Manual 19

Capacity Grants

Regional Organization and Lead Entity Guidance

July 2025

WASHINGTON STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Salmon Recovery
Funding Board

Mission

The SRFB 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.

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Section 1: Introduction

This section covers the following:

✓ Background on Washington's salmon recovery framework
✓ Contents of this manual

Background

Locally Developed Salmon Recovery, or the "Washington Way"

The Legislature created the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office in 1998 and charged it with coordinating and assisting in the development of recovery plans for all listed salmon, steelhead, and trout in Washington.[1]

Salmon, steelhead, and trout are a critical part of Washington's history, culture, economy, and recreation. Numerous factors, including historical overfishing and ongoing habitat loss, devastated these iconic fish. Since 1991, the federal government has listed eighteen species of salmonids in Washington for protection under the Endangered Species Act, affecting more than 75 percent of the state's geographic area.

In response to the decline and listings, Washington State developed the *Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon–Extinction is Not an Option* (1999). The statewide strategy provides a coordinated framework for salmon recovery. Full recovery supports healthy, sustainable populations that allow productive commercial and recreational fishing as well as meaningful exercise of tribal treaty rights. Two of the key building blocks for salmon recovery are the lead entity program and the regional salmon recovery organizations.

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[1]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.030

Regional Salmon Recovery Organizations[2]

Seven regional salmon recovery organizations coordinate the work of recovery planning and implementation in Washington State. All have recovery plans approved by the federal government. See section 2 for more information on regional salmon recovery organizations.

Lead Entities

In 1998, the Washington State Legislature created a framework for salmon recovery that supported the creation of watershed-based organizations, known as lead entities, which are agreed upon by the cities, counties, and tribes within a geographic area. Lead entities develop local watershed strategies, make funding recommendations to the state's Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), and coordinate funding and implementation of habitat projects in their areas. Five of the state's regional salmon recovery organizations house the lead entity for their salmon recovery region.[3] See section 3 for more information on lead entities.

See the map on [RCO's website](#) for a complete listing of contact information.

About this Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide direction and guidance to the state's regional salmon recovery organizations and lead entities in administering and managing the capacity grants allocated to them by the SRFB. These capacity grants support infrastructure and staffing needs of lead entities and regional salmon recovery organizations. The grants are administered by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

This manual was created under the authority granted to the SRFB. It reflects the requirements of Revised Code of Washington, chapters 39.26, 77.85, and 79A.25.240; Washington Administrative Code 420.04 and 420.12; and policies of the SRFB and RCO.

RCO follows state and federal guidelines for nondiscrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, age, marital status, sex, sexual orientation, residence, veteran status, and disability. Anyone believing RCO or its programs discriminate should inform RCO's director.

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[2]Regional organizations must be recognized in statute or by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office. See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.010.

[3]The lower Columbia, middle Columbia, upper Columbia, Snake River, and Hood Canal regional salmon recovery organizations house the lead entities for their regions.

For an alternative format of this manual, contact the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office's regional organization and lead entity program manager, Jeannie Abbott, (360) 480-2701, relay service for the hearing impaired, call 711.

Section 2: Regional Salmon Recovery Organizations

This section covers the following:

✔ Salmon recovery regions
✔ Regional recovery organizations
✔ Regional salmon recovery plans
✔ Council of Regions

Salmon Recovery Regions

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, together with other state and federal agencies, defined eight salmon recovery regions in Washington State based on fish populations listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. The act requires the federal government to develop recovery plans for listed salmon species. The federal government measures the health of fish populations based on Evolutionarily Significant Units or Distinct Population Segments, which are populations or groups of populations of salmon species that are reproductively isolated from other populations and that contribute substantially to the evolutionary legacy of the species.

The *Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon–Extinction is Not an Option* (1999) concluded the best way to ensure that recovery plans were implemented was to encourage local groups to develop them. This conclusion eventually led to the formation of the regional salmon recovery organizations.

Figure 1. Salmon Recovery Regions
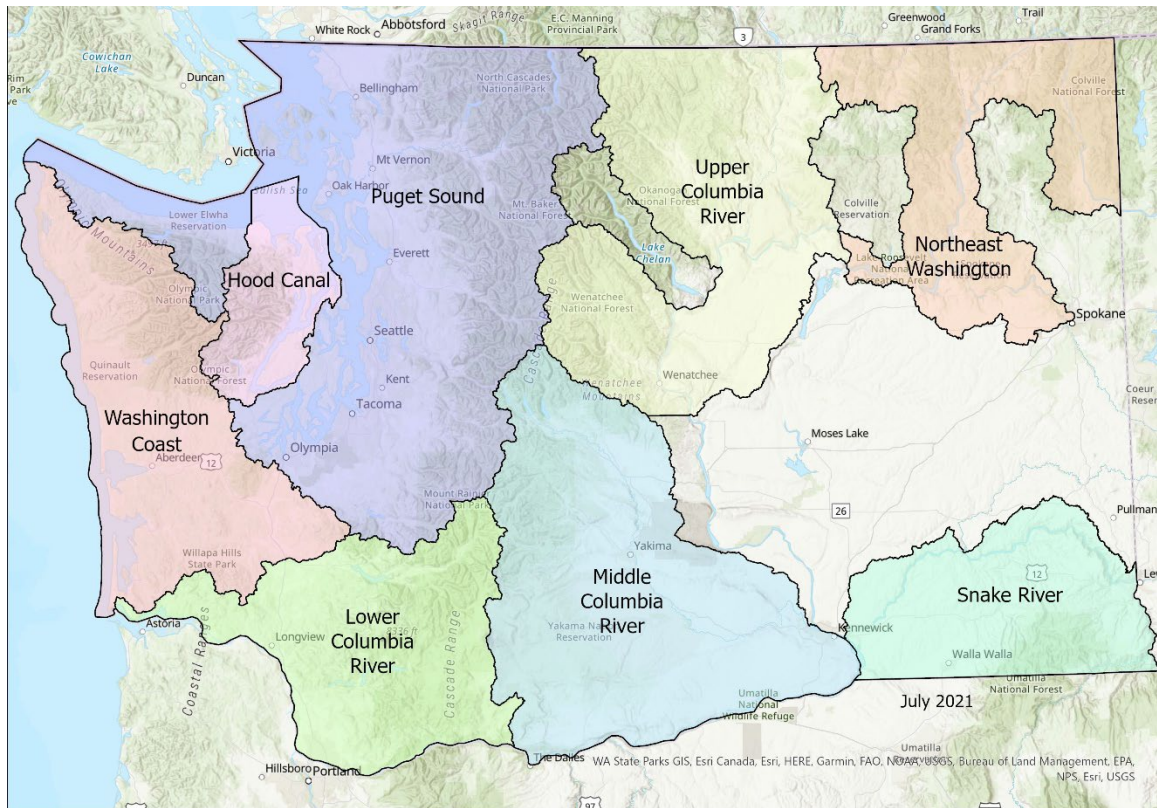
Regional Salmon Recovery Organizations

Seven regional salmon recovery organizations formed to coordinate the work of recovery planning and implementation. Regional organizations must be recognized in statute or by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office.

