SYNOPSIS

INVESTING IN AMERICA:

The Estimated Socioeconomic Impacts and Ecosystem Services Benefits of NOAA Coastal Management and Habitat Restoration Investments

A Preliminary Analysis of Select Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act Grant-Funded Awards

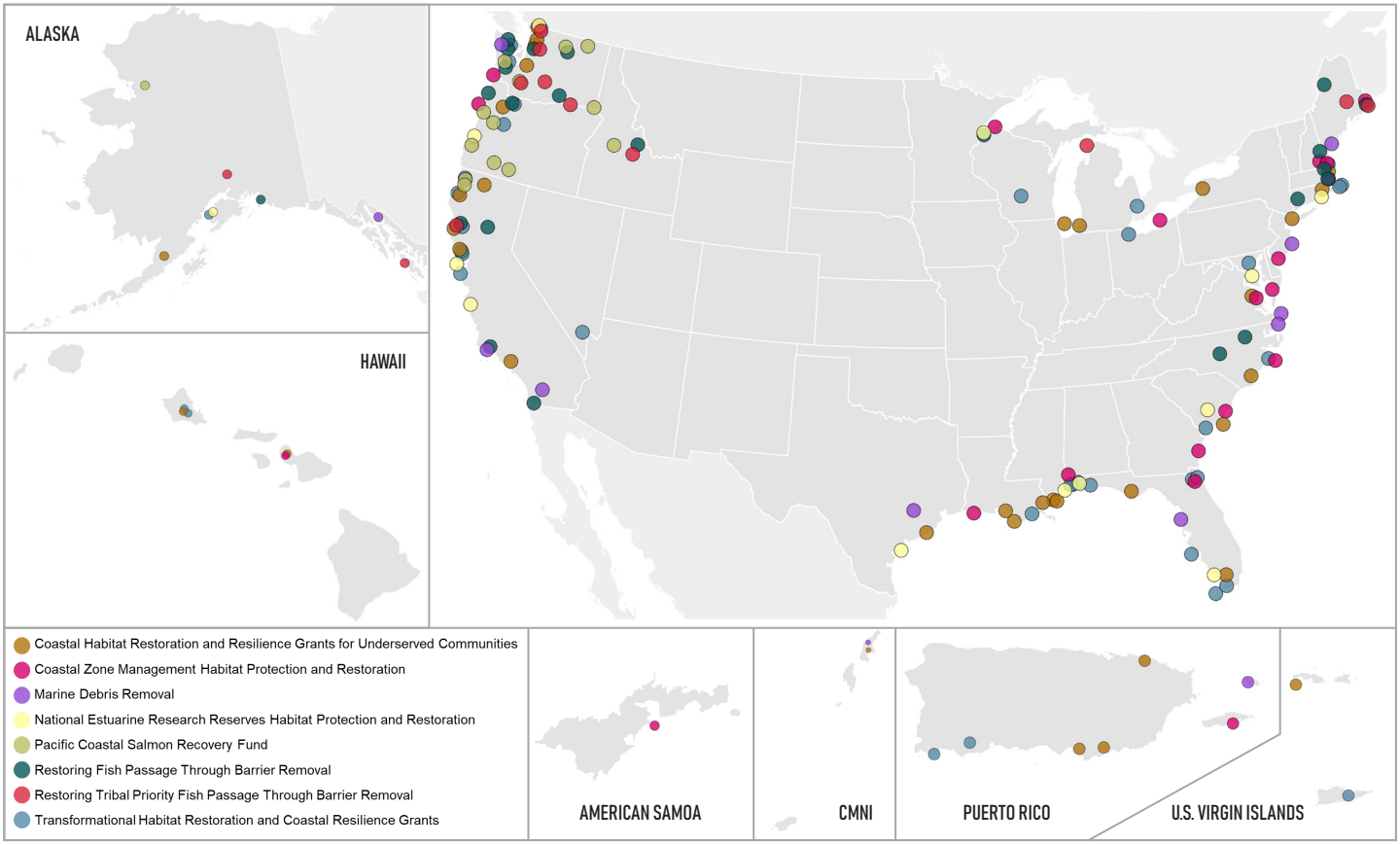
noaa.gov/reports/noaa-coastal-management-habitat-restoration-investments

SYNOPSIS

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) represent transformational investments, including about $6.3 billion for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) to stimulate economic development, reduce climate risk, and protect and restore habitat. To begin to understand the value of this funding—and to inform future policy and grant-making decisions—NOAA evaluated eight coastal management and conservation funding opportunities in the National Ocean Service and National Marine Fisheries Service. In 2022 and 2023, NOAA made 173 awards representing $717 million in federal support, mostly from the BIL. Because these awards are in the early stages of implementation, our methods focused on using available grant award information to estimate the value of what we are calling the "3 Es":

1. The estimated *economic impact* of these awards in coastal communities, the Great Lakes, and U.S. territories.
2. A preliminary analysis of the extent of *equitable engagement* and potential benefits flowing to underserved, Tribal, and Indigenous communities.
3. The expected *ecosystem services benefits* of habitat improvements.

