Manual 18M

Salmon Monitoring Grants

January 2025

WASHINGTON STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE
Salmon Recovery
Funding Board

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

Mission

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

Board Members

Citizen Members
Jeff Breckel, chair, Stevenson
Kadi Bizyayeva, Stanwood
Kaleen Cottingham, Olympia
Chris Endresen Scott, Conconully
Joseph Maroney, Spokane

Agency Members
Conservation Commission
Department of Ecology
Department of Fish and Wildlife
Department of Natural Resources
Department of Transportation

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

Director
Megan Duffy
Natural Resources Building
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Olympia, WA 98501
Email

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Washington Relay: Dial 711
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Olympia, WA 98504-0917

About this Manual

This manual was created under the authority granted to the SRFB. It reflects the requirements of Revised Code of Washington Chapters 77.85 and 79A.25.240; Title 420 Washington Administrative Code, updated in December 2019; and policies of the SRFB and RCO.

The SRFB may issue additional or modified rules, instructions, interpretations, and guides from time to time as it believes necessary for the effective conduct of the grant program. Such changes may apply to all projects. Whenever possible, sufficient lead time will be given between the announcement and the effective date to minimize impacts to projects already in process at the time of announcement.

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2025 Grant Schedule

Monitoring Grants

Date	Action	Description
December 2024	Request for Proposals	SRFB Science Advisory Panel and RCO release a Request for Proposals that identifies strategic priorities and available funding for grants.
February to March	Letter of Intent and Eligibility Screening	The applicant must email the monitoring grants manager a Letter of Intent between February 1 and March 31 to determine eligibility. RCO will respond within two weeks of receiving the letter with a determination of initial eligibility.
May 1	**Due Date:** Complete Project Application Materials Due	The applicant must submit a complete application in PRISM, including required attachments.
May (Date TBD)	Screening and Presentations	RCO screens the application for completeness. The science panel and RCO convene a virtual presentation meeting with the applicant. The applicant uploads the presentation to PRISM after the presentation.
May (date TBD)	Science Panel Meeting	The science panel and RCO meet to discuss the project. The science panel evaluates the project using the SRFB's evaluation criteria in appendix B and completes comment forms.
May 30	First Comment Form	The applicant receives the science panel's comments, which identify the project as "Clear," "Conditioned," "Needs More Information," or "Project of Concern." RCO accepts a "Clear" application and returns all others so the applicant may update and respond to comments.
June 9-10	Conference Calls (optional)	The applicant may email the science coordinator to schedule a conference call with the science panel to discuss the comments.

Date	Action	Description
June 23, Noon	**Due Date:** Final Applications Due and Regional Rankings Due	The applicant submits the final application materials in PRISM. Regions also must email a ranked list of monitoring projects to the science coordinator if more than one application is submitted.
July 16-17	Science Panel Review and Scoring	The science panel and RCO meet to discuss the project and complete comments. The science panel scores and ranks the project using the scoring criteria in appendix C.
July 25	Final Comment Form	The applicant receives the final science panel comments, which identify the project as "Clear," "Conditioned," or "Project of Concern."
August 7	**Due Date**: Accept Science Panel Condition	An applicant with a "Conditioned" project must indicate whether the condition will be accepted or the project withdrawn.
September 2	Final Grant Report Available for Public Review	The final funding recommendation report is available online for SRFB members and public review.
September 16-17	Board Funding Meeting	The SRFB reviews the ranked list of projects and awards grants. Public comment period available.

Section 1:
The Monitoring Grant Program

This section covers the following:

- ✓ Important things to know
- ✓ About the Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- ✓ Where to get information
- ✓ The Salmon Recovery Monitoring Grant Program
- ✓ The SRFB Science Advisory Panel
- ✓ The big picture of salmon recovery

Important Things to Know

First, some important things to know.

- This year, $973,855 will be available for monitoring projects.
- The strategic priorities for this year are life stage bottlenecks, limiting factors, and effectiveness monitoring.
- An applicant may request between $5,000 and $300,000.
- Regional organizations are encouraged to collaborate on projects. A project that benefits multiple regions may exceed $300,000.
- A regional organization may not submit more than two applications.
- No match is required.
- The monitoring project must be completed in three years. If work is not, the grant recipient, also called the project sponsor, may request a one-year, no-cost time extension or submit a new application to continue the project.
- An application must be submitted electronically through PRISM Online.

About the Salmon Recovery Funding Board

The Washington State Legislature established the SRFB in 1999[1] to administer state and federal funding and to assist with a broad range of salmon recovery-related activities. The primary goal is to recover salmonids (salmon and steelhead) by providing grants to local organizations.

The board is composed of five voting members, appointed by the governor, and five non-voting state agency directors. The SRFB believes that scientific information and local citizen review must develop projects. Projects must demonstrate, through an evaluation and a monitoring process, that effective implementation will provide sustained benefit to fish.

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

The complete text of the SRFB's strategic plan is on its website.

SRFB Not a Hearings Board

The SRFB's role is to fund salmon habitat projects. It is not, and is not authorized to be, a hearings panel that resolves land-use or permitting issues. The SRFB expects all proposals to resolve land-use issues through the permitting process. Projects should be ready to implement when funded.

