



## Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Success Stories from the 2020 Grant Projects



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN  
RESTORATION PROGRAM

### ABOUT THE COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION FUNDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

*Congress amended the Clean Water Act in 2016, which required EPA to establish a Columbia River Basin Restoration Program. EPA was directed to develop a voluntary, competitive grant program for eligible entities to fund environmental protection and restoration programs throughout the Basin. Eligible entities include state, Tribal, and local governments; regional water pollution control organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and soil and water conservation districts. Funded work must be for the purpose of environmental protection and restoration activities within the Columbia River Basin; and may include programs, projects, and studies. EPA funded 14 projects in the 2020, inaugural round of grants that address the following four priorities:*

1. *Increase monitoring and access data from monitoring.*
2. *Reduce stormwater and agricultural runoff.*
3. *Reduce toxics through small scale cleanup of non-CERCLA (also known as Superfund) contaminated sites.*
4. *Promote citizen engagement, education, and involvement to increase pollution prevention actions.*

*In September of 2020, EPA was able to provide the full amount requested by successful grantees for a total of \$2,053,903 in FY19 and FY20 grant funding. These are their stories of progress made to date.*

### EVALUATING AND PRIORITIZING CONTAMINANTS OF EMERGING CONCERN IN THE LOWER COLUMBIA RIVER (OR, WA)

The University of Washington Tacoma (UW-Tacoma) **Center for Urban Waters (CUW)** received \$76,601 from EPA's inaugural Columbia River Basin Restoration Grant Program. UW-Tacoma analytical laboratories focus on understanding the presence, fate, and impacts of anthropogenic contaminants in regional waters. The group collaborates with federal, state, and regional partners, performing investigations at the intersection of chemistry and ecotoxicology, and addressing questions around the evaluating and improving management approaches. The UW-Tacoma laboratories at CUW are co-located with the City of Tacoma Environmental Services and the UW Puget Sound Institute, a boundary spanning organization focusing on integrating science and evaluation into management and policy decision-making processes. Key partners on this project include the **Columbia River Basin Restoration Working Group** and the **Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program**.



This goal of this project is to monitor previously unmonitored contaminants, known as Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs) such as endocrine disruptors, in the Columbia River to determine whether they might have the potential to harm important species. The sampling area covers the Portland metro area to Wauna, OR, as well as locations in the Willamette River.

This project specifically addresses the grant program Priority 1—Increased monitoring and access to data.

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

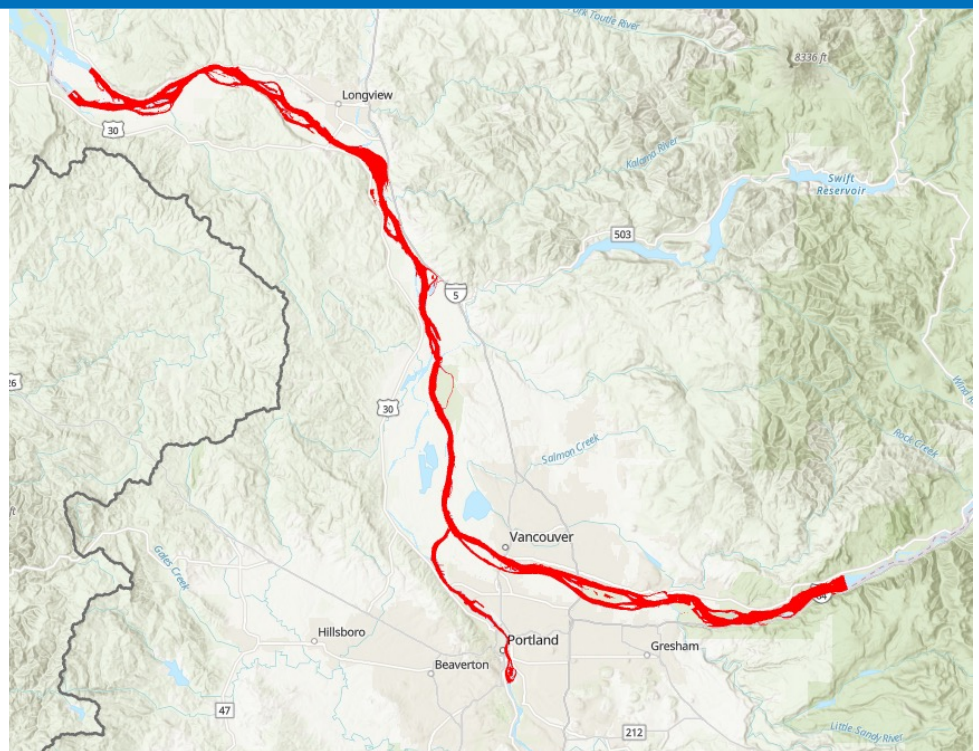
All water quality sampling events have been completed. The events took place in February, March, August, and September 2021. The first two events were meant to characterize conditions during the wetter winter and spring, while the last two focused on the dry summer period. Sixteen samples were collected in each event and processed the following day at the UW-Tacoma laboratories.



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***“We successfully completed our sampling events in spring and summer 2021 over a large range of the lower Columbia river. They were logistically challenging events and were pleased to have completed them. We also continue to engage the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program CEC subgroup, which includes our EPA Technical Lead, focusing on approaches for prioritizing CECs in regional waters. This has been a fruitful collaboration and feel that it will bring value and improved coordination to regional water quality work.”***

*– Andy James, PhD PE,  
Center for Urban Waters  
Research Laboratories*



UWT Project Area



The samples have been run of the LC-QToF (liquid chromatograph-quadrupole time of flight) and we are currently starting in on the data analysis.

### **WHAT'S NEXT? WHERE DO THEY GO FROM HERE?**

Once the data analysis is complete, the results will be compared against a CEC Prioritization Effort that is being performed under the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program. This will help determine which CECs might be biologically relevant. The results will be communicated through a final report and regional presentations. Through these results UW-Tacoma is looking for

information to better understand what CECs might be occurring, and if any of them might be of concern. UW-Tacoma is focusing on previously unmonitored contaminants such as endocrine disruptors in the Columbia River.

**To Learn more, visit the University of Washington Tacoma's Center for Urban Waters website: <https://www.urbanwaters.org/>.**