

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Project Subcommittee Funding Report *Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grant Program – 2021*

Funding Summary: Table 1 summarizes 2021 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant funding in WRIA 8. Grants for SRFB are available annually and are comprised of state and federal funds. In the 2021 – 2023 state capital budget, the state legislature increased the appropriation for the SRFB program above the amount included in recent budgets. As a result, WRIA 8’s 2021 allocation exceeds \$400,000 for the first time since 2015 and is the largest annual allocation for the watershed since 2010.

<i>Table 1. Summary of 2021 SRFB Grant Funds – WRIA 8</i>	
2021 SRFB Allocation	\$435,235
2021 Funding Requested	\$796,474
<i>Difference between Requested and Available Funds</i>	<i>(\$361,239)</i>

Grant Eligibility and Administration: Grants for SRFB are administered by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and projects proposed for funding must meet the criteria and policies outlined in RCO’s Manual 18. Eligibility is geared toward acquisition and habitat restoration (including project design and planning activities that relate to project development), and a 15% match is required. All proposed projects must be on the WRIA 8 Four-Year Work Plan and have a clear link to one or more of WRIA 8’s recovery strategies.

Project Subcommittee Process: The Subcommittee members (listed in Attachment 2) review grant proposals and develop funding recommendations for consideration by the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (Council). The Subcommittee, an RCO grant manager, and two members of the SRFB Technical Review Panel heard from applicants in an online presentation session held in March, and the Subcommittee evaluated the proposals using the WRIA 8 grant criteria. Funding is prioritized for proposals that offer the greatest alignment with WRIA 8 goals and recovery strategies, articulate clear goals and objectives, and demonstrate a strong likelihood of successful implementation.

The WRIA 8 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee developed community engagement and DEI application questions and evaluation criteria that were applied to this year’s SRFB grant process. The purpose is to better understand how grant applicants are incorporating DEI values into their projects and programs and give stronger consideration to DEI principles in the allocation of grant resources. To assist in the DEI evaluation, the Project Subcommittee engaged a King County DEI subject matter expert, who reviewed applicant responses to the DEI questions and provided feedback that informed proposal ranking and funding recommendations.

2021 SRFB Funding Recommendations

1. Lower Issaquah Creek Stream and Riparian Restoration – *City of Issaquah*

Grant Request: \$450,000

Funding Recommended: \$435,235

The City of Issaquah’s habitat enhancement project is focused on restoring instream and riparian habitat along 1,200 feet of Issaquah Creek north of I-90. The project will remove bank armoring, construct side and backwater channels, place large wood in the stream, and enhance riparian and floodplain areas with native vegetation. These actions will improve habitat for multiple species of salmon and will complement other past and future restoration along Issaquah Creek.

Project construction is planned to begin in 2022, and funding is the only limitation to this project moving forward on schedule. The Project Subcommittee recommends awarding the full SRFB allocation to this project, and while this doesn’t quite provide the funding requested, the city is actively seeking other funding sources to enable the project to move forward without delay.

2. Cutthroat Creek Restoration, Final Design – *Snohomish County*

Grant Request: \$196,700

Funding Recommended: \$0

Snohomish County seeks funds for final design of an instream, floodplain, and wetland restoration effort along Cutthroat Creek at the county’s new Carousel Ranch Community Park. Cutthroat Creek is a tributary of Little Bear Creek, and this project is primarily focused on enhancing habitat in an area that was negatively impacted by past agricultural practices. All life stages of coho and sockeye salmon should benefit from the project, as well as possibly juvenile Chinook.

The Subcommittee noted that this project will help promote resilience in the Little Bear Creek sub-basin, which is important as the climate changes. While direct benefits will be created for coho and sockeye, the benefits for Chinook are less direct. Also, the presence of a fish passage barrier downstream of the project site reduces the immediate benefits of this project. Noted as a project with a well-developed approach given the current site conditions, the Subcommittee suggested other funding sources may be more appropriate for advancing this work.

3. Bear Creek Restoration at Friendly Village, Phase III Design – *Adopt a Stream Foundation*

Grant Request: \$149,774

Funding Recommended: \$0

The Adopt a Stream Foundation proposes to complete preliminary design for a third phase of instream and riparian restoration along Bear Creek within the Friendly Village mobile home park in the City of Redmond. This project intends to expand on recent restoration efforts in the reach, primarily by placing wood in the stream and restoring riparian vegetation.

Subcommittee members commented that the current proposal would benefit from more diverse habitat types (side channels and backwaters), and the presence of a downstream road bridge presents challenges that need to be carefully considered. Additionally, a large volume of wood was installed downstream in 2020, and the Subcommittee believes the sponsor should evaluate that site

for a year or two prior to replicating the same approach at the proposed site. While SRFB funding is not recommended, a Cooperative Watershed Management grant was awarded that will fund conceptual design work and enable the applicant to answer some remaining questions.

Attachment 1: WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee Funding Recommendations for 2021 SRFB Grant Funds

Table 1: Funding Recommendations			
<i>Project Name and Sponsor</i>	<i>Project Phase</i>	<i>Funding Request</i>	<i>Funding Recommended</i>
Lower Issaquah Creek Stream and Riparian Restoration <i>City of Issaquah</i>	Construction	\$450,000	\$435,235
Cutthroat Creek Restoration, Final Design <i>Snohomish County</i>	Design	\$196,700	\$0
Bear Creek Restoration at Friendly Village, Phase III Design <i>Adopt a Stream Foundation</i>	Design	\$149,774	\$0
Totals		\$796,474	\$435,235

Attachment 2

2021 SRFB Grant Round

WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee Members

1. Tor Bell – Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust*
2. Jim Bower – King County
3. Diane Buckshnis – City of Edmonds*
4. Christa Heller – City of Bellevue
5. Peter Holte – City of Redmond
6. Josh Kubo – King County
7. Brent Lackey – Seattle Public Utilities
8. Ezekiel Rohloff – Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
9. Mark Phillips – City of Lake Forest Park*
10. Rob Plotnikoff – Snohomish County
11. Lauren Urgenson – WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator
12. Jason Wilkinson – WRIA 8 Projects and Funding Coordinator and Subcommittee Chair

*Denotes WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council member