Where to Get Information

The Science Advisory Panel and the science coordinator in the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office provide guidance for project development. RCO provides administrative support, including administering the grants.

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Contract and Billing Information
Jeannie Abbott, monitoring grants manager
360-480-2701

Monitoring Program Information
Greer Maier, science coordinator
360-890-0804

Washington Relay: Dial 711

[1]Revised Code of Washington 77.85

Science Advisory Panel Members

Hood Canal Salmon Recovery Region	Ken Currens and Micah Wait
Lower Columbia River Salmon Recovery Region	Bob Bilby
Middle Columbia River Salmon Recovery Region	Pete Bisson and Jeanette Smith
Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Region	Ken Currens and Micah Wait
Snake River Salmon Recovery Region	Tracy Hillman and Jeanette Smith
Upper Columbia River Salmon Recovery Region	Tracy Hillman
Washington Coast Salmon Recovery Region	Pete Bisson

Other Grant Manuals Needed

SRFB uses the policy manuals below for the administration of grants. These contain information relevant to the monitoring grant program.

- *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations*
- *Manual 8: Reimbursements*
- *Manal 18: Salmon Recovery Grants*

The Salmon Recovery Monitoring Grant Program

The SRFB was established in 1999 to provide funding for salmon recovery. The board's goals are the following:

- Fund the best possible salmon recovery activities and projects through a fair process that considers science, community values and priorities, and coordination of efforts.
- Be accountable for board investments by promoting public oversight, effective projects, and actions that result in the economical and efficient use of resources.
- Build understanding, acceptance, and support of salmon recovery efforts.

To help achieve these goals, the SRFB created a monitoring program in the early 2000s that focused on measuring fish abundance, project effectiveness, and restoration results in a handful of specific watersheds. The original monitoring program attempted to answer the following broad questions:

- 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?
- Is progress being made towards recovery?

Still guided by those broader questions, the SRFB revised its monitoring program in 2024 to answer more specific questions, provide new information, and develop modern technologies and methodologies to meet statewide and regionally specific information needs. The SRFB will use information from the new monitoring grant program to direct restoration investments, provide accountability, and build understanding.

The monitoring grant program is a statewide, competitive grant round offered in odd-numbered years. The grants are open to regional recovery organizations and their designated project partners. RCO will notify regional organizations of the amount of funding available before each grant round. Each project request may not exceed $300,000, and all grant requests combined may not be more than the funding available for monitoring from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund.

The grant program is guided by strategic priorities for funding and the resulting information is intended to inform decision-making at all levels of recovery implementation.

Projects are intended to be of regional importance, to directly inform recovery actions, and to have strong technical merit. The goals for the grant program are as follows:

- Generate strategically **consistent** information **applicable** to state, regional, and local decision-makers.
- **Guide** habitat restoration and protection and inform recovery plan implementation.
- Support and implement an **adaptive approach** that focuses on the following:
    - Timely and relevant questions
    - Monitoring needs
    - Timely information on the status and trends of fish populations and their habitats
- **Communicate** data, information, and knowledge in a meaningful way.
- **Collaborate** with partners to leverage programs and results.

SRFB Science Advisory Panel

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board's Science Advisory Panel, previously called the Monitoring Panel, helps guide the board's Monitoring Program. The science panel has been in place since 2013 and its members are experts in the fields of salmon recovery, natural resources management, and monitoring science. The SRFB uses the science panel to help coordinate and prioritize the ongoing assessment of habitat restoration efforts. The Monitoring Program goals are to address the following questions developed by the SRFB and the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office:

- Are restoration treatments having the intended effects on local habitats and their use by salmon?
- Are some treatments more effective than others at achieving specific results?
- Can monitoring results be used to improve the design of future projects?

Recently funded monitoring efforts have included regional monitoring projects, intensively monitored watersheds, remote sensing, reach-scale project effectiveness, and other regional monitoring projects.

The science panel does not advocate for projects. Rather, it assesses the technical merits and applicability of proposed projects statewide. To do so, science panel members review applications, convene presentations, provide feedback to applicants on proposed projects, and score and rank project proposals. The science panel considers projects in light of regional recovery plans and other regional-level strategies where no regional recovery plans exist. The panel is independent in the sense that members do not represent an agency or constituency.

The Big Picture of Salmon Recovery

Salmon Recovery Regions

The Endangered Species Act requires the federal government to develop recovery plans for salmon species at risk of extinction. The federal government measures the health of fish populations based on Evolutionarily Significant Units or Distinct Population Segments, which are populations or groups of populations of salmon species that are substantially reproductively isolated from other populations and that contribute to the evolutionary legacy of the species. The federal government determined that each unit or segment listed as at risk of extinction under the Act should have a recovery plan. State law directed development of a statewide strategy to recover salmon on an evolutionarily significant basis.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, together with other state and federal agencies, defined eight geographical salmon recovery regions.

Regional Organizations

To coordinate the work of recovery planning and implementation, seven regional organizations[2] formed within the eight regional recovery areas. The Northeast Washington Salmon Recovery Region does not have a regional organization but is covered by the Pend Oreille Salmonid Recovery Team. In September 2001, the SRFB funded six regional groups to develop recovery plans. Each group developed a recovery plan that expanded on previous planning efforts and helped connect local social, cultural, and economic needs and desires with science and the Endangered Species Act goals. In addition, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service developed recovery plans for Puget Sound steelhead trout, bull trout, and Lake Ozette sockeye salmon.

