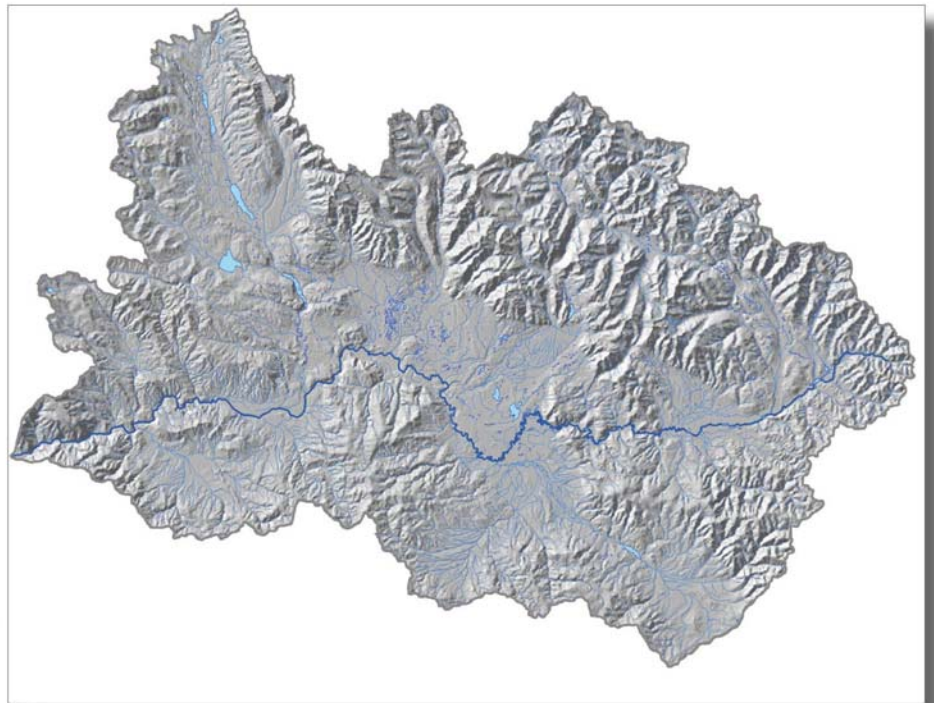


Blackfoot Subbasin Plan



**Prepared for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council
Prepared by the Blackfoot Challenge and Trout Unlimited**

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A remarkable group of people representing public agencies, private organizations, and the general public dedicate their energy and expertise to the ecological, social, and economic well-being of the Blackfoot Subbasin and its inhabitants. Many of those people served on the technical work groups that steered the development of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan. Numerous others contributed to the editorial process, helping us to refine the plan into a form that will be most useful to conservation and restoration partners working in the subbasin. We thank them for their generous assistance throughout the subbasin planning process.

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Executive Summary

1.1 Overview

The Blackfoot Subbasin has a strong history of locally-led conservation and restoration. Beginning in the mid1970s, private landowners developed the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement and established two Walk-In Hunting areas near the confluence of the Clearwater and Blackfoot Rivers. In that same timeframe, the first conservation easement in Montana was acquired in the Blackfoot Valley. Thanks to the vision of these landowners, an important foundation was established for public and private partners to work together on restoring and protecting habitat, fish and wildlife populations in the Blackfoot River basin.

Building on this legacy, the Blackfoot Challenge, Trout Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy began the process of developing a subbasin plan for the Blackfoot Watershed in fall 2007. The purpose of the subbasin plan is to create a comprehensive strategy for conserving, restoring and enhancing the natural resources and rural lifestyle of the Blackfoot Subbasin. The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan is one of more than 50 such plans that have been written for tributaries and mainstem segments of the Columbia River under the leadership of the Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NPCC 2000).

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan was developed collaboratively by a wide range of stakeholders including private landowners and representatives from public agencies and non-government organizations working in the subbasin. This community-based approach to natural resource and conservation planning ensures a local voice and vision for land management and restoration activities in the Blackfoot Subbasin. It also provides opportunities to work across public and private boundaries and to coordinate technical and funding resources.

1.2 Subbasin Planning Process

Based on community, agency and partner interest, four technical work groups were formed in early 2008 to capture in the subbasin plan the local knowledge, professional expertise and on-the-ground experience of people living and working in the Blackfoot Subbasin. Technical work groups held regular meetings between March 2008 and May 2009.

