

Jocko River Watershed Restoration

Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes

In 1998, the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes finalized a Consent Decree with the Atlantic Richfield Company (ARCO) to pay for the restoration, replacement, and/or acquisition of injured natural resources in the Upper Clark Fork River Basin (UCFRB), as compensation for natural resource damages basin-wide. Following an extensive natural resources inventory and restoration suitability analysis, the Jocko River watershed was selected as the target restoration watershed. The Jocko was chosen because it is most similar in size, streamflow, hydrology, and species composition to Silver Bow Creek the primary areas of injury in the UCFRB. In addition, the Jocko River drainage is a "core area" for bull trout, which are listed as threatened pursuant to the Endangered Species Act. The Jocko River watershed also supports a relatively healthy population of westslope cutthroat trout, a Tribal Species of Special Consideration and a State of Montana Species of Special Concern.

The Jocko watershed was also selected for restoration because it is threatened with further resource injury due to the high rate of development in the watershed. The lower reaches of the Jocko River ecosystem have suffered significant disturbance from land use such as agriculture, irrigation, livestock grazing, transportation, and residential and commercial development. These and other cumulative water quality impacts have destabilized a substantial

portion of the Jocko River and substantially modified bull trout and westslope cutthroat trout habitat in the Jocko River, particularly downstream of the town of Arlee. These habitat modifications have exacerbated the problems of competition for existing habitat by brown and brook trout, and hybridization of westslope cutthroat trout with rainbow and Yellowstone cutthroat trout.

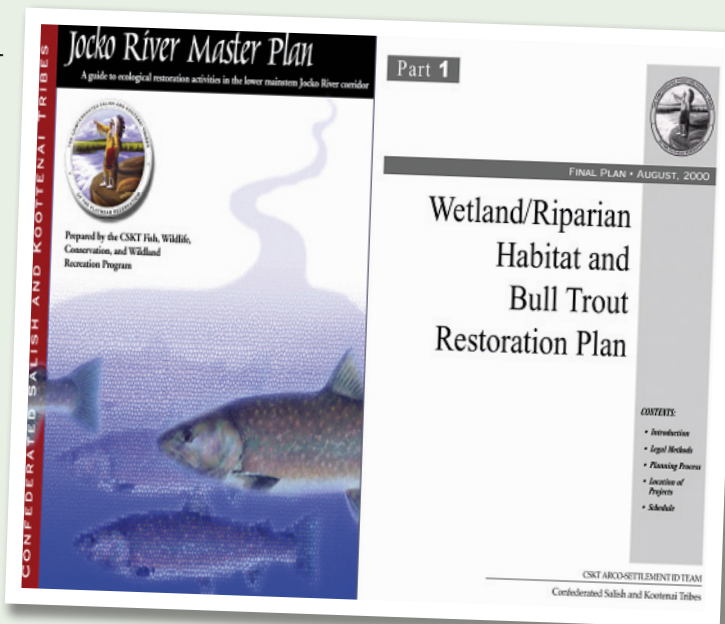
tion Plan). Part I of the Restoration Plan provides background information, while Part II explains our approach to watershed restoration. It states: "The basic goal of watershed restoration is to reestablish the natural processes that existed before the watershed was disturbed. Because we believe a comprehensive approach has a greater chance of succeeding, the goal includes reestablishing natural linkages between the terrestrial, riparian,

and aquatic parts of the ecosystem. Our focus, however, will be on the protection and restoration of riparian and wetland areas because they have the greatest influence over the health of the watershed."

An important aspect of the tribes' restoration effort is to share our approach and lessons learned and educate others on how to protect and enhance these important resources. To this end, we have created a website (www.jockoriver.net) to share the Master

Plan as well as our monitoring results; we also developed an educational interactive DVD entitled "Explore the River". The restoration science and data in the Master Plan and the Salish and Pend d'Oreille culture are linked through the DVD. Join us by visiting the website or requesting the DVD.

For more information contact: Les Evarts
lese@cskt.org.



The tribes' approach to watershed restoration in the Jocko River drainage is comprehensive, and includes land acquisition, fish management, information and education, and active and passive restoration components. The Jocko River Master Plan is the road map for the restoration component of watershed restoration effort. This document describes the watershed history, present condition, and gives a vision for the future, and also outlines restoration strategies and techniques. It tiers off of the *Riparian/Wetland Habitat and Bull Trout Restoration Plan; Parts I & II* (Restora-