

September 28, 2006

Memo

To: Neil Aaland

Re: San Juan Protection Initiative: SRFB Project Number 06-2291N

This memo is in response questions raised by the SRFB staff regarding the eligibility of the San Juan Protection Initiative for funding in the seventh round.

This Initiative will produce significant results for protection that span both the programmatic and project-specific spectrum. This paper focuses on the project-specific deliverables as the programmatic pieces are discussed in more detail in the existing application and the concern expressed by SRFB staff relates to the lack of detail on the project-specific deliverables. It should be noted that the bulk of the funding for this effort will be raised from other sources but the SRFB funds will be critical to advancing this critical project for the San Juan Islands and addressing the most significant issue in the Puget Sound Recovery Plan .

Scientists and policy-makers alike agree that to ensure protection given the intensive growth pressures, we must combine programmatic with project-specific protection efforts to have any strong degree of certainty of effectiveness. The purpose of the Initiative is to ensure that the entire suite of protection programs: voluntary, incentive, education and regulatory in combination result in site specific and on-the-ground protection measures. To this end, the Initiative will have specific project outcomes that are consistent with the SRFB criteria for assessments listed on page 17 of SRFB Manual 18.

Through the course of the Initiative we will be working with local and national land trusts as part of the assessment of voluntary and incentive programs. During this phase we will evaluate the effectiveness of their acquisition projects and their overall strategy for acquisition in protecting what is most important in San Juan County. This assessment work is made all the more powerful as it will be combined with an assessment of where regulations are successfully protecting key habitats and habitat forming processes necessary to protect salmon and where regulations will be ineffective. The result will be an analysis that demonstrates spatially and site specifically where acquisition is the best and potentially only option to ensure protection of key habitats.

Instead of a “wish list” of key acquisition sites, the Initiative establishes a process where citizens, land owners and key implementers (e.g. land trust staff) are involved throughout the process such that the final result will be a detailed list of projects with a high likelihood of landowner support and land trust or other interest in implementation. The package will also include cost estimates and will be rolled into the Salmon Recovery Plan 3-Year work program. For the first time in Puget Sound if not the state, this assessment will clearly identify how, why and where acquisition projects fit into a comprehensive approach to protection and complement other needed actions both project and programmatic.

These deliverables are consistent with the language used in your Manual 18 eligibility criteria. As stated above this project will be delivering an assessment of the “willingness of landowners to consider selling a property interest.” It will also significantly advance protection because it will coordinate assessments “with other assessments and data collection efforts in the watershed and with the appropriate federal, tribal, state, regional, and local organizations and landowners to prevent duplication and ensure the use of appropriate methods and protocols.” Lastly, through

the analysis and assessment phase existing data sets and information will be compiled such that “physical and biological elements [are used to] identify and prioritize protection projects.”

Lastly, this project is the result of the acknowledgement by regional and local scientists and policy-makers that the greatest uncertainty with the 2005 Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan and local chapters, including San Juan is the lack of a coordinated effort to ensure that protection measures will produce the results necessary to protect existing habitat. This is a “high and urgent priority [both] in the lead entity strategy” and the regional salmon recovery effort. With the extreme expense associated with protection of the marine shorelines of Puget Sound, public dollars such as those dispersed by the SRFB are coming under increasing pressure to be used for acquisition projects where it is clear that acquisition is the best option. The data gap that exists between a clear understanding of what regulations do and do not adequately protect and the resultant conclusion of where acquisition dollars are best targeted is a data gap that “clearly limits subsequent project identification and development.”

We hope that this summary addresses your questions and more clearly articulates our confidence that this project not only meets SRFB eligibility requirements but is a key project for the SRFB to support and advance.

Funding Request

Due to the limited amount of money available with the San Juan allocation, the San Juan Initiative request initially submitted for \$200,000 can be readjusted to fit within the remaining funds. For example, if the remaining funds were \$35,000 then the funds requested would be applied to the Project Manager position (\$20,000) and the professional services necessary to complete the assessment (\$15,000).

Cc: Barbara Rosenkotter, Jim Kramer, Tara Galuska, Pete Rose, and Kevin Ranker