

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council – Cooperative Watershed Management Grant Program (Flood Control District) Funding Guidance

March 20, 2014

Summary and Recommended Option

Each year, in advance of the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee's evaluation of Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grant proposals, the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council provides the Subcommittee with an allocation formula for developing CWM funding recommendations. In the past, the Council's funding guidance remained constant as year-to-year funding went unchanged. In 2014, however, available CWM grant funding in WRIA 8 will be \$308,846 greater than in 2013.

At the January 16 Salmon Recovery Council meeting, Council members voiced strong support for directing the full balance of new funds to habitat protection and restoration projects. The Council noted the importance of ongoing support for monitoring and for public outreach and education, but advancing WRIA 8's capital work was identified as a high priority. As a result, Option 2 as described on page two is recommended as the preferred option for allocating 2014 CWM grants. The following information summarizes the change in funding and the three options presented at the January meeting.

Background

In 2012 the King County Flood Control District (FCD) established the Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grant program, which provided \$1.2 million to WRIA 8 in 2012 and 2013 for salmon recovery projects and programs. The *WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan* calls for habitat projects, monitoring activities, and outreach and education programs, and the Salmon Recovery Council approved the allocation of CWM grant funds using the same formula formerly applied to WRIA 8 King Conservation District (KCD) grants. The allocation of past KCD and CWM grant funds is as follows:

- Site-specific restoration and acquisition projects – at least **67%** of total available
- Monitoring – up to **25%** of total available
- Education and outreach – up to **8%** of total available
- The WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee was also granted the discretion to balance funding recommendations across the three categories based on applications received and their merits.

The FCD's 2014 budget, adopted in November 2013, authorized an increase to the property tax levy assessed by the FCD and approved an increase in the CWM grant funding provided to WRIAs. For the 2014 CWM grant round, WRIA 8's allocation will increase from \$1,200,000 to \$1,508,846. The funding increase is effective through 2017 and will grow annually with inflation. Beyond 2017, this funding level is uncertain due to possible levy suppression, which could require the FCD to reduce the tax it collects.

Funding Allocation Options

As with past years, the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council is being asked to provide guidance to the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee for allocating CWM funds. The following options are offered for Salmon Recovery Council consideration for the 2014 CWM grant round.

Option 1: Apply the same formula used in past years to the new, increased funding amount. Also, provide the Project Subcommittee with the flexibility to develop funding recommendations that reflect watershed priorities and are based on the proposals received and application of the WRIA 8 grant review criteria.

Option 1 Proposed Funding Amounts

Activity	Amount
Site-specific projects and acquisitions (at least 67% of total)	\$1,010,927
Monitoring (up to 25% of total)	\$377,212
Education and outreach (up to 8% of total)	\$120,707
Total	\$1,508,846

Option 2: Direct the balance of new funding to site-specific acquisition and restoration projects and retain the same dollar amounts used in 2012 and 2013 for monitoring and outreach and education. Also, provide the Project Subcommittee with the flexibility to develop funding recommendations that reflect watershed priorities and are based on the proposals received and application of the WRIA 8 grant review criteria.

Option 2 Proposed Funding Amounts

Activity	Amount
Site-specific projects and acquisitions (at least 74% of total)	\$1,112,846
Monitoring (up to 20% of total)	\$300,000
Education and outreach (up to 6% of total)	\$96,000
Total	\$1,508,846

Option 3: Determine another funding allocation for each of the three categories. Retain flexibility for the Project Subcommittee to develop funding recommendations that reflect watershed priorities and are based on application of the WRIA 8 grant review criteria.

Recommendation: Option 2 meets the Salmon Recovery Council’s desired focus on implementation of site-specific projects and acquisitions while continuing to support monitoring and education and outreach. This option also maintains flexibility for the Project Subcommittee as they develop their funding recommendations.