



Conservation in Washington: Powered by People



MAKING AN IMPACT:

- *Livestock trough spillage eliminated and mud reduced.*
- *Water from uphill runoff piped under access road instead of flowing through feedlot.*
- *Success of the project motivated landowner to seek Conservation District assistance with more work on his ranch.*

EASTERN KLICKITAT CONSERVATION DISTRICT - LIVESTOCK OWNERS PROTECT WATER QUALITY IN ROCK CREEK

Rock Creek in Eastern Klickitat Conservation District is on the 303(d) list as a Category 5 stream and is critical habitat for Mid-Columbia Steelhead and Coho and Chinook salmon. Streams placed on the 303(d) list have pollution levels high enough to impair their use as drinking water, habitat, recreation, and industrial use.

FINDING A COMMON PATH Livestock owners along Rock Creek asked the Eastern Klickitat Conservation District to help them implement best management practices that would improve water quality in the creek while still allowing them to continue livestock operations. One landowner requested that the District help alleviate the mud and manure flow from his water trough in the winter feed area, adjacent to Rock Creek. This mud flow had the potential to reach the creek, and the landowner wanted it fixed. District engineers designed a new system for a trough and overflow. The trough is spring fed and has a constant flow.

RESULTS ON THE GROUND As a result of the practices installed, the mud and manure accumulation and transport around the trough has been eliminated. By re-designing the trough overflow mechanism and installing adequately sized pipe, the spillage from the tank has been eliminated. In addition, the hardened area around the trough has stopped the mud created by the livestock when they visit the trough for water. The inflow is a constantly flowing spring which runs through the trough. That water is piped away from the tank and flows through a filter strip before entering the creek. Water from uphill runoff also was piped under the access road instead of being allowed to flow through the feedlot. The District continues to implement projects in the Rock Creek watershed knowing that the cumulative effect of such sediment reduction projects can impact water temperature and flow.

The landowner initially was not convinced that the District’s plan would work. As they began construction, he eventually could see the design had merit and allowed them to continue. Eastern Klickitat Conservation District now has an advocate in this landowner, who wants the District to do more work on his ranch.

District Manager Jim Hill said, “Projects like this are exciting because they are easy to implement and produce dramatic and obvious results. When they work as well as this one did, we also get a friend who trusts the District and is willing to work with us in other endeavors.”



Water trough project before (left) and after landowner received assistance from Eastern Klickitat Conservation District (right)