

# Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group's (RFEWG's)



Fish and Wildlife Commission  
June 1, 2012

# RFEG History:



- **R.C.W. 77.95.060**

- 1990 legislation enabling the establishment of community based non-profit organizations (RFEGs) to produce salmon and restore habitat involve local communities, citizen volunteers, and landowners in the states salmon recovery efforts.
- *WDFW Commission - role is to establish policy and direction for fish and wildlife species and their habitats in Washington and to monitor the Department's implementation of the goals, policies and objectives established by the Commission. (such as - 21<sup>st</sup> Century Salmon and Steelhead Initiative – next slide).*



While salmon have been on the decline for a century, in the last decade alone, 167 populations of salmon and steelhead in Washington State have been added to the federal endangered species list (ESA).

"The ESA listings were a loud and clear warning that unless we changed our ways, we were going to lose a species that's a fundamental part of our biological and cultural heritage. It is hard to imagine living in the State of Washington and Pacific Northwest without wild salmon."

U.S. Congressman Norm Dicks



## Dramatic declines in wild salmon and the habitat necessary to support them call for a bold response

Over the last decade, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has worked intensively with tribal governments and our salmon recovery partners to restore salmon and steelhead, provide recreational opportunities, and support economically viable and sustainable fisheries.

### PACIFIC SALMON TREATY REDUCES CANADIAN CATCH

We played a key role in negotiating a reduction in Canadian and Alaskan Chinook catch by nearly a million fish over the next 10 years, returning Washington salmon to Washington rivers.

### HATCHERY REFORM

We conducted with the Hatchery Scientific Review Group an evaluation of 187 hatchery programs and initiated program changes and millions of dollars of facility improvements.

### HABITAT RESTORATION

We helped the State's Lead Entity program and Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups implement over 3,000 projects to protect and restore salmon habitat.

### RECOVERY PLANS

We worked with Regional Salmon Recovery Boards to create six salmon recovery plans mandated by the federal Endangered Species Act.

### FEDERAL DISASTER RELIEF FOR COASTAL FISHERIES

We worked with the Governor's Office to secure federal disaster relief in 2008 for unprecedented fisheries restrictions off the west coast of the United States.

### SELECTIVE FISHERIES

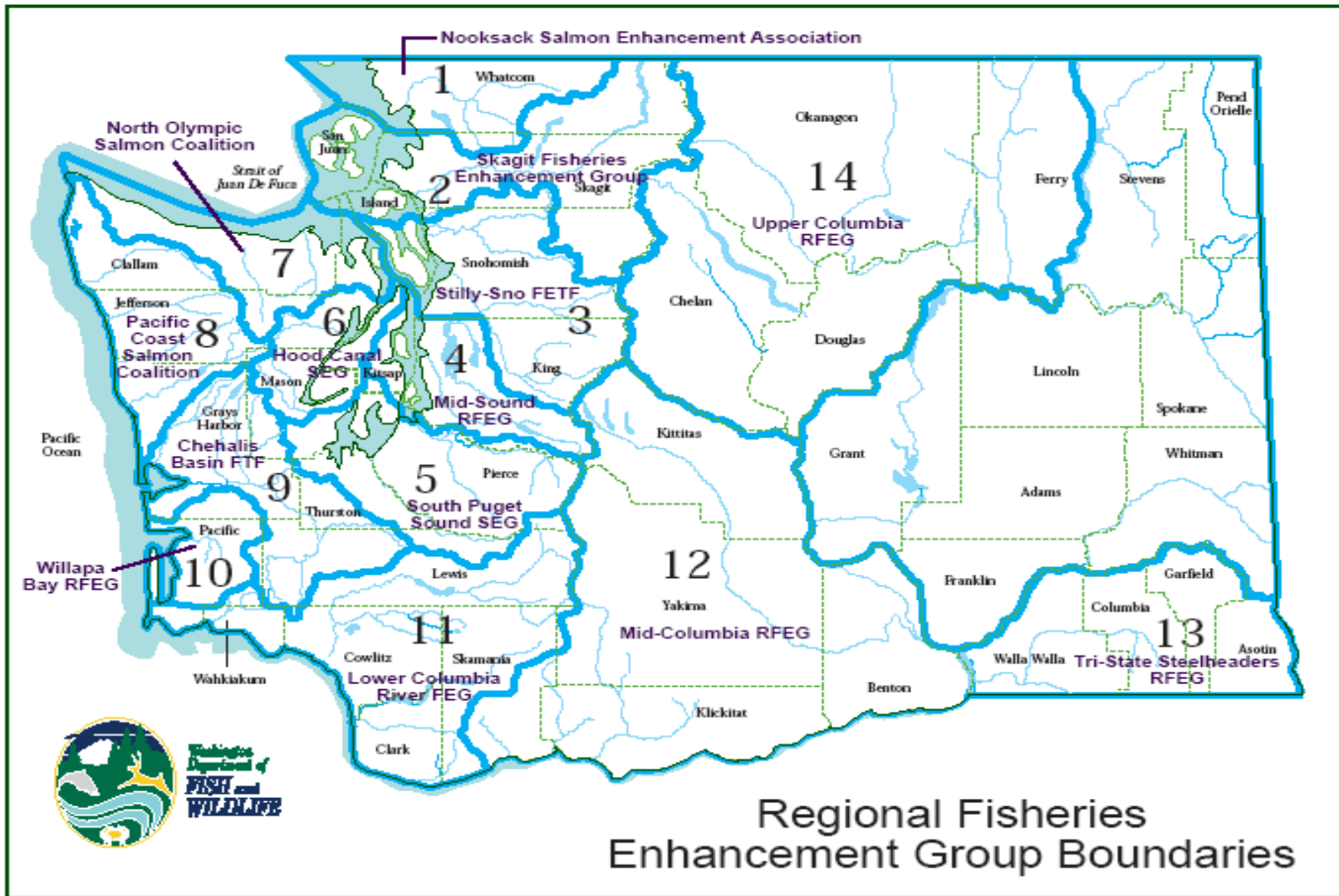
We made hatchery fish the backbone of state fisheries, marking them to distinguish them from wild fish and to provide fishing opportunities.

