

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8)

Project Subcommittee Report

2013 Grant Round – Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) & Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)

Project Subcommittee Members:

- Tor Bell (Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council)
- Hans Berge (King County)
- Councilmember Don Fiene (City of Lake Forest Park, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council)
- Peter Holte (City of Redmond)
- Cyndy Holtz (City of Seattle)
- Kirk Lakey (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council, Recovery Implementation Technical Team)
- Frank Leonetti (Snohomish County)
- Kerry Ritland (City of Issaquah)
- Scott Stolnack (WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator)
- Jason Wilkinson (Subcommittee Chair, WRIA 8 Actions and Funding Coordinator)

2013 Funds and Regional Allocation: In 2013, a total of \$1,909,131 in grant funds is anticipated to be available to WRIA 8 from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) grant sources. The allocation of these grant funds is determined by the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council and approved by the Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council and Salmon Recovery Funding Board. Both SRFB and PSAR grant funds are administered by the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). Seven pre-applications were received for WRIA 8 SRFB and PSAR funds this round (see Table 2 for summary). The requests exceed available funding by \$657,810.

Table 1. Summary of Anticipated 2013 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) Grant Funds				
	Funding Amount	Total Estimated Project Costs	Amount of Request	Match to Grant Request
Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)	\$433,356	\$10,942,632	\$2,566,941	\$869,390
Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)	\$1,475,775 (from 2013-2015 biennium funds)			
Total Anticipated Funding Available \$1,909,131 Shortfall (\$657,810)				

Project Eligibility and Match Requirement: Projects for SRFB and PSAR grant funds must meet the respective SRFB and PSAR criteria and policies outlined in RCO’s Manual 18. For WRIA 8 the project must be on the WRIA 8 Three-Year Work Plan prepared for the Puget Sound Partnership each spring. Projects on the Three-Year Work Plan are: 1) a sub-set of the WRIA 8 Plan’s 10-Year Start List of Actions (Volume I, Chapter 9), 2) have been evaluated for benefits to Chinook and relative likelihood of successfully being implemented; and, 3) are the highest priority projects for Chinook recovery. The Three-Year Work Plan is reviewed annually by the Puget Sound Recovery Implementation Technical Team (RITT) for the Puget Sound Region. Project proposals are evaluated using WRIA 8 criteria designed to assess a project’s relative benefit to Chinook and certainty of being implemented successfully. A 15% match is required for SRFB or PSAR funding, with the exception of design-only projects, which require no match.

Project Subcommittee Process: The WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee (or Subcommittee) is charged with reviewing project proposals and developing funding recommendations for WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council consideration. To conduct their review, the Project Subcommittee received the following: 1) SRFB/PSAR pre-applications; 2) grant criteria, narrative guidance for applying criteria, and scoring sheets; and 3) a conflict of interest statement. On May 22, Project Subcommittee members, SRFB Project Manager Elizabeth Butler, SRFB Review Panel Members Steve Toth and Tom Slocum, and WRIA 8 staff visited the seven proposed project sites. Project sponsors gave brief presentations and responded to questions.

After the site visits the Project Subcommittee met briefly to discuss the projects and reconvened on June 3 to score and prioritize projects and develop funding recommendations. The Subcommittee developed a single, consensus-based score for all proposals, which served as the foundation for Subcommittee discussion on funding recommendations. In scoring and ranking projects, the Subcommittee applied the WRIA 8 grant review criteria as a tool to align the projects with the priorities identified in the WRIA 8 Plan.

Table 2 summarizes the Project Subcommittee’s final ranking and funding recommendations. Following the table are descriptions of the applications, in rank order, with highlights from the Subcommittee discussions.

TABLE 2: Summary of 2013 WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee Funding Recommendations for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) Grant Funds

Rank	Project Name, WRIA 8 Plan #, Project Sponsor	Total Cost of Current Phase	Request	Grant Match	SRFB Funding Recommendation	PSAR Funding Recommendation
1	Confluence Parks/Issaquah Creek Restoration – Plan Project #: I211; I213; I282; I283 City of Issaquah	\$1,076,401	\$600,000	\$120,000	\$433,356	\$166,644
2	Riverbend Acquisition - Relocation (Cedar River) Plan Project #: C219 King County	\$7,749,900	\$500,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$349,631
3	Royal Arch Reach Protection – Selland Acquisition (Cedar River) Plan Project #: C247 Seattle Public Utilities	\$286,000	\$214,500	\$71,500	\$0	\$214,500
4	Sammamish River Side Channel Restoration – Phase II Plan Project #: N338 City of Bothell	\$195,000	\$195,000	\$0	\$0	\$195,000
5	Willow Creek Daylighting Design Plan Project #: M233 City of Edmonds	\$722,331	\$315,441	\$406,890	\$0	\$200,000
6	Little Bear Creek – 134th Ave. Culvert Removal Plan Project #: N402 Adopt A Stream Foundation	\$471,000	\$400,000	\$71,000	\$0	\$350,000
7	Hooven Bog Acquisition Plan Project #: N319A Sno-King Watershed Council	\$442,000	\$342,000	\$100,000	\$0	\$0
	ALTERNATE: Riverbend Acquisition - Relocation Plan Project #: C219 King County				Alternate to receive additional funds up to maximum request if other projects are not approved or cannot be implemented.	
	TOTALS	\$10,942,632	\$2,566,941	\$869,390	\$433,356	\$1,475,775
	WRIA 8 SRFB and PSAR Anticipated Allocation		\$1,909,131			
	Difference between requested and available funds		(\$657,810)			

