



**CHARITABLE
CONTRIBUTIONS**

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TulalipCares.org

Funds Distribution Report

Recipient Organization:
Conservation Northwest

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Organization's General Goals:
Conservation Northwest protects, connects and restores wildlands and wildlife from the Washington coast to the British Columbia Rockies.

Date of Award:	Level:
2019 Q2	\$2,501 to \$5,000

Specific Use for This Award:
For more information, please read the attached report from Conservation Northwest.

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Conservation Northwest Final Report – Tulalip Tribes Charitable Contributions

2019 Central Cascades Watershed Restoration Project

Report Number: Q2 2019 14.2

Number of People Impacted: 22,000

Website: www.conservationnw.org

Thank you for your generous support of our Central Cascades Watershed Restoration Project! Your grant allowed us to engage the local community in restoration of over 2 miles of illegal motorized trails and to finalize a restoration blueprint with the Forest Service on about 200,000 acres of the upper Green and White River watersheds. Restoration will protect the Puget Sound and the rivers that drain into it, sustaining our region in the face of continued development and climate change. Details below.

Overview

Since 2015, we have been working with Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and other partners to achieve whole-watershed restoration of the Upper Green and White River watersheds. Your support helped us advance this work by restoring illegal motorized trails and by developing a restoration blueprint with the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. Measurable objectives included:

- Restore 2 to 4 miles of illegal motorized trails;
- Engage 20 to 40 community volunteers in outreach and habitat restoration;
- Install 10 informational signs to keep users on designated trails;
- Complete restoration blueprint of agreed upon strategies for improved watershed health.

We met all of these objectives and more, as outlined below.

Progress

On-the-ground restoration

We worked in coordination with staff at Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest and diverse local stakeholder groups to advance on-the-ground restoration in the headwaters of the upper White River watershed. In 2019, we engaged a contractor who completed archaeological surveys on 16.5 miles of roads and trails that we planned to restore. The surveys were needed to ensure that any areas with cultural and tribal artifacts were recorded. We shared the report with the Forest Service and the Muckleshoot and Tulalip Tribes, who approved the report.

With the survey work complete, we hired a contractor to implement restoration, successfully closing over 2 miles of illegal motorized trails and unnecessary roads. We focused



Before (top) and after (bottom) restoration of an illegal motorized trail

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on three areas. First, we decommissioned and closed 1000 feet of a road that had sustained significant illegal damage to a wetland system, and we restored the wetland. Wetland restoration involved blocking further vehicle access, regrading deep tire ruts, reestablishing native vegetation, and retaining walk-in access to a huckleberry enhancement area that is of value to local tribes.

We also removed 2.4 miles of steeply eroded, illegal trails, improving habitat and hydrologic function on an adjacent 10 acres. These illegal trails had existed on the forest for over 20 years. The unauthorized 'mudding' and trail creation had damaged higher elevation wet meadows and contributed to sedimentation and erosion of surrounding areas into nearby creeks and the larger watershed. To reduce erosion, we removed deep tire ruts, added erosion-control wood straw to bare ground, and transplanted locally sourced vegetation to revegetate damaged areas.

Finally, we installed a boulder barricade along a road, removing vehicle access but retaining walk-in access for dispersed camping and foraging activities. Three gates were installed to improve wildlife habitat and watershed health, while balancing the access needs of tribes and the Forest Service.

The archaeological surveys we completed also allowed the Forest Service to close and decommission an additional 15.5 miles of roads, improving habitat connectivity for wildlife and water quality for salmon!

Volunteers and outreach

Community support is vital to ensure a lasting impact on this landscape, so we engaged diverse user groups in outreach and stewardship. During trail decommissioning, we reached out to local communities about the importance of watershed restoration and a legal access system, reaching about 20 individuals who recreate on the National Forest. These users included campers, hikers, mushroom pickers, backcountry horsemen, recreational shooters, and many four-wheel drive enthusiasts.

We also hosted a family-friendly guided hike with Latino Outdoors, and we secured the support of groups such as Pacific Northwest Four Wheel Drive Association, Back Country Horsemen Tahoma Chapter, Artemis Outdoors, and Phi Beta Sigma, all of whom provided volunteers for restoration.

Volunteers repaired eroded areas associated with motorized use near the Naches Trail, built an informational kiosk and repaired a damaged one, installed 12 signs to help the public understand where legal motorized use is allowed, and picked up trash. The signage will make it easier for ORV riders to stay on *legal* Forest Service routes and inform them of the consequences of unauthorized travel across fragile ecosystems. We have ordered 40 additional signs for installation this fall. We also partnered with Back Country Horsemen to improve a



Volunteers help build an informational kiosk

dangerous section of elevated trail, protecting the wetlands below from stock damage. Finally, volunteers installed two game cameras to document wildlife presence and to monitor the route closures for further off-road vehicle use. The data confirmed that our road and trail closures successfully stopped illegal motorized use! In total, we reached 68 people through volunteer engagement.

We reached another 100 people through presenting at the Puyallup Watershed Symposium, which brought together stakeholders working on the health of this watershed. We also led field tours with representatives from ten different recreational and stakeholder groups, including tribes, legislative aids, and other key decision-makers in our region to demonstrate the need for public funding of forest and watershed restoration in the Central Cascades, such as the Legacy Roads and Trails Program, which was just reinstated to provide federal funding to the federal lands maintenance backlog.

Restoration blueprint

Through our input and technical advice, the Forest Service completed its blueprint for restoration: the Snoquera Decision, which will guide restoration actions on about 200,000 acres of the upper Green and White River watersheds for at least the next decade. The Forest Service drafted a preliminary list of immediate needs that partners could help with, although this has been delayed due to Covid-19. We are hoping this document can be used to bring folks together and fill the gaps where the agency doesn't have adequate staff or resources. The agency has also continued to explore strategies related to conservation finance, which could help fund the entirety of large, landscape-scale restoration plans like Snoquera. With funding from Conservation Northwest, contractors are currently working on forest stand and roads surveys in the Upper Green River Watershed to help the Forest Service prioritize which roads and silviculture treatments are of highest priority to move the watershed and forest toward greater resiliency and function. The implementation of Snoquera is expected to roll out in phases over the next decade; through collaboration with many other partners, we are moving towards a more solid plan and timeline for implementation and funding of all aspects of restoration in these watersheds.

Publicity

We shared this work on our website and social media and on partner blogs, reaching about 20,000 people. We've included a sample of communications below. The first link goes to a blog post on the National Forest Foundation website, which includes a thank you to Tulalip Tribes at the end of the post!

<https://www.nationalforests.org/blog/restoring-watershed-health-and-habitat-connectivity-on-mt-baker-snoqualmie-national-forest>

<https://www.conservationnw.org/central-cascades-watersheds-restoration-season-wrap-up/>

<https://www.conservationnw.org/response-to-final-snoquera-landscape-analysis-decision/>

Finances

Your generous grant helped to cover the costs of the contract to restore the illegal routes [REDACTED]. It also covered a portion of payroll for the project lead, Laurel Baum, [REDACTED] to help develop the restoration blueprint, oversee the route restoration, and engage volunteers.

Thanks again for your support! This work could not have occurred without your thoughtful giving. Because of people like you, we are improving water quality for fish, wildlife, and people in our region.

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