Future Fisheries Improvement Program
Future Fisheries Improvement Program Funding
Winter 2025

1. **001-2025 Blacktail Creek Restoration (Silver Bow County).** Blacktail Creek is a tributary to the Clark Fork River that contains westslope cutthroat trout. In the project area, the stream channel was manipulated and infrastructure was installed, leading to two problems: 1) diversion structure and irrigation improvement effects on fish passage and stream function, and 2) sewer line effects on fish passage. The diversion component would separate the Butte Country Club irrigation from the creek, constructing a new diversion and fish screen off of the creek and re-establishing unobstructed fish passage. A stormwater outfall would be altered to move discharge from the creek to an irrigation pond. The sewer line component would fix the head-cut and exposed infrastructure, creating fish passage with two rock weirs and step pools. The goals of this project are to improve fish passage, eliminate entrainment, improve water quality through the reconstruction of a floodplain, and shade the stream with riparian vegetation.

Project Name	Blacktail Creek Restoration
Request	$60,695
Match	$1,051,668
Total Project Cost	$1,127,363
% FFIP Request	5%
Construction Schedule	Fall 2025 to Spring 2026
Requested Items	Construction materials, equipment and labor
FWP Notes	Supportive. Significant benefit to native fish passage, small ask relative to project size.
Panel Recommendation	Partial funding ($30,000).

2. **003-2025 Lee Creek Fish Passage (Missoula County).** Lee Creek is a tributary to Lolo Creek in the upper Lolo watershed. This area includes designated bull trout critical habitat and supports high densities of westslope cutthroat trout, as well as other trout species. It is considered important spawning and rearing habitat for all salmonid species present. In the project area, two tributaries of Lee Creek are seasonally disconnected by roads, leading to fish passage and water quality issues. This project would upsize three undersized culverts to 84-inch culverts that will incorporate stream simulation bed material and provide year-round fish passage and withstand a 100-year flood event. A fourth culvert will be upsized to 36 inches to allow for increase hydraulic capacity. This project would build upon other road decommissioning and fish passage projects in the upper Lolo Creek watershed. The goals of this project are to attain full fish passage and reduce chronic sedimentation, and therefore increase native fish populations.

Project Name	Lee Creek Fish Passage
Request	$50,000.00
Match	$179,123.00
Total Project Cost	$235,123.00
% FFIP Request	21%
Construction Schedule	?
Requested Items	Construction materials

FWP Notes	Supportive. Conservation population of native fish, demonstrated proficiency in project type (previous work in drainage).
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($50,000).

3. **004-2025 Lolo Creek Tenant Meanders (Missoula County).** Lolo Creek is a tributary to the Bitterroot River, which contains brown trout and rainbow trout, as well as westslope cutthroat trout, bull trout, and mountain whitefish. In the project area, which is adjacent to Highway 12 west of Lolo (Earl Tenant campground), the stream was channelized and rip-rapped due to the highway construction. This project would realign 0.5 miles of the creek in a wide segment of valley bottom and relic channel. Wetland and instream habitat restoration and revegetation would be used to reduce flood energy, increase off-channel water storage, and improve fisheries and aquatic habitat. The stream, floodplain, and wetland areas would be reconnected and a buffer would be created between the stream and the road to allow for channel adjustments. The restoration would be completed in a publicly accessible area and is intended to be a demonstration project.

Project Name	Lolo Creek Tenant Meanders
Request	$60,000
Match	$355,000
Total Project Cost	$415,000
% FFIP Request	14%
Construction Schedule	2025 field season
Requested Items	Construction materials, mobilization
FWP Notes	Supportive. Robust approach to habitat restoration, demonstration value. Direct public access at campground.
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($60,000).

