



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Coastal Program

*nature's
good neighbors*



Supporting Coastal Habitats

Nature's Good Neighbors

Nature's Good Neighbors is a series of stories compiled by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) that highlights people's connection to the land, wildlife and waters of our country.

Conserving these natural places fuels our economy, sustains our communities, and contributes to the health and well-being of families in every corner of the nation.

The stories also highlight the technical and financial assistance provided by the Service to these stewards who are working to make a home for people and wildlife and to conserve these resources for future generations.



Free Flowing

Protecting communities and restoring stream habitat in Connecticut

Although more than 80% of Americans live in cities, it is important for people to maintain a connection with nature. Studies show that nature has a positive effect on people's health and happiness. Communities are recognizing its importance and are conserving natural spaces in and near cities.

Gather New Haven, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, and the Service's Coastal and Urban Wildlife Conservation Programs are working together to conserve natural places in New Haven.



Find out more about the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program at <https://bit.ly/3xoar7D>

The partners removed an aging dam that restored fish passage and stream functions at Pond Lily Nature Preserve. It eliminated threats to the community from flooding associated with the dam and catastrophic dam failure.

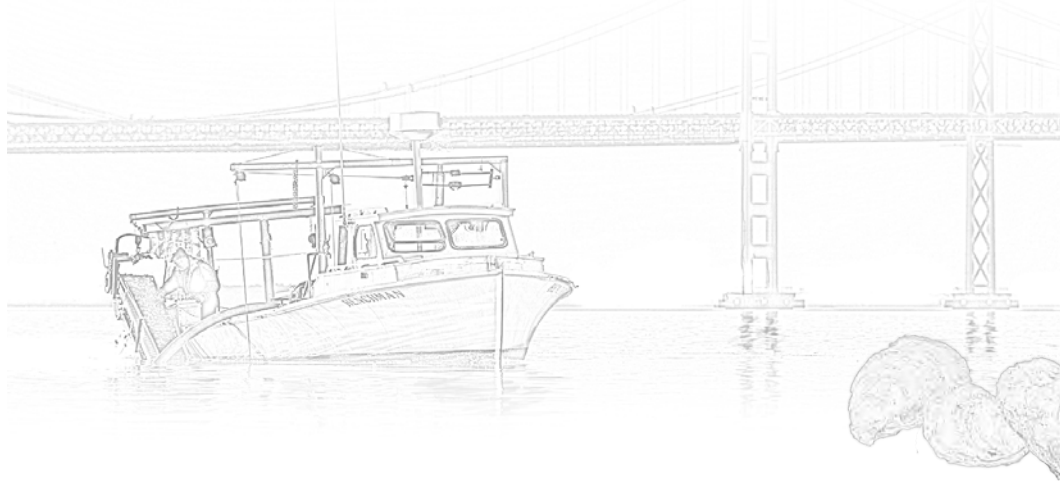
These conservation efforts often have additional benefits for surrounding communities. The Preserve is an important natural amenity that provides recreational and educational opportunities and fosters a sense of community stewardship.



Watch a video about this story at <https://bit.ly/2YoHIR6>

Pearl in the Making

Supporting Chesapeake Bay and shellfish harvesters in Maryland



Harris Seafood Company and the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center are working with the Coastal Program and local shellfish harvesters to build new oyster reefs. The commercial benefit of these reefs is obvious – more oysters to harvest. There are other benefits, oysters also filter pollution from the water, reduce shoreline erosion, and provide habitat and food for fish, crabs, and waterbirds.

Read more about this story at <https://bit.ly/3NNeDms>



Working together matters

David Sutherland (left), Coastal Program biologist; Jason Ruth, Owner of Harris Seafood Company; and Vicki Paulas, Assistant Director of the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Center.

“Today’s watermen and seafood businesses have a better understanding of their stewardship role and we are taking action to make things better.”

