



Salmon Recovery Funding Programmatic Guidelines

1.0 Program Background

A portion of funds in the State Operating budget are appropriated to the Salmon Recovery Account. From this Salmon Recovery Funding (SRF), \$10 million has been allocated to the State Conservation Commission (SCC) in the FY23 supplemental budget with proviso language that specifies how these funds are to be used. This proviso states the funding is provided:

“...solely for the commission to provide grants for riparian restoration projects with landowners.”

The Commission interprets the SRF funding to be restricted to projects with landowners for the purpose of riparian restoration.

Because the SRF funds come from the Operating budget, all projects must begin July 1, 2022 and be completed by June 30, 2023. At the end of the fiscal year unspent operating funds will revert to the Salmon Recovery Account. Due to the short timeline for expenditure and the criticality of achieving and demonstrating effective restoration projects with landowners through voluntary incentives, it is essential quality projects are implemented and completed by June 30, 2023.

2.0 Salmon Project Funding Eligibility

2.1 Who is eligible?

All Washington conservation districts are eligible for funding from the Salmon Recovery Fund. A conservation district may partner with other entities on a proposal.

2.2 Project Evaluation Criteria

All projects must be located within riparian areas. Instream projects must be conducted in support of a riparian restoration project. See definitions section for definitions of the terms “riparian” and “instream” projects.

Projects must be started within 120 days of the award of funding and completed by June 30, 2023. This work may include technical assistance (outreach/engagement, project planning and design, etc.). Funding will not be extended beyond this date, and there is no guarantee continued legislative appropriation for this program.

Districts are encouraged to geographically group landowners and practices together. This targeted approach of clustering practices with multiple landowners in one concentrated area allows for more effective and efficient use of funding and helps reach the measurable natural resource improvement goal more quickly.

Projects meeting one or more of the following criteria may receive enhanced prioritization:

- 2.2.1 Located within a watershed or portions of a watershed with critical salmon habitat needs as identified by the Commission or identified by the local conservation district with supporting documentation as having insufficient quality of salmon riparian habitat. The Commission is available to assist districts with this information.
- 2.2.2 In addition to increasing riparian habitat for salmon, districts are encouraged to prioritize projects implemented in areas with identified pollution inputs with particular focus on areas with 303(d) listing for temperature, projects implementing an Ecology TMDL implementation plan, and project implementing a local resource plan. Information on how to access this information will be posted on the Commission’s website.
- 2.2.3 A project adjacent to or within the same sub-basin as another project funded either with SRF funding or with other fund sources such as CREP, SRFB, or other funding.
- 2.2.4 Projects that group work on multiple parcels/landowners together into a larger continuous project.
- 2.2.5 Preference for projects that are included in a salmon recovery plan, WRIA plan or other local salmon habitat restoration strategy.
- 2.2.6 Projects where partners, contracted field technicians, or coordination between districts supports or leverages capacity of existing CD staff.
- 2.2.7 Districts are encouraged to prioritize projects connected to the conservation district’s annual or long-range plan.

- 2.2.8 Preference may be given to projects that complement the NRCS standards, particularly the standards relating to “Riparian Forest Buffers”, with management considerations found in the WDFW document: [Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 2: Management Recommendations. 2020.](#)

2.3 Project Proposal Requirements

2.3.1 Eligible Activities

All project proposals must include eligible activities. Eligible activities are those intended to increase protection and/or restoration of riparian habitat. Instream activities with no connection to nearshore or upland riparian habitat function will not be funded. See Appendix A for list of eligible best management practices (BMPs).

2.4 Eligible Project Types

SRF funds may be used to support four different project types: 1.) landowner implemented cost-share; 2.) District Implemented Project (DIP); 3.) incentives program (e.g. commodity buffer); or 4.) planning/design of a riparian restoration BMP. A project may not be changed from one eligible project type to another once work has been done or expenditures have occurred. The following are the eligible project types and associated parameters of each type:

2.4.1 Landowner Implemented Cost-Share Projects

- All landowner information and proposed practices must be entered completely into the Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS).
- All cost-share practices must be identified under the funding tab as utilizing “Salmon Recovery Funding” funding.
- The cost-share contract must be generated from CPDS and utilized for this type of project. The cost-share agreement terms must not be modified.
- Multi-landowner cost-share projects are allowed. A multi-landowner cost-share project is one in which the same or similar BMP(s) are installed on several landowner’s properties.

