

Rewinding a River¹

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Abstract: Ninemile Creek is located in the Middle Clark Fork River watershed and has a long history of surface mining. Placer mining peaked in the 1870s and dragline dredging became prominent in the early 1940s. Large scale dredge operations worked much of the valley bottom in Upper Ninemile Creek and have resulted in multiple thread stream channels, abandoned dredge ponds, and large piles of overburden 15-30 feet high that dominate the stream corridor. Rewinding a River is a short story of a large multi-phased placer mine reclamation project in the Ninemile

Valley of Montana. The story features a Trout Unlimited engineer as he describes the need for reclamation on abandoned placer mine sites along Ninemile Creek. The discussion then turns to the reclamation design process and subsequent reclamation work on Ninemile Creek. As the story ends, a completed phase of the reclamation project and associated benefits are featured.

Additional Key Words: Restoration, Reclamation, Abandoned Mines, Placer Mining, Habitat.

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 3. Work shown in the video was conducted near 47.213337 N, 114.636088 W.