

# factsheet

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August 2009

## East Fork Finley Creek land acquisition protects trout habitat in Montana

The Bonneville Power Administration is proposing to fund an approximately 13-acre conservation easement in Montana's Jocko River watershed for fish habitat mitigation.

Located in Missoula County in northwestern Montana, this property is part of a watershed designated as critical habitat for bull trout, resident fish that are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The Jocko River watershed also supports local populations of resident and migratory westslope cutthroat trout, a subspecies that is considered at risk by local tribes and the state of Montana.

This property, which is located within the boundaries of the Flathead Indian Reservation, was selected for protection for several reasons.

First, it is located along East Fork Finley Creek which lies within the Jocko River watershed, a core recovery area for bull trout. East Fork Finley Creek supports a pure population of westslope cutthroat trout. Over the years, various land-use disturbances in the watershed have degraded stream channel conditions, elevated temperatures and increased sediment levels in the river, causing fish populations to decline in the area. This watershed was selected as a focus for restoration efforts because the high rate of development in the area increases the risk that more habitat resources will be damaged in the future.

Additionally, this area is significant to the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, with evidence of traditional use going back hundreds of years.

Acquiring the easement would provide BPA with credits for partial mitigation of resident fish habitat losses due to the construction and inundation from Hungry Horse Dam, a federal dam located on the South Fork of the Flathead River. Other agencies involved with this project include Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

### Land to get management plan

After BPA finalizes the project, which is expected in late summer 2009, a conservation easement will be placed on the property to ensure that the fisheries values and habitat are protected in perpetuity. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes would provide long-term stewardship for the land and will develop a management plan to guide the protection and enhancement of habitat resources on the property.

Pending approval of the management plan, any activities that could damage habitat (such as harvesting of wood products, grazing or livestock or construction of buildings) would be prohibited on this land.

### For more information

If you have questions about this proposal or would like additional information, please contact Cecilia Brown with the Bonneville Power Administration at (503) 230-3462, (800) 282-3713 or [ckbrown@bpa.gov](mailto:ckbrown@bpa.gov). You may also contact Lynn DuCharme of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes at (406) 883-2888 or [lynnd@cskt.org](mailto:lynnd@cskt.org).



# Finley Creek Acquisition

## Missoula County, Montana



Finley Creek Acquisition  
 Evaro Quadrangle  
 (13 Acres)

 Subject Property

0 0.125 0.25 0.5 Miles



