



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA Renews Partnership with The Nature Conservancy: Works with California Communities to Restore Critical Coastal Habitats

NOAA has teamed up once again with The Nature Conservancy to preserve America's valuable coastal resources. The new three-year partnership will build on past successes protecting coastal and marine habitat, while engaging local communities through volunteer and educational opportunities.

NOAA's Restoration Center has awarded \$800,000 in the first year to fund the restoration of fish and shellfish habitat in 14 innovative projects that stretch from the California shores to the oyster beds of New England and Florida. NOAA has awarded \$156,825 to projects in California. NOAA staff collaborated with The Nature Conservancy during the project selection process and will provide technical expertise and oversight through the life of the partnership.

"America's rich history began with early settlers building their communities on the wealth of marine resources available along our coasts and rivers," said William T. Hogarth, director of NOAA Fisheries Service. "These projects will help rebuild oyster reefs, open rivers for sturgeon and salmon and restore habitat for oysters and other shellfish. They will improve the environment and benefit the economies of local communities."

In California, the following projects were selected to receive partnership support. In addition to the NOAA award, TNC's Global Marine Initiative will provide a match.

Rehabilitating the Freshwater Creek Estuary \$71,825

TNC is working with the Northcoast Regional Land Trust to provide fish passage and significantly restore tidal estuarine habitat around Humboldt Bay. This project will create habitat slough channels and pools and remove an existing tidegate in the confluence of Wood Creek and Freshwater Slough, which will rehabilitate important migratory fish nursing habitat.

Restoring Fish Habitat in the Garcia River Forest \$50,000

This project is designed to improve habitat for juvenile coho salmon through the deepening of rearing pools and placement of woody debris in a section of Inman Creek, within the Garcia River Forest. The site is an excellent candidate for restoration because, despite over 100 years of industrial timber management, the aquatic habitat is still able to support fish and other organisms. TNC and local partners anticipate hands-on training and restoration activities by volunteers from the community and Americorps.

Studying the Synergistic Relationship Between Eelgrass and Oysters in Richardson Bay \$35,000

California Audubon manages a 900-acre preserve in Richardson Bay, and is partnering with TNC to combine native Olympia oyster restoration with seagrass restoration. The study will determine if eelgrass beds help the recruitment of native oysters and if restoration of both eelgrass and oysters can be best done simultaneously. Community involvement in the restoration efforts will increase awareness of the importance of oysters while providing a unique hands-on education experience.

Volunteers will monitor the recruitment of oyster juveniles, measure the physical and chemical properties of the sites, and study waterfowl and fish populations.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is celebrating 200 years of science and service to the nation. From the establishment of the Survey of the Coast in 1807 by Thomas Jefferson to the formation of the Weather Bureau and the Commission of Fish and Fisheries in the 1870s, much of America's scientific heritage is rooted in NOAA.

NOAA is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and information service delivery for transportation, and by providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with its federal partners, more than 70 countries and the European Commission to develop a global monitoring network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to protecting and preserving our nation's living marine resources and their habitat through scientific research, management and enforcement. NOAA Fisheries Service provides effective stewardship of these resources for the benefit of the nation, supporting coastal communities that depend upon them, and helping to provide safe and healthy seafood to consumers and recreational opportunities for the American public. To learn more about NOAA Fisheries Service, please visit: www.nmfs.noaa.gov.

NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program (CRP), a financial and technical assistance program within the NOAA Fisheries Office of Habitat Conservation, promotes strong partnerships at the national, regional and local level to fund grassroots, community-based activities. The NOAA-funded projects provide strong on-the-ground habitat restoration components that offer educational and social benefits for people and their communities in addition to long-term ecological benefits for fishery resources. More information about CRP can be found at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration>.

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