The primary purpose of a regional recovery organization is to prepare a federally approved regional recovery plan and oversee its implementation. These plans strive to gain regional consensus on measurable fish population status and goals; identify priority harvest, habitat, hydropower, and hatchery actions; and incorporate monitoring of the implementation and effectiveness of these actions. Regional organizations also work with the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and RCO to report on recovery progress.

The Legislature created the following three regional recovery organizations:

- The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board is charged with developing a program for salmon and steelhead recovery in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties[4] and serves as the lead entity.

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[4]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.200.

- The Hood Canal Coordinating Council is designated as the regional salmon recovery organization and lead entity for Hood Canal summer chum.[5]

- The Puget Sound Partnership, a state agency, serves as the regional salmon recovery organization for all Puget Sound salmon[6] other than Hood Canal summer chum.

Four other organizations were organized by local governments and recognized by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, as provided by state law.[7] These regional organizations are as follows:

- Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

- Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

- Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board (middle Columbia River region)

- Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership (Washington Coast region)

The newest regional organization, the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership, hereafter referred to as Coast Salmon Partnership, formed in 2013. It completed the Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Plan, a regional salmon action plan to protect and promote the sustainability of a number of salmon populations in its area that are not listed under the Endangered Species Act.[8]

The Northeast Washington recovery region does not have a regional recovery organization.

Regional Salmon Recovery Plans

Starting in 2001, the SRFB provided funding for regional organizations to develop and implement recovery plans.[9] Each group developed a recovery plan that expanded on previous planning efforts and helped connect local social, cultural, and economic needs and desires with scientific knowledge and Endangered Species Act goals. The SRFB funding complemented other funding these groups had acquired for drafting components of the plans.

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[5]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.090(3) and RCW 90.88.030(1)(a).
[6]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.090(3).
[7]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.090(2).
[8]A recovery plan for Endangered Species Act-listed Lake Ozette sockeye was completed by the federal government, working with a local steering group, in May 2009.
[9]With support from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, administered by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service.

Today, the following seven regional organizations have regional recovery plans approved by the federal government and are working vigorously to implement them.

Regional recovery plans contain an implementation schedule that provides details on responsibilities, tasks, sequence or schedule, and costs. In addition, each plan calls for monitoring implementation efforts and periodic review of progress toward goals and adaptive management.

Recovery Region	Listed Species	Key Limiting Factors Identified in Recovery Plans and Addressed by Projects
Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Region	Chinook, steelhead; bull trout*	The *Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan* (2007) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; degraded near-shore, marine, and estuarine conditions; riparian degradation and loss of in-river woody material; degraded water quality and temperature; excessive sediment; impaired stream flows; fish passage barriers; hatchery-related adverse effects. A recovery plan for Puget Sound steelhead is the review process.
Hood Canal Salmon Recovery Region	Hood Canal summer chum; bull trout*	*Hood Canal and Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca Summer-Run Chum Recovery Plan* (2007) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; degraded near-shore, marine, and estuarine conditions; riparian degradation and loss of in-river woody material; degraded water quality and temperature; excessive sediment; impaired stream flows.
Lower Columbia River Salmon Recovery Region	Chinook, steelhead, coho, chum; bull trout*	*Washington Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery and Fish and Wildlife Subbasin Plan* (2010) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; degraded near-shore, marine, and estuarine conditions; riparian degradation and loss of in-river woody material; degraded water quality and temperature; impaired stream flows; barriers to fish passage; excessive sediment; hatchery impacts; harvest impacts; predator harassment of juvenile and adult fish.
Middle Columbia River (Yakima) Salmon Recovery Region	Steelhead; bull trout*	The *Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan* (2009) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; riparian degradation; degraded water quality and temperature; impaired stream flows in tributaries; excessive sediment; barriers to fish passage in tributaries; impacts of main stem flow regulation; mortality from Columbia River hydropower dams.

Recovery Region	Listed Species	Key Limiting Factors Identified in Recovery Plans and Addressed by Projects
		The Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan provides detailed guidance for bull trout recovery in the Yakima Basin.
Snake River Salmon Recovery Region	Chinook, steelhead	The *Southeast Washington Management Unit Plan for Spring/Summer Chinook and Steelhead* (2011) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; riparian degradation; degraded water quality and temperature; impaired stream flows in tributaries; excessive sediment; barriers to fish passage in tributaries; harvest impacts; pinniped and avian predation.
Upper Columbia River Salmon Recovery Region	Spring Chinook, steelhead; bull trout*	The *Upper Columbia Spring Chinook and Steelhead Recovery Plan* (2007) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; riparian degradation; degraded water quality and temperature; impaired stream flows in tributaries; excessive sediment; barriers to fish passage in tributaries; harvest impacts; hatchery impacts; hydropower system mortality.
Washington Coast Salmon Recovery Region	Sockeye	The *Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Plan* (2013) identifies the following limiting factors: degraded floodplain and channel structure; degraded near-shore, marine, and estuarine conditions; riparian degradation and loss of in-river woody material; degraded water quality and temperature; impaired stream flows; barriers to fish passage; excessive sediment; hatchery impacts; harvest impacts. The *Lake Ozette Sockeye Recovery Plan* (2009) identifies the following limiting factors: floodplain connectivity and function; channel structure and complexity; riparian areas and large woody material recruitments; stream substrate; predation, competition, and disease.

*U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service finalized the *Bull Trout Recovery Plan* in 2015

Council of Regions

Formed in 2002, the Council of Regions is a forum for Washington's regional recovery organization leaders to develop solutions to common issues and to coordinate on shared priorities.

Meetings are facilitated by a chairperson chosen by council members. Assistance is provided by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and RCO.

The council has no independent decision-making authority. It serves as an advisory body, providing information and recommendations about regional salmon recovery policies, implementation strategies, and monitoring coordination to regional recovery organizations, the SRFB, state and federal agencies, and others.

Section 3:
Lead Entities

This section covers the following:

✓ Lead entities
✓ The lead entity process
✓ The Salmon Recovery Portal database
✓ Washington Salmon Coalition

Lead Entities

The Legislature created the lead entity program when it passed the Salmon Recovery Act. The Legislature asked communities to choose an entity that would lead the process of identifying and prioritizing habitat protection and restoration, rather than designating which organization would guide salmon recovery in a watershed. Lead entities (except for the Spokane lead entity, which formed in 2023) formed in 1999–2000, pre-dating all the salmon recovery regions, except for the lower Columbia.

Lead entities are community-based groups that develop strategies to restore salmon habitat and recruit project sponsors to implement the strategies through on-the-ground habitat protection and restoration projects. As local, watershed-based organizations, lead entities provide a fair and neutral forum, performing an essential role in Washington State's community-based salmon recovery efforts.

A lead entity's primary purpose is to establish and facilitate the work of the citizens committee. The citizens committee has the following tasks:

- Maintain a prioritized list of habitat projects needed in the lead entity area (the overall habitat project list)

- Establish priorities for individual projects

- Define the sequence for project implementation

- Submit an annual ranked list of habitat projects to the SRFB

The citizen evaluation of the proposed projects ensures that the projects have community support, that no project on the list is considered mandatory, and that no private landowner is forced or coerced into participation in any respect.[10]

Each salmon recovery regional organization contains one or more lead entities.

