



Fish Passage Projects Address Climate Resilience and Strengthen Local Economies

[Image Details](#)

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Funding Supports Fish Passage and Local Communities

Apr 23, 2024

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced 29 states will receive just over \$70 million to support 43 projects that will address outdated or obsolete dams, culverts, levees and other barriers fragmenting the nation's rivers and streams.

Millions of barriers around the world fragment rivers, block fish migration, and put communities at a higher risk of flooding. Obsolete or poorly designed dams, culverts, stream crossings, and levees keep fish and other aquatic species from moving freely to feed, migrate, and reproduce. These challenges put fish populations at risk, undermine the health of the rivers, and reduce fishing opportunities. These barriers also fragment aquatic habitats and are often more susceptible to flooding or drought. Improving aquatic connectivity can be an effective way to help conserve vulnerable species while building safer infrastructure for communities, improving climate resilience, increasing recreational opportunities, and strengthening local economies.

The [Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#) investment of just over \$70 million will address these outdated and obsolete barriers in 43 projects across 29 states. These funds build on the Service's [2022](#) and [2023](#) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law National Fish Passage Program investments of nearly \$73 million for 79 projects across the U.S. The newly announced project list represents the third and fourth years of funding of a five-year, \$200 million commitment to restore free-flowing waters, allowing for fish migration and protecting communities from flooding.

This diverse portfolio of aquatic conservation projects receiving funds will improve fish passage and climate resilience, increase recreational opportunities, and strengthen local economies. This important work is accomplished through a multi-agency approach, working with and investing in states and local partners to yield transformational results for local communities.

[Lower Skutik/St. Croix River Fishways](#) (Maine) -

This collaborative project with the State of Maine, Passamaquoddy Tribe, and other partners has the potential to support tens of millions of adult river herring returns annually, making their population the biggest in the United States and Canada. The fishways project will also contribute to the sustainability and economic viability of the local pulp, paper and fishing industries.

[Conasauga Habitat Connectivity for Trispot](#)

[Darters](#) (Georgia) - This project will reconnect river habitats by removing undersized barrier culverts on county-owned roads. The culvert removals will directly benefit federally-threatened trispot darters and blue shiners, improve local transportation systems, and increase community infrastructure resilience during peak flows.

[Enloe Dam Removal](#) (Washington) - This collaborative project is co-sponsored by Trout Unlimited and the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and supported by both the Upper and Lower Bands of the Similkameen Indians. When implemented, the project will reconnect over 1,500 miles of habitat for steelhead trout, Chinook salmon, and Tribal trust species like Pacific lamprey, while also creating benefits for water quality, recreation, and flood risk reduction.

[Otilia Dam Removal](#) (Texas) - Led by the San Antonio River Authority, this project will remove a 1920s era dam that has become a human safety hazard as well as a complete barrier to aquatic species. The project will improve public safety, reduce flood risk, and reconnect 30 miles of upstream river habitat for species and recreational uses.

[Upper Otter Tail River Connectivity Project](#) (Minnesota) - This project is led by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources with collaboration from the White Earth Band of Chippewa, Red Lakes Band of Chippewa, Minnesota Department of Transportation, East Otter Tail Soil and Water Conservation District, and other partners. It will connect 20 river miles and nearly 1,800 acres of aquatic habitat, contributing to lake sturgeon recovery and sustainability as well as connectivity for walleye, white sucker, mussels, and other aquatic species of concern. Increased fish passage provides fishing, wild-origin protein harvest opportunities, and improves sustainability of culturally significant fish populations for local Tribes. The project also contributes to regional transportation improvements by eliminating undersized culverts on a state highway, replacing them with climate resilient bridges.



The Enloe Dam removal will reconnect important habitat for multiple species, including Chinook salmon like the one pictured here. | [Image Details](#)

FY24-25 National Fish Passage projects with funding from Bipartisan Infrastructure Law

