



TRI-STATE STEELHEADERS

SALMON ENHANCEMENT GROUP

PO Box 1375 Walla Walla, WA 99362 | (509) 529.3543 | www.tristatesteelheaders.com

2025 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

20 Log structures installed in the Walla Walla River

480 *Salmon in School* in-classroom lessons

3,038 salmon released by *Salmon in School*

10,600 student contact hours in *Salmon in School*



RESTORATION | EDUCATION | RECREATION

Our mission is to restore sustainable populations of native fish species. We do so by enhancing habitat, providing public education, and promoting recreational angling. Our projects and programs fall into three mission areas:

RESTORATION

Mill Creek Passage - Gose St – In 2025, final plans were completed, permits secured, and construction funding awarded to improve fish passage downstream of Gose St. The project will improve the fishway on the site, improve instream conditions, re-grade stream banks to reduce stream power, and install riparian vegetation in 2026.

Mill Creek Passage Design - 3rd to Colville - Design work was initiated for this section of Mill Creek that is under downtown Walla Walla. A physical model of the channel was developed to test design performance during flood flows.

Mill Creek Passage Design - Roosevelt to Tausick – Design work continued on the section of Mill Creek upstream (east) of the concrete channel. Construction funding was awarded.

Bridge to Bridge Restoration

The Bridge-to-Bridge project is intended to improve in-stream habitat, riparian habitat, and floodplain function on about two miles of the lower Walla Walla River. Phase 3A installed log habitat structures, and planted trees on about 0.2 miles of river.

Brewer Wetland

This 23-acre site has been improved with mitigation funding for impacts to regional wetlands. In 2025, site maintenance continued with an emphasis on weed control and establishing herbaceous species.

Mottet Creek Design – In partnership with the Forest Service, an alternatives assessment was completed on this stream in the Grande Ronde watershed. A failing culvert at a crossing of the stream provides an opportunity to improve passage and habitat, while maintaining a heavily used forest road. A preferred alternative was selected, and developed to a preliminary design level.

EDUCATION

Salmon in School: The Salmon in School program allows students a hands-on STEM learning experience through raising and releasing salmon. For the 2024-2025 school year, the program provided 29 aquariums serving over 1,400 students at schools in Walla Walla, Columbia, and Garfield counties. Students released over 3,000 spring chinook into local streams.

STEM in the River: This four-day workshop is a professional development opportunity for local teachers to receive the training and hours necessary to maintain their teaching certifications. Our staff, board members, and partners place students in the role of designing a restoration project using concepts they learn during two days of hands on learning in the Walla Walla River

RECREATION

Jumbo Trout Program: Tri-State Steelheaders continued to support the Jumbo Trout Program by purchasing food to raise about 2,500 rainbow trout. “Jumbos” are about 1.5 – 2 pounds, and are released into about 20 southeastern Washington lakes, including Bennington Lake in Walla Walla.

Kids Fishing Days: Tri-State Steelheaders and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers co-sponsored the annual Kids Fishing Day at Bennington Lake on the Free Fishing Weekend in June. Fishing rods were available to loan to kids who did not have gear of their own. New fishing poles and other prizes were given out in a raffle and to winners of the Casting Contest and Biggest Fish Contest. All participants received swag bags and enjoyed free hot dogs and soda.