



Salmon Recovery Funding Board Meeting Agenda

March 6, 2024

Hybrid

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_jsKINLsbT-Goe3Y0UTgmCg

Phone Option: (669) 900-6833 – **Webinar ID:** 825 2445 9333

**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. Comment for these items will be limited to three minutes per person.

COVID Precautions: Masks and hand sanitizer will be made available. If you are feeling ill, the Zoom webinar format is a reliable resource for home viewing.

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.

Wednesday, March 6, 2024

OPENING AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| 9:00 a.m. | Call to Order <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roll Call and Determination of Quorum• Review and Approval of Agenda (Decision)• Approval of September Meeting Minutes (Decision)• Remarks by the Chair | <i>Chair Breckel</i> |
| 9:15 a.m. | 1. Director's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Director's ReportB. Legislative and Policy UpdateC. Fiscal Update (written only)D. Performance Report (written only) | <i>Megan Duffy Brock Milliern Mark Jarasitis Bart Lynch</i> |
| 9:45 a.m. | 2. Salmon Recovery Management Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">A. Governor's Salmon Recovery Office ReportB. Salmon Section Report | <i>Erik Neatherlin Tara Galuska Jeannie Abbott Marc Duboiski</i> |
| 10:25 a.m. | General Public Comment for Items Not on the Agenda: <i>Please limit comments to 3 minutes.</i> | |
| 10:35 a.m. | BREAK | |
| 10:50 a.m. | 3. Partner Reports <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Council of Regions• Washington Salmon Coalition• Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups | <i>Alex Conley Aundrea McBride Lance Winecka</i> |
| BOARD BUSINESS: REQUEST FOR DIRECTION | | |
| 11:20 a.m. | 4. Board Monitoring: The Path Forward | <i>Greer Maier Erik Neatherlin</i> |
| 12:15 p.m. | LUNCH | |
| BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFING | | |
| 1:15 p.m. | 5. Regional Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board• Puget Sound Partnership | <i>Steve Manlow Melissa Speeg</i> |
| 2:30 p.m. | BREAK | |
| 2:45 p.m. | 6. Fish Passage Coordination: Department of Fish and Wildlife and Department of Transportation | <i>Jeremy Cram Susan Kanzler</i> |
| 4:00 p.m. | 7. Board 2023 Grant Process Survey Results | <i>Marc Duboiski</i> |

4:30 p.m.

8. Partner Reports

- Conservation Commission
- Department of Ecology
- Department of Natural Resources
- Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Department of Transportation

Levi Keesecker
Annette Hoffmann
Tom Gorman
Jeremy Cram
Susan Kanzler

5:00 p.m.

ADJOURN

Next meeting: June 12-13, 2024, TBD

DRAFT

SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: December 13, 2023

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

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Members:

| | | | |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------------------|--|
| Jeff Breckel, Chair | Stevenson | Annette Hoffman | Designee, Washington Department of Ecology |
| Kaleen Cottingham | Olympia | Tom Gorman | Designee, Department of Natural Resources |
| Chris Endresen-Scott | Conconully | Levi Keesecker | Designee, Washington State Conservation Commission |
| Joe Maroney | Spokane | Jeremy Cram | Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| Vacant | | Susan Kanzler | 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 9:01 AM. **Julia McNamara**, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Board Liaison, performed roll call, determining quorum.

Motion: Move to approve the **December 13 Agenda**.

Moved by: Member **Endresen-Scott**

Seconded by: Member **Cottingham**

Approved: **Approved**

Motion: Move to approve the **September 13-14 Meeting Minutes**.

Moved by: Member **Cottingham**

Seconded by: Member **Endresen-Scott**

Approved: **Approved**

Item 1: Director's Report

In the interest of time, **Director Megan Duffy** referred the board to the written director's report included in the [materials](#).

Legislative and Policy Update

Brock Milliern, Policy and Legislative Director, shared the supplemental budget requests, which included \$7.56 million for the Washington Coast Restoration and Resiliency Initiative (WCRRI) and \$20 million for board projects. The 2024 Legislative session begins January 8 and runs through early March. November's revenue forecast anticipated \$191 million in revenue increase for this biennium and \$579 million next biennium. An additional revenue forecast occurs on February 20, 2024, informing the final supplemental budget.

Mr. Milliern plans to provide the board Legislative updates throughout session and anticipates Climate Commitment Act (CCA) funding use discussions concerning salmon recovery.

Item 2: Salmon Recovery Management Report

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Jeannie Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO), provided an update on the Spokane Watershed Lead Entity, recently named the Spokane Salmon Restoration Collaborative, receiving resolutions in support from the Spokane Tribe of Indians; Pend Oreille and Spokane Conservation Districts; Stevens, Lincoln, and Spokane Counties; and the City of Spokane. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe expects to sign their resolution by the end of December. The technical committee identified data gaps and projects that could meet habitat needs of Redband trout and reintroduced salmon.

Ms. Abbott referenced the timeline outlined in the meeting [materials](#), explaining that the lead entity expects to host its first grant round in January 2026. Ms. Abbott will provide status updates about the development of the lead entity and allocation options.

Member Maroney asked if there had been outreach to the Pend Orielle lead entity yet. Ms. Abbott noted she had spoken with Mike Lithgow, Pend Oreille Lead Entity Coordinator, but has not yet formally interacted with the Pend Orielle lead entity. She wanted to ensure the board was comfortable with the proposed timeline before doing so.

Additional GSRO updates were provided in the [materials](#).

General Public Comment

None.

Item 3: Partner Reports

Council of Regions

Mara Zimmerman, Council of Regions (COR), shared that in October, COR met for an all-day retreat to address strategic planning in 2024. COR directors hold monthly calls to organize participation in groups such as Salmon Recovery Network and the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board. Four Columbia River regions meet monthly to coordinate input to Columbia River policy and priorities. Since the September meeting, both the Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (LCSRB) and the Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board (YBFWRB) have presented to the Salmon Recovery Network specific regional recovery challenges and opportunities.

Ms. Zimmerman addressed the decision items on the agenda noting that since September, COR worked with RCO staff to provide input on the policies and some regions may offer individual feedback during specific agenda items. COR recommended edits to Item Four, riparian policies, to specifically allow instream and floodplain activities as eligible activities if they significantly support riparian goals.

Regarding Item Six, match, COR recommends waiving match requirements, but requiring documentation of cost share sources and amounts. Under any option, COR wanted to emphasize the importance of leveraged funds and work with project sponsors to document how diverse funding sources implement salmon recovery.

For Item Eight, large project list, COR supported the development of a large project list.

Washington Salmon Coalition

Mike Lithgow, Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC) Chair, directed the board's attention to the letter provided by the WSC regarding match included in the [materials](#) and to other letters submitted by various lead entities from around the state for additional perspective. Additionally, Mr. Lithgow directed attention to lead entity project update reports that WSC submitted.

Mr. Lithgow addressed the board one last time as the WSC Chair and announced Aundrea McBride from the Skagit Watershed Council as the new chair.

Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups

Lance Winecka, Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEG), highlighted a RFEG training held in Leavenworth, thanking the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife for funding most of the training.

Mr. Winecka shared the RFEG Draft Annual Report. The RFEGs and Lead Entities will hold meetings to discuss permitting and learn about using tools to engage the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) to expedite the permitting process. RFEGs and Lead Entities plan to visit the Legislature at the end of January.

Item 4: Additional Riparian Policies

Nick Norton, Policy Specialist, outlined the draft riparian policies for the riparian grant category. Based on board direction, partner, and Tribal feedback, staff developed draft [Manual 18](#) appendix language, detailing program processes and policies. .

Director Duffy emphasized that because CCA is a new funding source, certain commitments and obligations associated with CCA funding are still in development including reporting requirements, tribal consultation, and requirements that certain percentages of funding be dedicated to specific elements.

Mr. Norton highlighted the notable pieces of policy development that aimed at ensuring project success: Riparian Enhancement Plan, assessment and inventory guidance, match for blended projects, instream eligibility criteria, geographic envelope projects, and design elements. These are described in more detail in the [materials](#).

Member Cottingham asked about the letter from COR pertaining to floodplain re-grading. Director Duffy clarified that these comments were submitted by the Yakima Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board (YFWRB). **Alex Conley** was invited to provide comments. He shared a consensus was reached among COR, including proposed language for eligible instream work types to include floodplain, floodplain regrading, and side channel reconnection that significantly supports both riparian planting and natural regeneration. Mr. Norton summarized COR's request to add floodplain re-grading and side channel reconnection as eligible work types and remove the requirement for the work types to be associated with a planting component, noting that instream restoration work would be expensive and possibly perceived as deviating from Legislative intent.

Member Maroney asked for clarification of how "majority" is defined under Assessment and Inventory Eligibility in the [materials](#), where it says "... where the site-specific portion is the majority of the project.". **Kat Moore** explained that staff had not decided on a

deliberate amount and that that analysis will be project based. Noting the invasive species plant removal component, Member Maroney asked if there was any coordination on priority species with the Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC). Mr. Norton noted that while there is not currently coordination with WISC, collaboration could help applicants describe the nature and need of an invasive species removal component to make the nexus between salmon recovery and invasive species clearer to the review panel.

Mr. Norton then explained the policies, including CCA language, ordinary high-water mark, cost increases, eligible costs, buffer widths messaging, and specific definitions that align with WDFW riparian recommendations.

Next steps involve trainings and a webinar, complete changes to the PRISM application, publishing changes in Manual 18, providing riparian enhancement plan examples, updating the RCO website with reports and resources, and additional innovative policy preparation.

Members discussed the pros and cons of including floodplain re-grading and side channel reconnection as eligible work types in the program. Acknowledging floodplains as a necessary step in ensuring a healthy riparian project, **Chair Breckel**, **Member Cottingham**, and **Member Endresen-Scott** shared concern over spending riparian funds on contouring, which could be better suited for other programs. **Member Cram** noted research has shown that natural revegetation has been proven to be more successful than artificial revegetation. **Member Hoffman** recommended identifying a metric of success for natural revegetation. **Director Duffy** suggested one approach is to limit the dollar amount that could be invested in contouring projects. **Member Maroney** supported including floodplains and side channel connections.

Following discussion, Member Cottingham was supportive of including floodplain re-grading and side channel reconnection as eligible in-stream work types if language explaining how the activity is important to successful revegetation was added to the manual. Mr. Norton explained that this is an expected deliverable in the riparian enhancement plan and existing criteria that would be considered by the review panel and staff.

Public Comment

Alex Conley, on behalf of COR, commented on adding floodplain re-grading as an eligible work type. To determine if a project is eligible for riparian funding, Mr. Conley suggested asking sponsors whether the project would be equally cost effective and successful without floodplain work.

Motion: Move to approve the riparian funding policies as presented by staff and included in Attachment A with the following changes: adding floodplain re-grading and side channel reconnection as eligible instream work types and removing the requirement that projects with eligible instream elements have a riparian planting component. Recreation and Conservation Office staff are authorized to make additional administrative or grammatical changes as needed to finalize these riparian funding policies prior to incorporation into Manual 18.

Moved by: Member **Cottingham**
Seconded by: Member **Maroney**
Approved: **Approved**

BREAK: 10:13 AM – 10:30 AM

Item 5: Watershed Plan Recommendation Report

Member Gorman returned from the break at 10:32 a.m.

Kat Moore provided a brief overview of the Watershed Plan review framework. The 2018 Streamflow Restoration Law required planning groups in fifteen water resource inventory areas (WRIA) to develop watershed plans that offset impact from new domestic permit-exempt wells and identify actions that provide a net ecological benefit. To be adopted, plans had to be approved by all members of local committees and plans that did not have unanimous approval were sent to the board for a technical review. The technical review looked at the anticipated consumptive water use, offset of consumptive use, and net ecological benefit.

Since May, when staff presented the draft report to the board, the draft report was open for a Tribal and public comment period from July through October. Comments informed changes to the revised final report and are included in the [materials](#).

Hans Berge, Watershed Review Panel Member, explained the components of the review.

- **Consumptive Use** – estimated water consumption from permit-exempt wells in 2018-2038. Considered whether the projections are technically sound and used consistent methodology.
- **Water Offsets** – actions that put water back into aquifers and streams that offset new consumptive use. Considered whether the project offsets the projected impacts to instream flow in all subbasins in the WRIA.

- Net Ecological Benefit – actions that provide additional benefits to aquifers and streams beyond the minimum offset. Considered whether the project provides additional benefits.

The review looked at five watersheds.

| Watershed | Snohomish WRIA 7 | Cedar-Sammamish WRIA 8 | Deschutes WRIA 13 | Kennedy-Goldsborough WRIA 14 | Kitsap WRIA 15 |
|--------------------------------|------------------|------------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Area (square miles) | 1,856 | 692 | 270 | 381 | 676 |
| County | King, Snohomish | King, Snohomish | Lewis, Thurston | Mason, Thurston | King, Kitsap, Pierce, Mason |
| Subbasins | 16 | 12 | 13 | 8 | 7 |
| Permit-exempt Wells | 3,389 | 967 | 2,916 | 4,294 | 5,215 |
| Water use (acre-feet per year) | 797 | 425 | 434 | 760 | 718 |
| Offset (acre-feet per year) | 1,444 | 1,805 | 1,801 | 1,725 | 2,873 |
| Water Offset Projects | 11 | 10 | 9 | 6 | 15 |
| Habitat Projects | 26 | 23 | 19 | 25 | 31 |
| Members approve/disapprove | 21/1 | 15/1 | 11/1 | 7/4 | 12/6 |

Mr. Berge noted that there were challenges coming to a member consensus in WRIA Fourteen and WRIA Fifteen.

Mr. Berge briefly summarized the review outcomes, also shared at the May meeting, of each WRIA before sharing recommendations. The review panel recommended that WRIA Seven and Eight could make improvements through better distribution of projects to match the needs of individual subbasins; reducing the uncertainty of the measurement of consumptive use; and improving the likelihood of projects being completed to provide net ecological benefits. For WRIs Thirteen, Fourteen, and Fifteen recommended improvements included reducing projected water offset benefits for highly conceptual or uncertain projects; removing managed aquifer recharge (MAR) projects that use streamflow as source water; and removing estuary/marine projects that

have no offset potential. The technical review concluded that consumptive use estimates were technically sound, and methodology was consistent across WRIs. Water offsets were generally too optimistic, but after adjustment appear to be adequate but the benefits should be recalculated. Additionally, net ecological benefit projects will provide some additional ecological and instream benefits; however, some projects are overly optimistic, and implementation is uncertain. Mr. Berge summarized the Tribal and public comments for each WRIA, which can be found in full in the [materials](#). Overall, commenters highlighted climate change as an important consideration for context of withdrawals. Commenters also felt that adaptive management is necessary; there is an over reliance on habitat projects to mitigate water withdrawal; there is little data from existing exempt wells; and that there is an uncertainty of project implementation and benefits.

The technical review panel recommended revising and removing uncertain offset and habitat projects in WRIA Thirteen, Fourteen, and Fifteen; and that all plans benefit from addressing specific comments provided in Appendix A of the [materials](#). Additionally, plan adaptation should address additional projects; feasible offsets should be prioritized; and updates need to address improved data and climate change.

Member Maroney asked how up to date the consumptive use data was for each WRIA, assuming the data may have been impacted by COVID-19. Mr. Berge shared that the data was provided by the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) using pre-COVID-19 numbers but noted that some WRIs have done voluntary monitoring projects to update data.

Referring to a letter received from the Snoqualmie Tribe, **Member Cottingham** asked if the review panel's recommendations address the inconsistency in MARs mentioned by the Tribe. Mr. Berge explained that MARs are systems that remove water from high flow times and hold it in a reservoir of some kind where it infiltrates into a floodplain and returns to surface water through groundwater. Mr. Berge noted that the report could have done a better job explaining the difference between MAR projects in each watershed. Ms. Moore added that this clarification can be added to the updated report in the final letter to Ecology.

Public Comment

Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes Environmental Department Manager, was involved in streamflow watershed planning for WRIA Seven and Eight. Mr. Nelson shared that the Tulalip Tribes agree additional monitoring assessment accountability and data adaptation were necessary and with the special distribution of projects. The Tulalip

Tribes suggested some adaptation in the form of funding future projects that met the same criteria as projects included in the plan that could address the spatial aspects of the project. Mr. Nelson expressed concern over the MAR project in WRIA Thirteen that uses hydrologic manipulation. In a final note, Mr. Nelson shared that there was uncertainty of how the plan would be implemented and adapted after the plan was adopted.

Chair Breckel asked if plan implementation was considered in the review and Mr. Berge answered that was outside the scope of the project and up to Ecology.

Motion: Move to approve the Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan Review Report, Recreation and Conservation Office: Attachment A with amendments to include clarifying language related to WRIAs Seven and Eight Managed Aquifer Recharge projects and submit the report to the director of the Department of Ecology.

Moved by: Member **Endresen-Scott**

Seconded by: Member **Cottingham**

Approved: **Approved**

LUNCH: 11:39 AM – 12:45 PM

Item 6: Match Waiver Proposal Options

Nick Norton provided a summary of the match policy discussion that has taken place over the past year. At the September 2023 meeting, the board expressed a desire to revise match to better capture all the outside funding included in SRFB funded projects. For the sake of clarity and consistency, Mr. Norton refers to the options as “waiving match” or “match waiver.” Staff considered three main areas of Manual 18 where match would remain variable.

- Riparian Planting Projects – to incentivize sponsors to meet buffer width requirements, match would be required for projects where planting is the primary purpose that are unable to meet the established buffer width requirements.
- Acquisition Projects – requires different tiers of match for acquisitions with upland components, with the intent of focusing funds in riparian areas.
- Design-Only Projects – match is not required for design-only projects less than \$350,000 that are completed in two years.

Mr. Norton presented two options for board discussion and decision.

- 1) Full Match Waiver: Traditional 15% match is waived for all project types. This option is paired with new outside funding reporting requirements and program review and will require more secondary policy follow-up.
- 2) Partial Match Waiver: Match is waived for all project types except for certain acquisitions and riparian buffer projects (the three project types identified in the bullets above). This option would pair with new outside funding reporting requirements and a program review.

Both options would likely be implemented by 2025 and will not be in effect for the 2024 grant round.

Kurt Nelson, Tulalip Tribes, supported the full match waiver option, noting match restricts salmon recovery by burdening sponsors whose projects require multiple funding sources. Additionally, federal agencies are waiving match and requesting leverage that can be documented at project completion.

Dick Wallace, past board member representing Ecology and South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG) President, supported the full match waiver option, noting that match adds to the complexity of projects with no real benefit. **Chair Breckel** asked how the full spectrum of support is captured if match is not required. Mr. Wallace answered that, in his experience, most projects have multiple funding sources, with the administrative burden falling to the sponsor. **Kaylee Galloway**, Regional Fisheries Coalition (RFC), strongly supported the full match waiver option, noting that match is a financial barrier and administrative burden to salmon recovery partners. The full match waiver option would improve process efficiency, reduce administrative costs, expedite the completion of salmon recovery projects, and make funding more accessible and equitable. Ms. Galloway encouraged the board to consider individual letters submitted by RFEGs.

Melissa Speeg, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP), supported the full match waiver option and a partial match waiver at minimum, citing the administrative burden that match inflicts. Ms. Speeg noted that projects are complex, and match does not properly capture all funding sources. Additionally, without match, small projects could be completed with one funding source.

Vanessa Kritzer, Executive Director of the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT), supported the full match waiver option, which would put more good projects on the ground by saving time, reducing the administrative burden and barriers for new projects to begin, and increasing equitable access.

Board members agreed that match creates an administrative burden and is a barrier for smaller projects and project sponsors; however, many members shared concern over removing match entirely, primarily how it might be perceived by program funders.

Member Endresen-Scott suggested a review period after two funding cycles to ensure the expectations of changing match are met.

Member Cottingham wanted to make sure that RCO and Director Duffy receive board support when explaining match changes to members of Legislature and emphasized the importance of retaining the riparian and upland acquisition policies.

Member Maroney, Member Cottingham, Member Cram, and Member Gorman supported the partial match waiver option. **Member Endresen-Scott** supported the full match waiver option but was open to the partial match waiver option. **Member Kanzler** supported both options but noted the importance of continuing to track the full funding story.

Tom Kollasch, a Lead Entity Coordinator and Project Sponsor, explained how including itemized match in PRISM is such a burden that only the minimum amount of match is shown because the rest is not required, takes too much time, and is too much of an administrative burden.

Chair Breckel supported a partial match waiver, but wanted to be clear that the changes were meant to achieve a decreased administrative burden.

Cheryl Baumann was unsure and concerned about the partial match waiver for acquisitions, noting that acquisitions are often expensive but necessary for restoration. Additionally, acquisitions that do not include uplands are often unrealistic.

Member Cottingham clarified to Ms. Baumann that match is required on acquisitions only if there is over fifty percent of uplands.

Chair Breckel wanted reporting of other funding to happen at the time of application and in the final report.

Motion: Move to replace standing matching share requirements for board-funded projects with a requirement to report on the outside funding (at application and final report) used to accomplish the scope of work funded by the board. The matching share requirements shall remain under the following circumstances: acquisition projects with more than fifty percent uplands, as defined in Appendix L; projects with riparian planting as a primary component that do not meet

buffer standards as described in Appendix K; the board will review two grant cycles of information once implemented.

Moved by: Member **Cottingham**
Seconded by: Member **Endresen-Scott**
Amended by: Member **Endresen-Scott**
Amendment approved by: Member **Cottingham**
Amendment seconded by: Member **Endresen-Scott**
Approved: **Approved as amended**

Member Endresen-Scott amended the motion to include "*(at application and final report)*" and "*the board will review two grant cycles of information once implemented.*" so that it reads as written above.

Kat Moore asked if, once implemented, this change could be applied retroactively to projects that are funded between now and implementation. Mr. Norton noted that there may be some smaller pieces of policy presented at future meetings that could address this.

Public Comment

Comments were incorporated into the discussion above.

Item 7: Willapa Coastal Forest Acquisition: Transfer to United States Fish and Wildlife Service

Elizabeth Butler, Salmon Recovery Grants Manager, explained the proposed acquisition transfer of the Willapa Coastal Forest (WCF) Phase One ([RCO #22-1803](#)), an acquisition of more than 1,000 acres of industrial timberland from Western Rivers Conservancy (WRC) to the United States Department of Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to expand the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge (WNWR). Details of the project scope and other funding sources are in the [materials](#).

Although federal agencies are not eligible to receive board funding, the State Legislature provided guidance in [Revised Code of Washington \(RCW\) 77.85.130 \(7\)](#) on how to transfer board funded acquisitions to the federal government. In May 2023, Pacific County Commissioners approved Resolution 2023-036, included in the [materials](#), supporting the property transfer from WRC to USFWS. The USFWS determined they did not have the authority to assure that a future transfer would not occur, as they are directed by Congress. The National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act of 1966 provides authority to USFWS to exchange or sell property out of the refuge system should the USFWS Secretary or Congress decide to do so, therefore a future transfer cannot be prevented.

David Merchant, Washington State Assistant Attorney General (AAG), worked with the USFWS attorney to draft a series of documents that will govern this transaction. Upon board decision, RCO will deliver the grant funds to WRC, which will purchase the property from the timber company and sign and record the deed of right. WRC will then convey the property to USFWS, but the deed of right will not apply to the federal government, instead, the property stewardship agreement will govern the conservation project. If USFWS transfers the property to a non-federal entity, the deed of right will apply to the new landowner. AAG Merchant has confirmed that the legal requirements of the RCW have been met.

In addition to the RCW, [Manual 18](#) includes policy that guides the transfer of board-funded property to the federal government, including a provision for the review panel to assess substitute habitat protections. In October 2023, review panel members reviewed the conservation plan, property stewardship agreement, and the deed of right and concluded that the substitute protections meet the goals and objectives of the original project, benefiting salmonids and their habitat. The review panel provided recommendations to enhance riparian ecosystem protection and restoration for USFWS to consider as part of their next management plan update. RCO added a requirement to the property stewardship agreement that USFWS must notify RCO when management and restoration plans are open for public comment.

Ideally, the USFWS will forever own, protect, and steward the property to benefit salmon recovery in perpetuity. If USFWS fails to meet the obligations of the property stewardship agreement, RCO would need to file an injunction with the Federal District Court, and, if needed, sue the federal government for damages through Federal Claims Court. If USFWS transfers the property to another federal agency, the same substitute stewardship protections would apply; however, if they were to transfer to a non-federal entity, the property stewardship agreement and deed of right would still apply.

Staff have confirmed that the conveyance to the federal government aligns with [Manual 18](#) and USFWS attorney noted that a transfer to another agency is very unlikely. In developing the substitute habitat protections, staff tried to anticipate future challenges and provided input on opportunities for future stewardship as plans are developed for management and restoration. The risk of USFWS transferring this property to another owner or failing to live up to the responsibility of stewardship is likely very low.

Approving the conveyance and associated habitat protections as presented would enable the board to participate in a landmark acquisition prioritized by the lead entity and Pacific County Commissioners.

Member Hoffmann was under the impression that a memorandum of understanding (MOU) was not an enforceable document. AAG Merchant clarified that MOU is just the title of the document, and in this case is a stewardship agreement and deed of right. Member Hoffman also asked who at USFWS had the signature authority for this document. Ms. Butler answered that the Region One Real Estate Officer has authority.

Member Cram asked if the board would have a say in who could or could not buy the property if the USFWS decided to sell it. Ms. Butler explained that the board would not have that authority because USFWS takes direction from Congress. Additionally, Member Cram wondered if there was any potential for USFWS to focus on resource extraction. Ms. Butler and AAG Merchant agreed that the USFWS was focused on protection in national wildlife refuges and the risk of resource extraction was low.

Member Hoffmann asked if there were benefits in transferring to USFWS instead of state ownership. Ms. Butler noted that the property location made most sense to transfer into the federal wildlife refuge. This will also conserve state revenues as stewardship uses a lot of resources.

Motion: Move that the Salmon Recovery Funding Board approve the transfer of grant funded property from Project 22-1803, as described in the Item 7 Memorandum from the December 13, 2023, meeting materials, from Western Rivers Conservancy to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. This transfer protects critical salmon habitat and expands the Service's ownership and management of the Willapa Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Pacific County Washington. This transfer has also been approved by Pacific County per County Council Resolution 2023-036 in an open public meeting of the Council on May 23, 2023.

Moved by: Member **Endresen-Scott**

Seconded by: Member **Cottingham**

Approved: **Approved**

Public Comment

None.

BREAK: 2:35 PM – 2:50 PM

Item 8: Development of Large Project List for Funding

Before discussing the agenda item, **Brock Milliern** provided a Legislative update from the proposed Governor's budget that was released at 1:00 p.m. RCO received the requested \$7.56 million for WCRRI, and \$25 million for board funding, which is \$5 million more than requested. Additionally, RCO received \$22 million for the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board (BAFBRB) and \$11 million for the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP). This funding is all Climate Commitment Act (CCA) funding.

Turning the board's attention to the agenda item, Mr. Milliern explained the reasoning behind pursuing a large project list for funding. Over the last year, the board has emphasized the importance of a large project list, particularly a targeted investment (TI) round. In the original 2023 budget, many programs that received additional funding had a project list, while board funding decreased. The 2024 grant round is estimated to be around \$27 million, with \$25 million in the proposed Governor's budget, allowing the capacity to develop a large project list.

As explained in the [materials](#), TI appears to be an appropriate channel for a large project list. Mr. Milliern outlined the proposed parameters of a large project list. RCO intends to use the full amount received from the 2024 Supplemental Funding, minus administrative and review panel costs, to fund large projects and anticipates that projects that were not funded would become the basis for a large project request to the Legislature for the 2025-2027 biennium. Staff suggested limiting large projects to four per region and grants to between \$1 million and \$5 million. Mr. Milliern emphasized that this limit is a cap on the grant amount, not the project amount. Additionally, staff did not recommend new eligibility or evaluation criteria for this large project list; however, there was discussion of including evaluation criteria that would take projects that ranked higher at the regional level into account for the statewide competition.

Mr. Milliern shared the timeline, noting the process matches the regular 2024 grant round and finishes in time to submit a project list for the 2025-2027 biennium. Although this is a new concept, it follows existing board policies and the timing aligns with the next grant cycle and potential capacity of CCA funding.

Member Cottingham asked if, to better their chances, sponsors would try to get their projects on both the regular and large project list. **Nick Norton** believed the TI policy would require sponsors to choose one or the other, but not both.

Alex Conley, on behalf of the YBFWRB, shared that support for a large project list is conditional on seeing an equally robust effort to build funding for the regular grant program, noting that YBFWRB continues to believe that the regular grant program is the best funding route for most salmon recovery projects. Additionally, Mr. Conley suggested adding a scoring criterion that would award points based on project ranking to acknowledge regional priorities in the statewide competition.

Chair Breckel wanted to ensure that there were enough projects for the next biennial list and suggested increasing the number of projects allowed for each region.

Member Endresen-Scott and **Member Kanzler** shared concern that the \$5 million grant limit was too low. Mr. Norton explained that \$5 million was a strategic amount for the range of funding expected and **Jeannie Abbott** added that COR recommended the \$5 million limit.

Member Cram shared support for a large project list but wanted other large projects to continue to be tracked for legislative purposes.

Mr. Conley noted that COR did not have a consensus on whether \$5 million should be the cap. On behalf of YBFWRB, Mr. Conley expressed support for a \$5 million cap, adding that without a cap it is difficult to form a list with strong, broad-based support.

Steve Manlow, LCFRB Executive Director, supported the proposal made by Alex Conley on behalf of YBFWRB to add criteria to the scoring process that will ensure funded projects align with regional priorities.

