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**Location In-Person:** Room 172, First Floor, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street, SE, Olympia, WA. This public meeting location will allow for the public to provide comment and listen to the meeting as required by the Open Public Meeting Act. This requirement can be waived via [HB 1329](#) if there is declaration of emergency or if an agency determines that a public meeting cannot safely be held. If an emergency occurs, remote technology will be used instead.

**Location Virtually:** [https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_kmJzA5mJQIGIWATOUumJjA](https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kmJzA5mJQIGIWATOUumJjA)

**Phone Option:** (669) 900-6833 – **Webinar ID:** 897 2937 4854

*\*Additionally, RCO will record this meeting and would be happy to assist you after the meeting to access the recording.*

**Order of Presentation:** In general, each agenda item will include a staff presentation, followed by board discussion. The board only makes decisions following the public comment portion of the agenda decision item.

**Public Comment:** General public comment is encouraged to be submitted in advance to the meeting in written form. Public comment on agenda items is also permitted. If you wish to comment, you may e-mail your request or written comments to [Julia.McNamara@rco.wa.gov](mailto:Julia.McNamara@rco.wa.gov). Comment for these items will be limited to 3 minutes per person.

**COVID Precautions:** Masking is not required at this meeting. Masks and hand sanitizer will be available. The meetings rooms will be set to allow for as much social distancing as possible and air purifiers will be placed throughout.

**Special Accommodations:** People with disabilities needing an accommodation to participate in RCO public meetings are invited to contact Leslie Frank by phone (360) 902-0220 or e-mail [Leslie.Frank@rco.wa.gov](mailto:Leslie.Frank@rco.wa.gov).

**Wednesday, March 8, 2023**

**OPENING AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS**

<b>9:00 a.m.</b>	<b>Call to Order</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Roll Call and Determination of Quorum</li><li>• Review and Approval of Agenda (<b>Decision</b>)</li><li>• Approval of December Meeting Minutes (<b>Decision</b>)</li><li>• Remarks by the Chair</li></ul>	<i>Chair Breckel</i>
<b>9:15 a.m.</b>	<b>1. Director's Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Director's Report</li><li>B. Legislative and Policy Update</li><li>C. Fiscal Update (written only)</li><li>D. Performance Report (written only)</li></ul>	<i>Megan Duffy Brock Milliern Mark Jarasitis Bart Lynch</i>
<b>9:30 a.m.</b>	<b>2. Salmon Recovery Management Report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>A. Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Report</li><li>B. Salmon Section Report</li></ul>	<i>Erik Neatherlin Jeannie Abbott Tara Galuska Marc Duboisiki</i>
<b>10:00 a.m.</b>	<b>General Public Comment for items not on the agenda:</b> <i>Please limit comments to 3 minutes.</i>	
<b>10:15 a.m.</b>	<b>3. Partner Reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Council of Regions</li><li>• WA Salmon Coalition</li><li>• Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups</li></ul>	<i>Alex Conley Mike Lithgow Lance Winecka</i>
<b>10:45 a.m.</b>	<b>BREAK</b>	

**BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFING**

<b>11:00 a.m.</b>	<b>4. Targeted Investment Staff Review Update</b>	<i>Nick Norton</i>
<b>11:30 a.m.</b>	<b>5. Completed Salmon Recovery Funding Board Project Presentations</b>	<i>Outdoor Grants Managers</i>
<b>12:15 p.m.</b>	<b>LUNCH</b>	

**BOARD BUSINESS: REQUEST FOR DIRECTION**

<b>1:00 p.m.</b>	<b>6. Board Match Policy: Analysis and Impacts.</b>	<i>Nick Norton</i>
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## BREAK

**ADJOURN**

## SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

**Date:** December 7, 2022

**Place:** Hybrid - online via Zoom and in Room 172, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE; Olympia, WA

### Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members:

<b>Jeff Breckel, Chair</b>	Stevenson	<b>Annette Hoffman</b>	Designee, Washington Department of Ecology
<b>Jeromy Sullivan</b>	Kingston	<b>Tom Gorman</b>	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
<b>Kaleen Cottingham</b>	Olympia	<b>Chris Pettit</b>	Designee, Washington State Conservation Commission
<b>Chris Endresen-Scott</b>	Conconully	<b>Jeremy Cram</b>	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
<b>Joe Maroney</b>	Spokane	<b>Susan Kanzler</b>	Designee, Washington Department of Transportation

**This summary is to be used with the materials provided in advance of the meeting. The Recreation and Conservation Office retains a recording as the formal record of the meeting.**

### Call to Order:

**Chair Breckel** called the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) meeting to order at 9:00 AM and requested roll call, determining quorum.

**Motion:** Move to Approve the December 7, 2022, Agenda

**Moved By:** Member Cottingham

**Seconded by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Decision:** **Approved**

**Motion:** Move to Approve the August 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Moved by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Seconded by:** Member Cottingham

**Approved:** **Approved**

**Motion:** Move to Approve the September 2022 Meeting Minutes

**Moved by:** Member Cottingham

**Seconded by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Approved:** **Approved**

Chair Breckel recognized the hard work of applicants, staff, and partners in getting salmon grants allocated in 2022 and introduced new members Chris Pettit (Director of the Conservation Commission) and Joe Maroney (Director of Fishery and Water Resources for Kalispel Tribe of Indians).

### **Item 1: Director's Report**

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) **Director Megan Duffy** described agency activities and staff changes that have taken place since the September board meeting.

(See Item 1 memo [here](#))

**Brock Milliern**, RCO Policy and Legislative Director, said that the Governor's budget is coming out in December. The mid-November budget forecast was positive and showed an increase of \$762 million for this biennium and \$681 million for the next biennium. Mr. Milliern will compile a comparison of RCO's current allocation compared with the Governor's budget and make that available to staff and boards. **Member Cottingham** asked about the weekly Legislative emails that were previously sent to the board, and Mr. Milliern replied that he would send them to the board this session.

### **Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report**

#### **Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Report**

**Erik Neatherlin**, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) Director, summarized the recent work completed by the GSRO. Key topics included legislative and partner activities, the Governor's Salmon Strategy Update for the 2023-2025 biennial work plan, the State of the Salmon Report, Salmon Recovery Network, and the Salmon Recovery Conference.

**Tara Galuska**, GSRO Orca Coordinator, summarized recent work around Southern Resident Orca Recovery. Key topics included the Department of Ecology's, GSRO's, and the Puget Sound Partnership's (PSP) guidance concerning the sunset Orca Task Force's recommendation 27, Orca Recovery Day, and the Southern Resident Killer Whale population.

## **Salmon Section Report**

**Marc Duboiski**, Salmon Recovery Grants Section Manager, provided updates on the work of the salmon section including 2022 funded projects, an update on the Watershed Plan Review, and grant administration.

Chair Breckel asked if Mr. Duboiski and his staff had seen any trend in cost increases. Mr. Duboiski noted that there is approximately \$700,000 remaining of the board's \$1 million cost increase pot, which does not indicate a significant demand. However, he observed that sponsors may be finding funds elsewhere and that the \$25 million in supplemental funds for projects less than \$5 million can also be used for cost increases per board direction. Mr. Duboiski added that the costs are still rising and unpredictable.

(See Item 2 memo [here](#))

### *General Public Comment*

None.

## **Item 3: Partner Reports**

### **Council of Regions**

**Alex Conley**, Chair of the Council of Regions (COR), provided an update on the work of COR. The regional salmon recovery boards continue to work with RCO and GSRO staff on several issues and sent a letter to the Governor's Office in support of both RCO's capital and operation funding requests. On [Item 5A](#) (which discusses possible approaches for allocating any increases in funding due to the IIJA NOAA appropriation), the regions recommend using a modified version of Option 1, in which the overall regular grant round amount is increased with IIJA funds and allocated using existing formulas; RCO staff can review all projects submitted statewide and choose the projects that best fit the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) criteria. COR does not support Option 2 because it requires more process. Option 3 could be workable but requires a new statewide grant round which requires a lot of investment where capacity is already stretched.

### **WA Salmon Coalition**

**Mike Lithgow**, chair of the Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC) and the Kalispel Tribe Natural Resources Department Desk, discussed WSC work, including engaging in RCO's Manual 18 update. The WSC appreciated the good communication from RCO policy staff and were happy to provide input. WSC supports the remaining projects identified

by the regions for the large supplemental project list. Like the regions, WSC supports utilizing existing processes to allocate any additional IJA funds. WSC also supports the proposed one-time shift of \$208,000 in monitoring funds to the regions for regional monitoring projects. Finally, Mr. Lithgow expressed his appreciation for RCO's budget ask for capacity for the lead entities.

### **Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups**

**Lance Winecka**, Executive Director of South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, shared current Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group (RFEG) work. Mr. Winecka thanked RCO staff for getting contracts out quickly, enabling project sponsors to speed up engineering, permitting and bidding, which leads to an earlier start to construction and hopefully savings down the road.

RFEGs are supportive of the RCO's capacity fund request for lead entities and regional organizations.

Mr. Winecka mentioned interest in the Governor's Budget and funding improvement within the Salmon Recovery Plan. They are specifically interested in the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) "salmon in schools" program, which provides funding to low-income schools to educate them on salmon. All of the RFEGs are working with OSPI on this effort.

Mr. Winecka commented that the 'no match policy for those riparian projects with buffers greater than site potential tree height' is great because match is difficult to acquire.

Mr. Winecka said that the process the RFEGs use is not simple and appreciates board's acknowledgement of capacity that goes into applying for grant funds and implementing projects.

### **BREAK: 10:10 – 10:25 AM**

Chair Breckel moved Item 8 up on the agenda.

### **Item 8: Statewide Salmon Strategy Workplan Update**

**Katie Knight Pruitt**, GSRO Salmon Recovery Coordinator, presented the biennial workplan of State budget and policy priorities to implement the Governor's 2021 updated statewide salmon strategy. A budget proviso in the 2022 supplemental budget directed the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) to work with state agencies to develop a biennial workplan for state agencies that includes legislative and policy

priorities along with the budget required to support agency work that supports the Governor's Statewide Salmon Recovery priorities. The proviso further directed that the proposed budget for salmon recovery align with tribal priorities and regional salmon recovery plans. The proviso also established a position in the GSRO to lead this work. Work plan highlights include significant funding for salmon habitat restoration projects, regulatory improvements, assessments of riparian areas, reducing toxics in waterways, stormwater infrastructure, streamflow restoration, planning for climate resiliency, salmon reintroduction in the upper Columbia River, improved salmon harvest monitoring, and predation management.

(See Item 8 memo [here](#))

Members expressed their support for the workplan and coordinated salmon recovery efforts.

*Public Comment:*

None.

**Member Jeromy Sullivan joined the meeting at 10:47 am.**

**Item 4: Supplemental Funding Decisions**

**Kat Moore**, Senior Outdoor Grants Manager, introduced regionally proposed projects for the \$50 million appropriated in the 2022 supplemental budget. The appropriation directed that the \$50 million was to be used on salmon recovery projects valued at \$5 million or more. Several large-scale projects were approved at the board's September meeting, and the remaining projects were presented during this item discussion. Projects were presented from the Upper Columbia, Snake River, Washington Coast, and Yakima Basin regions.

(See Item 4 memo [here](#))

**Upper Columbia**

**Dave Hecker**, Coordinator of the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB); **Tara Gregg**, UCSRB Project Manager; and **Chris Johnson**, Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, presented on the [Sugar Reach Channel Reconnections Implementation project](#) and two alternate projects. The Sugar Reach Channel Reconnection Implementation project is located on the Methow River and intended to restore 2.6 miles of side-channel, 11.6 acres of Floodplain, 9 acres of riparian plantings, 2.9 miles of floodplain channels, and 44 wood placements. UCSRB worked closely with technical and citizen committees to review and rank their projects for submission. Below are the cost details of each project.



Upper Columbia				Allocation: \$4,794,000	
Project number	Project Sponsor, Project Name	Grant Request	Sponsor Share	Proposed Supplemental Funding	Total Project Cost
22-1806	Methow Salmon Recovery Foundation, Sugar Reach Channel Reconnections Implementation	\$4,974,000	\$206,001	\$4,794,000	\$5,000,001
22-1807	Yakama Nation, Nason Creek and State Route 207 – Phase 1	\$4,794,000	\$3,822,780	\$0 Alternate	\$8,616,780
22-1815	Chelan County Natural Resources, Icicle and Peshastin ID Instream Flow Project	\$4,794,000	\$321,787	\$0 Alternate	\$5,115,787
			Total	\$4,794,000	

[\(See presentation here\)](#)

Board members inquired about project permits and noted that this single phase, large project would be worth highlighting with the legislature. Presenters explained that permits were not in hand, but conversations with permitters had been held.

### **Snake River**

**John Foltz**, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board; **Ali Fitzgerald**, Snake River Salmon Recovery Board; and **Morgan Morris**, Tri-State Steelheaders, presented on the [Mill Creek Passage project](#). Mr. Foltz talked about the Snake regional process for large supplemental projects; context for Mill Creek Fish Passage; what is being proposed for \$4.79 million; and what is left to do. Mr. Foltz noted that the Mill Creek Fish Passage is identified as a significant barrier to recovery of the middle Columbia steelhead. This project will also benefit Columbia River bull trout, spring chinook, and pacific lamprey.

This project addresses fish passage issues created by the weirs, bridges and concrete flumes, which will all face upgrades or removal.

Below is a break down of the proposed project.

Snake River Region				Allocation: \$4,794,000	
Project number	Project Sponsor, Project Name	Grant Request	Sponsor Share	Proposed Supplemental Funding	Total Project Cost
22-1802	Tri-State Steelheaders, Mill Creek Passage – Large Capital Project	\$16,487,334	\$206,001	\$4,794,000	\$16,693,335
			Total	\$4,794,000	
<i>The scope of work for this project will be scaled to available funding.</i>					

[\(See presentation here\)](#)

Board members inquired about the underground section and cost savings of one large project versus multiple phase projects. Presenters explained that the underground section is in the early phase and speculated that completing one larger project would be far less costly than breaking it into phases.

### **Washington Coast**

**Mara Zimmerman**, Coast Salmon Partnership; **Tom Kollasch**, Willapa Bay Lead Entity Coordinator; **Jackie Ferrier**, Willapa Bay Wildlife Refuge; **Alex Barton**, Western Rivers Conservancy; and **Nelson Matthews**, Western Rivers Conservancy, presented on the [Willapa Coastal Forest – Phase 1 project](#). It was notable that this is an acquisition project of more than 1,000 acres near the Willapa Bay. This area is known to have chum, coho and Chinook, steelhead and coastal cutthroat. Below is a table of the cost breakdown:

Washington Coast				Allocation: \$4,794,000	
Project number	Project Sponsor, Project Name	Grant Request	Sponsor Share	Proposed Supplemental Funding	Total Project Cost
22-1803	Western Rivers Conservancy,	\$4,974,000	\$206,001	\$4,794,000	\$5,000,001

	Willapa Coastal Forest – Phase 1				
<b>22-1807</b>	Quileute Tribe, Quillayute River Historic Oxbow Implementation	\$4,794,000	\$206,001	\$0 Alternate	\$5,000,001
			Total	\$4,794,000	

([See presentation here](#))

During discussion by board members, Member Sullivan inquired as to tribal ability to enter the proposed acquisition to practice tribal treaty rights.

Ms. Zimmerman and Ms. Ferrier responded that the affected tribe is the Shoalwater Bay Tribe, which is not a treaty tribe but is a supportive partner. They also noted that most of the refuge is open for hunting.

Members also inquired about project scalability, property management, and pay-for-use access. The sponsors explained that the budget for the project will shift depending on the appraised value of each parcel. They also mentioned that a property management plan exists; limited road maintenance management will need to be maintained as the project is mainly conservation based. Additionally, sponsors noted that private hunting groups lease the property, but those leases will be terminated. Director Duffy noted that RCO also requires a stewardship plan for acquisitions.

### **Yakima Basin**

**Michael Horner**, Yakima Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board presented on [Gap to Gap](#) and two alternative projects. It was notable that the Gap to Gap project received previous funding, so funding from this track would be used for the [Yakima River Corridor Plan Implementation Phase II](#) project, which is part of a larger project that has been on-going for several years. This full reach and restoration project will benefit steelhead, coho, bull trout and other resident fish within its 650 acres of floodplain habitat by purchasing the 39-acre Yakima River RV Park. The project will include the removal of a levee and private berm, reconnection of side channels, the removal of irrigation, and revegetation of the floodplain.

**Yakima Region**

**Remaining  
Allocation:  
\$3,609,135**

<b>Project number</b>	<b>Project Sponsor, Project Name</b>	<b>Grant Request</b>	<b>Sponsor Share</b>	<b>Proposed Supplemental Funding</b>	<b>Total Project Cost</b>
<b>22-1961</b>	Kittitas County Public Works, Yakima River Corridor Plan Implementation Phase II	\$3,609,135	\$1,390,866	\$3,609,135	\$5,000,001
<b>22-1967</b>	Yakama Nation, Toppenish Creek at Pom Pom Road Floodplain Reconnection	\$3,609,135	\$1,390,866	\$0 Alternate	\$5,000,001
			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,609,135</b>	

([See presentation here](#))

Member Cram asked about why the projects were prioritized as they were. Mr. Horner replied that the RV park acquisition was considered a once-in-a-generation opportunity; it is where a lot of floodwaters gather and is considered critical.

*Public Comment*

None.

**Motion:** Move to Approve the Large Supplemental Projects ranked lists from the Upper Columbia, Snake River, Washington Coast and Yakima Basin regions as shown in the Updated Attachment A

**Moved by:** Member Sullivan

**Seconded by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Approved:** **Approved**

*Public Comment:*

None.

**LUNCH: 12:45 – 1:30 PM**

## **Item 5: Future Funding Pathways – 2023 and 2024**

**Jeannie Abbott**, GSRO Program Coordinator and **Nick Norton**, RCO Policy and Planning Specialist, presented options for direction should increased funding become available in 2023 via NOAA's Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) given the passing of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). This memo also summarizes a path forward for a 2024 Targeted Investment Grant Round should funding be available. Options presented were:

	<b>2023 Grant Round</b>	<b>2024 Grant Round</b> <i>*For the 2024 grant round, the board may select to combine all funds (TI &amp; IIJA) greater than the \$18M grant round for one Targeted Investment project selection process</i>
<b>Option 1 Regional Allocation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• Regional allocation for PCSRF IIJA</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• Regional allocation for PCSRF IIJA</li><li>• TI grant round for 23-25 TI funding</li></ul>
<b>Option 2 Regional Allocation Plus</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• Regional allocation for PCSRF IIJA<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◦ Project list must contain a project of regional significance, meeting IIJA objectives</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• Regional allocation plus for PCSRF IIJA</li><li>• TI grant round for 23-25 TI funding</li></ul>
<b>Option 3 Large Project List</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• Region large project list for PCSRF IIJA (NOAA objectives)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular grant round</li><li>• TI grant round for 23-25</li><li>• Region large project list for PCSRF IIJA</li></ul>

(See Item 5 memo [here](#))

Before discussing the options, Director Duffy provided two points of clarification: we do not know if or at what level RCO will receive IJA funding. This year, the state received \$6 million in IJA funding and the board directed that funding to be used in the targeted investment process. Member Endresen-Scott asked if any IJA funding received this year could be distributed using the same criteria as was used for the 2022 Targeted Investment grant round. Director Duffy responded that we do not know yet what the criteria might be, because NOAA could decide to add additional criteria. Moreover, part of this presentation is about possibly changing the targeted investment criteria due to lessons learned over the past year and to consider whether there could potentially be one process for additional funding when it is allocated to the state. Chair Breckel, Member Cram and Member Hoffman expressed that consistency in process and criteria from year to year is important.

Alex Conley presented an alternative to Option 1: increase the grant round by the amount of IJA funds and allocate to regions via current formula to create lists to submit to RCO. Staff could then look at the funded projects across the state and pick the projects that best meet IJA criteria – it is a fund-shift in the background that lets the regions run their grant rounds and still get the best projects.

While several board members supported Mr. Conley's proposed option, members and the RCO Director expressed concern over how regions can ensure that projects on their lists will meet the IJA criteria, especially engaging underserved communities. Mr. Conley replied that much of the criteria should be like other funding sources, but the Requests for Proposals (RFP) would need to include the underserved communities criteria.

As discussion continued, it was suggested that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board technical review panel and RCO salmon staff be included in the project review process before presenting them to the board. Member Endresen-Scott suggested that completing one larger project at once versus spreading the funding throughout to the regions would be more beneficial.

