Chapman Ranch Phase B
Channel Rehabilitation Project
Proposed 2021 In-River Construction

Project Background

The U.S. Department of Interior established the Trinity River Restoration Program (TRRP/Program) in 2000 with the intent to restore the fisheries of the Trinity River (River) from the impacts of dam construction and related water diversions of the Trinity River Division of the Central Valley Project[1]. Baseline ecological conditions of the Trinity River at the time of the establishment of the TRRP also reflected effects from legacy mining and timber harvest in the watershed. These effects are considered in the Program's restoration activities.

Chapman Ranch Phase A and B project areas before Phase A project construction

The TRRP is administered by the US Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) and establishes a partnership between federal and state resource agencies, tribes, and Trinity County toward the fisheries restoration goal. The Program's primary objective is to restore the processes and attributes of an ecologically-functioning river system while retaining the Trinity and Lewiston Dam water supplies—vital to the Central Valley.

There are five primary components to the TRRP's river restoration work:

1. ***Variable annual instream flows***: releasing water from Lewiston Dam (based on forecasted Water Year availability) to mimic natural Trinity River conditions and to maintain/interact with downstream areas to enhance conditions for all life stages of fish and wildlife.

2. ***Channel rehabilitation***: restoring the River's functional floodplain, which has been channelized and simplified by managed river flows and mining.

3. ***Sediment management***: re-introducing gravel (aka coarse sediment for spawning and habitat diversity) that is blocked by the dam and moves downstream during high flow events and reduces fine sediment that degrades fish habitats.

4. ***Watershed restoration***: addressing negative impacts that have resulted from poor land management in the basin. Activities include efforts in Trinity River tributaries to decrease fine sediment inputs and increase aquatic habitats.

[1] https://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvp/

5. ***Adaptive management***: monitoring, evaluating, and improving the effectiveness of River restoration actions.

Anadromous spawning habitat after TRRP project construction

As part of continuing River restoration efforts in channel rehabilitation, the TRRP proposes to construct the second phase of its Chapman Ranch Phase A river restoration project near Junction City, CA, termed the Chapman Ranch Phase B Project (Phase B).

As part of Phase B, the TRRP will complete an Environmental Assessment/Initial Study (EA/IS) to meet requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This effort will be lead by Reclamation, the US Forest Service (USFS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the California North Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board., The EA/IS will evaluate and disclose potential environmental effects of implementing Phase B. The purpose of this notice is to invite you to participate in the NEPA/CEQA process for Phase B, by providing comments, suggestions, or concerns you may have about this effort during a public scoping period. To encourage your informed participation, this scoping notice includes a general description of the project/proposed action and the purpose and need for the project. All NEPA/CEQA documents completed for the 2019 Phase A project can be found at http://www.trrp.net/restoration/channel-rehab/chapman/.