Project Descriptions and Discussion Highlights

Note: Projects listed in rank order

1. *Confluence Parks/Issaquah Creek Restoration Project (Plan #: I211; I213; I282; I283)* ***City of Issaquah***

This project will restore aquatic and riparian habitat at the confluence of Issaquah Creek and East Fork Issaquah Creek, where the city is currently constructing a public park. The grant proposal is for a portion of construction costs for restoration activities. Construction will be focused on removing bank armoring and floodplain fill, installing large woody debris in the channel, removing invasive vegetation, and planting native vegetation.

Discussion

Issaquah Creek is a high priority for habitat restoration and protection. The WRIA 8 Plan identifies the confluence of Issaquah Creek and East Fork Issaquah Creek as a Tier 1 subarea, for which protecting and restoring riparian cover is the most important restoration approach. Previous King Conservation District and SRFB/PSAR grants were awarded to this particular project to fund project design and provide a portion of construction funding. As a result, this project has received several rounds of review from the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee and the SRFB Technical Review Panel. It was noted during the site visit that the current project design reflects the technical review comments provided during past grant rounds, and in so doing, the project will help restore natural channel processes to the extent possible in this highly urbanized setting.

This grant will provide the balance of funding needed to complete construction of the project, which is scheduled to occur in 2014.

Recommend \$600,000 in SRFB and PSAR funds (100% of request)

2. *Riverbend Acquisition – Relocation (Plan #: C219)* ***King County***

In 2012, King County purchased the 18.6 acre parcel underlying the Riverbend Mobile Home Park along the Cedar River for future floodplain and salmon habitat restoration. The property offers the potential for setting back levees and restoring the natural functions of the floodplain and riparian area, yet prior to commencing with restoration activities, King County is required by law to relocate the mobile home park tenants. This activity is a continuation of the acquisition process and will simultaneously set the stage for a noteworthy restoration project and reduce flood risk to the mobile home park. This grant will provide a portion of the funding needed to relocate the residents; additional funding will be necessary to complete the relocation of residents and for future restoration.

Discussion

The Subcommittee acknowledged the tenant relocation effort will be costly and span multiple years, yet this necessary component of the acquisition process must be completed before restoration can begin. The Subcommittee expressed concern with the amount of

funding that may be requested from WRIA 8 over the next several years (the expected cost of the full relocation effort is approximately \$7.75 million). However, multiple funding sources are expected to contribute to the relocation, and the project sponsor suggested funding sources outside of WRIA 8 may be available for restoration costs.

Given the significant benefits anticipated through the eventual restoration of the property and the importance of large-scale floodplain reconnection projects on the Cedar River, the Subcommittee determined that the project deserves PSAR funding in this grant round in order to jumpstart the relocation process. Should the PSAR funding level be lower than expected as a result of the state budget process, the Subcommittee recommended reducing the funding amount to a level no lower than \$300,000. Additionally, the Subcommittee recommends this project as an alternate eligible to receive funds up to the maximum grant request if other WRIA 8 projects are not approved by the SRFB or cannot be implemented.

Recommend \$349,631 in PSAR funds (70% of request)

3. *Royal Arch Reach Protection – Selland Acquisition (Plan #: C247)*

Seattle Public Utilities

This project will acquire a 1.65 acre parcel located in the Royal Arch Reach of the lower Cedar River, between river miles 13.4 and 13.9. Seattle Public Utilities currently owns 11.09 acres in this reach, and purchase of this property will build on the ongoing acquisition strategy in the reach. Once all target parcels are acquired, the foundation will be set for a large-scale floodplain reconnection project focused on improving juvenile Chinook salmon rearing and refuge habitat.

Discussion

The Subcommittee expressed some level of concern about the location of the parcel, which contains no river frontage, as well as the influence State Route 169 may have on future restoration designs and the ability to reconnect this parcel to the river channel. The restoration design question is premature at this time, and the Subcommittee acknowledged that acquisition of this parcel will factor into the scope of future floodplain reconnection efforts in this reach.

