



Contact: Marjorie Mooney-Seus, (978)281-9175
Fionna Matheson, (301) 427-8003

For Immediate Release
October 22, 2013

**NOAA Fisheries announces \$6.6 Million in funding for habitat restoration
in Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland and Virginia**

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) has announced more than \$6 million in funding for habitat restoration projects in Maine, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Virginia to restore more than 11,000 acres of habitat, and open more than 200 stream miles for fish passage. These projects will benefit species like river herring and the tuna, bluefish, cod, birds and marine mammals that prey on them.

"Dam removal, fishways and other restoration efforts provide a key role in helping us bring back depleted fish stocks," said John Bullard, Regional Administrator for NOAA Fisheries Northeast Region. "They also have a variety of ecological, social and economic benefits to communities that border our rivers."

From Virginia to Maine, native fish like river herring and Atlantic salmon are limited by a lack of habitat. NOAA Fisheries is working with partners in the region to restore habitat for these fish by removing barriers to fish passage and improving in-stream conditions. These projects address actions recommended in the recovery plans for Endangered Species Act-listed species. Three will restore critical spawning and nursery areas for river herring in Massachusetts. One will open fish passage to Atlantic salmon and forage fish in Maine, two will create oyster reef habitat in Virginia and Maryland, and another will advance dam removal in Maryland along critical waterways for herring, eel, and shad.

Restoration efforts will include:

- **Bloede Dam (\$3.83M):** The funding to remove Bloede Dam and for engineering design to remove the Daniels Dam on Maryland's Patapsco River are part of a larger effort with partner American Rivers to restore more than 65 miles of spawning habitat for blueback herring, alewife, and American shad, and more than 183 miles for American eel, ensuring sustainable populations of these target species. Two other dams on the Patapsco River (Simkins and Union Dams) were also removed in 2010 as part of this effort.
- **Plymco and Holmes Dams (\$525,000):** The removal of these two dams will conclude more than a decade of work by NOAA and its partners to remove all barriers to fish along Town Brook, in Plymouth, MA. It creates the potential for restoring a herring run of over 500,000 fish. Currently, the run has been measured at roughly 150,000, which is largely sustained by trucking the fish around the dams. Award recipient: Town of Plymouth, MA
- **West Britannia and Barstows Pond Dams (\$77,660):** Once these dams in Taunton, MA are removed, fish will have full access to habitat from Narragansett Bay to headwater pond habitats (36 miles and 400 acres). A river herring run of more than 100,000 fish is anticipated. The removals will also eliminate the public safety threat associated with the aging dams. Award recipient: Massachusetts Department of Fish and Game

- **Penobscot, East Machias, and Androscoggin watersheds (\$174,000):** Several projects, including the removal of inappropriately-designed culverts and the installation of fish ladders, will open up fish passage in the Penobscot, East Machias, and Androscoggin watersheds in Maine. An estimated 10,000 lake acres and 160 river miles will be made accessible to Atlantic salmon and forage fish such as alewife and blueback herring. Award recipient: Atlantic Salmon Federation
- **Penobscot River, ME (\$365,000):** Funding for removal of the Veazie Dam and environmental monitoring of the river. NOAA has already invested roughly \$21 million towards a multi-year plan, developed in close collaboration with partners, to restore fish habitat on the Penobscot River.
- **Lafayette River, VA and Harris Creek, MD oyster reefs (\$1.34M):** Nearly 67 acres of oysters will be planted in the first year of these two awards, creating habitat for black sea bass and other fish. Award recipients: Restore America's Estuaries; Chesapeake Bay Foundation; Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Oyster Recovery Partnership.
- **Herring River estuary (\$300,000):** Design and permitting of the Herring River estuarine restoration project in Wellfleet and Truro, MA that could restore roughly 1,000 acres and more than 11 miles of estuarine and river habitat for bluefish, summer flounder, scup, striped bass, and river herring. Award recipient: Friends of Herring River, Wellfleet/Truro, Inc.

NOAA Fisheries' investment in habitat is part of a long-term effort to rebuild fisheries, many of which have declined from habitat loss, over-fishing and climate change. [Recent successes](#) show that restoring habitat is a way not only to stop the decline of fish populations, but also to regrow them to historic high numbers.

NOAA's mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth's environment, from the depths of the ocean to the surface of the sun, and to conserve and manage our coastal and marine resources. Join us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook/noaa>, [Twitter](#) and our other [social media channels](#).