# FUTURE FISHERIES IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION

*All sections must be addressed, or the application will be considered invalid*

## I. APPLICANT INFORMATION

A. Applicant Name: Yaak Valley Forest Council

Mailing Address: 11896 Yaak River Rd

City: Troy State: MT Zip: 59935

Telephone: (406) 295-9736 E-mail: info@yaakvalley.org

B. Contact Person (if different than applicant): Jeff Babik

Address: 11896 Yaak River Rd

City: Troy State: MT Zip: 59935

Telephone: (352) 283-5661 E-mail: jeff@yaakvalley.org

C. Landowner and/or Lessee Name (if different than applicant): District Ranger Kirsten Kaiser
Kootenai National Forest - Three Rivers Ranger District

Mailing Address: 12858 US Hwy 2

City: Troy State: MT Zip: 59935

Telephone: (406) 295-4693 E-mail: kirsten.kaiser@usda.gov
benjamin.hegler@usda.gov

## II. PROJECT INFORMATION

A. Project Name: South Spread Creek Storage and Decommissioning Project

River, stream, or lake: Spread Creek and Hidden Creek Drainage

Location: Township: 36 N Range: 33 W Section: 34

Latitude: 48.838038 Longitude: 115.855971 *within project (decimal degrees)*

County: Lincoln County

B. Purpose of Project:

The purpose of this project is to improve water quality, fish habitat connectivity, and the spawning habitat of genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout in the Hidden Creek drainage.

Hidden Creek and its major tributaries provide critical spawning habitat for a genetically pure population of westslope cutthroat trout. The Yaak watershed also houses Columbia River red band and bull trout. The historic range, population numbers, and genetic integrity of these native trout have been drastically reduced by habitat fragmentation and degradation due to historically unsustainable road building and logging practices, as well as hybridization with non-native trout.

Native westslope cutthroat trout are adapted to rivers with cold, well-oxygenated water, and river systems with low sediment and nutrient concentrations. Sediment loads from unpaved roads are one of the primary anthropogenic sources of sediment to impaired streams in the Yaak watershed due to the extensive network of forest roads. Therefore, best management practices and stream restoration activities that reduce sediment loading and increase riparian shading to reduce water temperatures and provide in-stream cover are our highest work priority in our efforts to protect these native fish populations.

Because of this, these species are at high risk of extinction. In the Yaak watershed, there is imminent need to reduce sediment loading into habitat of these sensitive native fish species by “right-sizing” the roads system.

This will be accomplished by reducing chronic sediment sources and reducing or eliminating the potential for future sediment sources. The South Spread Creek Storage and Decommissioning Project will distribute over-road flows through waterbarring, decompaction, and recontouring.

C. Brief Project Description (attach additional information to end of application):

The Yaak Valley Forest Council (YVFC) respectfully requests 49,700.00 in support of the South Spread Creek Storage and Decommissioning Project. YVFC is a 501(c)(3) organization that works for a wild Yaak through science, education, and bold action.

This project will reduce sediment in the Hidden Creek drainage by stabilizing or removing failures or imminent failures of 4 stream crossings. Those crossing include one buried log, one twin corrugated metal pipe, several smaller crossings of wood culverts, and multiple smaller various work sites on Hidden Creek and its major tributary. This project will also actively decommission .9 miles of unused Forest Service road 5948B, and active storage of 7.4 miles of unused Forest Service roads 591 (4.4 miles), 5948 (2.6 miles), and 5948D (0.4 mile).

