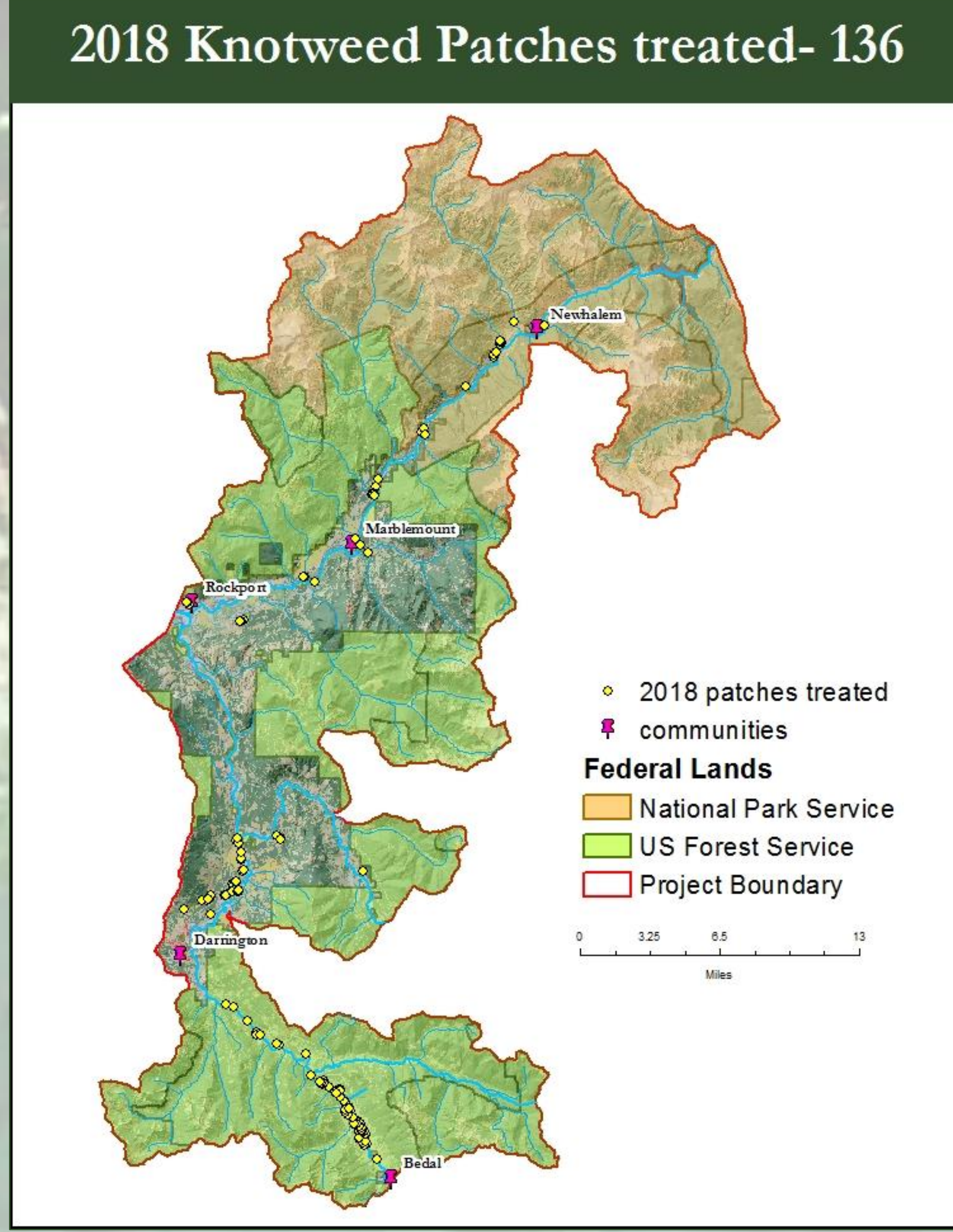
