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News Release



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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE OFFERS FUNDING, INVITES PROPOSALS FOR COASTAL WATERSHED RESTORATION PROJECTS

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking proposals for watershed restoration projects on the Oregon coast and lower Columbia River. Funds will be granted through the Oregon Coastal Program to restore, assess, and educate about coastal watersheds and sensitive species within them. Up to \$25,000 may be available to each accepted project, with a minimum cost-share requirement of 25 percent.

Applicants must complete a brief pre-proposal project description, including objectives and location, which must be received by the Fish and Wildlife Service by January 14, 2005. Applicants will be contacted to schedule a field review if their pre-proposal meets the initial eligibility requirements.

Cost shares may be a combination of financial and in-kind contributions from federal, state, local and private funding sources, but cannot be matched with any other U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service funding. Eligible in-kind cost share types include those services such as labor, use of equipment, surveying, or other contributions that would otherwise require funds. The program seeks to invest about 75 percent of total funding in restoration activities, 20 percent in assessments to develop restoration strategies, and five percent in educational efforts to support them.

Some of the broad types of projects which may be eligible for these funds include:

- restoring tidal flow to estuarine wetlands,
- outreach and educational activities focused on coastal ecosystems,
- restoring coastal habitats that support federally listed species, or species of concern,
- restoring fish passage, and
- controlling non-native species.

The Oregon Coastal Program works with private landowners; tribes; non-governmental organizations such as community groups; and federal, state or local agencies. The program promotes the health and restoration of fish and wildlife habitat in coastal watersheds through projects that directly improve habitat, public outreach and education, developing partnerships and community support, and fish and wildlife monitoring and assessment.

For assistance or answers to other questions, contact Mary Holbert at the agency's Newport office, at 541-867-4558, extension 247, or by e-mail at oregon_coastal_program@fws.gov.

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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.

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