



September 8th, 2021 Field Tour Meeting Minutes

10:30 – Presentation from the Payette National Forest on past and projected restoration in Boulder Creek

Jason Greenway- West Zone Fisheries Biologist, Payette National Forest

Leigh Bailey- Forest Hydrologist/Watershed Program Manager, Payette National Forest

- In 2015, an Aquatic Organism Passage structure was installed on Star Creek. There was previously a culvert at this location that prohibited fish passage. The new concrete structure has an open bottom with native substrate that provides natural stream solution that allows fish to go through. Bull trout, maybe Chinook salmon and steelhead use it.
- Idaho Fish and Game did dynamite work at falls on Boulder Creek to create more fish passages with a step pool and then stocked Chinook fry but they never established well. Very different breeding styles for fish.
- Reports of Chinook in lower part of Hazard Creek and lower Boulder Creek
- Threatened bull trout in Boulder Creek and Star Creek, a tributary to Boulder Creek (where we are)
- Little Salmon Falls is a fish passage barrier into upper meadow
- Aquatic organism passage (AOP)- crossing structure for stream passage for various species and fish age classes.
- The Forest Service created a Watershed Restoration Action Plan (WRAP) for the Boulder Creek Subwatershed and prioritized areas on Boulder Creek that were barriers. 12 locations identified. 7 replacements and 5 removals on long-term storage roads (non-drivable roads) where culverts were going to be pulled. Able to replace the 7 and because of litigation the 5 removals have not progressed but hope to in future plans.
- Providing passage to new areas is part of the forest service “plan”
- Likely 3-5 years before work in the area will be completed
- How do you measure success after a project?
 - Plan specifies for each location. Reflected in forest baseline acceptable conditions
 - Look at existing conditions and assess realistic expectations for the other users of the land. Create an essentials project list following the WRAP.
- Boulder Creek Subwatershed has been identified by the Forest as an Aquatic Conservation Strategy Priority Watershed. The Forest Service conducts Ecological Indicator monitoring and Forest Plan monitoring every two years

Walked to a restoration site down at a Star Creek tributary

- Watershed restoration action plan identified many proposed projects in Boulder Creek and waiting for NEPA approval
- Star creek tributary
 - 18 years ago removed a failing log culvert. Pulled soil back and replaced with rock lining. Put root masses and mycorrhizae to establish new growth

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LITTLE SALMON RIVER

WATERSHED

COLLABORATIVE

- Path was roughed up to discourage full-size traffic. Ideally would do a full recontour and decommission the roads
- Systematically looked at every crossing to see where failing culverts were. In 2003, tackled 25 of these types of culverts throughout Payette National Forest
- Current efforts are more holistic. Would want a natural bottom for the aquatic passage benefits. Materials used include metal or concrete which would go beyond high water mark so sediment would not run down
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12:00 – Viewed adult Chinook salmon in pool below Amphitheater Rapid on Little Salmon River

1:00 – Discussion on importance of tributaries on water quality and water temps for fish in the Little Salmon.

Craig Johnson- Fisheries/Wildlife Biologist, BLM (Cottonwood Office)

- Most of the Bureau of Land Management property is north of Little Salmon Falls which is heavily intermingled with private and other state land
- Larger tributaries impact water quality and temperature
- Study shows data from 1998 where six temperature loggers were placed along the Little Salmon River. These loggers recorded temperature every 4 hours.
- 7 day running maximum temp averaged
- Flows, channel morphology, shade all impact temperature
- Large cold water tributaries can add up to a third of total water to Little Salmon River
- Fires are impacting the flow regime with increased severity. Water comes down faster and retains less in headwaters. Landslides after fire also impact waterway.
- Hazard Creek is a steeper gradient stream with Chinook and bull trout still spawning in the gravel
- Rapid river is a refugia area and provides great habitat
- Optimal temperatures vary depending on species and life stage. Optimal adult spawning temperatures are 4-14 degrees C for Chinook and steelhead and 4-9 degrees C for bull trout.
- The Nez Perce Tribe gets 60% of Chinook harvest out of Rapid River so very important to identify how tributaries impact temperature

26 total participants

Next Meeting: NEW Time, NEW Location, NEW Format

The next Little Salmon River Watershed Collaborative meeting is **October 7th 11am -3pm** at the **Meadows Valley Community Center**, 102 N Commercial Ave. An agenda for this meeting will follow.

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