



## Habitat suitability classification of stream segments for relocation of beaver

### Big Hole Watershed, SW Montana

The beaver habitat suitability model is part of a project working on relocating 'nuisance' beaver to suitable sites to promote resiliency of stream and riparian ecosystems during climate change (drought), including increasing important habitat for the rare arctic grayling in the Big Hole Watershed, Montana. The beaver habitat suitability model was developed as a landscape level management tool to identify stream segments in the Big Hole Watershed that can support and sustain a population of relocated beaver. This map is for use by Natural Resource Managers to identify potential beaver relocation sites. Potential sites should be field checked to ensure suitability before a final decision is made for any relocation. Appropriate use of this model is to use the information at a stream reach scale and field verification should be used to determine the site specific location for relocation.

The beaver habitat suitability model is a shapefile of stream segments with a Strahler Stream order of 4 or less in the Big Hole Watershed and is displayed based on the habitat suitability category. Habitat suitability categories describe the habitat as low quality, marginal quality, or high quality habitat suitability for supporting and sustaining beaver populations. Where: low quality habitat is defined as habitat not able to support a population of relocated beaver. Marginal quality habitat is defined as habitat that may support, for a short period of time, a population of relocated beavers. High quality habitat is defined as habitat that will support and sustain a population of relocated beaver.

Questions regarding the use and limitation of this model should be directed to: Stephen M. Carpenedo, Wetland Environmental Science Specialist, MT DEQ Wetland Program. [Scarpenido2@mt.gov](mailto:Scarpenido2@mt.gov). (406) 444-3527.

#### Habitat Suitability Classification

Low Quality (1183)

Marginal Quality (822)

High Quality (1060)

Big Hole River (Stream Order >= 5)

Big Hole Watershed



0 1.25 2.5 5 7.5 10 Miles

1:201,475

NAD1983 StatePlane Montana FIPS 2500  
 Projection: Lambert Conformal Conic  
 Datum: North American 1983  
 Spheroid: GRS 1980

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