The South Spread Creek Storage and Decommissioning Project is expected to improve water quality, fish habitat, spawning habitat of westslope cutthroat trout, and habitat connectivity. by reducing chronic sediment sources and reducing or eliminating potential for future sediment sources from failures; and by distributing over-road flows through water-barring, decompaction, and recontouring, which would be beneficial to the watershed during higher runoff events.
Abstract

This project will perform .9 miles of active decommissioning and 7.4 miles of active storage including removing all non-metal stream crossings and any metal stream crossings that are unstable or preventing fish passage on unused Forest Service roads in the Hidden Creek drainage of the Yaak Valley in northwest Montana. This project is part of a Headwaters Restoration Partnership that is a collaboration between state and federal agencies, local groups, businesses, and citizen

D. Length of stream or size of lake that will be treated (project extent): 4.4 miles

Length/size of impact, if larger than project extent (e.g. stream miles opened): 8.3 miles

E. Project Budget:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Grant Request (Dollars):** | $ | 49,700.00 |
| Matching Dollars: | **$** | 11,225.25 |
| Matching In-Kind Services:* | **$** | |

**salaries of government employees are not considered matching contributions*

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Other Contributions (not part of this app) | **$** | 8,910.30 |
| **Total Project Cost:** | **$** | 69,820.55 |

F. **Attach** itemized (line item) budget – *see budget template*

G. **Insert** or **attach** a project location map showing the project area in relation to a major landmark or town. Please indicate if the project location is on public or private property.

Please see attached.

H. **Attach** specific project plans (e.g. detailed sketches, plan views [showing location and type of channel modifications], example photographs), current condition photographs, and maps. **If project involves water leasing or water salvage complete and attach a supplemental questionnaire (fwp.mt.gov/habitat/futurefisheries/supplement2.doc).*

I. **Attach** letters or statements of support. This includes landowner consent, community or public support, and fish biologist support.

J The project agreement includes a 20-year maintenance commitment. Please indicate (yes or no) that you will ensure project protection for 20 years. Discuss your ability to meet this commitment.

Yes [✓] No [ ]

YVFC will maintain this 20-year commitment through the Yaak Headwaters Restoration Partnership (YHRP). YHRP includes the U.S. Forest Service, MT Fish Wildlife & Parks, local groups, businesses, and citizens. YHRP reduces sediment loading into spawning habitat of sensitive and threatened native fish species through on-the-ground restoration and monitoring of degraded habitat, and promotes interagency and community collaboration in project planning, implementation, and monitoring

K. **Describe** or **attach** land management & maintenance plans, including changing to grazing regimes, that will ensure protection of the restored area.

**III. PROJECT BENEFITS** (attach additional information to end of application):

A. What species of fish will benefit from this project?

Spread Creek is a tributary to the Yaak River and provides habitat for native westslope cutthroat trout. This project will also benefit species downstream in the Yaak River and prevent further habitat degradation. Species of concern downstream include the threatened bull trout and Columbia River redband trout.

Native westslope cutthroat trout are adapted to rivers with cold, well-oxygenated water, and river systems with low sediment and nutrient concentrations. Sediment loads from unpaved roads are one of the primary anthropogenic sources of sediment to impaired streams in the Yaak watershed due to the extensive network of forest roads. Therefore, best management practices and stream restoration activities that reduce sediment loading and increase riparian shading to reduce water temperatures and provide in-stream cover are our highest work priority in our efforts to protect these native fish populations.

B. How will the project protect or enhance wild fish habitat?

- The project will remove road fill from five large stream crossings at potential risk of washout, which will help ensure the associated road fill material is not delivered to the stream
- The project will also remove several smaller culverts on stream crossings which show signs of future problems, such as being undersized, worn out, or partially failed
- Provide more dispersed drainage on the surface of the roads, which will more closely mimic natural conditions and help prevent future road failures and excess water delivery to streams in heavy runoff events.
- De-compact and recontour (in a manner that retains public access) the road prism of the decommissioning segment, which will return the road to productive forest land
- Reseed disturbed ground with native grass seed and allow it to revegetate with on-site native species

C. Will the project improve fish populations and/or fishing? To what extent?

Fish population improvement will come from improved spawning grounds and refuge along the Hidden Creek drainage and Spread Creek.

D. Will the project increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish and, if so, how?

This project will increase public fishing opportunity for wild fish by improving native fish habitat and spawning areas.

E. What was the cause of habitat degradation in the area of this project and how will the project correct the cause?

The cause of habitat degradation is from extreme amount of erosion and sediment buildup due to historically unsustainable road building and logging practices. The South Spread Creek Storage and Decommissioning Project will distribute over-road flows through water-barring, decompaction, and recontouring.