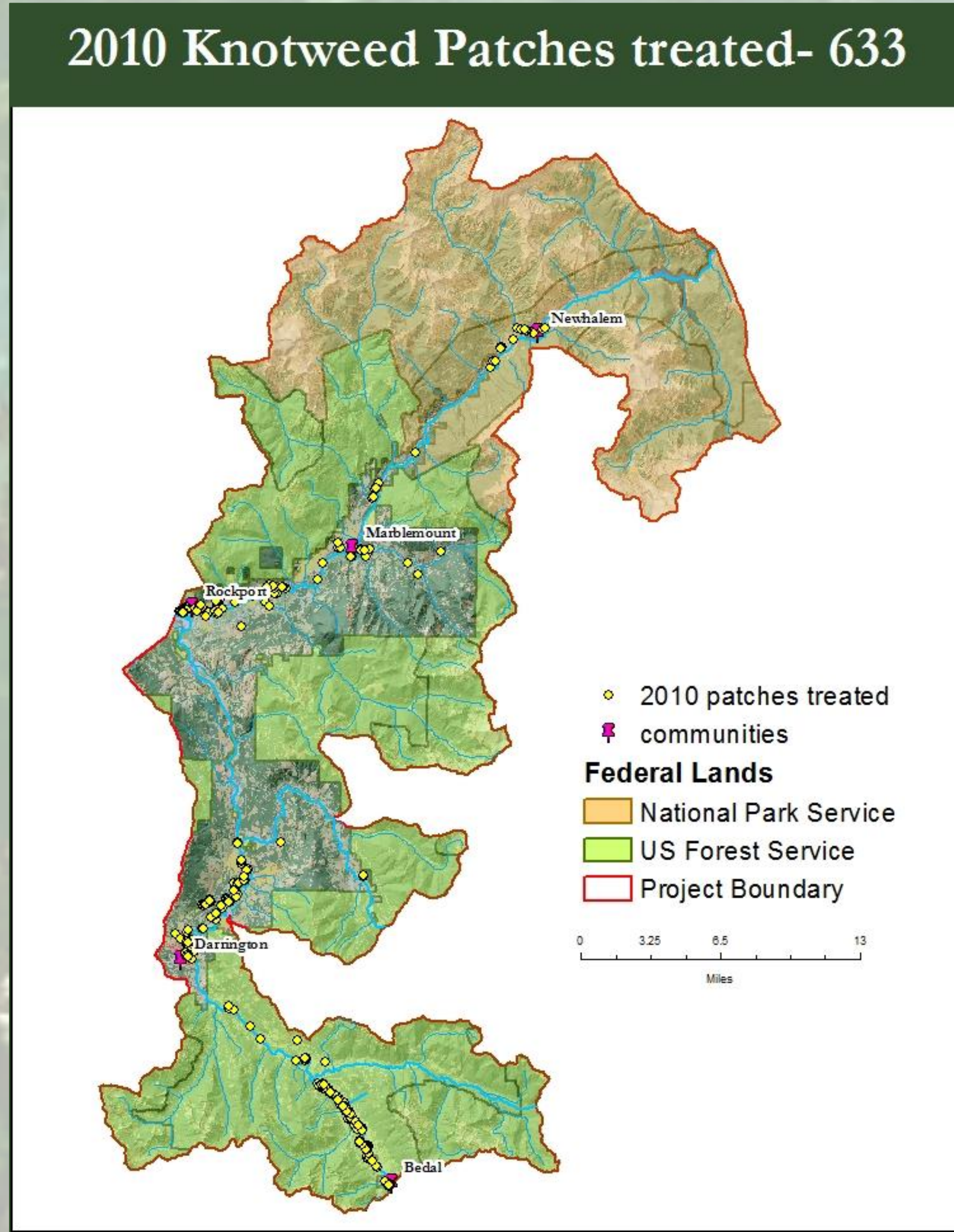