### NEW STEELHEAD MANAGEMENT PLAN

We redefined steelhead conservation policies statewide based on new information about the biology and life history of Washington's State Fish.



But we need to do more— and **more strategically**



# RFEG Funding:

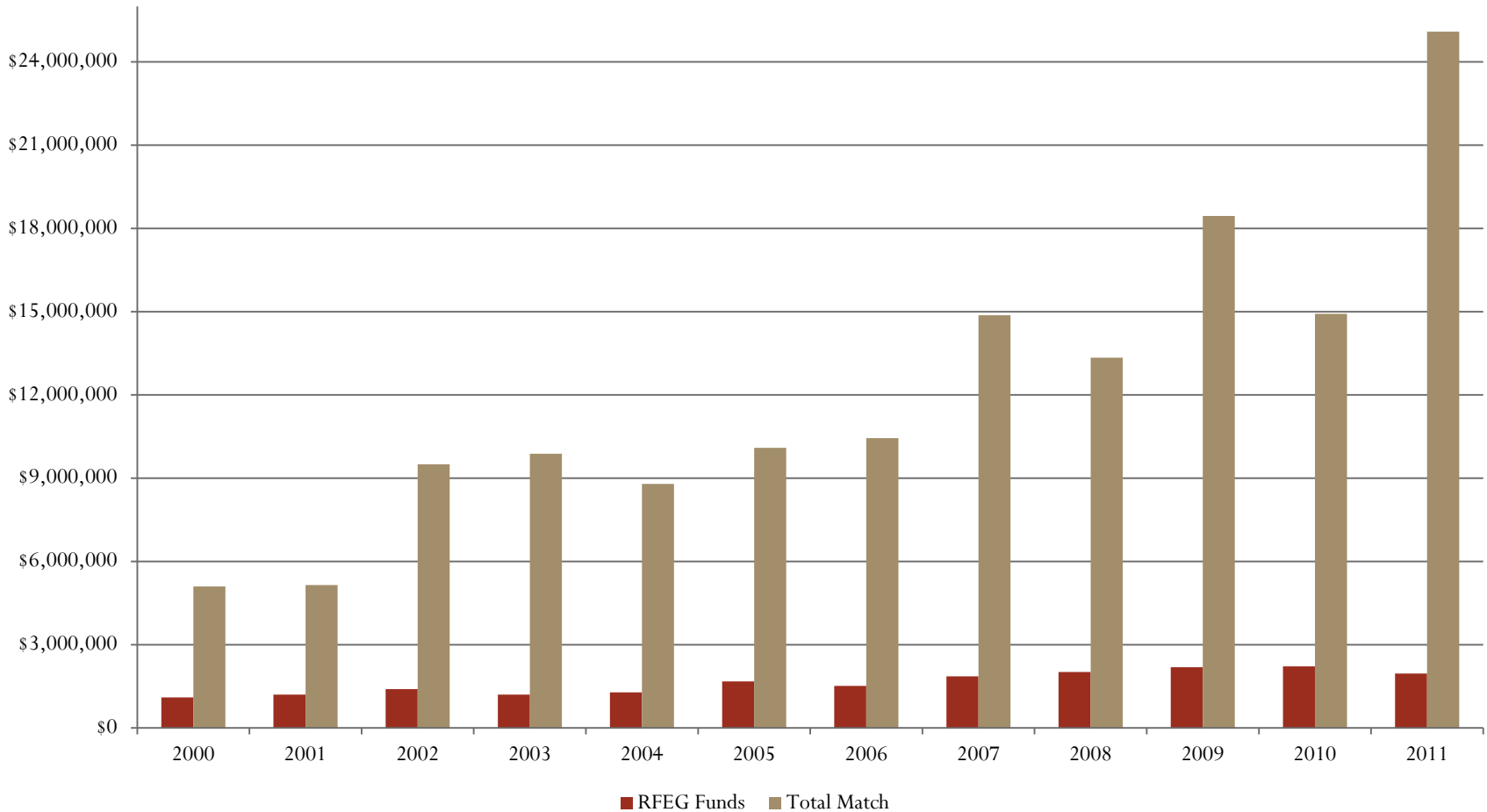


- Funding Mechanism
  - Federal: \$90k per RFEG via USFWS pass through
  - State: \$40k per RFEG via WDFW (Non General Fund)
  - The Rest \$: Competitive Grants, In-kind, Creativity, and Leveraging
- RFEG “Base” funds are leveraged ~15:1 to accomplish a tremendous amount of salmon restoration efforts and education across the state
  - 20+ years of momentum
  - Economic engine
  - Unique regional organizational structures with local niches
- Federal funds ARE NOT secured beyond 2013
  - RFEG’s are currently working on a sustainable funding plan to possibly fill the gap
  - Without our federal funds RFEG capacity is greatly reduced
  - State funds reliant on excess hatchery fish and licenses

RFEGs work cooperatively with WDFW to manage funds, report on accomplishments, and complete projects that are in line with the WDFW’s goals.

