



PRCC Habitat Subcommittee

Conference Call

Thursday, 11 July 2024
 11:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Meeting Minutes

PRCC Habitat Subcommittee Members

Kate Terrell, Shelby Fowler (alt), USFWS	Chris Fisher, CTCR
Dave Duvall, Deanne Pavlik-Kunkel (alt), GPUD	Brandon Rogers, Hans Smith (alt), YN
Justin Yeager, NMFS	Carl Merkle, CTUIR
Jeremy Cram, Amanda Barg (alt), WDFW	Erin Harris, GPUD
Nathan and Clayton Buck, Wanapum	Tracy Hillman, BioAnalysts, Chair

Meeting Attendees¹

Kate Terrell, USFWS	Dave Duvall, GPUD
Amanda Barg, WDFW	Justin Yeager, NMFS
Chris Fisher, CTCR	Brandon Rogers, YN
Shelby Fowler, USFWS (alternate)	Mickey Fleming, CDLT
Tracy Hillman, BioAnalysts	

Action Items:

- None.

Decision Items²:

- PRCC Habitat Subcommittee members approved \$102,234 for the Skyline Screen and Fish Return Project. Funding for this project will come from Fund 602.

¹ Mickey Fleming joined the meeting for the discussion on Chelan-Douglas Land Trust protection projects.

² All decision items listed here were approved by PRCC HabSC members.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Tracy Hillman welcomed everyone to the meeting and participants introduced themselves.

Tracy noted that the PRCC Habitat Subcommittee (PRCC HabSC) and HCP Tributary Committees will meet jointly for the Methow River Reach 2 Projects discussion. Following that discussion, the PRCC HabSC will take a short lunch break and reconvene to discuss PRCC HabSC items.

II. Methow River Reach 2 Projects Discussion (with the HCPs Tributary Committees)

Representatives from the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) joined the meeting to discuss the Methow River Reach 2 Projects. Brian Fisher gave a presentation titled “M2 Overview and Progress Update” (see Attachment 1). Brian began by providing a general background on the importance of enhancing habitat within the M2 reach. He shared the reach-level goals for restoration and said that restoration work on the reach is guided by the assessment completed in 2007. The assessment indicated that the reach has high intrinsic potential, a large gap between current habitat and potential habitat conditions, and target species use the reach. He then summarized the geomorphology of the reach, identified when different life stages of fish use the reach, and noted the length of the reach is 8-miles long.

Brian identified all the projects that have been implemented and are planned within the reach. In general, these projects will improve floodplain connectivity, increase off-channel and side channel habitat, restore riparian habitat, and increase fish cover. To date, MSRF has added 46 wood structures, added 0.5 miles of floodplain channels, restored 12 acres of riparian vegetation, reconnected 38 acres of floodplain habitat, and added 1 mile of side channel habitat within the reach. Projects planned by MSRF will add 127 wood structures, add 2.5 miles of floodplain channels, restore 29 acres of riparian habitat, reconnect 62 acres of floodplain habitat, and add 1.2 miles of side channel habitat within the reach.

Brian then described some of the projects MSRF has implemented. Those included, among others, Barkley Bear, White Fish Island, and WDFW Floodplain. He also discussed some of their side channel complexity and connectivity projects. These include both perennial and season side channels. He then briefly described some of the planned projects, including Eagle Rocks and Sugar. Brian showed numbers of fish counted within some restoration sites before and after enhancement. Most sites showed large increases in fish numbers and fish richness. White Fish Island showed the largest increase in fish following enhancement.

Lastly, Brian described the need to adaptively manage the projects. He discussed the need to adaptively manage flows between split channels (e.g., Barkley Bear side channel), maintaining engineered log jams and riparian plantings (e.g., WDFW Floodplain and Sugar), and addressing the MVID/Barkley Fish Return. They continue to use monitoring to inform adaptive management.

Chris Johnson (MSRF) added that the original goal was to complete restoration work in the reach in a short period of time (Chris called it the Big Bang approach). Unfortunately, for several reasons, the Big Bang approach did not occur. Projects were implemented over an extended period of time, which made before-after monitoring more difficult.

