



NFWF

Iron Horse Fish Screen Implementation Project – Permitting

Recipient: Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District

Project Period: 11/01/2021 – 12/31/2023

Award Amount: \$34,906.89

Matching Contributions: \$0.00

Project Number: #8006.22.073962

Summary of Accomplishments

The purpose of this project was to complete permitting work for installation of a fish screen on a previously unscreened direct diversion at Iron Horse Vineyards, on Green Valley Creek, Sonoma County, CA. All permits necessary to construct this project were secured and the fish screen was installed in the late summer and fall of 2023.

Project Activities & Outcomes

Activities

- RCD staff drafted and submitted applications and prepared supporting materials for both permits and conducted field visits with regulatory agency staff
- RCD staff performed biological surveys of the project area, including surveys for habitat and presence of California red-legged frogs and a botanical survey, and prepared pre-construction survey reports in support of permit applications
- We contracted with Swift Biological to prepare a biological resources assessment for the project area to support permit applications
- As required by permit, RCD staff conducted a tailgate training for construction crews on red-legged frogs and procedures to be followed should a frog be discovered on-site
- At the start of construction, staff worked with California Department of Fish and Wildlife personnel to isolate the project site from Green Valley Creek and relocate aquatic species. We maintained isolation nets throughout the duration of project construction
- Because it took less time to secure the 404 and 401 permits than originally anticipated, we had some funds available to support permit compliance activities during construction. This was the only discrepancy from the original scope of work for the project.

Outcomes

- All permits required for project construction were secured in a timely manner, and the fish screen was installed during the summer/fall 2023
- There were no discrepancies between projected and actual outcomes

Lessons Learned

We had originally anticipated using the standard Section 1602 process for the required Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (a permit from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife), but instead used Section 1653 (Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act), an alternative process designed specifically for habitat restoration projects. This was the first time GRRCD staff had used this permit process, and it proved to be a worthwhile alternative while providing staff with additional experience. While this permit was outside the scope of this grant, it was related and provided a good lesson learned. We will likely use the HREA process for permitting habitat projects in the future.

Dissemination

The activities covered by this grant are pretty specific and somewhat dry, so we did not engage in any dissemination of our lessons learned.

POSTING OF FINAL REPORT: *This report and attached project documents may be shared by the Foundation and any Funding Source for the Project via their respective websites. In the event that the Recipient intends to claim that its final report or project documents contains material that does not have to be posted on such websites because it is protected from disclosure by statutory or regulatory provisions, the Recipient shall clearly mark all such potentially protected materials as "PROTECTED" and provide an explanation and complete citation to the statutory or regulatory source for such protection.*

Project Photos

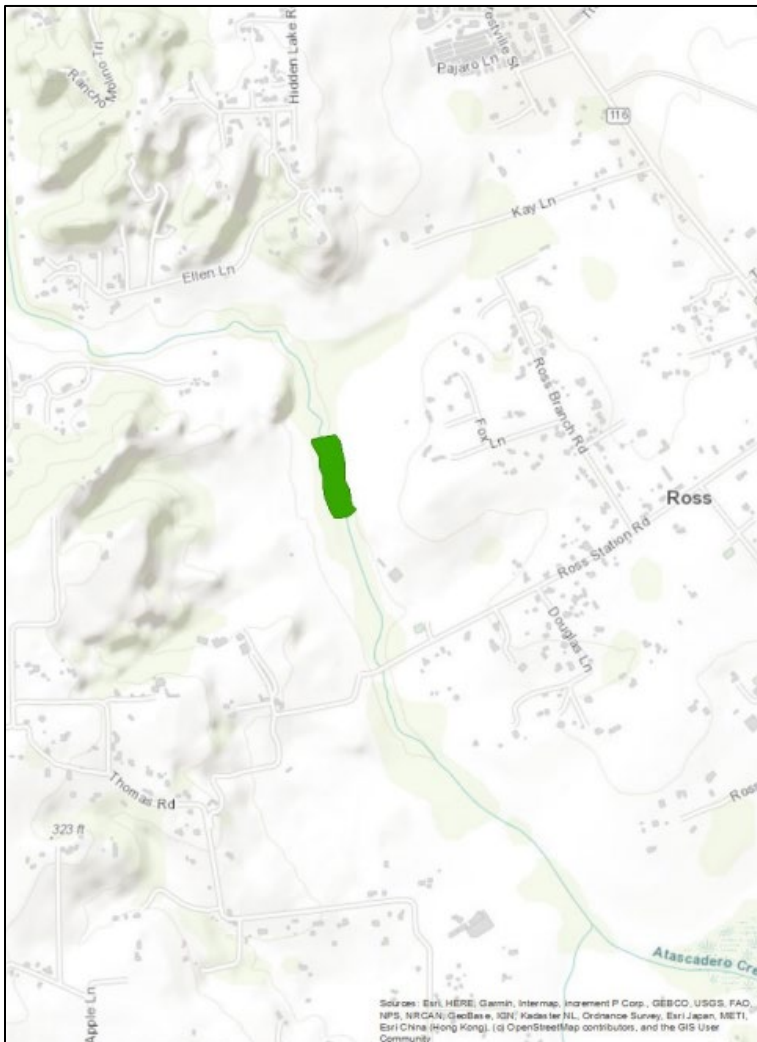


Image 1: Project site located west of Ross, CA.