

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Western Washington Office
510 Desmond Dr., SE
Suite 102
Lacey, WA 98503-1263

News Release



January 4, 2009

Contact: Ginger Phalen, 360-753-5819

#08-002

More than \$5 Million in National Grant Funding Awarded for Washington's Coastal Wetlands

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will award \$5 million in grants to 5 projects in Washington to restore and protect coastal wetlands, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director H. Dale Hall announced today. The grants are part of a \$20.8 million National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program awarded to 11 states and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico in today's announcement. Nationwide, the grant program will fund 30 conservation projects encompassing nearly 10,000 acres of coastal wetlands. States receiving funds include Washington, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Texas, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

Cost share from state, tribal and private partners for the Washington grants totals more than 7.75 million. Partners include many entities, such as the Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Ecology, and State Parks, Snohomish County, City of Everett, Tulalip Tribe, Quinault Indian Nation, Trust for Public Land, Cascade Land Conservancy and the Northwest Watershed Institute.

Funds will be used to acquire or restore coastal wetlands to provide long-term conservation benefits to fish, wildlife and their habitats. Four of the five projects occur within the Puget Sound Basin and will be part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's contribution to two of the key objectives of the Puget Sound Partnership: habitat restoration and habitat protection. Approximately 70 percent of Puget Sound's tidally influenced wetland and estuary habitat has already been altered, resulting in habitat fragmentation and declines in marine bird populations, salmon, trout, marine mammals and forage and groundfish production.

In Washington 1,616 acres of coastal wetlands and associated upland habitat will be protected or restored.

At Pilot Point on the Kitsap Peninsula, 34.5 acres of wetlands, streams, tidal habitat and 1,100 feet of shoreline will be conserved and added to an existing 400-acre area of protected coastal habitat. Near Old Fort Townsend State Park, 89 acres of tideland and forested uplands and 4,600 feet of shoreline along Glen Cove in Port Townsend Bay will be conserved, and in Dabob Bay, 150 acres of coastal wetland and upland forested habitat and 4,000 feet of shoreline will be set aside for conservation benefits. Across the Sound, in the Snohomish Estuary, 820 acres of Ebey Island adjacent to Deadwater Slough will be protected and restored.

On the Washington coast, the Quinault Indian Nation, Cascade Land Conservancy and the Washington Department of Ecology will conserve and protect 523 acres of estuary, river, and wetland habitat in the Queets River drainage. All of these areas have been identified as local and regional priorities for conservation and restoration, and support recovery goals for species of concern.

The program is funded under provisions of the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, drawing from Sport Fish Restoration Act revenue – money generated from an excise tax on fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels.

“The number of plant and animal species that rely on coastal wetlands for their health and well-being is remarkable and I include people as one of those species,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director H. Dale Hall. “This coastal grant program continues to provide valued funds for a valued resource, and we have the angling and boating industries – and the anglers and boaters themselves – to thank for its financial support.”

Including the 2008 grants, the Service has awarded more than \$200 million to states and insular areas since the program began in 1992, protecting and restoring more than 49,000 acres of coastal habitat nationwide.

For more information, contact the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or visit the program's home page at <http://www.fws.gov/coastal/CoastalGrants>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 97-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 548 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.