

Natural Resource Damage Assessment & Restoration Program



Photo Credit: Anna Bengtson, UPCM

What is NRDAR?

The **Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR)** Program works in partnership with federal, state and tribal trustees to restore natural resources that are part of the public trust which have been injured by oil spills or hazardous substance releases. Natural resource restoration occurs at no cost to the taxpayer. Compensation for lost resources can come in the form of habitat restoration, increased opportunities for recreation, projects that benefit migratory birds and sensitive species, and more.

The NRDAR process starts with the assessment of what resources have been injured and to what degree, and then develops a Restoration Plan that describes actions needed to restore injured resources back to the state they would be in but for the presence and effect of the contaminants. The Trustees then negotiate with potentially responsible parties to complete those restoration actions, reaching a settlement that would fund those actions, or taking other legal actions. This process is authorized under the Comprehensive Environmental Response Compensation and Liability Act, the Oil Pollution Act, and the Clean Water Act. The NRDAR Program restores a variety of resources considered to be part of the public trust.

What are Natural Resources?

Natural resources are defined ([40 CFR 300.5](#)) as water, air, soil, groundwater, and biota (birds, fish and other wildlife and the habitats that support them). The natural resources present and injured at a site vary depending on the site and the nature and distribution of the contaminants. These natural resources are a determining factor when developing the restoration plan. At Silver Creek, key natural resources that may be addressed by restoration include riparian and wetland habitats that support migratory birds; fish and amphibians, and other wildlife; and fishing and other human recreational uses.

What is a Trustee? Who are they?

Trustees are defined ([40 CFR 300.5](#)) as federal and state agencies, and tribes who have responsibility to manage natural resources in trust (hence, Trustees) for the American public. At Silver Creek, the Trustees include the U.S. Department of the Interior, represented by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the State of Utah represented by the Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Natural Resources.

What is the Public's role in Restoration?

The public plays a critical role in natural resource restoration because the resources being restored are trust resources that are managed for the public good. Also, the public (e.g. local government, non-profits, etc.) has an opportunity to become stewards of the restored areas that are located within areas of public use, such as within zoned open-space areas. Finally, good restoration ideas and projects may already have been identified and accepted by stakeholders; these may be a starting point for successful restoration ideas and projects.

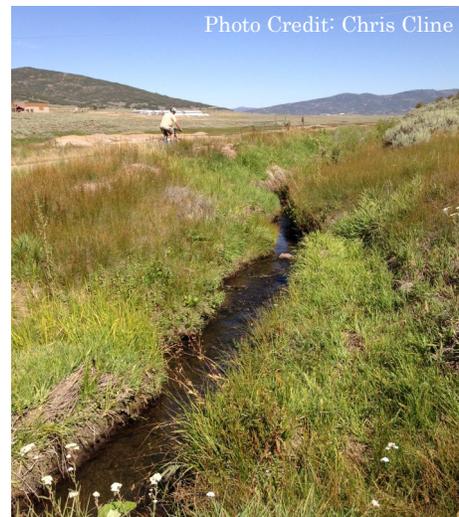


Photo Credit: Chris Cline

Highlights of DOI's Restoration Program

- *There are nearly 580 NRDAR cases, in all 50 states, that involve the U.S. Department of the Interior as a Trustee.*
- *Restoration plans are subject to public review to ensure broad support before they are implemented.*
- *NRDAR has assisted with the restoration of over 700 acres and 5 stream miles of riparian and wetland habitats in Utah.*



Restoration Program

Natural Resource Damage Assessment & Restoration Program

Natural Resource Damage Assessment & Restoration Program: Richardson Flat Tailing Site— Silver Creek, UT

Restoration of Silver Creek Natural Resources

Public trust natural resources that may have been impacted by legacy mine tailings in Silver Creek include surface and ground water, riparian and wetland habitats that support migratory birds, fish, and other wildlife, and public uses of those resources such as fishing and bird-watching.

Current Status/ Public Involvement

Currently, the Trustees are working cooperatively with the Park City Municipal Corporation and United Park City Mines Company to determine and quantify natural resource injuries in Lower Silver Creek and determine what kinds and amounts of restoration may be needed to address those injuries. At the same time, the Trustees want to hear from the public about how they use and value the Lower Silver Creek area, and what they would like to see in the area in the future. The Trustees also want to hear about similar restoration projects in the Silver Creek watershed and identify individuals and groups that are interested in restoring and being stewards for natural resources into the future. If you would like to make a comment or discuss this further, please contact the people identified below.



Photo Credit: Anna Bengtson, UPCM

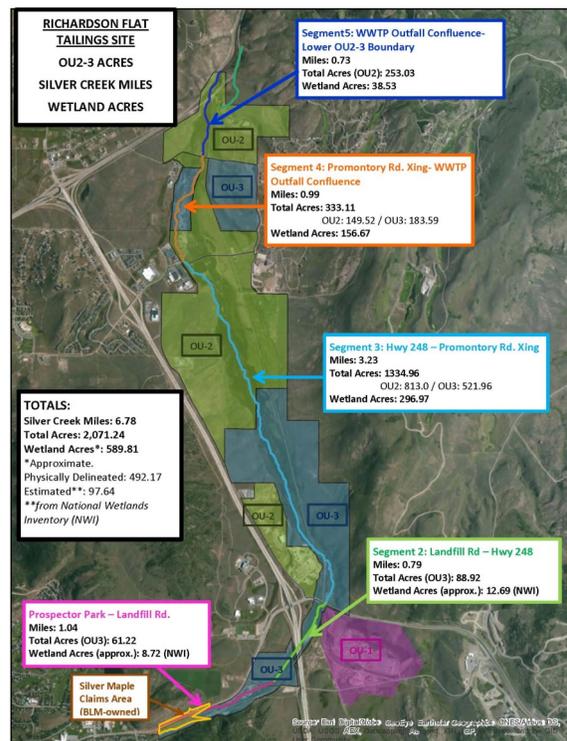
Restoring Silver Creek Through Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) Process

Silver Creek begins in the mountains above Park City, Utah, and flows east-northeast approximately 20 miles before joining the Weber River near Wanship, Utah. Tailings left as a “legacy” from mining activities have impacted the water, sediments and soils in Silver Creek and its floodplain with cadmium, zinc, lead, arsenic and other heavy metals. These contaminants in turn may have adversely impacted habitat conditions within the Silver Creek corridor. Reduced habitat conditions may translate into reductions in the natural resource services that Silver Creek provides, including clean water, fully functioning aquatic and riparian habitats for fish, birds and other wildlife, and recreational uses enjoyed by the public.

Natural resource restoration, put simply, is the process of assisting the recovery or replacement of an ecosystem that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed by releases of hazardous substances or oil spills. The Natural Resource Damage Assessment and Restoration (NRDAR) process (see details on the other side of this fact sheet) involves quantifying the impacts of these contaminants on an area’s natural resources for the purposes of understanding

what kind of, and how much, restoration is needed to bring the area back to a baseline level of function (e.g., function that would be there “but for” the presence of the contaminants), and make the public whole.

At Silver Creek, involved state and federal natural resource management and environmental protection agencies have teamed up with responsible private and municipal parties to implement coordinated cleanup and restoration actions. The intent of these coordinated efforts is to restore habitats and natural resource services to Silver Creek in the affected areas in an efficient and cost-effective manner.



Contact

Chris Cline

chris.cline@fws.gov

801-975-3330 x145



Trent Duncan

tduncan@blm.gov

801-977-4340



Alan Jones

avjones@blm.gov

801-977-4372



Mo Slam

mislam@utah.gov

801-536-4178

