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Commerce Secretary Gary Locke Announces \$167 Million in Recovery Act Funding for 50 Coastal Restoration Projects

Commerce Secretary Gary Locke announced today 50 habitat restoration projects that will restore damaged wetlands, shellfish beds, coral reefs and reopen fish passages that boost the health and resiliency of our nation's coastal and Great Lakes communities. Under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Department's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was provided \$167 million for marine and coastal habitat restoration.

"These Recovery Act projects will put Americans to work while restoring our coasts and combating climate change," Locke said. "They reflect our investment in sound science and commitment to help strengthen local economies."

Healthy coastal habitats are critical to the recovery and sustainability of the U.S. economy. Coastal areas generate more than 28 million jobs in the United States. Commercial and recreational fishing employs 1.5 million people and contributes \$111 billion to the nation's economy.

"NOAA is investing in green jobs for Americans to restore habitat for valuable fish and wildlife and strengthen coastal communities, making them more resilient to storms, sea-level rise and other effects of climate change," Commerce under secretary of oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator Jane Lubchenco said. "In addition to the immediate jobs created by the projects, stronger and healthier coastal communities will boost our nation's long-term economic health."

A significant number of these coastal and Great Lakes restoration projects—in 22 states and two territories – are in areas with some of the highest unemployment rates, including the states of California, Oregon, and Michigan. The projects will employ Americans with a range of skills including laborers, nursery workers, design engineers, restoration ecologists, landscape architects, hydrologists and specialized botanists.

In addition to direct jobs, the projects are estimated to create indirect jobs in industries that supply materials and administrative, clerical, and managerial services.

When complete, the projects will have restored more than 8,900 acres of habitat and removed obsolete and unsafe dams that open more than 700 stream miles where fish migrate and spawn. The projects will also remove more than 850 metric tons of debris, rebuild oyster and other shellfish habitat and reduce threats to 11,750 acres of coral reefs.

The 50 projects were chosen from a pool of 814 proposals totaling more than \$3 billion in requests. The agency worked through a rigorous selection process to identify and prioritize projects meeting the Recovery Act's criteria.

More than 200 technical reviewers from across NOAA worked in groups to review all the applications and the top 109 were chosen for panel review. Proposals were ranked by overall quality and with consideration given to program priority areas and geography. The determining criteria were that projects meet NOAA's highest priority mission needs for ecological restoration, be "shovel ready" and generate the largest number of jobs in the shortest period of time, and create lasting value for the American public.

For further information on funded projects nationwide, go to the NOAA Recovery Act website at <http://www.noaa.gov/recovery>. The public will be able to follow the progress of each

project on the recovery web site, which will include an interactive online map that enables the public to track where and how NOAA recovery funds are spent.

The 50 projects that will receive funding are:

Northeast

- **Tingue Dam Bypass and Naugatuck River Restoration (Seymour, Conn.)** – \$2.5 million – Constructs a bypass around the Tingue Dam and restores 32 miles of historic migratory fish passage for American shad, river herring, sea-run brown trout and the American eel on the Naugatuck River.
- **New Haven and East Lyme Marsh Restoration (New Haven, Conn.)** – \$1.5 million – Remedies three dysfunctional tide gates and restores 108 acres of tidal marsh and open habitat on the West River and Bride Brook lake.
- **Patapsco River Restoration (Baltimore, Md.)** – \$4 million – Removes the Union and Simkins dams on the Patapsco River, opening 8 river miles for alewife, blueback herring, and American eel. This project is part of a much larger coastal conservation initiative to restore more than 30 miles in the Patapsco River Watershed for diadromous and resident fish species.
- **Piscataway Park Living Shoreline Restoration (Accokeek, Md.)** – \$1 million – Restores 2 acres as “living shorelines” along the Potomac River, providing fish habitat and erosion protection, as well as protection for 30 acres of freshwater wetland and a threatened Native American archeological site.
- **Great Works Dam Removal (Great Works, Maine)** – \$6.1 million – Removes the Great Works Dam, which is part of a greater initiative to eventually restore and open more than 1,000 miles of river for endangered Atlantic salmon and other fish species.
- **Maine Atlantic Salmon Habitat Restoration (Washington County, Maine)** – \$1.7 million – Removes fish passage barriers throughout the Machias River watershed, opening 66 miles of habitat for endangered Atlantic salmon and other migratory fish species.
- **Stony Brook Salt Marsh and Fish Passage Restoration (Brewster, Mass.)** – \$1.3 million – Replaces undersized culverts and improves fish passage to 20 acres of ponds that provide habitat for herring and American eel, as well as protect the local community from storm surge and flooding.
- **Winnicut River Fish Passage Restoration (Greenland, N.H.)** – \$500,000 – Removes the Winnicut Dam and installs a fish passage structure under an upstream bridge, restoring passage to more than 39 miles of habitat for migratory fish.
- **Lincoln Park Wetland Restoration (Jersey City, N.J.)** – \$10.5 million – Restores 30 acres of a larger 80-acre coastal wetland in the urban industrialized area of the Hackensack River basin.
- **Rhode Island River Ecosystem Restoration (Providence, R.I.)** – \$3 million – Opens fish passage at six high-priority places throughout Rhode Island, including four fish and eel ladders and two dam removals.
- **Virginia Seaside Bays Restoration (Hog Island, Va.)** – \$2 million – Restores 124 acres of native oysters and seagrass, and re-introduces two million juvenile bay scallops from the Chincoteague inlet to the Chesapeake Bay.

