

PROJECT PROPOSAL – NON-CAPITAL PROJECTS AND COMBINATION PLANNING/ACQUISITION PROJECTS (EXCLUDING BARRIER INVENTORIES)

INSTRUCTIONS: Salmon Recovery Funding Board applicants must respond to the following items. Please respond to each question individually -- do not summarize your answers collectively in essay format. Local citizen and technical advisory groups will use this information to evaluate your project. Contact your lead entity for additional information that may be required. Limit your response to eight pages.

Submit information via PRISM attachment process. Application checklists and attachment forms may be downloaded off the SRFB Web site at <http://www.rco.wa.gov/srfb/docs.htm>.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Explain your project overall and include the following elements:

- a) List your primary project objectives, such as how this project will contribute to understanding or restoring salmonids within the ecosystem. For example, the objectives might be to characterize the extent and nature of a certain factor limiting salmonid productivity, identify sources that contribute to the problem and prioritize restoration and management activities to address the problem; to assess landowner willingness to participate in a future land acquisition or restoration project; or to determine project location, feasibility, and design.

This project will complete the necessary prerequisites to implement a permanent conservation easement on a wide diverse tract of riparian buffer along the Touchet River, immediately south of Prescott, WA.

- b) State the nature, source, and extent of the problem or gap in knowledge that the project will address, including the primary causes of the problem, not just the symptoms. Explain how achieving the project objectives will help solve the problem. For fish passage design/feasibility studies, concisely describe the passage problem (outfall, velocity, slope, etc); the current barrier (age, material, shape, and condition); whether it is a complete or partial barrier; and the amount and quality of habitat to be opened if the barrier is corrected.

Housing encroachment, development, and human disturbance of the stream are possibly the largest threat to long term fish production in the watershed today. This project permanently removes that threat from the project area and protects the already-installed, wide, native, diverse riparian buffers forever.

- c) Describe the fish resources (species and life history stages present, unique populations), the habitat conditions, limiting factors, and historic factors important to understanding this project. Be specific-- avoid general statements. Which salmonid species and life cycle stage(s) are targeted to benefit by this project?

Project is located in a MSA on the Touchet River, a tributary of the Walla Walla River. Riparian buffers have been installed on the site and are growing well. The site is habitat for ESA-threatened steelhead.

- d) Describe how this project fits within your regional recovery plan or local lead entity strategy (i.e., Does the assessment fill a data gap identified as a priority in the lead entity's strategy or regional recovery plan? Does the project address a priority action, occur in a priority area, or target priority fish species?).

The installed project will accomplish HWS #32-00304, Conserve riparian habitats, of the 3 year plan by permanently protecting a large tract (both sides of river) of riparian habitat in the Touchet River Msa. Project will provide permanent protection to buffers and forever remove human disturbance and housing development from the riparian zone.

- e) Has any part of this project been previously reviewed and/or funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board? If yes, please provide the project name and SRFB project number (or year of application if a project number is not available). If the project was later withdrawn for funding consideration or was not awarded SRFB funding, please describe how the current proposal differs from the original.

The project was submitted as a complete acquisition project for the July 2009 grant cycle. The Board funded the preliminary work only at this time.

2) PROJECT DESIGN

- a) Describe the location of the project in the watershed, including the name of the water body(ies), upper and lower extent of the project (if only a portion of the watershed is targeted), and whether the project occurs in the nearshore, estuary, main stem, tributary, off channel, or other location.

Project is located on the Touchet River, a tributary of the Walla Walla River, directly south of Prescott, WA (please see vicinity map).

- b) If the project will occur in phases, explain individual sequencing steps and which steps are included in this application.

Phase 1 (this project), will be to complete necessary prerequisite steps. Phase 2, funding to secure the conservation easement, will be submitted next year.

- c) Describe what products will be produced (i.e., project deliverables). If a project design will be produced, what stage of project development is proposed (conceptual, preliminary, or final-- refer to Appendix D – Project Development Phases Defined)?

