# Appendix C-3:Restoration, Acquisition, and Combination Project Proposal

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| **Project Number** | 17-1062 |
| **Project Name** | Dugualla Bay Tidelands Acquisition |
| **Sponsor** | Whidbey Camano Land Trust |

List all related projects previously funded or reviewed by RCO:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Project # or Name** | **Status** | **Status of Prior Phase Deliverables and Relationship to Current Proposal?** |
|  | Choose a status |  |
|  | Choose a status |  |
|  | Choose a status |  |

If previous project was not funded, describe how the current proposal differs from the original.

*Please respond to each question individually. Do not summarize answers collectively in essay format. Local citizen and technical advisory groups will use this information to evaluate your project.* ***Limit the response to ten pages (single-sided), excluding supplemental questions****. The sponsor may delete the italicized portion of the questions and inapplicable supplemental questions to shorten the proposal.*

*Submit this proposal as a PRISM attachment titled “Project Proposal.”*

1. **Project brief.** *In one or two sentences, what do you propose to do?*

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust proposes to acquire approximately 83 acres of tidelands in Dugualla Bay.

1. **Project location.** *Describe the geographic location, water bodies, and the location of the project in the watershed, i.e. nearshore, tributary, main stem, off-channel, etc*.

The project is located in Dugualla Bay, directly across from the mouth of the North Fork of the Skagit River. Dugualla Bay is identified as one of the top priorities for Salmon Recovery in WRIA 6.

1. **Problem statement.** *What are the problems your project seeks to address? Include the source and scale of each problem. Describe the site, reach, and watershed conditions. Describe how those conditions impact salmon populations. Include current and historic factors important to understand the problems.*

The Dugualla Bay Tidelands acquisition will protect intact tideland habitat important for juvenile salmon exiting the Skagit River. Multiple species of salmon and forage fish use intertidal habitat in Dugualla Bay for forage and rearing habitat. Suitable rearing habitat for juvenile salmon is in decline throughout Puget Sound, and this project seeks to protect existing habitat from degradation.

1. **List the fish resources present at the site and targeted by this project.**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Species** | **Life History Present (egg, juvenile, adult)** | **Current Population Trend (decline, stable, rising)** | **Endangered Species Act Coverage (Y/N)** |
| Chinook Salmon | juvenile | decline | Y |
| Steelhead | adult | decline | Y |
| Bull trout | adult | decline | Y |
| Coho Salmon | juvenile | unknown | N |
| Chum Salmon | juvenile | unknown | N |
| Cutthroat | juvenile | unknown | N |
| Pink Salmon | juvenile | unknown | N |

1. **Describe the limiting factors, and limiting life stages (by fish species) that your project expects to address.**

Suitable rearing and foraging habitat is a limiting factor for juveniles of all salmon species listed above. Dugualla Bay lies in the migratory pathway for multiple salmon species exiting the Skagit River, and the mudflats on the subject tidelands provide zooplankton and other prey items necessary for juvenile salmon, particularly migrating Chinook fry.

1. **Project goals and objectives.** *When answering the questions below please refer to Chapter 4 of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife’s* [*Stream Habitat Restoration Guidelines*](http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01374/) *for more information on goals and objectives.*
	1. **What are the project’s goals?** *The goal of the project should be to remedy observed problems, ideally by addressing the problems’ root causes. The sponsors goal statements should articulate desired biological outcomes (the vision for desired future condition). The statement should also include which species and life stages will benefit from those outcomes and the time of year (if pertinent) those benefits will be realized (e.g., will high flow refuge be available when juveniles are outmigrating or rearing in the project area?).*

The goals of the Dugualla Bay Tidelands Acquisition project are to protect important, intact juvenile salmon rearing and foraging habitat, and to expand existing, adjacent protected tidelands.

* 1. **What are the project’s objectives?** *Objectives support and refine biological goals, breaking them down into smaller steps. Objectives are specific, quantifiable actions the project will complete to achieve the stated goal. Each objective should be “SMART:” Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.*

Acquire 83 acres of tidelands in Dugualla Bay in fee-simple ownership by early 2018.

* 1. **What are the assumptions and constraints that could impact whether you achieve your objectives?** *Assumptions and constraints are external conditions that are not under the direct control of the project, but directly impact the outcome of the project. These may include subsequent availability of funding, public acceptance of the project, land use constraints, geomorphic factors, additional expenses, delays, etc. How will you address these issues if they arise?*

Funding availability is the only constraint on this project.

1. **Project details.** *Please answer the questions below and all pertinent supplemental questions at the end of the application form.*
	1. **Provide a narrative description of the proposed project.** *Describe the specific project elements and explain how they will lead to the project’s objectives. Include relevant existing project documentation (if any) as attachments in PRISM.*

This is a fee acquisition of approximately 83 acres of tidelands, under two ownerships, in Dugualla Bay. This acquisition will expand upon 149 acres of adjacent acquisitions and easements by the Whidbey Camano Land Trust, as well as Island County protected tidelands. Intertidal mudflats produce zooplankton and other small prey items that are eaten by fry migrant Chinook salmon. Currents push juvenile salmon into Dugualla Bay from the mouth of the North Fork of the Skagit River, which lies directly east of the site.