Melissa Speeg encouraged the board to increase board funding for the regular grant round. Ms. Speeg questioned the fairness of projects being capped at four per region since Puget Sound has fifteen lead entities. Additionally, Ms. Speeg encouraged the board to clarify how projects would be ranked so that sponsors have a clear understanding of which project would be best to put forward for a large project list.

Member Cottingham suggesting increasing the regional project limit to six or seven projects.

Alicia Olivas highlighted the benefits of a board approved large project list, which helps projects find other funding sources and gives reviewers a chance to assess how the project will benefit salmon recovery.

Motion: Move to approve the initiation of a targeted investment grant round in conjunction with the 2024 grant round with the project and funding parameters as described by staff, but with the following changes: 1) add supplemental ranking

criteria that awards points based on how a project was ranked within a particular region; and 2) increasing the number of projects that each region can submit from four to six.

Moved by: Member **Cottingham**
Seconded by: Member **Endresen-Scott**
Approved: **Approved**

Public Comment

Comments were incorporated into the discussion above.

Item 9: State Agency Partner Reports

This item was presented after Item 5.

Washington State Conservation Commission

Member Levi Keesecker shared that the Washington State Conservation Commission's (SCC) riparian grant guidelines were open for review and public comment open until January 2, 2024.

SCC's new Executive Director, James Thompson, started on December 1, 2023.

Department of Ecology

Member Annette Hoffmann provided an update on 6PPD-Quinone (6PPD-Q). Ecology is continuing to create infographics for better communication to the public on "The Connection Between Tires, Fish, and Us" and is developing sampling protocols for data collection. Additionally, Ecology's environmental laboratory was accredited for analyzing 6PPD-Q in water. The hazard criteria used in assessing safer alternatives were revised and include toxicity on rainbow and Coho trout, toxicity of transformation products, and limits to acute toxicity (lethal concentrations) allowed. Staff continue to monitor 6PPD-Q research around the world, including results from wastewater treatment plants in Hong Kong, crumb rubber effects on marine lumpfish, interactions with dopamine, toxicology, and other research on how 6PPD-Q affects human health and aquatic environments. For more information and to sign up for updates visit the 6PPD-Q webpage at ecology.wa.gov.

Ecology continues to make efforts regarding climate change impacts affecting salmon, including impacts through water quality and quantity and ocean conditions. Primarily, Ecology is leading the update to Washington's Climate Resilience Strategy. This work covers a range of activities to help improve how Washington prepares, responds,

withstands, and recovers from climate change impacts through addressing communities, infrastructure, and natural and working lands. Ecology will consider ecosystem resilience and species and habitats as part of this work. For more information, visit the Climate Resiliency Strategy webpage at ecology.wa.gov.

Lastly, Member Hoffmann shared that Ecology contributed to the [Puget Sound Marine Waters 2022 Overview](#), published in November, that involves an important part of the salmon-life history.

Member Cottingham asked about federal litigation filed on 6PPD-Q. Member Hoffmann was unsure about litigation but shared that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is fast-tracking a petition by Tribes on 6PPD-Q and is currently gathering information through listening sessions.

Department of Transportation

Member Susan Kanzler shared that Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) constructed thirty-two fish passage projects in 2023, improving access to sixty-seven miles of habitat. This was the largest number of projects completed in a single year and salmon are spawning upstream of several projects. Nine other fish passage projects are anticipated to be completed by the end of next summer, including a bridge over Chico Creek on State Route Three in Kitsap.

The 2022 Washington Legislature authorized \$500 million over sixteen years, beginning in 2023, for WSDOT stormwater retrofitting as part of the Move Ahead Washington package to enhance stormwater treatment from existing roads and infrastructure with an emphasis on green infrastructure retrofits. The Legislature directs WSDOT to prioritize projects that focus on benefits to salmon recovery and ecosystem health, reducing toxic pollution, addressing health disparities, and cost effectiveness. Projects treat stormwater when adding new pavement or resurfacing roads to meet current stormwater treatments, standards, and regulations. The stormwater retrofit program addresses stormwater impacts from existing transportation infrastructure through three main approaches: a project triggered approach, opportunity-based retrofits, and stand-alone retrofits. WSDOT is making progress on an interactive web-based map that shows stormwater retrofit priorities and projects. The final map will be publicly available and should be ready by summer of 2024.

WSDOT is addressing overarching habitat, water quality, 6PPD-Q, and human health goals that will endure beyond Move Ahead Washington funding and legislative changes.

Department of Natural Resources

Member Tom Gorman shared that in early December, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) submitted two reports to the Legislature, the statewide [Kelp Forest and Eelgrass Health and Conservation Prioritization Plan](#) and the [Kelp and Eelgrass Health and Conservation Prioritization – Monitoring Plan](#).

Additionally, with support from WDFW and WISC, DNR is seeking direct funding from the Legislature for European Green Crab (EGC) management. This direct appropriation would conserve WDFW funds and be primarily used for control work on the coast and monitoring in the Puget Sound, particularly in DNR preserves.

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Member Jeremy Cram shared that in October, the WDFW Commission approved the co-manager hatchery policies and is pending signatures from individual tribes. WDFW Commission hosted four Special Hatchery Workshops on how hatcheries relate to Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW). The presentations can be found in the [WDFW Commission meeting minutes](#).

WDFW riparian teams working on riparian systems assessments have been engaging with the Puget Sound Taskforce and other agencies to roll out tools for riparian systems mapping.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) agreed that the petition to list coastal Chinook and steelhead has merit, and WDFW is requesting support for monitoring these coastal species.

WDFW has made progress on the net gain proviso, which requires public projects to have an environmental benefit, and is hoping to move towards agency request legislation in the next full biennium.

Reports have been published to the [WDFW website](#) about EGC emergency management.

ADJOURN: 3:26 PM

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------------|
| Motion: | Move to adjourn early. |
| Moved by: | Member Cottingham |
| Seconded by: | Member Endresen-Scott |
| Approved: | Approved |

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: March 6, 2024

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 fiscal and performance updates.

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

Recreation and Conservation Office in the Other Washington

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) led a multi-state delegation to Washington D.C. in November to discuss the importance of the federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund, federal funding with the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act, and federal commitments and engagement in supporting salmon recovery across the West Coast and north Pacific. The delegation, which included representatives from state agencies, tribes, and Governor's Offices, met with federal agency leadership and congressional members and staff.



RCO Gives Top Awards

The December all staff meeting was a chance to recognize staff for jobs well done and give out special recognition awards. Tessa Cencula was the recipient of the Director's Award for Excellence. This award is given to an individual for embodying RCO's core values and competencies and exhibiting outstanding leadership in carrying out work duties or advancing the positive culture of the agency. Staff who nominated Tessa lauded her work ethic, problem solving, and attention to detail, as well as her organization, thoughtfulness, empathy, and overall excellence. Staff described Tessa as "steadfast in her quality of work and positive attitude."



Nick Norton was the recipient of the Director's Achievement Award. This award is given to an individual or team for outstanding work or completion of a critical project. This award recognizes those who complete work that is above and beyond normal duties, complicated, or of special significance to the agency. Staff who nominated Nick cited his way of framing questions and policy issues to capture what is really important, that he has earned the trust of external partners, his hard work on the Salmon Recovery Funding Board match policy, his instrumental work in the Local Parks Maintenance grant program, and that he has become an invaluable member of both the policy and salmon teams. There were seventeen nominations this year, which gave the judges, two of the past year's winners Ben Donatelle and Marc Duboiski, a challenging job.



More Happy Migrating Fish on the Way

RCO recently received some good news for the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board. The Washington State Department of Transportation received funding from the Federal Highway Administration for the department's PROTECT (Promoting Resilient Operation for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost Saving Transportation) program. This program provides funding to help make surface transportation more resilient to climate change and natural disasters, including correcting fish passage barriers. The



original biennial funding from the Legislature allowed the board to fund 34 of the 102 projects on the ranked list. The new funding from the federal government will cover thirteen of those projects, allowing the board to pay cost increases on other funded projects and perhaps fund another thirty or more projects.

Governor’s Budget Favorable to RCO

Governor Jay Inslee’s proposed supplemental budget was great news for RCO, salmon recovery, and other natural resource priorities. The operating budget includes \$150,000 to update an RCO study on the economic benefits of outdoor recreation and \$1 million to match federal funds in a project to develop a blueprint for investments in recreation along the lower Snake River if the dams are breached.

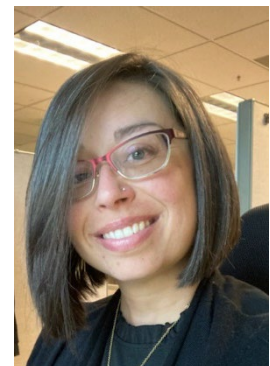
The capital budget includes \$5.7 million to fund the final two projects in the Community Forests Program and \$5 million for a grant program designed to incentivize carbon storage practices such as increased harvest rotation time and forest health projects. Salmon recovery got a big boost in the capital budget with the Salmon Recovery Funding Board receiving \$25 million, the Washington Coastal Restoration and Resiliency Initiative receiving \$7.5 million, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program receiving

\$11 million, and the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board receiving \$22 million. Between the two budgets, RCO could receive \$70 million more than requested. The Governor’s budget is the first step and will be followed by two budgets from the Legislature. The Legislative session is set to end in March.



Employee News

Ashly Arambul started in December as the Land and Water Conservation Fund compliance grants manager. Ashly came to RCO from the Department of Natural Resources in 2018. She was RCO’s first compliance inspector and then two years ago, moved to the Recreation and Conservation Grants Section as an outdoor grants manager. Ashly will be using her research and relationship skills to work collaboratively on resolving compliance issues. She will provide technical assistance to Land and Water Conservation Fund sponsors about the long-term federal grant obligation, work on compliance issues and conversions, conduct inspections, and coordinate with the National Park Service compliance staff.



Caroline Morin joined RCO in December as its first equity coordinator. She comes to RCO from North Carolina where she ran a diversity, equity, and inclusion consulting services business. Caroline's work background comes with a wide breadth of experience including executive director of the LGBTQ Center of the Cape Fear Coast, vice president of Learning and Development at Tru Colors Brewing, and regional field coordinator with the American Civil Liberties Union. While her experience is wide, the common thread is her commitment to and promotion of diversity, equity, and inclusion. In addition to work, Caroline received her law degree from New England Law and is an active member of the Massachusetts Bar.



Lorik Soukiazian joined RCO January 1 as a fiscal analyst. She came to the agency with a lot of accounting experience, most recently at the Employment Security Department. This is a new position in fiscal. She will be the lead for administrative accounting, working with other staff on travel reimbursement, accounts payable and receivable, budget, and interagency agreements.



Sarah Thirtyacre left RCO in December to take a position as the Environmental Program manager for the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. Under the umbrella of the newly established Stewardship Division, she is managing the statewide coordination of environmental review and cultural resources compliance. This position knits together her land management, environmental review, and cultural resources experience. Sarah joined RCO sixteen years ago as an outdoor grants manager before moving into the Grants Services Section handling cultural resources. She has grown that team to three employees, including RCO's first archaeologist.

Erik Tompkins joined RCO January 2 as a contracting specialist in the Grant Services Team. He brings seventeen years of experience in contracting and previously worked at the Washington State Departments of Commerce, Employment Security, and Transportation. He most recently worked at the King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks. Erik graduated from The Evergreen State College, where he earned his master in public administration degree. He has extensive experience working on a wide array of state contracts and brings project management and Lean process improvement skills as well.

News from the Boards

The **Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group** will meet in April.

The **Washington Invasive Species Council** met in December and heard a presentation from the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) on its enhanced monitoring efforts for quagga mussels and lessons learned from the eradication efforts in Idaho. The council then heard an overview of the Feral Swine Tabletop Exercise event in Spokane and was briefed on topics such as American bullfrog removal on Kalispel tribal lands and WDFW's Chronic Wasting Disease Surveillance Program. The council approved a proposal for new criteria for volunteer recognition awards. Finally, the council received an update of the Prioritization Assessment Tool and exercised the newly included cultural resource impacts element, which was extremely enlightening and garnered support from the council to further explore.

The **Recreation and Conservation Funding Board** met for a special meeting in December and adopted criteria changes to four grant programs, with the goal of improving opportunities for outdoor recreation in communities with fewer parks and less open space. The board is scheduled to meet next on January 30 to cover topics including the annual compliance report, policy changes to the Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities program, and featured funded projects.

Legislative and Policy Update

Policy staff will provide an update on bills being tracked during this legislative session and updated information on the supplemental budget.

Staff will also provide an outline of policy topics for the board in 2024, which will include a timeline for development of the 2025-2027 biennial budget, which is due to the legislature in mid-September 2024.

Fiscal Report

The fiscal report reflects Salmon Recovery Funding Board activities as of July 18, 2023.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

For July 1, 2023-June 30, 2025, actuals through October 15, 2023 (FM 03). 12.5 percent of biennium reported.

| PROGRAMS | BUDGET New and Re- appropriation 2023-2025 | COMMITTED | | TO BE COMMITTED | | EXPENDITURES | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------|----------------|---------------------|----------------|---------------------|-------------------|
| | | Dollars | % of Budget | Dollars | % of Budget | Dollars | % of Committed |
| State Funded | | | | | | | |
| 2015-17 | \$1,312,000 | \$1,144,136 | 87% | \$167,864 | 13% | \$0 | 0% |
| 2017-19 | \$2,437,000 | \$1,592,158 | 65% | \$844,842 | 35% | \$945,722 | 59% |
| 2019-21 | \$2,174,000 | \$2,115,499 | 97% | \$58,501 | 3% | \$533,186 | 25% |
| 2021-23 | \$23,207,419 | \$22,627,987 | 98% | \$579,432 | 2% | \$2,947,128 | 13% |
| 2021-23 Supplemental | \$118,925,618 | \$93,572,013 | 79% | \$25,353,605 | 21% | \$11,680,098 | 12% |
| 2023-25 | \$16,168,606 | \$6,632,113 | 41% | \$9,536,493 | 59% | \$100,292 | 2% |
| Total | \$164,224,643 | \$127,683,906 | 78% | \$36,540,737 | 22% | \$16,206,426 | 13% |
| Federal Funded | | | | | | | |
| 2018 | \$2,924,445 | \$2,897,907 | 99% | \$26,537 | 1% | \$1,874,905 | 65% |
| 2019 | \$3,521,707 | \$3,491,098 | 99% | \$30,609 | 1% | \$1,545,966 | 44% |
| 2020 | \$4,896,590 | \$4,896,055 | 99% | \$535 | 0.1% | \$456,460 | 9% |
| 2021 | \$9,212,259 | \$8,680,377 | 95% | \$531,882 | 5% | \$1,808,726 | 21% |
| 2022 | \$17,957,016 | \$17,950,165 | 99% | \$6,850 | 0.1% | \$1,609,262 | 9% |
| 2023 | \$24,435,000 | \$21,003,609 | 86% | \$2,611,391 | 11% | \$489,913 | 2% |
| Total | \$62,947,017 | \$58,919,211 | 94% | \$3,207,804 | 5% | \$7,785,232 | 13% |
| Grant Programs | | | | | | | |
| Lead Entities | \$10,981,879 | \$7,375,574 | 67% | \$3,606,305 | 33% | \$1,737,105 | 24% |
| PSAR | \$122,127,986 | \$117,624,261 | 96% | \$4,503,725 | 4% | \$14,768,918 | 13% |
| Subtotal | \$133,109,865 | \$124,999,835 | 94% | \$8,110,030 | 6% | \$16,506,023 | 13% |
| Administration | | | | | | | |
| Admin/ Staff | \$10,250,000 | \$10,250,000 | 100% | \$0 | 0% | \$2,632,729 | 26% |
| Subtotal | \$10,250,000 | \$10,250,000 | 100% | \$0 | 0% | \$2,632,729 | 26% |
| GRAND TOTAL | \$370,531,525 | \$321,852,952 | 87% | \$47,858,571 | 13% | \$43,130,410 | 13% |

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

Performance Update

The following data displays grant management and project impact performance measures for fiscal year 2024. Data included is specific to projects funded by the board and current as of November 7, 2023.

Project Impact Performance Measures

The following tables provide an overview of the fish passage accomplishments funded by the board in fiscal year 2024. 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.

| Measure | FY 2024 Performance |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| Blockages Removed | 17 |
| Bridges Installed | 1 |
| Culverts Installed | 2 |
| Fish Ladders Installed | 0 |
| Fishway Chutes Installed | 0 |

Table 1: Blockage Removal and Passage-way Installation projects

So far, 17 salmon blockages were removed this fiscal year (July 1, 2023, to January 29, 2024), and 3 passageways installed (Table 1). These projects have cumulatively opened 9.06 miles of stream (Table 2).

| Project Number | Project Name | Primary Sponsor | Funding Program | Stream Miles |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------------|
| 21-1005 | Cougar Creek Fish Passage Restoration | Asotin Co Conservation Dist | Salmon State Projects | 2.25 |
| 19-1522 | Lower Clearwater Tributaries Restoration | The Nature Conservancy | Salmon Federal Projects | 0.81 |
| 21-1342 | RFEG 21-23 DFW Funding | Fish & Wildlife Dept of | Salmon State Activities | 6.00 |
| | | | | 9.06 |

Table 2: Stream Miles Opened

Grant Management Performance Measures

The table below summarizes fiscal year 2024 operational performance measures as of January 29, 2024

| Measure | FY Target | FY 2024 Performance | Indicator | Notes |
|--|-----------|---------------------|-----------|--|
| Percent of Salmon Projects Issued Agreement within 120 Days of Board Funding | 90% | 41% | ● | 159 agreements for SRFB-funded projects were due to be mailed this fiscal year to date. Staff issued 65 agreements within 120 days, averaging 33 days. |
| Percent of Salmon Progress Reports Responded to On Time (15 days or less) | 90% | 88% | ● | 425 progress reports were due this fiscal year to date for SRFB-funded projects. Staff responded to 376 in 15 days or less. On average, staff responded within 7 days. |
| Percent of Salmon Bills Paid within 30 days | 100% | 100% | ● | During this fiscal year to date, 988 bills were due for SRFB-funded projects. All were paid on time. |
| Percent of Projects Closed on Time | 85% | 84% | ● | 99 SRFB-funded projects were scheduled to close. So far, this fiscal year 83 of them closed on time. |
| Number of Projects in Project Backlog | 5 | 14 | ● | 14 SRFB-funded projects are in the backlog and need to be closed out. |

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: March 6, 2024

Title: Salmon Recovery Management Report

Prepared By: Erik Neatherlin, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Director
Jeannie Abbott, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Program Coordinator
Greer Maier, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Science Coordinator
Tara Galuska, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Orca Recovery Coordinator
Marc Duboiski, Salmon Grants 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 Section.

Board Action Requested

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

Introduction / Background

Federal Affairs

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) and Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) continued to coordinate with the Governor's Office in DC on federal budget and policy issues important for salmon, orca, and habitat resiliency. RCO, Puget Sound Partnership, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Department of Ecology directors jointly submitted written testimony to the Senate Committee on Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs for a hearing on "Reauthorization of the National Flood Insurance Program: Local Perspectives on Challenges and Solutions."

Governor's Statewide Salmon Strategy

GSRO is developing the 2025-2027 biennial work plan to implement the [governor's salmon strategy](#). The work plan will include state agency legislative and policy priorities

with a recommended budget for salmon recovery that aligns with Tribal priorities and salmon recovery plans.

The work plan is due to the governor's office in October. GSRO is working with the natural resource agencies, regional recovery directors and the Tribal consortiums to inform salmon recovery policy and budget priorities.

Partner Activities

GSRO attended the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board meeting and field tour in Bellingham in September. The tour visited a series of projects from railroad crossings in the nearshore to sites upstream of I-5.

GSRO Director Erik Neatherlin attended the annual Centennial Accord meeting with RCO Director Megan Duffy in October. Directors Duffy and Neatherlin and Board Chair Jeff Breckel attended the in-person Council of Regions work planning workshop on October 19, hosted by Hood Canal Coordinating Council in Poulsbo. GSRO and the Council of Regions continued their quarterly meetings with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Director and Executive Management Team. These quarterly meetings have deepened the relationship and partnership between the regions and the department on key policy and budget topics.

RCO and GSRO continued to participate in the Governor's Office Riparian Roundtable discussions and the Riparian Working Group meetings.

GSRO attended the Pacific Salmon and Climate Initiative scoping workshop hosted by Long Live the Kings and Pacific Salmon Foundation. The workshop was held in SeaTac and attended by nearly one hundred participants. The goal of the workshop was to bring together policy makers, leaders, and scientists from across the region (California to Alaska) including Tribes and First Nations to scope a path for the long-term resilience of Pacific salmon in the face of a changing climate.

Spokane Watershed Lead Entity

Spokane Salmon Restoration Collaborative submitted their package to RCO requesting lead entity status, including resolutions supporting the Lead Entity creation from the initiating governments. Resolutions have been received from the Spokane Tribe of Indians, Stevens County, Lincoln County, Spokane County, city of Spokane and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. The Spokane Conservation District and Pend Oreille Conservation District also submitted letters of support.

Staff are working on map boundaries and how the website displays this information. Currently, Northeast region encompasses the Watershed Resource Inventory Areas

(WRIA) 53, 54, 58, 60, 61, and 62. Spokane Watershed Lead Entity encompasses WRIA 54, 55, 56, and 57.

Staff expect the following timeline for funding options and approval:

- March-May 2024: staff develops funding options for Spokane Watershed Lead Entity.
- June 2024 board meeting: request direction from the board on funding options to consider and develop.
- March 2025 board meeting: request decision from the board on final funding option for Spokane Watershed Lead Entity.
- June 2025 board meeting: the board sets 2026 grant round, including funding for Spokane Watershed Lead Entity.
- January 2026: Spokane Watershed Lead Entity hosts their first grant round.

Salmon Recovery Conference

The 2025 Salmon Recovery Conference will be held in Yakima at the Yakima Convention Center, April 28-30, 2025. Changes for this conference include starting Monday afternoon, having more plenary general sessions, allowing more time for questions and discussion, and providing more opportunity to network with colleagues.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Monitoring Panel met November 6 to workshop the future of monitoring programs. During the meeting, the group developed a draft charter and proposed changing their name to the "Science Advisory Panel" (SAP) to better reflect their role in decision making. They reviewed results from assessment interviews with panel members and regional directors, deciding to expand the interviews to Salmon Recovery Funding Board members to gather more information on monitoring and evaluation in relation to board decision making and adaptive management. The group started development of a 2024 workplan that includes tasks for moving forward on Intensely Monitored Watersheds, the Floodplain Monitoring Pilot Project, and the board's regional monitoring program.

The Monitoring Subcommittee met on November 17 to discuss outcomes from the assessment interviews and Monitoring Panel workshop, and their role in tasks identified in the 2024 SAP Workplan.

Orca Recovery

The Center for Whale Research completes an annual census of the population. The most recent report showed the population was comprised of 75 individuals. They have noted that K34, a 22-year-old male, has not been seen in the last three encounters with his family. In addition, a birth was reported on December 26, 2024. However, this calf was not spotted with his pod in the most recent encounter and is likely deceased. Whales

that are missing from encounters with their associates three times or more are more likely to be deceased, however calves of this young age are much more reliant on their family.

In January, Orca Recovery Coordinator Tara Galaska presented to Canada's Southern Resident Killer Whale First Nations group and their Joint Indigenous and Multi-Stakeholder Advisory Group (IMAG) on Washington State's recovery efforts and heard about Canada's work on recovery. Canada has invested in protection of this species through their Oceans Protection Plan and their Whale Initiative. Canada has adopted annual protection measures since 2019 and at this meeting, they discussed moving to longer term protective measures. NOAA and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada are meeting over two days in January to discuss research coordination for Southern Resident Killer Whales for the next five years, which will be important to help inform management decisions.

A two-day Oil Spill Task Force on Southern Residents took place on the San Juan Islands in December where deterrence methods were discussed and planned for in the event of an oil spill.

Quiet Sound is implementing their second commercial vessel slowdown in Puget Sound and was recognized by NOAA as a Species in the Spotlight partner of the year.

Tara presented and participated in the annual Ways of Whales Hybrid Workshop. The panel was on Southern Resident Killer Whales and salmon recovery. Presenters included Brad Hansen, a leading NOAA biologist discussing the seasonal diet of Southern Resident Killer Whales, Darren Croft, Executive Director of Center for Whale Research presenting on the evolving size of Chinook and possible behavior shifts in foraging of SRKW, and Kayeloni Scott, from the Nez Perce Tribe, who recently coproduced the movie, [Covenant of the Salmon People](#). Tara spoke about the task force and recommendations on improving prey availability as well as the Statewide Salmon Recovery Strategy 2021 and the state's efforts to increase prey. The panel answered many questions about salmon recovery.

The Southern Resident Killer Whale Intergovernmental Workgroup will meet in February to discuss the 2024 supplemental budget in relation to the orca task force recommendations and opportunities for collaboration looking ahead as well as the federal budget and the National Defense Act.

Salmon Recovery Section Report

New Assistant Grant Section Managers

RCO hired two new assistant grants section managers. [Kat Moore](#) was promoted from senior grants manager to become the SRFB assistant grants section manager. [Christy Rains](#) was hired from WDFW to oversee RCO's salmon recovery related office programs.

2022 Grant Cycle

RCO staff and grant recipients are wrapping up the execution of agreements for the 160 salmon projects funded in 2022. As of February, 151 are active grant agreements.

2023 Grant Cycle

RCO staff and grant recipients are working on executing agreements for the 95 salmon projects funded by the board last September. As of February, 73 are active grant agreements.

2024 Grant Cycle is Underway!

The new 2024 SRFB manual was published in January, including the new riparian and targeted investment guidelines.

The SRFB review panel kickoff was held on February 1 in Olympia. The salmon team also conducted the annual statewide application workshop webinar on February 13.

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 31, 2024. This table does not include projects funded through the BAFBRB, 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 | 34 | 499 | 3,102 | 3,635 |
| Percentage of Total | 1% | 14% | 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.

Attachments

Closed Projects

Attachment A: Closed Projects lists projects that closed between December 13, 2023, and January 31, 2024. Each project number includes a link to information about the project (e.g., designs, photos, maps, reports, etc.). Staff closed out 14 projects or contracts during this time.

Approved Amendments

Attachment B shows the major amendments approved between December 13, 2023, and January 31, 2024. Staff processed 67 cost change amendments during this period.