Cheryl Baumann, North Olympic Peninsula Lead Entity coordinator, said that her lead entity is a huge area that covers many miles. For this large area, \$719k is allocated from the board in a time when the lead entity regularly receives three project requests per year of \$1 million dollars or more. She said that many of the big projects brought to the board start out as small projects.

#### **BREAK: 2:54 – 3:02 PM**

Mr. Norton said that the next motion is to ask the staff to look at the next Targeted Investment grant round. He indicated that 2022 was the first formal targeted investment

grant round and with the benefit of experience, potential areas of change have been identified to possibly incorporate into the next iteration.

Chair Breckel asked that the board look beyond the next targeted investment grant round and consider broader objectives. He directed staff to create a working committee for the process, which would bring back information to the board.

Members Cottingham, Endresen-Scott and Cram all volunteered to be on the working committee.

#### *Public Comment:*

None.

**Motion:** Move that for the 2023 grant round, any IJA funding received be distributed via the regional allocation formula. Each region shall indicate which projects, if any, on their 2023 lists, they believe meet the NOAA's IJA objectives. The staff and review panels shall use this information to recommend to the SRFB which projects to fund with IJA.

**Moved by:** Member Cottingham

**Seconded by:** Member Sullivan

**Approved:** **Approved**

**Motion:** Move to recommend that staff review the goals, priorities, objectives, criteria, and processes of the Targeted Investment program. The review will include a working committee to support the review. Staff will provide updates to the SRFB at the March meeting.

**Moved by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Seconded by:** Member Sullivan

**Approved:** **Approved**

#### **Item 6: Manual 18 2023 Updates**

**Nick Norton** and **Kat Moore** presented proposed policy changes and administrative revisions to Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants for the 2023 grant round. These revisions incorporate changes resulting from suggestions from the Technical Review Panel and Recreation and Conservation Office staff, and feedback and edits from regions, lead entities, and project sponsors. Key changes proposed included policy changes to the design-only match waiver to increase the eligibility cap and required

completion timeline; increase threshold where preliminary design deliverable are required prior to application for construction funding for large restoration projects; clearly defining prohibited and allowed uses; clarify cost increase procedures; add content to Appendix D: Design and restoration project deliverables; add content and clarity to Appendix D: design-build projects; and add clarity for Appendix K: targeted investments.

(See Item 6 memo [here](#))

Member Pettit asked about the definition of preliminary design. Ms. Moore responded that Manual 18, Appendix D defines preliminary design for board projects. As a new member of the board, Member Pettit asked for a meeting with Mr. Norton and Ms. Moore to get a better understanding of how Manual 18 approaches restoration design and project phasing.

Chair Breckel asked how stakeholders have responded to the proposed changes. Mr. Norton shared that feedback had been largely positive, but that some concern was expressed related to requiring conceptual design in order to be eligible to submit a field-fit application when the request is for less than \$350,000 from the board. This is a higher bar than required previously and is included to give the review panel enough information to provide a thorough technical review.

*Public Comment:*

**Alex Conley** thanked staff for work on Manual 18. He raised a concern that requiring a conceptual design threshold for smaller field-fit projects before application means that applicants would potentially need to stretch out a project across multiple grant rounds.

**Motion:** Move to Accept policy changes to the following Manual 18 sections as further presented by staff:

- Design-only Match Waivers
- Prohibited and Allowed Uses
- Cost Increase Procedures
- Appendix D Deliverables
- Design-Build Projects
- Appendix K
- Large restoration project definitions



**Moved by:** Member Cottingham

**Seconded by:** Member Sullivan

**Approved:** Approved

## **Item 7: Upland Acquisitions Policy Options**

**Leah Dobey**, Policy Specialist, and **Marc Duboiski** presented options for the board to proceed on a potential policy relating to the funding and match requirements of board acquisition projects that include, to varying degrees, upland acreage. The options presented include:

- Option 1 - Approve a policy that defines upland acres and sets standards for increased match based on the percentage of upland acres in a proposed acquisition; or
- Option 2 - Develop acquisition-specific criteria in Manual 18, Appendix F to support sponsor project development and technical review of acquisition projects with upland components; or
- Option 3 - Take no action.

(See Item 7 memo [here](#))

During board discussion, members expressed support for Option 1. Member Cottingham noted that sponsors should explain the reasons why an acquisition may need to include over 75 percent upland. This would provide a clear understanding of why the upland is included.

Board members asked whether the policy would be for a specific period of time or permanent until/unless the board chose to change it. Director Duffy and staff confirmed that if a policy were adopted, it would be permanent until the board takes different action. Member Endresen-Scott asked about when the definition of uplands and the value of the uplands would be reviewed to determine if it was working. Mr. Duboiski replied that staff would monitor how a new policy is applied for two years, it will take up to a year of stakeholder outreach to analyze and propose a different approach. Member Endresen-Scott clarified that if it turns out to be a problem, the board can always change it.

### *Public Comment:*

**Vanessa Kritzer**, Executive Director, WA Association of Land Trusts (WALT), supported the first policy option. WALT has a long history of work with the board. The organization submitted comments on Manual 18 and stated that Option 1 best addressed their concerns. Uplands make a difference in riparian areas, salmon habitat and watershed

function. WALT was not opposed to Option 2, but Option 1 was noted as being more helpful during the 2023 grant round.

**Dan Roix**, Conservation Director, Columbia Land Trust (CLT), was supportive of Option 1, stating that it substantially addresses concerns that were raised during the input process. Option 1 will provide some certainty for project sponsors. CLT has brought more than the 15 percent match required for projects and, like many land trusts, will continue to do so. There will be times when the organization brings forward projects with uplands critical to salmon recovery.

**Motion:** Move to approve Option 1: Tiered Match Approach as presented by staff

**Moved by:** Member Cottingham

**Seconded by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Approved:** **Approved**

### **Item 9: Monitoring Update**

**Erik Neatherlin** and **Keith Dublanica**, GSRO Science Coordinator, presented an update on the status of monitoring funding, the monitoring synthesis report and adaptive management strategy, and the remote sensing “proof of concept” pilot. Mr. Neatherlin mentioned that Bob Bilby, PhD was the lead author of the IMW Synthesis Report, which will be finalized in March 2023. This report builds on other reports such as the IMW matrix, Pacific Northwest Aquatic Management Plan Management Implications Report, and the Western Washington IMW Habitat Monitoring Report.

Pete Bisson, Monitoring Panel Co-Chair, mentioned that the Adaptive Management Strategy is underway and the draft will be presented in 2023. The group intends to select a framework and approach, integrate science and lessons learned, and engage with the monitoring subcommittee and board for further direction.

Addressing the remote sensing projects, Mr. Bisson explained that larger and small side channels in the rivers have occurred since reconnecting the floodplains. This has provided positive response to spawning and rearing.

In addition, given that the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has secured state operating dollars to fund the WDFW fish in/fish out gaps, there is a recommendation to set aside the \$208,000 fish in/fish out funding for other regional monitoring priorities.

(See Item 9 memo [here](#))

Member Cottingham asked why this is only a one-time shift – will this be built into the PCSRF application? Mr. Neatherlin clarified that the PCSRF application categorizes “monitoring” as tier 2 priority, and therefore, it is okay to shift funding between monitoring activities so long as you do not fund (lower) tier 3 priorities with (higher) tier 2 priority funds. Mr. Neatherlin further clarified that the reason this is one time funding is that there may be other types of monitoring that the board wants to fund in future years.

*Public Comment:*

None.

**Motion:** Move to Approve a one-time fund shift for up to \$208,000 of fish in/fish out monitoring funding to be made available for regional monitoring projects. Selection and approval of the projects will occur via the grant round process.

**Moved by:** Member Endresen-Scott

**Seconded by:** Member Cottingham

**Approved:** Approved

## **Item 10: Partner Reports**

**Partner reports were submitted in writing.**

### **Conservation Commission**

**Member Pettit**, Conservation Commission Director, shared that the Conservation Commission continues to implement the \$10 million in SRF funding from the supplemental budget in partnership with the conservation districts throughout the state. At present, over \$7.5 million of the overall total has been encumbered. Of that amount, 1/3 is focused on the technical assistance and engineering necessary to implement the projects and 2/3 is focused on project implementation. Additional rounds of projects have already been submitted and are expected to be approved in the coming months until the total amount is expended. The Commission was pleased to see its budget requests proposed as part of the Governor’s budget and continues to undertake structural adjustments and update policies to ensure the most efficient and effective implementation of any additional funding availability into the next biennium. Lastly, the Commission has hired staff and expedited implementation of the Sustainable Farms and Fields program to achieve carbon sequestration benefits tied to conservation project and practice implementation.

## **Department of Ecology**

**Member Hoffman**, Department of Ecology (ECY) Assessment Program Manager, stated that ECY continues to work with the Governor's office and OFM on several areas with ties to salmon recovery. I would like to highlight the work on 6ppd-q, which is a tire anti-degradant chemical.

To date, ECY has:

- 1) developed a method in water,
- 2) conducted a hazards assessment,
- 3) contracted with universities to continue toxicity testing and best management practice (BMP) effectiveness monitoring,
- 4) convened expert workgroups to help review scientific and technical information to inform next steps for assessment strategies and mitigation actions (we have published a legislative report on 6ppd in road runoff: assessment and mitigation strategies), and
- 5) given presentations on our work to the Puget Sound Partnership.
- 6) worked/working with academia and industry representatives to create a roadmap for safer alternatives
- 7) requested funding to continue to fill information gaps, grow analysis capabilities including laboratory method in sediment, conduct baseline monitoring to evaluate action effectiveness, develop new criteria for the use of BMP's, expand coordination with state and federal partners, continue the search for safer alternatives and develop a cohesive strategy to eliminate the use of this chemical.

## **Department of Natural Resources**

**Member Gorman**, Washington State Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Resources Division Manager, said that DNR is continuing to pursue several legislative initiatives that directly or indirectly support salmon recovery and conservation.

- **Derelict Aquatic Structures Removal (GF-S \$1.14M / Cap \$20M)** - Funding and legislation to remove and restore derelict aquatic structures to protect our waterways and improve fish habitat. Program will work with Tribes, local governments, and nonprofits to address and remove derelict structures from state and privately-owned aquatic lands.
- **Watershed Resilience Action Plan (WRAP) (GF-S \$2.86M)** - Funding needed to meet Snohomish WRAP deliverables, including kelp and eelgrass stewardship; a large woody debris program; aquatic restoration grants; culvert removal; and begin planning for pilot projects in three additional target watersheds for systems-level efforts to benefit salmon recovery.

- **Protect Public Lands and Tribal Rights (GF-S \$7.8M)** - Funding to hire ten (10) law enforcement officers to allow DNR to better protect our public lands and cultural resources.
- **Natural Area Preserve Act turns 50! (GF-S \$3.35M)** - Funding to celebrate the importance of the Natural Areas Preserve Act (NAPA) and allow DNR to better identify, protect, and manage important natural area ecosystems for the next fifty years.
- **Urban Forestry (GF-S \$8M)** - Funding for additional community grants that provide necessary assistance for increasing our statewide urban tree canopy.
- **HEAL Act and Environmental Justice Investments (GF-S \$3M)** - Funding to create the Office of Equity and Environmental Justice within the agency to centralize the agency's environmental justice (EJ) vision and create capacity across all divisions while becoming the public facing program for DNR's EJ and Equity work.
- **Growing Roots for Next 7 Generations (GF-S \$2.4M)** - Funding to expand the agency's Tribal Affairs Department to address growing government-to-government needs for all Tribes in the state across all agency programs, including requirements under the recently passed HEAL and Climate Commitment Acts.

### **Department of Fish and Wildlife**

**Member Cram**, WDFW Salmon Recovery Policy Lead, said that WDFW is eagerly awaiting the Governor's budget and subsequent dialogues regarding our budget and policy priorities. We are also excited to have delivered multiple new reports that are available on our website. They pertain to net ecological gain, riparian, coastal steelhead, SRKW vessel adaptive management, European green crabs, Columbia River fisheries, and other relevant topics. We encourage everyone to check them out online.

### **Department of Transportation**

**Member Kanzler**, Washington State Department of Transportation Fish Passage Coordinator, reported that WSDOT corrected 14 injunction barriers this past summer, improving access to nearly 30 miles of salmon and steelhead habitat within Western Washington.

Among the barriers corrected this past summer, WSDOT constructed a 113-foot span bridge under SR 169 Ravensdale Creek located in WRIA 9.

- Over the period of two construction seasons in 2021 and 2022, WSDOT partnered with King County to correct three barriers located on Ravensdale Creek, including the culvert under SR 169 and two nearby culverts under the local pedestrian trail in Ravensdale Creek Natural Area.

- King Co Parks Department received a \$2.5 million grant from the state Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board for fish passage restoration at the two county barriers on Ravensdale Creek, located just downstream of SR 169.
- One of the King County Parks' barriers was completely abandoned to allow for an open channel.
- The second King County Parks' barrier was replaced with a 100- foot span pedestrian bridge.
- These projects collectively opened 2.4 miles quality habitat for salmon and steelhead in Ravensdale Creek.

**ADJOURN: 4:51 PM**

Next meeting: March 8-9, 2023. Location: Olympia WA.

**Approved by:**

Chair Breckel

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023

**Title:** Director's Report

**Prepared By:** Megan Duffy, Recreation and Conservation Office Director; Susan Zemek, Communications Manager; Brock Milliern, Policy Director; Mark Jarasitis, Fiscal Manager; and Bart Lynch, Data Specialist

#### Summary

This briefing memo describes staff and Director's activities and key agency updates including: a legislative update, new staff profiles, news from other Recreation and Conservation Office boards, and a fiscal and performance update.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

## Agency Update

### RCO Tackles Watershed Plan Review

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) received a new assignment in the past legislative session to review five watershed restoration and enhancement plans in Puget Sound Watershed Resource Inventory Areas for these river systems: Snohomish, Cedar-Sammamish, Deschutes, Kennedy-Goldsborough, and Kitsap. Because this work is outside the agency's expertise, RCO on behalf of the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) contracted six experts to examine the plans. The panel will report any recommendations to the board, and then the board will provide recommendations to the Department of Ecology (ECY). The kickoff meeting for the new panel members was December 15 and draft recommendations will be presented to the board in late 2023.





## European Green Crab Efforts Advanced

The European green crab multi-agency coordination group, responsible for advising response to European green crab statewide, approved a \$70,000 agreement with Washington State University to develop a new citizen science detection and reporting program in partnership with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Washington Sea Grant, and the Washington Invasive Species Council. This project is a significant step toward getting more boots in the mud to detect European green crab. By working together, the state, shellfish growers, tribes, and other partners have removed nearly 250,000 invasive crabs in 2022 responding to Governor Jay Inslee's emergency order.



## Staff Earn Top RCO Honors

Every year, RCO staff nominate employees who do exemplary work. Ben Donatelle was given the Director's Award for Excellence for leading the development of a trails plan and outdoor recreation plan. The Director's Award for Excellence is given to an employee for embodying RCO's core values and competencies and exhibiting outstanding leadership or advancing the positive culture of the agency.



The Salmon Section leadership team of Marc Duboiski, Kat Moore, and Alice Rubin received the Director's Achievement Award, which is given in recognition for outstanding work above and beyond daily duties. The team was called out for its efforts help to staff navigate organizational change, which included adding four new team members and supporting the advancement of two internal staff, designing two new grant programs, and deploying a legendary and unprecedented amount of grant funds. Nominators called out the team's effort to maintain a positive and problem-solving attitude throughout.





## Lower Columbia River Salmon Remain at Risk

RCO has been closely monitoring the status of lower Columbia River salmon and the news is not good. The National Marine Fisheries Service reviews the status of West Coast salmon and steelhead listed under the Endangered Species Act every five years to see if recovery efforts are on track and identify the greatest immediate challenges. The most recent reviews include lower Columbia River Chinook, chum, and coho



salmon; steelhead trout; and Ozette Lake sockeye salmon. The reviews found most of these species lack sufficient access to functional floodplain habitat where juvenile salmon feed and grow on their way to the ocean. The reviews also found these populations of lower Columbia salmon and steelhead face risks from deteriorated water quality and barriers blocking access to spawning habitat. The National Marine Fisheries Service recommends reestablishing and improving fish passage on the Lewis and Cowlitz Rivers for Chinook salmon, and restoring spawning and rearing habitat, especially for lower Columbia chum and fall Chinook salmon. For Ozette Lake sockeye, a conservation hatchery program has helped stabilize and even increase the population, but these fish still face risk from climate change, invasive species, and shifting conditions in their lake spawning habitat, such as low dissolved oxygen and encroaching upland vegetation. These reviews help focus recovery efforts funded by the board.

## Changes Coming to the Salmon Recovery Portal

Changes are coming to the Salmon Recovery Portal as RCO's Data Team begins to move portal data into PRISM. The portal is a comprehensive, online database that displays information on salmon recovery actions and goals funded through



RCO and other organizations. Displaying more than 9,500 on-the-ground projects across the state, the portal makes it easy to see how projects relate to each other, what needs to be done next for salmon, and how progress is being made to address the problems harming salmon. The migration will improve data management and system performance. The portal codes page will be split into metrics and reporting codes. The Data Team will evaluate the metrics and remove duplicates. Once the metric alignment is complete, the team will be able to roll up metrics and implement goal tracking. The team hopes to have the data alignment complete by the end of January.

## Employee News

**Megan Montgomery** joined RCO January 3 as the administrative assistant to the boards and Policy Team. She has a bachelor of science degree in geology; experience in drafting, mapping, and forest practices; a strong background in customer service, and creative experience doing marketing for a number of local small businesses. In addition, she has been involved in her children's cooperative preschool board and enjoyed being a barista for the past few years. Megan grew up in the Olympia area and likes to travel, cook, and spend time outside with her husband and two daughters.



**Daniel Homan** joined RCO February 1 as an information technology intern, working for the Puget Sound Partnership. Daniel comes to us through the Internship Program at South Puget Sound Community College and will be with us until March. Daniel previously was a warehouse manager with experience in order fulfillment and customer service.

**Doran Lower** started at RCO in February as a fiscal analyst and will be processing project reimbursements. Doran graduated from the College of Business Administration at the University of Oregon in 1988. He was a high school teacher for 26 years.



**Sarah Steinkraus** joined RCO's Grant Services Team in mid-January as its second archaeologist. Sarah is a Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist and architectural historian with 15 years of experience in the Pacific Northwest, Great Basin, Midwest, and Mexico. Her archaeological experience ranges from monitoring sewer pipe installation in Tacoma to excavating Tarascan urn burials in Mexico. She worked on a variety of RCO-funded projects when she was a senior archaeologist at Stell, Tierra Right of Way, and Central Washington University.



## News from the Boards

The **Invasive Species Council** met in December and elected new officers: Blain Reeves, an assistant manager for the Aquatic Resources Division in the Washington Department of Natural Resources, will be chair and Todd Murray, director of the Puyallup Research and Extension Center for Washington State University, will be vice chair. The council

submitted its [Biennial Report to the Legislature](#) summarizing activities and accomplishments in 2021 and 2022.

The **Recreation and Conservation Funding Board** met January 24 and adopted the statewide recreation and conservation plan and discussed actions to improve equitable distribution of grants.

### **Legislative and Budget Update**

Legislative session kicked off on January 9<sup>th</sup> and is scheduled to wrap up on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The next revenue forecast is approximately March 20<sup>th</sup>, and the House and Senate budgets will be released shortly after.

RCO is currently tracking approximately 65 bills and several budget provisos that may have impacts to RCO programs.

### **Fiscal Report**

The fiscal report reflects Salmon Recovery Funding Board activities as of January 20, 2023.

### **Salmon Recovery Funding Board**

For July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023, actuals through January 20, 2023 (FM 18). 75.0 percent of biennium reported.

