

2018



UPPER COLUMBIA LEAD ENTITY FUNDING PROCESS GUIDE

January 1, 2018 version 10

Prepared by: Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board

FOR DEVELOPING AND SUBMITTING SALMON HABITAT
RESTORATION PROJECTS IN THE UPPER COLUMBIA REGION FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE
SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD AND TRIBUTARY COMMITTEES

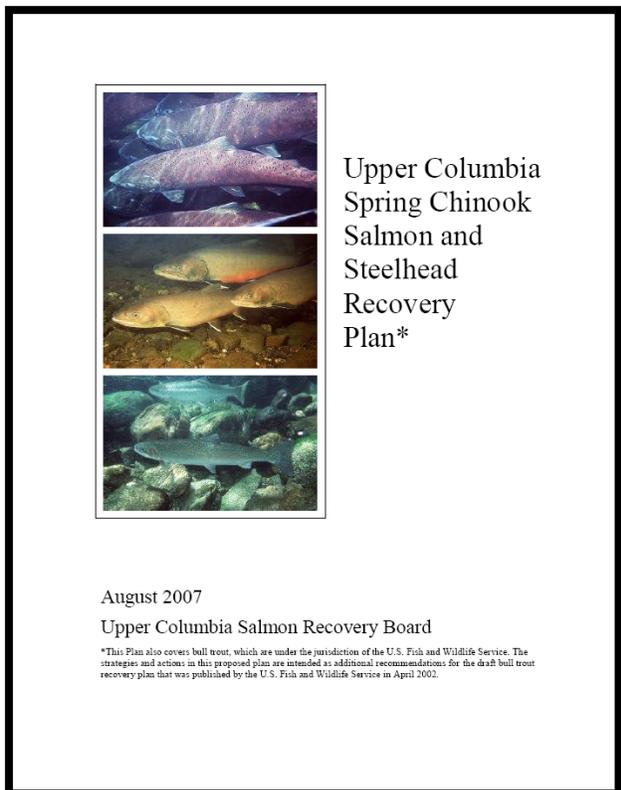
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The following Process Guide is intended to document the steps through which a potential habitat restoration project proponent, technical reviewer, or citizen will participate when pursuing funds through the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) in the Upper Columbia recovery region (UC). This guide represents the consensus decision of participants in the UC on the process to develop and submit projects for funding to the SRFB. The Rock Island, Rocky Reach, and Wells Dam Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Tributary Committees (TRIB) have agreed to use this process and timeline for funding consideration. In addition, the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) is targeting high biological priority projects to potentially fund within the UC via a habitat programmatic funding project with the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board (UCSRB).

The principle guiding document for identifying appropriate projects for implementation in the region is the *Upper Columbia Spring Chinook Salmon and Steelhead Recovery Plan* (UCSRB 2007), a federally approved recovery plan for this Evolutionary Significant Unit (ESU) in Washington State.



The UCSRB is the Lead Entity (LE) for the UC. “Lead Entities” is a term used by the state to define a county, city, conservation district, special district, tribal government, regional recovery organization, or other entity that is responsible for submitting a project list to the SRFB for funding consideration.¹

The UCSRB is also the state-designated regional recovery organization² and the LE is responsible for facilitating the process of compiling one project list and to submit that list for funding consideration to the SRFB.

The regional approach to pursuing both mitigation and recovery funds from all available sources is the result of years of collaborative work on the part of all interested parties to establish an effective and efficient process. Regional project and funding coordination is an on-going process.

The details are identified from the Recovery Plan’s Implementation Schedule and developed

¹ RCW 77.85.050 – *Note:* On January 1, 2013 the two active Lead Entities in the Upper Columbia consolidated into one Lead Entity under the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board.

² RCW 77.85.010

within each of the Watershed Action Teams (WATs) in the region. The UCSRB currently facilitates two approaches to funding projects in the region: (1) targeted process of habitat programmatic funds; and (2) traditional grant applications (a.k.a. “Open 6-Step Funding Process”). The following guidance document focuses on the Open 6-Step Funding Process.

OPEN 6-STEP FUNDING PROCESS

The Lead Entity (LE) Coordinator will help facilitate the movement of proposals through the review process. This includes assuring that the RTT, BPA, TRIB, and Citizens’ Committees receive review copies at appropriate times. Project sponsors should begin working with the LE early in the process to engage available services that will assist in developing competitive proposals for SRFB, TRIB, or BPA funding. See contact below:

Lead Entity Coordinator

Pete Teigen
509-662-4710
Pete.Teigen@UCSRB.org

Funding Schedule

The funding schedule for the regional process is included on the UCSRB website and updated as necessary.

