

# Salmon River Restoration Council

## *2014 Annual Report*

*Fish passage crew arrange rocks and boulders to allow for ease of passage for juvenile salmonids in the low water months.*

Greetings,

*The Restoration Council's diversity of program work is how we accomplish our mission to conserve, protect and restore the Salmon River watershed and the communities that make their home here. We owe a deep debt of gratitude to those who started the Restoration Council and I'm reminded to be thankful for their vision every time I drive up the Salmon River and pass the many sites where actions took place that protected fish, prevented the spread of noxious weeds, educated our young children about the watershed, monitored water quality and fish numbers, enhanced fire resilience in our forest and around homes, and beautified our waterways and roadways.*

*In a watershed with as much beauty as ours, it's a blessing to be able to spend our collective energy on efforts to revive, renew and restore our connection to this place. I'm constantly amazed at the depth of our community's will to work together in the face of challenges. Once again this past year, a large scale fire affected our watershed and brought many opportunities for all of us to work side by side to protect homes and property as well as positively influence fire suppression activities. From the Community Liaison Program to the "Hillbilly Hotshots", our SRRC staff, volunteers, and community members mobilized to protect private property from this large scale wildfire. While the fire brought both good and bad effects on our environment, we are hopeful the good effects can be maximized through community input into the many actions now being proposed on our ridges and slopes, and in our rivers and streams.*

*As we welcome in a new year and look forward to accomplishing our restoration goals for 2015, SRRC staff and volunteers would like to extend an invitation to rub elbows with your neighbors at the coming year's community events, work days, volunteer opportunities, public meetings, field trips and learning opportunities we offer. The more involved and engaged our community becomes in efforts to restore our fisheries, our upland resources, and the connection between the two, the more lasting the positive impact will be upon the very lifeblood of this beautiful place we call home.*

*A huge pat on the back and "thank you" for all you do to help revive and sustain our strong sense of community,*

*Josh Saxon  
Executive Director*



## SRRC Board

*Toz Soto, President  
Ben Beaver, Vice President  
Kathy McBroom, Secretary/Treasurer  
Petey Brucker  
Will Harling  
Creek Hanauer  
Jennifer Silveira  
Scott Harding  
Ron Reed*

## SRRC 2014 Staff

*Josh Saxon, Executive Director  
Karuna Greenberg, Restoration Director  
Lyra Cressey, Assoc. Director & Monitoring Coordinator  
Kathy McBroom, Office Manager  
Brenda Hurlimann, Bookkeeper  
Sarah Hugdahl, Program Staff and Outreach  
Tom Hotaling, Fisheries Coordinator  
Sam Berry, Noxious Weeds Coordinator and Program Staff  
Daralyn Soto, Watershed Education Coordinator  
Maria Mullins, Program Staff  
Shannon Monroe, Program Assistant  
Steve Adams, Watershed Center Maintenance*

## 2014 Fuels Crew, Noxious Weed Crew, Screwtrap & Fish Survey employees -

Steve Adams	Mike Kerrick
Greg Arteche	Kent Kuster
Aileen Bammer	Melanie McPherson
Sam Berry	Maria Mullins
Sheri Campbell	Rick Metro
Mathew Cavin	Nat Pennington
Kevin Dunbar	Katie Reinhart
Brian Feeney	Adam Robinson
Rudy Galindo	Joe Stoltz
Steve Gunther	Irie Swift
Jessica Hanscom	Emily Tornroos
Daniel Hendrickson	Andrew Waksmonski
Tom Hotaling	

## Major Accomplishments of 2014

- ✓ We created an interactive, multi-media Salmon River History Timeline, with hundreds of photos, videos and stories that bring life to the history from 1849 to the present (online at [srrc.org/timeline](http://srrc.org/timeline)).
- ✓ We coordinated a highly praised community liaison program that provided invaluable local knowledge and technical assistance to firefighting teams, and served as a critical communication tool when fire threatened local homes and communities during this summer's wildfires.
- ✓ We brought good fire to the landscape by carrying out 50+ acres of prescribed burns to help protect homes and restore natural processes on six local private properties during the Klamath River Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TREX) in October.
- ✓ The SRRC has been advancing fisheries restoration goals on the Salmon by facilitating a collaborative work group dedicated to prioritizing restoration opportunities; coordinating the acquisition and analysis of high-tech aerial LiDAR imagery to create detailed maps of the river floodplain; and installing ground water monitoring wells at our first off-channel habitat enhancement site.