PROGRAMS	BUDGET	COMMITTED		TO BE COMMITTED		EXPENDITURES	
	New and Re-appropriation 2021-2023	Dollars	% of Budget	Dollars	% of Budget	Dollars	% of Committed
State Funded							
2015-17	\$1,746,440	\$1,570,028	90%	\$176,412	10%	\$444,385	28%
2017-19	\$6,230,576	\$5,614,774	90%	\$615,802	10%	\$3,601,534	64%
2019-21	\$14,669,777	\$14,146,206	96%	\$523,571	4%	\$8,310,327	59%
2021-23	\$26,682,800	\$26,359,712	99%	\$323,088	1%	\$5,465,708	21%
2021-23 Supplemental	\$95,880,000	\$66,282,045	69%	\$29,597,955	31%	\$1,650,144	2%
Total	\$145,209,593	\$113,972,765	78%	\$31,236,828	22%	\$19,472,098	17%
Federal Funded							
2016	\$389,018	\$389,018	100%	\$0	0%	\$389,018	100%
2017	\$4,159,679	\$4,159,679	100%	\$0	0%	\$3,580,367	86%
2018	\$7,627,453	\$7,556,251	99%	\$71,201	1%	\$5,164,406	68%
2019	\$10,867,937	\$8,810,807	81%	\$2,057,131	19%	\$4,939,842	56%
2020	\$16,530,979	\$14,767,457	89%	\$1,763,522	11%	\$8,235,071	56%
2021	\$17,848,000	\$16,951,669	95%	\$896,331	5%	\$3,240,442	19%
2022	\$23,280,000	\$18,112,662	78%	\$5,167,338	22%	\$409,063	2%
Total	\$80,703,066	\$70,747,543	88%	\$9,955,523	12%	\$25,958,209	37%
Grant Programs							
Lead Entities	\$6,926,575	\$6,884,454	99%	\$42,121	1%	\$2,147,474	31%
PSAR	\$107,036,152	\$105,324,297	98%	\$1,711,855	2%	\$36,006,413	34%
Subtotal	\$113,962,727	\$112,208,751	98%	\$1,753,976	2%	\$38,153,887	34%
Administration							
Admin/ Staff	\$8,117,810	\$8,117,810	100%	\$0	0%	\$5,743,088	71%
Subtotal	\$8,117,810	\$8,117,810	100%	\$0	0%	\$5,743,088	71%
GRAND TOTAL	\$347,993,196	\$305,046,869	88%	\$42,946,327	12%	\$89,327,282	29%

*Note: Activities such as smolt monitoring, effectiveness monitoring, and regional funding are combined with projects in the state and federal funding lines above.*

N

## Performance Update

The following data displays grant management and project impact performance measures for fiscal year 2023. Data included are specific to projects funded by the board and current as of January 30, 2023.

### Project Impact Performance Measures

The following tables provide an overview of the fish passage accomplishments funded by the board in fiscal year 2023. Grant sponsors submit these performance measure data for blockages removed, fish passages installed, and stream miles made accessible when a project is completed and in the process of closing. The Forest Family Fish Passage Program, Coastal Restoration Initiative Program, Chehalis Basin Strategy, Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board, and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program are not included in these totals.

So far, eight salmon blockages were removed this fiscal year (July 1, 2022, to January 30, 2023), and 109 passageways installed (Table 1). These projects have cumulatively opened 63.67 miles of stream (Table 2).

Measure	FY 2023 Performance
Blockages Removed	8
Bridges Installed	1
Culverts Installed	1
Fish Ladders Installed	1
Fishway Chutes Installed	106

Project Number	Project Name	Primary Sponsor	Funding Program	Stream Miles
<a href="#">21-1042</a>	Black R Trib - Littlerock Rd. Fish Pass. Con.	Thurston County of	Salmon Federal Projects	1.65
<a href="#">19-1718</a>	Mill Creek Fish Passage - Park to Roosevelt	Tri-State Steelheaders Inc	Salmon State Projects	0.38
<a href="#">19-1104</a>	Wildcat Road Fish Barrier Correction	Chehalis Basin FTF	Salmon State Projects	7.29
<a href="#">18-1671</a>	Pilchuck Dam Removal Restoration Project	Tulalip Tribes	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	37

<a href="#">18-1648</a>	Cooke Creek Screening & Passage	Kittitas Co Conservation Dist	Salmon Federal Projects	1.35
<a href="#">18-1534</a>	Middle Fork Nooksack Diversion Dam Removal	Bellingham City of	PSAR Large Capital Projects	16
<b>Total Miles</b>				<b>63.67</b>

### Grant Management Performance Measures

Table 3 summarizes fiscal year 2023 operational performance measures as of January 30, 2023.

Measure	FY Target	FY 2023 Performance	Indicator	Notes
Percent of Salmon Projects Issued Agreement within 120 Days of Board Funding	90%	<b>58%</b>	●	133 agreements for board-funded projects were due to be mailed this fiscal year to date. Staff issued 76 agreements within 120 days, averaging 73 days.
Percent of Salmon Progress Reports Responded to On Time (15 days or less)	90%	<b>85%</b>	●	406 progress reports were due this fiscal year to date for board-funded projects. Staff responded to 344 in 15 days or less. On average, staff responded within 8 days.
Percent of Salmon Bills Paid within 30 days	100%	<b>100%</b>	●	During this fiscal year to date, 913 bills were due for board-funded projects. All were paid on time.
Percent of Projects Closed on Time	85%	<b>78%</b>	●	59 SRFB-funded projects were scheduled to close. So far, this fiscal year 46 of them closed on time.

Number of Projects in Project Backlog	5	<b>11</b>	●	Eleven board-funded projects are in the backlog and need to be closed out.
Number of Compliance Inspections Completed	125	<b>20</b>	●	Staff inspected 20 worksites this fiscal year to date. They have until June 30, 2023, to reach the target.

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023

**Title:** Salmon Recovery Management Report

**Prepared By:** Erik Neatherlin, GSRO Director  
Marc Duboiski, RCO Salmon Recovery Section Manager

#### Summary

This memo summarizes the recent work completed by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and the Recreation and Conservation Office's Salmon Recovery Grants Section, including work with regional salmon recovery boards, planning for the Salmon Recovery Conference, and an update on salmon grant programs.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

### Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)

#### Legislative and Partner Activities

In the past quarter, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) has engaged in the legislative process with Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff, the Governor's Office, and partner agency leads to support salmon recovery policy and budget priorities; presented on the Southern resident killer whale (SRKW) recovery to Indigenous and Multi-agency groups; and met with tribal entities, regional salmon recovery directors, and other salmon related entities.

Regarding the House Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee, Erik Neatherlin, GSRO Director, provided [testimony](#) on January 18 for governor request House Bill 1215 concerning protection and restoration of riparian areas, and on January 25, Mr. Neatherlin provided a [salmon recovery update](#) on a panel that included Ruth Musgrave, senior policy advisor in the Governor's Office; Margen Carlsen, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Habitat Program Director; and Jeremy Cram, WDFW Salmon Recovery Policy Lead and Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) Member. Panel topics included an overview of the salmon recovery act and statewide strategy



implementation, and 2022 legislative proviso updates, including net ecological gain, riparian assessments, and the riparian roundtable discussions. The panel was engaged and asked many questions.

### Multi-State Letter

GSRO staff worked with Governor Inslee's Office in Washington, DC on the multi-state governor letter sent to Secretary Raimondo in December 2022. The letter (Attachment C) highlighted opportunities for collaboration associated with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act federal funding.

### Presentations and Meetings

GSRO staff presented to the Indigenous and Multi Agency Group on SRKW recovery on Washington State's orca and salmon recovery efforts. This group meets regularly to review the proposed SRKW management measures, updated by Canada annually. These measures include sanctuary areas, fishery closures, and SRKW boater distance rules.

GSRO staff also presented to the Multi Nations SRKW recovery group to discuss tribal collaborations on recovery efforts of both salmon and orca in Washington state.

GSRO staff continued quarterly meetings with Upper Columbia United Tribes, Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission, and Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC). The purpose of these meetings is to ensure communication and collaboration on federal and state affairs, and key policy and budget issues.

GSRO and RCO staff continued to meet with the Regional Salmon Recovery Directors and their boards on a regular basis.

GSRO staff presented the Governor's proposed budget to the Regional Fisheries Coalition at their annual meeting and provided a legislative update to the Washington Salmon Coalition and Council of Regions at their regular meetings outlining proposed salmon bills and budgets.

### **Governor's Salmon Strategy Update – 2023-25 Biennial Work Plan**

Following the completion of the legislatively required 2023-25 biennial work plan to implement the Governor's 2021 Salmon Strategy Update, GSRO staff continued to coordinate with agency leadership. GSRO is convening legislative coordination meetings bi-monthly with designees of the Natural Resources Subcabinet. This interagency committee is actively engaged in salmon recovery and is the same group that informed the 2023-25 biennial work plan priorities, which implements the statewide salmon strategy.

GSRO is also required to convene the Natural Resources Subcabinet throughout the year. Scheduling is in process for the Natural Resources Subcabinet to meet in the spring to discuss implementing 2023 legislation, progress on implementing 2022 legislation, and begin to set priorities for the 2024 supplemental legislative session. This conversation will be informed by recovery plan and tribal priorities. The Subcabinet includes the directors of state natural resource agencies.

### **Salmon Recovery Network**

The Salmon Recovery Network (SRNet) continues to meet virtually and recently discussed how to best gather information about federal funding opportunities. SRNet is creating a method to collect information about federal funding programs, total costs, project descriptions, and applicants to share with SRNet members and other interested parties.

### **Salmon Recovery Conference**

The salmon recovery conference will be April 18-19, 2023, in Vancouver, WA. The theme is "A Shared Future." Registration opened January 4 and early bird registration (reduced price) ends March 8. All participants must be registered by April 7 to attend the conference. Western Washington University conference services and GSRO staff are working with presenters on their biographies, presentation description, and uploading pre-recordings of their presentations.

### **Southern Resident Orca Recovery**

The population remains critically endangered at 73 whales. There were two new births, but three deaths over the last year and a half. In addition, 12 whales were considered in vulnerable body condition in 2022, decreasing their chances of survival. The primary threats are contaminants, vessels, and prey availability.

In 2019, the legislature passed new vessel regulations and put a commercial whale-watching license system in place. WDFW is required to write an adaptive management report on the new rules every two years. They submitted their first report, [Southern Resident Killer Whale Vessel Adaptive Management 2022](#), to the legislature in 2022, and new bills, [Senate Bill 5371](#) and [House Bill 1145](#), are currently being considered by the legislature. The proposed law would change the vessel distance from SRKW from an oval of 300/400 yards to a thousand yards or a half nautical mile and would simplify the commercial whale watching licensing system. Ms. Galuska provided testimony on Senate Substitute Bill 5371 on January 30 in the Senate Agriculture Water, Natural Resources and Parks Committee.

The Department of Ecology (ECY) is working with GSRO, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) and the public on finalizing a checklist and guidance to support the Orca Recovery Task Force's recommendation 27, "Determine how permit applications in Washington State could be required to explicitly address potential impacts to orcas." A series of public meetings are complete, and guidance is being developed for the State Environmental Policy Act SRKW checklist questions. Mitigation options have been developed and will be summarized on the [orca website](#) later in the year.

State agency budget requests and the Governor's proposed budget to accomplish the recommendations by the Governor's Southern Resident Orca Task Force by state agencies have been summarized to the Office of Financial Management and partners for the 2023-25 session.

### **Spokane Watershed Lead Entity**

The Spokane Tribe received funding in the 2022 supplemental budget to establish a lead entity and habitat restoration strategy for the Spokane River watershed in NE Washington. This lead entity will focus on habitat protection and restoration priorities in order to support reintroduction of salmon and steelhead, and resident Redband trout habitat in the blocked area above Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams.

As part of the process for establishing a lead entity, counties, cities, and tribal governments must jointly designate, by resolution or by letters of support, the formation of a lead entity. The Spokane Tribe and partners began meeting with initiating governments in December 2022. Currently, there are draft resolutions in process for City of Spokane, Stevens County, Lincoln County, and Spokane Tribe. Final resolutions are expected in March 2023. Spokane Tribe staff are planning to meet with Spokane County and other city, county, and tribal governments in spring and summer to wrap up this process. In addition, work is proceeding to establish the technical and citizen advisory committees and the technical work that guides and informs the habitat restoration and protection projects and priorities. A Technical Advisory Committee has been formed and is working on the analyses and technical products that will form the foundation for a limiting factors analysis, which is scheduled to begin in March 2023 and wrap up by June 2024.

## **Salmon Recovery Section Report**

### **2022 Grant Round**

The board funded 133 projects at the September and December meetings. Staff will provide an update at the board meeting on grant agreement progress.

## **Watershed Plan Review**

The watershed plan review panel had a kickoff meeting in December. Staff from RCO and Department of Ecology (ECY) briefed the panel on background, process, and structure of the watershed plans. Staff from ECY outlined the technical aspects of the plans, including demand, offsets, and net ecological benefit. The review panel was divided into two teams to conduct their work:

WRIA 7 & 8 team: Hans Berge, Annika Fain, and Adam Hill.

WRIA 13, 14 & 15 team: Bob Montgomery, Bill Norris, and Phil Roni.

The panel was tasked with working in their teams to review background materials, the plans, and develop questions and observations. The next panel meeting will be on February 17 to discuss their initial findings and determine the framework of their report of recommendations and discuss with WDFW staff involved in the local planning process.

## **2023 Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Application Workshop**

On January 24, salmon staff conducted a two-hour workshop for regions, lead entities and sponsors to learn about this year's grant cycle. Topics included updates on acquisitions, assessments and design, monitoring, restoration, application process, application requirements, and PRISM. Staff did an amazing job presenting the information and answering questions.

## **SRFB Standing Technical Review Panel (2023-2025)**

On January 31, RCO Director Duffy and the salmon grants team kicked off the 2023 grant cycle by hosting a meeting for the 10-member technical review panel. Topics covered included 2023 application site visit assignments, grant schedule for the year, new policy changes, upcoming policy work, RCO's new conditioned project tracker, PRISM review module training, and the selection of the panel chair.

## **2023 Cost Increase Fund**

In June 2022, the board added \$250,000 to the cost increase fund for the remainder of the 2021-2023 biennium, bringing the fund total to \$1,000,000. There is approximately \$734,000 remaining. Staff will bring a discussion item to the board in May to decide on the cost increase fund level for the 2023-2025 biennium.

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Administration

The following table shows projects funded by the board and administered by staff since 1999. The information is current as of January 30, 2023. This table does not include projects funded through the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board, Family Forest Fish Passage Program, the Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative, or Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program; although RCO staff support these programs through grant and contract administration, the board does not review or approve projects under these programs.

**Table 1. Board-Funded Projects**

	Pending Projects	Active Projects	Completed Projects	Total Funded Projects
Salmon Projects to Date	79	458	2,935	3,472
Percentage of Total	2%	13%	85%	

## Strategic Plan Connection

The Salmon Recovery Management Report supports *Goal 2* of the board's strategic plan, which focuses on the board's accountability for investments. By sharing information on staff activities and the grant round processes, the board can ensure accountability for the efficient use of resources.

<https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SRFB-StrategicPlan.pdf>

## Attachments

**Attachment A: Closed Projects** lists projects that closed between November 1, 2022, and January 30, 2023. Each project number includes a link to information about the project (e.g., designs, photos, maps, reports, etc.). Staff closed out 26 projects or contracts during this time

**Attachment B:** shows the major amendments approved between November 1, 2022, and January 30, 2023. Staff processed 14 cost change amendments during this period.

**Attachment C:** Multi-state Letter to Secretary Raimondo

### Salmon Projects Completed and Closed from November 1, 2022-January 30, 2023

Project Number	Sponsor	Project Name	Primary Program	Closed Completed Date
<u>16-1519</u>	Wahkiakum Conservation District	Elochoman Stream Restoration Cothren	Salmon Federal Projects	11/04/2022
<u>17-1025</u>	Wahkiakum Conservation District	Elkinton Property Stream Restoration	Salmon Federal Projects	11/15/2022
<u>18-1003</u>	Ecolution LLC	REVIEW PANEL - Marnie Tyler	Salmon Federal Activities	01/17/2023
<u>18-1004</u>	JE Smith Consulting	REVIEW PANEL - Jeanette Smith	PSAR Activities	01/10/2023
<u>18-1005</u>	Natural Systems Design	REVIEW PANEL - Jennifer O'Neal	Salmon Federal Activities	01/17/2023
<u>18-1006</u>	E. Steven Toth Consulting Geomorphologist	REVIEW PANEL - Steven Toth	PSAR Activities	01/04/2023
<u>18-1008</u>	Wild Salmon Center	REVIEW PANEL - Michelle Cramer	Salmon Federal Activities	01/04/2023
<u>18-1296</u>	North Olympic Salmon Coalition	Dungeness River Riparian Recovery: Phase II	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	11/03/2022
<u>18-1532</u>	Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians	Gold Basin Landslide Restoration	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	12/23/2022
<u>18-1534</u>	City of Bellingham	Middle Fork Nooksack Diversion Dam Removal	PSAR Large Capital Projects	12/12/2022

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Primary Program</b>	<b>Closed Completed Date</b>
<a href="#"><u>18-1758</u></a>	Pacific Conservation District	Mid Nemah Stream Habitat Assess. and Rest. Design	Salmon Federal Projects	11/18/2022
<a href="#"><u>18-1835</u></a>	10,000 Years Institute	Hoh River Invasive Species Prevention and Control	Salmon Federal Projects	01/17/2023
<a href="#"><u>19-1103</u></a>	Pacific Conservation District	Letsinger Habitat Restoration Design	Salmon State Projects	11/21/2022
<a href="#"><u>19-1119</u></a>	Forterra NW	Chambers Creek Dam Conceptual Design	Salmon Federal Projects	01/06/2023
<a href="#"><u>19-1147</u></a>	Snohomish County Public Works	Chatham Acres Restoration Design	Salmon Federal Projects	12/21/2022
<a href="#"><u>19-1155</u></a>	King County Water & Land Resources	Lones Levee Restoration - Construction	Salmon Federal Projects	12/22/2022
<a href="#"><u>19-1365</u></a>	Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians	Stillaguamish Tidal Wetlands- Acq.	Salmon State Projects	01/10/2023
<a href="#"><u>19-1398</u></a>	Capitol Land Trust	Lower Eld Nearshore Habitat Complex Acquisition	Salmon State Projects	12/21/2022
<a href="#"><u>19-1470</u></a>	Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group	Upper Methow Assess/Design & Protection Strategy	Salmon Federal Projects	01/19/2023
<a href="#"><u>19-1471</u></a>	Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group	Okanogan Basin Barrier Assessment	Salmon State Projects	01/24/2023

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Primary Program</b>	<b>Closed Completed Date</b>
<a href="#"><u>19-1718</u></a>	Tri-State Steelheaders Inc	Mill Creek Fish Passage - Park to Roosevelt	Salmon State Projects	11/17/2022
<a href="#"><u>20-1055</u></a>	Asotin County Conservation District	Cougar Creek Fish Passage Design	Salmon Federal Projects	11/17/2022
<a href="#"><u>20-1096</u></a>	South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group	Sequalitchew Cr. Estuary Rest Design Alternatives	Salmon Federal Projects	01/06/2023
<a href="#"><u>20-1163</u></a>	Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group	Union River Fish In Fish Out Program	Salmon Federal Activities	01/27/2023
<a href="#"><u>20-1198</u></a>	South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group	WRIA 13 Passage Inventory & Prioritization	Salmon State Projects	12/20/2022
<a href="#"><u>21-1042</u></a>	Thurston County	Black R Trib - Littlerock Rd. Fish Pass. Con.	Salmon Federal Projects	12/19/2022



## Project Amendments Approved by the RCO Director

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<a href="#"><u>18-1228</u></a>	Dosewallips R Powerlines Acquisition and Design	Jefferson County Public Health	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	Cost Change	11/28/2022	Add \$217,945 of 2022 Hood Canal Lead Entity Small Supplemental funds awarded by Salmon Recovery Funding Board 9/22/2022. New Agreement total is \$589,119.
<a href="#"><u>18-1291</u></a>	Elwha River Engineered Log Jams - Ranney Reach	Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	Cost Change	11/04/2022	\$79,064 cost increase using 2022 supplemental funding from NOPL's allocation. Costs are for CLOMR revision, FEMA permitting requirements.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<u>19-1446</u>	Ahtanum Village Restoration Design	Yakama Nation	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	01/24/2023	In order to address Salmon Recovery Funding Board Technical Review Panel comments on the preliminary design deliverables and extend the performance period through the end of 2023, the Yakama Nation will contribute \$50,000 in match, for design and cultural resources consultation, raising the Project Agreement total to \$170,000. The Cultural Resources Consultation Special Condition is updated to reflect the addition of ground disturbing activities in this phase of the project.
<u>19-1489</u>	Lower Wenatchee Instream Flow Enhance Phase II	Trout Unlimited Inc.	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/09/2022	Reduce match from 52% to 15% of the grant total. \$33,231 added as the new match total. Adjusting AA&E to 30% based on new match/grant total.

