Salmon Recovery Grants

FACT SHEET

Saving Washington Salmon

Salmon are a vital part of Washington’s economy, recreation, culture, and heritage. Commercial and recreational fishing alone in Washington is estimated to support 16,000 jobs and $540 million in personal income.

But for more than a century, we have damaged the streams, rivers, and bays that salmon call home as we settled the area and developed our cities. By the 1990s, salmon populations across three-quarters of the state were decimated. The federal government has declared 16 species of salmon and bull trout near the brink of extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act.

The decline of salmon has had far reaching effects on Washington’s economy, from ending generation-old family fishing businesses, to changing the type of fish we eat at dinner, to affecting other wildlife that rely on salmon as food, such as iconic orcas.

Communities in Washington are not sitting by, waiting for someone to fix the problem. Across the state, citizens, nonprofits, businesses, tribes, and governments are coming together and creating projects, based on science and federally approved recovery plans, to fix the worst of the problems.

Providing Grants to Fix the Worst Problems

Five grant programs, administered through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and Recreation and Conservation Office provide funding to protect and restore salmon habitat:

- General salmon recovery grants
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program
- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration fund
- Puget Sound Chinook Critical Stock Program

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Search for Projects at
www.secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/projectsearch.aspx

Who Can Apply?
- Conservation districts
- Landowners
- Local governments
- Special purpose districts
- Nonprofit organizations
- Regional fisheries enhancement groups
- State agencies
- Tribes

Types of Projects Funded
- Restoration
- Fish passage repair
- Acquisitions
- Planning
- Monitoring
- Project design
- Assessments

Grant Schedule
Applications for all five programs are accepted annually.

Leveraging State Dollars
Grant recipients provide matching resources for some grants, ranging from 15-25 percent.
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INVESTING IN WASHINGTON’S GREAT OUTDOORS

These grant programs fund projects that:

- Remove barriers to fish migration, opening new habitat.
- Replant riverbanks and remove roads to reduce the amount of fine sediment entering streams and destroying spawning habitat.
- Restore rivers, estuaries, wetlands, and beaches to create a variety of habitats.
- Conserve water use so more is left in rivers for salmon.
- Protect quality habitat.
- Gather salmon and habitat data to prioritize and design better projects.

Funding

Funding for all the salmon recovery grants comes from a mix of the sale of state general obligation bonds, the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and other federal funds.

Salmon Recovery Is Working

Washington State is beginning to see the effects of more than a decade of salmon recovery funding: 6 of 15 salmon populations are increasing.

As land and waterways are restored, not only are we creating more places for salmon to live and grow and more places for other wildlife to live, we are creating jobs, reducing flooding, and making Washington a healthier place to live.

Ensuring the Best Projects Receive Funding

Washington’s approach to salmon recovery combines local community interests with scientific priorities to ensure projects with the best chance of success and the highest benefit to salmon are funded. There are several different ways projects are selected.

For general salmon recovery and for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration grants, local and regional citizen groups develop plans and solicit projects to protect and restore salmon species and their habitats. Projects are evaluated by local scientific panels and community groups to ensure they are scientifically sound and fit with the regional recovery plans approved by the federal government. The projects then are reviewed by regional organizations, and sent to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for funding consideration. Using its technical review panel, the board reviews the projects to ensure they benefit fish and have a high certainty of success before awarding funding. This combination of citizen-generated projects, endorsed by local communities and reviewed by scientists, means only the best projects are funded.

For the Family Forest Fish Passage Program grants, landowners apply and their projects are reviewed and ranked by staff from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. A steering committee, made up of representatives from the Washington Department of Natural Resources, Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Recreation and Conservation Office, make funding recommendations to the Washington Department of Natural Resources, which approves projects.

For Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program grants and Puget Sound Critical Stock program, other agencies make the funding decisions and the Recreation and Conservation Office administers the grants.

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