F. What public benefits will be realized from this project?

This project will benefit the public by providing native fish habitat and spawning areas for native trout species. This will benefit the public by ensuring the Yaak River watershed has healthy fisheries for anglers and fishermen.

G. Will the project interfere with water or property rights of adjacent landowners? (explain):

No, the project is being administered in coordination with the Three Rangers District of the Kootenai National Forest.

H. Will the project result in the development of commercial recreational use on the site? (explain):

No, the land is own and operated by the US National Forest Service and will not be leased or used for commercial recreational use.

I. Is this project associated with the reclamation of past mining activity?

No

**Each approved project applicant must enter into a written agreement with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks specifying terms and duration of the project. The applicant must obtain all applicable permits prior to project construction. A competitive bid process must be followed when using State funds.**

## IV. AUTHORIZING STATEMENT

I (we) hereby declare that the information and all statements to this application are true, complete, and accurate to the best of my (our) knowledge and that the project or activity complies with rules of the Future Fisheries Improvement Program.

Applicant Signature: _____ Date: 11/30/2020

Sponsor (if applicable): _____

Submittal: **Applications must be *signed and received before* December 1 and June 1 of each year to be considered for the subsequent funding period**. Late or incomplete applications will be rejected.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Mail to: | FWP Future Fisheries<br>Fish Habitat Bureau<br>PO Box 200701<br>Helena, MT 59620-0701 | Email: | Future Fisheries Coordinator<br>FWPFFIP@mt.gov<br>(electronic submissions must be signed)<br>For files over 10MB, use https://transfer.mt.gov |

*Applications may be rejected if this form is modified.*

## BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS

Both tables must be completed or the application will be returned

| PROJECT COSTS | | | | | CONTRIBUTIONS | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **WORK ITEMS (Itemize by Category)** | **NUMBER OF UNITS** | **UNIT DESCRIPTION*** | **COST/UNIT** | **TOTAL COST** | **FUTURE FISHERIES REQUEST** | **MATCH (Cash or Services)**** | **OTHER (Not part of this application)** | **TOTAL** |
| **Personnel***** | | | | | | | | |
| Survey | 165 | mult salaries | $20.27 | $ 3,344.55 | | | 3,344.55 | $ 3,344.55 |
| Design | 49 | hours | $30.75 | $ 1,506.75 | | | 1,506.75 | $ 1,506.75 |
| Engineering | 0 | n/a, see design | $0.00 | $ - | | | - | $ - |
| Permitting | 3 | hours | $30.75 | $ 92.25 | | | 92.25 | $ 92.25 |
| Oversight | 129 | hours | $30.75 | $ 3,966.75 | | | 3,966.75 | $ 3,966.75 |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | Sub-Total | $ 8,910.30 | $ - | $ - | $ 8,910.30 | $ 8,910.30 |
| **Travel** | | | | | | | | |
| Mileage | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| Per diem | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | Sub-Total | $ - | $ - | $ - | $ - | $ - |
| **Construction Materials****** | | | | | | | | |
| Native grass seed | 100 | lbs native seed | $7.00 | $ 700.00 | 700.00 | | | $ 700.00 |
| Straw wattles | 7 | each | $45.00 | $ 315.00 | 315.00 | | | $ 315.00 |
| Straw bales | 18 | each | $15.00 | $ 270.00 | 270.00 | | | $ 270.00 |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | Sub-Total | $ 1,285.00 | $ 1,285.00 | $ - | $ - | $ 1,285.00 |
| **Equipment, Labor, and Mobilization** | | | | | | | | |
| Mobilization | 0.05 | 5% of const. | $56,405.00 | $ 2,820.25 | - | $ 2,820.25 | | $ 2,820.25 |
| Hourly excavator rental with operator and fuel | 389 | hours | $145.00 | $ 56,405.00 | 48,015.00 | 8,390.00 | | $ 56,405.00 |
| Fire Watch (if in Phase II restrictions) | 10 | hours | $40.00 | $ 400.00 | 400.00 | | | $ 400.00 |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | | $ - | | | | $ - |
| | | | Sub-Total | $ 59,625.25 | $ 48,415.00 | $ 11,210.25 | $ - | $ 59,625.25 |
| | | | **TOTALS** | $ 69,820.55 | $ 49,700.00 | $ 11,210.25 | $ 8,910.30 | $ 69,820.55 |

**OTHER REQUIREMENTS:**

**All of the columns in the budget table and the matching contribution table MUST be completed appropriately or the application will be invalid.** Please see the example budget sheet for additional clarification.

