

Blackfoot Drought Response Announcement

August 1, 2017 – Several weeks of hot, dry weather have taken a toll on the Blackfoot River and its tributaries, bringing the river very near the triggers for the Blackfoot Drought Response Program. The Blackfoot Drought Response Committee is meeting regularly to monitor river flows and temperatures, fully expecting to activate the local drought plan within the next several days. Under this plan, participating irrigators are asked to implement their individual water conservation plans when Blackfoot River flows at the Bonner stream gage drop below 700 cfs. As the river warms, anglers are also asked to practice voluntary, low-stress fishing techniques and may experience further hoot owl fishing restrictions if water temperature triggers are reached.

In 2000, the Blackfoot Drought Response Committee was formed to coordinate a voluntary drought response effort in the Blackfoot watershed. Drought response is intended to minimize the adverse impacts of drought on fisheries and to aid in the equitable distribution of water during low flow summers. The Blackfoot Drought Response Plan is based on the premise of “shared sacrifice” with the goal that all Blackfoot water users – agricultural users and anglers alike – voluntarily agree to take actions that will result in water savings and/or the reduction of stress on fish during critical low flow periods.

For more information on the Blackfoot Drought Response Program or for updates on current drought response activity, please contact Jennifer Schoonen, Blackfoot water steward, at jennifer@blackfootchallenge.org or visit www.blackfootchallenge.org.

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