

**Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group**  
**Annual Report for the Fiscal Year 2009**  
**July 1, 2008 – June 30, 2009**

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group is to restore self-sustaining salmon and steelhead populations through habitat preservation and restoration projects which assist landowners and promote community partnerships throughout our region.

**Overview**

Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group is a non-profit (501c3) organization dedicated to restoring and protecting fish habitat. Mid-Columbia Fisheries (MCF) takes a three-pronged approach to protecting and restoring fish habitat.

- We sponsor and implement high-quality habitat restoration and protection projects throughout our region.
- We help support the work of our partners by providing financial support for restoration and protection projects.
- We help support educational and community outreach programs that promote the long-term commitment our society needs to protect fisheries resources.

The Mid-Columbia region includes several important steelhead and salmon rivers, notably the Wind River, the White Salmon River, the Klickitat River, the Yakima River, and numerous tributaries to the Columbia River. Our region includes all of the waterways in seven of Washington's Water Resource Inventory Areas, fully encompassing all of Klickitat, Benton, Yakima, and Kittitas Counties, as well as portions of Skamania and Franklin counties.

Along with its large geographic size, this region has a diversity of watershed and fisheries issues unique to each of the individual rivers and watersheds. These watersheds provide habitat for eight salmonid species listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act, as well as a number of sensitive and culturally significant stocks.

**Project Highlights**

**Hemlock Dam Removal & Trout Creek Restoration, Skamania County**

The Hemlock Dam Removal and Trout Creek Restoration project removed an obsolete dam, improved fish passage, and restored natural channel and sediment transport conditions on Trout Creek. The project site is on the Gifford Pinchot National Forest and the

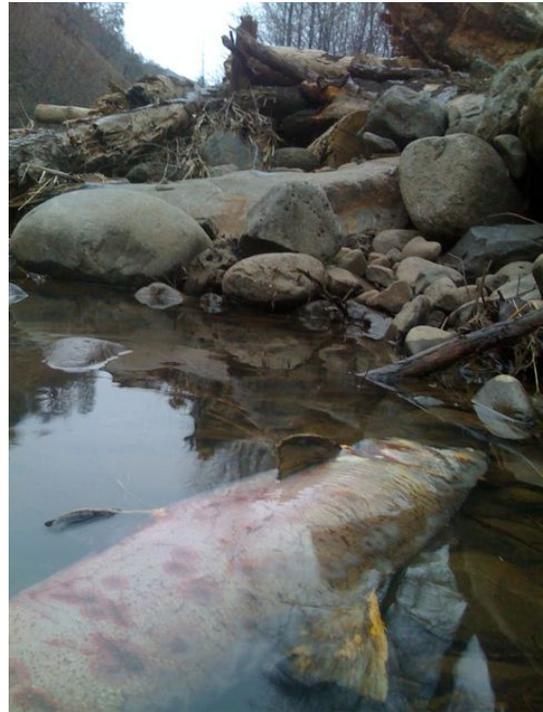
project has been a priority for the USDA Forest Service for many years. The 2.1 million dollar project received support from many sources, including four grants sponsored by MCF totaling nearly \$500,000. The Forest Service managed the project. During the summer of 2009, Trout Creek was re-routed around the project area, the dam (which measured 26 feet high by 112 feet long at the spillway) was removed along with the accumulated sediments, a natural channel was re-construction, and wood was installed in



the channel and floodplain. Threatened steelhead salmon re-entered the restored stream channel within one day of the project area being opened to fish passage. Riparian planting is planned for the fall of 2009.

#### Swale Creek River Mile 2, Klickitat County

Five large woody debris jams were constructed on private property along 800 feet of stream channel to provide pool habitat for juvenile salmonids, particularly Mid-Columbia steelhead. The Yakama Nation staff designed and managed the project. Construction of the log jams was completed in the late summer of 2008, and we have documented significant use of the project area by fry and smolts.



*Salmon carcass at project site on Swale Creek*

#### Middle Wind River Riparian Planting, Skamania County

MCF provided RFEF funding to the Underwood Conservation District for riparian planting at a restoration site on the middle Wind River. The seven acre site was planted with a hydraulic stinger in the fall of 2008. First year survival of the plants is approximately 90%. Other restoration actions at the site include installation of multiple woody debris jams.

#### Coleman Creek, Kittitas County

With funding from the ALEA grant program, MCF hired a contractor to remove a dilapidated farm bridge at Olmstead State Park. The bridge created a velocity barrier to juvenile salmonids. The Kittitas Conservation Trust and the Yakama Nation assisted with construction management on this project.

#### Columbia River Mainstem Literature Review

In June, 2009, MCF completed a review of existing literature and research affecting salmonid survival in the mainstem Columbia River between Bonneville Dam and the Yakima River confluence.

