

RECENT WATERSHED ENHANCEMENT PROJECTS IN THE KLICKITAT SUBBASIN

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ABSTRACT: The Klickitat Watershed Enhancement Project (KWEP) is a broad-based in-stream, floodplain, and watershed restoration initiative of the Yakama Nation Fisheries Program. KWEP utilizes a multi-prong approach to restoration. Watershed conditions are assessed to prioritize sites for restoration; prioritized watersheds are protected, enhanced or restored to increase riparian, wetland, and stream habitat quality; and watershed conditions are monitored to assess trends and effectiveness of restoration activities. Project actions target stream reaches and watersheds that support steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*; ESA-listed as “Threatened”) and/or spring Chinook (*O. tshawytscha*). In any given year, KWEP implements multiple projects to enhance and restore watershed health in the Klickitat River subbasin, often concurrently.

The presentation will highlight habitat projects completed in the Klickitat subbasin in the last 5 years and preview two projects to be implemented in 2017. Recent habitat actions focused on restoring side channel and floodplain connectivity along the mainstem Klickitat River, creation of diverse active-channel hydraulic conditions (varying depths and velocities), enhancement of the quality and quantity of salmonid rearing habitat, and restoration/reconnection of headwater meadow systems. Monitoring and assessment activities have focused on the characterization of hydrologic and geomorphic conditions along the mainstem Klickitat River and tributaries. The purpose of these data collection activities is to inform watershed assessment and land use planning, and to focus watershed and fisheries restoration efforts.

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