By completing this acquisition, this floodplain property has the potential to eventually be reconnected to the main channel, which will improve juvenile Chinook rearing habitat in the reach. Combined with sponsor matching funds, this grant will fully fund the acquisition.

Recommend \$214,500 in PSAR funds (100% of request)

4. *Sammamish River Side Channel Restoration Design, Phase II (Plan #: N338)*

City of Bothell

Building on a previously-funded feasibility study, this grant request seeks to complete preliminary and final designs for reconnection and restoration of a relic side channel to the

Sammamish River along 102nd Avenue NE in the City of Bothell. The preferred project alternative includes construction of approximately 1,080 linear feet of side channel, re-vegetation of 6.4 acres of floodplain wetland, and riparian enhancement of 1 - 2 acres. The project objective is to provide off-channel rearing habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon. This grant will fund the development of a final design report and drawings, technical specifications, cost estimates, and contract bid documents.

Discussion

The Subcommittee debated extensively whether this project, if implemented, would actually be used by out-migrating juvenile Chinook salmon. There are no analogous sites on the Sammamish River, so it is unknown whether juveniles will make use of this type of habitat in this system. Despite this uncertainty, it is expected that the project could benefit migrants from Bear Creek, Issaquah Creek, and the North Creek/Little Bear Creek system. Correspondingly, the project—if constructed—could offer a unique monitoring opportunity to see if and how Chinook make use of this type of habitat on the Sammamish River. Understanding the fish response to such a feature will be valuable in informing potential future actions along the Sammamish River.

Beyond fish usage questions, the Subcommittee also discussed design-related concerns related to channel flow and water temperatures. These issues will be addressed through the design process, and the Subcommittee determined the project merits full funding to continue the work completed to-date.

Recommend \$195,000 in PSAR funds (100% of request)

5. Willow Creek Daylighting Design (Plan #: M233) City of Edmonds

As proposed, this grant seeks to complete the feasibility study and initiate design for a project to restore tidal inflow and improve fish passage into Edmonds Marsh by daylighting Willow Creek. Preliminary feasibility work suggests this action would improve access to 28 acres of estuarine marsh habitat, providing a juvenile Chinook rearing habitat type that is rare in central Puget Sound due to anthropogenic changes to the shoreline environment. It is the only remaining salt marsh along the WRIA 8 nearshore.

Discussion

The Subcommittee had a robust conversation around some of the complex technical issues presented by this project, as well as contemplated whether juvenile Chinook might use the restored nearshore habitat at this location. Fish are already present along the shoreline and are expected to use the mouth of the restored creek. The Subcommittee largely felt that juvenile Chinook would use the marsh as well if the connection through Willow Creek is maintained. The sponsor provided additional fish use survey information following the site visit suggesting this would be the case.

A key point of uncertainty presently is whether the connection to the marsh through Willow Creek will remain passable to Chinook given the proposed orientation of the channel and stream mouth. The proposed channel alignment would empty to Puget Sound at an area where longshore drift could be expected to deposit sediment on an ongoing basis. As a result, the creek will need to be able to flush out the mouth to allow for fish passage into the system, yet it is unclear whether the site elevations and tidal prism will accommodate this need.

An additional concern noted by the Subcommittee is the unclear separation of the flooding/stormwater component of the project from the habitat restoration component. A key benefit of implementing this project is stormwater conveyance, which will alleviate flooding of adjacent urban land uses. While the objectives are linked, the sponsor needs to clearly define the components of the project that are focused on Chinook recovery since the funding source is directed at this outcome.

The Subcommittee agreed that this is an important restoration action, yet as a result of the issues outlined above, the Subcommittee felt it appropriate for the project sponsor to focus on completing the feasibility work currently underway prior to undertaking any design work. The funding request is \$315,441, and the Subcommittee recommended providing \$200,000 to the project in order to build on the work already completed and answer the outstanding technical questions prior to moving ahead with design. The sponsor is being asked to scale down the scope to align with this recommendation. The Subcommittee also suggested considering whether to increase funding to \$250,000 if another project recommended for funding cannot be implemented.

Recommend \$200,000 in PSAR funds (63% of request)

6. Little Bear Creek – 134th Avenue Culvert Removal (Plan #: N402)

Adopt A Stream Foundation

This project will remove three partial fish barrier culverts under 134th Avenue on Little Bear Creek in Woodinville, easing upstream access for Chinook and other salmon species. The project also involves riparian restoration and will combine with a similar project completed in 2012 just downstream to improve overall habitat conditions in this reach.

As part of the overall scope of this project, the City of Woodinville requires that the existing road prism be replaced with a one-lane bridge in order to protect an existing sewer line that crosses the creek and to allow for access to the opposite bank for sewer line maintenance needs and emergency access. While this grant would fund only the culvert removal and restoration components and not be used for bridge construction, the City's ability to secure bridge funding is a prerequisite for this project moving forward.

