



NEWS RELEASE

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Cooperation leads to Solutions for Wild Fish

Community Celebration Will Mark Unprecedented Public-Private Collaboration for Fish Passage on the South Fork Klaskanine River

Portland, OR, September 24, 2007—A small, dedicated group of local citizens, county employees, and conservationists will come together along the banks of the South Fork Klaskanine River on Wednesday, September 26 to celebrate completion of a fish passage project that could never have happened without the unique contributions of each. Fish passage projects can often be complicated and cost prohibitive, but this project achieved an unprecedented level of collaboration to secure funding and expertise. Private citizens, local businesses, and state and federal agencies worked together to pool their time, talent and resources to improve habitat for wild fish.

The effort began last year, when employees of the Clatsop County Fisheries Project decided to remove an aging diversion dam on the South Fork Klaskanine River. The river, a tributary of Youngs River near Astoria, contains threatened runs of wild salmon and steelhead as well as hatchery fish, but the dam hindered fish passage during low river flows. While there was no legal or regulatory mechanism that required the hatchery to remove the dam, employees were determined to make operations compatible with the needs of not only hatchery fish, but also wild salmonids, trout and lamprey. In August, the dam was replaced with a low head diversion and fish screen. Now, during both high and low flows, more than three miles of high quality spawning and rearing habitat will be accessible to wild coho, chum, coastal cutthroat trout, Pacific lamprey, steelhead, and Chinook salmon.

To achieve this, the old dam had to be replaced with a new structure. However, dam removal entailed substantial effort beyond the scope of hatchery operations. The fishery project employees began by involving the local community, which brought local donations of labor, services and materials from businesses and individuals, as well as a high level of ownership and pride in the project.

At the same time, the county fisheries employees contacted a number of state and federal agencies for funding assistance and technical support. The result was an unparalleled level of multi-agency cooperation and coordination to bring technical and financial

investments beyond what any single entity or program could provide. In less than one year, partnering agencies including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife worked together to provide professional survey, hydraulic analysis and modeling, engineering design, technical review, federal permitting, financial assistance, contracting, and oversight.

The final project incorporates innovative technology for reliable water diversion, stream bank erosion prevention, and unimpeded up- and downstream fish passage at all flows. “The technically innovative methods pioneered by this partnership can now be applied to many other sites in the region,” said State Supervisor Kemper McMaster of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which provided funding, technical assistance, and federal compliance oversight and coordination.

Just as important as the technology, the effort also demonstrates how streamlined agency interaction and public involvement can address local water needs while providing habitat for native fish.

“Successful and lasting conservation projects are best achieved through the cooperative efforts of a variety of individuals and groups,” said State Conservationist Bob Graham with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), which provided funding, professional engineering, and biology services.

Entities involved in the \$300,000 project include, but are not limited to:

- American Rivers**
- Astoria Builders Supply**
- Bergerson Construction**
- Big River Excavation**
- Clatsop County Fisheries Program**
- Clatsop Soil and Water Conservation District**
- Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce**
- Ed Fisher Construction**
- Englund Marine Supply**
- Hampton Affiliates**
- Longview Fibre**
- National Marine Fisheries Service**
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s**
 - Community-Based Restoration Program
- Natural Resources Conservation Service**
 - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
- Natural Solutions**
- Nygaard Logging**
- Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife -Screen Shop, R&E Board**
- Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board**
- US Fish and Wildlife Service**
 - Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program
- Weyerhaeuser Corporation**

Media Opportunity

The media is invited to attend the community celebration at 2:00 p.m. at the South Fork Klaskanine Fish Hatchery. Clatsop County Fisheries will provide a brief overview of the project and recognize contributors. Special awards will be presented for the outstanding efforts of partners and key individuals. The presentations are expected to last approximately 30 minutes. A salmon dinner will follow with opportunities to view the project and interview attendees. The event will be held outdoors in a wooded area; attendees are advised to dress accordingly and be prepared for rain. Please RSVP to Clatsop County Fisheries at (503) 325-6452 for detailed directions and more information.



Photo on left - Migrating salmon at the South Fork Klaskanine dam prior to replacement: *The old diversion dam at the South Fork Klaskanine hatchery hindered fish migration when stream flows were low.*

Photo on right - Restored habitat: *Where the dam was once located, wild fish now have unimpeded access to an additional three miles of high quality spawning and rearing habitat.*

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