



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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TO: SRFB Members and Designees

FROM: Laura E. Johnson, Director 

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SUBJECT: Programmatic Funding of Projects Occurring in Intensively Monitored Watersheds

Background:

Whether watershed habitat restoration projects funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (Board or SRFB) are creating more fish in the treated watersheds, or simply shifting places fish use, is an important aspect of determining the success of these investments. To address this monitoring need, in June 2004 the Board approved funding for four clusters of experimental watersheds. These four watersheds have become known as Intensively Monitored Watersheds, or "IMWs". To date, IMWs supported by SRFB include treatment basins in Hood Canal, the Lower Columbia, a San Juan de Fuca complex (E. Twin, W. Twin and Deep Creeks), and the Skagit Estuary.

IMWs measure both 'control' and 'treatment' area parameters. Because restoration projects are expensive and the percentage of habitat treated needs to be high, mostly small watersheds were chosen for this type of monitoring. In the past two years, the IMW scientists have been busy developing before-treatment baseline information in the control and treatment streams for fish abundance, water quality, flow, and habitat.

The testimony to the Board regarding IMW methods stressed the fact that fish populations have an inherent high natural variability. There will need to be sufficient projects implemented in the experimental treatment watersheds in order to detect a response in fish abundance due to increased productivity of the watershed.



SRFB Seventh Round Issue:

To affect the limiting factors being studied and to evoke a response in the fish populations, projects are now needed in the IMW treatment watersheds. Unfortunately, there have been some difficulties in getting the appropriate project proposals from the respective lead entities. The SRFB should therefore provide guidance as to how projects proposals in these areas can be encouraged, prioritized, and funded.

Difficulties in getting IMW restoration projects in the past two grant rounds from some areas occur because:

- IMWs have had no status in the lead entities' scoring or ranking mechanisms for awarding grants, and
- The primary populations needing recovery and restoration to meet ESA recovery goals are not the same streams where IMWs have been developed.

Two Lead Entities have not included IMW-related proposals in their project development and ranking scenarios. Two other areas – the Skagit, and the Straits of Juan de Fuca – have been able to participate with IMW proposals.

In the Skagit, the IMW is testing the improved production of chinook juveniles in the estuary. The river has a primary population for recovery and the estuary is the main focus for projects from two Lead Entities involved with the Skagit River delta. In the Straits, the Lead Entity ranked its IMW projects the highest for Round 6 funding. With the implementation of the recently funded projects in the Strait of Juan de Fuca complex, planned restoration there will be complete. The planned future restoration projects in the Skagit Estuary IMW will likely rank high and so the IMW scientists foresee no need for special consideration there.

In the remaining two areas with IMWs, the Lead Entities submitted no projects even though the IMW scientists had asked for projects to assist in the monitoring design. This scenario is likely to be repeated in Round 7 unless proactive steps are taken.

In preparation for the April 2006 SRFB discussion, the IMW scientists were asked to provide an estimate of restoration costs in the treatment basins in both Hood Canal (three streams) and the Lower Columbia (two streams) complexes. Although complete project lists for these basins are not available, there are cost estimates for several projects as well as examples of the actual cost for restoration of both treatment streams in the Strait of Juan de Fuca complex.

Based on these figures and advice from several project sponsors, estimated restoration costs in Hood Canal and Lower Columbia IMWs are presented in Table 1. The IMW teams will certainly seek other funding sources as the opportunities allow, but did want to show the SRFB the magnitude of the restoration required.

Table 1. Estimated costs of restoration in Hood Canal and Lower Columbia IMW complexes.

Year	Hood Canal area creeks			Lower Columbia area		Total
	Little Anderson	Seabeck	Big Beef	Germany	Abernathy	
2006 – 7 th Round	\$350k			\$300k		\$ 650k
2007	\$350k	\$850k				\$1,200k
2008			\$950k			\$ 950k
2009				\$1,000k	\$1,300k	\$2,300k
2010				\$1,200k	\$1,200k	\$2,400k
Total	\$700k	\$850k	\$950k	\$2,500k	\$2,500k	\$7,500

Recommendation: Based upon discussions with the IMW scientists and with some Lead Entity leaders, it is recommended that either IMW projects come automatically out of the first increment targets, or the SRFB should provide a certain amount of programmatic funding for some IMW projects each year until the treatments have been made.