

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 includes much-needed funding for habitat restoration programs within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- > National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration: \$230 million for operations, research, and facilities including addressing backlog in habitat restoration and other activities. Exact amount to be allocated to restoration is yet to be determined.
- > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Construction: \$115 million for priority construction, repair, habitat restoration and other activities on Service properties.
- > U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service - Resource Management: \$165 million for priority critical deferred maintenance, capital improvements, habitat restoration and other activities on Service properties.

This is funding that can help address outdated dams that pose public safety hazards and financial liabilities, burdening many communities. By 2020 more than 85% of our nation's dams will be older than 50 years of age, their average life expectancy. Dam removals serve many purposes including improving water quality, eliminating public safety hazards, promoting sustainable economic and community development, and opening up fish habitat.

River Restoration Will Stimulate the Economy

Ecological restoration is a high-growth sector that employs such positions as design engineers, hydrologists, architects and heavy equipment operators. The same laborers that design, build and repair dams can be employed in removing unsafe dams. On average, \$1 million in restoration activities creates 20 jobs.

Local suppliers provide materials (e.g., quarries) and heavy equipment is purchased or leased from local businesses, providing an immediate infusion in local economies. On average, 80% of documented restoration grant expenditures stay within the local counties, and 96% of the funds are expended in-state.

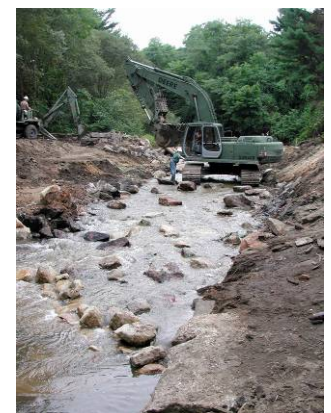


American Rivers and our partners have identified more than 140 projects in 23 states with an estimated funding need of more than \$700 million that could be ready to go in 6-18 months. In Maine and Massachusetts alone, 39 dam removal projects costing over \$40 million could begin construction within three years.

21st Century Restoration Solutions

NOAA and FWS remove dams and restore rivers with the goal of improving habitat. Through NOAA's Community-based Restoration Program and the Open Rivers Initiative communities work with governments, NGOs, businesses, and industries to restore river habitats and remove dams that are social and environmental liabilities. FWS's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program assists private landowners in using public-private partnerships to restore degraded habitats.

In addition to the ecological benefits provided by these programs, removing outdated infrastructure prevents loss of life and serious damage to homes and critical infrastructure. Dam removal is a one-time cost and a long-term solution to our aging infrastructure problems that removes the un-ending infrastructure maintenance costs that communities may be unable to afford over the long-term.



For more information please contact Stephanie Lindloff at slindloff@americanrivers.org or (518) 482-2631 or Serena McClain at smcclain@amrivers.org or (202) 347-7550.