

## **The War Eagle Creek Barrier Removal Project: A Multi-Agency Approach to Stream Restoration and Habitat Connectivity**

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The War Eagle Creek Barrier Removal Project is the largest stream barrier removal and restoration project the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (AGFC) has undertaken. The AGFC formed a partnership with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, landowners, NGOs, and state and local governments to remove four stream barriers. These barriers include a large dam with its overflow structure, a private concrete ford, and a county road concrete ford.

Project partners completed engineered designs, all required permitting, and obtained all project funding. Through these collaborative efforts, the removal of the largest and most severe barrier was completed in under a year. The project is just past the midpoint of its third year; approximately 6,000 feet of stream bank have been restored, and five acres of wetlands were created or restored. Removal and replacement of the remaining two barriers, along with the installation of associated bank stabilization, will be completed by December 2027. Upon completion, the project will have restored habitat for target federally listed species while providing beneficial outcomes for drinking water, watershed function, wildlife, outdoor recreation, farming, and education. Funding was provided by the America the Beautiful Challenge, two grants from the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the AGFC, and other partner NGOs.

**Keywords:** Stream restoration, barrier removal, aquatic connectivity, watershed management, wetland restoration, bank stabilization, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission, habitat restoration.