



WOOD RIVER TRAILS COALITION

PROJECT REPORT
GREENHORN
IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT



OUR MISSION IS TO CREATE, MAINTAIN AND SUSTAIN OUR TRAIL NETWORK FOR ALL USERS.

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ABOUT THE WOOD RIVER TRAILS COALITION

GREENHORN IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT PHASE 1 - 2024

PARTNERS



FUNDING PROVIDED BY

- Wood River Trails Coalition
- USFS - Ketchum Ranger District
- American Trails Legacy Trails Grant Program

TOTAL COST \$TBD

Phase One: Bridge Removal & New Bridge Installation, Lower Greenhorn Main Reroute, Imperial Reroute, Associated Trail Decommissioning, Riparian Restoration (2024)

\$150,000

Phase Two: Upper Greenhorn Reroute(s), Heavy Trail Maintenance, Trailhead Improvements (2025-2026) **\$TBD**

Project Need:

Greenhorn Gulch is an iconic trailhead located on the Ketchum Ranger District (KRD). It is a true multi-use trail system where one can regularly see hikers, dirt bikes, mountain bikes, equestrians, and e-bikers sharing the system. Currently there are 3 bridge sites along the first 0.3 miles of the Greenhorn Gulch Trail.

According to our Trail Monitoring data, last year the Greenhorn Gulch Trail was one of the most utilized recreation facility on the KRD seeing 22,509 total trail counter detections. That is a lot of traffic going through sensitive riparian habitat!

In the spring of 2023 the first bridge from the trailhead was removed due to correlated safety concerns after a stringer broke as a result of extreme spring weather.

When the bridge went out, users had to ford the creek, creating a huge hurdle to anyone with mobility or stability issues (children and the elderly).

Proposed Plan:

The overall plan is to remove the first two bridges and reroute the trail out of the riparian area

After removing the second lower bridge (currently at the end of its useful lifespan), and closing the trail in the riparian zone we plan to re-route 0.2 miles of trail along the north side of the creek to the third bridge.

This should reduce future maintenance costs with two less bridges and eliminate trail braiding through the wetland. It will also move the trail out of beaver habitat that is continually flooding the trail.

We will rebuild the third bridge (also at the end of its useful lifespan) with a fully engineered design in a sustainable location.

All of this will allow for quality riparian area restoration that we can accomplish with both professional and volunteer efforts.

PROJECT ELEMENTS

01 RIPARIAN AREA RESTORATION

The most limiting factor to aquatic species in the Big Wood River basin is disconnection to the floodplain by infrastructure like bridges and homes. By reducing 3 bridges to 1 bridge this project can enhance habitat by reconnecting the floodplain. Benefits of floodplains are:

- Provides groundwater recharge and increases instream flows during base flow periods.
- Floodplain connection provides off channel rearing habitat and refuge during high spring run-off events which increases survival and productivity of salmonids.
- Allows for large woody debris recruitment which increases complex habitat for salmonids.
- Floodplains allow for more natural processes such as in-channel pool-riffle sequences (pools followed by riffles) which increases productivity of aquatic organisms.

Removing bridges from and rerouting the trails around aquatic habitat will positively impact the many species that rely on the riparian zone. Reducing human and dog interactions with the wildlife and fish that rely on the riparian zone should make these species more resilient.



PROJECT ELEMENTS

02 TRAIL REROUTE

Sustainable trail design allows the Trails Coalition and our agency partners to spend less resources on maintenance and repairs on major problem areas, and more resources on creating new trail experiences and ensuring the rest of our trail system is well-maintained!

By removing the bridges, this project should become more sustainable to maintain, less affected by seasonal flooding, less impacted by beaver activity, and will better serve the entire community. The Greenhorn Bridges have washed out twice in the past decade - requiring thousands to replace them. A more sustainable trail design will eliminate the need for this consistent investment, allowing us to focus on other trails, and other trailheads.



PROJECT ELEMENTS

03 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

One really exciting thing about the Greenhorn Bridge Riparian Reroute and Restoration Project is the opportunity for volunteer engagement.

