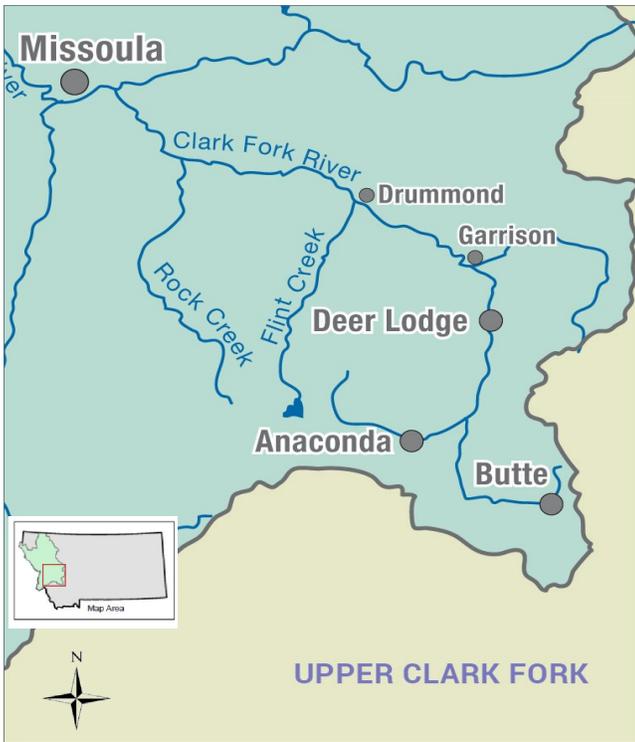
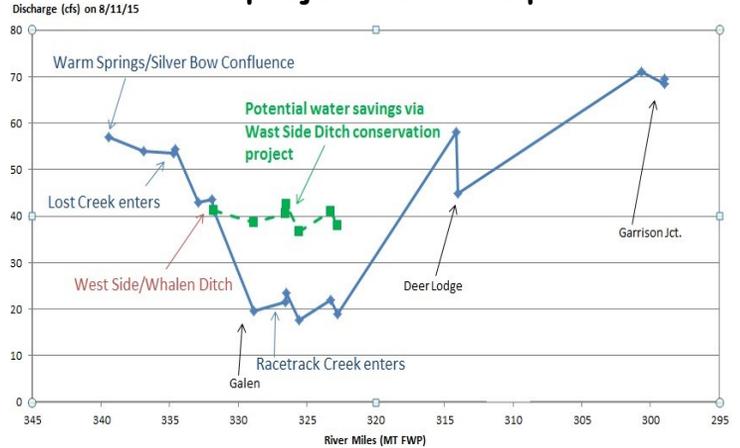




Streamflow Spotlight: Upper Clark Fork River



How one water conservation project could help



The blue line reflects flows in the Upper Clark Fork on 8/11/15 from its headwaters to Garrison Jct., showing a sharp drop where the West Side Ditch diverts irrigation water. Flows that low are barely enough to wet a boot, much less sustain healthy fish habitat. By simply piping the canal we can keep more water in the river (green line), preventing those dangerous lows, while also ensuring ample water for agriculture.

ABOUT THIS STREAM:

The Upper Clark Fork River begins at the confluence of Warm Springs and Silver Bow Creeks and extends to Milltown, where it joins the Blackfoot River.

This section of river was extremely contaminated with toxic mining wastes after a flood in 1908. But extensive cleanup is now underway between Warm Springs and Garrison to remove contamination and improve water quality.

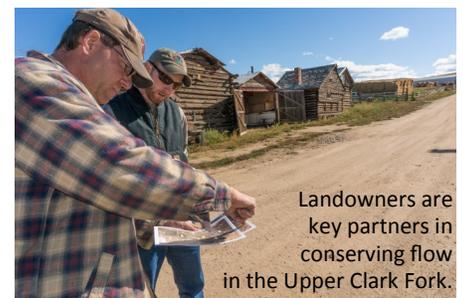
Tributaries of this system support brown, westslope cutthroat, and threatened bull trout. By addressing chronic dewatering in the upper reaches, cleaning up pollution, and restoring streams, this dynamic river system can again take its place as one of Montana's premiere fisheries.

LOW FLOW IMPACTS:

- Elevated water temperatures, more aquatic plant growth, lower oxygen levels, and less wetted fish habitat
- Poor aquatic habitat conditions for trout during portions of the summer
- Higher fish mortality; less reliable water for agriculture

WHAT WE'RE DOING:

- Implementing a major irrigation efficiency improvement project on West Side Ditch (see above)
- Partnering with landowners and irrigation groups to conserve water, lease or purchase water rights to restore flow to the river
- Monitoring flows to better understand where and when the greatest flow limitations exist
- Managing a working cattle ranch in the heart of the Superfund cleanup zone and piloting extensive water conservation measures



Landowners are key partners in conserving flow in the Upper Clark Fork.

LEARN MORE about instream flow restoration strategies at clarkfork.org and find out how you can help protect and restore Montana's rivers.