Discussion

This project scored lower than many of the other projects due to it being on a Tier 2 stream and due to uncertainty surrounding the city's ability to secure bridge funding. Regardless,

the Subcommittee felt the project should move forward due to the deteriorating condition of the culverts and the cumulative benefit of the project when combined with the restoration recently completed at 132nd Avenue. The Subcommittee did express concern with the cost of the project since the 132nd Avenue project was constructed for much less. The site constraints are somewhat different, but cost was noted as a concern nonetheless.

Since the project cannot be implemented without funding for the replacement bridge, the Subcommittee made the funding recommendation contingent upon Woodinville securing bridge funding. If bridge funding is not secured by the City of Woodinville, some of the recommended funds may be shifted to other projects and any remaining funds will be carried over to the 2014 grant round. The Subcommittee's funding recommendation is less than the sponsor's request.

Recommend \$350,000 in PSAR funds (88% of request)

**7. Hooven Bog Acquisition (Plan #: N319A)
Sno-King Watershed Council**

This proposal seeks to acquire approximately 30 acres of land containing a large bog/wetland complex and mature forest. The Hooven Bog is an important component of the headwaters system above Cottage Lake. Water flows from Hooven Bog into Crystal Lake, which drains into Daniels Creek. Daniels Creek then flows into Cottage Lake, which drains through Cottage Lake Creek to Bear Creek. The purpose of the acquisition is to protect water quality and water quantity in this headwaters area.

Discussion

Acquisition of headwaters areas offers protection to water quality and natural hydrological processes. Headwaters protection is especially important in the North Lake Washington sub-basin, where high water temperatures in the Sammamish River are a limiting factor for salmon. As a result, the WRIA 8 Plan identifies several high priority areas for headwaters protection along North Lake Washington tributary streams as a means to protect sources of cold water inputs into the Sammamish system.

The Subcommittee highlighted the substantial distance from salmon-bearing waters as a major limitation of this proposed acquisition, and there was agreement that the acquisition offers very indirect benefit to Chinook salmon since the area of interest is far above Chinook distribution. Furthermore, development potential around the bog is already limited due to existing rural residential uses, and the Subcommittee determined that the degree to which any future development would impact water quality and quantity to the detriment of Chinook salmon is highly questionable. This project also faces numerous unknowns that directly influence the ability of the project to be implemented, so the project did not score highly in either its potential benefit to Chinook or certainty of success. As a result, the Subcommittee did not recommend funding for this proposal.

Recommend \$0

Conclusion

With 2013 being the first year in a new biennium, WRIA 8 has both SRFB and PSAR funds available to allocate to high priority protection and restoration projects. Even with a full complement of funding from these two sources, requests for grant funds far exceeded the amount of funds available. Nevertheless, the Project Subcommittee was able to fully or partially fund six of the seven project proposals.

The projects recommended for funding represent important steps in the Chinook salmon recovery efforts in WRIA 8 and continue to build on work done to-date to protect and restore habitat. The Confluence Parks/Issaquah Creek Restoration project is a large-scale restoration project that offers the potential to provide Chinook habitat benefit in a highly visible, ecologically important section of the Issaquah Creek basin. The Cedar River projects occur in high priority reaches and help set the stage for large-scale floodplain restoration projects in the future. The Little Bear Creek restoration is small in scale, but eliminating a partial upstream barrier to fish passage will ensure continued access to many miles of habitat for Chinook and other salmon species. Two projects—the Willow Creek Daylighting and the Sammamish River Side Channel—are not yet to the construction phase, but each of these projects offers the potential to restore habitat types that are currently uncommon in WRIA 8 due to many decades of anthropogenic modification of the landscape.

As described in the body of this report, the Subcommittee outlined a few possible funding scenarios that could result in deviations from the recommended funding amounts. These are as follows:

- The Riverbend Acquisition – Relocation project was recommended for \$349,631 in PSAR funds but was additionally identified as an alternate to receive up to the full amount requested (\$500,000) if any of the other projects recommended for funding cannot be implemented or are not approved for funding.
- The Willow Creek Daylighting Design was recommended for \$200,000 in PSAR funds. If any of the projects recommended for funding cannot be implemented or are not approved for funding and the Riverbend Acquisition (as the designated alternate) is fully funded, the Subcommittee may elect to award an additional \$50,000 to the Willow Creek project.
- If the state budget results in less than the full PSAR allocation for WRIA 8, the recommended funding for Riverbend may be reduced, but a minimum of \$300,000 is recommended for this project. If additional reductions are necessary, these will be made beginning with the lowest ranked project on the list of recommended projects.
- If any of the projects recommended for PSAR funds cannot be implemented or are not approved for funding and funds remain after being applied as described in the first two bullets above, these remaining funds will be carried over to the 2014 grant round.