



**Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)
Large Capital Projects
FINAL**

**Request for Proposals for
the 2025-2027 State Biennium**

*Approved by PSSRC on November 16 and Leadership Council on December 14, 2023.
12.18.23*

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Introduction

The Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership) is the state agency leading the region’s collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound. The Leadership Council, the governing body of the Puget Sound Partnership, serves as the regional organization for Puget Sound salmon recovery (except for Hood Canal Summer Chum). To advance salmon recovery efforts in Puget Sound, the Partnership seeks the best available science to guide funding, restoration, and policy decisions through adaptive management.

The Partnership is committed to implementing the [Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\) Act](#) by incorporating environmental justice into agency work, including salmon recovery. As part of the HEAL Act, the Partnership strives to promote the equitable sharing of environmental benefits and investments for tribes and overburdened and vulnerable populations through this solicitation. Salmon recovery improves environmental health and human well-being and provides a healthy food source for Puget Sound residents. Prioritizing salmon recovery also prioritizes the livelihoods, experiences, and cultures that historically rely on seafood. Addressing tribal harvest needs in salmon recovery efforts is complementary to environmental justice, yet distinct in that treaty tribes are sovereign nations and co-managers of salmon through a government-to-government relationship with Washington State.

Tribes in Puget Sound have treaty rights to harvest half of Washington’s harvestable salmon in their “usual and accustomed grounds”, but with low salmon abundance in many Puget Sound populations tribal treaty rights to salmon harvest remain unfulfilled. Proposed projects should strive to support federally recognized tribal treaty rights and interests in relation to salmon recovery. The Partnership’s [Equity Guidebook](#) includes tools that can be used to identify geographic areas, populations, and communities that proposals might benefit. For more information on addressing the HEAL Act and environmental justice in proposals, please see the glossary in Appendix B and the resources in Appendix C.

PSAR Overview

The Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration program (PSAR) was created in 2007 to help implement the most regionally significant habitat protection and restoration priorities that advance salmon recovery efforts. Funding is appropriated by the Legislature through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). The Puget Sound Partnership works with local entities to identify and prioritize projects. This funding is critical to advancing projects with the greatest benefit to salmonid species throughout our region.

Funding for the PSAR Program is a biennial appropriation from the Washington State Legislature. The PSAR program is comprised of two different funding programs termed **Regular**

PSAR and PSAR Large Capital Program (or PSAR Large Cap). Both programs have their own unique set of criteria and operating procedures.

Regular PSAR – Historically, the first \$30M of PSAR funding appropriations is devoted to the Regular PSAR Program. The Regular PSAR program provides funding to the 15 [Puget Sound Lead Entities](#) based upon a percentage formula approved by the **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC) and Leadership Council**. This funding is then used to fund restoration and acquisition projects through the Lead Entity – Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) process.

PSAR Large Capital – A Large Capital Project is a high priority project in a watershed’s 4-year workplan with respect to its benefit to Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed or Treaty right priority salmon populations that, due to the complexity and cost of the project, cannot be easily accomplished by the Lead Entity with the funds allocated from the **Regular PSAR** funding round. Large Capital Project costs should exceed what a given watershed receives in a PSAR regular round allocation or be greater than \$1M.

The PSAR Large Capital program is aimed at funding projects that are regionally significant and provide the most benefit to salmon species in Puget Sound. With the release of this RFP, **the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC), Leadership Council and the Puget Sound Partnership begin the process to develop a ranked list of regionally significant, high priority capital projects to propose for funding as a regional package of habitat acquisition and restoration projects for the 2025-2027 biennium state budget.**

Proposed projects should be ready to advance as soon as funds are available after the passing of the 2025 state capital budget and cost more than what Puget Sound salmon recovery lead entities are *typically* able to support through the standard funding process. This ranked list will be an important component of the 2025 - 2027 PSAR budget request. The state legislature has previously allocated between \$7M and \$40 M for the PSAR Large Capital program; thus, the number of projects funded can vary greatly across funding cycles.

