

Joint effort restores salmon to upper Moose Creek

NOAA's Habitat Restoration Center teamed up with the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to bring salmon back to the upper reaches of Moose Creek near the village of Chickaloon. NOAA contributed \$25,000 to the successful effort to relocate the creek to its historic channel so salmon could return to spawn.



Aerial photographs of the stream channels. Photo credit Chickaloon Village Traditional Council

Athabascan elders of the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council told stories about Moose Creek teeming with salmon. Today, salmon remain plentiful in the lower reaches, but not in the upper watersheds. Biologists set out to discover why that is true.

After a long search, a Chickaloon Village Traditional Council biologist uncovered historical documentation of a stream re-alignment to allow for construction of a railroad, which was later removed. These historical documents also revealed the natural flow of the stream, which curved around a waterfall that was created (and blocked fish passage) when the railroad was built. With this knowledge, the Chickaloon Village Traditional Council, the NOAA Restoration Center and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service were able to re-create the historical channel. Chinook salmon are now spawning in the restored channel.