

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY 2024 Tribal Wildlife Grants Awards Summaries**

***Below = Tribes that have not received TWG funds in the past.**

ALASKA:

***Native Village of Brevig Mission (\$170,841)**

Watershed Assessment & Long-term Subsistence Habitat Protection for Hot Springs, Glacier Canyon, and Graphite Creeks in Alaska's Seward Peninsula

The goal of this project is to provide long-term protection of the Native Village of Brevig Mission's and other Imuruk Basin Native Villages' culture and subsistence fish and wildlife resources and their habitat which are impacted by potential mining activities and exacerbated by more frequent extreme weather events within the Imuruk Basin Watershed and Norton Bay.

Chilkoot Indian Association (\$199,910)

Utilizing Environmental DNA (eDNA) to Monitor Tribally Important Fisheries Populations within Deishu, Alaska

The Chilkoot Indian Association (CIA) has been a regional leader in integrating eDNA into fisheries monitoring initiatives since 2014 within Southeast Alaska. The ever-growing number of eDNA samples collected annually, additional target species of interest, and interest in investigating additional population-level genetic questions has led CIA to identify the need of establishing our own Environmental Laboratory here in Deishu to support CIA's eDNA monitoring efforts and be a resource for Tribes throughout Alaska to utilize for eDNA sample processing.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska (\$200,000)

Artificial Intelligence for Subsistence Salmon Monitoring and Management

Sitka Tribe of Alaska will partner with Wild Salmon Center and the US Forest Service to install artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled video chutes to produce automated real-time counts of Redoubt Lake sockeye salmon for a fraction of the cost of traditional weirs. Once the model meets accuracy targets, it will substantially reduce long-term monitoring costs and be able to generate accurate in-season salmon counts in real-time with minimal human input.

Hoonah Indian Association (\$176,008)

Video Monitoring of Sockeye Salmon in Hoktaheen Watershed

The Hoonah Indian Association is looking to fill significant data gaps by installing and operating a fish weir with a video monitoring system to begin building complete and accurate records of Sockeye and other important fish species in the Hoktaheen system. Additionally, this project will begin year-round monitoring of water quality and temperatures in the main creek and lakes to further build a better understanding of the watershed and identify concerns and potential future restoration or enhancement projects in the area to increase resiliency to climate change and

insure food security for the people who use this system for up to 80% of their subsistence salmon needs.

Chickaloon Native Village (\$200,000)

Historical and Contemporary Salmon Research Project

This project will 1) describe the run timing, enumeration, and species composition of adult Alaska salmon in Moose Creek, 2) quantify juvenile salmon abundance in Premier Creek or Moose Creek, prior to restoration work, 3) perform a fish health survey on Moose Creek to identify parasites of concern, 4) document and non-lethally sample genetic tissue from salmon to contribute to the Alaska Anadromous Waters Catalog and Genetic Baseline Collection, 5) quantify marine-derived nitrogen and historical salmon DNA at culturally relevant fishing locations, and 6) build program capacity for additional fisheries projects in the future. This project combines traditional knowledge and western science to understand and protect culturally significant Chinook, coho, chum, and sockeye salmon.

Native Village of Eklutna (\$199,813)

Eklutna River Salmon Population Monitoring and Fish Weir Project Plan Development

The Native Village of Eklutna (NVE) will (1) continue to monitor salmon population trends and habitat use by juvenile and adult salmon within the Eklutna River; (2) continue the collection of genetic samples of salmon to help assess population viability; (3) develop a fish counting weir project plan for future implementation and; (4) present findings to management agencies and other partners to facilitate sound management decisions and timely actions are taken. These activities will build on previous efforts in the Eklutna River by the NVE.

Sun'aq Tribe of Kodiak (\$152,234)

Population evaluation of migratory emperor geese and Aleutian terns on the Kodiak Island Roaded Area, AK

This project has been specifically designed to directly aid in conservation of migratory emperor geese and Aleutian terns within the Kodiak Island Roaded Area through collection of necessary population-level abundance and health data, and to inform future harvest management decisions and conservation strategies, including habitat protection. Important staging areas for both species will be documented and used to develop the “Kodiak Island Roaded Area emperor goose and Aleutian tern status report and habitat conservation strategies.” Investigation of anthropogenic contaminants, infectious disease, and naturally-occurring environmental toxins will also be investigated and documented.

