

# Riparian Grant Program

## Program Outcomes (2024 - 2025)



### What is the Riparian Grant Program?

Launched in February 2024, the Riparian Grant Program provides funding for conservation districts to work with landowners to implement projects that restore and enhance vital riparian habitat; vegetated areas along water bodies that are crucial to ecosystem health.

The program invests in on-the-ground conservation efforts that advance statewide water quality and salmon recovery goals. Through voluntary partnerships between conservation districts and land managers, the Riparian Grant Program improves water quality and supports fish and wildlife habitat, benefiting ecosystems and communities.

#### Alignment with state goals

This grant supports state and local priorities in salmon recovery, climate resilience, and sustainable land management.

#### Eligibility

Conservation districts, in collaboration with private land managers, Tribes, fisheries enhancement groups, and other entities, for project implementation.

### Support for land managers

The Riparian Grant Program provides resources for conservation districts to work with land managers to voluntarily implement riparian restoration projects, expand existing buffers, and conduct crucial maintenance activities to ensure long-term success.

### Quick numbers

The Riparian Grant Program launched in March 2024. Below are some highlights from the first 14 months of implementation.

**\$9.7 M**

awarded to conservation districts to support statewide riparian restoration and stewardship.

**278 Acres**

of riparian forest buffers restored or enhanced, improving salmon and wildlife habitat and water quality.

**3,094 Acres**

of riparian habitat maintained—sustaining prior restoration investments and ensuring long-term benefits.

**201,995 Native plants**

were installed to provide shade, filtration, and temperature regulation for fish and wildlife habitat.

**23 Miles**

of streams treated with new riparian restoration projects.

**\$30 M**

funding for the 2025-27 biennium is already obligated for conservation districts to continue and expand this work.

# Project Highlights



## Whatcom Conservation District

In the Nooksack River watershed, Whatcom Conservation District focused riparian work on supporting water quality, stream health, and salmon recovery in an area where agriculture, rural communities, and salmon-bearing streams are closely connected. Through the Riparian Grant Program, the district restored 82.7 acres and 39,102 feet of riparian corridor, planted 54,887 native trees and shrubs, and maintained 205 acres of existing riparian habitat, helping ensure both new and previous investments in riparian habitat continue functioning effectively. These efforts illustrate how coordinated local stewardship can restore riparian habitat in shared working and community landscapes, while also advancing future work through the planning and design of 12 upcoming projects.

## Mason Conservation District

In Mason County, where forested areas, working lands, and salmon-bearing streams connect to marine waters, Mason Conservation District has focused efforts on keeping existing buffers effective in partnership with local land managers and partners. Through the Riparian Grant program, the district and its partners maintained 541 acres of established riparian habitat, helping ensure past restoration continues to support water quality, salmon habitat, and downstream shellfish areas. This work takes place within the broader regional effort where the Skokomish Tribe and Squaxin Island Tribe play a leadership role in watershed and salmon recovery planning. The district is helping to lay the groundwork for what comes next through the maintenance of 701 acres and planning and design of 116 additional acres of riparian restoration with local landowners and community partners.



## Snohomish Conservation District

In the Snohomish and Stillaguamish River basins, Snohomish Conservation District established new riparian forest buffers and maintained existing streamside vegetation across rural and urban priority reaches. These efforts support water quality, habitat, and overall watershed health. Through the Riparian Grant Program, the district maintained 32 acres of established riparian habitat and planted 12.78 acres of new riparian forest buffer. This work advances regional salmon recovery and water quality goals, aligns with riparian restoration efforts led by the Tulalip Tribes and Stillaguamish Tribe, and reflects a sustained commitment to long-term watershed stewardship.

## Asotin County Conservation District

In the Asotin Creek and Snake River watershed, Asotin County Conservation District focused riparian work on supporting erosion control, fish habitat, and water quality alongside ranching and agricultural production. Through the Riparian Grant Program, the district maintained 77 acres of existing riparian habitat, helping ensure previously established buffers continue performing effectively for both land managers and the watershed. The district's work demonstrated a collaborative commitment to sustaining riparian areas in agriculturally influenced watersheds that are vital to salmon recovery, and planning and design efforts resulted in 31 additional riparian projects with local partners and land managers.

## About the Washington State Conservation Commission

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) conserves natural resources on all lands in Washington. We collaborate with Washington's 45 conservation districts and other partners to provide voluntary, incentive-based programs.

## About Conservation Districts

Conservation districts are locally-led, non-regulatory governments dedicated to natural resource management. All 39 Washington counties are served by at least one conservation district, bringing expertise and trusted relationships to meet conservation needs.