

Road Decommissioning: Why Culverts are Removed and How

*Six Photos and Seven Paragraphs
Demonstrating the Choice Between*

*Streambed Restoration
or
Streambed Devastation*

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Which Method of Culvert Removal Do You Prefer?



Forest Service photo

Unable to fit through a 54" culvert, Nokio Creek in 1999 washed 1,000 cubic yards of Road #114 downstream toward Trail Creek, a bull trout spawning stream on the Flathead National Forest.



Forest Service photo

Monitoring revegetation in 1998, where a culvert was carefully removed from Road #316A in the Big Creek watershed, an area critical to bull trout spawning on the Flathead National Forest.

Culvert Blowouts Or Road Decommissioning?

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Culverts are Ticking Time Bombs Their Removal is Urgent!



Forest Service photo

This culvert blew out in 1997, sending a big chunk of Road #1612 downstream to Quintonkin and Sullivan Creeks, important bull trout spawning streams on the Flathead National Forest. This culvert had been left in place to access a timber salvage unit while culverts further up the road had already been removed, preventing such blowouts there.



Swan View Coalition photo

The culvert was finally removed in 2001 and the road fill moved well back from the restored streambed, which was armored with rock and woody debris. Erosion control mats will minimize erosion while the new stream banks revegetate. The plan, however, is to remove culverts like this **before** they blow out!

To Restore Watersheds Removing Culverts is Top Priority!

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P & A Harvey photos

How It's Done Right

Road fill that spans the stream and gully is relayed by excavators to a dump truck (above) or a bulldozer to move it far back from the stream.



Before removing the culvert and restoring the natural profile of the streambed, water is temporarily rerouted around the work site and back to the stream below (left).

This keeps the road fill out of the stream and results in a stream restored to nearly natural conditions with little disturbance to water quality (see bottom of previous page).