



Conservation in Washington: Powered by People



MAKING AN IMPACT:

- *Removed several fish barriers, including 95-foot wide cement dam.*
- *Installed woody debris and boulders that created pools, riffles, and runs that fish now inhabit.*
- *Provided a model for successful, public-private sector conservation partnerships.*

PEND OREILLE CONSERVATION DISTRICT - RESTORING BULL TROUT HABITAT IN NORTHEAST WASHINGTON

Cedar Creek in northeast Washington was historically accessed by bull trout—a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act—for spawning and rearing. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) designated Cedar Creek as “Critical Habitat” for bull trout and called for the removal of barriers from the creek’s confluence with the Pend Oreille River to its head waters. The barriers not only hindered bull trout passage, they also posed a public safety concern. The Pend Oreille Conservation District (POCD) was the Salmon Recovery Fund Board (SRFB) Lead Entity Coordinator and was the logical agency to facilitate Cedar Creek restoration efforts.

FINDING A COMMON PATH POCD worked with partners to secure federal, state, and local funding to remove fish barriers. Many private landowners participated with projects on their land, and others allowed staging of equipment and supplies to take place on their property.

Several fish barriers were removed, the largest being the demolition of an old, 95-foot wide cement dam in 2005. Other removals included a bridge, two water crossings, and small log crib dams. POCD and partners also installed a foot bridge and two auto bridge placements; restored log and rock structures in and along Cedar Creek; and planted several thousand trees and shrubs. POCD’s project partners included US FWS, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), WA Recreation and Conservation Office, WA Department of Ecology, WA State Conservation Commission, Kalispel Tribe, Pend Oreille County, and other regional and local entities.

RESULTS ON THE GROUND Results as far as temperature changes and bull trout returns are unknown at this time; however, observations of the project area indicate that fish and wildlife are benefiting from the Cedar Creek restoration. Woody debris and boulder placements have created pools, riffles, and runs—one can physically see fish inhabiting these newly structured environs.

These restoration projects on Cedar Creek underscored the importance of stakeholder collaboration. Without the many partnerships formed from the local-level all the way to the federal-level, this project would never have gained the momentum to get off the ground.

Left: Cedar Creek dam before (top) and during destruction (bottom).



Right: Site following Cedar Creek dam removal and instream and riparian restoration efforts.

