



# Underwood Conservation District

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Legislative District: 14 Congressional District: 3

## Other Accomplishments

- ▶ Developing a plan for an irrigation efficiencies project with White Salmon Irrigation District along Buck Creek, a tributary to the White Salmon River, which will save over two cfs water instream, correct a fish passage barrier, and install a fish screen.
- ▶ Planning an instream habitat enhancement project along the Little Wind River by working with private landowners and the U.S. Forest Service Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area.
- ▶ Assisted over 30 landowners with soil tests.
- ▶ Assisted over 50 landowners with wildfire fuels reduction work.
- ▶ Sold nearly 20,000 native seedlings in UCD's annual native plant sale.

## 2018 FEATURE ACCOMPLISHMENT

### Rattlesnake Creek Fish Habitat Enhancement

#### Resource Challenge

Rattlesnake Creek, a major tributary to the White Salmon River watershed, provides important fish habitat to salmon and steelhead recolonizing since the removal of Condit Dam in 2012. However, Rattlesnake Creek habitat is over-simplified and unfriendly to fish. It lacks complexity, large wood for capturing spawning gravel, pools for temperature refuge, and side channels for storm flow refuge and energy dissipation. Even the riparian area is over-simplified, often dominated by red alder.

#### Project Summary and Results

Underwood Conservation District (UCD) worked with a family ownership along the creek to plan and implement an exciting habitat enhancement project. Whole trees with rootwads were pushed over by an excavator in an upland forest stand nearby. Under the direction of a fish biologist with extensive experience in restoration design, UCD's contractor skillfully wove the downed trees among standing mature trees along the stream's edge, extending the rootwads into the water, but keeping most of the tree length on the bank as ballast. A total of six large woody debris jams were constructed in this way to enhance fish habitat.

#### Key Partners

Salmon Recovery Funding Board; Yakama Nation Fisheries Program – Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funding; Washington State Conservation Commission



Before and after photos at one of the large wood placement sites along Rattlesnake Creek, creating refuge habitat for fish. Photo by Dan Richardson

## Priorities for 2019...

- ▶ Consistent, robust funding support for Firewise work, education, and fuels reduction in the wildland urban interface.
- ▶ Adequate funding support for a bacteria source tracking study in the White Salmon River watershed to discern the sources of fecal coliform.
- ▶ Sustainable and continuous funding support for conservation district programs and services, including conservation technical assistance and natural resources education for the general public and within the schools.