



Habitat Assessment of Three Watersheds in Southwestern Washington State

Kalama, Washougal, and Lewis Rivers, Washington



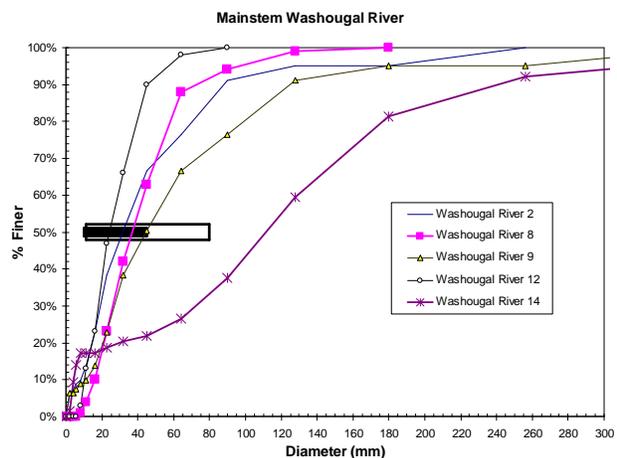
The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) is the regional Lead Entity responsible for developing a strategic- and science-based plan for evaluating and ranking all habitat projects for the region including Cowlitz, Clark, Lewis, and Wahkiakum counties and parts of Pacific and Skamania counties, Washington. To assist in this task, the LCFRB's Watershed Assessment Project was designed to provide stream-specific data on the current state of aquatic and riparian habitats to help fill data gaps, identify potential enhancement, restoration, or protection projects, and to verify previous Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) and IWA model results.

In 2004, the LCFRB contracted R2 Resource Consultants, Inc. (R2) and a third-party consultant to conduct habitat assessments of priority reaches of the lower Columbia subbasin.

Project Elements:

- Fish Habitat Assessment
- ESA Species
- Remote Riparian Assessment
- Evaluation of Hydromodifications
- Large River Habitat Protocol

The assessment involved the collection of data on stream habitat conditions, riparian conditions, sediment sources, and hydromodifications within priority reaches identified on the Kalama, North Fork Lewis, East Fork Lewis, and Washougal rivers, as well as Salmon Creek.



Comprehensive stream habitat surveys were conducted using a modified U.S. Forest Service Level II protocol including natural stream order designations. Data collected during the stream surveys were used in a View-to-the-Sky (VTS) assessment for the targeted watersheds using procedures described by Washington Forest Practices Board. VTS estimates for potential reference temperatures and estimated present-day temperatures were calculated at each of the surveyed EDT reaches in the five river basins.

The information gathered was used to describe, map, and characterize a variety of habitat conditions for salmonids so that the LCFRB could identify and prioritize specific restoration locations and protection actions in the lower Columbia subbasin.