2.4.2 District Implemented Projects

- 2.4.2.1 A district implemented project (DIP) is a project where the district is the lead planner and implementer. An example of a DIP could be implementing an identified practice with multiple landowners at the same time – i.e. installing riparian buffers on

several consecutive properties along a creek. Another example of a district implemented project could be performing one aspect of a much larger project such as acquiring large woody debris for a stream restoration project or constructing or installing one component or practice of a multi-practice project. In this project type, the District is taking full responsibility for installation/construction of the project which may include, but is not limited to: acquiring permits, bidding and purchasing processes, and prevailing wage requirements.

- 2.4.2.2 A district implemented project must not include cost-sharing, cash reimbursement, to a landowner(s) with SRF or other SCC funds. The District is assuming all responsibility for project planning and construction directly.
- 2.4.2.3 All project information and completed practices must be entered completely into the Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS).
- 2.4.2.4 A Landowner Agreement is required for any projects completed on non-district owned property and a fully signed copy must be provided to the SCC at the time of vouchering. The WSCC provides a Landowner Agreement template for district use, if desired. A District may also use their own version of a Landowner Agreement. A copy of this agreement must be provided when vouchering.
- 2.4.2.5 There is no match or cost-share scenario requirement for these projects. However, other sources of contributing funds toward the project should be reported.
- 2.4.2.6 See District Implemented Project Decision Tree for assistance with determining if a cost-share or DIP approach is best for your project or contact your Regional Manager.

2.4.3 Project Planning and Design

Other eligible activities include programs for project planning and design through landowner outreach and engagement targeting specific sub-basin or defined geographic sub-watershed areas with particular resource concerns impacting the recovery of listed salmonid species. Examples of specific resource concerns include water temperature or riparian area degradation but there may be others. Since funding is limited to the state fiscal year, such program proposals must be completed within this timeframe with the outcome of identifying future riparian habitat restoration projects clustered or grouped in the targeted location.

3.0 Program Rules and Funding Process

3.1 Eligibility to Receive Funds

Conservation districts must meet all of the Accountability requirements under the [Conservation Accountability and Performance Program](#) (CAPP) in order to be eligible to receive Salmon Recovery Funding (SRF) funds.

3.2 Timeline & Application for Funding

SRF funds are allocated to conservation districts at the beginning of fiscal year 2023, which starts July 1, 2022. Funds may also be offered throughout the state fiscal year as they are available. Funds will be allocated to districts based on complete applications submitted utilizing a [grant application form available from the Commission](#). Funding will be allocated based on a competitive granting process. Applications will be reviewed by an internal team of SCC staff for complete information, adherence to program guidelines, and scored for the extent to which the request meets the program goals.

Districts are strongly encouraged to enter project proposals for SRF funding into CPDS to build future requests for funding.

Regional Managers will interact with each conservation district with awarded SRF funding to ascertain project progress. Work must be initiated, regardless of project type, within 120 days of funding award to the district. This work may include technical assistance (outreach/engagement, project planning and design, etc.) At the end of 120 days if progress has not been demonstrated, the district may forfeit the funding allocation.

If funds are returned to the SCC or additional funding otherwise becomes available, a subsequent application round may be conducted. If that occurs, funding will be distributed through a competitive process.

3.3 Funding Process

Projects will be reviewed and approved by a committee made up of SCC staff. The review committee exists:

- To ensure consistency with funding criteria and funding intent
- To request clarity or additional information on the nature of specific projects
- To provide for case by case consideration of projects that are unique cases
- To provide formal award of funds for projects

The review committee will meet as often as necessary to review projects. During the period July 2022 – September 2022, the review committee will meet weekly to review project applications. Subsequent to this period, the review committee will meet as needed to review project applications. It is recognized that from time to time, projects may need further review by the review committee or SCC leadership.

