

Western Native Trout Initiative

Idaho - Badger Creek Flow and Habitat Restoration Project Summary



Badger Creek before and after stream restoration (left, top and bottom) and before and after irrigation diversion removal (right, top and bottom).

Background

- Project was funded in 2006, the first year of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan's Western Native Trout Initiative (FWS received \$8,960 for this project)
- Recovery plans developed for bull trout in the Little Lost River drainage identified the need to protect, restore, and maintain suitable habitat and eliminate migration barriers. Diverse partnerships were formed to accomplish this and still maintain ranching and farming activities occurring in the basin since the late 1800's.

Purpose

- Assist in the recovery of threatened bull trout in the Little Lost River drainage by removing an irrigation diversion blocking passage into pristine habitat, restore the lower ½ mile of Badger Creek through channel restoration, revegetation, and riparian fencing, and obtain flow agreements which keep water in the stream.

Cooperators

Pancheri, Inc Family Partnership



Project Status

- In 2001, the U.S. Forest Service eliminated grazing in the headwaters of Badger Creek and in 2005, placed woody debris below headcuts that were blocking passage to upstream habitat.
- In 2004, plans began for restoring the lower stream channel and restructuring irrigation practices on the Pancheri Ranch.
- In 2005-2006, the point of diversion was changed from Badger Creek to the Little Lost drainage, irrigation practices were changed from flood to a pivot sprinkler system, and a non-diversion agreement for Badger Creek was obtained through the Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program.
- In 2007 the stream channel was reconstructed and the irrigation diversion was removed, once again connecting the lower reaches of Badger Creek with habitat upstream for bull trout. A 150 foot wide riparian area was excluded from grazing with the construction of 3,200 feet of buck and rail fence. Wetland, riparian and upland areas were planted with local, native species.
- In August 2007, Trout Unlimited hosted a tour of the Little Lost Basin projects for all partners, with Idaho Senator Mike Crapo as the Guest of Honor.
- The project has been completed. Expenditures for all components including stream restoration, water agreement, fencing, pivot irrigation system, diversion relocation and revegetation totaled over \$400,000. The Western Native Trout Initiative Portion was \$8,960.
- Barrier removal and habitat restoration in other portions of the Little Lost drainage complement the Badger Creek Project. Bull trout now have unimpeded access into all reaches of the Little Lost River and its tributaries, thanks to the partnerships created by landowners, non-governmental organizations, and federal and state agencies.



Little Lost River bull trout