Regional organizations have developed a series of actions necessary to recover salmon and other listed species and gained regional consensus on measurable fish recovery results and federal approval of their regional recovery plans.[3] Today, the regional organizations implement those actions. A seventh regional organization, for the coastal area, which had no listed species at the time of formation, completed the *Washington Coastal Sustainability Plan*. The hallmark of this plan protects the region's salmon habitats by bringing together partnerships aimed at safeguarding and enhancing the natural function of the regional ecosystems on which salmon depend.

Lead Entities

Other key players in salmon recovery are local watershed-based lead entities, authorized by the Legislature in 1998[4] to develop habitat restoration and protection strategies and projects to meet those goals. Lead entities are essential partners in Washington's salmon recovery efforts. Regional organizations incorporated the strategies of local watershed groups and lead entities when writing regional recovery plans.

To create a lead entity, cities, counties, and tribes within a geographic area comprised of one or more watersheds or Water Resource Inventory Areas, develop a mutual agreement. Lead entities establish and support citizen and technical committees, develop strategies, and garner community support for salmon recovery.

[2]Regional organizations must be recognized in statute (Revised Code of Washington 77.85.010) or by the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office.
[3]Hood Canal, Puget Sound, and the lower, middle, and upper Columbia River regional organizations have final recovery plans accepted by the federal government.
[4]Revised Code of Washington 77.85.050-77.85.060

Nonprofit organizations, tribes, and local governments are eligible to provide the administrative duties of a lead entity. Together, the administrative body, citizen committee, and technical advisory group form a lead entity. The SRFB provides financial support to lead entities. For questions about the lead entity program, contact the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office program coordinator, (360) 480-2701 or Washington Relay, dial 711.

Lead entities use their strategies and regional plans to identify a sequence of habitat restoration and protection projects. Lead entities also work with their regional organization to develop monitoring projects. For this manual "recovery plans" may include federally recognized recovery plans under the Endangered Species Act or regional conservation plans for unlisted species that have been developed by the regional organization. Recovery plans form the basis of monitoring program grants. The grant applicant must demonstrate how the project addresses the actions defined in the regional recovery plans.

Section 2:
Eligible Applicants and Projects

This section covers the following:

- ✓ Eligible applicants
- ✓ Eligible projects

Eligible Applicants

The Salmon Recovery Monitoring Grant Program emphasizes and capitalizes on regional organizations in helping identify, craft, plan, and direct monitoring projects to ensure they have the necessary regional support and applicability to recovery and that the right information is collected in the right places and with the right partners and stakeholder involvement. Regional involvement also ensures information can be communicated effectively both up to the state level (via the science panel) and down to the practitioner level (via established regional strategies and networks).

Regional recovery organizations have their own processes for selecting which monitoring projects are submitted. Any organization wishing to do a project should contact its regional organization. The regional organizations are responsible for working with lead entities, monitoring partners, and tribes to identify specific monitoring projects.

Only the following are eligible to receive funding:

- Regional salmon recovery organizations: Note: The Pend Oreille Salmonid Recovery Team in the northeast region and the Spokane Lead Entity, both of which are not part of a regional organization, are not eligible for federal Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funding and therefore cannot receive monitoring grant funding.

- A regional partner who is independently eligible to receive funding (see below) and submits an application on behalf of the regional organization. The partner must work closely with the region and be involved in the planning and

implementation of the project. The regional organization must complete a Regional Monitoring Project Certification Form and the applicant must submit it with the final application for each project from a partner agency or organization.

Only the following partners may receive monitoring funding:

- Cities
- Counties
- Conservation districts
- Federally recognized Indian tribes[5]
- Nonprofit organizations registered with Washington's Office of the Secretary of State
- Regional fisheries enhancement groups
- Special purpose districts
- State agencies

- Federal agencies: RCO must request approval from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to provide money from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund to a federal agency.

Eligible Projects

Only monitoring projects are eligible to receive funding through this grant program. The SRFB defines **monitoring** as the **ongoing and systematic** collection and analysis of data in a standardized approach with the intent of informing salmon recovery actions.

Monitoring projects, as defined under the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund,[6] should contribute to the general understanding of watersheds and populations over time and space (status and trends monitoring) or the understanding of an action's ability to affect change (effectiveness monitoring).

Each regional organization may submit up to two projects in a grant round and regions must rank proposals for the reviewers. Regional rankings indicate the importance of each project and will be used by the science panel in its ranking.

[5]Revised Code of Washington 77.85.010 (12)
[6]Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund data dictionary

Projects must meet the following criteria:

- Must collect and analyze new data. The analysis of existing data may be included if it is not the primary goal of the project.
- Address high-priority regional information needs or data gaps identified in a recovery plan or associated regional research, monitoring, and evaluation plan or be endorsed as a high priority by the region.
- Inform the development of restoration or acquisition projects or programs.
- Complement, enhance, or leverage ongoing monitoring efforts.
- Have a plan to communicate results in a way that supports the learning and adaptive management processes in regions and more broadly.
- Be submitted by a region or vetted by the region and submitted on the region's behalf by an eligible partner.
- Have a funding request between $5,000 and $300,000 unless submitted by multiple regions.
- Align with strategic priorities for the grant round as noted below.

