

FY 2012 Annual Report
Montana Partners for Fish and Wildlife Narrative

Introduction & Highlights

FY12 was another banner year for the Montana (MT) PFW Program. The program implemented impressive conservation delivery projects and helped coordinate important outreach/in-reach events. We continued to make progress broadening partnerships and enhancing accountability. As in past years, the dedication, creativity and vision of MT PFW field biologists played a major role in these successes. Six FY12 highlights are summarized below.

1. America's Great Outdoors: The Crown of the Continent was selected as one of five Demonstration Landscapes by the Obama Administration. MT PFW staff was heavily involved in the Federal team set up to highlight conservation success stories and bring new success stories to light. One of those new success stories was developing a Declaration of Partnership between the DOI, DOA and the Working Lands Council. The Working Lands Council is made up of key private landowners from the Rocky Mountain Front, Blackfoot and Swan River Valleys. The Declaration of Partnership will bring these key landowners together with high level Administration Staff twice a year (once in the Crown and once in DC) to coordinate community based landscape scale conservation. We really see this as the future of landscape scale conservation, not only in the Crown but across the country.

2. Landscape Conversations Workshop: The MT PFW Program hosted a one day partnership training workshop as part of the Montana Wildlife Society Meetings. The workshop worked off of the theme for the over-all workshop of Landscape Conservation. We brought in landowners and conservation partners representing four different landscapes across Montana and the west. The thrust of discussion for the day was it first takes conservations to build relationships in order to achieve conservation. Over 140 conservation practitioners attended the conference and by all reports it was highly rated. Numerous folks have approached us about continuing this workshop each year and perhaps expanding it across the west.

3. National Community Based Transferability Workshop: In late September, the MT PFW Program along with the Blackfoot Challenge hosted over 120 conservation practitioners from 23 landscapes in the Blackfoot Valley. The intent of the conference was to bring together landowners, agencies, and conservation groups from key landscapes for a hands on learning experience that will further community based conservation. This conference was supported by the new National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant called Landscape Stewardship as part of America's Great Outdoors. The many partners involved came away with many lessons learned from the ground and many new partners to act as mentors and friends. As usual, Montana landowners and partners did an amazing job emphasizing the irrefutable link between focused PFW programs and community-based, landscape-level conservation.

4. National Wetland Award Winner: The Nature Conservancy's Tim Swanson was awarded the National Wetland Award winner in 2012. The MT PFW Program nominated Mr. Swanson for his conservation efforts in the wetland-rich Centennial and Big Hole Valleys of southwest Montana. Beginning in 1998, Tim reached out to local ranchers and listened to their visions for these biologically diverse landscapes. In 1999, Tim hired the first of many "weed interns", these interns worked with landowners and agencies to control noxious weeds. This built trust and credibility with landowners that often led to long term conservation of private lands that included many wetland acres. In 2000, Tim completed the Conservancy's first conservation easement in the

