

With most of our fall fieldwork wrapped up, staff at Pelton Round Butte have settled in for a quieter season, ready for a few months of important in-office work. Most of our biologists stay busy this time of year with report-writing and planning for the spring. However, fall Chinook redd surveys, adult trap operations, steelhead tracking, and water quality monitoring continue through the winter. Our work is far from over. We are also thrilled to announce the latest round of Pelton Fund selections, and look forward to working with these partners on their ambitious projects over the next few years. Happy holidays to all of our friends and newsletter subscribers! Stay safe, warm and cozy this season.



Investing in healthy habitat

2019 Selected Projects

Jefferson County Soil & Water Conservation District

- Beaver Creek Watershed Restoration

Upper Deschutes Watershed Council

- Creekside Park Fish Passage & Habitat Restoration
- Plainview Fish Passage & Screening
- Whychus Canyon Preserve Habitat Restoration
- Willow Springs Preserve Habitat Restoration Project

Trout Unlimited

- Link Creek Large Wood Project

Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs

- Log Springs Meadow Restoration
- Warm Springs River & Middle Beaver Creek Large Wood Placement

Deschutes National Forest - Sisters Ranger District

- Metolius River Fish Habitat Project

U.S. Forest Service (Ochoco & Deschutes National Forest) and Wild Turkey Federation

- Metolius Winter Range Restoration

Deschutes Land Trust

- Priday Ranch Steelhead Conservation Project
- Rimrock Ranch Fee Purchase

Ochoco National Forest

- Upper Trout Creek Rehabilitation Package

Our experience in the Deschutes Basin has shown us time and again that a successful reintroduction program requires an investment not just in fish, but also in their habitat. Without shady streams, native vegetation, gravel for spawning, large wood to hide under, and sufficient water flow, we could never expect salmon and steelhead to thrive, even if fish passage systems were perfected.

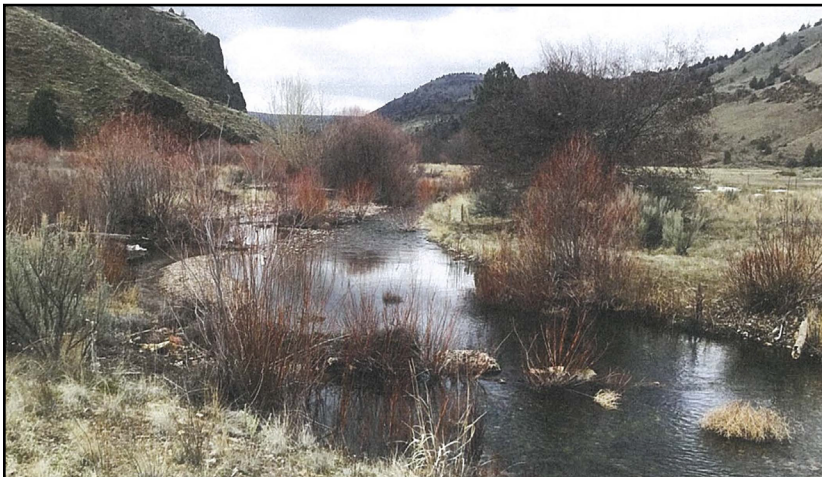
That's why, over the last fifteen years, we've invested millions of dollars in restoration projects planned and executed by our partners in Central Oregon. Through the [Pelton Fund](#), we've contributed \$26.5 million to projects that advance fish passage, wildlife habitat, water quality and water quantity throughout the Deschutes Basin. We are excited to announce the latest round of projects selected for this funding. [Continued on page 2](#)



The Link Creek Large Wood Project is a restoration effort from Trout Unlimited. Trees and logs will be installed in this historic sockeye habitat, using strategies from a previously successful Upper Metolius project (pictured here). 1



The Metolius Winter Range Restoration project is a collaborative effort to improve habitat for mammals and birds that rely on this protected grassland area.



The Friday Ranch Steelhead Conservation Project is an effort by the Deschutes Land Trust to protect 5,820 acres of grassland and sagebrush habitat in the Trout Creek subbasin, where steelhead and redband trout spawn and rear. Benefits of the project include increased habitat connectivity, improved water quality and surface flow.

Eight organizations launching 13 unique projects were notified of their selection in late November. This cycle – the fifth round for the Pelton Fund – represents a \$4.5 million contribution to the Deschutes. Projects are geographically dispersed throughout the basin, from Whychus Creek in the South to Log Springs Meadow north of Warm Springs; stretching east from Upper Trout Creek in the Ochoco National Forest all the way to Link Creek, West of Black Butte Ranch.

A technical review team (TRT) carefully evaluated the merits of each proposal received, judging each project on its feasibility and potential impact. This team, composed of representatives from the project licensees and federal, tribal, and state agencies, attended presentations and conducted site visits as part of their review process. The TRT presented recommendations to a formal Governing Board composed of 11 signatories, which made the final decisions in November.