4. **005-2025 Mill Creek Phase 2 – 5 Bar 6 (Park County).** Mill Creek (Park County) is a tributary to the Yellowstone River in the Paradise Valley. It is one of the remaining Yellowstone cutthroat trout strongholds outside of Yellowstone National Park. Past land management included channelization that pushed the channel to the westernmost edge of the valley. Lack of large wood and instream habitat complexity indicates that wood was removed, and the channel became simplified. Despite the limitations, the project area is an important spawning and rearing area for migratory Yellowstone cutthroat trout as it is upstream of dewatering in lower Mill Creek. This project is phase 2 and would continue the restoration on Mill Creek (one mile section) by breaching a historical berm in strategic locations to restore floodplain connectivity, allow side channel formation, and restore natural meadow and stream function. Log jams will be built to create habitat complexity. Reconnection is expected to encourage riparian plant growth. The goal is to improve in-stream and spawning habitat for Yellowstone cutthroat trout and other fish species and to enhance fishing opportunities.

Project Name	Mill Creek Phase 2 - 5 bar 6
Request	$86,920.00
Match	$45,000.00
Total Project Cost	$274,770.00
% FFIP Request	32%
Construction Schedule	Summer 2025 to Fall 2026

Requested Items	Final design, permitting, equipment, labor, mobilization
FWP Notes	Supportive. Suggested questions on large wood structures, grazing plan, and monitoring. Successful phase 1 project.
Panel Recommendation	Partial funding ($60,000) with the inclusion of an approved grazing plan.

5. **006-2025 Nevada Creek Restoration Phase 8 (Powell County).** Nevada Creek is a tributary to the middle Blackfoot River near Helmville that supports populations of westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, and brown trout. The project area had past channel manipulations and streamside vegetation removal that led to bank erosion issues. In 2010 and 2017-2024, nearby Future Fisheries channel restoration projects addressed extensive instream and riparian habitat and resulted in reduced sediment, increased stream complexity, improved riparian condition, and increased trout abundance. This project is phase 8 and would continue the restoration downstream. It intends to restore fish passage and natural stream and riparian function upgrading existing irrigation diversions, lowering channel width-to-depth ratios, increasing pool frequency and overhead cover, and implementing a grazing management plan. The goal is to improve fish passage while also improving instream, riparian, and upland habitat within a working landscape. The end result would be a benefit to aquatic species, particularly westslope cutthroat trout.

Project Name	Nevada Creek Restoration Phase 8
Request	$113,700.00
Match	$396,159.49
Total Project Cost	$514,859.49
% FFIP Request	22%
Construction Schedule	Fall 2025
Requested Items	Willows, equipment and labor
FWP Notes	Supportive. Long, demonstrated history of successful projects in Nevada Creek.
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($113,700).

6. **007-2025 Poorman Creek Restoration Phase 3 (Lewis and Clark County).** Poorman Creek is a tributary to the Blackfoot River that flows through a mix of USFS and private land. It supports populations of pure westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout. Poorman Creek is a high priority tributary and listed as critical bull trout habitat. Several other Future Fisheries projects were completed in this stream, including fish passage, fish screening, stream restoration, placer mine restoration, and water conservation. This project would address an area with entrenchment, lack of instream and riparian habitat, channel instability, and bank erosion. Approximately 1200 feet of channel would be restored using channel reconstruction, instream habitat (step pools, vegetated wood matrix, large woody debris structures). Tailings piles would be removed from the floodplain, opening channel access. The goal is to reestablish floodplain connectivity and function, improve instream and riparian habitat, correct chronic bank erosion, and restore a self-maintaining stream system.

Project Name	Poorman Creek Restoration Phase 3
Request	$33,000.00
Match	$69,124.61
Total Project Cost	$107,124.61
% FFIP Request	31%
Construction Schedule	?

Requested Items	Oversight, construction materials, equipment and labor
FWP Notes	Support. High priority tributary for native fish value.
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($33,000).

7. **002-2025 Clearwater River fish passage (Missoula County).** The Clearwater River is a tributary to the middle Blackfoot River that supports westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout, as well as many other fish species. The project location is near Clearwater Junction, and is tied to an irrigation diversion that consists of a rock dam and is identified as a partial fish barrier. This is considered an important site for bull trout migration as well as recreationists. This project would rebuild the existing diversion structure with a boulder cascade. Streambank would be restored with vegetative wood matrix structures to address bank erosion and an existing riparian road would be relocated. The goals of the project include restoration of fish passage, removing hazards for recreationists, addressing bank erosion and sediment inputs, and accommodating future irrigation needs.

