

# 2010 National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program Project Descriptions

## Region 1

Contacts: Chris Swenson – 503-231-2014  
Nell Fuller – 503-231-6758

**Beaver Creek Estuary Acquisition Project** – Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD) was awarded \$925,000 to permanently protect 91 acres of tidally influenced freshwater marsh habitat and 12 acres of uplands within the Beaver Creek wetland priority acquisition area on Oregon's central coast. These funds will leverage \$1,067,500 in non-Federal cost share. These lands are key linkages within a larger project area that extends from the Beaver Creek confluence with the Pacific Ocean to the head of tide. This acquisition will eventually be incorporated into a 1,348-acre conservation area called the Beaver Creek Partnership Area at the Beaver Creek confluence with the ocean. OPRD will own and manage the acquisition lands and will work with The Wetlands Conservancy, Mid-Coast Watershed Council, and other partners on restoration and management of the Beaver Creek estuary.

**Dungeness Basin Coastal Wetlands Project, Phase IV** – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was awarded \$1 million to protect 39 acres of coastal wetland in the lower Dungeness watershed in partnership with Clallam County. These funds will leverage \$549,150 in non-Federal cost share. Thirty-two acres will be acquired in fee and 7 acres will be protected through a conservation easement. The Lower Dungeness River basin is characterized by historical stream channels and flood plain. The basin is recognized as one of the most significant habitat areas for wide diversity of fish and wildlife, including marine mammals, shorebirds, waterfowl, neotropical migrants, salmon, shellfish, and Dungeness crab. Fourteen of these species are listed as threatened, endangered, or candidates. Habitat restoration, including control of invasive species and revegetation will provide immediate benefits to fish and wildlife.

**Elk River Estuarine Lands Acquisition Project** – The Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) was awarded \$1 million to acquire in fee and permanently protect 300 acres of pristine coastal wetland habitat in the Elk River. These funds will leverage \$1,017,000 in non-Federal cost share. The land will be added to the 5,000-acre Elk River Natural Resources Conservation Area owned and managed by WDNR. This site contains one of the largest, most diverse, highest quality estuarine system remaining in the Pacific Northwest. The project will help sustain productive and diverse habitats and protect the water quality and habitat for two Federally-threatened species (North American green sturgeon and marbled murrelet) as well as the candidate species, Olympic mud minnow. Purchasing these properties will remove threats and disturbance from land-use practices.

**Grays Bay Estuary Acquisition Project** – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was awarded \$700,000 to acquire 287 acres of tidal wetland marsh on the Lower Columbia River at the mouth of Deep and Grays River for protection of estuarine habitat for wintering waterfowl and threatened salmon and other marine fish. These funds will leverage \$320,000 in non-Federal cost share. The project protects rearing habitat for Columbia River threatened salmon which have declined to approximately 10 percent of their levels. The Lower Columbia River Salmon Recovery Plans identify the need to protect these estuaries for salmon recovery efforts and the Lower Columbia Pacific Coast

Joint Venture has identified the emergent marsh targeted in this proposal as a priority for protection and acquisition. All of the lands in the acquisition area will remain open for public use, including hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

**Hoquiam Surge Plain Acquisition Project, Phase II** – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife was awarded \$950,000 to protect 644 acres and six river miles of high quality coastal surge plain and adjacent spruce forest, in partnership with Chehalis Basin Land Trust, Cascade Land Conservancy, and Grays Harbor Audubon Society. These funds will leverage \$390,000 in non-Federal cost share. This project is the second phase of an effort to conserve the Grays Harbor and Chehalis River Basin ecosystem. Through a 2009 National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant the applicants acquired 714 acres on the west branch of the Hoquiam River. Phase II will bring 75 percent of the Hoquiam Surge Plain into conservation ownership. Grays Harbor is one of the largest, most important estuarine habitats on the Pacific coast and conservation of the Chehalis River Basin is the focus of the USFWS Chehalis Fishery Restoration Program.