Kate Terrell asked what actions are left to be implemented in the reach. Brian responded that a floodplain reconnection project near the Two Channels Project is left to be implemented. Currently, landowner issues prevent this project from moving forward. This is a Yakama Nation project. Brandon Rogers said they are still trying to work with the landowner. He noted that it could be quite some time before they can implement the floodplain reconnection project. Chris Fisher asked whether they have observed a fish response at the population scale. John Crandall (Confluence Aquatics) indicated that

they have project and/or reach-scale data, which indicate fish responses at those scales. He has not tried to assess the effects of restoration actions on fish at the population scale. Tracy Hillman noted that in 2010, 236 summer Chinook Salmon spawned in the M2 reach, making up 26% of all summer Chinook Salmon spawners in the Methow River. In 2015, the number of summer Chinook Salmon spawners increased to 307, making up 25% of all spawners in the Methow River. In 2023, 421 summer Chinook Salmon spawned in the reach and made up 36% of all the spawners in the Methow River. He added that although the number of spawners has increased in the reach, it is unknown whether the increase in spawners is a result of the restoration actions or coincidence.

The Tributary Committees thanked MSRF for the presentation and discussion.

III. Lunch Break

IV. Agenda Review

The PRCC HabSC reviewed and approved the July agenda.

V. May Meeting Notes

PRCC HabSC members reviewed and approved the 13 June 2024 meeting notes with edits.

VI. Review Action Items

There were no action items to review from the June meeting.

VII. Project Updates

Members of the PRCC HabSC provided the following updates on funded projects:

- **Alternate Primary Appraiser** – Dave Duvall reported that the appraiser is working on the two Bockoven properties. The appraisals should be done by the end of July or early August.
- **ORRI VDS Backwatering Project** – Chris Fisher indicated that the Okanagan Nation Alliance is planning to construct three of the five remaining riffles this summer. Chris said he recommended to the sponsor that they try to complete all five riffles this year if sufficient funding is available.
- **Sage Sugar Acquisition** – Kate Terrell indicated that this project is complete and can be closed.
- **Lower Trout Creek Re-naturalization: Stage 1 Construction** – Chris Fisher said this project is complete and can be closed. Following the meeting, Dave Duvall shared the final report with the PRCC HabSC.
- **Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhancement Project, Phase II Project** – Kate Terrell reported that the sponsor (TU) continues working on the Record of Examination. In addition, the sponsor received six bids and selected Smith Excavation to construct the project. The contractor's bid was below the engineer's cost estimate. They will complete the contracting process in early July.
- **Cascade Orchards Icicle Creek (COIC) Flow Restoration Project** – Justin Yeager said construction is underway and the screens will be installed this fall.
- **Okanagan Lake Dam East Salmon Passage Project** – Chris Fisher indicated that the Okanagan Nation Alliance submitted a funding request to the HCP Tributary Committees. At this time, the sponsor is not seeking funding from the PRCC HabSC.

- **Peshastin Creek RM 2.5 Project** – Kate Terrell indicated that Cascade Fisheries completed the 60% design package. They also held multiple meetings with their consultant (Natural Systems Design) and the landowners to discuss Cascade Fisheries review comments. The final permit-ready design package can be found here: [☐ Peshastin2pt5 Permit-Ready Design Deliverables](#) In June, their archaeologist was onsite and completed a cultural resource survey. They were also successful in securing \$750,000 from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for construction. Their focus now is on permitting.
- **Bockoven Entiat Acquisition Project** – Dave Duvall said the appraiser is currently evaluating this property. The appraisal should be completed late this month or early next month.
- **Bockoven Stormy Acquisition Project** – Dave Duvall said the appraiser is currently evaluating this property. The appraisal should be completed late this month or early next month.
- **Canyon Creek Culvert Design and Construction Project** – Kate Terrell indicated that Cascade Fisheries is currently working on the 30% designs (see Section VIII for possible contracting issues with this project).
- **Eagle Rocks Habitat Enhancement Project** – Kate Terrell said the sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation) is waiting on a contract with Grant PUD. They hope to begin construction next month (August).
- **Kedrowski Acquisition Project** – Kate Terrell indicated that the sponsor (Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation) is waiting on a contract with Grant PUD.
- **Shuttleworth Creek Diversion Removal Project** – Chris Fisher indicated that the Okanagan Nation Alliance plans to remove the structure beginning this month. Dave Duvall noted that Grant PUD can begin the contracting process now that the draft June meeting notes have been approved. He said there may be some issues within insurance coverage (see Section VIII).
- **Bartsch Acquisition – Lower Twisp River – Reach 2A Project** – Kate Terrell said that contracting with Grant PUD will begin this month.

VIII. Restoration/Protection Projects

Skyline Screen and Fish Return Upgrades Project

Kate Terrell introduced the specification sheet titled, *Skyline Screen and Fish Return Project*. The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation (MSRF) is the sponsor of this project. The purpose of the project is to develop designs for and installation of a new fish screen and fish return at the Skyline Irrigation Diversion located at RM 8.3 on the Chewuch River in the Methow River basin. This project will address deficiencies in the existing facilities and reduce potential impacts to Covered Species. The upgraded designs will meet all current requirements for fish protection and flow passage and will increase habitat access and quality in the return channel. The total cost of the project is \$857,330. The sponsor requested \$102,234 from the PRCC HabSC.

