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Newsome Creek Habitat Restoration Project Watershed Restoration Partnership Program FY2012 Accomplishment Nez Perce – Clearwater National Forests, Northern Region

State: Idaho

Congressional District: 1st

Accomplishments:

- Redistribution of 10,000 cubic yards of historic dredge mining tailings to hillside repositories to reconnect floodplain processes; rehabilitation of 0.5 mile of juvenile and adult spring chinook salmon, steelhead, westslope cutthroat, and bull trout habitat including approximately 250 pieces of large woody debris.
- Targets accomplished include:
 - 20 acres watershed improved;
 - 1 mile stream improved;
 - 3 stream fords removed.

Forest Service Contribution: \$137,092

Partner Contribution: \$238,258

Project Costs: \$375,350

External Partners:

Nez Perce Tribe, Department of Fisheries Resource Management / Watershed Division; Bonneville Power Administration.

Internal Partners:

This was a cooperative project between Fisheries, Watershed, and Engineering.

Newsome Creek, a tributary to the South Fork Clearwater River, was dredge mined extensively until the 1950s. Hundreds of thousands cubic yards of valley material was mined and remains in the piles left by the dredge, leaving a valley bottom lacking in floodplain connectivity and a straightened stream devoid of complex structure. Spring chinook salmon, steelhead, westslope cutthroat and bull trout have the potential to use this system for spawning and rearing.

Past efforts at restoring some habitat features were implemented in the early years of restoration, but much of this work had ceased to function as planned. Forest Service and Nez Perce Tribe personnel began working towards

valley restoration over 10 years ago through planning and design creation. Phase 1 was implemented in 2011, with 1.75 miles of stream improvement and 33,000 cubic yards of dredge tailings removed. Phase 2 was completed in 2012. The first rain event after completion of Phase 2 brought new depositional features forming on the floodplain, an example of restored floodplain connectivity. Future Phases will continue to remove tailings downstream, add complex instream habitat features (ie, new meanders, side channels and large woody debris), and plant riparian vegetation to complete the restoration of approximately 5 miles of Newsome Creek and valley bottom.



Floodplain Dredge Pile Removal.



Pre-construction Stream Section.



Post-construction Woody Debris Structure.

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