## SRRC Program Updates for 2014

**Fire, Fuels, & Forestry:** It's been an active and exciting year for the Fire, Fuels & Forestry Program. With two years of major wildfires in a row covering over 80,000 acres, an active Community Liaison Program, homes threatened, an upswell in USFS forestry and timber projects, the Klamath River Prescribed Fire TREX, landscape level fire planning, and more fuels reduction grants than ever....we've been busy to say the least. The good news is that we've made two new hires to help with the work load and build capacity for our growing program: Scott Harding is our new Fire, Fuels, & Forestry Program Coordinator, and Orion Marley was hired as our Fuels Project Manager.

As one of the hottest, driest years on record, we knew the likelihood of a long hard fire season was high. Once again wildfires dominated our lives this summer. The Community Liaison Program sprang into action, acting as a key conduit for information exchange between Incident Management Teams, the USFS, and the community. Under extreme drought conditions, this year's fires burned overall at a higher intensity than last year. Our hats are off to the numerous community members, now dubbed the Hillbilly Hotshots, who gave up weeks of their time, sweat and valuable resources helping to prepare threatened properties and the entire town of Sawyers Bar for imminent fire. The Klamath National Forest 2014 Wildfire Campaign Community Liaison and Cooperators Team received the Regional Forester's 2014 Honor Award for Partnership of the Year!

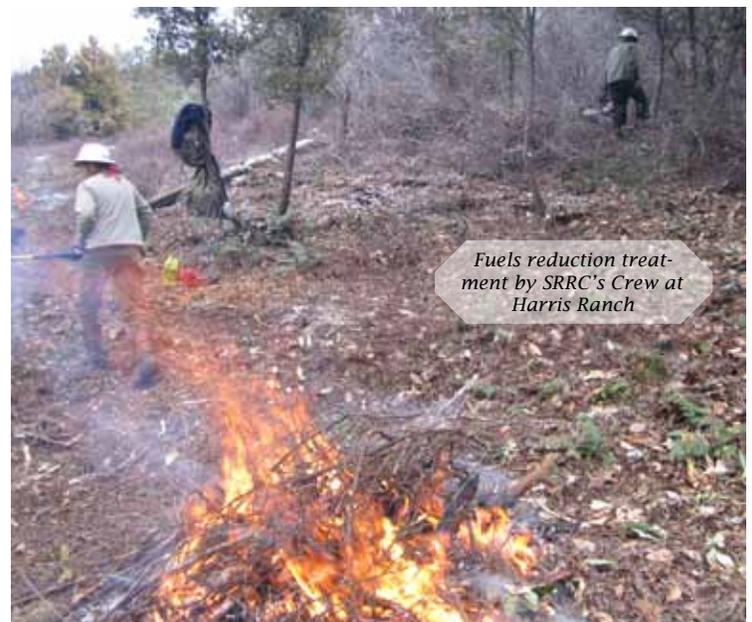
One of the more exciting elements of 2014 was helping to organize and participate in the Klamath River Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TREX) where tribal and community members were empowered to implement prescribed burns for community protection and resource benefit with the assistance of an experienced team. It was cathartic to work proactively with fire, where and when we wanted it, rather than simply reacting to it. As part of the Klamath River TREX ~50 acres were treated with prescribed fire on six parcels of land throughout the Salmon River. The TREX program is funded for at least the next 4 years, offering a great opportunity for locals to get on the ground training, help to build a viable local prescribed fire team, and kick start a larger prescribed fire program within the region. If you are interested in participating in this training opportunity, or having prescribed fire on your property please contact the SRRC.

