

F-9-F-12 Southwest Montana Fishery Study.

Job II. Stream Channel Alteration Inventory.

Shields River

The objective is to describe the kind and amount of stream channel alteration to trout streams in the management area. Natural streams containing pools, riffles, and undercut banks provide the habitat desirable for wild trout populations. Each year, more and more Montana trout streams are being gutted and ruined through mans activities. Channel alterations were measured on 13 Montana streams in 1962; five were in the management area. In all cases, a greater number of trout were found in natural stream sections than in altered sections. The Shields River was added to the program last year, and over 20 percent of the stream had been altered by man with most of the damage caused by agricultural activities. Over 40 times more trout were found in natural stream sections than in altered sections.

Other streams will be added to this type of survey as deemed necessary to strengthen our present stream preservation policy.