



Salmon River Restoration Council

2015 Annual Report

During TREX Prescribed
+ Fire Treatment on
After Rainbow Mine



Major Accomplishments of 2015

✓ Bringing good fire back to the landscape by successfully carrying out 41 acres of prescribed burns to help protect homes on three private properties in the watershed during the Klamath River Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TREX)

✓ Initiating a Salmon River focus group of the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership, which is an innovative land and fire management effort aimed at restoring natural fire resilience on a landscape level so we can break the cycle of increasingly large and devastating wildfires in our area.

✓ Advancing fisheries restoration goals on the Salmon by facilitating a collaborative work group dedicated to prioritizing restoration opportunities; working on a floodplain and mine-tailing restoration assessment for the whole Salmon River; and completing designs for our first off-channel habitat enhancement projects.

Ayukii,

In my time as Executive Director of the Salmon River Restoration Council I have had the privilege of meeting and interacting with some incredible people who care deeply about restoring the Salmon River and creating positive energy around actions in our watershed that truly make a difference for the people from this place. Since being elected on the Karuk Tribal Council in November of 2013, it has been steadily more difficult to balance the amount of energy needed for both SRRC and the Tribe. After serious consideration and with a heavy heart I have decided to step away from my role as Executive Director.

I can say without a shadow of doubt that I learned and took away from my time with the SRRC insight and knowledge that will serve our watersheds for years to come. Everything from how to put on waders and boots, to how to write an FRGP grant I owe to our incredible staff at SRRC. Our paths in life are never guaranteed, never outlined for us and will always keep us on our toes and I can say that through the relationships cultivated over the last several years I will have a much better understanding of not just what we are fighting for with watershed restoration, but WHY we are fighting for funding, attention, and energy to make our watersheds better places to live for us and the natural resources we depend upon.

Our surroundings are in constant communication with us about what they need and over the last few decades, key staff have risen to that call and taken steps to minimize negative impacts and maximize positive actions. I can't say enough about the level of commitment and the amount of energy the Restoration Council staff has put into our organization over the years to make a huge positive impact, not just in the Salmon River, but in local, regional and national arenas as well. I have the utmost respect for the people in the Salmon River watershed. Those who know me know I'm only a phone call or an email away.

My heart beats with the Salmon River always,
Josh Saxon



SRRC Board

Toz Soto, President
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Petey Brucker
Will Harling
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Jennifer Silveira
Hawk White

SRRC 2015 Staff

Josh Saxon, Executive Director
Karuna Greenberg, Restoration Director
Lyra Cressey, Associate Director
Kathy McBroom, Office Manager
Sarah Hugdahl, Program Staff and Outreach
Tom Hotaling, Fisheries Coordinator
Daralyn Soto, Watershed Education Coordinator
Scott Harding, Fire, Fuels & Forestry Coordinator
Melissa Van Scoyoc, Habitat Restoration & Noxious Weeds Coordinator
Brenda Hurlimann, Bookkeeper
Steve Adams, Watershed Center Maintenance

2015 Employees & Crews for Fuels, Fisheries and Noxious Weeds

Steve Adams	Rudy Galindo	Rick Metro
Greg Arteche	James Goldy	Shannon Monroe
Bonnie Bennett	Steve Gunther	Maria Mullins
Sam Berry	Jessica Hanscom	Rick Metro
Sheri Campbell	Jim Hardaway	William Morris
Mathew Cavin	Carson Herold	Samuel Mucioki
Edward Collins	Rhiannon Jordan	Steve Pfannensteil
Tyler Conrad	Mike Kerrick	Beau Quintar
Michael Cress	Scott Kingery	Katie Reinhart
Jesse Cullin	Danielle Klinkow	James Stewart
Lino Darling	Dave Knight	Jake Sutter
Alex Denny	Kent Kuster	Irie Swift
Kevin Dunbar	Orion Marley	Maggie Zee

