

About Us

The Restoration Partnership is comprised of the Coeur d'Alene Basin Natural Resource Trustees. Our mission is to return the Basin's natural resources that have been harmed by mine-waste contamination to a healthy condition. Public participation is important to us and we encourage you to be involved. If you have any questions about us or about this report, please contact us at:

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Trustees

U.S. Department of Interior

Bureau of Land Management
Fish and Wildlife Service



U.S. Department of Agriculture

Forest Service



Coeur d'Alene Tribe

Lake Management
Department



State of Idaho

Department of
Environmental Quality



Department of Fish and
Game



Robinson Creek

In 2012, the Partnership purchased 10 (of a total 62) acres of land next to the Schlepp Agriculture to Wetland Conversion Project. This area is known as the Robinson Creek Habitat Segment Expansion. The area is owned by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game who is working with the Department of Environmental Quality to do a wetland conversion. In FY14, they:

- Finalized designs to treat non-native plants.
- Finalized designs to enhance waterfowl habitat.
- Enhanced other wetland habitat values and provided recreational opportunities.



2014

Accomplishments

(October 2013-September 2014)

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Wetland Habitat



This was an exciting year for basin residents as they were able to see the success of the Schlepp Agriculture to Wetland Conversion Project as evidenced by the presence of thousands of tundra swans. It was the first time this project site played host to significant numbers of swans since the habitat restoration work began in the west field. Tundra swans have been a symbol for the need for restoration in the Basin due to their sensitivity to lead contamination and resultant mortality rates. The success in 2014 can be attributed to the combination of many factors, including the use of decoys, water control mechanisms, habitat improvements and unusually high water levels throughout the rest of the lower Coeur d'Alene River floodplains.

This project began as a remedial project led by
See: Wetland, pg. 2

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Photo: Westslope cutthroat trout with bull trout
by Pat Clayton



Integration

The Partnership continued to improve its integration efforts with the EPA's remedial work in FY14.

This included providing design review, technical feedback, and field expertise on various remedy projects, participating in coordination meetings, and providing restoration updates to the EPA. This is an essential function of both restoration and remediation work as they are often complementary activities. These efforts have been fruitful in helping both groups become familiar with key values as they look forward to future work together.

The primary example in FY14 took place at the Kahnderosa RV Park & Campground Remediation Pilot Project. This was an EPA bank stabilization project that was intended to reduce erosion and prevent human exposure to contaminants. The Partnership, through the U.S. Forest Service, provided technical expertise and on-site consultation to help make the project provide more suitable habitat for fish and wildlife. The result was an innovative design that relies heavily on local plant species to provide stability for remediation purposes as well habitat for restoration purposes.

Wetland (continued from pg. 1)

the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The goal of the remediation portion of the project was to transform this 400-acre tract of lead-contaminated agricultural land into a wetland suitable for migratory waterfowl (especially tundra swans). The EPA completed the remediation phase in 2008 and the Restoration Partnership (Partnership) has continued to improve the habitat since.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been the project lead for the Partnership since 2008. In FY14 they and their partners continued vegetation monitoring and maintenance to ensure habitat diversity. This included treatments to reduce invasive species such as reed canarygrass. Water management was also a key accomplishment that aided in this year's success. The result was that nearly 20,000 waterfowl, representing 20 species, were observed using the wetland. Key partners on this project have included the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, CH2MHILL, Ducks Unlimited, and Mike and Brenda Schlepp (landowners).



Tundra swans and other waterfowl at the wetland restoration site.

Restoration Planning

The Partnership, in FY14, continued the effort of developing a draft Restoration Plan and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Coeur d'Alene Basin. This is a crucial step in the National Environmental Policy Act process.

It is an effort that will identify restoration actions to be undertaken, using Trustee settlement funds, with a programmatic approach. Restoration actions in the Basin are complex and must integrate restoration science, a suite of ecosystem processes, community values, legal requirements, technical feasibility, appropriate management plans, cost-effectiveness, and clean-up efforts. The Trustees hope to release the draft Plan and EIS later this year (2015) for public comment.

Planning Process

