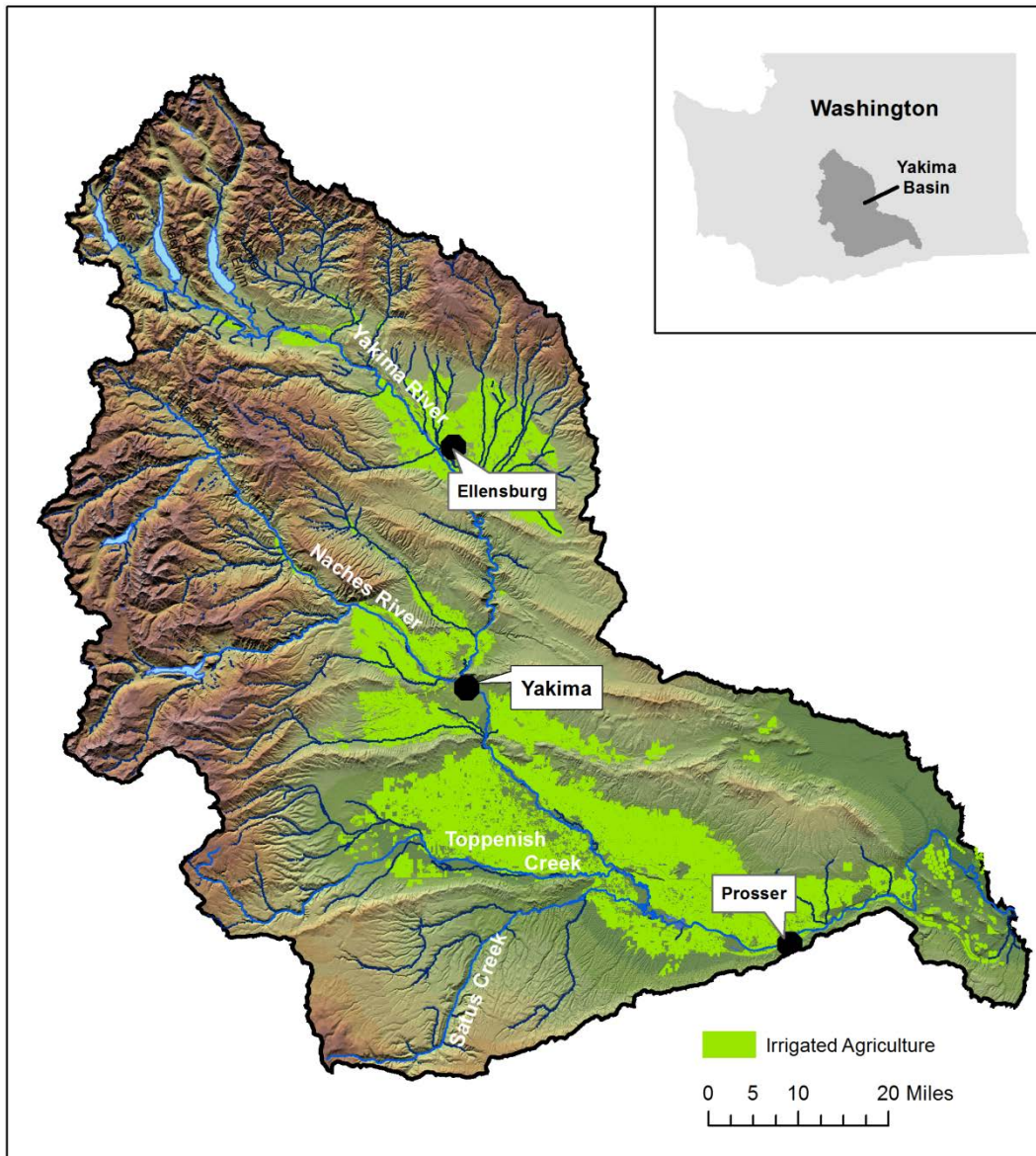




YAKIMA BASIN
FISH AND WILDLIFE
RECOVERY BOARD

LEAD ENTITY MANUAL



Updated January 2023

Dedication

To all of the landowners and managers in the Yakima Basin who have taken on the challenge of demonstrating that we can protect and restore fish habitat while meeting landowner goals and sustaining local economies.

Executive Summary

Washington's Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funds fish habitat improvement projects throughout the State of Washington. To assure that funded projects address high priority needs and are supported by local communities, SRFB project proposals are vetted through an intensive local and state review process lead by the Lead Entity. Lead Entities are local community groups whose work is essential for salmon recovery in Washington. They coordinate volunteer community leaders and technical experts to accomplish scientifically-sound and publicly supported salmon habitat restoration projects across the state. Lead Entities are organizations supported by city, county and tribal governments and work with project sponsors to solicit and develop project proposals, complete vigorous local technical and community review, and rank them according to how well they address real priorities for at-risk fish populations in a technically sound and broadly supported manner. The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board (Board) serves as the Lead Entity for the Yakima Basin. This document describes the review process used by the Board. Those interested in an overview of existing projects funded by the SRFB in the Yakima Basin should see the [Yakima Basin Habitat Restoration Projects booklet](#)¹.

The first section of this document provides background information on the Board and its role as a Lead Entity. The second section gives an overview of:

- Fish populations of the Yakima Basin and the major issues facing them, and
- Past and current efforts to improve fish habitat

This information gives the reader a sense of the larger context within which SRFB funds are used in the Yakima Basin.

The third section provides a detailed description of the process used by the Board to solicit, review and prioritize projects proposed for SRFB funding. It is meant as a guide to the process for project sponsors, committee and board members and others. The associated appendices provide the specific review criteria used by the technical committee. This document does not provide a detailed overview of priority habitat needs in specific parts of the basin. That role is filled by three separate plans developed by the Board, the [Yakima Subbasin Plan](#)² prepared for the Northwest Power and Conservation Council in 2004 and the [Yakima Steelhead Recovery](#)

¹ Available at Available at <https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-YBFWRB-Project-Booklet.pdf>

² Available at <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

[Plan](#)³, which was completed in 2009 and is incorporated into [NOAA's Middle Columbia Steelhead Recovery Plan](#),⁴ and the [Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan](#)⁵.

³ Available at <https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/YakimaSteelheadPlan.pdf>

⁴ Available at <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/recovery-plan-middle-columbia-river-steelhead-distinct-population-segment>.

⁵ <https://ybfwrp.org/recovery-planning/bull-trout-recovery/bull-trout-action-plan/>

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Introduction to the Board's Lead Entity Program

The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board is made up of representatives of the Yakama Nation and 22 local governments including Benton, Kittitas & Yakima Counties and 19 Yakima Basin cities. The Board's mission is to restore sustainable and harvestable populations of salmon, steelhead, bull trout and other at-risk fish and wildlife species through collaborative and economically-sensitive resource management in the Yakima River Basin. The Board:

- develops strategic plans to guide fish and wildlife recovery efforts in the Yakima Basin
- coordinates funding for fish and wildlife restoration projects in the Yakima Basin
- fosters public awareness and engagement in fish and wildlife recovery issues

An important part of the Board's work is to act as the Lead Entity (LE) for the Yakima Basin. The Salmon Recovery Act (RCW 77.85) created the Lead Entity program to support salmon recovery work in Washington. Each year the Washington Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) distributes money to on-the-ground fish habitat improvement projects throughout the state. This funding is a mix of funds appropriated by the state legislature and federal contributions from NOAA Fisheries via the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF). Lead Entities are local organizations that solicit projects from their geographic areas, organize local technical and community reviews of the proposals, and present those ranked the highest to the SRFB for funding.

The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board is under contract with the State of Washington to act as the Lead Entity for the Yakima Basin (WRIAs 37, 38 & 39).⁶ Between 1999 and 2022, the Yakima Basin Lead Entity program has funded 153 local projects for a total of over \$38.5 million dollars of SRFB funding. These projects are described in detail in a booklet available at:

<https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-YBFWRB-Project-Booklet.pdf>.

We also work with the SRFB and project sponsors to track the progress of funded projects in the Yakima Basin, help project sponsors access other sources of project funding, and conduct outreach that supports the Lead Entity program. Other funding entities have also used the local review structure set up by the Board's Lead Entity program to provide local input for funding decisions for habitat work in the Yakima Basin.

This Lead Entity Manual is a supporting document for the Board's Lead Entity Program. It is meant to serve as a guide for potential project sponsors, members of the Board and the Lead Entity Technical Advisory Group and Citizen's Committee, participants in the statewide SRFB review process, and other interested parties. This manual is updated as needed to incorporate new information, changing ecological conditions, and changing community interest and public policy. It is consistent with the rationale developed by the Governors Salmon Recovery Board (JNRC 2001).

Guiding Principles for the Board's Lead Entity Program

⁶ From 1999 through early 2006, the Lead Entity Program was managed by the City of Selah and overseen by a separate Board, the Yakima River Basin Salmon Recovery Board.

The Board's Lead Entity Program supports habitat protection and restoration efforts that help recover salmon, steelhead and bull trout populations in the Yakima Basin. Our efforts are guided by the following beliefs:

- Local leadership and community involvement are required if efforts to recover at-risk fish populations in the basin are to succeed;
- Recovering and maintaining self-sustaining, harvestable populations of native salmonids throughout their historic range in the Yakima basin creates direct benefits for:
 - the native ecology of our river systems;
 - recreational fisherman and the local businesses that they support;
 - the culture and economy of the Yakama Nation.
- Recovering populations of steelhead and bull trout to levels that allow them to be removed from the federal Endangered Species Act will reduce current and potential regulatory burdens on land managers and local economies;
- When wisely conducted, efforts to protect and restore fish habitats can also provide numerous other public benefits, such as:
 - reduction of flood hazards;
 - improved public infrastructure (roads, bridges, utilities, irrigation systems, etc.);
 - protection of open spaces and working landscapes; and,
 - improved outdoor recreation opportunities.
- Protecting existing high-quality and functional habitat from future degradation is an essential part of recovering and sustaining at-risk fish species in the Yakima Basin;
- Recovering at-risk fish species also requires improving habitat conditions in parts of the Basin that have been degraded but still have the potential to provide quality habitat;
- Efforts to protect and restore habitat should be driven by voluntary incentives.

These guiding principles are consistent with the Yakima Subbasin Fish and Wildlife Planning Board's Vision 2020, [Appendix A](#), which was developed in 2004 as part of the Subbasin Planning process.

Objectives of the Board's Lead Entity Program

Specific objectives for the Board's Lead Entity Program are to:

- Develop and implement a credible process for identifying and prioritizing fish habitat projects in the Yakima watershed that is built upon the best available science and has broad community support;
- Identify and encourage diverse project sponsors to apply for SRFB funds;
- Provide clear guidance to potential project sponsors as they identify and develop projects that address priority habitat needs in an effective manner;

- Submit a list of prioritized project proposals to the SRFB for each funding cycle that meets statewide, regional and local goals for salmon recovery;
- Assist project sponsors in their efforts to secure other funding sources for priority projects;
- Help coordinate the efforts of watershed groups, stakeholders, and state, federal, local and tribal governments to ensure that habitat projects are implemented in an efficient and cost-effective manner;
- Support education and outreach efforts that help build broad public support for habitat protection and restoration activities; and,
- Support monitoring, research and assessment activities that help us better understand how to effectively protect and enhance priority habitats in the Yakima Basin.

Overview of Fish Restoration in the Yakima Basin

This section provides background information on the Yakima Basin, the fish species that inhabit it, and the work that is being done to promote recovery of salmon, steelhead, bull trout and other species in the basin. This information provides the broader context needed to understand the role of the Lead Entity process in the Yakima Basin.

The Yakima River is the largest of the Columbia River's tributaries in Washington and drains approximately 6,100 square miles from its headwaters in the Cascade Mountains.

The mainstem Yakima flows from the glacial lakes, now used as reservoirs, just east of Snoqualmie Pass to its confluence with the Columbia River 221 miles downstream at the Tri-Cities (Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco). Along its route it passes the old mining communities of Roslyn and Cle Elum, the hay farms and cattle ranches of the Ellensburg area, the stark scenery and trophy fly fishing of the Yakima Canyon, and the orchards, vineyards, hop yards, dairies and other farms that fill much of the valley from Selah to the Tri-Cities. The Yakima's tributaries rise in the mountain highlands and flow through the managed forestlands of the Wenatchee National Forest, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, the Yakama Nation and private landowners before passing through private ranchlands, recreational areas and some of the state's biggest state Wildlife Areas.

These waters supply a vibrant agricultural economy and a diverse population of over 500,000 people, most of who are centered in and surrounding the growing urban areas of Ellensburg, Yakima and the Tri-Cities. The watershed includes a striking range of ecosystems, including the mixed conifer forests of the Cascades, the drier pine forests and grasslands of the foothills, and the riparian forests and sagebrush steppe of the lower elevations. The broad range of elevation, climatic, and geologic conditions available creates some of the most extensive and diverse aquatic habitats in central and eastern Washington. These habitats supported - and to a lesser degree - continue to support some of the most diverse fish populations in the inland Columbia Basin.

Fish Species of the Yakima Basin

Table I shows estimated historic and current abundances of major fish species in the Yakima Basin. Total historic numbers are estimated to have ranged from 300,000 to a million returning adults. Recent returns have improved significantly from the lows of the 1980s and 90s, but still range from only 6,000 to 50,000 a year. The rest of this section gives a species by species overview. Run numbers reported are from Yakama Nation Fisheries and DART; totals include adult and jack returns. For steelhead a July 1 to June 30 run year is used.

