



# Wild and Scenic River Eligibility Report

Second Edition, August 20, 2012

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## Introduction

Through the national forests of Montana flow some of the most beautiful and ecologically vital rivers and streams in the nation. Born from high elevation glaciers and snowpack, these cold, clean waters are home to a host of native fish species including westslope and Yellowstone cutthroat trout and federally threatened bull trout. Their canyons and valleys provide habitat to a stunning array of wildlife ranging from grizzly bears and Canada lynx to prized big game animals like elk, deer and moose. Anglers, paddlers and hikers come from across the country and around the world to explore Montana's incomparable rivers and streams. For many residents, their backyard rivers and streams provide the water they drink, the wildlife they hunt, and the scenery that enriches their lives.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was passed to protect the ecological and social values of our nation's last best rivers. The Act serves as a tool for agencies to recognize and prioritize special rivers and streams under their management. Agencies are charged with determining which streams are "eligible" for Wild and Scenic designation:

"A wild, scenic or recreational river area eligible to be included in the system is a free-flowing stream and the related adjacent land area that possesses one or more of the values referred to in section 1271 of this title. Every wild, scenic or recreational river in its free-flowing condition, or upon restoration to this condition, shall be considered eligible for inclusion in the national wild and scenic rivers system..."<sup>1</sup>

These eligibility determinations are created and updated by the USFS through discrete inventories or through the forest planning process. They are cataloged in the Nationwide Rivers Inventory, and in each forest plan. Once found eligible, the USFS is charged with protecting the specific values of each stream that could one-day lead to designation.

In reviewing the current, and in some cases proposed, inventories of eligible streams, the authors of this report recognized that certain streams, and the values of certain streams, were missing from the current US Forest Service inventory. This report is intended to fill those gaps, as well as be a comprehensive inventory of the rivers and streams that are eligible for Wild and Scenic designation in western Montana. This report is the Second Edition of what will certainly be a living document. In the coming years we hope to learn a great deal from citizens, scientists, and managers about these streams and others, and will continue to add to and refine this report.

Based on our analysis, each river and stream listed in this report is eligible for Wild and Scenic designation.

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<sup>1</sup> Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, § 1273 (b)

## About this Report

This report was generated by a team of experts in fisheries and wildlife biology, river ecology, hydrology, recreation and other related fields. Team members have extensive direct experience with the streams of Montana and specifically with the streams in this report. This report is based on a combination of placed-based experience and scientific knowledge. A scientists’ workshop was held at the Flathead Lake Biological Station in October 2010 at which nearly two-dozen prominent scientists helped shape the direction of this report.

The authors of this report relied on a wide array of sources in drafting this report, including but not limited to:

- Final Bull Trout Critical Habitat Designation (September 30, 2010).
- Montana Fisheries Information System.
- Current and draft forest plans.
- The Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI).
- The National Whitewater Inventory.
- Google Earth and a variety of geospatial resources.

The Report is organized by National Forest, and then alphabetically by eligible stream name. The stream name is followed by the reach description and by a corresponding table with the following fields, described below:

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
A	B	C	D

- A) This field describes the body of water which the eligible stream flows into. In cases where the stream flows into a tributary of a larger river, the field is filled out as follows: “Large River (tributary that the eligible river flows into)”
- B) This field describes the estimated length of the river reach
- C) This field indicates if the reach is currently protected as eligible under an existing forest plan and the Nationwide Rivers Inventory (NRI) (Yes or No).
- D) This field indicates the Outstanding Remarkable Values (ORVs) associated with the reach. ORVs are abbreviated as follows: Cultural (C), Fisheries (F), Geological (G), Historical (H), Recreation (R), Scenic (S), Wildlife (W), and Other (O).

Additional photographs and supplementary information are available upon request.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.fws.gov/pacific/bulltrout/FinalCH2010.html>  
<sup>3</sup> <http://fwp.mt.gov/fishing/mFish/>  
<sup>4</sup> <http://www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/rtca/nri/states/mt.html>  
<sup>5</sup> <http://www.americanwhitewater.org/content/River/state-summary/state/MT/>



## 4 Flathead National Forest

The Flathead watershed contains some of the largest expanses of federally protected Wilderness in the Northern Rockies, fringed by equally pristine but unprotected roadless lands. Combined with the fact that it encompasses such a wide elevational range – from alpine glaciers to broad alluvial floodplains – and it is a battleground between maritime and continental climates, this watershed is home to an incredible diversity of fish and wildlife. Many of the watershed’s rivers are blue-green in color like their Canadian counterparts, mountain vistas are stunning, and the country is rugged and lush. Visitors are confronted with devil’s club, grizzly bears, and wild weather. Rivers range from meandering valley rivers like the Spotted Bear and the North Fork of the Flathead to cascading streams like Graves Creek careening over ledges and coursing through boulders. The sheer size and largely intact hydrologic integrity of the Flathead watershed make it one of the most important strongholds for native bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout in the Lower 48 states. Its spectacular scenery, exceptional water quality, diversity of fish and wildlife, and protected areas make the Flathead an international outdoor recreation destination.