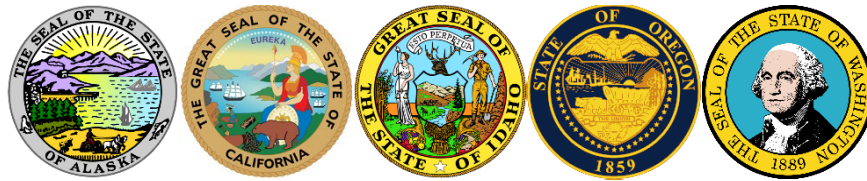
<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<a href="#"><u>20-1008</u></a>	Minter Creek Conservation Easement	Great Peninsula Conservancy	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	Cost Change	12/16/2022	This amendment will reduce match from \$120,000 (53%) to \$97,285 (48%) to reflect actual project costs which were less than estimated. This amendment also raises the administrative cost limit from \$10,000 to \$10,878 to account for the time and expense necessary to negotiate the terms of the easement.
<a href="#"><u>20-1018</u></a>	Finn Creek Design	Wild Fish Conservancy	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	Cost Change	11/09/2022	This amendment adds \$58,200 of the 2022 state Salmon Recovery Funding Board funding awarded through 22-1098 and down-scopes 20-1018 from completing final designs to restore the Finn Creek estuary to instead completing preliminary designs. Final designs will be completed through project 22-1098.

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Type	Date	Amendment Descriptions
						Additionally, the original 20-1018 proposal included securing a title report and an acquisition purchase or option agreement for a park-adjacent 1.3-acre vacant private parcel. This amendment removes that landowner willingness component from the project since it is now being accomplished in-kind by the park-adjacent landowner and Kitsap County Parks who are working through a land exchange agreement.
<a href="#"><u>20-1113</u></a>	Lower Big Quilcene River Acquisition	Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/10/2022	Add, by way of merger, \$167,571 21-23 Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) funds and project scope from agreement 20-1497 to 20-1113. ESRP Scope of Work is integrated and attached to agreement. All other agreement funding remains the same, Increase Administration rate to 5%. New agreement total is \$922,221.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<a href="#"><u>20-1119</u></a>	Snow Creek Uncas Preserve Restoration	North Olympic Salmon Coalition	Salmon State Projects	Cost Change	11/08/2022	Add \$468,065 2022 Hood Canal Lead Entity State Supplemental Small funds awarded by Salmon Recovery Funding Board 9/22/2022. New agreement total is \$1,373,844. Sponsor match is waived by Recreation and Conservation Director.
<a href="#"><u>20-1367</u></a>	Debays Slough Feasibility Assessment	Skagit County	Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	Cost Change	01/25/2023	Adding \$85,741.90 returned 15-17 and 17-19 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds. Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) letter of approval 11/7/2022. Increase of funds is due to originally underestimated consultant costs and additional costs to finish work with the approved one-year time extension.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<a href="#"><u>21-1002</u></a>	Flaming Geyser State Park Riparian Revegetation	King County Water & Land Resources	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/17/2022	WRIA 9 LE awarded an additional \$163,018 of 2022 Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds to fully fund the application bringing the total grant amount to \$295,895. Special Condition #2 relating to partial funding is removed and the new agreement total is \$400,000. Using PCSRF 2022.
<a href="#"><u>21-1062</u></a>	Upper Dungeness R Large Wood Restoration Phase III	Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe	Salmon State Projects	Cost Change	11/07/2022	Cost increase to add \$249,500 of the lead entity (NOPL) 2022 supplemental allocation to the project.
<a href="#"><u>21-1101</u></a>	Dungeness Riparian Recovery Phase III	North Olympic Salmon Coalition	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/07/2022	\$25,935 cost increase using 2022 PCSRF funding. This project was partially funded in 2021 and was provided full funding in the 2022 NOPL ranked list.

<b>Project Number</b>	<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Sponsor</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Amendment Descriptions</b>
<a href="#"><u>21-1148</u></a>	McArdle Bay Shoreline Conservation Easement	San Juan Preservation Trust	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/10/2022	Adding \$107,648 in 2022 Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) funding to fully fund a partially funded 2021 project. This project was included on the 2022 ranked list for San Juan County lead entity.
<a href="#"><u>21-1179</u></a>	Restore Lower Peshastin Creek Ph 2 Final Design	Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group	Salmon Federal Projects	Cost Change	11/21/2022	Adding \$70,000 of Bonneville Power Administration matching funds. Sponsor requested a time extension to allow for cultural resources delays and final wetland delineation and design work. Match needed to extend agreement end date.



December 29, 2022

Dear Secretary Raimondo:

We are writing to highlight opportunities for collaboration associated with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). We want to offer our assistance to ensure that this funding opportunity will result in actions that are impactful, equitable, and lead to truly transformative change.

Pacific salmon play an essential role in the economy, health, and prosperity of coastal Western states. When we restore salmon habitat, we bolster regional and local economies, enhance fisheries, secure reserved rights for tribes, build climate resiliency, protect against floods, ensure clean water, abate pollution, and improve watershed health for salmon and communities.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) funding plays a critical role in the health of Pacific coast fisheries, communities, and the ecosystems they depend on. Local implementation partners, including tribes, non-profit organizations, and local governments, are a critical mechanism to accomplish projects on the ground with NOAA funding.

As NOAA develops guidance to roll out the next stage of BIL and IRA funding, we offer the following recommendations based upon our states' extensive experience collaborating with local partners to accomplish coastal species recovery on the ground. These recommendations recognize challenges and opportunities related to local partner capacity, equity, and landscape-scale restoration.

#### Capacity and Equity

- Set aside additional funds for local capacity building to help ensure that all communities have opportunities to implement real change by providing the capacity resources necessary to put large, transformational projects on the ground. Larger cities and entities often have this capacity and expertise while smaller, more rural communities, do not. If we are to make holistic progress on climate resiliency and salmon recovery, we need to properly support all communities.
- Consider adjustments to the federal Notice of Funding Opportunities (NOFOs) to ensure smaller, rural, and more marginalized communities have an opportunity to compete. Shifting NOFOs to late fall and winter will avoid summer restoration work windows and tribal fishery seasons. Extending the NOFO response times to 4 or 5 months for new or expanded nationwide Office of Habitat Restoration programs will also encourage more equitable distribution of proposals from the expert implementers.



- Reduce or eliminate match requirement where possible unless required by legislation. Nonfederal match requirements preclude many organizations (including tribal entities) from applying and impose an undue administrative burden on states or local entities.

#### Tribal Partners

- Depending upon jurisdiction, tribes have varied legal, cultural, and co-manager roles. We support prioritizing funding for planning and implementation of key projects that have endorsement of the state, federal partners, and tribal entities.

#### Non-profit Organizations/Local Governments

- Encourage NOAA to consider dedicating funding to non-profit organizations and local governments. These groups play a critical role in the health of Pacific coast fisheries, communities, and the ecosystems they depend on. They are also critical partners in the successful implementation of granted programs. As with tribal entities, projects that have endorsement of state, federal and tribal entities should have priority over those that do not have consensus support.

#### Funding Pathways

- Encourage the packaging and bundling of multiple projects within a specific geographic area to assure effective coordination and implementation across a watershed. By broadening the definition of a project will encourage the proponents to scale up their efforts to better capture a more holistic watershed approach.
- Provide a clear path for block grants to states to encourage coordination across broader geographic scales and more effective project delivery. There are efficiencies in using established, proven models of funding structures that also provide accountability of investments and local knowledge that allows for more equitable distribution of funds.
- Consider setting programmatic goals provide broad funding streams to states implement those key transformational projects that will cross jurisdictional boundaries and turn the dial on climate resiliency and salmon recovery.
- Expand opportunities to fund science and information to help communities better understand and increase climate resiliency.

Our states have worked closely with our respective federal delegations to inform early conversations around state-level priorities and have continued to work with Congressional and federal agency leadership collectively and collaboratively as BIL funds roll out to states. We look forward to continued dialogue with you in anticipation of the Department of Commerce's IRA guidelines for the NOAA investment in coastal communities and climate resilience.

Thank you for your consideration of these state priorities for federal funding and for your leadership on environmental and climate challenges. We look forward to working together to build more climate resilient communities better prepared for the challenges we face collectively.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mike Dunleavy".

Governor Mike Dunleavy  
State of Alaska

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gavin Newsom".

Governor Gavin Newsom  
State of California

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brad Little".

Governor Brad Little  
State of Idaho

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kate Brown".

Governor Kate Brown  
State of Oregon

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jay Inslee".

Governor Jay Inslee  
State of Washington

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023

**Title:** Targeted Investments Staff Review Update

**Prepared By:** Nicholas Norton, Policy, and Planning Specialist

#### Summary

This memo summarizes the progress to date related to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board's December 2022 motion directing staff to review the Targeted Investments policy with the support of a working committee. To date, Recreation and Conservation Office staff and the working committee have discussed potential updates to objectives, priorities, eligibility, and ranking process.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

### Introduction/Background

Appendix J of Manual 18 lays out the Salmon Recovery Funding Boards (board) Targeted Investment (TI) policy. This creates a structure, process, and criteria for how the board would utilize funding above what is currently allocated to the regions. In 2022, the board used the TI policy to award funding to two projects: a final design and construction (\$4,977,891) and the Gap-to-Gap Ecosystem restoration construction (\$3,612,109). After the 2022 TI grant round, stakeholders and the SRFB technical review panel provided input that updates to the TI evaluation criteria might be useful prior to the next TI round to support more effective project review and scoring.

In addition, the board and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff distributed \$50 million in new state funding in 2022 for projects valued at over \$5 million dollars. This involved adopting a new allocation proposal and solicitation process parallel to the regular SRFB grant round and TI processes that were already occurring. Internal staff discussions indicate that, though the outcomes have been successful to date, it would be advantageous to use the same or similar processes to distribute additional funding if/when additional funding is received.

Lastly, at the December 7, 2022, board meeting, RCO staff engaged the board in a discussion about different pathways for using potential additional federal funding from the Infrastructure Investments and Job Act (IIJA) coming through the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) over the next few years. Part of that discussion centered on whether the TI policy provides a structure for distribution of IIJA funds and an opportunity to leverage this funding and the potential benefits of having a more centralized place and process to accommodate additional monies from federal sources.

Given the interests in 1) adapting to lessons learned after the 2022 TI grant round, 2) providing certainty regarding additional funding received, and 3) proactively responding to additional federal funding, the board passed the following motion during the December 2022 board meeting:

*Move to recommend that staff review the goals, priorities, objectives, criteria, and processes of the Targeted Investment program. The review will include a working committee to support the review. Staff will provide updates to the SRFB at the March meeting.*

## Working Committee

Per board recommendation, RCO staff recruited a working committee with representation from the board, RCO staff, the Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC), the Council of Regions (CORs), and project sponsors:

Name	Title
Kaleen Cottingham	Citizen member of the board
Jeremy Cram	Salmon Recovery Policy Lead, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Non-voting, WDFW representative to the board
Chris Endresen Scott	Citizen member of the board
Nick Norton	Policy and Planning Specialist, RCO
Kat Moore	Senior Outdoor Grants Manager, RCO
Alex Conley	Executive Director, Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board
Mike Lithgow	Information and Outreach/Policy Analyst, Kalispel Tribe Natural Resource Department

Jason Griffith	Environmental Manager, Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians
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The working committee has met twice. On January 30, 2023, the committee discussed core objectives of the TI program and the role of investment priorities in driving funding decisions and on February 15, 2023, the committee discussed potential changes to the current TI investment priorities and the current process of solicitation, reviewing, scoring, and funding.

## Core Objectives

The first question considered by the working committee was ‘what does the TI policy need to do to be successful given past experiences and future needs?’ Through a combination of discussion and fine-tuning, the following are draft core objectives that would help guide any TI policy analyses and updates:

- 1) Uses funding sources with potentially different directives.** Specifically, any changes to TI policy should enhance the ability of the program to leverage and distribute the following sources of money in a single process: state capital dollars directed specifically to the board, additional federal funding through PCSRF, and supplemental state funding for high-cost projects or specific project types (ex. more than \$5 million dollar projects, riparian planting projects).
- 2) Utilizes funds not directed towards regional allocation.** Specifically, any changes to TI policy should not undermine the statewide nature of the funding and allocation. That maintains the opportunity to fund priority projects that might otherwise have difficulty being funded through the regional allocation process.
- 3) Funds projects with significant regional recovery benefits.** Specifically, any changes to TI policy should ensure that regional recovery plans and their associated priorities are used to support funding decisions.
- 4) Provides certainty and consistency across grant rounds.** Specifically, any changes to TI policy should increase awareness about available funding to support sponsor decision-making, help give a consistent process for all stakeholders to plan around and limit the number of alternate processes that would be needed to get new or unexpected funds out the door.

## Investment Priorities

Currently, the TI policy has five priorities (approaching recovery, southern resident orca recovery, populations at risk, future threat abatement, and emergency response); the board can choose any combination of these priorities to focus on during a TI grant round. Depending on the chosen priority(ies), project eligibility and a sub-set of evaluation criteria would be determined.

During the first working committee meeting, two key things emerged relative to the current approach to investment priorities:

- Depending on what the board chooses as a priority, it might not apply to every part of the state and would lack consistency from year to year. This might make it more difficult for sponsors to develop projects across years without knowing whether it will fit with that biennium's chosen priority, and it might make it harder to incorporate unexpected funding with directives that don't cleanly align with a specific chosen priority.
- Instead of having changing priorities that are based on specific types of resource concerns (orca, delisting, etc.), having broadly applicable priorities based on the TI funding impact to projects may make more sense.

At the second meeting of the working committee on February 15, 2023, the following draft investment priorities were developed relative to the types of projects that might otherwise be funded through the regional allocation:

- 1) Increasing on-the-ground scale of project implementation
- 2) Reducing phases required to complete well-developed projects
- 3) Allowing long-term, complex projects to get off the ground

## Process

The majority of the second working committee meeting was reserved for discussion of the current TI process and roles of various entities (lead entities, regions, board, staff, review panel). Specifically, the working committee analyzed the current TI process to see how well it accomplishes the core objectives mentioned above, and discussed if there are other approaches that RCO has taken that might be leveraged moving forward.

From the meeting, the working committee developed the following initial ideas for further analysis and discussion:

- 1) Switch to board investment priorities that don't inherently limit the number of eligible regions and don't change every biennium.
- 2) Remove the limit on number of projects per region.
- 3) Shift to a "biennial TI fund plan" to provide information about predicted amounts of funding from different sources and for different project types, and amount of funding from these sources that will be allocated to TI over a two-year period.
- 4) Switch to an evaluation process where applicants submit a letter of intent, and the board invites a subset of proposals to submit a full application for funding consideration. These intent letters could be invited to submit a full application during the second year if new or unexpected funds become available.
- 5) Full applications not funded in the first year would be rolled over to the second year and funded in order based on additional funds available.

### Next Steps

Staff is currently working to further analyze and assess the initial ideas from the working committee on changes to the TI process. Currently, the working committee has one additional meeting scheduled for March 13, 2023. The planned topic for this meeting will be to refine recommendations on changes to the TI process, and discuss TI eligibility and evaluation criteria.

RCO staff's goal is to have updated TI policy language ready for board consideration and approval during the May 23-24, 2023, board meeting. This would allow the board to utilize the new TI policy in tandem with key decisions about use of state and federal funding opportunities during the 2023-2025 biennium.

### Strategic Plan Connection

The TI staff review and working committee supports aspects of *Goal 1* and *Goal 2* of the boards strategic plan. Specifically, this process will help ensure that allocations best advance the salmon recovery effort, close gaps in current funding relative to overall salmon recovery efforts and support the economical and timely use of resources for projects.

<https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SRFB-StrategicPlan.pdf>

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023

**Title:** Board Match Policy: Analysis and Impacts

**Prepared By:** Nicholas Norton, Policy and Planning Specialist

#### Summary

This memo summarizes background information, policy analysis, and project impacts relative to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board's current match policies; a topic considered at its June 2022 retreat. The purpose of this item is to provide additional context and background on match issues so that the board can provide staff feedback:

- 1) On whether to move forward with further development of match policy options; and
- 2) On the opportunities and risks perceived with potential changes to match policies.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

### Introduction

In June 2022, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) held its biennial retreat. The board considered several different issues at its retreat including match. as it relates to board-funded projects. There was interest among the board in:

- Understanding the role of board match in relation to the overall project funding
- Examining whether match is variable by geography, project type, or entities
- Learning about the impacts to other state programs that have eliminated match

### Goals of this briefing



This memo includes information to provide the board with additional context as it considers match and its role in the board program. This memo outlines the following:

- A description of how match is operationalized at the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), its connection to the overall funding of a project, and the progression of match-related policy decisions from the board.
- Identifying potential objectives for requiring match and assessing whether required board match supports those objectives.
- Providing a clear, detailed description of how match can impact different phases of board projects.
- Identifying possible options for match policies that the board may want to consider.

Staff requests direction from the board on whether to further examine options for changing board match policy, and if so, what are the desired outcomes and/or risks.

## Background

### How is match applied and operationalized at RCO?

At the June 2022 retreat, the board noted a desire to gain a better understanding of how board match relates to overall project funding as sponsors are developing and implementing a project. Attachment A provides a detailed table that compares key aspects of these elements as it relates to RCO policies and internal processes.

To summarize, board match is essentially a subset or component of overall non-board project funding (i.e., leveraged funds). Sponsors identify which component of funding and how much to include in a board grant agreement; sometimes it is the minimum of 15%, sometimes it is greater. Including something as match comes with a formal administrative pathway and workflow that RCO uses to ensure compliance with existing match policies. In contrast, overall project funding not included in the grant agreement captures a broader scope of work relevant to the larger salmon recovery goals at the entire site.

The way match is defined and operationalized within the agency has a strong influence on how a “project” is presented to the board in terms of dollars and deliverables, and this package is rarely identical to the way the sponsor is leveraging additional resources needed to achieve recovery outcomes at the site.

## History of the Board's match-related decisions

A thorough review of past board decisions indicates that at least ten key decisions have been made relative to match requirements, which can be found in detail in Attachment B and are summarized below:

- Establishment of a standing 15 percent match requirement (May 2000).
- Waiving match requirements for design-only grants in the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program (2007) and the overall program (February 2008).
- Setting a 35 percent match requirement for fish passage projects and a 50 percent match requirement for sediment reduction projects when addressing RMAP requirements. (August 2009).
- Waiving match for three years for restoration projects in three Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMWs) (March 2014) and permanently waiving match requirements for all IMW restoration projects (March 2017).
- Creating a match waiver for riparian planting projects that meet minimum buffer requirements (September 2021).
- Not requiring match for large projects (over \$5 million) applying for funding from the 2022 supplemental operating budget (June 2022).
- Establishing increased match requirements based on percentage of upland acres in board funded acquisitions (December 2022).

Over time the board has used match to incentivize and to maximize cost-benefit outcomes for certain types of projects or efforts.

### Desired Outcomes

Match is often used in grant programs. While individual grant programs may be distinct, match requirements are generally used to drive a combination of the following desired outcomes:

- 1) **Local support (project level)** – The presence of additional funds from the landowner, the sponsor, or the “community” serves to demonstrate that the project is a priority and serves as a needed proxy for buy-in from the entities necessary for implementation.
- 2) **Return on investment (funding list level)** – In a limited funding environment, match brings additional dollars to accomplish priorities on a funding list,

increasing what would otherwise get done for the same amount of investment by the funder.

- 3) **Demonstrate effectiveness (program level)** – Matching funds from other sources serve as a key part of demonstrating to decision-makers that a program is utilizing public money effectively.

Staff assessed the role of board match policy in driving these three desired outcomes by gathering informational anecdotes, project data, and stakeholder perspective.

### Does Board Match Policy Drive Local Support?

The project data is relatively clear that both donated and cash match coming directly from the landowner or sponsor is very rarely reported (see attachments - Figure 1 and Figure 2). This is consistent with anecdotal information staff received that most landowner engagement is not match-eligible; cash or in-kind match from the landowner or the sponsor is difficult to get; and is the most inefficient type of match to report even if it is available. Match funding from non-state, non-federal sources is relatively common, but it is not clear the extent to which that is a result of requiring match.

Overall, this suggests match is a poor proxy for landowner and sponsor buy-in, which are the types of local commitment the board was explicitly trying to target by establishing match requirements. In contrast, current match policy seems to be filtering out projects with strong landowner engagement, but where non-board public funding is limiting. A more detailed summary of the anecdotes and project data used to inform this staff analysis, as well as stakeholder perspectives, can be found in Attachment C.

### Does Board Match Policy Drive Return on Investment?

The data (see attachments - Figure 4 and Figure 5) is consistent with anecdotes suggesting that additional funds are usually required for many restoration projects requesting construction funding, and that board monies often serve as a minority funder on these types of projects. In addition, data from other relevant programs or provisos suggest that the board match threshold might not be much different than what sponsors would be willing to report regardless (see Attachment D).

