California Forests and Watersheds Infrastructure Resilience

**OVERVIEW**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and USDA Forest Service (USFS) announced a 2020-year round of funding for California Forests and Watersheds Infrastructure Resilience projects. Nine new watershed infrastructure resilience and meadows restoration grants totaling $1.6 million were awarded. The nine awards announced generated $2.5 million in match from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of $4.1 million.

The 2020 program focuses funding on enhancing watershed health and resilience throughout California, and addresses restoration of meadow habitat within the Sierra Nevada range that drains into the Desert Terminal Lakes basin. In particular, this funding opportunity prioritized transportation infrastructure management (improved roads, culverts, etc.) to reduce sedimentation and improve connectivity for aquatic organisms to improve watershed health and fish habitat. Restoration efforts in the Sierra Nevada meadow range will remove invasive species, improve hydrologic function, and restore habitat for wildlife and fish species.

(continued)
Aquatic Organism Passage Barrier Removal and Meadow Restoration in the Pine Creek Watershed (CA)
Grantee: American Rivers
Grant Amount: ....................................... $338,094
Matching Funds: ................................... $1,170,000
Total Project: ....................................... $1,508,094
Remove aquatic organism passage barriers and restore meadows in the Pine Creek watershed in Lassen National Forest (LNF). Project will remove eight passage barriers, support permit development for seven additional passage improvements, and restore 240 acres of meadow to improve instream flows, restore stream connectivity, and enhance native fish habitat.

Boca Meadows Restoration in the Truckee River Watershed (CA)
Grantee: Truckee River Watershed Council
Grant Amount: ....................................... $239,899
Matching Funds: ..................................... $240,000
Total Project: ......................................... $479,899
Restore disrupted hydrology, improve water quality, link existing and planned meadow restoration sites, and promote riparian habitat connectivity for willow flycatcher and other bird species in the Truckee River watershed, a Desert Terminal Lakes Basin. Project will restore 129 meadow acres, 1 stream mile, 5 acres of aspen habitat, and eliminate or reduce erosion from 26 road miles to improve watershed conditions.

Improving Water Quality in the Headwaters of the South Fork Trinity River (CA)
Grantee: Trinity County Resource Conservation District
Grant Amount: ...................................... $230,999
Matching Funds: ..................................... $50,000
Total Project: ......................................... $280,999
Protect and improve water quality for anadromous fish habitat in the headwaters of the South Fork Trinity Watershed in the Shasta Trinity National Forest. Project will reduce road-related sediment delivery at 62 stream crossings, which will strengthen watershed resilience to storm damage, improve road infrastructure, and enhance water quality.

Finalization of Removal Plans for Wheeler Gorge Campground Aquatic Organism Passage Barrier (CA)
Grantee: Earth Island Institute
Grant Amount: ........................................ $49,581
Matching Funds: ..................................... $131,283
Total Project: ......................................... $180,864
Finalize engineering plans for the removal of four stream crossings in proximity of the Wheeler Gorge campground of the Los Padres National Forest (LPNF). Funding will guide the implementation phase of this project to restore access for the federally endangered steelhead trout to approximately 13 miles of creek habitat in the Ventura River watershed.

Great blue heron in California
Watershed Infrastructure Assessment in Lassen National Forest (CA)
Grantee: Sierra Institute for Community and Environment
Grant Amount: ...................................... $152,277
Matching Funds: ...................................... $67,000
Total Project: ......................................... $219,277
Conduct an infrastructure assessment to identify and prioritize specific Watershed Improvement Plan projects in the LNF. Project will complete site-specific surveys of road features to complete a road-stream crossing inventory and condition assessment that will be used alongside ranking criteria to assist with project prioritization and help guide future planning efforts.

Stormproofing and Watershed Infrastructure Improvements in the Horse Creek Watershed (CA)
Grantee: Shasta Valley Resource Conservation District
Grant Amount: ....................................... $285,856
Matching Funds: ..................................... $500,000
Total Project: ......................................... $785,856
Improve watershed health and reduce sediment sources within the Horse Creek tributary in the Klamath National Forest (KNF). Project will complete engineered designs to improve roads and replace or install culverts to reduce sedimentation and improve watershed condition, road infrastructure and instream habitat.

Culvert Removal and Improvement in the Griffin Creek Tributary (CA)
Grantee: Resource Conservation District of Tehama County
Grant Amount: ........................................ $34,191
Matching Funds: ...................................... $34,191
Total Project: .......................................... $68,382
Remove and replace an existing culvert to improve hydrologic function in the Griffin Creek tributary within Mendocino National Forest. Project will replace a culvert and improve stream flows that will lead to reduced sedimentation and improved water quality.

Invasive Plant Species Removal to Enhance Riparian Habitat in the Salmon River Watershed (CA)
Grantee: Salmon River Restoration Council
Grant Amount: ........................................ $32,000
Matching Funds: ...................................... $32,497
Total Project: .......................................... $64,497
Contain, control and eradicate invasive vegetation and restore native species to enhance riparian habitat in the Salmon River watershed in the KNF. Project will remove invasive plant species, such as the spotted knapweed, and will plant locally sourced native species in riparian corridors to reduce ecological pressures on native organisms.

Improving Meadows and Wildlife Migratory Corridors in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest (CA)
Grantee: California Deer Association
Grant Amount: ....................................... $260,500
Matching Funds: ..................................... $260,500
Total Project: ......................................... $521,000
Create pollinator and wildlife migratory corridors and re-establish historic meadows in the McCloud Ranger District of Shasta-Trinity National Forest with tribe, public and private sector support. Project will improve watershed and meadow resilience, establish new forage sites and migratory corridors for pollinators and wildlife, re-establish historic aspen and meadows, and remove invasive conifers that are encroaching in critical habitat areas.