Eligible Project Types

- Restoration
- Acquisition
- Planning projects (assessments, designs, inventories, and studies) – the results of this type of project must directly and clearly lead to preliminary or final project design
- Combination projects (acquisition and restoration OR acquisition and planning)
- Phased projects
- Distinct, individual projects (bundling of projects within a watershed is not allowed for Large Capital applications)

NEW: Criteria for Environmental Justice (unscored)

In order to incorporate environmental justice into agency work, the Partnership has developed and incorporated a new set of questions that Project Sponsors will be required to respond to in their proposals. Based on initial feedback and discussion at the July and September 2024 PSSRC meetings and through Tribal consultation, these new criteria are currently proposed to be unscored but will provide information to help shape scored criteria in future grant rounds. The Partnership is committed to promoting the equitable sharing of environmental benefits and investments for tribes and overburdened and vulnerable populations and is asking Project Sponsors to incorporate the following into their supplemental questions responses:

- State whether the project sponsor is a federally recognized tribe, an organization that is co-sponsoring with a tribe, or a sponsor that represents an overburdened community or vulnerable population;
- Demonstrate how the project will result in direct or indirect environmental benefits to tribes, overburdened communities, or vulnerable populations;
- Describe how the proposed project meaningfully engages overburdened communities (which include tribes) or vulnerable populations;
- Describe whether the project provides funding directly to tribes, overburdened communities, and/or vulnerable populations.

NEW: Natural Climate Solutions Account (Requirements to be determined)

The PSAR program has been funded (and could be again) in part by Climate Commitment Act associated funding. The Climate Commitment Act (RCW 70A.65) created a market-based program to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions over the next few decades. A portion of the revenues are directed into the Natural Climate Solutions Account and were distributed into several standing grant programs, such as PSAR. Funding comes with additional reporting, assessment, and tribal consultation requirements. The Governor’s Office and state family plan to engage with tribes in conversations about how best to meet these requirements. The Partnership will provide further guidance after these conversations conclude (Appendix D).

Eligibility Criteria

Each project must:

1. Address a high priority need identified in a watershed recovery plan chapter (Chinook, steelhead or multi-species), a regional recovery plan for Puget Sound Chinook salmon, Puget Sound steelhead, or Hood Canal Summer Chum salmon, or other strategy submitted as part of the 4-Year Work Plan (4YWP) project list that benefits Treaty rights populations.

2. Demonstrate significant benefit to one or more listed salmon populations and/or salmon populations that benefit Treaty rights.
3. Require only funding for implementation (i.e., no other barriers with respect to authorizing environment, land ownership or project implementation exist).
4. Begin implementation during the 2025-2027 biennium. Implementation is defined as beginning work on one of the eligible project types above.
5. Be evaluated by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) review panel (previously or in 2024).
6. Receive a letter of support through the Lead Entity SRFB/PSAR review process in 2024.

Additional prerequisites for specific project types include the following:

1. **Restoration construction projects (*projects seeking construction funding*):** Conceptual and preliminary design must be complete, final design must be complete or anticipated to be complete within the first year of the award, and permit applications must be started (at a *minimum documented discussions with permit agencies*). Project construction must commence within one year of contract award or the next available fish window. Please refer to Manual 18's Appendix D for detailed deliverables.
2. **Engineering and design projects:** At a minimum, a conceptual design as described in SRFB Manual 18's Appendix D must be complete and meet all appropriate requirements as identified in the SRFB process. Anticipated design costs need to still meet the criteria of being more than a Lead Entity will receive in a PSAR regular round allocation or at least \$1M, whichever is less.

Lead Entity Process

Each Puget Sound salmon recovery Lead Entity may submit projects through the local and regional process outlined below. Final application materials must be submitted by the SRFB deadline for SRFB and PSAR project applications in June 2024. The Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council will approve the final Large Capital list, in August 2024.