Salmon Recovery Regional Organization	Number of Lead Entities
Hood Canal Coordinating Council[11]	1 lead entity
Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board	1 lead entity
Snake River Salmon Recovery Board	1 lead entity
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board	1 lead entity
Yakima Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board	1 lead entity
No regional organization[12]	3 lead entities
Washington Coast Sustainable Salmon Partnership	4 lead entities
Puget Sound Partnership	15 lead entities

How is a Lead Entity Formed?

To create a lead entity, counties, cities, and tribal governments within a geographic area must jointly designate, by resolution or by letters of support, the area for which a habitat project list is to be developed and the lead entity that is to be responsible for submitting the habitat project list.[13]

What is a Lead Entity Area?

A lead entity area must be based, at a minimum, on a Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA), combination of WRIAs, or any other area as agreed to by the counties, cities, and tribes involved. A county, city, conservation district, special district, tribal government,

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[10]Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050(1)(a)

[11]Hood Canal has regional organization responsibility for summer chum; it is also a lead entity in the Puget Sound region for Puget Sound Chinook.

[12]Klickitat County Lead Entity is independent from a regional organization but cooperates with both the middle Columbia and lower Columbia regions. Pend Oreille Lead Entity lies in the Northeast Washington region and no regional recovery organization has been formed. Spokane Lead Entity lies in area with no salmon recovery region.

[13]Projects include habitat restoration projects, habitat protection projects, habitat projects that improve water quality, habitat projects that protect water quality, habitat-related mitigation projects, and habitat protection maintenance and monitoring activities. See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.010.

regional recovery organization, or other entity may be a lead entity or serve as the lead entity's fiscal agent.[14]

How Is a Lead Entity Funded?

The Legislature provides basic funding for lead entities through RCO. This funding supports the capacity or administrative needs of the lead entity. Most lead entities receive in-kind and monetary support from their local communities.

The Legislature, through the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund, provides additional capacity funding to Puget Sound lead entities to support their effort to recruit, develop, review, and prioritize eligible habitat projects.

What Does a Lead Entity Do?

Each lead entity develops strategies and seeks community support for salmon recovery. Each solicits, develops, and prioritizes salmon habitat projects and submits them in an annual ranked list for funding to the SRFB. They use the Salmon Recovery Portal database to track and report salmon recovery projects and related activities.

The particulars of each lead entity's process derive from its community and its history. The details vary among the lead entities in the state, i.e., the committees may be called different names, the fiscal agent may be involved closely with the process or not, or the lead entity coordinator tasks may be spread among several people.

In practice, all lead entities perform the following functions:

- Convene a citizens committee

    o Represents counties, cities, conservation districts, tribes, environmental groups, business interests, landowners, citizens, volunteer groups, regional fish enhancement groups, and other habitat interests

    o Uses community social, economic, and cultural values as well as scientific information to evaluate and prioritize salmon habitat recovery projects

    o Identifies and reviews projects

    o Ranks annual list of salmon habitat recovery projects

    o Submits ranked list to the SRFB for funding consideration

- Convene a technical advisory group

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[14]See Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050(1)(a).

- o   Uses scientific information and local technical knowledge and expertise to evaluate salmon habitat recovery projects.

- o   Assists in developing salmon habitat recovery strategies in the lead entity area

- o   Helps identify and review projects

- o   Advises on prioritizing projects

- o   Ensures projects are scientifically valid

- Acts as or designates a fiscal agent

  - o   Manages lead entity contract with RCO

  - o   Signs contract with RCO for lead entity capacity grants

  - o   Pays bills for lead entity (e.g., payroll, benefits, rent, telephone, and supplies)

  - o   Submits reimbursement requests (billings) to RCO

- Designates a lead entity coordinator

  - o   Serves as the point of contact for the lead entity

  - o   Establishes, maintains, and staffs the citizens committee and technical advisory group functions for the lead entity

  - o   Administers the lead entity annual work plan

  - o   Develops and manages grant program criteria

  - o   Coordinates submission of the ranked habitat project list to the SRFB

  - o   Tracks project information in the Salmon Recovery Portal database

  - o   Conducts community outreach to develop support for salmon recovery projects

The Lead Entity Process

The result of the lead entity process is a ranked list of salmon recovery habitat projects that is submitted annually to the SRFB. Projects go through a variety of reviews during the lead entity process including verifying the project meets the lead entity strategy

and/or work plan, evaluation by local technical experts, and ranking by the citizens committee. For more about the criteria and process for funding projects, see RCO's *Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants*.

Lead Entity Strategy

A lead entity strategy is a habitat protection and restoration action plan for the watersheds in the lead entity area. It provides a stepwise approach to how, where, and when to take action to restore and protect habitat and the watershed processes that are necessary to support salmon.

The lead entity strategy may be an independent document or part of a regional salmon recovery plan.

The strategy characterizes the needs of salmon species and prioritizes geographic areas and the types of restoration, protection, monitoring, outreach, or other activities needed. It identifies local socio-economic and cultural factors relating to salmon recovery. These stakeholder-supported strategies increase local buy-in and effective decision-making.

Local Technical Evaluation

Lead entities tap into local expertise, often, but not always with a technical advisory group that meets separately from the citizens committee. Technical advice is provided by biologists, engineers, hydrologists, or other natural resource experts who often are from city, county, state, federal, tribal, private, or other organizations in the lead entity area. The technical advisory group rates the projects submitted by the grant applicants on their technical merits.

These local technical experts often are the most knowledgeable about the particular watershed, habitat, and fish conditions in the area. Their expertise is invaluable and helps ensure that priorities and projects are based on specific ecological conditions and processes. They judge projects on their technical merits, on benefits to salmon, and on the level of certainty that the benefits will occur.

Citizens Committee

The purpose of the citizens committee is to provide a community-based evaluation of the proposed projects. The technical advisory committee shares its technical evaluation with the citizens committee. The citizens committee weighs local social, cultural, and economic values, as they apply to salmon recovery, along with the technical evaluation.

The citizens committee is critical to ensure that priorities and projects have the necessary local support for success and that, as the law states, "no project included on a habitat

project list shall be considered mandatory in nature and no private landowner may be forced or coerced into participation in any respect."[15]

It is the citizens committee that ranks the project list and submits it through the lead entity coordinator or recovery region to the SRFB for funding consideration.

Citizens Committee Representation

State law[16] identifies the interests that are to be represented on a lead entity citizens committee. The interests identified are as follows:

- Business Interests
- Cities
- Citizens
- Conservation Districts
- Counties
- Environmental Groups

- Landowners
- Regional Fish Enhancement Groups
- Tribes
- Volunteer Groups
- Other Habitat Interests

Ideally, each of these statutorily identified interests is represented on a lead entity citizens committee. If such an interest is not participating, the lead entity coordinator should actively cultivate and recruit potential representatives.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office recognizes that in some lead entity areas, the statutorily identified interests may not be engaged actively in salmon recovery efforts.[17] At a minimum, a citizens committee should include interests to represent diverse habitat-related community values and issues.

The lead entity coordinator shall provide a list of participating citizens and technical committee members. The lead entity coordinator also will detail the committee members' levels of participation, for example with meeting attendance records.

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[15]Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050
[16]Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050 (1)(b)
[17]See Revised Code of Washington 77.88.200(2) for specific management board membership requirements for the lower Columbia region. The management board acts as the citizens committee for the lower Columbia region.