Ineligible Projects

- **Assessments:** Assessments are a process for determining conditions at a site or reach scale to inform project development and design. This information is needed to identify gaps between current conditions and desired conditions and therefore provide the information needed to identify and scope potential habitat enhancement projects. It is sometimes referred to as status monitoring or an inventory. In some cases, assessments can contribute data and information to a larger monitoring program (e.g., reach assessments in the context of regional habitat status and trends monitoring). The sponsor is encouraged to complement assessments with regional monitoring programs to the extent possible. Assessments are funded through a separate SRFB funding program**.**
- **Research:** Research is the esoteric pursuit of knowledge, aimed at uncovering new insights and a deeper understanding of a particular topic. Research often lacks a specific tie to management or decision-making and is not intended to be repeated over time.

Strategic Priorities

Restoration project outcomes are highly dependent on the extent that they address life stage bottlenecks (survival and capacity) and the limiting factors that cause those bottlenecks. The science panel developed a conceptual framework (Figure 1) for a restoration decision-making process that is used to develop the monitoring grant program strategic priorities. The framework includes steps to identify survival bottlenecks, evaluate limiting factors associated with those bottlenecks, develop restoration and recovery actions to address those limiting factors, and monitor results and adapt based on the results.

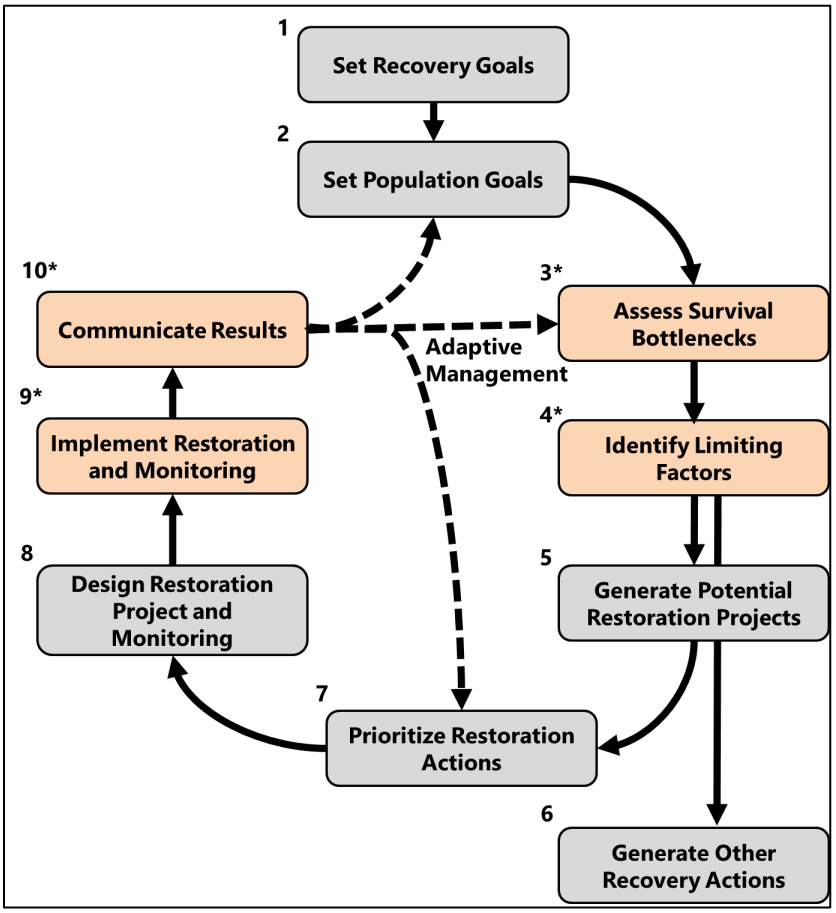

Figure 1. Conceptual decision-making framework used in developing strategic priorities for the 2025 SRFB Monitoring Grant Program. Steps 3, 4, 9, and 10 were identified as priorities for monitoring.

To maximize the potential for learning and application at different scales, the SRFB adopted the following strategic priorities for the 2025 and 2027 grant rounds:

- **Monitor survival bottlenecks** (species and life stage): A survival bottleneck is a specific stage in the life cycle that experiences high mortality or habitat capacity limitations, ultimately limiting future production. Populations can experience more than one survival bottleneck.

- **Monitor limiting factors** (e.g., habitat quality and quantity, food webs, and biological interactions such as competition and predation): The limiting factor is the event, events, or conditions that cause the survival bottleneck to occur.

- **Monitor project effectiveness:** Effectiveness monitoring addresses whether habitat restoration projects are achieving their goals effectively by measuring environmental conditions, habitat characteristics, and biological indicators. The applicant is encouraged to explore questions about the effectiveness of novel restoration approaches or techniques and restoration programs specifically aimed at alleviating survival bottlenecks and limiting factors.

Monitoring these metrics helps practitioners understand what causes population decline, whether projects are addressing them effectively, and if and how fish and habitat change over time affects fish populations. These types of monitoring are especially important as the climate changes. Regional organizations are encouraged to follow this step-wise process in their monitoring and may submit proposals for monitoring at any stage depending on their needs. As more funding becomes available or priorities change, these strategic priorities could be updated in future grant rounds.