Overall, this suggests a 15 percent match requirement is not what helps board funding go further by increasing the size of projects or funding further down a project list. Instead, it appears that a combination of the regional allocation structure and local review processes necessitate and/or encourage bringing additional funds to the table

for most projects. A more detailed summary of the anecdotes and project data used to inform this staff analysis, as well as stakeholder perspectives, can be found in Attachment D.

## Does Board Match Policy Help Demonstrate Effectiveness?

The available data (see attachments - Figure 4, Figure 5, Figure 6, and Figure 7) is consistent with the anecdotal information that sponsors are generally reporting as little match as possible, and that match is dwarfed by funds that would otherwise be eligible but are not included in the grant agreement.

Overall, this indicates that a significant amount of the “financial story” in connection with board funds is not analyzable and reportable to decision makers or other funders. A more detailed summary of the anecdotes and project data used to inform this staff analysis, as well as key relevant opinions, can be found in Attachment E.

## Synthesis

**Together, the data and anecdotes suggest that the current 15% board match requirement is not greatly affecting the desired policy objectives.** In other words, the local support, harnessing of outside funds, and public support associated with the board is not necessarily attributable to the 15 percent match requirement. Much of this potential lack of impact seems to come from context unique to the board (i.e., a 15 percent threshold, within a regional allocation model, in a state with a relatively strong and diversified funding pool).

### Match Impacts on Board Projects

Goal #1 of the boards strategic plan involves *“funding the best possible salmon recovery activities and projects through a fair process that considers science, community values and priorities, and coordination of effort”*. In connection with this aspiration, staff wanted to better understand and assess the ways that board match policy impacts key phases of a salmon recovery project. As further described below, staffed looked at the impact of board match policy on project development, project scoping, and project implementation. **Together, the assessment suggests that the current 15% board match requirement can stall otherwise priority projects, reduce the scope of grant agreements, and draw out implementation timelines.**

These impacts occur at the project level and in ways that are not connected with specific, analyzable data within PRISM. As a result, the impacts described below are

things that occur, but their frequency or overall impact on the pace and scale of salmon recovery efforts is difficult to assess.

## Project Development

**Impact Statement:** Match policy can have a direct, negative impact on where and what types of projects are developed into funding requests for the board. A project case study that illustrates this impact can be found in Attachment F.

### Why might project development be impacted?

- **Project Type** - If a project is dependent on finding matching funds through local in-kind or donated sources, then this can have a large impact on the types of projects that can be accomplished. Smaller communities may not have the technical experts available to provide donated labor needed for more complex projects. Alternately, the "free" labor that is available (ex. community volunteers) might mean they are limited to submitting riparian planting projects to the board when other types of restoration work may be a higher priority.
- **Project Location** – There is a wide variation in the amount and types of match-eligible funding available from non-state sources depending on the local tax base, presence of mitigation funds, the type of entity, etc. In places that have limited access to matchable public funding, practitioners may decide to not even engage with landowners in an otherwise priority area as a direct result of board match policies.
- **Landowner Type** - If the landowner is state or federal, potential applicants will often try and see if funding can be secured directly without any match requirements. Alternatively, the increasing costs of even small projects can remove projects from the board project pipeline where a private landowner or sponsor is not able to find enough external funds to meet the 15 percent requirement.
- **Application Timelines** - If the timelines for submission and certification of matching funds do not line up well between different grant sources, then potential sponsors will not begin an application for board funding.
- **Grant Incompatibilities** – When a grant cannot be used to match with board funds, then potential sponsors will not begin an application to the board even if the two grants would otherwise have been able to complete the planned scope of work in the project area. This could be because of slight differences in

eligibility criteria across funders, the source of match making it ineligible, or misalignment between what would qualify as match.

- **Fund Source** – Some funders do not like to see the same entities requesting funding every year and ask practitioners to apply less frequently. In addition, some municipal entities can be subject to rapid changes in funding priorities based on infrastructure needs or staffing turnover. This can be a rate-limiting step in obtaining match needed to apply for board funding.

## Project Scoping

**Impact Statement:** Though match brings outside funding to the scope of work, it can also lead to down-scoping or down-scaling before or after signing a grant agreement. A project case study that illustrates this impact can be found in Attachment F.

### How might project scoping be impacted by match?

- **Cost-Carrying Challenges** – Smaller jurisdictions or nonprofit applicants may decide to down-scope the initial scale of a project to ensure they can accommodate a negative cash balance resulting from less than 100 percent reimbursement from RCO on major line items.
- **Match Timing** – When using a different public funding source as match, it is often not possible to secure match fully in hand prior to an application to the board, either because they have a similar application schedule or also have a requirement to have matching funds in hand. If another grant falls through or another funding source shifts priorities unexpectedly, sponsors may have to reduce the scope of the application to meet the required matching share.

## Project Implementation

**Impact Statement:** Match requirements can directly or indirectly impact timelines and project management capacity. A project case study that illustrates this impact can be found in Attachment F.

### How specifically can project implementation be impacted?

- **Cost Increases** – For a cost increase from RCO, sponsors must identify additional funds to re-balance their match percentage above 15 percent. The process of identifying additional funds can delay completion of deliverables and result in extensions.

- **Match Deferrals** – When sponsors need to be reimbursed in full when adequate match has not been banked, RCO can approve match deferrals. This increases the risk that the sponsor must either pay money back or find additional match late in the process, potentially resulting in extensions or incomplete projects.
- **Cash Flow** – Other funding sources may be secured at different times relative to board funding or pay reimbursements on a different schedule. This can result in sponsors waiting to sign a grant agreement until other funding is confirmed or sitting on invoices to help manage organizational cash flow. Both things can delay a project timeline.

## Potential Match Options

The board has previously changed match requirements based on project type. If the board would like to examine additional alternate match options, it could include assessing the following changes:

- Should match be required
- Can it be administered differently
- What eligible costs can count as match
- If match requirements must be met by a single project, or by the program
- Where match is required geographically
- What entities need to bring match

A comprehensive summary of relevant examples and approaches from other funders is included in Attachment G.

Options can be analyzed based on the opportunities and risks the board perceives. For example:

- If the board wants to address constraints on project scoping but is concerned about maintaining legislative support, that might point towards a policy that looks at tracking other funding outside of the grant agreement.
- If the board is broadly concerned about the impacts of match on projects and does not perceive a risk to public support or sponsor commitment, that might point to reducing or eliminating the match requirement all together.

## Discussion and Direction

Staff requests direction from the board on:

- 1) Whether to analyze and/or recommend specific match options for board consideration; and
- 2) If analysis is desired, what outcomes would the board like policy changes to support and what risks they would want policy changes to mitigate.

### Strategic Plan Connection

The issue of match is relevant to the board's Allocation Strategy in Goal 1: *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.*

In addition, this issue connects directly with the board's Resource Strategy in Goal 2: *Confirm the value of efficiency by funding actions that result in economical and timely use of resources for projects, human capital, and monitoring.*



**Attachments:**

## Attachment A:

## Comparison table of key differences between RCO match and leverage

	<b>Match</b>	<b>Leverage</b>
<b>How might it be described/defined?</b>	Non-board funds included in the RCO grant agreement.	All the resources brought to bear as part of completing the larger "project" as defined by the sponsor.
<b>What is considered eligible?</b>	Must be expenses that would otherwise be eligible for RCO reimbursement incurred during the agreement period.	Could potentially encompass a broader suite of things and time, such as stewardship endowments, previous acquisitions to secure the site, mitigation, other partner contributions, etc.
<b>Is it included within the grant agreement?</b>	Yes, the match and the board funding together determine the project size and scope within the agreement.	Only to the extent that the sponsor has elected to report it as match. Everything else would not be included.
<b>At what level is it required?</b>	Unless it is a project type where match is waived by board policy, match is required by each individual project.	There are examples of other funders either requiring or tracking leverage at the program level rather than at the project level.
<b>At what level are costs approved/substantiated?</b>	At the invoice level as part of the reimbursement process.  Incoming match monies are given the same level of fiscal scrutiny, dollar for	Funds not reported as match are not subject to approval and/or substantiation.  Funding programs using leverage might be more likely to substantiate at the level of an

	dollar as outgoing RCO funds.	entire project at any point prior to closing.
<b>How does it relate to reimbursement?</b>	The amount of match sets the "RCO share." Sponsors are reimbursed up to the RCO share for each invoice submitted.	Not related to RCO reimbursement process.
<b>Are there exceptions to the standard reimbursement?</b>	Yes, sponsors may be paid out more than the RCO share for a reimbursement request if they have additional match "banked" in the system or have a match deferral approved by the RCO Deputy Director.	Not related to the RCO reimbursement process.
<b>How is it tracked?</b>	<p>The PRISM database invoicing process provides a record of the amount of match brought at any given time.</p> <p>In addition, starting in August 2021, applicants are asked to provide the actual amounts and types of match as part of the final reporting process.</p>	<p>The board excel budget template allows sponsors to split out funds between those being reported as match and additional funds not reported as match.</p> <p>Since August 2021, board sponsors are given the option to report a lump sum of additional funds not reported as match in PRISM at final reporting.</p> <p>The Salmon Recovery Portal is also being set up for users to report additional funds beyond what was funded by the board but is highly variable in terms of what is provided.</p>

<b>What happens if they cannot find the funds?</b>	They must either re-scope the project or pay back money until they hit their percentage reported in the grant agreement.	Not applicable at RCO.  Would depend on how a funder decides to administer leverage as part of their grant-making process.
<b>Is there a retainer? How much?</b>	Yes, 10 percent of the RCO share is withheld until the project is complete and the matching share is secured in full.	Not applicable at RCO.  Would depend on if and how a funder decides that the leverage requirement needs to be legally enforceable.
<b>Is it subject to long-term compliance obligations?</b>	Yes, by virtue of being in the grant agreement.	No, by virtue of not being in the grant agreement.

## Attachment B.

### In-depth summary of match related decisions at the board

#### **Original 15 Percent Threshold – 2000**

In May 2000, the board elected to establish a standing 15 percent match requirement across all project types. This appears to have been a continuation of a one-time 15 percent requirement for the previous grant round. Different match requirements depending on project or sponsor type and the role of match in lead entity evaluation status were discussed. Ultimately, 15 percent was chosen to help reduce barriers to rural areas and small private landowners engaging in the salmon recovery process.

#### **Puget Sound Acquisition and Recovery - 2007**

With the funding of the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program, there were discussions about not requiring match given the time limitations on the spending of new capital dollars. Some board members expressed that local support is a key aspect of matching funds, and that match requirements would be easy to meet. However, there was support for the notion of no-match design grants.

RCO hired a consultant to do interviews to get more information on match, concluding that for the first PSAR funding round and current grant cycle for board funds, there was match available, but it was taking additional time for the sponsors to acquire match. Rural areas were finding that sources of match were already tapped out. In 2007, the board approved no-match design grants but 15 percent for all other project types in PSAR.

#### **Design-Only Match Waiver – 2008**

In February 2008, the Lead Entity Advisory Group (LEAG) shared several recommendations including allowing design-only projects up to \$200,000 to not require match statewide, which was approved by the board in May 2008. This threshold was increased to \$350,000 by the board in December 2022.

#### **Road Maintenance and Abandonment Plans - 2009**

In 2009, board policy stated that, with some exceptions, forest practices related to road maintenance and abandonment plans (RMAP) are ineligible for funding by the board. In some cases, this policy may conflict directly with RCW 77.85.130(6), which addresses the procedures and criteria for allocation of funds for the board. In August 2009, the board elected to make RMAP projects for larger landowners eligible if they demonstrate elements from RCW 77.85.130(6), and set a 35 percent match requirement for fish passage projects and a 50 percent match requirement for sediment reduction projects.

### **Intensively Monitored Watersheds Match Waiver - 2017**

In March 2014, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) presented the Stillwater Report, which recommended implementing projects in Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMWs). As a result, the board approved providing funding with no required match up to \$2 million per year for three years from return funds to implement projects in the Lower Columbia, Straits, and Hood Canal IMWs. In March 2017, the board made the match waiver permanent for restoration projects in all IWMs, to speed up completion of the IMW treatment phase and move into monitoring.

### **Riparian Buffer Projects – 2021**

Given updates to riparian habitat guidelines and the formation of a state-tribal riparian working group, the board began discussions regarding related policy updates for Manual 18. As part of this process, GSRO led discussions with tribes and other stakeholders to bring a proposal to the board. In September 2021, the board approved a match waiver for riparian planting projects that meet minimum buffer requirements as part of a new Manual 18, Appendix K that lays out riparian buffer width standards. This program was approved as a pilot program for three years.

### **Large Supplemental Projects - 2022**

As part of the 2022 state supplemental budget, the board received an additional \$50 million dollars to be used to implement projects valued at over \$5 million. In June 2022, the board elected not to require matching funds for these projects but asked that total project costs and all funding sources be identified in PRISM.

### **Acquisitions - 2022**

Acquisition projects can sometimes come with substantial upland acres with varying degrees of connection to the desired salmon recovery outcomes of the proposed acquisition. Previously, it was common practice to encourage applicants to bring additional match commensurate with the amount of upland acreage in the application. In December 2022, the board approved a policy that defines upland acreages and sets standards for increased match requirements based on percentage of upland acres.

## Attachment C.

### Anecdotes, project data and opinions relevant to analysis of local support

#### **Anecdotes relevant to local support**

- In-kind and donated match can cost the project more because it is harder to secure and is less efficient to track relative to the scale of the funds.
- There is variation in availability of match-eligible public funding across regions. This means that certain areas will by necessity be more reliant on in-kind or sponsor cash match to meet the required 15 percent threshold.
- Meeting 15 percent match through cash contributions from sponsors is avoided, particularly difficult for organizations that do not have the authority to levy outside rates, charges, fees, or taxes for that purpose, and becomes more difficult the costlier the project.
- Many of the ways landowners are typically engaged in supporting a project are not match-eligible activities (providing access and permission, discussing restoration plans, supporting maintenance after closing, etc.).
- If private landowners are not able to provide monetary match, the sponsor may agree to find match for them through public funding so a project can move forward.
- It is very rare for a private landowner of any size or scale to apply for a grant directly given the multiple barriers of income tax, registering to receive payment from the state, match requirements, and general administration. Staff try to have landowners steer clear of being project sponsors because of these challenges.

#### **Project data relevant to local support**

- In-kind contributions and donated labor only accounted for 14 percent of match reported, while monetary funding accounted for the remaining 86 percent. See Figure 1 for more information.
- Of projects reporting monetary funding as match to the board, landowner funds were the least frequently reported source (3 percent of projects), while federal funding was the most frequently reported source (26 percent of projects). See Figure 2 for more information.

## **Stakeholder perspectives relevant to local support**

- The local technical review and ranking process associated with the 'Washington Way' already serves the role of assessing local support and priorities.
- Sponsor organizations have a board or other oversight body composed of local stakeholders that adequately serves to demonstrate or assess local support.
- Just getting permission and collaboration of landowners involves lots of work and is often the extent of what you can get; that is a truer measure of buy-in.
- The internal resources, risk and liability associated with taking on multiple grant sources to accomplish a restoration project involves plenty of buy-in on its own.
- Any project of significance will need multiple partners, which has no relationship with match requirements.
- Back in 2000, it may have made sense to try and get the landowner or sponsor to provide resources since other sources were not available. The entire funding system and sponsor approach to projects has significantly changed, so the board should respond to that.
- The technical review process is not a good proxy for true local support; requiring matching funds can bring needed additional perspectives, as well as checks and balances, to the project development process.

## Attachment D.

### Anecdotes, project data and opinions relevant to analysis of return on investment

#### **Anecdotes relevant to return on investment**

- Sponsor match has previously been used to help RCO leverage federal funding opportunities and is voluntarily shared as “other” funds outside of match as part of our Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) reporting.
- Match plays different roles across a handful of lead entities in their list making: some give it points in the ranking criteria, some look favorably upon leverage, some consider it as part of cost/benefit or readiness to proceed considerations.
- The effort required to track and manage match is not linear with the amount reported; that is, the organizational capacity required to manage the matching aspects of a grant with 15 percent required is not substantially different than a grant with 50 percent match.

#### **Project data relevant to return on investment**

- The Washington Coastal Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRI) does not require match but does provide up to 5 out of 100 points for bringing match. On average, the 47 completed WCRRI projects have brought 16 percent match to date.
- The board waived the match requirement for large projects (over \$5 million) funded through the 2022 supplemental budget. Overall, the 12 sponsor’s application budgets show 25 percent match.
- From 2013 through 2023, between 75 to 93 percent of restoration projects requested less than \$350,000 from the board. See Figure 3 for more information.
- Of 15 restoration projects reporting all funding in a final report since August 2021, board funding made up less than 25 percent of the total amount. See Figure 4 for more information.

#### **Stakeholder perspectives relevant to return on investment**



- If funds are used as match for other related recovery grants, then the funds are not stretching further. It is simply an accounting exercise for the sponsor.
- The timing of match can feel counterintuitive, as match funds that are not yet guaranteed are expected to be reported in the grant application.
- Match was intended to create collaboration, but it also creates repeated competition from partners seeking similar funds to meet matching requirements.
- On larger-cost projects, the board is often a secondary funder to other entities with differing requirements. Smaller funding amounts should not be an impediment in the process. It is ineffective.
- The board allocation process means other funds are going to be needed to make a project whole whether match is required or not.
- Match requirements do not solely relate to bringing in additional money; the project realities relative to grant maximums determine how much is leveraged beyond the board amount.
- The burden of tracking and reporting board match wastes significant public money that could go towards recovery projects. In addition, it costs the sponsor more time that could go towards other salmon recovery opportunities. These cost burdens have not been adequately measured or considered.
- The idea of return on investment is a funder-focused way to look at success. The board and sponsors should be focused more on what the funding is able to support in terms of recovery outcomes in combination with other resources.
- The match threshold is low compared to other programs. Any project with substantive salmon recovery impacts should not have trouble finding 15 percent.
- The requirement to find match can help get municipal entities to allocate dollars, redirecting funding towards salmon recovery that would otherwise have gone to unrelated infrastructure projects.
- If match was not required, applicants might start asking for more from the board and inflate their budgets because there would be less incentive to reduce costs.

## Attachment E.

### Anecdotes, project data, and opinions relevant to analysis of program effectiveness

#### **Anecdotes relevant to demonstrating effectiveness**

- There are disincentives to reporting match above what is required.
- The ratio between federal funds and state funds seems to be the greatest interest of funders and state tracking agencies, like the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

#### **Project data relevant to demonstrating effectiveness**

- Less than one-third of board projects showing match reported over 25 percent. For more information, see Figure 5.
- The board waived the match requirement for large projects (over \$5 million) funded through the 2022 supplemental budget. The ratio of funds not reported as match (\$107.8 million) to those reported as match (\$17.3 million) was over 6:1. See Figure 6 and Figure 7 for more information.
- Of the projects reporting additional funds as part of their final PRISM report, the average amount of additional funds was over eight times the amount of funding going towards match. See Figure 4 in Attachment A for more information.

#### **Stakeholder perspectives relevant to demonstrating effectiveness**

- Other funding sources are getting rid of match and new federal money is often looking more at leverage; sponsors will go to those first as a result and the board risks becoming ineffective or obsolete in areas where no-match funding is available.
- Match requirements create a situation where non-board money gets an outsized role in determining what becomes a viable project, thus reducing local autonomy. The board program is less effective and responsive when it is essentially held hostage by a small minority of third-party funding.
- Match has contributed to an environment where grant/project management capacity is now a key rate-limiting step in completing salmon recovery projects at scale.

- Tracking and reporting funding is difficult; if the incentive to report information from the administrative requirements is disconnected, it is a win-win.
- Legislators are more interested in jobs and multiple benefits than matching funds. Decision-maker support does not represent a solid rationale for maintaining match requirements.

## Attachment F.

### Match Impact Case Studies

#### **Case Study: Project Development**

Researchers began collecting baseline data on Lower Columbia Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) Abernathy Creek in the early 2000s. In 2009, the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) completed a treatment plan and suite of restoration designs to push prospective project sponsors to take up restoration projects in the basin. Sponsors were able to find one-off sources of match for only three projects. The first was from a nonprofit that switched priority watersheds the following year, making it unavailable for future projects. The second project used banked mitigation funds and donated logs from a distant private landowner to cover the match requirement. These mitigation funds would normally have been ineligible to serve as match except they had been transferred to LCFRB, and securing the donated wood cost the board more in reimbursable expenses than the wood was worth. The third ended up securing full funding from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, but the sponsor was strongly encouraged not to apply again in the basin due to a lack of fit with funding priorities.

