



Roads to Success for Sediment Reduction—Working with County Conservation Districts

- 2000-2009
- Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest
- Partners: Skagit Conservation District and Snohomish Conservation District

Project description

Working in partnership with county conservation districts, the Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie drew on the districts' soil and water conservation mission to help the Forest address a road maintenance backlog and begin implementing watershed recovery.



Photo courtesy Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

The Conservation Districts secured major funding through Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants, and the Forest provided materials as match. Projects included correcting road drainage problems by upgrading culverts; converting some road roads to Level I maintenance (storage) by removing culverts and installing rock-lined dips, and blocking the roads to prevent vehicle access; and decommissioning roads.

The Forest completed nine projects in the Skagit River Watershed in partnership with the Skagit Conservation District and treated 124.5 miles of road. Four projects in the Stillaguamish River Watershed with the Snohomish Conservation District treated 42.95 miles of road.

Benefits

These partnerships helped the Forest address a road maintenance backlog and watershed health, while helping the conservation districts address sedimentation and water quality issues in their service territories.

These projects would not have been completed without this partnership.

Keys to success

Roger Nichols, engineering geologist for the Forest, emphasized the cooperative effort by both Forest and Conservation District staff, and the number of people involved in making this type of effort successful. "Conservation districts were set up during the Dust Bowl era to address soil and water conservation. They are underutilized when it comes to developing partnerships for watershed recovery," says Roger Nichols. "We worked with their district managers, financial officers and field staff to build trust and achieve consistent results in these projects."

"The need for watershed restoration was identified by Roger through a series of predictive models, logging related landslide observations, and cumulative effects studies that effectively showed that something had to be done to reduce sediment inputs...from Forest Service roads," noted Christian Hoffman, Engineer with the Snohomish Conservation District. For his efforts, Nichols received individual partnership awards and a Forest Service Caring for the Land award.

Type of agreement

Challenge Cost Share Agreement

Project costs and contributions

Skagit watershed projects treated 124.5 miles of road:

- Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest provided \$576,700 value in materials, laid out each project and provided project oversight.
- Skagit Conservation District initiated \$2,139,000 in Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants, hired the contractor and provided contract oversight.

Stillaguamish watershed projects treated 42.5 miles of road:

- Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest provided \$181,500 value in materials, laid out each project and provided project oversight.
- Snohomish Conservation District initiated \$823,500 in Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board grants, hired the contractor and provided contract oversight.

More information

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Before and after road decommissioning.
Photos courtesy Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Find this story and more at the Partnership Resource Center website: <http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/roads/success-stories.php>

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