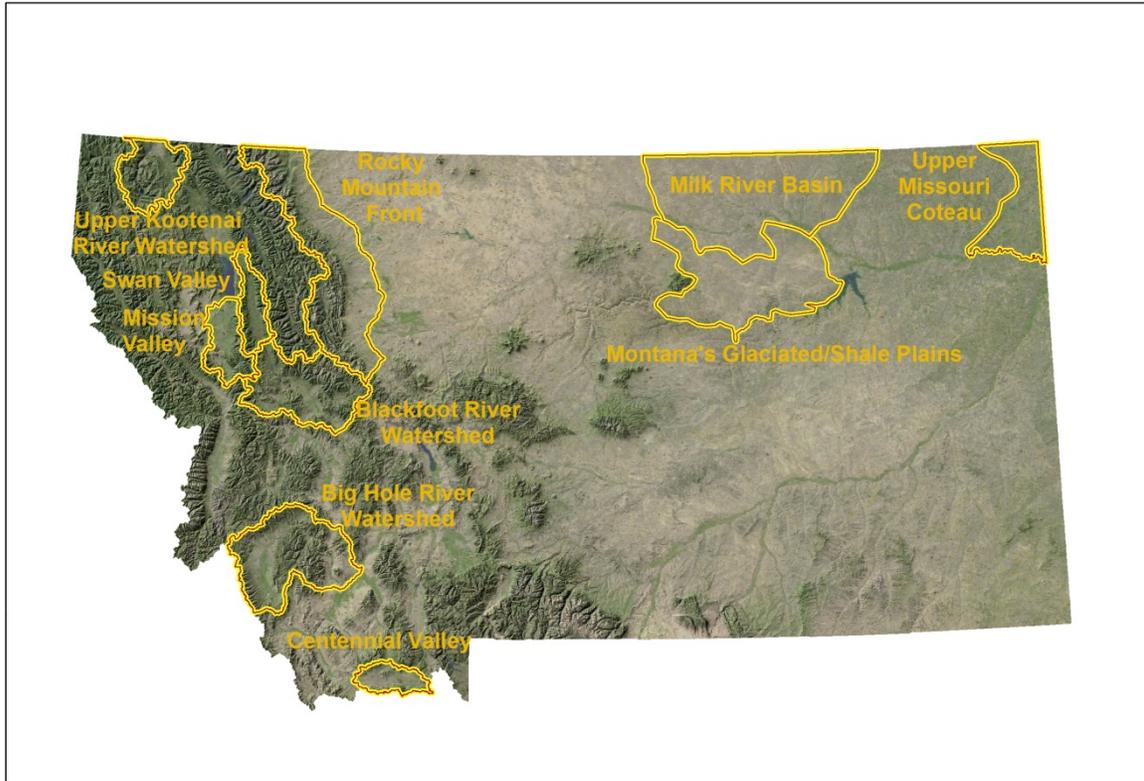
Centennial in the headwaters above Red Rock Lakes National Wildlife Refuge. Since that time, Tim has worked collaboratively with USFWS and numerous landowners to protect nearly 70,000 acres of private lands in perpetuity in the Centennial and Big Hole Valleys. The Centennial Valley contains the largest wetland complex in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. To date 57% of the private lands in the Centennial have been permanently protected with priority to buffering the Wildlife Refuge and maintaining its connection to wetlands on private lands. Tim's leadership in the community-based conservation program in the Centennial represents a model for maintaining intact landscapes for future generations of ranchers, hunters, birders, and outdoor enthusiasts.

5. *Advanced Leadership Development Program hears from MT Rancher Jim Stone:* The 2012 Cohorts from ALDP asked Rancher and Chairman of the Blackfoot Challenge, Jim Stone to spend a couple of hours talking about partnerships. Mr. Stone used his relationship with the MT PFW Program as the model for success in community based landscape scale conservation. The Cohort ranked Jim's presentation as one of the best from their entire training and requested Mr. Stone back for a more detailed presentation to the 2013 Cohort.

6. *Advancing Strategic Habitat Conservation and Surrogate Species:* In 2012, the MT PFW Program began implementing the third generation of our Strategic Plan covering years 2012-2016. This comprehensive, multi-step approach has really begun to take hold in Montana and across the country. The MT PFW Program has been asked to give numerous presentations on our approach and have been technical advisors to many groups and organizations going through similar efforts. In 2012, we also were asked to provide technical support for the new Surrogate Species approach adopted by the FWS. We gladly participated as selecting the right species is perhaps the most important factor in a successful on-the-ground Strategic Habitat Conservation approach. Our approach uses surrogate species to identify where to work and what to do – we call it linking habitat outcomes with biological outcomes. This new approach led to the selection of 10 Conservation Focus Areas encompassing 11% of the private lands in Montana.

The following narrative, photos, and tables show the results of this approach over the last year. For 2012, the MT PFW Program worked with 33 landowners to restore over 1,720 wetland acres, 32 miles of in-stream/riparian habitat and 3,389 upland acres.

Montana PFW 2012-2016 Focus Areas



Goal I. Conserve Habitat

Progress in meeting our 5-year strategic plan habitat targets for the State of Montana and within each individual conservation focus area are summarized below.

Montana			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	1720	1985	87%
Upland (Acres)	3389	44,940	7.5%
Riparian (Miles)	32	121	26%
Fish Passage (Units)	5	33	15%

BLACKFOOT RIVER WATERSHED			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	7	150	5%
Upland (Acres)	0	2800	
Riparian (Miles)	0	14	
Fish Passage (Units)	0	8	

Example Project: Frazier Creek
Focus Area: Blackfoot Valley
HabITS Project Number: 58720
Office Org Code: 61810



The goal of this project was to restore migratory corridors and conserve instream flows for pure populations of westslope cutthroat trout as well as reduce irrigation maintenance in the Frazier Creek drainage.