Jason Ruth, Owner of Harris Seafood Company

Supporting local economies

Harris Seafood Company operates year-round – employing 57 people, supporting 250 watermen, and generating \$25 million to \$30 million annually for the local economy.



Where Quail is King

Preserving nature and hunting traditions in South Carolina

The Lord Berkeley Conservation Trust, Oakland Club, and the Coastal Program protected a 11,000-acre property that supports a stunning array of habitats, including longleaf pine forests, bottomland hardwood forests, and cypress-tupelo swamps. It is home to endangered species such as the red-cockaded woodpecker and Canby's dropwort. The protection of this property completes a corridor of conserved habitats.



"By saving one place, you save a region."

Raleigh West, Executive Director of Lord Berkeley Land Trust

The property also operates as a hunting club and provides some of the best bobwhite quail hunting in the region. The owners retain many private-property rights, while preserving historical and hunting traditions in perpetuity.



Four generations of the Revenelle family have worked at the Oakland Club. And for the past 51 years, Roger Revenelle (left) has guided quail hunts. Ryan Bowles (right), the Oakland Club manager, has worked hard to maintain the property as it was in the 1900s – when quail was king.



Born on the Bayou

Protecting communities along the Texas Salt Bayou



The Coastal Program helped to restore marsh on the McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge that protects businesses and communities along the Salt Marsh Bayou.

The Texas Gulf Coast is home to communities of fish, wildlife, and people, as well as important oil and gas, military, and manufacturing infrastructures. It is also a popular destination for vacationers, birders, anglers, and hunters.

Increasingly, hurricanes and floods threaten these communities, businesses, and recreation. However, communities have been taking action to protect their families and livelihoods.

The Coastal Program, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and other partners restored a salt marsh on McFaddin National Wildlife Refuge that protects homes and businesses adjacent to the refuge. Community and business leaders attribute the reduced flooding from subsequent hurricanes to the restored marsh.

“The only thing that stood between the destruction of our refining capacity and Hurricane Ike was that marsh. It saved the county.”

Jeff Branick, Jefferson County Judge



Hurricane Harvey flooded large areas in the Texas coast and impacted the production of more than 640 million gallons of gasoline and other fuels.

California Dreaming

Conserving salmon and supporting working lands in California

In Humboldt County, salmon spawn in streams that meander among ferns and towering redwoods. As they swim upstream, they pass wetlands that are an important staging area for young salmon preparing to go to sea. The region has lost 90% of these wetlands due to historical farming practices. However, local communities are working to restore these wetlands while preserving farms and working lands.

The Northcoast Regional Land Trust, California Coastal Conservancy, and the Coastal Program restored a 35-acre tidal wetland on Freshwater Farms Reserve by removing a levy, restoring stream channels, and planting native vegetation.



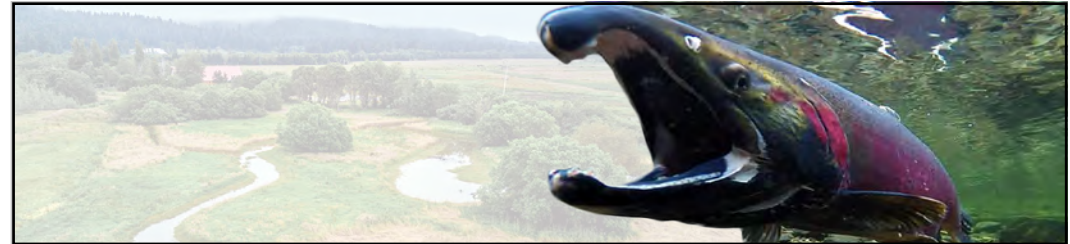
Read more about this story at <https://bit.ly/2Ar0PrY>

A study found that salmon in the restored watershed grew four times faster than in other watersheds – increasing the survival of young salmon at sea.¹ The success of this project is more impressive considering the property continues to be used for cattle, agriculture, and a community farm stand.



“Freshwater Farms Reserve is a grand experiment of restoration and compatible agriculture.”