Table I: Historic and current fish abundances in the Yakima Basin⁷

Species/Run	Low Estimate	High Estimate	Current Status	Low	Year		High	Year
Spring Chinook	100,000	500,000	Supplemented	666	1995		21,472	2001
Fall Chinook	38,000	100,000	Supplemented	523	1988		13,000	2002
Summer Chinook	??	??	Extirpated and reintroduced	254	2020		1,536	2014
Coho	40,000	150,000	Extirpated & reintroduced	-	till 93		21,428	2014
Sockeye	100,000	200,000	Extirpated & reintroduced	-			3,742	2016
Steelhead	20,000	100,000	Wild Population	561	2022		6,796	2009
Total	298,000	1,050,000		2,004			61,178	
Bull Trout	??	??	Wild Population				Up to 3000	
Lamprey	??	??	Wild Population	0	many		710 adults	2017

Steelhead

Steelhead (the anadromous form of *Oncorhynchus mykiss*) spawn in tributaries and mainstem reaches throughout the Yakima Basin, making them the most widespread of the basin’s anadromous species. They are part of the Middle Columbia River Steelhead Distinct Population Segment (DPS) which is classified as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act. “Threatened” means a species is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future. Biologists have identified four distinct populations- Satus, Toppenish, Naches and Upper Yakima- in the basin. Estimates of historic abundances range from 20,000 to 100,000; returns in the last 20 years have ranged from 561 to 6,796. There is no hatchery production in the Yakima Basin, and in-basin fisheries for steelhead have not been held since 1994. Unlike salmon, steelhead do not always die immediately after spawning, and Yakima Klickitat Fisheries Project (YKFP) runs an innovative program to recondition post-spawning adults (kelts) so that more of them can spawn again. Recovering steelhead to levels that allow for removing the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listing and reopening fisheries is a primary focus of fisheries recovery efforts in the Basin. For more information on steelhead in the Yakima Basin, see the [Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan](#).⁸

Chinook

Historically there were three runs of chinook (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) in the Yakima Basin: spring, summer and fall. The spring run returns to the Yakima in the spring, and holds in the Yakima system until late summer and early fall when they spawn in the Upper Yakima and

⁷ Current status data from Dart online database; historic estimates are from preliminary review of literature.

⁸ Available at <https://ybfwr.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/YakimaSteelheadPlan.pdf>

Naches basins. The eggs hatch the following spring, and the young rear in the basin through the summer and following winter before leaving for the ocean as smolts in their second spring. Juveniles migrate extensively throughout the basin as they rear. Biologists have identified three distinct populations of spring chinook- the Upper Yakima, Naches, and American River. Biologists estimate historic populations to have been between 100,000 and 500,000, and numbers dropped below 500 in the 1980s. The last decade has seen runs range from fewer than 2,000 to over 21,465. The YKFP's Cle Elum hatchery supplements the Upper Yakima spring chinook population. The YKFP research program is evaluating the effects of this hatchery program on chinook and other species of concern. Spring chinook are a primary focus for efforts to protect and restore the complex floodplain habitats along the mainstem Yakima and Naches Rivers. They are harvested in tribal fisheries in the Columbia and the Yakima, and, in years with sufficient returns, in mark-selective recreational fisheries in the Yakima Basin. For more information about spring chinook in the Yakima, see the [Yakima Subbasin Plan](#).⁹

Adult fall chinook have a life history that allows them to make use of habitats that would be inhospitable to salmonids in the summer. They return to the Yakima Basin and spawn in the fall; and are the only salmon species that spawn primarily in the lower Yakima River, from its mouth up to the city of Yakima. The following spring their young hatch and almost immediately start to migrate to the Columbia and the ocean. Estimates of historic abundance range from 38,000 and 100,000. In the 1980s numbers dropped as low as 221; in the last decade, runs have ranged from under 700 to over 7,000 returning adults. The YKFP runs a hatchery program to supplement the fall chinook run, which is the target of both tribal and recreational fisheries in the basin. For more information about fall chinook in the Yakima, see the [Yakima Subbasin Plan](#).¹⁰

Summer chinook were once numerous in the mainstem Yakima and lower Naches Rivers, but the combination of high harvest rates in the Columbia and ocean and poor summer habitat conditions in the lower Yakima resulted in their extirpation by the 1970s. Their life history is similar to fall chinook, except that the adults migrate into the basin during the summer months, and some young may over-summer like spring chinook. The Yakama Nation is currently reintroducing summer chinook. Reintroduced summer chinook are expected to make use of the extensive floodplains of the lower Naches and mid-Yakima.

Coho

Coho (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*) make use of low-gradient tributary and side channel habitat and were historically widespread in the Yakima River. The Yakima's native coho run was extirpated in the 1980s, but the estimated historical abundance ranged from 40,000 to 150,000 returning adults. This was largely due to heavy harvest in ocean and Columbia River fisheries that targeted abundant hatchery stocks. YKFP began reintroducing coho in the mid-1980s and are developing Yakima-adapted brood stock from the original Little White Salmon Hatchery brood stock. Since 2006, between 1,881 and 21,428 adults have returned to the basin each year. Coho migrate into the Yakima and spawn in the fall and early winter and rear in freshwater from one to two years. Coho are a target species for many tributary and side channel restoration efforts. For more information about coho, see the [Yakima Coho Master Plan](#).¹¹

⁹ & ¹⁰ Available at <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

¹¹ Available at http://www.ykfp.org/CohoMP/Final%20Yakima%20Coho%20Master%20Plan%2010_04.pdf

Sockeye

Sockeye salmon (*Oncorhynchus nerka*) historically occupied the headwater lakes of the Yakima Basin. Estimated returns range from 100,000 to 200,000 adults. They were extirpated by the early 20th century when impassable dams were built on top of the outlets of lakes Kachess, Keechelus, Cle Elum, and Bumping. Kokanee, the resident form of sockeye, are present in these five major reservoirs in the basin.

Sockeye reintroduction is underway in Cle Elum Lake and planned for other large lakes. The Bureau of Reclamation, WDFW and the Yakama Nation are currently building a fish passage facility at Cle Elum Dam and transporting adult sockeye from the Columbia River to Lake Cle Elum. Offspring of these fish are successfully returning to the Yakima. More information about sockeye in the Yakima Basin can be found in the [Yakima Subbasin Plan](#)¹² and the Bureau of Reclamation's [Yakima Dams Fish Passage Study](#) webpage¹³.

Bull Trout

Twelve local populations of bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) are found in the cold headwaters of the Yakima Basin. Once abundant stocks migrated between high-elevation spawning areas, the mainstem Yakima, and possibly the Columbia River; today migratory populations remain in the Naches and its undammed tributaries. Upstream of the five storage dams in the basin isolated populations now migrate between the reservoirs and upstream headwaters, while in other areas resident populations go through their entire life-cycles in specific tributaries. Once treated as a “trash” fish, bull trout are now listed as threatened under the ESA. Bull trout prey on other salmonids, and the reduction in overall numbers of anadromous fish is considered to be one of the causes for the decline of bull trout. Habitat degradation, genetic isolation and harvest have also negatively affected bull trout. Surveys from 1996 to 2017 show an average of 558 redds, with counts declining significantly for a number of populations. For more information on bull trout in the Yakima Basin, see the 2005 [Yakima Subbasin Plan](#), the [2015 USFWS Bull Trout Recovery Plan](#)¹⁴, the [Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan](#)¹⁵ and other [recovery documents](#).¹⁶

Rainbow Trout

The catch and release fishery for rainbow trout (the resident form of *Oncorhynchus mykiss*) in the Upper Yakima River and the Yakima Canyon is one of the most popular recreational fisheries in the state. It attracts anglers from throughout the region and supports a number of professional guides. WDFW discontinued planting hatchery rainbows in the early 1990s. Specific tributaries in the basin show distinct genetics, while mainstem fish often show a mixing of native and hatchery-origin genetics. Rainbow trout are known to interbreed with steelhead, and improving our understanding of the relationship between the two is a key research need in the basin. It is generally assumed that trout will benefit from the work to improve habitat condition for anadromous salmonids. The YKFP research program has found no evidence to support early concerns in the angling community that increases in chinook runs would be detrimental to the trout population.

¹² Available at <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

¹³ Available at <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/studies/fishpassage/index.html>

¹⁴ Available at https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Final_Bull_Trout_Recovery_Plan_092915-corrected.pdf

¹⁵ Available at <https://ybfwrp.org/recovery-planning/bull-trout-recovery/bull-trout-action-plan/>

¹⁶ Available at <https://www.fws.gov/species-publication-action/5-year-review-bull-trout>

Cutthroat Trout

Native west-slope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisii*) exist in the Yakima River and its tributaries, and the USFWS has designated it as a species of concern. "Species of concern" is an informal term that refers to those species which might need of concentrated conservation actions. Native cutthroat populations are strongest in upper reaches of many tributaries. Native cutthroat inbred with both hatchery-origin cutthroat and rainbow trout. To date there has been little focus on the conservation needs of cutthroat trout in the Yakima Basin.

Other Trout

Introduced brook trout (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) (widespread) and lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*) (in Lake Cle Elum) are present in the basin and have a negative effect on bull trout and sockeye reintroduction. Brown trout are also present in some areas (Cooper Lake and Cooper River in the upper Cle Elum Basin, Corral Canyon Creek, Wide Hollow Creek, Wenas Reservoir). These exotic trout species are not conservation priorities.

Lamprey

Pacific lamprey (*Lampetra tridentata*), while not salmonids, also have an anadromous life cycle in which they travel from spawning locations in the headwaters of rivers like the Yakima to the Pacific Ocean and back again. Restoring lamprey runs is a goal of the Yakama Nation, whose people once relied heavily on lamprey as a food source. At this time, conservation needs of lamprey in the Yakima Basin are not well understood, and SRFB funds have not been used to fund lamprey restoration projects. Significant effort is being focused on improving passage conditions for lamprey in the Columbia River, and the Yakama Nation has begun to investigate what can be done to restore lamprey in the Yakima Basin. See the [Tribal Pacific Lamprey Restoration Plan for the Columbia River Basin](#)¹⁷.

Other Species

The Basin is also home to at least 46 other native species such as dace, sculpins, pikeminnow, burbot and suckers. To date these have not been the subject of focused conservation efforts, though many are believed to benefit from projects aimed at improving ecosystem functions for other species. There are also many introduced species, such as carp, catfish, bass and sunfish, which thrive in highly altered habitat conditions and may in places prey on or outcompete native fish.

Prioritization of Species

The Board's Lead Entity strategy supports habitat protection, restoration and enhancement work that benefits both ESA-listed steelhead and bull trout populations and non-listed salmon and native trout populations throughout the basin. It accords the highest priority to actions that clearly benefit the ESA-listed species and spring chinook (which have the highest cultural significance for tribal subsistence and sport harvest). Secondary priority is given to actions that benefit only fall chinook or coho. To date the Lead Entity process has not placed independent priority on efforts that benefit other native species such as resident rainbow and cutthroat trout, though these species are presumed to benefit from many of the actions prioritized based on other species.

¹⁷ Available at <http://www.critfc.org/fish-and-watersheds/columbia-river-fish-species/lamprey/lamprey-plan/>

One of the challenges of fish management in the Yakima Basin is how to balance efforts to sustain:

- native populations
- naturally-reproducing populations of hatchery origin
- hatchery-origin fish

Managing hatchery programs and their impacts on other fish populations is the responsibility of the fisheries co-managers in the Yakima Basin (the Yakama Nation and the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, which work together on salmon hatchery programs under the Yakima Klickitat Fisheries Project). The Board's Lead Entity strategy emphasizes efforts to protect and improve natural habitats that sustain all life-stages of native and naturally-reproducing fish throughout the basin. This habitat may also play an important role in sustaining hatchery-origin fish. Protecting and improving a diverse range of natural habitats in the basin is an essential part of efforts to conserve the spatial distribution and diversity of the basin's remaining native stocks, and will also support efforts to establish diverse naturalized stocks of species like coho, summer chinook and sockeye that were extirpated from the basin.

Major Issues Affecting At-Risk Fish Species

As noted earlier, populations of salmon, steelhead and bull trout in the Yakima Basin have declined significantly in abundance over the last 150 years. This was due to a complex interplay of factors including extensive harvest in the Yakima River, Columbia River, and the ocean, the construction of the Columbia River dams, and widespread degradation of freshwater habitats. Over the last 30 years, state, tribal and federal managers have made significant changes in harvest regulations and the operation of the Columbia River hydropower system that are aimed at improving conditions for salmon and steelhead. The Board's Lead Entity program is part of a broader effort to reverse the degradation of freshwater habitats in the Yakima Basin. While these efforts have contributed to the rebound of anadromous fish numbers since the low points of the 1980s and early 1990s, significant improvements remain to be made in order to restore sustainable and harvestable salmon and steelhead runs. Detailed descriptions of factors affecting freshwater habitats in the Yakima Basin can be found in:

The Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan:

<https://ybfwrp.org/recovery-planning/steelhead-recovery-plan/>

The Yakima Subbasin Plan:

<http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

2015 USFWS Bull Trout Recovery Plan:

https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Final_Bull_Trout_Recovery_Plan_092915-corrected.pdf

Limiting Factors Analysis:

https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Limiting-Factors-LFA37_38.pdf

For the purpose of this document, we simply note that in many areas of the Yakima Basin, historic and current land use practices have:

- Changed the natural flow regime of the Yakima River and its tributaries (via efforts to store, convey and withdraw irrigation water from the river system, and via changes to upland and floodplain hydrology associated with human land uses).
- Created physical barriers (dams, irrigation diversions, road culverts, etc.) that block or impair the movements of adult and juvenile fish, sediment, and woody debris.
- Confined floodplains with dikes, roads and other developments, reducing the extent, diversity and quality of the productive aquatic habitats associated with active alluvial floodplains.
- Altered the extent and composition of riparian vegetation, affecting water temperatures, habitat complexity and food web dynamics in the Basin's streams and rivers.
- Increased the delivery of fine sediments to streams and rivers due to increased erosion in upland areas, filling in spawning gravels and changing stream food web dynamics.
- Disrupted sediment supply and routing within river systems through the construction of dams, the constriction of floodplains, and changes in flow patterns, etc.
- Introduced diverse contaminants to the river system.
- Trapped fish in unscreened water diversions.

Private and public land managers have made significant efforts to adjust management practices to avoid negative impacts on fish habitats while continuing economically and socially beneficial land uses. Significant public and private investments have also been made with the specific goal of protecting and restoring fish habitats in the basin. The following section gives a brief overview of these efforts.

