



NEWS FROM NOAA

NATIONAL OCEANIC & ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION • US DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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NOAA ANNOUNCES \$20,000 GRANT TO SUPPORT EELGRASS MONITORING IN PORT TOWNSEND, WASHINGTON

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) announced a \$20,000 grant to the Northwest Maritime Center for science-based monitoring of eelgrass restoration project. The project is one of many efforts funded through the Community-based Restoration Program of the NOAA Fisheries Service.

The project involves monitoring the survival and growth of eelgrass transplanted near the recently rebuilt Northwest Maritime Center Dock. This state-of-the-art dock was designed to minimize impact ON nearshore ecosystems and was under-planted with an eelgrass meadow. Monitoring of light patterns and eelgrass growth under the new dock will provide enhanced understanding of how to reduce the impact of over-water structures, while providing nearshore field science experiences for local students.

“The continued partnership between NOAA and the Northwest Maritime Center demonstrates both organizations' commitment to restoring fisheries habitat,” said retired Navy Vice Adm. Conrad C. Lautenbacher, Ph.D., under secretary of commerce for oceans and atmosphere and NOAA administrator. “These habitat restoration efforts support NOAA’s approach of ecosystem-based management, and promote local stewardship of the habitats that sustain our nation’s fisheries resources.”

“Fundamentally, this monitoring research helps us to assess whether continuous eelgrass communities can exist in conjunction with overwater structures,” said Battelle scientist Heida Diefenderfer. “On this basis, the Maritime Center’s unique dock design elements can be evaluated for use elsewhere.”

Maritime Center Executive Director Dave Robison added, “Our partnership with NOAA CRP has been instrumental in building community awareness of the marine habitat along our downtown waterfront. We are now anxious to evaluate our habitat restoration efforts, which this grant allows us to do.”

The NOAA Restoration Center’s Community-based Restoration Program (CRP) is a financial and technical assistance program that promotes strong partnerships at the national, regional, and local level to restore fisheries habitat. NOAA CRP works with organizations and government to support locally-driven habitat restoration projects in marine, estuarine, and riparian areas. NOAA CRP funds on-the-ground habitat restoration projects that (1) offer educational and social benefits for citizens and their communities, and (2) provide long-term ecological benefits for fishery resources. Since 1996, more than 900 projects in 26 states have been implemented using NOAA funding and leveraged funding from national and regional habitat restoration partners.

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Each year, NOAA awards approximately \$900 million in grants to members of the academic, scientific and business communities to assist the agency in fulfilling its mission to study the Earth's natural systems in order to predict environmental change, manage ocean resources, protect life and property, and provide decision makers with reliable scientific information. NOAA goals and programs reflect a commitment to these basic responsibilities of science and service to the nation for the past 35 years.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, an agency of the U.S. Commerce Department, is dedicated to enhancing economic security and national safety through the prediction and research of weather and climate-related events and providing environmental stewardship of our nation's coastal and marine resources. Through the emerging Global Earth Observation System of Systems (GEOSS), NOAA is working with our federal partners and nearly 60 countries to develop a global Earth observation network that is as integrated as the planet it observes, predicts and protects.

On the Web:

NOAA: <http://www.noaa.gov>

Community-based Restoration Program: <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration>