



## Washington County Rd 526 - "Gar Hole" Fish Passage Barrier Removal Fact Sheet

*This project will improve water quality, improve conditions for aquatic and terrestrial species and save farmland along War Eagle Creek. It will also reduce safety risks and burdensome repair costs for Washington County staff and residents.*

### *The Problem:*

The current crossing is a cement, vented ford that severely constricts War Eagle Creek and limits aquatic organism movement. Eroded streambanks and unpaved road erosion are also a source of habitat and water quality degradation. War Eagle Creek is listed on the U.S. EPA 303D list for D.O. and has one of the highest phosphorus and nitrogen levels in the Upper White River Watershed.

### *The Solution:*

A 160' span bridge will be installed to allow passage for fish/aquatic species, provide improved road access for local residents/farmers, and will allow for safety vehicles and residents to pass over War Eagle during flood events. Approximately 1,020 linear feet of streambank will be corrected, 2.5 acres of riparian zones enhanced, and 4 in-stream structures will be installed (grade control, weirs, cross vanes) to improve stream function. The streambank restoration will also benefit local landowners/farmers from losing land.

### *The Benefits:*

By removing the Gar Hole low water crossing, approximately 15.5 miles of perennial reaches, and 89.2 miles of downstream network will be reconnected. Federally-listed and at-risk mussels and fish that will benefit from restoration in War Eagle Creek: rabbitsfoot (T), and western fanshell (ARS) mussels, Ozark shiner (ARS), and longnose darter (ARS). Stream connectivity, hydrology, and aquatic/terrestrial habitat will improve. Sediment and phosphorus reductions will be achieved through restoration practices, further reducing loads to Beaver Lake, our drinking water source.

### *Partners*

Committed Partners: Beaver Watershed Alliance, Beaver Water District, Arkansas Game and Fish, Partners for Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, The Nature Conservancy, Arkansas Natural Resources Division, Landowners, Washington County, SARP, and others.



# War Eagle Creek Watershed Site Map & Photos



*Left: War Eagle Watershed Map with Site Location*

*Right: War Eagle Creek - Gar Hole during rain events/flooding*

## Where Does Northwest Arkansas' drinking water come from?

Northwest Arkansas' drinking water primarily comes from Beaver Lake. Our regional drinking water supply serves one in five Arkansans. Water is collected and treated from four water treatment facilities, including Beaver Water District, Benton-Washington Regional Water Authority, Carroll-Boone Water District and Madison County Regional Water District and is distributed to 550,000 residents in the NWA area.

Sediment and nutrient loads are the number one threat to this watershed and our drinking water supply. By working together, we can reduce impacts of these challenges and help sustain our natural resources for a healthy, resilient watershed and regional drinking water supply.