



Forest Service News Release

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Forest Installing New Bridge and Culverts on Lost Horse Road

(Hamilton, MT, March 31, 2026) — The Bitterroot National Forest is planning to install a new bridge and replace numerous culverts this summer along Lost Horse Road on the Darby-Sula Ranger District. The work is scheduled to begin August 1 and will take approximately one month to complete.

Two failing culverts at Ten-mile Creek will be replaced by the new bridge, and five undersized culverts at Twelve-mile Creek will be replaced with new, larger culverts.

The work is located in areas and at crossings that have recently experienced washouts during high water events, damaging the road, and spilling large amounts of sediment into Lost Horse Creek.

In order for the project to be completed in a safe and timely manner, Lost Horse Road (Forest Road #429) is scheduled to be closed at the lower gate, mile post 5, during the month of August. Heavy equipment from the project will be parked along the road, making it impassable. The Lost Horse cabin rental and Schumaker Campground at Twin Lakes will also be unavailable during this time. Local trails will remain open, but parking areas (past the lower gate) will not be accessible by vehicles.

“We realize the inconvenience of the road closure at this time of year,” said Steve Brown, Darby-Sula district ranger. “We are working closely with contractors and partners to get this work done in as timely a manner as possible and will be looking to re-open the road as soon as the work is completed.”

In addition to improving public access and safety, the project will also restore critical aquatic habitats and help protect native fish populations including bull trout and Westslope cutthroat trout.

Lost Horse Creek is one of the most important westside tributaries for bull trout in the Bitterroot River. Bull trout are currently listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Project partners include the Clark Fork Coalition, Trout Unlimited, local irrigation districts, Ravalli County, along with numerous federal and state agencies including Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (FWP), and the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

For more information, contact the Darby-Sula Ranger District at 406-821-3913 or visit www.fs.usda.gov/bitterroot.

Photo Caption: Washout and damage to Lost Horse Road at Ten-mile Creek during high spring flows in 2024.

Credit: Bitterroot National Forest

About the Forest Service: The Forest Service has for more than 100 years brought people and communities together to answer the call of conservation. Grounded in world-class science and technology, and rooted in communities, the Forest Service connects people to nature and to each other. The Forest Service cares for shared natural resources in ways that promote lasting economic, ecological, and social vitality. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest wildland fire and forestry research organizations in the world. The Forest Service also has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 900 million forested acres within the U.S., of which over 130 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.

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