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan was developed following The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Action Planning process (citation?). Conservation Action Planning provides a framework for designing, implementing and evaluating conservation projects at any scale, from small sites to large landscapes such as the Blackfoot Subbasin. Technical work groups used this adaptive framework in the Blackfoot Subbasin to 1) identify key natural and community resources, 2) assess viability of the resources, 3) identify factors that threaten the health and viability of the resources, 4) develop conservation and management strategies to abate critical threats and ensure long-term viability of the resources and 5) incorporate quantitative measures to track effectiveness of the conservation strategies over time.

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan integrates existing information contained in a variety of planning and management documents, including two key documents that have been cornerstones for conservation and restoration planning and action in the Blackfoot Subbasin: the Blackfoot River Valley Conservation Area Draft Plan (TNC and BC 2007) and A Basin-Wide Restoration Action Plan for the Blackfoot Watershed (BC 2005a).

1.3 Elements of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan

1.3.1 Subbasin Assessment

The primary purpose of the Subbasin Assessment is to synthesize and evaluate the biological, physical and socioeconomic characteristics of the Blackfoot Subbasin, forming a scientific and technical foundation for prioritization of restoration and protection strategies for habitat and fish and wildlife populations. The Assessment begins with a broad overview of subbasin geography, geology, soils, climate, water resources, fish and wildlife, vegetation and socioeconomic and

land use characteristics, followed by an examination of the subbasin in a regional context. The remainder of the Assessment focuses on the following eight key conservation targets considered by the subbasin technical work groups to be representative of the natural and cultural resources of the Blackfoot Subbasin:

- Native salmonids
- Herbaceous wetlands
- Moist site and riparian vegetation
- Native grassland/sagebrush communities
- Low elevation ponderosa pine/western larch forest
- Mid to high elevation coniferous forest
- Grizzly bears
- Rural way of life

Each conservation target includes one or more “nested targets” that are expected to benefit from conservation of the main targets. Conserving and/or restoring this set of targets will help to ensure the viability of the species, natural systems and rural way of life that make the Blackfoot Subbasin unique and that contribute to the larger-scale significance of the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem.

After selecting the representative list of focal conservation targets for the Blackfoot Subbasin, technical work groups conducted viability and threat assessments for each target. Viability indicates the ability of a conservation target to persist for many generations. All conservation targets within the Blackfoot Subbasin were determined to have a current viability rating of *good*, *fair* or *poor*, suggesting that each conservation target will require some degree of human intervention in order to persist under current conditions. In the subbasin threat assessment, technical work groups identified the most critical factors that currently impact or have the potential to impact target viability over the next ten years. Critical threats to subbasin conservation targets are:

1. Unplanned Residential and Resort Development
2. Climate Change
3. Exotic/Invasive Species
4. Lack of Fire
5. Incompatible Forestry Practices
6. Physical Road Issues
7. Conversion to Agriculture
8. Mining
9. Motorized Vehicle Use
10. Incompatible Grazing
11. Drainage and Diversion Systems
12. Channel Alteration
13. Epidemic Levels of Native Insects and Pathogens

14. Non-motorized Recreational Use
15. Existing Crop Production
16. Filling of Wetlands
17. Lack of Human Tolerance
18. Human-Caused Mortality
19. Altered Wildlife Use Patterns
20. Presence of Bear Attractants

The threats are ranked from very high to low. The highest ranking threats are those that have the greatest impact on the greatest number of conservation targets in the subbasin. In addition to this list of threats, there are external factors that impact fish and wildlife in the Blackfoot Subbasin including climate change, fish migration barriers, habitat conditions, land use in adjacent subbasins and human population growth at a regional scale. Of the Blackfoot Subbasin conservation targets, bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout and grizzly bears are all wide-ranging species that are particularly vulnerable to threats originating outside of the subbasin.

The cumulative impact of threats results in an overall subbasin threat rank of *very high*, indicating that all of the conservation targets face some threat of degradation or extirpation across portions of the subbasin over the next 10 years. A *very high* rating suggests that, without conservation action, the viability of conservation targets within the subbasin will decline. These threats are viewed both as challenges to sustaining natural and cultural resources in the Blackfoot Subbasin and as opportunities for collaboration and conservation action. Conservation objectives and strategic actions outlined in the Subbasin Management Plan are designed to abate the critical threats in the subbasin, thereby ensuring the long-term viability of conservation targets.