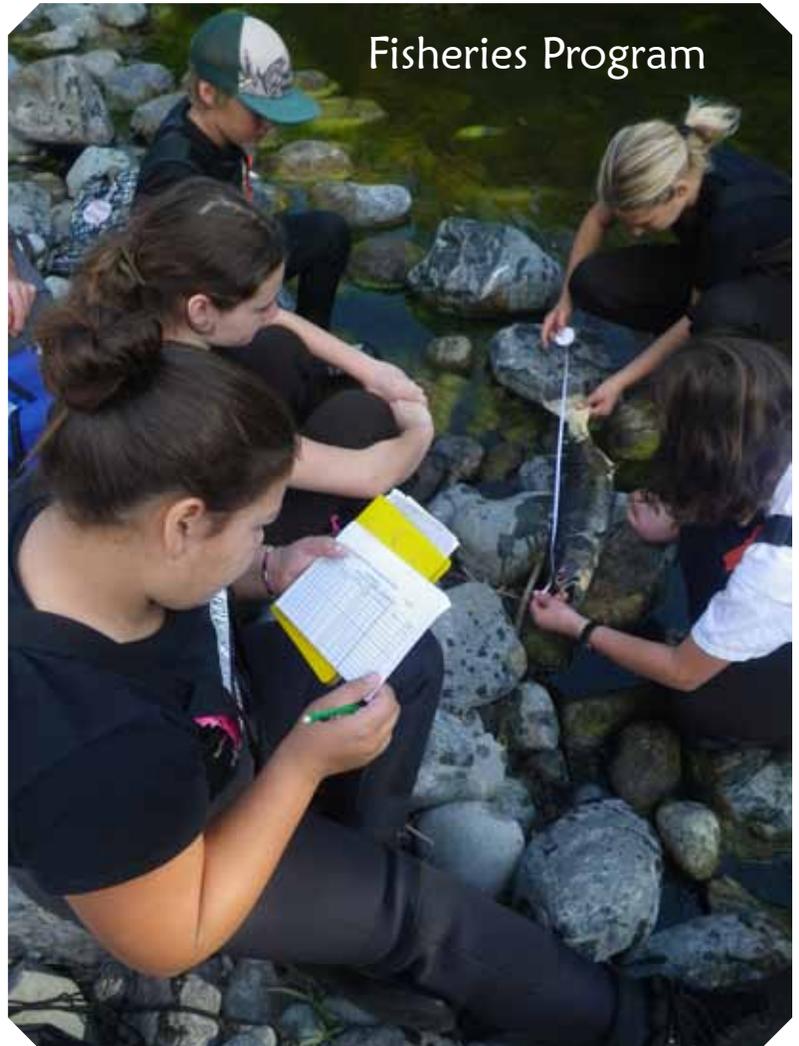
SRRC Program Updates for 2015

This was another rough year for Salmon River fish - from lethal water temperatures in July, to extreme low flows, to post fire mud flows on the North Fork, to overall low returns. The SRRC Fisheries Program was as busy as ever. We engaged in fisheries habitat restoration through brush bundling at rearing habitats and fish passage improvement at creek mouths, both of which are particularly important in drought years. We also continued adult and juvenile salmonid population monitoring, through the Annual Spring Chinook Dives, Fall and Spring Chinook Spawning Surveys, and the first year of our participation in the Coastal Monitoring Program Aquatic Survey Program for juvenile coho salmon. SRRC also continued operating the Juvenile Outmigration Screw Trap at the mouth of the Salmon River and Big Bar on the Klamath in cooperation with the Karuk Tribe.

We witnessed below average returns of adult spring and fall Chinook, as well as summer steelhead in 2015. Only 286 total spring-run Chinook were observed during our dive on July, 24th. These aren't our lowest returns in recent history, but they do mark a distinct trough after a number of average or above average years. In addition, only 183 summer steelhead were observed. Preliminary estimates of Salmon River fall Chinook were roughly 1,600 fish. During formal summer snorkel surveys for juvenile coho salmon, zero coho were observed. One juvenile coho was observed in the lower Salmon during informal surveys and an adult coho was mistakenly caught and released by a sport fisherman in November.

There was a valuable increase in volunteer participation during 2015 spawning surveys. Many new people participated! A big Thank You goes out to Nat Pennington for all of the volunteer support he brings along. The SRRC Fisheries Staff performed crucial work during the 2015 field season. Despite some of the discouraging results of our fisheries surveys this year, the SRRC Fisheries Program has a strong and trustworthy base headed into 2016.

The Fisheries program was funded this year by the Karuk Tribe, CDFW, MidKlamath Watershed Council, National Fish & Wildlife Foundation - Coho Enhancement Fund, and US Fish & Wildlife.