We've continued to be integrally involved in the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRPP), working toward collaborative fire management in the Klamath Basin. SRRC's Restoration Director is a Co-lead of the WKRPP, representing one of the three focal areas (Salmon River, Orleans/Somes Bar and

Happy Camp). In 2014 the WKRPP made significant progress toward truly collaborative fire planning on the landscape level, coming to agreement in principal among diverse stakeholders on manual, mechanical, and prescribed burning treatments, as well as acquiring significant funding to build local capacity among partners, initiate project planning for a pilot project, and start a planning process on the Salmon River.

We completed 50 acres of fuels reduction work on the Salmon River during 2014, and we have funding to do far more in 2015-2016. SRRC continues to be engaged in planning and commenting on Forest Service forestry management projects on the Salmon. The SRRC and Fire Safe Council work with stakeholders to develop an approach toward forestry management that can improve forest health by developing projects that better prepare private and public lands for wildfires. We are working on a Neighborhood Community Wildfire Protection Plan for the Bear Country Neighborhood of Godfrey, Harris, Blue Ridge, and Black Bear Ranches, and surrounding landscape.

The Fire Fuels and Forestry Program was funded by the USFS/ Grants Clearinghouse, USFWS Partners Program, the Siskiyou County RAC, and exceptional volunteerism of landowners and community members throughout the watershed.



Fuels reduction treatment by SRRC's Crew at Harris Ranch

**Fisheries:** Fisheries crews were busy with a wide range of activities this past year. During late winter through early summer they worked on juvenile coho habitat enhancement, adding willow baffles and brush bundles to side channels and pools to increase habitat and cover. As summer progressed low flows and high water temperatures became a critical concern for fish survival. Maintaining fish passage into cold water tributaries was our first priority and crews focused on assessing and making subtle adjustments to creek mouths to allow fish access to essential refugia and to increase its extent. By mid-July we were getting numerous reports of dead adult fish in the river.

On high fish kill alert, SRRC staff participated in the Klamath Fish Health Assessment Team (KFHAT), attending trainings, participating in calls, putting up notices, and reporting dead or diseased fish and other aquatic species. Our annual Spring Chinook Dives were held July 23rd and a record 55 adult

spring Chinook were found dead along with hundreds of juveniles. Other than the unfortunately high mortality rates, the dives were successful and 851 spring Chinook and 362 summer steelhead were counted. As the summer continued, more Spring Chinook mortalities were observed, but fortunately, many of these fish survived the summer and spawned during the fall. Based upon spawning survey observations, at least 562 Spring Chinook spawned within the survey areas. Similar to what we observed in the 2008 and 2013 fires, water temperatures dropped significantly as the Whites Fire became established, likely saving us from a more devastating fish kill.

Summer also saw crews doing a couple of special projects. In coordination with the USFS, Karuk Tribe, and a Stillwater Sciences juvenile coho thermal tolerance study, we did extensive surveys for juvenile coho throughout the watershed. Hundreds of coho were found sheltering in small cold water refugia areas in the upper Mainstem and lower North

and South Forks. We also conducted a Large Woody Debris Assessment on Knownothing, Methodist and Nordheimer Creeks, all of which have a history of having large wood removed in the past. Conceptual designs were developed for future wood augmentation projects to improve fish habitat.

Fall brought fisheries cooperators to the river to help with spring and fall Chinook carcass and Redd Surveys. This annual effort provides population data that is used to help develop harvest regulations for the following year. SRRC also continued operating the Juvenile Outmigration Screw Trap at the mouth of the Salmon River and Big Bar on the Klamath in cooperation with the Karuk Tribe.

This year's fisheries work was funded by the Karuk Tribe, Mid-Klamath Watershed Council, Bureau of Reclamation, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bella Vista Foundation.

