



EPA Announces \$6.9 Million in Grants to Communities, Tribal, State and Local Governments, and Others to Reduce Toxics in the Columbia River Basin!



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM

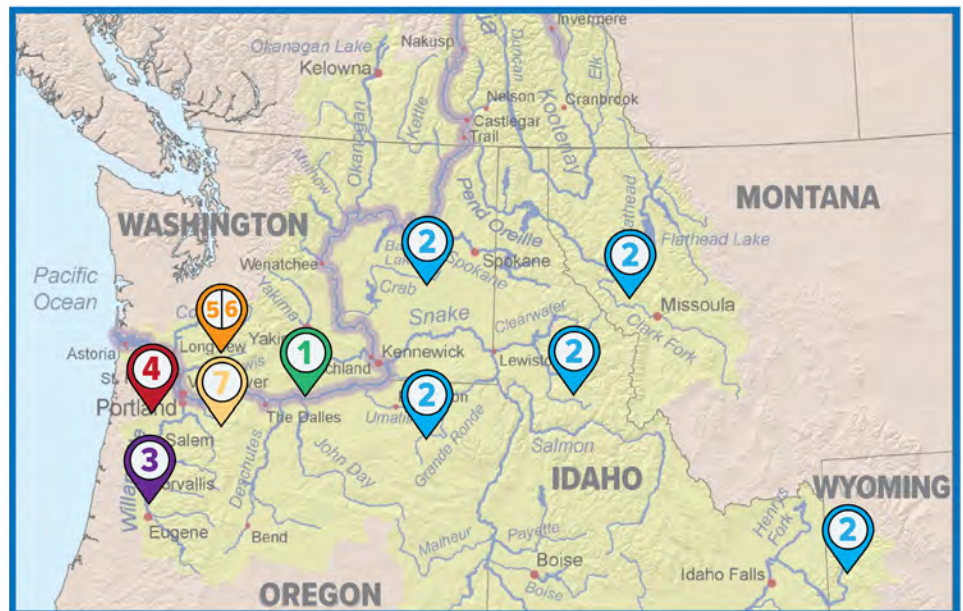
ABOUT THE COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION FUNDING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

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 to 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.

EPA will be awarding approximately \$6.9 million across 25 projects in 2022 to reduce toxics in fish and water throughout the Columbia River Basin in ID, MT, OR, WA, and WY, using annual Congressional appropriations and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding. On August 10, 2022, EPA is announcing 7 initial 2022 grants totaling \$1,785,524 which represent the breadth of toxics reduction, community engagement, and pollution prevention projects occurring throughout the Basin. With a 25% match for non-Tribal projects, federal dollars will be leveraged by community funds and community engagement to increase the impact and provide more successful results for this work.



- 1** Columbia River Pollution Education and Outreach Project (OR, WA)
- 2** Salmon-Safe Columbia Basin Pledge: Accelerating water quality protection in the interior Columbia Basin (OR/WA/ID/MT/WY)
- 3** Engaging Communities to Monitor Mercury Risk in the Columbia River Basin: Intensive Application of a National Biosentinel Network at a Regional Scale (OR)
- 4** Reducing PFAS and Phthalates in Local Clean Water Systems within the Columbia Basin (OR)
- 5** City of Vancouver Columbia Slope Water Quality Monitoring Phase 2 (WA)
- 6** City of Vancouver Waste Incentive Network (WA)
- 7** Pesticide Behavior Change Project of Oregon & Southwest Washington (OR, WA)

AUGUST 2022 EPA GRANT AWARDS

EPA is excited to announce the following grants as examples of how this program is building community and Tribal government capacity around the Basin, with more to be awarded this fall. These grants reflect the diversity and geographic breadth of the Basin.



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM

BIPARTISAN INFRASTRUCTURE LAW FUNDING

The EPA Columbia River Basin Program received \$79 million in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) in 2021. This funding provides EPA the ability to grow the Columbia River Basin Restoration Program and significantly increase competitive grants throughout the Basin to reduce toxics. EPA will be awarding 12 grants using BIL funds in 2022 totaling \$3,831,276. EPA plans to issue additional Requests for Applications in 2022/2023 using BIL funds to increase toxics reduction through agricultural best practices, stormwater green infrastructure, pollution prevention, clean-up of small non-CERCLA sites, and community education and engagement.

