

County	Custer	Upstream River Mile	158.7
Classification	CM: Confined meandering	Downstream River Mile	149.2
General Location	To Powder River confluence	Length	9.50 mi (15.29 km)

Narrative Summary

Reach C21 is 9.5 miles long and extends from River Mile (RM) 158.7 downstream to the mouth of the Powder River at RM 149.2. It is a Confined Meandering (CM) reach type, as the river flows down a sinuous course that is highly confined by Fort Union Formation sandstones and younger erosion-resistant terraces.

Reach C21 has just over 4,000 feet of rock riprap and 71 feet of mapped flow deflectors, which collectively armor 4.1 percent of the total stream bank. About one half of the armor is protecting road embankments, and the other half is protecting the railroad.

Bear Rapids forms two distinct shoals as bedrock shelves in the river between RM 153 and RM 154 near the mouth of Camp Creek.

Between 1950 and 2001 there was about 53 net acres of riparian encroachment into the channel, and the bankfull channel area decreased by ~58 acres, indicating a diminishing river size over the last half-century. This trend is common below the mouth of the Bighorn River, where flow alterations have reduced peak flows and cause the active river channel to shrink. Consumptive water uses, primarily associated with irrigation, have contributed to the reduced flows.

Land use is dominated by agriculture with 164 acres of the ~7,000 acre mapping footprint occupied by transportation-related land uses. There is one ~0.6 acre series of corrals near the mouth of Mack Creek at RM 157.2R that are within 200 feet of the river. There are also several acres of corrals within 300 feet of the river on the left bank at RM 154.9L. At RM 153.3R there is another much larger series of corrals that are within 500 feet of Camp Creek.

There are 49 acres of Russian olive in the reach, which appears to dominate riparian areas.

A hydrologic evaluation of flow depletions indicates that flow alterations over the last century have been major in this reach. The 100-year flood has dropped by 19 percent. The 2-year flood, which strongly influences overall channel form, has dropped by 24 percent. Low flows have also been impacted; severe low flows described as 7Q10 (the lowest average 7-day flow anticipated every ten years) for summer months has dropped from an estimated 5,080 cfs to 3,140 cfs with human development, a reduction of 38 percent. More typical summer low flows, described as the summer 95% flow duration, have dropped from 6,730 cfs under unregulated conditions to 3,510 cfs under regulated conditions, a reduction of 48 percent.

CEA-Related observations in Reach C21 include:

- Natural channel stability provided by bedrock
- Minimal bank armoring

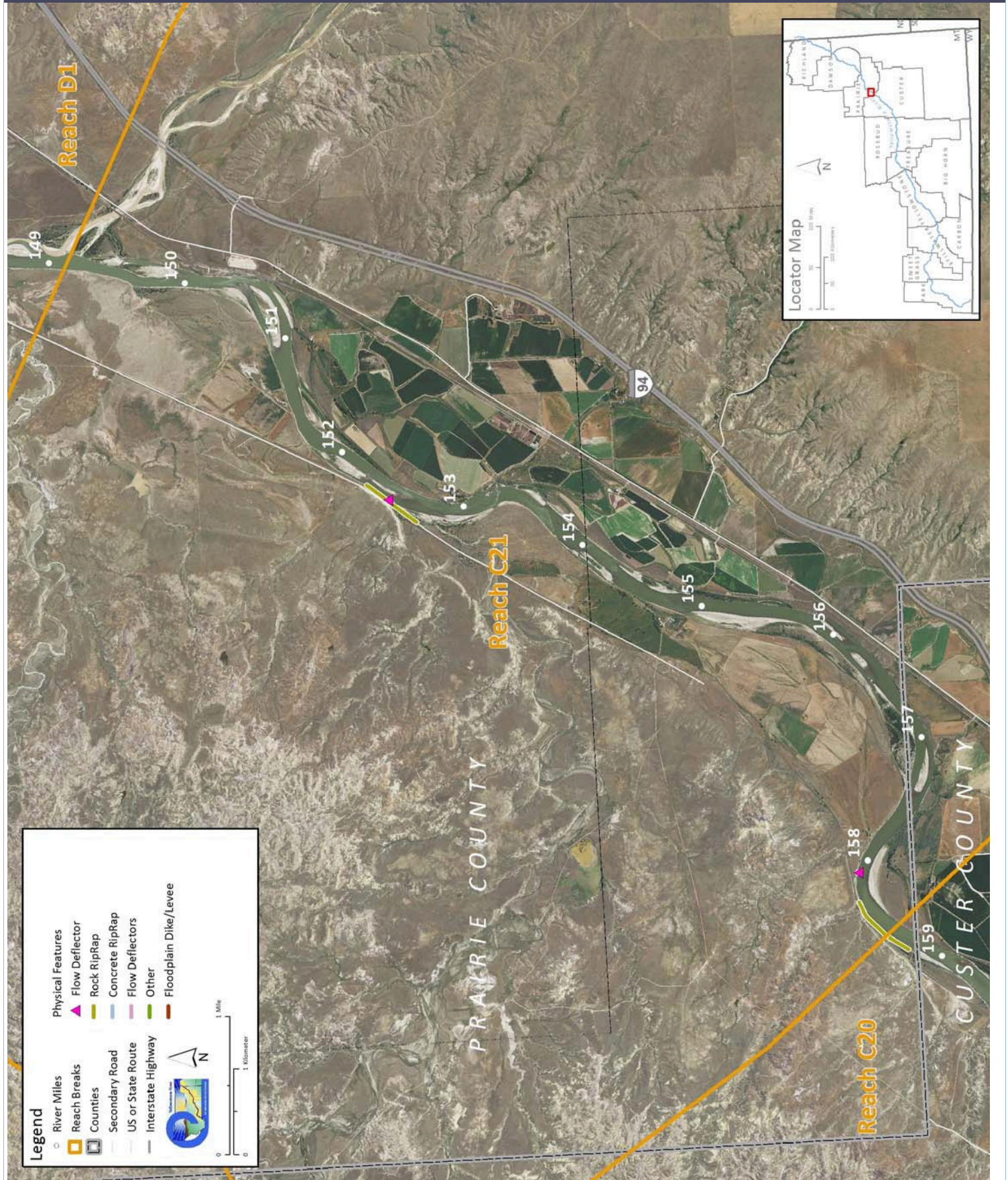
Recommended Practices (may include Yellowstone River Recommended Practices--YRRPs) for Reach C21 include:

- Russian olive removal
- Nutrient management at corrals at RM 157.2R and RM 153.2R, and 154.9L

The following table summarizes some key CEA results that have been used to describe overall condition and types of human influences affecting the river. The values are specific to this single reach. Blanks indicate that a particular value was not available for this area. This information is consolidated from a large dataset that is presented in more detail in the full reach narrative report.

Discharge	Undev.	Developed	% Change	"Undeveloped" flows represent conditions prior to significant human development, whereas "developed" flows reflect the current condition of both consumptive and non-consumptive water use.		
2 Year (cfs)	63,900	48,600	-23.9%			
100 Year (cfs)	119,000	96,800	-18.7%			
Bankfull Channel Area (Ac)	1950	1976	1995	2001	1950-2001	Bankfull channel area is the total footprint of the river inundated at approx. the 2-year flood.
	973.2	929.6	936.0	914.8	-58.4	
Physical Features	2011 Length (ft)	% of Bankline	2001-2011 Change	There are additional types of bank armor such as car bodies and steel retaining walls, but they are relatively minor.		
Rock RipRap	4,024	4.0%	-41			
Concrete Riprap	0	0.0%	0			
Flow Deflectors	71	0.1%	71			
Total	4,096	4.1%	30			
Length of Side Channels Blocked (ft)	Pre-1950s	Post-1950s	Numerous side channels have been blocked by small dikes.			
	0	0				
Floodplain Turnover	1950 - 1976	1976 - 2001	1950-2001 In-channel riparian encroachment (negative number indicates retreat)		The rate of floodplain turnover reflects how many acres of land are eroded by the river. Turnover is associated with the creation of riparian habitat.	
Total Acres	64.9	62.0	53.32 acres			
Acres/Year	2.5	2.5				
Acres/Year/Valley Mile	0.3	0.3				
Open Bar Area	Point Bars	Bank Attached	Mid-Channel	Total	The type and extent of open sand and gravel bars reflect in-stream habitat conditions that can be important to fish, amphibians, and ground-nesting birds such as least terns.	
Change in Area '50 - '01 (Ac)	29.2	76.2	-1.1	104.4		
Floodplain Isolation	Acres	% of FP	Floodplain isolation refers to area that historically was flooded, but has become isolated do to flow alterations or physical features such as levees.			
5 Year	95.2	35%				
100 Year	12.7	3%				
Restricted Migration Area	Acres	% of CMZ	Channel Migration Zone restrictions refer to the area and percent of the CMZ that has been isolated by features such as bank armor, dikes, levees, and transportation embankments.			
	2.4	0%				
Land Use	1950	2011	1950	2011	Changes in land use reflect the development of the river corridor through time. The irrigated agricultural are is a sub-set of the mapped agricultural land.	
Agricultural Land (Ac)	6,629.3	6,527.2	Flood (Ac)	1,799.1	1,915.9	
Ag. Infrastructure (Ac)	35.4	99.7	Sprinkler (Ac)	0.0	0.0	
Exurban (Ac)	0.0	11.1	Pivot (Ac)	0.0	0.0	
Urban (Ac)	0.0	0.0				
Transportation (Ac)	100.5	163.8				
1950s Riparian Vegetation Converted to a Developed Land Use (ac)	To Irrigated	To Other Use	Total Rip. Converted	% of 1950s Rip.	Changes in the extents of riparian vegetation are influenced by land use changes within the corridor.	
	0.0	1.2	1.2	1.0%		
National Wetlands Inventory	Acres	Acres per Valley Mi	Total Wetland Acres	Wetlands units summarized from National Wetlands Inventory Mapping include Riverine (typically open water sloughs), Emergent (marshes and wet meadows) and Shrub-Scrub (open bar areas with colonizing woody vegetation).		
Riverine	7.7	0.9	79.6			
Emergent	61.4	7.2				
Scrub/Shrub	10.5	1.2				
Russian Olive (2001) (Appx. 100-yr Floodplain)	Acres	%	Russian olive is considered an invasive species and its presence in the corridor is fairly recent. Its spread can be used as a general indicator of invasive plants within the corridor.			
	48.6	0.8%				
Riparian Forest at low risk of Cowbird Parasitism (Ac/Valley Mile)	1950	1976	2001	Change 1950-2011	Cowbirds are associated with agricultural and residential development, displacing native bird species by parasitizing their nests.	
	8.9	3.3	7.5	-1.4		

PHYSICAL FEATURES MAP (2011)



CHANNEL MIGRATION ZONE MAP

