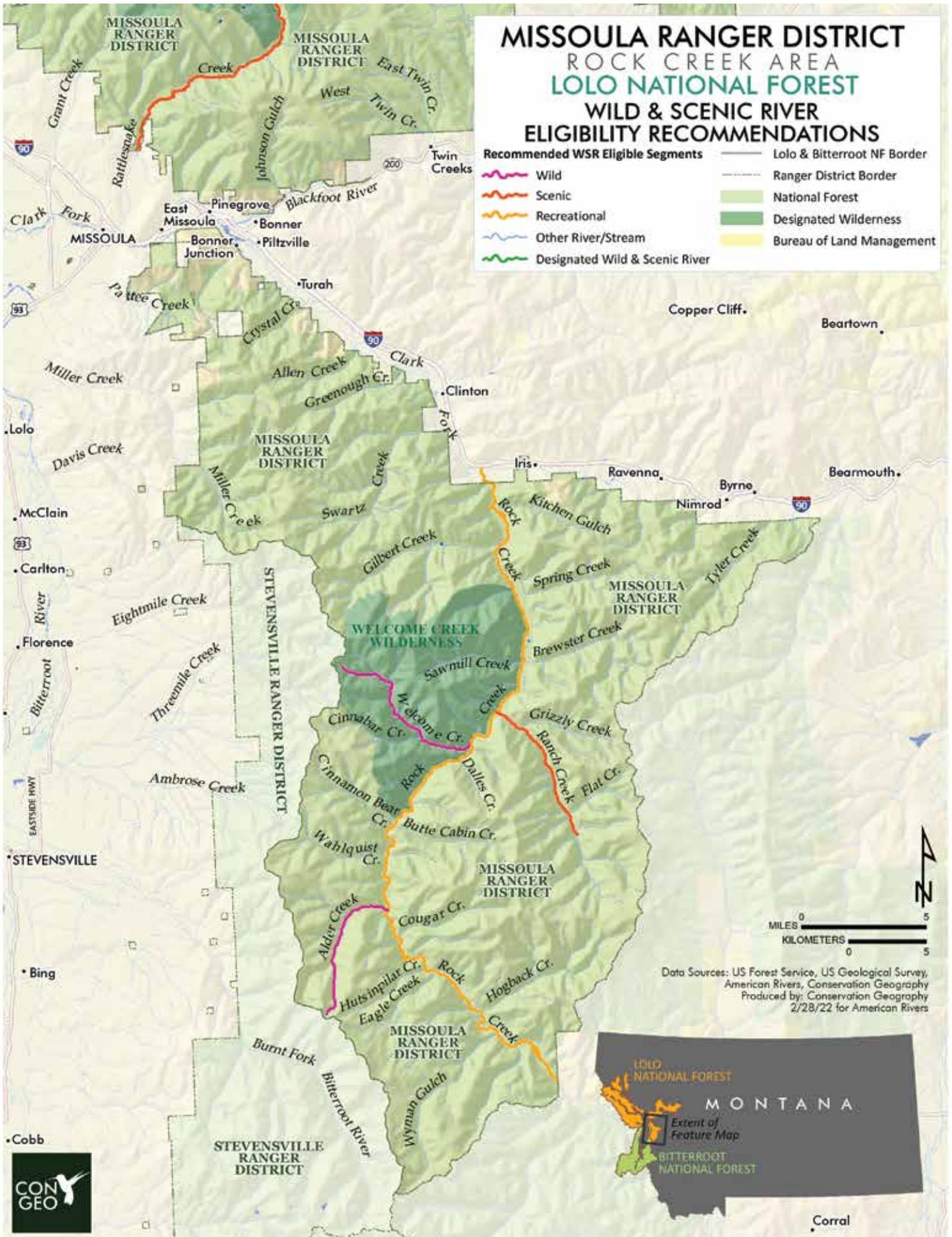






# MISSOULA RANGER DISTRICT ROCK CREEK AREA LOLO NATIONAL FOREST WILD & SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- |  |   |
|--|---|
|  Wild                           |  Lolo & Bitterroot NF Border |
|  Scenic                         |  Ranger District Border      |
|  Recreational                   |  National Forest             |
|  Other River/Stream             |  Designated Wilderness       |
|  Designated Wild & Scenic River |  Bureau of Land Management   |



Data Sources: US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, American Rivers, Conservation Geography  
Produced by: Conservation Geography  
2/28/22 for American Rivers



# ALDER CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Rock Creek

**MILEAGE:** 6

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Alder Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** Alder Creek hosts a significant spawning population of fluvial Bull Trout in the Rock Creek drainage and is also home to a genetically pure Westslope Cutthroat

Trout population. Alder Creek's headwaters are located in a largely roadless area with little access and no development.

# SOUTH FORK LOLO CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 12

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the South Fork of Lolo Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** The South Fork of Lolo Creek is home to a resident population of spawning Bull Trout and was designated critical habitat by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, a species considered sensitive by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** The well-maintained South Fork Lolo Creek Trail #311 offers popular hiking, backpacking, equestrian, and trail running opportunities along the creek and a unique northern access point into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

# RANCH CREEK

**REACH:** Avon Creek to Rock Creek

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Ranch Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** Ranch Creek supports valuable spawning grounds and is a nursery tributary for fluvial Bull Trout in the Lower Rock

Creek drainage. It also hosts a population of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout that are believed to be genetically pure.

# RATTLESNAKE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 19

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

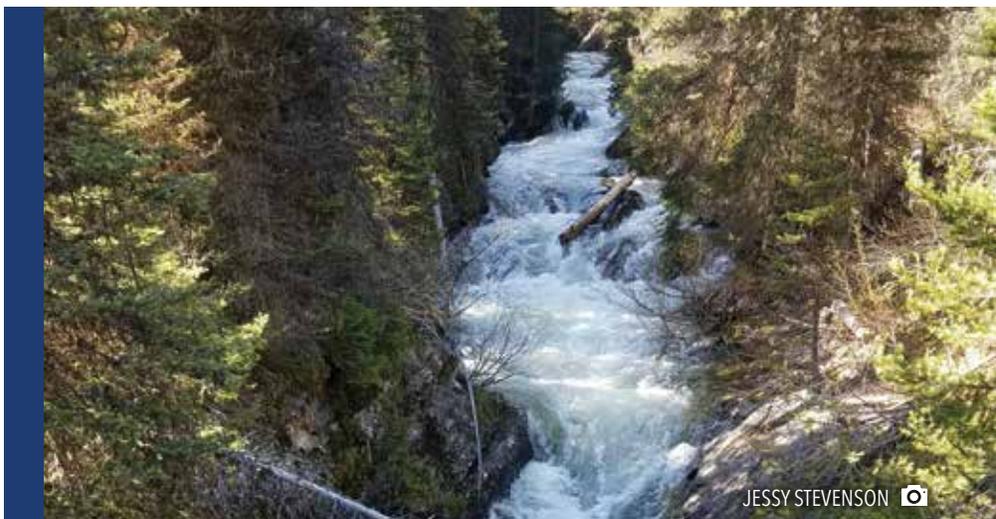
**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Cultural, Climate Refuge, Fish, History, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** Rattlesnake Creek is of great cultural significance to the Séliš (Salish), Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d'Oreille), and other Indigenous Peoples, serving as a historical fishery and place of importance in many stories.



**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Rattlesnake Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Rattlesnake Creek is considered critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout and serves as a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**HISTORY:** The corridor is home to a number of historic sites from the settlement of the Missoula valley, dating back to the mid-19th century.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Running through the unique Rattlesnake National Recreation Area, the corridor offers an abundance of opportunities for anglers, paddlers, backpackers, hikers, mountain bikers, and skiers, as well as access to the Rattlesnake Wilderness. Striking views of the creek and surrounding landscape are plentiful from the Rattlesnake Main Trail #515 as well as dozens of side trails.

# ROCK CREEK

**REACH:** Lolo National Forest boundary to Clark Fork River

**MILEAGE:** 35

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Culture, Fish, History, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Known as Npnétkʷ, meaning “Logs in the Water,” Rock Creek is a place of great importance to the Séliš (Salish) and Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d’Oreille) Peoples. The area has been cherished for centuries for its bountiful fisheries, hunting grounds, and sources of other traditional foods and cultural practices.

**FISH:** Rock Creek is considered critical habitat for Bull Trout and was determined by USFS Region 1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. It also serves as a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



**HISTORY:** The corridor is also home to a number of historic sites, including the Morgan Case Homestead (listed on the National Register of Historic Places), which is a relic of early homesteading and ranching in the area.

**RECREATION:** Rock Creek is a nationally renowned blue-ribbon trout stream that experiences high levels of use throughout the year. Ample campsites dot the river corridor. The creek also offers paddlers of all types and ability levels an abundance of flatwater and whitewater experiences.