1.3.2 Inventory of Existing Programs and Activities

The purpose of the Subbasin Inventory is to summarize current fish, wildlife and habitat protection and restoration activities in the subbasin. The Inventory includes a description of 1) protected areas in the subbasin, 2) management plans, including endangered species recovery plans, 3) management and funding programs and 4) on-the-ground conservation and restoration projects that target fish, wildlife and habitat in the subbasin. To complete the Inventory, we surveyed a large number of agencies, organizations and individuals involved directly or indirectly in fish and wildlife activities in the subbasin.

This review of existing protections and current management strategies enabled the subbasin planning team to evaluate and identify gaps in conservation and restoration activities in the subbasin, particularly in relation to the threats identified in the Blackfoot Subbasin Assessment. This gap assessment illustrates that, while most of the factors threatening the viability of subbasin conservation targets and associated nested targets have received some level of attention in an effort to abate them, the extent of actions varies widely. While conservation accomplishments in the subbasin have been significant, much work remains to be done.

1.3.3 Management Plan

The Management Plan is the heart of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan. It consists of five elements: 1) a vision for the subbasin, 2) conservation objectives, 3) strategic actions, 4) research, monitoring and evaluation and 5) consistency with the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act. The Blackfoot Subbasin Management Plan is a living document that is based on a 10-15 year planning horizon. It reflects current knowledge of conditions in the Blackfoot Subbasin and will be updated through an adaptive management process as knowledge of ecological processes and socioeconomic conditions in the subbasin grows. The Blackfoot Subbasin Management Plan, which was developed collaboratively by a wide range of stakeholders, will serve as a guide for partners working to sustain the outstanding ecological, economic and cultural values and resources in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

The Management Plan includes a vision for the Blackfoot Subbasin that describes the desired future condition and incorporates the values and priorities of a wide spectrum of stakeholders. The Blackfoot Subbasin Vision will guide prioritization and implementation of conservation objectives and strategic actions to ensure the continued viability of ecological and human communities in the subbasin.

The vision for the Blackfoot Subbasin is for a place characterized by dynamic natural processes that create and sustain diverse and resilient communities of native fish and wildlife and the aquatic and terrestrial habitats on which they depend, thereby assuring substantial ecological, economic and cultural benefits. The efforts to conserve and enhance those natural resources will be implemented through a cooperative partnership between public and private interests that will seek to sustain not only those natural resources, but the rural way of life of the Blackfoot River Valley for present and future generations.

The core of the Blackfoot Subbasin Management Plan consists of a comprehensive set of conservation objectives and strategic actions designed to abate the critical threats to subbasin conservation targets, resulting in healthy, viable conservation targets. The ten conservation objectives included in the Management Plan are:

Conservation Objective 1 – Maintain the large, intact working landscapes that sustain the natural resources and rural way of life in the Blackfoot Subbasin through support to local communities, counties, and land conservation partners.

Conservation Objective 2a – Maintain and/or restore viable populations of bull trout within the three major population groups in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 2b – Maintain and/or restore viable populations of migratory (fluvial and adfluvial) westslope cutthroat trout within each of the three major population groups within the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 2c – Maintain and/or restore viable populations of resident westslope cutthroat trout within each of the three major population groups within the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 3 – Control existing noxious and invasive plant species abundance and distribution, and prevent establishment of all new noxious and invasive species in the Blackfoot Subbasin. Emphasis should be placed on protecting the highest quality habitats, which should be identified and prioritized by 2012.

Conservation Objective 4 – Maintain or restore the viability of priority herbaceous wetlands based on historic conditions across the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 5 – Maintain or restore the viability of priority moist site and riparian vegetation based on historic conditions across the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 6 – Maintain or restore the viability of priority native grassland and sagebrush communities based on historic conditions across the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 7 – Maintain or restore the viability of low severity fire regime ponderosa pine and western larch forest communities based on historic stand conditions across the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 8 – Maintain or restore the viability of mid to high elevation coniferous forest communities based on historic stand conditions across the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 9a – Maintain functional connectivity for grizzly bears across biologically suitable habitats in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 9b – Reduce human-caused grizzly bear mortality in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 9c – Improve human acceptance of grizzly bears and wolves by building a community-supported conservation and management process that reflects the interests and values of residents and landowners throughout the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Conservation Objective 10 – Increase public awareness and education about conserving and enhancing the natural resources and rural way of life in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

The Management Plan concludes with a discussion of the Blackfoot Subbasin Monitoring and Evaluation Plan. This plan will be based on the draft monitoring plan contained in the Blackfoot River Valley Conservation Area Plan (TNC and BC 2007) and will incorporate the results of the Blackfoot Subbasin viability assessments that describe the current and desired viability ratings for a variety of indicators for each conservation target. The plan will also incorporate a conceptual plan for restoration effectiveness monitoring in the Blackfoot Watershed, contained in A Basin-Wide Restoration Action Plan for the Blackfoot Watershed (BC 2005).