Project Name	State, County	Funding
Upper Moose Creek Watershed Fish Passage Project	Alaska, Mat-Su Borough	\$3,000,000
Southeast Alaska Community & Tribal Fish Passage	Alaska	\$4,000,000
Fish Passage Barrier Removal in Emmonak, AK	Alaska, Kusilvak	\$500,000
Removal of the Elba Hydroelectric Dam	Alabama, Coffee	\$1,931,465
Robinson Fork Arkansas Fish Passage Improvement	Arkansas, Polk and Sevier	\$2,000,000
Salt & Little Colorado River Basins Fish Passage	Arizona, Apache	\$2,211,450
Big Chico Creek Iron Canyon Fish Passage Project	California, Butte	\$3,815,372
Tejada Ranch Habitat Management Project	California, Lake	\$2,500,000
Cherry Creek Fish Passage, La Plata Watershed	Colorado, La Plata	\$702,000
Norwalk River Dam Removal, Planning and Assessment	Connecticut, Fairfield	\$1,306,314
Conasauga Habitat Connectivity for Trispot Darters	Georgia, Murray Whitfield	\$1,457,500
South Fork Running Creek Barrier Replacement	Idaho, Idaho	\$420,000
Sangamon County Dam Removals	Illinois, Sangamon	\$1,500,000
Emrichsville Dam Removal	Indiana, Marion	\$750,000
Flatrock River Restoration: removal of two dams	Indiana, Shelby	\$265,000
Hoosic River Headwater Dam Removals	Massachusetts, Berkshire	\$2,300,527
Ipswich Mills Dam Removal Project	Massachusetts, Essex	\$1,230,000
Sandy River Watershed Dam Removals	Maine, Franklin-Somers	\$630,000
Lower Skutik/St. Croix River Fishways	Maine, Washington	\$2,500,000

Kallio Creek at Skanee Road AOP Restoration	Michigan, Baraga	\$600,142
Increasing Arctic Grayling Fish Passage	Michigan	\$2,500,000
Removal of Peninsular Paper Dam	Michigan, Washtenaw	\$800,000
Crystal River Fish Passage and Restoration Project	Michigan, Leelanau	\$400,000
Upper Otter Tail River Connectivity Project	Minnesota, Otter Tail	\$3,906,000
Huzzah Creek, Missouri Fish Passage Program	Missouri, Crawford	\$1,459,850
Upper Clark Fork River Fish Passage Project	Montana, Deer Lodge	\$1,000,000
Lockville Dam Removal Project	North Carolina, Chatham	\$500,000
Jicarilla Willow Creek Connectivity Project	New Mexico, Rio Arriba	\$350,000
Amargo Creek Connectivity Project	New Mexico, Rio Arriba	\$1,100,000
Rio Costilla Metapopulation Connectivity Project	New Mexico, Taos	\$1,117,434
Boquet River at Moss Rd Barrier Removal	New York, Essex	\$500,000
Middle Great Miami River Restoration Project	Ohio, Miami	\$3,000,000
Pomeroy Dam Removal and Irrigation Pumping Project	Oregon, Josephine	\$1,200,000
Dorrance and Wilson Diversions in Wallowa River	Oregon, Wallowa	\$750,000
Ten Dam Removals in Western PA Watersheds	Pennsylvania	\$1,203,550
Upper MN River Watershed Fish Passage	South Dakota, Grant	\$3,300,000
Otilla Dam Removal	Texas, Bexar	\$1,000,000
Clinchco Dam Removal McClure River	Virginia, Dickenson	\$500,000
Essex County VT Connectivity & Flood Resiliency	Vermont, Essex	\$1,193,875
Enloe Dam Removal Feasibility, Design & Permitting	Washington, Okanogan	\$4,896,250
Skagit Watershed Carpenter Creek Culvert Removal	Washington, Skagit	\$299,134

[Gold Creek Restoration: Instream Habitat and Flows](#)

Washington, Kittitas

\$5,000,000

[West Fork River Restoration at Hartland Dam](#)

West Virginia, Harrison

\$1,000,000

The National Fish Passage Program: Connecting Watersheds and Communities

The National Fish Passage Program has decades of experience implementing infrastructure projects with partners. Under the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law we are bringing that experience to bear to foster collaboration between federal agencies, Tribes, states, and non-profit partners.

Since 1999, the program has worked with over 2,000 local communities, Tribes, and private landowners to remove or bypass over 3,400 barriers to fish passage and reopen access to over 61,000 miles of upstream habitat for fish and other animals. Staff have expertise in fish migration and biology as well as financial, engineering, and planning assistance to communities, Tribes, and landowners to help them remove barriers and restore rivers for the benefit both fish and people.

The rivers, streams, and coastal systems of North America once supported vast annual runs of fish such as Pacific salmon, American shad, blueback herring, Pacific lamprey and American eel. These species and many others, including some at-risk and listed species, depend on connected streams and high-quality habitat to survive. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Fish Passage Program are committed to reconnecting rivers for the benefit of all.

Federal Interagency Fish Passage Portal

The Federal Interagency Fish Passage Portal is a resource for anyone who needs information, funding, or technical assistance to improve fish passage and aquatic connectivity projects. We provide landowners and public lands managers the tools they need to access [fish passage](#) resources across the federal government.

The Fish Passage Portal will be a living repository of the best resources and information from across the federal government, in one free and easy to access location. It will be updated regularly to meet all your project needs from planning, to funding, to implementation.

[ACCESS THE INTERAGENCY FISH PASSAGE PORTAL](#) 

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