

2020 National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grants Project Summaries

California

Los Osos Creek Wetland Restoration – Phase II

The California State Coastal Conservancy will enhance and restore 40.05 acres of declining palustrine coastal wetlands, including riparian and seasonal floodplain wetlands, and 16.4 acres of upland coastal dune scrub habitat on the 56.9-acre project site located in lower Los Osos Creek in the Morro Bay watershed on California’s central coast. The Coastal Conservancy acquired the property with a 2014 grant on behalf of the Coastal San Luis Resource Conservation District. The 2014 grant also funded the preparation of a restoration plan for the property. As the subrecipient, the Conservation District will implement the actions identified in the restoration plan, including removal of structures, infrastructure, fill, replacement of road culverts and breaching a levee to allow water flows and sediment deposition on the adjacent floodplain.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$408,275	\$200,940	\$609,215

Lower Walnut Creek Habitat Restoration – North Beach

The California State Coastal Conservancy, in partnership with the Contra Costa County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, will restore and create at least 227.7 acres of coastal wetlands and associated upland habitat on a 231.9-acre portion of Lower Walnut Creek. The remaining 4.2 acres will remain unrestored to provide 2.5 miles of grading for future public trails and other public access amenities as part of a future project phase. The project improves habitat connectivity by doubling the width of marsh corridor along the Walnut Creek channel and helping fill a nearly mile-wide gap between two large historic tidal marshes on either side of the site along the shoreline of Suisun Bay. Implementation of the overall restoration project will create and enhance a 386-acre mosaic of tidal marsh and channels, adjacent terrestrial lowlands and uplands to support a diversity of plant communities and wildlife species.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$1,500,000

Mill Bend Conservation Project

The California State Coastal Conservancy will acquire 113 acres of high priority coastal wetlands, riparian and associated uplands located at the estuary and lower reach of the Gualala River in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, California. The estuary and lower reach of the Gualala River includes critical habitat for federally listed species, such as steelhead trout, coho salmon, red-legged frog, tri-colored blackbird and numerous regionally sensitive animal and plant species. The project will also support removal of existing contaminants and development of a restoration plan for a 65-acre wetland habitat. The project will also include planning for a future environmental education and outreach facility using existing buildings on the property and public access trails for fishing and wildlife-oriented recreation.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$1,158,296	\$2,158,296

Ocean Ranch Restoration – Phase 1

The California State Coastal Conservancy will restore 410 acres of wetlands and dunes in the Eel River estuary, California’s fourth largest. The Ocean Ranch Unit is a part of the California Department of Fish

and Wildlife’s Eel River Wildlife Area. Phase I of the project will restore and enhance 850 acres of coastal wetlands, dunes, and other associated uplands. The overall project goal is to restore full tidal exchange to much of the northern half of the Eel River Delta, thereby restoring a resilient complex of wetlands, wetland-upland transition zone and dunes at Ocean Ranch, as part of a larger regional effort to restore the Eel River Estuary and its threatened species. These restored and enhanced wetlands and dunes will provide critical habitat for listed species, including salmonids, longfin smelt, tidewater goby and western snowy plover.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$532,271	\$1,532,271

Delaware

Thousand Acre Marsh Wetland Protection Project – Phase 4: Shilling Property

The Delaware Division of Fish and Wildlife will acquire and manage the 54-acre Shilling Property in Middletown, New Castle County, Delaware. The project will protect coastal wetland ecosystems, restore upland habitat to improve wetland and water quality and provide public access for wildlife-oriented recreation and for wetland and wildlife outreach and education. Thousand Acre Marsh is a 1,288-acre fresh to slightly brackish coastal wetland complex that is a haven for coastal wetland-associated waterfowl, water birds, shorebirds, muskrats and fish. The Thousand Acre Marsh itself is an ecologically unique area and protection of its habitat for the species that thrive there is imperative. It also provides public access for recreational activities such as hunting, trapping, birding and other wildlife viewing.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$390,000	\$212,812	\$602,812

Georgia

Black Point Acquisition

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources will acquire approximately 3,177 acres of diverse coastal habitats known as Black Point. The area is made-up of maritime forests, upland pine flatwoods and rare freshwater wetlands on Harriet’s Bluff in Camden County, Georgia. It is suitable habitat for species, such as the candidate gopher tortoise and federally listed eastern indigo snake, and numerous species of neotropical migrants. This purchase will add to the preservation and ecological integrity of the Satilla River Watershed, the Crooked River Delta and the Cumberland Island National Seashore. Black Point is part of a larger conservation project that will result in over 11,000 acres conserved on the Harriet’s Bluff peninsula, which includes Cabin Bluff. The long-term protection of the Santilla River Corridor provides critical linkage between Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the Altamaha Corridor. The conservation of Black Point will create a lasting conservation stewardship legacy by protecting important fish and wildlife habitat.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$2,300,000	\$3,300,000