# WELCOME CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Rock Creek

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.’s Climate Shield spatial data, Welcome Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



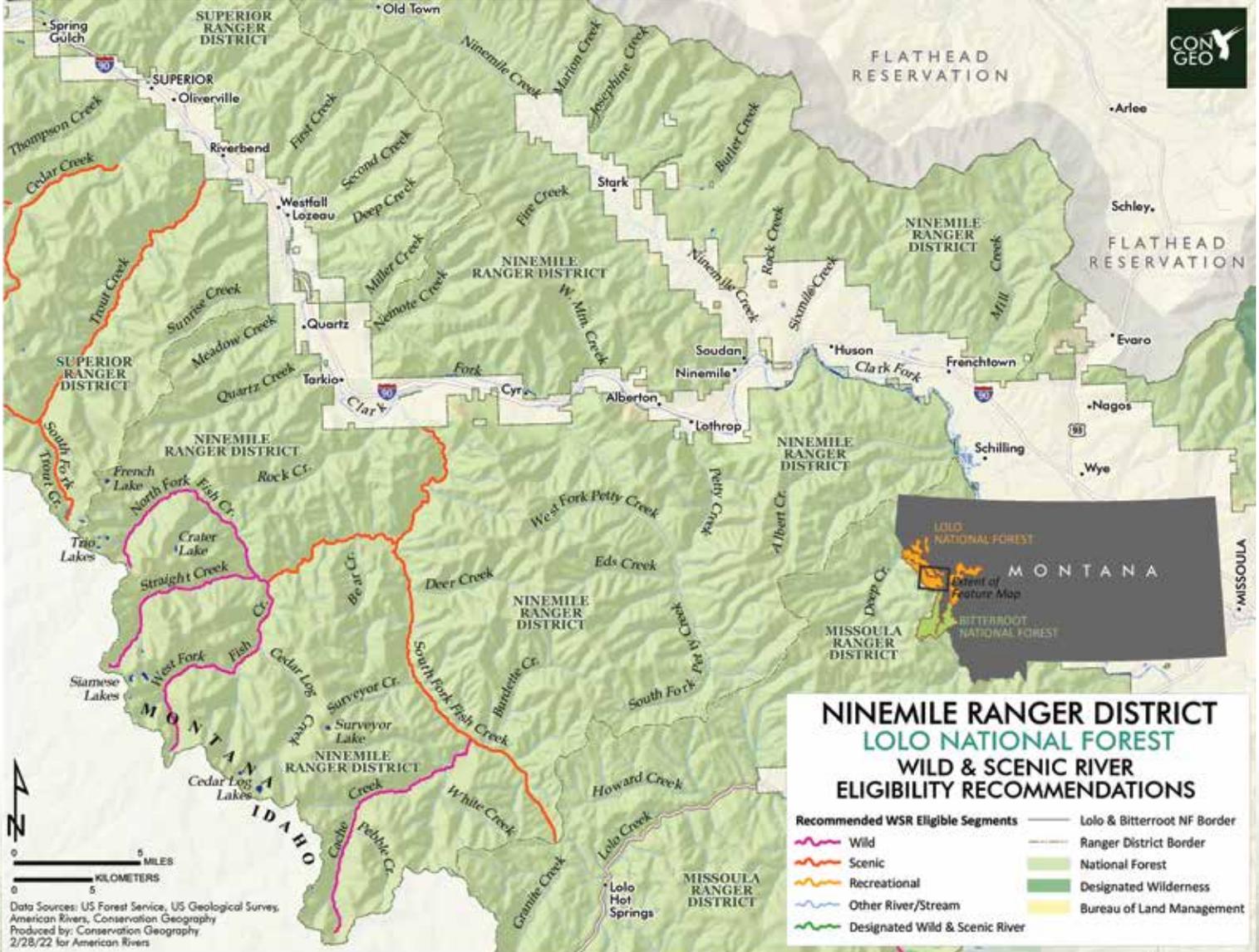
**FISH:** Located almost entirely within the Welcome Creek Wilderness, the clean, cold waters of Welcome Creek support an abundant population of fluvial Bull Trout, which contribute significantly to Bull Trout populations of both Rock Creek and the Clark Fork River. The creek also hosts a resident population of Bull Trout.

**RECREATION:** The lower reaches of Welcome Creek support naturalized populations of rainbow and brown trout, providing uniquely accessible, high-quality, wilderness angling opportunities.



# NINEMILE

## RANGER DISTRICT



# CACHE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to South Fork Fish Creek

**MILEAGE:** 11

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Cache Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Located within the Proposed Great Burn Wilderness, Cache Creek provides high-quality habitat for both a resident population of Bull Trout and a population of genetically pure Westslope Cutthroat Trout. The entire Proposed Great Burn Wilderness, a recommended wilderness, has been identified by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service as critical habitat for Bull Trout, a species listed as



threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

**RECREATION:** Cache Creek Trail #317 parallels the creek and offers hikers, backpackers, skiers, anglers, and others the opportunity to access high cirques, clear lakes, and an abundance of wild country, much of which was heavily burned in the historic "Great Burn" of 1910.

# FISH CREEK

**REACH:** Clearwater Crossing to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 4

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Botany, Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**BOTANY:** The waters of Fish Creek feed "Big Pine," the largest ponderosa pine in Montana and third largest in the nation with a circumference of over 20 feet. Big Pine is over 350 years old and is one of two Montana trees listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** Fish Creek is a popular whitewater destination with runs of varying length and difficulty, thanks to the area's unique geology. The area is also home to Fish Creek State Park and the Fish Creek Wildlife Management Area, established in 2010 as part of the Montana Legacy Project. With an abundance of trails and campsites, the area offers opportunities for anglers, hikers, backpackers, cyclists, and other recreationists.



**FISH:** Fish Creek is the Middle Clark Fork River's primary drainage for Bull Trout spawning and rearing and is therefore considered critical habitat for the species. USFS Region 1 considers it a priority restoration area for Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The creek is also a stronghold for over 20 populations of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, many of which are believed to be genetically pure. With headwaters in the vast Proposed Great Burn Wilderness, the cold, clear waters of Fish Creek are a critical source of trout for the Clark Fork River fishery overall.

# NORTH FORK FISH CREEK

---

**REACH:** Source to Fish Creek

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the North Fork of Fish Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** Flowing through the Proposed Great Burn Wilderness, the North Fork of Fish Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. As a tributary of the main stem of Fish Creek, the North Fork contributes significantly to the Clark Fork River

fishery (See Fish Creek description above for more details).

**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** The North Fork Fish Creek Trail #103 parallels the creek, providing hikers, backpackers, and equestrians the opportunity to view the area's unique geology and explore the remote and scenic Proposed Great Burn Wilderness.

# SOUTH FORK FISH CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** The South Fork of Fish Creek is critical Bull Trout habitat and is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. It is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. As a tributary of the main stem of Fish Creek, the North Fork contributes significantly to the Clark Fork River fishery (See Fish Creek description above for more details).



**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** The South Fork of Fish Creek offers recreationists the opportunity to view the area's unique geology and explore the remote Proposed Great Burn Wilderness.



# WEST FORK FISH CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Fish Creek

**MILEAGE:** 9

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the West Fork of Fish Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



ZACK PORTER 

**FISH:** Flowing through the Proposed Great Burn Wilderness, the West Fork of Fish Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. As a tributary of the main stem of Fish Creek, the West Fork contributes significantly to the Clark Fork River fishery (See Fish Creek description above for more details).

**GEOLOGY:** Unique quartz crystal formations can be found near Cedar Log Creek.

**RECREATION:** The West Fork Fish Creek Trail #101 provides hikers and backpackers the opportunity to explore the beautiful and remote stretches of the West Fork. Groves of Western Red Cedar that survived the "Great Burn" of 1910 can also be found in this corridor.

# STRAIGHT CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to North Fork Fish Creek

**MILEAGE:** 8

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Straight Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



KYLE WATSON 

**FISH:** Straight Creek is home to a resident population of Bull Trout and is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Several waterfalls and bedrock

gorges make this a geologically unique and stunning area while a series of rapids offer whitewater paddling opportunities. Straight Creek Trail #99 offers views of the area's unique geology and surrounding landscapes.



# GRAVES CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 13

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Graves Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** Graves Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** The Graves-Vermillion Road offers recreationists an abundance of opportunities to explore the area, including Graves Creek Falls, which are located in a gorge that displays the area's scenic geology.

# PROSPECT CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Clark Fork River

**MILEAGE:** 20

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic (2 miles:

Blossom Lakes to MT Secondary Hwy 471); Recreational (18 miles: junction of Prospect Creek and MT Secondary Hwy 471 to Lolo National Forest boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Prospect Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** Prospect Creek is critical Bull Trout habitat and is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a

sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** Prospect Creek offers exceptional whitewater paddling opportunities with large rapids defined by boulders in the upper reaches and a bedrock flume rapid in the lower gorge. A U.S. Geological Survey gauge allows paddlers to monitor ideal flows on the creek.

# THOMPSON RIVER

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**REACH:** Upstream Lolo National Forest boundary to downstream Lolo National Forest boundary (near Thompson Falls)

**MILEAGE:** 12

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** The Thompson River is home to populations of Bull Trout and Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** The North Fork Fish Creek Trail #103 parallels the creek, providing hikers, backpackers, and equestrians the opportunity to view the

area's unique geology and explore the remote and scenic Proposed Great Burn Wilderness.