We recommend the following rivers and streams be found eligible for Wild and Scenic designation.

### 4.1 Aeneas Creek (Source to Graves Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	9	No	F, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Aeneas Creek supports a nearly pure population of westslope cutthroat trout, and is an important fish nursery stream for Graves Creek and Hungry Horse Reservoir.
- **Recreation:** Aeneas Creek drains the popular Jewel Basin Hiking Area
- **Scenery:** This system drains steep terrain on the east slope of the beautiful Swan Range. The aptly named Jewel Basin lies at its headwaters.



### 4.2 Basin Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

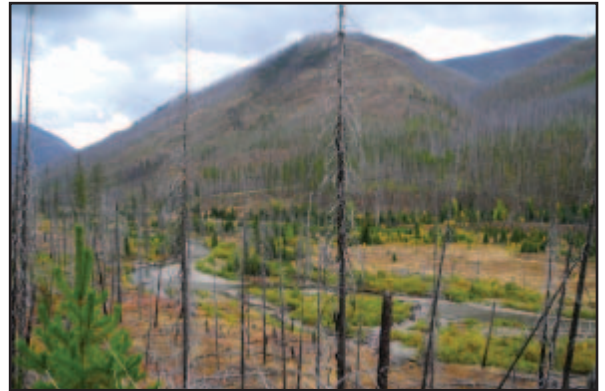
TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	5	Yes	F, S

- **Fisheries:** Basin Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

### 4.3 Big Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	18	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Big Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



### 4.4 Big Salmon Creek (Source to South Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	10	Yes	F, H, R, S

- Fisheries:** Big Salmon Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Recreation:** Big Salmon Creek offers paddlers a remote and inaccessible whitewater adventure, and hikers and horse packers views of scenic waterfalls.



#### 4.5 Bunker Creek (Headwaters to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	20	No	F, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Considered an “outstanding” fisheries resource by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks. Bunker Creek was designated critical habitat for bull trout in 2009, and is home to genetically pure Westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** A Forest Service road along lower Bunker Creek provides access for paddling, angling, and hiking opportunities.
- **Scenery:** Beautiful, large tributary to the SF Flathead flowing out of the picturesque Swan Range



#### 4.6 Clack Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	2	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** Clack Creek is critical habitat for bull trout. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.7 Coal Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	19	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** Coal Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.8 South Fork Coal Creek (North Fork Flathead River Tributary - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	7	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** The South Fork of Coal Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.9 Cyclone Creek (Cyclone Creek to Coal Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	5	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** Cyclone Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.10 Danaher Creek (Limestone Creek to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	14	Yes	C, F, H, R, S

- Fisheries:** Danaher Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Recreation:** Danaher Creek forms the centerpiece of this iconic remote and scenic valley in the heart of the Bob Marshall Wilderness. The Danaher offers hiking, horse packing, and pack rafting access to the South Fork Flathead down a scenic and remote valley.



#### 4.11 Dean Creek (Source to Spotted Bear River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Spotted Bear River	9	No	F

- Fisheries:** Dean Creek is an important but little-known tributary to the Spotted Bear River in the Great Bear Wilderness. Paralleled by a Forest Service trail, Dean Creek supports native fish including bull trout and likely genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout.