Upon approval of the project by the committee, districts will be formally notified of the award.

***NOTE: Periodic reports of Conservation District Supervisors and Associate Supervisors receiving cost share funding will be given to the SCC Commissioners.

3.4 Landowner Cost-share Cap

All landowner cost-share proposals must be consistent with the SCC grants manual and policies. Current SCC policies cap cost-share to \$50,000 per landowner per fiscal year. A project proposed for SRF funding may request cost-share in excess of the \$50,000 cap. Such requests must be made as part of the project proposal submitted to the review committee and must include a detailed justification for exceeding the cap. Approval of requests to exceed the cap will be considered on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the SCC Executive Director or designee based on the recommendation of the review committee.

3.5 Technical Assistance

A maximum of 25% of the total funding award of SRF funds may be used for technical assistance activities for cost-share, district implemented projects, or incentive programs. TA activities include planning, project design, engineering, permitting, project implementation oversight, project management and administration, travel, and reporting. Total award amount x 25% = allowable amount for technical assistance. Planning/design only projects are not eligible for a technical assistance allowance.

3.6 General Requirements

- 3.6.1 All funded cost-share and completed District Implemented Projects and practices must be entered in the CPDS.
- 3.6.2 All projects and practices must have a detailed description. See example descriptions below.

- 3.6.3 Maximum cost-share per landowner per fiscal year is \$50,000 per *13-25 Category 3 Policy, May 16, 2013*.
- 3.6.4 The maximum cost-share rate allowable for publicly owned lands is 50% per *13-05 Cost Share Assistance Policy, March 21, 2013*.
- 3.6.5 All best management practices (BMPs) must meet NRCS standards and specifications, alternative practice designs approved by a professional engineer licensed by the State of Washington or an SCC approved practice per *13-05 Cost Share Assistance Policy, March 21, 2013*.
- 3.6.6 An overhead percentage only is allowed to be billed based on actual hours worked.
- 3.6.7 Ineligible costs include administrative goods and services (office rent, copy machines, telephones etc....)
- 3.6.8 Work must be underway on all awarded SRF projects within 120 days of the funding allocation. This could be technical assistance effort or actual construction.
- 3.6.9 Any district that does not utilize their awarded SRF funding in a timely manner or returns funding late in the biennium without a compelling explanation, may be deemed ineligible to receive future SRF funding.
- 3.6.10 All project and practices must be completed in the funding time frame. The funding is granted on a fiscal year basis (July 1 - June 30) therefore, all projects must be completed by the end of each fiscal year. All technical assistance costs must be vouchered for in the month following when the expenditures are incurred.
- 3.6.11 A [Returned Funds form](#) must be submitted as soon as it becomes clear that funds will not be utilized.

3.7 CPDS Requirements

- 3.7.1 All funded cost-share and completed DIP's and practices must be entered into the CPDS
 - i. Input the amount of SRF funding utilized for the practice.
 - ii. Input other funding sources also being utilized for the practice such as landowner contribution or another grant.
- 3.7.2 The Contract for Cost Share must be printed from the CPDS for all cost-share projects. No changes may be made to SCC's Contract for Cost Share.

3.7.3 “Before” and “After” pictures are required for each practice.

3.7.4 “Planned” and “Actual” implementation measures are required for each practice.

3.8 Vouchering

Monthly grant vouchers are required. Technical assistance must be vouchered for on a monthly basis whether or not any cost-share practices or construction of a district implemented project were completed in the given month.

- Once practices are completed, the following fields must be updated in the CPDS prior to reimbursement:
 - “After” pictures are required for each practice.
 - “Actual” implementation measures are required for each practice.
 - Completion date of practice is required.
- The [Cultural Resources Complied Statement](#) form must be submitted when requesting cost share or district implemented project reimbursement.

Refer to the [Grant and Contract Procedure Manual](#) for further, detailed vouchering and cost share rules.