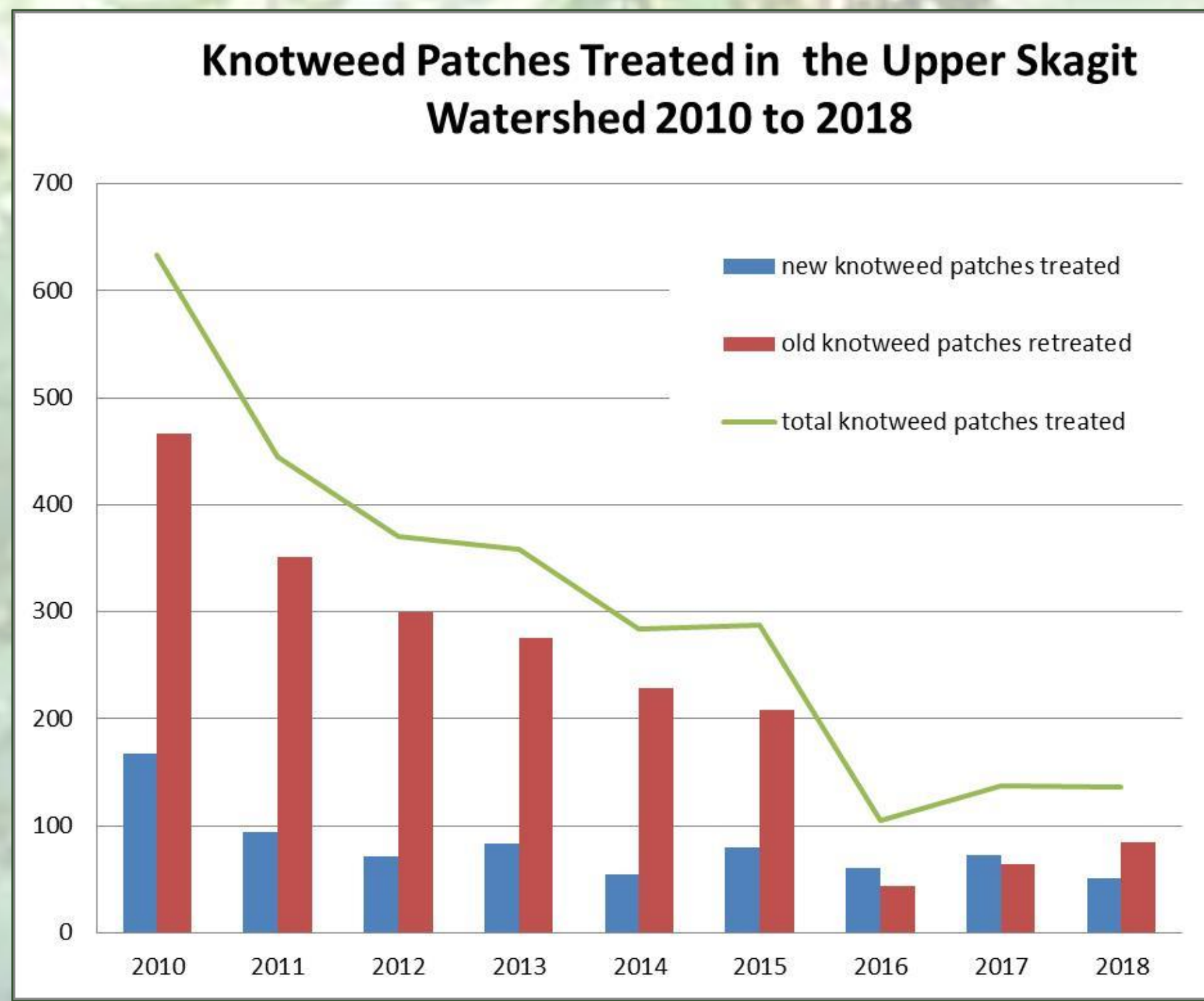


