Washington State Conservation Commission

CONSERVATION DISTRICTS OF WASHINGTON STATE
your window to healthy lands

2021-23 Budget Request:
Capital Funding Need

Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

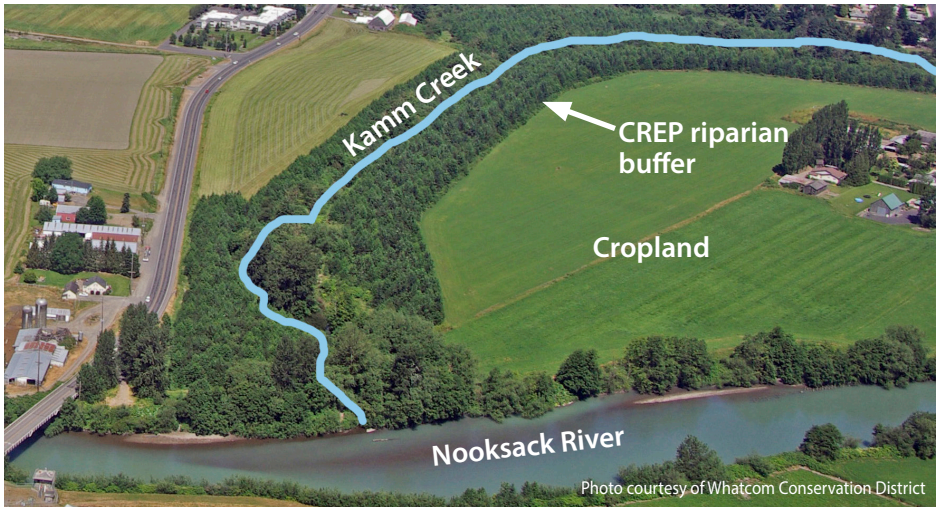
Funding is needed to support two crucial components of the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP), which is our state's largest riparian restoration program. These budget requests provide the state match needed to bring millions of federal Farm Bill dollars to Washington State for salmon recovery and the bridge financing that many landowners need to participate in the program.

Funding requested:

- *CREP Riparian State Match - $7,500,000*
- *CREP Practice Incentive Payments - $500,000*

How does CREP work?

- CREP is a win-win for viable farms and healthy fish.
- Farmers voluntarily grow native trees and shrubs along riparian areas, which enhances salmon habitat. They're paid rent for the acreage they plant.
- Vegetation forms a buffer between agricultural land and salmon streams. Buffers keep water clean and cool and give farmers a modest but dependable source of income.

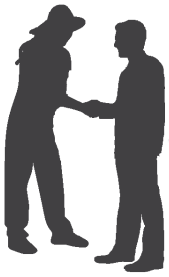


Why these requests can't wait:

	What it does	If unfunded, what are the impacts?	Request
CREP Riparian State Match	Provides state match required to bring $30 million federal dollars to Washington for salmon recovery projects on private agricultural land.	► Washington will lose the opportunity to quadruple state investment in salmon recovery by leveraging federal CREP dollars. ► Cooperative progress to enhance salmon streams will end. ► Over 1,000 sites — most of which are located in basins that are home to high-priority Chinook salmon stocks for orca — will be unenrolled and associated riparian habitat will be in jeopardy.	$7,500,000
CREP Practice Incentive Payments	Provides bridge financing to cover landowners' upfront costs for CREP projects that are pending payment from federal agencies. The state is reimbursed by federal payment when the project is done.	► Many landowners, particularly low-income landowners, will be unable to participate in CREP due to the financial burden of waiting to be reimbursed for project costs. ► Any remaining participation in the program will be based on the ability of the landowner to carry upfront project costs, rather than the priority of habitat to be protected.	$500,000

High return-on-investment:

What can Washington expect from investing in CREP for the 2021-23 biennium?



80-175 new and re-enrolled CREP sites

50-100 more miles of riparian area planted

Continuation of salmon recovery benefits made through over **20 years** of CREP projects

509 jobs created*

$25.5M labor income generated*

*Based on Washington Input-Output Models for Impact Analysis from the Office of Financial Management

CREP is good for salmon, good for orca

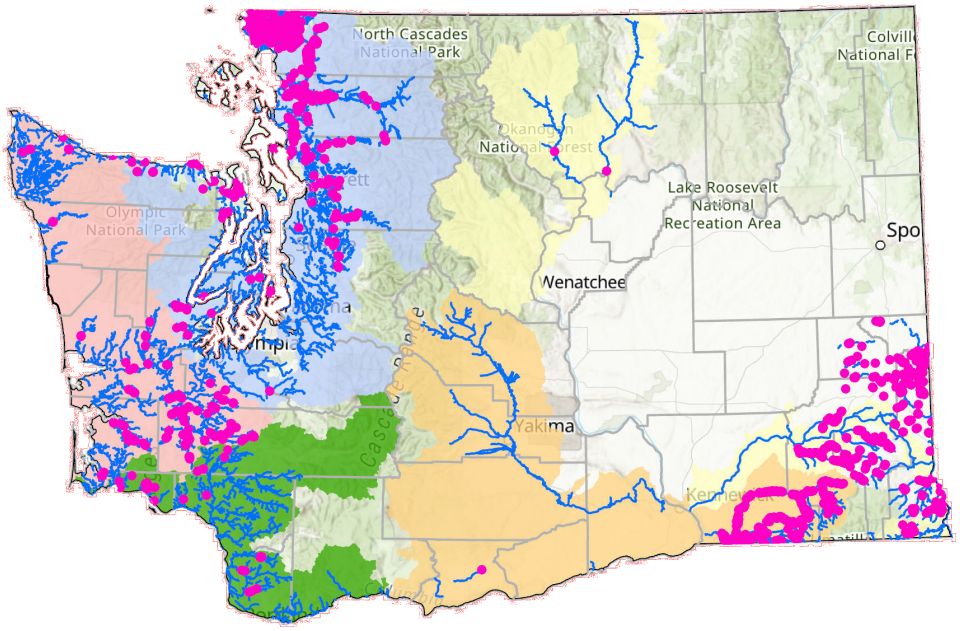
Most CREP-eligible streams are within priority Chinook stock basins for Southern Resident Killer Whales.