Projects that were submitted for funding as Large Capital Projects during the 2023 – 2025 PSAR Large Capital review process, were approved by the SRFB, and have not changed in scope or cost may be resubmitted by the Lead Entity without undergoing additional local review process unless required by the Lead Entity¹. If the project has changed in scope or cost since it was

¹ Projects from the 2022 PSAR large capital project list MUST RESUBMIT in the pre-proposal process to be considered for the 2025-2027 PSAR grant round. If you wish to resubmit your application, or portions of it, unchanged from the previous grant round, please contact your RCO grant manager to request that the application be copied in PRISM.

originally approved by the SRFB and the Lead Entity would like to resubmit it, the Lead Entity should check with its Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Grant Manager to determine what level of additional review is required. All submitted projects will be re-ranked through the current approved regional ranking process for Large Capital Projects.

Project sponsors must complete the SRFB application through PRISM and projects must be reviewed by and receive a letter of support from the sponsoring Lead Entity's local process by the deadlines in the timeline below. All policies for SRFB projects in Manual 18 apply to these project proposals except where there is a narrowing of what is eligible for the PSAR Large Capital proposal process. For final application materials, project sponsors must also submit answers to the supplemental proposal questions outlined in the attachment to their project proposal. Because of the project limit per Lead Entity, project sponsors must work with their Lead Entity and have approval as described below to apply.

Proposal Elements

Projects must be approved through the local Lead Entity before being submitted for consideration within the PSAR Large Capital program. Each Lead Entity develops an individual grant round timeline, with most beginning in January. Please consult with your local Lead Entity Coordinator to ensure you have the necessary information and deadlines to begin your application process.

Pre-Proposal – Application Materials

To be considered during the pre-proposal review process, completed applications must include:

- A RCO PRISM Application - available online through the PRISM system.
- A Recovery Plan strategy connection - Lead Entity Coordinators must draft a memo identifying a clear link to a recovery plan strategy or demonstrate a benefit to Treaty rights populations to support the preliminary tiering process.

Please consult your local Lead Entity about additional materials that may be required at the time of submitting a pre-proposal.

All pre-proposal materials must be submitted via PRISM as part of an online application or attached to the online application by April 10, 2024 at noon.

Full Proposal – Supplemental Materials

For projects that have been invited to submit a full proposal after the pre-proposal review, completed applications include all materials required for an initial proposal as well as:

- A letter of support from the sponsoring Lead Entity Committee (technical, implementation, citizens, or executive body). Letters of support must verify the project sponsors’ or project managers’ abilities to manage a project of this scope and scale, including examples of successful project management of similar project(s), if applicable.
- Responses to the PSAR Large Capital Supplemental Questions available [here](#).

Supplemental materials must be submitted via PRISM by May 21, 2024 at noon.

PSAR Large Capital Review Process and Timeline²

Final proposals must be completed in PRISM when all other SRFB and PSAR projects are due for the 2024 SRFB grant round³. The Partnership will facilitate a regional review process to develop a regionally ranked list of Large Capital Projects using the following steps. Key deadlines are in red font for project sponsors.

| Date | Actions/Requirements |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Late 2023 - Early 2024 | Project sponsors consult with local Lead Entities on local grant round process and local timelines |
| Spring 2024 - (<i>LE sets date</i>) | PRISM materials due - sponsors submit proposals in accordance with individual Lead Entity due dates |
| April 10, 2024 NOON | DUE DATE: Pre-proposal materials due at Partnership. To include: RCO PRISM application, memo from Lead Entity describing connection to Recovery Plan strategy and any additional materials required by the Lead Entity. |
| April 11-22, 2024 | Review of pre-proposal materials by Regional Review Team. (Review team to include a sub-group of local Lead Entity Technical Review Committee members from various geographies, members of the Salmon Science Advisory Group and RCO and Partnership staff. Materials will be reviewed for eligibility, completeness & rated by the criteria listed on page 9.) |
| April 23, 2024 | Regional review team meeting to determine which projects advance. |
| April 24, 2024 | Project sponsors notified and invited to submit supplemental materials if ranked in the top-tier or notified that they are unsuccessful. |
| May 21, 2024 NOON | DUE DATE: Full application due in PRISM to include supplemental materials from project sponsors. |
| May 29 & 30, 2024 | Project sponsors provide virtual presentations to the Regional Review Team. Reviewers will provide feedback to sponsors during the presentations and after for revisions to final applications, if needed. |

² Timeline contingent on the passing of a capital budget and securing of review team.