3.9 Cultural Resources

4.1.1 All practices must comply with the SCC cultural resources policy. Due to the short timeline for completion of projects under this fund source, a cultural resource review should begin as soon as the location, nature and extent of soil disturbance is known with sufficient confidence. Please plan ahead to ensure enough time is permitted prior to implementation, which could be 45 days or more. Cultural resources review is required by the Governor’s Executive Order 21-02 for all projects using both state operating and capital funding provided by SCC.

4.1.2 Please refer to the [SCC cultural resources policy and procedures](#).

4.1.3 Cultural resource costs are awarded on a case by case basis. Funding will be added in to a separate grant outcome as each award occurs.

4.0 Definitions

4.1 Definitions

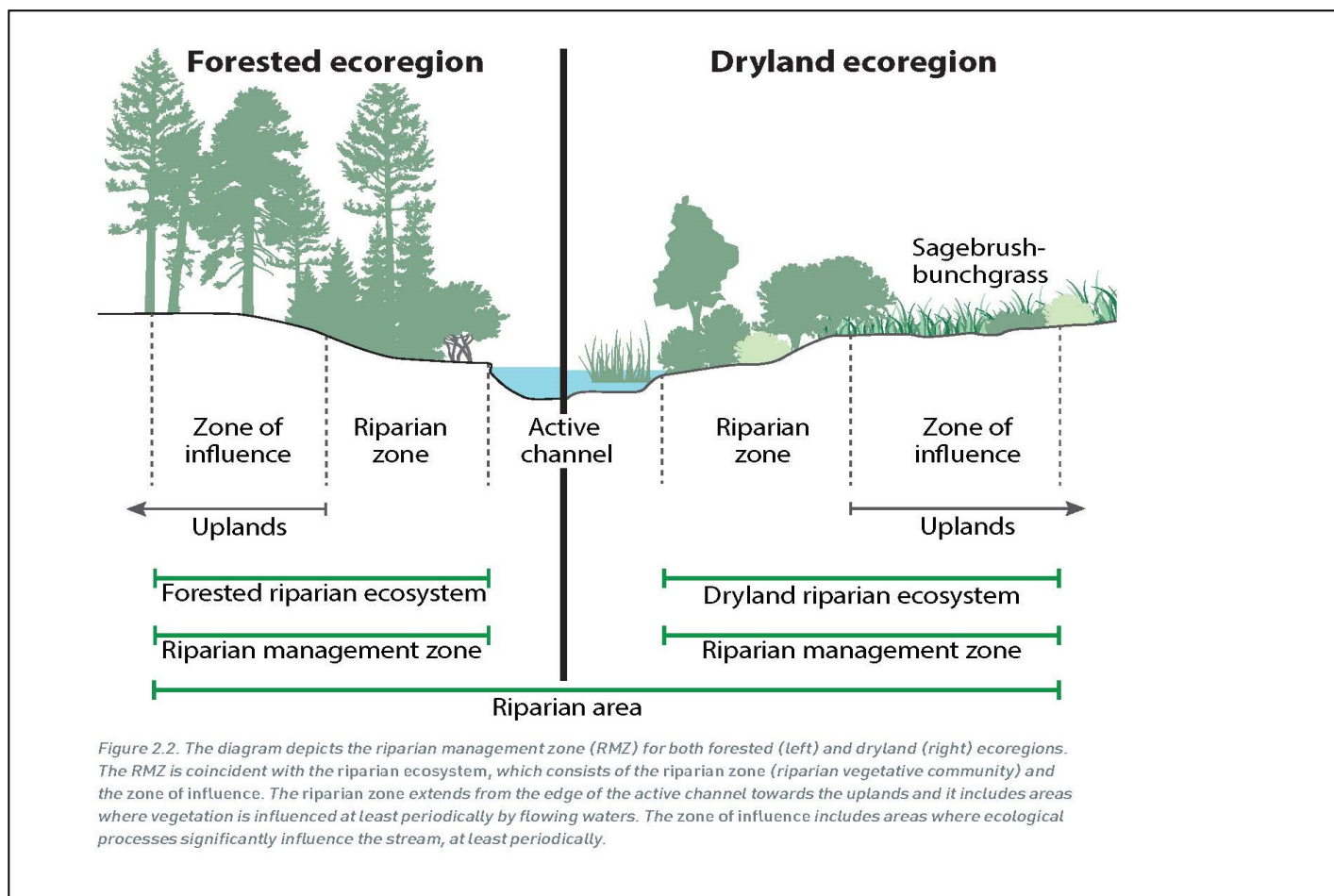
- 4.1.1 **Instream habitat improvement**¹: Projects which include the placement of natural structures such as large wood (LW; single or multiple logs), engineered log jams, and artificial structures (e.g., weirs, deflectors, boulders) into the active stream channel, or similar structures. Instream restoration activities as stand-alone restoration techniques are only appropriate if the cause of stream degradation can be isolated to a specific instream cause.²
- 4.1.2 **Practice**: Approved practice per current NRCS practices available within CPDS, or Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) approved practices or Licensed Engineer approved practices.
- 4.1.3 **Riparian ecosystem**³: Riparian ecosystems are transitional between terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems and are distinguished by gradients in biophysical conditions, ecological processes, and biota. They are areas through which surface and subsurface hydrology connect waterbodies with their adjacent uplands. They include those portions of terrestrial ecosystems that significantly influence exchanges of energy and matter with aquatic ecosystems (i.e., a zone of influence). Our definition of riparian ecosystem does not include adjacent waters (i.e., river or streams, but does include riverine wetlands) and recognizes the riparian zone as a distinctive area within riparian ecosystems.

