



Killer Whale Research and Conservation

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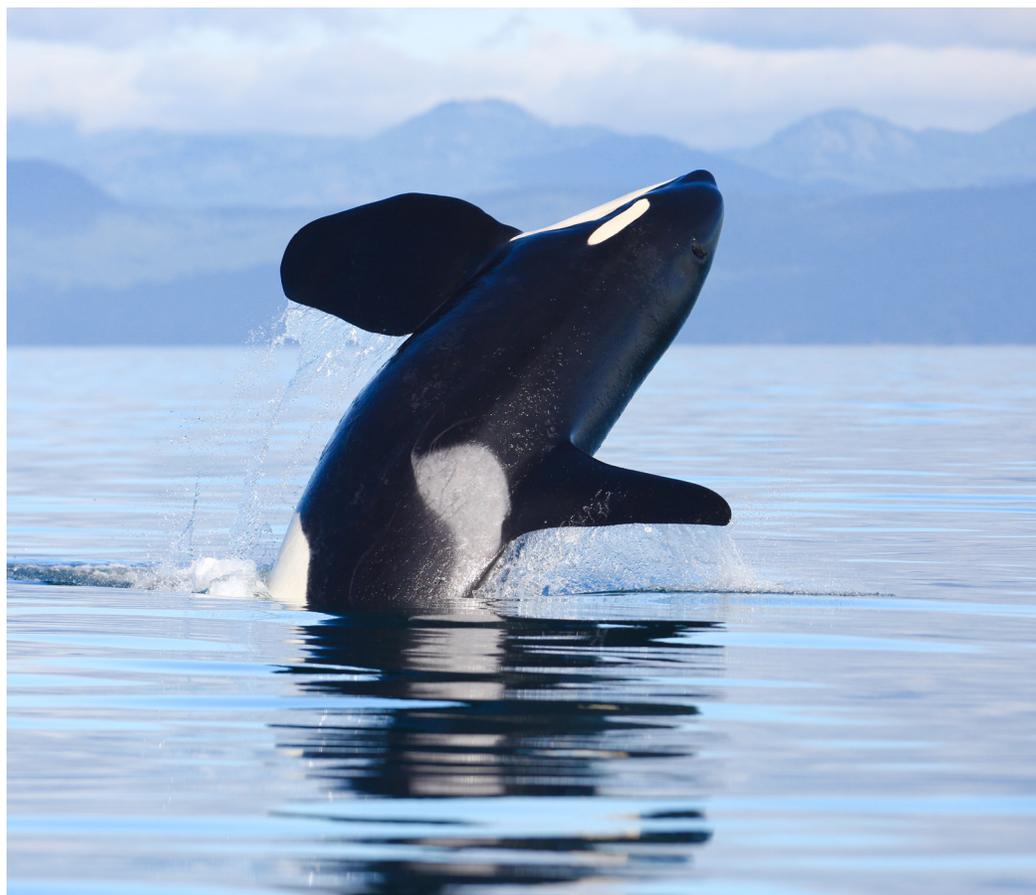
ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 5,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$6.1 billion.

Learn more at www.nfwf.org

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Orca breaching in Puget Sound

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), SeaWorld Entertainment, Inc., Shell Oil Company, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration announced a 2020 round of funding for Killer Whale Research and Conservation projects. Eight new grants totaling \$918,713 were awarded. The eight awards announced generated \$3,200,186 in grantee matching contributions for a total conservation impact of \$4,118,899.

The following eight projects address three threat categories that were prioritized by the Washington Governor's Orca Task Force in 2018: 1) prey availability, 2) vessel impacts, and 3) toxins/pollutants. All three of these priorities are connected. Vessel sounds and disturbance reduces hunting success for prey (Chinook salmon) that are already in low abundance and of sub-optimal size. Reduced nutrition means lowered immunity and a release of fat stores that may contain toxics that get released into the blood stream.

Therefore the 2020 awards focuses heavily on increasing prey availability which will take the longest to achieve, while also minimizing other risks to whale health while these salmon stocks recover.

