

# Eastern Klickitat Conservation District

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State Legislative District #14, 15  
Congressional District #3, 4

2015 Feature Accomplishment:

## Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan for Rock Creek



Close-up view of Eurasian watermilfoil in Rock Creek

**RESOURCE CHALLENGE** The mouth of Rock Creek where it enters the Columbia River has nearly one mile of slack water because of the John Day pool and covers 68 acres. Eurasian watermilfoil, an invasive freshwater plant, has moved into the area and is creating issues for boating, fishing, and swimming. The biggest problem is it provides habitat for species that prey on salmonids. Rock Creek provides the only

steelhead and salmon habitat in eastern Klickitat County and has been designated as critical habitat for Mid-Columbia steelhead.

**PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS** Eastern Klickitat Conservation District received funding from the Department of Ecology to produce a plan to control or eliminate the Eurasian watermilfoil. This Integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan will provide options for control of the invasive weed. Formulated over two years, the plan is being developed by district staff with input from program partners. The plan will focus on selecting methods to control the milfoil and other invasive species that are detrimental to water quality and provide habitat for bass and other species that prey on steelhead and salmon. Program participants all agreed that invasive aquatic weeds are a threat.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Central Klickitat Conservation District; Klickitat County Noxious Weed Coordinator; Department of Ecology; US Army Corps of Engineers; Yakama Nation Fisheries; WA Department of Fish and Wildlife; Local citizens and landowners



Slack water of Rock Creek clogged with Eurasian watermilfoil

## Other Accomplishments



Purchase of conservation easements in Rock Creek will protect livestock grazing in the watershed.



Extinguishing development rights will guarantee the views will not change.



The district installed and monitors a permanent gauging station on Squaw Creek.

## More Work to Do!

- Several spring developments have been identified in the Rock Creek watershed. Spring developments on Rock Creek itself should add flow to the creek.
- Completion of the two ongoing easement purchases that were funded through the Washington State Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation.
- Working with the state Department of Fish and Wildlife to purchase fee simple and easements on 22,000 acres from Western Pacific Timber in the Rock Creek watershed.