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State Awards more than \$42 Million in Grants for Salmon Recovery
Organizations in 30 Counties Receive Funding

OLYMPIA – The Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Puget Sound Partnership today announced the award of more than \$42 million in grants to organizations around the state for projects that restore and protect salmon habitat, helping bring salmon back from the brink of extinction.

“Salmon are an important part of both Washington’s culture and economy,” said Gov. Jay Inslee. “Healthy salmon populations support thousands of jobs in fishing, hotels and restaurants, seafood processing, boat sales and repair, charter operations, environmental restoration and more. I am very pleased with the work of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and its efforts to fund projects that help our economy and assure future generations of Washingtonians can enjoy the return of wild salmon.”

Funding for the grants comes from the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and the sale of state bonds. In addition, \$24.4 million is from the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund, which is jointly approved by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Puget Sound Partnership in coordination with local watersheds, for projects that will help restore Puget Sound.

Grant recipients will use the money to remove barriers that prevent salmon from migrating, reshape rivers and streams and replant riverbanks so there are more places for salmon to spawn, feed, rest, hide from predators and transition from freshwater to saltwater and back again.

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Grants were given to projects in the following counties (click the link below to see details on each project):

Projects in Asotin County\$342,500	Projects in Lewis County\$742,576
Projects in Benton County\$5,976	Projects in Mason County\$1,223,980
Projects in Chelan County\$828,625	Projects in Okanogan County.....\$1,124,375
Projects in Clallam County\$2,779,455	Projects in Pacific County.....\$570,337
Projects in Clark County.....\$632,513	Projects in Pend Oreille County\$360,000
Projects in Columbia County\$840,833	Projects in Pierce County\$1,732,974
Projects in Cowlitz County.....\$237,550	Projects in San Juan County\$648,602
Projects in Garfield County.....\$91,080	Projects in Skagit County\$5,120,405
Projects in Grays Harbor County...\$520,548	Projects in Skamania County\$388,512
Projects in Island County.....\$364,271	Projects in Snohomish County ...\$6,189,644
Projects in Jefferson County\$1,732,142	Projects in Thurston County\$4,552,639
Projects in King County\$4,458,129	Projects in Wahkiakum County\$596,120
Projects in Kitsap County\$2,548,325	Projects in Walla Walla County\$323,987
Projects in Kittitas County\$772,974	Projects in Whatcom County\$1,630,543
Projects in Klickitat County.....\$593,150	Projects in Yakima County\$484,500

Creating Healthy Salmon Habitat

Salmon populations in Washington have been declining for generations. As Washington grew and built its cities and towns, it destroyed many of the places salmon need to live. In 1991, the federal government declared the first salmon as endangered. By the end of that decade, salmon populations had dwindled so much that salmon and bull trout were listed as threatened or endangered in three-quarters of the state. Those listings set off a series of activities including the formation of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to oversee the investment of state and federal funds for salmon recovery.

“Without these grants, Washington’s salmon populations would continue to decline until nothing was left,” said David Troutt, chair of the state funding board. “That’s the trajectory we were on before salmon were placed on the federal Endangered Species

Act list. In most areas of the state, fish are increasing or staying the same while in some important areas, fish populations are decreasing. Habitat is the key to salmon recovery and continuing to fund these important projects will help to move all populations in a positive direction.”

How Projects are Chosen

Projects are selected by local watershed groups, called lead entities. Lead entities are local consortiums that include tribes, local governments, nonprofits and citizens who work together to recruit and review project proposals and make decisions about which projects to forward to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for funding. Lead entities ensure that the projects are based on regional salmon recovery plans that were approved by the federal government. Then regional salmon recovery organizations and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board review each project to ensure they will help recover salmon in the most cost-effective manner.

“This bottom-up process of local groups identifying what needs to be fixed in their communities and then those projects undergoing regional and state scientific review means only the best and most cost-effective projects will be funded,” said Kaleen Cottingham, director of the Recreation and Conservation Office, which administers the grants. “We have been working for more than a decade to repair the damage that has been done to salmon habitat. But we have much more to accomplish before salmon can be removed from the endangered species list. This process of local priorities and state scientific overview has proven to be the most effective way of getting projects done on-the-ground and it assures we are investing the money we have very strategically.”

The Big Picture

“Restoring our lakes, streams, rivers and ecosystem isn’t just about saving salmon. A healthy ecosystem supports human health, our economy, our traditions, and our quality of life,” said Marc Daily, interim executive director of the Puget Sound Partnership, the state agency leading the recovery of Puget Sound. “These projects help to protect and perpetuate valuable resources today and for generations to come.”

Recent Oregon studies showed that every \$1 million spent on watershed restoration results in 15-33 new or sustained jobs, \$2.2 million to \$2.5 million in total economic activity, and that 80 percent of grant money is spent in the county where the project was located.

Using the Oregon study formula, these new grants are estimated to provide more than 630 jobs during the next four years and more than \$84 million in economic activity as grant recipients hire contractors, crews and consultants to design and build projects, including field crews to restore rivers and shoreline areas.

“Salmon recovery is an important goal for Skagit County government, our partners and our residents,” said Skagit County Commissioner Ken Dahlstedt, who also serves as chair of the Skagit Watershed Council. “Balancing the needs of salmon and steelhead with other important values like agriculture and infrastructure will be an ongoing challenge, but the Skagit Watershed Council and its members are committed to completing this task efficiently and thoughtfully for the benefit of our children and grandchildren. When salmon recovery is done thoughtfully, it can benefit us all by upgrading public infrastructure, reducing flood hazards, supporting community open space and ensuring the viability of the farming industry in Skagit County.”

Information about the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Recreation and Conservation Office is available online at www.rco.wa.gov.

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