Cumberland River Easement

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (GA DNR) will help permanently protect through the purchase of a conservation easement approximately 1,018 acres of diverse habitat known as the Cumberland River Tract. The area includes tidal salt marsh wetlands and adjacent uplands in the lower

Satilla River watershed. The Cumberland River Tract is a component of a larger project to conserve a critical 11,000-acre property called Cabin Bluff in partnership with The Nature Conservancy, Open Space Institute and The Department of Defense. Protection of the Cumberland River Tract is also part of a long-term initiative by the GA DNR and partners to conserve priority habitats in the lower Satilla River system, and is designated within GA DNR’s 2015 State Wildlife Action Plan as a priority area.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$580,000	\$1,580,000

Massachusetts

Childs River Restoration Project

The Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, in partnership with the Towns of Falmouth and Mashpee and 18 other partners including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, will implement the Childs River Restoration Project located in the Towns of Falmouth and Mashpee, Massachusetts. The Project will restore 16-acres of historic coastal freshwater wetlands and streams to reconnect the headwaters of the Childs River to Waquoit Bay and Vineyard Sound on the coast of Massachusetts. The Childs River passes through fallow cranberry bogs (Garner Bogs and Farley Bog), an undersized culvert at Carriage Shop Road, and an aging earthen dam downstream of this road. The project includes removing the dam, replacing an undersized culvert and restoring the river channel and the riparian habitat, including the retired cranberry bogs. Removing downstream barriers will restore watershed connectivity and improve fish passage in the Childs River watershed.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$819,000	\$1,810,648	\$2,629,648

Mill Brook Bogs Restoration Project

The Massachusetts Division of Ecological Restoration, in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife (landowner) and others, will restore a rare coastal Atlantic white cedar freshwater wetland and other habitat types, and support its on-going management as permanently protected public open space. The proposed wetland restoration project will occur within the permanently protected and state managed Mill Brook Bogs Wildlife Management Area in Freetown, Massachusetts. The restoration site consists of approximately 147 acres of retired commercial cranberry farmland, a 1-mile reach of the perennial Mill Brook and approximately 56 acres of adjacent coastal Atlantic white cedar swamp. The project site, which is located on the northern edge of the Southeastern Massachusetts Bioreserve, will provide opportunities for passive recreation and environmental education.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$335,000	\$1,335,000

Michigan

Abbaye Peninsula Wetlands Conservation

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with Keweenaw Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy and others, will acquire 193 acres of diverse and intact coastal wetland habitats on the Abbaye Peninsula and the adjoining Keweenaw and Huron Bays of Lake Superior in Baraga County, Michigan. Four parcels will be acquired in fee simple, to be held and managed by the Keweenaw Land

Trust. The 193 acres, combined with the 143 acres of land match parcels, together are comprised of over 60% nationally declining wetland. The wetlands include at least 98 acres of palustrine-forested and 119 acres of palustrine scrub-shrub nationally declining types. The project will benefit migratory birds and waterfowl, nearshore aquatic habitats, native plants, fish and wildlife by permanently protecting diverse habitats. It will also protect over a mile of undeveloped Lake Superior shoreline that will remain natural and available for public recreation.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$925,000	\$563,125	\$1,488,125

New Jersey

Delaware Bayshore Wetlands Preserve Project 2

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Green Acres Program, with the assistance of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service New Jersey Field Office and Ducks Unlimited will acquire and permanently preserve 1,650 acres of property in Fairfield Township, Cumberland County, Delaware. The property contains a significant amount of habitat identified as nationally decreasing coastal wetlands types, along with sandy beachfront and upland maritime-like forest. It is the last large privately-owned landholding between the Cohansey River and the Nantuxent Cove along the New Jersey-Delaware Bayshore. The protected parcel will be added to the Dix Wildlife Management Area. Over 300 species of neotropical migrant birds, including the federally listed red knot, use the Delaware Bay region during their migration or as breeding habitat.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$428,571.43	\$1,428,571.43