Fisheries Program

Older students of the river schools take part in the fall Chinook Spawner Surveys. Training for properly taking this important data is a tool which will come in handy for any future fisheries technicians!



Water Monitoring : The Salmon River, along with the rest of California, experienced another extreme drought year in 2015. It was the warmest year on record for the second year running, and the warm temperatures were exacerbated by the almost complete lack of snowpack over last winter. River levels were extremely low, and water temperatures reached highs that were lethal for fish by early July. The river also experienced a thunderstorm event in early July that led to large debris flows in the Russian Creek watershed of the North Fork Salmon. The thick mud entering the river was a mixed blessing; inputting large amounts of sediment, but also cooling water temperatures. The SRRC monitored water and air temperatures at about 50 sites throughout the watershed (*photo left*) during the summer months. In addition to our own long term sites, we continued to help the Forest Service collect temperature data throughout the watershed for the Klamath National Forest Monitoring Plan. We also collected stream flow data once a month through the summer at a dozen sites. The SRRC has continued to participate in the collaborative Klamath Basin Monitoring Program, which facilitates the coordination and implementation of water quality monitoring in the Klamath Basin. *This program was funded by the US Forest Service.*



Fire, Fuels & Forestry:

We are very thankful to have gotten a reprieve from fires on the Salmon River in this extreme fire year. We still had plenty to keep us busy – between fuels reduction projects, regional and local fire planning, our second Klamath River Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TRES), and USFS forestry projects, there hasn't been much down time.

SRRC operated two fuels reduction crews in 2015, clearing brush and flammable materials from private properties throughout the watershed. Several fuels reduction units were prepared for additional treatment with prescribed fire and in the fall we burned two of the units that our crews had recently worked on. Our crews reduced fuels along the entire north side of Sawyers Bar, working both on private property and on adjacent federal land so that homes are protected from wildfire regardless of property lines. Our fuels reduction crew returned to work at the start of November and is working in Forks of Salmon and the Bear Country Neighborhood. They have a full schedule of work for the next

couple of seasons. All together our crews treated over 90 acres this year on over 30 parcels throughout the watershed!

As part of the second annual TRES, SRRC planned and successfully implemented 41 acres of burning on three private properties in the Salmon River watershed: Butler Flat, Rainbow Mine, and Black Bear Ranch-all properties that the SRRC Fuels Reduction Crew prepared in advance for prescribed fire treatment. During TRES, we hosted a 10-day spike camp in Sawyers Bar with 18 firefighters and all the necessary resources to accomplish our goals of safely burning in order to reduce fuels, protect homes, and improve wildlife habitat. Five locals were trained as basic wildland firefighters and many others advanced their skills. We also forged new relationships with land and fire management agencies, setting the stage for more prescribed fire work in the watershed in the future. Look for SRRC's new yellow fire truck supporting our burn operations next season!

SRRC continues to be a key participant in the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WGRP), a large and growing collaborative effort aimed at restoring natural fire resiliency throughout a 1.2 million acre area in the Klamath Mountains. This year we initiated planning of demonstration projects in our three focal areas. In addition to participating in the effort's core organizational functions and developing a pilot project in the Somes Bar area, SRRC also initiated a Salmon River WGRP group to work exclusively in our watershed on fire-related issues. We hosted two workgroup meetings in 2015 and came to a consensus to develop a collaborative project with multiple fire-related objectives along Yellow Jacket Ridge and the Forks of Salmon area. Local residents and others interested in restoring the natural role of fire in our landscape, and creating fire adapted communities, are encouraged to participate in the Salmon River WGRP.

The Fire Fuels & Forestry Program was funded by the USFS - Grants Clearinghouse and Steven's Authority, USFWS Partners Program, the Siskiyou County RAC, Karuk Tribe, and exceptional volunteerism of landowners and community members throughout the watershed.



