



Chapter 8: Implementation Strategy

There are three major funding sources that support implementation of the projects and programs prioritized within the Salmon Habitat Plan – Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund (PSAR), and King County Flood Control District Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grants. The WRIA also supports project sponsors in seeking funding from various other local, state and federal sources.

Annual Funding Package

WRIA 9 develops an annual funding package of projects based on anticipated allocations. The proposed funding package is reviewed and approved by the WRIA 9 Implementation and Technical Committee (ITC) and Watershed Ecosystem Forum (WEF). This funding package serves as the WRIA 9 Lead Entity's habitat project list, as defined in RCW 77.85.050.

Several factors are considered when building the annual project list for funding. Primarily, the WRIA supports projects from the list that demonstrate readiness to proceed and have a high likelihood of success, and where WRIA funding is critical to moving the project forward. Project tiering (Chapter VII) will assist the ITC and WEF in making tough funding choices when there are more projects in need

than funding available. Project planning efforts with partners have allowed the WRIA to project out-year project funding needs which provides time to anticipate funding shortfalls and seek outside support. This long-term planning effort also allows sponsors to align salmon projects with other jurisdictional priorities, like those within their jurisdiction's Capital Improvement Plans and Transportation Improvement Plans, as well as realistically phase large projects that span multiple years.

Yearly, project sponsors assess the status of their projects and funding needs and notify the WRIA 9 Habitat Project Coordinator of their intent to apply for WRIA funding, and for how much. Projects undergo a technical review by WRIA staff and the ITC. For those projects competing for SRFB funding, projects undergo an additional rigorous technical review by the SRFB review panel.

Salmon Recovery Funding

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funding is administered through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). It is a fund source of combined state salmon funds and federal Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Funding (PCSRF). This annual fund is allocated by a SRFB approved interim allocation formula based in NOAA's Chinook delisting criteria. For several years, the Green/Duwamish watershed has received \$295,895 annually to support implementation of the Plan.

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund (PSAR) is co-managed by the Puget Sound Partnership and the RCO. This is a Puget Sound specific fund source appropriated through the State budget process, within RCO's budget request. In 2007, Governor Christine Gregoire formed PSAR in direct response to the growing need to restore habitat for salmon and other wildlife within Puget Sound. The Green/Duwamish has received just over \$1.1 million biennially to support implementation of the Plan. RCO serves as the fiduciary for both PSAR and SRFB funding, so all projects funded through SRFB and PSAR are reviewed and approved through the SRFB process.

King County Flood Control District Cooperative Watershed Management Funds (CWM) are provided by the King County Flood Control district (KCFCD). The KCFCD is a special purpose government created to provide funding and policy oversight for flood protection projects and programs in King County. Funding for CWM is a small portion of the tax assessment to support salmon recovery projects within the four WRIAs in King County. In 2020, CWM funding was doubled, and WRIA 9 now receives \$3.63 million annually to support high priority projects and programs. The FCD approves project lists annually.

Other Local, State and Federal Funding Sources – In addition to these funding programs, sponsors are encouraged to compete for other local, state and federal funds. It typically takes multiple funding sources to implement projects due to project complexity and cost. Many projects are initiated with and sustained by local funding provided by the sponsoring jurisdiction. Other state and regional grant programs that support salmon recovery include, but are not limited to, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP), Floodplains by Design (FbD), Brian Abbott

Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB), Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA), and Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). Additionally, many of the projects within King County are supported through the County's Conservation Futures Tax (CFT), a program passed by the Washington State Legislature in the 1970s to ensure citizens have are afforded the right to a healthy and pleasant environment. This fund specifically protects urban parks and greenways, watersheds, working forests, and salmon habitat as well as critical links connecting regional trails and urban greenbelts.