Salmon Recovery Portal

The Salmon Recovery Portal is the mapping and project tracking tool that allows lead entities and others to share habitat protection and restoration projects with funders and the public. The portal helps lead entities relate planned, proposed, current, and past project achievements to salmon recovery goals.

Connecting these projects online improves planning and program performance because project managers and funders can organize and share projects with each other and with technical reviewers. It allows them to see how recovery actions fit together and where future opportunities might be. The transparency of the Salmon Recovery Portal increases support and accountability.

Data on Many Projects Displayed Many Ways

The Salmon Recovery Portal stores data that includes project name, type, description, objective, a mapped location, amounts funded, goals, outputs, outcomes (metrics), the limiting factor being addressed, photographs, reference documents, and project status (planned, proposed, alternate, active, completed, or dormant).

The Salmon Recovery Portal is used to collect and track information on projects funded by all funding sources, which may include the SRFB, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, and the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund. The portal can track projects funded by other sources, such as agricultural incentive programs, federal road management programs, and conservation programs.

Projects funded from different sources can be put on a single map so people can coordinate efforts and leverage funds. Projects and data can be seen in a variety of ways, such as maps, spreadsheets, and hierarchical diagrams, as well as at variety of scales, such as watershed, regional, and statewide.

The Salmon Recovery Portal maintains landowner privacy through security features in the system.

Resources

Training and a help desk are available. Lead entities and project sponsors are encouraged to participate in the Salmon Recovery Portal trainings periodically conducted by RCO. Trainings provide information on how to most efficiently and effectively use the portal for project management and how to best update project information regularly.

The Salmon Recovery Portal website is online.

Salmon Recovery Portal Data Specialist, Chantell Krider, (360) 902-3020

Washington Salmon Coalition

The Washington Salmon Coalition originally formed to provide advice to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on salmon recovery policy issues.

Over time, the organization evolved to support the lead entity program by serving as a forum for discussing lead entity issues and improving communication with the SRFB, RCO, Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, other state agencies, the Council of Regions, and other interested groups.

Education and coordination are a central theme for the Washington Salmon Coalition. The organization anticipates that the roles of lead entities and of the Washington Salmon Coalition will evolve with the needs of salmon recovery and the changing landscape of Washington State's economy.

The organization receives a training budget and a stipend for its chair from the SRFB. Contracted administrative support may be available when funds returned from lead entity capacity grants are available and approved by the SRFB.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Washington Salmon Coalition is to support and strengthen the twenty-six lead entities in Washington State in their endeavors to restore, enhance, and protect salmonids and their habitats in a scientifically-sound manner that engages local communities and supports Washington's economy. Each lead entity is a member of the Washington Salmon Coalition.

The Washington Salmon Coalition has developed the following internal and external goals.

Internal Goals

- Provide an official forum to do the following:

  o Facilitate the interchange of information, build relationships, and support mentoring amongst lead entity coordinators.

  o Encourage lead entity consensus on priority recommendations and communicate in a unified manner.

  o Support professional development and training opportunities.

- Periodically review and reaffirm Washington Salmon Coalition's identity and strategies.

- Accomplish the objectives set forth by the communications and outreach committee.

- Develop strategies to improve long-term stability of capacity and capital funding for lead entities, the Washington Salmon Coalition, and salmon recovery.

- Track, participate in, and lead where appropriate, the development of funding mechanisms that align with salmon recovery.

- Support efforts to ensure effective use of reporting and communication tools.

External Goals

- Actively advise the SRFB on local salmon recovery and lead entity issues.

- Promote the Lead Entity Program as the local, scientifically based program for developing salmon habitat projects that fit within local community values.

- Increase lead entity efficacy, profile, and influence by engaging at regional, state, and national levels.

Structure

Information about the Washington Salmon Coalition's structure can be found in the document [Washington Salmon Coalition Mission, Structure, and Action Plan](#).

Section 4:
Conflict of Interest Policy

This section covers the following:

✔ Ethics and appearance of conflicts
✔ Guidance on conflict of interest policies

Ethics and the Appearance of Conflicts

As recipients of RCO funding, regional organization and lead entity staff must uphold a high ethical standard. Compliance with the ethics requirements is an individual responsibility. Regional organization and lead entity staff should avoid any circumstance that invites a conflict of interest or creates the appearance of unethical conduct or practices.

Regional organization and lead entity staff may not do the following:

- Have a financial interest or engage in any activity that conflicts with the proper discharge of their official duties.

- Use their official positions to secure special privileges for themselves or any other person or entity.

A conflict of interest occurs when a person has a private interest that may benefit from that person's actions on behalf of RCO, or when a private interest could interfere with the person's duties on behalf of RCO. Such interests do not need to be financial. Regional organization and lead entity staff must not make decisions to gain financial or other benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends.

Regional organization and lead entity staff can avoid conflicts of interest and other ethical problems by being aware of statutory restrictions, adhering to such restrictions, using good judgment, and being fair and equitable in decision-making.

RCO recommends that staff carefully review their organizations' codes of ethics and Revised Code of Washington Chapter 42.52, the statutory Code of Ethics for public officials.

Limitations on Gifts

It may be useful to understand that RCO considers all RCO members to be subject to Revised Code of Washington 42.52.150(4) "Limitations on Gifts" because the agency provides grants. As such, the strictest provisions of the state ethics law apply to RCO members.

"RCO members" means officers, employees, volunteers, and members of RCO and its boards and committees.

This definition does not include regional organization and lead entity staff, who are employed by other organizations. However, those organizations may have similar rules that should be incorporated into the local policy document.

- A RCO member may not accept a gift if it could reasonably be expected that the gift would influence the recipient's action or judgment, or the gift could be considered a reward for the recipient's action or inaction.

- A RCO member may not accept, from any person or organization, any gift or gifts with a value in excess of $50 a year. Such gifts are limited to those permitted by statute. The Executive Ethics Board produces a brochure that lists the types of gifts that may be accepted.

- A RCO member may accept only gifts of nominal or promotional value from an individual or organization that receives RCO grants or is subject to RCO policies.

RCO members are expected to use good judgment. Even if a situation seems to comply with the ethics law, members should avoid it if it would it appear unethical or unfair to others.

RCO members are not allowed to accept the following:

- Payments for expenses in connection with a speech, presentation, or appearance made while in the role of an RCO member.

- Payments for seminars and educational programs.

- Flowers, plants, and floral arrangements.

Guidance on Conflict of Interest Policies

Dealing properly with conflict of interest is crucial to maintaining the integrity and reputation of an organization or a person. This is especially true for the state's lead entities and regional salmon recovery organizations as they depend on public confidence and support. As noted above, it is extremely important to avoid both actual and the appearance of conflicts of interest.

Adopting and actively employing a well-written policy that clearly addresses conflict of interest is an essential step. Here are three considerations to keep in mind:

- **Content.** The policy should include the following:

  o Definition of conflict of interest. This should be clear, non-technical, and include the full range of factors that can be expected to affect fair decision-making in the organization. It should not be limited to just financial interests.

  o Examples. Supplement the definition with examples that illustrate how conflict of interest might arise in the organization.

  o Procedures. Outline the procedures to be followed to avoid conflict of interest, where possible, and to deal effectively with it when it occurs. For example:

    - Who should be notified?

    - Are there forms to be filled out (e.g., disclosure forms)?