Kate noted that after the project went out for bid, the lowest bid received was ~\$100,000 over the estimated amount to implement the project. She noted that Bonneville Power Administration is funding the screen, and that construction is planned for this year. Therefore, this is a time-sensitive request. Members had several questions, including the following: (1) will the saved water be trusted? (2) how is the action connected to the biological opinion? (3) is Skyline contributing to the project? (4) is the sponsor insured for this project? and (5) is anyone monitoring water withdrawal? Kate shared these questions with the sponsor.

Following the meeting, the sponsor responded to the questions and provided an updated specification sheet that addressed each question. In addition, the sponsor provided design plans and a letter from WDFW describing the benefits of the proposed project. What follows is the sponsor's responses to the questions:

Q. Will saved water be trusted?

A. Yes, all saved water is going to be donated to trust at project completion.

Q. How is the action connected to the BiOp?

A. The project is fully consistent with the BiOp requirements.

Q. Are there any non-fish dollars going toward the action?

A. Skyline's contribution to the project is largely time and shareholder contributions as they do not have any reserves to draw from. Primary sources of funding are WDFW and BPA for design and majority of construction, and Bureau of Reclamation for coordination. The specification sheet reports the following: "The Skyline Ditch Association will donate 10 CFS in saved conveyance flows, based on the capacity reduction between the existing and planned fish screens."

Q. Is MSRF insured for this project?

A. Yes.

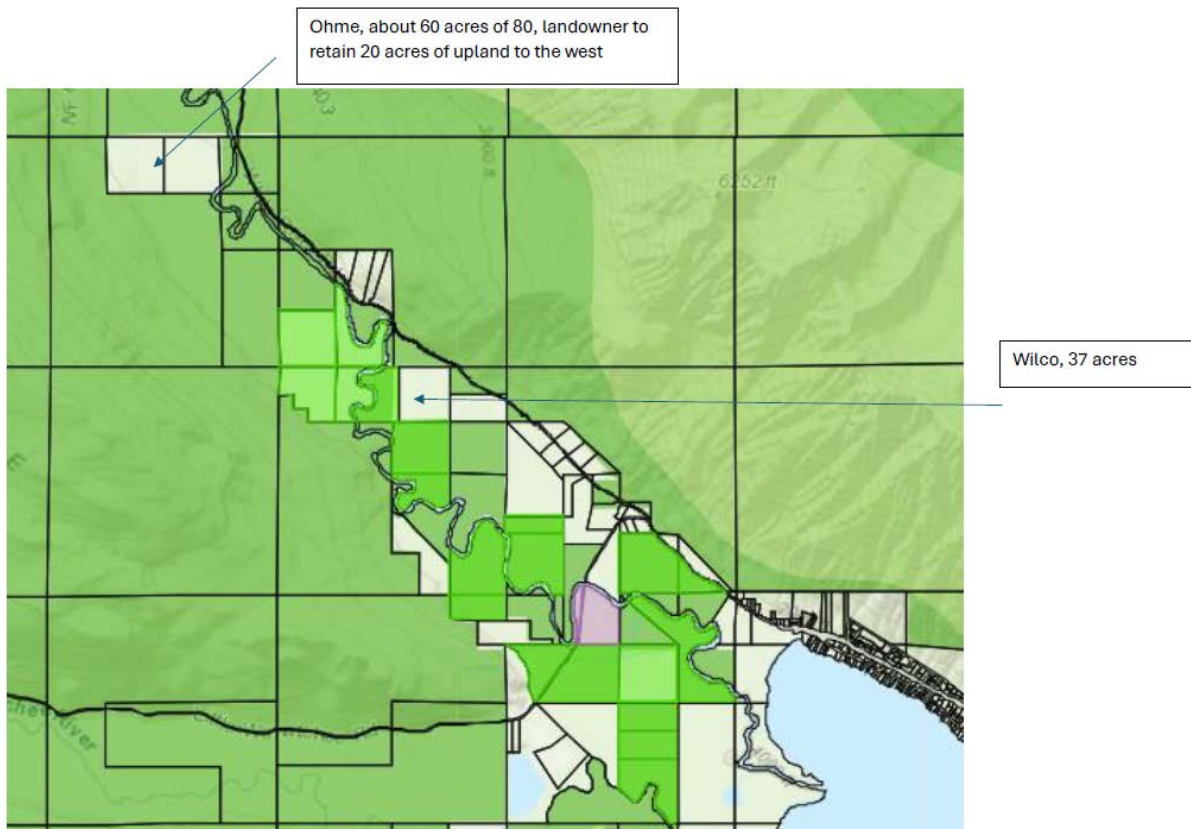
As for the question, "Is anyone monitoring water withdrawal?", Justin Yeager indicated that the Forest Service is responsible for monitoring the diversion. In addition, Skyline is required to monitor the diversion daily and provide reports.