Studying leaves under the scope during the KS Outdoor Camp

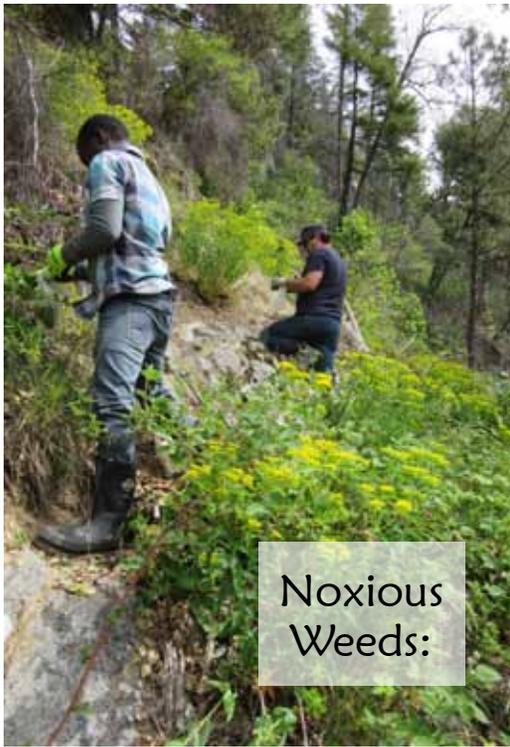
Watershed Education:

SRRC's Watershed Ed Program integrates environmental sciences and watershed stewardship into the curricula of our river schools. In 2015 students focused their watershed studies on water quality and fisheries monitoring, water and fisheries conservation, drought and climate change. The older students also spent the spring mentoring with natural resource professionals. They all shared their knowledge and projects with the community at the annual Watershed Fair in May- always a wonderful day. A new addition to the Program this year was the Klamath Siskiyou Outdoor Camp, bringing kids 7-9 years old together for a week on the Salmon River, learning about the watershed through fun, hands-on activities. SRRC also helped coordinate a "Farm to School" program at Forks of Salmon Elementary this year, invigorating the school garden, teaching food related curriculum and



Forks School kids harvest potatoes from their garden for school lunches

providing the school with funds to purchase locally produced meat and produce. We held a couple of very successful community education workshops, including a fruit tree pruning workshop and a water conservation/drought workshop, both taught by Mark DuPont from the Mid Klamath Watershed Council's Foodsheds program. Additionally SRRC hosted a conifer identification hike in the Russian Wilderness, led by the author of "Conifer Country", Michael Kauffmann. *The Watershed Education Program was funded this year by the Ford Family Foundation, CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife and USFWS.*



Noxious Weeds:

SRRC Noxious Weed Crew and dedicated volunteers worked hard this year to control invasive species throughout the Salmon River Watershed. They made excellent progress on several key species-Italian thistle, oblong spurge and spotted knapweed. Additionally weeders treated Marlahan mustard, puncturevine, Scotch broom, tree of heaven, and yellow and Malta star thistles. We target high use areas and areas where weeds are likely to spread, including trailheads, campgrounds, river accesses, and along some roadways.

All known oblong spurge sites were treated multiple times, and several large, new infestations were found late in the season. Sites that had high germination rates due to fire disturbance in 2013 did not have many plants this year, thanks to a

great job by weeders in 2014. We will continue to focus on these sites for several years to maintain the success of the 2014 season. SRRC will continue to prioritize treatment and surveying for this species in order to limit the spread as much as possible.

Several large, new spotted knapweed infestations have been found within the last two years, including an additional site at the end of this field season. Crews and volunteers treated all priority knapweed sites several times in 2015, and helped the USFS apply a black plastic mulch treatment to a densely infested site on the South Fork found during last year's post fire surveys. These new sites were not caused by recent fire suppression activity, but spotted knapweed seed may have been spread throughout the area disturbed by suppression actions. New populations could likely arise from

this disturbance. Roads and firelines disturbed during the 2014 fires were surveyed this year and though no new infestations were found, the effects of the disturbance may not be known for several years. We hope to continue surveys this coming year. SRRC staff also worked with local students, teaching weed ecology on a field day, at the local Watershed Education Fair, and at two summer camps. *Funding for the Noxious Weeds program came from CA Dept. of Food & Agriculture's State and Private Forestry Funds, USFS – Whites Fire BAER funds, and the National Forest Foundation's Pulling Together Initiative.*

SRRC's Habitat Restoration Program has grown considerably in 2015. Throughout the year we have built strong stakeholder and financial support for the program and several important projects and subbasin-wide assessments. Program Coordinator Melissa Van Scoyoc was hired for her technical training in restoration planning and GIS analysis, and has been essential in moving this program forward. The Salmon River In-Stream Restoration Work Group continued developing a Candidate Action Table of restoration actions for the entire river and major tributaries, and a draft prioritization scheme is being developed for the table. SRRC has continued to work with Stillwater Sciences to assess floodplains and mine tailings along the Salmon River, and has completed 15% conceptual designs for all floodplain reaches. These projects will set the stage for agreed upon, priority restoration efforts on the Salmon River for years to come.