# WEST FORK THOMPSON RIVER

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**REACH:** Source to Thompson River

**MILEAGE:** 9

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the West Fork of the Thompson River is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** The West Fork of the Thompson River is home to populations of Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Accessible by a USFS road, the West Fork offers stunning views and opportunities for angling, hiking, cycling, and other forms of recreation.

# WILKES CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Prospect Creek

**MILEAGE:** 9

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

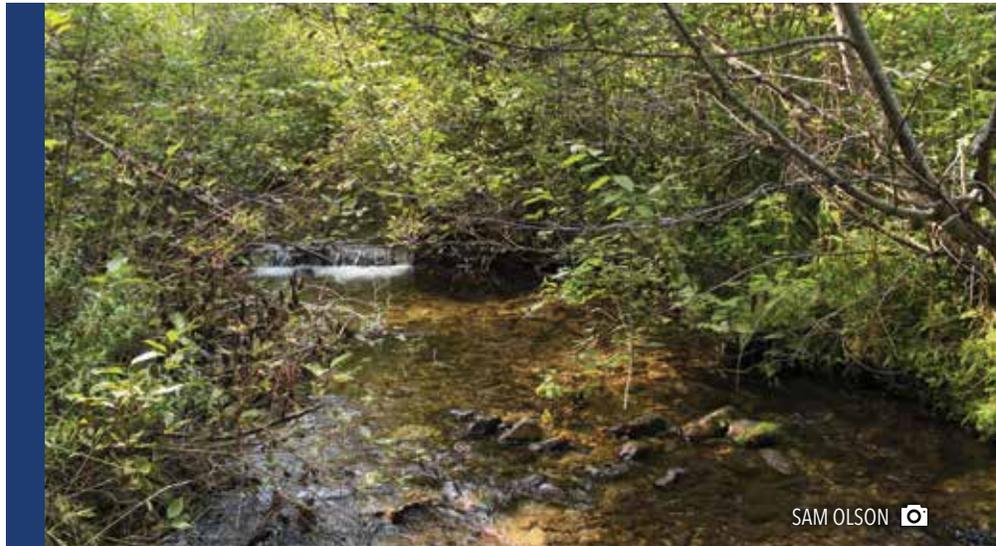
**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Wilkes Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Wilkes Creek is home to populations of Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



SAM OLSON 

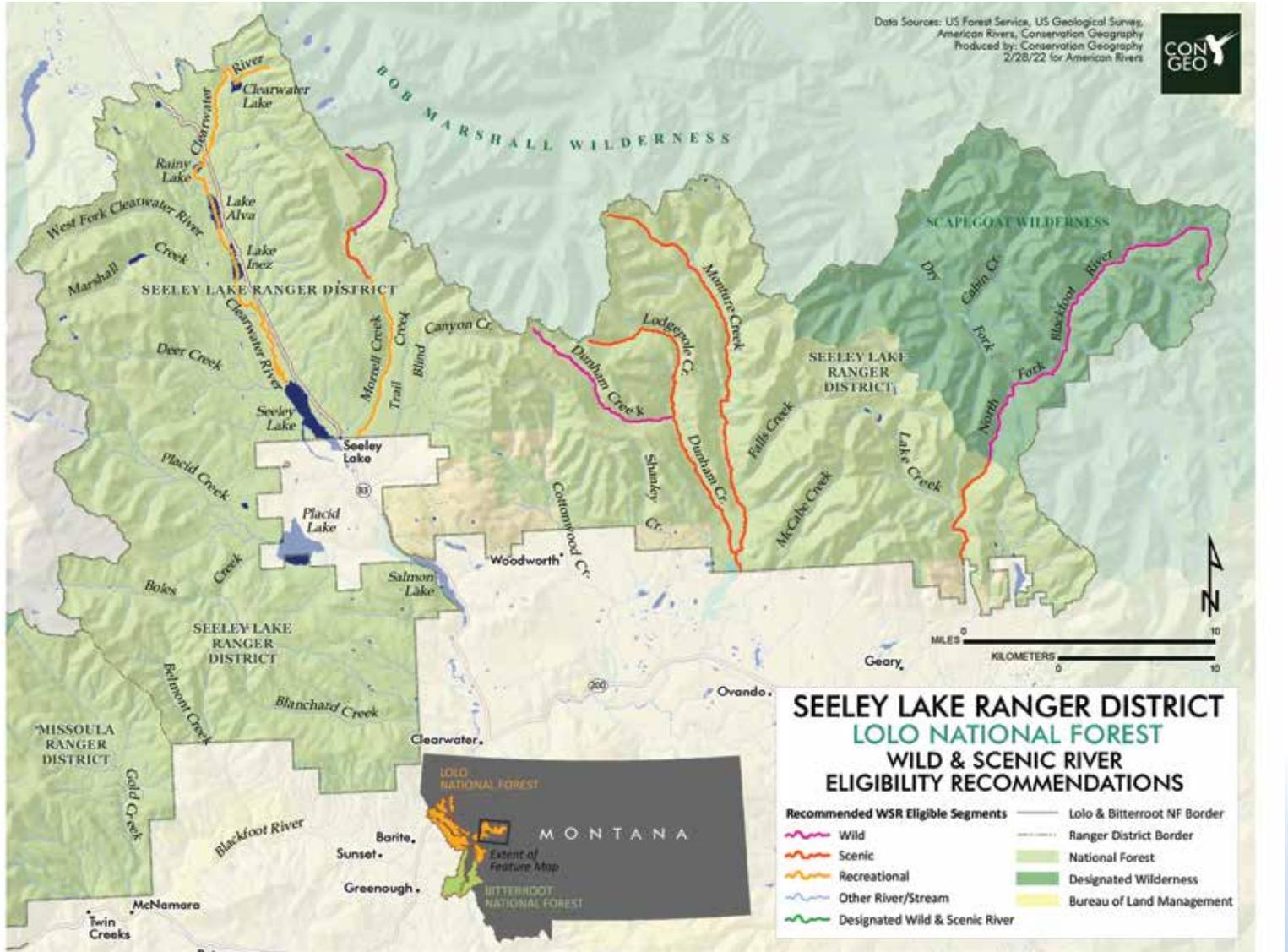
**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Wilkes Creek Trail #584 parallels the creek and offers hikers, backpackers, mountain bikers, and equestrians the opportunity to explore a beautiful Western Red Cedar grove and access to the CC Divide Trail.



SAM OLSON 

# SEELEY LAKE

## RANGER DISTRICT



# NORTH FORK BLACKFOOT RIVER

**REACH:** Source to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 20

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (14 miles: Source to Scapegoat Wilderness boundary); Scenic (6 miles: Scapegoat Wilderness boundary to Lolo National Forest boundary)

## DESCRIPTION:

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the North Fork of the Blackfoot River is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** With headwaters in the Scapegoat Wilderness, the North Fork of the Blackfoot River is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



ZACK PORTER 

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** The North Fork is a popular fly-fishing destination and offers high-quality, hike-in paddling opportunities to kayakers and pack rafters throughout a long season. Hobnail Tom Trail #32 provides access to the river and remote, pristine wild lands. A series of spectacular waterfalls illustrate some of the area's unique geology. The North Fork Blackfoot River is also part of the proposed Blackfoot-Clearwater Stewardship Act, which aims to add 80,000 acres of new Wilderness to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountain Wilderness.

# CLEARWATER RIVER

**REACH:** Source to Seeley Lake

**MILEAGE:** 16

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Culture, Fish, Recreation, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

## DESCRIPTION:

**CULTURE:** The Clearwater River is culturally significant to the Blackfeet, Séliš (Salish), and Kootenai Tribes, serving as a historically important fishery and place of gathering. Many Tribes refer to the Clearwater watershed and surrounding area as the "backbone of the world".

**FISH:** The Clearwater River is critical habitat for Bull Trout and is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** The popular Clearwater Canoe Trail offers scenic flatwater paddling opportunities with striking views



JESSY STEVENSON 

of the Swan Mountains. The lower section of the river offers a Class II paddling opportunity through a beautiful canyon.

**WILDLIFE:** The Clearwater River watershed forms the southernmost portion of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, some of the most important conservation lands in the nation, and provides critical habitat to species including wolverine, lynx, grizzly bears, and Bull Trout.