*Units = feet, hours, inches, etc. Do not use lump sum unless there is no other way to describe the costs.

**Can include in-kind materials. Justification for in-kind labor (e.g. hourly rates used). Do not use government salaries as match. Describe here or in text.

***The Review Panel suggests that design and oversight costs associated with a proposed project not exceed 15% of the total project budget. If design and oversight costs are in excess of 15%, applications must include a justification or minimum of two competitive bids for the cost of undertaking the project.

****The Review Panel recommends a maximum fencing cost of $1.50 per foot. Additional costs may be the responsibility of the applicant and/or partners.

**Additional details: The US Forest Service surveyed the roads and will complete the project design/engineering, apply for permitting, and provide project oversight. Total contribution by the US Forest Service for these functions is an estimated $8,910 for salaries and $445 for vehicle costs, totaling $9,355. This cost would be reduced if the contractor opts to work longer work days (and thus fewer work days total) or at a faster rate than estimated.**

## APPLICATION MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

(do not include requested funds or contributions not associated with the application)

| CONTRIBUTOR | IN-KIND | CASH | TOTAL | Secured? (Y/N) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Please see "Additional Details" section above.** | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| **TOTALS** | $ - | $ - | $ - | |

## OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS

(contributions not associated with the application)

| CONTRIBUTOR | IN-KIND | CASH | TOTAL | Secured? (Y/N) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **USFS salaries for survey/design/eng/permits/oversight** | $ 8,910.30 | $ - | $ 8,910.30 | |
| **USFS vehicle cost** | $ 445.00 | $ - | $ 445.00 | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |

**BUDGET TEMPLATE SHEET FOR FUTURE FISHERIES PROGRAM APPLICATIONS**

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| | $ - | $ - | $ - | |
| **TOTALS** | $ 9,355.30 | $ - | $ 9,355.30 | |

**EXAMPLES OF SELECTED WORK SITES IN THE SOUTH SPREAD CREEK STORAGE & DECOMMISSIONING PROJECT**

Ben Hegler, Hydrologist – USFS Troy, MT Nov 27, 2020

NOTE: These sites are examples of some of the key work in this project. There are numerous other sites that require work at perennial streams and intermittent streams, as well as various road drainage needs which currently contribute flow and sediment to basin streams.

