

Underwood Conservation District

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Board Chair: Paul Newell



State Legislative District #14
Congressional District #3

2016 Feature Accomplishment

Wind River tributary fish passage project

RESOURCE CHALLENGE A small tributary to the Wind River had two culverts under Cannavina Road and the Wind River Highway that posed barriers to fish passage. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife has designated the Wind River watershed as a wild steelhead gene bank, and even small seasonal tributaries are important for fish spawning, rearing, and refuge from high flows or warm stream temperatures on the mainstem of the Wind River. More than two miles of fish habitat are available upstream of the culverts.

PROJECT SUMMARY AND RESULTS The Wind River watershed is valuable for multiple human uses, such as fishing and boating, and also as habitat for many species, including salmon and steelhead. One important fish in the watershed is the wild native steelhead. The Wind River and its tributary streams provide important habitat for steelhead fish returning from the ocean to spawn new generations.

Complete replacement of these road culverts was cost-prohibitive. To correct the barriers most cost-effectively, the streambed immediately downstream of both road crossings was built up in elevation, which backwatered the culverts, slowing and deepening flows and enabling fish passage.



Looking at upper (left) and lower (right) culverts and constructed riffles designed to provide fish passage at county road crossing. Photos: Tova Tillinghast

KEY PARTNERS:

Skamania County Public Works; Inter-Fluve, Inc.; Tenneson Engineering Corporation; Kysar & Koistin-en, Inc.; Bonneville Power Administration's Fish and Wildlife Division; US Fish and Wildlife Service National Fish Passage Program; Clark-Skamania Flyfishers; private landowners

Other Accomplishments

- Provided ongoing free mobile chipper service to more than 150 homeowners improving defensible space.
- Provided cost-share for conservation practices and Firewise projects, helping landowners implement best management practices as well as reduce their risk to wildfire.
- Completed design and permitting for Mill Creek fish passage project, to be constructed summer 2016, in the White Salmon River basin.
- Conducted successful Annual Native Plant Sale, using online sales platform.
- Carried out successful long range planning public meetings and 75th anniversary events throughout the district.

More work to do!

- Successfully complete construction of Mill Creek fish passage project.
- Continue to plan and implement livestock management projects, water quality improvements, and watershed restoration work with cooperating landowners throughout the district.
- Pursue funding for and provide educational opportunities and technical assistance for livestock, forest, horticulture, and natural resource management.