Deliverables include all items necessary for an appraiser to accurately determine the value of the easement, including at a minimum: site map that illustrates the location and dimensions of the easement within the property and any sub-areas within the easement. Written description of restrictions being placed within the easement or sub-areas of the easement, including: development, timber, water, or other rights being extinguished and retained, and other land use restrictions that affect the value of the easement. Other deliverable for this project include preliminary title report, survey, appraisal, review appraisal.

- d) Explain how the results of the project will lead directly to habitat restoration projects that benefit salmonids.

This project will complete the necessary prerequisites to implement a permanent conservation easement on a large tract of riparian habitat (both sides) on the Touchet River near Prescott, WA.

- e) ***If your proposal includes a Fish Passage or Screening Design/Feasibility Study :***
 - i) Provide the Priority Index (PI) or Screening Priority Index (SPI) number and describe how it was generated (physical survey, reduced sample full survey, expanded threshold determination, or Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife generated [list source, such as a study or inventory]). Refer to the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Fish Passage Barrier and Screening Assessment and Prioritization Manual (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/hab/engineer/fishbarr.htm>) for guidance.
 - ii) For fish passage design projects, identify other fish passage barriers downstream or upstream of this project.
- f) ***If your proposal includes an Assessment or Inventory (NOTE: project may extend across a wide area and cover multiple properties):***
 - i) Describe the assessment or inventory design and methodology.
 - ii) Describe any previous or ongoing assessment or inventory work in your project's geographic area.
 - iii) Describe how the assessment or inventory addresses the stages and elements in *Guidance on Watershed Assessment for Salmon* (Joint Natural Resources Cabinet, May 2001, <http://www.digitalarchives.wa.gov/governorlocke/gsro/watershed/watershed.pdf>).

3) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

- a) List the individuals and methods used to identify the project and its location.

Project was identified via IEAC seeking to implement the best available projects in the highest priority areas.

- b) Explain how the project's cost estimates were determined.

Costs were based on previous conservation easement projects and appraisals for similar projects in the area.

- c) Describe other approaches and design alternatives that were considered to achieve the project's objectives.

Conservation easement was determined to be the best approach because it is pretty difficult to beat permanent protection with full restrictions to housing development, timber harvest, roads or structures of any kind, farming or grazing in the riparian zone, human disturbance to the stream, etc. Also, conservation easements are acceptable to the community.

- d) Describe the consequences of not conducting this project at this time. Consider the current level and imminence of risk to habitat in your discussion.

There is great potential for housing development, human disturbance to the stream, and loss of riparian habitat in the future if this project is not done. This project ensures that a large and important piece of intact riparian habitat stays in place forever.

- e) Include a Partner Contribution Form, when required, from each partner outlining its role and contribution to the project. This form may be downloaded off the SRFB Web site. State agencies are required to have a local partner that is independently eligible to be a project sponsor. A Partner Contribution Form is also required from partners providing third-party match.

N/A

- f) List all landowner names. Include a signed Landowner Acknowledgement Form (download off the SRFB Web site) from each landowner acknowledging their property is proposed for SRFB funding consideration. If an assessment covers a large area and encompasses numerous properties, Landowner Acknowledgement Forms are not required. For sponsors proposing feasibility/assessment work on their own property this form is not required. For multi-site acquisition projects involving a relatively large group of landowners, include, at a minimum, signed Landowner Acknowledgement Forms for all known priority parcels.

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- g) Describe your experience managing this type of project. List the names, qualifications, roles and responsibilities for all known staff, consultants, and subcontractors who will be designing and implementing the project. If unknown, describe the selection process.

IEAC staff will complete the project and we have successfully completed several similar projects.

4) TASKS AND SCHEDULE

List and describe the major tasks and time schedule you will use to complete the project. Non Capital projects should be completed within two years of funding approval.