Legend

- CREP-eligible stream segment
- CREP Site

Priority Chinook Stock Basins for S. Resident Killer Whales

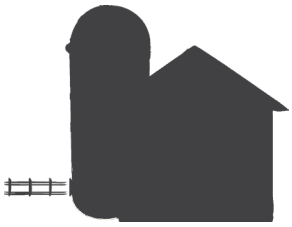
- Washington Coast
- Lower Columbia
- North/South Puget Sound
- Upper Columbia and Snake Fall/ Snake River
- Middle and Upper Columbia Spring/ Summer



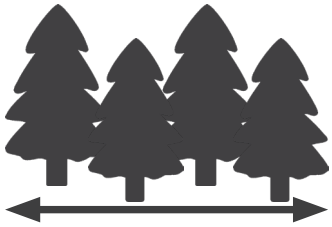
NOAA and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. (2018) Southern Resident Killer Whale Priority Chinook Stocks Report. Retrieved from: https://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/publications/protected_species/marine_mammals/killer_whales/recovery/srkw_priority_chinook_stocks_conceptual_model_report___list_22june2018.pdf

20 Years of CREP:

What's been accomplished in Washington to date?



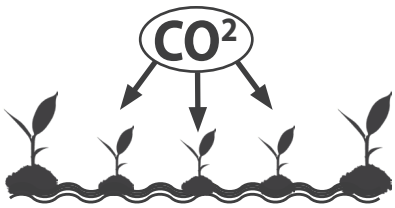
1,375 voluntarily enrolled agricultural sites



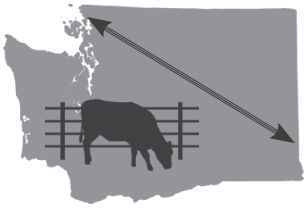
142-foot average width for riparian forest buffers

925 miles of stream enhanced for salmon

(That's the distance from Seattle to the Grand Canyon!)



5.9 million trees/ shrubs planted that provide habitat and sequester carbon



286 miles of fence constructed

(That's the distance from Bellingham to Pullman!)

How do CREP buffers benefit Washington farms?

Erosion control

They stabilize stream banks and provide a protective barrier against moving water.

Flood mitigation

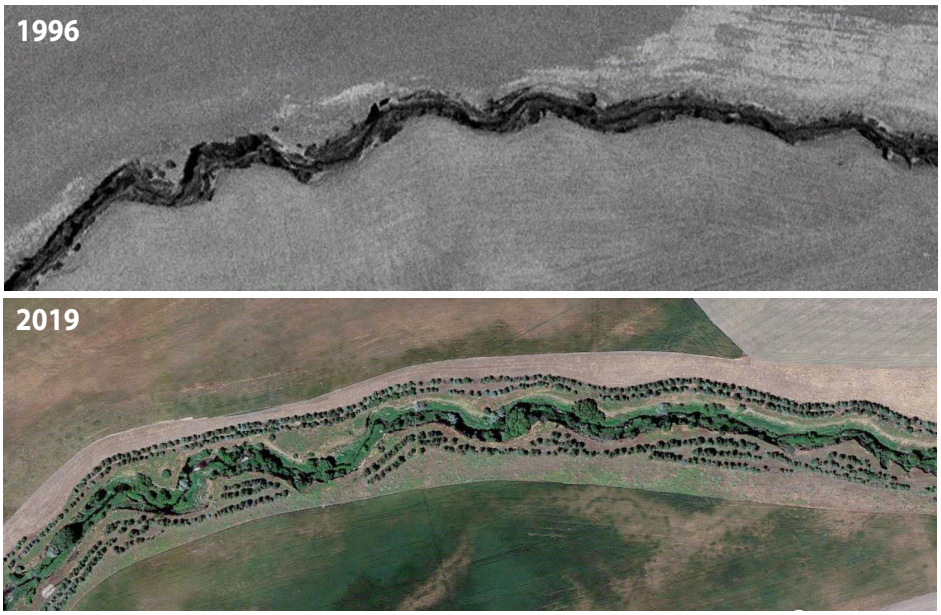
Buffer vegetation increases water infiltration and slows flood waters.

Weather protection

They shelter fields, structures, and livestock from blowing wind and snow.

Learn more about CREP: scc.wa.gov/conservation-reserve-enhancement-program

What does CREP look like on the ground?



On Dry Creek, Walla Walla County Conservation District has partnered with landowners to plant six contiguous miles of CREP buffers along a stretch of water where there are several cattle operations.

These images show a stretch of this area before and after CREP implementation. The top photo was taken in 1996, and the bottom photo was taken in 2019, 23 years later.

The buffers have been very effective at filtering contaminants and keeping the cattle away from stream banks.

Mature forested buffers planted through CREP offer many benefits for salmon:

- They function as a "water treatment plant," absorbing nutrients and other pollutants before they reach streams.
- Trees and plants shade the stream, cooling water temperatures for salmon.
- Trees that fall into streams provide habitat and rearing pools.
- Vegetation stabilizes stream banks and reduces erosion.
- Vegetation sequesters carbon, which helps mitigate climate change.

See what a CREP buffer looks like on the ground, and hear from a landowner why he voluntarily decided to participate in the program. (2:42)

Contacts

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