

# Landscape Scale Restoration Project Report



**Project Name:** Big Bear

**Funding Year:** 2013

## Stakeholders

Forest Service Region: USDA Forest Service - R1

Sponsoring Organization: Idaho Dept. of Lands

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Participating Organizations:

Grantee: Idaho Dept. of Lands

## Project Funding

Agreement(s): 12-DG-11010000-004

## Project Design

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## Project Purpose

Idaho's Forest Action Plan (FAP) identifies the West Fork tributary of Big Bear Creek sub-watershed (WFBBC) as within a priority landscape area. It recommends planning and treatments to improve forest health and water quality, decrease wildfire threats and support wildlife benefits—especially fisheries restoration. Area watershed management plans identify this tributary as the most important for steelhead trout restoration—a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act.

This project focuses work on the most critical 10-miles of stream and adjacent forestlands. It brings together multiple resource management organizations and forest landowners to complete a detailed assessment of the stream and surrounding riparian areas, uses this information to inform development of Forest Stewardship and Conservation Plans, and implements the highest priority forest and aquatic treatments through a coordinated, holistic approach to address the area's most critical natural resource issues.

## National Themes & Outcomes

### **Conserving and Managing Working Forest Landscapes**

- Forests are actively and sustainably managed.

### **Protect Forests from Threats**

- Threats to forest and ecosystem health are identified, managed and reduced.

### **Enhance Public Benefits from Private Forests**

- Water quality and quantity is protected and enhanced.
- Wildlife and fish habitat is protected, conserved, and enhanced.
- People are connected to trees and forests and are engaged in environmental stewardship activities.
- Trees and forests are managed and restored to help mitigate and adapt to changing conditions.

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## Strategic Issues

In addition to addressing goals and objectives of Idaho's Forest Action Plan and specific strategies identified within for this priority landscape area, this project is part of the watershed planning progression that is taking place within the larger Clearwater River sub-basin and Potlatch River watershed associated with Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery. This project supports priority recommendations from a variety of regional planning documents from multiple resource management organizations. As the overall area is very large and available funding is limited, partners scaled this project to achieve the greatest impact. It addresses the most important forest management needs along the most critical 10 miles of the West Fork of Big Bear Creek, the highest priority sub-watershed of the Potlatch River. By focusing on forest and riparian health in the upper reaches and cooling base flows of Big Bear Creek, water quality and steelhead habitat is improved downstream. As important, the scale addresses both forest and aquatic resources within this area in a cohesive set of staged actions, each building on and complimenting the others.

## Collaboration & Partners

Latah Soil and Water Conservation District (Latah SWCD or LSWCD), Idaho  
Department of Fish and Game (IDFG); Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ);  
Idaho Soil and Water Conservation District (ISWCD);  
Idaho Office of Species Conservation (IOSC); National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) – Fisheries; Bonneville Power Administration (BPA); West Fork Big Bear Creek (WFBBC)  
Landowners (LOs),  
Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute (PCEI)

## Integrated Delivery

This grant provides a mechanism to coordinate planning and forest improvement work with the other work that is being conducted by multiple entities within the watershed to restore fisheries habitat.

## Influence on Positive Change

This project expands relationships between the Idaho Department of Lands and the Latah Soil Water Conservation District. Together these partners are able to holistically work within the watershed to engage landowners in planning and mitigating issues.

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## Accomplishments

### Deliverables

Deliverables include assessment on 10 miles of stream to identify priority resource concerns, 8 landowner Forest Stewardship Plans that cover 789 acres, priority forest improvement treatments on at least 300 acres, priority aquatic treatments within 3-4 miles of the creek and annual monitoring during and after the project to compare initial assessments to post-treatment conditions.

Outcomes include improved steelhead habitat and increased steelhead populations, forests and tree species are resilient to insects, disease and wildfire, stream conditions are improved, forest landowners are informed and contribute to restoration, and collaborative landscape-wide management planning and treatments address multiple resource issues to meet mutually beneficial objectives.

### Accomplishments to Date

LSWCD, in cooperation with BPA, completed a stream assessment along 10 miles of West Fork Tributary of Big Bear Creek and developed and prioritized recommendations for activities to improve the stream for steelhead habitat. Ten Forest Stewardship Plans for private landowners have been completed on 789 acres. In 2016, landowners began implementing treatments identified in their Forest Stewardship Plan. Trees were thinned, pruned and the slash masticated on 119 acres to improve forest health and reduce fire threats. Nearly 8,000 trees were planted on 21 acres and grass was seeded on 131 acres to help stabilize soils and reduce erosion.

