

THE CHEHALIS BASIN



VISIT US

To learn more about how to protect your streamside property and the native ecosystems that salmon need in the Chehalis River Basin, visit the Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat at chehalisleadentity.org. Contact Kirsten Harma at kharma@chehalisribe.org.

Or contact the Chehalis Basin Strategy at <https://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/contact/>

CHEHALIS BASIN STREAMSIDE LANDOWNER'S GUIDE

STEWARDSHIP BEGINS WITH YOU!



Landowners restoring Wisner Creek in Adna

**Chehalis Basin Collaborative
for Salmon Habitat**

LIVING STREAMSIDE

BACKGROUND

Living along a stream or river in the Chehalis basin is a tremendous gift. It can also pose flooding, bank erosion, and weed infestation challenges.

Your stewardship of the stream on your property has a real, positive impact in supporting clean water, abundant salmon, wildlife habitat, drainage, flood control, and erosion control on your property --with rippling impacts throughout the basin.

RIPARIAN HABITAT

Healthy riparian habitat is the forested land area adjacent to rivers, wetlands, and streambanks. Native vegetation is a key contributor to the health of our streams providing much biodiversity, productivity, aesthetics, and improves water quality.

Check out <http://www.chehalisleadentity.org/get-involved/#For-Landowners>. At the site, there are listings of local nurseries that carry native trees and shrubs to help you get started!

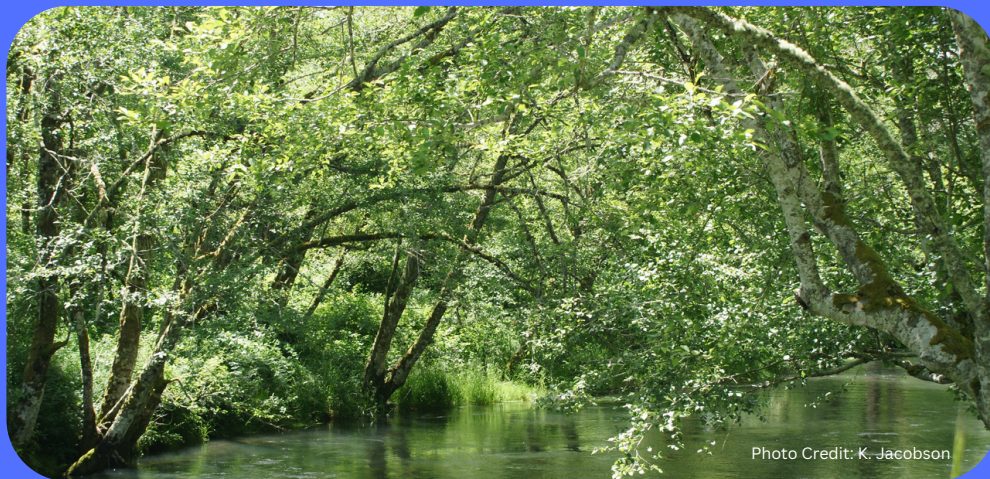


Photo Credit: K. Jacobson

Healthy Riparian Habitat

PROTECT STREAMSIDE HABITAT ALSO BY:



REMOVING ROCK DAMS THAT BLOCK FISH! LET THEM PASS!

When rock dams are present, they block fish and are illegal. Fish can't move upstream to find cool water, spawn and feed. Help maintain healthy habitat by not leaving rock dams in the stream.

Report rock dams and stranded fish at 360-902-2936 or WILDCOMM@fw.wa.gov. Please provide the dam location, dam description and photo and date and time.

NOT DRIVING ON GRAVEL BARS OR IN THE RIVER DURING LOW SUMMER FLOWS.

Respect the fish and their journeys back to the places where they hatched. Don't disturb fish or walk on salmon redds during or after spawning.

LEAVING WOOD IN THE RIVERS AND NOT CUTTING OR REMOVING WOOD.

Check out the [Wood in the Water is Good for the River and Salmon](#) publication for more information.

Your local Conservation District can also visit your property and help determine what work you can do to slow bank erosion on your streamside land.



