

**FEATURING:**

Clark Fork  
Delta Restoration  
Project

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Contact us at:  
(208) 263-5310

## Clark Fork River Delta Restoration Project

*A proposal to address the erosion of wetland habitat types in a delta ecosystem due to altered hydrologic conditions*

The Clark Fork River is the principal tributary to Lake Pend Oreille and the Clark Fork River delta is the largest area of contiguous wetland complex in the Pend Oreille system. The delta forms where the Clark Fork River enters Lake Pend Oreille, about three miles west of Clark Fork, Idaho. The delta extends roughly four miles downriver from the town of Clark Fork and is roughly three miles wide where the delta meets Lake Pend Oreille. About 80 percent of all water entering Lake Pend Oreille is from the Clark Fork River.



*Aerial photograph (taken in the summer of 2009) of the Clark Fork River delta and the proposed action area.*

Extensive bank erosion has occurred to islands and shorelines in the Clark Fork River delta, resulting in losses of soil, native riparian and wetland vegetation, as well as the quantity and quality of fish and wildlife habitat. This erosion is the result of wave action and water level fluctuations of Lake Pend Oreille due to the operation of the Albeni Falls dam. In addition, about 15 – 25 percent of all habitat loss in the delta is attributed to the operation of the Cabinet Gorge dam located upstream on the Clark Fork River. The altered hydrology in the Clark Fork River and delta has resulted in changes in the wetland and aquatic vegetation cover, such that many of the delta's wetland functions are severely impaired.

Ecologically, the Clark Fork River delta is important for providing connectivity between mountain ranges, providing nutrient and sediment transport, improving water quality, and for providing essential cover and feeding areas for migrating and breeding songbirds, waterbirds, waterfowl, raptors and numerous other species of wildlife. The Clark Fork River delta area is also extremely important to the local community and is culturally important to several tribes, including the Kalispell Tribe, Kootenai Tribe of Idaho, Confederated Tribes of the Salish and Kootenai and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe of Indians.

The goal of the restoration project is to protect areas vulnerable to erosion while improving and diversifying key riparian and wetland habitats behind the protection to restore ecological function in the Clark Fork River delta. To meet this goal the project has two focuses:

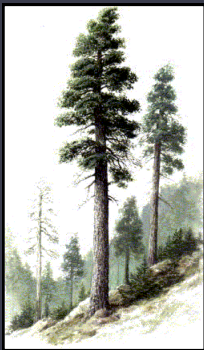
1. Protect existing areas within the delta from further erosion using environmentally compatible stabilization methods.
2. Restore and enhance the edge and interior areas; restoration and enhancement activities will add habitat complexity with large woody debris; promote diverse native riparian vegetation growth such as black cottonwood, dogwood and willow; and reduce non-native invasive reed canarygrass.

The project is proposed to occur in stages to reduce impacts to fish and wildlife, as well as to reduce interruptions to public access. Phase I is scheduled to start in 2014, with construction ending in 2015, and planting efforts to follow. ***The Clark Fork Drift Yard Access Area and boat launch will be closed to public access from September 8, 2014 through June 15, 2015, due to Project construction***

*“The Clark Fork Delta needs your help.”*

*“The banks of the delta are receding every year. The goal of our project is to restore the delta.”*

*~Kathy Cousins, IDFG Mitigation Biologist*



## Clark Fork River Delta Restoration Project

*Continued...*

*activities and for public safety. We apologize for the inconvenience. The Johnson Creek Access Area will remain open for public access.*

The community has a strong interest in participating in the project and so the monitoring effort is being developed with input from the community and planned so volunteers have opportunities to participate and work with researchers. The public is welcome to participate and volunteer opportunities are posted on the website [www.clarkforkdelta.org](http://www.clarkforkdelta.org).



*Volunteers helping to replant wetland vegetation.*

*(Article from [www.clarkforkdelta.org](http://www.clarkforkdelta.org))*

## NRCS Seeks Input from Local Working Groups

This year the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District (BSWCD) called together a Local Work Group (LWG) to identify priority resource concerns in Bonner County. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) relies on LWG's to provide recommendations on the 2014 Farm Bill program delivery.