This evaluation does not include the long-term economic benefits associated with reducing climate risk exposure or the benefits of natural hazards preparedness. As the maps and analysis below illustrate and quantify, these investments reach across coastal communities, the Great Lakes, and U.S. territories, and are expected to grow economies, create jobs, and improve valuable habitat for underserved communities, Tribes, and Indigenous communities.



Illustrative Geographic Distribution of Award Activities by Funding Opportunity

This map illustrates the geographic scope of grant activities from over $700 million in NOAA funding, primarily from the BIL. The map is for illustration purposes and does not capture all geographic areas in which grant activities will occur.

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SUMMARY

Based upon a preliminary assessment of economic growth and job creation, the direct spending from these awards will generate about 2.4 times the economic activity for every federal dollar spent—in addition to creating 13.6 jobs for every million dollars spent. In the long term, these investments will create healthier ecosystems that will reap sustainable dividends for years to come; help reduce climate risk; and build resilience in underserved, Tribal, and Indigenous communities.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Estimated changes to economic growth and job creation that these historic investments will bring to the areas where project activity is occurring.

Coastal and habitat restoration awards supported through the eight funding opportunities are expected to stimulate significant economic activity across coastal America, including the Great Lakes, and U.S. territories. Using input-output modeling, we estimated the preliminary value that these investments will have on the flow of economic activity and jobs in the economies around the award sites.

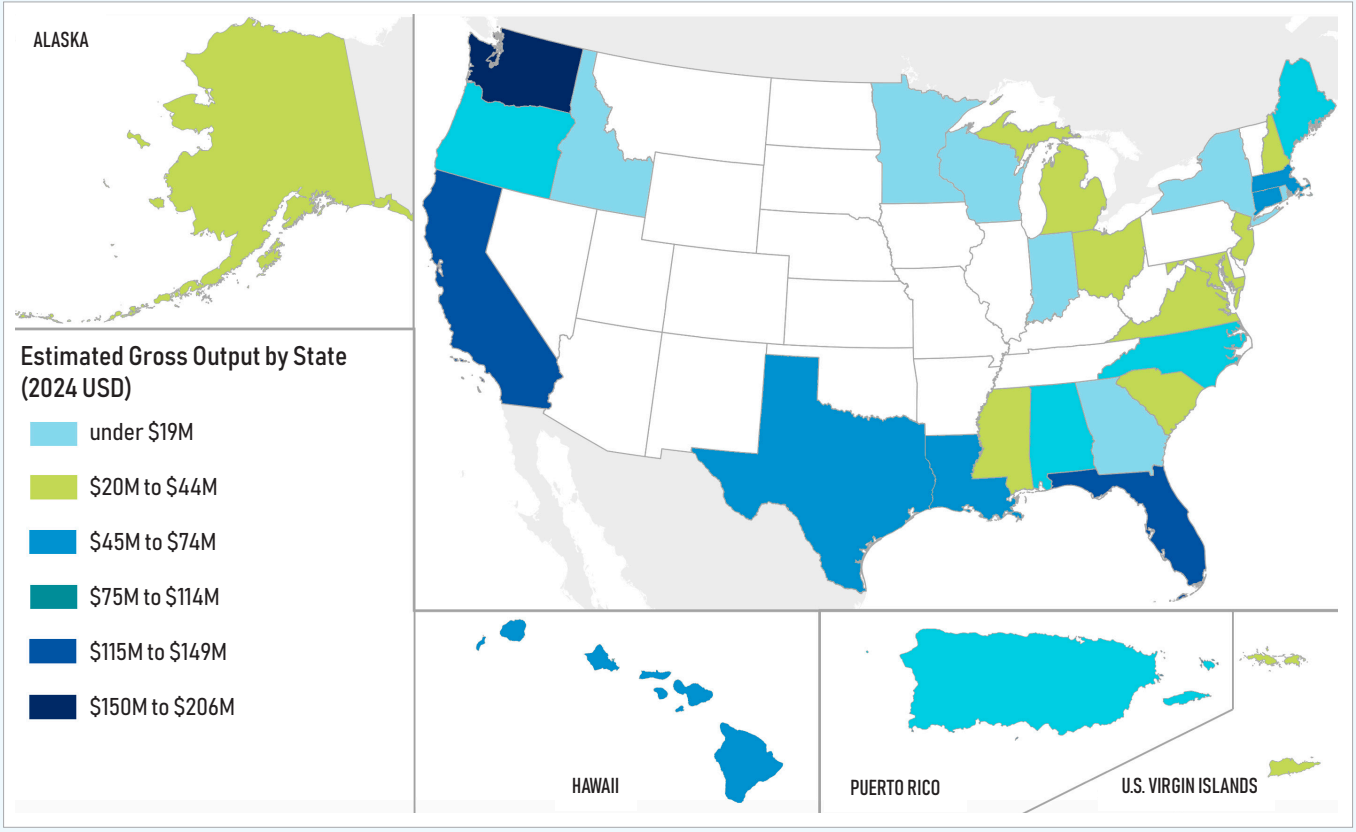
Estimated Economic Benefits:

OVER 7,800 JOBS and $553 million in labor income

13.6 JOBS created for every **$1 MILLION** in NOAA grant investment

$1.4 BILLION IN ECONOMIC OUTPUT in local economies across coastal states, including the Great Lakes, Tribal nations, and U.S. territories

$2.40 worth of economic activity generated for **EVERY $1 SPENT**



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EQUITABLE ENGAGEMENT AND EXPECTED BENEFITS

How these awards are anticipated to engage and provide benefits to underserved, Tribal, and Indigenous communities.

Our preliminary analysis shows that the Administration's equity and environmental justice objectives are expected to be advanced through these awards, with 59 percent of projects planning on engaging Tribal or Indigenous communities. Half of the awards are committed to protecting, restoring, or enhancing culturally significant ecosystems, and over 40 percent provide important resilience benefits to vulnerable populations, including weather and climate risk reduction activities.

Expected Equity Benefits:

50%

50 percent of awards will protect, restore, or enhance culturally significant ecosystems and resources.

41%

41 percent of awards will provide important community co-benefits, such as risk reduction efforts to mitigate flooding, excessive heat, and other climate risks.

38%

38 percent of awards will result in economic benefits—especially job creation—for underserved, Tribal, or Indigenous communities.

59%

59 percent of awards plan on engaging Tribal or Indigenous groups and 55 percent of the projects' underserved community members and/or Tribal/Indigenous representatives are expected to be directly involved in project planning and/or implementation.

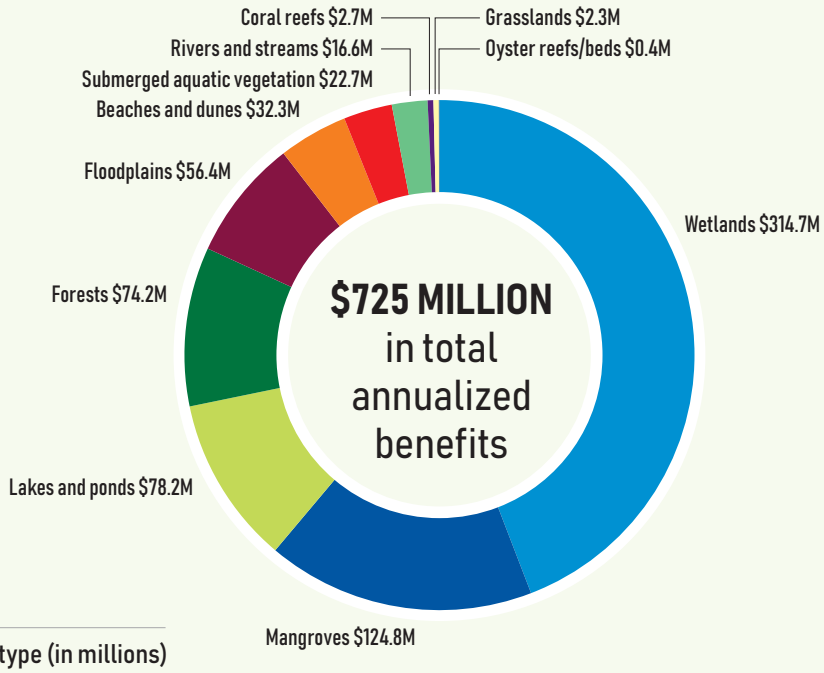
ECOSYSTEM SERVICES BENEFITS

The value that society would place on the expected improvements to habitats that will enhance the function of ecosystems.

These awards will improve the function of habitats, resulting in ecosystem services that are valued by society. Coral reefs, mangroves, salt marshes, and dunes provide protection to homes and businesses along the shore. Beaches provide a space for recreation. Wetlands provide a nursery for fish species to grow before migrating to ocean waters, supporting recreational and commercial fisheries. These and other benefits are distributed across the habitats covered by the awards. Using economic valuation methods, we estimated the value that society would place on the expected award outcomes.

Expected Ecosystem Service Benefits:

Through the anticipated restoration of coastal habitat, removal of derelict vessels and marine debris, and removal of fish passage barriers, ecosystem improvements are expected to result in $725M in annualized benefits.



Preliminary annual expected benefits by habitat type (in millions)