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NEWS

Nearly \$105 Million in Fish Passage Funding Recommended under Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, Including Significant Funding for Tribes

December 14, 2022

Thirty-six new projects will reopen migratory pathways, restore access to healthy habitat for fish, and build tribal capacity to participate in developing and implementing fish passage projects.

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Dam removal on the Penobscot River in Maine. Credit: Penobscot River Restoration Trust.

NOAA is recommending nearly \$105 million in funding for 36 fish passage projects this year and \$61 million in future funding under the [Biden-Harris Administration's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law](#). With this historic level of funding, our partners will reopen migratory pathways and restore access to healthy habitat for fish across the country.

Fifteen of these projects—more than \$26.3 million in funding—will be led by tribal applicants for fish passage and to build tribal organizational capacity. In addition, nearly two-thirds of the remaining projects will directly involve tribes and are aligned with tribal priorities. Tribes will play key roles in decision-making and build capacity to help recover tribally-important migratory fish. The projects will also provide community and economic benefits such as jobs and training opportunities.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides a once-in-a-generation opportunity for NOAA to continue making an impact for fisheries, protected resources, and coastal communities. These projects will help recover endangered migratory fish and support the sustainability of commercial, recreational, and tribal fisheries. They will also support coastal communities by removing derelict and unsafe dams, removing contaminated sediments, improving opportunities for recreation, and adapting to climate change by reducing flooding and improving threatened infrastructure.

[View tribal priority fish passage projects recommended for funding >](#)

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Tribal Priority Fish Passage Projects Recommended for Funding

NOAA is recommending more than \$16 million in funding for 13 projects selected through the [Restoring Tribal Priority Fish Passage through Barrier Removal](#) funding opportunity.

These projects will support Indian tribes in their role as managers and stewards of tribal trust resources for cultural, spiritual, economic, subsistence, and recreational purposes. They will support tribally important fish passage barrier removal projects and help to increase tribal capacity to participate in developing current and future fish passage projects.

Fish Passage Projects Recommended for Funding

NOAA is recommending more than \$87 million in funding for 23 projects selected through the [Restoring Fish Passage through Barrier Removal](#) funding opportunity.

These projects will help restore access to healthy habitat for migratory fish across the country through efforts including: on-the-ground fish passage restoration, engineering and design, future project development, and building the capacity of new and existing partners to design projects and manage multi-faceted restoration efforts.

Fish Passage and NOAA

Every year, millions of fish migrate to their spawning and rearing habitats to reproduce. Some fish need to swim thousands of miles through oceans and rivers to reach their destinations. They are often blocked from completing their journey by barriers like dams and culverts. When fish can't reach their habitat, they can't reproduce and maintain or grow their populations. As a result, many fish populations have declined. NOAA works to [reopen these migratory pathways](#), restoring access to healthy habitat for fish.

[NOAA's Office of Habitat Conservation](#) has a long history conducting habitat restoration efforts, including fish passage, with large-scale competitive funding opportunities and expert technical assistance. Through our [Community-based Restoration Program](#), we have partnered with more than 2,600 organizations to take on more than 2,200 projects since 1996. These efforts have restored more than 94,000 acres of habitat and opened up more than 4,400 miles of streams and rivers to fish migration.

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- > [Tribal Projects Recommended for Funding](#)
- > [Fish Passage Projects Recommended for Funding](#)

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