Local Working Groups, usually from diverse backgrounds, are asked for input on agricultural interests and natural resource issues existing in the local community. The goals were to:

- 1) Identify priority resource concerns specific to Bonner County.
- 2) Identify, as appropriate, high-priority areas needing assistance in the county.
- 3) Generate five to seven local ranking ques-

tions for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

The meeting was well attended with a diverse range of interests including: the USDA Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Idaho Department of Lands, IDEQ, NRCS, BSWCD, Bonner County Commissioner and Public Works Department, City of Sandpoint, Idaho Soil Conservation Commission, Lake Assist coordinator, Cocolalla Lake Association, UI Extension, Idaho Conservation League, Kaniksu Land Trust, Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau, Pack River Watershed Council, and local landowners .

Primary concerns in Bonner County included water quality and plant production. The majority present believed in approaching these concerns utilizing a watershed perspective.

## Last Chance to Order Tree Seedlings !

Each year the Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District sponsors an annual tree seedling sale. This year the District sold over 61,675 trees!

This is the last chance to order seedlings for 2015.

There is a limited supply of White Pine and Ponderosa Pine trees left. Please contact Linda O'Hare at the Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District office at (208) 263-5310 x 100 for more information.

## NRCS Cost-Share Programs...

Dear Bonner County Landowner,

The Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District and the NRCS (Natural Resource Conservation Service) would like to inform you of the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and other conservation programs. Water quality and plant production are important priorities for Bonner County. We support the combination of agriculture management and environmental quality as compatible goals. Anyone can receive cost free natural resource consultation and applicants to our programs can potentially receive cost share for completing management practices.

Examples of management practices in Bonner County are pasture and hay planting, comprehensive forest management plans, tree thinning, tree planting, stream bank stabilization, livestock watering pipes, and cross fences among others.

By contacting this office for these services, including application, you will not be obligated to anything. The pro-

gram applicants who receive the highest ranking will have the opportunity to develop a contract with the Sandpoint Field Office. Your application will be cancelled if you decide not to continue on with a contract.

Other cost share programs are available that are specifically designed for wildlife, wetlands, and special agricultural projects. As stated, for landowners not interested in program participation, we are still available for site visits and consultation. Our office provides non-regulatory, cost free services to individuals who voluntarily request our time. Additional information may be found at the Bonner County Field Office or on-line at: <http://www.id.nrcs.usda.gov/programs>.

**Deadline for applications is November 21, 2014.**

Sincerely,

Greg Becker, District Conservationist

[greg.becker@id.usda.gov](mailto:greg.becker@id.usda.gov)

208-263-5310 x 104

*"A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is Earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature."*

*~ Henry David Thoreau*

### Willows for the Clark Fork Delta... Nov. 12<sup>th</sup> & 13<sup>th</sup>

The public is welcome to come help collect willow cuttings for the Clark Fork Delta Restoration Project on November 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>. We will cut, bundle, and haul willow poles from the Willow Nursery located in Ponderay, Idaho, from 8:00 am until approximately 4:30 pm. This is a wonderful opportunity to help make a difference in our community.

For more information, and to sign up, please email Kate Walker at [kate.walker@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:kate.walker@idfg.idaho.gov) or contact Linda O'Hare at the Bonner Soil and Water Conservation District office at 208-263-5310 x 100 by Monday, November 10th. All volunteers need to be registered in advance.

### Calendar of Events...

November 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Willow Collection Days for the Clark Fork Delta Restoration Project.</b> Contact Linda O'Hare at 208-2634-5310 if you are interested. We will meet at the Kootenai-Ponderay Sewer District Willow Nursery at 8 am. Call for directions.
November 21 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Application deadline for EQIP cost-share program.</b>
November 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<b>Water Quality Monitoring:</b> If you are interested in learning about water quality, please join me for our last monitoring of the year. Contact Jessica Erickson @ 208-255-5545.



# Pack River Watershed Council

The Pack River Watershed Council  
c/o Bonner SWCD  
1224 Washington Ave., Suite 101  
Sandpoint, ID 83864  
208-263-5310



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Bonner Soil & Water Conservation District  
& NRCS  
1224 Washington Ave., Suite 101  
Sandpoint, ID 83864  
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*“The mission of the Pack River Watershed Council is to improve water quality and riparian habitat in the Pack River watershed for people, fish , and wildlife through education, collaboration, and cooperative projects.”*

*Thanks to Avista Watershed Council Funding, we are able to print and distribute this newsletter.*