

RECLAMATION

Managing Water in the West

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Reclamation

Return to the Yankee Fork

[music]

Jude Trapani: We're on the Yankee Fork of the Salmon River looking at a side channel habitat improvement project that was completed last fall in 2012. And we're observing adult steelhead returning from the ocean.

And they're constructing their nests which we call redds and they're going to lay their eggs in there and cover them over. Later on this summer they are going to hatch out as little babies, as fry, and they're going to rear in the stream for one to three years and do the whole thing over again...

Camera Operator: That's a big fish!

Jude Trapani: It shows exactly the idea of a well thought out process that puts the habitat in that we know that fish like... To build it, and then the following spring to have adult steelhead to come in and use it is very satisfying for all the partners. All the partners were hoping to do this together, so the next generation of the effort, where it didn't work in the past, it's working now.

[machine noise]

The Yankee Fork of the Salmon River has had a lot of impacts to it, mostly from dredge mining earlier 50 to 60 years ago. And it disrupted the fish habitat quite a bit. And many of the partners, including the Shoshone-Bannock tribes have been trying to do some rehabilitation work in there for the past 25 years. And we finally got a significant project done last fall to start that process. We're hoping to do another series of projects to improve habitat in there.

So this first project we just finished is exciting because it's a first step and the fish are already using it. We're expecting the future projects in the next 5 years to be even bigger and to be used even more by steelhead and Chinook salmon adults to spawn in.