*photos - Crews monitoring for juvenile coho*



**Habitat Restoration:** We've had some exciting advances in our Habitat Restoration Program this past year. Early in 2014 we received funding from CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife to complete designs for a fisheries and riparian enhancement project at Kelly Gulch. When implemented, the Kelly Gulch project will enhance existing side channel habitat and create new off-channel alcove habitat for juvenile fish. We also submitted a proposal for design of a similar project at Red Bank. We've also continued to coordinate our Salmon River In-Stream Restoration Work Group, which is a collaborative group identifying and prioritizing future in-stream restoration projects. As part of this process we are working with the US Forest Service and Stillwater Sciences to assess and create designs for floodplain restoration at mine tailing sites throughout the watershed. This group is currently funded by the National Forest Foundation and Patagonia World Trout Initiative. We are also continuing to seek funding to have the county road crossing at Hotelling Gulch upgraded to allow fish passage, and are in the process of getting a fish barrier on Taylor Creek removed. These projects are both currently funded by US Fish and Wildlife Service.

As part of ongoing fish passage improvement efforts, the mouths of creeks providing important fish habitat got an overhaul - small barriers removed, step pools created, and the benefit of cold water maximized, so that both juvenile and adult fish can utilize the habitat more effectively.



**Watershed Education:** In spring of 2014 we re-hired Dara Soto to coordinate our Watershed Education Program. We are super happy to have her back on our staff after a number of years away.

SRRC's Watershed Education Program integrates environmental sciences and watershed stewardship into the curricula of our two Salmon River schools. Older students focused on water quality monitoring, as well as job training/mentoring with natural resource professionals this year. Younger students kept nature journals and studied local wildlife, including beavers. As always they all shared their knowledge with the community at the annual Watershed Fair in May which was a wonderful success. During the fall, students participated in the annual Fall Chinook Carcass and Redd surveys, collecting data used by CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife to manage Klamath River fisheries.

We also held a couple of very successful community education workshops, including a wildflower identification hike into Devil's Canyon, and a mushroom identification workshop with the Humboldt Bay Mycological Society. The watershed education program was funded this year by the Jiji Foundation and USFWS.



**Temperature Monitoring:** The Salmon River, along with the rest of California, experienced another extreme drought year in 2014. It was the warmest year on record, and also one of the driest. River levels were extremely low, and water temperatures reached highs that were lethal for fish during the month of July.

The SRRC and community volunteers monitored water and air temperatures at approximately 50 sites. In addition to our own long term sites, we continued to help the Forest Service collect temperature data throughout the watershed for their Klamath National Forest Monitoring Plan. We also collected stream flow data once a month through the summer at a dozen sites. The SRRC has continued to participate in the collaborative Klamath Basin Monitoring Program, which facilitates the coordination and implementation of water quality monitoring in the Klamath Basin. Our water monitoring coordinator currently serves as the co-chair for this group. This program was funded by the US Forest Service.

**Noxious Weeds:** Sam Berry took over as the Noxious Weeds program coordinator last spring and successfully guided the program through another busy season. Unfortunately he will be leaving us this spring and we are currently looking for a new program coordinator; spread the word.

It was a race against the heat this summer as all of our invasive species flowered early due to extreme drought conditions. SRRC staff made a strong push on Italian thistle around Forks this spring. Oblong spurge was once again a major focus this year, with intensive treatment and surveying from Indian Bottom to the mouth of the Salmon River. Several new populations were found, mapped and given initial treatment. The majority of the known populations are within the river corridor, with many only accessible by boat. Special thanks to Nat Pennington for putting in many days guiding our crew and volunteers to these hard to reach locations.

Many of the oblong spurge sites burned in the 2013 Butler Fire, resulting in a huge flush of juvenile plants from the existing seed bed! In places where we had only found a handful of adult plants in the past, we were now seeing a carpet of tiny seedlings sprouting up everywhere. Although overwhelming in the field, and disconcerting when it comes to numbers, it's far better to get the seedbed to germinate while we are actively watching and treating them, than at some point down the road when we are not paying close attention.

