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**STATE OF WASHINGTON**  
**RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE**

December 2008

**Item #7: Grant Approval: Skagit Watershed Council 2007  
Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration (PSAR) Funds**

**Prepared By:** Marc Duboiski, Outdoor Grants Manager

**Presented By:** Brian Abbott, Section Manager

**Approved by the Director:**

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**Proposed Action: Decision**

**Summary**

On December 13, 2007, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (Board) approved the Skagit Watershed Council's (Council) 2007 project list for its Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds. Since the Council did not have enough grant proposals to use its entire allocation, the Board approved the list with the understanding that the Council would submit new projects for the remaining \$1.3 million in PSAR funds. Two projects, requesting a total of \$596,000, are being submitted for consideration at the December 2008 Board meeting.

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends that the Board approve funding for projects #08-1747A and #08-2132N.

Suggested language for motion

Move to approve the funding for project #08-1747A, Snell Property Acquisition, and project #08-2132N, Middle Skagit River Project Development.



## Background and Analysis

The Skagit Watershed Council has submitted the two projects shown in the table below for Board funding consideration. The council and SRFB Review Panel have completed the local and state technical reviews, and found no technical concerns regarding these projects.

Project #	Project Sponsor	Project Name	PSAR Request	Sponsor Match	Total
08-1747A	Skagit County Public Works	Snell Property Acquisition	\$430,000	\$86,000	\$516,000
08-2132N	Skagit Watershed Council	Middle Skagit River Project Development	\$166,000	\$30,000	\$196,000
<b>Totals</b>			\$596,000	\$116,000	\$712,000

The project summaries and SRFB Review Panel evaluation comment forms (Attachments A, B, and C) include more information on these two projects.

## Next Steps

If the Board funds these projects, Recreation and Conservation Office staff will begin work to enter into appropriate grant agreements.

The Skagit Watershed Council will have a \$700,112 balance of PSAR funds remaining for project allocation. The Council will submit additional projects for funding consideration in early 2009.

## Attachments

- A. Snell Property Acquisition Project Summary (Project #08-1747A)
- B. Middle Skagit River Project Development Project Summary (Project# 08-2132N)
- C. SRFB Review Panel Evaluation Forms

# Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration Fund

## Puget Sound Recovery Projects

### Application Project Summary

<b>TITLE:</b> Snell Property Acquisition	<b>NUMBER:</b> 08-1747A (Acquisition)
	<b>STATUS:</b> Application Complete
<b>APPLICANT:</b> Skagit County Public Works	<b>CONTACT:</b> Jeff McGowan (360) 419-3427
<b>COSTS:</b> RCO \$430,000 83 % Local \$86,000 17 % Total \$516,000 100 %	<b>SPONSOR MATCH:</b> Appropriation \ Cash \$86,000

#### DESCRIPTION:

The scope of this project is to purchase 4 parcels totaling ~81 acres on Cockreham Island in the middle reach of the Skagit River. The project site is primarily composed of low lying floodplain and is located between the Towns of Lyman and Hamilton on the north side of a large bend in the river. This reach of the Skagit has been targeted for acquisition and restoration by local conservation agencies and for floodplain restoration as outlined in the Skagit Chinook Recovery Plan.

The property was evaluated in the Middle Skagit Floodplain Inventory and Assessment (00-1716N) and ranked above the benchmark used successfully to identify protection acquisitions. The purchase of these properties is a critical first step in the assemblage of property for large scale restoration in the middle Skagit River. The 4 parcels would include ~3700 linear feet of Skagit River shoreline, much of it with intact riparian buffers. This acquisition would also facilitate the removal of 300 to 600 feet of bank hardening at the upstream end of the project site which inhibits natural processes and well as protect intact riparian forest next to the Skagit River.

#### LOCATION INFORMATION:

Cockreham Island

**COUNTY:** Skagit

#### GOAL & OBJECTIVE:

The goal of the project is to protect intact habitat from degradation.

The objective of the project is to protect salmon refugia and habitat that is part of a key ecological process.

