

## Bull Trout Enhancement in the Yakima Basin

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**Narrator:** Of the 7 key elements of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan, Agricultural Conservation and Habitat Enhancement have a host of readily implementable projects. Among these is the effort toward Bull Trout Habitat Improvements, specifically, the Bull Trout Task Force.

**Wendy:** We take very seriously this ecosystem restoration piece of the integrated plan where there is a great opportunity here to restore bull trout with all the integrated plan projects that we have planned.

**Cassandra:** So, Bull Trout have very specific habitat requirements. They require the four Cs, which is cold, clean, complex, and connected habitat.

**Cassandra:** The Bull Trout Task Force Project is a unique project that provides an on-the-ground crew to mitigate recreational impacts to Bull Trout and their habitat. So, goals of the project are to educate anglers and recreationists about Bull Trout and how to identify them. We also remove rock dams that are built in the streams. Rock dams are generally intended as harmless fun during the summer time. And as flows begin to drop in the late summer, that can be a passage barrier to fall migrating fish. So, we identify those dams and remove them. We also post educational and informational signage. And then we assist with population monitoring and on-the-ground research needs.

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**Tom:** And so, the Bull trout enhancement is a commitment by the agencies to go beyond what may be necessary in terms of just permitting, and go to the next level to try to recover the species.

**Cassandra:** It's a locally supportive, cost-effective way to bring about change and so all of the education and the outreach can prevent incidental take to Bull Trout. And it's fun to get families and community members engaged in Bull Trout recovery.

**Dale:** We're taking positive steps to address things that we know are a problem now, and if we're successful at those, then bull trout will have more reliable access into Box Canyon and Mineral Creek than they do presently.

**Cassandra:** The Bull Trout Task Force is a really fun and unique project. It's the only project I'm aware of that provides an on-the-ground crew all summer long to mitigate recreational impacts to bull trout, and it's really great to see the direct benefits out on the ground.