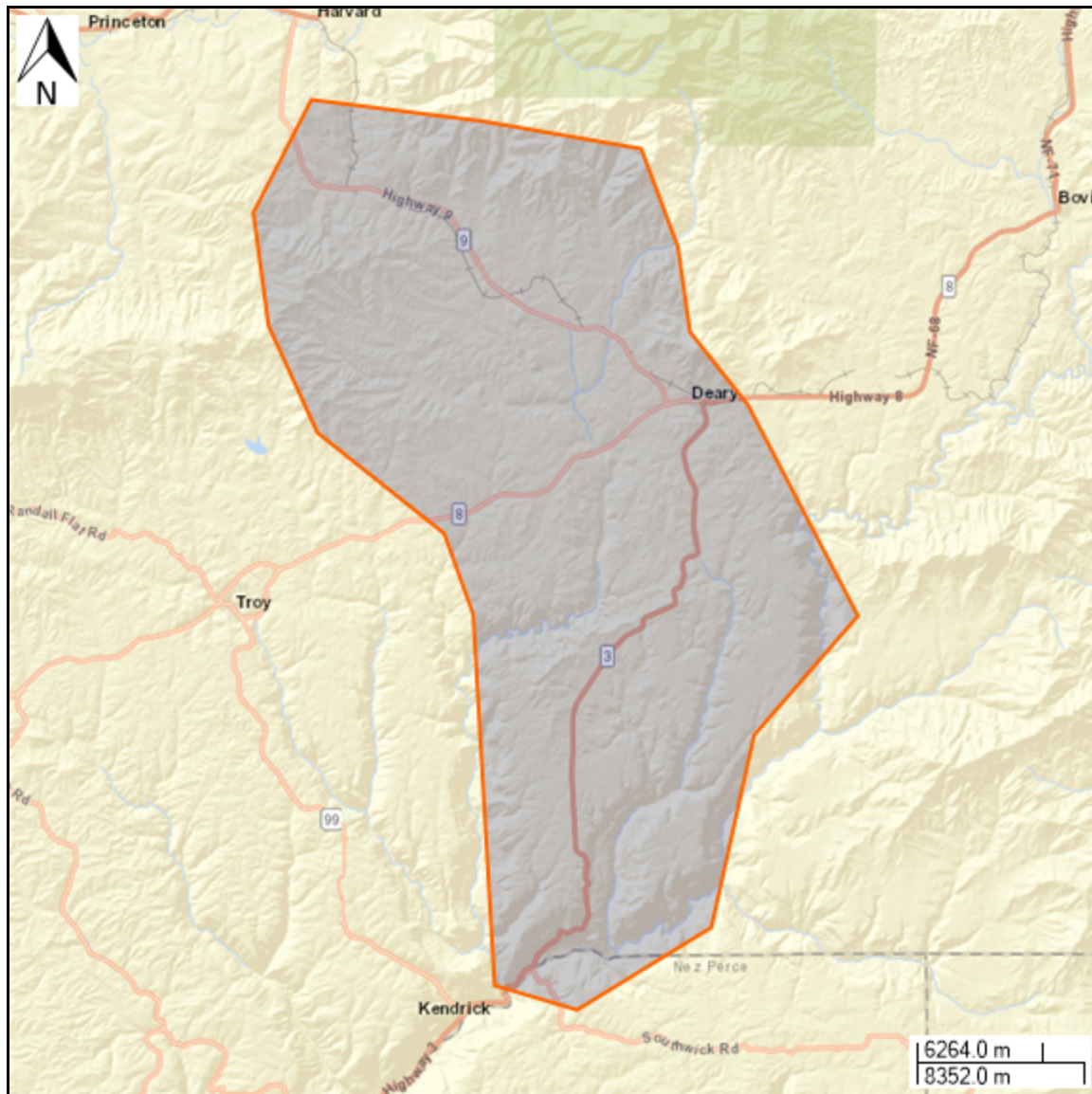
Additionally, the PCEI thinned 8 acres, controlled weeds on 15 acres and planted 2000 trees and shrubs on four acres to help meet the overall project goals.

Overall, 299 acres were treated and the restoration efforts associated with this project are complete. The benefits from the Landowner Stewardship Plans that were developed will help guide future actions by the landowners. This will enable restoration efforts to continue into the future.

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## Impact Area



**Information Last Updated**  
12/19/2017