**ROAD 591 SITE EXAMPES:**

**Station 30+80 Culvert failure & erosion**

**Station 100+60 Perennial stream - washout/fill failure**

**Station 202+50 Perennial stream - undersized culvert failing, shows signs of overtopping, washout risk**

**ROAD 5948 SITE EXAMPES:**

**Station 37+20 Perennial stream/slide and saturated roadbed, slide risk**

**Station 64+37 Perennial stream culvert inlet buried, washout risk**

**Station 74+50 Hidden Creek crossing, failed log/earth crossing with abutments & road fill reconstructing stream**

**Station 90+70 –Hidden Creek tributary, undersized culverts show signs of plugging & overtopping, washout risk**

**ROAD 5948B SITE EXAMPES:**

**Station 8+50 Failing wooden culvert on perennial stream, washout risk**

**Station 17+48 Hidden Creek failing log/earth structure, channel restriction**

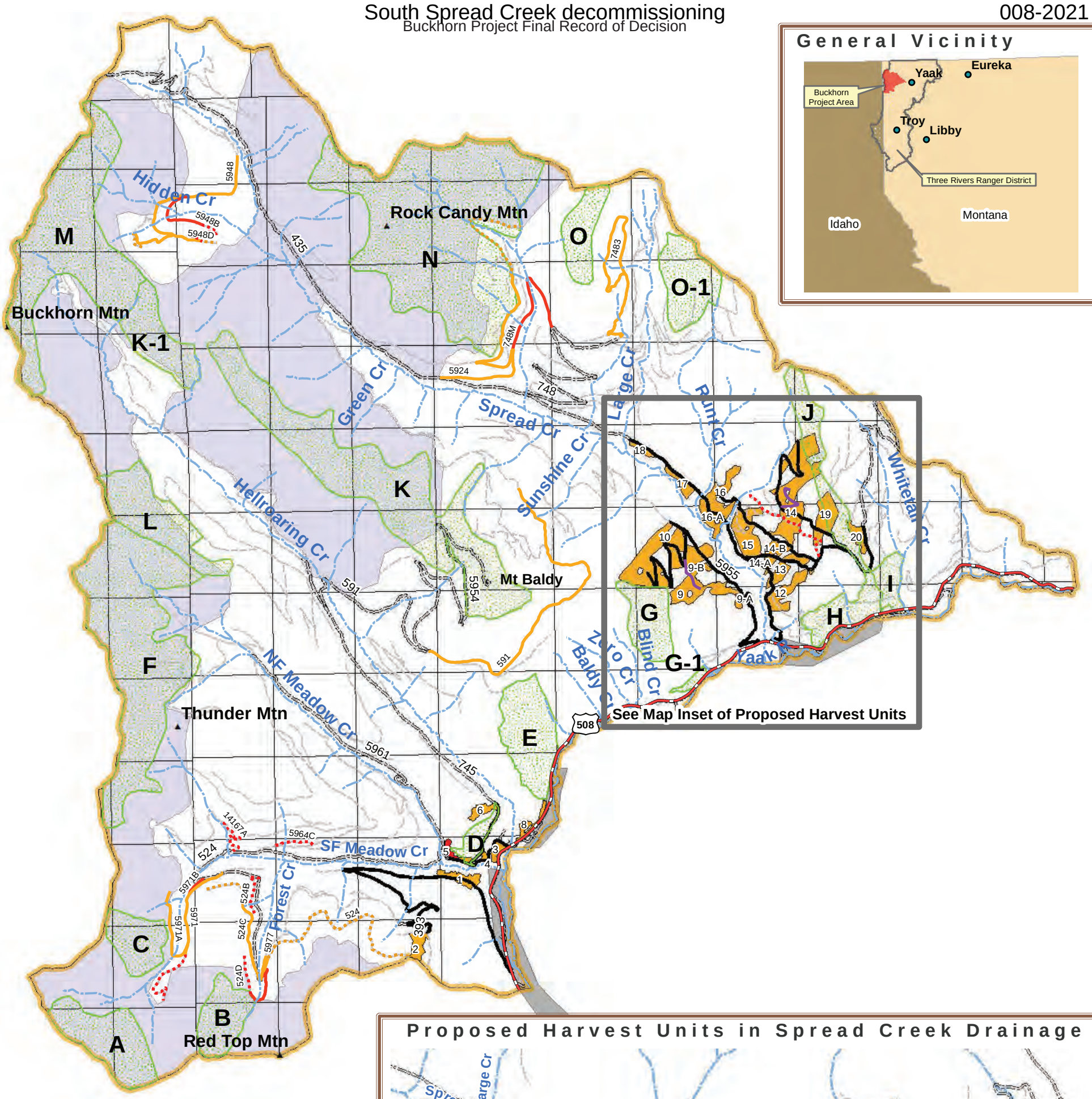
**Station 23+47 Hidden Creek tributary – collapsing log/earth structure and channel restriction**