**Island and Loomis Lakes Conservation Project** – Washington Department of Ecology, partnering with Columbia Land Trust, was awarded \$1 million to acquire 125 acres of highly threatened, declining coastal wetlands, riparian areas and associated mature and old growth conifer forest on the Long Beach Peninsula, a coastal barrier between the Pacific Ocean and Willapa Bay in southwest Washington. These funds will leverage \$476,000 in non-Federal cost share. These lands will be added to the 890-acre Island and Loomis Lakes Conservation Area. The project area contains one of the largest interdunal freshwater wetland complexes in North America and supports over 25 sensitive habitat communities and at-risk species. This project will support the goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and the Partners in Flight Plan.

**Kiket Island Shoreline Acquisition Project, Phase II** – Washington Parks and Recreation Commission was awarded \$1 million to acquire a 12.4 acre waterfront parcel on Kiket Island in Puget Sound and a 10.4 acre wetland complex on Fidalgo Island in Skagit County. These funds will leverage \$1,079,175 in non-Federal cost share. The parcels provide excellent habitat for endangered juvenile salmon and other fish and bird species. The Kiket parcel is surrounded by native eelgrass and contains abundant tidelands with some light gravel and sand beaches that support a diversity of wildlife. Kiket Island is Washington State Parks number one acquisition priority. The Commission is working with the Trust for Public Lands and other non-profit and government agencies to secure funding to purchase Kiket Island. In 2009, the Commission received a National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant to fund Phase I.

**North Nehalem Bay Wetlands Conservation Project, Phase II** – Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board was awarded \$994,290 to acquire six parcels totaling 56 acres at the edge of Nehalem Bay in Tillamook County on the northern coast of Oregon. These funds will leverage \$633,761 in non-Federal cost share. The project area contains 25 acres of palustrine wetlands, 29 acres of estuarine intertidal wetlands, and one acre of adjacent uplands. Phase II also includes development of management plans to conserve wildlife on three additional parcels owned by local homeowners associations. The six parcels will be owned and managed by the Lower Nehalem Community Trust and a conservation easement will be held by the State of Oregon. Acquisition of these parcels will support the goals and

objectives of several Federal, State, and local conservation plans, including the USFWS Coastal Program Strategic Plan and the Oregon Conservation Strategy.

**Quilcene Bay/Donovan Creek Coastal Stream Acquisition and Restoration** – Washington Department of Ecology, in partnership, partnering with Jefferson County Land Trust, was awarded \$701,250 to permanently protect and restore 76 acres of the lower Donovan Creek coastal ecosystem in upper Quilcene Bay, Hood Canal. These funds will leverage \$318,750 in non-Federal cost share. The project actions will restore almost a mile of stream habitat, 15 acres of riparian habitat, and acquire 43 acres of coastal wetland, riparian and upland habitat. The protection and restoration of the Donovan Creek coastal ecosystem is key to completing the ecosystem-scale restoration of the entire upper Quilcene Bay delta and tidal marsh habitat complex. The project will benefit all seven species of native salmonids, numerous shorebirds, and neotropical migrants.

**Smuggler's Slough Estuary Restoration, Phase II** – Washington Department of Ecology, partnering with the Lummi Indian Nation, was awarded \$700,500 to permanently protect 160 acres of Nooksack River estuarine wetlands and restore the tidal wetlands on and adjacent to this land. These funds will leverage \$467,000 in non-Federal cost share. This project includes the construction of a setback levee in the Kwina Slough area, north of Smuggler's Slough and re-route agricultural drainage to allow the project area to be flooded without negatively affecting adjacent farmland. Numerous estuary-dependent fish, migratory birds, and other wildlife species, including several species of salmonids will benefit from protection of this site. This project supports Salmon Recovery Board's Salmon Recovery Plan, the Washington Component of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture Strategic Plan, and the Northern Pacific Coast Regional Shorebird Conservation Plan.

