

Good News for Salmon: Promising Results at Wood Creek



The Wood Creek Phase II Aquatic Enhancement Project, largely completed in September 2016, has shown tremendous results this past winter and spring! The slow moving off-channel habitat that the Wood Creek Phase II channels provide is paradise to a young salmon trying to feed, grow, and survive in its first year of life. Winter precipitation sends pulses of fast moving water through the region's rivers and creeks. Habitats created through Wood Creek Phase I (completed in 2010) and Phase II (completed in 2016) offer a critical refuge to juvenile salmon and other aquatic species who are fighting to escape the strong winter flows in major Humboldt Bay tributaries. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife has been monitoring this project and has detected or caught over 500 juvenile coho salmon this past year in the new channels. Data recorded from the captured salmon show that the Wood Creek Phase II project area supports the second fastest growth rate for juvenile salmon of all Humboldt Bay tributaries – a true measure of success!

This past September, NRLT put the finishing touches on the Wood Creek Enhancement Project. Twenty-five-hundred cubic yards of excavated cattail and soil – left to decompose after previous restoration efforts – were processed and graded to restore a high brackish marsh and enhance agricultural production. In the channels, 25 large wood structures were installed to increase cover and protection for juvenile salmon that rely on the waters flowing through Freshwater Farms Reserve.

Bob Pagliuco, NOAA Project Biologist overseeing woody debris installation

NRLT would like to thank our wonderful project partners: US Fish and Wildlife Service, NOAA Habitat Conservation Restoration Center, State Coastal Conservancy, the CA Department of Fish and Wildlife, Land Trust Alliance, the California Conservation Corps, and the AmeriCorps' Watershed Stewards Program. We'd like to give a special thank you to Mike Wallace and his crew at CDFW for the many years of hard work monitoring the Wood Creek Phase I and II projects! And last but not least, we'd like to thank our volunteers for exemplifying true community conservation through their diligence and dedication.



HSU students installing deer fence during a recent Planting Day



Woody debris installed in Wood Creek as shelter for juvenile salmon

Boat Carts Ready to Roll!

We are proud to announce the installation of a bicycle rack and boat cart system at Freshwater Farms Reserve! Our boat carts allow for swift and easy boat transportation from the parking lot to the boat launch about one-half mile down the Freshwater Nature Trail. Many thanks to the Rotary Club of Eureka for making this new and exciting community asset possible!

The combination code necessary to use the boat carts is available by contacting the NRLT office (typically open Mon-Fri from 9-5 pm). Please plan ahead if you would like to go boating on the weekend.



Kerry McNamee trying out a new boat cart



Volunteers preparing to plant along Wood Creek