We are confident that the projects selected will benefit Deschutes Basin fish, wildlife, water and habitat for generations to come.

Learn more about the Pelton Fund and view a map of past projects on [PGE's website](#).

Juvenile & Adult Fish Passage Updates

Juvenile Species	Nov. 2019	Yearly Total (through Nov. 2019)
Chinook	133	37,031
Kokanee	426	123,261

- We are collecting more fall Chinook at the Pelton Trap and seeing an increase in spawning in the Lower Deschutes between October and November.
- Steelhead return numbers are currently low, but could still improve. The peak capture month varies from year to year.
- We have passed 26 known-origin steelhead above Round Butte Dam. Opal Springs has reported that at least five steelhead have used the new fish ladder and are now upstream, in the Crooked River.

The SWW was closed for annual maintenance in September and October.



Adult Species	Oct. 2019	Nov. 2019	Yearly Total (through Nov. 2019)
Steelhead	108	82	212 (Aug. 2019 - Nov. 2019)
Fall Chinook	61	111	172 (through Nov. 2019)

Meet Tanya Sosnowski

Pelton Round Butte FERC License Coordinator for PGE



In her two years at PGE, Tanya Sosnowski has had a hand in many of the operations taking place at Pelton Round Butte. If you've ever stopped by our office in Madras, attended a well-catered meeting with our staff, made decisions as a member of the Fish Committee, or enjoyed presentations at the annual fisheries workshop, you've most certainly seen the fruits of Tanya's efforts. Tanya began her PGE journey in 2017 and 2018 when she worked as a seasonal fisheries technician, gaining first-hand experience conducting research and sorting fish on the Deschutes. This position built on Tanya's previous field experience with the US Forest Service, where she helped with a wide range of terrestrial and aquatic research tasks, including measuring habitat for sage-grouse, conducting pika surveys, sampling invasive mussels, trapping mosquitoes to test for West Nile virus, and teaching members of the public about invasive species. Tanya transitioned from fieldwork to behind-the-scenes logistics in May 2018, becoming an administrative assistant for the Pelton Round Butte office. In April 2019, Tanya took on the role of FERC License Coordinator for the project. "I have enjoyed all the opportunities to learn something new and get out of my comfort zone," says Tanya. "It's truly an honor to work alongside a team of environmental professionals who are passionate about our work and stewardship in the Deschutes Basin."

Announcements & News



Join our team at Pelton Round Butte as a seasonal fisheries technician. Spend your days in a beautiful part of Oregon, helping reintroduce salmon and steelhead on the Deschutes.

[Apply today!](#)

1. "The Great Outdoors" covered the complexities of the Selective Water Withdrawal in a two-part video series.
→ [Central Oregon Daily News](#)
2. PGE and CTWS hosted an open house in The Dalles to present the results of the Deschutes water quality study.
→ [The Dalles Chronicle](#)
3. After two years of construction, the new fish ladder at Opal Springs Dam (operated by the Deschutes Valley Water District) opened at the end of November. Adult fish can now freely travel up the Crooked River!
→ [Bend Bulletin](#)
4. PGE and CTWS recently provided a water quality update to the Deschutes County Commissioners.
→ [Central Oregon Daily News](#)

5. A draft Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for Deschutes Basin species was released in October, with a public comment period that lasted until early December.
→ [Bend Bulletin, Oct. 21](#)
→ [Bend Bulletin, Dec. 3](#)
→ [Cascade Business News](#)
6. North Unit Irrigation District is planning a \$30-\$50 million piping project to help protect the Oregon spotted frog.
→ [Madras Pioneer](#)
7. This year's marine heatwave has shrunk and moved further offshore.
→ [Columbia Basin Bulletin](#)



Photo courtesy of USFWS

The Oregon spotted frog, one of the species addressed in the HCP, is listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act.

Early steelhead returns started off strong in September and October, but have since slowed. We are hopeful that numbers will pick up again soon. The female pictured here was collected in late October, given a radio tag, and released into Lake Billy Chinook so we can track her progress upstream.



Discover PGE Parks



Thanks for traveling far and wide to visit our PGE parks this summer!

Here's a snapshot of the people who signed our guestbook at just one park: **Round Butte Overlook**

- **Total Visitors:** 4,371
- **From 33 States:** including Texas, Alaska, South Dakota, Hawaii, Georgia, New York, and Utah.
- **From 14 Countries:** including Singapore, Israel, Brazil, and the Netherlands.

Just outside of Gates, Oregon, Trout Creek Ranch offers an opportunity for big game hunting in a remote, picturesque location. Permits are available by lottery for deer and elk. The Ranch is also open to bird hunting in December and January. Hunters must follow all state and federal regulations.

...

Pelton Park is gaining three new cabins this year as we slowly exchange our seasonal yomes (yurt-like domes) for more permanent structures.



Thanks for reading our December newsletter!

Visit our [website](#) • [Subscribe](#) to the newsletter •
[Email us](#) with questions or to unsubscribe