# DUNHAM CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Monture Creek

**MILEAGE:** 15

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

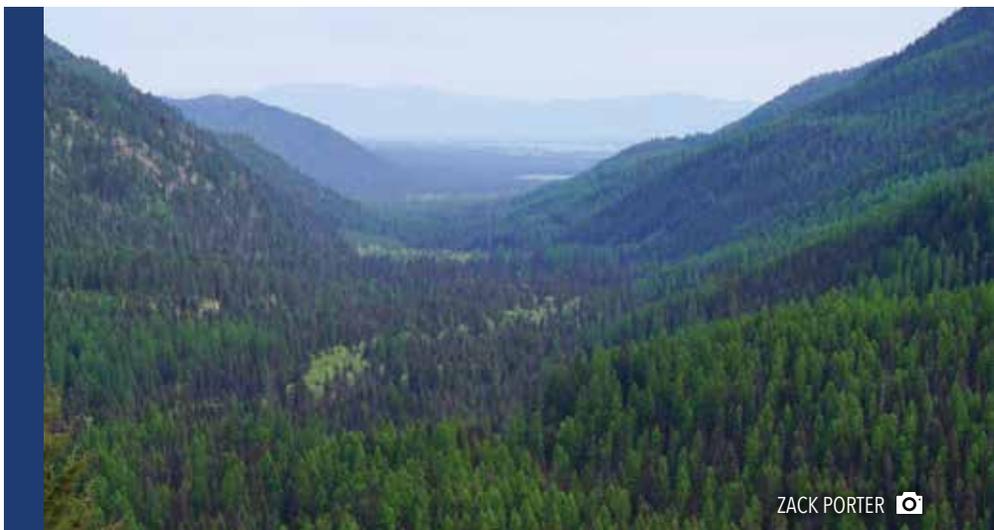
**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (7.5 miles: Source to Lodgepole Creek); Scenic (7.5 miles: Lodgepole Creek to Monture Creek)

## DESCRIPTION:

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Dunham Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** A primary tributary of Monture Creek, Dunham Creek is critical Bull Trout habitat and is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



ZACK PORTER

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Dunham Creek Trail #400 follows the creek through old growth ponderosa pine stands and offers stunning views. A waterfall showcases the area's unique geography and numerous deep pools offer angling opportunities. Dunham Creek is also part of the proposed Blackfoot-Clearwater Stewardship Act which aims to add 80,000 acres of new Wilderness to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountain Wilderness.

# LODGEPOLE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Dunham Creek

**MILEAGE:** 4

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

## DESCRIPTION:

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Lodgepole Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**GEOLOGY:** Lodgepole Creek tumbles over a number of sheer waterfalls in a tight, rocky canyon, showcasing the area's unique angular geological strata.

**FISH:** A primary tributary of Dunham Creek, Lodgepole Creek is critical Bull Trout habitat and is considered by USFS Region



ERIN CLARK

1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**SCENERY:** Lodgepole Creek is part of the proposed Blackfoot-Clearwater Stewardship Act which aims to add 80,000 acres of new Wilderness to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountain Wilderness.



# MONTURE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 19

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Monture Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Monture Creek Trail #27 parallels the creek, which passes through a steep, redrock canyon and offers an abundance of angling opportunities. The trail offers stunning views of the Swan Mountains and is one of the primary access points into the Scapegoat Wilderness and larger Bob Marshall Wilderness complex. Monture Creek is also part of the proposed Blackfoot-Clearwater



Stewardship Act which aims to add 80,000 acres of new Wilderness to the Bob Marshall, Scapegoat, and Mission Mountain Wilderness.

**FISH:** Monture Creek is critical Bull Trout habitat and is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority restoration watershed for the species. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

# MORRELL CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 12

**WATERSHED:** Blackfoot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (3 miles: Source to Morrell Lake); Scenic (3 miles: Morrell Lake to Morrell Falls Trailhead); Recreational (6 miles: Morrell Falls Trailhead to Lolo National Forest boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Morrell Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Morrell Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat

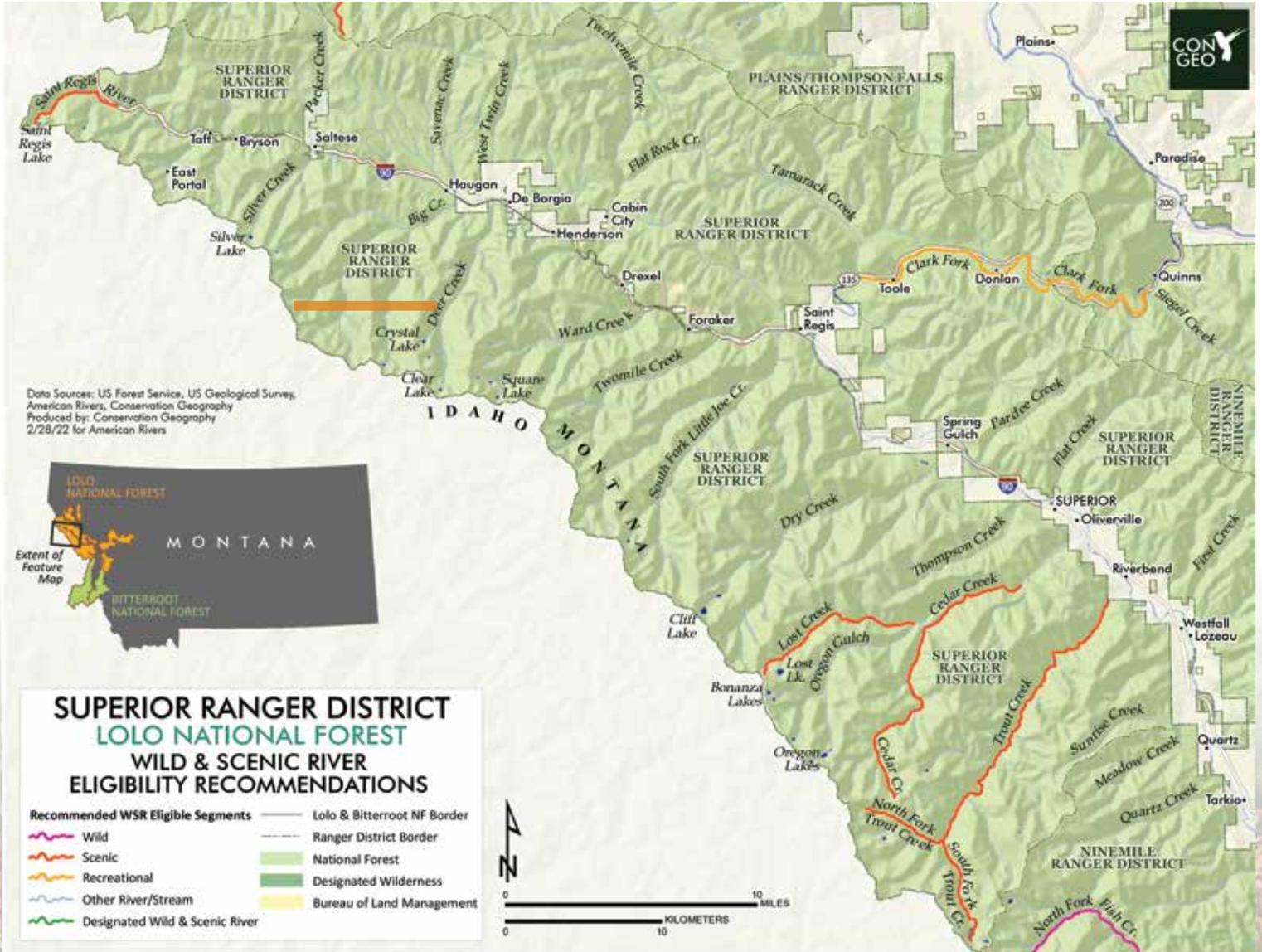


Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** Morrell Falls National Recreation Trail #30 weaves through a recently burned forest which offers views of the Swan Mountains and leads to a stunning waterfall, showcasing the area's unique geology. Above the falls is a beautiful, hanging glacial valley.

# SUPERIOR

## RANGER DISTRICT



# CEDAR CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bear Gulch

**MILEAGE:** 14

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Cedar Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Cedar Creek serves as critical spawning grounds for Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** Cedar Creek was the focus of a collaborative project led by Five Valleys Land Trust in 2004 to acquire 204



SAM OLSON

acres of land along a five-mile stretch of the creek containing key spawning grounds for both Bull Trout and Westslope Cutthroat Trout. The land was then turned over to public ownership and is managed by the Lolo National Forest with an emphasis on the protection and enhancement of cold water habitat. Clear Creek Road parallels the creek and offers numerous angling and other recreation opportunities.

# CLARK FORK RIVER

**REACH:** Siegel Creek to Tamarack Creek

**MILEAGE:** 15

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Culture, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** As an important fishery, gathering place, and the setting of numerous cultural stories and ways of knowing, the Clark Fork River plays a significant role in the current and historic culture of the Séliš (Salish), Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d'Oreille), Kootenai, Ktunaxa, Nimíipuu (Nez Perce), and Schitsu'umsh (Coeur d'Alene) Tribes, among others.

**FISH:** The Clark Fork River is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The river



FRANK L. JUNIOR

is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** The Clark Fork River offers an abundance of angling opportunities as well as river-based recreation including kayaking, rafting, and packrafting.

# LOST CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Two Creek

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Lost Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Lost Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY:** Two tiers of waterfalls and glacial tarns showcase the area's unique geology.



**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Oregon Creek Road parallels the lower stretch of Lost Creek, leading to Lost Lake Trailhead at Lost Meadows. Lost Lake Trail #112 parallels the upper stretch of the creek to its source at Lost Lake. Running through a beautiful subalpine landscape, Lost Creek is a popular angling and hiking destination in the Proposed Great Burn Wilderness.