#### 4.12 Dolly Varden Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River)

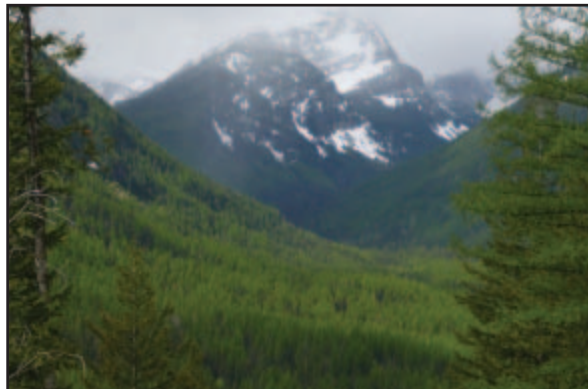
TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	21	No	F, R, S

- Fisheries:** Dolly Varden Creek supports excellent water quality and habitat with an abundant population of spawning migratory bull trout, and abundant westslope cutthroat trout of likely pure genetic character.
- Recreation:** Dolly Varden Creek is paralleled by a popular trail linking the Great Bear Wilderness to the Bob Marshall Wilderness trail system in the vicinity of Pot Mountain and the Spotted Bear River headwaters.

### 4.13 Elk Creek (Source to Swan River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	11	No	F, R, S, W

- Fisheries:** Elk Creek is a critical and highly productive spawning tributary for the Swan River bull trout metapopulation, with a large, roadless catchment area supporting very high water quality and excellent stream habitat.
- Recreation:** Elk Creek offers paddlers a Class III-V run alternating between open valleys with incredible views of the Mission Mountains and high quality bedrock and boulder-strewn rapids in a relatively large stream. Elk Creek has a long paddling season and few or no mandatory portages. Forest Trail #300 provides access for hikers. While difficult to access, the meadows in between the bedrock canyons offer excellent cover and substrate for fish in an open and meandering river. Presumably angling would be quite good.
- Scenic:** Meandering wetland complexes alternate with bedrock and boulder sections under a backdrop of the Mission Mountains.
- Wildlife:** Wildlife is abundant in the relatively remote and untrammed stream canyon, which serves as a key wildlife corridor across the Swan Valley linking the Mission Mountain Wilderness Area to the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area.



### 4.14 Gorge Creek (Source to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	14	No	F, R

- Fisheries:** Gorge Creek is home to both federally-threatened bull trout and native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Recreation:** A scenic Forest Service trail follows the left bank of the creek, providing excellent access for paddlers, anglers, hikers, and photographers. Considered a treasured, high-quality kayaking run by expert paddlers in the region.
- Scenic:** Moss-draped limestone gorge filled with pools, riffles, and falls greet the hiker, photographer, angler, and paddler a short walk from the trailhead.





#### 4.15 Glacier Creek (Glacier Lake to Outlet of Glacier Slough - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	6	Yes	F, H, R, S, W

- **Fisheries:** Glacier Creek is home to both federally-threatened bull trout and native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** A popular trail leads hikers along the waterfall-studded Glacier Creek to the high elevation lakes that form its dramatic headwaters in the Mission Mountains. Kayakers explore the creek itself and enjoy several clean bedrock drops.
- **Wildlife:** Glacier Creek traverses an important and habitat rich corridor for grizzly bears and other wildlife that migrate from the Mission Range to the Swan Valley and disperse to and from the Swan Range and Bob Marshall complex.



#### 4.16 Goat Creek (Source to Swan River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	10	No	F, W

- **Fisheries:** Goat Creek is one of the more important spawning tributaries for migratory bull trout in the Swan River system. It also comprises part of an important wildlife migration and dispersal corridor between the Swan Range and Swan Valley and Mission Mountains to the west.

#### 4.17 Gordon Creek (Headwaters to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	18	No	F, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Gordon Creek was designated critical habitat for bull trout in 2009, and is home to genetically pure Westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Gordon creek is large enough to packraft and is popular with anglers. Forest Service Trail #35 parallels the left bank up to the headwaters.
- **Scenery:** Beautiful, large tributary to the South Fork Flathead flowing out of the Swan Range from the flanks of Waldbillig Mountain.



#### 4.18 Granite Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	8	Yes	F, H, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Granite Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Paddlers regularly float down the class II Granite Creek as the beginning of multi-day Middle Fork Flathead adventures. The creek provides a valuable way to explore the Wilderness by boat without requiring a backcountry flight. A popular hiking trail accessing the Great Bear Wilderness reaches of the Middle Fork Flathead parallels Granite Creek.

#### 4.19 Graves Creek (Source to Hungry Horse Reservoir)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	5	No	F, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Graves Creek is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Waterfalls, slides, and rapids awe hikers and paddlers alike - and even those driving by - on this Hungry Horse Reservoir tributary. A hiking trail provides access to the high country along the Swan Range crest. While newly discovered, Graves Creek is quickly becoming known as one of the absolute best steep creeks for kayaking in the state.
- **Scenic:** Waterfalls, slides and rapids make an awe-inspiring site from the road, trail, or the creek itself.



