

# News Release



Office of Public Affairs  
4401 North Fairfax Drive  
Arlington, VA 22203  
Phone 703/358 2220 Fax: 703/358 1930

August 26, 2009

Contact: Vanessa Kauffman  
703-358-2138  
[vanessa\\_kauffman@fws.gov](mailto:vanessa_kauffman@fws.gov)

Joan Jewett  
503-231-6211  
[joan\\_jewett@fws.gov](mailto:joan_jewett@fws.gov)

## **Fish Habitat Benefits from Nearly \$3 Million in Funding**

*Three projects in the Pacific Region will help native trout species*

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing more than \$2.7 million to support 52 fish habitat projects in 26 states across the nation. An additional \$4.7 million in partner contributions, over \$7.4 million in total, will go toward restoring and enhancing stream, lake and coastal habitat, as well as to improving recreational fishing and helping endangered species.

In the Pacific Region, the Service is providing \$147,760 and the Western Native Trout Initiative is contributing \$256,300 to support restoration projects that will restore or reopen nearly five stream miles of trout habitat.

The funding is provided for priority projects identified through six Fish Habitat Partnerships established under the National Fish Habitat Action Plan (NFHAP). The partnerships formed as part of this plan help direct funding and other resources to habitat improvement projects offering the highest long-term conservation returns.

More than 40 percent of U.S. fish populations are currently in decline, half of the waters in the U.S. are somehow impaired, and fragmented conservation efforts are not reversing these declines. Some of the principal factors contributing to these declines include: habitat destruction and fragmentation, toxic substances, invasive species, harmful algal blooms and altered thermal regimes.

“Despite the dedicated efforts of natural resource managers, the nation’s fish and aquatic resources face real challenges and habitat conservation is a key element of supporting fish populations and sustainable fisheries. Through the efforts of NFHAP and its partners to conserve fish habitats throughout the U.S, we can make a difference, said Sam Hamilton, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

In addition to helping stem these declines, NFHAP projects also enhance fishing opportunities for the public by putting more dollars on the ground for fish conservation.

This year's funding in the Pacific Region supports the following projects, all of them partnerships with the Western Native Trout Initiative:

- **Honey Creek, OR** – \$97,010 in Service funds and \$115,200 in partner funds to remove one mile of barriers, opening up 1.25 stream miles of habitat for redband trout and Warner suckers.
- **Panther Creek, WA** – \$35,000 in Service funds and \$45,100 in partner funds to restore upstream passage for westslope cutthroat trout, currently blocked by undersized culverts, opening up 1.2 stream miles of habitat.
- **Bear River Basin, ID** – \$15,750 in Service funds and \$96,000 in partner funds to restore and enhance two stream miles of habitat for Bonneville cutthroat trout.

For a complete listing of funded projects, please visit: [www.fws.gov/fisheries/fwco/nfhap](http://www.fws.gov/fisheries/fwco/nfhap).

NFHAP is a national investment strategy to maximize the impact of conservation dollars on the ground. Under the plan, federal, state and privately-raised funds are the foundation for building regional partnerships that address the Nation's biggest fish habitat issues. This comprehensive effort will treat the causes of fish habitat decline, not just the symptoms.

By 2010, through NFHAP, the Service and its partners will:

- Assess the condition of fish habitats in the U.S.
- Prepare a *Status of Fish Habitats in the U.S.* report.
- Establish 12 or more Fish Habitat Partnerships in priority areas.
- Fund projects to protect, restore and enhance priority habitats.

For more information about the National Fish Habitat Action Plan, its partnerships and programs please visit: [www.fishhabitat.org](http://www.fishhabitat.org).

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).