The Kelly Gulch Fisheries and Riparian Enhancement Project design was delayed in order to collect summer water monitoring data to incorporate into the design. The project team has now completed review of the 30% design phase, and 100% designs are expected by spring. We have



Habitat Restoration

already begun seeking funding for implementation; if funded this would be our first floodplain restoration and habitat enhancement project of this size and scope! Similarly, we have initiated assessment and monitoring of a floodplain restoration project design at Red Bank; water monitoring wells were installed in September and topographic and geologic surveys have been completed.

The Hotelling Gulch barrier removal project is moving forward again. We now have funding for design and NEPA with help from the USFS. Another fish passage project, located on the South Fork's Taylor Creek is also moving into design phase with help from Pacific Watershed Associates. Another exciting project that appears to be moving forward is a large woody debris enhancement project for Knownothing

and Methodist Creeks. This is a direct outcome of last year's large woody debris assessments, which found both creeks deficient in large wood log jams that provide critically important habitat to juvenile salmon and other aquatic species.

Funding sources for this program include: CA Department of Fish & Wildlife; National Forest Foundation; US Fish & Wildlife; US Forest Service; National Fish & Wildlife Foundation – Bring Back the Natives; Patagonia World Trout Initiative.

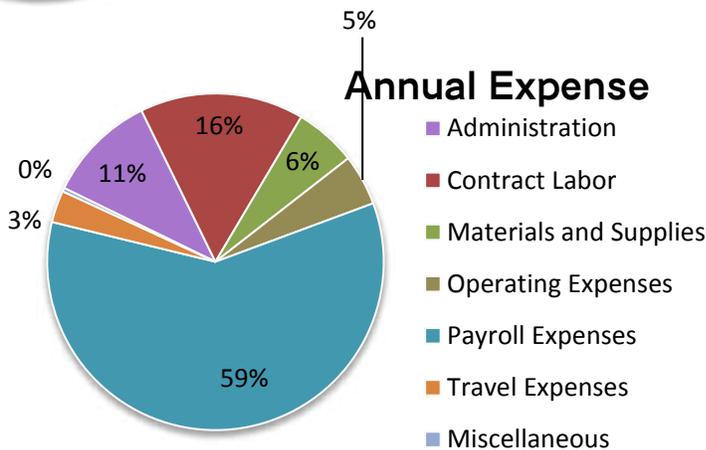
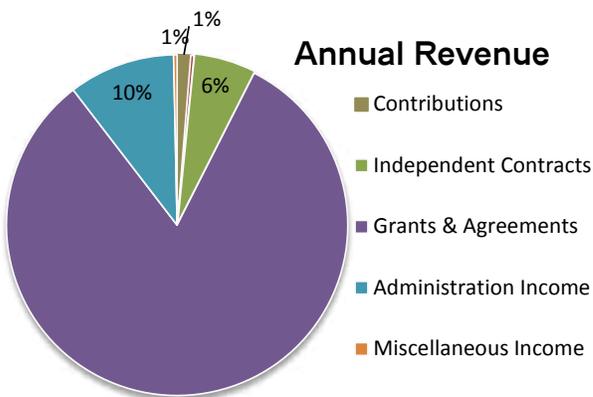


Some of SRRC's noxious weed crew and volunteers stop for a photo while digging Leafy Spurge from Salmon River Main Stem sites. The inset shows a detail of the class A noxious weed Euphorbia oblongata.

A word from the Watershed Center

The Watershed Center has long served as a valuable community hub, hosting meetings, providing computer and internet access and other resources to the community, and offering watershed information for travelers. We had several upgrades to our infrastructure this year, including a new server and office network, and funding for a new solar array to reduce the diesel generator use in our off-grid facility.