- Grays Harbor Conservation District:
<https://www.graysharborcd.org/>
- Lewis Conservation District:
<https://lewisconservation.wordpress.com/>
- Mason Conservation District:
<https://www.masoncd.org/>
- Thurston Conservation District:
<https://www.thurstoncd.com/>



STEPS TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF YOUR STREAMSIDE AREAS:

RETAIN AND PROTECT EXISTING NATIVE VEGETATION

If your streamside lacks dense native vegetation, planting native trees and shrubs is highly recommended. Establishing healthy riparian habitat prevents erosion, protects and recovers salmon populations and promotes healthy water quality by lowering water temperatures, and filtering nutrients.

FLOODING

Healthy riparian habitat – especially wetlands can help slow down the river, lessen volumes during peak flows by storing water and slowly releasing it back into streams during low flows. *Wetlands are areas where water covers the soil, or is present either at or near the surface of the soil all year or for varying periods of time during the year, including during the growing season.*

SIGNS OF DEGRADED RIPARIAN HABITAT



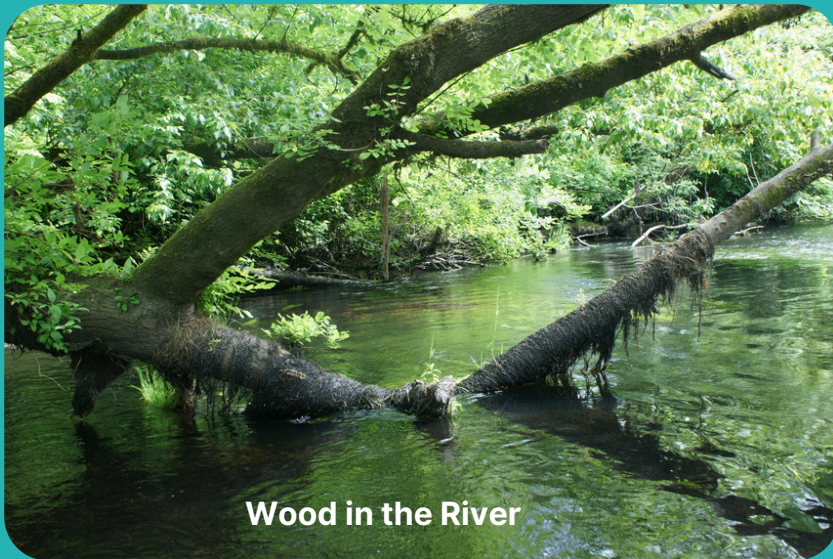
Signs include steep banks, the absence of native woody vegetation, soil compaction, the presence of invasive plant and animal species and stream sedimentation. Studies in WA State have found that more than 13% fine sediment in redds (salmon nests) can lead to almost no steelhead or coho eggs.

EROSION CONTROL TECHNIQUES

- Protect the existing “first defense” to bank erosion: plant native shrubs and trees along the river’s edge.
- Improve the “toe” of an eroding bank by leaving wood in a stream, or employing bioengineering approaches to enhance the bank, if needed.

The Office of the Chehalis Basin has developed a guide to help you to control erosion using bioengineering to support salmon habitat:

<https://chehalisbasinstrategy.com/erosion-management-program/>



Wood in the River

WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Habitat Biologists can help determine what kinds of projects you can get a permit for on your land.

Call WDFW: Southwest Region 5: 360-696- 6211 or the Coastal Region 6: 360-249-4628 for more info.

MANAGE PETS AND LIVESTOCK

Living and caring for pets and livestock is an important part of life for many rural residents. When not properly managed, pets and livestock can have unintended negative impacts on water quality, riparian vegetation, and in-stream habitat.

Steps you can take to prevent negative impacts on your property:

- Pick up and properly dispose of pet waste.
- Exclude livestock from by fencing off animals from streams and streamside vegetation and provide alternative water sources. This can improve water quality and habitat diversity.

Check to see what technical and financial assistance is available for livestock owners and landowners with streams and rivers on their properties from your local conservation district.



CPhoto credit: Thurston CD

Riverbend Ranch Restoration Project