

Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership

Salmon Superhighway Partnership

2017-2019



Clouds hang low over the Pacific Northwest forest and river (Credit: Justin Bailie)

As the project name implies, the goal of the Salmon Superhighway Partnership is to connect people to their watershed by reconnecting salmon, steelhead, trout, and lamprey to their native habitat. In addition, the project is helping to restore more natural stream flow regimes that will reduce flooding and increase safety for drivers. Central to this project is replacing old undersized culverted stream crossing with new span bridges. Designing and building span bridges isn't trivial, but is considered a win-win for at-risk species and the local community. The North Oregon coast communities and economies depend upon healthy fisheries along with agriculture, tourism, and forest products. While opening passage upstream is important to the salmon, steelhead, trout, and lamprey, so are the forests that border the waterways. Many of the forests in the lower part of the watershed are privately owned, while higher in the watershed it is the public Siuslaw National Forest or Tillamook State Forest. So to make the Salmon Superhighway happen, requires a coordinated partnership.

PROJECT IMPACT:

30.1 miles

USFS & NRCS JCLRP funds awarded 2017-2019: \$2,118,116
Total USDA and partner project funds: \$6,651,635

Nine aquatic organism passage projects have led to the restoration of 30.1 miles of upstream salmon spawning and rearing habitat.

PROJECT RESULTS



Juvenile sculpin during stream restoration project (Credit: Justin Bailie)



Fish passage improvements:

replacing culverts with span bridges connects salmon, steelhead, trout, and lamprey to historic habitats.



Restoring natural stream flow regimes:

removing culverts allows for natural sediment transport down waterways and mitigates flood risk.



Forest Management Plans:

NRCS Technical Service Providers helped landowners write 21 new plans.

USDA's Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service are working together to improve the health of forests where public forests and grasslands connect to privately owned lands. Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, the two USDA agencies are restoring landscapes by reducing wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protecting water quality and enhancing wildlife habitat.

Photos in this document are public domain or stock imagery unless otherwise noted.

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SALMON SUPERHIGHWAY PARTNERSHIP



Salmon Superhighway team members oversee a stream restoration project (Credit: Justin Bailie)

Connecting People and Habitats

The Tillamook-Nestucca Subbasin is an area that covers about 940 square miles of the north Oregon coast and is home to thriving populations of Chinook and Coho salmon, steelhead trout, Pacific lamprey, and other aquatic species.

Many of these populations have declined dramatically in the last century as development of the landscape has altered their habitat, creating barriers to the movements their lifecycles require.

In 2010, scientists and professionals came together to assess the subbasin and found over 260 barriers to fish passage. Their analysis helped identify projects that would allow access to 95% of historic habitat for six species of ocean-going fish, while also reducing chronic flooding, improving recreation opportunities, and stimulating the local economy. And thus, the initiative now known as Salmon SuperHwy was born.

This Joint Chiefs' project is an unprecedented effort to restore access to 180 miles of blocked habitat throughout six river watersheds. Since 2014, it has cumulatively invested more than \$10.9 million for the restoration of fish passage at 35 sites, and reconnected 94 miles of aquatic habitat within the six major river systems. Additionally, Salmon SuperHwy has brought millions of dollars into the local economy and supported hundreds of local jobs.

Salmon SuperHwy now involves a wide range of partners, including local government, state and federal agencies, private landowners, businesses, and Tribal governments.

“Ambitious initiatives like the Salmon SuperHwy take substantial investment and commitment,” said Sarah Zwissler, Trout Unlimited, Salmon SuperHwy Coordinator. “Votes of confidence like a Joint Chiefs award are important not only for the funding support to leverage and build momentum, but also to demonstrate to other potential funders that this is an important and worthy project with a landscape scale impact.”

For more information, please visit the following sites:

- nrca.usda.gov/JointChiefsReports
- www.salmonsuperhwy.org
- www.fs.usda.gov/features/building-salmon-superhwy



An old undersized culvert in need of replacement (Credit: Justin Bailie)

Key Partners

US Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
Hebo Stewardship Group
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Department of Forestry
Tillamook County
Tillamook Estuaries Partnership
Trout Unlimited
Pelican Brewery

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