

Washington Fish and Wildlife Office Restoration Programs Recommended Projects Summary – Fiscal Year 2015

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) restoration programs work with partners to achieve voluntary habitat restoration through financial and technical assistance. Following staff review of projects submitted for consideration by partners in response to the “Notice of Funding Availability” (NOFA), the following projects were recommended for fiscal year 2015 (FY15) funding. In total the USFWS Washington Fish and Wildlife Office funded 26 projects totaling approximately \$850K; USFWS funds leveraged approximately \$1.3M in partner contributions to these projects. Conservation partners included Tribal entities, state and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private landowners. Funded projects will conserve and restore coastal wetland, riparian, prairie, shrub-steppe, and forested ecosystems. These habitats support a diversity of fish, wildlife, and plant species, including many listed for protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Project: Fence Removal in High Priority High Density Sage Grouse Habitat

Cooperator: Pheasants Forever Inc.

Project Type: Shrub-steppe Restoration

Conservation Benefit: Removal of 9.8 miles of unnecessary fencing. Several portions of fence are within 1 mile of known sage-grouse leks. This project will enhance the functionality of approximately 3,840 acres of shrub steppe habitat by removing potential collision hazards and predator perching areas in areas likely to be used by sage-grouse for nesting and brood-rearing.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Cavness Ranch Restoration II

Cooperator: Center for Natural Lands Management

Project Type: Prairie and Oak Woodland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: This is a multi-year project that builds on work previously funded by USFWS, WDFW and NRCS. A mosaic of habitats exists on the site, including upland prairie, extensive oak woodlands, and one of the few remaining examples of wet prairie habitats. This project will improve the structure and function of native and semi-native grassland habitat to benefit current and future populations of multiple rare animal and plant species including the Mazama pocket gopher, Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly, golden paintbrush and Oregon spotted frog. Approximately 80 acres of upland habitats will be restored or enhanced.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Yellow starthistle Control in Douglas County

Cooperator: WSU

Project Type: Shrub-steppe Restoration/Invasive control

Conservation Benefit: This project will result in the control of a highly invasive plant on 476 acres of Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) enrolled shrub-steppe habitat. The treatment sites are the only known occurrence of this invasive plant in Douglas County. Surveys of the area have shown very little evidence of greater sage grouse where yellow starthistle has displaced the native grasses and forbs. Removal of this invasive weed species will allow the native plant community to remain intact and facilitate increased use by sage grouse.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$15,419

Project: Sims Corner Habitat Restoration Project

Cooperator: Foster Creek Conservation District

Project Type: Shrub-steppe Restoration

Conservation Benefit: This project will restore approximately 100 acres of shrub-steppe habitat in Douglas County, WA. This project will restore shrub-steppe habitat in an area with remnant populations of both greater sage-grouse and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The project parcels are almost entirely bordered by Conservation Reserve Program and/or Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) lands managed for shrub-steppe.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$17,802

Project: Native Prairie Plant Materials Production in North Puget Sound

Cooperator: Center for Natural Lands Management

Project Type: Prairie Restoration/Plant Material Production

Conservation Benefit: This project supports prairie restoration and listed species recovery in north Puget Sound. Primary areas of restoration include Whidbey Island, the San Juan Islands and the Olympic peninsula. This project will coordinate the prairie plant material needs for the region, provide technical assistance for local nurseries and restoration efforts, and begin the large scale seed production of north Puget Sound ecotypes of core prairie species. FWS is also supporting this project with nearly \$100,000 in FY15 Recovery Implementation Program funds.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Tenalquot Prairie Preserve Restoration II

Cooperator: Center for Natural Lands Management

Project Type: Prairie and Oak Woodland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: Tenalquot Prairie Preserve contains Roemer's fescue grassland and Oregon white oak, as well as Douglas-fir forest. The Preserve is currently habitat for multiple conservation species including: federally listed Mazama pocket gopher and Golden paintbrush, Oregon vesper sparrow, western bluebird and Columbian white-top aster. Habitat is being developed for the introduction of Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, a federally listed species. This project will maintain and improve the structure and function of prairie and oak woodland habitats on over 90 acres of the site.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Lummi Reservation Spartina Removal

Cooperator: Lummi Indian Business Council

Project Type: Coastal Wetland Restoration/Invasives Control

Conservation Benefit: This project will help protect and restore critical estuarine habitat within the Lummi River Estuary by manually removing expanding patches of invasive *Spartina anglica* over a 51 acre area surrounding Plover Island. This area is important for tribal shellfish and fishing resources, and Plover Island is owned and managed by the Whatcom Land Trust for its conservation and habitat value. The project will also monitor all tidelands along 29.15 miles of shoreline along the Lummi Reservation for Spartina infestation.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$17,251