# South Spread Creek decommissioning

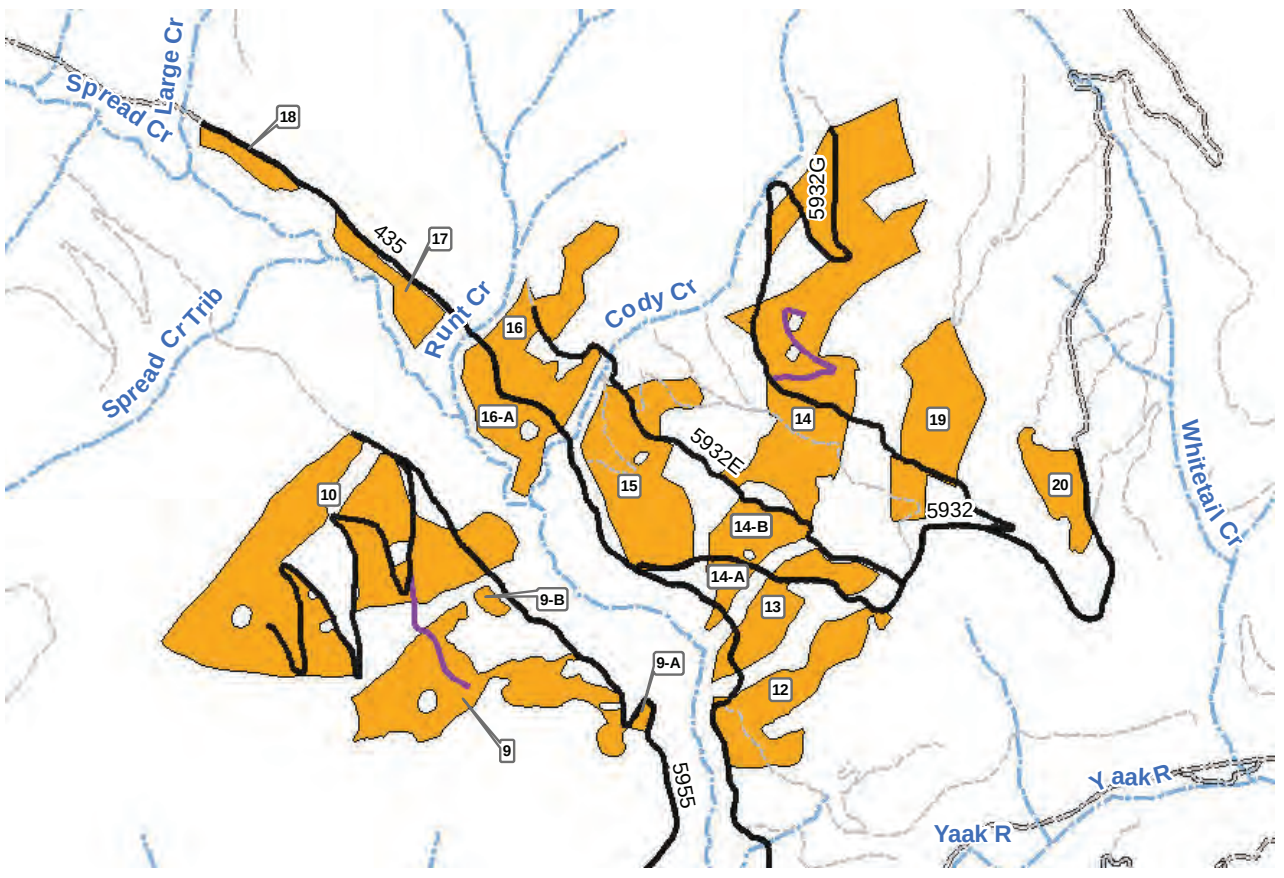
Buckhorn Project Final Record of Decision

008-2021




## Proposed Harvest Units in Spread Creek Drainage




**Legend**

- Project Area
- Streams
- Open Roads
- Other Roads*
- Inventoried Roadless Area
- Non FS lands

**Alternative 2**

**Proposed Activities**

- Improvement Harvest
- Regeneration Harvest
- Prescribed Burns
- Haul Routes
- Temporary Roads

**Watershed Work ****

- Decommissioning - Active
- Decommissioning - Passive
- Storage - Active
- Storage - Passive

*Other roads are gated, barriered, or impassable, due to vegetation.

