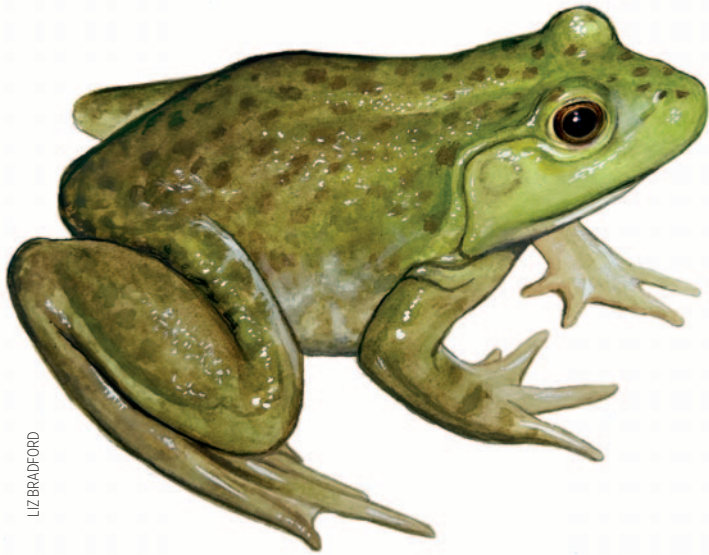


American bullfrog

What they are

Bullfrogs are large, green frogs native to eastern North America. They are harvested in the wild and raised commercially for their legs, which taste like chicken. They are also kept as pets. The species has been distributed into the American West, including Montana, where they devour native amphibians and other small wildlife.



How to ID them

Bullfrogs are the largest frogs in North America, reaching 7 inches long in Montana. They are dark green or brownish-green on top with dark blotches and a cream underbelly. Their loud, deep *jug o' rum* call can be heard from a considerable distance.

Where they're found

Bullfrogs are now firmly established in the Yellowstone River floodplain around Billings and are moving upstream and downstream. They are also in the Bitterroot, lower Flathead, middle Clark Fork, and Stillwater river valleys and Flathead Lake.

Why we hate them

Bullfrogs have voracious appetites and will eat almost anything smaller than they are, including native baby turtles, frogs, toads, and newly hatched ducklings.

How they spread

Bullfrogs enter Montana water when people buy them as pets in pet stores and later release them into the wild, or when people try to raise bullfrogs as food and the amphibians escape confinement.

How to control them

Once established, bullfrog populations can't be controlled. Don't purchase or release pet bullfrogs, and report any field observations to your local FWP office. ■

LIZ BRADFORD

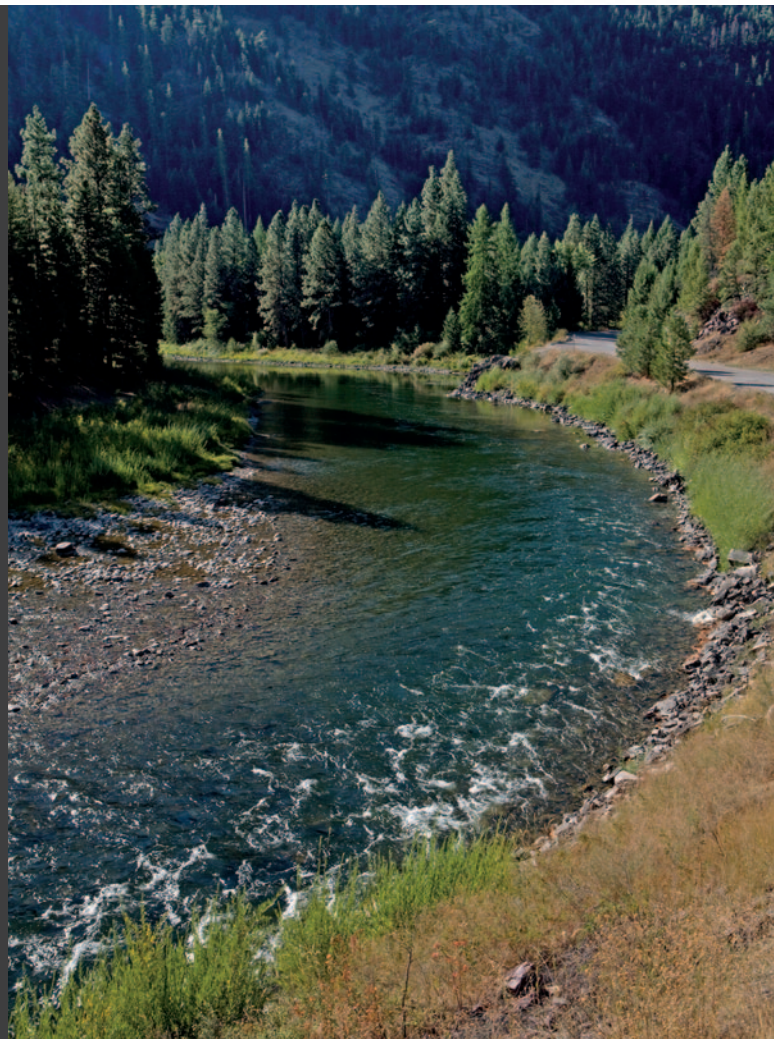
THE MICRO MANAGER

A quick look at a concept or term commonly used in fisheries, wildlife, or state parks management.

“Stream Channelization”

Stream channelization is any type of engineering that straightens a natural stream or river into an artificial stream bed or prevents it from overflowing its banks during high water, such as by building a berm or installing riprap along the bank. Channelization is done mainly to prevent the flooding of cropland, pasture, home sites, or communities in a floodplain. The problem for fish is that channelization removes habitat such as pools, undercut banks, and spawning areas, as well as reduces total stream miles. Channelization also “corsets” rivers and streams, preventing the energy of floodwaters from naturally dissipating into floodplains and instead sending the water with even greater force downstream, like from a fire hose. ■

Riprap protects Montana Highway 200 but channelizes the Blackfoot River east of Missoula



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