Frazier Creek is a small third-order tributary that flows for 3.8-miles through private lands and enters the middle Blackfoot River at river-mile 59.4 from the Garnet Mountains. Frazier Creek supports a genetically pure, disjunct population of stream resident westslope cutthroat trout with no other fish species present and is a priority tributary to the Blackfoot River as outlined in the Blackfoot's "Integrated Stream Restoration and Native Fish Conservation Strategy for 182 stream in the Blackfoot Basin, Montana". This population has high conservation value and potential for improvement by eliminating headwater fragmentation.

Frazier Creek fish passage has historically been hindered by two undersized culverts and was blocked in its upper reaches by a reservoir that is used for irrigation purposes. This reservoir

was previously managed so that any overflow water was released in a ditch off the back side of the reservoir that does not connect with downstream reaches of Frazier Creek. By completing this project, we restored a migration corridor for westslope cutthroat to three miles of instream habitat by constructing a step-pool channel on the front side of the reservoir to act as a fish ladder to connect Frazier Creek below the reservoir to the upstream reaches of Frazier Creek via the reservoir. Two undersized culverts below the reservoir that caused channel impairments and blocked upstream migration were upgraded with new crossings. This project also has water conservation benefits as the proposed fish ladder is designed to handle a high range of flows, thus eliminating the loss of water through the back-side ditch. We anticipate dramatically improved flow conditions, as well as decreased instream water temperatures and sediment inputs.

Project Partners: Mannix Family Ranch, United States Fish & Wildlife Service, Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, Chutney Foundation, Cinnabar Foundation, TU National Embrace-a-Stream, and Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited.



Newly constructed fish ladder connecting three miles of habitat in the Frazier Creek drainage.



Photos 3-4: Existing 2' culvert on North Fork Frazier upgraded to a 7' bottomless arch structure.



Photos 5-6: Existing undersized culvert on Frazier Creek upgraded to a bridge

ROCKY MOUNTAIN FRONT			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	0	75	
Upland (Acres)	17	4500	1%
Riparian (Miles)	0.8	6	13%
Fish Passage (Units)	0	0	

Integrated Noxious Weed Management for Leafy Spurge, Muddy Creek
 Focus Area: Rocky Mountain Front
 HabITS Project Number: 668904
 Office Org Code: 61810

Use of leafy spurge beetles (*Aphthona spp.*) as a primary biological control agent for reducing leafy spurge, (*Euphorbia esula*) infestations, has been very effective to greatly reduce spurge densities on most patches along the Rocky Mountain Front. In combination with the effective, but long-term approach of biological control, herbicide application around the perimeter of the weed patch helps to limit spread of the weed. Working with a new Wildlife Cooperator in the Muddy Creek watershed provided an opportunity to implement this integrated weed management approach on one of the largest leafy spurge patches found along the Front.

Addressing the magnitude and expanse of this nearly 100-acre spurge patch, which includes smaller outlying patches, began in earnest two years ago. Working under a cooperative agreement developed with the Teton County Weed District, biological control insects were released and fall herbicide treatment was completed over a portion of the patch perimeter. Continuing the effort, 2012 treatment included a complete perimeter spray covering 20 acres, and release of approximately 9,000 leafy spurge beetles.

The objective of this integrated noxious weed management project is to greatly enhance the health and productivity of the native grassland and small riparian corridor currently degraded by this invasive plant. Plans are underway to continue the integrated weed management treatments for at least the next three years.

Location of some beetle release sites (before).



UPPER KOOTENAI RIVER WATERSHED			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	0	50	
Upland (Acres)	134	1500	9%
Riparian (Miles)	0.7	18	4%
Fish Passage (Units)	1	3	33%

Annual Narrative 2012
The Therriault Meadows Stream and Wetland Restoration Project
Focus Area: Kootenai Watershed
HabITS Project Number: 646301
Office Org Code: 61810

The Therriault Creek Stream and Wetland restoration project is an ongoing cooperative project between the Therriault Meadows Ranch, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Kootenai River Network, and MT PFW Program. The project represents a continued commitment by partners to complete several restoration projects in the Tobacco River watershed (Grave and Sinclair Creek restoration).

