



US Army Corps of Engineers  
BUILDING STRONG.

**NAME:** Eelgrass Restoration in Puget Sound

**LOCATION:** Puget Sound, WA

**ACRES:** 3,700 acres of subtidal area within deltas

**NON-FEDERAL SPONSOR:** Washington Department of Natural Resources

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:**

The overall goal of this proposed regional-scale eelgrass restoration is to capitalize on current estuary restoration efforts and to contribute to the Puget Sound Partnership’s Action Agenda recovery goal of 20% more eelgrass by 2020. The objective is to restore eelgrass (*Zostera marina*) at three river delta locations within the Puget Sound region of the Salish Sea: the Nisqually, Elwha, and Skokomish Rivers. These major estuaries have been subject to significant wetland and upland restoration projects that are improving conditions for eelgrass at the delta. The goal is to enhance the rate of eelgrass recovery through transplantation of minimum viable populations of eelgrass. Planting is necessary due to low flowering and seed production in the region, and thus a severely limited seedling recruitment and recolonization rate. The proposed project would leverage ongoing work to locate sites within Puget Sound suitable for successful eelgrass restoration, with a focus on identifying sites that could be protected from future anthropogenic disturbances and would be resilient to climate change impacts.

**EXPECTED BENEFITS:**

Eelgrass is considered by the state to be a “habitat of particular importance” in Puget Sound. Restoring eelgrass will benefit a multitude of species valued in Puget Sound, including threatened and endangered species, as well as contribute to water quality improvement, shoreline stabilization, and carbon sequestration. Specifically, eelgrass restoration in Puget Sound will raise pH levels and protect shellfish.

**STATUS:** Planning and Design