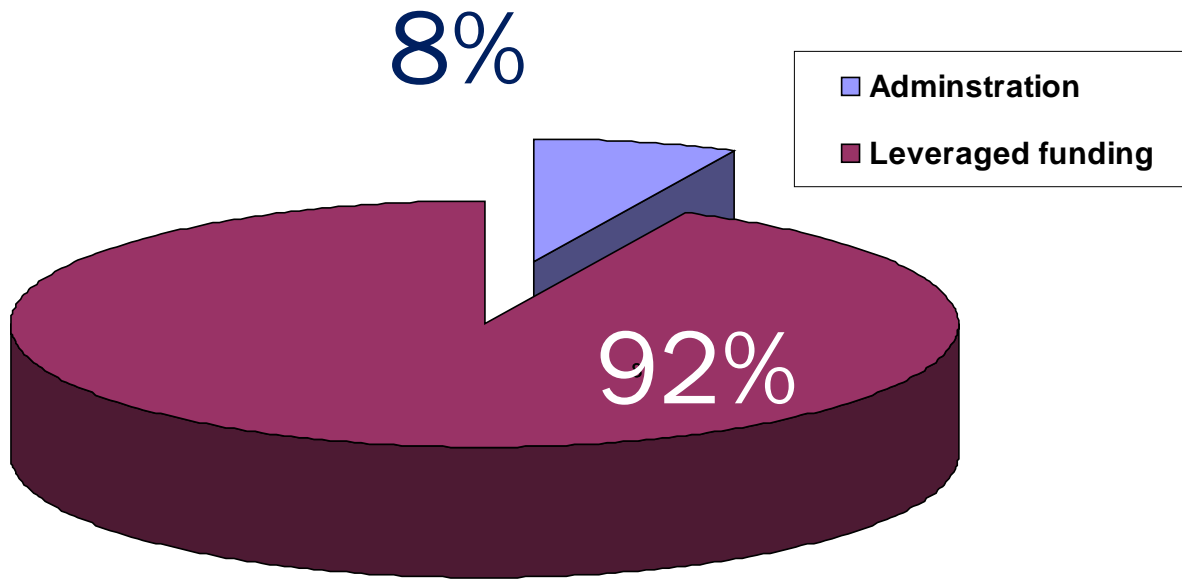


# RFEG Leveraged Funds:





# RFEG Administration:





# RFEG Economic Engine:



- 60+ RFEG FTE's and 50+ Intern FTE's
  - Professional, efficient, and effective
- Hundreds of volunteers equal thousands of donated hours per year
  - Over 1.1 million volunteer hours since 1995
- Construction Services on Average:
  - \$6 million per year (on-the-ground dollars)
  - Over 100,000 hours of construction activities
  - Additional 50+ FTE's for construction
  - ~800,000 hours of Professional Services
    - i.e. Engineers, Surveyors, Accountants, Scientists, etc.



# RFEG Projects since 1995:

- 735 Fish Passage Projects Completed
- 846 Stream Miles Re-opened
- 524 Miles of Habitat Restored
- 962,893 Carcasses distributed (nutrient enhancement)
- 3,190 Salmon “Projects”
- Over 69,000,000 Fish Released
- 1.15 million Hours Volunteered
- \$22 million State and Federal Funding
- \$144 million Additional Funding Leveraged



# In stream



Trap Creek – Pacific County  
(Willapa RFEG)