Fires and the associated suppression efforts can be a major vector for the spread and proliferation of invasive species. SRRC staff Maria Mullins worked with USFS field botanists to survey roads, fire lines, and fire camps in the wake of the 2013 fires. They found new populations of spotted knapweed; showing just how important it is to conduct this level of detailed inventory. In light of this discovery we are gearing up for a major effort to deal with these large established populations. You can look forward to some knapweed eradication parties this coming field season. Also, given the 2014 fires we will be at it again this summer.

We have significant funding to increase our work on private lands for the next two years. Please let us know if you have any invasive species that you could use assistance with and/or if you are treating weeds on your property that can count as an in-kind match to our work.



The 2014 Noxious Weed program was accomplished through USFS, CA Dept. of Food & Agriculture (for treatment on private lands), the National Forest Foundation Wilderness Challenge, and the huge support of our valued community volunteers. *We are happy to announce that this important program is fully funded for the next two years!*



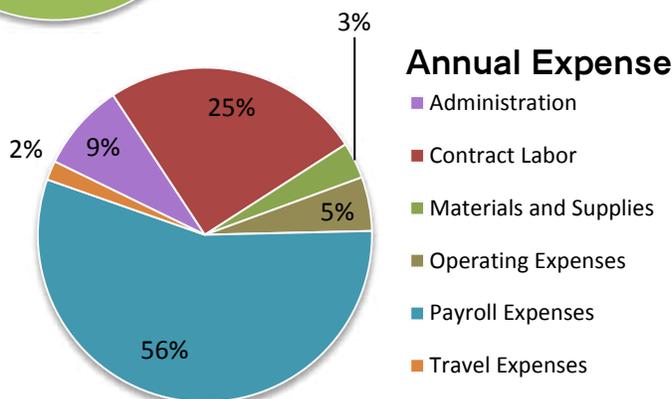
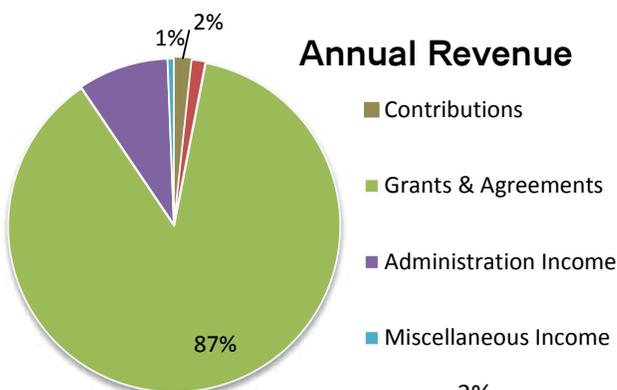
## News from the Watershed Center

The Watershed Center played an important role during this summer's wildfire event. The building served as a center for community meetings, a communications hub for visiting fire teams, and a clean air refuge for residents. We continually strive to make this building available as a community resource, whether during emergencies, or just day to day activities.

With support from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation, we were able to purchase several new computers, printers and scanners this fall, which was a much needed upgrade to our office equipment. The big office infrastructure project for the upcoming year is going to need to be a new network server and associated hardware. It's amazing how many years our current server has served us well, but it is on its last leg at this point.

We've had some staffing changes this year. Dara Soto took over coordination of our Watershed Education Program last winter. She worked for SRRC doing watershed education during our early years, so we were very happy to have her back. After a year of serving as a program staff member and field tech, Sam Berry decided to coordinate the Noxious Weed program this past summer. He did a wonderful job and we'll be sorry to lose him when he leaves the area later this season. We'll be bringing on a new Fire Fuels and Forestry Program Coordinator and Noxious Weed Coordinator after the New Year.

The Watershed Center has been occupying the old school in Sawyers Bar for over 13 years now. Our membership and fundraising drives contribute significantly towards our ability to operate the Watershed Center, and your contributions are much appreciated. We couldn't have a better office and meeting space.



