

Upper Dotta Canyon Project

DESCRIPTION:

This 253 acre channel-floodplain restoration project is on Red Clover Creek in Upper Dotta Canyon on the private (206 acres) lands of Goodwin Ranch and public (47 acres) lands managed by the U.S. Forest Service Plumas National Forest. The project utilized the pond and plug meadow restoration technique to re-establish the connection of the channel to its naturally evolved floodplain. The project entailed constructing 77 plugs and building seven small rock riffles on a tributary channel. Flows were re-directed out of the downcut channel into existing remnant channels on the meadow. All impacted vegetation was re-planted on the plugs and all disturbed areas were seeded with native grass and sedge seed. Grazing management infrastructure involved construction of 4.7 miles of fence, installation of a cattle guard, and an off-channel water source. Grazing is deferred in the project area until adequate re-vegetation is established (typically 2-3 years). Monitoring parameters include groundwater elevations, stream flows above and below the project area, water temperatures, and birds. Project partners included U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, California Department of Water Resources, Bonneville Environmental Foundation, and Goodwin Ranch.

SPONSORS:

FEDERAL: Secure Rural Schools Title II funds, U.S. Forest Service Plumas National Forest, Natural Resources Conservation Service; PRIVATE: Sacramento District Wetland Conservation Fund, Goodwin Ranch (landowner), Point Blue, Bonneville Environmental Found

PROJECT RESULTS:

Project was successfully implemented in 2013. Extreme drought conditions in 2013- 14 have delayed any measurable project effectiveness. Precipitation amounts in the project area in 2014 were 40% of the normal average. The meadow did not recharge the first winter and incoming flow into the meadow went subsurface quickly in the spring, so no surface flow was observed the in the project area the first year. The ponds created from excavating fill material for the plugs only partially filled in the middle of the meadow, the lower and upper meadow ponds never had water in them, reflecting that the groundwater table was not recharged. The pond from the Forest Service concrete dam/road crossing where the project terminates dried up completely in August 2014. Monitoring of this project will continue through 2017.

PROJECT REPORTS (IF AVAILABLE):

Upper Dotta Canyon Restoration Project Final Report

http://www.weebly.com/uploads/4/0/5/5/40554561/upper_dotta_canyon_finalreport.pdf