    - What does "recusal" mean in the organization? For example, should a person with a conflict not participate in discussion or should the person leave the room?

    - Are there exceptions? Who has authority to grant exceptions?

- **Access and readability.** Ensure that people affected by the policy can access it, read it, and understand it.

- **Awareness and training.** Ensure that people affected by the policy know that it exists. Revisit the policy regularly so that participants have the opportunity to discuss it and have their questions answered.

Structuring a Conflict of Interest Policy

Below are key points to remember when structuring a conflict of interest policy:

- The policy should require those with a conflict (or who think they may have a conflict) to disclose it.

- The policy should prohibit board or committee members from voting on or scoring any matter that gives rise to a conflict between their personal or professional interests and the objectives of the lead entity or regional organizations.

- The policy should explain how the board or committee will deal with violations (i.e., what corrective action will be taken).

- The policy should note that it is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest that may be applicable to the organization.

Good Practices

- Circulate an annual "conflict disclosure questionnaire" and require board, committee, and staff members to review and sign it. The questionnaire could disclose existing or potential conflicts and should remind them to disclose any that might arise in the future.

- Make sure that meeting minutes reflect when a person discloses a conflict or potential conflict and how the conflict was managed during the meeting.

- Publicize lead entity project evaluation and scoring criteria, project review procedures, and schedules widely and early in the grant process to potential project sponsors, interested parties, and the public in general. This will help avoid confusion and potential conflicts of interest. Publicity efforts can include website postings, email distribution, social media, local newspapers, public meetings, and other methods.

Section 5: Reimbursement Policies

This section covers the following:

✔ Capacity grant agreements with RCO
✔ Important things to know
✔ Eligible capacity grant costs
✔ Ineligible capacity grant costs
✔ Manual 8

Capacity Grant Agreements with RCO

Unlike most grants administered by RCO, lead entity and regional salmon recovery organization grants are not capital projects. Their grants support local and regional processes that require staff to develop community-based project proposals and to implement, update, and report on the progress of salmon recovery plans. These capacity grants are awarded annually by the SRFB, and typically are amended to add funds for the second year of each biennium.

Depending on the region, RCO may combine regional organization and lead entity funding into one grant agreement. However, in such an agreement, the regional organization and the lead entity each have distinct scopes of work, deliverables, and budgets.

Important Things to Know

Reimbursement Help

Manual 8: Reimbursements provides guidance for requesting reimbursements.

Billing rates, examples, links, federal rules, and training videos are available on the RCO website.

Grant Recipients Pay First

RCO pays grant recipients through a reimbursement process. Grant recipients may request reimbursement only after they have paid their employees and vendors. RCO does not provide money before vendors are paid, except as outlined in the SRFB's cash advance policy (See manual 8, section 6, "SRFB Cash Advances").

RCO Will Pay Only for Allowable Costs

RCO will pay only for allowable costs. A cost is allowable if it is as follows:

- Reasonable. A cost is considered reasonable if the work or materials and the cost reflect what a prudent person would have spent under the circumstances.

- Necessary to complete the approved scope of work.

- Eligible in the grant program.

- Documented adequately.

- Incurred during the period of performance set forth in the grant agreement.

Reimbursement is Limited to Out-of-Pocket Costs

Grant recipients will be reimbursed RCO's percentage of total allowable costs. However, if this calculation exceeds the grant recipient's out-of-pocket costs, the payment will be limited to those costs. Out-of-pocket costs are costs the grant recipient paid that were not reimbursed by another funding source. The effect of this limit is that the grant recipient is not reimbursed for donations or other non-reimbursable amounts.

Use a Verifiable Payment Method

RCO will not reimburse payments made in cash. Paying in cash does not provide a verifiable audit trail.

RCO Holds Retainage

RCO generally holds 10 percent of the grant until the project has been completed and all required documentation is approved.

RCO Pays within Thirty Days

RCO generally pays reimbursement requests within thirty days of receiving a properly completed bill. Properly completed bills include all necessary documentation.

Information is Public

All information and documentation submitted to RCO is open to public review. RCO recommends that confidential or sensitive information, including home addresses and social security numbers, be removed from documents submitted to RCO.

Statewide Vendor Number

Regional organizations and lead entities are required to have a statewide vendor number to receive payments. Reimbursement payments may be paid by check or electronic fund transfer (EFT). To register or update information, visit the [Office of Financial Management (OFM) website](#).

Tax Related Information (1099-MISC)

Federal tax regulations require RCO to issue an annual 1099-misc tax form to all individuals, partnerships, sole proprietors, and attorneys who receive more than $600 a calendar year in RCO funding.

Special Rules for Federally Funded Projects

Regional organization grants are funded by the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, and the federal omni-circular defines the federal rules for managing these funds. The formal title of this is Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards.

This is effective for all federal awards received and implemented after December 26, 2014. If the RCO agreement includes federal funds it will be noted in section G and will be subject to omni-circular rules.

The omni-circular [code of federal regulations](#) is online.

Manual 8 refers to specific sections of the omni-circular, but more sections may apply. Manual 8 is not intended to provide all applicable omni-circular information and requirements.

Eligible Capacity Grant Costs

Liability Insurance

In accordance with sound business practices, RCO recommends that the lead entity or regional salmon recovery organization carry and maintain appropriate liability insurance,

including, but not limited, to general public liability insurance and automobile liability insurance.

Payroll

Employee time directly related to the approved scope of work may be reported as a project cost. The reportable amount is the employee's regular rate of pay, including taxes and benefits. Taxes and benefits are eligible only if they are paid when they are due.

Timesheets

All payroll-related costs must be based on records that accurately reflect the work performed and must be documented on a timesheet. Do not submit copies of the timesheet with the bill unless requested to do so. The timesheet must meet the following standards:

- Reflect an after-the-fact determination of the actual activity of each employee.

- Account for the total activity for which employees are compensated.

- Be signed or authorized electronically by the individual employee or by a responsible supervisor having firsthand knowledge of the activities performed by the employee.

- Be prepared at least monthly and coincide with one or more pay periods.

- Not be budget estimates or other distributions based on a percentage before the work was performed.

For RCO projects funded with a federal element, read and understand omni-circular §200.430 Compensation-Personal Services.

Travel, Meals, and Transportation

Travel costs are allowable, and they are limited to the state per diem rates. Grant recipients must maintain a detailed travel log, which includes a name with dates, times, locations, business purpose, and itemized travel costs.

Reimbursements for meals are limited to the state per diem meal rate in effect for the area of travel. Meals provided by the regional organization and lead entity are limited to the lower of the actual cost or the state per diem meal rate. Reimbursements for lodging are limited to the lower of the actual cost or the state per diem lodging rate.

The portion of allowable transportation costs that are directly attributed to the project can be reimbursed using one of the following methods:

- **Mileage:** Allowable costs are limited to a maximum of the current state mileage rate. No other vehicle costs including insurance, fuel, oil changes, repairs, maintenance, or lease payments will be allowed.

- **Short-term Vehicle Rental:** Allowable costs are limited to actual rental and fuel costs. This generally applies to rentals lasting less than one month.

- **Long-term Vehicle Lease:** Allowable costs are limited to the long-term lease rates and mileage listed on the RCO website.

For RCO projects funded with a federal element, read and understand omni-circular §200.474 Travel Costs.

