

# Trout Creek WNTI Project Progress Report December 2007

## Background

Trout Creek is one of four isolated redband trout streams north of the McCloud River on the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. Increased OHV use within Trout Creek Campground has resulted in degradation of redband trout and riparian habitats. The Western Native Trout Initiative has provided \$29,849 to improve habitat for redband trout, stabilize eroding banks, and mitigate OHV impacts on the lower perennial reach of Trout Creek within Trout Creek Campground.



*Fire crews planting riparian vegetation at site of low water ford on Trout Creek.*



## Scope of Work

### 1. Stream Restoration

- Repair or remove nonfunctional instream structures that have failed or are contributing to channel degradation.
- Restore stream banks and channel at low water fords.
- Install gradient control structures to reduce bank erosion and downcutting.

- Reconfigure existing in-stream woody debris to prevent lateral scour and protect streambanks.
  - Lower elevation of artificial floodplain at north end of campground and vegetate with riparian and terrestrial native plants.
  - Remove encroaching conifers from Trout Creek floodplain.
  - Remove bull thistle, mullein and other non-native species.
- 2. Protection (OHV damage mitigation)**
- Install split rail fence in portions of upper and lower campground to minimize impacts to meadow, riparian and aquatic resources.
  - Decommission 2 low water fords.
  - Decommission rock gabion water drafting ledge.
  - Obliterate fire rings where they are damaging meadow habitat.
- 3. Education and Interpretation**
- Construct kiosk in campground for posting education and interpretive materials.
  - Develop educational signs and posters that highlight activities occurring in Upper McCloud Watershed that benefit and/or protect redband trout populations and educate campers on purpose of fencing and need to minimize impacts to aquatic and riparian resources.

## Cooperators

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Lead applicant for WNTI funds (\$29,849) and participant in project planning and field trips.
- U.S. Forest Service – Responsible for project planning and implementation. Provided personnel time to oversee planning and implementation valued at \$10,000.
- California Trout – Contributed \$5,000 for kiosk construction and redband trout brochure development. Also is assisting in development of additional interpretive materials for campground kiosk.
- The River Exchange – Provided \$16,000 and staff time to plan and coordinate community and school working field trips to Trout Creek as well as kiosk construction.

## Project Status

The project is on schedule and will be completed by July 2008. As of December 2007 project expenditures totaled \$38,000 (includes \$18,000 of WNTI funds and \$20,000 from partners). The following activities were completed in Fall 2007:

- Functional instream structures were repaired and nonfunctional structures were removed.
- The kiosk was constructed and will be installed next spring.
- Both low water fords were obliterated and replanted with riparian vegetation.
- Gradient control structures were installed at both former ford locations. Streambanks were recontoured and revegetated.

- Fire rings located in sensitive meadow areas were removed.
- Conifers encroaching on the floodplain were cut and the debris was chipped.
- The artificial floodplain was lowered and recontoured.



*Camper created low water fords were causing bank erosion and channel widening.*



*High School students from Mount Shasta planting at former ford location.*



*Forest Service crews install channel grade control and bank stabilization structure.*



*High School students repairing fish habitat structure.*



*Conifers encroaching on floodplain.*



*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with cut conifers prior to chipping.*