



**Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks**

# NEWS

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## **Fishing Restrictions Begin for Some Blackfoot Tributaries on Thursday**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) will close fishing between the hours of 2 p.m. and midnight on some tributaries in the Blackfoot drainage beginning Thursday, July 30.

These “hoot owl” restrictions apply to Morrell, Gold, Belmont, Cottonwood, Copper, and Monture Creeks; the North Fork of the Blackfoot River below North Fork Falls; and Landers Fork. The entire main stem of the Blackfoot River has been under hoot owl restrictions since July 3.

The Blackfoot Drought Response Plan, established to protect fisheries that are threatened by drought conditions and to share limited water resources, calls for limiting fishing to the cooler hours of the days to reduce stress on fish. More information about the plan can be found at [blackfootchallenge.org](http://blackfootchallenge.org).

"All these waters are experiencing low flows and warming temperatures, despite some rain and reprieve in hot weather," said Pat Saffel, Region 2 Fisheries Manager in Missoula. "And many of these tributaries are also important habitat for bull trout, which are extra sensitive to these conditions."

As water reaches flow and temperature triggers, the plan also calls for reductions in water use from water right holders as part of a “shared sacrifice” approach to improve stream flow and reduce stress on the trout fishery.

The Blackfoot tributaries join the Blackfoot River and many other west-central Montana rivers and streams that are already under these “hoot owl” restrictions.

Fishing is closed from 2 p.m. to midnight on the following rivers and streams in western Montana:

- **Bitterroot:** Entire length, excluding the East and West Forks.
- **Blackfoot and tributaries:** Entire river and North Fork below the falls, Morrell, Gold, Belmont, Cottonwood, Copper, Monture and Landers Fork.
- **Clark Fork:** Headwaters downstream to the confluence with the Flathead River.
- **Flint Creek:** Hwy 1 bridge near milepost 53, downstream to the mouth.
- **Silver Bow Creek:** Confluence with Warm Springs Creek (near Warm Springs) to the confluence with Blacktail Creek (in Butte).

[Other river restrictions](#) are in place in other parts of the state. For up-to-date information on restrictions related to drought, visit [fwp.mt.gov/news/restrictions](http://fwp.mt.gov/news/restrictions).

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