

# Salmon Recovery Funding Board

## Strategic Plan

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In 1999, the Washington State Legislature created the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to provide grants for salmon habitat restoration and protection projects and other salmon recovery activities. The board is governed by Chapter 77.85 RCW and Title 420 WAC.

### Mission

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board provides funding for elements necessary to achieve overall salmon recovery, including habitat projects and other activities that result in sustainable and measurable benefits for salmon and other fish species.

### Values

The board supports a comprehensive approach to salmon recovery that reflects the priorities and actions of its local, regional, state, tribal, and federal partners.

- **Recovery Goals:** The board supports the goals in the regional salmon recovery plans and recognizes the importance of integrating habitat restoration, hydropower operations, and hatchery and harvest management.
- **Coordinated, Bottom-up Approach:** Coordination across all levels of governmental and non- governmental organizations and geographic scales is necessary to balance diverse interests, build community support, and provide for the efficient use of resources to maximize the public investment.
- **Science-based Decisions:** The board believes that successful salmon recovery requires decisions and actions guided by science, and advocates for coordinated scientific support at all levels of salmon recovery.
- **Community Priorities:** The board considers community values and priorities in its decisions, and integrates public participation and outreach into its actions and those of its partners.
- **Assessing Results:** The board recognizes the importance of monitoring project implementation, project effectiveness, and the long-term results of all recovery efforts.
- **Adaptive Management:** The board supports adaptive management through reviewing the results of SRFB- monitoring programs and factoring what has been learned into future decisions thereby completing the adaptive management loop.

- **Accountability:** The board provides citizen oversight and accountability for the expenditure of public funds, and conducts its work with openness and integrity.
- **Communications:** The board continues to support the telling of the salmon recovery story, including how thousands of people across the state are working together to restore salmon and their habitat and why this is so important for our culture, our economy, our communities, and our future.

## Goals and Strategies

The board values all aspects of salmon recovery, and provides funding and support based on its priorities, available resources, and emergent opportunities.

**Goal 1:** Fund the best possible salmon recovery activities and projects through a fair process that considers science, community values and priorities, and coordination of efforts.

- **Allocation Strategy:** Within the limits of the board's budget and priorities, fund projects, monitoring, and human capital in a way that best advances the salmon recovery effort.
- **Process Strategy:** Ensure that the processes to identify, prioritize, and fund projects are based on (1) regional salmon recovery plans, lead entity strategies, and tribal governments' salmon recovery goals, (2) sound science and technically appropriate design, and (3) community values and priorities.
- **Funding Source Strategy:** Identify gaps in current funding related to overall salmon recovery efforts and work with partners to seek and coordinate with other funding sources. Work with Salmon Recovery Network Partners to coordinate funding requests at the legislative and congressional levels to achieve funding levels necessary to implement approved recovery plans.

**Goal 2:** Be accountable for board investments by promoting public oversight, effective projects, and actions that result in the economical and efficient use of resources.

- **Accountability Strategy:** Conduct all board activities clearly and openly, and ensure that the public can readily access information about use of public funds for salmon recovery efforts.
- **Resource Strategy:** Confirm the value of efficiency by funding actions that result in economical and timely use of resources for projects, human capital, and monitoring.
- **Monitoring Strategy:** Provide accountability for board funding by ensuring the implementation of board-funded projects and assessing their effectiveness, participate with other entities in supporting and coordinating state-wide monitoring efforts, and use monitoring results to adaptively manage board funding policies.

**Goal 3:** Build understanding, acceptance, and support of salmon recovery efforts.

- **Support Strategy:** Support the board's community-based partner organizations in their efforts to build local and regional support for salmon recovery.
- **Partner Strategy:** Build a broad partner base by engaging a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations and political leaders to address salmon recovery from different perspectives.

## Key Actions

### Funding Allocation Strategy Key Actions

Within the limits of the board's budget and priorities, fund projects, monitoring, and human capital in a way that best advances the salmon recovery effort.

Provide funding for the following:

- Projects that produce measureable and sustainable benefits for salmon.
- Monitoring to measure project implementation, effectiveness, and the long-term results of all recovery efforts.
- Human Capital that identifies, supports, and implements recovery actions.
- Ensure funding practices reflect that a critical part of the board's mission is to fund the habitat restoration and protection projects that constitute the foundation of salmon recovery.
- Support projects that meet regional salmon recovery goals and the goals of other related planning efforts.
- Inform budget decisions by establishing the minimum and maximum funding needed for each focus area (projects, monitoring and human capacity) necessary to support salmon recovery.
- Encourage projects and activities that find innovative ways to achieve goals and realize efficiencies.