## Financial Report

### Ordinary Income/Expense

Annual Revenue	
Administration Income	\$9,415.58
Contributions	\$8,189.70
Earned Income	\$6,529.50
Grants and Agreements	\$421,899.34
Miscellaneous Income	\$2,950.21
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$482,134.43</b>
Annual Expenses	
Administration	\$42,565.44
Contract Labor	\$125,603.72
Miscellaneous	\$298.00
Operating Expenses	\$26,100.97
Payroll Expenses	\$278,254.99
Materials and Supplies	\$17,528.00
Travel Expenses	\$9,264.47
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$499,616.00</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>-\$17,482.71</b>
Volunteer and In-Kind Contribution	\$115,320.76

# Thank You to our 2014 Members, Volunteers, Donors, and Funders!



*Part of the noxious weed crew and volunteers stop for a photo while digging roadside weeds and picking up trash.*

Thank you to all the people who donated what they could of their time, materials or money. All contributions, whether by becoming an SRRC member, sending us a donation, or volunteering your services to the SRRC and the Salmon River, are hugely appreciated.

## Thank You New and Renewed Members for 2014:

Spring Chinook Memberships - Frank Colver, Anthony Lunt

Green Sturgeon Memberships - Frank Berry, Jon Grunbaum, Sharon Hoppas & George Martin, Lynn Decker

Coho Memberships - Denise & Bob Bearding, Harriet Beinfeld, Foster Boone, Millie Brucker, Tom Carlson & Jenny Sowerwine, Mary Ann Ciavonne & John Ziegler, Don Comstock, Carl & Marie Flarity, Chris Hatton & Tera Palmer, Lynn Halpern, Shirley Hugdahl, Jim & Suzanne Jennings, Jan Keith & Gene Millburn, Bill Kleppinger, Dan Krall, Earl & Trace Landberg, Leslie & Linda Libow, Nick & Marilyn Letsos, Michael Love Assoc. Inc, John Moriarty, Cathi Nelson, Sandy Bar Ranch, Richard Roggia, Lee & Sandy Smith, Mary Sobol, Kristy & Peter Sturges

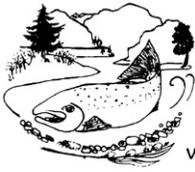
Fall Chinook Memberships - Susanne Cardiff, Kate Chatfield & Peter Stiehler, Donna England, Dennis Grady, Bob-O & Kathleen Jarschke-Schultze, Liz & Jody Pullen, Ahni & Kit Robinson, Jared & Wilson Strote, Hope Woodward

Winter Steelhead Memberships - Ann Berry, Juniper & Steve Blanchard, John Brennan, Alan & Clara Crockett, Sr, Nancy Doman, Judd Ellinwood & Andrea Webb, Jessica Frisk, Sarah Jacobs, Peter Kleinert, Robert Lieber & Cheryl Taubenfeld, Bill & Patsy Marcy, Gabriela McCord, Nature's Kitchen, Kathleen Nolan, Deanne Prchal, Martin Peterson, Quartz Valley Indian Reservation, Steve Robinson, Heather Rowbury, Michael Seeber, Galena Seeger, Steve & Lee Stefanki, Christopher Ursich, Matt Van Scoyoc, David & Valerie Van Scoyoc, Melissa Van Scoyoc

## Thank you to our Funders:

Bureau of Reclamation, CA Department of Conservation, CA Department of Fish & Wildlife, CA Department of Food & Agriculture, Grants Clearinghouse, Firedoll Foundation, Jiji Foundation, Karuk Tribe, Mid Klamath Watershed Council, National Forest Foundation, Patagonia Environmental Programs, Sidney Stern Memorial Trust, Strong Foundation, Sustainable Northwest, Trees Foundation, US Fish & Wildlife Service, US Forest Service