New York

Tidal Wetland Restoration at Fireplace Neck Marsh

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation will restore a state-owned tidal wetland on the Great South Bay in Suffolk County, New York. The 115-acre wetland was primarily high marsh when it was initially mapped 50 years ago. The natural tidal hydrology has since been altered, reducing sedimentation and leading to a transition from high marsh to low marsh and eventually mudflat and open water. Restoration activities will include removing plugs to increase tidal circulation, filling existing channels to encourage appropriate tidal exchange and installing micro-topography to connect waterlogged areas to channels. The wetland is home to shellfish and many species of waterfowl and migratory birds. The area provides recreational opportunities, including hunting, fishing, clamming and birdwatching.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$556,000	\$254,000	\$810,000

South Carolina

Samworth Wildlife Management Area Wetlands Restoration Project

The South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR) will restore and enhance 250 areas of palustrine emergent and forested wetlands and associated maritime forest habitat on the Samworth Wildlife Management Area (WMA) in Winyah Bay. Samworth WMA is a 1,500- acre state-owned property managed by SCDNR to conserve native plant and wildlife communities, including high priority

species, and to provide opportunities for outdoor public recreational uses including birding, hunting and fishing. This project will contribute to the restoration of a tract in the region focused on providing habitat to a host of non-game species including federally listed species and state listed endangered and threatened species, as well as shorebirds, wading birds, secretive marsh birds, birds of prey, fish, reptiles, mammals and other wetland dependent species.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$417,879	\$1,417,879

Texas

6th Addition to the Galveston Island Coastal Heritage Preserve – Middle Tract

The Texas Department of Parks and Wildlife will acquire and permanently protect 45 acres of coastal habitats, including 19 acres palustrine emergent persistent marsh habitat, 1 acre of permanently flooded palustrine unconsolidated bottom excavated habitat and 25 acres of upland coastal prairie. The purchased tract will be added to the 754-acre Coastal Heritage Preserve. This project will conserve breeding, nesting, foraging, roosting and wintering habitats that benefit numerous coastal-dependent and migratory bird species including mottled ducks and sandhill cranes. The project will also protect coastal habitats that are breeding, nursery, juvenile and foraging habitat to marsh resident fishery species. The project will help to maintain and improve the biological integrity of the coastal ecosystem along the southern shoreline of West Galveston Bay.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$333,335	\$1,333,335

Schicke Point Wetland Protection and Restoration

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will construct a 3,236-foot living shoreline at Schicke Point in Matagorda Bay in Calhoun County, Texas. The living shoreline has demonstrated many of the benefits expected to result from this proposed project including protection of emergent marsh, living shoreline creation supporting oysters and a wide variety of vertebrates and invertebrates, sediment accumulation and nutrient removal. The project will protect an estuarine intertidal emergent wetland, which is a smooth cordgrass, black mangrove, eastern oyster marsh complex. It will create 2 acres of marine intertidal habitat as a living shoreline colonized by oysters. The project will allow intertidal emergent wetland to reestablish will be supported. The project will protect marsh and prevent the Schicke Point peninsula from breaching where elevations are less than 3 feet. Emergent marsh in this area protects the peninsula from breaching.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$715,000	\$528,540	\$1,243,540

Washington

Discovery Bay Acquisitions Phase 1

The Washington Department of Ecology, in partnership with Jefferson Land Trust, will acquire and conserve nine acres of critical wetlands and nearshore habitat in Discovery Bay in Jefferson County, Washington, and nearly 2,173 feet of Puget Sound shoreline. The project will conserve degraded and filled estuary and nearshore habitat and preserve a rare intact pocket estuary that provides high-functioning salt marsh habitat in the Discovery Bay area. The sites feature current and historic estuarine

salt marsh habitat, freshwater marsh, sand spit, the mouth of a fish-bearing stream, tide flats and tidal channels with a salt marsh fringe, and surrounding marine riparian forest. The wetlands provide critical habitat for several federally listed salmonids, as well as numerous other fish and wildlife species such as Olympia oysters, forage fish and migratory shorebirds.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$713,268	\$465,840	\$1,179,108

