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| Lead Entity: | Island County --WRIA 6 |  |  | Date | Status**[[1]](#footnote-1)** |
| Project Number: | #15-1485 |  | Post-Application | 10-12-15 | NMI |
| **Project Name:** | Whidbey Basin Pocket Estuary Census |  | Final |  |  |
| **Project Sponsor:** | Skagit River System Cooperative |  |
| Grant Manager:  | Keith Dublanica |  |

# Project Summary *(for Monitoring Panel reference only)*

This proposal requests $22,734 (not including match) to fund a census of pocket estuary habitat using remote sensing in the nearshore/marine waters of the Whidbey Basin in Island County. Pocket estuaries are used as rearing habitat by juvenile Chinook from adjacent river systems (Skagit, Stillaguamish, and Snohomish), and, along with the rest of the marine nearshore in Island County, make up the majority of ESA listed salmonid habitat in WRIA 6. A census of pocket estuary habitat is one of the three highest priority data gaps for salmon habitat status and trends monitoring for WRIA 6 (Island County Lead Entity RFP, July 13, 2015). If funded, this project would fill the requested data gap. Indicators measured in the census will include a count of sites accessible to juvenile salmon, the extent of habitat by type, and site connectivity. This data collection complements work being conducted in the Skagit Pilot Project, a monitoring project funded by the Puget Sound Partnership. The Skagit Pilot Project will use the same census technique to establish conditions in 2005, the data collected in this request would be from 2013/14, and will be used to establish a trend for this habitat type over the period of time since the adoption of the Salmon Recovery Plan (2005-2013/14). All project funding will go to support technical staff at the SRSC, with about half going to GIS and the other half supporting a geomorphologist.

In conjunction with the Skagit Pilot Project, this project would establish status and trends for the most important rearing habitats for ESA listed salmonids in Island County. The WRIA 6 Salmon Plan prioritizes protection over restoration, and developing an understanding of habitat trends since the inception of the Plan is important for evaluating the success of the Plan in meeting recovery goals. The application clearly articulates the project goals and how they are related to regional monitoring objectives.

# FINAL Monitoring PANEL Comments

**Date:** **Final Project Status:** Choose an item.

**Monitoring Panel Member(s)**

1. **If the project is a POC, identify the SRFB monitoring eligibility criteria used to identify the status of the project:**
2. **If the project is Conditioned, the following language will be added to the project agreement:**
3. **Other comments:**

# Post-Application REVIEW PANEL comments

**Date: 10/12/15 Project Status:** NMI

**Review Panel Member(s): Full Panel**

1. **If the project is a POC, identify the SRFB monitoring eligibility criteria used to identify the status of the project:**
2. **If the project is a POC, identify the changes that would make this a technically sound project:**
3. **If the project is Conditioned, the following language will be added to the project agreement:**
4. **General comments:**

**The following information must be provided or the project will be assigned a POC**. The enumerated points below and your responses to them should be appended to your proposal under the section heading Responses to Post-Application Comments. **Your updated proposal must be posted on SharePoint by October 26.** Please also alert your grant manager (Keith Dublanica) when the proposal has been updated with this information.

1. The Salmon Project Proposal cites an Island County RFP (July 2015) as identifying this work as a high priority data gap, however the RFP was not included in the references section. Please provide this RFP. Also the Panel would like to know if this data gap is identified anywhere else, either within the basin Salmon Recovery Plan or in updates to the Plan. If the RFP is the first time this data gap was identified, what was the process for identifying and prioritizing data gaps?
2. The proposal seeks to obtain the best available remote sensing data, including orthophotos and LiDAR. Do the principal investigators know if time series orthophotos and/or LiDAR image files are available (and from whom), and if so, what the cost of obtaining them would be?
3. When seeking remote imagery for the contemporary period, securing data flown at a similar tidal stage as the 2005 census effort will be critical in detecting change. Please specify if this will be a criterion of adequacy when evaluating the best available imagery.

**Additional Comments**

If possible, the panel recommends that the census be expanded to include all of the Pocket Estuaries in Island County, not just those in the Whidbey Basin. However, an inability to do so will not affect the status assignment given m=by the monitoring panel. We understand that this would likely require an increase in project budget.

It was unclear in the proposal if the project would include a census of stream mouths accessible to non-natal rearing fish. If not, this should be included in the project scope of work.

## Sponsor Response instructions

**THIS PROJECT PROPOSAL 15-1485 HAS BEEN IDENTIFIED AS NEEDING MORE INFORMATION (NMI)**

**PLEASE PROVIDE WRITTEN RESPONSES TO THE ABOVE NO LATER THAN CLOSE OF BUSINESS OCTOBER 28.**

**PLEASE SUBMIT THESE COMMENTS AS AN ATTACHMENT LISTED AS ‘CORRESPONDENCE’ INTO PRISM.**

**PLEASE INFORM ME BY E-MAIL OR PHONE IF ANY ISSUES PREVENT YOU WITH A TIMELY SUBMISSION.**

**THANK YOU**

***Keith Dublanica***

Science Coordinator

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

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1. CLEAR: Cleared to proceed; CONDITIONED: Cleared to proceed with a condition; NMI*:* Needs More Information; POC: Project of Concern; NOTEWORTHY: Exemplary Project [↑](#footnote-ref-1)