Attachment A

Salmon Projects Completed and Closed from December 13, 2023-January 31, 2024

| Project Number | Sponsor | Project Name | Primary Program | Closed Completed Date |
|----------------|--|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <u>17-1030</u> | Wahkiakum Conservation District | Johnston Wilson Creek Restoration | Salmon Federal Projects | 01/29/2024 |
| <u>18-1499</u> | Skagit Watershed Council | Sauk River Habitat Protection & Restoration Plan | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | 01/12/2024 |
| <u>18-1761</u> | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | Upper Puyallup-White Assessment and Design | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | 01/24/2024 |
| <u>19-1213</u> | Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group | Coweeman, Nineteen, and Skipper Restoration | Salmon Federal Projects | 01/05/2024 |
| <u>19-1217</u> | JE Smith Consulting | PERS SRV Monitoring Panel JE Smith 2019 | Salmon Federal Activities | 01/19/2024 |
| <u>19-1494</u> | Columbia Conservation District | Tucannon PA 26 LWD Enhancement | Salmon State Projects | 01/11/2024 |
| <u>19-1699</u> | Wild Fish Conservancy | PERS SRV Monitoring Panel Wild Fish Cons. 2019 | Salmon Federal Activities | 01/25/2024 |
| <u>20-1091</u> | Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians | Trafton Floodplain Preliminary Design | Salmon State Projects | 01/23/2024 |
| <u>21-1005</u> | Asotin County Conservation District | Cougar Creek Fish Passage Restoration | Salmon State Projects | 01/12/2024 |

| Project Number | Sponsor | Project Name | Primary Program | Closed Completed Date |
|--------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <u>21-1183</u> | Okanogan County | Mazama Bridge Habitat Acquisition | Salmon State Projects | 01/30/2024 |
| <u>21-1184</u> | Chelan County Natural Resources Department | RegM-Entiat River Fish Monitoring | Salmon Federal Activities | 12/22/2023 |
| <u>21-1233</u> | Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians | Stillaguamish Co-LE Tribe BN 21-23 | PSAR-Lead Entity Contracts | 12/22/2023 |
| <u>22-1190</u> | King County Water & Land Resources | Seawest Granston (Middle Bear) Natural Area Rest. | Salmon Federal Projects | 01/03/2024 |
| <u>22-1514</u> | Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation | Scaffold Camp Floodplain Restoration | Salmon State Projects | 01/30/2024 |

Attachment B

Project Amendments Approved by the RCO Director

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------|------------|--|
| 17-1177 | North Fork Teanaway Large Wood Trapping | Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 02/08/2023 | Add salmon state to close project. |
| 18-1228 | 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 LE Small Supplemental funds awarded by SRFB 9/22/2022. New Agreement total is \$589,119. |
| 18-1228 | Dosewallips R Powerlines Acquisition and Design | Jefferson County Public Health | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 01/22/2024 | Increase SRFB funding by \$27,500 (RCO cost increase funding pot), new project total \$616,619. |
| 18-1291 | 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. |
| 18-1598 | Goodman Creek Collapsed Stringer Bridge Removal | Pacific Coast Salmon Coalition | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 07/31/2023 | Add \$12,468 in salmon funds and \$1,870 in match to complete construction due to high contractor bids. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| <u>18-1837</u> | Kitsap Nearshore Armor Removal Design & Readiness | Kitsap County | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 07/11/2023 | This amendment changes the number of designed projects from 4-6 to 3 and increases the grant award by \$9,000 (from \$236,274 to \$245,274). FY19-21 PSAR funds (returned from 18-1472 Little Manzanita 2) are being used to fulfill the cost increase. |
| <u>19-1116</u> | Pacific Pointbar - Acquisition #2 | City of Sumner | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 03/15/2023 | Correcting the funding source for previous cost increase amendment. Correct funding source for \$1,082,940 is 21-23 PSAR. |
| <u>19-1219</u> | Gobar Pond Restoration Project | Cowlitz Indian Tribe | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 06/16/2023 | Increase A&E to 30%. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>19-1346</u> | Lower Horn Creek Fish Passage | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 03/14/2023 | Add \$92,000 return 2017-19 PSAR funding (PSP). Increase sponsor match to \$56,000. New project total is \$369,000. Director approved 3/9/2023; PSP approved 2/28/2023. Also, exchange \$120,212.71 of 2019/2021 PCSRF between project 19-1346 and project 21-1032 (cost changed entered). Change PCSRF reporting year for project 19-1346 to 2021. |
| <u>19-1424</u> | Tjossem Ditch -- Improving Salmonid Survival | Trout Unlimited Inc. | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 06/02/2023 | Per Amendment 5 to IAA C1800180 (19-17) between Department of Ecology and Recreation and Conservation Office, the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Funding is increased by \$81,637 to total \$240,947 to afford higher construction costs. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>19-1446</u> | Ahtanum Village Restoration Design | Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 01/24/2023 | To address SRFB 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. |
| <u>19-1497</u> | Walla Walla B2B Phase 3 Design | Tri-State Steelheaders Inc | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 01/10/2024 | To correct the close short amendment. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>20-1008</u> | 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. |
| <u>20-1018</u> | Finn Creek Design | Wild Fish Conservancy | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 11/09/2022 | This amendment adds \$58,200 of the 2022 state SRFB funding awarded through 22-1098 and down-scopes 20-1018 from completing final designs to instead completing preliminary designs. Final designs will be completed through project 22-1098. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|------------|--|
| <u>20-1081</u> | Camp Coweeman Restoration | Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 03/16/2023 | <p>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.</p> <p>Sponsor is \$45,250 underbudget for completing the Baird Creek component of this project. They are requesting \$12,250 be added to the AA&E budget and \$33,000 be added to the construction budget. Adding \$45,250 based on this request.</p> |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>20-1082</u> | SF Toutle at Johnson Creek Riparian Restoration | Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 12/14/2023 | Due to inflation, increased fuel costs, and higher than anticipated construction expenses, the project sponsor has insufficient funds to complete this final component of the project and has requested an additional \$50,000 to finish the project. RCO funding is increased by \$50,000 to \$299,800, sponsor match is increased by \$6,006 to \$52,906. |
| <u>20-1086</u> | West Oakland Bay Restoration 2020, 2C | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | PSAR Large Capital Projects | Cost Change | 11/01/2023 | Merging PSAR Large Cap funds from 22-1175. Updating sponsor match to 11% by approval from Puget Sound Partnership. New total is \$6,475,931, with sponsor match at \$712,352. |
| <u>20-1105</u> | Skokomish RM 6.5 Restoration Phase 1 | Mason County Conservation District | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 02/02/2023 | Add 2022 Hood Canal LE SRFB funds of \$1,100,000, allocated as \$817,026 SRFB and \$282,974 Small Supplemental). Sponsor match changes to \$439,493. Agreement total is \$2,412,283. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>20-1107</u> | Snow Creek Forest Acquisition and Design | Jefferson Land Trust | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 08/17/2023 | Reduce PSAR funds to \$213,407 and sponsor match to \$74,000. New agreement total is \$287,407. Reduce planning to assessment. |
| <u>20-1113</u> | 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 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. |
| <u>20-1119</u> | Snow Creek Uncas Preserve Restoration | North Olympic Salmon Coalition | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 11/08/2022 | Add \$468,065 2022 Hood Canal LE State Supplemental Small funds awarded by SRFB 9/22/2022. New agreement total is \$1,373,844. Sponsor match is waived by RCO Director. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| <u>20-1177</u> | Lower East Fork Grays Restoration | Cowlitz Indian Tribe | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 12/01/2023 | RCO cost is increased from \$598,883 to \$1,146,241 to complete the project. Construction costs were higher than anticipated in the original estimate. Sponsor is contributing \$96,600 of additional match. Total project cost, including funds not reported in PRISM is \$2,095,123. This amendment was approved by the SRF Board on 09/13/2023 and is included on the ranked list as #23-1194. 23-1194 and 20-1177 were merged on 11/1/2023. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| <u>20-1350</u> | O'Brian Reach Floodplain Reconnection Feasibility | Department of Transportation | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 08/21/2023 | Adding in \$13,400 of 15-17 PSAR returned funds to accommodate for a post-flood high water mark survey and additional stakeholder outreach costs. Additional stakeholder outreach costs cover: many responses to community and attorney, in person meeting with community members, beefed up prep for workshop #2, prepare detailed meeting notes, update website, follow-up listserv emails, and finally added a virtual meeting for feedback. Also adding \$33,000 of match to maintain a minimum 15% match requirement. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>20-1367</u> | Debays Slough Feasibility Assessment | Department of Fish and Wildlife | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 01/25/2023 | Adding \$85,741.90 returned 15-17 and 17-19 PSAR funds. 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. |
| <u>20-1386</u> | IMW-Swinomish Channel Ph 3 Tidal Marsh Restoration | Swinomish Indian Tribal Community | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 07/06/2023 | This amendment increases the project funding by \$180,000 of Pacific Salmon Treaty ORCA Habitat funding (NA22NMF43800091) awarded by NOAA in 2022, increasing the total project agreement amount to \$627,274 to afford restoration; and the project will no longer be used to match 2020 NMFS PCSRF; and Special Conditions are added. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| <u>20-1390</u> | West-Middle Fork Teaway Instream Wood Design II | Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 06/08/2023 | Per Amendment 5 to IAA C1800180 (19-17) between Department of Ecology and Recreation and Conservation Office, \$172,294 of Yakima Basin Integrated Plan funding is added to this project to afford higher than anticipated Preliminary Design costs, including \$170,000 from Project 9: 20-1527 YBIP Teaway Watershed: instream/floodplain rest; \$2,245 returned from Project 2: 18-1424 Bull Trout Task Force; \$7 returned from Project 3: 18-2105 Little Naches River WS Aquatic Restoration (Design); and, \$42 returned from Project 5: 18-2108 Wapato Reach Restoration. |
| <u>20-1401</u> | Lower Yakima River Thermal Refuge Habitat Design | Benton Conservation District | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 05/02/2023 | For grant 20-1401, change PCSRF grant year online of coding. Reduce 2020 - \$21,656.21 Increase 2018 - \$21,656.21 |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>20-1469</u> | Loup Loup Creek Restoration Design | Okanogan Conservation District | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 09/18/2023 | Add \$41,651 of Salmon Recovery Funding Board cost increase funds to the project to complete current scope of work. Additional staff time/budget needed to complete Reach Assessment and Scope of Work associated with Prelim Design, administrative tasks, and documentation. |
| <u>20-1520</u> | Middle Nemah Restoration Phase 2 Design | Pacific Conservation District | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 04/21/2023 | Remove state funds used for advances. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|---|--------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>20-1562</u> | Armor Removal at Shaw Island's Broken Point | Friends of the San Juans | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 11/17/2023 | This amendment adds \$34,682 of regional returned PSAR funds to the contract. The reason for the cost increase is that, during construction, they discovered that the volume estimates for native sand and gravel behind the creosote bulkhead were WELL under what the engineering geologists estimated from their original test holes. It is mostly fill clay and soil behind the armor and this fill needs to be removed and clean, rounded, fish mix sand and gravel nourishment material brought in to restore the beach to natural substrate and grade. As a result, the sponsor will need to bring more clean nourishment material in, and export more dirt fill, than was originally designed, budgeted, and contracted for. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| | | | | | | The sponsor request and PSP approval are attached to PRISM. |
| <u>21-1002</u> | 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 SRFB 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. |
| <u>21-1005</u> | Cougar Creek Fish Passage Restoration | Asotin County Conservation District | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 12/14/2023 | Adding \$20,000 from the SRFB cost increase pot to cover unanticipated engineering and contractor costs, bringing the new project total to \$705,000. The sponsor will use other funding sources to cover the rest of the unanticipated contractor costs. Snake lead entity approved 12/6/2023. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1030</u> | Nisqually River McKenna Reach Protection 2021 | Nisqually Land Trust | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 11/01/2023 | Adding \$266,336 of SRFB funds and \$47,100 sponsor match to increase the project total to \$401,278. Project scope remains unchanged. This amendment is approved through the 2023 grant round. |
| <u>21-1032</u> | Mashel River Habitat Designs RM 0-3 | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 04/10/2023 | PCSRF funding exchange: Exchange \$120,212.71 of 2019/2021 PCSRF between project 19-1346 and project 21-1032 (cost changed entered). Change reporting year for 21-1032 to 2019. |
| <u>21-1034</u> | Riparian Enhancement and Knotweed Control 2021 | Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 05/04/2023 | Increase SRFB grant funding by \$18,050. Match remains the same. New project total is \$269,162 |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>21-1051</u> | Cicero Floodplain Acquisition | Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 01/04/2024 | In response to a request from Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians, the Sponsor Match is reduced from \$155,000 (16.51%) to \$148,000 (15.89%) because a portion of the proposed match is not an eligible acquisition cost. |
| <u>21-1052</u> | Springbrook Cr Preserve Protection & Restoration | Bainbridge Island Land Trust | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 06/02/2023 | This amendment uses FY19-21 PSAR funds that were returned to the lead entity to increase the PSAR award by \$36,435 (from \$154,053 to \$190,488) and sponsor match by \$14,819 (from \$494,564 to \$509,383) for a total project cost increase of \$51,254. Project costs exceeded the original cost estimates; higher than budgeted cultural resources and construction costs account for most of the cost increase. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| <u>21-1058</u> | Fletcher Bay Rd Culvert Removal Design | City of Bainbridge Island | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 08/23/2023 | This amendment 1) reduces the scope of work from final design to 30% design and 2) Increases sponsor match by \$164,295, from \$50,000 to \$214,295. During negotiations with the hired consultant, it became clear that the original budget of \$135,000.00 was substantially undersized and not realistic for a road and culvert project of this magnitude. Available grant plus local funds will allow the city to complete needed surveys and 30% designs. |
| <u>21-1062</u> | 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. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1077</u> | Kachess River Restoration - Phases I + 2 | Kittitas Conservation Trust | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 09/19/2023 | This amendment adds \$323,878 of YBIP funding approved by the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Habitat Sub-Committee bringing the total YBIP funding amount to \$394,914 and the total RCO award amount to \$887,059. This additional increment of YBIP funding will be used to design and construct a new relocated Mineral Creek access road and trailhead off of FS 4600 road, as described in Amendment #5 to IAA C190001 (RCO IAA No. 19-15), attached in PRISM. |
| <u>21-1094</u> | Elwha River Vegetation Enhancement | Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 11/29/2023 | Add \$191,613 in 2023-2025 PSAR funding from North Olympic Peninsula LE 2022 ranked list. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1101</u> | 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 NOPLER ranked list. |
| <u>21-1127</u> | Ridgefield Pits- Final Design | Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 01/20/2024 | Cost increase of \$30,000 changing the RCO Share from \$370,795 to \$400,795, existing match of \$77,636 is still greater than 15% of the total. Additional funds will be used to pay for the design and permitting to include adjacent properties. |
| <u>21-1138</u> | Upper Deschutes Conceptual Design | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 03/31/2023 | Add state funds used for advances. |
| <u>21-1144</u> | Anton and Cedar Creeks Fish Passage Design | Trout Unlimited Inc. | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 02/28/2023 | Increase budget by \$14,000 due to increased design engineering required for federal funds for construction. No additional match required. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1148</u> | McArdle Bay Shoreline Conservation Easement | San Juan Preservation Trust | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 11/10/2022 | Adding \$107,648 in 2022 PCSRF funding to fully fund a partially funded 2021 project. This project was included on the 2022 ranked list for San Juan County LE. |
| <u>21-1179</u> | 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 BPA 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. |
| <u>21-1179</u> | Restore Lower Peshastin Creek Ph 2 Final Design | Cascade Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 06/19/2023 | Add \$57,248 in Upper Columbia State Supplemental funding to allow for staff time, permitting support, and determination of safe floating parameters for the project reach. Delays included Cultural Resources review, CLOMR, and wetland determination. Match is 27.46%. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1197</u> | Lower Cowiche Floodplain Restoration | Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 02/01/2023 | This cost increase adds \$15,802 of Sponsor Match and \$87,366 of Salmon State Supplemental awarded to project 22-1527 "Lower Cowiche Floodplain Rest Cost Increase" to fully fund this 21-1197 project. The Yakima Lead Entity included this cost increase on their 2022 SRFB ranked list which was approved for funding by the SRFB on September 22, 2022. The total sponsor match is now \$43,880 and the total SRFB funding is \$246,472, bringing the total Project Agreement amount to \$290,352. The Special Condition pertaining to SRFB Technical Review Panel Design Review is expanded based on the 2022 application review, and the special condition relating to rescoping the project if full funding is not secured, is removed. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|--|---|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| <u>21-1197</u> | Lower Cowiche Floodplain Restoration | Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 01/25/2024 | In response to a request from Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group outlined in the January 2024 Progress Report which explains construction costs were higher than anticipated and additional funds are needed to afford stewardship in 2024. This amendment adds \$17,000 PCSRF cost increase funding, bringing the total RCO funding to \$263,472, and \$3,000 Sponsor Match bringing the total match to \$46,880. The project will be closed complete at the end of 2024. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|-----------------------|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|---|
| <u>21-1244</u> | White Salmon River Conservation Assessment 2021 | Underwood Conservation District | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 11/28/2023 | This amendment 1) adds \$27,000 of SRFB funds and \$4,765 match for a total project cost increase of \$31,765, and 2) Adjusts the project scope to (a) remove property valuation since, now that acquisition is eminent, a full appraisal will be completed as part of the acquisition transaction, and (b) remove title report and review of deeds, exceptions and legal descriptions, as that will also be accomplished by the final survey work being conducted by the buyer in their acquisition process. It is not feasible to obtain title reports and legal descriptions until a Phase 2 survey is complete, which is outside this scope of work and funding capability. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>22-1047</u> | Nelsen Side Channel | City of Tukwila | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 08/28/2023 | Amendment to add additional money to fully fund a partially funded project. WRIA 9 Lead Entity allocates \$200,000 23-25 PSAR funding (available July 1, 2023) as approved on their 2022 ranked list. \$36,250 of match will be added to maintain the 15% minimum requirement. |
| <u>22-1057</u> | Middle Ohop Creek Protection 2022 | Nisqually Land Trust | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 08/30/2023 | Adding \$426,357 of 23-25 Nisqually LE PSAR funding as noted in 2022 Nisqually Lead Entity Ranked List. Add EPA reporting grant (PSP) to allow indirect to be eligible. Reduce sponsor match to \$237,000. New project total is \$1,574,138. |
| <u>22-1084</u> | Johnson Ck Triple Culvert Restoration 2022 | North Olympic Salmon Coalition | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 03/07/2023 | Adding \$3,212,638 in 21-23 BAFBRB funding which will replace most of the match. |
| <u>22-1084</u> | Johnson Ck Triple Culvert Restoration 2022 | North Olympic Salmon Coalition | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 07/21/2023 | Add \$440,663 in 2023-2025 PSAR funding from the 2022 North Olympic Peninsula LE ranked list. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|--|--------------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>22-1132</u> | Coal Creek Fish Passage Restoration | Trout Unlimited Inc. | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 02/07/2023 | Adding \$45,000 in 21-23 ASRP opportunistic funds as match. The SRFB dollar amount remains unchanged while match percentage increases from 15.01% to 15.29%. Project total increases slightly from \$293,610 to \$294,310. This amendment also adds ASRP special condition language regarding preliminary design review. |
| <u>22-1160</u> | Evergreen Bulkhead | South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group | Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration | Cost Change | 07/27/2023 | Per special condition #2, this amendment adds \$133,382 of the lead entity's 23-25 PSAR allocation, This is reflected on WRIA 13's approved 2022 ranked list. The project total increases to: \$183,382. |
| <u>22-1162</u> | Deschutes Tributary Final Design & Implementation | Wild Fish Conservancy | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 08/04/2023 | Per special condition #1, this amendment adds \$15,946.00 of the lead entity's 23-25 PSAR funds. This is reflected in WRIA 13's approved 2022 ranked list. Project total increases to \$161,545. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>22-1165</u> | Boise Creek at Enumclaw Golf Course_Construction | City of Enumclaw | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 07/31/2023 | Adding \$590,171 in 23-25 PSAR as approved on the 2022 Pierce ranked list. Also updating the match to \$783,849 as requested in the application. |
| <u>22-1332</u> | Armstrong Cr Restoration Barrier Correction Design | Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 06/23/2023 | Since the 2022 lower reach avulsion, this project will receive an additional \$30,870 in SRFB funds to expand the final design footprint to include the lower reach. RCO Director approved the new project total of \$206,318. |
| <u>22-1332</u> | Armstrong Cr Restoration Barrier Correction Design | Willapa Bay Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 08/23/2023 | Adding \$2,500. of SRFB to cover unanticipated cultural resource costs. Match increases to \$31,400. The project total increases to \$209,270. LE approved. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|---|---|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|--|
| <u>22-1358</u> | SFNooksack (Nuxw7iyem) Homesteader Ph2 Restoration | Nooksack Indian Tribe | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 09/13/2023 | Increase cost from \$413,295 to \$513,295 to pay for additional design and modelling needed to comply with unforeseen FEMA CLOMR permitting requirements. \$100,000 will come from WRIA 1's 2022 supplemental state funding carryover. |
| <u>22-1418</u> | Sorensen Shoreline Armor Removal Project - SRFB | Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Foundation | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 07/21/2023 | This amendment adds \$150,000 of FY23-25 ESRP funds from project 22-1695, Weeks Point Armor Removal, and reduces sponsor match from \$45,757 to \$0. It also adds an ESRP special condition. The ESRP award requires \$65,757 match, including some non-state match; this requirement is fully met with SRFB funds. The ESRP funds serve as match for SRFB. |

| Project Number | Project Name | Sponsor | Program | Type | Date | Amendment Descriptions |
|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|--|
| <u>22-1512</u> | Entiat Trib. Baseflow and Hab. Restoration | Cascadia Conservation District | Salmon Federal Projects | Cost Change | 08/24/2023 | Reduce match from 48% to 15% to allow for a more accurate reflection of costs. |
| <u>22-1595</u> | 2022 Skagit Watershed Habitat Acquisition VI (b) | Seattle City Light | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 07/26/2023 | Adding additional money to fully fund a partially funded project. Skagit Watershed Council Lead Entity allocates \$62,120, 23-25 PSAR funding (available July 1, 2023) as approved on their 2022 ranked list. \$10,962 of match will be added to maintain the 15% requirement. |
| <u>22-1766</u> | Skagit Basin Fish Passage Final Designs | Skagit County | Salmon State Projects | Cost Change | 10/03/2023 | Adding \$958,800 from a direct legislature appropriation out of the state building construction account. Appropriation was \$1,000,000, \$41,200 was reserved by RCO for admin. |

COUNCIL OF REGIONS UPDATE for the SRFB's March 2024 Meeting

Prepared by Alex Conley, Chair

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. Regions and our partner Lead Entities are **working hard to initiate the 2024 grant round, including the new riparian and Targetted Investments grant opportunities.**
2. Regions are **working with Katie Pruitt of GSRO to provide regional input as state agencies identify priorities for the 2025 legislative session.**
3. Regions participated in the **Salmon Day at the Legislature** along with Lead Entity and Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups from around the state. It was a full day of outreach with legislators, who definitely noted that different groups were there together with shared messages.
4. Regions continue to work with partners to **support efforts to secure federal funding for priority recovery action in our areas**; it's great to see new funding available at an unprecedented scale to implement projects that have been nurtured over the years by regions, lead entities and the SRFB!
5. 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 and Jeremy Cram for organizing quarterly check-in calls with WDFW leadership.
6. The **four Columbia River Regions continue to meet** to discuss and coordinate regional input on Columbia River policy and priorities with other state partners.

Specific Council of Regions Input for the September SRFB Meeting:

This is the easiest COR update to write in well over a year. Let me start by congratulating the Board for all the significant decisions discussed over the course of 2023 and made in December! The lighter agenda today has been well earned.

In reviewing your agenda for today's meeting, we have only two items to comment on:

ITEM 4: BOARD MONITORING

The Regions have reviewed and support the general direction identified in the staff memo on monitoring. We are excited to work closely with staff and partners as more detailed proposals for how to run a monitoring program focused on addressing critical recovery knowledge gaps is developed.

ITEM 5: REGIONAL PRESENTATIONS

Thank you for the invitation to present regional perspectives to the Board. We hope you find today's presentations from the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board and the Puget Sound Partnership valuable. The remaining regions look forward to presenting at future meetings.

Executive Committee

Amy Hatch-Winecka
Deschutes WRIA 13 Salmon Recovery Lead
Entity

Ariel Edwards
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board
Lead Entity

Aundrea McBride, Chair
Skagit Watershed Council

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

Denise Smeed
Lower Columbia Lead Entity

Kirsten Harma
Chehalis Basin Lead Entity

Lisa Spurrier
Puyallup and Chambers Watersheds Salmon
Recovery Lead Entity

Mike Lithgow, Past Chair
Kalispell-Pend Oreille Lead Entity

Members

Ali Fitzgerald
Snake River Salmon Recovery Board

Alicia Olivas
Hood Canal Lead Entity

Anna Geffre
North Pacific Coast Lead Entity

Ashley Von Essen
Nisqually Lead Entity

Becky Peterson
WRIA 1 Watershed Management Board

Caleb McGivney
Spokane Lead Entity

Cheryl Baumann
N. Olympic Lead Entity for Salmon

Clea Barenburg
Island County Lead Entity WRIA 6

Dani Driscoll
Stillaguamish Watershed Lead Entity

Gretchen Glaub
Snohomish Lead Entity

Jason Murray
WRIA 14 Lead Entity

Keaton Curtice
Klickitat County Lead Entity

Michael Horner
Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board
Lead Entity

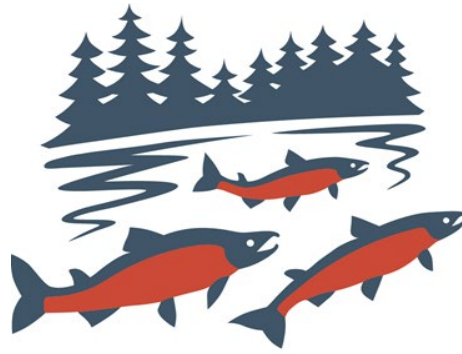
Renee Johnson
West Sound Partners for Ecosystem
Recovery

Richard Brocksmith
Quinault Indian Nation Lead Entity

Sam Whitridge
San Juan Lead Entity

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

Tom Kollasch
Pacific County Lead Entity



WASHINGTON
SALMON
COALITION
Community-Based Salmon Recovery

February 21, 2024

Dear Chair Breckel, Salmon Recovery Funding Board members and Director Duffy,

On behalf of the Washington Salmon Coalition, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide you with this Partner Report.

On January 31st Lead Entity coordinators had the opportunity to visit legislators with members of the Council of Regions and Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups. This "Salmon Day" event had over 60 participants attending 84 legislator meetings. We shared a unified message about the importance of salmon funding, eliminating match requirements for salmon grants, and streamlining permitting. We plan to coordinate with COR and RFEGs again for a Salmon Day next year.

Following Salmon Day WSC held our first quarterly All Hands meeting. We welcomed the Spokane Lead Entity to the fold, making us 26 Lead Entities in number. We meet next on March 26th.

Now Lead Entities are beginning the 2024 grant round. The early cohort is hosting site visits in the next few weeks while the late cohort is starting to review letters of intent. All are flexing their adaptability muscles while excitedly embarking on this first-of-its-kind grant round with five pots of funding to put to work.

The following Lead Entity project update section includes reports from Island County (WRIA 6), the Deschutes River System (WRIA 13), and the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board. These demonstrate some of the variety of work Lead Entities are doing, from collaborating with other salmon programs to implementing multi-benefit projects, to conducting GIS data analysis and strategy development. SRFB funding has played a part in these efforts.

Thanks again for your support.

Kind Regards,

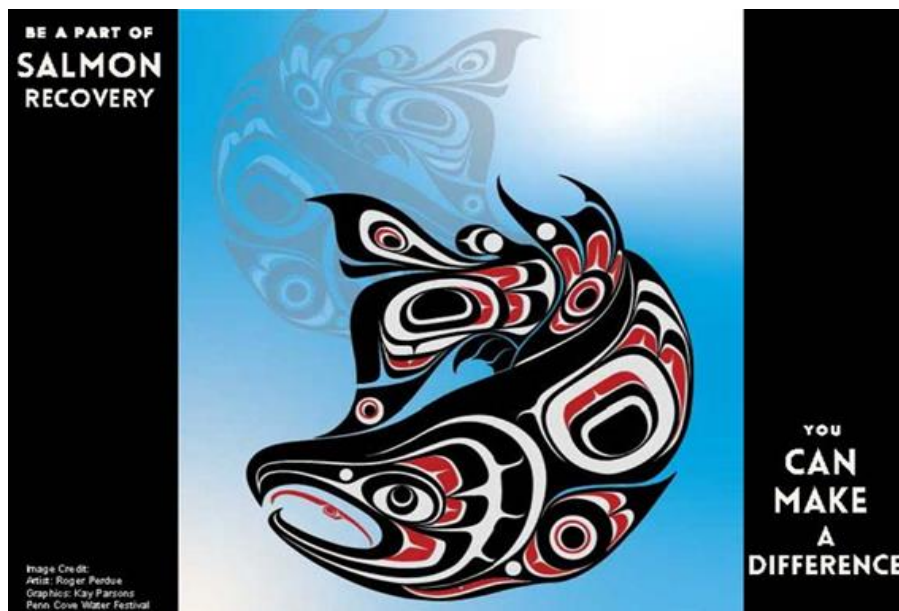
Aundrea McBride, Chair of the Washington Salmon Coalition

LEAD ENTITY HAPPENINGS

Salmon Recovery Outreach in Island County

Submitted by Clea Barenburg, Island County Lead Entity

This past year, the WRIA 6 Island County Lead Entity coordinated with the Island County Shore Friendly program to share information with local shoreline property owners. Island County has over 200 miles of shoreline, and most of that ownership is private. Our habitat restoration work and the Shore Friendly program rely on partnered outreach to recruit shoreline property owners to the Shore Friendly program and increase awareness about salmon recovery activities.



Postcard created by Shore Friendly and WRIA 6 Lead Entity

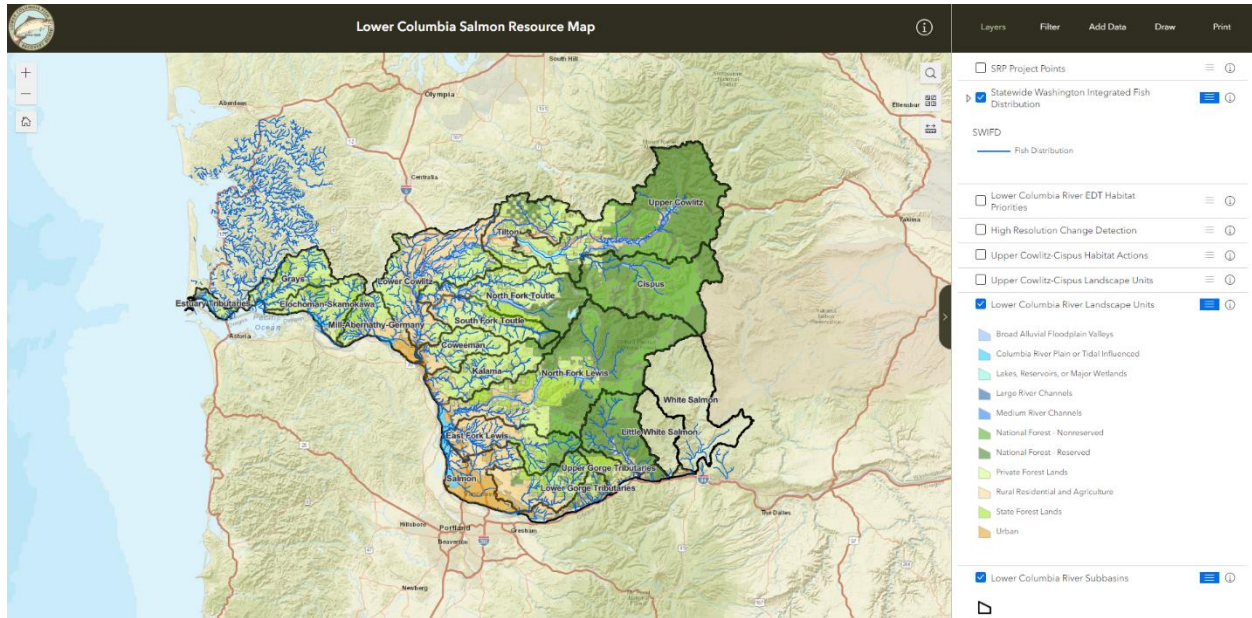
Island County Shore Friendly and the WRIA 6 Lead Entity partnered to create a postcard that focused on salmon recovery and promoted the Shore Friendly program. The postcard went out to the mailing addresses for privately owned shoreline parcels in Salmon Recovery Priority Areas 1 and 2. The Penn Cove Water Festival generously allowed the use of salmon art created by Roger Perdue for the postcard. Perdue was a prolific and highly regarded Coupeville artist who passed away in 2014.