³ For a more detailed SRFB timeline, consult Manual 18.

| Date | Actions/Requirements |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 22-June 18, 2024 | Regional Review Team scores and ranks projects using criteria outlined on page 10 and 11. |
| June 12, 2024 | Updated applications due, if applicable, from project sponsors. |
| June 18, 2024 | Review team meets to discuss scores and finalize ranked project list. |
| June 20, 2024 | Final rankings are announced. |
| June 24, 2024 | Partnership submits draft ranked project list to RCO. This list may be modified if the PSSRC and/or Leadership Council makes changes during approval process. |
| Early July 2024 | Compiled scores and draft rankings presented to the PSSRC Executive Committee by Partnership staff. The Executive Committee approves regional project list and recommends a ranked Large Cap project list for PSSRC approval. |
| Late July 2024 | PSSRC adopts a final ranked Large Cap project list and regional project list. |
| August 2024 | PS Leadership Council approves regional project list and ranked Large Cap list. |
| August 20, 2024 | Partnership staff submit final, approved project list to RCO. |
| September 24 & 25, 2024 | SRFB funding meeting and grants awarded for regional projects. |
| September/October 2024 | PSAR Large Cap projects ranked list packaged for use by OFM, the Governor’s office and the legislature as part of the full PSAR request. Budget requests are developed. |
| Winter 2024-2025 | Project sponsors work with the Partnership and other state capital grant staff to conduct legislative outreach tours. |
| Winter/Spring 2025 | State capital budget is passed in 2025, project sponsors are notified if funding received, and contracts are initiated as applicable. |

PSAR Large Capital Pre-Proposal Tiering Criteria

Pre-proposals will be rated on a scale from low to high according to how well they fit the following criteria:

- Alignment to strategy
- Likelihood of success: technical
- Likelihood of success: human
- Contribution to recovery
- Readiness to proceed

Proposals that rank highly across most criteria will be invited to submit full proposals.

2025-2027 PSAR Large Capital Full Proposal Scoring Criteria

Final proposals will be evaluated using the following criteria for a total of 55 possible points:

| BENEFIT TO SALMON AND PRIORITY WATERSHED POPULATIONS | DESCRIPTION | TOTAL 50 |
|------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| VIABLE SALMONID POPULATION (VSP) BENEFITS EXPECTED. | Link VSP parameters to salmonid population(s) and describe expected changes to the parameters specified. Provide estimated outcomes of Key Ecological Attributes (KEAs), if possible. | 25 |
| HABITAT QUALITY | Explain how the restored or protected habitat will support functions that benefit salmon and promote salmon production through improved foraging, growth, and/or decreased mortality. | 10 |
| PROBABILITY OF PROJECT SUCCESS | Describe the proposed actions, objectives, and success measures for the proposed project. Include detail on how ecosystem processes are being restored or protected and for what purpose. | 15 |
| ADDITIONAL CRITERION | | TOTAL 5 |
| CONNECTION TO THE ACTION AGENDA | Identify the most relevant Action Agenda <u>desired outcome(s)</u> . | 5 |
| UNSCORED CRITERIA⁴ | | |
| ACCESS AND CONNECTIVITY | Describe how the project will improve the capability of salmon to access and benefit from the restored or protected habitat. | Required response, not scored |
| TRIBAL SPONSORSHIP | Is the sponsor a federally recognized tribe or an organization that is co-sponsoring a project with a tribe? | Required response, not scored |

⁴ Responses related to environmental justice will not be scored for ranking but will be used to develop scored criteria in future grant rounds.