#### 4.20 Hallowat Creek (Source to Big Creek - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Big Creek)	7	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** Hallowat Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.21 Lake Creek (Scott Lake to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	4	Yes	G, H, S

- **Geology:** 30ft + waterfall
- **Scenery:** A trail leads Middle Fork Flathead paddlers and others through the intact watershed.

#### 4.22 Unnamed Fork Lake Creek (Flotilla Lake to Scott Lake - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River (Lake Creek)	1	Yes	G, S

- **Geology:** Flotilla Lake formed by mass failure, which dammed the creek. Outlet of the lake is underground and surfaces as a big spring 1 mile below the lake. (NRI)

#### 4.23 Langford Creek (Mud Lake to Big Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Big Creek)	2	Yes	F

- **Fisheries:** While not critical habitat for bull trout, Region 1 considers Langford Creek home to a local population of bull trout. Essential spawning habitat for westslope cutthroat trout.
- Recommend considering Langford Creek as “Ineligible.” Langford Creek is a two-mile long stream that originates from a small reservoir/augmented lake (“Mud Lake”), and is surrounded by roads and clear cuts. Potential for restoration if fisheries values still exist.



#### 4.24 Lion Creek (Source to Trailhead - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	7	Yes	F, H, R, S, W

- **Fisheries:** Lion Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species. Lion Creek is paralleled by a popular trail accessing the Bob Marshall Wilderness at Lion Creek Pass south of Swan Peak.
- **Recreation and Scenery:** a relatively popular trail leads hikers along the creek to a high divide.
- **Wildlife:** Lion Creek comprises part of an important wildlife migration and dispersal corridor between the Swan Range and Swan Valley and Mission Mountains to the west.

#### 4.25 Little Salmon Creek (Source to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	13	Yes	F, H, R

- **Fisheries:** Little Salmon Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It also is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** The Little Salmon offers hiking, horse packing, and pack rafting access to the South Fork Flathead down a scenic and remote valley.



#### 4.26 Logan Creek (Star Meadow Road to Talley Lake)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Flathead River	5	No	F, R

- **Fisheries:** Logan Creek is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Logan Creek is featured in a paddling guidebook as an enjoyable Class IV-V run.

#### 4.27 North Fork Lost Creek (Forest Boundary to Swan River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	7	No	F

- **Fisheries:** The North Fork of Lost Creek is home to federally threatened bull trout and native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.28 South Fork Lost Creek (Source to Swan River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River	3	No	F, R, S, W

- Fisheries:** The South Fork of Lost Creek is home to federally threatened bull trout and native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Wildlife:** The headwaters support unusually abundant populations of the coldwater-dependent Rocky Mountain tailed frog, as well as grizzly bears, black bears, and other wildlife species. The stream traverses an important wildlife migration and dispersal corridor between the Swan Range and Swan Valley and Mission Mountains to the west.
- Recreation and Scenery:** The headwaters drain an extensive, pristine roadless catchment contiguous with the Bob Marshall Wilderness, paralleled by a well-worn trail accessing the Bob Marshall Wilderness near Thunderbolt Mountain. On its descent to the Swan River the stream wends through deep cataracts and an unusually well-preserved mosaic of old growth spruce and cedar-hemlock forests.



#### 4.29 Mathias Creek (Source to Coal Creek)

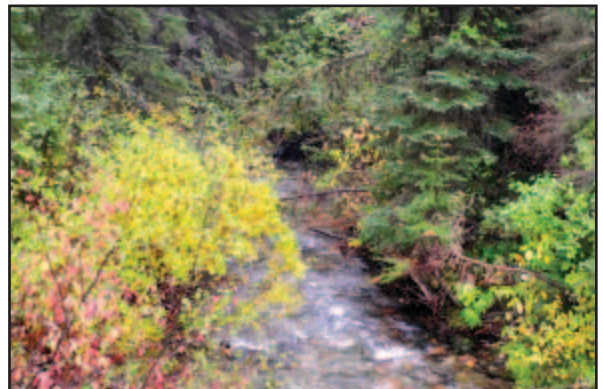
TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Coal Creek)	1	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Mathias Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.30 Moose Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	6	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** While not critical habitat for bull trout, Region 1 considers bull trout present in Moose Creek. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



### 4.31 Morrison Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	5	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Morrison Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

