

Islands awarded \$212,000 for salmon recovery

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The Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board has allocated \$212,000 to three salmon recovery projects in San Juan County.

The projects submitted to the board from San Juan County fulfill critical roles in supporting salmon recovery, said Barbara Rosenkötter, San Juan County coordinator for salmon recovery efforts.

The primary salmon recovery strategy for San Juan County is protection of the more than 400 miles of relatively pristine and intact nearshore habitat.

The local strategy, which is also part of the Puget Sound Shared Strategy Salmon Recovery Plan, is based on increased protection through improved information.

The three projects funded: **Washington Trout, \$119,393, "Expanding the Cutthroat Trout Habitat Inventory."**

Washington Trout will use this grant to complete a survey of potential habitats in San Juan County for cutthroat trout, determine the minimum pool depths and maximum pool temperatures that cutthroat can tolerate, identify threats to preserving stream conditions and make recommendations to landowners and county government for in-stream flow rules, habitat restoration and protection priorities and actions needed.

Coastal cutthroat trout have declined significantly and are in danger of extinction because they consist of small, isolated populations. To date, research has focused on mainland head-

waters and not short, steep coastal watersheds typical of the San Juan Islands.

Washington Trout will contribute \$30,876 in donated equipment and labor.

Northwest Marine Technology Inc., \$62,000, "Tracking Juvenile Chinook Salmon."

Northwest Marine Technology Inc. will use this grant to tag salmon to estimate how much time they spend in the San Juan Islands.

This project is a first attempt to decipher whether juvenile Chinook salmon spend much time in nearshore habitats or whether they just pass through. Work will include tagging wild fish as they arrive in selected areas of the San Juan archipelago and recapturing them during selected times. By identifying site specific behavior, an inventory of priority habitats targeted for future work can be prepared.

Northwest Marine Technology Inc. will contribute \$31,860 in donated equipment, labor and materials.

San Juan County, \$30,607, "San Juan Ecosystem-Based Initiative — Analyzing How to Protect the San Juan Archipelago."

San Juan County will use this grant to develop a list of site-specific recommendations to increase protection of the

Cutthroat trout inventory, Chinook tracking, environmental protection targeted for funding

San Juan archipelago. Work will include a community-based analysis of regulatory, voluntary, incentive and education protection programs and the gaps, and creation of a vision for protection actions.

The county and its partners also will deliver a set of site-specific actions responding to identified gaps along with commitment from key parties to implement the recommendations. Lastly, it will bring existing scientific information into one usable system.

San Juan County will contribute \$471,393 from state, private and other grants.

→ "We are confident that the money invested in San Juan

County will be put to good use and will support salmon recovery locally and ultimately, regionally, since San Juan County fulfills an important juvenile and adult feeding and migration route for salmonids from multiple areas," Rosenkötter said.

The county Marine Resources Committee is the designated local citizens advisory group under the Washington Salmon Recovery Act and is dedicated to the protection and restoration of the marine environment in the San Juan Islands.

MRC members, selected by the County Council, represent the local government, tribal governments, the scientific, economic,

recreational and conservation communities, and citizens at large.

San Juan County waters and nearshore habitats are an essential part of the larger picture for salmon recovery in Puget Sound as the San Juan Islands provide an important source of energy and shelter for many fish en route to and from other portions of the Puget Sound and other regions.

Multiple species of salmon from watersheds across the region use the islands during their juvenile and adult life stages, utilizing a complex array of habitats.

All 22 populations of Puget Sound Chinook salmon occupy the San Juan Islands nearshore ecosystem at some point in their life cycles.

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