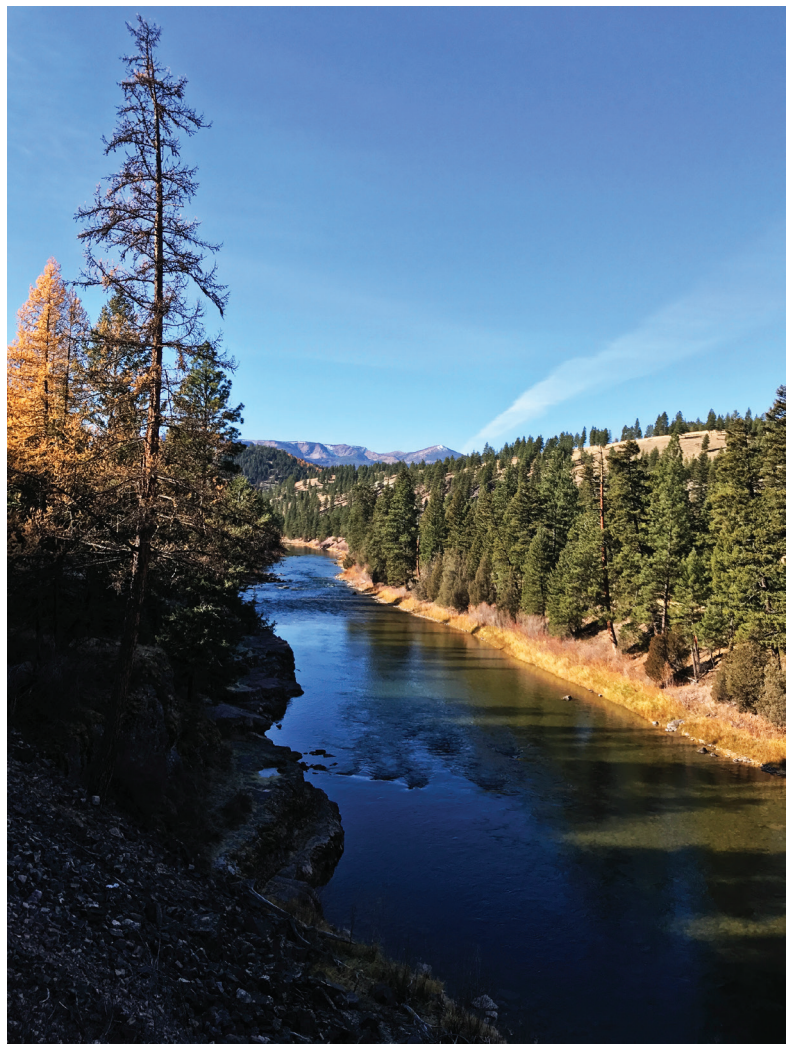


BIG BLACKFOOT RIVER
MONTANA



CLARK FORK TAMARACKS
MONTANA



CLARK FORK RIVER
MONTANA



“MY FATHER WAS VERY SURE ABOUT CERTAIN MATTERS PERTAINING TO THE UNIVERSE. TO HIM ALL GOOD THINGS-TROUT AS WELL AS ETERNAL SALVATION-
COME BY GRACE AND GRACE COMES BY ART AND ART DOES NOT COME EASY.”
-NORMAN MACLEAN

During the last few days of October, I made a solo trip over to the Beaverhead Mountains with the intentions of catching a fish. I arrived at the junction of the Big Hole River and the Continental Divide near Wise River, MT greeted by a low overcast sky, 34° outside air temperature and a sustained wind of 25 mph... not what you would call ideal fishing conditions. I was already cold by the time I finished suiting-up into my waders and rigging-up my fly rod. I looked up and down the river and didn't see another soul. I made a dozen or so casts with no results. I switched to a different fly. A dozen casts on that pattern produced the same outcome. My fingers started to get numb. I climbed back into the car and turned the heat on full blast while I drove to the next hole down the river. A few dozen more casts and a couple of different flies yielded yet again, zilch... not even a bump. Fishing is like that sometimes. I took a few photos just before darkness fell. It was then I became aware of how isolated I was in a setting that was simply stunning. For the past three hours, I hadn't noticed any other vehicles on the road that ran next to the river. I decided to head back to Missoula for a room and the hopes that a good night's rest would bring a nice rainbow the next day.