



Community-Based Salmon Habitat Mapping on Prince of Wales Island

... The Project ...

Since 2012, partners in this project have been mapping baseline salmon distribution and habitat conditions in selected watersheds on Prince of Wales Island.

Watersheds were prioritized based on their importance to subsistence, lack of current scientific data, likelihood to be impacted by near-term land use practices, and need for stream restoration.

The objectives in each watershed were to:

- 1) Document the full extent of anadromous water bodies
- 2) Map salmon habitat characteristics

Completing these objectives has allowed for the collection and dissemination of the scientific data that is important for protecting and restoring important

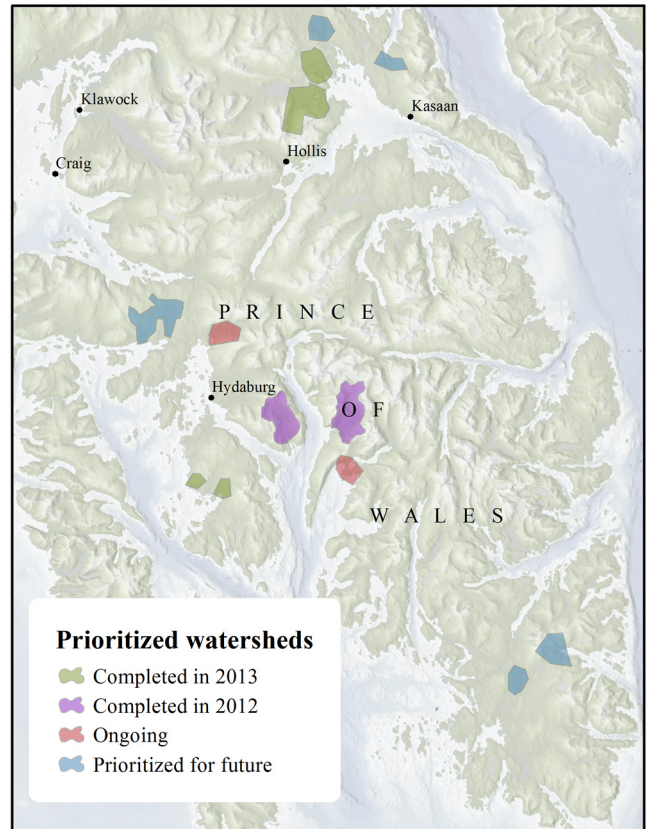


Photo credit: Erika Nortemann / TNC

... The Partners ...

The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Hydaburg Cooperative Association (HCA), the Organized Village of Kasaan (OVK), and Kai Environmental Consulting Services have worked together to design these projects to meet the needs of all partners. The communities of Hydaburg and Kasaan rely heavily on salmon for subsistence purposes, and are interested in scientific research that can help protect these subsistence resources. In addition, hiring local crews to lead and participate in the data collection allows for capacity building, community-based stewardship, and economic opportunities for these communities.

Results

... Fish Surveys ...

Using minnow traps and adult salmon foot counts, crew members identify important spawning and rearing habitats for coho salmon, pink salmon, chum salmon, and sockeye salmon. In addition, they record locations of Dolly Varden char, rainbow trout, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

Submission of this information into the State of Alaska's Anadromous Waters Catalog (AWC) results in protection under the law of these stream reaches.

As of 2013, fish surveys have resulted in:

- ~ 9 miles of new anadromous stream segments added to the AWC
- ~ 116 new fish observation points added to the AWC



Photo credit: Erika Nortemann / TNC

... Habitat Mapping ...

Crews measured and mapped important habitat features including stream channel size, substrate, large woody debris, pool density, riparian vegetation, water temperature and flow, culvert condition, and bank disturbance.

This data will serve as baseline information to evaluate land use decisions around logging and mining in the area. In addition, it is being used to identify restoration potential in previously impacted streams.

As of 2013, habitat mapping work has resulted in:

- ~ 26.3 miles of mapped streams
- ~ Updates to the streams GIS database for Southeast Alaska (SEAKHydro)