## Process Strategy Key Actions

Ensure that the processes to identify, prioritize, and fund projects are based on (1) regional salmon recovery plans, lead entity strategies, and tribal governments' salmon recovery goals, (2) sound science and technically appropriate design, and (3) community values and priorities.

- Ensure that funded projects reflect the current federal, state, and tribal governments' salmon recovery goals.
- Ensure that the knowledge of habitat conditions, ecosystem processes, and trends in long-term factors (e.g., human population growth, climate change, and working land priorities) guide the type, complexity, location, and priority of proposed habitat protection and restoration.
- Fund projects that reflect community support and priorities, sound science, and that benefit salmon.
- Encourage actions and policies that optimize board investments by integrating with other restoration and protection tools and efforts (e.g., transfer of development rights, purchase of development rights, mitigation banking, and ecosystem services markets).
- Work with partners to evaluate capacity and funding allocations and improve the board's funding process.

## Funding Coordination Strategy Key Actions

Identify gaps in current funding related to overall salmon recovery efforts and work with Salmon Recovery Network partners to seek and coordinate with other funding sources.

- Help to ensure that funding sources are coordinated to make the most effective and efficient use of board dollars.
- Recognize the importance of a full understanding of the roles of hatcheries, harvest, and hydropower, and communicate and coordinate with involved parties to ensure that funding decisions are in concert.
- Develop incentives for our partners to leverage board investments with other funding sources.

## Accountability Strategy Key Actions

Conduct all board activities clearly and openly, and ensure that the public can readily access information about use of public funds for salmon recovery efforts.

- Ensure that the public is aware of and has access to board meetings and materials and other elements of the funding process.
- Provide clear, comprehensive, and easily accessible information to the public about restoration and protection projects via electronic databases, the agency web site, and other communication tools. Meet all reporting requirements with consistent and consolidated information, including data and project examples that explain both salmon recovery efforts and results.

## Resource Strategy Key Actions

Confirm the value of efficiency by funding actions that result in economical and timely use of resources for projects, human capital, and monitoring.

- Facilitate information sharing among project sponsors and experts in the restoration/preservation community.
- Continue to sponsor workshops and policy forums for project sponsors, lead entities, regional organizations and other interested parties.
- Develop funding approaches that reward innovation and efficiency in areas such as project development and implementation, administration, technical review, public-private partnerships, economies of scale, and community outreach.

## Monitoring Strategy Key Actions

Provide accountability for board funding by ensuring the implementation of board-funded projects and assessing their effectiveness, participate with other entities in supporting and coordinating state-wide monitoring efforts, and use monitoring results to adaptively manage board funding policies. The board has two main monitoring objectives: 1) to answer the question – does implementing on the ground projects lead to greater fish abundance and diversity; and spatial distribution and productivity 2) to demonstrate the effectiveness of different types of board funded projects.

- Support regional organizations by funding basic administrative functions so they can develop a customized approach to meet NOAA delisting monitoring requirements.
- Conduct **implementation (compliance) monitoring** of every board-funded project to ensure the project has been completed consistent with pre-project design objectives and criteria.

- Conduct monitoring to determine the **effectiveness** of different types of Board-funded restoration and protection projects in achieving stated objectives.
- Support validation monitoring of selected **intensively monitored watersheds** to determine whether watershed health and salmon populations are responding to recovery efforts.
- Participate in supporting status and trend monitoring.
- Coordinate with the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership (PNAMP) to ensure consistency with region wide monitoring goals while meeting SRFB monitoring goals and objectives.
- Ensure that projects identify objectives and use adaptive management principles to improve success by utilizing scientific experts to provide annual program evaluation and recommendations to the board.

The SRFB Monitoring Panel will fill a key role to 1) advise the Board on monitoring issues and 2) implement a functional adaptive management program. The panel will verify accountability by each monitoring component and integrate their findings into future decisions and recommendations to the SRFB.

