

FishAmerica Foundation

News Release



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For Immediate Release

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FishAmerica Awards \$1 Million in Sportfish Habitat Restoration Grants

Partnership with NOAA Restoration Center invests in community efforts to restore coastal and marine fish habitat

Alexandria, VA – March 8, 2011 – The FishAmerica Foundation, through its partnership with the NOAA Restoration Center, has awarded more than \$1 million in grants to 18 projects in coastal communities across the United States. The foundation's grants will leverage \$9 million in cash, in-kind services and approximately 11,000 hours of volunteer hours to help restore coastal and marine habitat.

Since 1998, FishAmerica's partnership with the NOAA Restoration Center has invested in more than 270 projects, leveraging \$6 million in funds into more than \$14 million in vital fisheries habitat in 25 states.

The projects include restoring habitat or access to habitat such as salt marshes and oyster reefs as well as upstream spawning and rearing for recreationally-important fish species including American shad and striped bass, salmon and trout species, and snook, drum and flounder. Each project promotes strong community partnerships to ensure the longevity and success of habitat restoration and provides for education, outreach and/or volunteer opportunities in the local communities.

"We received nearly \$3.4 million in requests for funding, demonstrating the great need for marine and coastal sportfish habitat restoration work throughout the United States," said Johanna Laderman, executive director of FishAmerica. "The selected projects will restore 60 acres of wetland and reef habitat and open nearly 72 river miles to sportfish."

According to *Sportfishing in America*, there are more than 8.5 million saltwater anglers in the United States who contribute more than \$30 billion to our nation's economy and help maintain more than 260,000 jobs each year.

"The critical need for funding has led to new and innovative partnerships in the local communities. With each dollar awarded being leveraged nearly nine times over, FishAmerica demonstrates how essential, and critical, the need is for continued federal funding of national and regional partnerships that focus on sportfish habitat conservation and restoration," said Gordon Robertson, vice president of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA). The FishAmerica Foundation is ASA's conservation and research foundation.

In February 2011, President Obama announced the Administration's America's Great Outdoors Initiative action plan to conserve outdoor spaces that power our nation's economy, shape our culture and build on our outdoor traditions. The initiative, established by Executive Order in April 2010, seeks to reconnect Americans, especially children, to

America's rivers, waterways, coasts and beaches by promoting community-based recreation and conservation and advancing job and volunteer opportunities related to conservation and outdoor recreation.

"For 28 years, FishAmerica has been in the forefront by investing in communities' efforts to improve sportfishing opportunities through local fisheries conservation projects," Laderman further said. "This year is no exception. These 18 projects will leverage more than 11,000 hours of volunteer time and combine the efforts and funding of the sportfishing and boating industries; local, state and federal agencies; and conservation groups and foundations."

- **California:** Restoration of habitat for steelhead trout, coho and Chinook salmon along the Mattole River, San Luis Obispo Creek and the South Fork Big River and in the Mattole Estuary.
- **Delaware:** The restoration of fish passage for striped bass, brown trout and rainbow trout in the Delaware River Basin.
- **Florida:** Restoration of fisheries habitat for snook, red drum and black drum in the Indian River Lagoon.
- **Massachusetts:** The restoration of fish passage and habitat for Atlantic salmon and brook trout in the Connecticut River Basin and fish passage for alewives, blueback herring and brook trout in the Cape Cod watershed.
- **Mississippi:** Restoration of habitat and water quality for southern flounder and largemouth bass in the Mississippi Coastal watershed.
- **North Carolina:** The restoration of habitat and water quality for southern flounder along North Carolina's coast and improve fish passage for American shad and striped bass in the Neuse River Basin.
- **Oregon:** Restoration of habitat for steelhead and cutthroat trout and coho and Chinook salmon through four projects in the Rogue River watershed, Sandy River Basin, Miami River watershed and the Willamette River watershed that will improve fish passage in the Clackamas River watershed.
- **Virginia:** The restoration of habitat for Atlantic sturgeon along the James River in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- **Washington:** Restoration of habitat and water quality steelhead and cutthroat trout and coho and Chinook salmon in the Salmon Creek watershed.

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The FishAmerica Foundation is the conservation and research foundation of the American Sportfishing Association, working to keep our sportfish and waters healthy. FishAmerica unites the sportfishing industry with conservation groups, government agencies, fishing tournaments, corporations and charitable foundations, investing in fisheries conservation and research across the country. FishAmerica invests in local projects to enhance sportfish populations, restore sportfish habitat and improve water quality – increasing the opportunity for sportfishing success and ensuring the future of fishing. Since 1983, FishAmerica has provided more than \$11 million for nearly 1,100 fisheries conservation and research projects nationwide.