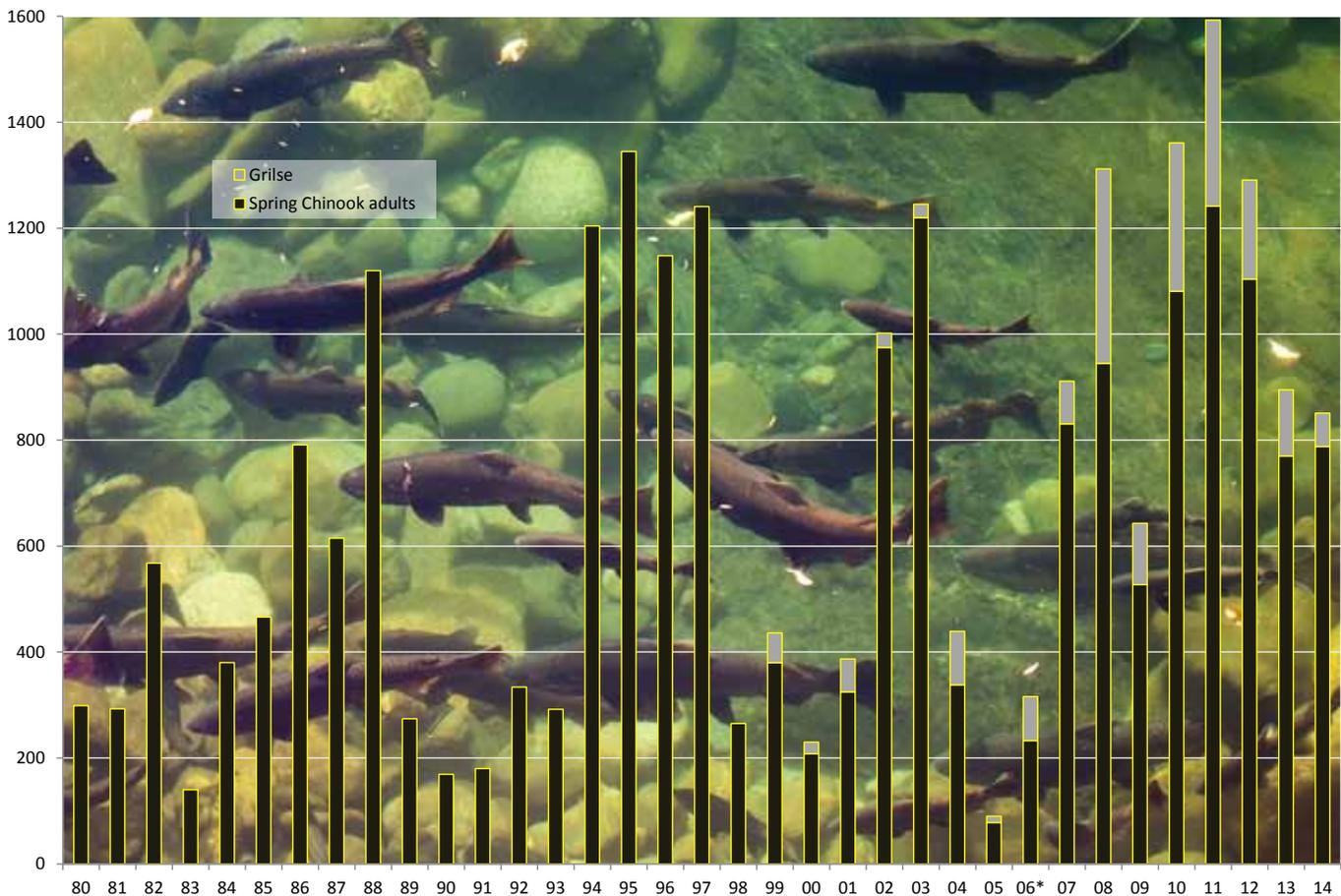
*The Salmon River Restoration Council's mission is to assess, protect, restore and maintain the Salmon River ecosystems with the active participation of the local community, focusing on restoration of the anadromous fisheries resources and the development of a sustainable economy.*



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**Salmon River Spring Chinook Population Totals 1980 - 2014**  
Grilse counted separately only since 1999, \*06 Estimation due to inability to survey 35% of the river because of wildfires.  
Photo by Jan Jaop