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| OVERBURDENED COMMUNITY SPONSORSHIP | Does the sponsor represent an overburdened community or vulnerable population? See Appendix B for definitions. | Required response, not scored |
| COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT | How does the proposed project meaningfully engage overburdened communities (which include tribes) or vulnerable populations? | Required response, not scored |
| ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS | Demonstrate how the project will directly or indirectly result in environmental benefits to tribes, overburdened communities, or vulnerable populations. | Required response, not scored |
| MULTIPLE BENEFITS | Briefly explain other benefits the project will provide to surrounding communities, small businesses and industry. If applicable, what percentage of the budget will be received by tribes, overburdened communities or vulnerable populations? | Required response, not scored |
| CLIMATE CHANGE | How will your project be climate resilient given predicted future conditions? How will your project increase habitat and species resiliency? | Required response, not scored |
| PROJECT READINESS | What is the level of readiness for this project (design, permitting, appraisal and purchase, or level or readiness)? | Required response, not scored |
| OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING OR MATCH ⁵ | List other funding sources. | Required response, not scored |
| VITAL SIGNS ⁶ | List which Puget Sound Vital Signs this project contributes to and briefly describe the connections. | Required response, not scored |

⁵ Match is not required for Large Capital Projects. Match will be defined using [SRFB Manual 18](#) to include cash, bond funds, and grants (unless prohibited by the funding entity); labor, equipment, materials, staff time, and donations.

⁶ For more information and to access reference resources, please visit: <https://pspwa.box.com/VSPGuidance>

Project Scoring and Ranking

- Final scores will be represented as sum total of average points per criterion earned for review. Blind individual scores will be available for review by project sponsors upon request.
- Upon completion of project scoring by reviewers, Partnership staff will compile results and place projects into rank order.
- Partnership staff will present a draft ranked list to the PSSRC Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will review the ranking and make a recommendation to the full PSSRC to accept the list as ranked by the scoring or provide a recommended change to the order of the ranked list. The ranked list is the culmination of a significant amount of thorough scientific review and investigation of the merits of each project proposed.
- The PSSRC Executive Committee shall not “re-order” the ranked list unless there is a strong policy reason to do so. If changes to the ranked list are suggested by the PSSRC Executive Committee, they will be done in a transparent fashion and will be accompanied by a detailed written explanation as to why the change was necessary. The Executive Committee will use the following criteria when considering whether re-ordering the list is necessary:
 - Geographic distribution
 - Uncertainty of implementation
 - Project types – ensuring a balance of project types including those that provide multiple benefits and acquisition and restoration projects
 - Connection to Southern Resident Killer Whale recovery efforts – if evidence emerges that a particular project will contribute to prey availability for Southern Resident Killer Whales
- Partnership staff will present the Executive Committee’s approved list and the original ranked list (if different) to the full body of the PSSRC for discussion and a final recommendation at the July 2024 PSSRC meeting.
- The Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council will approve the final list in August 2024.

Questions/Contact information

Project sponsors must coordinate with the appropriate [Lead Entity Coordinator](#) for submission.

Please contact the PSAR Program Manager at the Puget Sound Partnership with any questions:

Marlies Wierenga
 PSAR Program Manager
 360.968.9673
 marlies.wierenga@psp.wa.gov

Appendix A - PSAR Large Capital Project Glossary

Project Readiness – PSAR Large Capital funds are intended to be used for projects that have already completed their due diligence (i.e., they have completed feasibility studies; and landowners and project partners understand and agree with the project feasibility and conceptual design). This understanding and agreement is documented in writing and provided with the proposal. PSAR Large Capital funds are not intended for project development and feasibility analysis. Please use the definitions below to confirm project readiness.

Design Ready - Is a term for design/planning projects. A project is considered “design ready” if it meets the conditions described below:

- Completed the **Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant round process** and approved by the SRFB for funding.
- Has preliminary design (and project feasibility and conceptual design deliverables) by the time of contract award.

Shovel Ready – Is a term for capital construction projects. A project is considered “shovel ready” if it meets conditions described below:

- Completed the **SRFB grant round process** and approved by the SRFB for funding.
- Preliminary design must be complete, final design must be >90% complete by the time of contract award. Project construction must be able to commence within 1 year of contract award or the next available fish window.