History of Salmon Recovery in the Yakima Basin

The Early Days:

Efforts to address the impacts of agricultural development and other land uses on salmon and steelhead in the Yakima Basin started in the early 1900s. By the 1920s and 30s, state programs were installing fish ladders and screening irrigation ditches; discussions of the need for improved instream flows for fish were underway by the 1940s.

The 1970s:

By the late 1970s, salmon runs in the basin were disappearing. Both summer chinook and coho disappeared from the basin, and spring and fall chinook dropped to their lowest levels to date. Issues came to a head by 1980. Several years of intense drought conditions in the 1970's drove home that the river was over-allocated, the screens and ladders installed 30+ years earlier were obsolete, and fish biologists documented that rapid dewatering below reservoirs at the end of the irrigation season was drying up spring chinook redds.

The 1980s:

In the early 1980s, several key events jump-started the modern period of fisheries recovery efforts. In response to findings by the Yakama Nation, Federal District Court Judge Justin Quackenbush ruled that the Bureau of Reclamation did have an onus to protect fish runs; this decision led to the implementation of the ‘flip-flop’ flow regime, which greatly reduced the dewatering of spring chinook redds.¹⁸ The Northwest Power and Conservation Act created a mechanism for the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) to fund projects in the Yakima Basin to offset the impact of Columbia River dams on fish and wildlife, which initiated a major BPA-funded push to install up-to-date fish ladders and diversion screens throughout the basin. The Yakama Nation and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife also began using BPA-funds for habitat protection and restoration. In 1981 Reclamation first convened SOAC, an advisory board to the USBR consisting of fishery biologists representing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the YIN, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), and irrigation entities represented by the Yakima Basin Joint Board (YBJB).

The 1990s:

On October 31, 1994, passage of the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project’s phase II legislation secured minimum flows for the mainstem Yakima and set up the BOR’s YRBWEP office to promote water and habitat conservation efforts. The YKFP began to bring together the Yakama Nation and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to develop BPA-funded hatchery and habitat programs to restore salmon and steelhead runs in the basin. The Cle Elum Hatchery began production in 1997. During this period federal land managers significantly adjusted their policies to protect fisheries resources, and noteworthy advances were made in our understanding of fish runs and habitat in the Basin.

The 2000s:

The ESA-listing of steelhead and bull trout in 1999 and 1998, respectively, forced additional attention on fisheries issues in the Yakima Basin. An increasing number of project sponsors began to do habitat projects with funding from BPA, YRBWEP and the newly-established SRFB. The attention on steelhead focused more effort on the basin’s tributaries, leading to the creation of the Yakima Tributary Access and Habitat Program (YTAHP), which brings together the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife, the North Yakima, Kittitas County, and Benton County Conservation Districts, the Kittitas Conservation Trust, Mid-Columbia Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group, the Yakama Nation, the South-Central Washington Resource Conservation & Development Council and others to implement fish passage and habitat restoration projects in Yakima Basin tributaries. Adult chinook from the YKFP’s Cle Elum hatchery started returning to the Basin in 2000 (age 3 jacks) and 2001 (age 4 males and females). Basin managers also started to focus on protecting and restoring mainstem floodplain reaches. During this period the basin-level strategic plans described in the following section were developed.

¹⁸ Flip-flop is the process by which flows in the Upper Yakima are reduced in late summer to avoid luring spawning chinook to spawn in areas that will not be covered in water through the winter. In order to continue delivering water to irrigators, flows from Rimrock Lake are increased as flows from the Upper Yakima are decreased- thus the term “flip-flop”.

The 2010s:

This decade saw significant acceleration of restoration activities in the Yakima Basin, with much of it supported by the combination of new funding and collaboration developed by the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan. The Integrated Plan brings together the Department of Ecology's Office of Columbia River, the Bureau of Reclamation, The Yakama Nation, major irrigation districts, environmental groups and others to support joint environmental and water supply goals for the Yakima Basin. For more information, see: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-supply/Water-supply-projects-EW/Yakima-River-Basin-projects/Yakima-integrated-plan>. The SRFB Board process and the work of the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Habitat Subcommittee have been coordinated to move forward more and larger projects than previously possible, and the design and assessment work funded by SRFB has often been implemented using Integrated Plan funds. This decade also saw increased technical capacity applied to understanding the impacts of water management and predation on fish production. This resulting data is driving a closer look at how we can best improve fish survival.

Current issues:

Today, fish biologists and the Bureau's river operators continue to discuss how to adjust river operations to protect anadromous fish. The Bureau of Reclamation is constructing fish passage facilities at Cle Elum Dam and is planning future fish passage project at the rest of the headwater storage dams. The Yakama Nation, YRBWEP and local counties are completing significant floodplain restoration projects. A wide range of project sponsors are using diverse funding sources to implement habitat projects throughout the basin, and tributaries that were blocked for over 100 years are being reopened to anadromous fish. In addition, significant investments are being made to improve smolt survival to the Columbia.

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) is one of many sources of funding available for protecting and restoring fish habitat in the Yakima Basin. All SRFB projects are required to show matching funds from other sources, which typically include local landowners, city and county governments, the Department of Ecology, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, community volunteers, and/or BPA. Projects funded by SRFB are often implemented by staff funded through YTAHP, YKFP, county governments and other programs. The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board is committed to working together with its many partners in the basin to ensure that SRFB funds support and complement the many other fish recovery programs in the Yakima Basin.

Strategic Planning for Habitat Protection and Restoration

In the Yakima Basin, four major efforts have been made to develop comprehensive plans to protect, restore and enhance fish populations and their habitats:

[The Yakima Basin Limiting Factors Analysis](#)¹⁹ was completed by the Washington Conservation Commission and a local technical advisory group in response to House Bill 2496. This report was issued in 2005 and is the most detailed reach-by-reach description of habitat conditions in the basin.

¹⁹ Available at https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Limiting-Factors-LFA37_38.pdf

The [Yakima Basin Watershed Management Plan](#)²⁰ was completed in 2003 as part of the Department of Ecology's watershed planning process. This plan covers a broad range of water supply, water quality and fish habitat issues, and was prepared with input from numerous technical and citizen's committees. Both the Yakama Nation and Kittitas County withdrew from this planning process. The completed plan was ratified by Yakima and Benton Counties.

[The Yakima Subbasin Plan](#)²¹, which was prepared by the Yakima Subbasin Fish & Wildlife Planning Board (one of the precursor organizations to the Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board) for the Northwest Power & Conservation Council. The plan covers the needs of a broad suite of fish and wildlife species, and identifies priority strategies for protecting and improving priority habitats throughout the basin. The planning process included extensive public participation, and the resulting plan was adopted by the NPCC as the primary guide for the Bonneville Power Administration's investments in fish and wildlife mitigation in the Yakima Basin.

The Regional Salmon Recovery Plan was prepared by the YBFWRB. The 2005 draft was titled the Yakima Subbasin Salmon Recovery Plan and covered the needs of the two ESA-listed fish species in the basin, steelhead and bull trout. An updated version of the steelhead portion of that plan was released in September 2009. This [Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan](#)²² is the document of record for steelhead recovery efforts in the basin, and has been incorporated into NOAA Fisheries' Middle Columbia River Steelhead Recovery Plan. The [Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan](#) is, along with the [2015 Recovery Plan from the USFWS](#)²³, the primary reference for bull trout conservation efforts in the basin.

The Board believes that the Yakima Subbasin Plan, the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan and the Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan incorporate the best available science while representing the interests of the Yakima Basin's citizenry. These plans incorporate the results of previous research and modeling efforts and were subjected to extensive scientific and public review. These plans are the primary technical documents used to prioritize recovery actions. The Board recommends that actions identified within these plans be given priority status for SRFB funding.

Community Attitudes towards Fisheries Recovery Efforts

There is broad support and recognition for the ultimate goals of this recovery strategy - returning at-risk fish runs to harvestable and self-sustaining levels by improving habitat conditions that are essential to their needs. Local communities have generally supported projects that:

- Improve water quality;
- Increase the diversity and functionality of existing habitat in the prioritized reaches;

²⁰ Available at <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/reports/watershed.pdf>

²¹ Available at <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

²² Available at <https://ybfwrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/YakimaSteelheadPlan.pdf>

²³ Available at https://ybfwrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Final_Bull_Trout_Recovery_Plan_092915-corrected.pdf

- Incorporate cost-effective approaches with tangible outcomes;
- Increase community involvement and education in fish habitat projects;
- Provide necessary flows for fish in a manner that does not compromise agricultural users and other potentially competing water needs;
- Provide incentives when salmon projects ask water users for voluntary reductions in water use;
- Provide incentives to developers to preserve functional habitats that are at risk of degradation;
- Maintains and/or increases recreational opportunities for the public.

However, local communities have also raised significant concerns about efforts to protect and restore fish habitat. These include:

- The perception that habitat acquisition projects can erode local tax bases, reduce natural resource-based economies, reduce development opportunities and associated economic benefits, and negatively impact nearby water and land users;
- Concerns over negative effects on economic endeavors that reintroduction of listed fish might have on areas they could occupy if passage barriers are removed;
- Perceived negative effects of anadromous fish on the important resident trout population/fishery in the Upper Yakima, and the negative effects of non-native smallmouth bass on listed and/or native anadromous species in the lower Yakima River and Yakima delta;
- A concern that many salmon recovery projects are not being done in a cost-effective manner and may be wasting taxpayer dollars;
- Resistance of some recreational users to habitat projects that may restrict recreational access and/or create perceived hazards (esp. large woody debris).

The Board's Lead Entity outreach program strives to engage community members in discussions about how to address these concerns and build community support for the full range of recovery actions. The Lead Entity's efforts to support research, monitoring and assessment should also emphasize work that helps reduce uncertainties associated with these questions.

The Yakima Lead Entity SRFB Review Process

Each year, the Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board (Board) solicits, evaluates and ranks proposals for salmon recovery projects in the Yakima Basin. Organizations looking for SRFB funding for projects in the Yakima Basin must submit applications through the Yakima Lead Entity. This section of the Yakima Lead Entity Manual provides:

- Guidance for individuals and organizations who are considering applying for a SRFB grant for a project in the Yakima Basin;
- Guidance and resources for Citizens Committee and Technical Advisory Group members who are part of the project review process; and,
- An overview of the grant review process for other interested parties.

Sources of Guidance for the SRFB Process

Each lead entity in the state has a slightly different process with different timelines, so the applicant should become familiar with the specific procedures in the Yakima Basin, as described in this document. Applicants should also acquire a copy of Salmon Recovery Grants [Manual 18](#)²⁴ (Policies and Application Instructions), which is the official guide to the statewide SRFB grant process. A copy can be downloaded on the RCO website. Be certain to download the most current version of Manual 18 as it is updated for each grant cycle. If you have downloaded Manual 18 before, you may need to clear your browser history or cookies to download the 2023 version.

Applicants need to request both a SAW (Secure Access Washington) account and an account for [PRISM](#)²⁵, RCO's grant management program. The SAW account is an added layer of security for the PRISM system, which applicants use to submit and modify their grant application. When users login to PRISM, they will be redirected to the Secure Access Washington page to enter their SAW credentials. After this, first-time users will be redirected to the PRISM login page to enter their PRISM credentials. After this, they will only need to use their SAW login to access PRISM.

Please allow 2-3 business days to receive your usernames and passwords. If you have difficulty accessing PRISM, please contact the YBFWRB office at 509-453-4104.

²⁴ Available at <https://rcو.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SAL-Manual18.pdf>

²⁵ Applicants can request both a SecureAccess Washington account and a PRISM account at this website: <https://rcو.wa.gov/recreation-and-conservation-office-grants/apply-for-a-grant/prism/>

Key Players in the SRFB Grant Process

There are several individuals and groups who participate in evaluating SRFB applications:

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

The Washington State Legislature created the SRFB in 1999. The Board provides grant funds to protect or restore salmon habitat and assist related activities, and sets the policies governing how those grant funds are allocated and used. The Board is composed of five citizens appointed by the Governor and five state agency directors. It brings together the experiences and viewpoints of citizens and the major state natural resource agencies. All meetings are open to the public. The SRFB is supported by staff from the state's Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO).

Lead Entities (LE)

Lead entities are local, watershed-based organizations that develop local salmon habitat recovery strategies and then recruit organizations to do habitat protection and restoration projects that will implement the strategies. The Lead Entity coordinates the SRFB grant process to fund many of these projects. Lead entities consist of:

- A coordinator or administrative body (usually county, conservation district, or tribal staff);
- A committee of local, technical experts;
- A committee of local citizens.

Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board (Board)

The Board is made up of representatives of the Yakama Nation and 22 local governments including Benton, Kittitas & Yakima Counties, and 19 Yakima Basin cities. The Board is under contract with the state's Recreation and Conservation Office to act as the Yakima Lead Entity, and it runs the Lead Entity process in accordance with the SRFB's statewide guidance and the specific terms of the Board's contract with RCO. For additional information on the Board and its members, see www.ybfwrb.org.

Lead Entity Coordinator

The Lead Entity Coordinator is an employee of the Board whose position is funded via the Board's contract with RCO. The Lead Entity Coordinator organizes the local Lead Entity process and provides ongoing support to prospective and funded SRFB project sponsors in the Yakima Basin. They are the primary contact for SRFB programs in the Yakima Basin.

Pre-Application Review Team

This is a small group of individuals consisting of YBFWRB staff and project permitting officials to review SRFB project pre-applications and provide feedback to the sponsor on how to further develop their project ideas. These individuals are not members of the Technical Advisory Group, and are chosen by the Board based on their specific expertise.

Technical Advisory Group (TAG)

The Technical Advisory Group is a group of local biologists, scientists, and natural resource professionals who represent a variety of agencies and expertise in the basin. These local

technical experts are knowledgeable about the local watershed, habitat and fish conditions. Their expertise is invaluable to ensure projects are based on priorities for fish recovery and effectively address adverse ecological conditions and processes. The TAG is convened by the Board staff and members to evaluate the technical soundness and biological priority of SRFB project proposals. Their comments are forwarded to our Citizen's Committee to use as a reference when they are ranking projects for funding recommendation.