The project has focused on converting riparian vegetation along Therriault Creek at the site to a mosaic of native riparian shrubs and trees. Re-vegetation has been a crucial component to compliment the extensive 9,000 feet of stream re-construction implemented in 2007. The re-vegetation practice requires a multi-year, phased approach that includes maintenance and monitoring during the establishment period while vegetation becomes adapted to site conditions. The intention of the initial phase, completed in fall 2007, was to implement a range of treatments based on a detailed evaluation of existing site conditions and ecological processes driving vegetation succession at the site. Effectiveness monitoring of the treatments installed in 2007 was completed in 2008 and 2009. A small number of additional re-vegetation treatments were implemented in September and October 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2012. In 2012, additional project enhancement tasks included watering of existing plants, removal and expansion of browse protectors, removal and transfer of solarization fabric to reduce reed canary grass, and herbicide application to target invasive species in or adjacent to the project site. In 2012, vegetation installed in Phase I will be in its fifth growing season. Five years is an appropriate point in re-vegetation projects to evaluate if, and to what extent, implemented treatments are achieving project goals and objectives.

In 2012, in addition to re-vegetation activities, an undersized culvert was replaced with a gauge steel culvert upstream from the restoration project area. The improved culvert will allow sufficient in-stream flow needed for the improved riparian conditions and fish passage.

All projects have occurred on the Therriault Meadows Ranch. Therriault Creek is a tributary within the Tobacco River watershed. Therriault Creek has historically provided spawning and

rearing habitat for threatened bull and westslope cutthroat trout. The landowners have been ideal partners in funding off-site watering and conducting invasive weed control treatment adjacent to the project area. The project continues to provide restored channel morphology, continued re-establishment of wetland conditions, decreased in-stream temperatures, increasing riparian vegetation, fish passage, and improved fish and wildlife habitat in the Therriault Creek watershed.



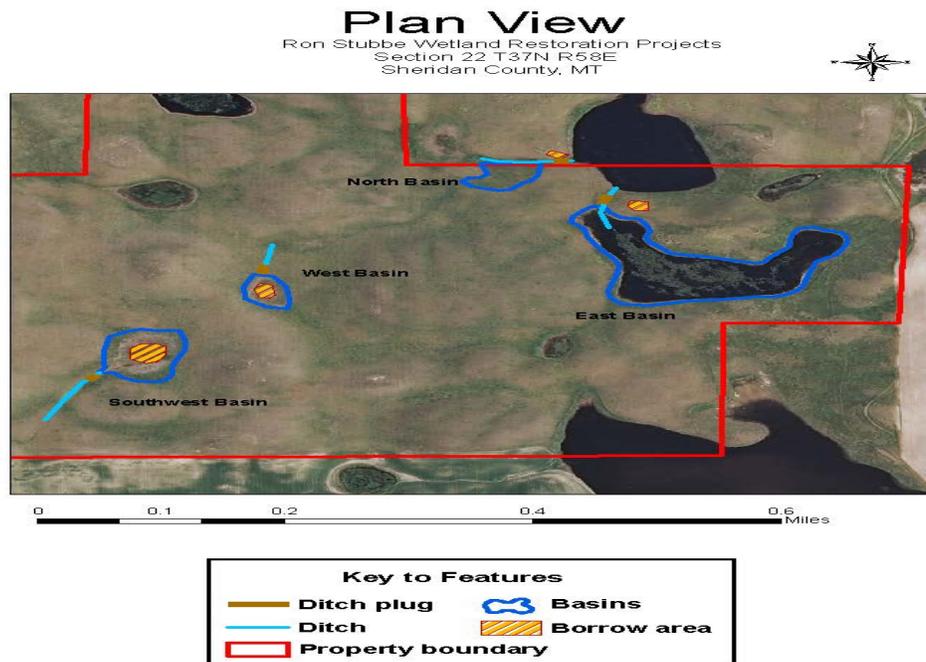
UPPER MISSOURI COTEAU			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	116	500	23%
Upland (Acres)	0	7500	
Riparian (Miles)	0	2	
Fish Passage (Units)	0	0	

Example Project: CP-37 Wetland Restoration & CRP
 Focus Area: Upper Missouri Coteau
 HabITS Project Number: 643900, 644026, 644032

The PFW program provided technical assistance to NRCS and FSA for landowner enrollment within the CP-37 (Duck Nesting Initiative) continuous CRP practice by ground-truthing wetland basins on offered tracts to determine wetland acreage and tract qualification for the CP-37 program. CP-37 is only offered within the Prairie Pothole Region and tracts must have a minimum of 25 breeding duck pairs per square mile based on USFWS HAPET maps. In addition, the offered upland acreage must meet cropping history standards and landowners may only enroll upland acreage at a 4:1 to 10:1 ratio with the wetland acreage found on the tract.

