

WRIA 8 Cooperative Watershed Management Grant Program

Recommendation for Revising Salmon Recovery Council Funding Guidance

November 2020

In March 2020, the King County Flood Control District (FCD) increased annual Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) funding from \$4.8 million to \$9.6 million to support salmon recovery activities and a greater commitment to a multi-benefit approach to floodplain management in King County’s four main watersheds. Beginning in 2020, the FCD’s funding decision increased WRIA 8’s CWM funding from \$1.8 million to \$3.6 million. This funding increase helps address WRIA 8’s funding need to support salmon recovery projects and programs, and provides an opportunity to reconsider the Salmon Recovery Council’s (SRC) CWM grant funding guidance – see options on page 3 of the memo.

Recommendation for Salmon Recovery Council Decision

The SRC’s initial discussion of options for revising the CWM funding guidance in September resulted in a general preference for Options 5 and 6. Following the SRC’s September discussion, the WRIA 8 Implementation Committee and Technical Committee discussed the options to produce a recommendation for Salmon Recovery Council decision. A new Option 7 was proposed, which reflected the amounts in Option 6, but removed the funding caps, so the amounts in all categories would increase with the annual increase in total CWM grant program funding.

Implementation Committee and Technical Committee recommendation:

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,815,485 <u>OR</u> \$2,694,104
Monitoring/assessment – \$600,000 (~16.6% of available funding) <u>OR</u> \$721,525 (20% of available funding)	\$600,000 <u>OR</u> \$721,525
Education and outreach – \$192,000 (~5.3% of available funding)	\$192,000
Total	\$3,607,629

The Implementation Committee focused on funding for the education and outreach category. The Committee recommends the SRC approve \$192,000 as the amount to guide funding awards to education and outreach proposals. This amount is reflected in Option 7 and represents doubling the current amount and removing the cap so the amount will increase as the total CWM amount is adjusted annually to keep pace with inflation. The Committee noted that the WRIA 8 Communications and Outreach Framework and approved recommendations from the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee will guide education and outreach priorities.

The Technical Committee primarily focused on funding for the monitoring and assessment category, although other program needs (e.g. education/outreach and projects/acquisitions) were also considered. The Technical Committee recommends the funding amount in either Option 5 (20% - \$721,525) or Option 7 (doubling current amount with no cap - \$600,000).

The TC identified four monitoring and assessment categories for the watershed and used professional judgement to estimate a funding need for each category (Table 1):

Table 1

Category	Prior Annual CWM Funding	Projected Funding Need
I. Chinook status and trends monitoring	\$250,000 - \$300,000	\$300,000- 400,000
II. Habitat status and trends monitoring	\$ 0 (funding through SRC using carryforward funds and external grants)	\$50,000 – 100,000
III. Project effectiveness monitoring	\$ 23,000 (single award)	\$50,000 - 100,000
IV. Emerging issues assessments and projects	\$ 100,000 – 150,000 (occasional and supplemented by SRC using carryforward funds)	\$200,000
Total		\$600,000 – 800,000

Both committees noted the value in assessing the selected funding option following a trial period.

Background

The King County FCD provides funding to the King County portions of WRIs 7, 8, 9, and 10 through the CWM grant program. Eligible activities include habitat restoration and acquisition projects, monitoring, and outreach and education. For each annual grant cycle, the SRC is asked to provide funding targets for the three categories of eligible activities.

The SRC-approved targets serve as guidance for the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee as they review grant proposals and develop grant funding recommendations. Since the inception of the CWM grant program in 2012, the SRC has approved amounts of \$300,000 for monitoring/assessment and \$96,000 for outreach and education (approximately 17% and 5% of available funding, respectively). The remainder (approximately 78% of available funding, adjusting with increases) has been directed to restoration and acquisition projects. Additionally, the SRC grants flexibility to the Project Subcommittee to deviate from these targets if there is a strong justification for doing so. Annual funding requests typically exceed available funding in all categories, demonstrating substantial need in all areas. Regarding the monitoring/assessment category, the majority of available funding has regularly supported ‘fish-in’ and ‘fish-out’ salmon population status and trends monitoring, leaving little CWM grant funding available to support research and assessment work to address priority data gaps and information needs. To address these funding needs the SRC has instead approved use of limited one-time funding from the WRIA 8 budget’s carryforward fund balance.

Funding guidance revision options for consideration

On the next page are seven CWM grant funding guidance options for SRC consideration. Under all options, any funding not awarded in the monitoring and assessment and education and outreach categories would be added to restoration and acquisition project funding. The SRC-approved funding guidance will go into effect for the 2021 CWM grant cycle.

Option 1: Status Quo / No Change (reflects 2020 grant funding guidance)

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$3,211,629
Monitoring/assessment – \$300,000 cap (~8.3% of available funding)	\$300,000
Education and outreach – \$96,000 cap (~2.6% of available funding)	\$96,000
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 2: Designating 10% for monitoring/assessment and 5% for education and outreach

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$3,066,485
Monitoring/assessment – 10%	\$360,763
Education and outreach – 5%	\$180,381
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 3: Designating 15% for monitoring/assessment and 10% for education and outreach

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,705,722
Monitoring/assessment – 15%	\$541,144
Education and outreach – 10%	\$360,763
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 4: Designating 20% for monitoring/assessment and 10% for education and outreach

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,525,341
Monitoring/assessment – 20%	\$721,525
Education and outreach – 10%	\$360,763
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 5: Designating 20% for monitoring/assessment and 5% for education and outreach

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,705,723
Monitoring/assessment – 20%	\$721,525
Education and outreach – 5%	\$180,381
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 6: Doubling designated funding caps for monitoring/assessment and education and outreach

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,815,485
Monitoring/assessment – \$600,000 cap (~16.6% of available funding)	\$600,000
Education and outreach – \$192,000 cap (~5.3% of available funding)	\$192,000
Total	\$3,607,629

Option 7: Amounts from Option 6, but with no cap

Activity	Amount
Restoration projects and acquisitions (including up to 15% of this amount for riparian-only habitat projects)	\$2,815,485
Monitoring/assessment – \$600,000 (~16.6% of available funding)	\$600,000
Education and outreach – \$192,000 (~5.3% of available funding)	\$192,000
Total	\$3,607,629