NOAA Administrator Announces Stimulus Fund Awards for Habitat Restoration in Oregon

NOAA Administrator Dr. Jane Lubchenco at the fishing port in Newport today announced more than $7 million in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding to restore habitat projects throughout coastal Oregon.

Three projects were selected in Oregon, including the Newport project, proposed by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, which received $699,000 to employ off-season commercial fishermen to remove 180 metric tons of derelict crab pots and other fishing gear along the Oregon coast.

“This funding will employ fishermen in the off-season in green jobs that will stimulate the economy while creating healthier coastal communities,” said Lubchenco. “Every season, thousands of crab traps, lines and buoys are lost off the Oregon Coast. They can trap marine wildlife as well as cause boating hazards. We expect the project will help us remove more than 4,000 lost crab pots, lines and other marine debris from Oregon’s coastal waters.”

Other projects include a restoration project in Eugene, Ore., which received $1.6 million to restore and enhance 21 acres and two miles of the Willamette River riparian and wetland habitat, providing access to important refuge habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon; and the Gold Ray Dam removal project in Medford, Ore., which received $5 million to remove the dam and open more than 333 miles of the Rogue River and tributaries to steelhead, Chinook and endangered coho salmon.

In February 2009, NOAA received $167 million from the Obama Administration’s Recovery Act to restore coastal habitat and help jumpstart the nation’s economy. Altogether, the agency received 814 proposals from 34 states and five territories, totaling more than $3 billion in requests. From these proposals, NOAA selected 50 high quality, high priority projects to restore U.S. coasts on a grand scale. These projects will create jobs and restore wetlands, salt marshes, oyster and coral reefs, as well as remove fish passage barriers on coastal rivers and streams. In addition to improving the environment, these efforts will assist recreational and commercial fishing, support more resilient coasts in the face of climate change, and create jobs—many in areas of high unemployment.

For more information on funded projects nationwide, go to the NOAA Recovery Act website at http://www.noaa.gov/recovery. The public will be able to follow the progress of each project on the web site, which includes an interactive online map that enables the public to track where and how NOAA recovery funds are spent.
NOAA understands and predicts changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and conserves and manages our coastal and marine resources.