Citizen's Committee (CC)

The Citizen's Committee is a group of representatives from each county in the lead entity (Kittitas, Yakima, and Benton) and the Yakama Nation. Each jurisdiction has 4 seats, for a total of 16 members. Participants consist of representative interests of counties, cities, conservation districts, tribes, environmental groups, business interests, landowners, citizens, volunteer groups, regional fish enhancement groups, and other habitat interests. Their primary role is to evaluate SRFB project proposals. They rank projects based on the value of the project to the community and technical input from the TAG. The CC evaluation helps to ensure that projects will be supported by local communities, and that any controversial issues are addressed.

Outdoor Grants Manager

The Recreation and Conservation Office is the state agency that administers SRFB grants. The Outdoor Grants Manager (OGM) is the individual assigned to assist the Yakima Basin Lead Entity and applicants through the SRFB process. The OGM reviews SRFB applications to confirm that the project meets eligibility requirements and that the application is complete. This individual is the liaison between the lead entity coordinator and the SRFB and state review panel, and works with grant sponsors when a grant is officially awarded to a project.

State Review Panel

This is a group of engineers and fisheries and habitat experts hired by the SRFB to review projects for technical soundness simultaneously to the local review process. It provides an independent third-party review of the technical merits of SRFB proposals from throughout the state.

Steps in the Yakima Lead Entity Process

There are several steps in the SRFB grant process as implemented in the Yakima Lead Entity Process.

- Request for proposals**
- Pre-application deadline**
- Pre-application conference**
- Full application deadline**
- Proposal presentation**
- Site visit**
- Official submission to the SRFB**
- State Review Panel review**
- TAG review**
- CC committee review**
- Designation of alternate projects**
- YBFWRB approval**
- SRFB final approval**
- Scope amendments**

Each of these steps is outlined in further detail in the proceeding text.

Request for Proposals

At the beginning of each year's Lead Entity Process, the Board issues a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the upcoming SRFB grant round. The RFP is provided to previous project sponsors and other Board partners via email, released to local media, and posted on the Board's website. This document provides instructions on how to apply for a SRFB grant, timelines and deadlines for the grant process, provides links to application materials, and guidance for eligible and ineligible project elements. Those eligible for SRFB funding include cities, counties, conservation districts, Native American tribes, nonprofit organizations, private landowners, regional fisheries enhancement groups, special purpose districts, and state agencies. Federal agencies may not apply directly, but may partner with eligible applicants.

Pre-application

Applicants for Salmon Recovery Funding Board funds must complete a pre-application before entering the project into PRISM. The form is included in [Appendix B](#). The more thorough the pre-application, the more feedback the review committee can provide for strengthening the proposal. The date pre-applications are due is specified in the annual RFP, and listed in the [2023 YBFWRB Lead Entity SRFB Schedule](#)²⁶. Submitting a pre-application does not obligate the sponsor to submit a full application for the project.

Pre-application Conference

The pre-application process is meant to provide early feedback to applicants as they determine which proposals to pursue and how to develop them. Shortly after applicants submit the pre-application, they will be asked to schedule a conference with the pre-application subcommittee. The applicant will be required to talk through the steps of completing the project to prove that the project is well thought out, meets priority needs, and will be able to be implemented as

²⁶ Available at <https://ybfwrp.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2023-Grant-Schedule.pdf>

proposed within the grant timeframe. Applicants will need to provide a legal parcel map depicting the ownership of the project site, as well as ownership information for adjacent properties. The applicant will be asked to discuss project-specific communication with stakeholders to date, and the level of support the project concepts are receiving. This is NOT a formal presentation. At this point it is likely the applicant will not have written a full application. This is an informal discussion about the strengths and weaknesses of a project concept that is meant to help the applicant develop the full proposal. The hope is that this process will allow the applicant to consider initial committee concerns and suggestions, and incorporate them into the full application. This reduces the need for extensive revisions to applications later in the review process. Additionally, if it appears that the project is unlikely to fare well in the review process, the applicant has the option to either avoid the labor associated with developing a full application or continue to develop an application that specifically addresses the weaknesses identified.

Pre-applications are shared with the TAG and CC for early review if the applicant requests this feedback, but it is not required and pre-applications will only be posted if specifically requested. Voluntary comments received from committee members will be shared with the sponsor; neither TAG nor CC members are required to provide feedback at this point. However, sponsors are free to ask individual TAG and CC members questions or request input on their proposals at any point during the grant round.

Submission of Full Applications in PRISM

When an applicant decides to carry a proposal beyond the pre-proposal review, they are responsible for completing a formal application using the RCO's PRISM database. Applicants must work with the Lead Entity Coordinator to establish a PRISM project number. An application is considered complete when all of the components required by RCO are entered or attached into PRISM. A SRFB application is more than filling in the blanks in PRISM. There are several attachments required, including maps, landowner willingness forms, partner contribution forms, photos, etc. See [Manual 18](#)²⁷ under [Appendix C: Application Checklist](#). Applicants will receive a copy of this checklist during the pre-application conference.

Note that letters of support are not a required attachment and are not part of the evaluation process. Applicants are encouraged to place their efforts on developing the technical merits of their proposals rather than gathering letters of support. Letters of support should only be included if they are highly pertinent to issues raised in proposals and necessary for committee members to understand them.

Check the annual RFP and the [Board webpage](#)²⁸ for the deadline for submission of full applications. It is very important that complete applications are submitted into PRISM by the deadline. These applications will be electronically distributed in their entirety to the TAG and CC members. Late or incomplete applications will be at a disadvantage in the evaluation process and can delay our process with the state review panel.

Sponsor Presentations

A few weeks before site visits, project applicants will present their proposal to the Technical Advisory Group (TAG), Citizen's Committee (CC), and YBFWRB staff members. The goal of this

²⁷ Available at <https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SAL-Manual18.pdf>

²⁸ Available at <https://ybfwrb.org/grant-program/information-for-applicants/>

presentation is to generate dialog between applicants and reviewers that can be used to modify and strengthen the proposal prior to the technical and citizen review process. At the conclusion of the presentations, reviewers will clarify their overall feedback to sponsors, which the Lead Entity Coordinator will forward to sponsors. Applicants will have about 25 minutes to present their project. Presenters should review the best practices document provided by the Lead Entity Coordinator for specific details on what to include but should generally view this as the committees' first introduction to the project. Presenters should arrive at least 20 minutes early for the presentation. If presentations are held virtually, presenters should plan to attend a check-in with the Lead Entity Coordinator to ensure all technology is working as it should be. These are generally held the week before sponsor presentations.

A multimedia projector, laptop, and flip chart easels will be available for use. The applicant should provide:

- Updates on the status of previous grant awards
- A brief overview of project
- An assessment of the value of the project to focal fish species
- Relative priority of project for salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin
- A summary of landowner involvement in the project
- A description of the role of any additional partners in the project
- Assurances of project implementation as proposed within the grant timeframe
- For acquisition projects, reasons why it is critical to preventing future habitat degradation
- An overview of the project budget
- A summary of plans for long term stewardship of the project
- An overview of other funding sources to be used with SRFB funds for the project
- Any other community information that may be relevant to the Citizen Committee evaluation of the project

Site Tours/State Review Panel Feedback

Part of the SRFB grant evaluation process involves a visit to the project site, in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format. At a minimum, those who will be present for the site visit are the Lead Entity Coordinator, Outdoor Grants Manager, and two members of the state review panel along with the project sponsor or their designated representative. Other individuals who may also be present are other Board members, staff and/or members of the Technical Advisory Group and Citizen's Committee. The applicant, or a designated representative, needs to be present during the visit. If an applicant cannot attend the site tour, their alternate should be well briefed on the project.

The purpose of a site visit is to allow individuals who will be evaluating the project to get a better sense of the problem and proposed solution. Applicants should be prepared to explain the project, address potential challenges, and show why the project is important. This is an excellent opportunity for applicants to get advice from others on ways to improve the proposal before the final review, and applicants are encouraged to revise their applications in response to feedback.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to get permission from the landowner for access to the site. The Lead Entity coordinator will work with sponsors to plan site visits to make best use of the state review panel's time. Applicants should reserve all of the days listed in the RFP for site

tours until the final schedule is complete. Given the wide geographic range of the Yakima Basin, it can be very difficult to stay true to a schedule for site visits; applicants should be flexible on the day of the site visit in case the review team is behind or ahead of estimated times. The Review Panel will send the LE feedback on project proposals two weeks after the site visits. If the project does not raise any concerns, the Review Panel will indicate that it is “cleared”. Cleared projects have no other requirements from the state review panel and are considered cleared for funding. If the local lead entity process ranks a clear project above the funding line, no other action is required and the sponsor will begin contracting with RCO following the official SRFB funding award meeting in September. If there are issues that need to be addressed prior to being cleared for funding, the Review Panel will flag the project as “NMI” (needs more information). If a project is flagged as a “POC” (project of concern), this means that panel members have more serious concerns regarding the proposal and will bring it before the entire state review committee for further discussion. Both local committees and the state review panel may also place conditions for funding, prior to the project being cleared.

Conference Call with State Review Panel

For those projects that have been identified as “needs more information” or a “project of concern”, sponsors will have the opportunity to clarify feedback from the state review panel. This call will generally occur in early June and attendees will include RCO staff, YBFWRB staff, one state review panel member, and one Technical Advisory Group member. Participation is not required but if participating, the sponsor must be on the call and is welcome to bring other project partners who will be assisting in answering the state review panel comments and questions. This is not an opportunity for sponsors to answer questions from the state review panel but rather to ensure that those questions and any concerns are completely understood by the sponsor. This will enable the sponsor to appropriately respond to state review panel comments and questions. Each lead entity is given one hour for these calls, regardless of the number of projects that have been labelled as a “NMI” or “POC”, so sponsors must work with the Lead Entity Coordinator prior to the call to identify what questions or concerns need clarity.

Local Technical Advisory Group Feedback

The Technical Advisory Group and Citizen Committee, following site tours, will work via consensus to provide feedback to sponsors to strengthen applications identify questions to clarify details of the project.

Technical Advisory Group

This committee rates the proposals submitted by project sponsors on their technical merits, benefits to salmon, certainty that the benefits will occur, and certainty that the project can be completed within the grant timeframe within the proposed budget. TAG members are bound to our Conflict of Interest ([Appendix C](#)) policy to ensure a fair and equitable grant review process. They typically evaluate proposals approximately 2-3 weeks after the sponsor presentations. TAG members are as follows at the time of this printing; membership may change from year to year.

Shannon Adams	Yakama Nation
Sean Gross	NOAA Fisheries
Anna Lael	Kittitas County Conservation District
Pat Monk	US Bureau of Reclamation

Jennifer Nelson	WA Department of Fish & Wildlife
Katy Pfannenstein	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Danielle Squeochs	Yakama Nation
Luke Stilwater	Yakima County
Arden Thomas	Kittitas County
Rebecca Wassell	Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

Vacant positions to be appointed prior to March, 2023

The TAG operates under the following rules, as defined by the YBFWRB by-laws.

There shall be a Technical Advisory Group (“TAG”) to evaluate and grade salmon recovery and other fish and wildlife projects based primarily on technical merit. The TAG will also review updated plans, including prioritizing areas of interest and need; and, take such other actions as may be directed by the Board of Directors. Composition and operating procedures for the TAG will include:

- 9.3.1** 12- to 15-person membership that is broadly representative of technical experts that are highly knowledgeable of fish and wildlife needs in the Yakima Basin.
- 9.3.2** Adherence to standards set in chapter 77.85 RCW when reviewing salmon recovery projects that may be submitted to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.
- 9.3.3** All projects evaluated for funding under RCW 77.85.050 will be submitted to the Citizen Committee for review and ranking. All other recommendations will be made directly to the Board of Directors.
- 9.3.4** The TAG may choose to elect a chair and a vice-chair.
- 9.3.5** The TAG may choose, with Board of Directors approval, to create subcommittees, advisory groups or ad-hoc groups to meet specific needs and tasks.
- 9.3.6** The TAG shall use a consensus based decision making process.
- 9.3.7** Individual members may provide minority perspectives and guidance to the Board of Directors or, in the case of lead entity projects, the Citizen Committee.
- 9.3.8** TAG members may present information but shall remove themselves from participating in decisions and deliberations on projects where they have a direct interest in requested funding.

Technical Review Process

Before the evaluation discussion begins, TAG members will receive a table prepared by YBFWRB staff that includes:

- Project name
- Sponsor
- PRISM #
- SRFB Request (USD)
- Match Provided (USD)
- Total Project Budget (USD)
- Recovery Action(s) addressed

- A preliminary determination of whether or not the project fits within the TAG's identified priorities

In 2013, the TAG developed the TAG Focus Project List ([Appendix E](#)) to help focus SRFB resources on projects that represent the most immediate needs of priority species that can be reasonably achieved as SRFB projects. Project proposals receive a 10 point bonus if they are on the current TAG Focused Project List. If they are not on the list, no bonus points are awarded. The TAG Focus Project List will be updated annually. Occasionally the TAG will identify actions as priorities that are not included in identified priority reaches or defined recovery actions. The TAG may use professional judgment to justify including an additional action for evaluation. The TAG must document all additions to identified priorities and the justifications articulated to support them.

Upon meeting the criteria listed above, a proposal will be evaluated based on accepted biological and community criteria using tools outlined below:

A. The Lead Entity Salmon Recovery Model (SARM):

The SARM evaluates each project based on specific biological functionality provided to each life stage. A copy of this evaluation tool is available in [Appendix F](#). The SARM was initially developed in 2004 by ENTRIX, INC under contract with the Yakima River Basin Salmon Recovery Board, which acted as the Lead Entity for the Yakima Basin through 2005. It has been updated several times based on feedback from the TAG. The SARM is intended to structure consistent project-specific discussions. The SARM score is one of multiple inputs used by the TAG to determine a project's rank. The SARM has been evaluated and slightly adjusted by the TAG in 2013 and 2020.

In brief, evaluations of projects proposed within specific reaches in the Yakima basin using this SARM involve an interpretation of how effectively projects address factors limiting habitat function, and the anticipated fish population responses after implementation. The scoring matrix will evaluate and score projects based on benefits to species and key habitat factors, quantity and quality of habitat benefit, and certainty of project success in terms of meeting its stated habitat and/or biological goals.