For tracts on which drained wetlands were found, the PFW program contacted landowners to determine their interest in having wetlands restored. In some cases, wetlands would need to be restored to allow the entire tract to be enrolled within the CP-37 practice. The PFW program worked with three landowners to restore nine drained wetland basins totaling 22.0 acres on private lands that were enrolled in CP-37 10 to 15 year contracts. Uplands enrolled in CP-37 on the 3 tracts totaled 454 acres.

These projects are located within northeast Sheridan County, Montana on the Missouri Coteau, a very hilly landscape dotted with numerous shallow wetlands and an important breeding area for waterfowl and grassland birds. Abundant nesting habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds is provided by many acres of native prairie rangeland and CRP near project sites. Wetland restorations will provide additional wetland habitat for priority species, and by assisting with enrolling over 1200 acres in CP-37 in Sheridan county in 2012, the PFW program ensures that important nesting cover for waterfowl, shorebirds, and passerines remains on priority landscapes identified by the USFWS .



Above: One example of wetlands restored under CP-37.

SWAN VALLEY			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	14	150	9%
Upland (Acres)	3	640	1%
Riparian (Miles)	0.3	8	4%
Fish Passage (Units)	0	4	

Example Project: Heekin Wetland Restoration
Focus Area: Swan River Valley
HabITS Project Number: 58822
Office Org Code: 61810

The Heekin project entailed the restoration of a 12 acre semi-permanent wetland. This basin was ditched and drained during the 1940's for agricultural production. At some point in the past the wetland was plowed up and planted to a non-native invasive plant called Reed Canary Grass. The project included fill removal, ditch plug and installation of a water-control structure.

The project was completed for the benefit of trumpeter swans and grizzly bears. We also are monitoring the response of native sedges and rushes to the flooding of reed canary grass. In the first two years we are seeing significant die off of canary grass and re-establishment of native wetland plants. The Swan Ecosystem Center, in conjunction with USFWS, planted native grasses on all disturbed sites associated with restoration and worked cooperatively with the landowner to control noxious weeds within the restoration area.



GLACIATED/SHALE PLAINS			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	0	250	
Upland (Acres)	0	5000	
Riparian (Miles)	0	5	
Fish Passage (Units)	0	0	

The Glaciated/Shale Plains Focus Area, an extensive region in north central Montana, is characterized by undulating plains dominated by sagebrush-steppe and mixed-grass native prairie. Large river systems include the Milk and Missouri Rivers with smaller prairie streams and accompanying riparian habitat are scattered through drier uplands. Moderate to high densities of pothole-type wetlands are scattered across the focus area. Black-tailed Prairie Dogs are abundant. Key migratory bird species found in the focus area include; Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl, Greater Sage Grouse, Ferruginous Hawk, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Sprague's Pipit and Long-Billed Curlew. Livestock production and farming are the primary land-uses.

The Glaciated/Shale Plains Focus Area encompasses about 2.5 million acres. Land ownership is a checkerboard of public and private lands. Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge lies at the southern boundary of the Focus Area and BLM manages numerous large allotments. The Matador Ranch, a 60,000 acre preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy, lies in the heart of the focus area. Private ownership is dominated by large working ranches. Ownership is 37% private and 63% public lands.

Key partners in the Glaciated Shale Plains Focus Area include; The Rancher Stewardship Alliance, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Bureau of Land Management, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and private landowners.



The Glaciated Shale Plain includes Sage-Steppe and Riparian Habitats

The Glaciated Shale Plain Conservation Focus Area is presently not staffed and had no on-the-ground accomplishments for 2012.

