

December 11, 2025

Chehalis River Basin Group Seeks Salmon Habitat Restoration Project Ideas

If you are looking for funding for a project that restores or conserves streams and rivers in the Chehalis River Basin, a Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant may be able to help.

The Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat is a local organization that supports salmon habitat restoration through directing funding from the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Board to on-the-ground projects every year. The group is looking for new project ideas to restore or protect salmon habitat in the rivers that flow in the Chehalis River and Grays Harbor.

Successful project proposals will receive funding through the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Board. The minimum request is \$5,000. There is no maximum, but the total amount available for all projects in the river basin is about \$1 million.

Typical Projects

Typical projects include the following:

- Planting native trees and shrubs along stream banks
- Replacing undersized and poorly constructed culverts (pipes and other structures carrying water under roads) that impede salmon passage
- Reconnecting side channels with a creek main stem
- Anchoring tree trunks and their roots in creeks to provide shelter and create pools for fish
- Removing invasive plant species like knotweed from stream banks
- Buying land containing pristine salmon habitat or that could benefit from restoration

Who Can Apply?

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, conservation districts, tribes, nonprofits, regional fisheries enhancement groups, special purpose districts such as public utility and Irrigation districts, and state agencies with local partners. Private landowners may apply for a project on their land; however, the Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat encourages them to work with a qualifying organization due to the complexity of the application process.

Other Considerations

Projects may be fully funded by a grant, but applicants are encouraged to provide their own resources (such as labor, materials, equipment use, or cash) to show local commitment in addition to the state investment. Additional funding sources are available to complete these projects. The Collaborative invites proposals for high priority projects that address salmon habitat needs, regardless of cost.

How to Apply

Contact the Watershed Coordinator, Kirsten Harma (360-488-3232 or kharma@chehalistribe.org) to discuss the project idea. Then submit a project form to the Chehalis Basin Collaborative for

Salmon Habitat by February 10, 2026. To learn more about how to apply and to download application materials, visit the Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat website, www.chehalisleadentity.org, (see “For Grant Applicants”).

Why Recover Salmon?

“Recovering salmon is important because Washingtonians rely on healthy populations of salmon to support a robust economy, feed iconic orcas, enrich a cultural heritage and way of life, and fulfill obligations to Tribes” (2024 State of Salmon: <https://stateofsalmon.wa.gov/>)

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The Chehalis Basin Collaborative for Salmon Habitat is a community group dedicated to healthy, thriving salmon populations in the Chehalis River basin. Learn more on our website: www.chehalisleadentity.org.

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Photos:

Celebrating improving fish passage through replacing an undersized culvert with a bridge -- with “Happy Fish” in December, 2023 with many of the individuals who helped make it happen. Project site: Middle Fork Wildcat Creek. Grays Harbor County. Project sponsor: Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force (file name: Happy_Fish_CBFTF_Wildcat_12_01_2023a)

Van Ornum Creek at Bunker Creek Road Fish Passage Construction. Planting after barrier culvert replacement downstream. Project sponsor: Lewis County Public Works, photo submitted (file name: Van_Ornum_Planting.heic)

Newly planted douglas fir tree on the banks of the West Fork Satsop River. Project by Grays Harbor Conservation District. Grays Harbor County (file:25-1115_WF Satsop Riparian_G2A9816.jpg)

Fish passage barrier correction and side channel creation on Camp Creek, Grays Harbor County. Project sponsor: Chehalis Basin Fisheries Task Force. photo by Kirsten Harma (file name: Camp_Creek_Schafer_boom_complete_111825)

Native plants installed along a newly realigned creek channel: Berwick Creek at Logan Hill Road, Lewis County. Project sponsor: Lewis County Public Works, (file name: Berwick_at_Logan_channel_sm_012825.jpg)