After receiving the revised specification sheet and supporting information, on Monday, 15 July, the PRCC HabSC approved funding (\$102,234) for the Skyline Screen and Fish Return Upgrades Project provided the 10 cfs is placed in the Trust Water Rights Program.

Decision: PRCC Habitat Subcommittee members approved \$102,234 for the Skyline Screen and Fish Return Project. Funding for this project will come from Fund 602.

Protection Projects Discussion with Chelan-Douglas Land Trust (CDLT)

Mickey Fleming (CDLT) joined the meeting to discuss potential protection projects with the PRCC HabSC. Mickey talked about two potential protection projects on the White River and one on Nason Creek. On the White River, she identified the Ohme property, which is 80 acres and is connected to Forest Service and WDFW properties. This parcel is located at RM 6.5 and includes excellent floodplain/riparian habitat. The landowner will sell 60 of the 80 acres and retain the remainder, which is upland habitat. The Wilco property on the White River is located at RM 5.0 and is 37 acres. This parcel was recently sold to an investor. CDLT will approach the investor to see if they are willing to sell the property, which is floodplain habitat even though it is not touching the White River. This property is connected to CDLT and Forest Service properties. The following figure shows the locations of these two properties.



Mickey then described the property on Nason Creek. The McEndoe property is located at RM 10.5 in the Lower White Pine Reach. The landowner is interested in selling 5 acres, which is immediately adjacent to the stream, and may be interested in selling an additional 3 acres (upstream home property). Unfortunately, powerlines cross the property and therefore riparian vegetation will remain disturbed. In addition, the property is next to the highway. This property is shown in the following figure.



Brandon Rogers noted that not much benefit will come from the purchase of the McEndoe property. The greatest benefit would come from also acquiring the property across the stream. Regarding the Ohme property on the White River, Kate Terrell recommended making the access road to the upland property as short as possible.

Members thanked Mickey for the discussion and recommended that CDLT submit a specification sheet for funding to acquire the Ohme property. At this time, they do not support the acquisition of the McEndoe property on Nason Creek. They encouraged CDLT to reach out to the investor of the Wilco property.

Shuttleworth Creek Diversion Removal Project

Dave Duvall indicated that because the draft June meeting notes have been approved, Grant PUD will begin the contracting process on the Shuttleworth Creek Diversion Removal Project. This means there is a possibility that Grant PUD's Risk Department will require additional insurance (e.g., pollution insurance) for this project. Dave added that because of the nature of this project, there is a short work window for implementation, and the Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) is scheduling work to begin at the end of July. Dave said he asked ONA to determine what coverage their contractor has and to get a quote for additional insurance coverage if additional coverage is necessary. Alternatively, PRCC HabSC funds could be used to cover non-construction line items. Thus, no funds from the PRCC HabSC would be used for construction, which should remove the need for additional insurance. Dave hopes that the contractor's existing coverage will be sufficient, but if it is not, the PRCC HabSC will need to approve additional funding for the project (to cover that additional insurance). This will need to occur as quickly as possible given the construction schedule.

Canyon Creek Culvert Design and Construction Project

Dave Duvall said that the Grant PUD Risk Department indicated that additional insurance would be needed to implement the Canyon Creek Culvert Design and Construction Project. To avoid the increase in coverage, Dave has been working with the sponsor (Cascade Fisheries) to readjust the line-item budget. By showing that all funds from the PRCC HabSC will be used for design and administration (not construction), Grant PUD Risk may remove the additional insurance requirement. The PRCC HabSC agreed that this was a good approach.

IX. Administration and Information Updates

None.

X. Adjourn

Tracy Hillman adjourned the meeting at 2:00 pm.

XI. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the PRCC HabSC will be on 8 August 2024.