Project: Oregon Spotted Frog Habitat Improvement

Cooperator: Samish Indian Nation

Project Type: Wetland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: The project will on expand a habitat restoration project currently in place for the Oregon spotted frog while also providing habitat for other fish and wildlife species. Currently, there are three test plots placed in reed canary grass wetland areas. Monitoring of egg masses and adult Oregon spotted frog encounters will determine the relative success of the plots and guide the restoration efforts. Approximately 3.25 acres wetlands will be restored or enhanced.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$10,000

Project: Bayshore Prairie Restoration

Cooperator: Capitol Land Trust

Project Type: Prairie and Oak Woodland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: Restore approximately 10 acres of historic prairie on Oakland Bay in Mason County, Washington. The prairie had been cleared and converted into a golf course over 50 years ago. This multi-year project will restore historic oak and prairie habitat on the site. Once completed the site could be used for reintroduction of listed prairie species such as Mazama pocket gopher and golden paintbrush.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Upper Ohop Valley Habitat Protection & Enhancement

Cooperator: Nisqually Land Trust

Project Type: Aquatic/Riparian Restoration

Conservation Benefit: This project will initiate restoration of a newly acquired 202 acre parcel purchased by the Nisqually Land Trust. The site was originally cleared for agriculture, which was unsuccessful, and has since been invaded by weedy species such as reed canarygrass, Himalayan blackberry, and Scotch broom. The initial restoration activities will be removal of trash from the site, clearing of invasive plants, and installing native plant species. This phase will restore and protect 1.2 miles of riparian habitat, 4 acres of wetlands, and 1.2 miles of stream channel.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$25,000

Project: Tarboo Creek Instream and Riparian Restoration

Cooperator: Northwest Watershed Institute

Project Type: Riparian Restoration

Conservation Benefit: The project will restore a section of the mainstem of Tarboo Creek that is a key part of a protected stream, wetland, and wildlife corridor extending from the headwaters of Tarboo Creek to Tarboo-Dabob Bay. The project is located about one-half mile upstream from the Tarboo Wildlife Preserve in the heart of the Tarboo valley. A 650-foot long section of the mainstem was cleared and straightened in the 1890s resulting in long-term erosion and incision problems. Eroding banks will be sloped back and habitat logs installed instream and on the banks. Invasive blackberry and holly will be removed.

USFWS (Partners for Fish and Wildlife) FY15 Funding: \$32,690

Partners for Fish and Wildlife WFWO FY15 Total: \$243,163

Puget Sound Coastal Program

Project: Qwuloolt Estuary Restoration Project

Cooperator: Tulalip Indian Tribe

Project Type: Coastal Wetland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: The Qwuloolt Estuary project will assist with the final construction of this multi-agency project which has been in the planning and acquisition stage for over 15 years, and in construction for the past several construction seasons. The project will restore over 350 acres of estuary habitat in the lower Snohomish River. The restored estuary will provide a wide range of habitats for migratory and resident birds, salmon and bull trout.

USFWS (Puget Sound Coastal Program) FY15 Funding: \$100,000

Project: Fisherman Bay Coastal Wetland Reconnection and Beach Enhancement

Cooperator: FRIENDS of the San Juans, San Juan County Land Bank

Project Type: Coastal Wetland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: The Fisherman Bay Coastal Wetland Reconnection and Beach Enhancement Project will restore connections between Puget Sound and a four acre coastal wetland, remove shoreline armoring, and restore upper intertidal beach and salt marsh habitat along 800 linear feet of marine shoreline. The project site is located near the mouth of Fisherman Bay along the western shores of Lopez Island. This area of Fisherman Bay hosts eelgrass, beaches, mudflats, and salt marshes; it is a priority area for rearing and spawning forage fish and frequented by marine birds including shorebirds, seabirds and nesting bald eagles.

USFWS (Puget Sound Coastal Program) FY15 Funding: \$59,462

Project: SPU Floodplain Restoration Education Film Project

Cooperator: City of Seattle – Seattle Public Utilities

Project Type: Outreach and Education

Conservation Benefit: This project supports the Seattle Public Utilities work to produce an educational documentary film featuring a cutting edge approach to stream restoration. The Thorton Creek restoration project includes the innovative design element of a constructed hyporheic zone which is an area within a stream where surface water and groundwater mix. This project will create a 3-D computer animation to demonstrate visually how the hyporheic works to provide habitat for stream invertebrates and juvenile fish, and to clean and cool the stream flow.

USFWS (Puget Sound Coastal Program) FY15 Funding: \$16,500

Project: Using Beaver to Restore Ecosystem Functions in the Snohomish Watershed

Cooperator: The Tulalip Tribes of Washington

Project Type: Riparian Restoration

Conservation Benefit: This project will restore beaver populations in strategic locations in the upper Skykomish watershed. It will double the area of in-stream habitat in relocation reaches, restore hydrologic processes at relocation sites, improve public perception of beaver as ecosystem engineers, and encourage use of beavers for restoration. The project will restore over 3 miles of stream habitat.