Out-of-State Travel

For any out-of-state travel, grant recipients must receive prior authorization from the agency head or authorized designee, in accordance with RCO policy and the State Administration and Accounting Manual (SAAM) section 10.10.50.

Note that the Office of Financial Management does not define travel to counties or cities in Idaho and Oregon that are contiguous to the Washington border as out-of-state.

Air Travel

For any air travel, grant recipients must receive prior authorization from the agency head or authorized designee, in accordance with RCO policy. Contact the program manager.

Refreshments

Regional organizations and lead entities may wish to provide coffee and light refreshments and/or meals as an integral part of a meeting or volunteer activity. To be reimbursed for such expenses, the grant recipient must maintain supporting documentation with the regional organization or lead entity.

Supporting documentation must include the following:

- Pre-approval by the regional organization or lead entity.

- A list of attendees (sign-in sheet).

- Meeting purpose and agenda.

- Receipts showing actual costs.

Don't forget that costs can't exceed associated per diem rates for the meal and location.

RCO policy allows for coffee and light refreshments at meetings and trainings where regional organizations or lead entities are conducting official business as part of their scopes of work and according to [Office of Financial Management regulations](#).

Failure to follow state regulations may jeopardize reimbursement.

Meals during a meeting may be essential to the completeness of the meeting and advantageous to the State. It is RCO's policy to allow meals during meetings when the meal is an integral part of the meeting. The regional organization or lead entity must provide advance approval.

Definitions

- **Coffee and light refreshments**–Meaning any non-alcoholic beverages, such as coffee, tea, soft drinks, juice, or milk. For state purposes, a light refreshment is a snack served between meals. Examples are granola bars, rolls, fruit, nuts, or cheese.

- **Integral part of the meeting**–A meeting activity that is essential to the completeness of the meeting.

- **Official business**–The activities performed by a regional organization or lead entity employee, board member, authorized volunteer, contractor, work experience program participant, student, or employee of another governmental jurisdiction as directed by the person's supervisor in order to accomplish regional organization or lead entity programs or as required by the duties of the person's position or office.

- **Regular workplace**–The location where a regional organization or lead entity employee normally performs work, excluding meeting and conference rooms.

Procedure

The regional director (or designee) or lead entity coordinator must grant approval before any purchase and may approve the serving of coffee, light refreshments, and/or meals without regard to travel status where all the following conditions are met:

- Costs are within state per diem limits inclusive of any taxes, gratuities, and additional charges.

- The meeting is to conduct official business or to provide formal training that benefits the outcomes in the scope of work.

- The meals, coffee, or light refreshments are an integral part of the meeting or formal training that benefits the outcomes in the scope of work.

- The meeting or training session is away from the employee's regular workspace.

- The request for coffee, light refreshments, and/or meals has received approval before the event.

Regulations prohibit expenditures for meals, coffee, or light refreshments for hosting anniversaries of agencies; individual employment anniversaries; receptions for new, existing, or retiring employees or board members; election celebrations; etc. Please see the rules for meeting refreshments.

Employees and board or committee members may not claim reimbursement for a meal if the price of the meal was included in a conference registration fee or otherwise provided at no cost to them.

Documentation

Documentation of approval by the regional director or lead entity coordinator is required before the meeting is scheduled to start.

Documentation must provide support for the authorization including the following:

- The names of the organizations and people attending the meeting (includes conferences, conventions, and formal training sessions).

  o If the meeting provides coffee and/or light refreshments access to a limited number of individuals, the names of the people with access to the coffee and/or light refreshments.

  o If the meeting includes meals, the same rules apply.

- Final attendance must be documented after the meeting.

- A copy of the meeting agenda that includes the purpose of the meeting or expenditure.

- An original *itemized* receipt (including item descriptions, prices, sales tax collected, and any other charges) for accounts payable is required.

Keep documentation on file and provide to RCO upon request. See manual 8 for more information on record retention.

Subcontracts

For subcontracts of more than $20,000 or combined contracts of more than $20,000 going to one vendor (during the contract period), the regional organization or lead

entity must send the program manager a copy of the contract, including the scope of work, for review before completing the contract.

The program manager and RCO will review the contract proposal in a timely manner for consistency with work products promised in the scope of work.

Prevailing Wage Requirements

Specific wage rules may apply if contractors are used on projects. For some federally funded projects, the Davis Bacon law applies when determining appropriate wages. For all state-funded projects, state prevailing wages apply. Please see the links below for more information.

- Davis Bacon information

- State prevailing wages on the Department of Labor and Industries website

Competitive Bidding

Regional organizations and lead entities shall establish and follow their organizations' written procurement procedures or follow state or federal procurement procedures. All procurements, to the maximum extent practical, shall be open and competitive. Be aware of organizational conflicts of interest.

To avoid conflicts of interest, contractors who develop or draft specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals for RCO sponsors shall be excluded from competition for such procurements.

Procurements using federal funds must follow the Office of Management and Budget's Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principals and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, section 200.317 to 200.326.

Equipment and Supplies

Lead entities and regional organizations use a variety of equipment and supplies to support their salmon recovery efforts. Equipment shall be purchased only when it makes economic sense and the lead entity or regional staff can justify the purchase. Please consult with the program manager with questions.

Equipment

Only items with a purchase price of $5,000 or more are considered equipment. Items that cost less than $5,000 are considered supplies.

When buying equipment, the following items are required:

- Serial number

- Model number

- Purchase price

- Location where it is housed or stored

- Copy of the invoice

- Photograph of the equipment

Useful Life of Equipment

The State Administration and Accounting Manual (SAAM) section 30.50 discusses the useful life of equipment.

The table below summarizes the useful life of typical office equipment. Note that variations exist, for example a multifunction device that is both a printer and a scanner has a different useful life than a stand-alone printer. For full details, consult the SAAM.

Item	Class Code	Useful Life
Computer	Code 7012/7013	4 years
Tablet	Code 7014	2 years
Scanner	Code 7033	5 years
Printer	Code 7038	6 years
Telephone, mobile	Code 7014	2 years
Camera	Code 6720	6 years
Global Positioning System (GPS)	Code 5827	7 years

Loss or Damage

The regional organization or lead entity shall be responsible for any loss or damage to equipment.

Discontinued Use

Equipment obtained with regional organization or lead entity funding shall remain in the region's or lead entity's possession. When the regional organization or lead entity discontinues use of the equipment for the purpose for which it was funded, RCO may require the region or lead entity to deliver the equipment to RCO, or to dispose of the equipment according to RCO published policies.

Cost Sharing

If a lead entity coordinator serves more than one lead entity, the lead entities shall minimize duplication of equipment purchased and establish equipment cost-sharing agreements whenever practicable.

Similarly, where a regional organization includes more than one lead entity, the regional organization shall seek ways to minimize duplication of equipment purchased and establish equipment cost sharing agreements whenever practicable.

Supplies

Supplies include general office supplies, appropriate publications, and field gear for staff (e.g., rain gear, rubber boots, hip waders).

Please contact the program manager with any questions about supplies that are eligible for reimbursement.

Website

Website creation and maintenance that benefit the regional or lead entity organization are eligible costs.

Training, Seminars, and Conferences

Expenses for training, seminars, and conference fees that benefit the regional organization or lead entity are eligible costs.[18]

Related travel expenses must comply with state travel regulations (see above).

