FLOODPLAIN RECONNECTION FOR FISH, WILDLIFE & PEOPLE

SITE
La Center Wetlands is a 450 acre floodplain reconnection and restoration project located between river miles 3.2 and 5.5 of the East Fork Lewis River, upstream of the town of La Center, Washington.

A levee along the East Fork Lewis separates the river from its floodplain and also serves as a trail for recreation in this natural area. The wetland complex was previously expanded to support waterfowl habitat and a weir was installed to increase ponding. Adjacent property owners use the area for hunting and grazing. Fish passage is limited by both the levee and the weir.

DESIGN OBJECTIVES
- Increase inundation of wetlands and floodplains (depths greater than 1')
- Improve/increase side channel and off-channel habitat
- Improve fish passage and reduce stranding
- Don’t drain the existing wetland & pond
- Don’t flood the neighbors more frequently

OPTIMIZE FISH, WATERFOWL & WETLAND HABITATS
The weir was removed and replaced with a constructed riffle. The riffle elevation was lower than the weir to allow greater fish passage during the key ingress and egress periods observed by Cynthia Baker (PhD thesis 2008). The riffle is high enough to maintain ponding to support waterfowl and wetland habitats, and low enough to reduce fish stranding.

CULVERT REPLACED WITH BRIDGE
Fish passage into floodplain wetlands was supported by replacing a culvert with a bridge. The bridge provided maintenance access along a county road.