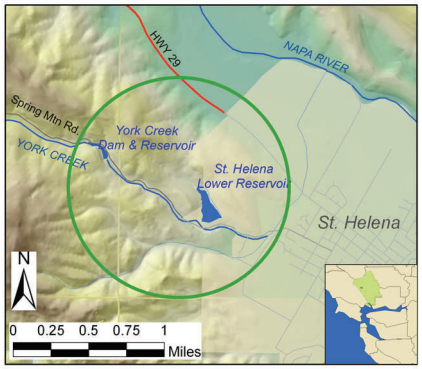
**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**, San Francisco District
**City of St. Helena,** Napa County, California

# Upper York Creek Ecosystem Restoration Project



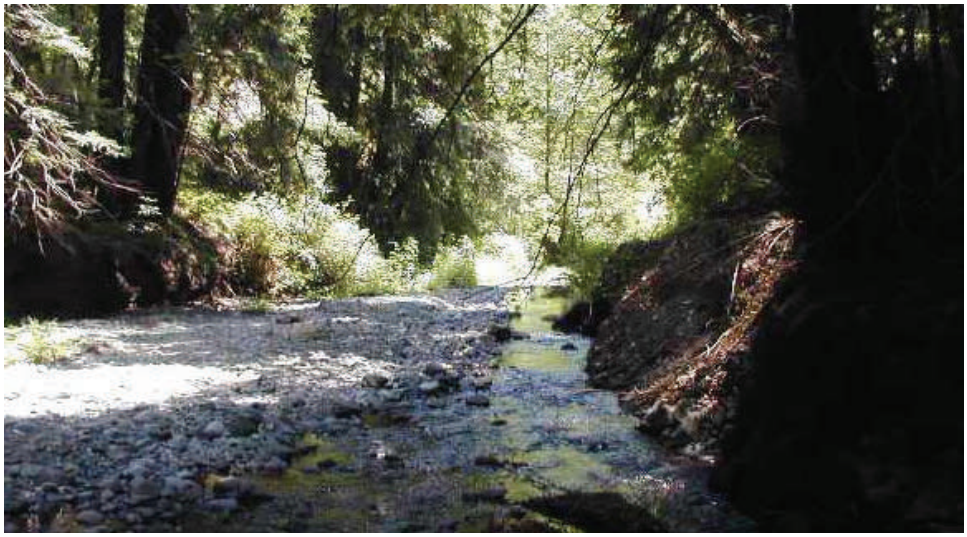

## Project Facts

### LOCATION
Northwest of the City of St. Helena, Napa County, approximately 60 miles north of San Francisco

### YORK CREEK
York Creek is a tributary to the Napa River, which flows to the Pacific Ocean via San Pablo Bay.

### THE UPPER YORK CREEK DAM AND RESERVOIR
The dam is a 50-foot high, 140-foot long earthen dam that was completed in 1900. The reservoir, though now abandoned as the result of siltation, was originally used for water storage.

### STEELHEAD
Steelhead are born in fresh water, emigrate to the ocean, and return to fresh water to spawn. Historically, large runs of steelhead trout made their way up the Napa River to spawn in its tributaries. Today, steelhead are listed as threatened on the endangered species list.



**York Creek is potentially one of the best steelhead spawning and rearing streams within the Napa River basin, and is important for the overall Napa River steelhead population. Unlike many streams in the Napa River watershed, York Creek maintains perennial flow, making it especially valuable rearing habitat for juvenile steelhead.**

## Project Background

York Creek originates in the California Coastal Range on the western side of the Napa Valley watershed, meandering approximately 5 miles through redwoods, mixed conifer forests, and vineyards before descending into St. Helena and draining into the Napa River.

Upper York Creek Dam and Reservoir are located approximately 1.25 miles northwest of the city of St. Helena. Originally built to provide drinking water for the St. Helena Water Company, this earthen dam was completed in 1900 and is a 50-foot-high, 140-foot-long structure. Today, use of the reservoir has been abandoned as it has essentially no holding capacity due to sedimentation up to 29 feet thick in some areas.

Upper York Creek Dam has been identified by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries as an impassible ecological barrier to fish and wildlife species living within the creek. The dam obstructs approximately 2 miles of upstream migration, spawning and rearing habitat for the threatened steelhead, while also blocking access for resident fish and other local aquatic wildlife.

In addition to the aquatic habitat, the dam and reservoir has also destroyed approximately 2 acres of riparian habitat. It is believed that a restored aquatic and riparian corridor through the project site would better support native populations by providing increased canopy, cover, foraging, and shelter habitat.

## Project Goals

To improve steelhead and wildlife passage and to improve the aquatic and riparian habitat of upper York Creek.

## Project Objectives

The project aims to restore aquatic wildlife habitat corridor through the project area, remove reservoir sediment, and restore critical riparian and riverine habitats. Additionally, the project will incorporate erosion control techniques by incorporating the use of native vegetation plantings.

## Partners

Non Federal Project Sponsor: City of Saint Helena.

Federal Partner: U.S. Army Corp Of Engineers.

Project Participants: California Department of Fish and Game, U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries, Regional Water Quality Control Board, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

**Sediment accumulation within the reservoir during January 2006 storm event.**

## The Proposed Project

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, San Francisco District, and the City of St. Helena, California, the project's non-Federal sponsor, propose a project that would remove 70% of Upper York Creek Dam. Additionally, the proposed project would restore a naturally functioning creek through the project site to reconnect 2 miles of steelhead spawning and rearing habitat, remove the accumulated sediment from the reservoir, and restore approximately 2 acres of degraded riparian and aquatic habitat. The proposed project includes filling in the spillway and stabilizing Spring Mountain Road.

**Steelhead Trout**
http://www.naparcd.org/steelheadtrout.htm

## Information for the Public

**Project Public Comment Period**

Friday September 1 - Sunday October 1, 2006

**Public Meeting UPDATE**

**Date:** Thursday September 21, 2006

**Time:** 6:00pm—8:00pm

**Location:** George and Elsie Wood Public Library @ 1492 Library Lane, St Helena, CA 94574

**Contact Information**:

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**Available Project Information and Documents**

**Hardcopy:** George and Elsie Wood Public Library

Address: 1492 Library Lane, St Helena, CA 94574

**Project Website (Electronic Documents)**

http://www.spn.usace.army.mil/projects/upperyorkcreek.html

**Project FTP Site Address (Electronic Documents)**

ftp://ftp.usace.army.mil/pub/spn/UpperYorkCreek/