Attachment 1

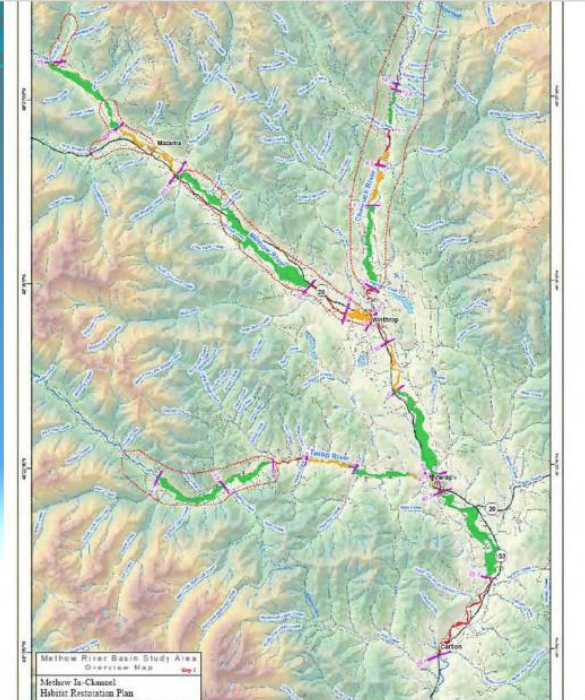
Presentation by the Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation on Methow River Reach 2 Projects



Tributary Assessment (2007)

Identified M2 as high potential restoration target

- High Intrinsic Potential
- Existing use by target species
- Greater difference between current and historic



M2 Reach

Methow - Thompson Assessment Unit

8 River Miles

Valley Floor

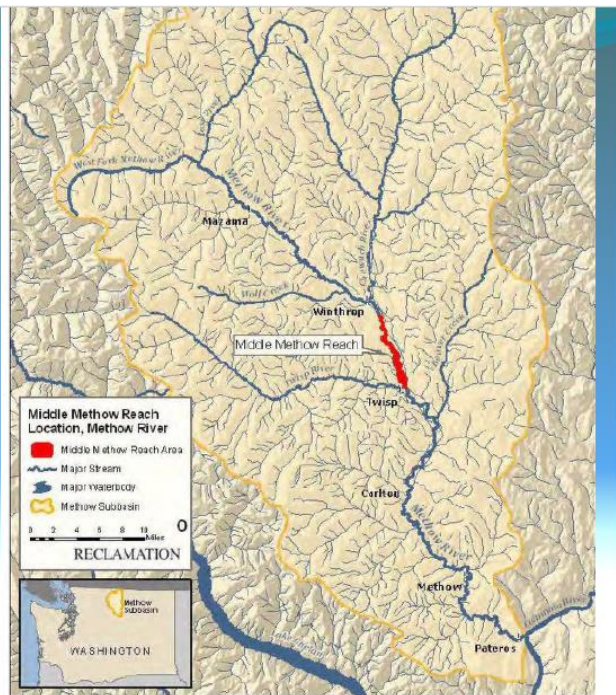
Steelhead (Spawning, rearing, migration, year around)

Spring Chinook (Rearing, year around)

Bull Trout (Feeding, Migration, Overwinter, Year around)

Summer Chinook (Spawning, Oct-May)

Coho (Spawning, Rearing, Migration, Year around)



Reach Level Goals

“Maximize habitat value in the Methow River between Twisp and Winthrop to support the short- and long-term recovery of ESA listed fish.

Develop projects restoring natural processes to the greatest degree feasible and adding sustainable features that immediately improve habitat.

Project options will consider the overall reach goals.”