**Stanley Point/South Willapa Bay Conservation** – Washington Department of Ecology was awarded \$1 million to permanently protect a total of 705 acres of high quality wetlands including estuarine emergent salt marsh, eelgrass meadows, mud flats, marsh scrub-shrub and freshwater forested wetlands. These funds will leverage \$559,000 in non-Federal cost share. As part of this project five miles of pristine estuarine shoreline in Southern Willapa Bay will also be permanently protected. Approximately 172 acres will be acquired in fee and 533 acres through conservation easements. Willapa Bay is one of the most productive areas for oyster cultivation in the Pacific Northwest and home to the largest commercial shellfish beds in Washington. The project area is adjacent to the 15,000-acre Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge and The Nature Conservancy's 7,000-acre Ellsworth Creek Preserve. The project also supports the goals of the Pacific Region Partners and Fish and Wildlife and Coastal Program Strategic Plan.

**Totten Inlet Estuarine Habitat Acquisition** – Washington Department of Ecology, partnering with Capitol Land Trust, USFWS, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, the Squaxin Island Tribe, Taylor Shellfish Farms, and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, was awarded \$531,745 to acquire 20 acres of forested and coastal habitat on the eastern shore of Totten Inlet in northwest Thurston County. These funds will leverage \$286,440 in non-Federal cost share. The project area includes an intact pocket estuary, 1,400 feet of undeveloped coastal shoreline, forested and estuarine wetlands, a pocket estuary with baymouth spit, and feeder bluffs. Totten Inlet has been identified by conservation organizations and agencies as a high priority for protection due to the quality of estuarine and nearshore habitat and

ecological diversity, and its protection is identified as a priority action in 20 conservation and recovery plans.

### **Region 3**

Contacts: Paul Glander – 612-713-5134  
Christie DeLoria-Sheffield – 906-226-1240

**Lake Michigan Coastal Wetlands Protection, Shivering Sands Unit** – Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, partnering with The Nature Conservancy and the Door County Land Trust, was awarded \$1 million to acquire 468 acres in Door County, Wisconsin. These funds will leverage \$1,001,300 in non-Federal cost share. The site includes 331 acres of palustrine forested coastal wetlands, 3 acres of palustrine emergent meadow coastal wetland, and 23 acres of open water (two small inland lakes). The site is characterized by lakeshore, coastal wetlands, dune-swale topography, embayment lakes, and large tracts of mixed conifer forest. The proposed acquisition will become part of the Shivering Sands Unit of the Cave Point to Clay Banks State Natural Area which encompasses 4,000 acres. The project will protect habitat for two Federally-listed species – the endangered Hines emerald dragonfly and threatened Dwarf lake iris.

**Restoration of Wetland at Burnham Prairie Annex** – Illinois Department of Natural Resources, partnering with Friends of the Forest Preserves and the Forest Preserve District of Cook County, was awarded \$266,853 to restore 98 acres adjacent to the Grand Calumet River which is a tributary of southern Lake Michigan. These funds will be leveraged by \$2,770,000 of non-Federal cost share. Of this parcel, 67 acres are nationally decreasing palustrine emergent wetlands and 12 acres are decreasing palustrine forested wetlands. The site is referred to as the “Burnham Prairie Annex” due to the location adjacent to the Burnham Prairie Nature preserve. The project includes restoration through topsoil replacement, invasive species control, and native plant establishment. The project site is an important migratory bird stop over location and additionally provides breeding habitat for several state threatened birds.

### **Region 4**

Contacts: Keith Taniguchi – 404-679-7180  
Debbie DeVore – 772-562-3909

**Acquisition of the Mouth of Money Bayou Tidal Creek** – Florida Department of Environmental Protection was awarded \$831,990 to acquire 11 acres encompassing the outlet of the Money Bayou tidal in Gulf County. These funds will leverage \$371,853 of non-Federal cost share. This site contains the tidal creek channel, adjacent estuarine and intertidal wetlands, and pine and beach dune uplands. It has exceptional wetland, wildlife, cultural, and recreational values. The acquisition and protection of this site will prevent the loss and degradation of nationally decreasing estuarine intertidal emergent wetlands and marine intertidal wetlands. It provides high value habitat for many Federal and State listed species, including the piping plover, green and loggerhead sea turtles, Gulf sturgeon, and others will benefit from this acquisition.