Eligible Applicants

The following entities are eligible for SRFB funding:

- cities
- counties
- Conservation Districts
- Native American tribes
- non-profit organizations
- private landowners
 - Private landowners are eligible applicants for restoration projects when the project takes place on their own land.
 - Private individuals may not acquire land using these funds.
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Special Purpose Districts
- state agencies (state agencies must have a local partner that is independently eligible to be a grant applicant)
- Federal agencies may not apply directly, but may partner with eligible applicants.
 - Projects may occur on federal lands.

Applicants should take into account federal restrictions on using federal money for a qualifying match when applying for a grant.

Anyone may apply for Tributary Committee funds.

Step One: DRAFT PROPOSAL

See “SRFB Resources” on the UCSRB website at: <http://www.ucsrb.org/mdocuments-library>.

The first step in the process to seek funding from the SRFB and TRIB is to submit the first series of questions indicated with a star * on the new online regional application (referred to as the ‘Jot Form’). This first step has replaced the previous “abstract” that sponsors submitted in past years. The Lead Entity will use this information to ensure project eligibility and to plan for tours and other milestones. A draft proposal is required from each project proponent wishing to pursue funds from both the SRFB and TRIB. Included in the draft proposal is the *Regional Supplemental Application* that includes questions that address the RTT scoring criteria and the CAC ranking criteria.

The LE can also work with the project proponent to help develop the necessary forms throughout the application process and to help develop the data that may be available for use in the project proposal.

The project proponent will need to fill out a draft proposal for each project being proposed. All proposals must be submitted electronically using the State’s PRISM database. PRISM is an Internet-based computer program used by the Recreation and Conservation Office to apply for and track grants, to get grant contracts, and to produce reports about projects.

Although not required by PRISM, a standardized naming convention for your proposal is important for project reviewers. Proposal names may include the following elements:

- Indication of project type (Assessment, Design, Project, etc.)
- Project phase (phase I, II, III)
- Geographic link (e.g., Upper Entiat)
- The use of **landowner names** in proposals should be **avoided** to protect landowner privacy.

The draft proposal requirement helps proponents in a number of ways. First, it is an opportunity for the project proponent to think through the details of a potential project early in the funding process. It is also an opportunity for the project proponent to identify areas where technical assistance may be needed to ultimately develop a strong final proposal. The process also serves the region. The draft proposal provides an indication of how close the region is to meeting the target allocation of funds from the SRFB and other funding sources. It is also an early opportunity to identify additional cost-share programs that most effectively leverage the resources needed to implement projects. **For these reasons, very few exceptions will be made for considering a new proposal after the draft proposal phase!** It is important that project proponents think through enough of the details of a project to submit a draft proposal. The RTT and TRIB have the option to recommend to the LE that a proposal not continue in the review process due to lack of sufficient information.

All final applications must also be submitted electronically using the State's PRISM database.

The State Technical Review Panel is available year-round to assist with early project review and development. Project proponents may elect to enter project data into PRISM during the draft proposal phase (it is required if the project proponent is requesting assistance from a member of the State Technical Review Panel to visit the project site). Contact your LE if you need assistance with the PRISM database. Additionally, the SRFB annually adopts a Policy Manual that describes the process for pursuing funds from the State. The SRFB Policy Manual and other associated documents can be found on-line at <http://www.rco.wa.gov/srfb/docs.htm> and on the UCSRB website.

Step Two: PROJECT SITE VISIT

Project site visits to the Methow, Okanogan, Entiat and Wenatchee sub-basins will be scheduled. Project proponents are strongly encouraged to attend their respective site visit to present information regarding the proposed project, answer questions, and receive additional technical feedback in the field. Project sponsors may want to develop posters and handouts to relay additional information. Time will be limited and allocated based on the number of proposals.

The RTT, BPA representatives, TRIB representatives, citizen committee members, and State Technical Review Panel members may all attend the tours. Some project proposals may not require a site visit (e.g., an assessment project); however, we will identify a location to discuss the project. Once the portfolio of potential projects are finalized, the UCSRB will work with TRIB, State Review Panel and RTT to develop the agenda and itinerary. Project proponents are encouraged to work with the LE to develop refined information and materials during the site visit. Please check the website for the current tour schedule.

Participants in the project tours will be asked to keep conversations and questions directed to the project proponent and refrain from any side conversation during each site visit.

Step Three: PROJECT REVIEW AND COMMENTS

RTT, TRIB and SRFB State Review Panel will provide comments and information requests by Mid-June so sponsors have time to incorporate information and further refine project proposals before the final proposals are submitted.

Step Four: PROPOSAL REFINEMENT AND SUBMITTAL

After the RTT distributes their comments, project proponents have the opportunity to refine the final project proposals, and should be working to finalize the details of the proposed project(s). Final proposal are due to the LE for the Regional technical scoring and ranking.

