

Summary of Wetland Program Development Grants Awarded by EPA Region 10 for Fiscal Year 2017-2018

EPA has awarded funding for 14 projects across the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. Healthy wetlands perform important ecological functions, such as feeding downstream waters, trapping floodwaters, recharging groundwater supplies, removing pollution, and providing habitat for fish and wildlife.

Alaska

Sitka Tribe of Alaska – *Sitka Tribe of Alaska Wetlands Program Plan Development*

The Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) plans to develop a Tribal Wetland Program Plan. STA includes 4,520 Tribal citizens and encompasses approximately 6,500 square miles, including the western coast of Baranof Island, the southern half of western Chichagof Island, and many smaller islands. The territory extends into Peril Strait, which separates Baranof and Chichagof Islands. Wetlands in the area are both tidal and non-tidal and are relatively intact. STA currently has no coordinated strategy or plan to manage wetlands. The main tasks planned are to focus on monitoring and assessment and voluntary restoration and protection of wetlands. Activities will be conducted in planning, capacity building, partnership building and validation. The information collected from the activities will provide STA with the knowledge and capacity to supply Tribal Council and Tribal Citizens with the data needed to make informed decisions about advocacy, conservation and management of wetlands.

Alaska Center for Conservation Science – *University of Alaska, Anchorage*

The Matanuska-Susitna Borough currently supports 14% of the state's population and is the fastest growing area of Alaska. Construction of new homes in the borough accounted for over a third of the new housing built in 2015 statewide. Growing population, related infrastructure improvements and climate-related changes have a cumulative impact on the wetland resources of the Matanuska-Susitna basin. The ACCS proposes to update wetland maps for 9 watersheds in the Matanuska-Susitna basin. These updated maps will be digital and will provide better landscape information as well as identify potential wetland functions. The availability of this tool will help support decisions on permits as well as conservation for the fast-developing region of southcentral Alaska.

Alaska Department of Natural Resources – *Alaska Wetland Collaborative*

Approximately 65% of America's wetlands are in Alaska. Yet the National Wetland Inventory has map coverage of only about 36% of the state's wetlands. Alaska does not have a standardized way to map wetlands, assess wetlands, or track changes to wetlands. ADNR's primary objective is to advance the overall state of knowledge about wetlands in Alaska through improved collaboration. An Alaska Wetland Collaborative (AWC) will be created to provide information sharing between multiple entities working on wetland issues. ADNR will invite other state and federal agencies, local governments, Tribal organizations, university researchers and non-governmental organizations to participate in the AWC. The proposal includes creating a Wetlands Project Inventory and AWC website, identifying data gaps and priorities, and hosting an annual wetland symposium.

Idaho

Nez Perce Tribe – *Wetland Program Plan Development and Adapting a Functional Assessment Tool for Regional and Tribal Use*

The 770,470 acre Nez Perce Reservation is in the Columbia-Snake River Plateau east of Lewiston, Idaho. Even though the land is mostly semi-arid, over 250 wetlands are found on the reservation in the headwaters and riparian zones of streams and rivers and in depressions in farmland. Most wetlands on the Reservation are degraded to some degree. The Nez Perce plans to replace the Nez Perce Tribe's existing wetland program plan. They also plan to carry out monitoring and Assessment actions from the Core Element Framework and refine an existing functional assessment tool to include cultural values and tailor it to the Tribe's wetlands.

Coeur d'Alene Tribe – *Coeur d'Alene Tribe Wetland Program Development: Assessment and Conservation Planning*

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe plans to support the development of their wetland program over a 2-year period. The Tribe plans to conduct Intra-Tribal Wetland Workgroup meetings for coordination and collaboration; Inventory and assess a subset of Coeur d'Alene Reservation wetlands; Identify and potentially enroll Coeur d'Alene Reservation lands eligible for wetlands conservation programs; and Develop a wetlands outreach plan for the Reservation.

Oregon

Oregon Department of State Lands – *Design of a Monitoring Framework and Training for Oregon's Aquatic Resource Mitigation Program*

Oregon Department of State Lands (DSL) will begin implementing changes to the state's compensatory mitigation program in the fall of 2018. DSL developed the changes over the last several years with project partners (EPA and Corps) to better achieve no net loss goals for the functions and values provided by all waters of the state. With these funds they plan to develop a monitoring framework to evaluate mitigation program effectiveness and implement the Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program (ARMP) training plan. The monitoring framework will build on protocols currently being developed for streams and add the companion protocol for wetlands, will test protocols for streams and wetlands, and will evaluate baseline performance of the existing program. The ARMP training plan focuses on developing materials and providing training on new tools and guidance in preparation for ARMP implementation.