### 4.32 Nokio Creek (Source to Trail Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Trail Creek)	1	No	F

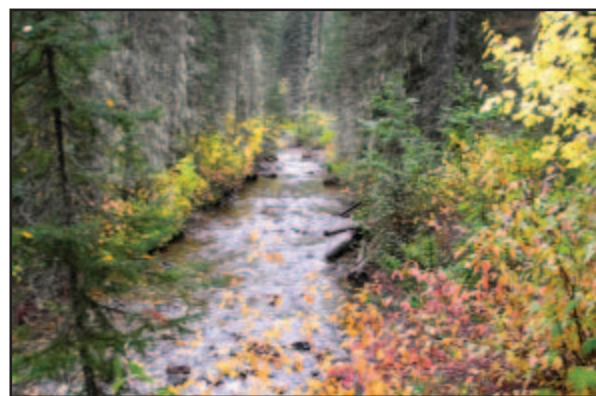
- Fisheries:** While not critical habitat for bull trout, Region 1 considers Nokio Creek home to a local population of bull trout. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



### 4.33 Quintonkon Creek (Source to Sullivan Creek - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River (Sullivan Creek)	8	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Quintonkon Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



#### 4.34 Red Meadow Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	12	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Red Meadow Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



#### 4.35 Schafer Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	2	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Schafer Creek is critical habitat for bull trout but Region 1 does not consider bull trout present. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.

#### 4.36 Shorty Creek (Source to Whale Creek - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Whale Creek)	3	Yes	F

- Fisheries:** Shorty Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



### 4.37 Spotted Bear River (Source to South Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	32	Yes	F, R, S

- **Fisheries:** Spotted Bear River is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Spotted Bear offers paddlers and anglers a scenic road-accessible float trip as well as a trail-accessible backcountry reach.
- **Scenic:** Beautiful, large tributary to the South Fork Flathead with gravel bars and a short canyon section flanked by mountain views and intact forests.



### 4.38 Squeezer Creek (Source to Goat Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Swan River (Goat Creek)	9	No	F, S, W

- **Fisheries:** Squeezer Creek is a bull trout core area for the Swan River system and also supports native cutthroat trout and amphibians, including the Columbia spotted frog.
- **Wildlife:** Important hydrologic and wildlife habitat features include an extensive system of wet meadows and fens connected to streams through subsurface flow paths in the region where Squeezer Creek traverses a mixed checkerboard of Flathead National Forest and Swan State Forest lands. This complex of forested wetlands and streams comprises a key part of an important wildlife migration and dispersal corridor between the Swan Range and Swan Valley and Mission Mountains to the west.

### 4.39 Strawberry Creek (Source to Middle Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Middle Fork Flathead River	10	Yes	F, S

- **Fisheries:** Strawberry Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Scenic series of pools and drops. Good fishing for cutthroat trout. (NRI)



#### 4.40 Sullivan Creek (Source to Hungry Horse Reservoir - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	15	Yes	F, R

- **Fisheries:** Sullivan Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Recreation:** Sullivan Creek offers a scenic mild float trip for small boats and angling opportunities.



#### 4.41 Upper Swan River (Crystal Lake to Lindbergh Lake, Lindbergh Lake to Holland Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Flathead River	3, 6	Yes	C, F, R, S, W

- **Fisheries:** The Upper Swan River is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species. These waters converge with Holland Creek to form the headwaters of the Swan River and give the system its characteristic high water quality that supports the river system's fishery, wildlife, and recreational resources.
- **Recreation:** The Upper Swan offers paddlers an incredible remote Class IV and V paddling adventure between Crystal Lake and Lindbergh Lake. Brilliantly clear water thunders over a long sliding falls on Crystal Lake Creek and gushes through several excellent rapids on the Upper Swan.
- **Wildlife:** A complex of wet meadows, fens, and ponds form a hydrologically interconnected mosaic of productive wildlife habitat that comprises part of an important wildlife migration and dispersal corridor between the Swan Range and Swan Valley and Mission Mountains.
- **Cultural:** Prehistoric site, historic guard station, and history of visit by Charles Lindbergh.



#### 4.42 Lower Swan River (Swan River State Forest to Swan Lake - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
Flathead River	11	Yes	F, R, S, W

- **Fisheries:** The lower Swan River is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species
- **Recreation:** The lower Swan River provides a superb float trip for a wide variety of paddlers, featuring excellent scenery and angling.
- **Wildlife:** The Swan River is nearly unique among Montana’s large floodplain rivers in retaining its extensive floodplain forests and largely unaltered examples of shifting river channels, floodplain ponds and springbrooks. This complex of features, historically characteristic of many Rocky Mountain rivers, provides diverse aquatic habitats for fish, amphibians, invertebrates, and water-loving birds and mammals, but also a rich and productive mosaic of terrestrial habitats for wildlife and rare plants.