Other Considerations

Phased Projects

The science panel recognizes that some monitoring may be complex, require extensive data collection and analysis over a longer time period, or require substantial funding to be successful. In these cases, the science panel will consider the benefits of the larger-scale program in relation to individual project applications. Phased projects that are part of a regional monitoring program are subject to the following:

- Each phase must be submitted as a separate application with a vision for future phases whenever possible.

- Each phase should be able to stand alone in terms of its public benefits.

- Each phase must have a scope of work the applicant can afford and complete given the amount of SRFB funding requested.

- Funding approval of any single phase is limited to that phase. No endorsement or approval is given or implied toward future phases.

- The science panel may consider progress in earlier phases when reviewing current proposals, including review of deliverables from previously funded work.

Puget Sound Projects

State law[7] requires the SRFB to align its grants with the *Action Agenda for Puget Sound* and to do the following:

- Give preference to projects referenced in the *Action Agenda for Puget Sound*.
- Give preference to Puget Sound partners without giving less preferential treatment to entities that are not eligible to be Puget Sound partners.

The Puget Sound Partnership defines the Puget Sound basin as the geographic areas within Water Resource Inventory Areas 1 through 19. The Partnership will certify whether projects submitted in those areas are consistent and not in conflict with the *Action Agenda for Puget Sound*. As with other project types, the Partnership will include a certification letter when submitting projects.

[7]Revised Codes of Washington 77.85.130 and 77.85.240

Section 3:
The Application Process

This section covers the following:

✓ The application process

The Application Process

The following outlines the basic grant process.

Step 1: Work Collaboratively

Regional organizations are encouraged to work with tribes, tribal organizations, lead entities, state and federal agencies, and other science and monitoring entities to develop monitoring applications. Identifying the greatest areas of need and projects that address those needs is important to consider in this grant program. Each region has its own process for identifying and selecting projects. An organization should contact its regional representatives if it is interested in partnering on a monitoring application. An applicant submitting a project on behalf of a region must submit a Regional Monitoring Project Certification Form in the final application. See section 2 above for more information on eligible applicants and projects.

Step 2: Submit Letter of Intent

The grant applicant must email the monitoring grants manager a Letter of Intent before submitting an application. Regions may submit as many Letters of Intent as they would like. RCO will make an initial decision about whether the project is eligible and email the applicant within two weeks of submittal.

RCO's initial screen will review the following requirements:

- Sponsor eligibility

- Project eligibility
- Alignment with strategic priorities
- Project must address high-priority regional information needs or data gaps identified in a recovery plan or associated regional research, monitoring, and evaluation plan or is endorsed as a high priority by the region.
- Alignment with *Action Agenda for Puget Sound* (if applicable)

Final eligibility will be determined once a full proposal is submitted.

Step 3: Submit Complete Application Materials in PRISM Online

Start Application in PRISM

Each regional organization may submit up to two projects in a grant round. The applicant will follow similar application procedures and timeline as other SRFB applications. However, an applicant of a monitoring project must contact the monitoring grants manager, before beginning so that RCO can create the project in PRISM, RCO's online database for grant management. To start an application in PRISM, provide RCO with the following information:

- Project name
- Start and end dates
- Project summary
- Total proposed project cost including match
- Project sponsor
- Project contact including email address

Once a PRISM project number is assigned, the applicant may use PRISM Online to complete the application. To use PRISM Online, visit RCO's website to sign up for a username and password. Do not share a PRISM username and password with others in the applicant's organization. Multiple users may work on one application in PRISM, just add individuals to the "Project Contacts" list. Once a project is in PRISM, the applicant completes the online application and attaches the required documents for the project type.

Complete Application by May 1

To be eligible for funding, an applicant must submit a complete application in PRISM Online by May 1. In addition to the application itself, the applicant must include attachments shown in appendix A.

The applicant should complete the required information on each screen and click the *Next* button. This process will take the applicant through the entire application page by page. Be sure to save work often. It is best not to have two people working in the application at the same time.

After completing all the application information and requirements, check the application for errors on the *Submit Application* screen. Pages indicated with a red exclamation mark (**!**) in the navigation table on the left of the screen require refinement.

Continue to check for errors after making corrections. If errors persist, reach out to the RCO grants manager for help. Once attachments are complete and all the pages are cleared of errors and show a green check mark (✓), submit the application.

Study Plan

Regional monitoring proposals should include a study plan with enough details to enable the science panel to review the proposal for technical merit. It is important that the proposal contains reasonably detailed technical information about the field methods, analytical techniques, information dissemination, and data archival and communication.

Study plans need to be based on clearly identified and sound scientific principles and valid assumptions and include technically sound methods and analytical techniques adequate to achieve the project goals and objectives. If the study plan has been reviewed by a qualified expert from an external organization, please so state. Attach supporting documentation that may include figures, tables, photographs, and citations. Clearly cite published papers and reports referenced in the study plan, and, if available, provide electronic links. If supporting documents are not publicly available, they should be uploaded to PRISM. Where appropriate, a brief literature review may be included in the study plan.