Dan Ehresman, Executive Director of the Northcoast Regional Land Trust



Salmon are ecologically and economically important to this region. They provide substantial nutrients for habitats and wildlife and support a \$3 billion fishing industry.

1. Wallace, M. 2017. Wood Creek Habitat Restoration Phase 2 Pre/Post-Project Fish and Water Quality Sampling November 2016 to May 2017. California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Dena'ina Country

Protecting nature and Alaska Native heritage

Eklutna, Inc., a tribal corporation, manages tribal lands for the economic benefit of the Dena'ina people. The corporation is also the largest private landowner in Anchorage.

**"Creator made us from dirt, this is the dirt I'm from.
Only home I've ever had."**

Lee Stephan, Traditional Chief, Eklutna Village



Recognizing the ecological importance of their lands, the corporation worked with the Great Land Trust and the Coastal Program to identify areas for conservation and development. This partnership has permanently protected thousands of acres of wetlands and forests and miles of streams, which preserves habitat connectivity and ensures that the iconic wildlife of Alaska continue to thrive. Abundant wildlife can also be good for the local economy.

Watch a video about this story at <https://bit.ly/2VxVVJc>



Example of habitats conserved by Eklutna, Inc.

For example, salmon in this region support hundreds of jobs and contribute millions of dollars to the local economy.² Partnerships like this one demonstrate that communities can successfully balance the need for development and conservation.

2. Colt, S. and Schwoerer, T. 2009. *Economic Importance of Sportfishing in the Matanuska-Susitna Borough*. Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska.

Aloha State of Mind

Preserving fish and Hawaiian traditions for future generations

Malama 'aina is a Hawaiian belief that we must care for nature, so that nature can provide for us and future generations. Declines in the abundance of fish along the North Shore of O'ahu led local residents to establish the Hā'ena Community-Based Subsistence Fishing Area.

The 3,583-acre fishing area protects coral reefs, while preserving fishing and traditional practices used by native Hawaiians for subsistence, cultural, and religious reasons. In addition to providing fish habitat, coral reefs sustain marine biodiversity, protect coastlines, and support recreational activities.



A study estimates that Hawai'i's coral reefs provide \$360 million in economic benefits per year.³

Hā'ena residents worked with the Coastal Program, Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, and many others to develop a management plan for the fishing area. Residents were also trained to oversee and manage the fishing area.



Hā'ena community circle.

The first of its kind in Hawai'i, this community-managed fishing area serves as a model for other local communities to co-manage their marine resources with their state governments.

Supporting Communities



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Coastal Program

The Coastal Program works with communities to conserve habitats that are important to them. It ensures coastal communities and their irreplaceable natural environments continue to thrive for future generations by working hand in hand with other government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, and private landowners.

Financial Assistance

The Coastal Program provides financial assistance to plan habitat protection and implements habitat restoration on public and private lands.

Since 1985, the Coastal Program has:

Protected
2,000,000+
acres of habitat⁴

Restored
600,000+
acres of habitat⁴

Delivered
\$1+ Billion
in partner contributions⁵

Delisted or Downlisted
15+
threatened or
endangered species⁶

Leveraged
\$5 to \$1
in partner to program
contributions⁵

4. Program data since 2002; 5. Program data since 2005; and 6. Program data since 2000

Commitment to healthy coastal ecosystems and resilient communities

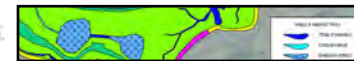
The Coastal Program works along all three U.S. coasts, the Great Lakes, and in Alaska, the Caribbean, and Hawaii and other Pacific islands. Local staff provide technical and financial assistance directly to partners to implement conservation planning, habitat protection, and restoration projects.

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance allows the Coastal Program to have a broader impact by improving the planning and delivery of habitat conservation.



Conservation Planning



Restoration Design



Capacity Building

Learn more about the Coastal Program at <https://www.fws.gov/program/coastal>