When this desire to further salmon recovery efforts was paired with a no-cost avenue to take action to protect salmon habitat on their properties, it seemed to inspire shoreline property owners. This mailer was a success for the Shore Friendly Program, resulting in an estimated 40 program inquiries and approximately 20 requests for technical assistance. Several shoreline property owners complimented the salmon artwork, and survey data indicates the beautiful art grabbed residents' attention. Between July 2021-June 2023, when asked how they heard about the Shore Friendly program, the largest percentage of technical assistance applicants indicated direct mailing.

For more information, please see the Island County Salmon Recovery Webpage:

<https://www.islandcountywa.gov/651/Salmon-Recovery>

The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board releases Salmon Resource Map
Submitted by Denise Smee, Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board



| Phase 1 – Winter 2024 | Phase 2 – Fall 2024 | Phase 3 – Spring 2025 |
|---|--|--|
| Initial release of the Lower Columbia Salmon Resource Map | Fish passage barrier correction priorities available | Focused Investment Habitat Action Priorities available |

The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board published the Lower Columbia Salmon Resource Map, a new interactive web map resource, this month. The web map contains regional recovery and habitat strategy resources to support salmon and steelhead planning, reporting and implementation efforts across the lower Columbia River basin in southwest Washington. Map resources build on the All-H recovery scenario in the Washington Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery and Fish & Wildlife Subbasin Plan and web resources previously maintained via the SalmonPORT map and project database. We are looking forward to working with the LCFRB Technical Advisory Committee and project applicants during the 2024 grant round to incorporate the new web resources into SRFB application development and evaluation.

Recovery mapping resources include information on salmon distribution, biological and habitat conditions, land cover details at both the jurisdictional and watershed scales, and habitat project data from Salmon Recovery Portal. The watershed planning unit (subbasin) layer details [recently released viability status](#) and goal information for each of the 72 salmon and steelhead populations in the region. The landscape unit and change detection data includes High Resolution Change Detection data developed by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and summarized for the Lower Columbia Lead Entity via the [Lower Columbia Regional Land Cover Analysis](#) project. Both the viability status assessment and land cover analysis efforts were funded in part by SRFB monitoring grants (20-1165 and 20-1170).

Updated habitat strategy priorities are under development and will guide strategic investments toward priority areas for protecting and restoring watershed processes and habitat conditions for salmon and steelhead. In the interim, the Ecosystem Diagnosis and Treatment (EDT) layer and associated information on recovery priorities continues to function as the regional habitat strategy technical foundation. Priority habitat action map layers are also currently available for the Upper Cowlitz and Cispus subbasins to support implementation of the LCFRB and Tacoma Power's [Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery Habitat Grant Program](#).

The mapping project was supported by regional operating and grants funds from the RCO. Explore the map on the LCFRB website: <https://www.lcfrb.org/salmon-resource-map>

WRIA 13 Projects Completed

Submitted by Amy Hatch Winecka, WRIA 13 Lead Entity



Log jam creation at Deschutes River Mile 34.5

WRIA 13 Lead Entity has supported major project work completed on the Deschutes River. At River Mile 21, in the summer of 2023 the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group built a high-water side channel through the floodplain designed to accept flows at a 2-year flood interval to provide off-channel rearing habitat and reengage the historic floodplain to deposit fine sediments. A series of margin log jams were built to add instream habitat and reduce direct fine sediments inputs from the site. The historic floodplain of 10.9 acres is now being planted with native trees and shrubs to help reestablish natural floodplain conditions.

The project occurred on permanently protected property owned by the Center of Natural Land Management. The property was historically used for agriculture until purchased by CNLM with the goal of restoring upland habitat as prairie for pocket gopher, and the floodplain for salmonids. This project is an excellent example of how to blend the needs of listed species with very different habitat requirements.

The project was funded with Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funds, with matching funds from the Rose Foundation. The work was enhanced when WDFW purchased an additional logjam for mitigation.

Another restoration occurred this past summer at River Mile 34.5 which built upon a partnership with Weyerhaeuser Company to increase available instream habitat and reduce fine sediment inputs across 0.5-miles of the upper Deschutes River in Thurston County. This project installed over 200 pieces of large wood over a series of instream log jams. The logs were provided by Weyerhaeuser. The project also installed multiple floodplain structures designed to deposit fine sediment into the floodplain by adding roughness. The floodplain will be planted later this month with native trees and shrubs by the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group.

This area supports spawning and rearing coho, steelhead, and cutthroat. This project is the result of more than a decade of work supported by the Squaxin Island Tribe building a partnership with Weyerhaeuser Timber Company which owns this site and much of the upper Deschutes River mainstem and the major tributaries. Now a strong partner, Weyerhaeuser has become the go-to supplier for wood for this and future projects. Additionally, we now have an 18-mile reach scale design catalog with full designs and permits in review for phased implementation to restore all 18 miles of the upper watershed that are crucial to mitigate low summer flows, store high winter flows, lower summer water temperatures, reduce sediment loading and add stream complexity, all made possible thanks to this project partnership.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: March 6, 2024
Title: Board Monitoring: The Path Forward
Prepared By: Greer Maier, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office Science Coordinator

Summary

This memo provides a background on Salmon Recovery Funding Board monitoring to date and presents options for a path forward based on input received from the Science Advisory Panel, Regions, and individual Board members.

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/Background

The Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) award from NOAA requires ten percent of the annual award be designated for monitoring. For the past twenty years the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (board) has been implementing several large-scale, state-led monitoring programs, including an Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) program and Project Effectiveness Program. The board has also contributed funding in the past to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for fish in/fish out monitoring and currently funds regions to address regional data gaps. The board currently uses approximately \$1.9 million of PCSRF funding for state-led monitoring programs and \$350,000 for regional monitoring per year. State-led programs are in the process of completing their study objectives and creating final reports. As these programs wind down, there is a need to restructure the board's monitoring program and an interest in increasing funding for regional monitoring. This memo provides details on board monitoring to date and summarizes options for restructuring board monitoring programs to meet the needs of the board and the regions moving forward.

Recommendations in this memo are informed by discussions that took place over the past few months with board members, staff, regions, partners, and the Science Advisory Panel to gathering information and input on board monitoring programs and process. Staff completed a series of one-on-one assessment interviews and hosted discussions with the Science Advisory Panel (previously called the Monitoring Panel) and Council of Regions. Staff also held a workshop on IMWs on February 20th and interviewed the current lead of the effectiveness monitoring Program.

Background

The foundations of board monitoring programs come from the [2002 Comprehensive Strategy for Watershed Health and Salmon Recovery](#); the 2013 Monitoring Investment Strategy for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and input from the Science Advisory Panel. The Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy was used in developing Goal 2 and the Monitoring Strategy included in the board's Strategic Plan:

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 state-wide monitoring efforts, and use monitoring results to adaptively manage board funding policies."

Stemming from this direction, the board developed the following key questions for monitoring:

- What is the status and health of fish populations?
- What is the status and health of the habitat?
- What are the key factors limiting recovery?
- Are we making progress towards recovery?

To address these questions, the board has relied on three focus areas for monitoring efforts to date: Status and Trends for Fish Populations (Fish in/Fish out or FIFO), Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMW's), Project Effectiveness Monitoring.

Fish In/Fish Out

Fish-in and fish-out monitoring is the counting and tracking of adult salmon coming in (fish-in) to spawn and the number of juvenile or young fish headed to sea (fish-out). Measuring this transition tells us the extent that freshwater habitat and marine habitat

affect the salmon numbers overall. This data can also be used to track trends in fish abundance. Between 2007-2022 approximately \$208,000 of board funds were used annually to fund a small portion of the WDFW's Fish-in, Fish-out program. Recently, WDFW has secured state funding to backfill this program and the board only funds these types of efforts via the regional funding process when regions have gaps in their data. Some regions use the regional funding (\$350,000 statewide) to fund fish in/fish out activities (e.g. smolt traps).

Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMWs)

An Intensively Monitored Watershed (IMW) is an intensive, watershed-scale research and monitoring effort. While project effectiveness monitoring might look at a single restoration or a suite of actions implemented in one location, an IMW looks at an entire suite of restoration actions at a larger watershed scale. It includes a sampling intensity necessary to evaluate the biological and physical responses to actions.

Washington's IMW program asks the question: Is restoration working to increase salmon numbers? IMW monitoring compares the number of salmon from streams where habitat restoration was done to similar streams nearby without such actions (control/impact). This shows if changes in fish survival and productivity are due to restoration efforts or to other factors not related to stream restoration. IMWs also look at changes over time (before/after restoration). Are certain combinations of restoration and/or management actions more effective than others at delivering the intended responses?

The board supported Intensively Monitored Watersheds (IMWs) were established in the early 2000s to determine the contribution habitat restoration can make to salmon recovery at various scales and to improve the effectiveness of habitat restoration programs in Washington. The board first provided funding in 2004 to establish a program of IMWs in Washington. The funding was used to leverage existing long-term fish and habitat monitoring efforts conducted by WDFW, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, Northwest Fisheries Science Center (NOAA) and the Skagit River Systems Coop. Three freshwater IMWs were funded by the board at this time: Strait of Juan de Fuca IMW, Hood Canal IMW, and Lower Columbia IMW. The Skagit IMW was included to provide an estuarine study site. The Asotin IMW received SRFB support shortly after the other IMWs were established, providing a study site east of the Cascade Mountains.

In June 2023, members of the Science Advisory Panel and scientists from the IMWs collaborated to complete a synthesis report to examine IMW results to date and identify opportunities to improve the procedures being used to prioritize, design, and

implement restoration treatments. After twenty years of focused restoration and study, IMWs are entering a new phase. IMW principal investigators, regional representatives, and members of the Science Advisory Panel will meet on February 20, 2024, to review progress and remaining research questions in each IMW. They will discuss the future of research and monitoring in each area. Outcomes from this workshop will provide input for the appropriate step-down of the research phase and the restructuring of the IMW program toward long-term monitoring in a subset of IMWs.

Project Effectiveness Monitoring

Phase 1

From 2004 through 2018, the board implemented a state-wide effectiveness monitoring program looking at a range of different project types. The goal of the project was to determine if actions specific to the project type category are improving stream morphology and habitat and increasing reach-scale juvenile salmonid abundance. A multiple before-after control-impact (MBACI) study design was used for monitoring of all project types.

The board contracted with TetraTech for the first twelve years of work. For the final two years, the board funded Cramer Fish Sciences to complete effectiveness monitoring and conduct an independent scientific review and synthesis of this fourteen-year program. Cramer Fish Sciences issued their final report in 2018 (Roni et al. 2018) with recommendations for future monitoring. The report identified only a few restoration project categories from the original ten categories that warranted future project effectiveness monitoring. Categories included: riparian planting, floodplain enhancement and nearshore conditions. These recommendations became the basis for a Phase 2 study of effectiveness monitoring.

Phase 2

Phase 2 of project effectiveness monitoring started in 2021 and focused on evaluating the effectiveness of large floodplain and riparian restoration projects using remote sensing. This work was conducted through a contract with Cramer Fish Sciences and a final report was issued in March 2023 (Roni et al. 2023). The project was envisioned as a “pilot” effort to be able to test, refine, and confirm the feasibility of the approach and methods. Cramer Fish Sciences issued several recommendations based on the results of the pilot study to be implemented in future monitoring.

Monitoring Program Recommendations

In the Fall of 2023, Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) staff completed an assessment process to gain feedback on current board funded monitoring programs

and engaged in one-on-one conversations about the future of these programs based on need. The assessment included interviews with all seven Science Advisory Panel members, each of the regional entities, and six board members. GSRO staff also used information summarized in 2021 on board monitoring opportunities and results and recommendations from IMW and effectiveness monitoring. All this information was used to develop the following recommendations.

Key underpinnings and assumptions for the recommendations:

- After twenty years of implementation, we are facing the end of board funding for Fish In/Fish Out, completion of the state-led project effectiveness program, and sunseting of the research phase of IMWs. There is a need to set a path forward for future monitoring programs.
- Fish In/Fish Out monitoring will continue to be funded by WDFW and any additional funding or effort will be executed in collaboration with WDFW not via board funding.
- There is a pressing need to support Regions, Lead Entities, and sponsors in strategically developing the best possible projects with the greatest likelihood of success in recovering salmon. Monitoring is part of this support as highlighted in recent reports, peer-reviewed research, and assessment interviews.
- Using monitoring to maximize learning opportunities includes targeted monitoring, which tracks changes in habitat and/or changes in fish populations following restoration, and surveillance monitoring, which establishes a baseline and examines changes over time. Most of the monitoring projects funded by the board have been targeted monitoring, except in the case of the six IMW watersheds which constitute a very small proportion of priority watersheds for salmon and steelhead.
- The board's current regional monitoring program is underfunded and not being used by some regions because monitoring competes with restoration funding.
- Feedback on board-funded IMW and project effectiveness monitoring indicate it is challenging to communicate results, and results were inconsistent and difficult to generalize, hence challenging to use in decision-making throughout the state.
- Washington's IMWs are part of a larger, Northwest network of IMWs largely funded by NOAA. Decisions made here could have broader consequences.
- WDFW has indicated that funding for IMWs at the current level of effort is unsustainable. WDFW-led IMWs receive approximately fifty percent of their costs from PCSRF per year. WDFW has been filling the gap using General Fund State dollars.

Given these underpinnings and assumptions, GSRO staff is asking the board to consider the following options for the future of board-funded monitoring programs. Both

options include a phased funding for IMW monitoring over the next 3-5 years, as those programs transition from research to long term monitoring programs. After that time funding would be allocated according to the options described below.

| Option | Annual Funding Amount | Eligible Projects |
|----------|--|---|
| Option 1 | Up to \$2,250,000 | <p>Competitive Grant Round:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish Status, Distribution, and Trends Monitoring – focus on Viable Salmonid Population (VSP) parameters of abundance, survival, diversity, and spatial structure • Habitat Status and Trend Monitoring- focus on high-level indicators, long-term monitoring, limiting factors, and life stage requirements • Project Effectiveness |
| Option 2 | <p>At least \$300,000¹</p> <p>Up to \$1,950,000</p> | <p>IMW Long-Term Monitoring</p> <p>Competitive Grant Round:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fish Status, Distribution, and Trends Monitoring – focus on Viable Salmonid Population (VSP) parameters of abundance, survival, diversity, and spatial structure • Habitat Status and Trend Monitoring- focus on high-level indicators, limiting factors, and life stage requirements • Project Effectiveness |

Option 1- IMW Restructuring + Monitoring Grant Round

Option 1 would include a step-down phase for IMW studies according to an agreed-upon plan by GSRO, the regions, IMW principal investigators, and the Science Advisory Panel. All remaining funds during and after that step-down phase would go into an open monitoring grant round similar to that run by Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB) Monitoring Grant Program. Regions could submit projects through this

¹ For comparison, SRFB has been spending ~\$1.5-\$2.0 million per year on IMW monitoring since 2009.

grant round to help fill data gaps related to the following initial priority areas (NOTE: these priorities could change over time based on the needs). Long-term monitoring in IMWs could continue through this monitoring grant program but would not be set aside by the board. Monitoring projects in IMWs would be submitting through the grant round instead.

- Fish Status, Distribution, and Trends Monitoring – VSP and Life Stage Specific Focus
- Habitat Status and Trend Monitoring
- Project Effectiveness
- IMW long-term monitoring

The goal of the program would be to support decision-making and adaptive management by regions and the board. Eligible projects will inform the development of restoration or acquisition projects or programs and funds could not be used to test theory(ies), evaluate experimental designs, or provide generalizable knowledge. Monitoring projects would be conducted in a way that data could be rolled up to the state level to inform decision making and reporting at that scale. For instance, fish and habitat data collected could inform the state’s [high-level indicators for salmon and watershed health](#) and project effectiveness monitoring would follow [board-established protocols](#) that would provide consistency in reporting. Details about the grant program and its process would be developed over the next six months and the program would be introduced in late 2024 to coincide with the 2025 grant round.

Option 2- IMW Restructuring + Dedicated IMW Funding + Monitoring Grant Round

Option 2 would include a step-down phase for IMW and funding according to an agreed upon plan by GSRO, the regions, WDFW, and the Science Advisory Panel. In this case, approximately \$300,000 (or another agreed upon amount) would remain dedicated to one or more IMWs. This is similar to how OWEB approaches the [Middle Fork John Day IMW](#).

All remaining PCSRF monitoring funds would go into an open monitoring grant round similar to that run by [Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board \(OWEB\) Monitoring Grant Program](#). Regions could submit projects through this grant round to help fill data gaps related to the following initial priority areas (NOTE: these priorities could change over time based on the needs).

- Fish Status, Distribution, and Trends Monitoring – VSP and Life Stage Specific Focus
- Habitat Status and Trend Monitoring
- Project Effectiveness

The monitoring grant round goals and process would be the same as described above but without a focus area on IWM long-monitoring.

Strategic Plan Connection

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 state-wide monitoring efforts, and use monitoring results to adaptively manage board funding policies."

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: March 6, 2024

Title: Board 2023 Grant Process Survey Results

Prepared By: Marc Duboiski, Salmon Recovery Grants Section Manager

Summary

This item will provide the board with snapshot of the 2023 Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Round survey results. Please See *Attachment A* for additional details and information.

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 |

Background

The Recreation and Conservation Office's Salmon Recovery Grant Section provides grant applicants with a post-grant cycle survey to identify areas of process strength and improvement. The last survey conducted was in 2020. The 2023 survey was sent to 541 contacts with sixty returns. Staff will use this information to consider process change for the next grant round.

Attachment

A. 2023 Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Process, Applicant Survey Results

2023 Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Process, Applicant Survey Results

February 2, 2024



Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Executive Summary | 5 |
| Summary of Comments and Survey Responses..... | 9 |
| 2024 Grant Round - Key Action Items | 5 |
| Survey Approach..... | 7 |
| Survey Response | 7 |
| About the Respondents..... | 7 |
| Survey Results: The Application Workshop/Webinar | 9 |
| Customer Comments | 10 |
| Survey Results: Application Process | 5 |
| Customer Comments | 12 |
| Survey Results: Manual 18 | 14 |
| Customer Comments | 15 |
| Survey Results: Appendix D Update | 16 |
| Customer Comments | 17 |
| Survey Results: Online Resources | 18 |
| Customer Comments | 19 |
| Survey Results: Questions About the Application | 20 |
| Customer Comments | 21 |
| Survey Results: PRISM Online | 22 |
| Customer Comments | 23 |
| Survey Results: PRISM Online | 25 |
| Customer Comments | 26 |
| Survey Results: Policy Recommendations | 28 |
| Survey Results: Site Visit | 30 |
| Survey Results: Review Panel | 31 |
| Customer Comments | 32 |
| Survey Results: Review Panel Phone Call | 34 |
| Customer Comments | 35 |
| Survey Results: Lead Entity | 36 |
| Customer Comments | 37 |
| Survey Results: Grants Manager | 39 |

Customer Comments 40

Survey Results: Overall Process 41

Customer Comments 42

Survey Results: Policy Recommendations 43

The following analysis is based on survey responses from 60 applicants who participated in the 2023 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant round.

Summary of Comments and Survey Responses

Overall applicant satisfaction with the 2023 SRFB grant round was high.

When asked about the application process, most respondents understood the RCO/SRFB application process and their responsibilities to submit a complete application. Many respondents also did not participate in the application workshop/webinar.

Most respondents agreed that Manual 18 was a useful tool, and the eligibility criteria were clear. They also included suggested improvements through comments. Respondents found updates to Appendix D useful, though comments indicated some respondents were not familiar with the updates. Many respondents also found the online resources (including checklists, forms, and training videos) to be beneficial. When respondents had questions, they were most likely to contact their Lead Entity Coordinator or their RCO/SRFB grants manager.

Most respondents felt that completing the application in PRISM Online worked well. Respondents also identified several suggested improvements to the application.

Most respondents had a positive experience with the Review Panel through the grant round process. Respondents agreed that they understood the Technical Review Panel process and its purpose and found the Panel's members to be knowledgeable. Many respondents included comments explaining what was particularly helpful or confusing about their interactions with the Review Panel. Applicants who participated in a phone call with the Review Panel found it to be helpful, though not all respondents participated.

Most respondents indicated they had a positive experience with their Lead Entity and with their RCO/SRFB grants manager.

2024 Grant Cycle - Key Action Items

RCO has implemented the following action items to address some of the comments made in this survey. RCO plans additional changes to the 2025 grant cycle, including the best approach to modernize our match requirements.

Application Process and Annual Statewide Workshop

- Maintained recorded standard presentation and held a live webinar on February 13th.
- Staff covered what's new in 2024 and presented a PRISM demo and answered questions.

- Multiple grant managers are conducting a more specialized application workshop for the individual lead entities or recovery regions, if requested.
- Moved traditional final application due date from Friday to Monday June 24th to allow one final weekend for those that need more time.
- The salmon team continues to emphasize the need for applicants to work with the lead entity to understand their local timeline in relation to the RCO-SRFB timeline.
- Staff continues to highlight the eligible cost items that fit into the Administration, Architecture & Engineering (AA&E) and construction categories.

PRISM Enhancements

- PRISM was adjusted to display cultural resources mapping training video more prominently.
- PRISM text boxes character limits were increased to allow more space for applicants to answer the project questions.

Appendix D

- Staff provided better clarity and conformity for the design deliverables and is now in new 2024 M18.

Survey Approach

The selected recipients were listed in PRISM as the primary, secondary, or lead entity contact for a 2023 SRFB project that participated in initial review meetings that took place on March 22, 2023, May 1, 2023, and May 17, 2023. Using this approach included contacts whose projects were eventually withdrawn from funding consideration. RCO staff distributed the survey to 541 project contacts on October 2, 2023. The survey closed October 27, 2023.

Survey Response

RCO received 60 responses – an 11 percent response rate based on the people contacted.¹ This is lower than the 20 percent response rate RCO achieved in the 2020 SRFB survey. However, a higher number of contacts were included and RCO received a higher number of responses in 2023 than in the previous survey, during which 226 applicants were contacted and 45 responses were received.

About the Respondents

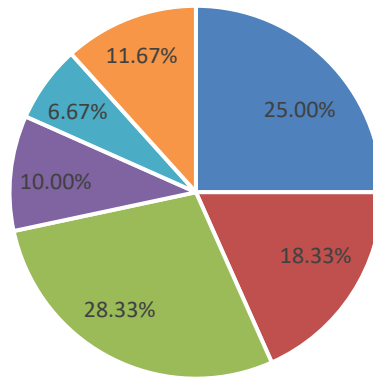
Survey respondents represented both Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) Projects and Salmon State Projects.

The majority, approximately 80 percent of respondents reported that they had applied for a SRFB grant in the past.

Representatives of many organization types responded to the survey. Nonprofits made up the largest group of respondents, with over 28 percent of the total.

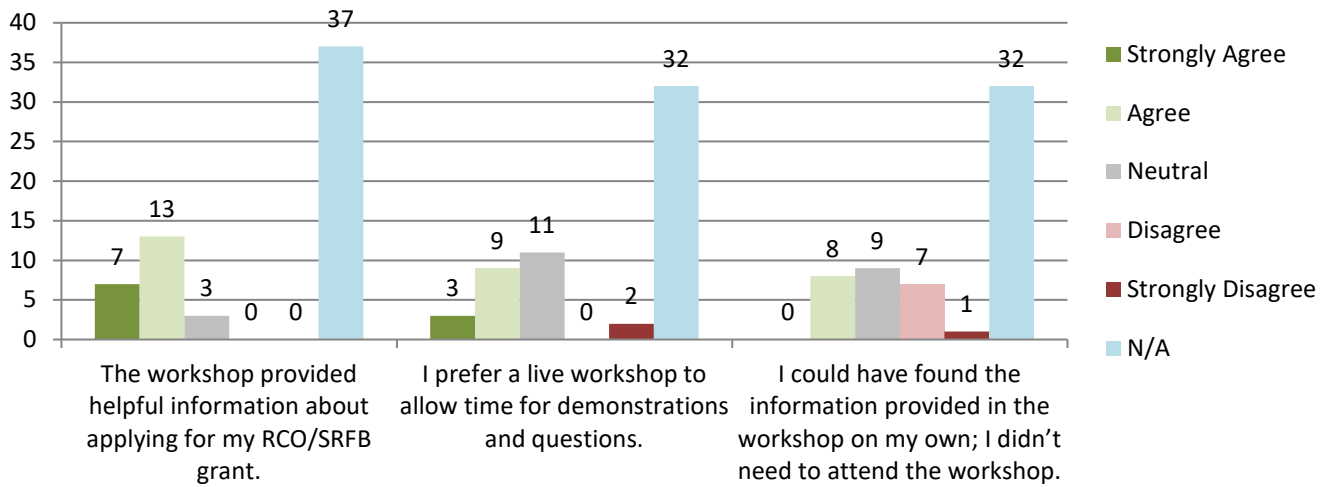
¹ The number of responses to each question in the survey varies from this total because some participants skipped questions and/or did not complete the survey.

What type of organization do you represent?



■ Local Government (city/county) ■ Native American Tribe ■ Nonprofit ■ RFEF ■ State Agency ■ Other

The following questions are about your experience with the application workshop/webinar. Please respond N/A if you did not use the application workshop.

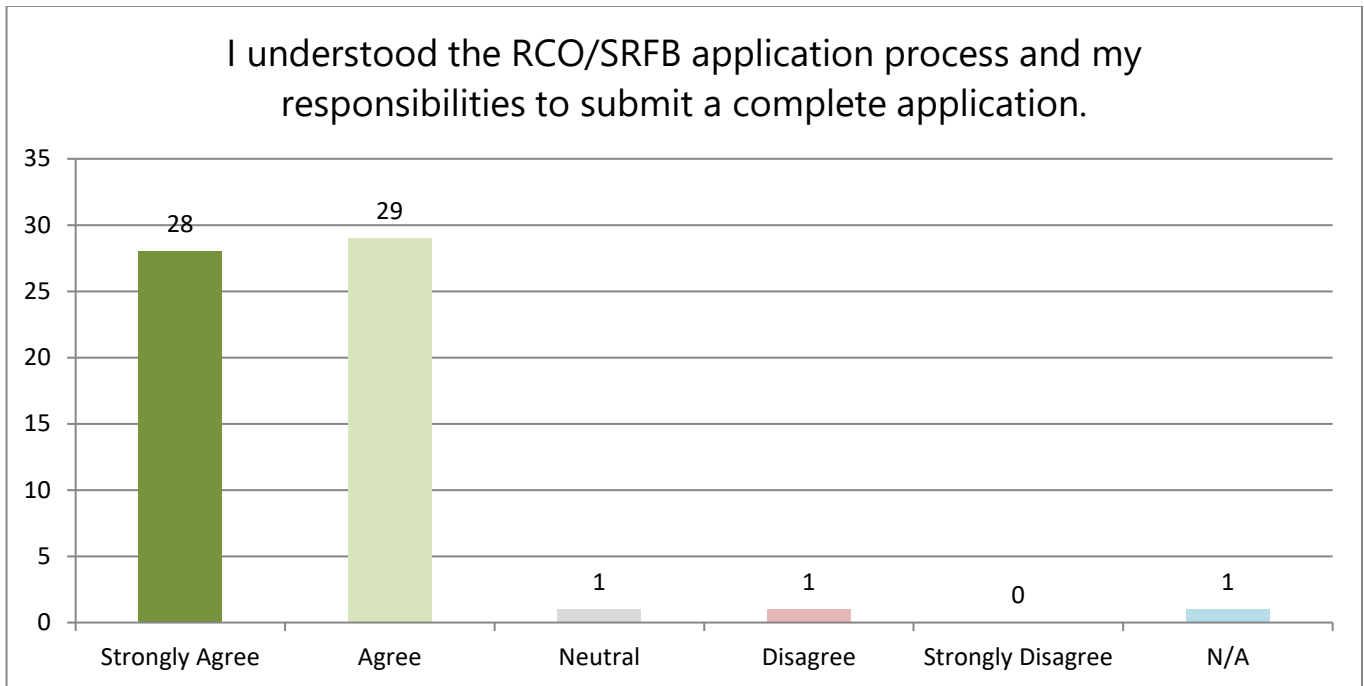


| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| The workshop provided helpful information about applying for my RCO/SRFB grant. | 33.34% | 5% | 0% | 61.67% |
| I prefer a live workshop to allow time for demonstrations and questions. | 21.05% | 19.3% | 3.51% | 56% |
| I could have found the information provided in the workshop on my own; I didn't need to attend the workshop. | 14.04% | 15.79% | 14.03% | 56.14% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Please provide any feedback you have about the application workshop. |
|--|
| I always attend these to refresh my memory about the complexities, requirements, and important dates. |
| I have been applying for SRFB grants in PRISM since 2009, so did not attend the workshop |
| I have not been a recent applicant, but the live workshops were helpful when I was. |
| I think it is a good thing particularly for first time sponsors or others who haven't brought a grant forward in a while. It is also good for us veterans to be reminded of changes in the upcoming grant round. Having the meeting recorded for folks who could not make the meeting is beneficial. |
| I only attended the section on acquisition. I have been applying for SRFB grants since 2015 and am familiar with habitat restoration requirements of Manual 18. |
| I greatly appreciate efforts made to clarify the process and the willingness of staff to help with problems. |
| I didn't attend. |
| I have applied for SFRB grants for the last three years, so at this point the workshop is mostly a refresher and to learn about any changes. |
| Sorry, didn't attend the workshop. I like online workshops that are recorded so we can access them again |
| I think the workshops I've attended have been helpful. |
| didn't attend |
| Workshops are great and an awesome opportunity to engage with our representative. |
| I have applied several times. If I was new it would be more helpful. |
| I watched a recorded version so thank you for recording it and sending it out. |
| Did not attend workshop. |



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| I understood the RCO/SRFB application process and my responsibilities to submit a complete application. | 95% | 1.67% | 1.67% | 1.67% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

If you did not understand the application process, what can RCO/SRFB do to improve the application process?