SRFB Applicant Resolution and Authorization

The applicant's governing body must pass a resolution that authorizes submission of the application for funding. This resolution will identify who may sign a contract and amendments on behalf of the organization. The format of the authorization may change, but the text may not change. Only one form is required for each applicant if each project name and number are included in the resolution. Forms filled out incorrectly or unsigned are not valid and will require revisions. For help, contact the monitoring grants manager

before signing the form. Secondary sponsors also must complete this form. Completed resolution and authorization forms should be uploaded to PRISM online as attachments.

Applicant Authorization Resolution Forms are not required from tribal sponsors at the time of application. However, RCO will need an organizationally drafted resolution from the tribal sponsor before signing the agreement. The tribal sponsor should work with the monitoring grants manager, to fulfill this requirement.

Working with Landowners

A Landowner Acknowledgement Form is required for all projects that require equipment installation or ingress/egress on property not owned by the applicant. It is important to know whether consent will be given if a project is funded. A project that requires ingress/egress on public land does not require a landowner acknowledgement form.

Permits and Consultations

The applicant must consider permitting requirements before submitting an application. Local, state, and federal permits likely will be required for any activity that takes place in or around waters of the state, including monitoring projects. The project sponsor must obtain all necessary local, state, and federal approvals and permits before payment. Similarly, if the monitoring project requires ground disturbance then Governor's Executive Order 21-02: Archaeological and Cultural Resources, directs state agencies to review it to ensure that reasonable action is taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to cultural resources. When needed, include permitting and cultural resources costs in the application. Select both permits and cultural resources as separate PRISM work type categories. More information on review and consultation requirements is in section 6 of *Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants*.

Tips to Avoid Common Application Mistakes

- **Scope of the Project.** Be sure the project description, answers to questions, metrics, and other application materials are consistent and reflect the entire project. Include tasks covered by grants and sponsor match.

- **Contingency.** Do not include a line item for contingency in cost estimates. This is not an eligible grant expense. Ensure that each of the budget line items accounts for inflation and contingencies.

- **Indirect Costs**. RCO allows agency indirect costs only for projects that receive federal funding or are used by RCO or the Puget Sound Partnership as programmatic match to a federal grant. Before submitting the application, attach a RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet, which indicates the indirect rate expected for the project. Start filling out this form early and work with accounting staff to

estimate the indirect costs. For indirect costs to be eligible, select the *Agency Indirect* work type on the metrics page and enter an associated cost.

- **Match Versus** Other **Funding.** Match is not required as a percentage of the total budget. Instead, report on outside sources of funding in the application on the *Other Funding* page of the application.

Step 4: SRFB Science Advisory Presentations and Application Review

Each applicant will give a presentation to the science panel in May. After the presentation, the applicant must upload the presentation to PRISM. The science panel then will meet to discuss the project and will provide the applicant with comments in PRISM Online and categorize the project as one of the following:

- **Clear**: approve the application as submitted for funding.
- **Conditioned**: approve funding with conditions.
- **Needs More Information**: request additional project details or clarification.
- **Project of Concern**: proposal does not align to the SRFB Review Panel Criteria (appendix B).

If the SRFB Review Panel indicates designates a project as "Clear," the applicant has completed the RCO grant process and does not need to update or resubmit the application unless there are comments that they would like to respond to. Comments are found on the *Review Comments* screen of the application. The applicant should respond directly in the *Review Comments* screen following each question or comment. If an applicant declines a project condition, the project becomes a "Project of Concern."

The grant applicant will have an opportunity, after the initial review, for a conference call with RCO and the science panel to ask for clarification or more information on the comments. Email the science coordinator to schedule a call by June 1. The calls will take place June 9-10.

Step 5: Use PRISM Online to Resubmit a Revised Application

RCO will return an application to the applicant either because 1) it was categorized as "Needs More Information," "Conditioned," or "Project of Concern;" or 2) the project was cleared for funding but has changed and must be updated and resubmitted. The final application must include a response to comments on the *Review Comments* screen.

An applicant must resubmit the updated, final application by noon, June 23, 2025. An incomplete application received by the application deadline will not advance. An

application submitted after this deadline will not advance. Regions also must rank projects and email the list to the science coordinator if more than one application is submitted. Regional ranking indicates the importance of each project and will be used by the science panel in its ranking.

Step 6: Project Evaluation

The science panel reviews updated proposals and responses to comments and scores each project according to criteria laid out in appendix C. If a panel member is engaged in a specific project, the member must recuse him/herself/themself from that project review. Next, the science panel discusses projects as a group and uses all available information and individual scores to rank projects. RCO may reach out to an applicant if a project ranks near the funding line to discuss options for funding the project. The outcome of this discussion is documented as an option in the final report to the SRFB.

From the discussion and scores, the science panel generates final comments on each project, assigns final categories ("Clear," "Conditioned," or "Project of Concern"), and summarizes discussions, scores, and ranking for the SRFB. During this step, RCO will review all projects for eligibility. When eligibility is questioned, the RCO director shall provide a final review.

RCO will return an application labeled "Conditioned" to allow the applicant to review the conditions in PRISM. An applicant with a "Conditioned" project must indicate whether the condition will be accepted or the project withdrawn. A project labeled "Project of Concern" may be required to address additional comments and answer questions from the SRFB during its consideration of applications.

