



# Reporting Our Progress in Caring for the Land and Serving People



## Sitkoh River Restoration Watershed and Fisheries Program FY2012 Accomplishments Tongass National Forest, Alaska Region

**State:** Alaska

**Congressional District:** AK-0

**Accomplishments:**

- 1 mile stream improvement – core;
- 150 acres riparian thinning – core;
- 131 acres upland thinning – core;
- 320 acres wildlife improvement - integrated.

**Forest Service Contribution:** \$316,000

**Partner Contribution:** \$119,000

**Project Costs:** \$435,000

**External Partners:**

Trout Unlimited, Sitka Conservation Society, Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

**Internal Partners:**

Fisheries, Watershed, Engineering (CMRD), Forest Management.

The Sitkoh River Watershed Restoration Project restores a priority watershed identified in the Watershed Condition Framework. This work will help ensure continued abundance of salmon and trout in an important Southeast Alaska fishery and provide jobs on the ground for small businesses.

In the 1970s and 1990s, the Forest Service constructed about 30 miles of road and harvested 2800 acres, mainly by clear-cut, in the Sitkoh watershed. Harvest included 27 percent of the riparian areas within 100 feet of streams and occurred along the larger floodplain channels. These activities reduced the quality and quantity of fish spawning and rearing habitat.

Part of the Sitkoh River was down an old logging road. The stream was wide and shallow; braided in numerous locations through second growth stands which was a chronic sediment source. This section impeded fish movement and resulted in stranding during low flows and winter kill.

This project moved the stream back into the original channel and enhanced the available habitat through placement of large wood and rocks. This project will improve stream conditions beyond where activities occur. Fish habitat will be improved upstream and downstream with improved stream bank stability and less sediment.



*Excavator placing wood to improve stream habitat.*

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