Not exactly related to this, but since we're all stretched for time - please don't put application due dates on a Friday before a weekend. Make due dates on a Monday so we have the weekend to finish our applications. Thanks.

I was confused at various times on the specific pieces of information I needed to submit for my application. I think most of this confusion was a result of my application being a "monitoring proposal" as opposed to the more traditional habitat-related project. Specifically, within PRISM, there were/are two questions in the "Program and Project Type" section unbeknownst to me then dictat(ed) the fields/questions in following sections. Keith started my application for me in PRISM and had provided responses to these two questions. What we later realized was that Keith selected the wrong responses for our application (and it being a monitoring proposal, I guess). Because Keith selected the wrong answer(s) to the(se) question(s) related to my application type, the section/list of "supplemental monitoring questions" were not visible within PRISM and thus I did not end up answering. I actually noticed this and emailed Keith. Without detailing our back-and-forth, he didn't correct the in PRISM issue and my application was submitted missing answers to the supplemental questions. Shortly after I submitted our application, review panel members met and immediately flagged the issue with my proposal and I received several emails from review panel members trying to understand why my application was incomplete. Luckily, I was granted more time to edit my application and confusion was mostly all I had to deal with. All said, there should be better instructions on what information needs to be provided for the various application types and RCO/SRFB staff assisting with what gets uploaded to PRISM prior to final submission. Bigger picture, these monitoring-related questions are mostly redundant and addressed in the Monitoring Study Plan if the provided template is followed.

The design requirement - even for a project under \$350,000 was not clear. Or maybe I just didn't get it -- so maybe an emphasis on describing that requirement in future workshops?

Between RCOs team and our local lead entity -- LCFRB -- we feel very well supported in the grant application process.

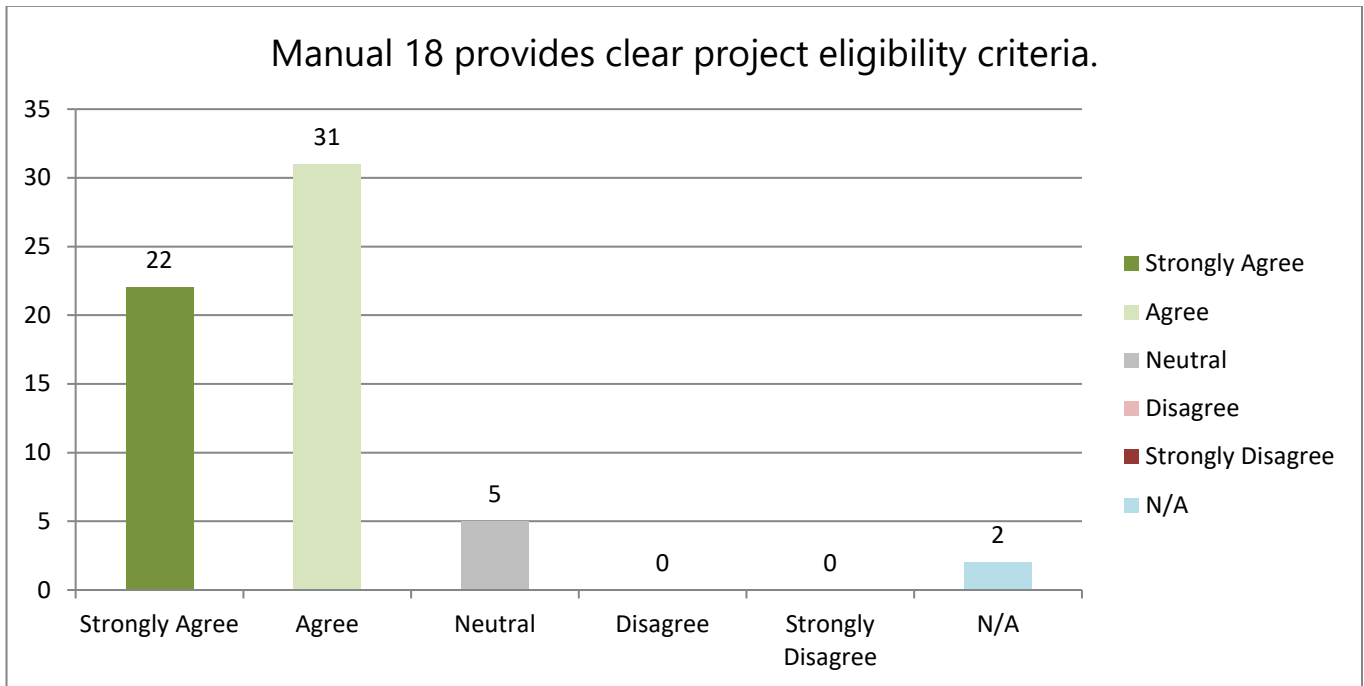
Generally the process was clear. I ran into some technical problems where responses written in word and copied into prism were not recorded properly but we got it sorted out.

I do remember that it was a little unclear to me the first year I applied how "final" the initial application (to the Lead Entity) needed to be versus the final application (to RCO). More guidance on what should be in the site visit presentation would also likely be helpful.

Make it less complicated. Its a lot of work to put an application together.

It is very hard if you're new to understand the local process. RCO should also make that clear as they approve each LE process and attend site visits.

The document names are specific to this grant program and it was hard for me to understand where some common documents should be submitted.

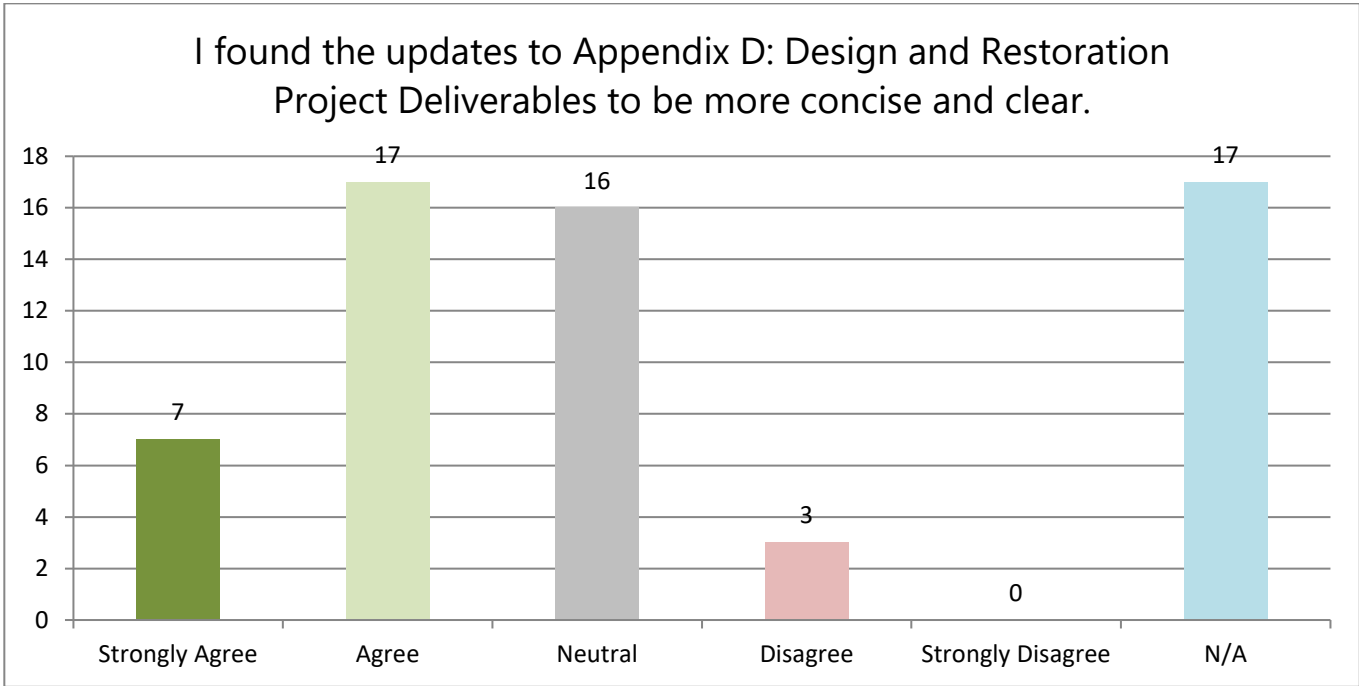


| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|-------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Manual 18 provides clear project eligibility criteria. | 88.37% | 8.33% | 0% | 3.33% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| What policies, procedures, or criteria in Manual 18 were not clear? |
|--|
| I cannot accurately answer this question without refreshing my memory as to the information provided in Manual 18. |
| The RCO manuals are the best, easiest-to-read grant manuals out there. |
| There is some gray area in what qualifies for AA&E versus Construction in the project management realm. I think this is a good thing for experienced project managers and gives us some flexibility with closing out our budgets without having to apply for several amendment requests; however, it can be very confusing for new project managers. |
| Manual 18 is clear but the fact that you need to respond to local project eligibility criteria is no clear for newcomers. |

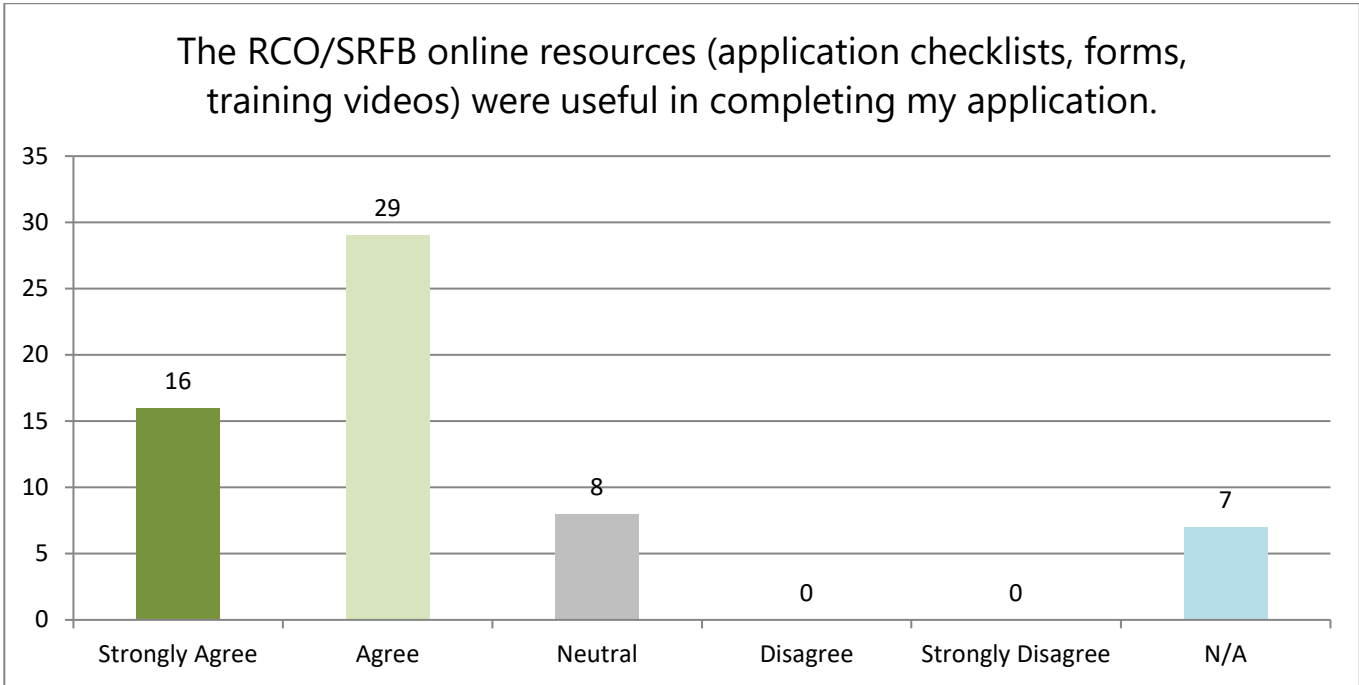


| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|-------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|--------|
| I found the updates to Appendix D: Design and Restoration Project Deliverables to be more concise and clear. | 40% | 26.7% | 5% | 28.33% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Comments |
|---|
| Still getting used to the new format. It's a bit long, but hopefully works well when put in action. |
| I did not review these. I probably should. |
| I think the updates were definitely beneficial and helpful, yet I still found the requirements for the different design projects a little confusing (i.e. what exactly was needed at the application and what was expected as a deliverable). While it seems as though it should be fairly clear with the wording, I still needed some clarification from my grant manager. |
| I must confess that I am not familiar with the updates. As a longtime, frequent applicant, I don't read Manual 18 through every year, although I often reference components. |
| It was better, but not perfect. I can't remember what wasn't perfect, but I'm sure others will tell ya'll. |
| I was not super familiar w/ Appendix D prior to the update, so can't comment on the changes. |

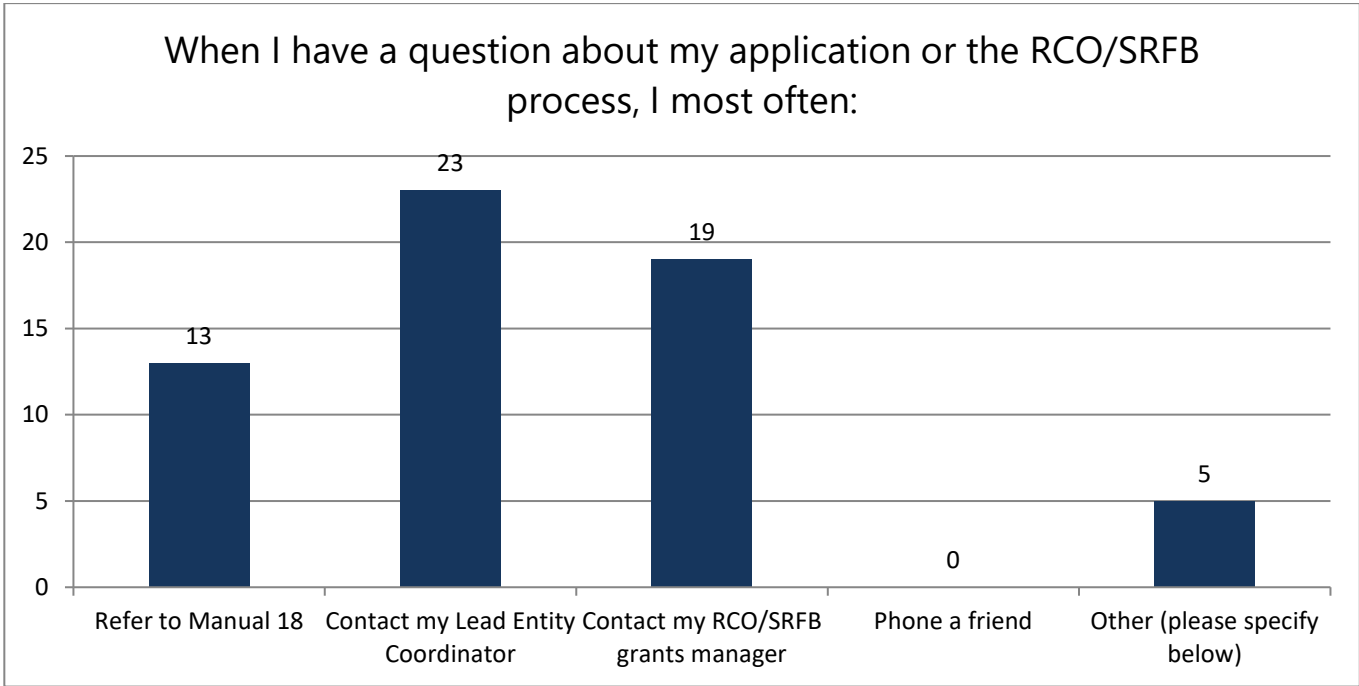


| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| The RCO/SRFB online resources (application checklists, forms, training videos) were useful in completing my application. | 75% | 13.33% | 0% | 11.67% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Comments |
|--|
| See response to question 4. |
| I think the RCO does a great job providing checklists that I use regularly in project management of these projects. |
| I don't think I used any of the online resources this year, other than downloading the newest versions of the manuals that were relevant to my application. I have not seen an application checklist for a couple years now and did not know it was available online. That would certainly be helpful. Will need to look for it next year. |
| The cultural resources parameter boundary was hard to find out until I watched the video... Maybe making the video link more clear or less clicks? |
| The materials are very useful but they are not always aligned with project milestones and grant agreement deliverables. At times we have questions about consistency of requirements when implementing different projects. |
| didn't use them |

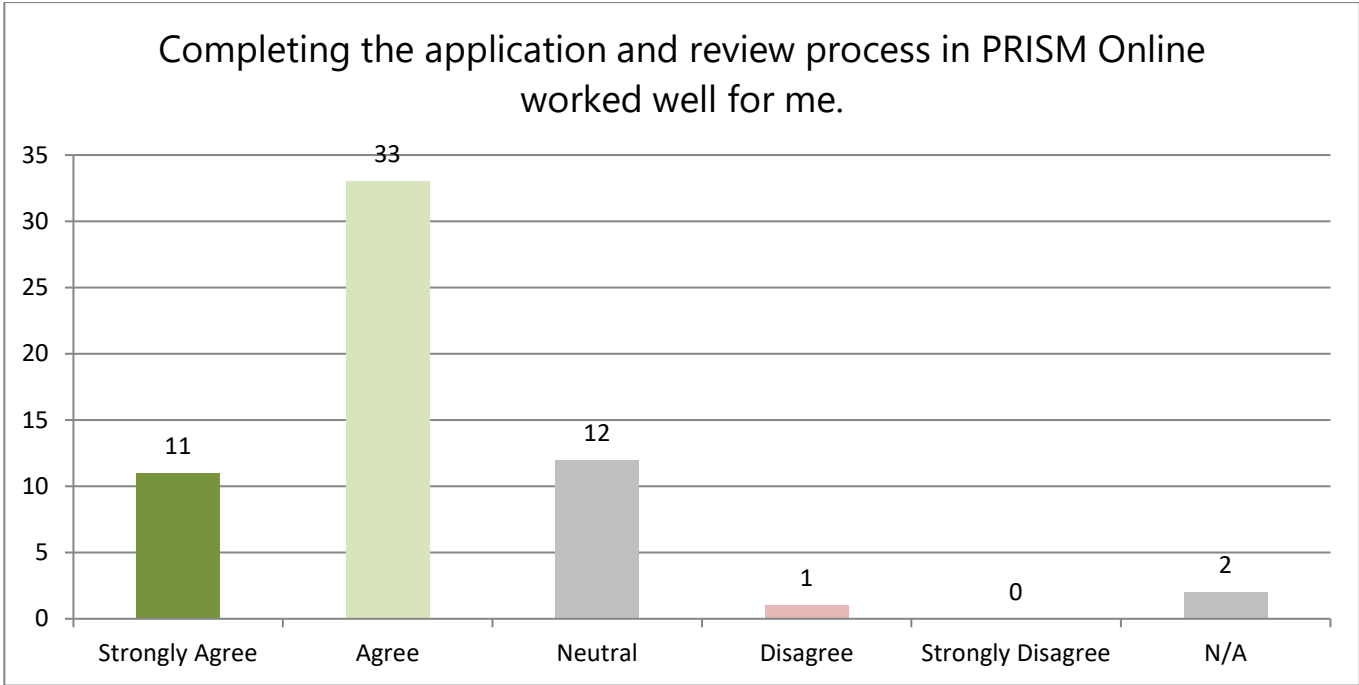


| | Refer to Manual 18 | Contact my Lead Entity Coordinator | Contact my RCO/SRFB grants manager | Phone a Friend | Other (specified in comments) |
|--|--------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------|-------------------------------|
| When I have a question about my application or the RCO/SRFB process, I most often: | 21.67% | 38.33% | 31.67% | 0% | 8.33% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| When I have a question about my application or the RCO/SRFB process, I most often: |
|--|
| All of the above, in that order 18, LE, RCO |
| Amelia Johnson was extremely helpful in completing the application. |
| I contact my RCO grant manager and refer to the manual as well as the top 3 |
| My Lead Entity Coordinator is also someone who I often ask question too. |
| depends on the question. usually start with manual 18, then Lead Entity, then grants manager... |
| I start with the manual but its not always easy to find things and sometimes the specific answers I need are not there. Then I call my RCO Grant Manager. |
| I typically start with the lead entity coordinator to talk through the question before I call RCO. |
| While manual 18 is usually the first place I look, I certainly called my grant manager on more than one occasion to clarify something. |
| Personally I need to utilize manual 18 more often. Currently I ask my colleague Brice for clarification followed by my Lead Entity Coordinator and then generally followed by my RCO grants manager depending on the issue. |
| Thankful for Alissa!! |
| Sandy Dotts is very helpful. |
| If it is unclear I then seek clarification via the lead entity coordinator or grants manager. |
| I often both check Manual 18 and then sometimes still want to check in with the Lead Entity. In part this is because each Lead Entity has a slightly different process and set of priorities that are harder to discern than the RCO Manual 18. Partly this is because there is sometimes gray area in the Manual that I like to seek clarification on from a real person. |
| typically email LE and srfb mgr together. |
| I first check the manuals and checklists provided, then reach out to our grant manager. Grant managers are by far the most helpful resource, but the manuals often have the answer. |
| Grant Managers are also a great resource |



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Completing the application and review process in PRISM Online worked well for me. | 74.57% | 20.34% | 1.69% | 3.39% |

Customer Comments

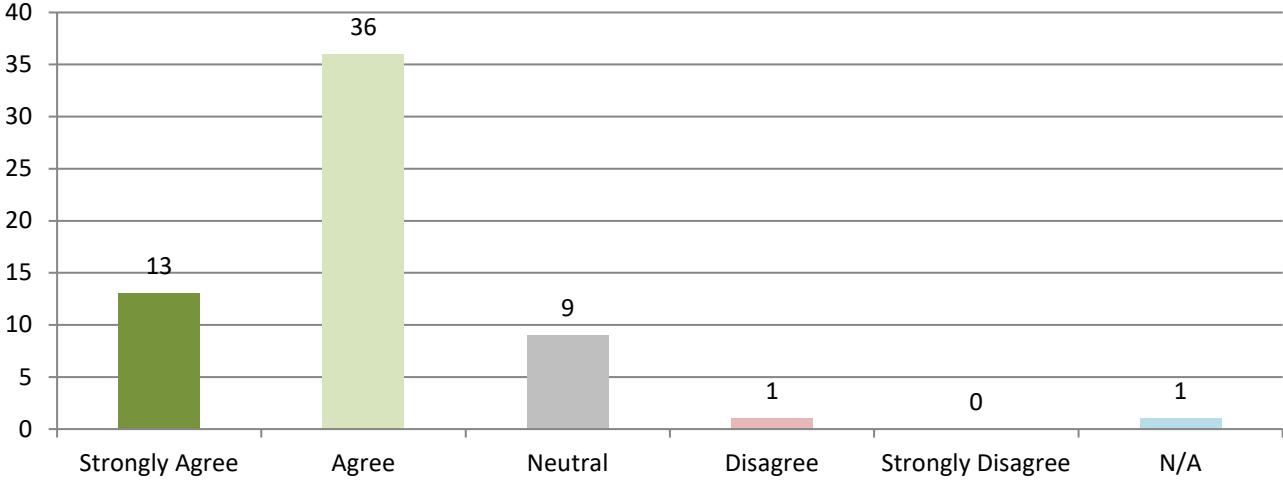
The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| What are the top three fixes to PRISM Online we should consider? |
|--|
| <p>Remove redundant sections. There are several areas that seem like one has just responded with the same information 2 screens earlier...</p> |
| <p>When in PRISM Online:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Saving each page sends one back to the top of the page despite being in a particular section. Should be able to stay where working. - Need to be able to copy and paste from different sections of the metrics into others. - Need to be able to format text boxes with indents and bullets at a minimum - otherwise, the narratives turn into a single unwieldy run-on paragraph that reads poorly in the Snapshots and Reports. - Need to be able to organize attachments after uploading - perhaps when they're associated with a specific attachment type, they'd automatically go into a section for that type? <p>Thanks for asking... :-)</p> |
| <p>The change log is not at all helpful - it isn't at all clear what changed or by whom. The character counts should not include spaces or returns, since formatting isn't really available it is useful to use breaks and space but if there aren't enough characters, this is difficult. PRISM almost always counts more characters than Word does for the same block of text. Finally - the Word document to draft answers to the PRISM questions should have the questions in the same order they are presented in PRISM. Ideally they should be numbered and the numbers should match. It isn't always easy to figure out what goes where, and I've been doing this for 15 years.</p> |
| <p>See answer to Question 4. Again, responses to one or two questions early in the PRISM application determine the resulting question/structure of the application. I just double-checked and the issue arose with the responses to the two questions in the "Program and Project Type". I don't recall exactly how Keith responded vs. should have to the two questions, but it was something like choosing "projects" instead of "activities" for the program type. With no prior knowledge, the distinction between the two answers was certainly not obvious to me and hence why I didn't think to flag the issue when I noticed the the "supplemental monitoring questions" were missing from the application template.</p> |
| <p>Overall I think PRISM works fairly well.</p> |
| <p>This isn't very specific, but have PRISM show match correctly always seems to take some back and forth with our grant manager.</p> |
| <p>It was more efficient to have the grant manager email out the review panel comments. Then we don't have to go looking for them. Also, it seems like a lot of times there are problems with accessing those in PRISM.</p> <p>If funding were available, it would save so much time if we could actually view attachments in PRISM, not have to download & save them.</p> |
| <p>Firstly, PRISM is my favorite database to navigate. Thank you for all the work you've put into it!</p> <p>The most difficult thing for us as a project sponsor is to know exactly how much funding is remaining in a grant. There are a lot of different variables to work out before we know how much is remaining. A few examples include retainage and approved but not yet released funds. For example, if you look at 19-1213, the "REMAINING BALANCE" is \$40,854.50 but we are already into retainage so the actual remaining balance is much less than this; this is misleading and sponsors have to ignore this number. It would be great get a few sponsors who are familiar with PRISM together with RCO staff to work out what information sponsors need to see.</p> <p>I use the Billings to Date function of the Billings tab all the time. Please do not remove this function.</p> |

| |
|---|
| I would like to see another tab added to the Project Details section where I could easily find the restoration metrics tab that is hidden inside progress reports. This way we could easily go in and check the remaining deliverables we need to meet if we are part-way through a project. |
| The biggest issue I have run in to is when doing a project that doesn't require match. PRISM is not set up to detect which types of projects require match and which do not. The budgeting portions therefore will show errors on a no match project and have so far required a call to the grant manager who can go in and change things in PRISM on her end to make it work. |
| It would be helpful to send this survey out shortly after submitting applications so any issues experienced are fresh. As noted before, making sure copy and paste responses are tracked properly. In my case I needed to enter an extra space after every pasted response for the system to recognize anything had been added to the cell. It took us a while to figure out what was happening because the text was visible but was not recognized by the system. If possible, having the system autosave changes every few mins rather than manual saving and risking loss of work due to a connection issue. |
| I didn't do the upload and submittal. |
| The budget components. Because of the way match is considered, the application process either forces you to lie about the overall budget in order to reduce the amount of match we have to document (the documentation is a pain), or we have to report way more match than the minimum, which leads to a bureaucratic headache once we have an agreement. As a result, the PRISM budget information often does not match the numbers in the budget spreadsheet we submit as an attachment. Second: make it possible to submit a PRISM application with no match. Right now, even when a specific application qualifies for zero match requirement, it is impossible to submit the application with no match unless an RCO employee checks a box on their end first. This leads to a lot of last-minute panic. |
| I preferred the old method of tracked changes to the prism module for question/answer |
| Text boxes associated with proposal questions often have formatting issues. Sometimes text sizes vary and sometimes other formatting-related items are not maintained when copying and pasting text prepared elsewhere into PRISM. Also, often text appears one way when viewing it online and another way (often with text formatting differences) when viewing the saved application report. |
| Ability to copy and paste metrics between project sites |
| Monitoring projects require a lot of redundancy in PRISM |
| Overly complicated. |
| prism is much better than it used to be |
| I really preferred the Tracked Changes uploaded document. It was easier as a reviewer and as an applicant. |
| Clearer explanations of document types, more information about the different types of comments, include deadline dates on the PRISM page |
| Prism is my favorite software experience! |
| Cultural resources map seems glitchy. Automatically populate the fish questions. Extra questions from the lead entity coordinator don't add anything. |
| I have multiple planting sites that need Cultural Resource reviews, and I had trouble labelling my sites after submitting shapefiles to the Cultural Resource portion of the application. I tried submitting my shapefiles all as one zipped file, then submitting each shapefile individually, but all my site labels would end up mixed up (sites along the Big Quilcene River labelled as Tahuya River sites, etc.). I ended up tracing over each shapefile so that I could label them correctly. |



The questions in the PRISM Online application allowed me to fully describe my project’s goals, objectives, and the benefit to salmon.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|---|-------------------------|------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| The questions in the PRISM online application allowed me to fully describe my project’s goals, objectives, and the benefit to salmon. | 81.67% | 15% | 1.67% | 1.67% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Please provide feedback on your experience with the Review Panel. |
|--|
| seems there's some redundancy in the questions |
| I often apply for invasive plant prevention and control projects. With support from my grant managers over time the metrics have evolved to allow repeat surveys (utterly necessary) but not to count the acres or miles, which are huge and require lots of time in fieldwork, mapping, planning, reporting, and treatments. Knotweed is not the only salmon-impacting non-native plant... and Salmon Recovery really needs to adapt the the explosion of many plants that impair riparian, floodplain, and channel function ... before it's too late. Thankful for WCRR! What's needed are more programs through RCO that allow programmatic work that needs decades of effort... PROGRAMS, not PROJECTS, right? I always get told I'm applying for funding for a PROGRAM, not a project - but in fact, that's what it'll take to do the work completely and effectively. That's what'll save salmon and their habitats. Really, fish passage is a PROGRAM, and each barrier project will need more work at some point, right? Thanks for considering... |
| several questions were near duplications of others |
| See above - overall, the supplemental monitoring questions seem redundant to the information that is asked for in the monitoring plan. |
| The actual questions are great; once I understood what the Review Panel was seeking from the questions, I was able to articulate my entries accordingly. The character limits are a bit limiting for large, complex projects. Is it possible to change the character limit based on the number of miles or acres we are including? |
| Provide a space to describe the project. There is no question that allows for an actual description of what the project is; I usually fit it into the cultural resources questions, which seems like an odd place for it. If you provide space to describe the project up front, then the following questions on benefits make more sense and answers can be understood in context. |
| Some of the character limits are constraining. |
| Good questions though as I remember some were very similar to each other. |
| The application is a bit over-determined, with extremely specific criteria. It is harder to talk about riverscape restoration projects and phased projects, where one application is for a small piece of a larger vision. |
| Some sections have more than enough characters and others are a struggle. |
| I generally agree, but I'd like it if the text boxes allowed for a bit more characters/text. While I understand the need to limit the amount of text included (for review purposes), a bit more space for some of the "meatier" questions would be helpful. |
| Some of them are redundant. But, that's okay, because I have mastered control C and V! Thank you for allowing me to keep my keyboard skills sharp! |
| We have some large/complex/phased projects and describing them in the project description box, was a bit truncated by the character limit. |
| Overly complicated. |
| writing the objectives was difficult. I suggest you provide more description and a few more examples of objectives so that we can get a better handle on what you're looking for. |
| Sometimes we hit word limits, but I see why they are in place. It levels the playing field, and requires project sponsors to answer the question more concisely. With time to work on my wording, I can <u>always make the points needed to answer the questions.</u> |

Sometimes the word limits make it difficult. Some questions seem very redundant.