***Chilkat Indian Village (Klukwan) (\$200,000)**

Mapping Critical Salmon Habitats and Populations of the Chilkat Watershed

Chilkat Indian Village will map and analyze the habitat and populations of sockeye salmon using advanced microchemical (strontium isotope) tracking techniques. Through a comprehensive

sampling effort, this project will create the first detailed map of strontium isotope variation across the watershed's rivers, providing our sovereign government with a new tool for tracking fish populations and critical habitats in the Chilkat River watershed. Strontium signatures in otoliths will be statistically matched to this river map to provide high-resolution assessments of previously unrecognized populations and their habitats in the watershed.

ARIZONA:

Navajo Nation (\$100,000)

Estimating Abundance, Preserving Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and Resolving Human-Bear Conflict of Black Bears on the Navajo Nation

This project will be led by University of Arizona with technical and logistical support from Navajo Nation Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project aims to assess the current status of the black bear population on the Navajo Nation to contribute to effective habitat management while preserving Traditional Ecological Knowledge and minimizing human-wildlife conflicts.

CALIFORNIA:

***Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians of California (\$197,300)**

Tribal Wildlife and Postfire Restoration for Habitat Connectivity, Pollinator Species and TEK Plants around Feather Falls

The Mooretown Rancheria of Maidu Indians of California is focused on restoring and managing their ancestral lands, which were devastated by the 2020 North Complex Fire. This project includes several key objectives: planning to identify landscape management units and set recovery objectives, monitoring to establish baseline conditions using modified Forest Inventory and Analysis (FIA) plots, and developing a restoration plan that incorporates Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) to prioritize culturally significant and endangered species. Additionally, the Tribe aims to build capacity by hiring specialists in GIS and TEK, which will enhance in-house expertise and expand the Tribal Youth Program. This project integrates traditional knowledge with modern practices to ensure long-term resilience and effective stewardship of the land.

Pechanga Band of Mission Indians (\$199,240)

Audie Murphy Management Phase II

The Pechanga Band of Indians will use funding for Phase Two of a wildlife management project to protect the Southwestern Pond Turtle and burrowing owl. The project focuses on restoring sensitive species and ecosystems in the Audie Murphy Preserve (California) while preserving cultural resources. Objectives include habitat mapping, assessing species population needs, developing and implementing an invasive species management plan, and creating a public outreach program. Anticipated benefits include species protection, habitat restoration, and

community education, ensuring long-term conservation of both biotic and abiotic cultural resources in the preserve.

***La Posta Band of Mission Indians (\$200,000)**

La Posta Wildlands Management Plan

The La Posta Band of Mission Indians (Tribe) is proposing to develop a La Posta Wildlands Management Plan (LPWMP). This plan will provide the Tribe with a structured roadmap to implement habitat improvement and monitoring projects to protect wildlife species that important to the Tribe. The La Posta will perform vegetation surveys and habitat assessment to inform the LPWMP. These efforts will help assist the Tribe in the restoration and management of important habitats and provide protection to manage endangered species and species culturally significant to the Tribe.

Karuk Tribe (\$200,000)

Pkurihaansa karu Ikipuhaansa: Birds, Wolves, Beavers, and Turtle Monitoring for Adaptive Management in Karuk Aboriginal Territory

This project combines traditional ecological knowledge with modern technology and Western science to monitor key species and guide ecosystem restoration in Northern California's mid-Klamath basin. Karuk tribal staff will receive training in bird song identification and data processing using acoustic recording units (ARUs). Post-dam removal surveys for North American beavers and Western Pond turtles will be conducted, along with habitat restoration using GPS loggers. Environmental DNA samples will assess beaver presence, while ARUs and game cameras monitor gray wolves and other mammals. Educational outreach will involve youth in conservation, supporting the Karuk Tribe's eco-cultural revitalization and holistic forest management efforts.

*** Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians (\$200,000)**

Soboba Habitat, Vegetation, and Wildlife Assessment Project

The Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians will conduct a 2-year survey to assess habitat, vegetation, and wildlife on the Soboba Reservation, focusing on areas needing restoration and protection. Tribal staff will receive training in survey methods, wildlife monitoring, and data quality assurance. Baseline data on native and invasive vegetation will be collected from the Soboba Indian Creek stream corridor, with wildlife monitored using cameras. The findings will be analyzed to assess habitat conditions and summarized in a final report for Tribal leadership, providing a roadmap for future restoration and wildlife protection efforts on the reservation.