Acquisition Ready – Is a term for acquisition projects. A project is considered “acquisition ready” if it meets conditions described below:

- Completed the **SRFB grant round process** and approved by the SRFB for funding.
- Obtained an appraisal and letter of interest, purchase and sale agreement, an option to purchase agreement, or have a signed waiver of retroactivity for reimbursement of a purchase.
- Can demonstrate positive communication and willingness from the landowner (e.g., purchase and sale agreement, letter of support from the landowner).

Appraisal Ready - Is a term for acquisition projects. A project is considered “appraisal ready” if it meets the conditions described below:

- Completed the **SRFB grant round process** and approved by the SRFB for funding.
- Has already had positive discussions with landowners and has secured a signed Landowner Acknowledgement form uploaded to PRISM.

*Project readiness will be evaluated throughout the contracting process, and projects that do not truly meet the definitions described above may have their project deemed ineligible for funding.

PSAR Large Capital Funding Sequencing - The ranked 2025-27 PSAR Large Capital Projects will receive funding in rank order in accordance with policy. Projects receiving other funds for the same project scope will receive a commensurate reduced amount in their contracting. Funding carries down the existing approved list until all projects are fully funded. Any returned dollars are first applied to PSAR Large Capital Projects of the same biennium, and then to the immediate previous biennium's approved project list in ranked order.

PSAR Biennial Funding – Funding is provided by the WA State Legislature through its biennial budget.

Obligated Funds – Funds are considered “obligated” when a project contract has been signed between the project sponsor and RCO.

PSAR Eligibility – PSAR projects must meet the same eligibility requirements as SRFB projects described in Manual 18, Salmon Recovery Grants. PSAR funding must be directly in support of implementing capital projects. Eligible project types include:

- Restoration
- Acquisition
- Planning projects (assessments, designs, inventories, and studies) – the results of this type of project must directly and clearly lead to a conceptual, preliminary, or final project design.
- Combination projects (acquisition and restoration OR acquisition and planning)
- Phased projects.

Bundled Projects – Project proposals are considered “bundled” if they contain more phases than would be attainable within the spending timeframe of the funding (grant recipients must complete projects within 2 to 3 years) or propose multiple projects under one application that do not clearly demonstrate interconnectedness (separated hydrologically, geographically, sequentially).

Return Funds – If an approved PSAR Large Capital Project cannot be implemented due to a change in circumstance or is completed under budget within the allowable timeframe, return funds will return to Puget Sound Partnership for reallocation. Partnership Large Capital Project Return Funds Reallocation Priority:

- Funds will be used to fund the highest ranked PSAR Large Capital Project that has cost overruns/funding gaps due to unforeseen circumstances. Cost overruns must be approved and are subject to criteria outlined in Manual 18's Appendix B.
- If no higher ranked Large Capital Projects need additional funding, funds may be used to fund further down the PSAR Large Capital list.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) - The Washington State Legislature established the SRFB in 1999 to administer state and federal funding and to assist with a broad range of salmon-related activities. Its primary goal is to recover salmonids (salmon, trout, and steelhead) by providing grants.

The SRFB funds riparian, freshwater, estuarine, near-shore, saltwater, and upland projects that protect existing, high-quality habitats for salmon. It also funds projects to restore degraded habitat to increase overall habitat health and biological productivity of the fish. Projects may include the actual habitat used by salmon and the land and water that support ecosystem functions and processes important to salmon.

The SRFB is composed of five voting members who are appointed by the Governor, and five non-voting, state agency directors. The SRFB believes that projects must be developed using scientific information and local citizen review. Projects must demonstrate, through an evaluation and a monitoring process, that they can be effectively implemented and that they provide a sustained benefit to fish.

The SRFB administers both SRFB funding (Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds (PCSRF) and state SRFB) as well as PSAR funding (state capital funds). Although both grants are administered through the same Board, they are two separate programs with separate authorities, advisory and technical groups, and guiding policies. SRFB is managed exclusively through RCO, while PSAR is co-managed by the Puget Sound Partnership and RCO.