Apart from this, prospective sponsors did not have ready access to match for implementing the rest of the prescribed projects in support of the board IMW treatment priorities. The primary landowner, Washington Department of Natural Resources, is prohibited from donating valuable material, no prospective applicants had independent funding to complete the work, and other donations of labor and materials would not amount to the 15 percent minimum match given the scope of outstanding projects. In 2014, given a lack of progress on treatment and feedback from stakeholders, the board set aside an allocation with no match required for implementing restoration work in three IMWs, including the Lower Columbia. In 2017, the board subsequently waived match requirements for restoration in all IMWs. Restoration projects in Abernathy Creek quickly ramped up in response, with one or more large projects being constructed annually between 2016 and 2020, efficiently completing the restoration work required for the monitoring study design.

#### **Case Study: Project Scoping**

A sponsor intended to perform the construction phase of their project in 2019 with match funding in-hand from the local Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group (RFE) as part of a signed board grant agreement. The project was delayed for two years due to severe flooding that necessitated a partial re-design of the project.

The funding from the RFEG had a clear expiration date, so it needed to be spent elsewhere prior to construction. This left the sponsor in the position of being contractually obliged to provide match on relatively short notice, but with no clear source of funding other than operating funds. Given the size and capacity of the organization, the need to use sponsor cash match directly contributed to a significant reduction in scope during re-design relative to the original project.

### **Case Study: Project Implementation**

A project sponsor developed a restoration project proposal relying on third-party donated logs to fulfill the board match requirement. During construction, the logs delivered by the third party and used in the project did not meet the expected appraised value in the project budget and did not meet the 15 percent match requirement. The sponsor was therefore partially reimbursed for its construction expenses, which posed an unacceptable burden to the organization.

To meet the match requirements and recoup the unreimbursed restoration costs, the sponsor requested two consecutive extensions to the project, modified the scope and scale to add an additional phase, and secured an additional federal grant to cover the second phase at a higher match percentage to cover the shortfall. Despite successful completion, the administrative workload for the sponsor was high, added years to the timeline, RCO funds were spent inefficiently, and the project was substantially different than the project initially reviewed and ranked.

## Attachment G.

### Examples of different match approaches from other funders

#### **If match is required at all.**

- The Department of Ecology (DOE) removed match requirements in the spring of 2022 for non-point projects within its Water Quality Combined Funding Program.
- Except PCSRF, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) eliminated match requirements for all its grants funded through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). However, leverage is highly encouraged and is reviewed as part of the ranking process.
- The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) removed its match requirements within the National Estuaries Program (NEP) in 2022 given language within the BIL implementation letter.
- Pending internal approval, Floodplains by Design (FbD) is pursuing getting rid of Recipient match for the 2025-2027 biennium and beyond.

#### **How match is administered for funded projects.**

- Even though Recipient match will still be required for the 2023-2025 FbD funding cycle, the Department of Ecology (DOE) will ensure that the new grant agreements are set up so that match is tracked at the project level, instead of the task level. They are hoping this approach will lessen the administrative burden at both the Recipients' and DOE's ends.

#### **What eligible costs can count as match.**

- The California Department of Conservation allows up to 50 percent of an easement monitoring endowment to be applied toward the matching requirement in its Farmland Conservancy Program.
- The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) allows stewardship funding, as well as costs related to securing and maintaining the conservation values associated with the property, to be used as match in its Land Acquisition Grant Program.

- The FbD Program at DOE offers the opportunity for jurisdictions to meet their match requirement by including the value of certain past acquisitions directly related to the current project.

**Whether match requirements are required by project or by program.**

- Through 2021, the Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership asked applicants to show match but did not require a specific amount. Instead, there was a list-level threshold for match that needed to be met across all projects within a fiscal year.

**Where match is required geographically.**

- The Youth Athletic Field (YAF) and certain Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) accounts at RCO allow entities to reduce their match if they meet certain geographic need-based match reduction criteria.
- The FbD Program waives matching requirements for jurisdictions that qualify as economically distressed based on median household income relative to the state median.

**What entities need to bring match.**

- PCSRF and the recent America the Beautiful funding opportunity both waive their matching requirements for tribal entities.
- The National Estuary Program (NEP) allows organizations to request a full or partial match waiver as part of its Coastal Watersheds Grant Program, to reduce barriers to application and project implementation.

## Tables and Figures

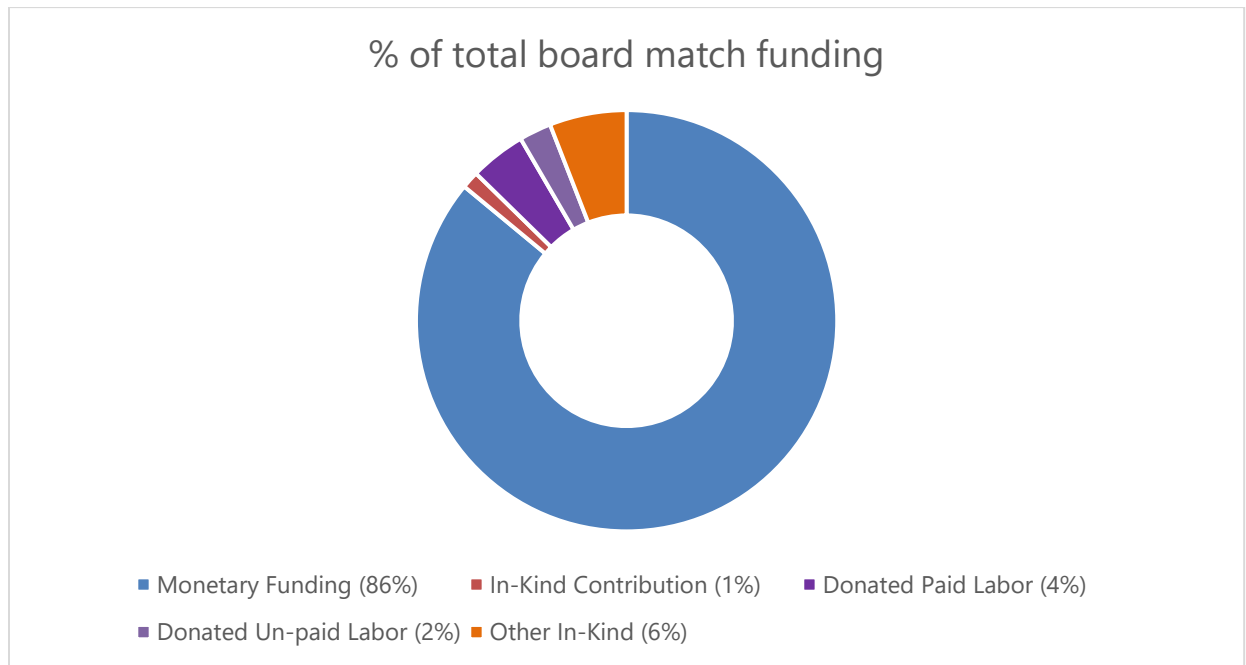


Figure 1. Percentage of total reported match funds to board by match type from all project types that closed between 1999 to 2022 (n=1,770 projects). Monetary funding could include other grants, municipal funding allocations, private donations, landowner cash match, sponsor payroll, etc.

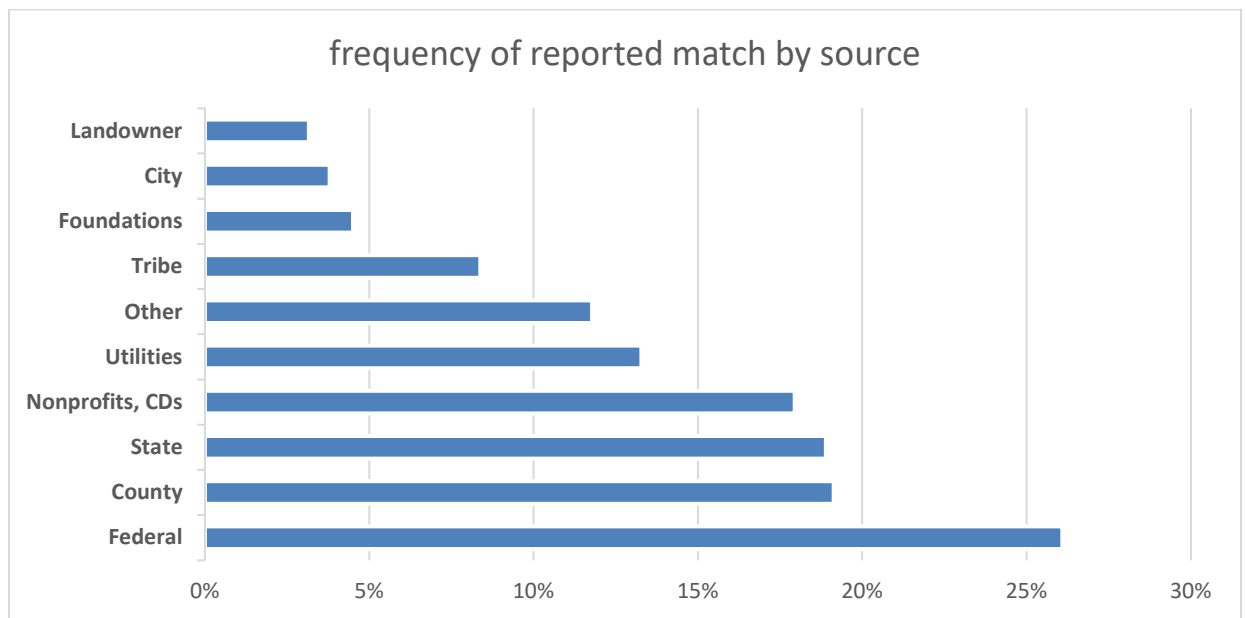




Figure 2. Frequency of different sources of match funding across all project types reporting matching funds that have been completed from 1999 to date (n=1,265 projects). Where it was clear that funds were passed through, the original source of the funds was considered the match source.

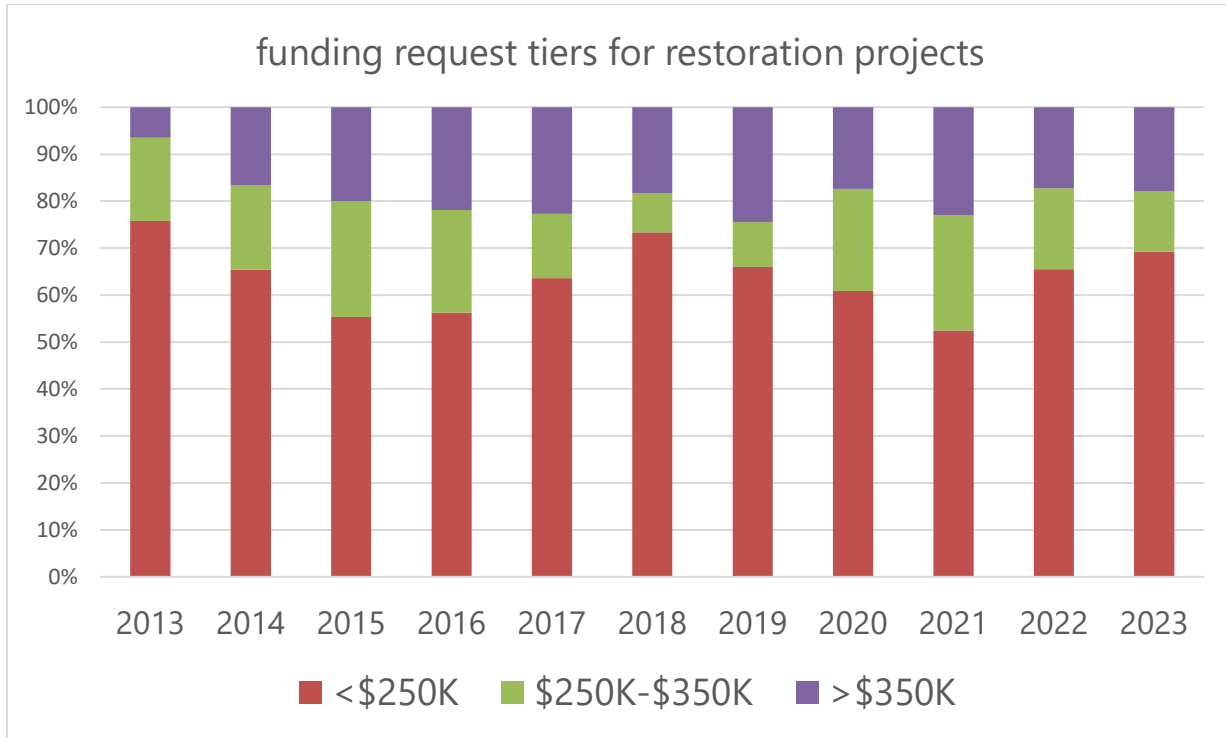


Figure 3. Percentage of restoration project applications falling into different funding tiers between 2013 and 2023 (n=693 total projects).

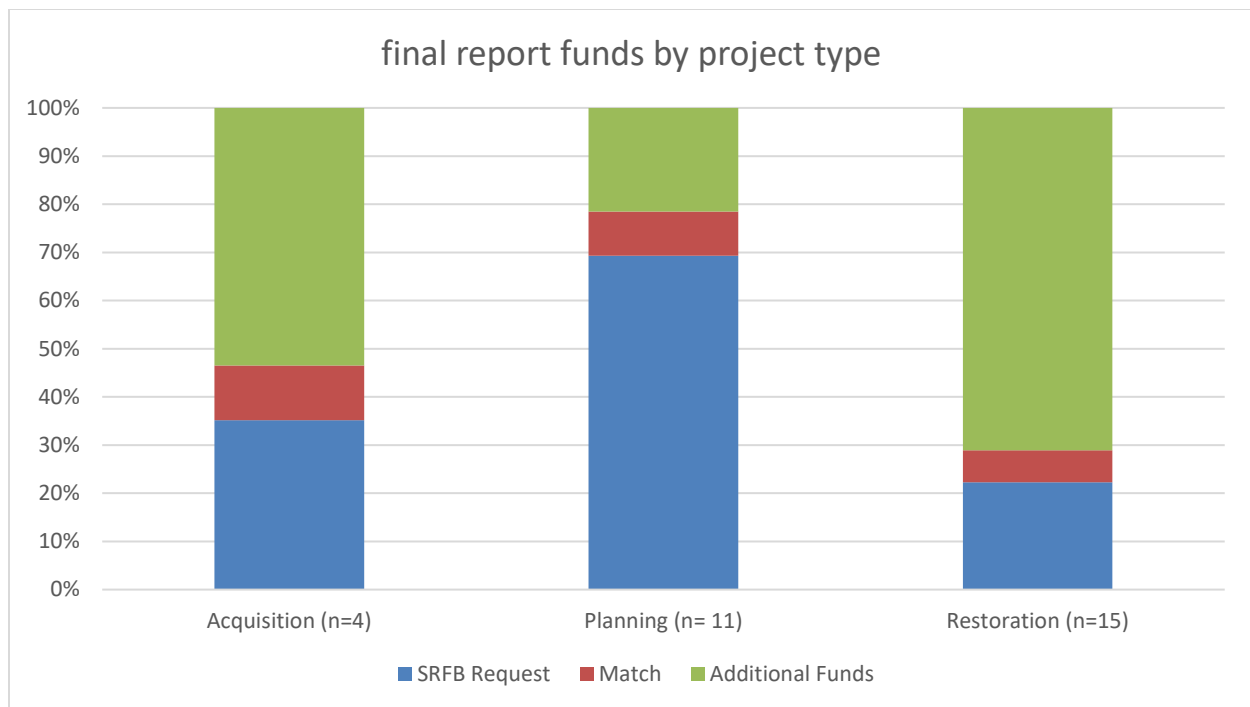


Figure 4. In August of 2021, PRISM added a question in the final report where sponsors could indicate how much additional funding was leveraged that was not reported as match. The figure above shows the amount of board award, match, and additional funds reported by different project types.

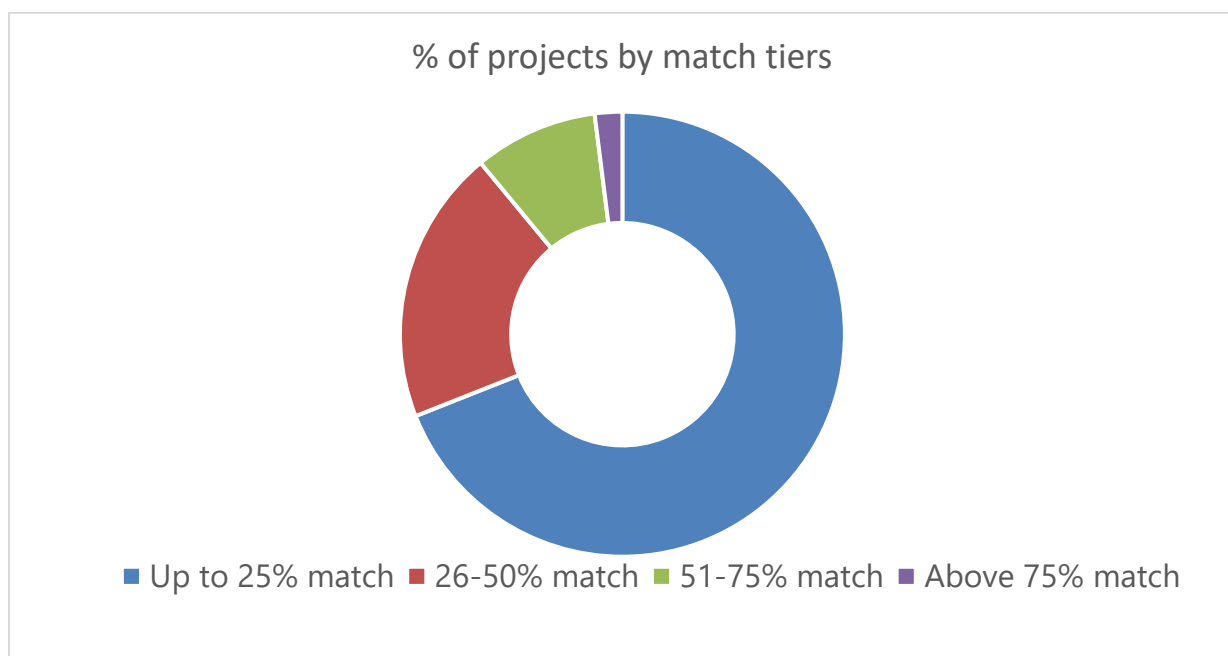


Figure 5. Across all project types, percentage of board projects reporting some match up to 25% match, between 26-50% match, between 51-75% match, or above 75% match (n=1,769 projects).

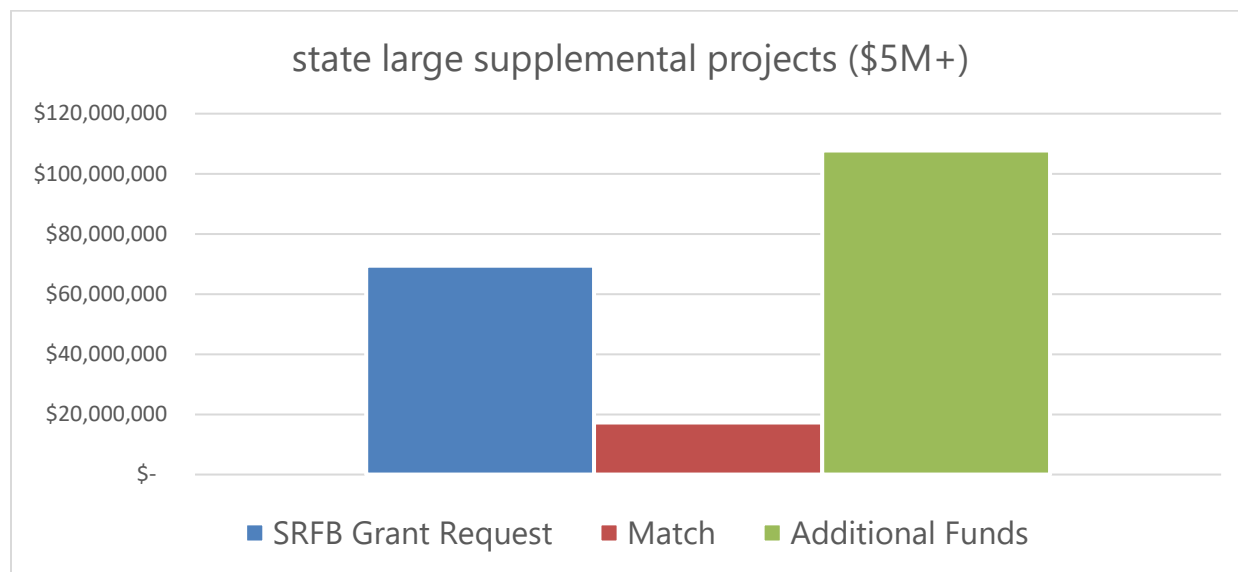


Figure 6. Total board grant request, reported match, and additional funds not reported as match across 2022 large project applications (\$5M+). Note that 3 applications did not report additional funds, though it is possible additional funds exist (n=12 projects).

