

# Investing in Salmon Habitat



Salmon runs continue to dwindle throughout the state, down to about 10% of historical levels across the Columbia Basin, throughout southwest Washington, and around the Puget Sound region.

Fortunately, experts know what it takes to protect and improve habitat for salmon: preserving streamside vegetation to keep water cool, decreasing stormwater and sewage pollution, removing or avoiding fish passage barriers like dams and culverts, and maintaining healthy nearshore and estuarine areas.

Every year, lack of funding stalls most locally-vetted, and regionally-prioritized, salmon recovery projects. For the past several budget cycles, only 15 percent of the need has been funded. **Now is the time to right-size salmon investments for the future.**

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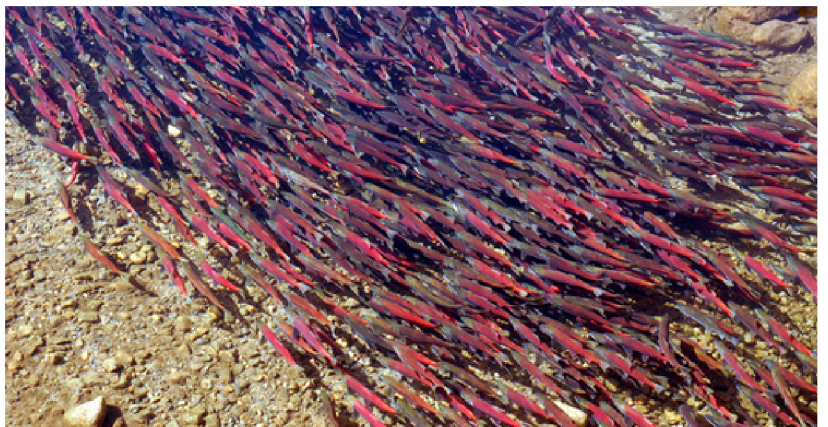
## 2023 Session Goal

**Adopt Capital, Operating, and Transportation state budgets that substantially increase salmon habitat investments.**

The Invest in Salmon Habitat campaign advocates for significantly increased investments in programs that protect and restore salmon habitat in the freshwaters and marine waters of Washington. During the 2023 legislative session, we are calling on the legislature to **right-size habitat funding to protect and restore abundant salmon for future generations.**

The budgets must:

- Substantially increase funds for proven programs that have a high degree of transparency and accountability
- Increase investments in habitat protection and restoration and pollution reduction
- Reduce the backlog of projects that salmon runs desperately need for survival



## Funding needed for backlog of projects that protect and restore habitat

**Twenty years and twenty grants** – that’s how salmon experts characterize what it takes to fully fund salmon protection and recovery projects. **Every salmon recovery region in the state has a backlog of projects identified and vetted to ensure that future generations have access to salmon.** For too many years, salmon experts have designed these projects that would protect and restore habitat throughout the state only to find that their projects do not make the cut for funding because other geographic areas are prioritized higher than them. To propose these projects takes collaboration and local vetting as well as regional prioritization. **Every project is locally relevant** because different communities depend on different runs of salmon across the state. Removing fish passage barriers is the fastest way to increasing healthy spawning and rearing habitat for salmon.

## Clean water is good for salmon – and people as well

Stormwater remains the largest source of toxic chemicals, and sewage delivers nutrients as well as toxic chemicals to waters throughout Washington. As with habitat projects, pollution experts have identified specific management practices that reduce pollution exposure and eliminate the toxicity of tire dust to salmon, steelhead, and trout. At the current pace, it will take over 50 years just to address current toxic stormwater sources. That’s why the legislature must increase funding for proven programs to jump start a new commitment to reducing pollution – **to benefit people, salmon, and other wildlife.**

## Future generations deserve access to salmon

Salmon have been a cornerstone of Washington’s ecosystems and culture for thousands of years. The future of our state’s salmon population stands at a crossroads today. By stepping up funding in these areas, the legislature can help address the salmon emergency:

### **Capital Budget**

#### Voluntary Protection and Restoration Programs

- Salmon Recovery Funding Board \$115m (RCO)
- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program \$53m (PSP)
- Floodplains by Design \$70m (ECY)
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program \$25,492,200 (RCO)
- Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative \$17,563,000 (RCO)
- Duckabush River nearshore \$71m (DFW)

#### Clean Water

- Stormwater Financial Assistance Program \$100m (ECY)
- State stormwater retrofits \$20m (WSDOT)

#### Riparian Areas

- Riparian protection and restoration grant programs additive to existing program \$100m (multiple agencies)
- Forest Riparian Easement Program \$10m (DNR)

#### Fish Passage Barriers

- Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board \$48,146,000 (DFW)
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program \$10,870,000 (RCO)

### **Operating Budget**

- 6PPD tire dust action plan and BMPs \$7,897,000 (ECY) and \$4,186,000 (DFW)
- Riparian round table \$480k (OFM)
- Statewide riparian coordinator \$398k (RCO)
- Riparian mapping \$1,994,000 (DFW) and \$354k (ECY)
- Snake River electrical generation and transmission \$5m (COM), barge transportation \$5m (WSDOT), irrigation study \$500k (ECY)