# ST. REGIS RIVER

**REACH:** Source to I-90

**MILEAGE:** 4

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** The St. Regis River is home to populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. As a tributary of the Clark Fork River, the St. Regis River is an important fishery for the watershed.



**RECREATION:** Fly fishing, hiking, mountain biking, and other recreation opportunities along the river are abundant.

# TROUT CREEK (INCLUDING NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS TROUT CREEK)

**REACH:** Sources to Lolo National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 21

**WATERSHED:** Clark Fork

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Trout Creek and the North Fork of Trout Creek are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Trout Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



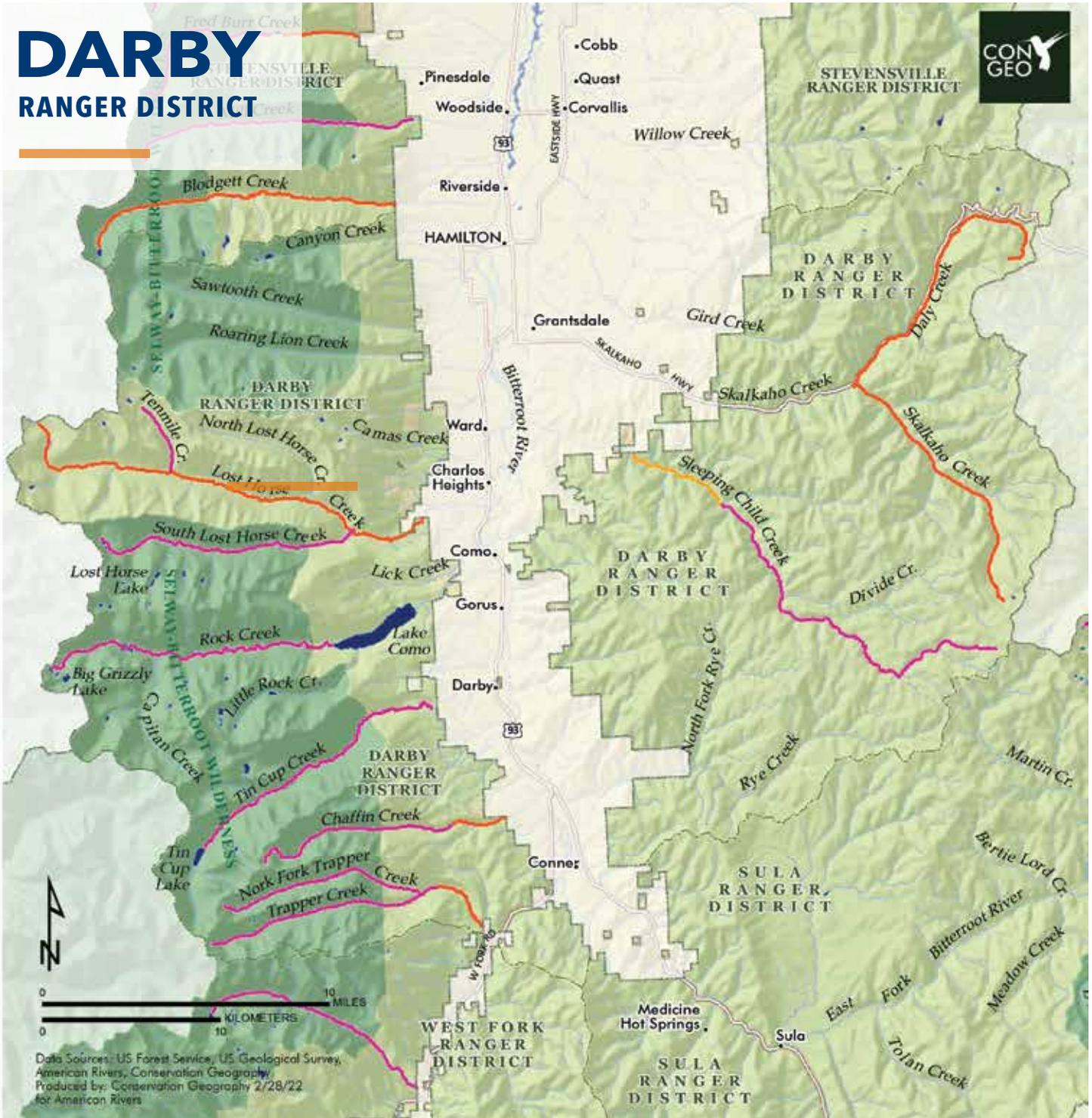
**RECREATION:** The canyon stretch of Trout Creek is a highly sought-after creek-boating destination, offering several vertical drops with connecting slides. Several trails connect to the Trout Creek corridor, including Heart Lake Trail #171 which parallels the South Fork of Trout Creek and is one of the area's most popular hiking trails.







# DARBY RANGER DISTRICT



Data Sources: US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, American Rivers, Conservation Geography  
 Produced by: Conservation Geography 2/28/22 for American Rivers

## DARBY RANGER DISTRICT BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST WILD & SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Recommended WSR Eligible Segments | Lolo & Bitterroot NF Border |
| Wild                              | Ranger District Border      |
| Scenic                            | National Forest             |
| Recreational                      | Designated Wilderness       |
| Other River/Stream                | Bureau of Land Management   |
| Designated Wild & Scenic River    |                             |





# CHAFFIN CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (8 miles: Source to Chaffin Creek Trailhead); Scenic (2 miles: Chaffin Creek Trailhead to Lolo National Forest boundary)

## DESCRIPTION:

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Chaffin Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Chaffin Creek is home to a resident population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY:** From its headwaters at Chaffin Lake cirque in the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Chaffin Creek tumbles

through a number of narrow canyons, through glacial boulders, and over one significant waterfall.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Chaffin Creek Trail #528 parallels the creek and offers spectacular views of the drainage and the Bitterroot Valley, as well as abundant angling opportunities.



JESSY STEVENSON 



JESSY STEVENSON 

# DALY CREEK

**REACH:** Source to South Fork Skalkaho Creek

**MILEAGE:** 11

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Daly Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** An important tributary of Skalkaho Creek, Daly Creek is home to a resident population of Bull Trout and supports a genetically pure population of Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** The lower reaches of Daly Creek tumble over a series of boulder steps between gently sloping alluvial flats and support a productive small-stream wild trout fishery, popular among anglers.



# LOST HORSE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 15

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, History, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Lost Horse Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** As the only road-accessible glaciated valley in the Bitterroot Range, Lost Horse Creek is popular among climbers for its spectacular bouldering, climbing, and hiking opportunities. Bedrock rapids offer paddlers incredible

Class III-V whitewater in a stunning subalpine setting.

**HISTORY:** Lost Horse Creek is also home to the historic Lost Horse Guard Station, built in 1938 by the Civilian Conservation Crew and listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1989.



# SOUTH FORK LOST HORSE CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Lost Horse Creek

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the West Fork of Fish Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** A primary tributary of Lost Horse Creek, the South Fork of Lost Horse Creek serves as important Bull Trout habitat and is also home to populations of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



**SCENERY:** See Lost Horse Creek section above for more information.

# ROCK CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Lake Como Reservoir

**MILEAGE:** 12

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Flowing over clean, bedrock slides and rapids through a wide, scenic valley, Rock Creek offers some of the highest quality whitewater paddling in the Bitterroot Mountains.

Rock Creek Trail #580 follows the shores of Lake Como, a large reservoir with abundant recreation opportunities, to a series of spectacular waterfalls. From that point, the trail parallels



Rock Creek to Elk Lake and beyond to One Horn Basin and Grizzly Lakes in Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

# SKALKAHO CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Daly Creek

**MILEAGE:** 11

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Culture, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** Known as Sq̓q̓x̓ó N̓š̓íy̓étk̓s, meaning “Many Trails Creek”, Skalkaho Creek is a place of great importance to the S̓é̓l̓i̓š (Salish) and Q̓l̓i̓sp̓é (Kalispel and Pend d’Oreille) Peoples. The creek served for centuries as important fishing, hunting, and gathering grounds and is a place of importance in many cultural stories.

**FISH:** Skalkaho Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



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**RECREATION:** Flowing from headwaters in the Sapphire Wilderness Study Area, Skalkaho Creek is a highly productive small stream wild trout fishery and is a popular destination for anglers in the area. Skalkaho-Rye Road parallels the upper stretch of the creek and leads to Skalkaho Creek-Jerry Lake Trail #503, which offers recreation opportunities in the proposed Sapphire Wilderness.

# SLEEPING CHILD CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 19

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Culture, Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (15 miles: Source to Sleeping Child Road/Trailhead); Recreational (4 miles: Sleeping Child Road/Trailhead to Bitterroot National Forest boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** Sleeping Child Creek and Sleeping Child Hot Springs, known as S̓net̓et̓š̓é (Place of the Sleeping Baby) are places of great significance in S̓é̓l̓i̓š (Salish) and Q̓l̓i̓sp̓é (Kalispel and Pend d’Oreille) Peoples culture. S̓net̓et̓š̓é (Place of the Sleeping Baby) is a site from cultural creation stories and, though the Hot Springs are now privately owned, Sleeping Child Creek and the surrounding area remains a place of deep cultural value.

