Pacific Coast Fish Wildlife and Wetlands Restoration Association

SPRING NEWSLETTER

We are a 501c3 non-profit with a mission to restore, enhance, and protect the fish, wildlife, and wetland resources of the pacific coast region. We have restored over 150 miles and prescribed treatments for 500 square miles of salmonid habitat since our start in 1991! Read on for some springtime updates.

New Projects, Including Coho Barrier Removals

PCFWWRA is excited to announce three salmon habitat restoration design projects that will begin this summer with funding from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fisheries Restoration Grant Program. Developing an accurate and implementable design is the first step to solving site-specific habitat issues. These projects will develop designs to remove two fish barriers on Lindsay Creek; improve instream habitat in the Lindsay Creek tributary of Squaw Creek, including large wood habitat structures and side channels; and enhance connectivity to an existing off-channel pond in Ryan Creek, a Humboldt Bay tributary.

Road Crossing Fish Barrier #1 – downstream view of culvert inlet, Note: This culvert was documented as perched, with and approximate 5 foot plunge below and a complete barrier (PWA, 2010).

In this article, we will focus on the Lindsay Creek Coho Barrier Removal Project. Its objective is to develop 100% engineering designs to remediate two barriers to salmonid passage, including coho salmon, by upgrading two separate culverted stream crossings both on a privately owned parcel; one on the Lindsay Creek mainstem and one on a tributary of Lindsay Creek. The consulting engineers and geologists are Pacific Watershed Associates.

Lindsay Creek is considered to be the most important tributary for coho salmon in the lower Mad River system (Ricker, personal communication, May 2014). According to NOAA's Coho Recovery Plan (SONCC, 2014). The highest priority recovery actions in the watershed include: assess barriers to coho salmon passage, prioritize barriers for removal, and treat the barriers.

A combined total of 1.33 miles of quality salmonid habitat is available upstream of the proposed project. In addition, Existing culverts at these two barriers proposed for removal are near the end of their functional life. Failure potential exists for both culverts, which would result in

The tail crest of plunge pool below Fish Barrier #1. Note the coho salmon visible right at the pool tail crest.

sediment delivering directly into the stream. This project, when implemented, will not only increase access to rearing and spawning habitat currently unavailable to coho salmon and other salmonid species; it will also reduce chronic sediment delivery from the road crossing and eliminate the risk of a larger sediment delivery event should either crossing fail during a larger flood event.

SRF Tour a Success!

Tour group headed into the Ryan Creek sediment reduction and wood structure enhancement project area.

A field tour of "Tidal, Off-Channel, Instream and Upslope Restoration in Humboldt Bay" was enjoyed by nearly fifty participants on April 11 as part of the Salmonid Restoration Federation's 36th Annual Salmonid Restoration Conference.

The participants from non-profit organizations, government agencies, consulting firms, California Conservation Corps veterans program, and academia were led by Mitch Farro of PCFWWRA and Chris Herbst of Pacific Watershed Associates. This field trip visited a diverse variety of projects and discussed issues involved with developing priorities and the challenges of working on public vs. private lands. The group visited two different project areas, starting with road decommissioning and in-stream habitat projects on Green Diamond Resources Company property in the Ryan Creek watershed, adjacent to the new Humboldt County Community Forest. The trip looked at off-channel habitats created at the mouths of streams during road decommissioning, in-stream large woody debris structures, and wetland habitats created along decommissioned road reaches. The tour ended on the Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge located at the mouth of

Salmon Creek, visiting the location of the major fish-friendly tide-gate replacements, salt marsh restoration, new tidal channel excavations, and off-channel ponds.

People participated in active discussions throughout the tour, persevering to learn and enjoy despite the at times pouring rain.

According to participant reviews, they will apply the knowledge they gained during the field tour "in application doing instream restoration work" and to be "better able to evaluate design elements in watershed restoration planning." Also, the tour "provided motivation to find a job in ecosystem restoration." Thanks Mitch and Chris!

Coordinators Mitch Farro (l) and Chris Herbst (r) led the tour.

Ryan Creek coho habitat enhancement and instream wood structure project.

The Ryan Creek projects combined road decommissioning and sediment reduction with instream wood placement, a cost-effective and time saving approach.

Volunteer Planting at Jacoby Creek

We are planning a volunteer day during the upcoming winter at the Jacoby Creek off-channel ponds in Kotke Ranch & Nature Preserve, Bayside, California. We will be planting native riparian vegetation to provide additional shade and habitat around two off-channel ponds that were constructed in 2015. The ponds were restored within two historical flood-plain meander bends of Jacoby Creek that were previously disconnected from the main channel. The wetland/ponds are again providing a place for critical winter rearing habitat for young coho salmon. Stay tuned for the Autumn Newsletter for more planting day details.

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