

FEDERAL AID IN SPORT FISH RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

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Description of Grant Program:

The Sport Fish Restoration Grant Program was authorized by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950 to support projects designed to restore and manage sport fish populations for the preservation and improvement of sport fishing and related uses of these fisheries resources. Revenues for the Program are derived from manufacturers' excise taxes on recreational fishing equipment, motorboat fuels, import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats, and flasher-type sonar finders, with the revenue earmarked for the states and territories solely for projects that would enhance sport fishing restoration.

Applicant Eligibility

Participation in the Sport Fish Restoration Grant Program is limited to State and Territory fish and wildlife agencies. These agencies must have passed laws for the conservation of fish which include a prohibition against a diversion of license fees paid by fishermen for purposes other than the administration of the fish and wildlife agency. The eligible territories are Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, the Northern Mariana Islands and the District of Columbia.

Eligible Purposes

Eligible activities include improvement of aquatic habitats for certain warm water sport fish species; land acquisition, construction, operation and maintenance of fishing areas for the public including construction of headquarters and research facilities, long-range fisheries research; fish population management; and surveys and inventories to meet fish management needs. Other eligible activities are boating access and aquatic education (see grant program descriptions for these two programs).

Ineligible Activities

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act prohibits using federal funds for certain purposes including:

- Public relations activities that promote organizations or agencies and that do not apply to educational or technical activities specifically related to accomplishment of Federal Assistance grants or programs.
- Activities whose purpose is producing revenue
- Providing services or property of material value to individuals or groups for commercial purposes or to benefit such individuals or groups
- Enforcement of game and fish laws and regulations.
- Establishment, publication and dissemination of regulations that a State issues pertaining to the protection and utilization of fish and wildlife resources.
- Furnishing public facilities, equipment or services in excess of the minimum requirement to meet grant purposes or health and safety standards
- Wildlife damage management activities

Determination of Project Eligibility:

If the applicant is unsure about the eligibility of the project, the Federal Assistance Office should be consulted. Projects must be submitted by the State/Territory agency having responsibility for management of the fishery resources. The agency selects those projects that are submitted for funding under the program. Projects are approved and awarded funding if they meet the basic criteria contained in the Federal Assistance regulations and guidelines.

Fundable projects:

Some of the more common sport fish restored and managed through projects funded by the Sport Fish Restoration Act include red drum, walleye, white sturgeon, bluegill, black rockfish, largemouth bass, spotted sea trout, northern halibut, coho salmon, black crappie, channel catfish, bluefish, lake trout, striped bass, muskellunge, and rainbow trout.

Grant Schedules/Cycles:

Apportioned funds are available for obligation for a period of 2 years. Projects are renewed on an annual basis through the approval of a grant agreement.

Grants Management

While underway and after a project is completed, the Service verifies its satisfactory progress and completion with communication with the grantee and with site visits. Performance and financial reports are required for each annual segment. The complete grant program and financial record is maintained under the Service's Federal Assistance

Information Management System. Cost and program records are maintained separately for each grant project.

Matching requirements

States are reimbursed up to 75 percent of the total project cost.

Supplemental Information

Information about the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program may be found at www.fws.gov. Click on “grants”.