# In stream



Middle Fork Nooksack - Whatcom  
County – Nooksack RFEG



NF Nooksack – Whatcom County –  
Nooksack RFEG



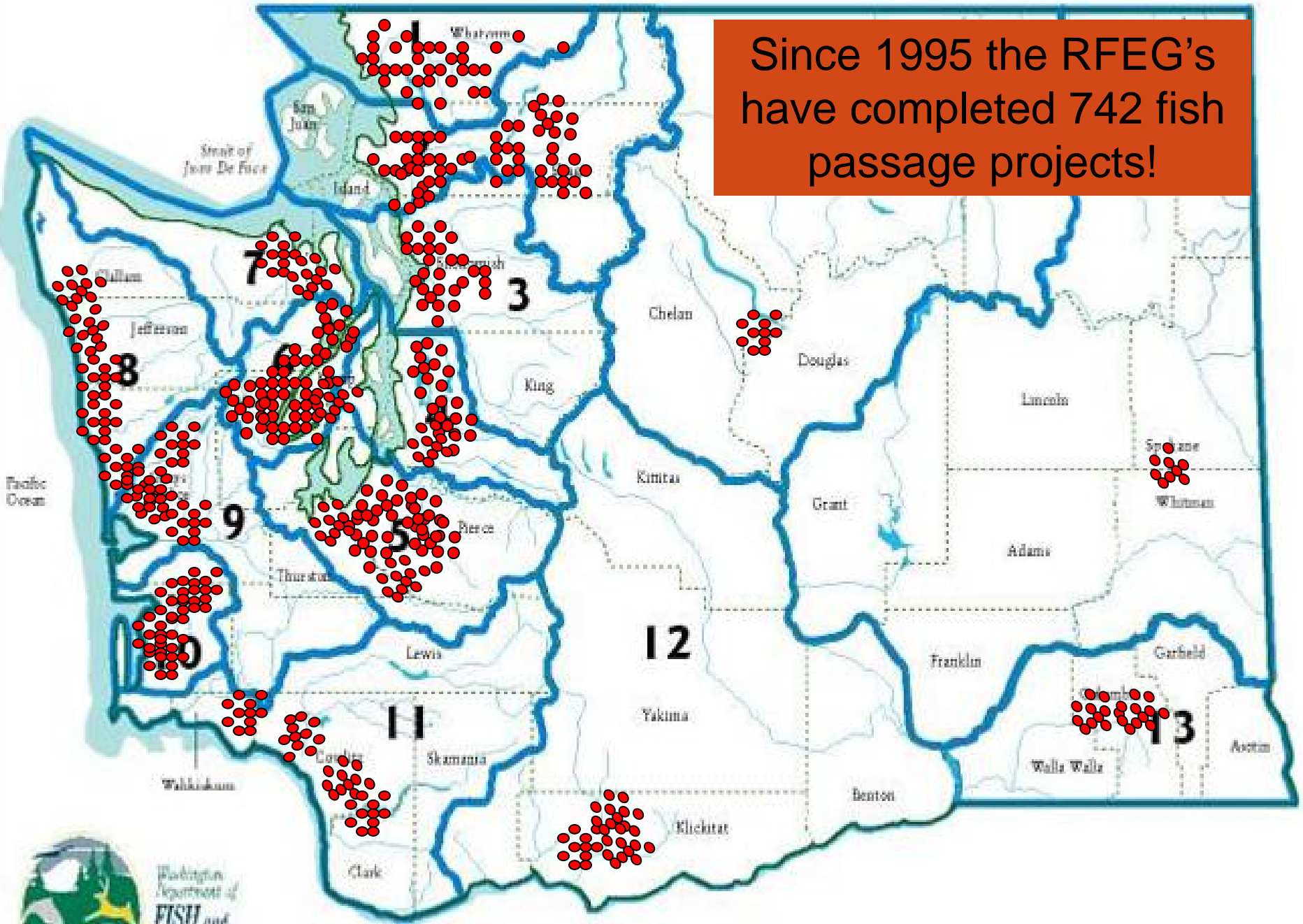






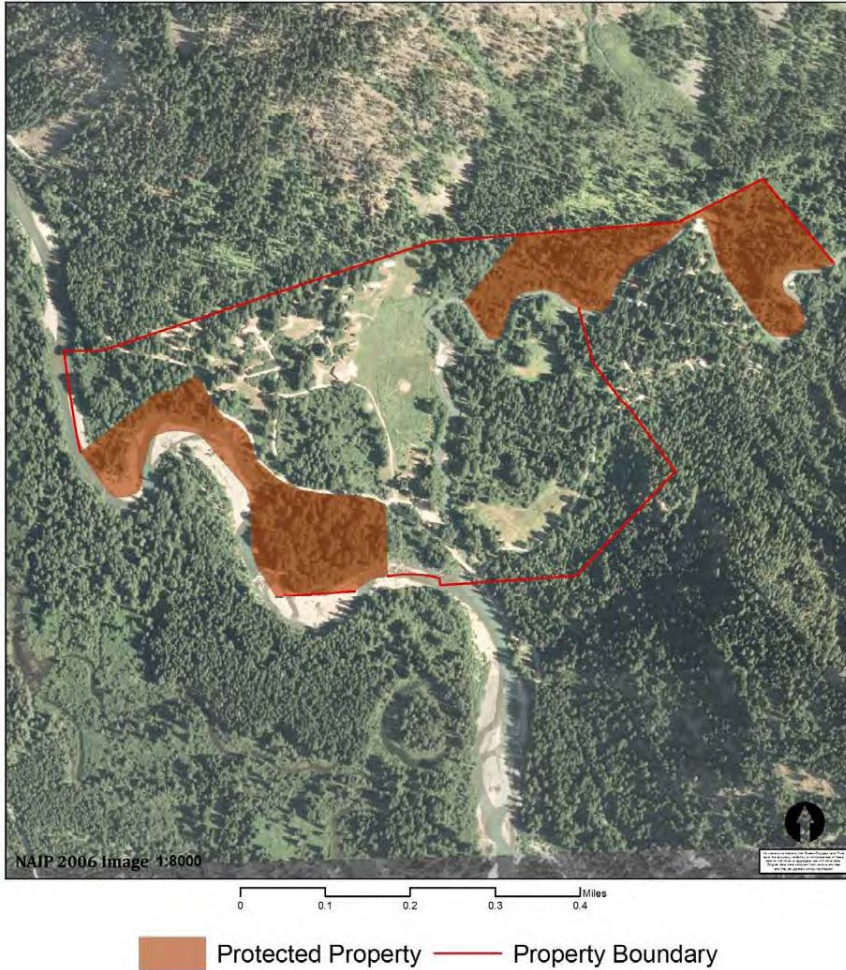


Since 1995 the RFEG's have completed 742 fish passage projects!



Washington Department of  
**FISH** and  
Wildlife

# Riparian Restoration



Napeequa River – Chelan  
County (Cascade Columbia  
RFEG)





# Nutrient Enhancement

962,893 Carcasses distributed (nutrient enhancement)



# 69,000,000 Fish Released





# Assessments & Monitoring





# Education & Outreach





# Thank you!

