

STAFF SUMMARY FOR AUGUST 24-25, 2016

15C. OTHER INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – FEDERAL AGENCIES REPORT**Today's Item**Information Action

Standing agenda item to receive reports on any recent federal agency activities of interest not otherwise addressed under other agenda items.

Summary of Previous/Future Actions (N/A)**Background**

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA): NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has recommended 17 coastal and marine habitat restoration projects, including three in California, for its 2016 Community-Based Restoration Program (Exhibit C1). NMFS also announced the availability of approximately \$10 million for projects focused on sustainable fisheries and coastal fishing communities, with pre-proposals due Sep 20 (Exhibit C2).

Significant Public Comments (N/A)**Recommendation (N/A)****Exhibits**

- C1. [NOAA news release: *Projects selected for \\$9 million in community-based habitat restoration funding, dated Jul 20, 2016*](#)
- C2. [NOAA news release: *Approximately \\$10 million available for fisheries projects, dated Jul 22, 2016*](#)

Motion/Direction (N/A)



Projects selected for \$9 million in community-based habitat restoration funding

17 projects will improve protected species recovery and support sustainable fisheries

July 20, 2016 NOAA is recommending \$9 million in funding for 17 coastal and marine habitat restoration projects for its 2016 Community-based Restoration Program, as part of agency efforts to support healthy ecosystems and resilient coastal communities.



The recommended projects, in 10 states and territories, range from coral reef restoration in Florida to fish passage improvements in California.

This year's projects will restore habitat for a variety of coastal and marine species, including three of NOAA Fisheries' highly at-risk "[Species in the Spotlight](#)" – Atlantic salmon, Central California Coast coho, and Sacramento River winter-run Chinook. Projects will also concentrate on habitat improvement in two of NOAA's [Habitat Focus Areas](#) – Puerto Rico's Culebra Island, and West Hawaii – where agency and partner efforts can come together to yield community and environmental benefits.

"These restoration projects are a win-win for the environment and surrounding communities," said Pat Montanio, director of the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation. "When we make smart investments in habitat restoration, we not only help sustain fisheries and recover protected resources, we also use these projects to provide additional benefits, like protecting coastal communities from flooding and erosion, and boosting local economies through increased recreational opportunities."

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the Community-based Restoration Program, which was established in 1996 and authorized under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006. Since the program's beginning, NOAA has provided more than \$140 million to implement more than 2,000 habitat restoration projects, all through strong partnerships with

more than 2,500 organizations. Through the program and the Magnuson-Stevens Act, NOAA and its partners are helping to create healthy habitats and resilient fish populations in the United States.

At this point in the selection process, the application approval and obligation of funds is not final. Each of the 17 applications is being “recommended” and is not a guarantee of funding. Final approval is subject to funding availability as well as final review and approval by both the NOAA Grants Management Division and Department of Commerce Federal Assistance Law Division. Applicants should expect to receive formal notification of award approval by October 1.

Details about the 17 projects recommended for funding are available on the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation [website](#).

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Recommended Projects

This year, we are recommending \$9 million in funding for 17 coastal habitat restoration projects across the United States through the [Community-based Restoration Program](#). These projects will restore at least 1,400 acres of habitat, and up to 80 stream miles for fish passage.

Recommended projects will use a habitat-based approach to increase fish production and foster species recovery. Successful proposals will **help rebuild fish stocks, help recover threatened and endangered species, or benefit other coastal and marine species** (such as forage fish).

These projects contribute to NOAA’s conservation efforts in two [Habitat Focus Areas](#) and to the recovery of three [Species in the Spotlight](#).

Restoration efforts will include:

- **California**
 - **Restoring Coho Salmon along the Lost Coast** (\$304,752): This project, in partnership with [Trout Unlimited](#), will reduce sediment in priority streams in Northern California. Funding will support timberland road decommissioning, fish passage barrier removal, and installation of instream large wood structures to improve habitat complexity. Many of these projects are located in priority areas identified in the [NOAA Fisheries Recovery Plan for Central California Coast Coho Salmon](#).
 - **Willow Bend Floodplain Habitat Restoration** (\$587,399): This project, in partnership with [River Partners](#), will restore floodplain habitat and mimic natural flood patterns. These actions will provide critical rearing habitat for juvenile salmon and steelhead. The project will benefit multiple Central Valley migratory fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act, including Central Valley steelhead, spring-run Chinook, and critically-endangered Sacramento River winter-run Chinook salmon.
 - **Pennington Creek Steelhead Barrier Removal** (\$239,327): This project, in partnership with [Trout Unlimited](#), will restore fish passage to two miles of stream with year-round

flow. The project will benefit the South-Central California Coast Distinct Population Segment of steelhead trout, which is listed under the Endangered Species Act.