Drayton Harbor and California Creek Estuary Coastal Wetland Conservation

The Washington State Department of Ecology, in partnership with the Whatcom Land Trust, will acquire and restore four parcels totaling 54.66 acres of coastal wetland habitat and 6,500 feet of shoreline. The project site is located in Whatcom County in Salish Sea portion of north Puget Sound. All four parcels are situated along California Creek, a tributary streams to Drayton Harbor. The mudflats and tidal marshes along California Creek provide vital critical habitat to breeding, migrating and rearing salmonid species and fall within a regionally significant area for birds. The wetlands will provide foraging and rearing habitat for a diversity of coastal dependent and migratory shorebirds, waterfowl and passerine species, including for example black oystercatchers, greater yellowlegs and red-necked grebe.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$915,000	\$463,000	\$1,378,000

Lower Eld Inlet Acquisition Phase 3

The Washington State Department of Ecology (WDOE) will acquire and permanently protect a total of 55 acres, with 9.5 acres of tidelands and 46.1 acres of wetlands, including 3,250 feet of shoreline on Lower Eld Inlet and the McLane Creek estuary. WDOE will partner in this effort with Capitol Land Trust, who will complete the acquisitions and hold fee title to the properties. The project, called the Lower Eld Inlet Acquisition Phase 3, will acquire and permanently protect one 15-acre parcel and eight contiguous 5-acre parcels adjacent to nearly 600 acres of habitat and six miles of shoreline protected by previous National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grants. The project will also remove five derelict structures, two fish-blocking culverts, restore the wetland hydrology and eradicate areas of invasive species.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$355,000	\$148,125	\$503,125

Lower Henderson Inlet Habitat Acquisition Phase 2

The Washington State Department of Ecology (WDOE), in partnership with Capitol Land Trust, will permanently protect 94.18 acres and 2,100 feet of Puget Sound shoreline in Thurston County through a conservation easement. The project builds on the recent successful acquisition and restoration project on over 150 acres on the opposite shore of Henderson Inlet, funded through a 2017 grant. The property has diverse habitats, from estuary and nearshore habitat to an agricultural field and forests with timber stands ranging from 15 to 70 years old. It also includes 43.6 acres of wetlands, and nearshore habitat, which supports chinook, steelhead and coho rearing. This property has been identified as high priority for acquisition by WDOE and the Squaxin Island Tribe.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$574,000	\$574,000	\$814,000

Misery Point Habitat Acquisition

The Washington State Department of Ecology in partnership with Great Peninsula Conservancy, will acquire 20.7 acres and approximately 3,500 feet of Hood Canal and barrier lagoon shoreline in Kitsap County, Washington. The property contains a 1,600-foot sand spit, which shelters a 3-acre tidal lagoon that provides important refuge habitat for juvenile salmon and waterfowl. It also has feeder bluffs (eroding coastal bluffs) that provide sediment to maintain and grow the sand spit, and nutrients for the eelgrass beds that grow in the property's tidelands. Eelgrass beds are critical habitat for many species of juvenile salmon, including federally listed Hood Canal summer chum salmon and Puget Sound Chinook salmon. They are also important for spawning Pacific herring, which are an important food source for salmon, marine mammals and many bird species.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$665,000	\$1,665,000

Stillaguamish Tidal Wetland Acquisition

The Washington Department of Ecology, in partnership with the Stillaguamish Tribe, will provide partial funding for acquiring 248 acres of former estuarine and marine wetlands in Snohomish County, Washington. The goal is to set back levees and return the coastal wetland acres to tidal and riverine influence. Restoration of tidal wetlands at this site would benefit a wide range of fish and wildlife species, but especially federally listed Chinook populations in the Stillaguamish and Skagit Rivers. Restoration of these tidal wetlands is specifically called for in the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan. Protecting and restoring these lands will also provide benefits to waterfowl and shorebirds using the Pacific Flyway.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$1,000,000	\$1,330,000	\$2,330,000

Tarboo Creek Wetlands Acquisition and Restoration

The Washington State Department of Ecology, in partnership with Northwest Watershed Institute, will permanently protect and restore 14.5 acres of wetlands on three adjoining parcels along Tarboo Creek that drain directly into Tarboo-Dabob Bay and Puget Sound. The restoration of 5 acres includes removing structures and wetland fill from two properties and re-vegetating a third property to restore nationally and regionally declining forested and scrub-shrub declining wetlands types. The project site includes a variety of freshwater wetland types, and Tarboo Creek and two tributaries flow through the parcel. The diverse wetland types and streams provide habitat for a many at-risk species, including rearing and spawning habitat for federally listed steelhead salmon and coho salmon, coastal cutthroat trout and western brook lamprey.

Award	Cost Share/Match	Total Project Cost
\$508,000	\$212,000	\$720,000