Too many questions

Fifteen respondents chose to answer this open-ended question. The following table includes unedited comments submitted by applicants for this question.

| Do you have any policy recommendations for Manual 18 that would most help support your ability to develop, scope, fund, and implement priority projects? |
|--|
| <p>No match! Otherwise I think Manual 18 has come a long way over the past 20 years.</p> |
| <p>Per above - not enough time to elaborate... you know where to find me!</p> |
| <p>Yes, drop the match requirement like so many other funders have. We could get more done without this constraint.</p> |
| <p>I would love a pdf or word template (with clear character restrictions) that allows me to fill out everything offline before I enter it into PRISM.</p> |
| <p>Our ability to get projects on the ground is limited by staff capacity. One way to free up staff time is to eliminate the cost share requirement for SRFB grants. This would not diminish our need to find partners and collaborate. If this is a concern, RCO could require some more stringent stakeholder outreach deliverables like they do cultural resource review. The difference in staff capacity is that stakeholder outreach is already part of our workload (or it should be if a sponsor isn't doing it) at working with partners to look at these projects from multiple angles to produce the best project possible.</p> |
| <p>None at this time.</p> |
| <p>Eliminate match requirements...particularly for bridge projects where traditional sources of match are difficult to create.</p> |
| <p>Not at this time.</p> |
| <p>Break down the Table of Contents for Section 2.</p> |
| <p>As I previously mentioned, we have some large/complex/phased restoration projects in the works. We support the targeted investment program for high priority projects. We are finding that for large (e.g. expensive) projects, we have to apply to multiple grant sources and tracking the restoration metrics for each funding source is proving to be difficult and a lot of additional work. I understand that we need to track funding sources and the work they accomplish separately, so having the ability to apply for large grant amounts, greatly reduces the administrative burden on project applicants. So perhaps, instead of one targeted investment project being funded there could be other opportunities to apply for large grant amounts. Or come up with another way to track restoration metrics/per funding source that is less complicated. At this time I do not have a solution to this issue (I will have to think about it more!), but pointing out that it is an added administrative burden for project sponsors. In addition, we are running into issues with acquisitions and meeting the RCO requirements to complete the hazardous materials requirements/certification form. As an example, attempting to acquire farmland, where there are historic uses of pesticides, chemicals, fuel/oil etc., if the project sponsor identifies hazardous materials and it is required for the current landowner/seller to clean up their land, at their expense, the project sponsor could lose out on the acquisition, because the seller, could just sell to another willing buyer who would not require them to clean up their land. Also, if there is clean-up required, the RCO grant sources are greatly limited in what they will fund for clean-up. I understand that the regulations are trying to hold polluters accountable but it may come at the expense of acquiring high priority lands for future restoration efforts that could help move the needle for salmon recovery. Plus, if a site does need to be cleaned up, there seem to be very few grant sources, where</p> |

hazardous material cleanup is an eligible task/expense. I am not sure how RCO would address this on a policy level; I am simply highlighting it as a significant barrier to project implementation. Finally, it is appreciated that the targeted investment does not require match, but the other RCO/SRFB grants do require match. I understand the reasoning behind requiring match, but it is a lot of additional administrative work for the project sponsor to secure and track match. The entity that I work for is absolutely committed to salmon recovery, for the next seven generations, in fact.

no

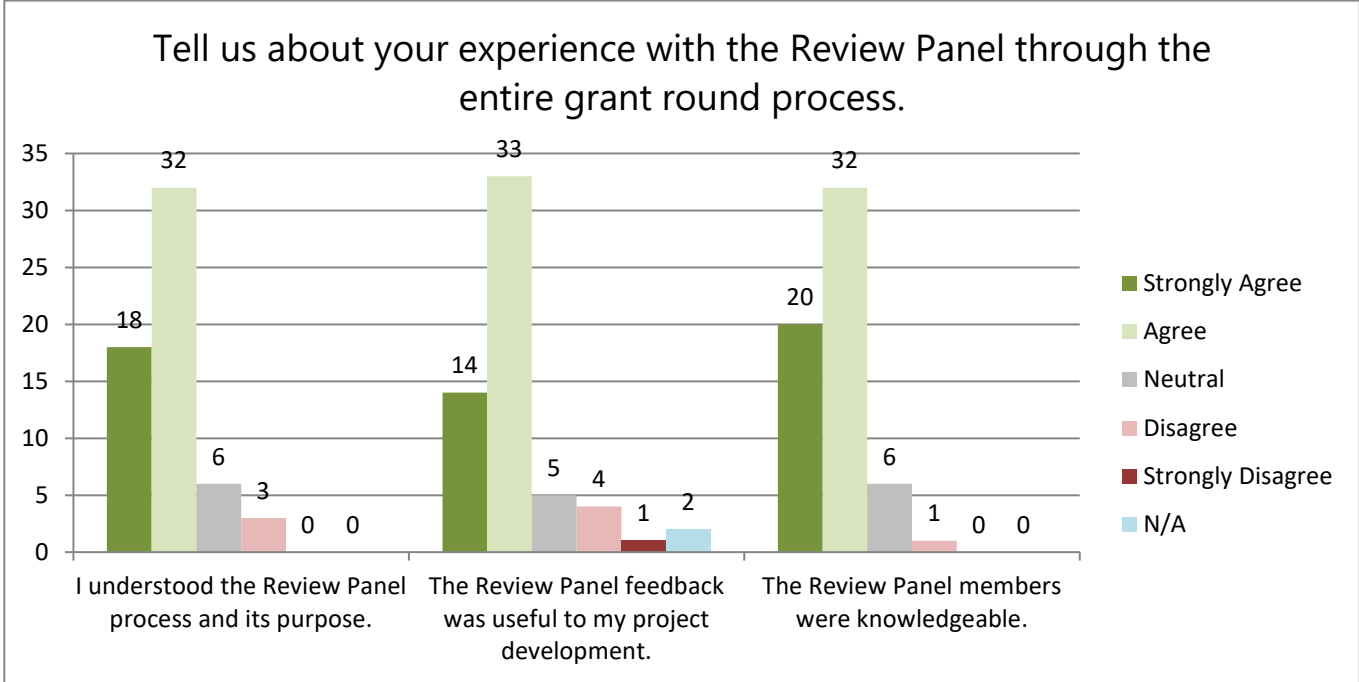
no

No. The manuals are really helpful.

N/A



| | Between Feb. 1 and March 17 | Between April 3 and May 12 |
|---|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| My Lead Entity's site visit with the Review Panel occurred: | 18.52% | 81.48% |



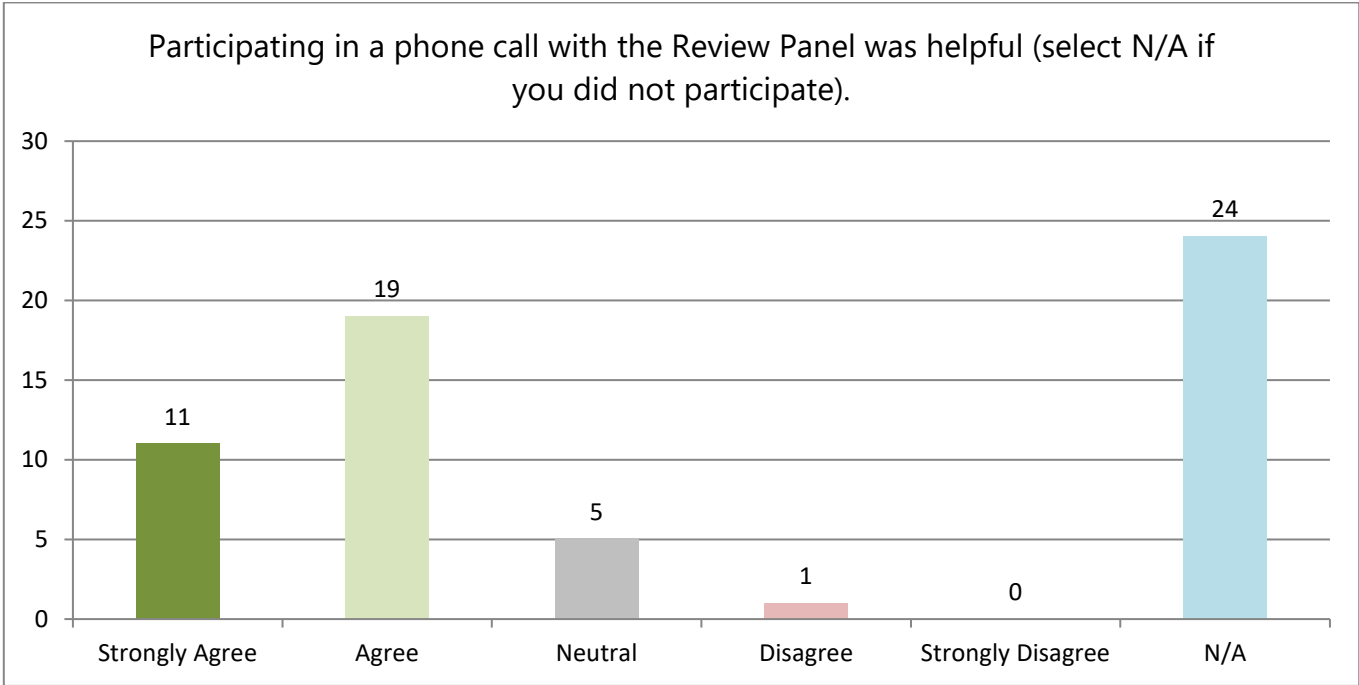
| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| I understood the Review Panel process and its purpose. | 84.75% | 10.17% | 5.08% | 0% |
| The Review Panel feedback was useful to my project development. | 79.66% | 8.47% | 8.47% | 3.39% |
| The Review Panel members were knowledgeable. | 88.14% | 10.17% | 1.69% | 0% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Please provide feedback on your experience with the Lead Entity. |
|---|
| We run out of time in our LE. Site visits near the end of the day become rushed, with folks being less willing to walk sites, especially when requiring significant distance. Mostly a time issue. |
| The Review Panel was not particularly on board with the project proposed - some initially pushing it into POC status - but being challenged made my articulation of the project stronger - and it will turn out to prove new methods and positive response for salmon and the river - stand by! |
| <p>I'm going to preface this comment by saying that this applies to project with a POC designation. We have had many projects make it through the Review Panel. My suggestion is that if it's a POC the Review Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - approach it has a learning exercise for all (there's so much we still don't know about rivers and we are all still learning). - provide clear reasoning for POC designation - is clear in the level of expectation that sponsor needs to meet to clear POC criteria - provide additional time/review that includes a site visit and multiple check-in's - allows for time for Review Panel "experts" to dive more fully into the project, including identifying a point person to meet with the sponsor (who's also a good match) - provide specific page numbers/reasons why it disagrees with BOD Report analysis and/or project hypothesis' |
| The local RTT and state review panel are not always in sinc. It is frustrating when one group will request specific project components and the other disregards those changes. |
| It wasn't clear to me the purpose of the proposal presentation that were completed in early May. By late-April, I had submitted my application and the only feedback I'd received was a single question regarding match-funding from Steve West at LCFRB. I emailed Amelia Johnson and Keith Dublanica asking for more guidance on what I should include in my presentation. Amelia provided a response and, in short, said, that I should "tailor [my] presentation to the evaluation criteria for [my] particular project type found in the LCFRB Grants Manual and the state level Manual 18." This was moderately helpful. Overall, it would be good to provide some specific guidance on what should be shared during the presentations. In the presentations that I saw around when I gave mine, the structure and content was quite different. Perhaps this is fine but again some description of expectations would be very helpful. |
| The Review Panel was very knowledgeable, but seemed almost overly negatively focused on the other co-benefits of my client's project that weren't directly fish related. The project was a fish passage project, and one of the co-benefits was that restoring the creek to its natural channel would help reduce erosion undercutting a sewer line, but the Review Panel was quite negative about the co-benefit being listed as part of the benefits my client's were presenting for the project. While we understand that SRFB is all about funding to improve salmonid habitat, many other stakeholders need to be involved in large scale projects and they might have other priorities that are not as salmon related. Listing co-benefits should be something that doesn't detract from an application as salmon projects that only have salmon benefit are rare and being able to have projects with a multitude of benefits helps gather a wide range of stakeholder support and can help diversify funding sources. |
| I do not have any issues with the Review Panel. They serve an important purpose. |
| Review panel members with experience with irrigation/agriculture related projects are more helpful to us generally. But that said, it's always good to share these types of projects with those that don't so we help improve the understanding of the complexities of these projects with the technical folks we or |

| |
|---|
| <p>other sponsors will be working with in the future. Review panel does usually seem to have a good mix of experiences so that makes us comfortable with our interactions and their feedback.</p> |
| <p>The Review Panel has a difficult task. I appreciate how the RP members assigned to our region include one person familiar with the region and another who is more neutral. I believe the RP is necessary to protect RCO/SRFB from funding projects that have red flags. I think that projects that are flagged as red flags should be limited to those with high risk to people or property and shouldn't include critiques of specific restoration strategies unless they have been proven unsuccessful. For example, "Stage-0" projects have become stigmatized to the point where sponsors can't use this term. However, we are encouraged to think floodplain-wide, to activate off-channel habitats, and to elevate the water table. I see it as the RPs role to look past the stigma of a specific strategy and provide feedback to the sponsor on design considerations for these kinds of projects, and potentially a pre-construction design approval. I do not believe that a good project in the proper location that doesn't have any red flags, should be unfunded because of the stigma of the restoration approach.</p> |
| <p>Frustrating at times, but overall a useful and necessary component to the application process.</p> |
| <p>I disagree with some of the responses but we worked out a solution.</p> |
| <p>I felt the review panel creates more work for applicant than what manual 18 requires. For example, manual 18 says you can apply for engineering and implementation... the panel said I needed alternatives and associated costs. I estimated and took educated guess, but that is the point of fully asking for 0 to 100% designs... to have an engineer give alternatives.</p> |
| <p>It is not clear to me, even after multiple years of this, how projects end up as Needing More Information or Project of Concern.</p> |
| <p>Appreciate the follow-up to ask questions that they provide.</p> |
| <p>I thought it was great to have student attend the site visits for the Chehalis Lead Entity grant round this year.</p> |
| <p>i think there is inherent conflict with srfb using private consultants on the review panel. these people then get very detailed knowledge of other firms project plans and processes and can be biased based on relationships between competing private firms. Would be best if review panel consisted of state agency staff not private consultants.</p> |
| <p>I dig the new panel members. Ten quirky scientists now!</p> |
| <p>I am still a bit new to the review panel and learning it's process.</p> |
| <p>Panelists were less knowledgeable about water transactions than other types of projects which makes it difficult to present the project without providing water rights 101 information</p> |
| <p>The meeting with the review panel absolutely helps focus our projects. It is a helpful and necessary step.</p> |
| <p>It was obvious that most of the review panelists did not review all of the application materials. Spending a lot of time and funding on developing materials for the application for them to not be reviewed is frustrating.</p> |
| <p>review panel members did their job well. no complaints</p> |
| <p>The Review Panel is great. I've worked with the same reviewers for years, and they are soooo helpful. They often ask great questions, and end up providing helpful advice to strengthen our projects. They also show a strong base of understanding our projects.</p> |
| <p>The review panel tried to make simple projects more complicated.</p> |



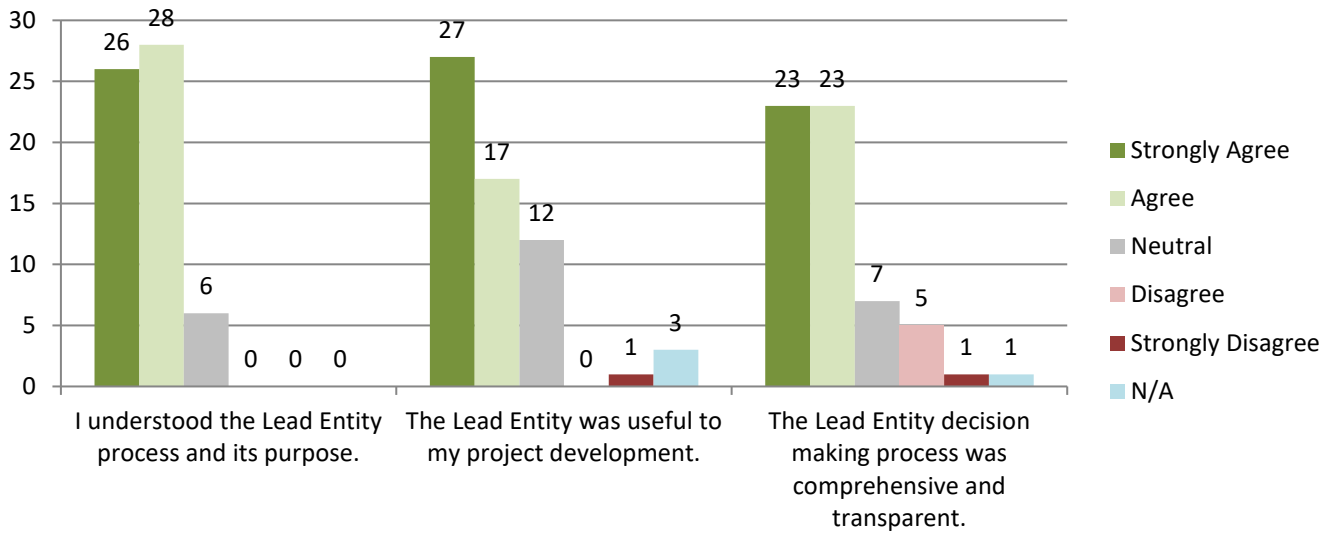
| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|--------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------|------------|
| Participating in a phone call with the Review Panel was helpful. | 50% | 8.33% | 1.67% | 40% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Additional Comments |
|---|
| It helped us work through the comments in an efficient manner with our engineering team. |
| I did not participate in phone call for restoration project, but did for monitoring project (only panel review). Good questions and feedback. |
| I'm going to preface this comment by saying that this applies to project with a POC designation. The phone call was not illuminating and did not highlight what we needed to correct to clear POC. For projects with POC designation I strongly suggest that the Review Panel make additional time to discuss the project outside of one phone call. |
| The Review Panel hosted a zoom meeting rather than a phone call. |
| The phone calls help with clarification. It would be better if they could offer their professional review about whether the project sponsor is heading in the right direction. |
| I did not need to discuss my projects with the RP. Other staff on our team did and we really appreciated that opportunity. |
| Over the years we have had a few projects that were somewhat complicated and/or difficult to adequately describe (especially during the virtual visits). Having a follow up call to clarify the Review Panel's comments/concerns was very helpful in refining and finishing the applications when they had a status of "needs more info" or "project of concern". |
| I appreciate that SRFB allows applicants to discuss and work out solutions to issues rather than disqualifying projects without discussion. |
| Not every year, but in some years the phone call is necessary to decipher comments/questions. |
| I did not participate in a phone call, but did meet online with the review team to ask questions regarding their initial review comments. I appreciate this opportunity, and find it helpful. |
| Who doesn't like talking to quirky scientists! The phone calls should be mandatory too! |
| Panel has to review a lot of projects and it can be difficult for them to understand the details of each project. |
| I very much appreciate review panel members taking the time to participate in a phone call and answer questions. Very helpful. |

Tell us about your experience with the Lead Entity through the entire grant round process.



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| I understood the Lead Entity process and its purpose | 90% | 10% | 0% | 0% |
| The Lead Entity was useful to my project development. | 73.33% | 20% | 1.67% | 5% |
| The Lead Entity decision making process was comprehensive and transparent. | 76.66% | 11.67% | 10% | 1.67% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

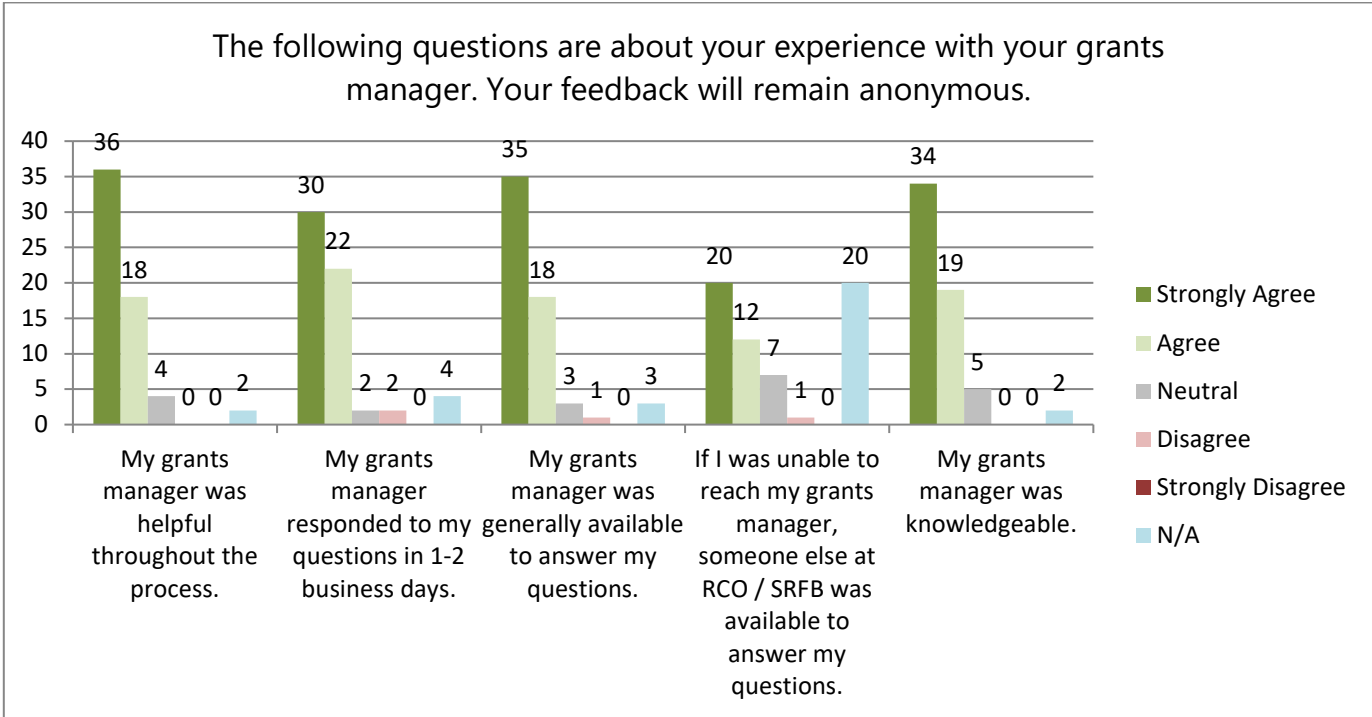
| Additional Comments |
|--|
| Our LE had issues with getting projects scored out of TAG and presented to the citizen's committee. Rushed meeting resulted in less than ideal results. We are working to improve our LE processes. |
| The LE coordinator is utterly professional, comprehensive, and supportive. The LE members are not all knowledgeable or particularly supportive of the work conducted by our organization or about invasive plants or of the project as proposed - there are many personalities, and one such member was making the case erroneously that the project was POC, when it wasn't. Made for tense moments. We lost 1/3 of proposed funding due to lack of knowledge (didn't come on the field tour, didn't read the proposals and see all the attachments). |
| The Lead Entity scorecard has ranges for most questions. This can skew a project up to 45 points depending on what the reviewer selects within the range. |
| Again, Amelia Johnson was extremely helpful in completing the application. |
| Our LE coordinator is relatively new but does a great job. |
| The Lead Entity does a fantastic job facilitating projects along, it just is a very very long grant process that is highly involved, especially when such little funding is available on any given round. Between the LOI, two presentations, a site visit, and another presentation during the ranking meeting it can be extremely time consuming to apply for SRFB funding. |
| Lead Entities offer strategic assistance and support to all project sponsors. This saves time, strengthens applications, keeps sponsors out of quagmires & makes the process more efficient and effective. |
| Process could be shorter, consider less presentations, major time commitment to process without knowing funding will happen. |
| Our lead entity is awesome. They work really hard to make sure that sponsors understand timelines and requirements and help to keep us on track. |
| We love our local lead entity. They have a great grasp on what it will take to reach recovery in our region. We believe they do a good job vetting projects and have a strong TAC that provides solid feedback. |
| We need a clear, consistent, and AG-approved conflict of interest policy that is applied by all lead entities, and extends beyond simple financial conflicts. |
| Projects are ranked based on every members subjectivity and bias and all votes are equally weighted. There should be a mechanism to remove members from the review team with clear bias toward there organizations proposed projects. There is data and information to back up such a decision. |
| I think the Lead Entities generally do a good job providing feedback but often the feedback comes too late in the process to be of much use. Lead Entities are also of somewhat limited utility for discussing priorities as related to project development. I have consulted one Lead Entity regarding project development ideas in the past but it has been an ad hoc process. The Lead Entities generally do not have either the funding or capacity to really develop priorities of their own or to shop those priorities around through participating organizations. That isn't only true of the Lead Entities; salmon recovery in general is a very opportunistic process, with individual organizations chasing individual projects based largely on landowner willingness and fundability. It would be helpful if SOMEONE was thinking more strategically. |
| Now that I know where to look and have done a few, but as a new applicant it was terribly confusing and nothing on RCO website suggests you need to check-in. |
| Lead Entities are the way! The salmon recovery act is the greatest statute in all of Washington! |

I am not really involved w/ the Lead Entity process. I primarily do the grant applications and my supervisor interfaces w/ the Lead Entity.

The local Technical Team made some scoring decisions that I had trouble understanding the biological benefits.

Feedback was minimal. Unclear how the ranking was accomplished.

lead entity is doing OK. not great, not terrible.

