

1.Fred Burr Creek Watershed Summary

Fred Burr Creek is a tributary to Flint Creek (a direct tributary to the Clark Fork River) and flows for about 11 miles from its headwaters in the Flint Range. The creek drains an area of nearly 15 square miles that is mainly private, along with some state and federal lands (Table xxx). The basin historically supported mining but now is mostly used for timber harvest and livestock grazing (FWP, 2008).

Table xxx: Fred Burr Creek Watershed Overview

Watershed Size	9,511 acres/14.9 sq miles/38.5 sq km
Elevation Range	2,907 feet [4,491-7,398]
Stream Miles	31.8
Land Ownership	Private: 80% /State: 16%/Federal: 4%
Road Miles	Driveway/Service Road = 3.3 Local Road/City Street = 2.5 Four Wheel Drive Trail = 14.2 Highway = 0.3 Total = 20.3

Source: Montana GIS Portal Data Layers

2.Impairments

Fred Burr Creek is not listed as a 303 (d) waterbody and was not included in the 2010 Montana DEQ TMDL report. However, given its long history of large-scale mining operations, logging and grazing, possibilities for water quality impairment exist in the forms of metals contamination, adit discharge, sedimentation and bank erosion, and fish and riparian habitat degradation. When Montana FWP surveyed the creek in 2007, the effects of heavy grazing and timber harvest operations were evident but appeared to be improving (FWP, 2008).

3.Native/Sport Fishery

Current Condition

Montana FWP conducted electrofishing and riparian assessments at RM 3.2 and 6.3 in September of 2007. They found that the upper section of Fred Burr supports almost entirely a population of native westslope cutthroat trout. The lower site (RM 3.2) contains a greater number of rainbow and brown trout. No westslope cutthroats were captured at RM 3.2 (MFWP, 2008).

The riparian assessments at each site showed stable channels but RM 3.2 received lower scores than RM 6.3 due to the sparseness of the vegetation (the effect of historic mining) and lower streamflow (MFWP, 2008). Montana FWP did not specifically rate fish habitat in their 2008 document.

Table xxx: Fish Distribution in Fred Burr Creek

Waterbody	Begin RM*	End RM*	Species	Updated
Fred Burr Creek	4.9	10.8	Westslope Cutthroat Trout	7/9/2009

Source: MFWP, 2010

Fishery Potential

While Fred Burr Creek experiences many possible impairments, protection and enhancement possibilities for a viable trout fishery exist on several levels (Table xxx). Montana FWP has shown an interest in managing the creek (in collaboration with state agencies and other organizations) as a “Priority 4” recreational fishery the agency’s Final Tributary Rating Summary (2010). Improved management practices can increase the fishery viability by addressing documented impairments (Table xxx) with appropriate restoration projects.

Table xxx: Tributary Rating Summary for Fred Burr Creek (Priority 4)

Stream	Reach(RM)	Trout Species	Impairments
Fred Burr Creek	All: 0.0-11.3	Westslope Cutthroat, Brown and Rainbow	Mining/possible metals contamination; timber harvest; heavy grazing pressure; soil erosion; competition to native fish from brown and rainbow trout
Current Recruitment/Restoration Fishery Value			Protection/Enhancement Value
Medium			Medium
Current Tributary/Replacement Fishery Value			Protection/Enhancement Value
High			High
Current Native Fishery Value (westslope cutthroat)			Protection/Enhancement Value
Low			Low

Source: MFWP, 2010

4. Assessments

Fred Burr Creek and its riparian areas have been assessed in recent years (Table xxx). Assessments have included fish habitat and fishery potential, noxious weeds, and stream channel and riparian habitat status.

Table xxx: Fred Burr Creek Assessments

Type	Agency	Year	Area
Tributary Prioritization /Rating Summary	MFWP	2010	River Mile 0.0-11.3
Fish Population/Riparian Habitat	MFWP	2009	River Mile 3.2 and 6.3

5. Restoration

Needs

- Thorough assessment of water quality and quantity throughout the basin
- Address grazing issues by limiting livestock access to riparian areas and the creek
- Restore degraded riparian areas with planting and other restoration practices
- Work with landowners to assess and address habitat issues on private property

Activities: Projects undertaken by the WRC

6. Watershed Map

7. Bibliography

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