Completion of the Blackfoot Subbasin Monitoring and Evaluation Plan will: 1) provide a framework for measuring conservation target viability over time, 2) ensure that strategic actions

are abating the critical threats to conservation targets and 3) verify that the stresses and threats identified in the Subbasin Assessment are, in fact, the factors that are limiting the viability of each conservation target. Through this process, existing strategies will be modified and new strategies will be developed. The process will also generate a cooperative research agenda to address management uncertainties and fill information gaps related to subbasin objectives and strategies.

2.0 Introduction to the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan

2.1 What is a Subbasin Plan?

The Northwest Power and Conservation Council was created in 1980 by Congress to give the states of Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington a voice in how the region plans for its energy needs, while at the same time mitigating the effects of the hydropower system on fish and wildlife in the Columbia River Basin. The Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program organizes the Columbia River Basin into 11 ecological provinces. Within these provinces there are groups of adjacent subbasins with similar climate and geology; in all there are 62 subbasins. The subbasin planning process has resulted in separate subbasin plans for more than 50 tributaries and mainstem segments of the Columbia River (NPCC 2000).

Subbasin plans identify and prioritize restoration and protection strategies for habitat and fish and wildlife populations in the U.S. portion of the Columbia River Basin. Each year the Council reviews proposals for on-the-ground projects and research. Proposals meeting the highest standards are then recommended to the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for funding. Local subbasin plans are intended to guide the review, selection, and funding of projects that will protect, mitigate, and enhance fish and wildlife affected by the development and operation of the Columbia River hydropower system (NPCC 2000).

Subbasin plans are developed locally and in collaboration with public agencies, local planning groups, conservation groups, landowners, and other stakeholders (NPCC 2001). The subbasin planning process emphasizes broad participation from a wide range of constituents who contribute and review technical information and reach consensus on the elements of subbasin plans. In this way, subbasin plans adopted by the Council reflect a wide range of support from interested parties (NPCC 2000, 2001). The basic elements of a subbasin plan are outlined below.

Table 2.1 Elements of a Subbasin Plan (NPCC 2001).

Section	Description
Introduction	An introduction to the subbasin plan.
Subbasin Assessment	A technical analysis, including a detailed description of subbasin characteristics and conditions, to determine the biological potential of the subbasin and the opportunities for conservation and restoration.
Inventory of Existing Activities	A summary of existing conservation and restoration projects and programs in the subbasin.
Management Plan	The overall vision for the subbasin, conservation objectives and strategies, and a monitoring and evaluation plan for 10-15 years.
Technical Appendix	Data, references, maps, and other supporting documentation.

2.2 Purpose of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan

The Blackfoot Subbasin has a strong history of locally-led conservation and restoration. Beginning in the mid-1970s, private landowners developed the Blackfoot River Recreation Corridor Agreement and established two Walk-In Hunting areas near the confluence of the Clearwater and Blackfoot Rivers. In that same timeframe, the first conservation easement in Montana was acquired in the Blackfoot Subbasin. Thanks to the vision of these landowners, an important foundation was established for public and private partners to work together on restoring and protecting habitat, fish and wildlife populations in the Blackfoot Subbasin.

Building on this legacy, the Blackfoot Challenge and Trout Unlimited began the process of developing a subbasin plan for the Blackfoot Subbasin in fall 2007. During development of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan, a broad base of stakeholders assessed the viability of natural resources and the rural way of life in the Blackfoot Subbasin and designed proactive strategies for abating critical threats to these resources. The purpose of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan is to describe these resources, document the viability and threat assessment processes, and outline the conservation objectives and strategic actions that will restore and protect natural and cultural resources in the subbasin. The plan is intended to support and strengthen conservation and restoration partnerships in the subbasin. The plan is an iterative document that will be adapted over time to incorporate new knowledge and changes in the biological, social and economic characteristics of the subbasin.