In addition to species and habitat scores, the TAG uses the SARM to assign each project weighting factors based on its assessment of the amount and quality of habitat affected, certainty of success, benefit to cost, and sustainability. Full details on scoring guidelines are available in [Appendix G](#).

Generally, higher scoring projects should yield greater fish production than lower scoring projects. This score provides a starting point for the ranking of projects.

B. YBFWRB TAG Evaluation Form:

This form ([Appendix H](#)) is used to provide consistency in evaluating projects. It is used to generate discussion and provide additional guidance to TAG members for how to rank projects. Stewardship projects and other project types that are not well-suited for evaluation through the SARM will be evaluated using the TAG Evaluation Form only. The completed TAG Evaluation Forms are also provided to the Citizen's Committee so they are aware of how the TAG

evaluated the proposals. For additional information on how the TAG utilizes this form, please see the accompanying guidance following [Appendix H](#). Form elements include:

1. **Biological Strengths and Weaknesses:** The main criteria for evaluation used by the TAG for every project is how well the project implements actions identified in the regional recovery plan and contributes to meeting specific biological goals within the plan.
2. **Landowner Commitment:** In order for a project to be successful, the landowner has to fully support a project. The landowner should be involved in discussions regarding this project early in the planning process, and should be aware of, and willing to wait through, the grant administration process. The SRFB requires that the landowner sign a Landowner Acknowledgement form before an applicant can submit a grant for evaluation, and a signed commitment by the landowner before SRFB approves funding.
3. **Project Sequencing:** The TAG will consider whether sponsors are implementing projects in the correct order. A project should build upon and complement existing or future actions, and/or pave the way for additional habitat projects. Correctly sequencing and coordinating projects is an efficient use of limited resources and maximizes potential benefits. The proposal should complement and support local and state salmon recovery regulations and programs, including land use and development regulations, critical area ordinances, storm water management regulations, shoreline master plans, forest management regulations, etc.
4. **Reasonable Budget:** A proposed budget should be analyzed to determine if it is complete and the prices quoted are reasonable as compared with similar projects. A budget can be too high or too low.
5. **Design Adequate for Goals:** Project design and based on proven methods. The design should match the goals outlined in the proposal, and meet standards established by WDFW. Innovative and experimental approaches should be considered if proven methods are not feasible, if the conditions they were designed for cannot be corrected through conventional methods, if the potential benefits exceed that of traditional designs, and/or if the benefit-to-cost ratio is high.
6. **Stewardship:** The SRFB requires a stewardship plan with the final documentation at the close of the project for acquisition and restoration projects on lands owned or controlled by the applicant. The proposal should include information on how the project will be maintained and monitored for at least 10 years.
7. **Uncertainties and Constraints:** A project should be reviewed to determine if there are any technical, legal, permitting, financial, or environmental constraints that could affect the outcome of the project.
8. **Acquisition Specific:** An acquisition project should be reviewed, in addition to the relevant questions above, to determine a) if the sponsor has sufficiently documented landowner interest and agreement on property value (e.g. appraisal) and b) has the sponsor sufficiently documented clear and significant risk to the property if it is not protected.

The below elements of the TAG evaluation form are generally not utilized for evaluation purposes by the TAG. Rather, this is the space for the TAG to reach consensus and provide background information to the Citizen Committee, when appropriate, for use in their evaluations.

1. **ESA Liability:** The Endangered Species Act prohibits unauthorized ‘take’ of a listed species which includes both killing or harming individuals of a species and altering habitat. Community members whose actions may create a ‘take’ face potential legal liability. Specific projects may either alleviate liability (e.g. when a new fish screen prevents fish from dying in an irrigation system) or increase liability (e.g. when a project allows a species to access new areas where take is likely). Any ways in which a project may decrease or increase legal liabilities for specific community members should be assessed (note that simply supporting general recovery of a species does not count as reducing liability). This information is generally not utilized by the TAG for evaluation purposes but rather to provide accurate information to the CC for the purposes of their evaluation.
2. **Other wildlife:** Proposals for funding by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board must target ESA listed species. However, there are times when a project has benefit to other terrestrial wildlife. TAG should identify any significant positive or negative impacts to other wildlife for use by the CC in their evaluation.

The TAG will use the quantitative and qualitative technical evaluation methods and criteria described above to rank each proposal. Stewardship projects and other project types that are not well-suited for evaluation through the SARM will be evaluated using the TAG evaluation form only. Additional points will be awarded for projects that fit within the TAG identified focus projects for that year. For this year’s focus project list, please see [Appendix E](#). Web-based versions of these tools are made available to TAG members approximately two weeks prior to the evaluation meeting for early scoring. At the conclusion of the TAG meeting, each project will be placed in one of five categories:

- High Priority Fund
- Priority Fund
- Fund
- Do Not Fund
- Defer

Projects categorized as “high priority fund” should be viewed as the most impactful and/or urgent for salmon recovery. These are the projects the TAG would most like to see funded in the current year.

Projects categorized as “priority fund” should be viewed as good projects to fund to further recovery but not as strong as high priority fund projects.

Projects categorized as “fund” should be viewed as projects eligible for funding but less competitive than medium or high priority projects.

Projects categorized as “do not fund” should be viewed as having significant flaws that mean they should not be funded through SRFB unless significant revisions are made to directly address the concerns documented by the TAG through the review process.

Projects categorized as “defer” should be viewed as having concerns that the TAG wants the project sponsor to address before applying for SRFB funding. Projects may also be given a deferred status if the sequencing of the project reduces maximum biological benefit.

The TAG will document its review, and report their results to the CC for final ranking. The documentation will include the SARM forms, qualitative evaluation forms, and summary tables showing project ranking recommended by TAG.

A variety of technical tools and information outlined in this document have been used to assist the technical advisory group (TAG) of the YBFWRB in evaluating projects for their ability to meet the above stated biologically-based goals and objectives, including:

[The Yakima Basin Limiting Factors Analysis](#)²⁹

[The Yakima Basin Watershed Management Plan](#)³⁰

[The Yakima Subbasin Plan](#)³¹

[Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan](#)³²

[2015 Recovery Plan from the USFWS](#)³³

Additional Criteria for Evaluating Specific Project Types

The technical evaluation process focuses on determining how proposed projects correspond to recommendations in the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan and the Subbasin Plan and how well they address documented limiting factors in priority areas. For some specific project types, other important sources of information should be considered, as noted below:

Protection Projects

Protection projects focus on ensuring that currently functioning habitat is not converted to incompatible uses or otherwise degraded. Protection tools include the purchase of land, water, access, or utilization of rights in fee title or by perpetual easement. All acquisition projects funded by SRFB shall be voluntary in nature, and require documentation that the seller is willing to participate in the proposed project. The TAG evaluates the current habitat value of proposed protection projects, the risk that those values will be lost if the project is not completed, and the potential for future habitat enhancement on the protected parcels.

Assessment Priorities: Proposed assessment projects should address priority reaches and show that information gathered by the project will fill a data gap, and will likely lead to a future project proposal that will protect or restore priority habitats.

Stewardship Projects: The TAG recognizes stewardship projects as important for the overall success of salmon recovery in the Yakima Basin. However, these projects do not fit well into the SARM and will therefore only be evaluated using the TAG evaluation form ([Appendix H](#)).

²⁹ Available at <https://ybfwrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Haring-2001.pdf>

³⁰ Available at <https://www.usbr.gov/pn/programs/yrbwep/reports/watershed.pdf>

³¹ Available at <http://www.nwcouncil.org/fw/subbasinplanning/yakima/plan/>

³² Available at <http://www.ybfwrb.org/RecoveryPlan/YakimaSteelheadPlan.pdf>

³³ Available at https://ybfwrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Final_Bull_Trout_Recovery_Plan_092915-corrected.pdf

Citizen Committee Evaluation

Upon completion of the TAG's review and scoring, the Lead Entity's Citizen Committee (CC) will review and rank the projects. In addition to local citizens, participants on the citizens committees may include local, state, federal and tribal government representatives, community groups, environmental and fisheries groups, conservation districts, and industry. The CC is critical to ensure that biological priorities and projects have the necessary community support for success. Citizen committee members are often the best judges of the community's social, cultural and economic values as they apply to salmon recovery, and of how to increase community support over time through the implementation of habitat projects. The CC will use the TAG's scoring for each project in conjunction with community value considerations to develop the final ranked habitat project list. Community values considered include: cultural, social, economic, efficient & effective resource use, community support, and partner support. The Citizen Committee makes the final recommendation for what projects get funded. The Citizen Committee evaluation is meant to build off the Technical Advisory Group evaluation, taking into consideration other non-technical criteria and details the TAG may not be aware of or have considered. The CC is not obligated to maintain the same ranking given to projects by the TAG if they feel a project's ranking needs to be adjusted based on its social value or detriment but will provide sufficient explanation for the community benefits or detriments that justify moving (a) project(s) up or down the ranked list. Citizen Committee members are bound to our Conflict of Interest ([Appendix C](#)) policy to ensure a fair and equitable grant review process. Members of our Citizen's Committee are:

Name	Representing
Gloria Boyce	Benton County
Rachel Little	Benton County
Shawn Mellgren	Benton County
Kat Thompson	Benton County
Bob Inouye	Yakima County
Doug Mayo	Yakima County
Ryan Anderson	Yakima County
Max Linden	Yakima County
Tom Ring	Yakama Nation
Mark Charlton	Kittitas County
Matt Eslinger	Kittitas County
McClure Tosch	Kittitas County

Vacant positions to be appointed prior to March, 2023

The Citizen's Committee Ranking Matrix can be found in [Appendix I](#).

The Citizen's Committee operates under rules established in the YBFWRB By-Laws. The Citizen Committee will rank and prioritize projects proposed by the Technical Advisory Group to promote fish and wildlife recovery. Composition and operating procedures for the committee will include:

- 9.4.1** The Citizen Committee shall be composed of four representatives working and/or residing in Benton, Kittitas and Yakima counties and the Yakama Nation (initially, 16 total). Representatives from each county should represent the diversity of interests particular to their region, e.g. – business, landowner, agricultural, habitat, and fishery

enhancement. Elected officials may be representatives when not also serving on the Board of Directors.

- 9.4.2 The Citizen Committee shall submit to the Board of Directors a prioritized list of SRFB projects for funding. The Board of Directors may review and approve the process and/or the selection of the prioritized project list. The Board of Directors may ask the Citizen Committee to re-assess the list, but does not have the authority to change it themselves.
- 9.4.3 The Citizen Committee shall use a super-majority vote of 65% for decision-making purposes.
- 9.4.4 Prioritization of projects being submitted for SRFB funding will follow procedures set by chapter 77.85 RCW.
- 9.4.5 The Citizens Committee may elect a chair and a vice chair.
- 9.4.6 Committee members shall remove themselves from participating in decisions and deliberations on projects where they have a direct interest in requested funding.

State Review Process

State review of projects will occur concurrently with local review. Panel members will review the applicant's responses to their submitted questions and continue to review individual projects for technical soundness. They will compile comment sheets on each project, which will be available to sponsors through PRISM. If they have any serious questions or concerns with a project, they will label a project a "POC" or project of concern. This means that the sponsor needs to supply additional information to the review panel. Projects may also be labeled "NMI" or needs more information or have a condition placed on the project prior to approval of funding. If a project is "clear" no additional changes need be made before final submission.

Final Rank

The final rank is determined by the Citizen's Committee (CC) and approved by the Board of Directors (Board). The Technical Advisory Group (TAG) develops a recommended ranking by considering the TAG matrix score and various "Certainty of Success" criteria, which include items such as project sequencing, uncertainties and constraints, and reasonable budget. The TAG then submits its recommended ranking to the CC for review. The CC then evaluates the project based on social and community impact criteria, and adjusts the TAG's proposed ranking based on its evaluation. The CC's proposed project ranking is then submitted to the Board for approval. Note that the Board can remand the list to the CC for reconsideration, but the Board cannot re-rank projects. This process is set up to meet the requirements of the state statute creating the SRFB and the Lead Entity program, and is designed to ensure that projects proposed for SRFB funding are technically solid, address priority issues, and are broadly supported by diverse community interests.

Designation of Alternate Projects

Each Lead Entity has the opportunity to add 2-3 alternate projects to their LE list. These are projects that have gone through the evaluation process and that the TAG and CC agree are worth funding, but are below the funding line for the year. If for any reason, SRFB funding for one or more of the projects above the funding line is no longer needed, the Lead Entity, in cooperation with the project sponsor, can move the money to the alternate projects as long as it is within a year of the original funding date. Alternate projects shall be designated by the Citizen's Committee.

Board Approval

After the Citizen's Committee ranks the project list and makes recommendations for funding, the Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board reviews the project list. If they have any discomfort with the project ranking, they may ask the Citizen's Committee to reconvene to respond to the Board's concerns and adjust the ranked list as necessary. The Board cannot reorder the Citizen's Committee's ranked list.

Final Submission of Final Applications to RCO

If changes have been requested by the state review panel or local reviewers, applications must be updated and changes incorporated before final submission to RCO.

Final SRFB Funding Decision

Successful SRFB project proposals are officially awarded at the September SRFB meeting. Sponsors do not have to be present at this meeting. After this meeting, the Outdoor Grant Manager assigned to the Yakima Basin will contact the sponsor for contracting details.

Scope Amendments

As contracts progress, at times it becomes apparent that significant changes need to be made to the original scope of work, or an opportunity arises that could enhance an existing contract. A sponsor has the option of submitting a scope amendment request for the following situations:

All projects

1. To request additional funding to pay for project overruns
2. To increase or decrease a project scope without a funding change
3. If a project closes short (has unspent funds remaining in the contract)
4. To change a project type
5. To transfer sponsorship to another entity
6. To reduce the proposed match

Acquisition projects

7. To change the site to a contiguous site
8. To change the site to a non-contiguous site
9. To pay more than fair market value (with no increase in funding)

Restoration projects

10. To make a significant change in the project location

Studies/Assessment projects

11. To make a significant change in the location of the study
12. To change the type of study

In order to request a scope amendment, a sponsor must fill out a SRFB Amendment Request Form ([Appendix J](#)) and submit it to the Lead Entity coordinator. The request must be approved locally by the TAG and CC before it can be considered for approval by RCO. Guidelines regarding the level of evaluation a scope amendment will receive at RCO can be found in the SRFB's [Manual 18](#)³⁴. If you are requesting a scope amendment, please understand that the

³⁴ Available at <https://rco.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/SAL-Manual18.pdf>

process could be lengthy, especially if the changes proposed differ significantly from the original contract. Expect the same level of scrutiny as during a regular grant round. There is no guarantee that a scope amendment will be approved.