WRIA 9 CWM Funding Allocation

High-Priority Capital Projects – CWM funding (> 65%) and all SRFB/PSAR capital funding. The WRIA invests the majority of annual funding on high priority capital projects that protect and restore critical habitats. These projects are identified through planning efforts like the Duwamish Blueprint, Middle Green Blueprint, and the Lower Green River Corridor planning process. More recently, projects incorporated in this Plan Update were solicited from partner organizations.

Regreen the Green small grant program - Up to \$500,000 of CWM funding. This grant program originated in 2016 after the completion of the "Re-Green the Green Revegetation Strategy" to support implementation of the priority sites identified in the plan. It has served as a primary source of funding to those focusing on revegetation efforts along critical areas in the Green/Duwamish. Additionally, this program has supported successful coalition building, landowner outreach campaigns, and network development that helps achieve broader Plan engagement goals.

Monitoring, Research and Adaptive Management – Up to 10% of CWM funding. This funding is essential to informing adaptive management and maximizing return on investment with respect to salmon recovery. This funding allocation also supports the Green River smolt trap managed by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Stewardship, Engagement and Learning – Up to 5% of CWM funding. This funding supports Stewardship, Engagement and Outreach efforts designed to increase awareness around salmon recovery and promote positive behavior change.

Outyear Project Planning (6-year HCPIP)

WRIA 9 maintains a Habitat Capital Project Implementation Plan (HCPIP) that identifies all projects with expected funding needs for three biennium (6 years). While these numbers are estimates they provide a sense of the magnitude of funding needed per year. This implementation plan supports staff in working with partners to properly sequence and support projects throughout the project life cycle, and to seek out additional funding to compliment WRIA directed funds. In many cases, WRIA directed funding sources are inadequate to support the full scope of a project but enable project sponsors to leverage other local, state and federal funds. The HCPIP will be updated annually based on evolving project needs, and will be published biennially along with a call for projects.

To ensure projects acquire, restore, rehabilitate, or create the type and amount of habitat that they was described in the original project description for the 2020 Salmon Habitat Plan capital project solicitation (or subsequent calls for projects), project sponsors will be required present to the ITC or project workgroup (below) for at least one of the significant milestones of the project design process.

This team will support ranking and tiering of any new proposed large capital restoration projects and provide input on design for WRIA funded projects.

Performance Management

Projects receiving funding through grants directed by WRIA 9 are often subject to various pressures from other local, state, and regional funders, stakeholders, and interested parties during project development. In order to make sure projects acquire, restore, rehabilitate, or create the type and amount of habitat that they described in the projects original description for the Salmon Habitat Plan, project sponsors will be required to present to the ITC or project workgroup (below) for at least one of the significant milestones of the project design process. For very large projects that will likely seek PSAR Large Capital funding, or large-scale complex projects with multiple objectives, the WRIA may request sponsor design teams include a WRIA technical representative to support WRIA 9 salmon recovery project priorities.

An ad hoc project workgroup will be established to support elements of project development, made up of three to five members of the ITC. This team will rank and tier newly proposed large capital restoration projects and provide input on design for WRIA-funded projects. The goal of this workgroup would be to provide feedback that will maximize salmon benefits, incorporate lessons learned from previous projects, ensure projects meet the highest possible outcomes for salmon, and help reduce project costs by addressing issues early in design.

It is anticipated that project sponsors will work with the Habitat Project Coordinator to present to the project workgroup or the ITC as follows, or if major changes/updates were made to the design:

1. Alternatives analysis - Project Workgroup
2. 30% design - Full ITC
3. 90% design - Full ITC

Project sponsors are expected to maintain fidelity to the original habitat deliverables. Naturally projects will evolve as more is learned about project design and feasibility. The project sponsor is responsible for alerting the WRIA if substantive modifications to the original scope are required. Modifications to the scope of the project may invoke a full project team review to affirm the project tier and may require subsequent approval from the ITC or WEF. Failure to notify the WRIA of these changes, or use of funding outside of the approved scope, could result in the withholding of future funding or constitute a breach of contract.