

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Pacific Regional Office  
911 NE 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Portland, Oregon 97232-4181  
Phone: 503/231-6121  
Fax: 503/231-2122  
<http://pacific.fws.gov>

# News Release



October 28, 2004  
Contact: Joan Jewett, 503-231-6211

03-113

## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Awards Nearly \$2.8 Million in Coastal Wetland Grants To Benefit Wildlife and Habitat in Washington

Pacific Regional Director Dave Allen announced today that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing grants totaling \$2,775,000 to conserve, restore and protect coastal wetlands in the State of Washington. The grants are among a total of \$13 million awarded nationally to help fund projects in 10 states.

In Washington, the three projects chosen to receive the grants are: the Davis Bay Acquisition and Restoration Project, the Willapa Bay/Seal Slough Acquisition Project, and the Lower Tarboo Creek Wetland Acquisition and Floodplain Restoration Project.

Other states receiving National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants for 2005 are Alaska, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Nationally, the grants provide federal funding for 16 projects and will be supplemented with nearly \$13 million from state and private partners. The grants will be used to acquire, restore or enhance coastal wetlands for long-term conservation benefits to wildlife and habitat. Partners in this year's projects include state and local governments, private landowners and conservation groups such as Ducks Unlimited, the Trust for Public Land and the Wildlife Forever Foundation.

"Citizen-stewards are often our most effective conservationists and programs like the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant program empower them." Regional Director Allen said. "People working in partnership will help us ensure that we can pass along to our children and grandchildren a country that is as healthy and whole as the one we inherited."

Interior Secretary Gale Norton made the national announcement of the grants, saying, "This is another effective example of cooperative conservation, a concept in which President Bush firmly believes."

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants are awarded through a competitive process. The program is funded by the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act. Funding for the program is generated from excise taxes on fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels. These taxes are deposited into the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund.

To date, the Service has awarded almost \$152 million in grants to states and a U.S. territory under the program. When the 2005 grants projects are completed, they will have protected and/or restored almost 22,000 acres. Nearly 189,000 acres will have been protected or restored since the wetlands grant program began in 1990.

For more information about the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program 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 Aid, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203; or check the program's Internet home page at <http://www.fws.gov/cep/cwgcover.html>.

This year, the program became the first Service grant program to accept proposals electronically through [grants.gov](http://grants.gov). The [grants.gov](http://grants.gov) website is a cross-agency E-Government initiative, spanning 900 federal financial assistance programs and \$350 billion in annual grants.

The 2005 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Projects for Washington are:

**Davis Bay Acquisition and Restoration:** The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will acquire conservation easements and restore approximately 120 acres of estuarine and freshwater wetlands on Davis Bay, within Puget Sound. The restoration includes removal of the existing tide gate system, filling of drain ditches, raising two sections of roads that will be inundated by the restoration, and providing a new potable water system for several families. This project will provide rearing habitat for fish and important migration and wintering habitat for birds.

Partners: A private landowner, Ducks Unlimited, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and the San Juan Preservation Trust.

Coastal grant award:	\$1,000,000
State share:	\$10,000
Partners share:	\$1,083,000
Total cost:	\$2,093,000

**Lower Tarboo Creek Wetland Acquisition and Floodplain Restoration:** The Washington Department of Ecology will protect 216 acres -- 200 acres by purchasing the land and 16 acres through conservation easements. The project also will restore 1.5 miles of Tarboo Creek and 1.5 miles of tributary channels and 120 acres of wetlands that had been drained for agricultural use.

Partners: Private individuals, Jefferson Land Trust, and Northwest Watershed Institute.

Coastal grant award:	\$875,000
State share:	\$350,000
Partners share:	\$50,000
Total cost:	\$1,275,000

**Willapa Bay/ Seal Slough Acquisition Project:** The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will purchase 1,002 acres of fee title and 374 acres of conservation easements along Seal Slough, Lynn Point, and Willapa Bay tidelands and adjacent uplands. The project will include control of invasive salt marsh grass (*Spartina sp.*) on 300 acres of the tide flats, enhancing utilization by wintering shorebirds and foraging waterfowl.

Partners: Cascade Land Conservancy, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, and Wildlife Forever Foundation.

Coastal grant award:	\$900,000
State share:	\$5,000
Partners share:	\$562,400
Total cost:	\$1,467,400

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 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 fishery resource 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 governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to State fish and wildlife agencies.

– FWS –