In 2015 we employed 61 people, contributing \$444,033 in payroll to the local economy. This included some great additions to our staff. Scott Harding accepted the Fire Fuels & Forestry Program Coordinator Position last winter, filling a long existing vacancy. Melissa Van Scoyoc became the coordinator of our new Habitat Restoration Program, as well as serving as interim Noxious Weed Program Coordinator. Our membership and fundraising drives contribute significantly towards our ability to operate the Watershed Center, and your contributions are much appreciated.



Financial Report

Ordinary Income/Expense

Annual Revenue	
Administration Income	\$78,759.00
Contributions	\$10,019.00
Earned Income	\$2,374.00
Grants and Agreements	\$640,677.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$2,558.00
Total Revenue	\$780,260.00
Annual Expenses	
Administration	\$78,746.00
Contract Labor	\$117,621
Miscellaneous	\$2,550.00
Operating Expenses	\$36,541.00
Payroll Expenses	\$444,033.00
Materials and Supplies	\$44,403.00
Travel Expenses	\$22,933.00
Total Expense	746,887 .00
Net Income	\$33,373.00
Volunteer and In-Kind Contribution	\$160,000.00



Thank You to our 2015 Members, Volunteers, Donors, and Funders!

Some of our noxious weed/road trash removal volunteers before setting out to dig roadside weeds and pick up trash on an Adopt-A-Hwy stretch of the Salmon River Road. Photo by Sarah Hugdahl

Thank you to all the people who donated what they could of their time, materials or money. All contributions, whether through becoming an SRRC member, sending us a donation, or volunteering your services to the SRRC and the Salmon River, are hugely appreciated.

Thank You New and Renewed Members and Donors for 2015. We work with your support!

Spring Chinook Memberships - Frank Colver, Jon Grunbaum, Danny Hagans, Nick Pence

Green Sturgeon Memberships - Frank Berry, Mary Ciavonne & John Ziegler, Sharon Hoppas & George Martin, Nick & Marilyn Letsos, Geba Greenberg & Petey Brucker, Michael Tierra

Coho Memberships - Denise & Bob Bearding, Andy Berman, Donna Brucker & David Jacques, Don Comstock, Elaine Senf Dvorak, Marie & Carl Flarity, Lee Greenberg, Chris Hatton & Tera Palmer, Lynn Halpern, Jim & Suzanne Jennings, Pamela Kaul, Jan Kieth & Gene Millburn, Robert Menzies, Michael Robinson, David Rose, Paula Rose, Sandy Bar Ranch, Cedar & Mahaj Seegar, Lee & Sandy Smith, Mary Sobol, Dee Tolson

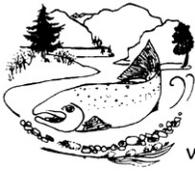
Fall Chinook Memberships - Josh Asarian, Nancy Bailey x2, Susanne Cardiff, Don Elder, Jud Ellinwood & Andrea Webb, Donna England, Gail Feldman, Kasey & Scott Gilroy, Ronn Harding, Janet Harding, Claudia & Von Holzinger, Lisa Latimer, Michael Love, Judy Meyer, Cathi Nelson, Kimberley Reiss, Ahni & Kit Robinson, Steve Robinson, Chad Smith, Steve & Lee Stefanki

Winter Steelhead Memberships - Craig Bunas, Dean & Karen Davis, ECOTEAS, Linda Hugdahl, Sarah Jacobs, Bill & Patsy Marcy, Amber Maywald, David & Valerie Van Scoyoc, Matt Van Scoyoc, Melissa Van Scoyoc, Kristen Sellmer, Mary Strote, and additional donations from John Brennan, Sarah Colvig, Linda Ciavonne in memory of Dominic Ciavonne Ziegler, Dan Grunbaum

Thank You to our Funders:

CA Department of Conservation, CA Department of Fish & Wildlife, CA Department of Food & Agriculture, Grants Clearinghouse, Firedoll Foundation, Ford Family Foundation, Karuk Tribe, Mid Klamath Watershed Council, National Forest Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Shasta Regional Community Foundation, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Strong Foundation, Sustainable Northwest, Trees Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Service, US Forest Service

The Salmon River Restoration Council's mission is to assess, protect, restore and maintain the Salmon River ecosystems with the active participation of the local community, focusing on restoration of the anadromous fisheries resources and the development of a sustainable economy.



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Etna Summit December 28, 2015 photo by Lyra Cressey