

Extending Conservation Education into Site Restorations

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Wasilla Soil and Water Conservation District has identified several riparian and stream sites within our district in the past several months in need of restoration. We have put into place low cost, highly collaborative projects to make necessary improvements along waterways. This has been accomplished by partnering with multiple agencies and groups, including elementary students and their teachers and parents, in educational programming and on the ground restorations. Our projects have included:

1. Revegetating stream banks with vegi-matting
2. Use of willow cuttings for stabilization
3. Spruce revetments
4. Native plant transplants
5. Wild seed collection and dispersal
6. Simple rock “check dam” construction to raise water levels downstream from an existing undersized culvert to improve anadromous passage
7. Boulder barricade placement along with signage to prevent continued degradation of salmon habitat by pick-up trucks entering the Little Susitna River.
8. CEMP assessment of water quality at stream sites being remediated/restored

We have used a basic conservation curriculum developed by our staff to educate students about watershed conservation practices. We then extend their learning opportunities by having them work along with our staff to conduct restoration projects. We have also seen a great deal of community support and awareness about watershed conservation within our district as students, parents and teachers continue to “get the word out” about their experiences and new understanding of local water related issues.

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