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.’s Climate Shield spatial data, Sleeping Child Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



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**FISH:** Sleeping Child Creek supports populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. The creek is a popular small stream fishery for anglers in the area.

**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** Lower stretches of the creek are accessible by Sleeping Child Road while upper stretches are accessible by Sleeping Child Trail #105 and Trail #84. Paralleling the creek, both the road and trail offer stunning views of unique cliff sections as well as sweeping views.

# TENMILE CREEK

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**REACH:** Source to Lost Horse Creek

**MILEAGE:** 3

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

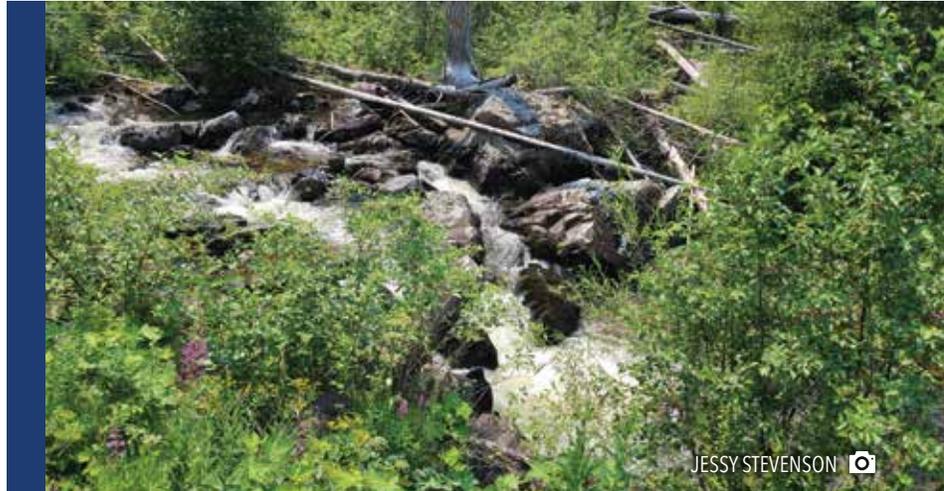
**ORVs:** Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** A primary tributary of Lost Horse Creek, Tenmile Creek serves as important Bull Trout habitat and is also home to populations of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** Tenmile Creek also offers high-quality paddling opportunities to whitewater boaters. See Lost Horse Creek section above for more information.



# TIN CUP CREEK

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**REACH:** Dam at Tin Cup Lake to Tin Cup Creek Trailhead

**MILEAGE:** 11

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper stretches of Tin Cup Creek are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Located primarily within the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness, Tin Cup Creek is home to native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. Bull Trout have also been recorded in the drainage. In 2006, partners including the Clark Fork Coalition, Tin Cup Creek Water and Sewer District, and the USFS began planning and raising funds to repair the historic Tin Cup Creek



Dam, located at the creek's headwaters. Construction was completed in 2011 and the restored dam helps to ensure year round in-stream flows that support fish populations and other aquatic species.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Tin Cup Creek is a small stream fishery popular among anglers and is accessible via Tin Cup Creek Trail #96. The trail parallels the creek which tumbles through massive glacial boulders and over stepped bedrock waterfalls, offering breathtaking views and recreation opportunities.

# TRAPPER CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 12

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (9 miles: Source to Trapper Creek Trailhead); Scenic (3 miles: Trapper Creek Trailhead to Bitterroot National Forest boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper reaches of Trapper Creek are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Trapper Creek supports populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species



Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Trapper Creek Trail #598 offers access to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness and parallels the creek as it tumbles over steep bedrock.

# NORTH FORK TRAPPER CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Trapper Creek

**MILEAGE:** 8

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper reaches of the North Fork of Trapper Creek are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** A remote, wilderness stream, The North Fork of Trapper Creek supports populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and native

Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



Data Sources: US Forest Service, US Geological Survey,

# STEVENSVILLE

## RANGER DISTRICT



### STEVENSVILLE RANGER DISTRICT BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST WILD & SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- |                                   |                             |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Recommended WSR Eligible Segments | Lolo & Bitterroot NF Border |
| Wild                              | Ranger District Border      |
| Scenic                            | National Forest             |
| Recreational                      | Designated Wilderness       |
| Other River/Stream                | Bureau of Land Management   |
| Designated Wild & Scenic River    |                             |





## BEAR CREEK (INCLUDING SOUTH FORK BEAR CREEK)

**REACH:** Source to Bear Creek Trailhead

**MILEAGE:** 9

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the South Fork of Bear Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Bear Creek is home to a population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



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**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** One of two ultra-classic whitewater kayaking runs in the Bitterroot Mountains, Bear Creek offers experienced paddlers a series of bedrock slides and drops ending in the multi-tiered Brave Bear Rapid (also known as Brave Bear Falls). Accessible by Bear Creek Trail #5, this is a stunning part of the Bitterroot Range that attracts recreationists of all types.

## BIG CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (8 miles: Source to Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness boundary); Scenic (2 miles: Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness boundary to Bitterroot National Forest boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Big Creek is home to a population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



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**RECREATION:** A series of large bedrock slides and rapids offer paddlers a scenic Class IV experience. Big Creek Trail #11 parallels the creek and is a popular point of access into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. Large walls and sweeping views up and down the beautiful, glaciated valley make this a particularly scenic area.

# BLODGETT CREEK

---

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 14

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, History, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Blodgett Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY:** One of the most popular tributaries of the Bitterroot River, Blodgett Creek showcases towering glacier-polished granite walls, dramatic spires, and glacial moraines throughout the wide, U-shaped valley.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Large granite walls and spires, standing just above the clear, cold waters of the creek, are known to provide some of the highest quality rock climbing



in the region. Tumbling over granite bedrock and through a series of rapids and glacial erratics, the creek is also a popular destination for whitewater paddling. Blodgett Creek Trail #19 parallels the creek and offers hikers and backpackers stunning views of the creek and valley.

**HISTORY:** Established by homesteaders in the mid-19th century, the trail up Blodgett Creek served as a major route for trappers, hikers, and horse packers accessing the Wilderness beyond the Bitterroot Valley.

# FRED BURR CREEK

---

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (7 miles: Source to Fred Burr Reservoir); Scenic (3 miles: Fred Burr Reservoir to Bitterroot National Forest Boundary)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Fred Burr Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Fred Burr Trail #38 parallels the creek and offers hikers, backpackers, anglers, and other recreationists views of towering glacier-carved granite walls.

# KOOTENAI CREEK

---

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Kootenai Creek is home to a population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY, RECREATION, AND SCENERY:** Kootenai Creek is known to whitewater paddlers as perhaps the highest quality and certainly one of the most accessible creeks in the region. Flowing through a spectacular, low-gradient glacial gorge, the creek offers a continuous series of Class III and IV drops.



The large, glacial-carved granite walls above Kootenai Creek offer high-quality rock climbing and spectacular scenery for hikers, backpackers, and other recreationists. Winter icefalls and icicles make this a stunning area to visit in the colder months.

**WILDLIFE:** The high granite walls above Kootenai Creek have been noted as peregrine falcon nesting sites.

# MILL CREEK

---

**REACH:** Source to Mill Creek Trailhead

**MILEAGE:** 11

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, Recreation, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Mill Creek is home to a population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The creek is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



and other recreationists views of the creek as it tumbles over a waterfall and through a series of granite boulders.

**WILDLIFE:** The high granite walls above Mill Creek have been noted as peregrine falcon nesting sites.

# SWEATHOUSE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 5

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVS:** Culture, Climate Refuge, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** Named for its significance to the Séliš (Salish) and Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d'Oreille) peoples as a place to build sweat lodges, Sweathouse Creek remains an important cultural site.

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Sweathouse Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** Sweathouse Creek is a local favorite for a short day-hike that offers views of Sweathouse Falls and stunning, glacial-carved granite walls. Large granite boulders offer high-quality backcountry bouldering opportunities to rock climbers. Sweathouse Creek Trail #121 parallels the creek and offers hikers, swimmers, climbers, and other recreationists stunning views of the creek and surrounding area.