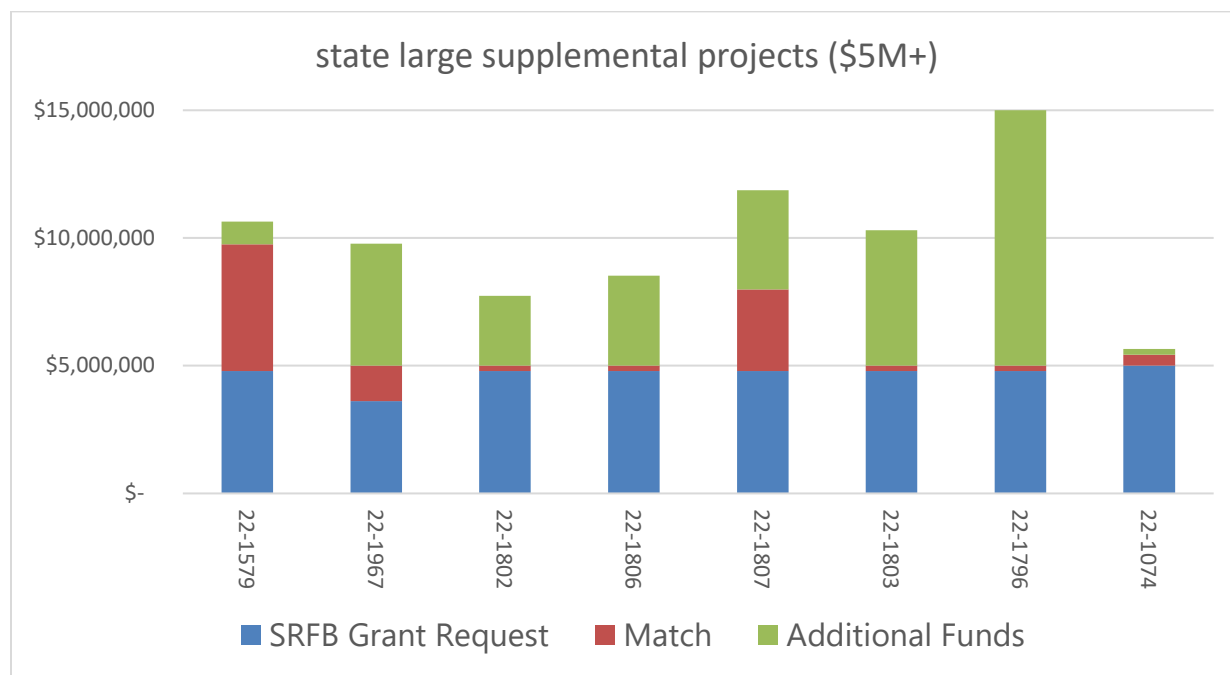


Figure 7. Amount of different types of reported dollars on 2022 large project applications (\$5M+) that reported both match and additional leverage funds (n=8)

projects). Note that match was waived for these large supplemental projects, but sponsors were required to have a grant agreement of greater than \$5M. Because certain regions were given slightly less than \$5M to allocate to projects, it necessitated applicants bringing a small amount of match.

## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023  
**Title:** Monitoring Update  
**Prepared By:** Keith Dublanica, GSRO Science Coordinator

#### Summary

Following is an update on several monitoring activities and products that have been in progress for the last year. This memo includes summarized findings from the Intensively Monitored Watershed synthesis effort, results from the floodplain remote sensing “proof-of-concept” pilot, and a summary of the adaptive management process and strategy.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a: ☒ Briefing  
☐ Request for Direction  
☐ Request for Decision

### Background

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) monitoring subcommittee has met over the past 18 months to evaluate the board’s monitoring program to inform funding decisions in 2023 and beyond. The subcommittee was established in summer of 2021 to identify opportunities and possible options for the board’s monitoring program. The subcommittee includes representatives from the board, Council of Regions (COR), Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC), monitoring panel, GSRO and RCO staff.

The subcommittee has focused its efforts on the following topics: summaries and synthesizing of the IMW findings, floodplain remote sensing technology “pilot/proof-of-concept,” and development of an adaptive management strategy. At the March board meeting, these monitoring initiatives will be presented respectively by Dr. Bob Bilby, Dr. Phil Roni, and Dr. Pete Bisson, who will each lead a specific monitoring presentation and discussion.

### Intensively Monitored Watersheds Program Collaborative Synthesis

The Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) program was first funded in 2004 across four complexes: Lower Columbia, Hood Canal, Strait of Juan de Fuca, and Skagit River Estuary. The purpose of these programs is to develop a better understanding of the effectiveness of current restoration practices by measuring fish response to the application of restoration actions across the study watersheds.

In 2022, a Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Project (PNAMP) sponsored effort examined the management implications of IMW results from across the Pacific Northwest region, which were summarized in a final report. This report provided a set of preliminary management recommendations and raised new questions. A summary of the report was presented to the board in June 2022. Following the completion of the PNAMP report and findings, the board approved a more in-depth Washington IMW synthesis analysis with Dr. Bob Bilby as lead author. This work will expand and refine the findings from the PNAMP report.

A synthesis of the IMW work at the four original IMW complexes in western Washington, plus the Asotin IMW complex in the Snake salmon recovery region commenced in late 2022 by a team consisting of the principal investigators (PIs) of the IMWs, the IMW oversight panel, and the monitoring panel.

Dr. Bilby will provide a summary update including initial results from each of the Washington IMWs. The summary will use data collected across multiple IMWs, focusing on three key questions identified in the PNAMP report:

- To what extent are fish responses to habitat restoration being impacted by insufficient spawner escapement?
- How can we increase the effectiveness of wood-placement projects?
- What are the key factors to consider in designing estuary restoration projects?

### **Floodplain Remote Sensing “pilot / proof-of-concept”**

Dr. Phil Roni of Cramer Fish Sciences will provide a comprehensive summary of the floodplain remote sensing pilot that included two sites each in eastern and western Washington. Dr. Roni will present his findings, which have been shared with the monitoring panel and the SRFB monitoring subcommittee.

Cramer Fish Sciences has completed a draft report summarizing the results of the pilot study. The results of the pilot study demonstrate that:

- most monitoring metrics for changes in floodplain, in-channel, and riparian habitat and conditions can be efficiently and accurately measured with LiDAR;
- other remotely sensed data is also effective at measuring these metrics; and,
- project effectiveness can also be measured with these methods.

Some limited field data collection is needed for validation of a small number of metrics and under specific site conditions. There are also recommendations for minor modifications to methodologies outlined in the original floodplain and riparian remote sensing study plan. The monitoring panel will use the final results from this project to develop their recommendations to the board at the June meeting.

### **Adaptive Management Process**

During the March 8 presentation, staff will provide an overview of the current progress and content from the draft monitoring and adaptive management strategy. Dr. Pete Bisson, co-chair of the monitoring panel, will summarize the adaptive management process and share comments, feedback, and insights from the board monitoring subcommittee and the Council of Regions.

The adaptive management working group (a subset of the monitoring subcommittee) has developed:

- a rationale for improving the adaptive management strategy,
- a conceptual framework for restoration that includes two important types of monitoring, and,
- a comparison of the products of effectiveness monitoring, intensively monitored watersheds, and regional monitoring projects, which comprise the board monitoring portfolio.

Upcoming work will include identifying specific actions that can improve connection and lessons learned from these three programs and developing draft recommendations to present to the board at its June meeting.

### **Strategic Plan Reference**

**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.

- **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 statewide monitoring efforts, and use monitoring results to adaptively manage board funding policies.

[https://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/strategy/SRFB\\_Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](https://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/strategy/SRFB_Strategic_Plan.pdf)





## Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

### APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

**Meeting Date:** March 8, 2023

**Title:** 2022 State of Salmon in Watersheds Report

**Prepared By:** Eli Asher, GSRO Policy Specialist

#### Summary

GSRO will provide an overview of the 2022 State of Salmon in Watersheds biennial report.

#### Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

### Introduction/Background

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) released the 2022 edition of the State of Salmon in Watersheds executive summary and [website](#) in January 2023. GSRO is mandated by statute (RCW 77.85.020) to produce this biennial report for the Legislature describing progress on salmon recovery efforts. The 2022 report follows the same format and general appearance of the 2020 report, with updated information and more robust scientific literature support.

The State of Salmon report provides an overview of salmon recovery efforts and progress statewide. As in past reports, the 2022 version of State of Salmon website displays data, story maps, and key messages from our partners in salmon recovery. The State of Salmon website includes a data hub that links to authoritative salmon and habitat datasets to help make data gathering more efficient and messaging more consistent among salmon-related reports. The hub and [data.wa.gov](#) make our data transparent and accessible to the public.

The executive summary is available for download from the [website](#) and a limited number of bound, printed copies have been produced for distribution. GSRO encourages the board and recovery partners to review this document; copies have been mailed and emailed to board members. The online version of the report includes

interactive multi-media salmon stories that present a range of accomplishments and challenges in salmon recovery from around the state.

The Department of Ecology (Ecology), the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), RCO, and others produced data for several State of Salmon indicators. Much of the data is published to <https://data.wa.gov/> and ArcGIS online. These are the state's web-based tools for mapping, charting, and tracking live data that feeds into the State of Salmon Web site. GSRO also worked with Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) staff to align outward-facing messages.

Development of this report was not possible without the cooperation, review, data, and content from many individuals and organizations across the state. Especially significant to this report were the contributions from previous GSRO staff and contractors, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, WDFW, Ecology, and regional salmon recovery organizations.

### **Strategic Plan Connection**

The biennial State of Salmon in Watersheds report supports Strategic Plan Goal #2 by promoting public oversight and reporting on statewide restoration and monitoring efforts. The report also supports Goal #3 by building understanding, acceptance, and support of salmon recovery efforts statewide by providing a consolidated source of information for legislators and members of the public and encouraging collaboration between state and federal agencies, tribal organizations, and regional recovery organizations.

<https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/SRFB-StrategicPlan.pdf>

**Executive Committee**

Anna Geffre  
North Pacific Coast Lead Entity

Michael Horner  
Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery  
Board Lead Entity

Mike Lithgow, Chair  
Kalispell-Pend Oreille Lead Entity

Aundrea McBride, Vice Chair  
Skagit Watershed Council

Alicia Olivas  
Hood Canal Lead Entity

Denise Smee  
Lower Columbia Lead Entity

Suzanna Smith  
WRIA 9 Green/Duwamish and Central  
Puget Sound Watershed

Lisa Spurrier  
Puyallup and Chambers Watersheds  
Salmon Recovery Lead Entity

**Members**

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Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

Amy Hatch-Winecka  
Deschutes WRIA 13 Salmon Recovery  
Lead Entity

Ashley Von Essen  
Nisqually Lead Entity

Becky Peterson  
WRIA 1 Salmon Recovery Board

Bill Armstrong  
Quinault Indian Nation Lead Entity

Carrie Byron  
Lake Washington, Cedar, Sammamish  
Watershed (WRIA 8) Lead Entity

Cheryl Baumann  
N. Olympic Lead Entity for Salmon

Clea Barenburg  
Island County Lead Entity WRIA 6

Dani Driscoll  
Co-Lead for Stillaguamish Watershed  
Lead Entity

Dave Hecker  
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery  
Board Lead Entity

Gretchen Glaub  
Snohomish Lead Entity

Jacob Murray  
WRIA 14 Lead Entity

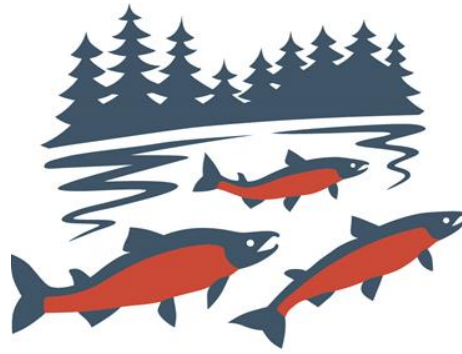
Kirsten Harma  
Chehalis Basin Lead Entity

Renee Johnson  
West Sound Watershed Council

Tom Kollasch  
Pacific County Lead Entity

Whitney Reynier  
Klickitat County Lead Entity

Sam Whitridge  
San Juan Lead Entity



WASHINGTON  
**SALMON**  
**COALITION**  
Community-Based Salmon Recovery

February 17, 2023

Chair Duffy & Salmon Recovery Board Members

RE: Washington Salmon Coalition "Partner Updates"

The first quarter of 2023 has been busy as our lead Entities are deep in the throes of the current grant round. Coordination amongst the GSRO, RCO, COR, RFEGs and WSC has been going well and we are thankful for all of our salmon recovery partners. In summary, we would like to update the Salmon Recovery Funding Board on the following items:

- Lead entities are very appreciative of the efforts by staff to get an increase to the capacity allocation for Lead Entities included in this year's budget.
- We really appreciate the amount of work and thoughtful approach that Nick Norton has taken on targeted investment and project match policy development.

Sincerely,

Mike Lithgow, Chair of the Washington Salmon Coalition

## **Lead Entity Work Throughout Washington**

### **Chehalis Basin Lead Entity**

-Submitted by Kirsten Harma, Watershed Coordinator

Chehalis Basin Partnership & Chehalis Basin Lead Entity for Salmon Recovery

In the Chehalis Basin, the Lead Entity program has been catalyzing successful collaborations between the many parties and funding programs working on salmon recovery in the Chehalis Basin. In October of 2022 we co-hosted a legislative tour for federal, state and county elected officials to share stories about the many programs working together in the Chehalis Basin, and the successful habitat projects that result.

Our October 7<sup>th</sup> tour brought State Representative Joel McEntire, Federal staffer to Jamie Herrera Beutler Colin Swanson, and Lewis County Commissioner Lindsey Pollock to see completed restoration projects in the Stillman Creek basin, Lewis County. The tour was co-hosted by the Coast Salmon Partnership, Chehalis Basin Lead Entity, and Chehalis Strategy's Aquatic Species Restoration Plan, and highlighted a fish passage improvement project and 2-mile reach-scale restoration project, both on private land.

These projects collectively relied on local collaborations and funding brought through Salmon Recovery Funding Board, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Aquatic Species Restoration Plan. We have learned that as more money comes to our basin it is all the more important to collaborate to meet shared goals.



*Photo by Christa Bale, Coast Salmon Partnership*



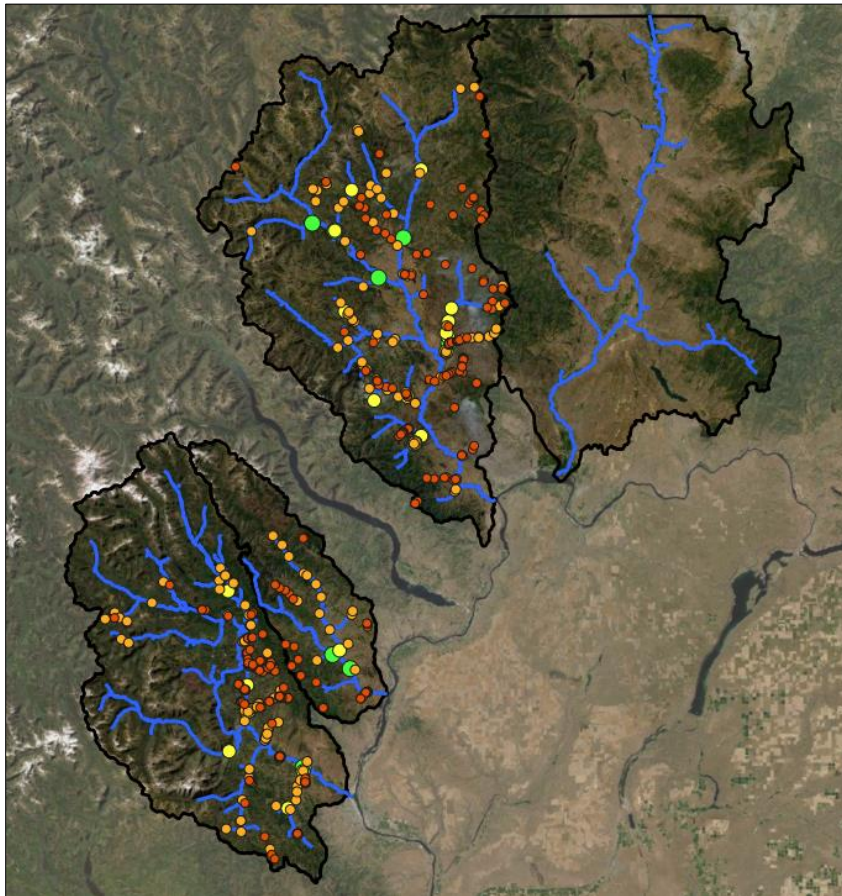
## Upper Columbia Lead Entity: Fish Passage Prioritization

- Submitted by Dave Hecker, Lead Entity Coordinator  
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

As we see an increased focus on addressing fish passage barriers, the Upper Columbia (UC) region has developed a tool to help regional sponsors decide which barriers to prioritize first.

The Upper Columbia Region used a collaborative approach to 1) conduct a thorough field-based assessment of barriers in all fish-bearing streams and 2) develop a tool to rank fish passage projects based on their relative biological priority for funding and implementation. Through partnerships with local organizations, the UC Lead Entity created a GIS-based decision support tool that summarized the potential gain from removing an individual barrier based on factors including the quantity of habitat made available, the quality of that habitat, distance to nearby populations, and the number of downstream barriers. The barrier prioritization tool provides decision-makers with an easy comparison between barriers: those with greater habitat quality and quantity and greater connectivity receive a higher priority ranking.

Tracy Bowerman, the Upper Columbia lead entity Science Manager, will be presenting the barrier prioritization tool during the Salmon Recovery Conference on April 19<sup>th</sup>. Stop by to learn more about efforts to address fish passage in the Upper Columbia region!



*Image 1: Displayed are all barriers to be addressed in the Upper Columbia region's Wenatchee, Entiat and Methow subbasins (Okanogan subbasin data excluded).*

## **Puyallup/ White/ Chambers/Clover Lead Entity**

- Submitted by Lisa Spurrier, Lead Entity Coordinator

Puyallup/White/ and Chambers/Clover Watersheds Lead Entity

The Puyallup/White and Chambers/Clover Watersheds Lead Entity is updating their Salmon Habitat Protection and Restoration Strategy to reflect the recent update to their Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment model, recommendations from the Salish Sea Marine Survival Study and more, which will help ensure they are doing the most impactful projects for salmon. The Lead Entity is also working on a Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan and looking for ways to manage fish data from screw traps as well as telemetry studies, which will help continually improve their Strategy.

Sponsors are  
teeing up several  
large-scale  
restoration  
projects in the  
Puyallup Estuary  
on Clear Creek, as  
well as on South  
Prairie Creek, the  
White River and in  
Chambers Bay and  
seeking Federal  
funding for  
implementation  
support. The

[White River Left  
Bank River Mile 2.5](#)



- [4.2 Restoration Project](#), which received almost \$15 M from PSAR, will begin the first phase of construction this summer, in partnership with BNSF. The project will restore 169 acres of floodplain, riparian, instream, and wetland habitat. Restoring a functional floodplain corridor will include lowering the floodplain to substantially increase the frequency and duration of overbank flow inundation and allow for the creation of new channels. Engineered log jams and complex woody revetments will support formation of in-stream habitat and production of prey resources and provide bank stability during large flood events. In-stream structures will support diverse and complex in-stream habitat overtime to support spawning, migration, and rearing.

The 2023 Grant Round is underway in this Lead Entity; their technical advisory group has screened projects to make sure they are a good fit to the Strategy and given sponsors the green light to apply, and they also have grant round guidelines in place for a minimum score allowable in order for projects to be placed on their ranked list of projects to submit to the SRFB. They have created a [fish barrier video](#) to help educate the public and recently a [podcast](#) all about salmon recovery in the watersheds was created by our Citizen Advisory Committee Vice Chair. You can find all of this on the [website](#) and the [Puyallup Watershed Salmon Homecoming Facebook page](#).