Oregon Department of State Lands – *Assessment and Planning Tools: Oregon Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program*

Oregon is in the final stages of developing a functions-based watershed scale approach for managing and regulating wetlands and streams. This grant will address the need to update, modify and maintain three map viewer tools and a mitigation portal that the new Aquatic Resources Mitigation Program will use. The main objectives of the project are to upgrade the Oregon Rapid Assessment Protocol's Map Viewer, develop a statewide Local Wetland Inventory geospatial data layer, and address the needed updates to the Stream Functional Assessment Method Map Viewer, the Mitigation Planning Map Viewer, and the Mitigation Portal hosted on the Oregon Explorer website.

Lane County Council of Governments – *Wetland Planning Tools for Local Resource Managers*

This project will refine and expand existing tools and make them available to local planners for planning and managing wetland resources. It will also help integrate information about increased flooding and water quality to help with local resiliency planning. Products proposed include GIS-compatible local planning tools and outputs, improved web-based mapping applications and local planning calculator upgrades, and improved wetland planning online resources. The project will also create a rural wetland assessment pilot study report and guide for resource management at the county and watershed scale, and fact sheets on available tools with instructions and trainings their application.

Washington

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation – *Wetland Program Plan Development*

Project activities and goals were developed from information gathered during previous WPDG grants and prioritized to address specific wetland issues. The Colville Tribes plans to implement a variety of activities identified in their wetland program plan including monitoring and assessment work, identifying priority parameters for future monitoring, identifying “wetlands of exceptional value”, tracking restoration opportunities, and providing outreach events. Educational outreach via in-school programming will assist in increasing wetland knowledge among youth and families. Additional outreach with communities on the four Districts of the Reservation will assist in building a strong wetlands protection ethic.

Washington Department of Natural Resources – *Measuring Land Use Impacts to Peatland Hydrology, Water Chemistry, and Vegetation. Implications for Peatland Management, Restoration and Conservation*
Regionally specific data on the effects of adjacent land use on wetland ecological integrity is limited. Current guidance for wetland buffers, mitigation avoidance measures, watershed planning, and conservation site selection is derived from logic-based models that make presumptions of likely impacts to wetlands. This project addresses a significant data gap by measuring variation in hydrological regime, water chemistry, and associated vegetation response in peatlands within various land use settings. A minimum of 10 sites in different land use categories will be sampled in western Washington

Tulalip Tribes of Washington – *2013 – 2019 Tulalip Wetland Program Plan Update, and Development of Wetland and Riparian Rehabilitation standards*

This project continues to build on the science-based foundation of the Tulalip wetland program through the development of standards, recommendations, and best management practices for wetland and riparian rehabilitation/enhancement activities. The grant will help to enhance the Tribes capabilities and expertise in providing detailed site plans and information sheets to those that are required to rehabilitate wetlands as part of permit conditions. At the end of Grant period (FY18), the Tulalip Tribe’s WPP will need to be updated and approved to insure continuity in the tribe’s wetland program. The updated plan will span the FY 2020-2026 time-frame.

Washington Department of Ecology – *Washington State Wetlands Classification Training*

Ecology and the Washington Department of Natural Resources Natural Heritage Program will develop a training course for classification systems that are used to identify or assess wetland type, condition, and potential for ecosystem services in Washington. Target audiences for the training are local governments and professionals in wetland consulting, restoration, protection and permitting. Training would be held in two phases. One phase will be a two-day course with classroom and field components, the second phase will include development of online modules of the classification systems.

Washington Department of Ecology – *Washington State Tool for Online Wetland Rating*

Washington Department of Ecology in partnership with Washington Department of Transportation, plans to develop a web-based tool to assist applicants with completing the Washington State Wetland Rating System forms. Field staff from WDOT would test and refine the tool before it is made available to the public.

Snoqualmie Indian Tribe – *R10 Tribal Wetland Working Group (TWIG) – Segues and Progress*

The Snoqualmie Indian Tribe plans to continue supporting Tribal Wetland Programs in EPA Region 10 through the TWIG. They plan to continue hosting workshops of the EPA Region 10 TWIG throughout the Pacific Northwest, provide training opportunities for staff on wetlands and aquatic resources and expand documentation/support of Tribal Values in the core elements framework. In addition, they would maintain the TWIG website, review the governance and representation in the TWIG and use the knowledge gained to inform a new strategic plan, and continue to implement the leadership transition plan for the TWIG.