

# WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee Recommendation to the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council

## Establishing a Funding Limit on Riparian Restoration Proposals

January 15, 2015

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### Background

In recent grant funding cycles, the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee observed that reach or basin-scale riparian restoration proposals (targeting large-scale invasive species treatment and replanting) score disproportionately high relative to other priority projects. These proposals are currently evaluated as site-specific restoration projects, but the scale of these efforts provides them with an advantage in our grant review scoring system due to the weight placed on project scale in our review criteria.

### Project Subcommittee Recommendation

On December 9, 2014, the Project Subcommittee discussed modifying the grant review process to better capture the benefit and priority of riparian restoration proposals relative to other restoration projects. The discussion resulted in the following recommendation for Salmon Recovery Council consideration:

- Establish a funding cap for programmatic-type riparian restoration projects and evaluate these proposals as a category separate from other habitat restoration projects.
  - For Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grants, define the cap as *up to 15% of the site-specific project allocation*.
  - For Salmon Recovery Funding Board and Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration grants, define the cap as *up to 15% of the WRIA 8 allocation*. Included in this funding pot is the “stewardship” project type, which was established in 2013 by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to ensure the success of previously-funded riparian projects.
- For CWM grants, any portion of the 15% not allocated to riparian restoration proposals will be allocated to site-specific protection and restoration projects.
- Similar to the CWM funding guidance, the Project Subcommittee is interested in retaining the discretion to deviate from the 15% cap if merited by a strong proposal in a high-priority location.

WRIA 8 staff and the Project Subcommittee are developing evaluation criteria to facilitate the review of riparian-only proposals. As part of the CWM grant application, we will also request a three-year budget for these projects in order to identify sponsors’ anticipated funding needs beyond the grant request. The implications of this recommendation on anticipated 2015 grant funds are shown in the following table.

**2015 Funding Amounts by Grant Source for Proposed Riparian Category**

<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Cooperative Watershed Management	\$178,384
Salmon Recovery Funding Board	\$65,003
Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (biennial allocation)	\$221,366
<b>15% of Total Anticipated 2015 Grant Funding</b>	<b>\$464,753</b>
<i>Total Riparian Proposal Requests in 2014</i>	<i>\$462,245</i>