BIG HOLE RIVER WATERSHED			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	1403	110	1275%
Upland (Acres)	1373	12,000	11%
Riparian (Miles)	22.3	43	52%
Fish Passage (Units)	4	10	40%

Example Project: Buffalo Ranch Riparian Fence and Howell Creek Fish Passage Project

Focus Area: Big Hole

HabITS Project Number: 616098

Office Org Code: 61810

Plimpton and Howell Creeks are important spawning rearing and summer habitats for the Big Hole Arctic grayling population. This project installed 7.25 miles of riparian fence and removed two fish passage barriers on Plimpton and Howell Creeks in the Big Hole drainage. The fence created a riparian pasture and provides the infrastructure needed to develop and implement a grazing management plan on 3.62 stream miles. The riparian pasture will have a 5 year deferred grazing period followed by a grazing management plan that specifies use inside the riparian

pasture. Improved riparian management will maintain and improve instream habitat, pool quality, bank stability, riparian vegetation and floodplain function. Additionally, two Denil fish ladders were placed in pin and plank irrigation structure that will allow fish to migrate through the diversion during irrigation season. The Buffalo Riparian fence and Howell Creek fish passage projects are part of two landowner's Site Specific Conservation Plans for the Big Hole Arctic Grayling Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances Program. These projects will benefit Arctic grayling, a candidate ESA species, as well as numerous other fish and wildlife species. This project is located approximately 6 miles north of Wisdom, Montana.



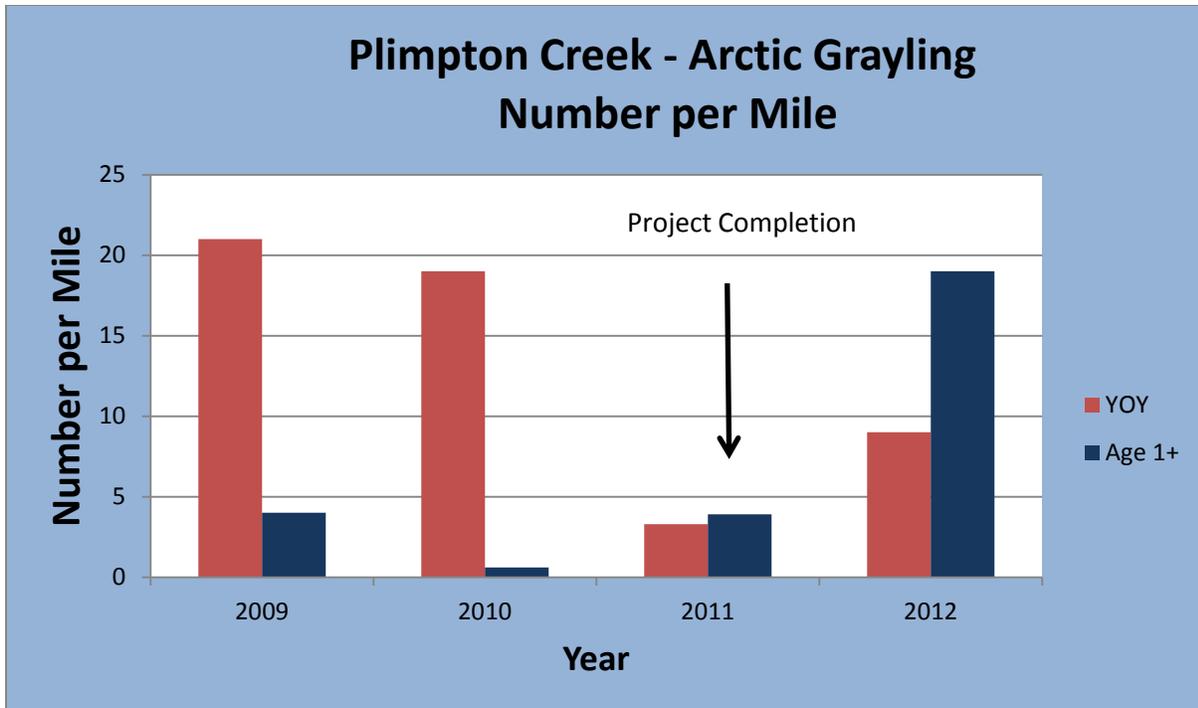
Riparian fence and conditions in October 2011 when project was completed. USFWS Photo.



Completing a riparian assessment on Plimpton Creek one year after completion of the riparian electric fence. Note the fence line contrast and condition of the stream banks. Riparian assessment scores on Plimpton Creek improved from a 43% “not sustainable ” in 2006 to 62% “at Risk” score in 2012. USFWS Photo.



Denil fish ladder installed in a pin and plank diversion on Howell Creek provides fish passage during irrigation season when boards are placed in the diversion. USFWS Photo.



Catch per effort - number of Arctic grayling per mile captured in Plimpton Creek from Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks electrofishing surveys from 2009-2012. Increase abundance of older Arctic grayling (Age 1+) in 2012 may be attributed to improved cover and pool quality following restoration project completed in 2011.