Project Name	Clearwater River fish passage
Request	$48,000.00
Match	$284,462.75
Total Project Cost	$326,962.75
% FFIP Request	15%
Construction Schedule	?
Requested Items	Construction materials, equipment and labor, mobilization
FWP Notes	Support. Impactful passage project on major river.
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($48,000).

8. **008-2025 Ranch Creek Gratton Fish Passage (Granite County).** Ranch Creek is a tributary to Rock Creek, which is a native fish stronghold and core habitat area for bull trout. In the project area, an existing diversion structure is located immediately downstream of documented bull trout redds and entrains several fish species, including bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout, rainbow trout, brown trout, and brook trout. Maintenance of the structure resulted in streambank erosion, sedimentation, and an over widened channel. This project would replace the existing irrigation diversion infrastructure and install a Farmer's fish screen with a return pipe. The goals are to eliminate fish entrainment and provide fish passage, provide improved water management for the water users, reconnect 1.5 miles of spawning habitat, and improve fish populations and recruitment to Rock Creek and the Clark Fork River.

Project Name	Ranch Creek Gratton Fish Passage
Request	$67,500.00
Match	$10,000.00
Total Project Cost	$158,806.00
% FFIP Request	43%
Construction Schedule	Summer 2025
Requested Items	Fish Screen and install, rock and install
FWP Notes	Support. Essential spawning habitat for native fish (including westslope cutthroat and bull trout) and recreational fisheries. Recommended additional budget detail.
Panel Recommendation	Partial funding ($60,000).

9. **009-2025 Tenmile Creek Bridge (Ravalli County).** Tenmile Creek is a tributary to Lost Horse Creek in the Bitterroot. Tenmile Creek supports westslope cutthroat trout, and Lost Horse Creek supports bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout, as well as wild populations of non-native species. Lost Horse Creek is considered a priority watershed to improve road-stream interactions and benefit native species. In the project area, Forest Road 429 is affecting the stream. Tenmile Creek splits into two channels above the road, where water flows under a timber bridge and a pair of culverts. The low capacity of the culverts and debris causes the stream to wash out the road, providing sediment to Lost Horse Creek, and it impedes fish passage. The project would replace the existing culverts with a bridge, leaving the timber bridge in place. The goal is to address habitat quality and connectivity for fish species.

Project Name	Tenmile Creek Bridge
Request	$32,120.00
Match	$32,120.00
Total Project Cost	$369,860.00
% FFIP Request	9%
Construction Schedule	Summer 2025
Requested Items	Project Management, Equipment and Labor
FWP Notes	Support. Benefits to fish passage and spawning quality; important source of trout recruitment.
Panel Recommendation	Partial funding ($22,120).

10. **010-2025 Tolan Creek Meadow Restoration (Ravalli County).** Tolan Creek is a tributary to the East Fork Bitterroot River. It supports native westslope cutthroat trout and bull trout. The Tolan drainage was severely burned in the 2022 Trail Ridge fire. As a result, debris flows caused severe habitat degradation through loss of pool habitat, floodplain disconnection, loss of riparian vegetation, and destabilizing streambanks. Temperature drastically increased. Native species have been negatively affected, but especially bull trout. This project would reestablish the former ecological and watershed processes in the meadow using low-tech processed based restoration techniques, including beaver dam analogue (BDA) structures and large wood structures (LWS). Hand crews will complete the work, and plantings will occur on an as-needed basis. Approximately 50 BDAs will be installed and 3,500 riparian shrubs will be planted. The goals are to restore aquatic habitat and improve populations of native species.

Project Name	Tolan Creek Meadow Restoration
Request	$6,885.00
Match	$26,230.00
Total Project Cost	$50,930.00
% FFIP Request	14%
Construction Schedule	July - Aug 2025
Requested Items	Construction materials (riparian shrubs, BDA posts)
FWP Notes	Support. Highly impactful project for low financial ask. Contains bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout. Questions about maintenance of structures, potential for long-term grazing.
Panel Recommendation	Full funding ($6,885).