#### Cle Elum River, Kittitas County

Mid-Columbia Fisheries and the Okanogan –Wenatchee National Forest completed work on the Cle Elum River Floodplain Restoration: Cooper Bridge project this year. The goal of this project was to restore floodplain function while accommodating recreational activity along the Cle Elum River. We placed 229 large boulders to prevent vehicles from accessing the Cle Elum River and its floodplain, and installed 150 tons of small boulders to prevent parking along a vulnerable river bank. We obliterated roads within the floodplain and floodway. We also prevented recreationists from pioneering new roads to the floodplain by constructing 610 feet of guardrail along the county road. We installed 30 logs in the floodplain to trap sediment during high flows, and create pockets of soils that will support vegetative recovery. In other parts of the project area, parking, picnic areas, and pedestrian trails were constructed. This year's work was funded by the USDA Forest Service, the National Forest Foundation and the Washington Department of Ecology, and was done in cooperation with the Kittitas Conservation Trust and the Kittitas County Conservation District.

### Large Wood Replenishment – Yakima Tributaries

Based on a successful pilot project in 2008, Mid-Columbia Fisheries is continuing with the effort to replenish large wood in Yakima basin tributaries. In the 2008 pilot project, Washington Conservation Corps and AmeriCorps crews thinned dense forest stands adjacent to Taneum Creek, and manually moved the trees and logs into the creek with the use of a grip hoist. High flows have sorted the downed trees into a natural distribution in the stream. The project is a partnership between Yakama Nation and MCF. We are currently continuing the work on Taneum Creek and have received a Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant to expand this work onto public lands on other key tributaries.



*Taneum Creek, before and after project*

### Yakima Riparian Restoration

Mid-Columbia Fisheries is implementing, funding, and planning a number of riparian planting projects in the Yakima Basin, including projects along the river and on key tributaries including Lmuma Creek, Swauk Creek, the Naches River, Wilson Creek, and Cowiche Creek. In the fall of 2008, we provided grant support to the Kittitas County Conservation District to install “clump” plantings along Lmuma Creek, a tributary to the Yakima River. These plantings are contained within pre-fabricated fence panels, and will provide shade and eventual wood recruitment without requiring complete exclusion of cattle from the riparian area. Also in the fall of 2008, we assisted a community along the Yakima River with a riparian planting project. Additional projects are planned for the fall of 2009.

### Project Planning & Development

#### Cowiche Creek, Yakima County

Cowiche Creek has been the focus of a multi-agency effort to improve watershed conditions for the benefit of salmonids. Currently, Mid-Columbia Fisheries is planning a dike removal project below Cowiche Canyon and assisting the project partners with downstream acquisitions. Site preparation began in the summer of 2009 with dike removal and riparian planting planned for the fall.

#### Reecer Creek Floodplain Restoration Project, Kittitas County

Several milestones were reached in the planning for this large-scale, multi-partner project. The project will relocate 4,000 feet of Ellensburg’s Reecer Creek to its historic floodplain, and increase the length of available fish habitat in the reach to 6,000 feet. Suver levee, which currently constrains the creek, will be set back to allow for 69 acres of floodplain and upland habitat. We hired Anchor QEA to assist WDFW with project engineering, and all permitting for the project was completed. Project partners are hoping to begin construction of the project in the spring of 2010. Partners include the South Central Washington RC&D, the City of Ellensburg, WDFW, the Kittitas County Conservation District, and the Yakama Nation.

### Naches River Off-channel Habitat Restoration, Yakima County

This project will utilize irrigation return flow water to restore a wetlands area and improve off-channel rearing immediately adjacent to the Naches River. The project will be implemented in the fall of 2009.

### Upper Rattlesnake Creek, White Salmon Basin, Klickitat County

This project will stabilize multiple headcuts located in the upper watershed. The project is in the design stage. The goal of the project is to prevent additional headcutting and reduce the likelihood of channel incision which threatens to degrade upstream wetlands.

### Salmon in our Backyards, Yakima & Kittitas Counties

This Community Salmon Fund-supported project will allow us to develop riparian planting “templates” for the Northern Kittitas County, Ellensburg, and Yakima areas. We will seek one demonstration site for each template. It will also support the installation of a web camera to view salmon spawning at the Yakama Nation’s Holmes property, and fund salmon education days in both Ellensburg and Naches.

### Jack Creek, Kittitas County

With grant support from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), MCF contracted Inter-fluve, Inc. to develop restoration alternatives for the lowest two miles of Jack Creek, a tributary to the North Fork Teanaway River. The creek and its floodplain are degraded from historic logging, road building, and agriculture. The creek travels subsurface in the summer months, creating a passage barrier for fish. The restoration alternatives will focus on minimizing channel dewatering and enhancing floodplain function.

### Swauk and Iron Creeks, Kittitas County

MCF also hired Inter-fluve, Inc. to develop a feasibility analysis of restoration work in Swauk and Iron Creeks, near their confluence. The construction of Highway 97 forced Swauk Creek into a simplified, uniform channel above its confluence with Iron Creek, and disconnected the floodplain from the creek. The feasibility analysis will evaluate potential ways of increasing groundwater storage and hyporheic connectivity in this reach of Swauk Creek, and of enhancing groundwater storage potential along Iron Creek. With this analysis, we hope to identify how restoration work in the headwaters might enhance downstream habitat quality, which is currently limited by low flows and high temperatures.

