



# SNAG BOAT BEND SIDE CHANNEL & FLOODPLAIN REFORESTATION

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Since 2013 LTWC has worked with partners along the mainstem Willamette River just east of the Long Tom Watershed to restore river processes and improve habitat for important fish and wildlife. The Willamette River and its floodplain have gone through drastic changes since the 1850's.

After getting to know the stretch of the Willamette River between Eugene and Peoria, we developed plans to improve habitat in the river, its side channels, and floodplain at two publicly-owned sites: Snag Boat Bend and Sam Daws Landing. Snag Boat Bend is a 341-acre unit of William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, and is owned and managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. It is located just across and downstream of the historic mouth of the Long Tom River, between Harrisburg and Corvallis. It is open to the public and has a number of trails you can walk to check out the extensive habitat restoration work.

The gallery forests at the refuge provide essential habitat for migratory, neotropical songbirds, and the backwater slough creates critical slow-water habitat for native salmon and trout. Restoration efforts led by the Long Tom Watershed Council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have included three phases of earthwork and five phases of floodplain reforestation. This work has reconnected 150 acres of the 2-year floodplain to the river, increased channel complexity in 25 acres of side-channel and alcove habitat, and planted native trees and shrubs across 204 acres of floodplain forest, with another 55 planned. We've also installed 15 log jams for fish habitat and treated 5 acres of non-native aquatic plants.



R. Franco Restoration plants bare root trees & shrubs (top); Coyote crossing river (bottom left); Western scrub jay (bottom right)



Photo by River Design Group

## HABITAT FOR FISH & WILDLIFE

- Gravel bars and side channels of the Willamette River provide important habitat for trout, salmon, steelhead, and lamprey. River water is cooled as it flows through gravel bars.
- >40% of the Willamette Valley is in agricultural production, and fish take refuge in the shallow seasonal floodwaters that inundate fields.
- Side channels provide slower waters and cover from predators during high flows.
- Floodplain gallery forests like those found along the Willamette River provide essential habitat for migratory neotropical songbirds.

## AT A GLANCE

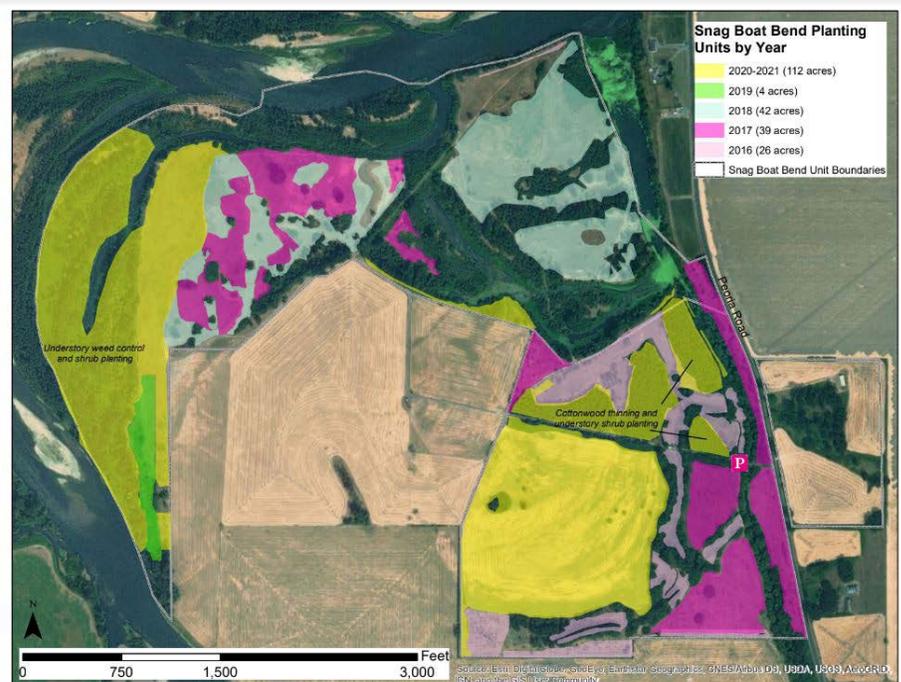
- **Nearly \$3 Million in funding from partners!**
- **Planted 318,000 trees & shrubs (see map below)**
- **Planting acreage: >250**
- **Restored hydrology to 150 acres of floodplain**
- **Installed 15 log jams**
- **Restored fish passage with 20' box culvert**
- **Installing 44' culvert to reconnect 1.25 mi channel**

## Partners



## PROJECT GOALS

- Increase period of inundation in and restore hydrology to historic side channel and floodplain habitat disconnected by constructed features like berms, fords, dams, and revetments.
- Reconnect 1.25 miles of historic river channel to the mainstem Willamette, currently cut off by porter dam.
- Eliminate or reduce fish stranding potential in side channel and floodplain habitats.
- Improve in-stream habitat complexity in side channel and alcove habitats.
- Restore physical structure and ecological function in historic floodplain forest.



**ACTION THROUGH UNDERSTANDING**

www.longtom.org • (541) 654-8965 • urbanwaters@longtom.org