COLORADO:

Ute Mountain Ute Tribe (\$199,968)

Mule Deer Population Monitoring & Management Planning

The Tribe is proposing to study deer populations through aerial, camera trap, pedestrian surveys, and analysis of long-term hunting permit data for population assessments to manage its wildlife resources through the lenses of traditional ecological knowledge and science.

FLORIDA:

Seminole Tribe of Florida (\$200,000)

Seminole Tribe of Florida Fiscal Year 2025 Tribal Wildlife Grants Program

The Tribe's primary goal with this application is to obtain funding to assist with the continued implementation and development of the Tribe's Wildlife Conservation Plan (WCP), as approved by USFWS; the WCP helps fulfill the Tribal Council's directive for supporting an informed decision-making process related to sustainable natural resource management. More specifically, the WCP establishes an applied framework for protecting federally listed threatened and endangered species as well as culturally significant species. Furthermore, executing the WCP ensures conformity to federal policies without placing a disproportionate burden of resource protection measures onto the Tribe. The Tribe continues to utilize the WCP as a robust and effective tool to provide guidance for wildlife management within Seminole Reservations and Tribal Lands.

IDAHO:

Nez Perce Tribe (\$200,000)

Evaluating Non-Natives in Wallowa Lake: Implications for Sockeye Salmon Reintroduction

This project builds on a previous Tribal Wildlife Grant from FY2022. Sockeye were extirpated from Wallowa Lake in the early 1900s. The Nez Perce Tribe (Tribe) Department of Fisheries Resources Management (DFRM) has been involved with reintroduction efforts since the 1990s in hopes of restoring this treaty-reserved fishery. In this project, the DFRM will investigate the role of non-native species in the Wallowa Lake ecosystem to anticipate potential negative impacts to Sockeye Salmon reintroduction. In this project, the Tribe will investigate the food web role of introduced Lake Trout and Mysis and the resulting impacts on Kokanee and potentially Sockeye populations in Wallowa Lake. The Tribe also seeks to continue monitoring physical limnology and relative abundance of basal food web components including phytoplankton, zooplankton, and Mysis. The monitoring data will allow early detection of potentially dangerous food web shifts, particularly as Sockeye return to the system, and provide essential information for adaptive management. The proposed research will also provide data valuable for management of the lake's ESA listed Bull Trout population.

MAINE:

Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians (\$199,910)

North Branch Meduxnekeag River Restoration

The goal of this project is to install log-jam and boulder structures to restore in-stream habitat complexity, long term stability, and enhance fish habitat quality in a 0.8 mile stretch of the Meduxnekeag River. This project continues a long term effort to restore aquatic habitat and improve water quality by mitigating legacy impacts of logging and dams in the historical salmon stream.

MINNESOTA:

Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (\$199,872)

Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians White-tailed Deer and Golden-winged Warbler Critical Habitat Restoration Project: Setting Back Forest Succession to Promote Early Successional Wildlife Species

Subsistence harvest of fish and game is extremely important for members of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa. White-tailed deer are an important protein sources for many Tribal families. Over the past five years there has been a reduction in deer populations numbers on the Red Lake Reservation. White-tailed deer thrive in early successional forest types, along with many other species including the Golden-winged warbler. This project will create 350 acres of early successional forest habitat, supporting deer population recovery and increasing habitat for golden-winged warblers during breeding season. Results will guide the development of management strategies that promote species dependent on early successional plant communities along Minnesota's prairie forest transition zone.

Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe (\$199,727)

Mooz (Moose) Monitoring on the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation, MN

Mooz (moose) are a culturally important species on the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation. Though our reservation does not fall in the primary moose range in Minnesota, the Tribe has found evidence of a low-density and reproducing moose population. We want to learn more about this unstudied population as it faces climate change, habitat fragmentation, and other anthropogenic factors so we can conserve moose across the landscape for future generations. Through this project the Tribe will collect data that will assist in developing a moose management plan to guide and support future decision making. This project will provide valuable information on the moose densities, habitat use, and movement patterns on the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe Reservation. Information gathered will contribute to moose conversation efforts in the Midwest Region.

MONTANA:

Fort Belknap Indian Community (\$184,359)

Sustaining Prairie Wildlife Through Conservation on the Fort Belknap Indian Reservation

Proposed project aims to implement conservation actions to advance recovery of black footed ferrets, greater sage grouse, swift fox, and ungulate species on the Fort Belknap Reservation in Montana.

