

---

# **Rogue River Basin Habitat Restoration Program, Instream Habitat Enhancement and Riparian Revegetation Project Monitoring and Stewardship Annual Report**

## **Introduction**

This report summarizes The Freshwater Trust’s (TFT) 2025 monitoring and stewardship activities for the Rogue River Basin Habitat Restoration Program funded by the Bureau of Reclamation. The intent of current program work is to increase the likelihood that TFT restoration projects implemented in support of Bureau of Reclamation BiOp requirements continue to meet their performance objectives and permit requirements. Assessments conducted in 2025 demonstrate that instream and floodplain restoration elements are continuing to provide high quality habitat to juvenile coho salmon and are on a strong trajectory to provide long-term high-quality habitat.

## **Background**

To help the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) complete its Rogue River Basin restoration requirements outlined in the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) “Endangered Species Act Biological Opinion and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Response for the Future Operation and Maintenance of the Rogue River Basin Project Rogue and Klamath River Basins (HUCs: 18010206, 17100308, 17100307) Oregon and California” (2012 BiOp), TFT recruited, designed, and implemented fifteen projects for Reclamation in the Rogue River basin between 2014 and 2021. To date, TFT has installed fifteen projects on South Fork Little Butte, Neil Creek, Wagner Creek, Lone Pine Creek, Emigrant Creek, and Bear Creek (in 2015-2021) under several cooperative agreements. Restoration project actions completed to achieve BiOp obligations include the installation of large woody material (LWM), side channel reconnection (SCR), livestock exclusion fencing (fencing), off-channel watering for livestock (OCW), road crossing/fish passage improvement (passage), and riparian revegetation (reveg). Table 1 lists completed projects and associated restoration actions.

In 2022, following completion of implementation and initial maintenance efforts, a new agreement (R22AC00441-00) between TFT and Reclamation consolidated all previously awarded grant agreements and associated project work into a single agreement. The result is an agreement that allows TFT to undertake Large Woody Material and Riparian revegetation project monitoring and stewardship actions at Reclamation’s Rogue River BiOp project sites that are designed to meet the terms and conditions of project permits (which extend out as far as 2027); ensure riparian and LWM project sites continue to meet BiOp objectives; ensure project sites do not pose increased risk to private property and infrastructure; and ensure project sites continue to meet landowner expectations.

**Table 1. List of projects and associated restoration actions completed.**

<b>Project Sites</b>	<b>Restoration Actions</b>
Emigrant RM 1.5	LWM, Revegetation
Neil RM 0.1	LWM, Revegetation
Neil RM 2.97	LWM, Revegetation, Passage
Neil RM 3.04	LWM, Revegetation, Passage
Bear RM 24.7	LWM, Revegetation, Fencing
Bear RM 25.3-25.8	LWM, Revegetation, Side Channel Reconnection, Passage
Bear RM 25.5	LWM, Revegetation, Side Channel Reconnection, Fencing
South Fork Little Butte RM 1.3	LWM, Revegetation, Fencing
South Fork Little Butte RM 1.92	LWM, Revegetation, Side Channel Reconnection
South Fork Little Butte RM 2.2	LWM, Reveg, Fencing, Off Channel Water Facility
South Fork Little Butte RM 3.32	LWM, Revegetation, Side Channel Reconnection
Lone Pine RM 0.5	Revegetation
Neil RM 2.0 Phase 1	LWM, Revegetation, Fencing, Off Channel Water Facility
Neil RM 2.0 Phase 2	LWM, Revegetation, Fencing, Off Channel Water Facility
Wagner RM 0.25	Revegetation

## Methods

To fulfill the monitoring and reporting obligations of this new agreement, TFT staff performed Qualitative LWM Monitoring, Qualitative Vegetation Monitoring, ODFW Fish Passage Authorization Monitoring, and Photo Point Monitoring. This monitoring occurred twice over the duration of the fourth year operating under the newly established agreement (during summer high flow and winter low flow). The subsequent appendices include data collected during these surveys and actionable management recommendations in response to these findings. Qualitative vegetation survey details, LWM survey details and Photo point reports are organized by project site in the order listed in Table 1.

## Summary of Riparian Revegetation Findings

Qualitative riparian surveys were conducted at all project sites by TFT project staff in June and December 2025. Project sites were walked in their entirety and inspected to assess the development of riparian habitat and address management needs to ensure continued project success. Survey attributes measure native plant health, overall cover of noxious and invasive species, wildlife presence, and management considerations related to these conditions. Photo-points were collected to document current conditions and demonstrate project growth since implementation. Recent stewardship actions and recommendations to continue to meet performance objectives are included in these surveys.

## Summary of Instream Habitat Enhancement Findings

Qualitative LWM surveys were completed at all LWM project sites by TFT project staff in June and December 2025. Project sites were walked in their entirety, and all project elements were inspected. Survey attributes measure habitat complexity and diversity, weighted usable area (WUA), side channel discharge and connectivity, changes in flood capacity, significant erosion or deposition, and any loss of large wood from constructed jams. Photo-points and additional representative photos were collected at each site to visually characterize project elements. Qualitative fish passage at crossings surveys were completed at all three road-stream crossing locations. Survey attributes measure changes in flood capacity, significant erosion or deposition, significant large wood recruitment, fish passage and presence of jump heights over six inches. No stewardship activities were performed on LWM or constructed side channels in 2025. Additionally, surveys reveal no maintenance or adaptive management activities are required to continue to meet performance objectives and permit requirements. Adaptive management strategies to enhance project performance identified by the project team were explored throughout 2025 and will be pursued on South Fork Little Butte Creek with the goal of implementing during the summer of 2026.