2.3 Overview of the Blackfoot Subbasin Planning Process

2.3.1 Subbasin Plan Partners

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan was developed collaboratively by a wide range of stakeholders including private landowners and representatives from public agencies and non-government organizations working in the subbasin. This community-based approach to natural resource and conservation planning ensures a local voice and vision for land management and restoration activities in the Blackfoot Subbasin. It also provides opportunities to work across public and private boundaries and to coordinate technical and funding resources. The following organizations coordinated the planning process:

The Blackfoot Challenge (<http://www.blackfootchallenge.org>): The Blackfoot Challenge is a landowner-based group that coordinates management of the Blackfoot River, its tributaries and adjacent lands. The mission of the Blackfoot Challenge is to coordinate efforts that will enhance and conserve the natural resources and rural way of life in the Blackfoot River Valley for present and future generations. Its membership is composed of private landowners, federal and state land managers, local government officials, non-government organizations, corporate landowners and representatives of economic interests. It is organized locally and known nationally as a model for conserving the natural resources, rural character, and scenic beauty of the Blackfoot Watershed. The Blackfoot Challenge provided partial funding for the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan.

Trout Unlimited (<http://www.tu.org>): Funding for the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan was also provided by Trout Unlimited, a national organization working to conserve, protect, and

restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. More than 150,000 volunteers organized into about 400 chapters from Maine to Montana to Alaska and a respected staff of lawyers, policy experts and scientists ensure that Trout Unlimited is at the forefront of fisheries restoration work at the local, state and national levels. The local chapter of Trout Unlimited, the Big Blackfoot Chapter (BBCTU), and the Blackfoot Challenge have a long history of partnering with private landowners, public agencies and nonprofit organizations to conserve, protect and restore tributaries of the Blackfoot River using a community-based approach to conservation.

The Nature Conservancy (<http://www.nature.org>): Staff from the Montana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy provided extensive technical assistance throughout the subbasin planning process. The Nature Conservancy's mission is to preserve the plants, animals and natural communities that represent the diversity of life on Earth by protecting the lands and waters they need to survive. The Nature Conservancy is a long-term member of and active participant in the Blackfoot Challenge.

Four technical work groups were formed to capture in the subbasin plan the local knowledge, professional expertise, and on-the-ground experience of people living and working in the Blackfoot Subbasin (see *List of Participants*, page 2). Technical work group members included local landowners and representatives from public agencies and non-government organizations. The Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes were invited but declined to participate in the subbasin planning process. Technical work groups held regular meetings between March 2008 and May 2009 to assess the viability of key conservation targets in the Blackfoot Subbasin, identify critical threats to targets and develop conservation objectives and strategic actions to abate critical threats.

2.3.2 Integration with Related Planning Efforts in the Blackfoot Subbasin

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan integrates two key documents that have been cornerstones for conservation and restoration planning and action in the Blackfoot Subbasin: the Blackfoot River Valley Conservation Area Draft Plan and A Basin-Wide Restoration Action Plan for the Blackfoot Watershed, both of which are described below. The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan also integrates existing information contained in a wide variety of other subbasin planning and management documents.

Blackfoot River Valley Conservation Area Draft Plan (TNC and BC 2007): In 2000, The Nature Conservancy published an assessment of the Blue Mountain-Middle Rockies Ecoregion that identified areas within the ecoregion important for the conservation of biodiversity. The Blackfoot Watershed was selected as a high priority site due to its biological diversity, habitat connectivity and feasibility of conservation action. A six-member planning team was convened to develop conservation strategies that would conserve and enhance the viability of significant ecological and social/economic components of the Blackfoot Watershed. The planning process resulted in a Blackfoot River Valley Conservation Area Draft Plan in January 2007. This Conservation Area Plan was developed with the intent of engaging a broader and more diverse set of stakeholders for future conservation action in the Blackfoot Watershed. Its methodology helped set the stage for designing the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan.

