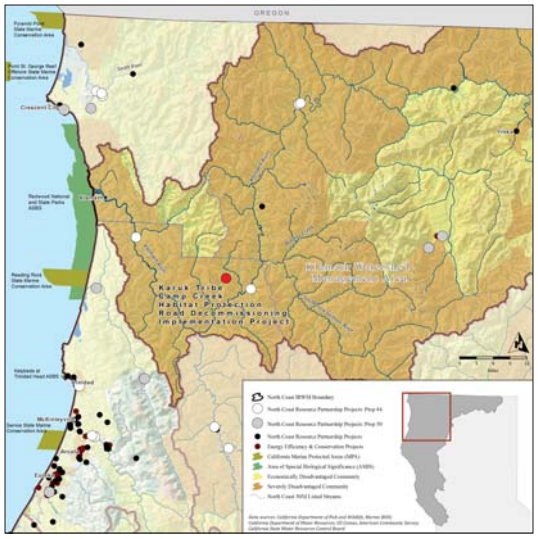
Camp Creek Habitat Protection-Road Decommissioning Implementation Project

KARUK TRIBE



STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Unmaintained and improperly designed road networks have negative impacts on North Coast fisheries. In addition to the chronic sediment transport from these roads, the high number of stream crossings has a high potential for failure during a significant storm event. Stream crossing failures result in debris torrents that scour stream channels of riparian vegetation which is critical in maintaining lower water temperatures. Depending on slope position and channel gradient these debris torrents can trigger successive debris torrents as they move downstream. Debris torrents fills in pools, which are used by salmonids as rearing areas and as refugia.

PROJECT GOALS

Protection and enhancement of the habitat of Tribal trust species such as Spring Chinook, Coho Salmon and Summer Steelhead populations.

THE SOLUTION

The Camp Creek Habitat Protection—Road Decommissioning Project involves approximately 16.02 miles of road slated for decommissioning that is within the ecologically sensitive 26,994 acre Camp Creek Watershed. Specific management strategies suggest for the Camp Creek watershed are to minimize hydrologic and erosion concerns in this critical watershed by addressing the high road density (2.3 miles/square mile) and implementing restoration activities including decommissioning. Recovery and maintaining the high quality of water can be promoted primarily through road decommissioning.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

Road decommissioning in the Camp Creek watershed involves the following tasks:

1. Environmental documentation and site-specific project design
2. Road decommissioning using proven decommissioning methods to remove and stabilize unstable fill at road/stream crossings, swales and springs, and reestablish the natural hillslope drainage pattern along the entire road using heavy equipment and hand labor.
3. Post-project erosion and sediment control measures and revegetation will include sowing of native grass seed and fertilizer followed by the spreading native mulch material.
4. Final construction evaluation and project closeout

COMPLETION DATE

Project is ongoing despite the lack of any funding from IRWM Proposition 84 Award.

PROJECT BUDGET

IRWM funds:	*$ 300,000*
Leveraged funds:	*$ 75,000*
TOTAL	**$ 375,000**

BENEFITS

Economic

- Approximately $299 per year in benefit from increases to forest biodiversity
- Approximately $14,506 per year associated with avoided costs of sediment deposition

Watershed Rehabilitation

- Improved fish and wildlife habitat
  - » Reduction in sediment deposition will improve spawning and rearing habitat for salmonids, allowing for increased populations
  - » Decommissioning the roads will reduce risk of spreading Port Orford Root Rot fungus (Phytophthora lateralis)
  - » Restoration of 2.5 acres of upland habitat and 2 stream miles of riparian habitat will encourage the reestablishment of other native plants and wildlife

Cultural benefits

- Increased salmonid populations, which are traditionally and culturally significant to the Karuk people, will provide for continued and improved ceremonial and sustenance uses
- Improved riparian habitat will result in increased presence of culturally significant resources for the Karuk Tribe

Jobs and Local Economic Benefit

- About $375,000 will be spent locally using local labor and supplies when possible, thus contributing to State goals for environmental justice and social equity
- 6 jobs created/maintained

NEXT STEPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

The Karuk Tribe is committed to improving habitat conditions in the Camp Creek watershed and will continue to seek funding for an implement projects that accomplish this goal throughout the Ancestral Territory.

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NORTH COAST RESOURCE PARTNERSHIP