- **Florida**
 - **Restoration of ESA Threatened Coral Species in Florida** (\$492,850): This project, in partnership with the [Coral Restoration Foundation](#), will plant more than 50,000 corals on eight reefs across the Florida Reef Tract. The reefs will be planted with two species of coral listed under the Endangered Species Act. The project will also develop the capacity to grow and transplant three additional threatened species, potentially benefitting a total of five threatened coral species in south Florida and the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary.
- **Hawaii**
 - **Hawaii Fishpond Estuary Restoration** (\$200,000): This project, in partnership with [The Nature Conservancy](#), will restore up to seven acres of habitat. It will also promote the exchange of knowledge between practitioners engaged in fishpond management. The ecological function of West Hawai'i's nearshore ecosystems will be improved by restoring traditional fishpond, coastal estuarine, coral reef, and aquatic habitats.
- **Maine**
 - **Sheepscot River Barrier Removal** (\$393,051): This project, in partnership with the [Atlantic Salmon Federation](#), will remove the 15-foot high Coopers Mills Dam. It will also replace undersized culverts in the watershed. The project will significantly improve fish passage for Endangered Species Act-listed Atlantic salmon, and enhance habitat for other migratory fish such as river herring, within the Sheepscot River.
- **Maryland**
 - **Bloede Dam Removal** (\$733,391): This project, in partnership with [American Rivers](#), will restore migratory fish species habitat in the Patapsco River by removing the Bloede Dam. This 34-foot-high dam is a documented safety hazard in the Patapsco Valley State Park. The project will benefit river herring and other migratory species.
- **Massachusetts**
 - **Barstow's Pond Dam Removal** (\$101,000): This project, in partnership with [Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game](#), will remove the Barstow's Pond Dam. The project will benefit river herring by providing access to eight miles of riverine habitat. The dam is classified as a significant hazard by the Massachusetts Office of Dam Safety.
 - **Tack Factory Dam Removal** (\$98,000): This project, in partnership with the [North and South Rivers Watershed Association](#), will remove the Tack Factory Dam. The project will benefit river herring by reconnecting eight miles of spawning and juvenile rearing habitat and restoring natural sediment and nutrient transport.
 - **Coonamesett River Restoration** (\$430,000): This project, in partnership with the [Town of Falmouth](#), will remove two dams associated with former commercial cranberry operations. It will also replace an undersized culvert with a larger arch structure. The former cranberry bog sites will be restored to native riparian and floodplain habitat. The barrier removals will restore fish passage to more than two stream miles and the 158-acre Coonamesett Pond, providing spawning habitat for river herring.
 - **Herring River Restoration Project** (\$700,034): This project, in partnership with [Friends of Herring River](#), will provide funds and technical assistance to design and permit the Herring River Restoration Project. When constructed, the project will slowly return tidal flow to the Herring River to allow for gradual rebuilding of the salt marsh. The marsh has subsided since the Chequessett Neck Road dike was built in 1909.
- **North Carolina**
 - **Pamlico Sound Oyster Restoration** (\$1,275,000): This project, in partnership with the [North Carolina Coastal Federation](#), will construct 45 acres of oyster reef sanctuary. This

will advance the state's goal to create a network of sanctuaries within Pamlico Sound over the next ten years. The project locations are designated as [Essential Fish Habitat](#) for at least 26 species of fish. It will provide highly-productive habitat that will benefit commercially and recreationally important species.