1. Appraisal – August 2010
2. Survey – August 2010

5) CONSTRAINTS AND UNCERTAINTIES

Each project should include an adaptive management approach that provides for contingency planning. State any constraints, uncertainties, possible problems, delays, or unanticipated expenses that may hinder completion of the project. Explain how you will address these issues as they arise and their likely impact on the project.

None expected as this project is very similar to other easement projects in the area and doesn't have any unusual complexities.

Supplemental Questions

6) PROJECTS INVOLVING ACQUISITIONS (Applies to Combination Projects)– Answer the following questions

- a) Describe the type of acquisition proposed (e.g., fee title, conservation easement).

Conservation Easement

- b) Describe the scale and size of the property(s) to be acquired and its proximity to protected, functioning, or restored habitats.

This project will implement a permanent conservation easement on approximately 140 acres of riparian land near the Touchet River immediately south of Prescott, WA. The easement averages approximately 300 feet on both sides for roughly 3.5 streambank miles. Site is functioning riparian buffer.

- c) Describe the habitat types 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.), their size in acres, and quality. If uplands are included, explain why they are essential for protecting salmonid habitat. Describe any features that make the site unique.

Forested riparian

- d) State the percentage of the total project area that is intact and fully functioning habitat.

95%

- e) Explain the degree to which habitat on site is impaired and the nature and extent of required restoration. If the property is in the channel migration zone, is that function intact (i.e., do existing levees, riprap, infrastructure, or other features on this or nearby properties inhibit channel migration)? Describe the likely prioritization, timeframe, and funding sources for proposed restoration activities.

Existing Riparian Buffer. Some planting of willows and cottonwood will need to be done in the few areas where it is lacking.

- f) List existing structures (home, barn, outbuildings, fence) on the property and any proposed modifications. Note: In general, buildings on SRFB-assisted acquisitions must be removed. Refer to SRFB Manual 18 for information about ineligible project elements.

None

- g) Describe adjacent land uses (upstream, downstream, across stream, upland).

Dryland wheat farming

- h) Describe the proximity of the property to other protected or functioning habitats, and the size and quality of those protected properties.

Other recovering riparian areas are located both up and downstream. IEAC is finalizing a permanent conservation easement on a very large tract of riparian buffer approximately 2 miles upstream.

- i) Describe why acquisition is needed. Explain why federal, state, and local regulations do not provide enough protection. State the zoning and Shoreline Master Plan designation.

The very narrow critical areas ordinance does not protect the wide riparian zone that is needed for natural functioning processes to occur.

- j) If buying the land, explain why the acquisition of conservation easements to extinguish certain development, timber, agricultural, mineral, or water rights will not achieve the goals and objectives of the project.

N/A

- k) For multi-site acquisition projects, identify all the possible parcels that will provide similar benefits and certainty of success and provide a clear description of how parcels will be prioritized and how priority parcels will be pursued for acquisition.

N/A

- l) Describe your approach to long-term stewardship of the land. Identify any planned use of the property, including the upland areas.

The permanent conservation easements will ensure the site stays in habitat forever. In addition, the following items that we use in all our easements will ensure the easement is monitored, maintained, and enforced (please visit <http://www.ieaconline.org/easement.htm> for specific photos, etc. of these items):

- Complete a thorough baseline inventory which documents the conditions at the time of closing. The inventory provides a critical benchmark that can be used in the future to monitor and enforce the easement.
- Create permanent, gps-located photo points that are monitored yearly
- Establish a permanent stewardship endowment where the funds can be only used for monitoring, maintenance, and enforcement of the easement

- Create a site management plan that goes beyond land trust alliance standards and identifies how and when communication with the landowner will take place, what monitoring is done and when, what happens if a violation is discovered, etc.
- Ensure that the easement is recorded on the deed and thus is transferrable to any other landowner if the property is sold
- Establish permanent boundary markers so that future landowners can easily see the boundary. These markers are in addition to the legal survey that is recorded with the County
- Complete an assignment of rights where the State of Washington co-holds the easement