# SWEENEY CREEK (INCLUDING NORTH AND SOUTH FORKS OF SWEENEY CREEK)

**REACH:** Sources to Bitterroot National Forest Boundary

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVS:** Climate Refuge, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper forks of Sweeney Creek are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



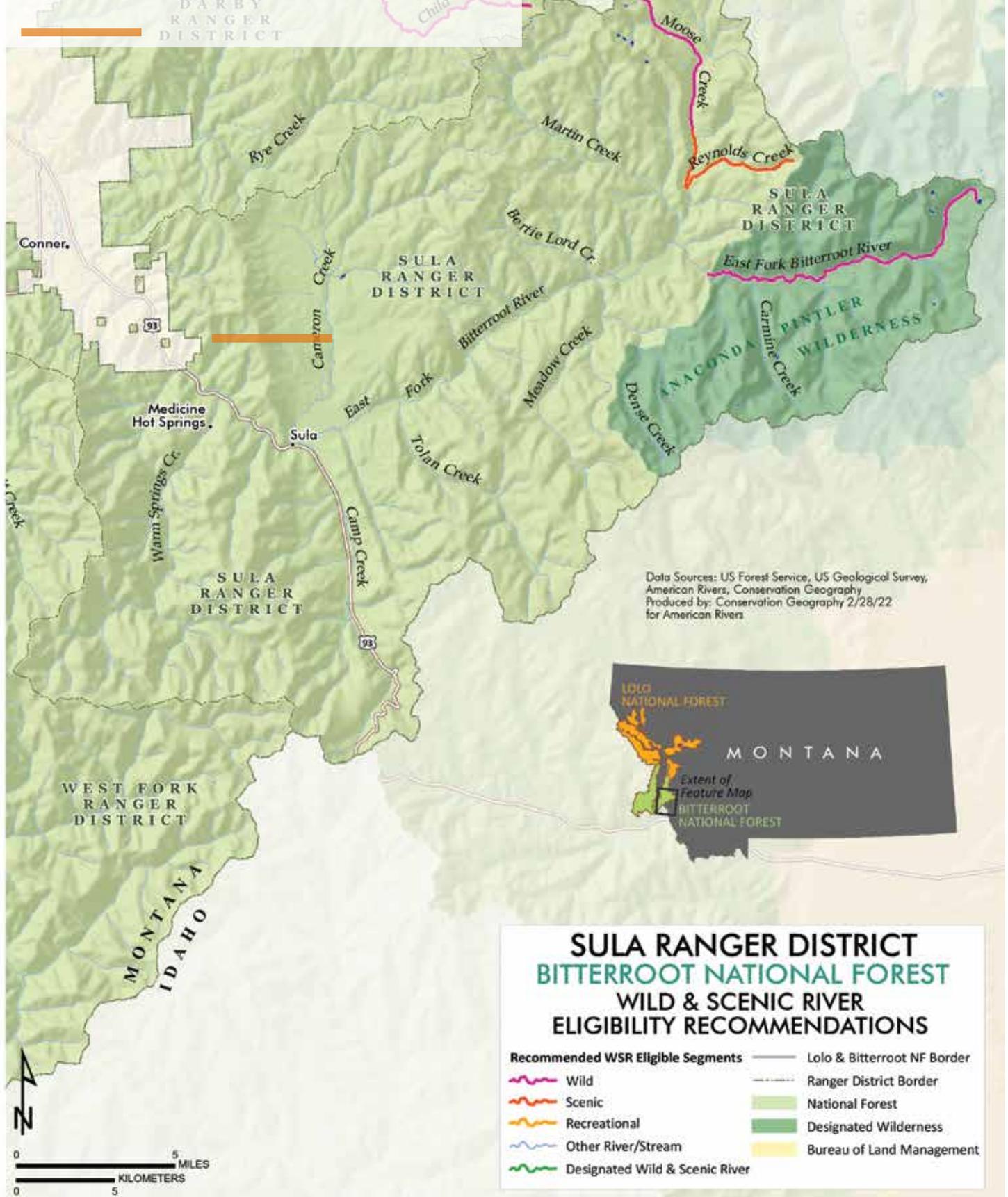
**SCENERY:** Sweeney Creek tumbles over a series of falls through a steep, largely inaccessible canyon. Holloway Lake Trail #393 offers hikers and backpackers stunning views into

Sweeney Creek Canyon and access to Peterson Lake, Duffy Lake, Holloway Lake, and Mills Lake. One of the few largely inaccessible drainages in the Bitterroot Valley, Sweeney Creek is a stunning wild creek.



# SULA

## RANGER DISTRICT



# EAST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER

**REACH:** Source to East Fork Trailhead

**MILEAGE:** 13

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Culture, Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** The East Fork of the Bitterroot River is home to hunting, fishing, and gathering grounds utilized and stewarded for generations by the Séliš (Salish) and Qlispé (Kalispel and Pend d'Oreille) Peoples. The area also served as a place for the allied western nations, including the Nimíipuu (Nez Perce) and Shoshone Tribes, to gather for buffalo hunts.

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper reaches of the East Fork of the Bitterroot River are predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Flowing from headwaters deep in the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness, the East Fork of the Bitterroot River is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority watershed for Bull Trout restoration. The river is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS, including some genetically pure populations in the upper reaches.



**RECREATION:** East Fork Trail #433 parallels the creek and is a primary route into the Anaconda-Pintler Wilderness. The trail passes Star Falls and the remarkable East Fork canyon, both popular hiking destinations along the creek and relics of the area's unique geology. The river corridor and surrounding area are popular big game hunting grounds in season and the river itself supports a popular and productive fishery for anglers.

**WILDLIFE:** The river corridor is rich in diverse and high-quality river and riparian habitat, including willow bottoms that support populations of moose, elk, beaver, river otters, and other wildlife.



# MOOSE CREEK

**REACH:** Source to East Fork Bitterroot River

**MILEAGE:** 10

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild (6 miles: Source to Moose Creek Trailhead); Scenic (4 miles: Moose Creek Trailhead to East Fork Bitterroot River)

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Moose Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** Moose Creek is home to abundant populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered



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Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. The creek's superb water quality and habitat conditions make it one of the most important and productive tributaries of the East Fork Bitterroot fishery.

# REYNOLDS CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Moose Creek

**MILEAGE:** 4

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Reynolds Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** A primary tributary of Moose Creek, Reynolds Creek provides important spawning and nursery grounds for populations of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. As part of the Moose Creek drainage, it is one of the



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most important and productive tributaries of the East Fork Bitterroot fishery.

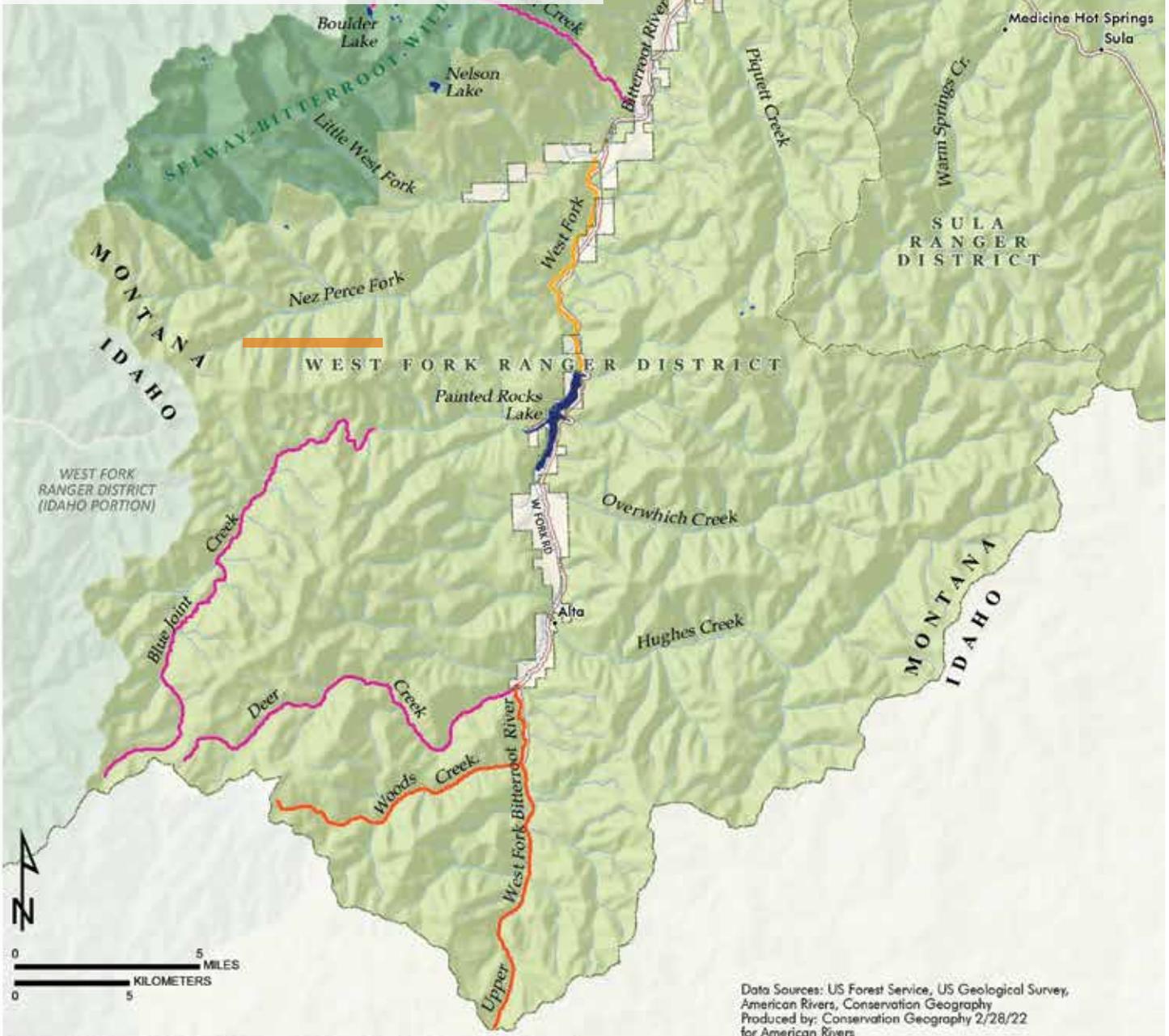
**RECREATION:** Accessible by USFS road, Reynolds Creek is a popular destination for hikers, backpackers, anglers, and hunters.