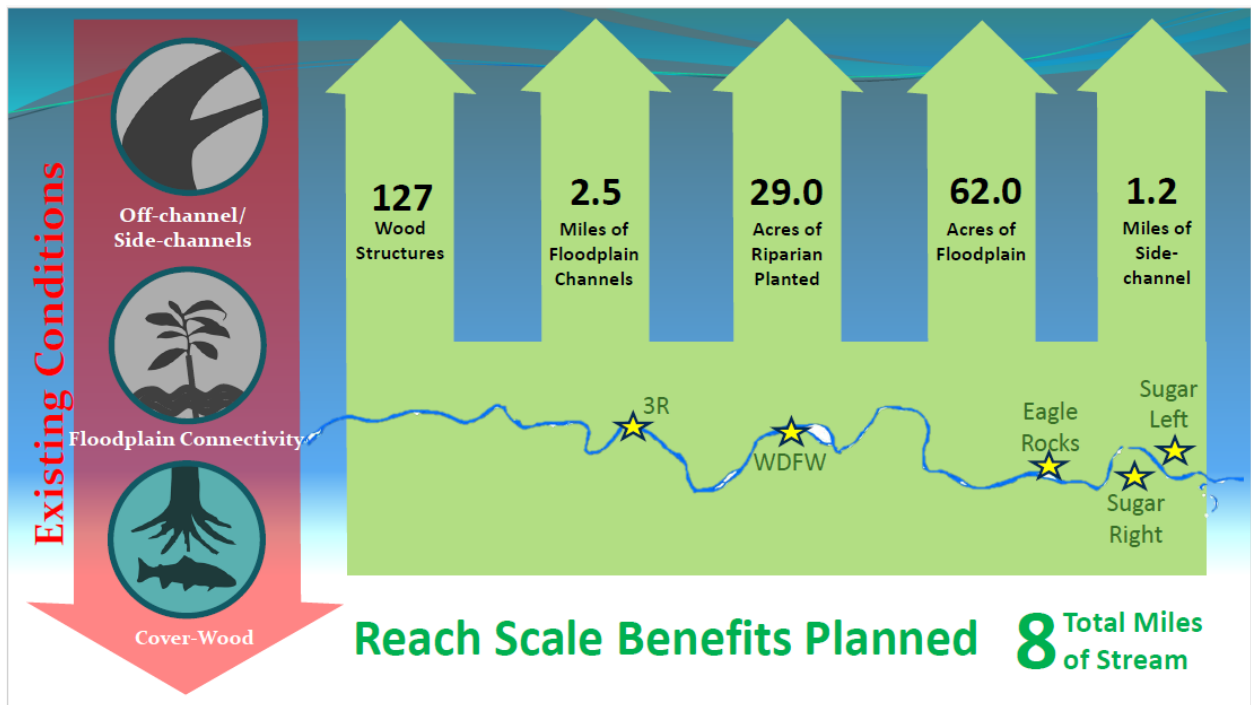
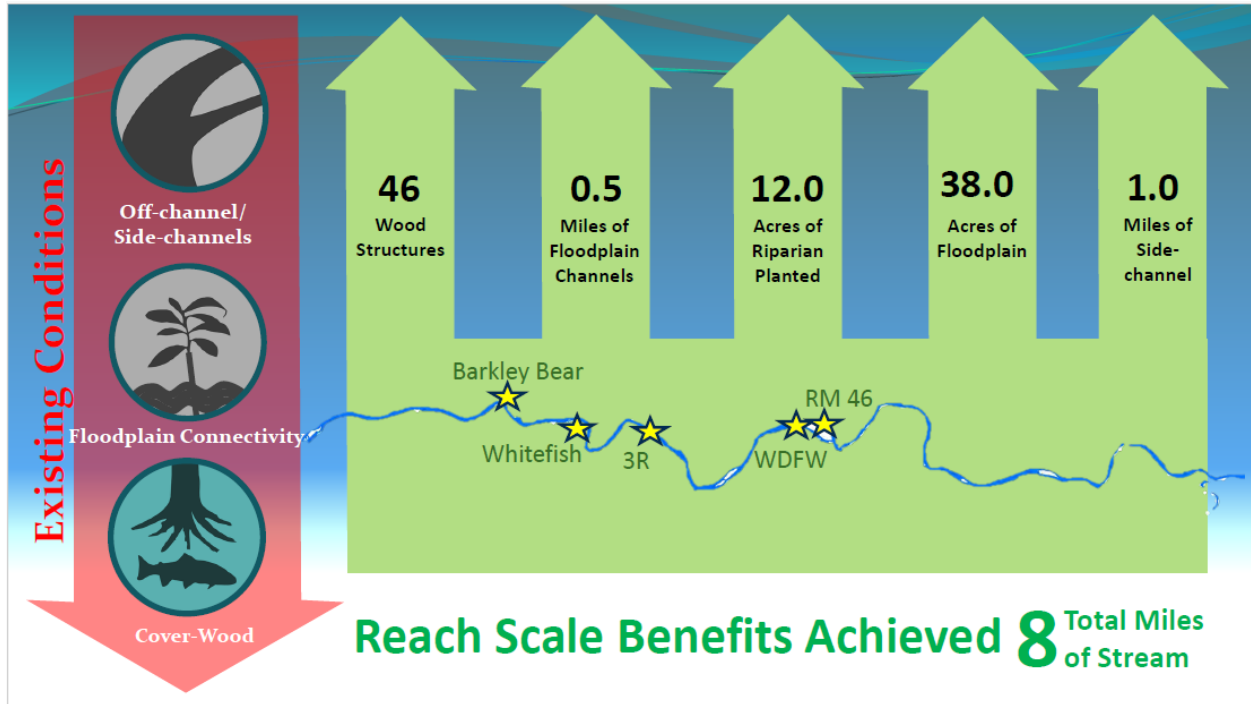
M2 workgroup of MRC (2010)

M2 Reach Projects

Improving floodplain connectivity, and providing off-channel/side-channel habitat and cover complexity for juvenile ESA-listed salmonids in the Middle Methow