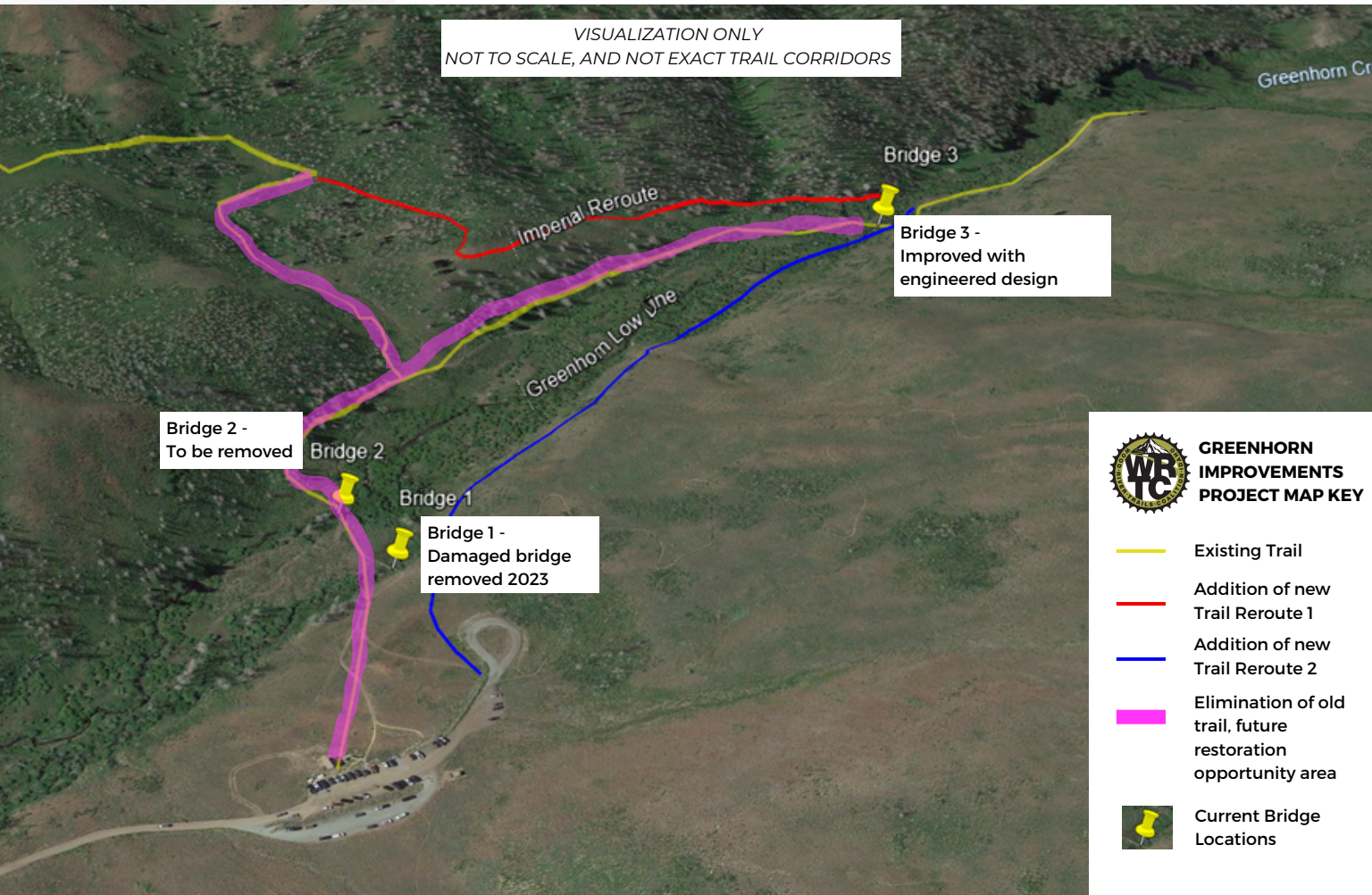
Because the bridge and trail are so popular with the community, and due to the proximity of the trailhead to town, we anticipate high turnout at any volunteer events that we schedule for this project.

We will work closely with our USFS staff partners to design volunteer events that both get work done, and help educate folks about the need for this kind of restoration. All of our land management partners need to balance the needs of humans, dogs, and wildlife, and communicating that delicate balance is important.

Having a hands-on work events for people to get to know a project that seeks to restore habitat while continuing to provide recreation opportunities will be an impactful way for people to engage with this balance.



PROJECT MAPS



PHASE ONE - 2024

Bridge Removal & New Bridge Installation, Lower Greenhorn Main Reroute, Imperial Reroute, Associated Trail Decommissioning, Riparian Restoration (2024-2025)

PROJECT MAPS

Figure 1

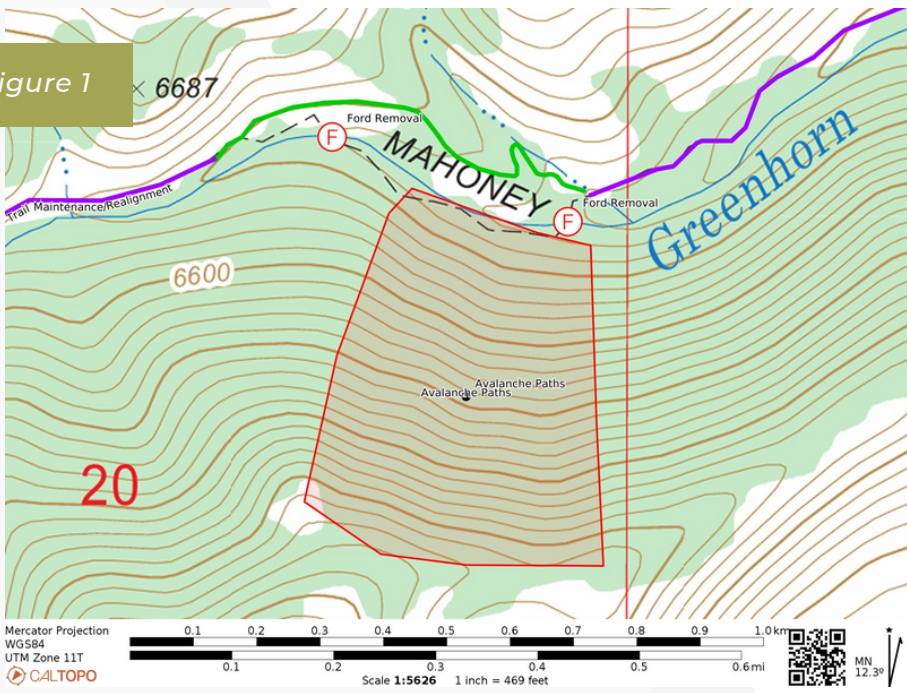


Figure 2



PHASE TWO - 2025/2026

Upper Greenhorn Reroutes (Figure 1), Heavy Trail Maintenance, Trailhead Improvements (Figure 2)

WHO WE ARE

In 2019 The Wood River Trails Coalition launched to execute a clear mission: to create, maintain and sustain our trail network for all users.

We execute our mission with three main "pillars":

- **Professional Trail Crew Support;**
- **Volunteer Trail Work;**
- **Membership Program and Trail Project Funding**

This allows us to maintain the world class trail system we have here in Central Idaho while working to improve it.

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