Events that do not require additional documentation include the following:

- Meetings held by the regional organization or lead entity

- Meetings or trainings held by the Washington Salmon Coalition or the Council of Regions

- Meetings of the SRFB or events sponsored by the SRFB (e.g., the Salmon Recovery Conference)

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[18]Recommended subjects for lead entity and regional staff training include Government-to-Government Training offered by the Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, the Open Public Meetings Act, Public Disclosure, Ethics in Public Service, facilitation skills, negotiation skills, and presentation skills. Trainings through Washington State's Department of Enterprise Services are available; please contact the program manager for details.

For other events, especially ones with significant registration fees or overnight travel, please supply the information below to the program coordinator **before** registering for an event, to ensure that the billing reimbursement goes smoothly.

- Name and purpose of training or opportunity

- Dates

- Location

- All anticipated costs

    o Registration

    o Transportation

    o Lodging

    o Meals

    o Parking

    o Other

- Statement on how the training or opportunity will benefit grant recipient's organization or salmon recovery efforts in the area

- How activity relates to the grant recipient's organization's work plan and any other relevant information

Indirect Costs

RCO allows indirect costs for regional organization and lead entity capacity grants. Regional organizations, which receive federal funding, are required to complete a RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet. The form indicates the indirect rate the applicant plans to charge to the grant. Start filling out this form early and work with accounting staff to estimate the indirect costs.

Costs usually included as indirect costs include utilities, general supplies, and administrative expenses (accounting department, information technology department, personnel department)

If indirect costs are charged, RCO expects not to see any other general administrative costs charged to the grant.

A region or lead entity fiscal agent who wants to charge indirect must provide RCO with a negotiated federal indirect rate or use the standard 15 percent rate. The fiscal agent must submit the RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet to the grants manager to receive the indirect rate.

Overhead and Administrative Costs

If the regional organization or lead entity does not wish to charge an indirect rate and so indicates on the RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet, then allocable overhead and administrative costs may be allowed if specified in the grant agreement and budget. The overhead and administrative costs may not exceed 25 percent of salaries and benefits.

Allocating Overhead Costs

If not using an indirect cost rate but wanting to bill for allowable overhead expenses, the grant recipient must identify an appropriate portion of the overhead expense to charge to the lead entity or regional organization grant. Allocating overhead costs is the process of dividing the costs into parts that are designated by expenditure for a specific purpose, like a lead entity grant.

For example, if a lead entity uses 20 percent of the space in a building with a monthly rent of $5,000, a defendable allocation for the lead entity share of the rent would be 20 percent or $1,000 a month. If costs are allocated, please ensure there is a defendable basis, and this basis is tracked, documented, and kept current.

In no case are administrative costs allowed when indirect costs are allowed.

Ineligible Capacity Grant Costs

Do not include ineligible costs in the billings. Some examples of ineligible costs include the following:

- Bad debts, including any losses arising from uncollectible accounts or claims.

- Ceremonial expenses, such as podiums, tents, and refreshments.

- Payments to an equipment replacement fund.

- Costs billed to an external funding source.

- Fines and penalties.

- Interest and other financial costs.

- Lobbying.

- Value of discounts or rebates on personal property.

If unsure whether an item is eligible for reimbursement, consult RCO staff.

Grant Reimbursement

RCO pays regional organizations and lead entities through a reimbursement process and not as a lump sum grant in advance. Documentation for all expenditures must be provided before receiving compensation.

RCO *Manual 8: Reimbursements* describes RCO reimbursement policies and procedures.

Reimbursement policies, audit information, labor and mileage rates, and other financial information are online at RCO's Billing section of its website.

Billing Deadlines and Limits

Lead entities and regional organizations must submit reimbursement requests at least once a year and not more often than monthly.

When a lead entity or regional organizational grant ends, complete the following:

- Send a final reimbursement request by the date identified in the grant agreement milestones with all required documentation to RCO

- Submit a final report in PRISM.

Final payment will not be sent until the final report is accepted and all required documentation has been submitted.

Regional Organization Contract Timelines

Facilitating a regional collaborative framework around natural resource issues depends on the participation and support of multiple parties and the public. Even though a regional organization may attempt to complete a task under its contract schedule or fill transitioning staff positions seamlessly, circumstances can delay work and result in funds remaining at the end of the grant period.

To provide the time necessary to complete planned work, regional organizations will be given twenty-six months to manage their contracts. The first year of a biennium will begin on July 1 and end June 30 of the following year. The contract will be amended adding second-year funding (if available). The second year will run July 1 through August 31.

Any funds remaining after the twenty-six-month period may be returned to RCO for distribution by the SRFB for board priorities.

Manual 8

[Manual 8](#) contains key information for regional organizations and lead entities, including:

- How to bill RCO

- Federal audit requirements

- RCO sponsor monitoring

- Record retention

- Salmon recovery grant cash advance policy

Section 6: Reporting Requirements

This section covers the following:

✔ Lead entity reporting requirements
✔ Regional organization reporting requirements

Reporting Requirements

Lead entities and regional salmon recovery organizations each have their own reporting requirements.

Lead Entities

Lead entities will provide documentation and reporting to the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office/RCO on their progress in completing the tasks that make up their scopes of work. The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office/RCO will provide a reporting template to the lead entity.

Regional Organizations

There are three methods RCO uses to help regional organizations provide better communication on progress toward overall recovery plan implementation. These methods will help answer the question "How are we doing?" The goal is to streamline reporting to show more easily the progress being made implementing the recovery plans.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office will provide templates for all reporting necessary under the grant agreement and will attempt to include requirements of the National Marine Fisheries Service for any other monitoring reports needed.

- The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office will work with regional organizations and the National Marine Fisheries Service, to the extent feasible, to fill data gaps and meet reporting requirements for the following:

    o National Marine Fisheries Service (recovery plan implementation monitoring)

    o Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund project implementation and funding

    o *State of Salmon in Watersheds* report

    o Annual progress reports

- At least once a year (twice per biennium), the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office staff will interact with regional organization staff to anticipate and address issues that may affect achievement of recovery plan implementation milestones. These meetings also will be open to SRFB members, state agency staff, and federal agency staff by invitation.

- The SRFB also should receive informational presentations from the regional recovery organizations. This gives the board a chance to hear regularly what kinds of things regional organizations and lead entities are doing and how implementation of recovery plans is proceeding. The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office staff will work with regional organizations to schedule these informational presentations to the SRFB.

Section 7:
Open Public Meetings Act

This section covers the following:

✓ Open Public Meeting Act
✓ Meeting requirements
✓ Training requirements

Opening Public Meeting Act

Assistant Attorney General Analysis

RCO considers lead entities subagencies to the State[19] because they operate through committees that play a mandatory role in the nomination and approval of salmon recovery projects. As subagents, lead entities are required to follow the Open Public Meetings Act.

Lead entity coordinators should provide Open Public Meeting Act training to their committees and make all the allowances for public input, testimony, advanced notice of meetings, etc.