** All watershed work is occuring on roads currently closed to wheeled motorized use.

0 0.5 1 Miles

N W E S

GMA - 05 Aug 2014

**Buckhorn Final Record of Decision**
**Selected Alternative**

**United States Department of Agriculture** **Forest Service** **Kootenai N.F. Three Rivers R.D.** **Troy Ranger Station 12858 US Hwy 2 Troy, MT 59935**

**Date:** November 30, 2020

Dear Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks Future Fisheries Improvement Program,

I am writing to support the Yaak Valley Forest Council Headwaters Restoration Partnership Project's (HRPP) proposal to the MFWP Future Fisheries Improvement Program for the South Spread Creek Road Storage and Decommissioning Project, located on the Three Rivers Ranger District of the Kootenai National Forest. This project was approved under the forest management project entitled the Buckhorn project in 2014 and is planned for implementation in the summer of 2021.

HRPP would be partnering with us to accomplish this project, which would place the affected roads into a hydrologically stable condition capable of passing 100-year storm flows following work. Work is planned on about 6 miles of road planned for storage and about 0.5 mile of road planned for decommissioning.

Spread Creek is a tributary to the Yaak River and provides habitat for native Westslope Cutthroat Trout, and the Yaak River provides habitat for several additional native species. The primary benefits of this project are:

- Remove the road fill from five large stream crossings at potential risk of washout, which will help ensure the associated road fill material is not delivered to the stream;
- Remove several smaller culverts on stream crossings which show signs of future problems, such as being undersized, worn out, or partially failed;
- Provide more dispersed drainage on the surface of the roads, which will more closely mimic natural conditions and help prevent future road failures and excess water delivery to streams in heavy runoff events;
- De-compact and recontour (in a manner that retains public access) the road prism of the decommissioning segment, which will return the road to productive forest land;
- Reseed disturbed ground with native grass seed and allow it to revegetate with on-site native species.

Additionally, the recreational public would have unregulated access to the project site for non-motorized travel, and over-the-snow access (except where decommissioned) would also be available. Currently, the majority of the mileage of roads are heavily grown in with vegetation.

The Three Rivers Ranger District looks forward to implementing this project next year. This project would benefit the local native fisheries, as well as support HRPP and US Forest Service collaboration towards watershed improvement.

Sincerely,

*Kirsten Kaiser*

KIRSTEN A. KAISER
District Ranger

November 30, 2020

Dear Future Fisheries Selection Committee,

Please consider this document to be a letter of support in principle from Montana FWP's Libby Area Office for the Yaak Headwaters Restoration Partnership Project. Montana FWP has a lengthy history of involvement working with the Yaak Headwaters Group. Montana FWP fisheries biologists Jim Dunnigan and Brian Stephens serve as advisory members to the Yaak Headwaters Group.

The Yaak Headwaters Group is a watershed group that builds collaboration between Federal and State government resource management agencies and interested publics to restore aquatic habitats primarily in the Yaak River Watershed. The Yaak Headwaters Group has been a powerful vehicle which has facilitated the culmination of three critical information types required in the Yaak Watershed for effective aquatic species conservation. These data include the spatial distribution of non-introgressed populations of native redband and westslope cutthroat trout collected and managed by Montana FWP, aquatic habitat inventory data collected by the US Forest Service and sediment source inventory and fish passage barrier data collected by the Yaak Headwaters Group. The result of these efforts has been the identification and prioritization of several fish passage and habitat improvement projects located in habitats occupied by native trout. The Spread Creek Project is an excellent example of a project waiting to be completed that would capitalize on the synergistic effort that results when local partners, Federal and State agencies collaborate. This project would help restore habitat connectivity and ensure the long-term viability for westslope cutthroat trout within the Spread Creek watershed. Please give this important project your consideration.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call or write.

Sincerely,

James L. Dunnigan

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Fisheries Biologist; Libby Mitigation Project

385 Fish Hatchery Rd, Libby, MT 59923 (406) 293-4161 x 200 email: jdunnigan@mt.gov