



# FY 2009 NOAA BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS



## National Marine Fisheries Service

### Habitat Conservation and Restoration Restoring and Protecting Fish Passage

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) FY 2009 budget request includes \$9.8 million for two key efforts to restore and protect fish passage to riverine spawning habitats. Restoring and protecting access to these habitats will help sustain important commercial and recreational migratory fish species and the communities and economies that depend on them.

#### Overview

Salmon, shad, sturgeon and other migratory fish are essential to the health of the nation's ecosystems and economy. Yet more than 2 million dams block 600,000 river miles and prevent annual fish migrations to and from their spawning grounds. NMFS uses both voluntary and regulatory approaches to provide means for fish to bypass these barriers.

#### Open Rivers Initiative

The Open Rivers Initiative provides technical expertise and financial assistance to remove dams and fish passage barriers in coastal watersheds. NOAA's FY 2009 request includes \$7.0 million to continue support of community-driven dam and barrier removals that restore fish passage to upstream spawning and rearing habitat.

Increased funding will help achieve watershed-wide ecosystem and community benefits, which is particularly important as total requests already received for dam removal support in FY 2007 and 2008 exceed \$28 million.

The Open Rivers Initiative will:

- Improve public safety through the removal of obsolete and aging dams and culverts.
- Revitalize riverine communities, provide new recreational opportunities, and reduce flood risks.
- Improve populations of commercially and recreationally important fish and restore naturally-functioning river ecosystems.

#### Hydropower

NMFS derives authority under the Federal Power Act to ensure passage for migratory fish at hydropower dams licensed by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. Amendments to the hydropower licensing process of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 have and will continue to increase NMFS' consultation workload associated with dam licenses. NOAA's FY 2009 request includes \$2.8 million for

technical, legal, and judicial capabilities to help meet the increased Energy Policy Act workload and the upcoming increase in number of dams seeking re-licensing.

Under the Energy Policy Act process:

- NMFS and its partners have re-opened 875 miles of historic habitat to migratory fish (including Endangered Species Act-listed species).
- NMFS' workload will continue to increase, as nearly 70 hydropower projects will undergo re-licensing in the next five years.
- Each dam re-licensing process presents NMFS a rare opportunity to improve fish passage at old dams last re-licensed 30 to 50 years ago.

*Communities watch dam removal in Brownsville, Oregon.*



NOAA FY 2009 Budget Request (\$ in Millions)			
BUDGET LINE:	FY2008 Enacted	FY2009 Program Change	FY2009 Pres Bud Request
<b>Habitat Conservation and Restoration</b>			
SUSTAINABLE HABITAT MANAGEMENT <b>Energy Policy Act Hydropower</b>	\$2.5	\$0.3	\$2.8
FISHERIES HABITAT RESTORATION <b>Open Rivers Initiative</b>	\$1.6	\$5.4	\$7.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$4.1</b>	<b>\$5.7</b>	<b>\$9.8</b>

For more information, contact: **Patricia Montanio, Director, NMFS Office of Habitat Conservation, at 301-713-2325 or visit [www.habitat.noaa.gov](http://www.habitat.noaa.gov).**