

# Regional Organization Monitoring Project Certification

**Project Name: Whidbey Basin Pocket Estuary Census**

**Project Number: 15-1485**

**Regional Organization: PSP**

## Questions:

1. **Explain how the project will address a high priority information need or data gap in your recovery plan and/or associated regional research, monitoring, and evaluation (RME) plan or lead entity strategy.**

This project will census nearshore pocket estuary habitat within the Whidbey Basin using remote sensed imagery from a contemporary time period and GIS methods. Indicators measured include: 1) count of pocket estuaries accessible to juvenile salmon, 2) the extent of habitat by types, and 3) their landscape position (i.e., connectivity). The contemporary time period will depend on the imagery available but will likely be 2013 or 2014. This project will complement work being done by the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) sponsored Skagit Monitoring Pilot Project (PSP Interagency Agreement #2015-64). Monitoring methods from this project are identical to the methods of the Skagit Pilot and follow the RITT Common Framework (Bartz et al 2013). The Skagit Pilot is being used to help develop regional guidance for monitoring of Common Indicators for Puget Sound Lead Entities. Pocket estuary metrics are included in the list of the Puget Sound Common Indicators (Fore et al 2015). In the Skagit Pilot, Whidbey Basin pocket estuary habitat will be measured for a time period representing habitat conditions around the time the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan was adopted (~2005). With monitoring results from both time periods, the Whidbey Basin Lead Entities (including Island County) will have a trend result for Whidbey Basin pocket estuary habitat for the first decade of Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan implementation.

1. **Explain how the monitoring will complement, enhance, or leverage ongoing monitoring efforts. Describe communication you have had with other monitoring practitioners of ongoing monitoring efforts.**

The area surveyed will include pocket estuaries in the WRIA 6 portion of the Whidbey Basin (east Whidbey Island and all of Camano Island). This project will complement work being done by the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) sponsored Skagit Monitoring Pilot Project (PSP Interagency Agreement #2015-64). Monitoring methods from this project are identical to the methods of the Skagit Pilot and follow the RITT Common Framework. The Skagit Pilot is being used to help develop regional guidance for monitoring of Common Indicators for Puget Sound Lead Entities. In the Skagit Pilot, Whidbey Basin pocket estuary habitat will be measured for a time period representing habitat conditions around the time the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan adoption (~2005). With monitoring results from both 2005 and the current time periods, the Whidbey Basin Lead Entities (including Island County) will have a trend result for Whidbey Basin pocket estuary habitat for the first decade of Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan implementation.

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. Combining the results from this project with the results from the Skagit Monitoring Pilot Project (PSP Interagency Agreement #2015-64) will create a trend result for Whidbey Basin pocket estuary habitat for the first decade of Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan implementation.

1. **Explain why SRFB project funds are being used rather than funds from other sources.**

No other sources of capacity funds, that are permitted to be used for this kind of assessment, have been found to be currently available. The timing of this funding allows for the commitment to this work, which will benefit and enhance the results from the Skagit Pilot.

1. **List of Projects**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Project Number** | **Project Name** | **Project Sponsor** | **SRFB Request** | **Matching funds** |
| 15-1485 | Whidbey Basin Pocket Estuary Census | Skagit River System Cooperative | $28,700 (WRIA 6 funds) | $5,996 |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**TOTAL AMOUNT of Request:**

**AMOUNT of Allocation:**

I do hereby certify under penalty of forfeiture of the above monitoring project amount(s) proposed out of SRFB allocation to the

INSERT REGION HERE that the above named project(s) will:

* Address a high priority information need or data gap identified within our recovery plan and/or associated regional research, monitoring, and evaluation (RME) plan or lead entity strategy.
* Not duplicate or interfere with ongoing monitoring efforts.
* Be consistent or compatible with data collection, analysis, and management methods and protocols being used within the region and shall to the maximum extent practicable be consistent or compatible with methods and protocols in common use throughout the state.
* Make data available to the RCO, the public, and the SRFB Monitoring Panel.
* Not exceed 3 years.
* Total 10 percent or less than our regional allocation.

**Authorized Signature:**

****

**Title: Local Ecosystem and Salmon Recovery Director**

**Date: Sept. 3, 2015**