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[19]RCO's assistant attorney general concluded that lead entity committees must follow the requirements of the Open Public Meetings Act because they are subagencies created by, or pursuant to, statute. They are deemed subagencies because of requirements in state law that they are funded and staffed by the RCO; that they designate an area to develop habitat project lists and designate a lead entity responsible for submitting the list; that they establish a committee of public and private members to provide input; that they compile a list of habitat projects and identify possible funding sources; that they submit the list to the SRFB; and that the SRFB must select projects to fund from those submitted by a lead entity. (Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050, Sections 1, 1a, 3, and 4 and Revised Code of Washington 77.85.130(3)).

Meeting Requirements

- Lead Entity citizen committee meetings are open to the public

- Meeting date, location, and time advertised on lead entity website

- Meeting minutes posted to lead entity website

- Time allocated on the meeting agenda for public comment

Technical advisory or other subcommittees of the lead entity citizens committee are <u>NOT</u> subject to Act, but the lead entity may choose to treat these meetings as open public meetings.

Training Requirements

Lead entities shall provide the [Open Public Meetings Act video](#) training to their members.

Appendix A: Qualities for Lead Entity Coordinator Success

Introduction

The recommendations from the Salmon Recovery Lean Study completed in December 2018 indicated that this manual should include a section on the qualifications of lead entity coordinators that lead to best outcomes. It further recommended inclusion of guidelines for the lead entity coordinator employer to coordinate with RCO on the hiring process for lead entity coordinators.

Accordingly, at the Washington Salmon Coalition retreat in Walla Walla in October 2018, the group discussed the qualities and skills that enable them to succeed. What follows are notes from that discussion.

Overall Considerations

The Washington Salmon Coalition offered the ideas below for improving clarity of the relationship between the fiscal agent, employing organization, and the lead entity coordinator.

- Employer should define where the lead entity function fits in its organization. Whose program is it?

- Skills and qualities of a lead entity coordinator will be different for different fiscal agent types.

- Employer/fiscal agent should understand the framework of the lead entity program.

- Fiscal agent and the lead entity coordinator should read manual 19 annually.

- Should understand how big a job being a lead entity coordinator is.

- Pay level needs to acknowledge the many different skills required.

The Washington Salmon Coalition also recommended working on additional clarity on the relationship between the regional organization and the lead entity. For some regions, there can be a liaison role or function between the regional organization and the employer/fiscal agent of the lead entity.

Hiring Process

Members of the Washington Salmon Coalition suggested that it would be useful for the lead entity initiating governments to be involved in writing the job description for the lead entity coordinator. They also suggested that the initiating governments participate in the hiring process and interviews.

Qualifications and Qualities for a Lead Entity Coordinator

The discussion among members of the Washington Salmon Coalition developed the following list of skills, qualifications, and qualities for a successful lead entity coordinator.

- Conflict resolution

- Management experience

- Organizational development

- Knowledge of watershed(s)

- Organizational skills (multitasking, prioritizing)

- Coordination and facilitation skills

- Project management skills

- Dedication to stewardship

- Knowledge of environmental planning, environmental studies, environmental science

- Communication skills

- Relationship building

- Ability to digest technical information and communicate it to non-technical audiences

- Knowledge of fish or related field

- Geographic Information System (GIS) or Google maps skills

- Ability to balance "other duties as assigned"

- Interpersonal skills

- Flexibility

- Can-do attitude

- Curiosity

- Ability to serve as "pep club" and advocate for program

- Ability to tolerate uncertainty

- Leadership skills

- Advocacy skills

- Know what you don't know

- Ability to find answers and problem solve

- Good listening skills

- Ability to be a neutral facilitator

- Able to compartmentalize

- Time management

- Ability to manage and juggle many things

- Budget management (juggling)

- Creative problem-solving

Appendix B:
PRISM-Salmon Recovery Portal Data Communication Process

Communication Process Overview

Accurate project reporting is an essential component of salmon recovery. Tracking project metrics (e.g., riparian miles treated or number of fish passage corrections) helps gage recovery efforts, plan future restoration projects, and report accomplishments. The metric data shapes the story of salmon recovery in Washington and helps justify ongoing support for salmon recovery to funding entities and the public.

In general, the Salmon Recovery Portal supports project planning and agency reporting. For programs funded and administered by RCO, the project metrics and metric values originate in PRISM and are transferred to the Salmon Recovery Portal. To ensure consistency between the two systems, the project information for the Salmon Recovery Portal projects that are linked to PRISM only may be edited in PRISM. The communication process outlined below is intended to improve communication among grants managers, lead entities, technical experts, and project sponsors to ensure a common understanding of the desired project outcomes throughout the project.

Projects that move through the lead entity process begin in the Salmon Recovery Portal. A small subset of data is entered into the portal to initiate project creation. Once the project is sent to PRISM, the project sponsor then completes the application process in PRISM.

As part of the project application process, the sponsor enters work types, which are specific to the project activities identified. The selection of the project work types automatically creates the relevant project metrics, which the sponsor then quantifies the values as proposed project accomplishments.

Each PRISM project should have one, and only one, corresponding Salmon Recovery Portal project. While the work types, metrics, and metric values may change during the project review process, choosing accurate project metrics and realistic metric values provides a foundation for project success and eventual reporting.

What's a Communication Stage?

Communication stages are opportunities for collaboration and communication during the project. The communication stages are intended to be check-ins among the grants managers, lead entities, technical experts, and project sponsors about the goals of the project expressed as work types and metric values. The goal during each communication stage is agreement among the parties about the project outcomes. The process is voluntary and consensus is not required for the project to move forward.

Stage 1: Application Review

During site visits and before the project enters the application phase, the project sponsor, grants manager, lead entity, and technical expert appointed by the program should discuss and establish a common understanding of the project work types and metrics. Any changes to work types and metric values must be made in PRISM. Everyone should agree on the project name, description, work types, and metric values (e.g., acres, miles) before the final application is accepted by RCO and ready for consideration by the SRFB.

Stage 2: Approved Project Review

Once a project has been approved for funding, RCO provides the project sponsor with a grant agreement for review and signature. Because a project may have multiple funding sources that can change a project outcome or metrics, reviewing the draft agreement is an opportunity to ensure a common understanding before the agreement is signed. Changing project information including work types, metrics, and metric values after the contract agreement may require a contract amendment. The project sponsor, grants manager, lead entity, and technical expert appointed by the funding program should agree on the project name, description, work types, and metric values (e.g., acres, miles). Changes to the project including work types and metric values must be made in PRISM.

Stage 3: Active Project Review

While the project is active, the sponsor submits progress reports that identify work accomplished, issues or problems, and progress on metrics. The lead entity coordinator will be emailed when the sponsor submits a progress report.

These reports give the project sponsor, grants manager, lead entity, and technical expert appointed by the funding program an opportunity to discuss and update project

information before the project is completed, thus avoiding a contract amendment. Changes to project information including work types, metrics, and metric values while a project is active may require a contract amendment. Any changes to work types and metric values must be made in PRISM.

Stage 4: Final Review

When a project is finished, the project sponsor submits a final report in PRISM and the lead entity coordinator receives an email about the report. There often is not time to review the report before RCO closes the project. Therefore, review of the project metrics and metrics values is encouraged during Communication Stages 1-3.

Questions or concerns about the metric or metric values that arise after a project is completed should be addressed within two months of the project close date to maintain data consistency with federal reporting requirements.

Changes to project information including metrics and metric values made after the project is closed may require a contract amendment process.

Resources

[Salmon Recovery Portal](#)

[PRISM Logon](#)