The Upper Skagit Knotweed Project: A Success Story

Background

Studies have shown that riparian corridors with large knotweed infestations can have up to 40 % fewer macroinvertebrates than similar systems without knotweed infestations. Since these aquatic insects are the main food source for juvenile salmon the carrying capacity of infested systems is impacted. This was one of the driving forces that motivated the Nature Conservancy to begin knotweed control in the Skagit River Watershed in 2003. At the time the top-down, landscape scale approach was a new concept. Prioritizing the upper most reaches of the watershed, especially the furthest upstream patch, prevents re-infestation of downstream areas, since knotweed spreads largely through alluvial processes. In 2010 the Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group (SFEg) inherited the Upper Skagit Knotweed Control Program from The Nature Conservancy with the intention of growing the program and providing more consistent control. With the assistance of the Skagit CWMA we have been able to document the decline of knotweed within the Upper Skagit River Watershed.

The Decline of Knotweed in the Upper Skagit River Watershed



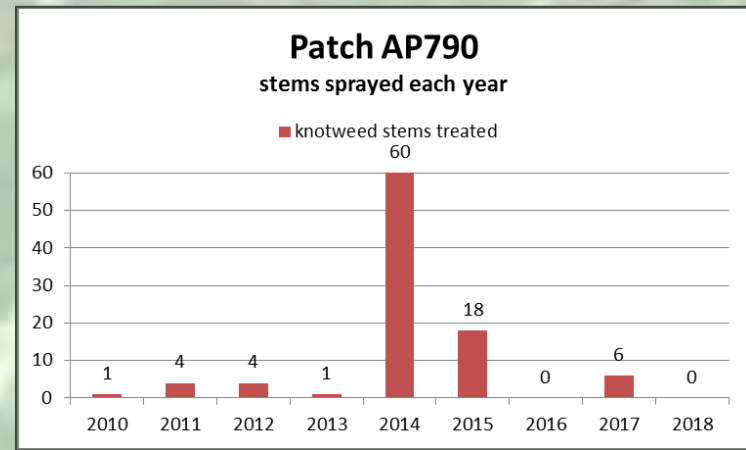
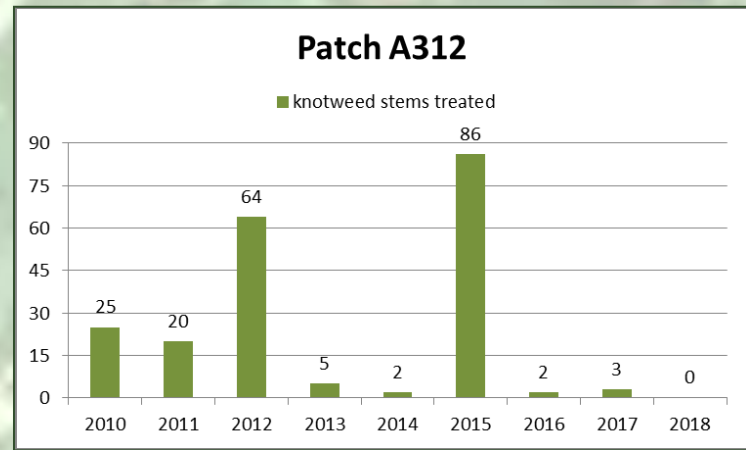
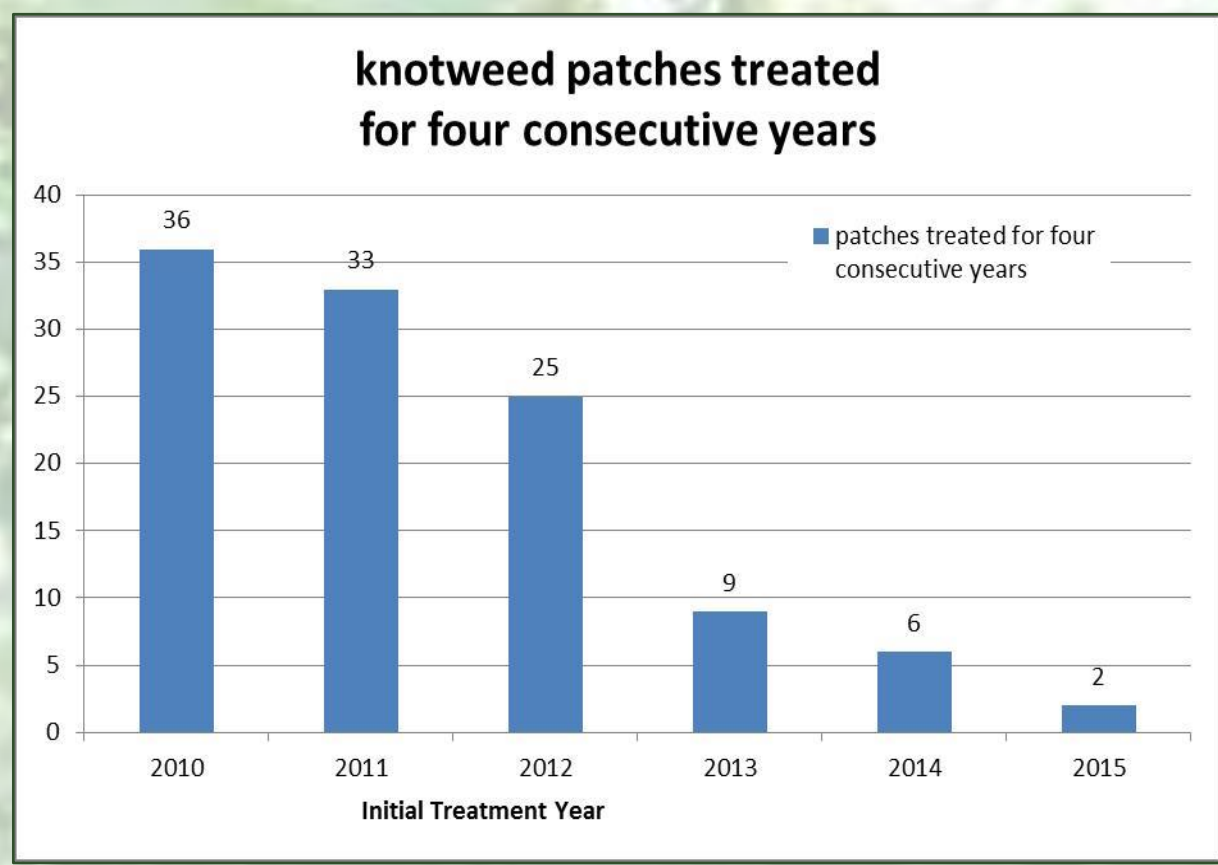
Lessons learned

