

Yakima/Klickitat Fisheries Project - Habitat Projects Update

JOHN MARVIN; *Yakama Nation Habitat Program*

The Yakama Nation's Yakima-Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) continues to promote strategic habitat protection and restoration in priority reaches of the mainstem Yakima River and in the most productive tributary streams. Projects undertaken include habitat acquisitions, restoration and protection. Current acquisition projects include protection of important habitat areas in strategic locations as funding and opportunities arise, including properties in the Ellensburg urban area and along the Naches River. Acquired habitat properties are restored based on specific plans, such as for the Harris (Naches River side channel), Fortune (Naches River), and Holmes (Yakima River side channel) properties. YKFP is currently conducting reach assessments for the Swauk and Taneum creeks to design appropriate restoration of degraded habitat. In addition, YKFP is developing a project with the US Forest Service to relocate a significant portion of roadway away from the Little Naches River. YKFP is in the process of acquiring LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) data to aid in restoration efforts and environmental planning. YKFP is active in local environmental planning and education. Participation in environmental planning includes the development of the Yakima County and City of Ellensburg Critical Areas Ordinances, coordinating discussion of flood issues in west Ellensburg and participation in local project permitting with potential to impacts sensitive habitat. Every year around Earth Day, YKFP sponsors two days of environmental education with elementary students from Ellensburg at the Holmes habitat property. The Earth Day education includes a series of stations for students to get hands on education about macroinvertebrates, water quality, wildlife, riparian zone & tree planting, a salmon life cycle game, and release of student incubated salmon fry.