NEBRASKA:

***Ponca Tribe of Nebraska (\$200,000)**

Comprehensive Inventory of Plants and Wildlife on Tribal Lands: Enhancing Conservation of Culturally Significant and At-Risk Species

Proposed project aims to document the presence or absence of flora and fauna on land the Tribe has reacquired on 4,000 acres of land situated in Knox County, Nebraska to gain essential information for a baseline assessment.

Santee Sioux of Nebraska (\$195,400)

The Santee Sioux Nation Would Like to Conduct a Study to Develop a Plan for the Conservation of Fish Populations, and Their Natural Habitats to be Included in the Natural Resources Planning Efforts

The purpose of this project is to evaluate, protect, and conserve fish populations, along with their respective riverine, riparian, wetland, and other wetland habitats located within the boundaries of the reservation by conducting an in-depth study of fish populations in highly conducive riparian and isolated wetlands and waterways. The data gathered will be used to support the prioritization of mitigation and protection efforts of water resources within the reservation.

***Omaha Tribe of Nebraska (\$199,965)**

Tallgrass Prairie Resource Management

This project will invest in staff capacity to restore, maintain, and enhance habitat for ecologically and culturally significant wildlife species within the Omaha Tribe of Nebraska reservation. The project addresses the need to increase stewardship by hiring a full-time conservation officer to assist with invasive species removal and buffalo management on approximately 40,000 acres.

NEVADA:

Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California (\$200,000)

Washoe Resiliency Garden and Culturally Significant Species Monitoring

The Washoe Tribe of Nevada and California will fund and support the Washoe Resilience Garden and implement a multispecies management plan. The garden, started in 2021, focuses on conserving the culturally important Single Leaf Pinyon Pine and other native plants for habitat restoration. The Washoe Environmental Protection Department will also monitor key species such as Pinyon Jay, rabbits, and native bees to assess habitat health and restoration success. The project aims to protect and restore natural resources, provide education and outreach to Washoe

communities, and collaborate with agencies to ensure environmental conservation and sustainability on Washoe Tribal lands.

Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe (\$199,337)

Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention

This project aims to expand capacity for preventing the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS) on the Pyramid Lake Paiute Reservation, focusing on protecting the federally endangered *Cui-ui* and threatened Lahontan cutthroat trout, along with the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe's (PLPT) natural, cultural, recreational, and economic resources. By increasing staffing, the PLPT AIS Program will enhance daily operations at the Watercraft Inspection and Decontamination Station in Sutcliffe, Nevada. This will boost AIS prevention efforts and public outreach, ensuring more consistent operations and greater community education on AIS prevention strategies.

NEW YORK:

Seneca Nation of Indians (\$42,713)

Seneca Nation Wood Turtle Survey

The Seneca Nation will tag wood turtles (*Glyptemys insculpta*), a culturally important species, with GPS transmitters to track and map home areas and nesting grounds. This data will be used to protect nests, and collect information on population size, environment quality, and predation. The Seneca Nation will also collaborate with the Buffalo Zoo to release captive-raised juvenile wood turtles to the Allegheny River.

NORTH CAROLINA:

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (\$200,000)

Leveraging DNA Sampling to Understand and Manage Resources

The Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian's Office of Fisheries and Wildlife Management Actively implements over 40 projects to adaptively manage and protect fisheries and wildlife resources across the boundary. Requested funds are to help continue cutting-edge non-invasive resource management techniques and expand them to include an evaluation of otter impacts on their trout fishing industry. An objective is to use environmental DNA (eDNA) and a variety of non-invasive methods (camera, trapping, acoustics, etc.) to evaluate and manage bear populations, sicklefin redbhorse, native brook trout, bats, otters, fish, aquatic communities, birds, and amphibians. We aim to use these datasets to inform our conservation and management efforts.

OKLAHOMA

Cherokee Nation (\$101,663)

Studying the Effects of Predator Removal on Artificial Nesting

Through this project, Cherokee Nation aims to address the declining population of wild turkeys and fill a void in data by studying the correlation between mesopredator removal and its influence on artificial nesting success. Through this study, with the support of Oklahoma State University's Department of Natural Resource Ecology and Management, the Nation will gather valuable data that will increase and enhance the understanding of wild turkey population decline.