- Partnerships are critical.** No-one can do it alone. The decline of knotweed in the Skagit is due to the hard work and dedication of various entities all working together towards a common purpose. Each brings various expertise and resources to the table. In the case of the Skagit River Watershed there are 19 Members/Participants in the Skagit Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA)

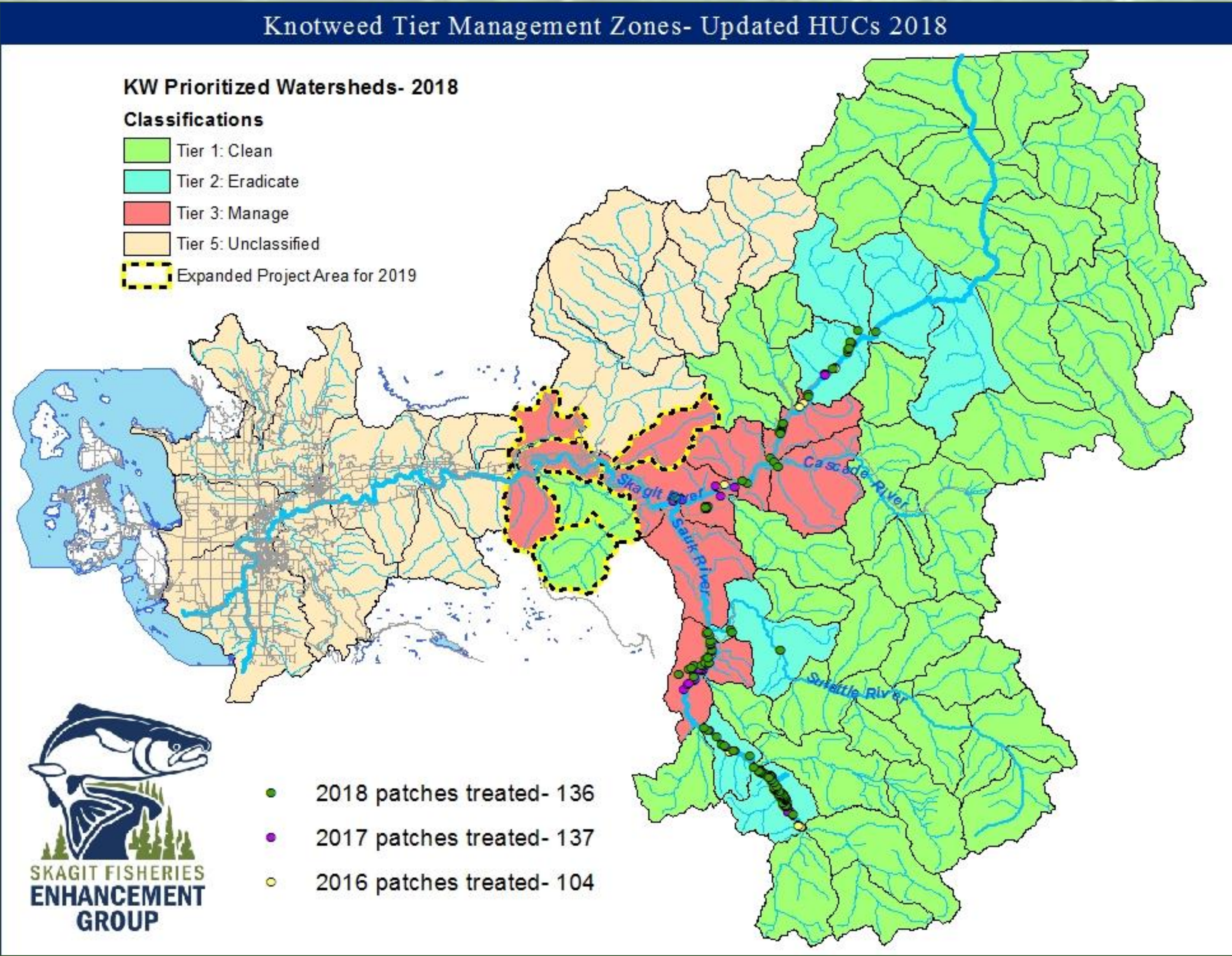
Members
WA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
WA Dept. of Natural Resources
North Cascades National Park
Seattle City Light
Snohomish Co. Weed Board
Skagit Co. Weed Board
Whatcom Co. Weed Board
The Nature Conservancy
Skagit Fisheries Enhancement Group
Skagit Land Trust
Samish Tribe

Partners
WA Dept. of Agriculture
U.S. Fish and Wildlife
Washington Conservation Corps (WCC)
WSU Extension
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
Upper Skagit Tribe
Sauk-Suiattle Tribe
US Forest Service
EarthCorps

- Persistence is key.** As with all restoration projects, obstacles will be encountered. The objective is to overcome these when they arise. Specific to knotweed is the tenacity of the plant. Rarely does one round of herbicide treatment lead to eradication of the infestation. Multiple treatments over multiple years is usually required.



- Set expectations.** We all want to shoot for the stars but we must keep in mind that forward progress occurs one step at a time. The goal of the Upper Skagit Knotweed Control Program is not to eradicate knotweed from the entire watershed but to manage and prevent the spread on the landscape scale. With that larger goal in mind the Skagit CWMA is optimistic that knotweed can be eradicated from some smaller sub-watersheds.



A special thanks to our funders who have shown a dedication to restoration in the Skagit



Washington
State Department of
Agriculture



The Future

SFEg has made such tremendous progress in treating knotweed in the Upper Skagit Watershed that the CWMA collectively decided it was time to expand the treatment area downstream. In 2019, for the first time, knotweed will be treated downstream of the original project area. This decision was not made lightly, and in fact would not be possible except for the involvement of a sub-group of CWMA participants who have committed to contribute resources to begin treated in this new section. The foundation was laid in 2018 when a knotweed reconnaissance survey was conducted in the new, downstream section to determine the level of infestation. From that data a coordinated plan of attack was agreed upon and work will begin in 2019.

