



***Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks***

Dry Fork Creek Barrier Construction Report

Status Report for PPL-Montana
FERC Project 2188

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The Dry Fork Belt Creek drainage currently supports five tributary populations of westslope cutthroat trout (WCT) with greater than 99% genetic purity. Mine cleanup activities are currently underway in the headwaters of the Dry Fork Belt Creek drainage. Improved water quality from the mine cleanup could jeopardize existing WCT populations, by allowing nonnative species to invade previously barren reaches, which could then result in competition or hybridization with WCT.

As such, a plan was made to preserve the native WCT populations. The plan includes construction of a fish barrier to prevent nonnative fish from moving upstream from Belt Creek, removal of nonnatives through a large scale piscicide treatment (planned for 2017), and repopulating the Dry Fork Basin with native WCT where nonnatives previously resided. Ultimately, the project will increase the potential stream miles available for WCT from 6 to 26 miles.

At the December 2014 Missouri River Technical Advisory Committee (MoTAC) meeting, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks was awarded \$60,000 from Northwestern Energy for construction services for the construction of a fish barrier on Dry Fork Creek. The \$60,000 awarded by Northwestern Energy was needed to cover the shortfall in funding after bids in early 2014 came in higher than the original engineers cost opinion. This funding was in addition to \$14,000 previously awarded by PPL Montana for construction oversight. Table 1 outlines the contributions from Northwestern/PPL Montana and other entities.

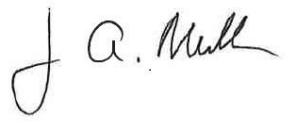
Table 1. Funding and costs for the Dry Fork Belt Creek barrier construction.

Category	RDGP*	EPA	PPL MT / Northwestern	Future Fisheries	Total
Funding Sources and Amounts					
Design		\$18,200			\$18,200
Construction	\$110,000		\$74,000	\$40,000	\$226,000
Total					\$244,200
Total Estimated Cost	\$110,000	\$18,200	\$74,000	\$2,130	\$204,330

* Resource Development Grant Program through Cascade Conservation District

A contractor was awarded the project in late May, began work at the site in August, and the barrier was completed in October 2015. The barrier site is located approximately 2 miles upstream from the confluence with Belt Creek (Figure 1). Below is a photo log of the barrier site, including photos before construction, during construction, and after completion of the barrier.

Submitted by; Jason Mullen November 2015



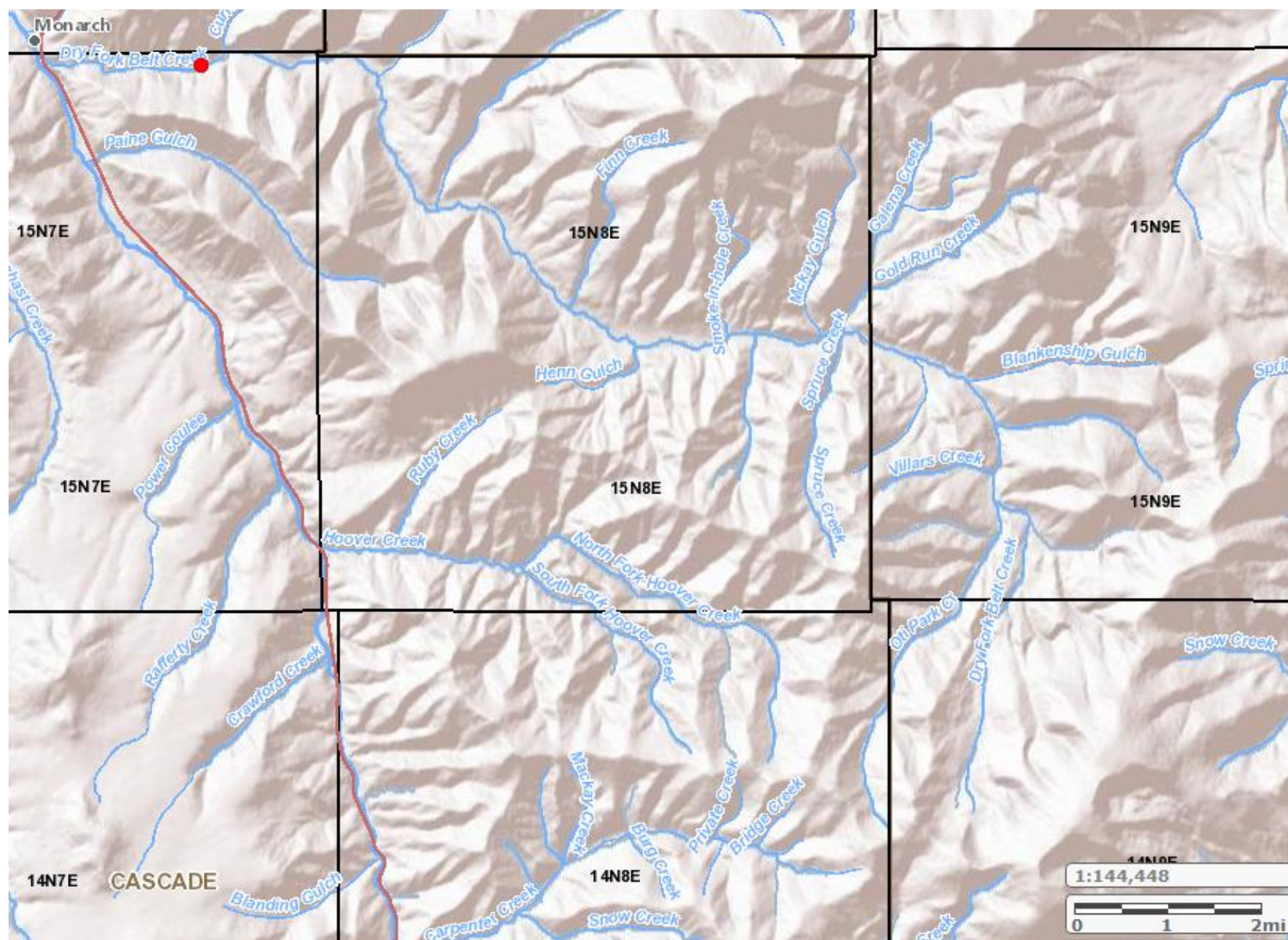


Figure 1: Barrier site (red dot) located on Dry Fork Belt Creek.



Photo 1: Barrier site during pre-bid meeting, May 2015.



Photo 2. Barrier during construction, August 2015.



Photo 3. Barrier during construction, August 2015.



Photo 4. Barrier during construction, looking upstream, Sept 2015.



Photo 5. Barrier during construction, looking downstream, Sept 2015.



Photo 6. Completed barrier, looking downstream, October 2015.



Photo 7. Completed barrier, looking upstream, October 2015.



Photo 8. Completed barrier, side view, October 2015.