

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Individual Comment Form



Lead Entity:	San Juan
Project Number:	15-1300
Project Name:	Cascade Creek Acquisition
Project Sponsor:	San Juan County Land Bank
Grant Manager:	Mike Ramsey

	Date	Status¹
Post-Application	9/23/15	Condition
Final	10/28/15	Clear

PROJECT SUMMARY *(for Review Panel reference only)*

The Cascade Creek project on Orcas Island will result in the permanent protection of 23.95 acres of upland forest buffer and riparian corridor that are vital salmon habitat in San Juan County. The Cascade Creek stream system is one of the three most valuable freshwater salmon habitats in San Juan County and has documented historical use by Chinook, Chum, and Coho salmon, and Cutthroat trout. The acquisition will include 1,250 feet of riparian corridor, consisting of all 300 feet of currently available salmon habitat and 950 feet of intact riparian habitat upstream of the first cascade/limit to anadromy. The Mountain Lake/Cascade Creek basin extends from the top of Mt. Constitution in Moran State Park through Mountain Lake to Buck Bay, where this project is based. This project, in conjunction with the previously SRFB funded culvert replacement at Cascade Creek (07-1539),

WILL PERMANENTLY PROTECT AND RESTORE THIS VITAL SALMON HABITAT.FINAL REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: 10/28/15

Final Project Status: Clear

Review Panel Member(s): Full Review Panel

1. If the project is a POC, please identify the SRFB criteria used to determine 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: 9/23/15

Project Status: Conditioned

Review Panel Member(s):

1. If the project is a POC, identify the SRFB criteria used to determine 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:
CONDITION: Sponsor will provide draft Stewardship Plan for review. The review panel wants to ensure that no damaging trails or parking is provided in the acquired land. The habitats and target species are sensitive to disturbance. The irregular shape of the parcel adds concern that visitor trails will be especially damaging because there is not space to separate trails from the creek, in fact the current trail runs close to the creek and crosses it. This condition is also necessary due to the high potential use by people. The parcel is situated in close

¹ CLEAR: Cleared to proceed; CONDITIONED: Cleared to proceed with a condition; NMI: Needs More Information; POC: Project of Concern; NOTEWORTHY: Exemplary Project

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Individual Comment Form



proximity to Moran State Park which increases the potential for higher numbers of visitors. The sensitive habitats included in the acquisition would be severely impacted by levels of use approaching those at the park.

4. General comments:

The review panel remains interested in the sponsor being able to provide more match funding to make the acquisition a more equitable and cost effective project given the split of aquatic, riparian, and upland habitats included in the parcel. This is described in more detail in the June 3 comments.



SPONSOR RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS:

If your project is not cleared (i.e. has a status of NMI, Conditioned, or POC) you must update your proposal, PRISM questions, or attachments as necessary to address the review panel's comments. Use track changes when updating your proposal. Fill out the section at the end of your project proposal to document how you responded to comments.

DRAFT APPLICATION / SITE VISIT REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: June 3, 2015

Project Site Visit?

☒ Yes ☐ No

Review Panel Member(s): Paul Schlenger and Tom Slocum

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

The proposed acquisition is a good opportunity to protect the lower portion of one of the few documented salmon streams in the county. Due to a natural barrier in the creek, the acquisition includes the one or both banks along the entire anadromous zone (300 ft) and additional stream length upstream. The parcel is an irregular shape that includes an extended portion of the creek, as well as upland areas that could be developed into 4 to 5 houses. The SRFB review panel's common practice in evaluating the cost effectiveness of acquisitions that include a substantial amount of upland areas is to look for a cost match amount that is roughly proportional to the percent of upland area included in the acquisition. Based on the acreage calculations in the application, approximately 66% of the parcel is upland. Coupled with the fact that some of the acquisition is above the anadromous zone, additional match would be beneficial to the overall equity of the application. During the site visit, a TAG member mentioned that WDNR has forest conservation funding through their [Rivers and Habitat Open Space Program](#), which could potentially be available to use as matching funds. The sponsor is encouraged to pursue that funding source for matching funds.

Please provide additional information on the plans for site access and stewardship of the parcel. Given the parcel's narrow width along part of its length, an access trail would be close to the creek and degrade riparian function. The review panel is also concerned that it could become a frequently visited site that could foreseeably result in impacts to both the aquatic and riparian habitats that the project aims to protect.

2. Missing Pre-application information.

Please provide the recent report by Long Live the Kings and Wild Fish Conservancy on fish use and genetics in the creek.

On parcel map, please add the location(s) of fish passage barriers.

3. General Comments:

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Individual Comment Form



The review panel understands there is some level of interest (by others in the county) in providing fish passage beyond the lowermost barrier. The argument is that the cascade is unnatural, formed by blasting in the 19th Century. There may have been blasting, but the general canyon topography indicates that there was a high natural grade break here too. The review panel discourages providing fish passage past this barrier. It would introduce anadromous fish to habitats naturally occupied by resident fish with little likelihood of providing substantial production increases in naturally spawning coho.

4. Staff Comments:



SPONSOR RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS:

Revise your project proposals using “track changes” and update any relevant PRISM questions and attachments. Fill out the section at the end of your project proposal to document how you responded to comments.