APPENDIX A: Vision 2020

As prepared by the YAKIMA SUBBASIN FISH & WILDLIFE PLANNING BOARD in 2004 as part of development of the Yakima Subbasin plan

Vision for the Year 2020

Yakima River Basin communities have restored the Yakima River basin sufficiently to support self-sustaining and harvestable populations of indigenous fish and wildlife while enhancing the existing customs, cultures, and economies within the basin. Decisions that continuously improve the river basin ecosystem are made in an open and cooperative process that respects different points of view and varied statutory responsibilities, and benefits current and future generations.

Guiding Principles for the Yakima Subbasin Plan

- 1) That the natural environment including its fish and wildlife resources is the cultural heritage that is common to the diversity of human existence. The underlying premise of the YSPB's *Mission* and *Vision* is to prepare and implement a balanced plan of action that plays a key role in the long-term sustainability of our common cultural heritage within the Yakima Basin.
- 2) That the quality of water and a near natural timing and quantity of water flow (normative hydrograph) are principle indicators of a healthy river ecosystem.
- 3) That the Yakima Subbasin Plan enhances the Yakama Nation's continued exercise of Treaty Reserved and aboriginal rights for religious, subsistence, commercial and recreational use of natural resources;
- 4) That the Yakima Subbasin Plan and the 2009 Yakima Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan are based on voluntary participation;
- 5) That the processes of plan preparation, implementation, and amendment, be open and equitable;
- 6) That the costs of plan actions be estimated in relation to benefits. Alternatives that achieve the benefits relative to costs are preferred. Costs of habitat/species restoration should be mitigated and distributed equitably;
- 7) That the science, strategies and art of restoring ecosystems is yet evolving, hence programs and actions must be monitored and evaluated for effect and may be altered as necessary;
- 8) That balanced sustainable resources management recognizes these basic precepts: a) that the physical and biological environments are functionally interdependent relative to productivity; b) that at any level of function, productivity is finite; c) without actions to restore degraded functions, and to protect, avoid and mitigate impacts to the physical and biological environment, the increasing demands of human population growth would reduce productivity to zero, with unacceptable costs to the cultures and economies of the subbasin.

APPENDIX B: YBFWRB Pre-Application

Project Sponsor:	Click here to enter text.
Sponsor Contact Info:	Click here to enter text.
Project Name:	Click here to enter text.
Key Partners:	Click here to enter text.
Project Location: <i>Include county & watershed</i>	Click here to enter text.
Project Description:	Click here to enter text. <i>Please be succinct – we would like to use this for correspondence with our TAG, CC, Board and general public</i>
List specific Steelhead Recovery Plan Action(s) address by the proposed project	Click here to enter text. <i>These are found in Chapter 5 of the Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan (please cite Recovery Plan page number). Example: Basinwide Action #2: Adequately screen all water diversions (page 146)</i>
Fish species benefited:	Click here to enter text.
Specific benefits to fish and certainty of success:	Click here to enter text.
How the project relates to/builds upon past/current projects:	Click here to enter text.
Constraints/Uncertainties affecting the Project:	Click here to enter text.
In addition to answering the questions above, please provide:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A general location map; 2) Detailed property/parcel map identifying the ownership of the project site and all legal property boundaries and adjacent lot ownership, aerial photos and designs as appropriate; 3) Provide a list of all potential stakeholders (landowners, adjacent landowners, and other interest groups). <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Include a summary of project-specific communication that has occurred and the level of support that the project has from each stakeholder. 4) A cost estimate and draft budget, and information on how the cost-estimate was developed or will be developed. 5) Photographs of the site (this is in addition to aerials) 	
Submit Pre-Applications To:	
YAKIMA BASIN FISH & WILDLIFE RECOVERY BOARD E-mail: mhorner@ybfwrb.org	

A Word version can be downloaded at: <https://ybfwrb.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/Pre-App-Form-2023.docx>.

APPENDIX C: Lead Entity Conflict of Interest Policy:

Yakima Basin Fish and Wildlife Recovery Board (YBFWRB) Citizen Committee (CC) and Technical Advisory Group (TAG) members are expected to leave the room for committee discussions about any applications for which they are the identified sponsor/co-sponsor or with which they have a direct personal conflict of interest. Secondary conflicts of interest of committee members and YBFWRB staff (e.g. employment by the sponsoring entity without direct involvement in the proposed project, or association with a project, but not as primary sponsor) shall be declared, and the affected individuals shall discuss with the committee whether they should participate fully in evaluations, remain in the room to provide information but not participate in scoring and ranking of proposals they are associated with, or leave the room during review of proposals they are associated with.

A direct personal conflict of interest is defined as the possibility or appearance of possibility, and not just the actuality of a private benefit, direct or indirect, or the creation of a material personal gain or advantage to the member, family, friends or associates who hold some share of a member's loyalty.

To be an identified project sponsor is to be a lead individual developing a proposal who is specifically identified as a sponsor in the application. When a committee member discloses either a direct personal conflict of interest or is an identified project sponsor, they shall be asked to leave the meeting, but may return once the project discussion and scoring is finished.

A secondary conflict of interest may exist when a reviewer is a project partner, defined as the underlying land owner (even if public), and anyone who provides cash or services match to the proposed project –an individual, company, private or public organization that has a financial or capital commitment to the proposed project under review. This category extends to include anyone who has financial ties to the applicant (spouse, etc.); sits on the applicant's governing body; or has played a significant role in the development of the proposal. Secondary conflicts of interest must be disclosed by review committee members. Once disclosed, the majority of the review committee will decide if the person should leave the meeting, observe the meeting without contributing to the discussion or scoring, participate but not score, or participate fully in the discussion and scoring of the proposal.

Prior knowledge of the proposal or prior contact with the applicant does not constitute a conflict of interest, as long as none of the above criteria apply to the reviewer. If you have any concerns or questions about whether your relationship with an applicant or proposal warrants taking one of the actions identified above, please explain your situation to the other members of the committee at the meeting. Majority vote will decide whether it constitutes a conflict of interest. If a member has not disclosed any conflict of interest but is challenged from the floor and the challenge has no basis in fact, the member should so state their opinion on the issue and defer to majority vote to decide the issue.

A member who has questions about his or her participation in any matter to come before the committee, or who is concerned about a potential conflict of interest of another participant should contact the Lead Entity Coordinator, the YBFWRB Executive Director, or YBFWRB Board members.

APPENDIX D: Reach Priority by Species

The TAG has prepared maps showing priority reaches for protection and restoration for spring and fall chinook, steelhead, coho and bull trout. These maps were generated for the following purposes:

- to provide guidance to help prioritize projects
- to inform project proponents of priority areas for our Lead Entity
- to present our priorities to the Salmon Recovery Board

The maps were developed for the Lead Entity to help rank projects and should not be used for other purposes. These maps have been largely superseded by the newer list of TAG focal projects. However, they are still available should the TAG choose to use them as part of its evaluation.

The priorities are based on the goal of maximizing the natural production of salmonids by preserving habitat that is functioning properly, and restoring that which has the highest production potential but is currently at risk or not functioning because of compromised habitat factors. Reaches are prioritized for project selection on the basis of the *critical habitat* contributions they provide for one or more of the priority species in the strategy. *Critical habitat in this context is considered habitat needed for the completion of one or more life history stages.* Reaches were initially prioritized based on Ecosystem Diagnostic and Treatment (EDT) model analysis with subsequent adjustment made by the YBFWRB TAG based on scientific data and working experience.

On occasion, there may be a project located in a high priority area that was not identified due to the scale of evaluation, a lack of information, or incomplete data at the time reach priorities were set. For projects that lay outside the geographic scope of the EDT modeling conducted for the Yakima Basin and for projects focused on bull trout and other salmonids not incorporated into the EDT model, the TAG's expert knowledge was used to determine high priorities areas. Reach priority may be updated periodically to account for changes in habitat conditions and to incorporate new information.

Maps are available from YBFWRB staff upon request.

APPENDIX E: TAG Focus Projects

January, 2023

The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board's Focus Project List is a tool developed by the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to help identify the most timely/urgent of the high priority Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) projects and apply those funding resources to projects that represent the most immediate needs of priority species.

The list is used to:

- Give the TAG a way to proactively guide Yakima Basin SRFB funding towards high priority and/or urgent projects
- Provide guidance to sponsors deciding what types of projects to pursue and propose
- Strengthen the link between the SRFB project review criteria and Recovery Plan priorities
- Award 10 extra points in the scoring matrix to projects consistent with the list

Using the list as a guide, a project proposal will receive 10 bonus points if it is clearly a Focus Project. If a proposal is not a Focus Project, zero bonus points are awarded. It is important to emphasize that the TAG uses this approach as a way to recognize and reward proposals that implement identified Focus Projects, but not as a way to exclude other SRFB proposals.

Projects that are Focus Projects, but have other significant weaknesses will have their score brought down by other elements in the TAG review process. Projects that do a strong job of addressing real needs, even if not identified as a Focus Project, will still have an opportunity to compete for funding based on all of the other TAG scoring criteria.

The Focus Project List is to be updated annually in the fall, following the SRFB grant review. Any modifications to the list will be communicated to project partners once the annual review is complete.

The following 25 projects and the associated next steps comprise the Focus Project List:

#	Focus Project	Alignment with Yakima Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan/Bull Trout Action Plan	Location/Geographic Scope
1	<p>Yakima Delta Temperature and Flow</p> <p>Projects to restore natural flow patterns and fish passage in the Yakima Delta.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action 7</p> <p>Protect and restore mainstem and floodplain habitats below Sunnyside Dam.</p> <p>Pg. 157</p>	<p>SR 240 Bridge at Richland to the confluence with the Columbia River.</p>
2	<p>Lower Yakima River Projects</p> <p>Improve thermal refugia for adults.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action 7</p> <p>Protect and restore mainstem and floodplain habitats below Sunnyside Dam.</p> <p>Pg. 157</p>	<p>Prosser Dam to the confluence with the Columbia River.</p>
3	<p>Reducing Smolt Entrainment</p> <p>Projects that result in the reduction of diversion related mortality of smolts.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action #3</p> <p>Reconfigure infrastructure to improve smolt survival rates.</p> <p>Basinwide Action #2</p> <p>Adequately screen all water diversions.</p>	<p>Roza, Wapato, Chandler, and Sunnyside Dams; as well as entrainment on Toppenish Creek below the forks.</p>

<p>4</p>	<p>Toppenish Floodplain and Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Toppenish Action 1</p> <p>Rehabilitate alluvial fan and downstream floodplain of Toppenish Creek.</p> <p>Pg. 184</p>	<p>Toppenish Creek up to and including areas with known anadromous fish distribution.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Wapato Reach Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action 7</p> <p>Protect and restore mainstem and floodplain habitats below Sunnyside Dam.</p> <p>Pg. 157</p>	<p>Locations that align with those described in the Wapato Reach Assessment.</p>
<p>6</p>	<p>Wapato Reach Floodplain & Side Channel Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action 7</p> <p>Protect and restore mainstem and floodplain habitats below Sunnyside Dam.</p> <p>Pg. 157</p>	<p>Locations that align with those described in the Wapato Reach Assessment.</p>

<p>7</p>	<p>Yakima River “Gap-to-Gap” Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Lower Mainstem Action 6</p> <p>Restore mainstem and side channel habitats in the Union Gap-to-Selah Gap reach.</p> <p>Pg. 156</p>	<p>Mainstem Yakima River; Union Gap-to-Selah Gap reach.</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>Naches Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Naches Action 5</p> <p>Restore lower Naches River floodplain.</p> <p>Pg. 163</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Naches FMO Action #3</p> <p>Pg. 29</p>	<p>Tieton River to Mouth.</p>
<p>9</p>	<p>Naches Floodplain & Side Channel Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection.</p>	<p>Naches Action 5</p> <p>Restore lower Naches River floodplain.</p> <p>Pg. 163</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Naches FMO Action #3</p> <p>Pg. 29</p>	<p>Wapatox Dam to Nelson Dam.</p>

<p>10</p>	<p>Little Naches Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Naches Action 11</p> <p>Restore side channels and floodplain of Little Naches River.</p> <p>Pg. 167</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Crow Action #2</p> <p>Pg. 118</p>	<p>Little Naches River up to and including areas with known anadromous fish distribution.</p>
<p>11</p>	<p>Upper Naches Floodplain & Side Channel Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection.</p>	<p>Naches Action 7</p> <p>Protect habitats in Naches River mainstem above Tieton confluence.</p> <p>Pg. 178</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Naches FMO Action #3</p> <p>Pg. 29</p>	<p>Within the potential meander zone of the Naches River upstream of the Tieton River confluence.</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Upper Naches Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Naches Action 31</p> <p>Restore Naches side channels and floodplains above the Tieton River confluence.</p> <p>Pg. 178</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Naches FMO Action #3</p> <p>Pg. 29</p>	<p>Within the potential meander zone of the Naches River upstream of the Tieton River confluence.</p>

<p>13</p>	<p>Improve Cowiche Creek Instream Flow</p> <p>Projects that create quantifiable improvements to instream flows in Cowiche Creek.</p>	<p>Naches Action 21</p> <p>Reduce irrigation diversions from Cowiche Creek.</p> <p>Pg. 173</p>	<p>South Fork of Cowiche Creek.</p>
<p>14</p>	<p>Ahtanum Creek Channel and Floodplain Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Naches Action 27</p> <p>Ahtanum Creek floodplain and side channel restoration.</p> <p>Pg. 176</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Ahtanum Action #7</p> <p>Pg. 60</p>	<p>From the mouth of Ahtanum Creek up to and including areas with known bull trout distribution.</p>
<p>15</p>	<p>Ahtanum Floodplain Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection. Work in Bachelor and Hatton Creek is not a current focused action due to unresolved flow and fish screening issues.</p>	<p>Naches Action 28</p> <p>Protect Ahtanum Creek riparian areas to lessen development impacts.</p> <p>Pg. 176</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Ahtanum Action #7</p> <p>Pg. 60</p>	<p>From the mouth of Ahtanum Creek up to and including areas with known bull trout distribution.</p>