MILK RIVER BASIN			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	23	250	9%
Upland (Acres)	498	1000	50%
Riparian (Miles)	0	5	
Fish Passage (Units)	0	0	

Example Project: Haugen Restoration
 Focus Area: Milk River
 HabITS Project Number: 652923 & 662164
 Office Org Code: 61810

The Milk River Basin Focus Area, located in north central Montana, is part of a larger landscape known locally as the “Hi-Line.” The region is bordered on the south by the Milk River Watershed and on the north by Prairie Canada. This focus area has relatively high densities of palustrine wetlands and large tracts of mixed-grass native prairie. Ranching and farming are the primary land-uses. Oil and gas production is increasing throughout the focus area.

North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) funding has been an important conservation delivery funding source for habitat projects in the Milk River Basin. We expect this trend to continue. A Standard Grant proposal submitted for the 2012 funding cycle recently received the highest score in the Nation.

The Haugen project included several types of habitat restoration and conservation. A grazing system with cross fencing and a well and stockwater system were installed on a tract of grassland previously enrolled in a FWS wetland/grassland easement. An additional 160 acres of cropland was reseeded to native grasses and enrolled in a FWS wetland/grassland easement. These projects will benefit many upland nesting migratory birds.



The Milk River Basin contains excellent wetland and native prairie habitat. USFWS Photo

On-the-ground work within the Milk River Basin was completed by biologist from Medicine Lake and Benton Lake as this position is presently vacant.

MISSION VALLEY			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	0.2	350	0%
Upland (Acres)	0	2500	
Riparian (Miles)	0.6	15	4%
Fish Passage (Units)	2	3	66%

Pistol Creek
Focus Area: Mission Valley
HabITS Project Number: 664038
Office Org Code: 61810

This cooperative project between the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes and the MT PFW Program will entail restoring approximately 800' of stream channel and approximately 200' of spring channel back to their historic form and function. This project is one of many being undertaken by CSKT in a comprehensive effort to restore the Jocko River Watershed. This multi-year restoration effort is aimed at improving fisheries and wildlife habitats that have been degraded by a century of impacts from housing development, transportation corridors, grazing, agricultural production and timber harvest.

Currently a failed instream earthen dam has caused the stream channel to head cut up the valley resulting in the stream channel becoming incised and straightened from its historic course. Not only do these current habitat conditions lend to fish passage problems, but the erosion caused by the failed earthen dam and head cutting contributes to downstream sedimentation problems. There is also a spring fed channel that has been redirected from its historic course, and is currently routed down an unimproved access road creating additional fish passage and sedimentation issues.

Restoration activities will consist of the removal and regrading of the failed instream earthen dam, restoring a straightened and incised section of Pistol Creek back to its original dimensions, pattern and profile and installation of a road culvert to allow the spring channel flows back into its original channel. Work already completed by the Tribes was the removal and reclamation of the former homesite and associated infrastructure.

The goals of this project are to provide connectivity to suitable native salmonid habitat upstream of the project site, which has been identified as important spawning and rearing habitat for migratory westslope cutthroat, and improve water quality and spawning habitat by reducing sedimentation downstream to the confluence of the Jocko River.

CENTENNIAL VALLEY			
Habitat Type	FY 2012 Accomplishments	FY 2012-2016 Goal	% 5-year Goal Completed
Wetland (Acres)	0	100	
Upland (Acres)	1366	7500	18%
Riparian (Miles)	5.2	5	100%
Fish Passage (Units)	0	5	

Example Project: Patchtop Mountain Grazing System
 Focus Area: Centennial Valley
 HabITS Project Number: 640255
 Office Org Code: 61810

Livestock were excluded from riparian habitat through the construction of single-strand, high-tensile, electric fence (Figure 1). Additionally, wildlife connectivity across the Patchtop Ranch was improved with the replacement five- to seven-strand barbed wire fences and woven wire fences with single strand high-tensile, electric fence or three-wire barbed wire fence.

All of the Patchtop Ranch is within the biologically significant four mile buffer of a known sage grouse lek. Fences within 1/4 mile of the known lek were marked with flagging to reduce collisions as per NRCS recommendations.