USFWS (Puget Sound Coastal Program) FY15 Funding: \$25,576

Project: Shannon Point shoreline armoring removal

Cooperator: Northwest Straits Foundation

Project Type: Coastal Wetland Restoration

Conservation Benefit: Project will complete planning to remove rip rap armoring from 770 feet of shoreline. This will result in recovery of approximately 15,250 sq. ft. of beach habitat on site for forage fish spawning. Removal of the armoring will also improve adjacent beaches by providing sediment that will enhance additional forage fish spawning habitat.

USFWS (Puget Sound Coastal Program) FY15 Funding: \$50,000

Puget Sound Coastal Program WFWO FY15 Total: \$250,950

Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program

Project: Chehalis River Brazilian elodea eradication

Cooperator: Thurston County Public Works

Project Type: Invasives species control

Conservation Benefit: This project will support a survey of a 54 mile section of the Chehalis River for the presence of Brazilian elodea, a highly invasive aquatic weed. Divers will manually remove all plants located, paying close attention to areas where it has occurred in the past. This is a continuation of previous partnerships with the Thurston County Public Works Noxious Weed Division and the Washington Department of Ecology, with a goal to eradicate Brazilian elodea in the Chehalis River to improve habitat and water quality conditions.

USFWS (Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program) FY15 Funding: \$27,205

Project: Boyer County Road Fish Barrier Culvert Correction

Cooperator: Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

Project Type: Fish passage

Conservation Benefit: This project replaces an undersized culvert with a bottomless arch culvert on the Boyer Road crossing of Porter Creek in the Chehalis Basin. There are large amounts of wood upstream of Boyer Road, and the new culvert will accommodate wood transport, sediment movement, and provide unobstructed fish passage. Porter Creek has few tributaries and this project will provide access to more than two and a half miles of salmon rearing habitat and one half mile of potential spawning habitat.

USFWS (Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program) FY15 Funding: \$20,000

Project: Oakhurst Street Fish Barrier Culvert Correction

Cooperator: Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force

Project Type: Fish passage

Conservation Benefit: The Oakhurst Barrier Correction Project is a two-phased project that will correct four individual fish-passage barriers located in the middle of the McDonald Creek Watershed in Elma, WA. This project is part of the broader, watershed-wide McDonald Creek Restoration Project which has successfully restored natural coho runs to McDonald Creek. Species which will benefit from this fish passage barrier correction include coho salmon, cutthroat trout, brook lamprey, sculpin, three-spined stickleback, Olympic mudminnow, and western pearlshell mussels.

USFWS (Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program) FY15 Funding: \$33,250

Project: Chehalis Basin Education Consortium Project

Cooperator: ESD 113

Project Type: Outreach and Education

Conservation Benefit: This on-going commitment supports stewardship of the Chehalis River basin by engaging high need and underserved Grays Harbor, Lewis and Thurston County schools and community teams in the study, investigation, protection and restoration of the Chehalis basin. Students will participate in water quality monitoring, field studies, riparian restoration work, and other watershed protection action projects.

USFWS (Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program) FY15 Funding: \$44,600

Chehalis Fisheries Restoration Program WFWO FY1 Total: \$125,055

National Fish Passage Program

Project: Salmon Creek Restoration project

Cooperator: Jefferson County

Project Type: Fish Passage

Conservation Benefit: This project will remove a fish passage barrier along Salmon Creek by replacing an undersized, 60 foot long culvert with a concrete bridge on West Uncas Road in Jefferson County. The culvert prevents summer chum salmon from accessing spawning habitat upstream of the road crossing. This is the final remaining habitat improvement project identified for Salmon Creek; completing efforts to restore watershed conditions to benefit ESA listed Hood Canal summer chum salmon.

USFWS (National Fish Passage Program) FY15 Funding: \$100,000

Project: Clearwater River Floodplain Restoration Project Phase 3

Cooperator: South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group

Project Type: Fish Passage/Riparian Restoration

Conservation Benefit: The goal of this restoration project is to increase spawning and rearing capacity of the watershed for spring Chinook, coho, and pink salmon, bull trout, steelhead and coastal and resident cutthroat trout by road removal and strategic placement of large wood structures in the Clearwater River. Phase 1 was completed in 2013, installing approximately one-half of the planned structures. This funding will complete the project, restoring river channel connectivity to 85 acres of historic floodplain and 19 existing side channels, reestablish channel processes, and improve riparian habitat.

USFWS (National Fish Passage Program) FY15 Funding: \$42,500

Project: Kristoferson Creek Fish Passage Barrier Correction

Cooperator: Snohomish Conservation District

Project Type: Fish Passage

Conservation Benefit: This project will replace two fish passage barriers near the mouth of Kristoferson Creek where it flows into Triangle Cove. Replacement of stream channel crossings will improve passage for juvenile Chinook, coho, chum, and steelhead. The worksites are the lowest crossings on Kristoferson Creek and will improve salmon access to approximately 1.2 miles of stream habitat.

USFWS (National Fish Passage Program) FY15 Funding: \$35,000

National Fish Passage Program WFWO FY14 Total: \$177,500