- ★ Completed Project
- ★ Planned Project



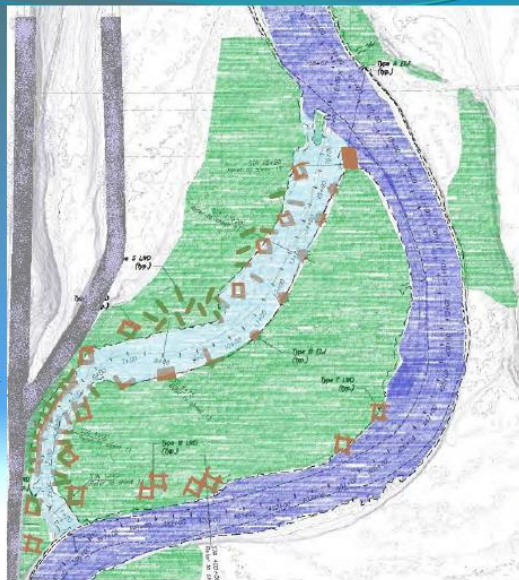
Barkley Bear (2020-2022)

Levee/Riprap removal
Side Channel ELJ's
Main channel ELJ's
Side Channels
Complexity Habitat Logs
Riparian Plantings



White Fish Island (2012)

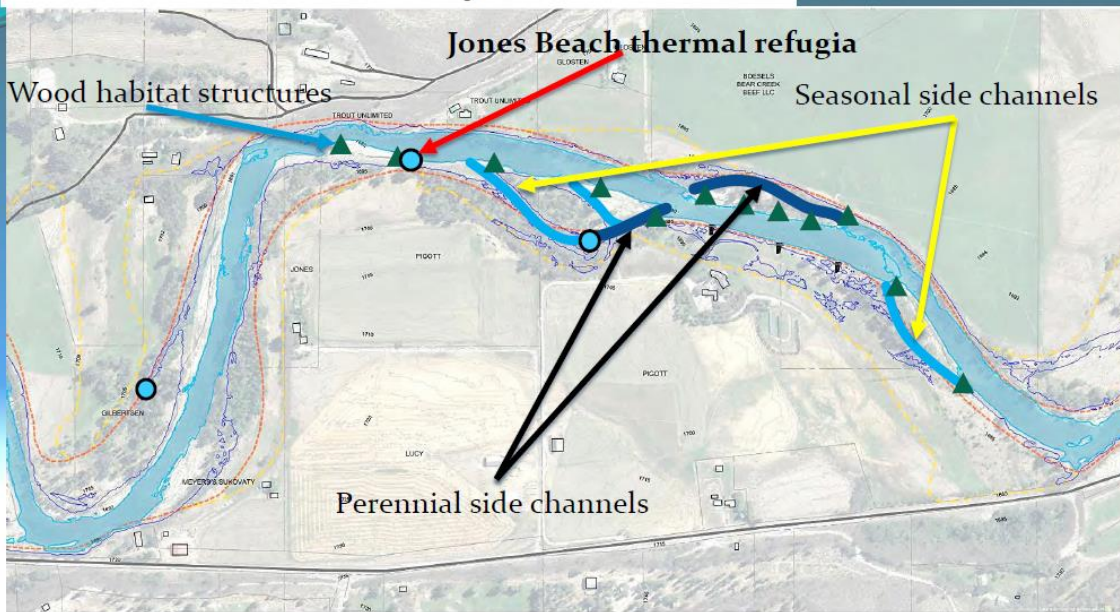
Constructed 2012
MSRF Acquisition - 17 acres
Large wood placement:
Apex logjam
8 ELJ's along left bank of side channel
~300 foot long log crib
23 single logs (tied or partially buried)
17 Low profile wood structures on gravel bars
Riparian vegetation:
Crib structure
Gravel bars
On wood structures and ELJ's