ABOUT THE BASIN

The Columbia River Basin covers 260,000 square miles, 16 federally recognized Tribes, areas of MT, ID, WA, and OR and smaller portions of WY, NV, and UT. The Basin provides benefits including commercial fisheries, agriculture, forestry, recreation, and electric power generation. Human activities have contributed toxic contaminants to the environment that contribute to human health and ecosystem risks. Throughout the Basin, fish species have accumulated contaminant levels that are harmful to people and wildlife. Toxins in fish are a primary health concern for Columbia River Basin Tribal people and other high fish consumers.

1 **Columbia River Pollution Education and Outreach Project (OR, WA)**

Columbia Riverkeeper will seek to reduce toxic pollution in the Columbia Basin by conducting youth and community pollution education and outreach. The project will promote citizen engagement and knowledge about EPA's priority toxics and pollution reduction through school, community, and online engagement and by educating and inspiring students and community members on sources of toxic pollution, reduction strategies, and actions to prevent pollution. This project builds on and expands Riverkeeper's successful Columbia Gorge Pollution Prevention Outreach and Education Program funded by EPA in 2020 and 2021. Specifically, the project will provide high-quality, field- and online-based toxic pollution education to 1,200 kindergarten through community college students from diverse communities in the Columbia River Gorge.

EPA Grant Amount: \$125,452

2 **Salmon-Safe Columbia Basin Pledge: Accelerating Water Quality Protection in the Interior Columbia Basin (OR/WA/ID/MT/WY)**

Salmon-Safe will build on the successful roll out of Salmon-Safe initiatives in interior Columbia Basin tributaries that were implemented with the first phase of EPA funding. Salmon-Safe Columbia Basin Pledge will scale up activities in these tributaries, particularly in Idaho, while introducing their new Trout-Safe initiative in Columbia River tributaries across western Montana and the Wyoming portion of the Teton River Valley and upper Snake River. Salmon-Safe will roll out the Columbia Basin Pledge, engaging 250 farmers across multiple crop sectors and other large-scale land managers in actions to protect downstream water quality. Earning Salmon-Safe certification will require that these mostly large-scale, diversified farms reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides that are harmful to fish and wildlife and reduce runoff and wind erosion, while also improving soil health, riparian habitat, irrigation efficiency, and protecting wildlife habitat and enhancing native biodiversity. The project is a long-term strategy to reduce toxics and enhance climate resiliency in the watershed, while demonstrating market support to maintain viable farming operations. **EPA Grant Amount: \$342,000 (funded with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds)**

3 **Engaging Communities to Monitor Mercury Risk in the Columbia River Basin: Intensive Application of a National Biosentinel Network at a Regional Scale (OR)**

Oregon State University (OSU) will work to implement a fine-scale, community-based mercury monitoring network in the Willamette River Valley to document trends in biotic mercury contamination at a fine scale across various environmental and demographic gradients, identifying pollution drivers and informing safer fishing practices. Using established curricula, OSU will engage and educate community scientists to sample dragonfly larvae as mercury bioindicators, connecting people to the freshwater systems on which they depend, and increasing public knowledge of mercury risks to ecosystem and human health. **EPA Grant Amount: \$349,919**

4 Reducing PFAS and Phthalates in Local Clean Water Systems within the Columbia Basin (OR)

Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA) will work to produce actionable information for ACWA and its member agencies to reduce and better assess sources of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and phthalates in municipal wastewater and stormwater systems. The results of this effort will advance water quality improvement strategies for two priority chemical classes of emerging concern and will directly inform ACWA's approaches for addressing other types of toxic pollutants through its prospective Toxics Reduction Strategy. **EPA Grant Amount: \$118,044**

5 City of Vancouver Columbia Slope Water Quality Monitoring Phase 2 (WA)

The City of Vancouver, Washington, will collect an additional 18 months of water quality data at ten locations along the Columbia Slope to accurately establish current conditions, provide baseline data for future trend analysis, and determine the effectiveness of stormwater management practices. Water quality data will also be used to identify and prioritize outfall basins where future stormwater treatment retrofits would be effective in removing contaminants that are currently reaching the Columbia River.

EPA Grant Amount: \$246,860

6 City of Vancouver Waste Incentive Network (WA)

The City of Vancouver, Washington, will work with its existing contracted waste hauler, Clark County Public Works, and other private waste haulers to improve dangerous waste disposal in the City of Vancouver for business and multi-family residential waste through a project called the Waste Incentive Network (WIN). The City of Vancouver will reduce pollution and threats to human and aquatic health by encouraging proper waste disposal and raising awareness about the water pollution risks of improper waste disposal. **EPA Grant Amount: \$255,837**