Southeast

- **Coastal Alabama Restoration (Bayou la Batre, Ala.)** – \$2.9 million – Rebuilds oyster reef and natural breakwater structures along 1.5 miles of shoreline. 19 acres of property will be protected by this project.
- **Lost River Preserve Restoration (St. Petersburg, Fla.)** – \$750,000 – Creates Rebuilds 43 acres of estuarine, freshwater wetlands and restore native vegetation, also reconnecting to the Cockroach Bay Preserve.
- **Northeast Florida Wetland Restoration (Merritt Island/Cape Canaveral, Fla.)** – \$2.7 million –Removes hydrological barriers and restores 1,002 acres of intertidal coastal wetlands, salt marsh and mangrove stands, which serve as nursery habitat for a number of commercially and recreationally important fish.
- **Indian River Lagoon Restoration (Port St. Lucie, Fla.)** – \$4 million – Surveys and enhances oyster reefs in the nationally significant Indian River Lagoon.
- **Grande Isle Shoreline Restoration (Grande Isle, La.)** – \$4 million – Bio-engineers 5 acres of living shoreline along the Louisiana coastline, resulting in the restoration and protection of 300 acres of vulnerable marsh habitat.
- **Mississippi River Tidal Marsh Restoration (Myrtle Grove, La.)** – \$3 million – Hydraulically dredges sediment from the Mississippi River to create 50 acres of intertidal marsh to support recreationally and commercially important fisheries as well as help to reduce storm surge and flooding.
- **Coastal Carolina Restoration (Cape Hatteras, N.C.)** – \$5 million – Rebuilds 49 acres of oyster reefs across coastal North Carolina, restoring the productivity of naturally occurring oysters in nearby estuaries.
- **City of Charleston Shoreline Restoration (Charleston, S.C.)** – \$750,000 – Creates or restores Charleston area estuarine marshes including nearly 200 acres of degraded salt march by stabilizing shorelines and increasing tidal exchange.
- **West Galveston Bay Estuary Restoration (Galveston, Texas)** – \$5.1 million – Restores 329 acres of intertidal wetlands in Galveston Bay, which serve as a nursery for recreational and commercial fish species in the Gulf of Mexico.
- **USVI Watershed Stabilization (St. John/St. Croix, V.I.)** – \$2.7 million Reduces sediment runoff through road stabilization, native plantings, beach access restrictions and monitoring on St. Croix and St. John.
- **Threatened Coral Recovery and Restoration (Fla. and V.I.)** – \$3.3 million – Recovers one acre of coral reefs in eight distinct areas of the Caribbean by growing coral in seafloor nurseries and transplanting them to depleted reef sites, tripling their natural recovery rate.

Great Lakes

- **Milwaukee River and Watershed Restoration (Port Washington, Wisc.)** – \$4.7 million – Removes a number of fish passage barriers and a dam, enhance watershed habitat and reconnect 158 stream miles to Lake Michigan.

- **Dunes Creek Watershed Restoration (Hammond, Ind.)** – \$1.4 million – Restores and reconnects Lake Michigan to nearly six miles of stream spawning habitat for migratory fish.
- **Muskegon Lake Restoration (Muskegon, Mich.)** – \$10 million – Restores 24 acres of wetland and stabilizes shoreline at 10 separate locations for this Great Lakes Area of Concern.

Northwest

- **Southeast Alaska Salmon Habitat Restoration** – \$992,000 – Remedies a barrier on the Klawock River, restoring passage for migrating juvenile salmon to 460 acres of estuarine eelgrass habitat.
- **Eyak Lake Restoration (Cordova, Alaska)** – \$973,900 – Opens 1.5 miles of upstream river habitat, as well as restore 2,400 acres of Eyak Lake salmon spawning, rearing and wintering habitat. This also includes restoring 20 percent of the lake's fresh water circulation.
- **Kenai Peninsula Salmon Habitat Restoration (Moose Pass, Alaska)** – \$1.5 million – Restores 10.7 miles of river and 11.4 acres of a manmade channel into a natural stream to benefit Chinook, coho, pink and sockeye salmon.
- **Alaska Marine Debris Removal and Restoration** – \$1 million – Conducts a statewide coastal marine debris removal of a total of 466 metric tons at multiple locations throughout rural coastal Alaska. A large derelict vessel removal will be implemented through this award.
- **Gold Ray Dam Removal (Medford, Ore.)** – \$5 million – Removes the Gold Ray Dam and opens more than 333 miles of the Rogue River to steelhead, Chinook and endangered coho salmon.
- **Delta Ponds Restoration (Eugene, Ore.)** – \$1.6 million – Restores and enhances 21 acres and two miles of the Willamette River riparian and wetland habitat by removing invasive plants and constructing channels between seven ponds, providing access to important refuge habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon.
- **Oregon Fishing Industry Restoration Partnership (Seal Rock, Ore.)** – \$699,000 – Employs crab fisherman to help remove derelict Dungeness crab pots and other fishing gear for a total of 180 metric tons of marine debris removal.
- **Elwha River Floodplain Restoration (Port Angeles, Wash.)** – \$2 million – In conjunction with the Elwha Dam removal, this project restores 82 acres of the floodplain of the lower Elwha River through the removal of dikes and culverts, re-vegetation and invasive species control.
- **Removal of Derelict Fishing Gear in Puget Sound (Seattle, Wash.)** – \$4.5 million – Removes over 200 metric tons of marine debris, including over 3,000 net removals, and restore 600 acres of habitat.
- **Smuggler's Slough Nooksack River Restoration (Bellingham, Wash.)** – \$1.7 million – Raises a roadway and reconnects tidal exchange for 493 acres of Smuggler's Slough channel that will flow to restored salt marsh and eelgrass habitat in Lummi Bay. Seven miles of slough habitat will also be opened as a result of this project.