**Kitty Hawk Woods Coastal Preserve, Hard Tract Acquisition** – North Carolina Division of Coastal Management was awarded \$168,090 to acquire 15.97 acres of ridge and swale maritime forest in Dare County. These funds will leverage an additional \$168,090 of non-Federal cost share. The Hard tract will be incorporated into the Kitty Hawk Woods Maritime Forest component of the North Carolina Coastal Reserve System. Kitty Hawk Woods is of extreme ecological importance and has been designated a Nationally Significant Natural Area by the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program. The Hard tract contains two globally imperiled plant communities: maritime swamp and maritime deciduous forest. Kitty Hawk Woods was rated by The Nature Conservancy as having a very high level of biodiversity and is included USFWS Regional Wetlands Concept Plan of the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan.

## **Region 5**

Contacts: Colleen Sculley – 413-253-8509  
Diane Lynch – 413-253-8628

**Brookings Bay North Point Conservation Project** – Maine Department on Inland Fisheries and Wildlife was awarded \$288,612 to acquire 59.5 acres in the town of Woolwich (Berry Tract) on Brookings Bay within the lower portion of the Kennebec River Estuary. These funds will leverage \$131,188 in non-Federal cost share. The Kennebec Estuary consists of high value salt marshes, tidal freshwater marshes, riparian habitat, and associated upland buffers. The estuary provides the most important waterfowl concentration area in New England and is one of the premier waterfowl staging grounds along the Atlantic Flyway. Completion of this acquisition project will result in the Maine Wetlands Protection Coalition achieving its goal of acquiring 12 high priority properties in the Kennebec Estuary Focus Area.

**Cedar Island Coastal Wetland Protection** – Maryland Department of Natural Resources was awarded \$207,760 to acquire 200 acres in Somerset County, including 192 acres of estuarine salt marsh located on Tangier and Pocomoke Sounds. These funds will leverage \$216,240 of non-Federal cost share. This parcel will be incorporated into the adjacent 3,000-acre Cedar Island Wildlife Management Area, completing the protection of the entire island. Located in the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture's Tangier Sound and Bay Islands sub-focus area, Pocomoke Sound and Cedar Island support some of the best remaining beds of submerged aquatic vegetation in Maryland and are considered to be important for breeding black duck. Partners in the project include USFWS Chesapeake Bay Field Office and the Lower Shore Land Trust.

**Madsen-Ridge Conservation Easement Great Marsh Estuary** – Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, partnering with the Great Marsh Land Protection Team, was awarded \$353,500 to permanently protect 177 acres of coastal salt marsh and associated upland buffer through the purchase of a conservation easement. These funds will leverage \$171,725 in non-Federal cost share. The property is located at the confluence of the Essex River and Soginese Creek on Essex Bay, just south of Plum Island Sound and the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge. The project site consists of over 76 percent declining coastal wetlands and 24 percent upland buffer. The Great Marsh is the largest salt marsh in New England covering 25,000 acres. It functions as a major shellfish and fin

fish nursery and is a critically important foraging and resting area for migrating birds along the Atlantic Flyway.

**Pocomoke Sound Coastal Wetland Protection, Saxis WMA Expansion** – Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, partnering with the Trust for Public Land, was awarded \$906,000 to acquire 106 acres of coastal wetlands on Pocomoke Sound in Accomack County. These funds will leverage \$390,000 of non-Federal cost share. The project area includes 55 acres of Chesapeake Bay estuarine salt marsh, 21 acres of palustrine forested wetlands, and 17 acres of estuarine intertidal forested wetland adjacent to the 5,574-acre Saxis WMA. Located within the large and expansive Pocomoke River salt marsh complex, this area is known as the kidneys of the Chesapeake Bay due to its importance to water quality. The salt marshes of Pocomoke Sound provide excellent habitat for raptors, waterfowl, water birds, and shorebirds.