A Basin-Wide Restoration Action Plan for the Blackfoot Watershed (BC 2005a): This document defines strategies for prioritization, development, implementation, and monitoring of water quality, aquatic habitat, and fisheries restoration projects for impaired and dewatered streams in the Blackfoot Watershed. The Restoration Action Plan was developed collaboratively by restoration partners in the Blackfoot and serves to strengthen restoration partnerships and programs through pooling of resources, greater information sharing, and the creation of a restoration network. The Restoration Action Plan encompasses three established restoration programs currently operating in the Blackfoot Watershed: 1) native fish species management and recovery, led by Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (MFWP) and the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited (BBCTU), 2) the Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program, led by the Montana Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) and the Blackfoot Challenge, and 3) water conservation and instream flow management, led by BBCTU and the Blackfoot Challenge. The Restoration Action Plan serves as a restoration guide for partners by identifying opportunities for cooperative restoration and monitoring efforts, promoting implementation of a variety of restoration strategies and monitoring to assess effectiveness and creating a tracking system for completed restoration projects and associated monitoring. To access the complete plan, please visit www.blackfootchallenge.org. Since completion of the Restoration Action Plan, updated data for streams in the Clearwater drainage have been made available in the MFWP report, *The Big Blackfoot River Fisheries and Restoration Investigations for 2006 and 2007* (Pierce et al. 2008).

2.3.3 Blackfoot Subbasin Planning Framework: Conservation Action Planning

The Blackfoot Subbasin Plan was developed following The Nature Conservancy's Conservation Action Planning process. Conservation Action Planning provides a framework for designing, implementing and evaluating conservation projects at any scale, from small sites to large landscapes such as the Blackfoot Subbasin (Low 2003). Technical work groups used this adaptive framework in the Blackfoot Subbasin to 1) identify key natural and community resources, 2) assess viability of the resources, 3) identify factors that threaten the health and viability of the resources, 4) develop conservation and management strategies to abate critical threats and ensure long-term viability of the resources and 5) incorporate quantitative measures to track effectiveness of the conservation strategies over time.

Conservation Action Planning is an iterative, adaptive process that is driven by data and expert opinion on the distribution and status of biodiversity, current and future threats to biodiversity and socioeconomic and political conditions within a project area. This information is used to develop strategies and actions of sufficient scope and scale to abate threats, maintain or restore biodiversity and strengthen capacity to ensure long-term results. The data used in Conservation Action Planning also provide a baseline for measuring the effectiveness of conservation strategies and adapting strategies over time (Low 2003, TNC 2006).

A brief overview of the Conservation Action Planning process is provided in the table below. Each step is discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan. More detailed information on Conservation Action Planning is available on the The Nature Conservancy's website at <http://conserveonline.org/workspaces/cbdgateway> and in *The Five-S*

Framework for Site Conservation: A Practitioner’s Handbook for Site Conservation Planning and Measuring Conservation Success (TNC 2003).

Table 2.2 Overview of Conservation Action Planning.

Step	Description
Define Conservation Targets	Select the specific species and natural systems that represent the overall biodiversity of the project area.
Assess Viability of Conservation Targets	Identify the key ecological attributes that maintain target viability, select indicators to measure each key ecological attribute, and determine the current and desired future status of each indicator.
Identify Stresses	Identify and rank the various factors that negatively impact each conservation target.
Identify Critical Threats (Sources of Stresses)	Identify the social, economic, political, and cultural factors contributing to each stress.
Develop Strategies	Develop specific and measurable conservation objectives and strategic actions to abate critical threats and enhance or restore target viability.
Establish Measures	Define specific, quantitative measures of target viability to assess progress in abating threats and improving overall biodiversity health of the project area.
Implement Strategies	Put the plan into action and monitor the outcomes.
Analyze, Learn, Adapt, & Share	Evaluate strategic actions, update and refine knowledge of conservation targets, and review the results available from monitoring data.

2.3.4 Public Involvement

Public involvement was instrumental in the Blackfoot Subbasin planning process. Members of the general public were invited to participate in technical work groups and were updated and solicited for feedback at various times throughout the two-year planning process. Public meetings were hosted in September 2007 (Lubrecht), November 2007 (Ovando), January 2008 (Lubrecht) and March 2009 (Ovando and Lubrecht). An update on the plan was given monthly to the Blackfoot Challenge Board of Directors and interested parties in the subbasin. Four semi-annual newsletters also gave over 700 members of the Blackfoot Challenge an update on the process. Between May and July 2009, portions of the plan were posted on the Blackfoot Challenge website for public comment. This public process is a requirement of the Northwest Power Act’s program amendment standards (NPCC 2000). Providing opportunities for public comment and participation is also integral to the Blackfoot Challenge’s mission and overall approach to conservation, restoration and natural resource management in the Blackfoot Subbasin. Implementation of the Blackfoot Subbasin Plan will continue to involve direct participation by local landowners and residents through committees, work groups, one-on-one discussions and website updates.