

Keep our Creek Flowing: Support SB 247!

- SB 247 enables state natural resource managers to ensure creeks have enough flow instream during hot summer months to keep them from being dewatered. MT FWP has this (limited) authority now, but without this bill, that authority will expire in June of 2019.
- FWP's Instream Flow program addresses critical dewatering problems across Montana. The Clark Fork watershed alone has a staggering 500 miles of chronically-dewatered streams. This program temporarily restores streamflows in priority creeks during the late-season – when the water is needed most.
- This program has benefitted several key streams in our watershed, including Chamberlain and Cottonwood Creeks in the Blackfoot, and Rock Creek in the Clark Fork drainage. If FWP didn't have this important tool, dewatering would continue to negatively impact these streams and the fish that rely on cold, clean water.
- This program works by allowing FWP to negotiate voluntary agreements with willing landowners to reduce water use to help keep streams wet, while still meeting agricultural needs. Often these agreements include infrastructure improvements to increase irrigation efficiency, and all other water users are notified of any changes and given full opportunity to participate. It's a win-win for landowners and trout streams – and we need it to continue.
- FWP's instream flow program is an example of government working! It's good for irrigators and good for fish. SB 247 protects this common sense, successful program, and it deserves a yes vote!