



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

National Fish Passage Program

Hydrology and Engineering Expertise in the Alaska Region

Intact fish habitat and native fishes play a central role in Alaskan ecosystems, heritage and economies. Healthy fish stocks are critical to the continued vitality of subsistence lifestyles, and support commercial and recreational fisheries worth billions of dollars annually to the State's economy.

Fish Passage Barriers in Alaska

With largely intact salmon runs and tens of thousands of streams across Alaska, the fact that fish passage barriers could be a significant threat to Alaska's fisheries may come as a surprise. However, an estimated 5,000-10,000 culverts underly Alaska's resource access roads, major state highways, and neighborhood streets. These can block juveniles and some adult salmon during all or certain times of year, as well as alter natural stream processes to which native fishes are adapted.

Engineering and Hydrology Solutions

Fish passage engineering and technical support are important tools for implementing the National Fish Passage Program in Alaska. Service support ranges from project selection and prioritization, funding, planning,

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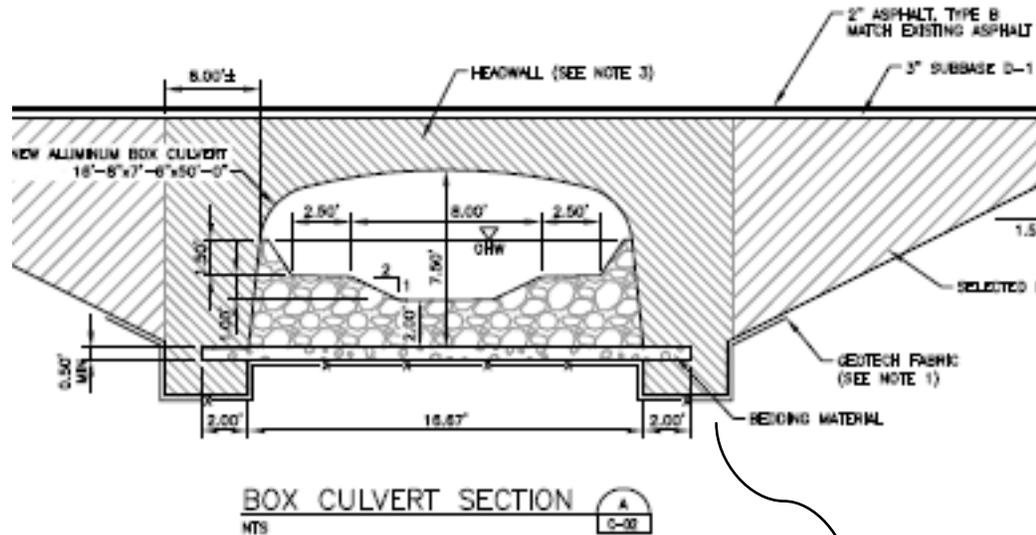
design, review, inspection, monitoring and evaluation. Region 7 continues to facilitate the delivery of on-the-ground fish passage projects by designing, reviewing and implementing projects in coordination with partner organizations.

Engineering and hydrological solutions to fish passage problems in the state are also presented annually at a series of educational workshops: in 2011, the Service and its state partners are holding three fish passage engineering workshops for professionals in Fairbanks, Homer and Juneau.

Region Capacity

Region 7 has one permanent fish passage engineer/hydrologist. Between 2006 and 2010, over 60 fish passage projects have been implemented with direct support of the engineer, as well as a myriad of stream channel and bank restoration projects.

<http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/restoration/index.htm>



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Government Creek: a 5.5ft perched/undersized culvert was replaced with a 16ft arch engineered to accommodate the system's natural hydrology and ecology of local fish populations.