* 1. **Provide a scope of work and detailed list of project deliverables.** *Provide a detailed description of the proposed project tasks, who will be responsible for each, what the project deliverables will be, and a schedule for accomplishing them.*

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust will be responsible for all project deliverables, which includes acquisition of two tideland parcels totaling approximately 83 acres.

**Fall 2017:** Due diligence, including in-house environmental assessment, title review, surveyor review of legal descriptions, purchase and sale agreement.

**December 2017:** Acquire 83 acres of tidelands in fee.

* 1. **Explain how the sponsor determined cost estimates.**

The cost estimate of $24,900 is based on the sponsor’s previous experience with tideland acreage acquisition in Island County.

* 1. **Describe the design or acquisition alternatives considered to achieve the project’s objectives.** *Why did the sponsor choose the preferred alternative?*

Fee simple ownership is the preferred alternative for protecting tidelands. Management costs are extremely low, and monitoring of tidelands is relatively simple.

* 1. **How have lessons learned from completed projects or monitoring studies informed this project?** *Sources of results may be from* [*Project Scale Effectiveness Monitoring*](http://www.rco.wa.gov/doc_pages/other_pubs.shtml#monitoring) *from TetraTech, individual sponsors, lessons learned from previously implemented projects, Intensively Monitored Watershed results, or other sources.*

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust has a significant history of successful experience with Salmon Recovery grants (since 2009) and general land conservation grant projects, and will effectively implement this project. Land protection is the core of the Land Trust’s mission.

* 1. **Describe the long-term stewardship and maintenance obligations for the project or acquired land.** *For acquisition and combination projects, identify any planned use of the property, including upland areas.*

The long-term stewardship obligations for the acquired land will be minimal. The properties consist of tidal mudlfats that are under water most of the time, and inaccessible due to their soft sediments. There are no planned uses for the properties other than habitat protection.

1. **Explain why it is important to do this project now instead of later.** *(Consider its sequence relative to other needs in the watershed and the current level and imminence of risk to habitat).*

Protection of intact habitats is the most effective way to ensure ecological integrity. Land acquisition requires a willing seller, and both current property owners are willing to sell to the Land Trust. If ownership of the properties is transferred, the opportunity for protection may be lost.

1. **If the project is a part of a larger overall project or strategy, describe the goal of the overall strategy, explain individual sequencing steps, and which of these steps is included in this application for funding.** *Attach a map in PRISM that illustrates how this project fits into the overall strategy, if relevant.*

The protection of intact habitat is the larger strategy that the Dugualla Bay Tidelands Acquisition project fits into. Recent relevant Land Trust projects include Barnum Point, Glendale Shoreline and Waterman Shoreline. The Land Trust’s most relevant past project is the 3,215 acres of tidelands purchased at Livingston Bay. Other past projects that also fit in this strategy include Indian Point, Strawberry Point, Penn Cove and Dugualla Bay.

1. **Describe the sponsors experience managing this type of project.** *Please describe other projects where the sponsor successfully used a similar approach.*

The Land Trust has more than 30 years of experience conserving, stewarding and restoring important lands. It currently holds and manages 42 conservation easements and 16 fee simple conservation properties (including 3,321 acres of tidelands), and maintains restricted funds for the stewardship and legal defense of these lands to ensure their permanent protection. As a demonstration of its commitment to excellence and permanency, the Land Trust was awarded National Accreditation in 2012.

The Land Trust is very experienced managing grant-funded contracts and contracting with consultants to complete specific aspects of projects.

1. **List all landowner names.** *If the project will occur on land not owned by the organization, attach a Landowner Acknowledgement Form (Manual 18,*[*Appendix F*](#Appendix_F_Landowner_Ack_Form)*) in PRISM from each landowner acknowledging that his/her property is proposed for SRFB funding consideration. Multi-site acquisition projects need only attach a Landowner Acknowledgement Form for priority parcels.*

1. Dunlap Towing, LLC.

2. Glenn Ducken

1. **List project partners and their role and contribution to the project.** *Attach a Partner Contribution Form (Manual 18,* [*Appendix G*](#Appendix_G_Project_Partner_Form)*) from each partner in PRISM. Refer to Manual 18, Section 3 for when this is required.*

The Whidbey Camano Land Trust will carry out all aspects of the project independently.