<p>16</p>	<p>Ahtanum Instream Flow</p> <p>Projects that result in permanent and quantifiable increases of instream flow in Ahtanum Creek and its forks. Proposals will only receive points if the cfs added can be protected.</p>	<p>Naches Action 24</p> <p>Protect instream flow improvements in Ahtanum Creek.</p> <p>Pg. 176</p> <p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Ahtanum Action #6</p> <p>Pg. 59</p>	<p>From the mouth of Ahtanum Creek up to and including areas with known bull trout distribution.</p>
<p>17</p>	<p>Teanaway, Swauk & Tributaries Instream Flow</p> <p>Projects that result in permanent and quantifiable increases in stream flows in the Teanaway, its forks and Swauk Creek by reducing water diversions or acquisitions of water rights.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 4</p> <p>Improve instream flows in Swauk Creek and Teanaway watersheds.</p> <p>Pg. 191</p>	<p>Teanaway River (all forks) and Swauk Creek upstream to and including areas with known anadromous fish distribution.</p>
<p>18</p>	<p>Teanaway, Swauk, & Taneum Floodplain and Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 14</p> <p>Restore instream and floodplain habitat complexity in Swauk and Taneum creeks and Teanaway and lower Cle Elum rivers.</p> <p>Pg. 197</p>	<p>Teanaway River (all forks), Swauk Creek, and Taneum Creek upstream to and including areas of known anadromous fish distribution.</p>

<p>19</p>	<p>Teanaway, Swauk, & Taneum Floodplain & Side Channel Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain and side channel habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 14</p> <p>Restore instream and floodplain habitat complexity in Swauk and Taneum creeks and Teanaway and lower Cle Elum rivers.</p> <p>Pg. 197</p>	<p>Teanaway River, Swauk Creek, and Taneum Creek upstream to and including areas of known anadromous fish distribution.</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>Manastash Instream Flow</p> <p>Projects that create quantifiable improvements to instream flows in Manastash Creek.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 5</p> <p>Provide passage and instream flows in lower Manastash Creek.</p> <p>Pg. 192</p>	<p>Manastash Creek upstream to and including areas of known anadromous fish distribution.</p>
<p>21</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Floodplain & Side Channel Restoration</p> <p>Dike setbacks and other projects that increase connectivity between the channel and its floodplain or between the channel and existing off-channel habitat. Does not include digging artificial channels or the installation of large woody debris that does not significantly reconnect specific side channels as demonstrated in the proposal.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 13</p> <p>Protect & restore floodplain, riparian and in-channel habitats in Upper Yakima, Kittitas and Easton/Cle Elum Reaches.</p> <p>Pg. 197</p>	<p>Yakima River from Keechelus Dam to one mile downstream of Wilson Creek confluence.</p>
<p>22</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Floodplain & Side Channel Protection</p> <p>Acquisition projects that protect high quality floodplain and side channel habitat and/or allow for significant future floodplain reconnection.</p>	<p>Upper Yakima Action 13</p> <p>Protect & restore floodplain, riparian and in-channel habitats in Upper Yakima, Kittitas and Easton/Cle Elum Reaches.</p> <p>Pg. 197</p>	<p>Yakima River from Keechelus Dam to one mile downstream of Wilson Creek confluence.</p>

<p>23</p>	<p>Bull Trout Stranding and Passage</p> <p>Assessment, design, and restoration projects that reduce bull trout mortality, and/or address passage impairments associated with stream dewatering for critical populations.</p>	<p>Bull Trout Action Plan</p> <p>Low Abundance, Passage and/or Dewatering are identified as significant and high priority threats for the Box Canyon, Kachess River, Deep Creek and Gold Creek Bull Trout Populations.</p> <p>Box Canyon Action #1: Pg. 89 Gold Actions #2, #3, and #5: Pgs. 140, 144, 149 Indian Action #3: Pg. 166 Deep Creek Actions #1 and #2: Pgs. 129 and 135</p>	<p>Reaches from reservoirs up to and including known spawning distribution in the following tributaries:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gold Creek • Box Canyon Creek • Kachess River/Mineral Creek • Deep Creek
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<p>24</p>	<p>Riparian Reforestation to Protect Stream Temperature (does not apply to stewardship projects)</p> <p>Re-establishment of at least 1 acre of native forest within 75 feet of selected streams.</p>	<p>Naches Action 10</p> <p>Improve habitat in Lower Bumping.</p> <p>Pg. 166</p> <p>Naches Action 22</p> <p>Improve riparian, floodplain, and temperature conditions in Cowiche Creek.</p> <p>Pg. 174</p> <p>Naches Action 23</p> <p>Restore Oak Creek habitat.</p> <p>Pg. 174</p> <p>Upper Yakima Action 15</p> <p>Restore tributary riparian areas.</p> <p>Pg. 199</p>	<p>Teaway Forks, Swauk, Taneum, Manastash, Cowiche, Ahtanum, Oak creeks, and tributaries to the Naches River above the Tieton (including Little Naches) from the mouth upstream to the extent of anadromy. Also, tributaries of these streams upstream to the extent of anadromy. Only applies to public lands to be permanently managed for native riparian forest.</p>
<p>25</p>	<p>Cold Creek Fish Passage Assessment</p> <p>Assessment and design of fish passage alternatives to address an artificial barrier at the confluence of Cold Creek with Keechelus Lake that makes the creek inaccessible to priority species including bull trout.</p>		<p>Cold Creek to the confluence with Keechelus Lake up to and including areas with potential bull trout habitat.</p>

APPENDIX F: Salmon Recovery Model (SARM)

Scoring Criteria	Possible Score	TAG Score	
<u>PRIORITY SPECIES</u>			
Steelhead	4		
Bull trout	4		
Sockeye	1		
Spring Chinook	2		
Summer Chinook	1		
Fall Chinook	1		
Coho	1		
Total	14		
<u>INSTREAM FLOW AND HYDROGRAPH</u>			
1a Improves degraded instream flow and/or hydrograph (e.g. water rights placed in trust, quantified cfs added)	4		
1b assess instream flow needs (IFIM) or design project to improve instream flow and/or hydrograph	3		
<u>WATER QUALITY</u>			
2a improves degraded water quality (e.g. temperature, sediment, nutrients, etc.)	4		
2b assess/design projects that improve degraded water quality (e.g. temperature, sediment, nutrients, etc.)	3		
<u>IN-CHANNEL HABITAT (e.g., LWM, spawning gravel, pool/riffle ratios)</u>			
3a protects spawning and/or rearing habitat	5		
3b improves or creates spawning and/or rearing habitat (cover, etc.)	4		
3c assess/design spawning and/or rearing habitat conditions and needs	3		
<u>HABITAT ACCESS</u>			
4a restores access for juvenile and/or adult to high quality habitat (structural/flow/temp)	5		
4b restores access for juvenile and/or adult to functional habitat (structural/flow/temp)	4		
4c assess/design habitat access	3		
<u>DIVERSION SCREENING</u>			
5a protects fish from entrainment, impingement and other diversion or screen induced mortality	5		
5b assess/design diversion screening	3		
<u>FLOODPLAIN CONNECTIVITY/RIPARIAN CONDITION</u>			
6a protects functioning floodplain and riparian (e.g., acquisition)	5		
6b improves degraded floodplain and/or riparian functions (e.g., dike breaching)	4		
6c assess/design floodplain connectivity and/or riparian corridor & functions	3		
<u>HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT</u>			
7 project is a TAG Focused Project (see 2021 list)	10		
Total Habitat Score		0.0	
Total Species & Habitat Score		0.0	
WF1 = Quality and Quantity (1.0 - 2.0)			
Quality	> 3 miles	1 to 3 miles	< 1 mile
High	2.0	1.8	1.4
Medium	1.8	1.6	1.2
Low	1.4	1.2	1.0
WF2 = Certainty of Success (0.0 - 1.0)			
1.0 if reasonably certain of success about 100%			
0.5 if moderately certain of success about 50%			
0.0 of low certainty of success about 0%			
WF3 = Benefit/Cost (0.5 - 1.5)			
1.5 if High Benefit/Cost			
1.0 if Medium Benefit/Cost			
0.5 if Low Benefit/Cost			
WF4 = Longevity of Benefit (0.5 - 1.5)			
1.5 if High Sustainability			
1.0 if Medium Sustainability			
0.5 if Low Sustainability			
Total Score		0	

APPENDIX G: Matrix Guidance

Introduction

Projects proposed for SRFB funding in the Yakima basin are evaluated by the TAG using several tools including the Salmon Recovery Model (the matrix). The matrix was developed in 2004 for use by the TAG, and has been revised several times. The TAG considers a standard list of questions about each project and provides the answers using a standardized numeric score. The matrix then calculates a total score for each project.

Generally, higher scoring projects should provide greater benefits to target fish populations than lower scoring projects. However, the matrix tool is not precise enough for small differences in final scores to be strong indicators of meaningful differences in project quality. Further, the matrix does not consider all factors which may be relevant to ranking proposed projects. Therefore, matrix scores are only a starting point for the TAG to rank projects. Adjustments to the preliminary rankings based on matrix scores should be expected and the rationale for final rankings will be documented by the TAG.

General Instructions

Reviewers start by identifying the priority species in the area affected by the project. They then consider a series of questions about how the proposed project would change habitat conditions to benefit priority species. The TAG also determines if the proposed project is on the TAG's previously adopted list of Priority SRFB Actions. Finally, the TAG assigns each project weighting factors based on its assessment of the amount and quality of habitat affected, certainty of success, benefit to cost, and sustainability.

The TAG assigns the project scores for each line in the matrix and scores can range from zero up to the full points indicated. Scores should be assigned in increments of 0.5 points for Species and Habitat elements (through question 8c), and in increments of 0.1 points for weighting factors. For question 8, projects are assigned full points if they are on the TAG Focus Project List, and zero points otherwise.

Project Categories

To answer the habitat questions, a project is usually assigned to one of three categories: 1) protection projects, 2) restoration implementation projects, and 3) assessment and design-only projects. However, in some cases, protection projects may be combined with other project types. For example, an applicant may propose to acquire and restore a property as one SRFB project.

For each habitat component in the SARM matrix, a project should be scored in the questions specific to its project type unless it is a combined category project. For example, if a project is scored under 4a (protection benefit for rearing habitat), it should not typically be scored under 4b and 4c (restoration and assessment/design benefits). However, a combination project including property acquisition and restoration of the property could be scored under both 4a and 4b. (In most of these cases, the project would not score full points for habitat protection because parcels requiring restoration are presumably not fully functioning.)

Protection projects ensure that currently functioning habitat is not degraded in the future. Typically, protection projects propose purchasing land, water, and/or development rights (via conservation easements) in order to assure that future management of the land focuses on maintaining its habitat value. Protection of high-quality habitat that is at high risk of degradation is the highest priority for protection projects. A project that protects an area of high-quality priority habitat from imminent development should receive the maximum score, while a project that protects lower value habitat from less likely degradation (e.g. where existing zoning, access and regulation make development highly unlikely) should receive a lower score.

Restoration projects propose to undertake activities that will significantly improve habitat conditions in the affected reach. Some key restoration actions for our basin include passage and screening, instream flow, floodplain connectivity, and physical habitat restoration.

Assessment projects collect and analyze information in order to identify and recommend future actions. Assessment projects should focus on priority reaches and assess how best to address significant limiting factors. Assessment projects need to show that information gathered by the project will fill a key data gap and will likely lead to a future protection or restoration project with significant fisheries benefit. Design projects fund design work but do not include funding for actual construction. They are typically a first step in a phased approach to project funding. Assessment and design projects should be scored using the assessment questions, but based on the expected benefits of implementing the assessed or designed actions.

Guidance for Specific Questions

PRIORITY SPECIES – Priority species are identified in the matrix and include anadromous salmonids and bull trout. The TAG assigns points for species that are within the area affected by the proposed project. Species scores will range from 0 to 4.0 based on established species priorities and the expected benefit of the project for key life stages. Most species have a maximum score of 1 point. Spring Chinook have a maximum score of 2 points. Federally listed species have a maximum score of 4 points. The TAG will assign a score considering the project benefit for spawning, rearing, and migration for each species, or reduce human-caused mortality. To receive a maximum species score there should be significant benefits for two of the three life stages, or a significant increase in survival or productivity. For example, a passage project that has a goal of allowing access to significant spawning and rearing habitat for steelhead should receive a score of four; a screening project that reduces or eliminates known mortality could receive a score of three, a LWD project that only provides rearing habitat for steelhead should receive a score of two.

INSTREAM FLOW AND HYDROGRAPH – Does the project directly and quantifiably benefit the hydrograph by increasing low flows or reducing unnaturally high flows?

1a – Application receives points if it directly improves the hydrograph via trust water program or other means, such as water conservation measures to reduce diversions. Reviewers should be able to quantify beneficial effects to the hydrograph (e.g. how many cfs will be trusted). This question is not intended to award points for projects that simply redirect in-stream water into side channels or improve floodplain connectivity, although such projects may have incidental effects on the hydrograph...for such a project to

receive points, the applicant should quantify hydrograph benefits. (In most cases, projects awarded points in 1a will also receive points for improving rearing habitat.)

1b – Application receives points if the proposed assessment directly addresses instream flows. Assessments for side channel or floodplain projects with incidental hydrograph effects are not considered here unless such effects will be explicitly addressed and quantified.

WATER QUALITY – Water quality is a major limiting factor in the middle and lower mainstem Yakima River and portions of some tributaries. Temperature, suspended sediment and agricultural chemicals in some flowing waters in the Yakima basin have exceeded either water quality criteria or known tolerance thresholds for salmonid species.