7 Pesticide Behavior Change Project of Oregon & Southwest Washington (OR, WA)

The City of Gresham, Oregon, will implement Phase II of the Pesticide Reduction Outreach (PRO) Campaign, previously funded by an EPA Columbia River Basin Restoration Grant. This project will be managed by the City of Gresham, the Clean Rivers Coalition Steering Committee, and its partners. The PRO Campaign will focus on the reduction of human exposures and environmental releases of residential and commercial pesticides. This project will launch pilot projects geared towards residential Do-It-Yourself (DIY) lawn care audiences and small business Hispanic/Latino/a/x (Latinx) lawn care landscapers without pesticide licenses. The project will achieve pesticide use reduction by teaching and engaging the key audiences about integrated pest management techniques and deploying community based social marketing techniques to maximize behavior change. **EPA Grant Amount: \$347,412 (funded with Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds)**

For more information, please contact Mary Lou Soscia (USEPA Region 10) at 503-326-5873 or soscia.marylou@epa.gov or find us on the EPA website at <https://www.epa.gov/columbiariver>.



COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN
RESTORATION PROGRAM

COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN RESTORATION PROGRAM VISION STATEMENT

The EPA Columbia River Basin Restoration Program—through the implementation of Clean Water Act Section 123—will be a catalyst for basin-wide toxics reduction work efforts, enabling communities to access unimpaired watersheds with healthy fish and wildlife and quantifiable toxics reductions in fish, wildlife, and water.

EPA'S COMMITMENT TO TRIBAL HEALTH PROTECTION, ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE

The Columbia River Basin Restoration Program is focused on engaging Tribal and underserved communities in efforts to identify and reduce threats to their environment and community health. EPA's commitment to reducing toxics in fish and water in the Columbia River Basin is key to EPA's ongoing trust responsibility to Tribal governments. Toxics reduction will support climate resilience for the Columbia River Basin ecosystem by reducing aquatic ecosystem and human health stressors in an environment stressed by severe climatic events.



**COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN
RESTORATION PROGRAM**

“The City of Vancouver is excited to launch the Waste Incentive Network; we will use this program to reduce pollution and threats to human and aquatic health by promoting proper waste disposal.

*Additional water quality monitoring along the Columbia Slope will help the City identify and prioritize stormwater retrofit projects to remove contaminants from urban road runoff that discharges to the Columbia River.” — **Kris Olinger, Interim Surface Water Manager, City of Vancouver***

“The City of Gresham is grateful to be a recipient of the Columbia River Basin Restoration Program Grant funds. This funding is instrumental in our efforts to restore and protect one of our Nation’s largest watersheds. We look forward to the continued collaboration with the EPA and partner communities as we collectively work together towards cleaner rivers and streams throughout our region.”
— **City of Gresham, Oregon**

“Salmon-Safe has partnered with environmentally innovative farmers in the mid-Columbia Basin for more than a decade to introduce market-based incentives for water quality protection and habitat restoration practices on agricultural lands. With support from EPA Columbia River Basin Restoration Program, Salmon-Safe is scaling up our grower outreach, farm assessment, and market recognition efforts throughout the interior Columbia Basin, building new partnerships with place-based conservation organizations and Tribal governments across the region, including upper Snake River tributaries. We look forward to building on this work with a new Columbia River Pledge to significantly expand the audience we activate in our water quality protection and salmon recovery efforts, including beginning to engage urban developers in cities like Spokane and Boise.”

— **Dan Kent, Executive Director, Salmon-Safe**

*“With support from EPA, Columbia Riverkeeper will help to reduce toxic pollution in the mid-Columbia. We are excited to keep up the community-based momentum for a clean Columbia with high-quality online, field- and classroom-based pollution prevention education to community members and students from diverse communities in the Columbia River Gorge.” — **Lauren Goldberg, Executive Director, Columbia Riverkeeper***

“Mercury contamination poses significant risks to fish, wildlife, and human health. We are grateful to start a mercury monitoring program in the Columbia River Basin using dragonflies as biosentinels. Using EPA Columbia Basin Restoration Program funds, Oregon State University will leverage and partner with an existing US Geological Survey national scale work effort, the Dragonfly Mercury Project, to engage Tribal Nations, K-12 students, and other local community groups in collaborative, experiential science.”
— **Oregon State University**

*“The Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA) is excited to receive funding support from the EPA to work on behalf our member wastewater and stormwater management agencies across the state to identify and reduce water pollution from priority toxic pollutants. This grant will enable ACWA to collaborate with partners to target water pollution from PFAS and phthalates—two highly toxic classes of chemicals found in thousands of consumer and business products and used in industrial processes—in the most effective, affordable, and equitable way, which is through reducing them at the source.” — **Susie Smith, OR ACWA Executive Director***