The complete text of the SRFB's statement of its mission, scope, and funding strategy is available on its website at <https://rco.wa.gov/about-us/mission-and-strategic-plan/>

Lead Entity - [Lead Entities](#) use their strategies and the regional salmon recovery plans to identify a sequence of habitat restoration and protection projects. Those projects are reviewed by Lead Entity technical advisory groups to ensure they are scientifically valid. Using information from the technical advisory groups as well as social, economic, and cultural values, the citizen committees, composed of people with diverse community interests, adopt ranked lists of projects and submit them to the SRFB for funding consideration. Contact information for Lead Entities and RCO staff can be found in RCO Manual 18's Appendix A.

Appendix B – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Glossary

The following terms and their definitions were selected from the Washington State Diversity Equity and Inclusion [Glossary of Equity-Related Terms](#) [EPA Environmental Justice 2020 Glossary](#), and the Partnership’s draft [Community Engagement Guide](#).

Community – A group of people who are brought together by something in common. This can include things like cultural background, shared experience, and geographic location. One person can belong to many communities.

Community Engagement – The process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest, or similar situations to address issues affecting the wellbeing of those people.

Diversity – Describes the presence of differences within a given setting, collective, or group. An individual is not diverse – a person is unique. Diversity is about a collective or a group and exists in relationship to others. A team, an organization, a family, a neighborhood, and a community can be diverse. A person can bring diversity of thought, experience, and trait, (seen and unseen) to a team — and the person is still an individual.

Environmental Benefits – Activities that (a) prevent or reduce existing environmental harms or associated risks that contribute significantly to cumulative environmental health impacts; (b) prevent or mitigate impacts to overburdened communities or vulnerable populations from, or support community response to, the impacts of environmental harm; or (c) meet a community need formally identified to a covered agency by an overburdened community or vulnerable population.

Environmental Harm – The individual or cumulative environmental health impacts and risks to communities caused by historic, current, or projected: (a) exposure to pollution, conventional or toxic pollutants, environmental hazards, or other contamination in the air, water, and land; (b) adverse environmental effects, including exposure to contamination, hazardous substances, or pollution that increases the risk of adverse environmental health outcomes to create vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change; (c) loss or impairment of ecosystem functions, or traditional food resources or loss of access to gather cultural resources or harvest traditional foods; or (d) health and economic impacts from climate change.

Environmental Justice – The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development,

implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies. Environmental justice includes addressing disproportionate environmental health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm.

Equity – The act of developing, strengthening, and supporting procedural and outcome fairness in systems, procedures, and resource distribution mechanisms to create equitable (not equal) opportunity for all people. Equity is distinct from equality which refers to everyone having the same treatment without accounting for differing needs or circumstances. Equity has a focus on eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of historically and currently oppressed groups.

Highly Impacted Communities – A community designated by the Department of Health as highly impacted by fossil fuel pollution and climate change in Washington, or a community located in census tracts that are fully or partially on “Indian country” as defined in 18 U.S.C. Sec. 1151.

Human Dimensions – How and why humans value natural resources, how humans want resources managed, and how humans affect or are affected by natural resources management decisions. Human dimensions inquiries strive to understand human traits and how to incorporate that understanding into management planning and actions. It covers a variety of ideas and practices including cultural, social, and economic values; individual and social behavior; demographics; legal and institutional frameworks of management; communication and education; and decision-making processes of management (Decker, Brown & Siemer, 2001).

Inclusion – Intentionally designed, active, and ongoing engagement with people that ensures opportunities and pathways for participation in all aspects of group, organization, or community, including decision-making processes. Inclusion is not a natural consequence of diversity. There must be intentional and consistent efforts to create and sustain a participative environment. Inclusion refers to how groups show that people are valued as respected members of the group, team, organization, or community. Inclusion is often created through progressive, consistent, actions to expand, include, and share.

Indigenous Peoples – The term “indigenous peoples” includes state-recognized tribes; indigenous and tribal community-based organizations; individual members of federally recognized tribes, including those living on a different reservation or living outside Indian country; individual members of state-recognized tribes; Native Hawaiians; Native Pacific Islanders; and individual Native Americans.

