

News Release
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Yakima Basin Receives \$1.26 Million in Grants for Salmon Recovery

The [Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board](#) announced the award of \$1.26 million in grants to Yakima Basin organizations that will help bring salmon back from the brink of extinction.

The Yakima Basin Region includes Kittitas, Yakima and a portion of Benton Counties. This year, the \$1.26 million is divided into \$772,974 for two projects in Kittitas County, \$484,500 for two projects in Yakima County, and \$5,976 for one project in Benton County. The five local projects awarded funds during this year's grant round range from designing levee setbacks near the City of Yakima to completing a large side channel restoration project in Kittitas County's Cle Elum River. Each project will implement recovery plan goals and improving places salmon use to reproduce and grow on their way to and from to the ocean. [View the approved list of Yakima Basin projects](#)

"This year's project list includes projects that will improve fish habitat in the Yakima Basin, benefitting landowners, local communities and fish," said Mike Leita, Yakima County Commissioner. "This year we'll see five projects worth a total of \$1,263,450 funded by the SRFB. In addition, the Department of Ecology has provided \$2.4 million to seven habitat projects that are a part of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. Thanks to the coming together of these two funding sources and community members, we'll see more habitat improvement projects completed than ever before."

In addition to steelhead, the Yakima Basin once supported large populations of Chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon, oceangoing lamprey, and migratory bull trout. While only bull trout and steelhead are listed under the ESA, all of these species are significant to our Basin. 2013 was a milestone year, with the first real returns of summer chinook and sockeye in decades. The habitat projects done to help steelhead and bull trout also help all of these species to thrive.

The local grant review process is coordinated by the [Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board](#) (YBFWRB), a consortium that include tribes, local governments, technical and biological experts and citizens all working together to spearhead local salmon recovery efforts. They encourage and review project proposals and make recommendations about which projects to forward to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for funding. From 2005 to 2009, local governments, the Yakama Nation, State and Federal Biologists and stakeholders worked together to write a recovery plan that details what needs to be done to get Yakima steelhead

off the Endangered Species List. In 2012, YBFWRB completed the Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan. Now, each year they work with the Salmon Funding Recovery Board to get funding to the projects that do the best job implementing these plans. It's a great example of partnership between local, tribal, state, and federal governments.

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