

Upper Grande Ronde River-Bowman Habitat Enhancement Project

Atlas Tier 1, UGR 15 Subwatershed



IMPLEMENTER: Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife was project sponsor with partners: Grande Ronde Model Watershed, Bonneville Power Administration, and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation.

Location: Located between RM 153.8-155.2 on the Grande Ronde River in Union County, Oregon.

Implementation: 2023; Contract #s: 79905 Rel 14, 84041 Rel 16

PROJECT BACKGROUND: . This section of the Grande Ronde River is in UGR Atlas Tier 1 and provides important spawning and rearing habitat for ESA listed spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead. Chinook and steelhead spawning and rearing occurs in the project reach. It is also used by ESA listed bull trout, Oregon Sensitive Species redband trout, and other important native fish species. Throughout the project reach, the Grande Ronde River is over-widened and shallow. Pool habitat and wood recruitment is poor. High water temperatures impact adult Chinook salmon during migration and holding and juvenile rearing.

ESA ESU or DPS: ESA listed Snake River spring Chinook salmon and summer steelhead. A migration corridor for ESA listed bull trout.

IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS : Restoration actions for this project target critical salmonid life stages and limiting factors, and include pool development, floodplain reconnection, levee removal, side channel and off-channel habitat restoration, riparian fencing, large whole tree structure creation via helicopter, LWD placement with heavy machinery, and additions of channel fill to increase depth and reduce width of the mainstem channel. This will also allow material to be redistributed during high flows and help to restore process and function to the system.

HABITAT RESPONSE: The project aims to improve the following habitat features: floodplain connectivity; floodplain and wetland vegetation; large wood densities; increased pool and zero velocity habitat, increased channel depth and complexity, increased spawning gravels.

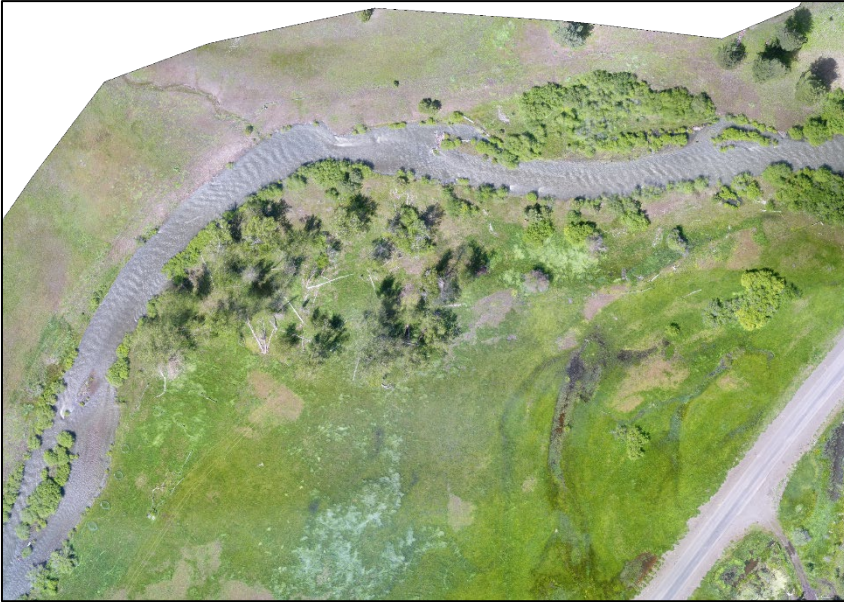
FISH RESPONSE: This project is striving to improve migration, holding, spawning, and summer and winter rearing habitat for salmon, steelhead, and Pacific lamprey, ultimately resulting in positive impacts to population abundance, productivity and viability. Adults were observed utilizing cover from large wood structures.



Left :
Helicopter placing wood and completed channel fill bar/helicopter log placements

Right :
Groundwater activation of side channel





Top Left: The meadow and cottonwood gallery before construction (06/14/23).

Lower Left: The meadow and cottonwood gallery after aerial wood placement and side channel construction (07/27/23).

Bottom : Side channel complex during construction (06/15/23).

Aerial imagery provided by Connor Stone, GRMW