**Please return your payment to  
reserve your space by Feb 3.**

Names of attendees:

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Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$25= \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Email: [sfeg@skagitfisheries.org](mailto:sfeg@skagitfisheries.org)



**SKAGIT FISHERIES  
ENHANCEMENT  
GROUP**

PO Box 2497

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WA STATE  
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE



S R F Board  
PO Box 40917  
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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**Help us celebrate salmon habitat restoration in the Skagit!  
Salmon Dinner, Volunteer Awards, Board Elections**

Thursday, February 9th, 2023 | 6:00 -8:00 pm

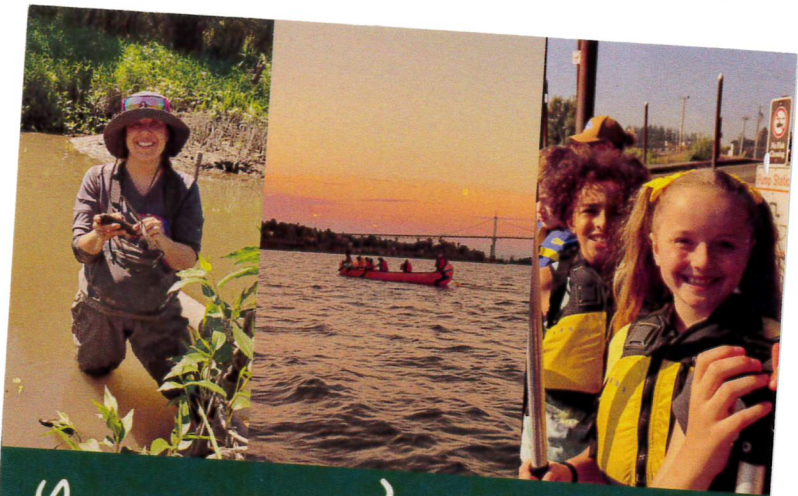
Sedro-Woolley Community Center | 703 Pacific Street, Sedro-Woolley

**DIRECTIONS:** From I-5 take Exit 232 to Sedro-Woolley. At Hwy 20 intersection, proceed straight through light to Ferry Street. Go 0.6 miles, turn right on Central Ave, first left to Pacific Street.

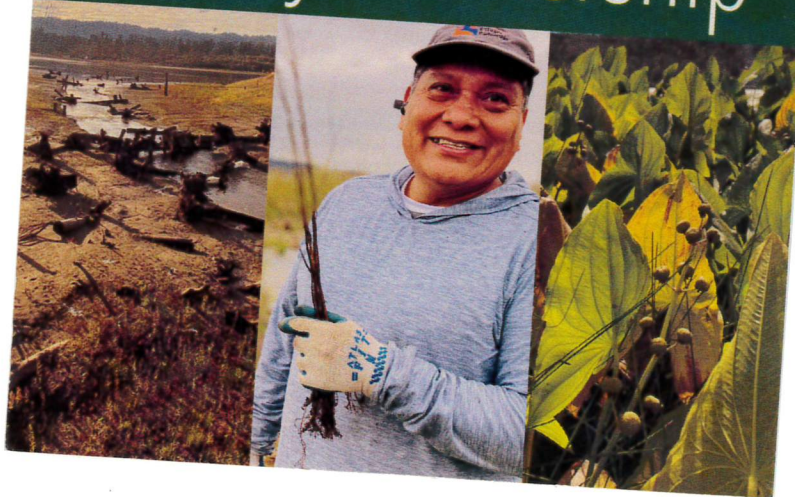
PLEASE RETURN YOUR PAYMENT AND THIS CARD TO RESERVE YOUR SPACE.







New Year's Wishes  
from the  
Estuary Partnership





Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership  
400 NE 11th Avenue  
Portland, OR 97232

*Wishing you a happy winter season!*

We are grateful for your partnership in 2022. Thank you for all the ways you support our mission, to protect and restore the lower Columbia River and estuary, for current and future generations of fish, wildlife, and people.

*Your gift this season buoys  
our efforts to restore  
the river and inspire the  
next generation of river  
stewards.  
Donate today at  
[estuarypartnership.org](http://estuarypartnership.org)  
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JEFF BRECKEL

PO BOX 40917

OLYMPIA WA 98504-0917

Photos (left to right top): Senior Scientist Sarah Kidd at Franz Lake; Big Canoe at sunset; students ready to board the Big Canoes at Scappoose Bay; (left to right bottom): Gibbons Creek at Steigerwald; Field Technician Alvey Seeyouma holds bareroot spirea; wapato grows at Steigerwald.





# 2022 ANNUAL REPORT

*Restoring Salmon for Future Generations*



# CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS

It was another exciting year for watershed restoration and salmon recovery in the Skagit Valley thanks to our members, partners, and volunteers. Skagit Fisheries accomplished much due to the generosity and investment our community chooses to make in having healthy watersheds for salmon and people. This year working with private landowners, salmon and trout access was restored to over 12 miles of valuable habitat. By removing and replacing culverts that block salmon migration in streams, salmon now are able to utilize 12 miles of spawning and rearing habitat that was not accessible to them. Volunteers (and sometimes even the landowners as volunteers themselves) are documenting salmon use above these newly removed structures and ensuring the habitat is utilized. Skagit Fisheries was also very busy this year working with County and Tribal partners to identify, survey, and prioritize future fish passage correction projects throughout our watersheds.

Planting native trees along rivers, streams, and wetlands remains a high priority for salmon recovery. This year Skagit Fisheries worked with many partners to plant over 21,500 native trees on 43 acres with willing landowners along waterways. To accomplish this restoration it takes the collective effort of volunteers, students, AmeriCorps, Washington Conservation Corps, public landowners, private landowners, and many partners. We are thrilled to have such a diverse group of stakeholders invested in helping to make the Skagit Valley a healthy place for all of us.

In addition to work led by Skagit Fisheries, we also assisted and supported a number of other amazing restoration projects being led by partners in our watershed. We were thrilled to be part of the significant Chinook restoration efforts taking place with Dike District 3 along the South Fork of the Skagit River. As well as assisting Skagit County to restore salmon access in Ovenell Slough at Cedar Grove.

All of us working collectively together and sharing expertise with one other is what makes doing habitat restoration in the Skagit Valley a success. This conservation work would not be possible without the tremendous partnerships on all levels from landowners, to funders, to agencies, tribes, volunteers, nonprofits and businesses. Partnerships are really what makes habitat restoration possible in the Skagit Valley.

Thank you each for being a partner in this work.

Gratefully,

  
**ALISON STUDLEY**  
Executive Director



Our mission is to educate and engage the community in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship to enhance salmon.

Skagit Fisheries  
PO Box 2497  
1202 South 2nd Street, Suite C  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
Phone: 360-336-0172  
[www.skagitfisheries.org](http://www.skagitfisheries.org)

Skagit Fisheries is an independent nonprofit 501 c(3) organization. All donations are tax deductible to the extent that the law allows.  
Tax ID# 94-3165939



# ACCOMPLISHMENTS

RIPARIAN PLANTINGS | **21,587 NATIVE PLANTS**  
*Over 43 acres of streams and shorelines revegetated with native plants*

HABITAT OPENED | **12 MILES** of habitat reconnected  
*by removing fish passage barriers*

COMMUNITY OUTREACH | **1,167 INDIVIDUALS** reached through community engagement programs

VOLUNTEER INVOLVEMENT | **9,052 HOURS** donated by community volunteers

KIDS EDUCATED | **818 STUDENTS** engaged in environmental science education programs

KNOTWEED SURVEYED | **19 MILES** of river surveyed for invasive knotweed

FISH PASSAGE | **26 CULVERTS** assessed to determine fish passability

# 2022 FINANCIAL SUMMARY







# IMPROVING FISH PASSAGE

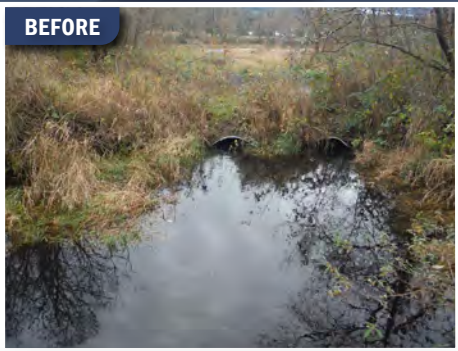
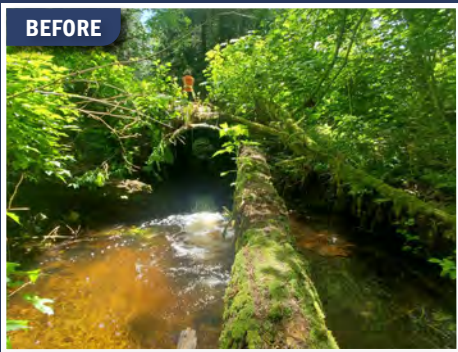


## STARBIRD CREEK

This project worked with a private forest landowner to improve access to over 6.2 miles of habitat for coho, steelhead, and sea run cutthroat. The Family Forest Fish Passage Program funded the project to remove and replace two side by side barrier culverts with a bridge on Starbird Creek, a tributary to Fisher Creek in the Skagit River watershed. This project builds on past fish passage improvement projects completed downstream. The landowner is super excited about their new bridge which now allows unimpeded access for salmon, steelhead, and trout to high quality spawning and rearing habitat.

## COLD SPRINGS TRIBUTARY

On a tributary to Cold Springs Creek, Skagit Fisheries worked with a private forest landowner to remove culverts which were completely blocking adult fish migration for coho salmon, rainbow trout, and sea run cutthroat trout. The Family Forest Fish Passage Program funded this project to remove the blocking culverts and replace them with a much larger diameter culvert to allow fish passage on an unnamed tributary to Cold Springs Creek in the Nookachamps Creek watershed. Due to the slope of the old culverts, adult salmon were blocked from migrating 100% of the time. The new larger culvert enables fish to access 2 miles of quality spawning and rearing habitat on several small tributaries located above this project site.



## CAREY'S CREEK

On Carey's Creek near where it joins Carey's Slough in the Town of Hamilton, Skagit Fisheries worked with a private landowner to completely remove a culvert which was creating a fish passage barrier. Since the landowner (Janicki Logging) no longer needed access on this private road crossing, no structure was needed to replace the removed culvert allowing the complete restoration of the natural stream channel shape and flow. These are the best kind of fish passage projects to complete, when complete removal of a fish passage barrier is possible and agreeable with the landowner. Removing this culvert and restoring natural stream flows provides salmon access to 3.8 miles of salmon habitat including 4.5 acres freshwater emergent wetland, 27 acres freshwater forest/shrub wetland, and 7 acres of pond habitat. This project builds upon several past and current salmon restoration projects occurring upstream, including a fish passage project on Carey's Creek in 2020, riparian restoration along Carey's Slough, and an ongoing project to design and restore Little Carey's Creek and wetland upstream. This project was funded with grant funds from Puget Sound Energy.

## NATIVE PLANT RESTORATION

Restoring riparian habitat means that we are planting native trees and shrubs adjacent to a river, stream, or other body of water. At Skagit Fisheries, we work with many partners throughout the year to plant thousands of trees to restore riparian areas. Revegetating these waterways with native plants, not only helps to restore habitat for salmon, it also helps to filter pollutants and keep our waterways clean and healthy for shellfish, wildlife, and our community. This past year, Skagit Fisheries worked with Skagit County, Dike District 3, City of Mount Vernon, WDFW, and many private landowners to plant over 21,500 native plants. Community members, students, staff, AmeriCorps and WCC members took part in making this restoration a reality. This year, many riparian restoration projects were located directly adjacent to the Skagit River providing important habitat for Chinook salmon. Some of these major projects took place along the South Fork of the Skagit River, the mainstem Skagit River in South Mount Vernon, DeBays Slough, Foxglove Slough, and Ovenell Slough. Skagit Fisheries is proud to provide opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to be a part of tree planting events. In addition to planting trees at restoration sites throughout the Skagit Valley, volunteers also help grow trees for future restoration projects at our native plant nursery. We are excited many new projects begin in 2023. We hope to see you at an upcoming community planting party.



Students from Conway planting trees along the Skagit River.

# PARTNERSHIPS FOR SALMON



Father-daughter team of volunteers walk the East Fork of Walker Creek documenting salmon spawning upstream of a previous fish passage improvement project.

## SPAWNER SURVEYS

One of the highlights for many volunteers is getting to participate in Skagit Fisheries' Spawner Survey Program. In this program, volunteers are trained to identify salmon and the redds (nests) they make when spawning in order to document fish use at restoration sites. We are especially interested in documenting salmon use upstream of where fish passage improvement projects have occurred. Of course it is exciting to see live salmon spawning anywhere, but it is even more exciting to see salmon spawning in habitat that wasn't accessible until a barrier such as a culvert was removed. This year we had teams of volunteers surveying 21 streams weekly from October to January. Salmon were late to arrive due to the dry fall, so surveys went later than a typical year. However these hearty volunteers were more than willing to continue their surveys late into the winter to ensure all fish were counted. Skagit Fisheries has been training volunteers to count returning salmon for more than 20 years and providing this data to the fisheries co-managers at Washington State and the Tribes.

## CHANNEL RESTORATION

In addition to being the lead on many salmon habitat restoration projects, Skagit Fisheries often partners with other entities and takes on support roles as well. This past year, Skagit Fisheries assisted Partners with multiple high priority Chinook Recovery projects. Along the South Fork of the Skagit River, Dike District 3 and Skagit County worked to reconnect over 1,600 feet of backwater channel and 5.3 acres of wetland habitat to restore important habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon. Skagit Fisheries's role was leading the fish rescue effort prior to construction and to ensure that over 5,000 fish were unharmed during the construction project. Post construction, Skagit Fisheries is planting thousands of native trees along 24 acres of riparian area at the site. At Cedar Grove, Skagit County lead a massive fish passage improvement project removing culverts and fill from Ovenell Slough and replacing the crossing with a pedestrian bridge. This new bridge allows recreationalists of all abilities to access the publicly owned property to hike and fish. Again, Skagit Fisheries lead the fish rescue effort prior to construction to ensure young salmon were not harmed. And post construction, Skagit Fisheries worked with volunteers from Fourth Corner Fly Fishers to build a trail, install benches, and restore the riparian area associated with this beautiful spot to recreate.





## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### SALMON IN SCHOOLS

With generous support from the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Skagit Fisheries was again able to expand our Salmon in the Classroom program last year and for the coming year. Specifically we are expanding to reach more students attending underserved schools. Skagit Fisheries is one of 12 Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups offering this unique education program to underserved schools across the state in a coordinated way. In the Skagit watershed, students at 11 elementary schools students receive 200 coho eggs from a state hatchery in January, and watch them transition through 3 life stages over the course of 3-5 months. Upon release into local creeks, students connect the concept of healthy habitat to the salmon they have raised for several months. The Children's Museum of Skagit County continues to host a Salmon in the Classroom tank as well, providing community members and younger children the opportunity to watch salmon grow and learn about habitat needs regardless of where they are enrolled in school. Anyone can come see the salmon at the Museum and even participate in the exciting salmon release days. Be sure to look for these opportunities in the spring.



One of many local students releasing salmon fry into Hansen Creek as part of the Salmon in Schools program.



Families at the Oyster Creek Salmon Sighting see live spawning salmon and learn about how to keep habitat clean and healthy.

### SALMON SIGHTINGS

Salmon Sighting events enable community members to have a front row experience for observing wild salmon spawning in local creeks. While the Skagit and Samish watersheds are home to all 5 Pacific salmon species, it is difficult to find accessible locations to view these amazing creatures. Salmon Sightings brings the public up close to salmon, finding locations and times when people can safely view spawning salmon while also learning about salmon species and how to keep their habitat clean and healthy from docents. This year we were excited to host several Salmon Sighting events throughout our watersheds, however the highlight was definitely the chum Salmon Sighting at Oyster Creek along Samish Bay. We hope you can join us next fall at a Salmon Sighting event.



Washington Conservation Corps members surveying the river for the invasive plant knotweed as part of the Upper Skagit Knotweed Removal Program.

### INTERNSHIPS

Skagit Fisheries strives to involve the community in all aspects of salmon habitat restoration. One way we do this is by providing internships to local college students offering them an opportunity to learn career building skills while earning their college degrees. In the past, these internships were unpaid thus limiting the pool of applicants to those individuals who can afford to work for free. In an effort to be more inclusive, Skagit Fisheries introduced paid internships to qualifying students this past year. This is an exciting new endeavor that we kicked off in 2022 and we hope to grow in the future as we expand our ability to provide learning opportunities for students, of any background to participate in career building internships. We look forward to this initiative expanding the number of internships we can offer to local students and expanding the diversity of young people who can apply.



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### OUR SUPPORTERS

We are very grateful to our community who continues to care so deeply for our natural environment. Our donors, supporters, and restoration partners understand that having healthy waterways for salmon also means having clean water and healthy communities for all of us. We are thankful for your investment of time, energy, and funding to support our work. Please show your appreciation for those entities that support our work by patronizing those businesses that contribute to our healthy watershed. A complete list of this year's generous donors, businesses, schools, grantors, partners, landowners, tribes, and members is available in the online version of our **2022 Annual Report** at [SkagitFisheries.org](https://www.SkagitFisheries.org).

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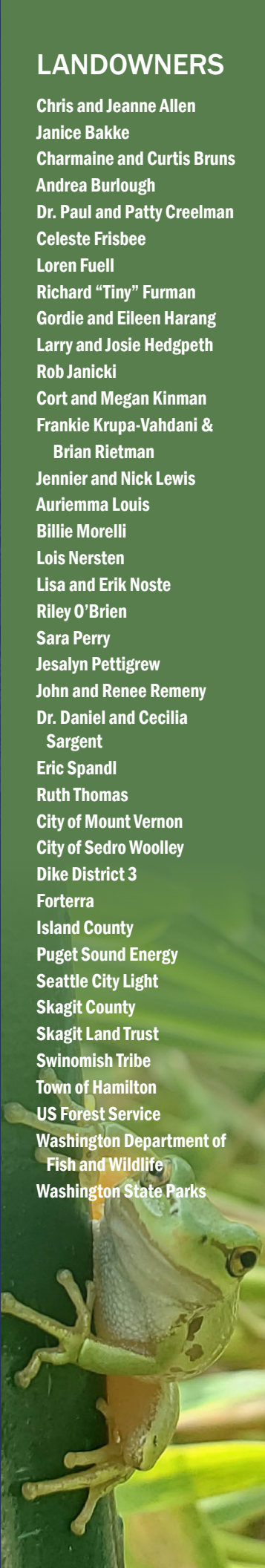
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## **COUNCIL OF REGIONS UPDATE for the SRFB's March 8, 2023 Meeting**

Prepared by Alex Conley, Chair; to be presented by Mara Zimmerman

The Council of Regions (COR) brings together the state's seven Salmon Recovery Regions to 1) share information among the regions, GSRO & RCO, 2) provide input to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board & 3) coordinate activities that address shared needs of the regional organizations. Since the last SRFB meeting:

1. COR continues to work with Lead Entities, RCO, GSRO and project sponsors to **ensure 2022 grants awards are contracted and moving forward**, and to **initiate the 2023 SRFB Grant Round**.
2. COR members have **appreciated the opportunity to actively participate in the Targeted Investment and Match dialogues** and look forward to seeing these processes move forward.
3. The US Army Corps of Engineers is meeting with partner groups for feedback on permitting, updating informational materials, and reorganizing staff assignments to emphasize faster permit completion. Dialogue with COR is ongoing.
4. COR has **held monthly COR calls and organized COR participation** in groups such as SRNet and the Fish Barrier Removal Board. Huge thanks to RCO Director Duffy for her quarterly check-in calls and to Erik Neatherlin for organizing quarterly check-in calls with WWDFW leadership.
5. The **four Columbia River Regions continue to meet monthly** to discuss and coordinate regional input on Columbia River policy and priorities with other state partners.

### **Specific Council of Regions Input for the December SRFB Meeting:**

#### **Item #4: Targeted Investment Review**

The Council of Regions would like to thank Nick Norton for his frequent and substantive engagement with the Council of Regions as proposals for future Targeted Investment policies are being developed. We look forward to providing specific feedback as final proposals are developed for consideration at the May SRFB meeting.

#### **Item #6: Board Match Policy**

The staff memo and its appendices do an excellent job of capturing the questions and concerns about the role of match that we have and hear from partners. We encourage the Board to continue its discussion of modifying or eliminating match requirements and look forward to providing more detailed input as specific proposals are developed.

#### **Item #8: State of the Salmon Report**

The regional organizations thank GSRO for the hard work put into developing the SOS report and the clear findings it expresses. We have appreciated the chance to provide input on both regional and statewide elements, and believe the final report helps further essential discussions about hard issues we face in salmon recovery.