

# Key to Aquatic Ecological Systems

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## Northwestern Great Plains Ecoregion

- 2) Stream 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> order or <30 miles long ..... 3
- 2) Stream 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> order or >30 and <100 miles long ..... **NWGP Prairie Stream**
- 2) River >5<sup>th</sup> order or >100 miles long ..... **NWGP Medium Prairie River**
- 2) River >5<sup>th</sup> order and >200 miles long and a direct tributary to the Yellowstone or Missouri River (Little Missouri, Tongue, Bighorn and Powder Rivers) ..... **NWGP Large Prairie River**
- 2) Yellowstone River downstream from Billings or Missouri River downstream from Great Falls ..... **NWGP Large Valley River**
  
- 3) Perennial 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> order stream above 1000 meters elevation in the Wolf Mountains, Powder River Basin or Missouri Breaks ..... **NWGP Perennial Spring**
- 3) Small (<100 m<sup>2</sup> in area), low gradient intermittent pools separated by long breaks of dry stream bed, typically lacks downstream connectivity to a large mainstem river ..... **NWGP Intermittent Stream**

## Northern Glaciated Plains Ecoregion

- 4) Stream 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> order or <30 miles long ..... **NGP Intermittent Stream**
- 4) Stream 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> order or >30 and <100 miles long ..... **NGP Prairie Stream**
- 4) River >5<sup>th</sup> order or >100 miles long ..... **NGP Medium Prairie River**
- 4) River >5<sup>th</sup> order and >200 miles long and a direct tributary to the Missouri River (Milk or Marias Rivers) ..... **NGP Large Prairie River**
- 4) The Missouri River downstream from Great Falls ..... **NGP Large Valley River**

## Foothills & Valleys Ecoregion

- 5) 1<sup>st</sup> order, origin from Valley Floor groundwater output ..... **Spring Creek**
- 5) 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> order or <30 miles long ..... **Headwaters Foothills River**
- 5) 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> order or >30 and <60 miles long ..... 6
- 5) 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> order, >60 miles long and a direct tributary to the Yellowstone or Missouri River ..... **Intermountain Transitional River**
- 5) The Yellowstone River from Gardiner downstream to Billings or the Missouri River downstream from Three Forks to Great Falls ..... **Mainstem Intermountain Transitional River**
  
- 6) Tributaries to transitional streams that become too warm for coldwater fisheries ..... **Small Transitional Foothills River**
- 6) Tributaries to intermountain transitional rivers that maintain coldwater fisheries ..... **Small Foothills River**

## Middle Rockies and Isolated Mountain Ranges Ecoregion

- 7) 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup> order or <15 miles long ..... 8
- 7) 3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> order or >15 and <60 miles long ..... **Mountain Stream**
- 7) 5<sup>th</sup> order or >60 miles long and a direct tributary of the *Intermountain Transitional River* ..... **Small Transitional Foothills River**
  
- 8) 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> order, elevation >2400 meters, hydrology driven by alpine snowmelt ..... **Alpine Stream**
- 8) 1<sup>st</sup> order, elevation from 1500 to 2400 meters, hydrology driven by ground water discharge ..... **Mountain Spring Stream**