- **Oregon**
 - **Winter Lake Restoration** (\$1,210,000): This project, in partnership with [The Nature Conservancy](#), will restore 407 acres of tidal wetlands. It will also increase fish passage on 1,300 acres at a site in the Coquille River Estuary of western Oregon. The project will benefit Endangered Species Act- listed coho salmon.
 - **Willamette Confluence Floodplain Restoration** (\$850,129): This project, in partnership with [The Nature Conservancy](#), will restore 330 acres of floodplain habitat at the confluence of two forks of the Willamette River. This project will benefit spring Chinook salmon, listed under the Endangered Species Act.
- **Puerto Rico**
 - **Culebra Island Restoration of Coral Reef Critical Habitat** (\$212,036): In partnership with [Protectores de Cuencas](#), this funding will support seven high-priority projects. All these projects are listed under the Culebra Watershed Management Plan and the Implementation Framework for NOAA's Habitat Blueprint Focus Area in the Caribbean. These efforts will reduce land-based sources of pollution, which will benefit coastal and coral reef habitats.
- **Washington**
 - **Illabot Creek Alluvial Fan Restoration** (\$491,705): This project, in partnership with the [Skagit River System Cooperative](#), will restore Illabot Creek into its historic channel and allow it to migrate freely through the floodplain. This will be accomplished by removing dikes, excavating pilot channels, installing two new bridges, and building log structures to improve habitat conditions. The project will benefit Chinook and coho salmon and steelhead trout.
 - **Accelerating Recovery across Puget Sound** (\$896,655): This project, in partnership with [The Nature Conservancy](#), will accelerate the restoration of floodplain and estuary habitat in Puget Sound. Partners will implement two on-the-ground projects and one feasibility and design project. These projects will restore at least 250 acres of delta, tidal, floodplain, and riparian habitat in two of the most important watersheds within Puget Sound for the recovery of Endangered Species Act-listed salmon.

Our investment in habitat is part of a long-term effort to rebuild fisheries, many of which have declined precipitously from habitat loss, over-fishing, and climate change. Recent successes show that restoring habitat is a way to not only stop the decline of fish populations, but also to regrow them to historically healthy numbers.



Approximately \$10 million available for fisheries projects

New process provides more guidance for Saltonstall-Kennedy grant applicants

July 22, 2016 NOAA Fisheries is announcing the availability of approximately \$10 million in funding for projects focusing on sustainable fisheries and coastal fishing communities.



Also, changes to how stakeholders apply for the grants — the 2017 round of NOAA’s Saltonstall-Kennedy grants — will help applicants sharpen their submissions for greater success.

The new “pre-proposal” process asks applicants to briefly show the technical merits and relevance of their project before they submit a full proposal. Applicants will then either be encouraged to submit a full proposal or given feedback how to improve their submission. A pre-proposal is required in order to be eligible to submit a full proposal.

“The Saltonstall-Kennedy grants are one of the primary ways NOAA Fisheries supports fisheries and fishing community research each year,” said Eileen Sobeck, assistant NOAA administrator for fisheries. “We want to make sure all stakeholders interested in applying and have fresh ideas about improving fisheries sustainability and coastal community resilience are well-informed about the application process.”

This new process builds upon improvements made to the program in 2016 which increased transparency and expanded stakeholder participation in the review process. Proposals undergo a rigorous evaluation process, including extensive technical review both within the agency and by an external constituent panel before final agency review.

To be considered for 2017 funding, projects should advance research in one of the following focus areas:

- Marine aquaculture
- Fishery data collection
- Techniques for reducing bycatch and other adverse impacts
- Adapting to climate change and other long term ecosystem change
- Sustainable seafood promotion, development, and marketing
- Socio-economic fisheries research
- Advancing fisheries science in U.S. territories, including research into enhancing annual catch limits and ecosystem-based fishery management

The deadline for pre-proposals is Sept. 20. Information on eligibility and application requirements can be found at www.grants.gov and the Saltonstall-Kennedy grant program [website](#). NOAA will hold online webinars to introduce the new application process and address questions this August.

President Eisenhower signed the Saltonstall-Kennedy Act, authored by U.S. senators Leverett Saltonstall and John F. Kennedy, the future president, both of Massachusetts, in 1954. Its grants have been a key source of funding for innovative and collaborative projects that advance efforts to achieve sustainable fisheries and enhance economic opportunities for fishing communities and working waterfronts.

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