1. **Stakeholder outreach***. Discuss whether this project has any opposition or barriers to completion, besides funding. Describe the sponsor’s public outreach and feedback received. Are there any public safety concerns with the project? How will the sponsor address those concerns?*

This acquisition falls within one of the Land Trust’s identified land protection priority areas that were developed with extensive public input, and lies adjacent to significant, existing conservation holdings where habitat restoration has taken place with numerous opportunities for public comment. The Land Trust has worked with the adjacent neighborhood for many years, has held public open houses and meetings, and has given several presentations for agencies, commissions and the public.

### Supplemental Questions

#### Acquisition Project Supplemental Questions

Applies to both acquisition-only and combination projects. Answer the following supplemental questions (these are not included in the ten-page limit):

1. Provide a detailed description of the property. *Describe the habitat types, size, and quality on site (forested riparian/floodplain, wetlands, tributary, main stem, off-channel, bluff-backed beach, barrier beach, open coastal inlet, estuarine delta, pocket estuary, uplands, etc.), critical areas on site, and any other features that make the site unique. Describe existing land use.*

The project will protect approximately 77 acres of tidal mudflats immediately adjacent to the newly restored estuary on the Land Trust’s Dugualla Bay Preserve and, as well as an additional ~6 acres of tidal mudflats just to the east, that connects previously protected tidelands owned by Island County and the Land Trust.

1. List type (fee title or conservation easement) and acreage of acquisitions proposed.

The project will purchase fee title on a total of approximately 83 acres (77 acres owned by Dunlap Towing; and 6 acres owned by the Ducken family)

1. Does the sponsor hold an option or purchase and sale agreement for the property?

Not yet.

1. Describe adjacent land uses. *Describe the property’s proximity to publically owned or protected properties in the vicinity. Attach a map in PRISM that illustrates this relationship.*

The subject tidelands lie between already protected tidelands and estuary, and State owned marine waters.

1. If uplands are included on the property, state their size and explain why they are essential for protecting salmonid habitat.

N/A

1. What percentage of the total project area is intact and fully functioning habitat?

100%

1. Is the site in need of restoration that is not part of this grant application? *If yes, describe the restoration need and planned timeframe for implementation.*

No restoration required.

1. List structures (home, barn, outbuildings, fence, levees, bank armoring, or other infrastructure) on the property and any proposed modifications. *If possible, please attach a map showing these structures. Note: In general, remove structures on SRFB-assisted acquisitions. Refer to “Manual 18, Salmon Recovery Grants,” Section 2 for information about ineligible project elements.*

None

1. Describe the long-term stewardship and maintenance obligations for the acquired property. *Identify any planned use of the property, including upland areas. If answered above, please skip.*

None

1. Describe the following:
2. Zoning/land use

The subject tidelands are not zoned, and are not being used for any human activities.

1. Shoreline Master Plan designation

Tidelands

1. Portion of site within 100-year floodplain

N/A

1. Portion of site within designated floodway

N/A

1. Explain why federal, state, and local regulations are insufficient to protect the property from degradation.

The project tidelands could be used for commercial aquaculture, which WRIA 6 and the sponsor view as incompatible with the salmon recovery goals of WRIA 6, particularly in the context of the adjacent protected lands and estuary restoration.

1. For water rights and water savings projects:
2. Describe the mechanism that the sponsor intends to use to conserve water (trust, etc.) and explain why this is the preferred approach.

N/A

1. Which steps in the water conservation process will be completed under this project proposal?

N/A

1. How much water, if any, will be saved because of this project? *By what methods will the sponsor calculate the amount of water conserved?*

N/A

1. For acquisition projects intending to purchase multiple properties within an area, identify the target parcels and how the sponsor will prioritize the parcels.

The 77-acre Dunlap Towing parcel is the top priority due to its adjacency to the Land Trust’s restored estuary on our Dugualla Bay Preserve. The 6-acre Ducken parcel is important for tying together existing protected lands, and is considered the second priority due to its smaller size and lack of adjacency to the estuary.

### Comments

Use this section to respond to the comments received after the initial site visits and after submitting the final application.

#### Response to Site Visit Comments

Site visit comments and responses are provided below:

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

none

1. **Missing Pre-application information.**

none

1. **General Comments:**

This relatively inexpensive acquisition of tideland parcels is located directly adjacent to land trust ownership and recent nearshore restoration projects. The primary threat to the tidelands would be future commercial shellfish operations, although such activities typically have minimal impacts on salmon. The importance of the Dugualla Bay estuary for juvenile salmon from the Skagit River, however, warrants a high level of protection and helps to justify the purchase of the tidelands. The review panel is supportive of protection efforts in Dugualla Bay.

We appreciate the review panel’s comments.

1. **Staff Comments:**

Please make sure the attached cost estimate sheet matches the PRISM budget. Both landowner agreements (Dunlap Towing and Ducken) need to be signed and attached. The application authorization resolution needs to match ours, be signed, and attached into PRISM. These items should be addressed by 8/10/17 application due date.

The cost estimate now matches the PRISM budget, and we will work with our RCO grant manager to submit all forms by the deadlines.