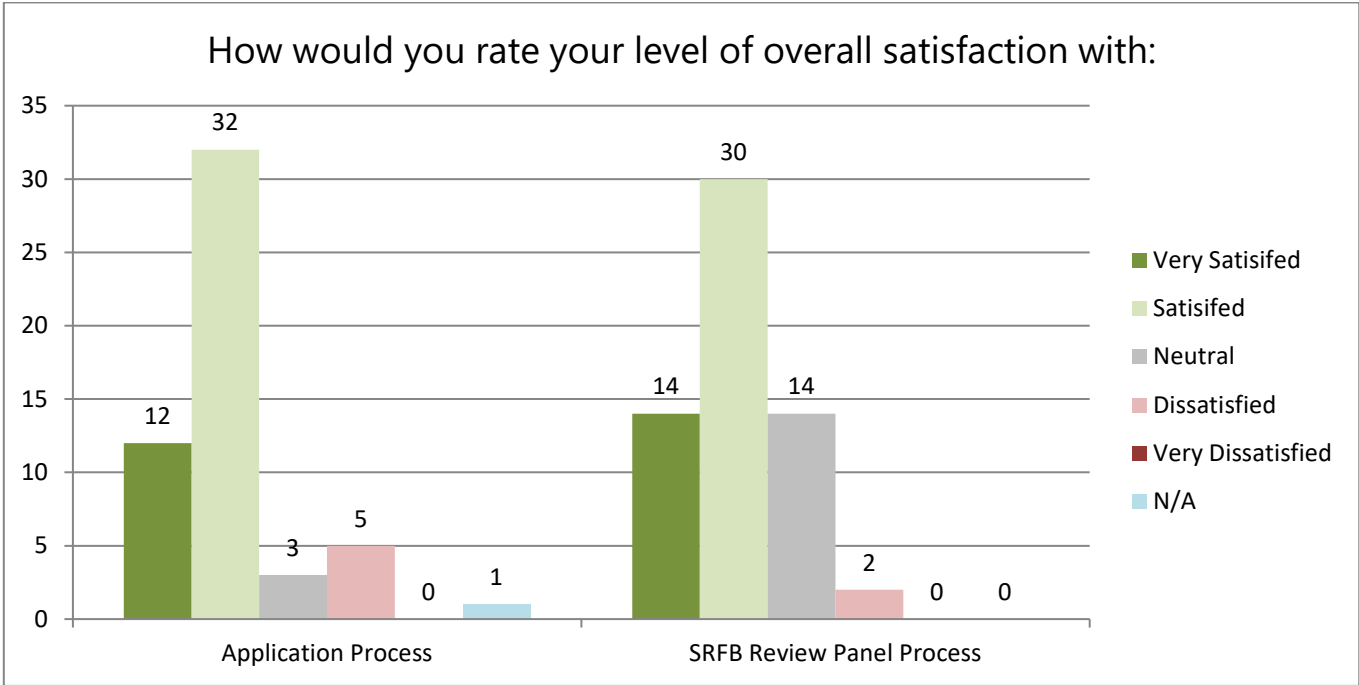


| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|--|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|---------------|
| My grants manager was helpful throughout the process. | 90% | 6.67% | 0% | 3.33% |
| My grants manager responded to my questions in 1-2 business days. | 86.67% | 3.33% | 3.33% | 6.67% |
| My grants manager was generally available to answer my questions. | 88.33% | 5% | 1.67% | 5% |
| If I was unable to reach my grants manager, someone else at RCO/SRFB was available to answer my questions. | 53.33% | 11.67% | 1.67% | 33.33% |
| My grants manager was knowledgeable. | 88.34% | 8.33% | 0% | 3.33% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Feedback about your experience with your grant manager or other RCO/SRFB Staff. |
|---|
| We love Elizabeth! |
| My grant manager and I seemed to work on different schedules. I prefer to do office work during the AM and head into the field. I rarely can reach via telephone (90%+ to voice mail), and responses are delayed. I would just prefer better immediate phone access for small issues. |
| Couldn't do what we do without our amazing grant managers and other RCO staff over the past 12 years. GRATITUDE. |
| Grants managers are always helpful and spot on with advice and guidance. |
| I responded with the understanding the Keith Dublanica was my grants manager. Overall, Keith was extremely friendly and pleasant to interact with. However, his ability to answer my questions wasn't always the best (e.g., see response to question #4) |
| The grant manager for our WRIA is amazing, very knowledgeable and helpful. If they weren't available however I don't know who else at RCO I would contact. |
| Sometimes concessions are made to allow sponsors to expend extra funding or do more or have more time. Some of these decisions can skirt policy and can create issues locally. If allowances are made one time, sponsors think they can do it another time. That can be a slippery slope. We need to keep honoring the policies and say no when needed and consider policy changes when warranted. This helps ensure best practices and continued responsible use of taxpayer dollars to maintain our collective credibility which is critical to continuing this important work. |
| We've had great experiences with grant managers over the years. They clearly want us to be successful and work hard to help us overcome obstacles as we encounter them. |
| Our grants manager was in transition during the grant round. Thus, it isn't productive to provide this feedback. So far, our new PM has been responsive and helpful as he learns the in's and out's of his role. |
| Being fairly new to the application process, I have made many calls to both our grant manager and RCO staff. all have been very helpful and typically easy to get a hold of. Additionally, my questions were all answered satisfactorily and in a timely manner. |
| Lately RCO staff in general have been slow in responding to questions. Sometimes I get answers quickly, other times I don't hear back at all, or only after repeated inquiries. |
| Alissa is very responsive and helpful, super clear. |
| I've had no qualms with the RCO staff. I've worked with several, and they have all been sympathetic and knowledgeable. One was a bit hard to get in touch with but in general they are responsive. |
| Our grants manager is super knowledgeable and keeps us on track! They go above and beyond to help us improve our grant applications. When we have unique issues/problems arise, they are willing to problem solve with us, within the bounds of RCO grant agreement/requirements. |
| RCO staff have always been available and helpful. |
| Elizabeth was incredibly helpful! |
| All of my grants' managers have been extremely helpful in making my projects a success. |
| EB is great. just top notch. |
| Alice Rubin is fantastic |



| | Strongly Agree or Agree | Neutral | Strongly Disagree or Disagree | N/A |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|---------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Application Process | 83.02% | 5.66% | 9.43% | 1.89% |
| SRFB Review Panel Process | 73.33% | 23.33% | 3.33% | 0% |

Customer Comments

The following table includes unedited applicant comments submitted for this survey question.

| Comments |
|--|
| Panel would benefit from either less projects under their responsibility (spread too thin to fully understand project details) or more deference given to LE project selection. Sometimes panel concerns have been well discussed at local level, only to rise up during SFRB review without fully understanding details/constraints. |
| As above... |
| The current process in a 10 month application process with 8 months active interaction involving 4 presentations/tours. It takes a significant amount of labor for SFRB applications compared to other grant applications. |
| Less process for sponsors would be appreciated. |
| Keep it up RCO! This funding source is really helping with salmon recovery! |
| Overall the process is a reasonable balance between accountability and minimizing sponsor burden. Unfortunately, in some WRIAs we've had real issues with conflicts of interest and tribal strong-arming / outright ethics violations that impact the fair and responsible distribution of competitive state grant funds for salmon recovery. |
| Cumbersome and very time consuming |
| Overly complicated. |
| all my interactions with rco staff have been positive. the application process is long and drawn out. I'd love to see you shorten up the interval between applications and funding decisions. we need more projects getting lined up and completed. |
| The application process is very long and it can be difficult to find funding just to pay for staff time through the application process. Also, the amount of modeling and information required just for the application can be prohibitive. A design/build grant is not always feasible and often splitting the process into a design application and a build application can take enough time that significant changes occur within the project reach that alter conditions enough that designs have limited use. It's partly just the nature of this type of project, but it can be frustrating. |
| No comments. Process is good and appreciate commitment to improve. |

Thirty-one respondents chose to answer this open-ended question. The following table includes unedited comments submitted by applicants for this question.

| Do you have any policy recommendations for Manual 18 that would most help support your ability to develop, scope, fund, and implement priority projects? |
|--|
| <p>No match! ECY beat you on this, but it is still a worthy change to the RCO/SRFB process. Happy to help with the messaging to the electeds in Oly on this...</p> |
| <p>No, I think RCO/SRFB works pretty well. Grant financial side is prompt, though sometimes frustrating for items that get returned for minor corrections.</p> |
| <p>All grant programs I've applied to that provide funding in the 100's of 1000's are complex and unwieldy and require huge investment of time and knowledge... is what it is. Can't think of anything specific, but we've been mostly funded by RCO programs for the past 15 years, with smaller amounts of funding in-between and added to. Those applications and programs are much simpler... but then there are FEDERAL grants - oh my. NVM.</p> |
| <p>Ecology has a 2 month application window. Most Federal grants have a 2 month application window. Please shorten the application process.</p> |
| <p>n/a</p> |
| <p>BAFBRB grants take a bit less effort for applicants than going through the entire SRFB process, while helps save staff time, but would likely be a much larger lift for the Review Panel.</p> |
| <p>I have not seen such. There are easier grant round processes, but I think there are safeguards and check points in this process that are important.</p> |
| <p>SRFB application and steps is generally good and fairly efficient. Less meetings/steps in the process would be welcomed.</p> |
| <p>No, there is no other grant process that works as well as this one. We mention this one often to other agencies when they ask about improvements they can make.</p> |
| <p>No! I think that RCO/SRFB is the gold standard. I tell Ecology that all the time :)</p> |
| <p>I do not have any direct experience with other grant programs</p> |
| <p>I think that the King County's CWM grant was a little easier to apply for because there are fewer requirements/questions but I also understand the necessity of asking comprehensive set of questions when considering to fund a big/expensive restoration project. One of my suggestions to CWM after joining their panel of reviewers in 2019 was to include in their map the river mile for Green River as it is very helpful for reviewers to immediately find where the project is located. Perhaps you could do the same on the map for cultural resources.</p> |
| <p>SRFB process is much more time-consuming and burdensome than other projects, but it seems valuable.</p> |
| <p>Our project was a simple land acquisition and not an engineer project. The processes should not be the same for both. The process for us was quite unnecessarily laborious and detailed. Additionally, I think that it's important to include the benefits to & merits of other species that combine together to support a healthy ecosystem for salmon and not just focus solely on salmon.</p> |
| <p>I cant say they are truly comparable, but we recently partnered with the Clark Conservation District in applying for their internal RPPP and SRF funding. I wrote two grants with the help of CCD and would say it only took about 10% the amount of time for roughly the same amount of SRFB funding...</p> |
| <p>I'm not familiar with any other grants that require a site visit. Maybe that's just my specific WRIA requirement? Generally, the steps and time it takes to make a proposal in both written and presentation format as well as site visits, comment round is just much more than say applying for a</p> |

| |
|---|
| NOAA grant and those are many times national competitions. It would be great to write a grant proposal, get feedback, send final revised proposal, wait for award or no award. That is the standard I'm familiar with outside of RCO. |
| For better or worse, this is probably the most functional process I've interacted with. The biggest complaint on our end has been invoicing. Our staff accountant has had headaches dealing with inconsistent requirements for invoicing. |
| These applications are a lot of work. Then they require a site visit and a LECC presentation. A more streamlined application that allows for in the field discussion or a more in depth application that cuts out the site visits would be well received. |
| I would like RCO/SRFB to consider providing effectiveness monitoring funds for restoration efforts in Washington. OWEB in Oregon does this, and has an option to include monitoring as part of its online application process for restoration projects. I think effectiveness monitoring is an important component of restoration, and would like to be able to incorporate this work into SRFB-funded stream restoration projects. |
| We work with dozens of grants. The RCO/SRFB is top tier for sure. The one element that feels less great is the project ranking processes. It can feel subjective, opaque, and disproportionately focused on local/community values rather than on salmon recovery values compared to other grant programs. Its understood that there is an intention to recognize local priorities in the SRFB ranking process and that that intention serves the goal of facilitating a broad base of support for the program. |
| In my experience, so far, the RCO/SRFB process (and PRISM) is the best. With that said, and this is true of most all grants, removing the match requirement would greatly reduce the administrative burden for project sponsors. |
| Fewer review rounds and presentations. I appreciate the opportunity to provide additional detail and make modifications but the time commitment required when you don't know if you'll even get funding is quite a lot and can be a drain on an organization. |
| No |
| cut and paste from question 17 |
| WWRP Farmland Preservation Program works really nicely, especially now that they have removed the presentation element, but that's likely not a good fit for SRFB. It's a quicker, more streamlined process that has worked well for us, but it seems like I might be comparing apples and oranges. |
| No match. |
| Nothing |
| The RCO/SRFB process is thorough, but that comes at the cost of being very lengthy and difficult. Any way to shorten the process would be appreciated. |
| FFFPP |
| N/A |



A publication of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Northwest Treaty Tribes

Protecting Natural Resources for Everyone

Winter 2024

nwtreatytribes.org



Inside:

- Tribes, state develop hatchery policy
- First fishery after Elwha Dam removal
- Interns help with toad surveys
- Drift fishery yields promising results
- Helicopter assists wetland project
- New salmon hatchery opens

Salmon recovery requires commitment



by Ed Johnstone
NWIFC Chairman

After decades of work and millions of dollars of restoration work, one of our region's threatened salmon runs is showing encouraging signs of recovery—summer chum that return to the Hood Canal and Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Hood Canal summer chum are among several distinct salmon populations in the Pacific Northwest that have declined significantly as a result of degraded habitat conditions and ongoing effects of climate change.

The lowest returns occurred in 1989 and 1990, when there were fewer than 1,000 summer chum returning to the Hood Canal and Strait of Juan de Fuca. But thanks to recovery work by treaty tribes and our partners in the Hood Canal Coordinating Council, we have seen an average return of more than 30,000 summer chum over the past 15 years.

No other Pacific salmon has come close to achieving this much progress toward recovery, because no matter how much we reduce harvest and how many hatchery fish we release, it is nearly impossible to reverse human destruction of salmon habitat, especially in urban areas. Without quality spawning and rearing habitat, salmon populations can't sustain themselves.

Along the Hood Canal and Strait of Juan de Fuca, it has been a different story. The Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) is a council of governments made up of the Skokomish and Port Gamble S'Klallam tribes, and Jefferson, Kitsap and Mason counties. We have been working together to rebuild summer chum runs by providing healthy habitat and removing some of the obstacles that keep fish from reaching their spawning grounds.

These obstacles are the result of people altering the landscape to accommodate their interests at the expense of the ecosystem. Tribes have been at the forefront of reversing this trend to benefit salmon recovery.

The Skokomish Tribe spent decades restoring the Skokomish estuary, reconnect-

ing 1,000 acres of farmland and fish habitat to an estuary that was used by the tribe before the 1900s. Starting in 2007, the tribe removed a mile-long dike to allow natural tidal flow into the estuary, recreating fish habitat adjacent to the Skokomish River.

Another example is the Jimmycomelately Creek restoration led by the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe. Work began in 2002 with channel realignment, replacing the Highway 101 bridge, and diverting existing creek flow to restore 25 acres of habitat at the creek mouth in Sequim Bay.

Prior to this work, only seven adult summer chum returned to Jimmycomelately in 1999. While the work was being done, a state-led recovery program supported the population by collecting adult salmon to spawn and raising the eggs in hatcheries before release. Over the last 15 years, Jimmycomelately Creek has had an average annual return of nearly 3,000 summer chum.

On the east side of the Olympic Peninsula, data from the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's 2014 salmon habitat study supported the North Olympic Salmon Coalition's work to replace an inadequate culvert that blocked salmon access to 2,300 acres of habitat for more than 75 years. A new 450-foot-long bridge connects Kilisut Harbor to Oak Bay, creating a corridor for out-migrating salmon to reach the ocean.

To build on this work and improve summer chum's resilience, federal, state and local governments must make sure regulatory agencies support habitat recovery rather than contribute to ongoing degradation.

Commitment is required from all of us to bring a salmon population back from the brink, and to continue to protect and restore them for the next seven generations.



Northwest Treaty Tribes

Protecting Natural Resources For Everyone

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On the cover: Lower Elwha Klallam tribal member Levi Charles, right, watches his son Kolby fish for coho salmon in the Elwha River. A mix of hook and line, dip nets and river nets were allowed, depending on river conditions, during the tribe's first fishery after dam removal. See story on page 5. *Tiffany Royal*

Tribes, state develop joint hatchery policy

For the first time, the Washington State Fish and Wildlife Commission in October approved a policy written in partnership with treaty tribes.

“The previous policy was put in place without any input from us,” said Jason Gobin, fish and wildlife director of the Tulalip Tribes. “It’s our duty to manage these together, as co-managers.”

The tribes initiated the creation of the policy two years earlier, and encouraged the state commission to see it through as several drafts were revised and new commissioners joined the table. Six of the nine commissioners—who set policy and oversee the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)—voted in favor of the joint policy agreement for salmon and steelhead hatcheries.

“This is, in my mind, simply a reflection of the co-managers’ commitment to each other, to collaborate, work together,” said state commissioner Steve Parker.

NWIFC Vice Chair and Lummi Council member Lisa Wilson said she was encouraged that the state commission saw the need to pass the policy and focus on the shared goal of salmon recovery.

“The tribes are working to bring the fish back for their people, for future generations and for everybody in the state,” she said.

“Co-management is the foundation that is going to help us recover these salmon in Puget Sound and on the Columbia River and on the Washington Coast,” Gobin said. “In all the areas, these hatcheries are an integral part of the tribes’ ability to access their treaty-reserved resource.”

The new policy includes commitments to work as co-managers to develop and



Above: NWIFC fish biologist Evan Weisdepp, left, and veterinarian Nora Hickey take organ samples from a salmon at the Lummi Nation’s Skookum Creek Fish Hatchery. *Kimberly Cauvel*

Below: The hatchery seen from above in 2019. *Kari Neumeyer*

implement hatchery management plans while mitigating the effects of habitat loss and other environmental impacts.

“Hatcheries are primarily operated to preserve, reintroduce or supplement natural production that contributes to both the spawning production of those populations and augments harvest,” the policy states. “Hatcheries will contribute to meeting these needs while mitigation, habitat

restoration and stock recovery efforts are ongoing.”

For decades, treaty tribes have operated their own hatchery programs to help sustain the region’s salmon and steelhead populations.

Tribes have built and staffed the facilities, updated and expanded the programs and infrastructure as needed, and run extensive monitoring and research on the fish.

As co-managers with the state, tribes also work collaboratively with WDFW hatcheries.

Recovering salmon is increasingly challenged by ongoing unregulated habitat degradation, the effects of climate change and the increase of seal predation on migrating fish.

“Our natural world is changing rapidly,” said NWIFC Chair Ed Johnstone. “With that role of mitigation, hatcheries are more important now than they have ever been.” —*Kimberly Cauvel*



Selective gear expands harvest

The Nisqually Indian Tribe expanded tribal fishing time on the river last fall by combining traditional fishing gear with recovery bags.

The fishery followed a three-year study that revealed recovery bags helped fishers harvest hatchery chinook selectively with drift gillnets, while releasing the natural origin fish in need of protecting.

The gillnets are selective by mesh size, allowing nontarget species to pass through. All captured chinook were checked for coded wire tags and clipped adipose fins, used to distinguish hatchery fish. Chinook determined to be of natural origin were held in a recovery bag in the water while biological data was collected, then the fish were released at the end of the day.

The study found that using this method in the Nisqually River had a mortality rate of less than 10%, lower than in studies using other selective gear types.

“We were surprised by the results the first year,” said Craig Smith, Nisqually finfish harvest program manager.

In 2023, the tribe opened a selective fishery using this gear in three freshwater sites below Clear Creek. Carefully monitored, fishers drifted for five minutes at a time. The fishery was open for seven days across August and September.

“The fishers are happy to be there. Until this fishery, some fishers have not been on the water as late as September in 10-plus years,” Smith said.

The tribe explored other potential fishing methods, including cedar weirs, which were found useful in a smaller stream but difficult to implement in a river, and tangle nets, which were unpopular because they scooped up nontarget fish.

This fishery observed the same low mortality rate found during the study. The fishery is a useful tool, and a stirring reminder that the tribes’ thousands of years of fishing experience can be drawn on to support present and future treaty fishing, Smith said.

“It’s pretty cool,” he said. “It’s pretty promising and the Nisqually River is a perfect place for it.”

—Trevor Pyle

Top: Nisqually fisher Willie Squally Jr., left, places a chinook in a recovery bag for Nisqually fisheries biologist Walker Duval to check for a coded wire tag.

Left: Duval and data technician Amber Left-Hand-Bull wand fish for coded wire tags. *Nisqually Tribe (2)*





Tribe celebrates renewed coho fishery

For the first time in more than a decade, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe exercised its treaty right to harvest salmon from the Elwha River in October.

The tribe opened a small ceremonial and subsistence fishery for adult coho salmon in the lower three miles of the river. Members of the tribal community and neighboring tribes showed up to celebrate with singing, dancing and prayers, plus words of gratitude from tribal leaders.

“My hands go up to all the tribal members that always gave us the encouragement not to give up, to stay the course, and work with the agencies that we had to work with,” said Frances Charles, the tribe’s chairwoman.

“I’m just so proud of our tribe,” said Russ Hepfer, the tribe’s vice chair. “We’re a small tribe and I believe that we started the trend towards dam removal world-wide. I’m so proud of us for that.”

Following the ceremony, several tribal members beelined for the river with the tribe’s bright orange fishing permits pinned to their jackets. Others lined up at the tribe’s hatchery to get a permit from the fisheries department. By the end of the day, more than 100 tribal members had received permits for the fishery.

This is the first time a fishery has been held since before two fish-blocking dams were removed from the river between 2011-2014. For more than a century prior to 2011, the dams blocked 90% of the river, preventing salmon from reaching spawning habitat and resulting in diminished populations.

Since the complete removal of the dams, several salmon species have shown signs of recovery, thanks in large part to the tribe’s restoration work, hatchery program, and a seven-year upstream fish relocation effort during and after the dam removal process.

Tribal members and brothers Lonnie and Levi Charles took their families to fish, finding a quiet spot by the sonar station where the tribe’s natural resources department has monitored the return of chinook salmon and steelhead since 2008, and coho salmon since 2019.

“I grew up on the river and my dad always brought us down here. We always sport fished,” Lonnie Charles said. “All we’ve been doing is crabbing and shrimping, so to actually have our river open to us is amazing.”

A mix of hook and line, dip nets and river nets were allowed, depending on river conditions. Nets were limited to half the span of the river, and only at a few locations. The fishery was monitored by tribal fisheries biologists and enforcement officers to minimize impacts to nontarget species, such as chinook salmon, bull trout and steelhead. —*Tiffany Royal*



Above: Tribal member Christina Sampson poses with her coho salmon.

Top: Tribal Vice Chair Russ Hepfer speaks during a small ceremony prior to the fishery opening. *Tiffany Royal (2)*

“My hands go up to all the tribal members that always gave us the encouragement not to give up, to stay the course, and work with the agencies that we had to work with.”

Frances Charles
Tribal Chair
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

Biologists in the making

While Lower Elwha Klallam tribal youth live in an ecologically robust watershed, some of them are hesitant to explore the forest outside their doors.

Many are tied to their screens, especially after COVID kept them mostly indoors for two years, said Kim Sager-Fradkin, the tribe's wildlife program manager, who works with kids through the tribe's summer jobs program.

"We realized there was a need to teach some basic skills and increase comfort in the outdoors," she said. "It's really good to get tribal youth excited and used to being outside, in hopes that some of them will use those skills to exercise their treaty rights, and even work in natural resources in the future."

She developed a yearlong program that has 15 tribal youth engaged in a variety of natural resources management jobs, in addition to learning basic wilderness skills, with funding from the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the Bonneville Power Administration.

To start, the kids spent a week last summer learning survival skills, such as building shelters, making cord out of stinging nettle, identifying plants on the reservation, and creating fire with sticks and string.

They also have been trained in animal track and sign—how to tell when an animal has been in the area, such as with footprints or vegetation disturbance—with an opportunity to become certified trackers. They also are shadowing the tribe's natural resources staff throughout the 2023-2024 school year.

Finally, the kids will be monitoring wildlife on the reservation, similar to the program managed by the tribe and others throughout the Olympic Peninsula. The kids installed 10 wildlife cameras on the reservation last summer and have been analyzing the images recorded.

"I think there was some excitement of getting really good cougar and bobcat photos already," Sager-Fradkin said. "It shows that excitement right down here, right on the river, right where we live." —*Tiffany Royal*



Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe wildlife biologist Sara Cendejas-Zarelli shows tribal youth Jesse Campbell how to set up a wildlife camera to observe activity on the tribe's reservation. *Tiffany Royal*

Welcoming salmon home



Students from the Puget Sound region consider who eats whom during a marine food chain game at Salmon Homecoming on the Seattle waterfront in September. *Kimberly Cauvel (2)*



Tribal fishery grows, opens to youth

In highly trafficked areas around lower Whatcom Creek in Bellingham, chinook salmon released as young fish from a Bellingham Technical College hatchery program returned from sea in large numbers for the second year in a row, providing an opportunity for local treaty tribes to harvest salmon.

The Lummi Nation and the Nooksack Indian Tribe fished during several days in August and September, and for the first time, Lummi Nation dedicated some of the tribe's fishing time to tribal youth.

"It fills my heart with so much joy that we are providing an opportunity to our youth to practice a right and a tradition that's exclusive for them," said Setrina Wilson, Endangered Species Act policy representative for Lummi Natural Resources.

For a few days in September, Lummi members 18 years old and younger visited the creek to practice their treaty-protected right to harvest salmon from waters in their homelands. For some, it was a chance to practice fishing skills developed while on the water with relatives. For others, it was a first-time



Above: Lummi Nation youth inspect each other's catch during a tribal youth-focused fishery in September.

Below: Lummi member Paul Cline helps his 3-year-old son Paul Cline Jr. with a fishing line during the tribal youth fishery. *Kimberly Cauvel (2)*

experience.

"This provides the educational opportunity to learn their history, their family's practices, the importance of hatcheries and about their treaty rights," Wilson said. "It is important that Lummi youth have an opportunity to practice their shelangén, or way of life, and maintain a

strong cultural identity."

The tribe made fishing gear choices flexible to accommodate youth of various skill levels and interests. Youth were able to try their hand at casting a sport fishing line, using tribal nets or exploring other traditional fishing methods.

Olga Kapuni-Lopez Revey, 13, was among those who reeled in a chinook using a fishing line, her smile wide as her mother captured the moment on her cellphone.

Paul Cline Sr. brought his young sons, Paul Jr., 3, and Henry, 2, to experience the opportunity as well. The toddlers were eager for their turns to hold a fishing pole and help reel in the line.

"This is a great educational experience for Lummi Nation youth," said Mark Nelson, Lummi finfish biologist. "We are hoping to expand this program next year."

Nelson estimated that more than 5,000 chinook returned to Whatcom Creek this year. Lummi caught many of those fish for commercial use and for cultural and subsistence purposes.

Nooksack Tribe's Cultural Resources Department staff also caught about 500 chinook to distribute to tribal members for cultural and subsistence use.

George Swanaset Jr., director of Nooksack Cultural Resources, said the brief fishing opportunity was momentous.

"We are exercising our rights as a recognized tribe," he said. "It is awesome to see the guys out there catching fish for our community."

The Whatcom Creek program is co-managed by Lummi, Nooksack and the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, with support from the college. —*Kimberly Cauvel*



Crab DNA helps population study

The Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe is working with a diverse group of partners to learn more about the population structure of Puget Sound’s Dungeness crab by studying the DNA of both larvae and adults.

“The main question is whether Dungeness crab in the region belong to a single large population or are there multiple genetically distinct populations?” said Liz Tobin, the tribe’s shellfish program manager.

Biologists worked with tribal and nontribal commercial crab fishermen to collect genetic material from throughout Puget Sound.

After genetic analysis is completed by research assistant professor Jay Dimond at Western Washington University, tribal and state co-managers and members of the shellfish industry will evaluate the results to determine if the population’s genetics vary throughout the region and how that aligns with current crab management regions and boundaries.

“Genetic diversity is a species’ best defense against environmental change, so our goal with this research is to provide fishery managers with the information needed to maintain this diversity,” Dimond said. “Genetic data can also provide us with information about where crab larvae are coming from and where they are going. Some populations may be self-seeding while others may be seeded by larvae from distant sources.”

The goal is to maximize harvest opportunities while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the resource.



Jamestown S’Klallam tribal fisherman Josh Chapman and shellfish manager Liz Tobin measure Dungeness crab samples as part of the genetics project. *Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe*

The tribes and state have been conducting surveys and test fisheries for decades to get an idea of how much crab is out there and observe seasonal molting patterns. A regionwide light trap project since 2018 also has helped scientists track when and where crab larvae are present across the inland waters of the Salish Sea. So far, more larvae have been found in North Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, while fewer have shown up in South Sound and Hood Canal. —*Tiffany Royal*



Annie Raymond, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe shellfish biologist, peers at a kelp sample, looking for spores. *Tiffany Royal*

Tribe, partners preserve kelp

Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe shellfish biologist Annie Raymond holds a piece of chocolate-colored kelp to the light, squinting to see if it has a patch of spores.

When she finds a section that looks darker than the rest of the kelp blade, she cuts it out, pats it dry and preserves the spores to germinate later.

The spores will be stored in a regional seed bank in partnership with the Puget Sound Restoration Fund (PSRF) to prepare for a possible decline of kelp populations. Since 2022, scientists have been surveying kelp beds important to the tribe in the Strait of Juan de Fuca and developing the seed bank.

“Kelp are a critical piece of the near-shore marine ecosystem,” Raymond said. “We are taking inventory of what kelp are present and building a toolbox to address potential changes in kelp abundance in the strait.”

The seed bank has focused on bull kelp because it provides habitat and food for many organisms, said Aurora Ocegueda,

PSRF’s habitat lab technician.

“We’ve seen about an 80% decline in Puget Sound over the last 50 years,” she said.

After the tribe collects samples and sends them to PSRF’s lab in Kitsap County, the spores develop into male or female gametophytes in petri dishes. After four weeks, when the gametophytes are the size of a bell pepper seed, they are placed in the seed bank (a large commercial grade refrigerator) where they are kept in a suspended state that prevents growth but keeps them alive. Bull kelp can grow from a tiny spore to 130 feet long in one year.

If kelp restoration is determined necessary 20 years from now, male and female gametophytes could be grown to the size of a small plant, then outplanted in the strait, Raymond said.

The bank has 29 different populations, primarily bull kelp. Three-ribbed kelp and winged kelp were added this year.

—*Tiffany Royal*



Left: Squaxin Island Tribe interns Trent Brown, left, and Adarius Coley prepare to conduct a kayak survey for Western toads.

