Grays Harbor County organizations get salmon recovery grants from state

Local News

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OLYMPIA – The Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board today announced the awarding of $42.8 million in grants to protect and restore salmon populations to communities across Washington.
“Salmon are an important part of Washington’s economy and culture. These grants are helping us reverse the decline in salmon populations we’ve seen over the past two decades,” said Steve Tharinger, chairman of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.
“These grants are not only good for salmon, the environment and the people of Washington, but they are good for the economy because much of this money will be awarded to local organizations to do restoration work in their local communities.”
The grants in the Puget Sound area also work toward implementing Governor Chris Gregoire’s initiative to restore Puget Sound.

The grants from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board ranged from $17,000 to $1.7 million. The funding goes for big and small restoration and recovery projects across the state, including work ranging from planting trees along streams to cool the water for salmon, to replacing culverts that prevent salmon from migrating to spawning habitat, to restoring entire floodplains.

Grants were given to projects in the below. Click here for details on each project.

Asotin County..... $136,800
Benton County..... $115,362
Chelan County..... $1,143,123
Clallam County..... $4,131,462
Clark County..... $510,452
Columbia County..... $787,113
Cowlitz County..... $706,695
Grays Harbor County..... $870,343
Island County..... $1,143,187
Jefferson County..... $2,277,856
King County..... $2,644,814
Kitsap County..... $1,489,850
Kittitas County..... $328,500
Klickitat County..... $265,650
Mason County..... $3,409,910
Okanogan County..... $809,877
Pacific County..... $1,135,419
Pend Oreille County..... $360,000
Pierce County..... $2,960,669
San Juan County..... $1,458,776
Skagit County..... $5,844,363

Snohomish County..... $5,547,631
Thurston County..... $1,320,675
Walla Walla County..... $674,487
Wahkiakum County..... $691,332
Whatcom County..... $951,215
Yakima County..... $1,120,053

"Local watershed groups develop these projects based on regional recovery plans and with the support of regional salmon recovery organizations. This “bottom-up” approach to salmon recovery ensures that funding is focused on what they see happening in their communities," Tharinger said. "The projects are then checked by the state’s technical review panel to make sure they will help recover salmon in the most cost-effective manner. This local and state partnership has made Washington a national model in salmon recovery."

Several populations of salmon were put on the federal list of endangered species in 1991. By then, the number of salmon had fallen to only 40 percent of historic levels in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and California. By 1999, almost three-fourths of Washington’s watersheds were affected by Endangered Species Act listings of salmon and bull trout. 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. Since 2000, the board has awarded nearly $404 million in grants, funded by federal and state dollars, for 1,307 projects. Grantees have contributed nearly $160 million in matching resources, bringing the total investment to more than $564 million.

The funding comes from the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and is matched by state funds from the sale of bonds. The funding for these grants was approved by Congress and the Washington Legislature earlier this year. On Thursday, Washington State received news that $80 million in 2010 federal funding for Washington and several other western states is in the final budget bill before Congress.

“We want to thank our Congressional delegation, especially Senator Patty Murray and Representative Norm Dicks, who have been champions of salmon recovery work,” Tharinger said. “Without their help at the national level, this important work wouldn’t be able to continue. All of Washington will benefit from these grants.”

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board’s citizen members are appointed by the Governor and they are: Harry Barber, Washougal; Commissioner Donald “Bud” Hover, Okanogan County; Bob Nichols, Olympia; Commissioner Steve Tharinger, Clallam County; and David Troutt, Dupont. Five state agency directors or their designees also serve as members (Conservation Commission, Department of Ecology, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources and Department of Transportation). Staff support to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the process of project recruitment and review is provided by the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office. Information about the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Recreation and Conservation Office is available online at www.rco.wa.gov.