### Support Strategy Key Actions

Support the board's community-based partner organizations in their efforts to build local and regional support for salmon recovery through the Salmon Recovery Network.

- Encourage public involvement in planning and implementation activities so that projects reflect a community's social, cultural, and economic values.
- Help ensure that lead entity and regional strategies include community values and priorities.

### Partner Strategy Key Actions

Build a broad partner base by engaging a variety of governmental and non-governmental organizations, legislators and political leaders to address salmon recovery from different perspectives.

- Seek input from partners on key program and policy decisions such as fund allocation, monitoring, data sharing and special projects.
- Seek regular updates from partners to ensure that their actions and board actions are mutually supportive.

- Work with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council to implement Columbia Basin Fish & Wildlife Program goals.
- Work with the Puget Sound Partnership to implement the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- Engage more organizations in discussions of the effects of salmon recovery in Washington State.

## Partners

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board recognizes that success in achieving its mission and meeting its goals requires important partnerships with the Legislature, Governor, state and federal agencies, tribes, and regional and local communities throughout the state. The board seeks to continually build new partnerships so that salmon recovery is addressed from multiple perspectives. Partners include, but are not limited to:

- 1. Lead Entities:** Voluntary watershed-based organizations established by RCW 77.85 that select and submit projects to the board for funding consideration. Lead entities have technical experts and citizen committees whose work ensures that their projects have both scientific and community support, and contribute to the lead entity's effectiveness.
- 2. Regional Salmon Recovery Organizations:** Organizations that (1) develop, coordinate, and advocate for implementation of salmon recovery plans, which are required under the Endangered Species Act, or (2) coordinate salmon restoration projects across a region in areas where there are no ESA-required recovery plans. Regional organizations bring the public, tribes, and private interests together to collaborate on improving their watershed for fish. Regional organizations and lead entities together identify and prioritize habitat protection and restoration strategies and other salmon recovery activities.
- 3. Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEGs):** The fourteen RFEGs implement salmon recovery projects, including habitat protection and restoration, and participate with lead entities and regional salmon recovery organizations.
- 4. State Agencies and Programs**
  - A. Governor's Salmon Recovery Office:** Coordinates and produces a statewide salmon strategy; assists in the implementation of regional recovery plans; helps secure funding for local, regional, and state recovery effort; and provides the Biennial State of Salmon report to the Legislature.
  - B. Puget Sound Partnership:** Addresses the health of Puget Sound by developing and implementing an action agenda for restoration.

- C. Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership: Addresses priorities in the Puget Sound marine nearshore ecosystem (co-managed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Army Corps of Engineers).
  - D. Conservation Commission: Oversees conservation districts in the state, which are often SRFB grant recipients and habitat project implementers. The commission also administers conservation programs targeted at agricultural land, such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program.
  - E. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife: Provides technical assistance to project sponsors and lead entities, manages fish hatcheries and hatchery reform activities, regulates harvest, and takes the lead on working with the tribes on salmon recovery issues.
  - F. Washington Department of Natural Resources: Manages timber land and aquatic land, jointly manages the Family Forest Fish Passage Program, and addresses salmon recovery through its habitat conservation plans and the Forest and Fish Agreement.
  - G. Washington Department of Ecology: Manages monitoring efforts, including status and trends, and addresses water issues such as watershed planning, water rights, and water quality.
  - H. Washington State Department of Transportation: Addresses fish passage issues, including removing barriers to fish, such as highway culverts; manages storm water runoff associated with WSDOT paved surfaces; mitigates for project impacts on wetlands and prevents erosion control associated with construction.
- 5. Tribes:** Individual tribes, along with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission and the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, are involved in regional recovery organizations, lead entities, the Puget Sound and Nearshore Partnership, sponsor salmon recovery projects, and co-manage the state's fisheries.
- 6. Federal Agencies:** Federal partners include the Army Corps of Engineers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA-Fisheries), the Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife, U.S. Geological Survey and U.S. Forest Service.
- 7. Other Entities:**
- A. Northwest Power and Conservation Council: Maintains a regional power plan and a fish and wildlife program aimed at protecting and rebuilding fish and wildlife populations affected by hydropower development in the Columbia River Basin.
  - B. Nonprofit and non-governmental organizations: Play a variety of roles in salmon recovery, such as sponsoring habitat protection and restoration projects and promoting local activities and citizen involvement.