Above: A Western toad found during a survey near Lake Cushman. *Trevor Pyle (2)*

Toad surveys get interns excited about science

A collaboration between the Squaxin Island Tribe and partners gives natural resources department interns an opportunity to see some of the state’s most beautiful places—and collect data that may help protect an imperiled species of toad.

For several years, the tribe’s interns have joined Western toad surveys, first on the Canyon River near Matlock with permission from the Quinault Tribe, and since 2022 near Lake Cushman with permission from the Skokomish Tribe.

The forays also have included interns from the Quinault and Skokomish tribes, and staff from all three tribal communities.

Interns gather data on the habitat, conditions and population of the Western toad, a species in increasing peril because

of habitat loss in urbanized areas of western Washington.

“When I started at Squaxin in 2013, I saw that they had summer interns,” said Erica Marbet, water resources biologist for the Squaxin Island Tribe. “I knew that the best way to get these kids excited about science was to expose them to work from my career that had been the most fun. And that work was certainly Western toad surveys.”

Marbet first conducted a Western toad survey for a private employer in the late ’90s and was struck by how the activity allowed her to carry out an important scientific task while exposing her to particularly beautiful stretches of the outdoors.

Four Squaxin Island interns joined the surveys in 2023. Near Lake Cush-

man, they took off in kayaks with staff to determine where toads could be found, as well as observe the toads’ preferred water depth, vegetation and temperature. The data is crucial considering the dwindling population of the species in the Puget Sound lowlands.

The late July outing spotted a few remaining tadpoles in the warm water shallows, but was otherwise dominated by newly metamorphosed toads on the banks. Next year, Marbet hopes to bring the interns to the Deschutes River near Olympia, where the presence of Western toads is unknown.

Other partners on surveys include the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Green Diamond Resource Company. —*Trevor Pyle*

Seven Generations

S’Klallam tribal members dig clams, a favored traditional food for Northwest tribes, near Port Townsend.
Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe





Wetland planting project goes airborne

Near the town of Gold Bar, wetlands overrun by invasive plants may soon transform into healthier habitat for the coho salmon that use the adjacent Bear Creek, a tributary to the Wallace River.

In October, the Tulalip Tribes introduced to the area an environmental restoration concept not tried anywhere else.

“As far as we know, this is a completely new idea,” said Todd Gray, Tulalip’s environmental protection ecologist, co-leading the project with wetland biologist Michelle Bahnick.

The experimental restoration involved moving 90 untreated wood shipping pallets topped with soil, conifers and flowering shrubs from an open field to a soggy wetland by helicopter. Deep channels and beaver activity hidden beneath the vegetation make the wetland unsafe to wade into.

“One of the benefits that we hope this technique provides is to establish or reestablish native plants in an area too difficult or dangerous to get to by vehicle, or too risky to disturb,” Gray said.

The pallets were pre-planted at the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Wallace Creek Hatchery, then airlifted one by one to their destination—a wetland infested with reed canary grass. Reed canary grass is an invasive plant that clogs waterways, leaving salmon habitat cramped, unshaded and lacking in prey.

“It chokes out channels that fish could otherwise use,” Gray said.

The pallets were placed in three 50-foot by 60-foot plots, with the idea that the Sitka spruce, western red cedar and shrubs will take root and provide shade, bugs and complex habitat that improve conditions for salmon.

“If you essentially set this island on top of the reed canary grass, you’re giving everything on it a leg up,” Gray said.

The tribes will compare percent coverage of reed canary grass, shrubs and trees over time to determine if the pre-planted pallet method is successful in controlling the invasive weed.

—Kimberly Cauvel



Above: A pallet planted with an evergreen and native shrubs flies through the air en route to the wetland restoration site.

Top: Tulalip Tribes environmental protection ecologist Todd Gray, left, and Washington Conservation Corps crew member Derek Bryant secure a pre-planted pallet to ropes attached to a helicopter. *Kimberly Cauvel (2)*

Restoring the river delta, piece by piece

Where the Stillaguamish River winds its way through a patchwork of agricultural lands toward the sea, the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians is forging ahead with a vision to decolonize the landscape, in ecology and in name.

Before the area was diked, drained and planted with crops, and the river was squeezed into narrow channels, the Stillaguamish River delta teemed with salmon, beaver and other wildlife; resources that supported several Stillaguamish villages, including the home of a tribal leader named *zis a ba*.

“There was a range of habitats here very different from what it looks like today,” said Jason Griffith, environmental program manager for the tribe. “These floodplains look nothing like they did at treaty times. There were lots of logjams, and the delta was this complex mosaic of channels that would kind of breathe with the tides.”

The lack of variable, tidally influenced habitat in the area today is one of six limiting factors identified in a 2005 chinook recovery plan for the watershed.

The tribe is working to reverse that trend with a multi-part estuary restoration effort named after *zis a ba*. After completing the first 88-acre restoration in 2017, the tribe is designing a 230-acre estuary restoration that could be shovel-ready in 2024, and is in the early stages of preparing for a third 537-acre restoration. Each phase of the effort involves removing dikes to expand the tidal flow of Port Susan Bay.

“If all the phases of *zis a ba* can be completed, it will significantly improve estuarine access for juvenile chinook salmon, which will increase survival,” said Charlotte Scofield, fisheries biologist for the tribe.

The *zis a ba* projects have the potential to stitch together a total of about 1,000 acres of restored estuary, including neighboring sites managed by The Nature Conservancy and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. The restored estuary will help chinook salmon and other species recover from the impacts of long-term habitat loss, water quality degradation and climate change.

“For us, it’s a no-brainer: the tidal wetlands will provide space for salmon and climate resiliency,” said Kadi Bizyayeva, a Stillaguamish Tribal Council member and the tribe’s fisheries director.

Within the first year after the initial *zis a ba* project, monitoring showed that native marsh plants and juvenile salmon were repopulating the site.

“Chinook were using it immediately,” Bizyayeva said.

Still, more habitat space is needed for the population to grow to numbers that can support tribal and nontribal fishing. For decades, dismal Stillaguamish salmon stocks have been off limits for fishing.

“What we’d like to see is climbing numbers of chinook,” Bizyayeva said. “We want to see healthy tribal fisheries, healthy recreational fisheries, healthy commercial fisheries. Ultimately, we want to see a healthy environment.”

Toward that end, the tribe is securing ownership of the land, restoring healthy ecosystem functions, and replacing the names of old farms and former packing plants with a tribal name, in honor of Stillaguamish ancestors and in support of the next seven generations.

—*Kimberly Cauvel*



An excavator digs new channels in August, preparing for the Stillaguamish Tribe’s *zis a ba* II project that will replace corn fields with salmon habitat. *Kimberly Cauvel*



A young salmon is observed at the first *zis a ba* restoration site in April 2019. *Kari Neumeyer*



Kadi Bizyayeva, a Stillaguamish Tribal Council member and the tribe’s fisheries director, and Jason Griffith, the tribe’s environmental program manager, walk the bank between the Stillaguamish River and a dike that will be removed during the *zis a ba* II restoration project. *Kimberly Cauvel*

Stormwater filtration shows promise

Last year, the Nisqually Indian Tribe and partners piloted a biofiltration unit they hoped could alleviate the deadly impacts of toxic roadway runoff to coho.

The results of the project show that the device, if scaled up, may protect salmon from tire debris chemical 6PPD-quinone's fatal effects.

"It certainly seems to have a measurable result on the chemical we're interested in reducing," said Chris Ellings, the tribe's salmon recovery program manager.

The tribe cautions that more study is needed before the device's benefits can be approved for expansion, and large-scale action to end 6PPD's effects is still urgently needed. But with a 90% reduction in tire debris through the device's use, the tribe and its partners are excited to seek more funding for the tool.

The tribe teamed up with Long Live the Kings, Herrera Environmental Consultants and Cedar Grove, among others, to pilot a biofiltration unit at Ohop Creek, a tributary to the Nisqually River and home to a large salmon habitat recovery project. It's also near Highway 7, a busy road that sees vehicles deposit 12 pounds of tire debris on its surface every year—which rainstorms can wash into nearby habitat.

The device applies the concept of in-ground biofiltration to a mobile unit. It filters stormwater through two layers—compost and a layer that removes phosphorus. As the unit captured stormwater from three storms last year, researchers studied how



A visitor tours the biofiltration pilot project that may be a valuable tool to fight the threat posed by 6PPD, a chemical found in tires that can be deadly for salmon. *Trevor Pyle*

well it leached out metals and harmful chemicals like 6PPD.

Researchers at Washington State University and University of Washington previously determined that 6PPD is deadly to coho; it's also harmful to steelhead and chinook.

"We need to get these chemicals out of the system," Ellings said. "We can't wait for politicians and the tire industry to make changes. This is an interim solution." —*Trevor Pyle*

Tribe monitors shoreline, salmon habitat as it rebuilds

The Suquamish Tribe has the rare opportunity to compare the results of an estuary restoration project to a nearly pristine wetland nearby.

The tribe is working with the Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group to improve salmon habitat on private property near Rose Point in northern Kitsap County.

Work includes removing a 770-foot-long creosote bulkhead and invasive reed canary grass, plus replacing a partial fish passage barrier on a creek with a bridge. The creek channel also is going to be redirected, helping the fresh water and salt water mix in the restored estuary.

The nearly pristine reference site is a few miles south at Doe Kag Wats, on property owned by the tribe.

"It's refreshing to see an area that's generally unimpacted," said Hanna Brush, a field biologist for the tribe.

From 2023-2025, data will be collected at both locations about existing fish and plant communities and the amount and types of vegetation that wash ashore during tide cycles. Tidal channels and substrate also will be monitored for changes.

"The monitoring should indicate whether the restoration effort is working to re-establish habitats that support juvenile salmon, and ultimately whether the salmon use it," said Steve Todd, the tribe's salmon recovery biologist. "We are still learning and can apply any lessons to future restoration sites." —*Tiffany Royal*



Suquamish Tribe field biologist Hanna Brush lays out a measuring tape in the Rose Point estuary during a vegetation survey. *Tiffany Royal*



Nisqually tribal member Danny McGee fishes for chinook on the Nisqually River below an I-5 bridge, where new crossings will include restoration work thanks to the tribe and partners. *Nisqually Tribe*

Partners plan for restoration with infrastructure updates

When the Interstate 5 stretch that spans the Nisqually River delta gets a much-needed replacement, the health of the surrounding ecosystem will be among the considerations, thanks to the Nisqually Indian Tribe, Long Live the Kings (LLTK) and other partners.

A \$959,000 National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant is enabling LLTK to continue work with the tribe to develop plans for habitat restoration that will go hand-in-hand with the expected I-5 project.

The ongoing work will examine how sea level rise and other impacts of climate change relate to replacing the two I-5 bridges over the Nisqually River. The work is expected to protect the lower Nisqually River watershed from flooding; restoration could include installing wood to slow river flow, planting native vegetation and reconnecting historic channels to the delta.

The project also could include ecosystem restoration and resilience-building as a core part of infrastructure projects, said David Troutt, natural resources director for the Nisqually Tribe.

“We want this to be the new way of doing things,” he said. “By doing it this way, the investment has the potential to reduce the community risks from severe flooding and improve habitat for birds, wildlife and salmon that are essential to the treaty rights, culture and economic health of the Nisqually Indian Tribe.” —*Trevor Pyle*

Honoring the first salmon



The Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe held its annual First Salmon Ceremony in September, placing four salmon on woven cedar boughs before setting them afloat in the Elwha River as a way to give thanks to the salmon and the gifts they provide to the tribe.

Above: Lower Elwha Klallam tribal member Lola Moses prepares boughs of cedar for the ceremonial salmon.

Below: Tribal members Karsten Turrey, left, and Rachel Hagaman watch one of the salmon offerings float down the Elwha River. *Tiffany Royal (2)*



New salmon hatchery up and running

The Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe has a new hatchery at Point Julia, more than 40 years after the original facility was constructed.

It’s a significant upgrade from the one-room office with no heat shared by staff members for decades, said Abby Welch, the tribe’s project manager.

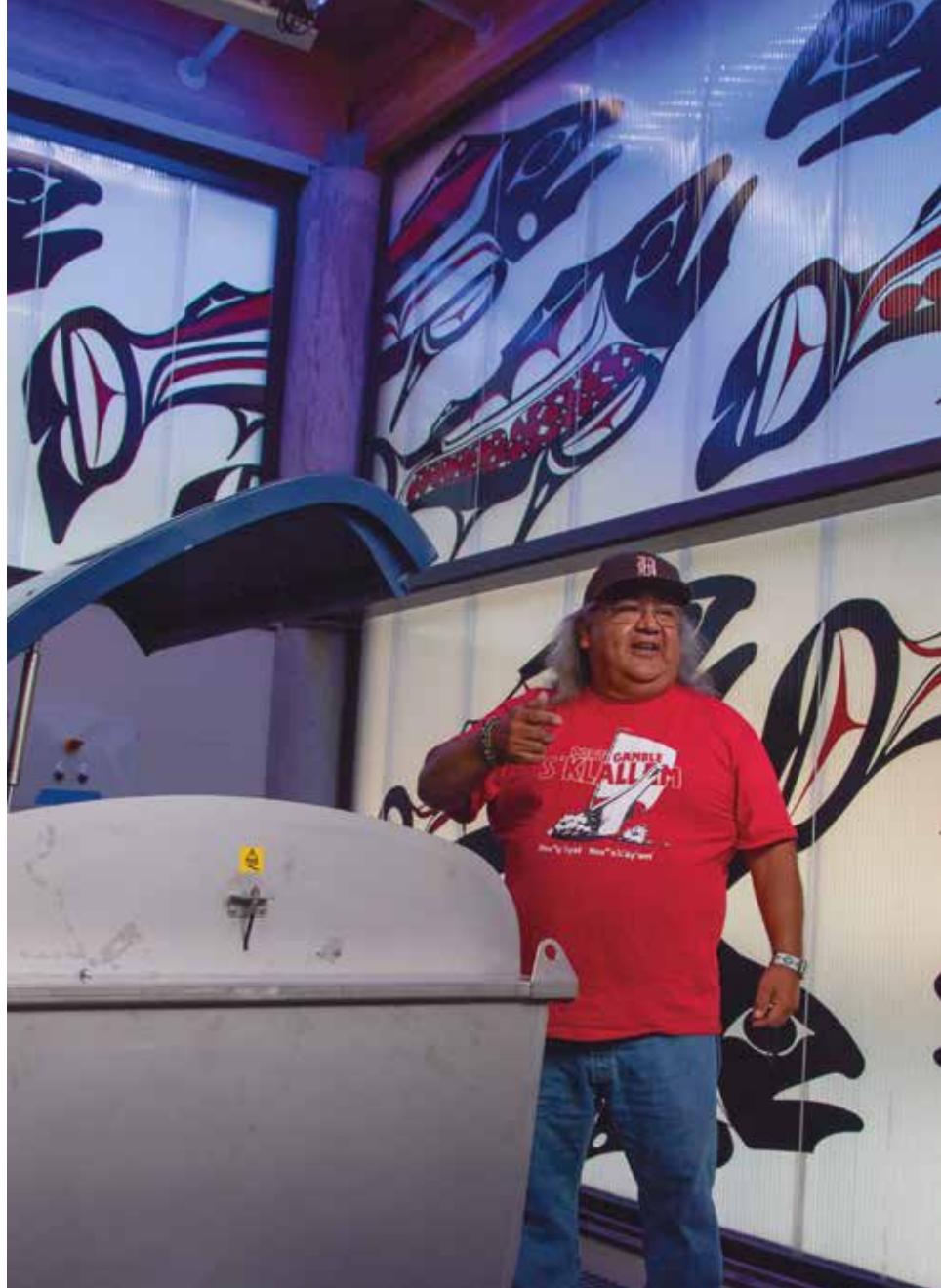
To lessen the impact on Point Julia and the tribe’s traditional village sites, the tribe constructed the new hatchery on top of the original footprint. The new facility consists of a pair of two-story buildings connected by an overhead walkway. It includes a new garage and egg incubation room plus a new drum filter for water coming into the hatchery from Little Boston Creek. There are now individual offices for hatchery staff and a conference room with a waterfront view. The hatchery’s existing spawning shed and concrete raceways remain.

“The larger office space will be much more comfortable than the shared space from the previous building,” said Mike Jones Jr., the tribe’s hatchery manager. “We will also have an alarm system which will notify us in case we lose water flow.”

While the tribe will be working with the same egg take (an annual goal of 1.2 million chum salmon eggs), the new water filtration system will provide cleaner water for the hatchery, which could improve survival rates for salmon once they hatch, he said.

The tribe also considered climate change when designing the new buildings, with concrete support pilings extending 20 feet deep, anticipating sea level rise in the bay. Tribal elders and the cultural department selected the traditional and medicinal plants used in the landscaping.

One of the new buildings features a Coast Salish mural of black-and-red salmon created by tribal member Jimmy Price. The mural greets tribal members as they drive down the hill to Point Julia to visit the hatchery, launch their boat, or use the new community picnic shelter that was constructed concurrently with the hatchery. —*Tiffany Royal*



Mike Jones Jr., Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe hatchery manager, describes how the water filtration system works inside the new facility, which is adorned with fish murals designed by tribal member Jimmy Price. *Tiffany Royal (2)*



Stream Survey for Spawning



Suquamish Tribe fisheries biologist Jon Oleyar conducts annual stream surveys for chinook salmon in Grovers Creek, gathering data about returning fish. A majority make it to the tribe's hatchery upstream for spawning.

This fall, the tribe saw 1,984 chinook salmon return to the hatchery, while Oleyar sampled 400 chinook downstream that were feasted on by bears or stranded by low water.

About one-third of the fish were female, which, coupled with low early fall stream-flow, made it difficult for the tribe to reach its targeted goal of 2 million spawned eggs, Oleyar said. Fortunately, a well-timed storm event increased the streamflow just enough to entice the last of the run to get to the hatchery, helping the tribe reach its egg-take goal in early October.

Left: Oleyar holds the head of a sampled chinook.

Above: Oleyar stays aware of his surroundings while surveying the creek, where he often observes bear tracks and sometimes sees bears themselves peering from the trees and through the bushes. *Tiffany Royal (2)*

Save the date

Join us to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Boldt decision in *U.S. v. Washington*, which reaffirmed tribal treaty fishing rights.

The two-day event Feb. 6-7, 2024 at the Muckleshoot Events Center will honor the past 50 years of tribal environmental stewardship as we look ahead to the next 50 years.

REGISTER ONLINE NOW:

nwtreatytribes.org/usvwa



The USvWA50 logo, featuring a traditional Salish salmon design in the center, was created by Muckleshoot artists Keith Stevenson and Sam Obrovac.

WALKING ON

Norma Joseph *Sud-tah-lo*

Norma Joseph of the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe died Oct. 1, at the age of 76. She was tribal council chair for seven years.

Joseph made many contributions to her tribe, including developing the Department of Cultural Resources and recovering Lushootseed in the Sauk-Suiattle dialect. She also supported the preservation and teaching of Coast Salish cedar and wool weaving practices.

Much of Joseph's inspiration came from listening to her elders talk about the hard-fought right of the Sauk-Suiattle Indian Tribe simply to exist.

Joseph's parents were Katherine and James Joseph. Her relatives include her grandfather Chief Leo Brown, great-grandfather Chief Jim Brown, and other chiefs of the Upper Snoqualmie, Duwamish and Wenatchi.

She was preceded in death by her parents; brothers James Lawrence Joseph, Kenneth Joseph and David Joseph; and sisters Eveline Joseph and Josephine Strong.

She is survived by her son Jason Joseph; sisters Christine Banks, Nancy DeCoteau (Ernie DeCoteau) and Katherine Misanes (Ray Misanes); brother Leroy C. Joseph; and numerous nieces, nephews and cousins.



Joseph "Joe" Bailey

Swinomish tribal member Joseph "Joe" Bailey died at his home Sept. 11 at the age of 71.

Bailey served many years with the Swinomish Police Department including as chief of the tribe's fish and wildlife enforcement team.

He was born May 30, 1952, in Tacoma to Eleanor (Willup) O'Leary and George Bailey Sr. He was raised by his grandmother Helen Ross until he was forced to attend a boarding school in Oklahoma.

After returning home and trying his hand at several trades including working on cars, Bailey attended the police academy and discovered his passion for serving his tribe in a law enforcement capacity.

He was proud to help develop the tribe's fish and wildlife department and grateful to the Swinomish Senate for the opportunity to do so. He enjoyed seeing young tribal members complete the police academy and proudly take their place on the water, watching over the community's fishers.

Bailey was married to his wife Sophie for 54 years. Together, they raised children and helped raise nieces, nephews and grandchildren.





Annual Meeting and Salmon BBQ



SEDRO-WOOLLEY COMMUNITY CENTER
Thursday February 8th, 2024 | 5:30-8:00 PM

Please return your payment to reserve your space by February 1st.

Names of attendees:

Dinner Donation \$25.00 per person
Number attending ___ x \$25.00 = \$ _____

A red dot on address label indicates membership is not current. Why not renew now?

Annual Membership

| | |
|------------------|----------|
| Individual | \$20.00 |
| Family/Household | \$35.00 |
| Supporter | \$100.00 |
| Benefactor | \$500.00 |
| Other | \$ _____ |
| Total Enclosed | \$ _____ |

Please send this card & check payable to "SFEG" to:

**SFEG
PO Box 2497**

Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Or pay online at www.skagitfisheries.org/event/2024-annual-meeting

Questions?

Call: 360-336-0172 or

Email: sfeg@skagitfisheries.org



Please return your payments and this card to reserve your space.



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SFEG Members, Volunteers, Project Partners, and Guests please join us for Salmon Dinner, Volunteer Awards, Silent Auction, and Board Elections!

Thursday, February 8th 2024 – 5:30-8:00 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.

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Update on the Campaign to Expand Big Rock County Park

Thanks to the support of 325 family and business supporters, we have crossed the first hurdle to expand Big Rock Park. Thank you to each member of the Skagit Land Trust community who has made a gift to the campaign to date.

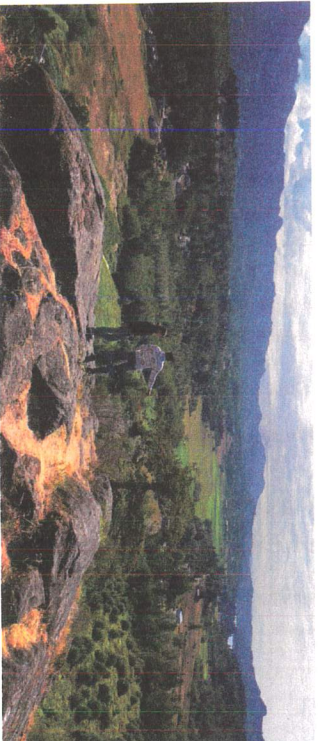
In the year ahead, the Trust will assist Skagit County Parks Department in their grant application to the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office. This million dollar grant will help Skagit Land Trust transfer the new park land to the County Parks Department in 2025.

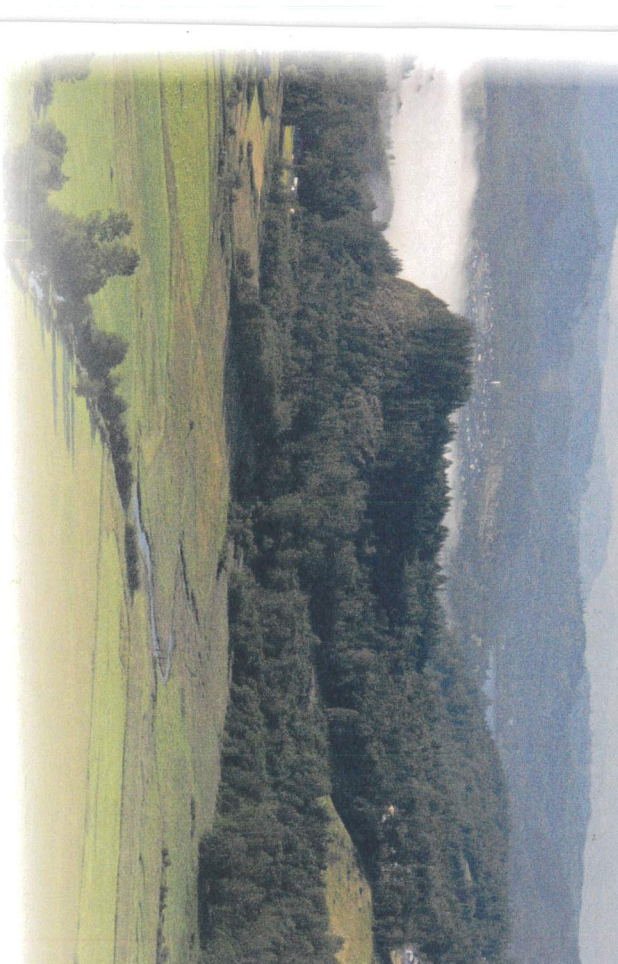
Throughout the year we will continue to update our members on work at Big Rock. Below is a timeline of events for the \$1.8 million project. Please reach out to Development & Outreach Director Lau

2023 - Raised more than \$400,000 from Skagit Land Trust memb

2024 - Trust staff will support Skagit County Parks Department in Recreation & Conservation Fund.

2025 - Once funds have been secured from grants, County funding; ownership of the property to Skagit County Parks, with an expand





ra Hartner if you have any questions, laurah@skagitlandtrust.org.

ers to assist with the acquisition and protection of Big Rock.

their application for a million dollar grant to Washington State's

5, and Skagit Land Trust member support, the Trust will transfer
ed conservation easement to protect 76 acres at Big Rock.



*You make our
hearts soar!*



*Thank you for
supporting conservation
in the Skagit*

Skagit Land Trust Annual Membership Meeting

March 13, 2024

5:30pm - 7:30pm

105 E Kincaid St, Mount Vernon, WA

- *Overview on Trust work in 2023*
- *Updates on upcoming projects in 2024*
- *Election of board members*
- *Open to members and their guests, Trust volunteers, landowners, and projects partners*

You are invited to our Annual Membership Meeting hosted in-person at the Skagit Station Community Room. Come see what we have accomplished together in 2023, help elect board members, connect with fellow members, and learn about plans for the year to come.

The evening will feature community awards and a presentation on staff picks for the favorite places to get outside in the Skagit this spring. Light refreshments will be served. RSVP online.

Please bring a friend who might be interested in the work of Skagit Land Trust.



Lam May 3

At this festive gathering at B members, and talk with staff

Guests are encouraged to drive feature live music, auction their fundraiser in support of local

All proceeds help conserve a join us for this festive fundr

Tickets are \$100 per person
Learn more at skagitlandtruu

**Must be 21+. No pets please.*



Save the Date for our **Friends We Love Social**

10th 2024 4:30pm-7:30pm

Leau Lodge guests can catch up with friends, connect with board members, and enjoy delicious food and drinks while enjoying delectable bites, wines, and beers.

Join us for a special evening of networking and fun! The event will feature a variety of activities including a wine and cheese reception, a silent auction, and a raffle. We will also have a presentation on the current state of the lodge and our plans for the future. The event will be held at the Leau Lodge, a beautiful resort located in the heart of the Skagitzi National Forest. Tickets are available for purchase through the lodge website. For more information, please contact the lodge office at 360-338-2222 or www.skagitzi.org.

and care for Skagitzi's natural lands today and in the future. Please contact the lodge office at 360-338-2222 or www.skagitzi.org for more information.

Registration is now open for the 2024 Friends We Love Social. Tickets are on sale April 1st, 2024.

www.skagitzi.org

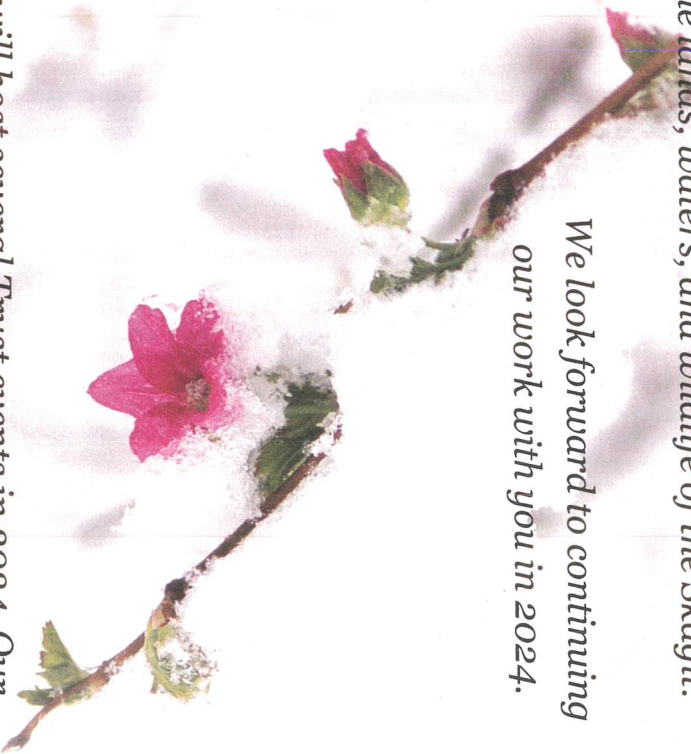
Advanced ticket purchase is required. Space is limited.



Happy Valentine's Day!

Thank you for being part of the Skagit Land Trust community and working with us to protect and care for the lands, waters, and wildlife of the Skagit.

*We look forward to continuing
our work with you in 2024.*



*We will host several Trust events in 2024. Our
Annual Membership Meeting takes place on
March 13th, 2024 from 5:30-7:30pm.*

We hope you can join us!

***Visit skagitlandtrust.org
to learn more and RSVP.***

photo by Chris Farrow