- **Qwuloolt Estuary Restoration (Marysville, Wash.)** – \$2 million – Restores 350 acres of wetland and 16 stream miles to fish passage for several species of salmon on the lower Snohomish River and its surrounding tidal floodplain by removing levees, excavating channels and planting native vegetation and trees.
- **Fisher Slough Marsh Restoration (Burlington, Wash.)** – \$5.2 million – Restores 60 acres of the Skagit River floodplain by replacing antiquated agriculture floodgates and restoring 15 miles of high quality habitat for chum, coho, threatened Chinook salmon and other important species.
- **Hansen Creek Floodplain Restoration (Milltown, Wash.)** – \$988,000 – Excavates and reconnects 140 acres of forested floodplain habitat and install woody debris for chum, coho, threatened Chinook salmon, and other important species.

Southwest

- **South San Diego Bay Restoration (San Diego, Calif.)** – \$2.9 million – Restores tidal circulation to former salt ponds, restore 120 acres of intertidal wetlands, as well as remove non-native vegetation and replace it with native estuarine plants.
- **California Coastal Fisheries Restoration Partnership** – \$1.5 million – Employs California Conservation Corps members to complete more than 20 identified coastal restoration activities that benefit threatened and endangered salmon throughout coastal California.
- **Elkhorn Slough Restoration (Watsonville, Calif.)** – \$3.9 million – Restores tidal flow, reduce erosion and create long-term protection and erosion control for more than seven acres of wetland directly and 450 acres overall. This project also prevents seawater intrusion into the coastal aquifer, which supports more than \$100 million annually in agricultural production.
- **San Francisco South Salt Pond Restoration (San Francisco, Calif.)** – \$7.6 million – Opens and restores more than 1,990 acres of three former salt ponds to tidal flow, as well as reinitiating the removal of *Spartina alterniflora*, an invasive wetland plant on the U.S. West Coast.
- **American Canyon Salt Pond Restoration (San Francisco, Calif.)** – \$8.5 million – Restores wetlands and re-create tidal flow to improve 1,135 acres of habitat for threatened Chinook salmon, steelhead trout and green sturgeon by removing levees around former salt ponds.
- **Salmon Creek Restoration (Bodega, Calif.)** – \$1.5 million – Restores four acres of a streamside corridor and in-stream habitat for endangered coho salmon and threatened steelhead trout by installing rain catchment tanks to improve instream flow, planting native vegetation and implementing other stream-related restoration activities to benefit fisheries resources.
- **Lower Klamath Riparian Restoration and Tribal Plant Nursery (Bodega, Calif.)** – \$527,000– Restores nine acres of in-stream and streamside river habitat of the lower Klamath River to benefit threatened coho salmon as well as Chinook salmon and steelhead trout.
- **Big Springs Shasta River Restoration (Big Springs, Calif.)** – \$1.6 million – Restores habitat for chinook, steelhead and threatened coho salmon by planting 20 acres of native vegetation and incorporating new agriculture conservation measures to enhance water quality, including a fence to exclude cattle from 70 acres of the riparian habitat.

- **Magnolia Marsh Restoration (Huntington Beach, Calif.)** – \$3.3 million – Restores more than 41 acres of an urban tidal marsh by expanding rearing habitat for many species of marine and coastal fish.

Pacific Islands

- **Maunalua Bay Reef Restoration (Maunalua Bay, Hawaii)** – \$3.4 million – Restores 23 acres of coral reefs through manual removal of invasive algae.
- **Laolao Bay Coastal Restoration (LaoLao Beach/Saipan, CNMI)** – \$2.9 million – In coordination with the grantee, NOAA will directly invest Recovery Act funds to restore Saipan's coral reefs by removing and addressing sources of upland sediment. This will include restoring 15 acres of upland habitat , road upgrades, drainage improvements and elimination of unsustainable beach activities.
- **Pelekane Bay Watershed Restoration (Pelekane Bay, Hawaii)** – \$2.7 million – Restores more than 1,463 acres of coastal and marine habitat by reducing sediment and runoff impacts to coral reefs through erosion control and replanting native upland vegetation.