

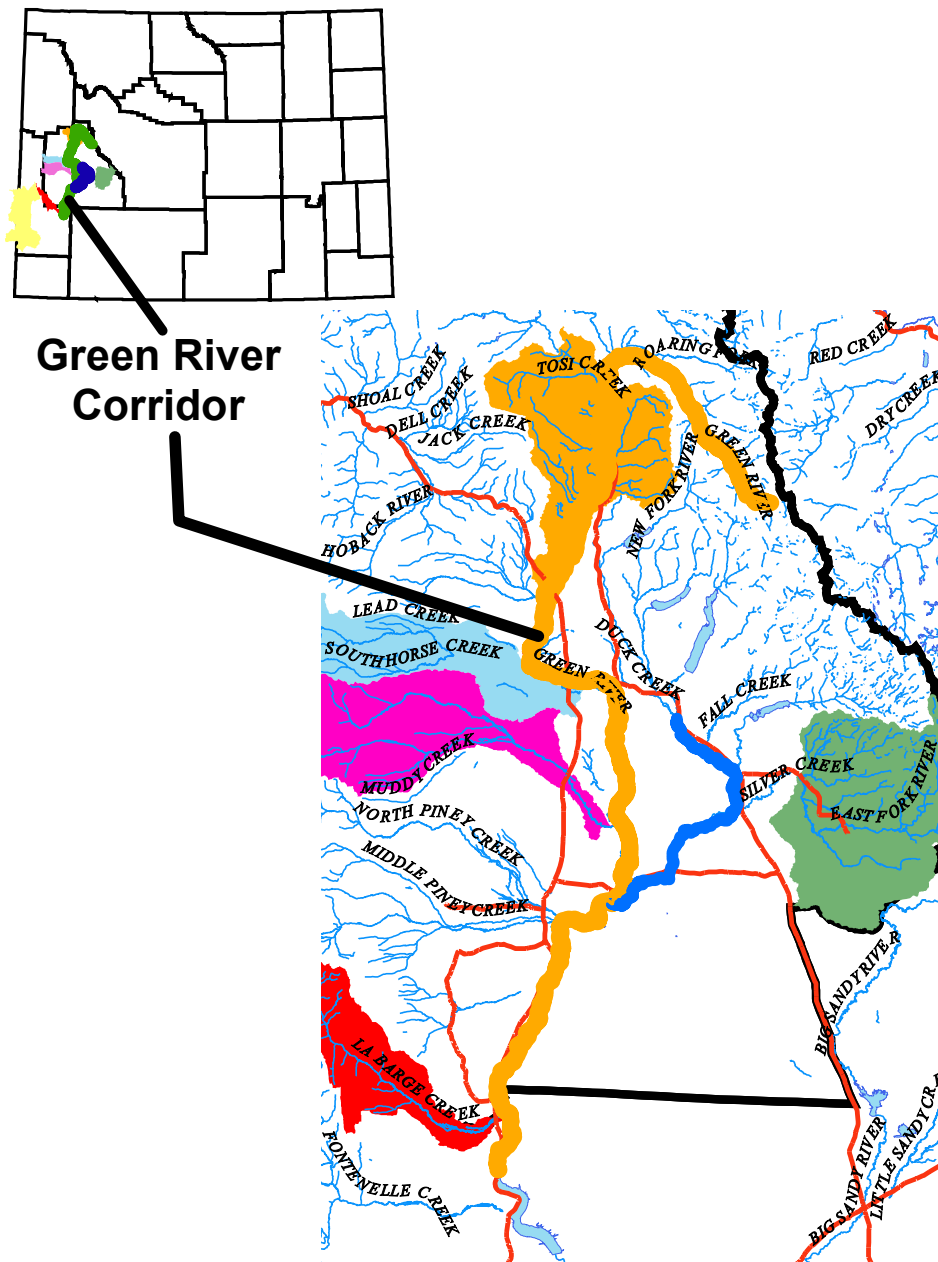
Pinedale Region Aquatic Habitat Priorities

Region: Pinedale
Watershed Name: Green River Corridor

Priority: 8
HUC: 1404010

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The Green River originates in the Wind River Mountains and flows about 104 miles before entering Fontenelle Reservoir. The Green River Corridor priority area encompasses this entire segment of the Green River Valley. The lateral boundaries generally lie within the approximate 100-year flood plain of the river. However, viable restoration / enhancement opportunities along this corridor influenced by irrigation activities are considered important as well as upland inclusions within this zone with potential to have significant effects on the river or riparian habitat.



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LAND STATUS: 90% Private 10% Public

SPECIES THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM ACTIVITY IN THIS WATERSHED:

The primary focus in this area is on assemblages of riparian obligate species with secondary benefits to other species that benefit from healthy and diverse riparian communities. This river and associated riparian communities provides a locally important sport fishery, critical moose winter range and important transitional and winter / yearlong habitat for mule deer, as well as supporting sage grouse broods.

CURRENT HABITAT CONDITIONS/LIMITING FACTORS:

One important indicator of the riparian condition is the structural and age class diversity of the woody riparian vegetation, particularly willows and cottonwoods. Due to their importance to numerous wildlife species, and streambank stability, successful regeneration of these communities in the Green River Corridor is of particular concern. Observations indicate adequate initial reestablishment of willows, but recruitment to medium and mature age classes is inconsistent and appears to be limited by browsing impacts. Cottonwood reestablishment is even less common, and recruitment to medium and mature age or height classes appears to be virtually nonexistent. Again, browsing impacts appear to be limiting recruitment. This situation has been observed throughout the Green River corridor.

A WGFD Administrative Report, titled “ An Evaluation of the Green River Fishery (above the New Fork Confluence),” authored by David A. Belford in 2001 describes a portion of this priority area (from Green River Lakes downstream to the New Fork confluence) and many of the associated opportunities and limiting factors from a fisheries management perspective.

CONSERVATION EASEMENTS/AGREEMENTS

Restoration of the woody riparian vegetative communities in this corridor area is most limited by the ability to control ungulate browsing and to provide for rest of vegetation treatments and proper follow up management following treatments. Readily available alternative locations to alleviate grazing pressure/demands in this area would provide greater opportunities for vegetation restoration/enhancement projects.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES/PROPOSED PROJECTS

Recreational fishing opportunities are significant on the Green River. The WGFD has implemented two significant instream fisheries habitat enhancement projects in the Green River Corridor Area. Between 1988 and 1992 a series of log / rock jams were constructed on the Upper Green (on Forest), and construction of 14 tree jams was completed in 1999 and 2000 on the Warren Bridge PFA (primarily on BLM lands). Other opportunities include potential projects on private property (Anselmi’s) adjacent to the Warren Bridge PFA as well as private property (Nataros’s) downstream from Warren Bridge. A channel split was stabilized and a fence sill was constructed in 2001 and 2002, respectively, at the recently developed Huston PFA. Additional cooperative enhancement opportunities with neighboring landowners may be developed in this area. A channel stabilization project was constructed at the Daniel PFA in 1988 and 1989. Additional enhancement opportunities may be developed at the Daniel & Fear PFAs.

Because a significant portion of this corridor area is privately owned, habitat enhancement opportunities are restricted to public lands or are limited by landowner cooperation and the development of common wildlife oriented goals. However, changing demographics in Sublette County combined with the potential to tap into WHIP funding resulting from changes in the Farm Bill regarding “Priority Area” designations within counties may increase future enhancement opportunities. The WHIP program within the 2002

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Farm Bill was funded at an even higher level than in 1996 and numerous restoration and enhancement opportunities may be pursued by landowners.