Allowable riparian area projects are those in the area described above and pictured below and are intended to address ecosystem attributes particularly important to salmonid needs.

¹ Krall, M., C. Clark, P. Roni, K. Ross. 2019. Lessons Learned from Long-Term Effectiveness Monitoring of Instream Habitat Projects. North American Journal of Fisheries Management 39:1395-1411, 2019

² Cramer, Michelle L. (managing editor). 2012. Stream Habitat Restoration Guidelines. Co-published by the Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, Transportation and Ecology, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, Puget Sound Partnership, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Olympia, Washington.

³ Quinn, T., G.F. Wilhere, and K.L. Krueger, technical editors. 2020. Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 1: Science Synthesis and Management Implications. Habitat Program, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Olympia. p.292



4.1.4 Riparian Restoration: Riparian restoration activities are management practices which focus on reinstating the ecological processes that naturally create and maintain stream habitat over the long term and return the stream to a dynamic, self-sustaining condition. Restoration strategies may include site- or reach-scale projects intended to increase or improve habitat or the processes that create and maintain habitat. Restoration actions also commonly include enhancement - habitat creation or stabilization - where the full restoration of processes is not possible within acceptable timeframes.

4.1.5 Riparian zone⁴: A distinctive area within riparian ecosystems. The riparian zone contains wet or moist soils and plants adapted to growing conditions associated with periodically saturated soils.

⁴ Quinn, et al., at 293

APPENDIX A

ELIGIBLE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING

NOTE: All instream BMPs must be done in conjunction with an upland restoration activity.

<u>BMP Name</u>	<u>Practice Code</u>	
Riparian Forest Buffer		391
Fence		382
Wetland Creation		658
Wetland Enhancement		659
Wetland Restoration		657
Bulkhead Removal	SCC16	
Conservation Cover		327
Hedgerow Planting		422
Riparian Herbaceous Cover		390
Structures for Wildlife		649
Access Control		472
Tree/Shrub Establishment		612
Beaver Dam Analogue	SCC3	
Aquatic Organism Passage		396
Brush Management		314
Contour Buffer Strips		332
Critical Area Planting		342
Filter Strip		393
Grade Stabilization Structure		410
Herbaceous Weed Control		315
LWD Structure	SCC26	
Root Wads	SCC45	
Dynamic Revetments	SCC46	
Bank Reshaping/Channel Modification	SCC48	
GPS Precision Guidance System	SCC52	
Bank Barb	SCC53	
Live Stake Revetments	SCC54	
Dead Stake Revetments	SCC55	
Rock Toe Protection	SCC56	
Brush Mattress	SCC57	
Mulching		484
Multi-Story Cropping		379
Road/Trail/Landing Closure and Treatment		654