#### 4.43 Trail Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	11	Yes	C, F, G, S, W

- **Cultural:** Over the Whitefish Range, prehistoric and historic routes connect the North Fork Valley with the Tobacco Valley. Indian pictographs and limestone caves along stream corridor. (NRI)
- **Fisheries:** Trail Creek is critical habitat for bull trout. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- **Geologic:** Limestone caves and grottos are common along Trail Creek. There is also a creek-wide “sink,” wherein the entire creek goes through a subterranean cavern, with a “rise” approximately one mile downstream.
- **Scenic:** Beautiful limestone gorge overlooking rapids gives way to a high-altitude wetland and views of the Whitefish Range.
- **Wildlife:** Rare, high-altitude wetland complex near the headwaters provides moose, beaver, fish, and bird habitat.



#### 4.44 Lower Twin Creek (Headwaters to South Fork Flathead)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	7	No	E, S, R

- **Fisheries:** Twin Creek is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species, and designated bull trout critical habitat.
- **Recreation:** Twin Creek offers a kayaking trip of moderate difficulty and high quality scenery, fishing, and hunting.
- **Scenic:** Beautiful wild tributary of the South Fork Flathead River, flowing through a limestone gorge.



#### 4.45 Upper Twin Creek (Headwaters to South Fork Flathead)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	7	No	E, G, R

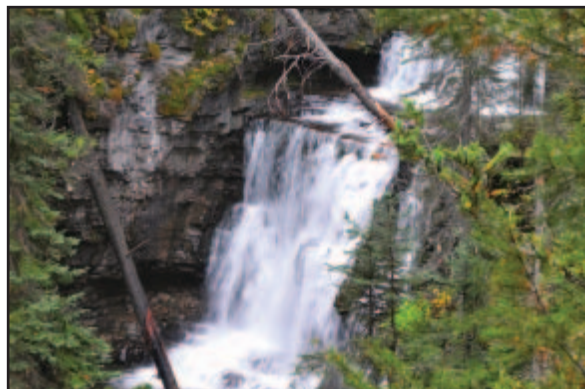
- **Fisheries:** Twin Creek is a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species, and designated bull trout critical habitat.
- **Geology:** Twin Creek passes through a natural arch that is a unique and scenic geologic feature in the region.
- **Recreation:** Upper Twin Creek offers a kayaking trip of moderate difficulty and high quality scenery. The creek also provides hiking, fishing, and hunting opportunities, accessed by a Forest Service trail system.



#### 4.46 Whale Creek (Source to North Fork Flathead River - see NRI)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River	14	Yes	F, O

- Fisheries:** Whale Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Other:** Whale Creek is well-positioned for ecological restoration to support its fisheries, recreation, scenic, and wildlife values in the large, beautiful, low elevation valley. The drainage has seen a fair amount of timber harvesting in the past.



#### 4.47 White River (Source to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	16	Yes	F, G, R, S

- Fisheries:** The White River is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Recreation:** A relatively popular pack trail follows the White River, making it a sought-after destination and travel corridor for horsepackers, anglers, backpackers, and packrafters.
- Scenery:** Scenic: The White River is a scenic landmark in the Bob Marshall Wilderness, filled with expansive wilderness views, scenic falls, and tremendously clear water that gives way to a red and white cobbled riverbed.



#### 4.48 Yakinikak Creek (Source to Trail Creek)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
North Fork Flathead River (Trail Creek)	5	No	F

- Fisheries:** While not critical habitat for bull trout, Region 1 considers it home to a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.



#### 4.49 Young's Creek (Source to South Fork Flathead River)

TRIBUTARY OF:	MILEAGE	USFS ELIGIBLE	ORVs
South Fork Flathead River	11	Yes	F, G, R

- Fisheries:** Young's Creek is critical habitat for bull trout and Region 1 considers it a local population. It is also a stronghold for native westslope cutthroat trout, a Forest Service sensitive fish species.
- Geology:** Geologic values, including Hole in the Wall Cave and various impressive cliff sections. (NRI)
- Recreation:** A major route for hikers, horse packers, and pack rafters to explore the Bob Marshall Wilderness and to reach the South Fork Flathead.



### C Flathead Watershed

