



Oregon Trout™
A program of The Freshwater Trust.

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Human actions over the past century have led to a progressive decline in the health and productivity of Oregon's rivers, streams and lakes. Though the settlers made era-appropriate decisions while "taming" the land, their arrival in the West ushered in an unprecedented time of habitat impact. Timber extraction, hydropower development, livestock grazing, hatchery production and agricultural irrigation impaired the ability of salmon runs to sustain themselves. Today, more than 85 percent of historic salmon habitat has been lost or compromised throughout the region, and Pacific salmonid populations flicker at less than 4 percent of their historic abundance. More than 30,000 miles of Oregon's streams fail to fully support aquatic life due to water quality impairment.



Oregon Trout is dedicated to the truism that conservation benefits people, communities and the economy on which we depend. Habitat loss is the single most important factor contributing to salmon declines, and restoring habitat function is critical to salmon productivity. By identifying key "anchor habitats" or "refugia" for salmon, Oregon Trout takes direct aim at what may be our best, last chance to provide long-term protection and restoration to these species and the ecosystems upon which we all depend.

Since Oregon contains more than 115,000 stream miles, Oregon Trout focuses its efforts by selecting priority basins that possess both degraded habitat and high restoration potential. Then, Oregon Trout creates a menu of restoration projects prioritized by need and benefit and seeks partnerships with public and private stakeholders to get the work done.

Engaging local communities

The restoration efforts of Oregon Trout advances ecologically sound, collaborative stream restoration projects on public and private land that assist, rather than polarize, local communities and economies. For all projects, we work to purchase supplies and hire contractors locally, providing the ingredients for development of restoration-based local economies.

80 cents of every dollar stays
in local economy

96 cents of every dollar stays
in Oregon

Beyond achieving success with on-the-ground project results, we strive to build replicable models for collaborative, community-based restoration and education. Our overall goal is to increase the cultural acceptance of, and demand for, stream restoration work. We feel our approach is best geared to address the need for lasting social change in the human behaviors that underlie the ecological challenges facing stream health, water quality, and salmon.

Over the past couple of years, Oregon Trout successfully advanced large-scale, on-the-ground restoration projects in the John Day, Deschutes, Klamath and Sandy River basins, as well as the South Coast region of the state.

Sandy River

In cooperation with many partners, Oregon Trout launched a collaborative effort that restores flow and habitat complexity to historic side channels on private and public land within the Sandy River Basin. The Salmon River Side Channel Restoration Project will engage local landowners in restoration actions on their property and will involve local students in monitoring and tree planting activities. Side channel work began in 2007 and is ongoing.



Deschutes River

Oregon Trout set out to plant 100,000 trees in the Deschutes basin before the end of 2008. With the help and support of our partners, hundreds of volunteers, Oregon Trout has planted 88,199 trees to date which will provide needed long-term water quality and habitat benefits to the Deschutes and its tributaries. An additional 20,000 trees have been secured for planting in spring of 2009.

Middle Fork John Day River

In summer 2006, Oregon Trout launched the Middle Fork John Day Channel Relocation and Riparian Restoration Project, a multi-phase effort to restore three miles of the Middle Fork John Day River to its

historic channel. By reconnecting the currently straightened river to its remnant historic channel and replanting the riparian area, Oregon Trout seeks to restore normal stream and riparian form and function to benefit spring Chinook and summer steelhead. On-the-ground work is scheduled to begin in summer 2009.

South Coast

Boatman Grove Fish and Wildlife Preserve

This restoration project seeks to reconnect a currently ditched fish bearing stream (Lowe Creek) to its historic mouth, while also removing an artificial levee and tidegate remnants in the Coquille River Estuary. Wetlands will be restored and enhanced by filling drainage ditches, placing large wood and restoring riparian vegetation through native plantings. Restored tidal influence and natural wetlands function will allow critical over-wintering habitat for juvenile coho salmon and other salmonids. Phase 1 of the project (restoration of wetland function and enhancement of tidal habitat) was completed summer 2007, with Phase 2 (diversion of ditched creek into its historic channel) to follow in summer 2009.



Fourmile Creek Riparian Restoration

This project site is located within a "double estuary" (both New River and Fourmile Creek systems), and contains critical rearing habitat for salmonids. This project aims to improve riparian health, habitat complexity and water quality while maintaining and promoting the working landscape. Project components include fencing and planting the riparian corridor, removing invasive vegetation, re-sloping the banks and placing large wood in-stream as well as creating off channel livestock watering areas. All major project components were completed in 2006 and 2007, with riparian planting activities to continue over the next two years.

Klamath Basin

Oregon Trout assembled the Technical Team, comprised of agency (federal and state), tribal, non-profit, and other scientific experts, which is now in the process of conducting the scientific assessment of restoration potential for the Upper Klamath Lake Basin. On-the-ground data collection on private ranches in the Upper Lake Basin occurred summer 2008. Landowner outreach related to restoration project implementation is ongoing, which remains a sensitive issue given the politics of the Klamath. As the Technical Team completes the assessment in early 2009, we will move into the Collaborative Group planning stage, which will involve using the assessment to delineate common ground over restoration scenarios among agency land managers, private landowners, and key interests groups.