#### SALMON INFORMATION: (\* indicates primary)

##### Species Targeted

Bull Trout	Pink
Chinook (Threatened (06/06))*	Searun Cutthroat
Chum (Not Warranted (06/06))	Steelhead (Proposed Threatened (06/06))
Coho (Species of Concern (06/06))	

##### Habitat Factors Addressed

Channel Conditions	Loss of Access to Spawning and Rearing Habitat
Floodplain Conditions*	Water Quality

**LAST UPDATED:** November 7, 2008

**DATE PRINTED:** November 21, 2008

# Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration Fund

## Puget Sound Recovery Projects

### Application Project Summary

<b>TITLE:</b> Middle Skagit River Project Development	<b>NUMBER:</b> 08-2132N (Non-Capital)
	<b>STATUS:</b> Application Complete
<b>APPLICANT:</b> Skagit Watershed Council	<b>CONTACT:</b> Mary Raines (360) 419-9326
<b>COSTS:</b> RCO \$166,000 85 % Local \$30,000 15 % Total \$196,000 100 %	<b>SPONSOR MATCH:</b> Appropriation \ Cash \$15,000 Cash Donations \$10,000 Donated Labor \$5,000

#### DESCRIPTION:

We propose to apply a science-based approach to develop a coordinated restoration and protection plan for the middle Skagit River. The middle Skagit is a priority and target area for restoration. Only four restoration projects in this 43 mile (69 km) reach were identified in the Skagit Chinook Recovery Plan (2005), and only one of these projects is currently being considered under an ongoing feasibility study. Few new projects have been subsequently added to the Skagit three-year project list in this reach.

The work will involve developing a set of evaluation criteria for prioritizing projects, assembling and collecting reach and site-level data and information, identifying a suite of potential projects to evaluate, seeking landowner agreement and cooperation, conducting scoping and pre-feasibility work, prioritizing restoration actions, and developing implementation strategies. The plan will result in a common understanding of priorities and a direction of efforts toward projects that are critical to the recovery of Skagit salmon and are prioritized and sequenced in a manner consistent with local and regional recovery planning.

The direct products of this work will also allow for better identification and timing of future funding needs, an understanding of the roles of the local community in implementation, and capacity planning among the restoration community and will inform the larger local land use planning efforts in progress that will influence the future protection and restoration of the river.

#### LOCATION INFORMATION:

Middle Skagit River, between Sedro-Woolley and Concrete.

**COUNTY:** Skagit

#### GOAL & OBJECTIVE:

The goal of the project is to increase/improve information to help select projects that have a high certainty and benefit.

The objective of the project is to determine feasibility of acquiring land and landowner willingness to sell.

The goal of the project is to increase/improve information to help select projects that have a high certainty and benefit.

The objective of the project is to determine feasibility of creating or reconnecting off-channel habitat.

The goal of the project is to increase/improve information to help select projects that have a high certainty and benefit.

The objective of the project is to determine project siting, feasibility, design, or implementation.

#### SALMON INFORMATION: (\* indicates primary)

##### Species Targeted

Bull Trout	Cutthroat
Chinook*	Pink
Chum	Sockeye
Coho	Steelhead

##### Habitat Factors Addressed

Channel Conditions	Riparian Conditions
Floodplain Conditions	Streambed Sediment Conditions
Loss of Access to Spawning and Rearing Habitat*	Water Quality

**LAST UPDATED:** November 21, 2008

**DATE PRINTED:** November 21, 2008

# Salmon Recovery Funding Board

## POST APPLICATION/SUBMITTAL PROJECT COMMENT FORM 2008 – 2007 PSAR FUNDS

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Panel Member

Name: **SRFB Review Panel**

Lead Entity: **Skagit Watershed Council LE**

Project  
Location:

Project Sponsor: **Skagit County Public Works**

Project  
Number: **08-1747A**

Project Name: **Snell Property Acquisition**

Project  
Number:

Date: **November 14, 2008**

Please refer to the criteria listed below or Manual #18, Appendix C, for projects that are not considered technically sound. In the "Why" area explain your reason for selecting this as a preliminary project of concern.

1. Is this a preliminary project of concern according to the SRFB's criteria?

Yes  No  NMI

Why?