Step 7: Receive Funding

The science panel will collate its rankings and comments in a final report submitted to staff. The report documents the process of the grant round and serves as a foundation for the board in making grant awards. The SRFB holds a public meeting to award funding in September. The SRFB will review the final report; project list; advisory panel scores, ranks, and comments; and public comments, including testimony at the funding meeting when making funding decisions. The SRFB may or may not choose to fund "Projects of Concern."

Section 4: Managing Monitoring Projects

This section covers the following:

- ✓ Grant agreements and administration
- ✓ Reporting and data sharing

Grant Agreements and Administration

After approving an application for funding, the SRFB will enter into a contract, called a grant agreement, implemented through RCO. Monitoring grant agreements have the same requirements and policies as other SRFB grants, except in the case of amendments (see below). Refer to section 6 of manual 18 for information on SRFB contracting and managing SRFB projects. Additional information about monitoring grant agreements and administration is provided below. Sponsors may reach out to the monitoring grants manager with any questions about contracting and contract management.

Amendments

The grant agreement may change with an amendment. A sponsor must notify the monitoring grants manager and science coordinator if a scope change, time extension, or cost increase is needed to complete a project. RCO may authorize an amendment for minor changes in scope and time extensions. The RCO director or SRFB may authorize major changes in scope and cost. RCO has an Amendment Request Template, which the sponsor should use. The sponsor must include documentation of regional approval of the amendment if the region is not the sponsor.

For cost increases, the sponsor also should submit an updated budget. Extension requests must be in writing and provided to RCO no less than sixty days before the project's completion date. The science panel and RCO will review the amendment request and determine the appropriate course of action.

Federal Program Requirements

Monitoring projects are funded with federal funds. Grant administration for these projects is governed by the Office of Management and Budget Part 200–Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards also called the "omni-circular." The applicant should review the omni-circular for detailed information on grant administration. The applicant may view trainings from RCO's fiscal office on indirect costs and other omni-circular issues on RCO's website under Post Award Information.

Reporting and Data Sharing

Monitoring grant agreements have the same reporting and data sharing requirements and policies as other SRFB grants, except as noted below. Refer to section 6 of manual 18 for more information on SRFB contracting and managing SRFB projects.

Progress Reporting

Each sponsor is required to enter two progress reports a year using the PRISM online progress reporting tool. Presentations to the science panel can be used to fulfill progress reporting requirements but presentations must be uploaded to PRISM. The monitoring grants manager will contact a sponsor if there is a request for such a presentation.

Final Reporting and Data Sharing

In addition to final reporting requirements in PRISM online, project sponsors must present and share data and information generated from the project in the following ways:

- Present results to the science panel
- Present results to regional or lead entity technical team and other regional groups
- Present results at a Salmon Recovery Conference
- Provide a spreadsheet of data or data layers and a report of results to the science panel, RCO, and appropriate lead entities, all of which can be done in PRISM.
- If applicable, upload data to appropriate databases and/or data managers (e.g., Coordinated Assessment database, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife PITAGIS)

Appendix A: Required Attachments

PRISM Online Required Attachments	Template / Form Link
Study Plan (required). RCO recommends using its template for development of a study plan. Attach in PRISM and label as "Study Plan." If using a different template, ensure it includes all the same elements.	Study Plan
Resumes of Project Personnel (required). Upload resumes of core project team members.	Applicant Creates
Project Cost Estimate (required). RCO recommends using its template or similar format. Attach in PRISM and clearly label "Cost Estimate." Include agency indirect in the estimate.	Spreadsheet
Other Materials (optional) graphs, maps, letters of support, etc.	Applicant Creates
Required Attachments in Final Application	
Landowner Acknowledgement Form is required for all projects that require equipment installation or ingress/egress on land not owned by the applicant. This form should be uploaded to PRISM. Projects that require ingress/egress on public lands do not require this form.	Form
Regional Monitoring Project Certification Form is required for all regional monitoring projects submitted by an applicant other than the region.	Form
SRFB Applicant Authorization Resolution Form is required for any non-tribal sponsor who will sign the grant agreement. Tribal sponsors will submit a resolution with a funded agreement.	Form
RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet (required). This form collects information about the applicant's organization's indirect rate and other financial information.	Form
Science Panel Presentation (required). After the presentation to the science panel, upload the presentation to PRISM.	Update PRISM
Response to Science Panel Application Comments (required). Respond to science panel comments by updating PRISM.	Update PRISM

Appendix B: SRFB Evaluation Criteria

To help ensure that every project funded by the SRFB is technically sound, the SRFB Review Panel will review and categorize projects. A project will receive a "Project of Concern" rating if it is not technically sound and cannot be significantly improved according to the following criteria:

1. Does not meet the definition of a monitoring project according to the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund.
2. Does not have region-wide applicability.
3. Lacks a technically sound scientific study plan. The monitoring plan is based on inaccurate assumptions.
4. The monitoring methods are technically flawed.
5. Analytical techniques proposed are inadequate to achieve the project goals or objectives.
6. The value of the study for recovery of salmon populations or the application of the study for future recovery efforts is not explicit.
7. Information provided or current understanding of the system is not sufficient to determine the need for, or the benefit of, the project.
    - Incomplete application or proposal.
    - Project's goal or objectives not clearly stated.
    - Project sponsor has not responded to SRFB Review Panel comments.
8. The project is dependent on addressing other key conditions or processes first.