After final proposals are submitted, there are no additional opportunities for interaction with the RTT to further refine the technical details of a project. Project proponents should always

communicate with the LE to answer questions as they arise throughout the process. **Significant changes in project scope or total project cost after the final regional submittal are not allowed.** These changes make it difficult for the citizens to evaluate projects after the RTT scores have already been assigned. Therefore, sponsors are strongly discouraged from making changes to scope or total project cost following final project submittal. Changes in funding allocation requests, while discouraged after final submittal, are accepted based on outside funding decisions or conditions made by the CAC or SRP. These changes in budget allocations **must be** communicated to the LE Coordinator in writing before the Citizen's Advisory Committee Presentations.

Step Five: TECHNICAL SCORING AND CITIZEN RANKING

After final project proposals have been submitted, the RTT will convene for technical ranking of the proposals. The technical review criteria for scoring projects is relatively new and was updated as a part of the RTT's Upper Columbia Biological Strategy revision process and can be found on the UCSRB website.

The RTT has requested that the project scoring meeting will be closed to non-RTT members, with exceptions for technical representatives from funding entities and LE representatives.

The RTT members can only score proposals as they were submitted to the LE. Information provided after the deadline will not be taken into account during the project review. It is important that project proponents are as succinct and inclusive in the application as possible. There are limits to the amount of attachments that regional and state technical reviewers can consume. The LE Coordinator may provide one hard copy of a document per review group and/or the electronic version if the document is large.

The final technical scores and comments from the RTT will be distributed to the sponsors and select partners in the Upper Columbia shortly before the Citizen's Committee presentations. Sponsor presentations to the Citizens' Committee will be at an evening meeting in either Chelan or Okanogan County. If a sponsor has proposals in each county, expect to present for both committees. The individual Citizens' Committees will meet the week following the presentations to rank the social implications of a proposed project. The two individual citizens' committees and the Joint Citizen Advisory Committee will use the same review criteria (located on website).

The individual lists from each of the Citizen's Committees will be combined for a joint Citizen's Committee meeting (three members from each of the individual LE Citizens' Committee). The process for merging the individual lists for initial discussion at the Joint Citizens' Advisory Committee is as follows:

- The region will combine the individual lists using the project's order of rank in the relative list (i.e., 1-1, 2-2, 3-3, 4-4, etc).
- The secondary consideration in merging the lists is the relative RTT score as the primary consideration (i.e., within the 1-1, 2-2 ranking on the separate citizens' lists, the region

will place those on the Joint Citizen Advisory Committee list in descending order based on RTT score).

The following ground rules for decision-making guide the Joint Citizen Advisory Committee in its deliberations to develop the final ranked list for the Upper Columbia Region.

1. A Citizen Advisory Committee member may, at any time, make a motion to move a particular project up or down on the list.
2. The Citizen Advisory Committee member making such a request must include rationale based on the citizens' review criteria.
3. The Joint Citizen Advisory Committee will then engage in discussion regarding the motion to move a project on the list.
4. After discussion, the Joint Citizen Advisory Committee will vote – approve, oppose, abstain – on the motion to move the project on the list.
5. The motion will carry upon unanimous approval by all Joint Citizen Advisory Committee Members (excluding “abstain” votes).

The result of this meeting is the final recommended list of projects submitted to the SRFB for consideration for funding. It is recommended that letters and/or comments be submitted to the Citizens Committee by the date of their first meeting to provide time for discuss and/or respond.

Step Six: SRFB/TRIB FUND REVIEW AND FUNDING

The State Technical Review Panel will meet during the month of September and October to review all of the project applications across the state. The Panel will develop a draft State Technical Review Panel report of its findings, by region, and distribute that for review and comment to the SRFB. The State Technical Review Panel will consider comments and additional materials submitted during the comment period, and finalize its report of recommendations for funding to the SRFB in October and November. Based on regional policy, proposals flagged as “Projects of Concern” by the State Technical Review Panel in its final report will not be forwarded on the final ranked list.

The SRFB will meet in December to make its final funding decisions for that year. The TRIB will also make internal decisions for funding, after release of the draft State Technical Review Panel report. Once the SRFB has made its final decisions for funding, the TRIB commonly meet to finalize their decisions for funding projects.

Post SRFB Award Amendments

Amendments require consultation with the LE, which may require a Level 1 or Level 2 review and subsequent recommendations from technical and citizen's committees.

Manual 18 outlines the process for SRFB approval of contract amendments. See the “Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board Funding Request Authority Matrix” and LE Amendment Request Form on <http://www.ucsrb.com/resources.asp>. Once the Amendment Request Form is filled out please work with your LE Coordinator for assistance.