

Yurok Tribe receives grants to restore salmon habitat

December 15, 2021



The Yurok Tribe recently received a little over a half million dollars to increase salmonid habitats in two local creeks that feed into the Klamath River.

Hunter and McGarvey Creeks are important rearing and staging habitats for salmonids, but historic logging, road building and loss of naturally forming wood jams have impacted both streams. As a result, Chinook, Coho, Steelhead, Coastal Cutthroat Trout and other species have suffered.

Recent grants from the California Coastal Commission for about \$300,000 and a little under \$243,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will allow the tribe to restore seven acres on McGarvey Creek and nine acres on Hunter.

Specifically, the tribe will construct dams that most commonly occur in nature, including beaver dam analogs. The part wood, part vegetation structure is porous and creates ponds that serve as ideal nurseries for juvenile fish. The ponds end up acting as a safe place for young salmonids to grow until they're big enough to venture out to sea, and is the same place they return to lay and fertilize eggs.

Constructed wood jams and revegetation along the creeks will also be a part of the project, as well as monitoring by the Yurok Tribal Fisheries Department through the end of 2026.

Most of the land near the two creeks is owned and managed for timber production by Green Diamond Resource Company, and the Yurok Tribe and Green Diamond have worked together for several years to improve fish habitats in the Lower Klamath River.

Matt House, Green Diamond senior aquatic biologist, said, "We are happy to be collaborating with the Yurok Tribe on these two restoration projects in the Lower Klamath River tributaries. The Yurok Tribe continues to bring forward innovative restoration ideas that contribute to the enhancement of aquatic species and their habitats."

The hope is that once the projects are completed, they will be self-sustaining. Both creeks sit at a high enough elevation that they are not expected to be impacted by predicted sea level rise.