

Salmon Recovery Funding Board Individual Comment Form



Lead Entity: Island County

Project Number: 11-1297

Project Name: Swan Lake Engineering Feasibility Assessment

Project Sponsor: Skagit Fish Enhancement Group

Grant Manager: Mr. Mike Ramsey

EARLY APPLICATION REVIEW/SITE VISIT - REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: April 21, 2011

Panel Member(s) Name: Patty Michak and Paul Schlenger

Early Project Status: NMI

Project Site Visit? Yes (April 19)

Date: June 1, 2011

1. Recommended improvements to make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria.

Comment:

The priority of the proposed engineering assessment should be for determining if functional fish passage is possible, with modeling data analysis to address the fish passage questions prior to design work being initiated for any alternative.

SFEG Response:

The primary focus of the proposed engineering assessment is to determine if providing functional fish passage is possible and cost effective. Technical Analysis tasks have been developed with this in mind. Water balance modeling will provide information on the volume of water entering and leaving Swan Lake on a seasonal basis, and will allow us to estimate the frequency, timing, and duration of hydrologic connectivity both via a natural, unregulated outflow channel as well as via an engineered connection. Evaluation of wave climate, littoral drift and inlet analysis will confirm whether or not a natural and/or engineered outlet can be sustained with minimal maintenance. Identification of infrastructure constraints will help us assess the constructability and potential cost of each alternative, as well as assure regulatory agencies and the public that proposed solutions will not exacerbate existing flood impacts or put infrastructure at risk.

The wetlands functional assessment will document existing wetland habitat conditions, function and species, and allow us to predict how those habitat conditions might be expected to change under potential restoration alternatives.

Lead Entity	Date	Application Complete	Status
Early App. Review-Site Visit	April 19	No	NMI
July Review Panel Mtg.			
Post Application			
Final			
Status Options			
NMI	Need More Information		
POC	Project of Concern (Post Application and Final only)		
FLAGGED	Needs full panel discussion		
CLEAR	Project has been reviewed by SRFB Review Panel and is okay to continue in funding process.		

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No design work is proposed as part of this project. The project deliverable will consist of conceptual design(s) that are sufficiently detailed as to support future application for grant funding.

Comment:

The project would be strengthened if the project sponsor can provide some level of interest from the landowners to the north of the county property that are most likely to be impacted should the project go forward with a channel to the north, which at this time seems to be the favored route.

SFEG Response:

Landowners to the north (Alice Sorenson, GT Telecom, and Joseph Whidbey State Park) and to the east (Mark Ashworth, Scott and Suzanne Ashworth) have been contacted and informed about the project. To date all landowners we have spoken to directly (Island County, Washington Parks Department, Sorenson's, Ashworth's) have signed Landowner Acknowledgement Forms (in PRISM) and expressed verbal support, and/or provided letters of support (Ashworths). One absentee landowner (GT Telecom) has proven to be difficult to reach by telephone; however, we have sent them information about the proposed project and a Landowner Acknowledgement Form via certified mail, and expect to hear back prior to the application submittal deadline.

2. Missing Pre-application information.

Comment:

Landowner acknowledgment forms for the parcels to the north that will be investigated in the study.

SFEG Response:

Landowner acknowledgment forms for 2 of the 3 parcels to the north that could be affected by the project have been uploaded to PRISM. As noted above the final landowner has been sent project information and a Landowner Acknowledgement Form via certified mail. We have also obtained letters of support from members of the Ashworth family , who own lands directly to the east of Swan lake (including portions of the lake shoreline).

3. Comments/Questions:

Comment:

The proposal states: "As a result, even if the technical evaluation concludes that establishing a connection that would ensure fish passage is not feasible, a solution that maintains hydrologic connectivity and sustains the current saltmarsh habitat while minimizing increases in flood impacts will be necessary. In the absence of a feasible fish habitat restoration alternative, secondary alternatives that focus on restoring and maintaining the saltmarsh habitat functions may need to be pursued." It needs to be determined very early on if fish passage can be created and sustained. If it is determined that fish passage is not feasible the project supported by SRFB funding should cease and other funding sources, as available, should be utilized to address the marsh ecological restoration.

There are numerous issues with the site that need to be addressed and many are infrastructure management issues such as: road elevation and flooding, county tidegate operations, flood management and stormwater management. Each of these may be exacerbated by projected sea level rise associated with climate change. Fish habitat restoration seems to be a secondary focus and benefit of the proposed project.

SFEG Response:

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As noted above, identification of a restoration alternative that would ensure fish passage is the primary focus of this proposal. The infrastructure issues identified by the reviewers are real, and may affect the constructability and/or cost effectiveness of any potential restoration alternatives, as no project that exacerbates flooding or puts infrastructure at risk would be approved by regulatory agencies. Future changes in sea level and/or the hydrologic regime will also affect the potential for establishing a connection that supports fish passage, and will be considered carefully during the course of this study. If the feasibility assessment determines that a cost effective solution that provides for fish access is not feasible then SFEG will not seek future funding for the project.

Data that are being collected in support of this project will be useful for effective future management of Swan lake regardless of the study outcome. In recognition of this Island County has pledged substantial funding for the project to date, including a \$25,000 appropriation of funds to initiate data collection in support of this feasibility analysis, as well as a recommendation to provide additional financial support via Conservation Futures Fund. We believe that leveraging funding for the project in this manner is the best way to both ensure that opportunities to improve salmonids habitats are not lost, while supporting ecologically sound management of the Swan lake Ecosystem over the long term.

EARLY APPLICATION REVIEW/SITE VISIT - LEAD ENTITY & PROJECT SPONSOR RESPONSES

Directions: Lead Entity or Sponsor must post their response to Review Panel comments in **PRISM** with document name: Response to Review Panel Comments. Attach this as a separate document in PRISM to become part of your application, and send your grant manager an e-mail.

All Flagged and NMI projects will be reviewed at the July 6th full Review Panel meeting. Sponsor responses received no later than one week prior to the meeting will be considered by the Review Panel.

Response:

*Attach Response to PRISM, and send your Grant Manager an e-mail.
Grant Manager will put in the PRISM attachment number here.*

JULY 6TH REVIEW PANEL MEETING - REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date:

Panel Member(s) Name:

Early Project Status:

1. Recommended improvements to make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria.
2. Missing Pre-application information.

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3. Comments/Questions:

JULY 6TH REVIEW PANEL MEETING - LEAD ENTITY & PROJECT SPONSOR RESPONSES

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Response:

*Attach Response to PRISM, and send your Grant Manager an e-mail.
Grant Manager will put in the PRISM attachment number here.*

POST APPLICATION - REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date:

Panel Member(s) Name:

Application Project Status:

Refer to Manual # 18, Appendix E-1, for projects that are not considered technically sound. In the "Why" box explain your reason for selecting this as a project of concern.

1. Is this a draft project of concern (POC) according to the SRFB's criteria? (Yes or No)

Why?

2. If YES, what would make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria?

3. If NO, are there ways in which this project could be further improved?

4. Other comments:

POST APPLICATION - LEAD ENTITY & PROJECT SPONSOR RESPONSES

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Response:

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Grant Manager will put in the PRISM attachment number here.

FINAL REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date:

Panel Member(s) Name:

Final Project Status:

Refer to Manual # 18, Appendix E-1, for projects that are not considered technically sound. In the "Why" box, explain your reason for selecting this as a project of concern.

1. Is this a project of concern (POC) according to the SRFB's criteria? (Yes or No)

Why?

2. If YES, what would make this a technically sound project according to the SRFB's criteria?

3. If NO, are there ways in which this project could be further improved?

4. Other comments: