

King County

Mucklehoot Indian Tribe

Grant Awarded: 390,334

Modernizing the University of Washington Hatchery

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe will use this grant to renovate the salmon rearing pond and infrastructure on the University of Washington Seattle campus, on Portage Bay along the Lake Washington Ship Canal. In a partnership with the university and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Tribe will repair and modernize the rearing pond, the fish ladder, and the electric and alarming system. Once the rearing pond is operational, funding also will support production of 180,000 Chinook salmon, the favorite food of hungry Southern Resident killer whales. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (21-1347)

Kittitas County

Kittitas County

Grant Award: \$3,609,135

Conserving Land along the Yakima River and Designing its Restoration

The Kittitas County Public Works Department and the Western Rivers Conservancy will use this grant to buy the 39-acre Yakima River RV Park, the last remaining privately held land in the Kittitas Reach of the Yakima River. In addition, the County will restore 19.5 acres of land along the river and maintenance another 12-acres of recently restored riverbank habitat. Finally, the County will select a concept for restoring the 594-acre floodplain and complete a 15 percent conceptual design, prepare a restoration phasing plan, and complete the preliminary design for the first phase of the restoration. These elements are part of a large Yakima River floodplain reconnection project planned for 650 acres in the Kittitas Reach, south of Ellensburg between Jefferies Levee and Yakima Canyon. The river is used by steelhead trout, which is a species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, and by Chinook salmon. Kittitas County will contribute \$1.3 million in other grants and donated services. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1961)

Okanogan County

Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation Restoring Sugar Reach

Grant Awarded: \$4,794,000

The Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation will use this grant to restore the Methow River's Sugar Reach in four different areas. The foundation will remove bank armoring, remnant

elements of a dam, and fill. The foundation also will plant the riverbank in areas affected by construction. The designs for the projects are underway and work is expected to start in 2024. The river is used by spring Chinook salmon and steelhead trout, both of which are species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act. The foundation will contribute \$206,001 in a federal grant. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1806)

Pacific County

Western Rivers Conservancy Expanding the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

Grant Awarded: \$4,794,000

The Western Rivers Conservancy will use this grant to permanently conserve about 1,087 acres of industrial timberland next to Willapa National Wildlife Refuge in Pacific County. After the purchase, the conservancy will transfer ownership to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for inclusion in the refuge. The project will ensure that 19 miles of streams will be safeguarded from degradation and readied for restoration projects to support salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout, and lamprey. The land contains about 3 miles of Bear River and Bear Branch, including the last unprotected portion of the east side of the Bear River estuary and its uppermost reach. The project's goal is to extend federal ownership into the freshwater habitats of the lower Bear River watershed to allow for future restoration work that builds upon the decade-long effort to restore the Bear River estuary. As part of the refuge, the land will be open for environmental education, wildlife viewing, and hunting. The Western Rivers Conservancy will contribute \$206,001 in a federal grant. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1803)

Skagit County

Swinomish Indian Tribe Designing Restoration of the Similk Estuary

Grant Awarded: \$250,000

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, in partnership with the Skagit River Systems Cooperative, will use this grant to develop final designs for a project that will raise a road, build a bridge, and restore a pocket estuary to improve habitat for salmon. The future project will excavate a tidal channel through a beach berm and road to create a 17-acre pocket estuary in the drained wetland at Similk beach, build branching tidal channels in the pocket estuary to mimic natural conditions, raise Satterlee Road, and build a bridge over the new tidal channel. Satterlee Road is the only land access to Fidalgo and Whidbey Islands other than State Route 20 but sits well below the high-tide elevation and is threatened by pump failure and sea-level rise.

