



Field Note

May 9th 2013

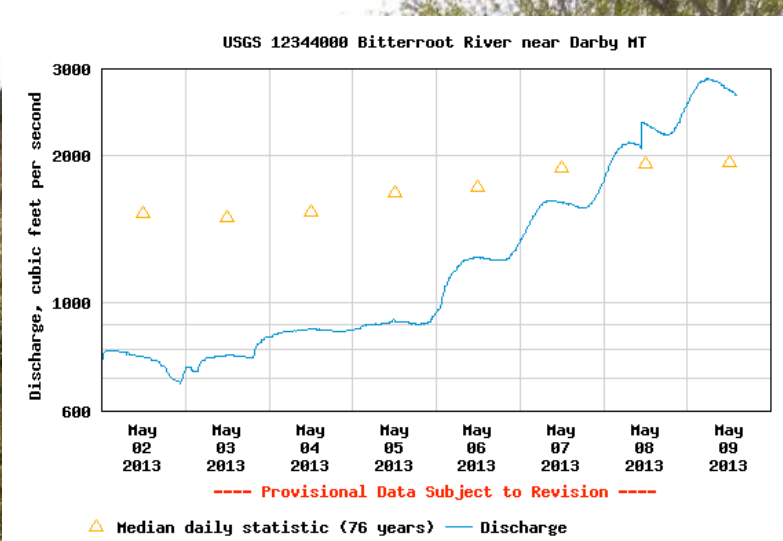
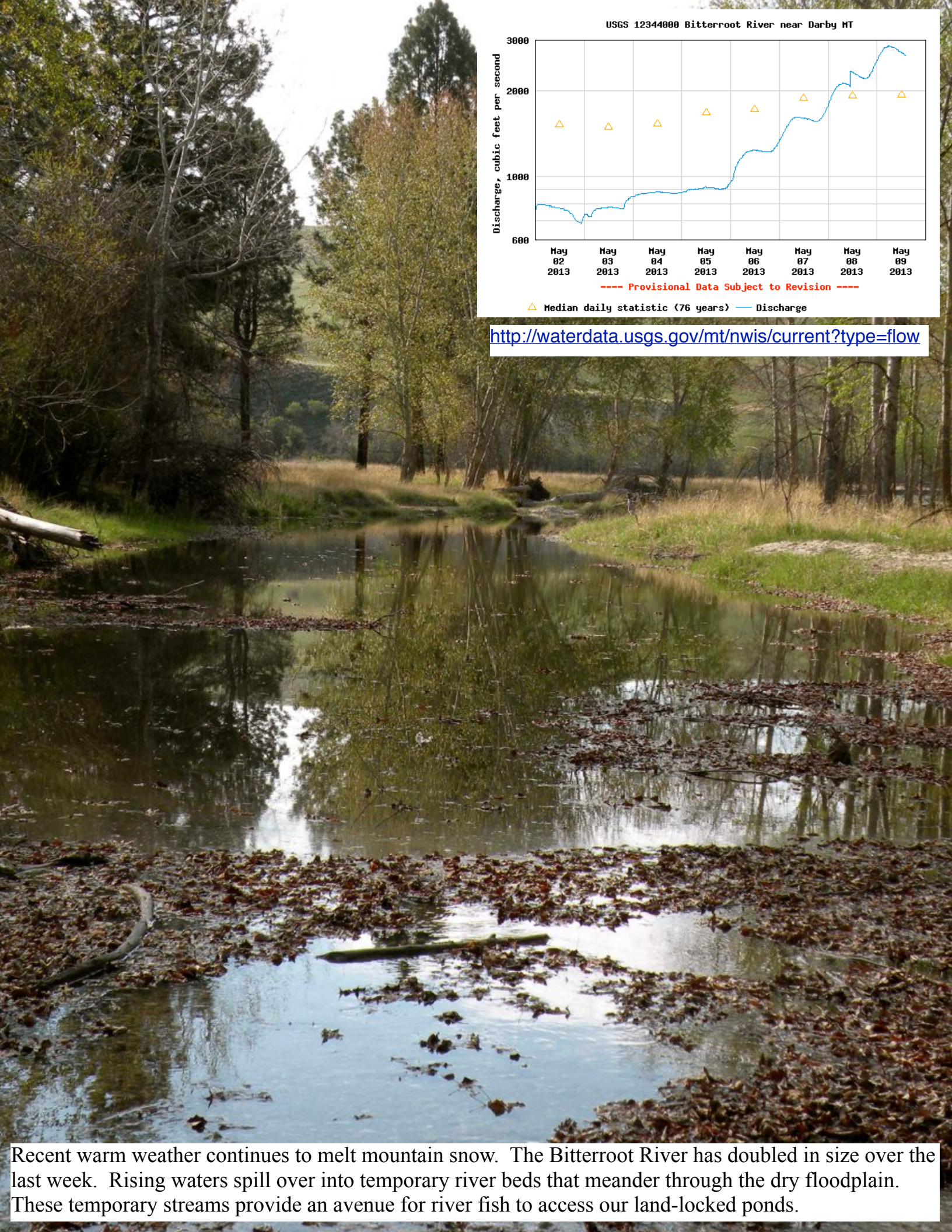
By Jeff Clarke





The crew planted a hedge of 500 trees and shrubs (hawthorn, wild rose, alum root, wax current, aspen) along the trail that leads to the interpretive garden. We used wood chips (recycled from ranch trees) to deter weed growth on the trail and around the trees. Last week the watering crew installed drip irrigation to all the plants to encourage them to grow.





<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/mt/nwis/current?type=flow>

Recent warm weather continues to melt mountain snow. The Bitterroot River has doubled in size over the last week. Rising waters spill over into temporary river beds that meander through the dry floodplain. These temporary streams provide an avenue for river fish to access our land-locked ponds.





In the floodplain, oregon grape blossoms watch the rising waters from a safe distance.



Swallows hunt insects near the rising waters into the late evening.





It looks like the clubhouse bald eagle nest will not produce eaglets for a second straight year. Today I ventured down stream to check on the eagle nest across the river. I found a mother eagle incubating.





The distant “Gobble!, Gobble!” calls echo through the North and Clubhouse Floodplains all day long. Today I watched this flock wander around ponderosa pines, pecking at the forest floor. I wonder what scrumptious treats they are after?





The first transplanted basin wild rye went in the ground over a month ago and it is still green and healthy! Since then, we have done several more BWR transplanting projects. May they all flourish as well. The map, left, shows their locations.







Large storm clouds billow up and over the bitterroot mountains...then fade before reaching the ranch!





When a planted tree perishes, we recycle its old exclosure. Next week the field crew will head to MPGN with old ranch exclosures. Many of the exclosures will protect sucking aspen trees.



Yesterday I explored last years logging project in section 22 to see how native vegetation rebounded. I found native grasses and wildflowers galore! The following slides show some of the wildflowers I found...and a dusky grouse that “hooted” while I wandered.



Old tractor tire lines





Dusky Grouse





Arrow-Leafed Balsam Root





Cutleaf Daisy





Spring Beauty









Indian Paintbrush





#### Recent Field Work

- Plant and chip interp. garden hedge row
- Transplant basin wild rye
- Remove fence
- Remove dead tree exclosures
- Weed experimental plots
- Spray leafy spurge
- Remove hounds tongue seed
- Seed w/ tractor
- Water plants
- Construct new landscape structures