Muscogee (Creek) Nation (\$199,785.00)

MCN Fisheries Development and Baseline Management Project

The Muscogee (Creek) Nation is developing its fisheries department in order to properly manage the waters within its reservation. The objective of this project is to conduct baseline studies on the waters and fish in the tribally managed Wildlife Access Areas and to cooperate with other tribes and agencies to gain a more comprehensive view of the large systems that the Nation comanages.

Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma (\$148,488)

Choctaw Nation Tribal Wildlife Project

The Choctaw Nation Department of Wildlife Conservation will survey and monitor sensitive Fish communities within the Nation's boundary. Many external threats such as climate change, energy development, developing rural economies, and fishing pressure are changing vital resources. Water quality and quantity, as well as poor land use practices are also threatening the aquatic resources native to the reservation. This project will provide the necessary tools and equipment in order to protect the Nation's traditional food sources, native fish communities, and sovereignty.

WASHINGTON:

Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe (\$198,928)

ESA Species Critical Coastal Habitat and Traditional Fisheries Restoration and Monitoring

The Shoalwater Bay Indian Tribe Natural Resources Department's (SBDNR) project goal is to continue to improve the conservation status of the Western Snowy Plover and Streaked Horned Larks residing on Shoalwater's coastal beaches and dunes. SBDNR also proposes to implement essential fish habitat assessments, eDNA and visual monitoring, and restoration actions to support climate resilience to influence the adaptive capacity of Western snowy plovers, larks and salmonid species on Tribal lands. Targeted restoration actions will continue to both increase the habitat quantity and quality available for plovers and larks while also increasing the availability of traditional plants, shellfish, and fish resources for Tribal members. Through implementation of eDNA analysis, SBDNR hopes to develop a database of fish biodiversity assessments of all streams and tributaries on Tribal lands that have fish habitat criteria. Focused restoration will support the return of essential fish habitat that will not only support a climate resilient site and open the area to forage, rearing and spawning habitat, it will also revitalize cultural practices,

traditional indigenous harvesting for the Tribal community, provide for purposeful indigenous cultural connections and increase the resilience of the Tribe.

Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe (\$200,000)

Monitoring the Dosewallips and Duckabush Elk Herds in Support of Sustained Treaty Hunting Rights

The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe (Tribe or PGST) is a co-manager of the natural resources within the lands ceded under the 1855 Treaty of Point No Point. Elk within the areas managed by the Tribe have very limited distributions and population sizes, and have for decades. The overall goal of this project is to establish current data for the herds and write an elk management plan. This information will be used to develop an elk management plan. This plan will improve monitoring and future management for critically important elk herds in the face of declining populations, novel diseases, habitat loss and growing urban development and recreational pressures

Lummi Nation (\$200,000)

Lummi Natural Resources Pinniped Monitoring and Management Project

The Lummi Natural Resources Department (LNR) seeks funding to initiate monitoring harbor seal populations and their impacts on salmonid stocks native to the Nooksack River in NW Washington State. As increasing evidence points towards pinniped populations reaching carrying capacity, baseline monitoring projects are necessary to understand the impacts of this species on salmonid populations to allow for better informed management decisions. This will ensure the Title 10 Lummi Code of Laws for Pinniped Management meets the best management practices for the Tribe. The summary reports from this study will be utilized by LNR and shared with the Lummi fishing and hunting communities, the Lummi Indian Business Council, Lummi Fisheries and Natural Resource Commission, co-managers, and federal partners.

Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (\$200,000)

Preliminary Study of Pinniped Abundance and Diet Composition, with a Focus on Salmonids, on the Dungeness River Mouth in Washington's Strait of Juan de Fuca

The Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe (JST or Tribe), along with the other signatories to the 1855 Treaty of Point No Point and Washington state, are co-managers of the natural resources within their ceded area, with the common goal of managing and preserving wildlife for current and future generations. Salmon have long been an important food source and trade item for the S'Klallams and neighboring tribes. Harbor seal and California sea lion numbers have increased greatly across western Washington since the 1970's. There is a lack of information regarding how growing seal populations may be impacting salmon recovery. JST proposes initiating population surveys and dietary analyses of the pinnipeds at haul-out sites near the Dungeness River for one year. Successful implementation of this project will allow the Tribe to quantify if pinnipeds are consuming salmonids in or around the mouth of the Dungeness River and, if so,

how significant the impacts are. This is a preliminary study to determine if further research (i.e. additional sites and years) is warranted.