The county-maintained pumphouse and drainage network will be removed and Satterlee Road will be elevated out of danger. The area is used by Chinook salmon, a favorite food of endangered Southern Resident killer whales and a species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, and by chum and pink salmon. This project received an additional \$545,000 from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1465)

Swinomish Indian Tribe Restoring a Swinomish Marsh

Grant Awarded: \$180,000

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community, in partnership with the Skagit River Systems Cooperative, will use this grant to design and restore 4.4 acres of tidal marsh habitat along the western edge of the Swinomish Channel. The site is a migratory corridor for salmon that connects the natal Skagit River to the extensive eelgrass meadows of Padilla Bay. Formerly abundant along the edges of the channel, these tidal marshes were reduced in size and connectivity over time as they were filled with dredge materials from maintaining navigation in the channel. Once restored, the site will provide important rearing habitat for Chinook salmon (a preferred food of the endangered Southern Resident killer whale) and other salmon and will connect habitats from the Skagit River delta at the south to large rearing habitat sites at the north. The Tribe will remove the dredge materials down to the natural marsh surface, which will allow the tide to enter the area and native marsh plants to grow. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (20-1386)

Snohomish County

Stillaguamish Tribe Continuing Restoration of the zis a ba Estuary

Grant Award: \$3,472,650

The Stillaguamish Tribe will use this grant to reconnect more than 230 acres of wetlands between Hatt Slough and the Old Stillaguamish River for estuary rearing habit for salmon species, including Chinook salmon, the preferred food for the endangered Southern Resident killer whales. Historically the land was a complex mosaic of brackish wetlands, which helped support the wildlife upon which local tribes depended. The land was diked in the late 1800s and farmed since then. The Tribe will demolish eight buildings, utilities, and other farm development. The Tribe also will move a dike and excavate tidal and tributary channels to bring the tides back to the wetlands. Completing this project has the potential to bring the restored area of the Stillaguamish delta to more than 700 acres. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1068)

Tulalip Tribes Improving the Bernie Gobin Hatchery

Grant Awarded: \$555,914

The Tulalip Tribes will use this grant to improve salmon production at its Bernie Gobin Hatchery with the goal of raising 2 million more Skykomish River Chinook salmon, a favorite food of the hungry Southern Resident killer whales. The Tribe also is testing experimental rearing and release of hatchery-raised fish groups to reduce negative interactions with wild salmon. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1770)

Tulalip Tribes Planning Removal of the Holy Cross Levee

Grant Awarded: \$1,400,000

The Tulalip Tribes will use this grant to complete assessment, designs, outreach, and permits for a project to remove up to 1,000 feet of a levee along the middle Pilchuck River on land near the Holy Cross Catholic Church. The levee impedes natural river processes and salmon access to critical off-channel habitat. The Tribes' design also will include habitat enhancements, such as installation of large woody materials, such as logs and tree root wads, to facilitate natural side-channel formation. Adding logs to a river creates places for fish to rest, feed, and hide from predators. It also slows the river, which reduces erosion and allows small rocks to settle to the riverbed, creating areas for salmon to spawn. Finally, logs change the flow of the river, creating riffles and pools, which give salmon more varied habitat. The work will encourage natural river processes such as channel migration and side channel formation to increase critical spawning and rearing habitat for virtually all salmon species. The river is used by Chinook salmon (a preferred food of the endangered Southern Resident killer whale) and steelhead trout, both of which are species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, by coho salmon, which is a federal species of concern, and by chum and pink salmon.

Walla Walla County

Tri-State Steelheaders, Inc. Creating Fish Passage in Mill Creek

Grant Awarded: \$15,110,304

The Tri-State Steelheaders will use this grant to continue their effort to restore fish passage to Mill Creek in Walla Walla. To control flooding, levees have been built along 4 miles of the creek with regularly spaced, energy-dissipating weirs and the creek has been placed in a concrete-lined channel for 2 miles. In the concrete channel, the water is too shallow in the summer and moves too quickly in the winter for some salmon. In the levee section, many fish die when they become trapped in the too-shallow water. The Tri-State Steelheaders will build passage structures in three segments of the concrete channel totaling more than a half-mile long, and a portion of the weir section. The creek is used by steelhead and bull trout, both of which are

species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act, and by reintroduced spring Chinook salmon. The Tri-State Steelheaders will contribute \$206,000 in a grant from the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1802)

Whatcom County

Lummi Nation

Grant Awarded: \$2,065,844

Restoring the Porter Creek Reach of the Middle Fork Nooksack River

The Lummi Nation will use this grant to restore the Middle Fork Nooksack River and its side channels, north of Mosquito Lake Road in Whatcom County. The goal is to increase cold-water areas, stabilize the riverbanks, and increase habitat diversity. The Tribe will build 27 logjams and 4 flood fence post arrays, excavate 1,040 feet of side channels, and plant 2.5 acres along the river and its tributary. Logjams and post arrays will deflect high-flow energy away from critical spawning and rearing habitat and improve channel stability. Logjams also create places for fish to rest, feed, and hide from predators. They slow the water, which reduces erosion and allows small rocks to settle to the riverbed, creating areas for salmon to spawn. Finally, they change the flow of the river, creating riffles and pools, which give salmon more varied habitat. Planting trees and bushes along a river helps shade the water, keeping it cool for fish. The plants also drop branches and leaves into the water, which provide food for the insects that salmon eat. Finally, the roots of the plants help keep soil from entering the water, where it can smother fish spawning gravel. The river is used by Chinook salmon (the preferred food of endangered Southern Resident killer whales) and steelhead and bull trout, all of which are species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, by coho salmon, which is a federal species of concern, and by chum, sockeye, and pink salmon. This project received an additional \$46,900 from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1366)

Nooksack Indian Tribe

Grant Awarded: \$1,150,000

Restoring the South Fork Nooksack River's Homesteader Reach

The Nooksack Indian Tribe will use this grant to build logjams in 0.4 mile of the South Fork Nooksack River at Homesteader Reach, north of Acme in Whatcom County. Adding logjams to a river creates places for fish to rest, feed, and hide from predators. It also slows the river, which reduces erosion and allows small rocks to settle to the riverbed, creating areas for salmon to spawn. Finally, logjams change the flow of the river, creating riffles and pools, which give salmon more varied habitat. In summer 2021, more than 2,500 Chinook salmon died on the spawning grounds before spawning. Scientists believe the deaths were caused by water that was too

warm, low river flows, and degraded habitat. This reach is one of the few remaining high-priority areas in the lower South Fork for which restoration is needed. It is heavily used by Chinook (a favorite food of endangered Southern Resident killer whales) for spawning and rearing; as well as holding for those Chinook returning to the Skookum hatchery and spawning grounds upstream. The project will reduce risk that Chinook will die before they can spawn by creating deep, cold pools. Restoration also will benefit steelhead and bull trout, both of which are species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act; coho, chum, sockeye, and pink salmon; and cutthroat trout. This project received an additional \$4.9 million from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1358)

Yakima County

Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation Grant Award: \$3,609,135 **Moving Toppenish Creek to Increase Habitat**

The Yakama Nation will use this grant to move Toppenish Creek at the Pom Pom Road crossing, near White Swan in the Yakama Reservation. The Tribe will move the creek back to its historic alignment, install a bridge and culverts, and place wood structures in the creek. Culverts are large pipes or other structures that carry streams under roads. The re-alignment will shift the main flow of the creek from a 1.5-mile-long, degraded, canal-like channel to a 1.75-mile-long historic channel that runs through dense forest, is more sinuous, and is well connected to the floodplain. In addition, the realignment will connect the creek to a cold-water area, which salmon need in the summer, and a side channel that provides a place for salmon to rest. The bridge and culverts will improve fish passage and the wood structures will increase habitat. Adding woody materials to the water creates places for fish to rest, feed, and hide from predators. It also slows the water, which reduces erosion and allows small rocks to settle to the bottom to create spawning areas. Finally, it changes the flow of the water, creating riffles and pools, which give salmon more varied habitat. The work will restore critical habitat for steelhead trout, which is a species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, in Toppenish Creek. The Yakama Nation will contribute \$1.3 million. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for [more information and photographs of this project](#). (22-1967)