All eight existing stock tanks were fitted with wildlife exit ramps. Since stockwater is important to dispersing livestock away from riparian and wetland habitats, we are working with NRCS to completely replace the existing pipeline system, though cost and partnership with neighbors remain a challenge to accomplishing this. This project will benefit sage grouse and other sage obligate species.



Sagebrush habitat on the Patchtop Mountain Ranch. USFWS photo.

Goal II. Broaden and Strengthen Partnerships

Robust conservation delivery relies on productive partnerships. The MT PFW staff is fully engaged in strengthening partnerships. Key partners include, MFWP, TNC, TU, DU, PF, The Arctic Grayling Recovery Program, Kootenai River Network, Blackfoot Challenge, Partners for Conservation, Big Hole Watershed Committee, Rancher Stewardship Alliance, Swan Ecosystem Center, Rocky Mountain Front Weed Round-table, NRCS, county conservation districts, Native American tribes, numerous private foundations and private landowners.

We aggressively seek new funding opportunities. FY2012, we attracted a couple of new funding partners for our work as well as continued support from many existing partners: Brainerd Foundation and, Kresge Foundation, EPA, MTFWP, MT DEQ, Ducks Unlimited, Defenders of Wildlife, Park County, Chutney Foundation, Blackfoot Challenge, the National Forest Foundation, The Trumpeter Swan Society, Montana Association of Conservation Districts, Montana State University, Cinnabar Foundation and American Wildlands to name a few.

Accomplishment Type	FY2012	2012-2016 Goal	% Completed
# of Landowner Agreements	33	230	14%
Staff Days of Technical Assistance	245	1225	20%
% of non-FWS funds leveraged		1:1.7/year	

Goal III. Improve Information Sharing and Communication

The FY2012 Information Sharing and Communication accomplishments are summarized below. We believe that on-the-ground conservation delivery and strong partnerships are tied to rigorous internal and external communication. USFWS and DOI leadership appear to support this premise based on the number of requests we receive for field tours, high-level briefings, meetings, workshops and media events. Highlights from 2012 include meetings with Director Ashe, meeting with DOI and DOA AGO leads Tom Fry and Leslie Jones, Intermountain West Joint Venture Board meeting and tour in the Blackfoot; hosted the Landscape Conversations Workshop; hosted the Community Based Landscape Scale Conservation Workshop; hosted the NRCS OMB staff; Presentation to ALDP. This list does not include "routine" information sharing between MT PFW field biologists and watershed groups, weed districts, conservation districts, NRCS State Technical sub-committees, joint venture steering committees and other entities.

Accomplishment Type	2012 Accomplishment	2012-2016 Goal	% Goal Completed
Participate in Landowner meetings	28	100	28%
Enter into new Coop Agreements	2	12	17%
Sponsor Landowner tours	6	10	60%
Assist in NCTC Courses as instructors	2	5	40%
Host MFWP Coordination Meetings	1	5	20%
Participate in NRCS State Tech. Com. mtgs.	3	12	25%
Participate in Congressional Mtgs./Tours	2	10	20%
Provide MT PFW Program Updates to WO & RO Staff	3	15	20%
Conduct MT PFW Staff Meetings	1	10	10%
Facilitate media events	2	10	20%
Complete school field trips	2	10	20%

Goal IV. Enhance Our Workforce

FY2012 activities related to Enhancing our Workforce are summarized below.

Accomplishment Type	2012 Accomplishment	2012-2016 Goal	% Goal Completed
MT PFW field staff acquire 40 hours of training/yr.	All MT PFW field staff completed at least 40 hrs. of training/year	40 hrs./year/employee	100%
Staff and mentor new field biologists in the Glaciated Shale Plains and Swan River Valley	No new position is the Glaciated Shale Plains due to budget constraints. A cooperative position was established in the Swan Valley and Mentoring was completed.	2 new positions	50%
Recognize exceptional MT PFW Program field staff	5 MT PFW staff members were recognized for exemplary performance in FY12	NA	

Goal V. Increase Accountability

FY2012 activities under the “Enhance our Workforce” category are summarized below

Accomplishment Type	2012 Accomplishment	2012-2016 Goal	% Goal Completed
By 2015 develop site specific plans for each staffed MT PFW Focus Area	1	5	20%
Use GIS technology to map MT PFW projects	All FY12 projects were mapped	All	100%
Create GIS layer of all MT PFW habitat projects by 2012	Not completed		
By 2017, conduct one peer reviewed biological assessment of each MT PFW Focus Area	None completed		