(continued)



Orca with calf

Restoring Habitat for Chinook Salmon in the South Fork of the Skagit River (WA)

Grantee: Skagit County Public Works
 Grant Amount:\$200,000
 Matching Funds:\$2,315,700
 Total Project:\$2,515,700
 Complete construction and restoration of 5 acres of off-channel pool habitat along the South Fork of the Skagit River in Washington. Project will create vital rearing habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon, ultimately increasing prey availability for Southern Resident killer whales.

Restoring Habitat for Chinook Salmon in Port Susan Bay Estuary (WA)

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy
 Grant Amount:\$200,000
 Matching Funds:\$250,000
 Total Project:\$450,000
 Restore 150 acres of rearing habitat and monitor the effect of restored hydrologic connectivity on salmonids and marsh habitats at Port Susan Bay, Washington. Project will improve habitat connectivity, lower site salinity, and support vegetation growth for Chinook salmon, a vital source of food for Southern Resident killer whales.

Bolster Protection of Forage Fish Habitat to Increase Survival of Juvenile Chinook Salmon (WA)

Grantee: Friends of the San Juans
 Grant Amount:\$84,797
 Matching Funds:\$84,798
 Total Project:\$169,595
 Foster relationships with public and private landowners to prevent further loss of forage fish and juvenile Chinook salmon habitat from shoreline hardening in San Juan County, Washington. Project will engage landowners through site visits, feasibility studies and preliminary design to protect and restore vital rearing and feeding habitat for out-migrating Chinook salmon.

Protecting Chinook and Steelhead Salmon from Harbor Seal Predation (WA)

Grantee: Long Live the Kings
 Grant Amount:\$152,538
 Matching Funds:\$165,000
 Total Project:\$317,538
 Test an innovative seal deterrent technology, the GenusWave acoustic startle device, in the Nisqually Estuary, Washington. Project will test the effectiveness of the acoustic startle device, reducing predation-related mortality of juvenile Chinook and providing a nonlethal option to address predation.



Juvenile Coho salmon

Reducing Disturbance of Southern Resident Killer Whales from Vessel Traffic (WA)

Grantee: Ocean Wise Conservation Association
 Grant Amount:\$100,000
 Matching Funds:\$169,441
 Total Project:\$269,441
 Reduce physical and acoustic disturbance of southern resident killer whales caused by vessel traffic in Washington State waters. Project will increase the use and functionality of the WhaleReport Alert System in British Columbia and Washington State to employ voluntary measures to benefit killer whales.

Improving Recreational Boater Behavior and Compliance Around Southern Resident Killer Whales (WA)

Grantee: San Juan County WA Public Works
 Grant Amount: \$52,812
 Matching Funds: \$55,000
 Total Project:\$107,812
 Improve recreational boater regulatory compliance around Southern Resident killer whales in the Salish Sea. Project will expand the whale warning flag program to additional critical habitat areas and develop new and innovative outreach campaigns to increase awareness of regulations with targeted audiences known to have high non-compliance.

Engaging Puget Sound Developers to Increase Water Quality to Benefit Killer Whale Populations (WA)

Grantee: Salmon-Safe
 Grant Amount: \$75,000
 Matching Funds:\$100,000
 Total Project:\$175,000
 Implement best management practices for stormwater runoff on 25 high priority development sites in the Puget Sound region. Project will expand the “Clean Water for Salmon, Clean Water for Killer Whales” campaign to reduce water quality impacts on the Puget Sound via strategic application of certification, developer incentives, and other market-based tools.

Developing Standards for Early Indicators of Change in Killer Whale Health (WA)

Grantee: Pacific Marine Mammal Center
 Grant Amount: \$53,566
 Matching Funds: \$60,247
 Total Project:\$113,813
 Evaluate the feasibility of remotely assessing early indicators of change in Southern Resident killer whale health while in the Salish Sea. Project will enhance the early identification of declining or improving health of whales and understand relationships in body condition, fecundity and survivorship.