## Education & Outreach

This year, Mid-Columbia Fisheries organized two major educational events in our region and helped staff four additional education events. In combination, these events reached approximately 1,700 students and adults with hands-on educational activities on watershed health, restoration, salmon life cycle, conservation themes.

- Water Jam – 210 students from Klickitat & Skamania Counties
- Salmon Education Days at the Holmes property – 250 students from Ellensburg
- Salmon Summit at Horn Rapids State Park, attended by 1,000 local students from Benton and surrounding counties.



*Recycleman & the Dumpster Divers get kids excited about conservation, Water Jam, 2009*

- Monument Middle School Watershed Festival – 100 students in Quincy
- Public salmon viewing field trip with biologist Bob Tuck of the Yakima Basin Environmental Education Program – 40 people in Ronald
- E3 Winter Fair – 100 people in Ellensburg

In addition to these events, Mid-Columbia Fisheries also provided Regional Fisheries Enhancement funding to help establish a small educational hatchery on Ahtanum Creek in conjunction with La Salle High School and the Yakama Nation. The hatchery will rear coho salmon in coordination with the Yakama Nation's coho program, which is working to re-establish naturally reproducing coho populations to this basin. The hatchery should be operational by the winter of 2009-2010.

Finally, we re-designed our website to allow for frequent updates and more comprehensive information about our projects.

## Financial Summary

<u>Project Name</u>	<u>RFEF Funds</u>	<u>Vol. Hours</u>	<u>Volunteer Value @ \$15/hr.</u>	<u>Other in-kind Donations</u>	<u>Grant Funds Through MCF</u>	<u>Other Funds Through Project Partners</u>	<u>Total Value</u>
Hemlock Dam Removal/Trout Creek Restoration	\$17,700				\$75,160	\$800,000	<b>\$892,860</b>
Swale Creek Restoration	\$26,450	10	\$150	\$7,190	\$23,207	\$40,425	<b>\$97,432</b>
Cowiche Creek Restoration	\$3,119	56	\$1,400		\$8,092		<b>\$12,667</b>
Coleman Creek Bridge Removal	\$1,356				\$5,934	\$1,000	<b>\$8,290</b>
Cle Elum River Restoration	\$2,033				\$154,543		<b>\$156,576</b>
Jack Creek Restoration Feasibility	\$2,711				\$19,637		<b>\$22,348</b>
Swauk & Iron Creeks Restoration Feasibility	\$8,970				\$15,035		<b>\$24,005</b>
Wind River Restoration, Middle Wind	\$14,200					\$181,000	<b>\$195,200</b>
Little Wind River Sediment Reduction	\$380				\$6,560		<b>\$6,940</b>
Lower Taneum Creek Restoration	\$410				\$4,936		<b>\$5,346</b>
Taneum Cr. Wood Replenishment	\$15,394					\$2,000	<b>\$17,394</b>
Mainstem Literature Review	\$1,400				\$10,000		<b>\$11,400</b>
Naches Off-Channel Restoration	\$8,568				\$2,273		<b>\$10,841</b>
Reecer Creek Restoration	\$6,946	15	\$225		\$20,018	\$3,000	<b>\$30,204</b>
Klickitat Tributaries Restoration	\$2,400	32	\$480		\$1,485		<b>\$4,397</b>
Yakima River and Tributaries Restoration (multiple projects)	\$19,460	60	\$900		\$14,542		<b>\$34,962</b>
White Salmon River Tributaries Project Development	\$2,160				\$2,016		<b>\$4,176</b>
Education & Outreach	\$14,396			\$100			<b>\$14,496</b>
Mileage, grant writing, bookkeeping, administration, and management	\$43,411	108	\$1,620				<b>\$45,139</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$191,464</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>\$4,775</b>	<b>\$7,290</b>	<b>\$363,438</b>	<b>\$1,027,425</b>	<b>\$1,594,673</b>

## Board of Directors

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>	<u>Watershed</u>
Glenn Miller	President	Construction Manager, Yakima County Road Department	Yakima Basin
Doug Miller	Secretary	Regional Fisheries Enhancement Advisory Board; Retired - Klickitat Public Utility District	Klickitat Basin
Marc Harvey	Board Member	Environmental compliance & management	Klickitat Basin
Blake Murphy	Treasurer	Washington Dept. of Natural Resources, White Salmon Watershed Management Committee	White Salmon Basin
Glen Rose	Board Member	Kittitas Field and Stream	Yakima Basin

## Staff

Margaret Neuman, Executive Director  
Rebecca Wassell, Yakima Basin Program Manager

## Contact Information

Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group  
P.O. Box 1271  
White Salmon, WA 98672  
Phone: 509-281-1322  
Email: [fish@midcolumbiarfeg.com](mailto:fish@midcolumbiarfeg.com)  
Website: [www.midcolumbiarfeg.com](http://www.midcolumbiarfeg.com)