9. The project has a high cost relative to the anticipated benefits and the project sponsor failed to justify the costs to the satisfaction of the SRFB Science Advisory Panel.
10. The project does not account for the conditions or processes in the watershed.
11. The project may be in the wrong sequence with other monitoring projects.
12. It is unclear how the project will achieve its stated goals or objectives.
13. It is unlikely that the project will achieve its stated goals or objectives.
14. The project is sited improperly.

Appendix C: Science Advisory Panel Scoring Criteria

SRFB Monitoring Project Evaluation Criteria

The SRFB Science Advisory Panel reviews and scores project proposals based on the following evaluation:

1. **Importance to Recovery Efforts (40 percent weight)**: Project outcomes clearly are aligned with the information needed for restoration or broader recovery planning and decision-making in the region. There is a clear path from project deliverables to regionally important decisions pertaining to restoration planning or regional recovery efforts. Specifically, the highest scoring projects will have some or all the following attributes:

    - Fill an identified area of uncertainty in an established decision-making process.
    - Be identified as a priority information need in a recovery plan, science plan, monitoring plan, or other regionally important planning document.
    - Provide a rationale for why it is important to recovery efforts.
    - Identify stakeholders who would benefit from this information and describe how they would use the results.

    ▲ Point Range: 0-10 points based on importance of information to recovery efforts.

7-10 points	Greatly improves region's understanding of a critical uncertainty and clearly is tied to important recovery and/or restoration decisions.

3-7 points	Will influence recovery and/or restoration decision-making to some extent due to the scope of the project and its outcomes.
0-3 points	Very little evidence that the project directly will affect important decisions related to recovery and/or restoration.

2. **Scientific Merit (30 percent weight):** The project should be thought out and planned clearly, be scientifically rigorous, and produce a clear deliverable within a specific and disclosed time frame. The project should demonstrate that the approach and methods are appropriate for addressing the goals and objectives. Specifically, the highest scoring projects will have some or all these attributes:

    - Includes a study plan that is complete and clearly laid out. Includes a reasonable scope of work tied to the study plan.
    - Demonstrates a high certainty of success based on approach, methods, and personnel.
    - Demonstrates that identified techniques and methods are adequate to achieve project goals and objectives.
    - Includes a sampling strategy that shows an understanding of the parameters and desired outcomes.
    - Describes the representativeness of the study area within a population or region.
    - Identifies a reasonable time frame and budget.
    - Identifies roles and responsibilities.
    - Describes a communications strategy that ensures data and information are readily available to the intended audiences.

    ▲ Point Range: 0-10 points based on scientific rigor and certainty of success.

7-10 points	Clearly laid out study plan with reasonable goals, defensible approach, and scientifically rigorous methods. High likelihood the project will result in the desired outcomes (e.g., data, information, support for future decisions).
3-7 points	Proposed project has some technical issues or deficiencies in its study plan (e.g., timeline, personnel, approach,

methods). Technical issues could result in outcomes that do not fulfill project objectives.

0-3 points	Project is unlikely to generate new and impactful knowledge in the proposed time frame. The project has major deficiencies in its study plan, is based on inaccurate assumptions, or in some way is technically flawed.

3. **Transferability of Results (25 percent weight)**: A strong project produces information that is generally important and broadly applicable to similar populations, species and life stages, or watersheds. Specifically, the highest scoring projects will have some or all the following attributes:

    - Produces results that are clearly applicable beyond the scale of the project.
    - Addresses information needs in other regions or at the state level (e.g., learning outcomes are meaningful beyond the project scale and would benefit stakeholders in other populations and regions).
    - Indicates how questions being addressed are relatable across watersheds, populations, or regions.
    - Describes how results could be used by decision-makers at the state scale (if applicable).

    ▲ Point Range: 0-10 points based on scale at which information is applicable and important.

7-10 points	Clear outcomes fill important information gaps across multiple watersheds or regions and generate information that can be used at the state scale.
3-7 points	Results are less clearly applicable to other regions and more specifically focus on information needs unique to that region. Issue is relatable across watersheds and learning outcomes will benefit multiple populations.
0-3 points	Results and information are applicable at the site, reach, or watershed or population scale only. Questions of interest and outcomes are unique and not broadly applicable. Results are difficult to roll up or carry forward beyond the project scale.

4. **Consistency and Leveraging (5 percent weight)**: A project that maximizes the benefits of limited monitoring funding will receive more points. This includes leveraging partnerships and other monitoring efforts and information. Specifically, the highest scoring projects will do the following:

    - Complement, enhance, or leverage larger monitoring efforts or existing information.
    - Leverage partnerships and collaboration to achieve project goals and objectives.
    - To the maximum extent practicable, be consistent or compatible with data collection, analysis, methods, and protocols used in the region and when possible, with methods and data collection in common use throughout the state.
    - Describe complementary monitoring projects, programs, or data sets, and lays out a method for integrating data and information, if applicable.

    ▲ Point Range: 0-10 points based on the extent of consistency and leveraging.

7-10 points	Complements, enhances, or leverages other monitoring efforts, partnerships, data, or information to achieve project goals
3-7 points	Complements, enhances, or leverages existing monitoring efforts or partnerships to some extent but not to a large degree
0-3 points	Does little to complement, enhance, or leverage other monitoring efforts or lacks leveraging of partnerships