Meaningful Involvement – Potentially affected community residents have an appropriate opportunity to participate in decisions about a proposed activity that will affect their environment and/or health; the public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision; the concerns of all participants involved will be considered in the decision-making process; the decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those potentially affected.

Overburdened Community – A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined RCW 19.405.020. In this context, community is defined by a geographic location (e.g., a census tract, a county, a region) that can be identified on a map. We can understand “overburdened communities” to be geographic areas where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts.

Vulnerable Populations – Population groups that are more likely to be at higher risk for poor health outcomes in response to environmental harms, due to: (i) adverse socioeconomic factors, such as unemployment, high housing and transportation costs relative to income, limited access to nutritious food and adequate health care, linguistic isolation, and other factors that negatively affect health outcomes and increase vulnerability to the effects of environmental harms; and (ii) sensitivity factors, such as low birth weight and higher rates of hospitalization. "Vulnerable populations" includes, but is not limited to:

- Racial or ethnic minorities;
- Low-income populations;
- Populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and
- Populations of workers experiencing environmental harms.

Appendix C – HEAL Act Resources

The [Healthy Environment for All \(HEAL\) Act](#), was passed and enacted in 2021 to reduce environmental and health disparities across Washington State and prioritize vulnerable populations and overburdened communities by integrating environmental justice into several state agency activities, including decision processes for budget development and expenditures. The Partnership is one of seven state agencies required to apply specific environmental justice requirements to agency actions. Per the mandate of the HEAL Act, the Partnership must take the following actions outlined in section 16.2 of the HEAL Act:

- Focus applicable expenditures on creating environmental benefits that are experienced by overburdened communities and vulnerable populations, including reducing or eliminating environmental harms, creating community and population resilience, and improving the quality of life of overburdened communities and vulnerable populations.
- Create opportunities for overburdened communities and vulnerable populations to meaningfully participate in agency expenditure decisions.
- Clearly articulate environmental justice goals and performance metrics.
- Consider a broad scope of grants and contracting opportunities that effectuate environmental justice principles.

Additional resources:

- Guiding questions and resources related to assessing equity, including tools to identify geographic areas, populations, and communities that proposals might benefit, are highlighted in the Partnership’s [Equity Guidebook](#) (Noufi and Sheikh 2022)
- Government Alliance on Race and Equity. [“Racial Equity Toolkit: An Opportunity to Operationalize Equity”](#)
- Resources to support the integration of human dimensions into project proposals and teams: [recent presentation](#) on Human Dimensions and the associated [Human Dimensions Protocol](#)
- Governor’s [Office of Indian Affairs](#)
- Puget Sound Partnership’s [Pro-Equity Anti-Racism \(PEAR\) Statement](#)

Appendix D – Natural Climate Solutions Account Overview

Washington's Climate Commitment Act (CCA) established a cap-and-invest program at the Department of Ecology that generates revenue through quarterly auctions (see [RCW 70A.65](#)). This funding is allocated among different accounts with different objectives, with an overall goal of at least 35% of funds directly benefiting overburdened communities and at least 10% directly benefiting tribes. The Natural Climate Solutions Account ((NCSA) - [RCW 70A.65.270](#)), one of these sub-accounts, was created to support work that improves aquatic ecosystems and water quality, enhances flood resilience, and protects fish and wildlife habitats. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration, and Brian Abbot Fish Barrier Removal Board, among others, were appropriated NCSA funding during the 2023-2025 biennium by the state legislature and may be appropriated additional funding in future years.

Because of its unique source, the NCSA funds come with additional requirements beyond those typically associated with bond funds in the capital budget. These include data sharing and expenditure reporting to the Department of Ecology, regular environmental justice assessments and reporting to the Environmental Justice Council, as well as tribal consultation on funding decisions, funding programs, and project preapplications. RCO and the Partnership are actively seeking additional clarity on the requirements from relevant parties including other state agencies, the Governor's Office and tribes. The Partnership is closely tracking the development of guidelines and rules related to these requirements and adapting grant-making processes to accommodate this new funding source. As more information becomes available, it will be shared.