**South Point Property and Croppers Island Conservation Easements** – Maryland Department of Natural Resources was awarded \$864,850 to acquire conservation easements on the 160-acre South Point property and the 210-acre Croppers Island property in Worcester County along Ayers Creek and Newport Bay. These funds will leverage \$900,150 in non-Federal cost share. Both properties are located within the 153,000-acre Maryland Atlantic Coastal Bays watershed. The acquisitions will protect 1.5 miles of shoreline on Newport Bay, 163 acres of estuarine intertidal and palustrine forested coastal wetlands, 92 acres of native coastal plain forest, habitat for breeding and wintering waterfowl, breeding habitat for water birds and shorebirds, and stop-over habitat for migrating birds. Twenty-four acres of wetlands will be restored through the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.

## **Region 8**

Contacts: Carrie Thompson – 916-414-6510  
Becky Miller – 916-978-6185

**Cullinan Ranch Restoration Project** – The California Wildlife Conservation Board was awarded \$1 million to restore 1,575 acres of vital estuarine tidal salt marsh and uplands at the San Pablo Bay National Wildlife Refuge in north San Francisco Bay. These funds leverage \$6,282,940 in non-Federal cost share. Specific project actions include excavation of historic channels, levee lowering, breach construction, and the protection of highway infrastructure. San Pablo Bay is part of the largest estuary system on the Pacific coasts of North and South America, and is globally recognized for its importance to numerous fish, waterfowl and shorebirds, and other wetland dependent species. The project will benefit numerous threatened and endangered species, including the salt marsh harvest mouse and California clapper rail. Population declines among both species are primarily attributable to habitat loss.

**Middle Watsonville Slough Wetlands Protection Project** – The California Coastal Conservancy was awarded \$860,410 to acquire the 45-acre Bryant/Habert parcel, which contains 18.3 acres of palustrine emergent and palustrine scrub-shrub coastal wetland habitat Santa Cruz County. These funds will leverage \$3,560,814 in non-Federal cost share. The Watsonville Slough complex is one of the largest remaining freshwater coastal wetlands in the central coast of California, totaling approximately 800 acres. The slough complex is located along the Pacific flyway and the wetlands, marsh, and grasslands

provide critical resting habitat for migratory waterfowl and significant wintering habitat for raptors. The slough ecosystem also supports the Federally-threatened California red-legged frog, the California endangered pelican, and at least 10 other bird species of state special concern.

**Odello East Floodplain Restoration Project** – The California Coastal Conservancy, partnering with the Big Sur Land Trust, was awarded \$925,000 to acquire and restore a 131-acre historic floodplain located along the lower Carmel River along the Central Coastal of California. These funds will leverage \$4,826,100 in non-Federal cost share. The project consists of acquisition of 82 acres of former coastal wetland habitat called Odello East; restoration of 90 acres of the project site to coastal wetland habitat by removing portions of a levee to reestablish the hydrologic connection between the project site and the Carmel River; and creation of a 41-acre agricultural preserve that will be managed to achieve the dual goal of preserving the agricultural heritage of the project area in a manner that is compatible with the adjacent coastal wetland habitat.

**Tomales Wetlands and Dunes Complex Protection Project** – The California Coastal Conservancy was awarded \$1 million to purchase a conservation easement to permanently protect 400 acres on a private property known as Lawson’s Landing at the mouth of Tomales Bay in Marin County. These will leverage \$550,000 in non-Federal cost share. The 850-acre dune complex is the largest unprotected wetlands and dunes system in central California, encompassing rare mobile dunes, central dune scrub, dune prairie, and seasonal dune slack wetlands. It supports at least 9 listed and special status species, including the Federally-threatened California red-legged frog, western snowy plover, and Tidestrom’s lupine. Protection of the complex will provide future opportunities for restoration and management of native dune and wetland communities. The project also includes an environmental education and outreach program.

**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/index.html>.**

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