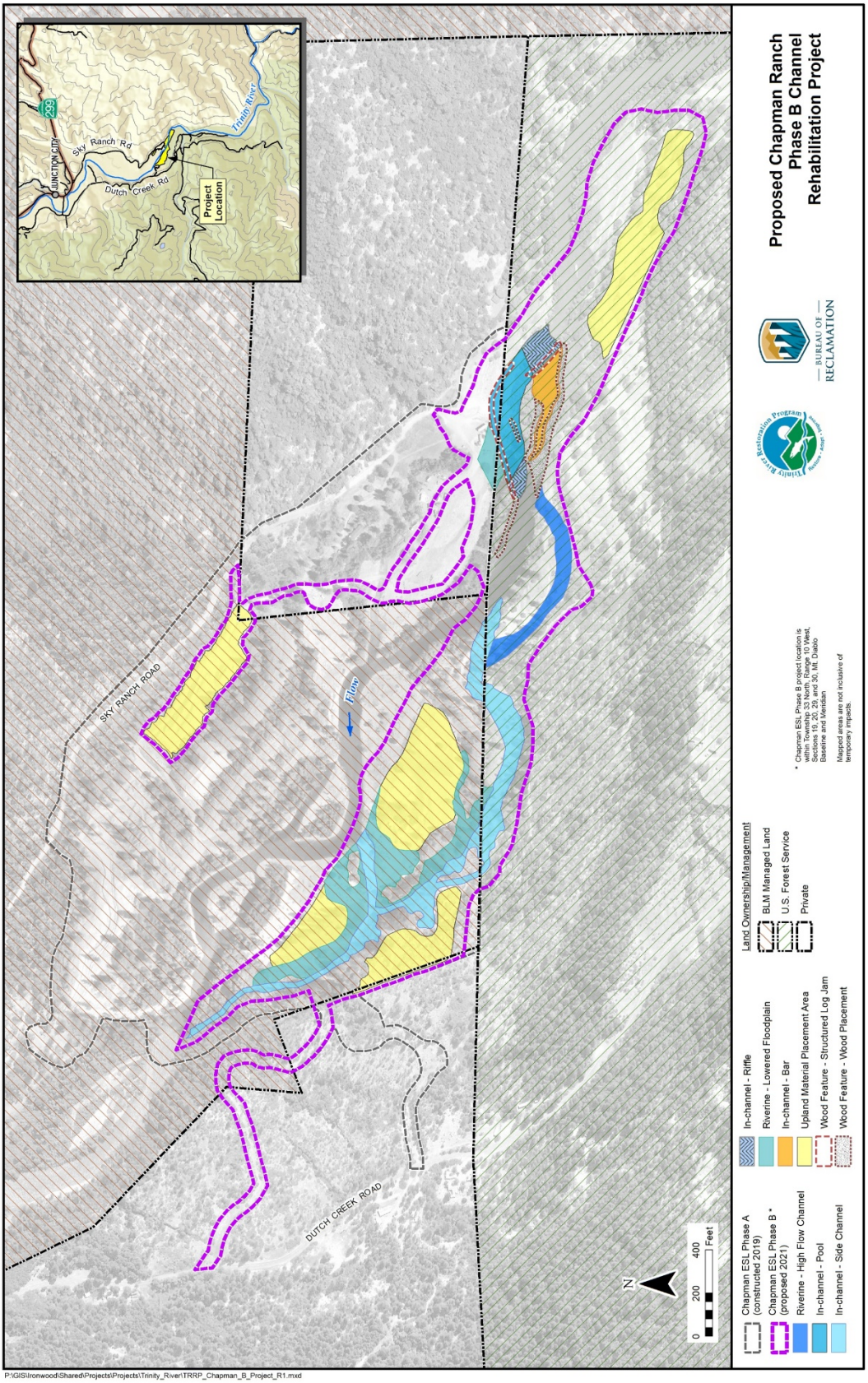
Phase B Project Goals and Objectives

The Phase B project is designed to interface with the 2019 Phase A project to increase the size and improve the overall function of the restoration area. The completed Chapman Ranch Project would:

- Reestablish a functional, topographically-complex floodplain to increase river connections at a greater range of flows and promote dynamic river processes.
- Increase in-channel habitat diversity at all flows by placing wood to interact with river flows, provide cover for fish, and increase channel complexity and groundwater retention.
- Revegetate construction-disturbed upland and riparian habitats to restore native plant diversity and fish and wildlife habitat, and provide future trees for recruitment to the River.

Chapman Ranch Phase B Channel Rehabilitation Project Description

The proposed Phase B project spans 63 acres south of Junction City, CA, between river miles (RM) 83.5 and 83.8 and adjacent to the Chapman Ranch Phase A project (RM 82.8 to 83.5). Phase B would be accessed via Sky Ranch Road on River right, and Dutch Creek Road (approximately 3 miles upstream of the Dutch Creek Road bridge) on River left. Most of the lands included in the proposed footprint are managed by the USFS (29 acres) or the BLM (27 acres). The remainder consists of several privately-owned parcels (7 acres) located at the upstream and downstream boundaries of the Project area. The figure below shows the Phase A and proposed Phase B project area footprints.



Chapman Ranch Phase B Project Location and Proposed Project Activities

Proposed Project Activities

To achieve the Phase B goals and objectives, TRRP proposes the following project activities which are similar to, and would work in concert with, those of Phase A:

- Wood placement and reduction of channel-stabilizing vegetation to encourage the River to meander and improve dynamic riverine processes;
- Lowering of floodplains and the creation of a high flow channel to support river maintenance of constructed features and promote broad-vegetated areas away from the River's banks;
- Excavation to create new side channels, in-channel pools, bars, and riffles—immediate habitat that would generally remain but evolve over years of seasonal flooding;
- Placement of large wood features, including log jams that would provide immediate cover and interact with River flows to scour and maintain function;
- Vegetation planting and amending of soils in riparian and upland vegetation zones to increase use by wildlife; and
- Re-vegetation of native riparian and wetland areas to improve aquatic habitat conditions.

Possible Local Disturbances

- Approximately 40,000 to 60,000 cubic yards of material would be excavated and moved throughout the Project using heavy construction equipment and haul trucks.
- Highway-legal haul trucks would make deliveries (of equipment, large wood, plants, etc.) during work hours, utilizing existing roads.
- Nearby residents may experience noise commensurate with the use of haul trucks and heavy construction equipment, such as dozers and excavators.
- No road closures or traffic delays are anticipated.
- Minimal tree and vegetation removal would occur. Trees downed for Project activities would be used to create the Project's large wood features, reducing the need for off-site timber.

Proposed Phase B Project Schedule

- Public Scoping – January 21 - February 21, 2020
- Draft EA/IS for public comment – Spring 2020
- Final EA/IS, Forest Service Objection Period, and Final Decision – Summer 2020
- Proposed Phase B Project construction – As early as Fall 2020 for up-slope work, Summer 2021 for in-river construction
- Post-construction revegetation and maintenance – As needed

How to Participate in the Phase B Scoping Process

The Trinity River at the proposed Phase B project area

If you can offer information relevant to the proposed Project, such as resources present in the Project area, potential conflicts in the use of resources, potential effects to resources from the Project, points of contention with the Project or viable Project alternatives to meet the goal, you are encouraged to send your comments in writing to Reclamation at the address below. Full citation of any scientific literature or data offered is requested to assure, and expedite, its retrieval.

After the scoping comment period, the interdisciplinary team will review all the scoping comments, determine key issues, and, if necessary, develop additional alternatives to respond to those issues.

- Comments may be submitted by email to msimon@usbr.gov or mailed to:

  Chapman Phase B Scoping
  C/O TRRP
  P.O. Box 1300
  Weaverville, CA 96093

- Please include Chapman Ranch Phase B Channel Rehabilitation Project Scoping Comment in the subject line of your email or letter.
- For all submittals, please also include the following information:
  - Your name and address (telephone and email are also suggested)
  - Site-specific comments about the proposed action, along with supporting information that would help identify issues, develop alternatives, or predict environmental effects of the proposal
- Comments received, including the names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered part of the public record on this proposal and will be available for public inspection.
- This project supports the objectives of the Redding BLM's Resource Management Plan and the Shasta Trinity National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan. This project is not a fuel reduction project as defined by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act of 2003. This document satisfies Forest Service Requirements for Scoping under 36 CFR 220.4(e).
- Comments received by **February 21, 2020** will be fully considered by the agencies' interdisciplinary team.