

# The Aquatic Species Restoration Program (ASRP)

The Aquatic Species Restoration Program (ASRP) is a major initiative funded by the Office of Chehalis Basin (OCB) in collaboration with local, Tribal, and state partners. The program is driven by a science-based plan designed to improve and restore more than 550 miles of prioritized aquatic habitat in the Chehalis Basin, as well as protect communities and landscapes from the predicted increase in flooding disasters.

Since 2015, the program has invested in **over 80 completed and active projects**, working in collaboration with landowners and local project sponsors.

As part of its process to determine a recommended long-term Chehalis Basin Strategy, the Chehalis Basin Board (Board) is currently evaluating different funding levels for ASRP implementation over the next several decades.



## The need for basin-wide aquatic restoration

The Chehalis Basin is made up of nearly 3,400 miles of streams and rivers that provide critical habitat to salmon, other native fish species, and Washington's largest diversity of amphibians. Salmon and other aquatic species have declined dramatically in recent years, and scientists estimate that existing salmon populations are now less than half their historical run size. A major reason for this decline is the loss of aquatic habitat, which is estimated to have been reduced by 80% – 87% compared to its historic area.

## What ASRP funds

The ASRP funds habitat restoration, protection, and related projects in priority areas, in collaboration with willing landowners and partner organizations. Funding supports projects in pursuit of the program's goals, which are to:

- Protect and restore natural habitat forming processes within the Chehalis Basin watershed context.
- Increase the quality and quantity of habitats for aquatic species in priority areas.
- Protect and restore aquatic species viability.
- Increase resiliency to climate change by protecting and improving natural water quantity, water timing, and water quality.

In addition to on-the-ground restoration and protection projects, the ASRP supports innovative project ideas, plan development, experimental restoration techniques, as well as monitoring and peer review processes, providing decision-makers with the best available science to support strategic investments in the basin's habitat.

To date, ASRP investments across the basin have resulted in *more than*:

- **285 acres of habitat restored**
- **295 acres habitat protected**
- **17 river miles restored**

## Who's involved

The ASRP is guided by a Steering Committee, which includes voting members from the **Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)**, **Quinault Indian Nation**, and **the Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation**. The Steering Committee works with technical experts to support monitoring and learning through project implementation. Implementation is made possible through partnerships with additional organizations such as:

- Lewis, Grays Harbor, Thurston, and Mason Conservation Districts
- Local land trusts
- Conservation and salmon recovery organizations
- Local governments
- Willing private landowners



### Are you an interested landowner?

Learn more about how to get involved at  
<https://officeofchehalisbasin.com/basin-residents/>

## Project Highlight: Stillman Creek Restoration Project

In 2023, OCB, WDFW, Capitol Land Trust, Lewis Conservation District, and four local landowners completed the largest ASRP habitat restoration project to date—spanning over 45 acres and two river miles of Stillman Creek, tributary to the South Fork Chehalis River.

- ASRP funding allowed Capitol Land Trust to purchase and permanently protect 38 acres of land along both banks of Stillman Creek.
- Partners restored natural river processes through excavating side- and off-channel habitats, planting native plants, and introducing 110 large wood structures.
- The results were improved habitat for aquatic life—especially coho salmon, steelhead trout, and fall and spring Chinook salmon.
- The project also provided flooding benefits by reconnecting Stillman Creek with its floodplain and helping reduce erosion.



## Future funding for ASRP

The Chehalis Basin Board is considering different scenarios to optimize investments in priority locations over the next several decades. The table below summarizes the level of investment, estimated costs, and assumptions around what it could fund. Scaling up investment will allow the ASRP to tackle more of its 30-year plan and address habitat loss and degradation in the basin.

Investment level:	Low	High
<b>Miles of river channel restored:</b>	222	555
<b>Miles opened up with barrier removal:</b>	200	444
<b>Riparian &amp; floodplain acres restored:</b>	8,700	16,700
<b>30-year cost range:</b>	\$278-\$964 million	\$571 million - \$2 billion



**SR 508 Erosion Project Stream Team tree planting.** Photo credit: Lewis Conservation District

## Next steps

In 2026, the Chehalis Basin Board will determine what level of ASRP investment it will include as part of its recommended long-term Chehalis Basin Strategy. The Board's decision will be informed by technical analyses and community input. In the meantime, ASRP is continuing to implement projects and distribute funding for priority restoration efforts across the basin.

## For more information



Learn more at <https://officeofchehalisbasin.com/asrp/> and <https://officeofchehalisbasin.com/basin-residents/>  
Questions? Contact [chehalishabitatrestoration@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:chehalishabitatrestoration@dfw.wa.gov)

