

2002 COASTAL AMERICA AWARDS PROGRAM WINNERS

• **Little River Salt Marsh Restoration Partnership, North Hampton, NH (2001 resubmission)**

Once 195 acres of back-barrier marsh, the building of grid ditches and roads, the placement of fill, and the installation of an undersized culvert at the outlet reduced the Little River marsh in size, deteriorated water quality, and led to the closing of nearby shellfish beds. This project restored the 170 remaining acres of degraded salt marsh through installation of new culverts and dredging of sediments in the tidal creeks. Monitoring, land protection, and public outreach will continue, mainly through the University of New Hampshire.

Significant Achievements:

- Installation of larger culverts at the main outlet and under road crossings
- Dredging of sediments out of the tidal creeks
- Employment of a new protocol for pre-restoration monitoring
- Improvement of water flow and quality (i.e. reduction in bacterial source contamination)
- Planning of continued monitoring, land protection, and public outreach

Team Members: Natural Resource Conservation Service; Town of North Hampton; North Hampton Conservation Commission; NH Coastal Program; US Fish and Wildlife Service; Ducks Unlimited, Inc.; NH Department of Environmental Services; National Fish and Wildlife Foundation; National Marine Fisheries Service; NH Department of Transportation; Audubon Society of New Hampshire; University of New Hampshire – Jackson Estuarine Laboratory

• **Pilgrim Trail Herring Restoration Partnership, Plymouth, MA**

The Town Brook Partnership goal is to restore the blueback herring and alewife run through restoration of their migratory and foraging habitat in Town Brook, located in historic Plymouth, MA. Town Brook, which empties into Plymouth Harbor, is the location of the nation's first fish ladder and has five major obstacles to fish passage. This project includes what will be the first proactively planned dam removal for anadromous fish passage in the state (Billington Street Dam), which will hopefully facilitate other selective dam removal projects. This restoration also entails the installation of a modern "Alaskan Steep Pass" fish ladder at the Newfield Street Dam to ensure access to the upper Town Brook. Due to the migratory routes of these fish, ecological benefits will be realized extending all the way down to the southern mid-Atlantic region.

Significant Achievements (projected by Fall 2002):

- Opening of ~ 1.5 mi. of Town Brook migratory fish habitat (via removal of Billington Street Dam and installation of a new fish ladder at Newfield Street Dam)
- Increasing the size of the river herring run (from 7,000 to 100,000 total fish)
- Eliminating the need to manually collect, transport, and release adult fish upstream of dams

Team Members: Town of Plymouth; National Marine Fisheries Service; MA Department of Fisheries, Wildlife, and Environmental Law Enforcement; Natural Resources Conservation Service; MA Division of Marine Fisheries; MA Coastal Zone Management; Massachusetts Watershed Initiative; US Army Reserves; US Fish and Wildlife Service; American Rivers; Milone & MacBroom, Inc.; US Environmental Protection Agency; Battelle

▪ **Back River Restoration Team, Langley Air Force Base, VA**

The Back River Restoration project at Langley Air Force Base began with a multi-service Chesapeake Bay initiative to regionally sample the water quality of several installations. Routine sampling qualified one of the base's sites in support of a test plot planting of the native eelgrass species. Following three years of healthy growth, long-term design plans were developed through a Memorandum of Agreement between the Air Force and Old Dominion University. Funding from the Department of Defense Legacy Program provided for a demonstration shoreline stabilization project. New partners were brought aboard when Langley was considered for a conservation reef. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission, Chesapeake Bay Foundation, and City of Hampton, with resources from NOAA's Community Grant Program, helped to build a 400' x 30' oyster reef. Such restoration efforts have been a catalyst for future, complete watershed planning at the base.

Significant Achievements:

- Restoration of ~ 150,000 sq. ft. of historic SAV beds
- Construction of a shoreline stabilization demonstration project
- Furnishing of research and documentation of native eelgrass planting techniques specific to LAFB shorelines (including documentation on film by the NAIB as part of the seahorse habitat exhibit that opened in 2001)
- Construction of a conservation oyster reef and the seeding of ~ 200,000 oyster spat
- Maintenance of critical real time data collection at the site that coordinates with other data collected around the bay watershed by NOAA, VIMS, and the National Aquarium
- Providing of a “living classroom” to local students on board one of the “Baywatcher” tours that allow the children the opportunity to broadcast seed oysters on the conservation reef

Team Members: Langley Air Force Base; Department of Defense; Virginia Marine Resources Commission; Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay; National Aquarium in Baltimore; City of Hampton- Public Works Department; Chesapeake Bay Foundation; VA Department of Conservation and Recreation

▪ **Sanibel Island Restoration/Management Partnership, Sanibel Island, FL**

This project focused on restoration and management of the environmentally sensitive lands on Sanibel Island, a subtropical barrier island on the southwest Gulf coast of Florida. The island provides habitat for a variety of wildlife including endangered and threatened species. Over the years it had lost much of its native habitat due to agriculture, invasive non-native plants, drainage, and development. A Cooperative Agreement was developed between the partners that allowed for the sharing of equipment and personnel and the methodical eradication of invasive non-native plants. Another agreement addressed the need for a disposal site for the exotic vegetation. This project continues with several hundred more acres of wetland scheduled for restoration in the near future and long-term management of conservation lands on the island (~ 60% of the entire island).

Significant Achievements:

- Restoration of thousands of acres to their former natural condition
- Return of raptors, wading and marsh birds, and prey species in areas once infested with non-native plants
- Formation of a cooperative agreement between partners allowing for future collaborative efforts
- Use of the Sanibel Island project as a model for restoration work and cooperative alliances in the region

Team Members: City of Sanibel, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Sanibel-Captiva Conservation Foundation

• **Southern California Wetlands Recovery Project, CA**

The partnership itself was created to pool resources and to recover wetlands using non-regulatory strategies. It consists of 17 state and federal agencies working in concert with scientists, local governments, and environmental organizations, as well as business leaders and educators. California has experienced a loss of wetlands of over 91%, with federal and state regulations only stemming losses, never having reached the “no net loss” objective. The SCWRP employs three primary strategies to recover wetlands: acquiring of property from willing sellers, restoring of wetlands where allowed by landowners and land managers, and education of people about best practices to protect wetlands.

Significant Achievements:

- Receipt of nearly \$40M in funding (with possible additional funding due to the passage of Proposition 40)
- Restoration of over 600 acres of wetlands and acquisition of some 2,500 acres

Team Members: US Environmental Protection Agency; US Army Corps of Engineers; US Fish and Wildlife Service; California Coastal Conservancy; CA Department of Fish and Game; CA Department of Parks and Recreation; State Water Resources Control Board; Santa Ana RWQCB; Los Angeles RWQCB; San Diego RWQCB; Central Coast RWQCB; National Marine Fisheries Service, National Resource Conservation Service; California Coastal Commission; State Lands Commission; CA Environmental Protection Agency

