Salmon Recovery Grants Awarded Statewide

Local News

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Posted on : December 13, 2011 at 6:30 am

The Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board on Monday announced the award of nearly $30 million in grants to organizations around the state to help bring salmon back from the brink of extinction.“These grants do two things: They provide needed money for local organizations to help repair damaged rivers and streams and protect the most pristine areas,” said Don “Bud” Hover, chair of the state funding board. “They also create jobs. They will put people to work improving the environment and restoring something that is important to Washington’s economy: salmon.”A Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife study in 2006 pegged the economic impacts of commercial and recreational fishing in Washington as supporting an estimated 16,374 jobs and $540 million in personal income. This new round of grants is expected to provide more than 300 jobs during the next four years.

Grants were given to organizations in the following counties. mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">See details on each grant.mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Asotin County..... $132,160 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Chelan County..... $1,296,713 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Clallam County..... $2,447,641 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Clark County..... $925,383 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Columbia County..... $265,720 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Cowlitz County..... $1,080,806 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Grays Harbor County..... $787,869 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Island County..... $1,010,949 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Jefferson County..... $1,803,600 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">King County..... $1,829,624 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Kitsap County..... $366,735 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Kittitas County..... $585,813 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Klickitat County..... $718,400 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Mason County..... $1,624,289 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Okanogan County..... $656,287 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Pacific County..... $485,989 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Pend Oreille County..... $360,000 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Pierce County..... $2,970,987 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">San Juan County..... $405,830 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Skagit County..... $2,298,337 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Skamania County..... $47,306

mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Snohomish County..... $2,497,397 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Thurston County..... $473,714 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Wahkiakum County..... $361,505 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Walla Walla County..... $1,131,220 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Whatcom County..... $1,500,119 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Yakima County..... $508,887 mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco ... on2011DetailsbyCounty.pdf">Multiple Counties..... $1,210,450The projects will reconnect rivers and streams, replace failing pipes that block fish passage and replant riverbanks with the goal of improving places salmon use to reproduce and grow on their way to and from to the ocean. “Salmon recovery does more than just help salmon, it also helps the many businesses dependent on healthy fish populations,” said Hover, who also is an Okanogan County commissioner. “There are many families that rely on salmon, from your mom-and-pop tackle shops to your large commercial fishing fleets. They all need salmon and trout populations to be healthy and harvestable.”Salmon populations in Washington have been declining for generations. In 1991, the federal government declared the first salmon, Snake River sockeye, as endangered. By the end of that decade, 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.Local watershed groups, called lead entities, are local consortiums that include tribes, local governments, nonprofits and citizens all working together to spearhead local salmon recovery efforts. They encourage and review project proposals and make decisions about which projects to forward to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for funding. The projects are based on regional recovery plans, which are approved by the federal government. Individual projects are reviewed by regional salmon recovery organizations and the state’s technical review panel to make sure each project will help recover salmon in the most cost-effective manner.“This local, state and federal partnership has made Washington a national model in salmon recovery,” Hover said. “This process ensures that we are funding the projects that the local citizens want and that scientists agree will do the most to recover salmon.”Funding for the grants comes from the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund and from the sale of state bonds. In addition, nearly $11.6 million is dedicated to projects in Puget Sound, as part of Gov. Chris Gregoire’s initiative to restore the health of Puget Sound. “Salmon recovery is key to restoring Puget Sound,” said Gerry O’Keefe, executive director of the Puget Sound Partnership, which is charged with developing a plan for improving the health of Puget Sound. “If we can improve the rivers, streams, lakes and other water bodies so we have healthier salmon, we’ll also have healthier places for other fish, wildlife and humans. These grants are an important step in righting past damage done to the environment.”“We owe a big thank you to our congressional delegation for working hard to ensure the salmon recovery funding stays in the federal budget,” Hover said. “Salmon recovery simply couldn’t happen at the scale that is needed without the federal funding.”Information about the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Recreation and Conservation Office is available online at mid://00003068/!x-usc:http://www.rco.wa.gov/"> www.rco.wa.gov.