IDAHO FOREST GROUP

Prichard Creek FAQ
Conservation Agreement

Q1. Where is Prichard Creek?

A1.
- Prichard Creek is in northern Idaho and is located between the rural town of Prichard (at the intersection of the Coeur D'Alene River and Prichard Creek) and Thompson Pass (14 miles northeast of Kellog, Idaho). The rural town of Murray, Idaho is nearby.

Q2. What is the history of Prichard Creek?

A2.

1882
Prichard Creek's namesake, A.J. Prichard, discovered gold in the area, launching a gold rush that brought 5,000 prospectors up the river. Mining for gold in the region lasted 50 years.

1917-1926
A large in-stream placer dredge, operated by the Yukon Gold Company and owned by Guggenheim Interests in New York, ran 24 hours a day with a crew of 12 men in three shifts of eight hours.
- The dredge was a beast, measuring 106'l x 44'w x 6 stories h. It never stopped, except for severe weather or breakdowns, which certainly contributed to the county, Shoshone, being ranked #1 in Idaho for gold production at the time.
- The dredge ultimately turned over five miles of the floodplain along Prichard Creek, leaving an unrecognizable waterway and lining a five mile stretch along the stream with large dredge piles of rock.
- The extreme dredging activity, coupled with a decades-long history of upstream historical mining contamination, severely degraded the stream's vegetation and aquatic habitat.
- The altered landscape was damaged to such an extent that a three-mile portion now flows subsurface during the summer months.

2014
IFG purchased over 2,000 acres of land along Prichard Creek from a private owner.
- A staunch champion of conservation and sustainability over its forty-year history, IFG saw an opportunity to support much-needed restoration and conservation efforts to protect the otherwise pristine beauty of the area.

2019
IFG began partnering with a variety of stakeholders to outline a conservation agreement and multi-phase restoration project.

2023
Launch of Phase 1 of a multi-phase restoration project to restore Prichard Creek and adjacent lands. Trout Unlimited managed the project with significant involvement from IFG.

2024
IFG finalizes the conservation agreement to entrust Kaniksu Land Trust (KLT) with the protection and conservation of the land and Prichard Creek; nearly 2,000 acres along this important tributary of the Coeur d'Alene River. The conservation agreement protects 80 different parcels.

Q3. What is a conservation agreement?

A3.

- A conservation agreement (aka conservation easement) is a legally binding agreement between a landowner (in this case, Idaho Forest Group) and a government agency or a qualified land protection organization (in this case, Kaniksu Land Trust).
- Landowners voluntarily agree to place restrictions on the use of their land to protect its conservation values.
- Landowners retain ownership and can continue to use the land, sell it, or pass it on to heirs. However, the agreement ensures that the agreed-upon conservation measures are upheld in perpetuity.
- Conservation agreements are used to protect a variety of conservation values, including wildlife habitat, water quality, open space, and agricultural land.
- The agreement between IFG and KLT outlines safeguards from development and ensures continued restoration and preservation of the tributary and adjacent land for generations to come. The donation encompasses nearly 2,000 acres including riparian habitat (10.5 miles of the 14-mile-long Prichard Creek), forested uplands, and equates to an over three-million-dollar donation by IFG.

Q4. Can you tell me more about IFG's commitment to conservation?

A4.

- IFG is heavily involved in conservation collaboratives at the local, state, and federal level to support the longevity and conservation of the natural resources that their business relies on.
- IFG's employs sustainable forestry practices. Sustainable forestry is the practice of land stewardship that integrates reforestation, growing, nurturing, and harvesting of trees while protecting soil, water quality and quantity, wildlife, and plant habitat as well as aesthetics for today and the future.
- IFG's efficient production process uses 100% of every tree and their lumber is available with Sustainable Forestry Initiative® (SFI) certifications. The SFI program is one of the world's most rigorous and widely applied standards of sustainable forestry.
- SFI standards encompass over 100 measurable requirements that regulate every aspect of forest management, including growing, harvesting, and replanting.

Q5. What has been done so far to protect Prichard Creek and the adjacent land?

A5.

- Working in partnership with local, state and federal entities as well as environmental, economic, and recreational groups, IFG defined a multi-phase, comprehensive restoration plan.
- The first phase of the restoration project began in the summer of 2023 and included the strategic installation of natural wooden structures along a four-mile stretch of Prichard Creek (to restore water flow) and planting vegetation (to enhance ecosystems and naturally support the wooden structures).
- As of the summer of 2024, positive outcomes include beaver activity, vegetation establishment, improved in-stream habitat diversity, and increased use of the channel by cutthroat trout.

Q6. How was the first phase of the restoration project funded?

A6.
- The first phase was funded by the Restoration Partnership—a group of federal, state, and tribal trustees— who aim to mitigate environmental damage from historical mining practices.
- The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality served as the fiscal sponsor for the project.
- The long-term project will involve securing grants for continued restoration efforts over many years.

Q7. What are the future phases and how will they be funded?

A7.
- Future phases will focus on improving access to fish habitats, securing water resources, providing public recreational access, ensuring forest health, preventing land conversion, halting further mining, and creating educational venues.
- The long-term project will involve securing grants for continued restoration efforts over many years.
- The project will:
  - Improve and increase access to important fish habitat for Westslope Cutthroat Trout and other fish species.
  - Secure protection of water resources for 13 miles of Prichard Creek, over 3 miles of perennial side streams, 20+ stream confluences, and various small wetlands.
  - Provide public access on 1,964 acres for recreational daytime access.
  - Provide certainty to the forest products industry that these working forests will remain in production — growing timber and fiber in perpetuity.
  - Prevent the conversion from productive forestlands to rural homesites and/or unstructured recreational development.
  - Prevent any further mining on this property.
  - Create an educational venue for local schools and the public interested in the robust history of this drainage.

Q8. Who did IFG partner with to make this conservation agreement and restoration project happen?

A8.
- Securing the conservation agreement and planning and launching the restoration project is a testament to the dedication and collaborative efforts of IFG and its partners.
- Below is a list of IFG's partners, along with links for more information about each.

  - Trout Unlimited
  - Kaniksu Land Trust
  - Coeur d'Alene Tribe
  - Idaho Fish & Game
  - Restoration Partnership
  - Idaho Department of Lands
  - U.S. Fish & Wildlife Services
  - Idaho Fish & Wildlife Foundation
  - Idaho Bureau of Land Management
  - Idaho Department of Environmental Quality