2. If YES, what would make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria?

3. If NO, are there ways in which this project could be further improved?

This acquisition is one of many that will be necessary to implement priority restoration projects in the Cockreham Island area. Given the upcoming removal of bank hardening on the adjacent property, this acquisition is timely.

The application should be further strengthened by providing information of surrounding properties under conservation management and any future plans for purchase of additional Cockreham Island parcels. Further justification for acquiring the Snell parcel, in the context of a larger program to systematically acquire and restore landscape processes on all of the riparian parcels along Cockreham Island, would be helpful.

Removing 600 feet of training levee and planting trees on this parcel will benefit salmon habitat conditions, but the acquisition would have much greater value if the county were to commit to a wider-scale acquisition and restoration program, rather than simply to buy the Snell parcels.

4. Other comments.

# Salmon Recovery Funding Board

## POST APPLICATION/SUBMITTAL PROJECT COMMENT FORM 2008 – 2007 PSAR FUNDS

### PROJECT INFORMATION

Panel Member

Name: **SRFB Review Panel**

Lead Entity: **Skagit Watershed Council LE**

Project  
Location:

Project Sponsor: **Skagit Watershed Council**

Project  
Number: **08-2132N**

Project Name: **Middle Skagit River Project Development**

Project  
Number:

Date: **November 14, 2008**

Please refer to the criteria listed below or Manual #18, Appendix C, for projects that are not considered technically sound. In the "Why" area explain your reason for selecting this as a preliminary project of concern.

1. Is this a preliminary project of concern according to the SRFB's criteria?

Yes  No  NMI

Why?

2. If YES, what would make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria?

3. If NO, are there ways in which this project could be further improved?

The project application was well written and addressed all the important elements for evaluating and prioritizing high quality restoration projects.

The project proposes to summarize and acquire data, coordinate a working group to develop and evaluate project opportunities, and develop projects and conceptual design within the Middle Skagit River Reach. The project appears to be very ambitious for the timeframe and budget; nevertheless it could provide a focused, coordinated approach to projects within this reach of the Skagit River.

4. Other comments.

## **Criteria**

### **For restoration and protection-related projects:**

1. It is unclear there is a problem to salmonids the project is addressing.
2. Information provided or current understanding of the system, is not sufficient to determine the need for, or the benefit of, the project.
3. The project is dependent on other key conditions or processes being addressed first.
4. The project has a high cost relative to the anticipated benefits and the project sponsor and lead entity have failed to justify the cost.
5. The project does not account for the conditions or processes in the watershed.
6. The project may be in the wrong sequence with other habitat protection, assessments, or restoration actions in the watershed.
7. The project uses a technique that has not been considered successful in the past.
8. It is unclear how the project will achieve its stated objectives.
9. It is unlikely that the project will achieve its stated objective.
10. There is low potential for threat to habitat conditions if the project is not completed.
11. The project design is not adequate or the project is improperly sited.
12. The stewardship description is insufficient or there is inadequate commitment to stewardship and maintenance and this would likely jeopardize the project's success.
13. The project has not been shown to address an important habitat condition or watershed process in the area.
14. The main focus is on supplying a secondary need, such as education, streambank stabilization to protect property, or water supply.

### **For assessment, design, feasibility, and research projects:**

15. It is not clear there is a problem to salmonids the project is addressing (per the research plan).
16. The project does not address an information need important to understanding the watershed, is not directly relevant to project development or sequencing, and will not clearly lead to beneficial projects.
17. The methodology does not appear to be appropriate to meet the goals and objectives of the project.
18. The project has a high cost relative to the anticipated benefits.
19. The assessment or research does not account for the conditions or processes in the watershed, may be in the wrong sequence with other habitat assessment or restoration activities, or may be inconsistent with a larger assessment or research need.
20. The assessment uses a technique that has not been proven successful in past applications.
21. There are significant constraints to the implementation of high priority projects following completion of the assessment.
22. It is unclear how the assessment will achieve its stated objectives.
23. It is unlikely that the assessment will achieve its stated objective.
24. The main focus is on supplying a secondary need, such as education, streambank stabilization to protect property, or water supply.