

Restoration Resources for Projects on Private Land

We frequently get questions from the general public on sources of funding and other resources available for restoration projects performed on private land. Here is a summary of some of the opportunities and resources out there. Most programs require landowners to match or exceed the financial resources provided by the funding organization and are voluntary (do not apply to mitigation or regulated projects). Contact specific programs directly for more information.

Federal programs

The US Fish and Wildlife Service administers several funding programs for endangered wildlife species habitat on private land, including the Recovery Program, Puget Sound Coastal Program, Private Stewardship Program, Partners for Fish and Wildlife and the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The Natural Resources Conservation Service offers help mainly for agricultural lands, including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the Conservation Reserve Program and the Wetlands Reserve Program. NRCS offers both financial and technical assistance. Some programs involve conservation easements and others simply offset the cost of a restoration project. The US Forest Service offers a Forest Land Enhancement Program for actively managed forestlands (landowners must complete a management plan for the area).

State programs

The Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) provides grants for projects that improve salmon habitat. Projects must be maintained in perpetuity according to the project goals outlined in the original grant proposal, and all grant proposals are prioritized and coordinated by lead entity organizations and regional recovery organizations. The SRFB is administered by the Recreation Conservation Office. Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife manages the Landowner Incentive Program to restore habitat of at risk species—landowners must provide at least a 25% cash and/or in-kind contribution to the project. Washington Department of Natural Resources offers many financial assistance programs for small, private forests including the Family Forest Fish Passage Program, the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and the Forest Land Enhancement Program, among others.

Conservation district programs

The focus of county conservation districts is to foster environmental stewardship by providing resources to private landowners that reside in their particular county. Services offered vary by district but may include planting plans and other planning services, soil testing, invasive plant management resources, equipment rental and plant sales. Services can apply to mitigation projects in some instances. Plant sales typically happen once per year in late winter, allowing people to purchase small quantities of bareroot plants that are otherwise available only in large quantities from growers.

Other organizations

Various organizations offer a range of assistance for restoration projects: technical advice at the planning stage, general labor for site preparation and installation, and/or providing plants and other materials. The Nature Conservancy, People for Puget Sound and local land trusts and other groups can help you establish and restore conservation easements. The Hood Canal Coordinating Council manages the Community Nearshore Restoration Program and the Marine Riparian Initiative, which provide private landowners with stewardship training, technical assistance and plant material in exchange for extending what they have learned to the greater community through workshops, meetings and other events. WSU Extension local offices offer a range of services and programs that can help homeowners with restoration resources, and they are often co-located with NRCS or conservation district offices to offer a team approach.

Grant proposal assistance and other resources

Navigating the dizzying array of proposal requirements can be a trying process. The Center for Invasive Plant Management maintains a list of sites (www.weedcenter.org/grants/rfp.html) that offer help with the grant writing process. Information includes general guidelines, check lists and common reasons proposals are rejected. Visit the 'Restoration resources for private landowners' section of the Links page (www.soundnativeplants.com/links.htm) on our website for links to the programs listed here.