Washington
Making a Difference to Salmon

Salmon are important to the economic and cultural vitality of Washington State. To ensure we are funding the right things, Washington has prioritized projects based on the problems most limiting salmon. We have built a bottom-up infrastructure of local organizations that has mobilized communities, written recovery plans, and now is implementing those plans.

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) is crucial to implementing habitat restoration, conservation, and hatchery reform projects. In addition to these critical efforts, Washington State also is working to improve habitat protection tools. Combined, these efforts will help us achieve full salmon recovery.

PCSRF is working

Many Salmon Populations are Improving, Still Work to be Done

Washington State is beginning to see a return on the federal, tribal, state, and local resources invested in salmon recovery. In most areas of the state, fish populations are increasing or staying the same, while in a few areas, fish are slightly decreasing. Development to accommodate more people, water use, hatchery practices, and global climate change still threaten salmon recovery.
what is washington doing with PCSRF?

PCSRF dollars are critical for Washington to implement its balanced strategy to recover wild salmon populations. It allows Washington to:

- Restore habitats to health.
- Better manage its fisheries.
- Reform hatcheries.

Over the long-term, survival and recovery of listed salmon will depend on these three areas and improving the effectiveness of all types of projects.

Restoring Habitats

In Washington, PCSRF and the state match pay for on-the-ground projects statewide and help support local organizations’ work in watersheds. In addition, local grant recipients have contributed more than $161 million in matching resources since 2000 for PCSRF grants to help return watersheds to healthy status.

PCSRF dollars are vital to Washington’s salmon recovery efforts. They provide more than 50 percent of the funding for salmon recovery administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office. PCSRF contributions in Washington have totaled more than $337 million and have helped accomplish the following since 2000:
• Removed 466 barriers that were preventing fish from migrating or reaching desirable habitats.
• Restored 447 miles of habitat in streams and rivers, and nearly 1,400 miles of riverbank.
• Restored more than 3,500 acres of estuarine and wetland habitat.
• Conserved more than 34,000 acres of crucial salmon habitat.

In addition to improving habitat, PCSRF and the state and local match support jobs – green jobs in a variety of fields, from large equipment operators, to office workers, to engineers. Restoration projects are estimated to create 1.57 jobs for every $100,000 invested, according to a University of Oregon study. Using that measure, PCSRF and the state and local match have funded more than 2,200 restoration projects estimated to have created more than 4,200 jobs.

To leverage this restoration and conservation work, state natural resources agencies and tribes are working together to determine the best ways to improve protection of our waterways through a variety of methods such as land use policies and permitting changes.

Managing Fish Harvests

PCSRF has contributed funding to clip the adipose fins of salmon, marking millions of hatchery fish. These efforts help improve the protection of wild salmon by externally marking hatchery fish so they can be identified easily and managed differently than wild fish. These efforts are vital to maintain fishing as an important part of the state’s economy.

• More fish are being marked. PCSRF funding has allowed for the marking of 100 percent of the hatchery produced Chinook, coho, and steelhead intended for harvest in Puget Sound, and 93 percent of those intended for harvest in the Columbia River. Nearly 100 million hatchery fish are marked externally, giving managers the ability to visually identify hatchery fish, estimate hatchery ratios on the spawning grounds, and support selective fisheries.

Reforming Hatcheries

Improvements to hatcheries are reducing impacts on wild fish and maintaining the production of fish that can be caught by anglers. Congress created the Hatchery Scientific Review Group, an independent scientific panel, to evaluate hatchery operations and recommend sound practices. Statewide, the number of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife hatchery programs meeting or expected to meet scientific standards increased from 18 percent in 1998 to 61 percent in 2011.
State Commitment

Washington State is committed to salmon recovery and has contributed $157 million in matching funds.

PCSRF’s Role in Washington’s Strategy

Washington’s approach to salmon recovery is collaborative and incentive-based. Through this approach, seven regional recovery plans have been approved by the federal government and implementation is underway. The eighth region is developing its plan.

PCSRF plays a key role in helping Washington fund implementation of the recovery plans and complements other state initiatives to improve salmon habitat, such as:

- **Puget Sound and Columbia River Salmon Recovery**: About 45 percent of PCSR F and state match are dedicated to projects restoring Puget Sound salmon and about 45 percent to projects restoring Columbia River basin salmon.

- **Salmon Strongholds**: Washington State is a member of the North American Salmon Stronghold Partnership, which focuses on protecting the healthiest remaining wild Pacific salmon ecosystems across North America to reduce their risk of decline.

tracking progress

Washington has been a leader in tracking the progress of salmon recovery through:

- Publishing an online report on the status of salmon recovery statewide.
- Funding and reporting the effectiveness of salmon recovery projects, and the status and trends in salmon populations.
- Developing and having all partners use an online database that displays information on salmon recovery actions and goals. The Habitat Works Schedule makes it easy to see how projects statewide relate to each other and what needs to be done next for salmon.