Project Increased Side Channel Complexity and Connectivity

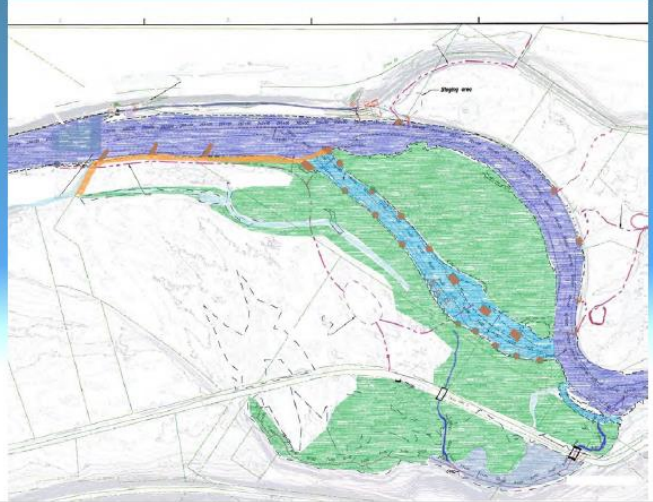


M23R Side Channels Project Overview



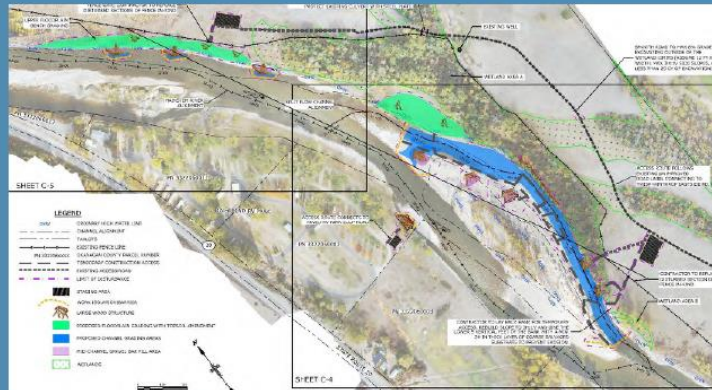
M2 WDFW Floodplain

- 1100 feet Levee Removal
- Dam Remnants Removal
- Wetland/Alcove Connection
- 1300 feet side channel
- 24 ELJ's
- 6 acres Riparian Plantings



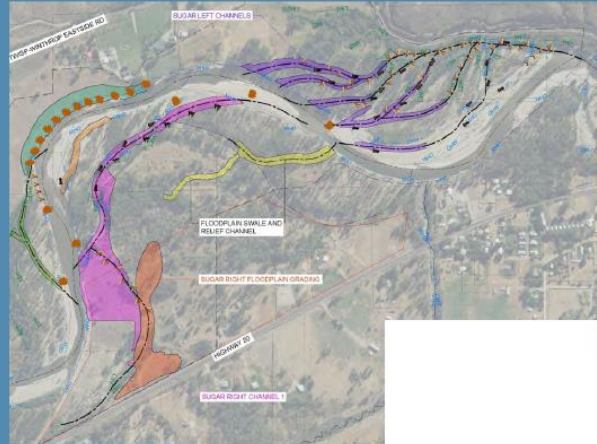
Eagle Rocks (Planned 2024)

- Side Channel
- Mainstem ELJs
- Main channel ELJs
- Floodplain benching
- Riparian plantings

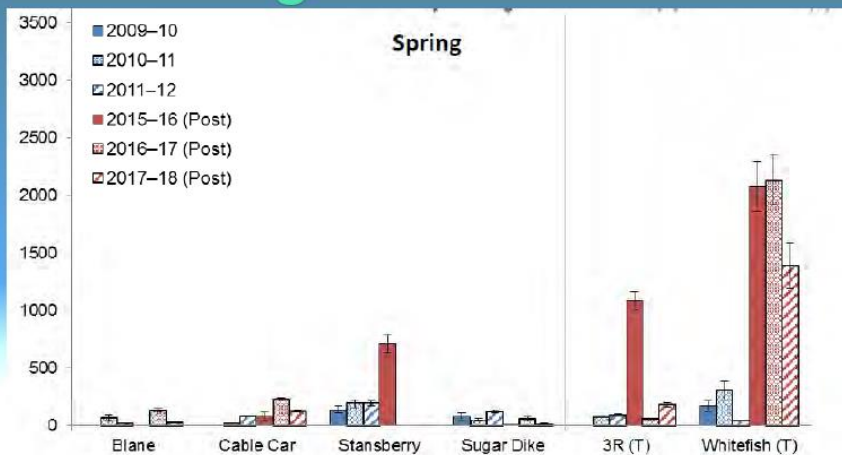


Sugar (Planned 2025)

- Property acquisitions
- Levee removal
- Floodplain connection
- Side channel enhancement
- Side channel creation
- Side channel ELJ's
- Main channel ELJ's
- Riparian Plantings



Monitoring Shows Increased Fish Use



From: Hutcherson et al 2019

WFI Adaptive Management 2019



WDFW Floodplain Phase II Adaptive

- Balance flow between split
- ELJ's
- Plantings
- MVID/Barkley Fish Return



Barkley Bear Adaptive

- Side Channel Connectivity



Sugar Monitoring and Adaptive

Maintain Plantings 3-5 years

Monitoring:

- Side channel connectivity
- Wood Structure Persistence
- Riparian Success
- Floodplain connectivity
- Fish Use