# WEST FORK

## RANGER DISTRICT



Data Sources: US Forest Service, US Geological Survey, American Rivers, Conservation Geography  
 Produced by: Conservation Geography 2/28/22 for American Rivers

### WEST FORK RANGER DISTRICT BITTERROOT NATIONAL FOREST WILD & SCENIC RIVER ELIGIBILITY RECOMMENDATIONS

- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Wild                           | Lolo & Bitterroot NF Border |
| Scenic                         | Ranger District Border      |
| Recreational                   | National Forest             |
| Other River/Stream             | Designated Wilderness       |
| Designated Wild & Scenic River | Bureau of Land Management   |



# WEST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER

**REACH:** Painted Rocks Reservoir to Nez Perce Creek

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Culture, Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Recreational

## **DESCRIPTION:**

**CULTURE:** The West Fork of the Bitterroot River is culturally significant to the Séliš (Salish) People and served for generations as a place to harvest edible valerian root, an important medicinal plant. Some stretches of the river are known as Epł msawye? ("Has Edible Valerian Root").

**FISH:** Upper reaches of this section of the West Fork of the Bitterroot River are considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The river is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. Expansive headwaters in the roadless area near the Lemhi Divide provide high water quality, productive trout populations, and a popular small stream fishery.



SAM OLSON 

**GEOLOGY:** Scenic, overhanging cliffs above the river showcase the Bitterroot's unique, glacial-carved geology.

**RECREATION:** With mild rapids and excellent water quality, the river provides ample recreation opportunities for anglers, beginner whitewater paddlers, packrafters, and others.



SAM OLSON 

# UPPER WEST FORK BITTERROOT RIVER

**REACH:** Source to Deer Creek

**MILEAGE:** 13

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** Yes

**ORVs:** Fish, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** The Upper West Fork of the Bitterroot River is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority watershed for Bull Trout restoration, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The river is also a stronghold for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS. Expansive headwaters in the roadless area near the Lemhi Divide provide high water quality, productive trout populations, and a popular small stream fishery.



**WILDLIFE:** Popular for wildlife viewing, the river corridor is rich in diverse and high-quality river and riparian habitat, including willow bottoms that support strong populations of moose and beaver.

# BLUE JOINT CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Trail #614 Trailhead

**MILEAGE:** 9

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

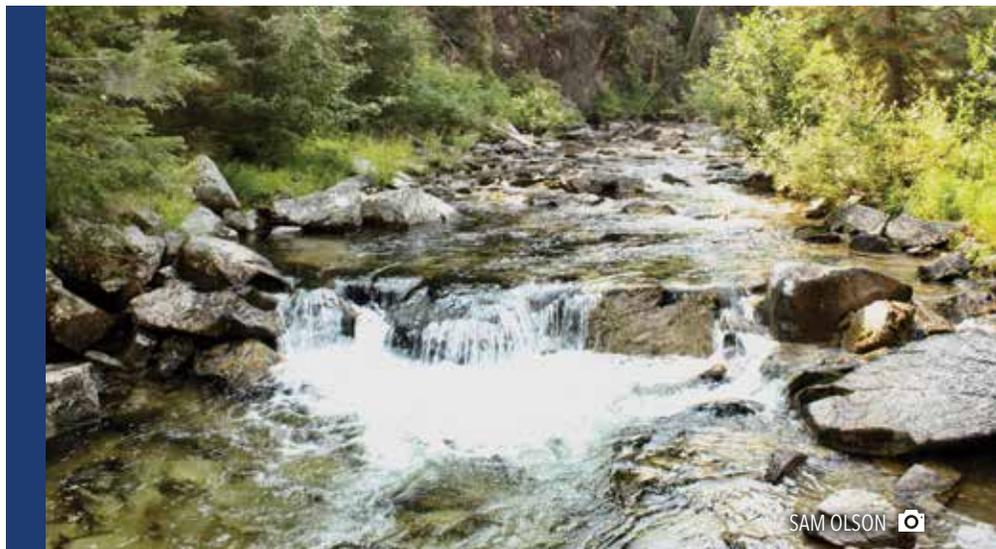
**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Geology, Recreation, Scenery

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Blue Joint Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



**FISH:** With expansive, roadless headwaters, undisturbed springs, and a largely intact natural forest floodplain, Blue Joint Creek has superb water quality and supports an incredibly productive fishery, which contributes significantly to the West Fork Bitterroot and Bitterroot River fisheries. Blue Joint Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be a priority watershed for Bull Trout restoration, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The river is also a stronghold for genetically pure populations of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY:** Blue Joint Trail #614 provides access to Castle Rock, known as Čícó ("Shale on Top") to the Séliš (Salish) People, a unique mass of porphyritic andesite which is a highly durable volcanic stone.

**RECREATION AND SCENERY:** Blue Joint Trail #614 parallels the creek and leads into the scenic Blue Joint Wilderness Study Area, offering hikers, backpackers, anglers, and paddlers access to Blue Joint Creek and thousands of acres of beautiful forest land.

# BOULDER CREEK

**REACH:** Source to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 8

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Fish, Geology, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**FISH:** Boulder Creek is considered by USFS Region 1 to be critical habitat for a resident population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Creek is also home to native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**GEOLOGY AND RECREATION:** With a series of powerful bedrock drops, granite boulder gardens, and Lower Boulder Falls, Boulder Creek offers an exceptional Class IV-V whitewater



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kayaking run. Boulder Creek Trail follows the creek to its headwaters below Trapper Peak, the iconic highest point in the Bitterroot Range, and offers hikers, backpackers, horse packers, and others access into the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

# DEER CREEK

**REACH:** Source to West Fork Bitterroot River

**MILEAGE:** 13

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish

**CLASSIFICATION:** Wild

**DESCRIPTION:**

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Deer Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.



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**FISH:** With headwaters in an extensive roadless area between Deer Creek Point and Razorback Mountain, Deer Creek is one of the most biologically important tributaries of the Upper West Fork Bitterroot River. Though the area has

experienced significant wildfires, the creek has maintained high water quality and provides excellent habitat to both resident and fluvial Bull Trout as well as a genetically-pure population of Westslope Cutthroat Trout.

# NEZ PERCE FORK

**REACH:** Sheephead Creek to Bitterroot National Forest boundary

**MILEAGE:** 8

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Culture, Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

## DESCRIPTION:

**CULTURE:** The Nez Perce Fork of the West Fork Bitterroot River flows from headwaters at Nez Perce Pass along the historic Magruder Corridor Road, which separates the Selway-Bitterroot and Frank Church River of No Return Wildernesses. Nez Perce Pass provides a route through the mountains and was used in 1877 by Chief Joseph as he led the Nimíipuu (Nez Perce) towards freedom in Canada. After being forcibly removed from their homelands near the Wallowa Valley, the Nimíipuu fled the U.S. Army but were intercepted less than 50 miles from the border. Their path, including the section along Nez Perce Fork, remains of great cultural importance today.

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, the upper reaches of the Nez Perce Fork are predicted



to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** The Nez Perce Fork supports a small population of Bull Trout, a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act, and healthy populations of native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.

**RECREATION:** The creek serves as a popular fishery, accessible by the Nez Perce-Magruder Road. Thanks to its accessibility, size, gradient, and scenic surroundings, Nez Perce Fork is also a popular early-season paddling destination.

# WOODS CREEK

**REACH:** Source to West Fork Bitterroot River

**MILEAGE:** 7

**WATERSHED:** Bitterroot

**USFS ELIGIBLE:** No

**ORVs:** Climate Refuge, Fish, Recreation, Wildlife

**CLASSIFICATION:** Scenic

## DESCRIPTION:

**CLIMATE REFUGE:** Based on Issak et al.'s Climate Shield spatial data, Woods Creek is predicted to serve as a cold water refuge in 2040 for temperature-sensitive species of native trout.

**FISH:** The clear, cold waters of Woods Creek provide ideal spawning and nursery grounds for populations of Bull Trout, listed as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act, and native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, considered a sensitive species by the USFS.



**RECREATION AND WILDLIFE:** The creek contributes significantly to the productivity of the Upper West Fork Bitterroot fishery, popular among anglers as a small creek destination. The riparian corridor along Woods Creek also supports populations of moose, elk, and beaver, and is a popular hiking, wildlife-viewing, and berry-picking destination.



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