Application receives most points for making substantial improvement to water quality. Some points may be awarded for incidental WQ benefits from other project types (e.g. riparian restoration that will provide shade in a temperature-limited stream). If nutrient enhancement is proposed as a project, it can be scored under Water Quality.

IN-CHANNEL HABITAT – For the purposes of the SARM, in-channel habitat is defined as the habitat below bank full width or OHWM. Quality in-channel habitat is a combination of cover, substrate, and hydraulics. Common in-channel restoration projects construction on the bank or bed to improve cover, width/depth ratios, pool quantity and quality, and/or streambank condition.

Improvements to in-channel habitat can be awarded in question 3. Typical projects will score in only one of the sub-questions (a, b, or c) unless the project is a combination. For example, a proposal to acquire and restore a property could be awarded points in parts a and b of question 3.

3a – Protection of spawning and rearing habitat should be scored by considering both habitat value and the threat to the habitat that the proposed project will alleviate.

Habitat value is the current value of the area to the priority species and is a function of size, quality, use by priority species, importance of habitat type or location, etc. Habitat value is not historic value or potential value based on anticipated restoration.

Threat Reduction is the threat to the existing habitat that will be alleviated by the proposed project. The TAG should consider the nature and type of the threat, and likelihood that it will occur. For example, the likelihood of habitat impacts may increase from properties merely in a UGA, to properties for sale, to properties with ongoing degradation. The TAG should also consider the effectiveness of the project in reducing the potential threat. For example, purchase may alleviate more of a threat than does acquiring an easement.

The following is an example of how Habitat Value and Threat Reduction can be considered together:

		Threat Reduction		
		Low	Med	High
Habitat Value	Low	0	1	2
	Med	1	3	4
	High	2	4	5

HABITAT ACCESS – Application receives points for removing or reducing physical and flow- or temperature- induced passage barriers. Examples include improving passage at culverts, dams, ladders, etc. or improving flows or temperature where they inhibit passage. Physical barriers preventing entrance to existing side channels are also included. Projects that correct partial barriers should generally receive a lower score than full barrier removals, unless the TAG identifies the barriers as addressing significant limiting factors in that watershed. This question is not intended to award points for side channel creation, levee setbacks, etc.

DIVERSION SCREENING - Application receives points for reducing injury or mortality of priority species from entrainment, impingement, and other diversion or screen-induced harm. Typical projects include screening currently unscreened diversions, improving poorly functioning or outdated screens, and removing or changing the location of diversions (e.g. converting an unscreened surface water diversion to a well).

FLOODPLAIN CONNECTIVITY/RIPARIAN CONDITION - These questions score projects that maintain and improve floodplain connectivity and riparian conditions. Functional floodplains and riparian zones allow water and sediment to move through the ecosystem naturally (often improving in-stream habitat) and allow fish to access an array of productive habitats at various flows. Typical projects include removing or modifying levees or bank armor, reconnecting or constructing side channels or off-channel areas, adding cover, planting native vegetation, managing invasive species, and/or controlling livestock, vehicle, and foot traffic.

HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT – The TAG has developed the TAG Focus Project List to help focus SRFB resources on projects that represent the most immediate needs of priority species that can be reasonably achieved as SRFB projects. Project application receives 10 points if it is on the most recent TAG Focus Project List. If not on the list, zero points are awarded.

WEIGHTING FACTORS – These elements are a very important part of the TAG evaluation and involve many factors. In addition to the scores assigned, there should be a clear explanation supporting the scores of WF 2, 3, and 4 in the TAG Evaluation meeting notes so that the Citizen’s Committee, applicants, and others have a clear understanding of what factors affected the TAG weighting.

WF 1: QUALITY AND QUANTITY - Only acquisition and passage projects will be evaluated for both quality and quantity of habitat. A simple matrix based on how much habitat a project benefits (<1 mile, 1 to 3 miles and 3+ miles) and what the current quality of that habitat is (High, Medium or Low) is used to assign a value ranging from 1.0 to 2.0 for acquisition and passage projects. Projects that implement fixes to point source fish mortality should be given a “medium” score of 1.6. The TAG is able to rank these projects qualitatively, if committee members this would still not capture the full biological benefits of the project through quantitative review. For all other project types, projects will be evaluated on the spatial extent of the project only. For these projects the TAG will use a weighting factor of 1.8 for projects with 3+ miles of habitat, 1.6 for projects with 1-3 miles of habitat, and 1.2 for projects with <1 mile of habitat. Passage projects will view the area opened upstream until the next barrier as the spatial extent.

WF 2: CERTAINTY OF SUCCESS – Projects are weighted based on the likelihood that they can ultimately deliver habitat benefits (identified in earlier matrix questions), given the known and unknown barriers to success. This WF is a combination of the likelihood that the project will be successfully

implemented and the likelihood that it will deliver biological benefits. The following table is an example of how the two elements of certainty of success can be considered together to derive WF 2. The specific questions to consider are listed below.

		Certainty of biological benefits		
		Low	Med	High
Certainty of successful implementation	Low	0	.3	.6
	Med	.3	.6	.8
	High	.6	.8	1.0

Considerations are different for each project type:

Construction projects: *Certainty of successful implementation:* Does the proponent have the wherewithal to successfully construct the project as proposed, given challenges (e.g. site complexity, administrative, political, property ownership)? *Certainty of biological benefits:* If constructed as proposed, what is the likelihood that the biological benefits identified in questions 1-8?

Design Projects: *Certainty of successful implementation:* Does the proponent have clear goals, and a solid understanding of and ability to overcome all of the challenges involved in designing a feasible project? More complex environments, complex designs, and unproven designs generally have a lower certainty of success. Design projects that will require coordination of multiple disciplines, or projects with sponsors that do not understand the required disciplines generally have a lower certainty of success. *Certainty of biological benefits:* Are there clear and specific biological goals for the design that would yield the biological benefits identified in questions 1-8? What is the likelihood that a design can achieve the biological goals?

Assessment projects: *Certainty of successful implementation:* How likely is the assessment to identify potential future projects that would be feasible given physical, administrative, and political constraints? Would potential future projects identified by the assessment be achievable at a reasonable cost? *Certainty of biological benefits:* What is the importance of the assessment to planning future restoration (i.e. will the information provided in the assessment have a significant impact on future restoration decisions)? How likely is the assessment to identify potential future projects that would achieve the biological benefits identified above?

Protection projects:

- *Certainty of successful implementation:* Degree of real estate interests secured, future property management, and likelihood of a sale actually closing.
 - What degree of real estate interests are being secured? From highest to lowest certainty: Fee simple, Deed Restriction, Easement held by government agency, easement held by private entity

- How will the property be managed into the future? Will there be regular inspections and a commitment to maintain (garbage, weeds, trespass)?
- Stage of agreement - From highest to lowest certainty: option agreement, purchase and sale agreement, appraisal completed and reviewed by seller, written correspondence discussing price, SRFB acknowledgement letter only
- Type of Seller – From highest to lowest certainty: government agency, individual with high motivation to sell, small business, corporation (higher for bank owned properties) , individual with low motivation to sell, estate, unresolved estate or high potential for unresolved estate
- Grant applicant – From highest to lowest certainty: government agency with real estate professionals and real estate policies, established real estate/land trust with a history of purchases of this type, government agency w/o in house real estate professionals, new or young land trust with little experience, other private organizations.
- Complexity of sale – From highest to lowest certainty: fee simple entire parcel with no other uses on parcel, Deed Restriction/Easement over a portion of parcel, fee simple with boundary line adjustment or subdivision required, fees simple with conformance to will or other testamentary document to divide property or proceeds from sale,
- *Certainty of biological benefits:* Will the habitat elements be protected into the future?
 - From highest to lowest certainty: Will be used solely for habitat with no other developed access, passive recreational uses allowed /encouraged, passive recreational uses allowed /encouraged with high intensity uses/urban areas adjacent.
 - From highest to lowest certainty: Property is surrounded by other properties already legally devoted to SRFB purposes and long-term management plan in place, property is surrounded by other properties currently zoned for and managed for compatible purposes, property surrounded/adjacent to properties incompatible and zoned with SRFB purposes.
 - Other things to consider – Risks posed by channel migration, risks posed by adjacent invasive species, risks posed by adjacent grazing practices, and other risks that would expose the habitat to potential degradation.

WF 3: BENEFIT TO COST – Is the proposed cost of the project reasonable with respect to the expected biological outcomes? This WF is a qualitative evaluation of the biological benefit of the project compared to the cost to SRFB and is not intended to require quantification of biological benefits. Projects with an average benefit/cost should be scored 1.0. If a score other than 1.0 is assigned by the TAG, there should be an explanation in the TAG meeting notes.

Note: WF 3 is not intended to evaluate if the proposed budget is a fair estimate of the work to be done. Although this is important, this topic should be addressed in the TAG evaluation form and not in the matrix.

WF 4: LONGEVITY OF BENEFIT – This WF considers the ability of the project to provide benefits in the long term and if the project will need additional resources for its benefits to persist.

- Will the projected benefits persist in the long term? For example:
 - More points if ecosystem processes (e.g. hydrology, sediment) will reinforce and sustain the benefits of the project, and fewer points if the project merely changes conditions that may

- revert to a degraded status over time. (Another way to think about this would be is the project addressing the cause or only a symptom?)
- Protection of investment. When relevant (e.g. riparian planting), more points if the project is on land managed by a public entity or land trust and dedicated to natural resource preservation, fewer points for other public land or private land protected by conservation easement, and least for private land with no conservation easement.
 - Will the project need additional input of resources in the long term, and what happens if those resources are not forthcoming? For example:
 - For riparian planting, will the project fail without a long-term commitment to weed management that has not been identified, committed to, and budgeted?
 - For a diversion, screen, or similar project, how much do the anticipated benefits depend on proper operation, and is the operation on ‘autopilot’, or is there a high susceptibility to human error (e.g. not opening a headgate at the right time, etc.). Also consider likelihood of proper maintenance and biological risk if maintenance does not occur.

APPENDIX H: TAG Evaluation Form

Proposal Title: _____

Proposal #: _____

For the following questions, please consider the factors relevant to the TAG's evaluation of the project. If the proposal is for acquisition, also consider the appraisal, habitat quality and urgency. The space on ESA liability does not need to be incorporated into TAG evaluation but information should be provided when appropriate for the CC to utilize in their review.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Biological Benefits		
Landowner Commitment		
Sequencing		
Budget		
Design		
Future Stewardship		
Other: Strengths, Uncertainties & Constraints		
Acquisition Specific		

What are the TAG recommended actions for improvement of proposal?

The below information does not need to be incorporated into TAG evaluation. Where appropriate, TAG should utilize their expertise to provide feedback for the Citizen Committee for use in their evaluation.

	Strengths	Weaknesses
ESA Liability		

Other wildlife		
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APPENDIX I: Citizen Committee Matrix and Guidance

Background:

The Citizen Committee evaluates projects proposed for SRFB funding based on their value to local communities. The Citizen Committee is made up of four representatives from each county in the lead entity (Kittitas, Yakima, and Benton) and the Yakama Nation, for a total of 16 members. Members are appointed by the YBFWRB Board of Directors following the procedures in its bylaws. Participants may represent counties, cities, conservation districts, tribes, environmental groups, business interests, landowners, citizens, volunteer groups, regional fish enhancement groups, and other stakeholder groups.

The Citizen Committee ensures that projects identified as biological priorities also have the community support they need to succeed. The committee works together to evaluate how the community's social, cultural and economic values are incorporated into salmon recovery projects. This is a vital part of ensuring that community support for salmon recovery increases over time.

The Citizen Committee develops the final ranked project list that is then approved by the Board and submitted to the SRFB for funding. The Citizen Committee takes the ranked list provided by the TAG, and utilizes it as the starting point for the development of the final ranked list. The TAG ranking serves as the local evaluation of the biological benefits of the projects, which is the primary driver of SRFB investments. Projects may be moved up or down in rank on the final ranked habitat project list when the committee provides sufficient justification that the social, cultural, and economic values of a project warrant changing its position from that recommended by the TAG. Committee decisions shall be made by consensus; on those rare occasions when consensus cannot be reached, the Citizen Committee bylaws allow a decision to be made using a super-majority vote of those present of 65%. Note that the Board can remand the list to the Citizen Committee for reconsideration, but the Board cannot re-rank projects. This process is set up to meet the requirements of the state statute creating the SRFB and the Lead Entity program, and is designed to ensure that projects proposed for SRFB funding are technically solid, address priority issues, and are broadly supported by diverse community groups.

Scoring:

Citizen Committee members use the Community Evaluation and Ranking Matrix to determine how projects rate for multiple criteria in each of four categories; cultural and social, economic, context and organization, and partnerships and community support.

In this matrix, each criterion will be scored with a +1, 0, and – 1 assigned as follows:

- +1 = Project has a positive effect
- 0 = Project has no significant net effect
- -1 = Project has a negative effect

Scores are added to determine an overall positive or negative total for each project. The Citizen Committee uses these scores as they review the TAG ranked list and develop the final ranked habitat project list. A positive score means that a project has high community value, beyond what the TAG evaluated for benefits to salmon and habitat, and may be a candidate to move higher up the final ranked habitat project list. A negative score means that a project may have less community value, and may be a candidate for moving lower in the final ranked habitat project list. Note that a project with a total of zero (0) points, or slightly above or below zero points, may well be a solid project, the Citizen Committee score of 0 simply means that there is not a clear indication that the project's rank should be either raised or lowered as compared to the TAG recommendation.

Citizen Committee Matrix:

1. How does the project affect the Yakama Nation and its members?
2. How does the project affect agricultural interests?
3. How does the project affect recreational opportunities within the Basin?
4. How will the project change ESA liabilities for community members?
5. Does the project include a substantive benefit for wildlife or other habitat?
6. Does the project include substantive and compelling education and outreach components?
7. Are there economic effects associated with this project?
8. Are there specific elements of the project budget that either raise concerns or are particularly cost-effective?
9. How is the project coordinated with other past, present, and future actions?
10. Are the right partners involved to make the project succeed?
11. Are the landowners who are directly affected by the proposed project in strong support of this proposal?
12. At the current stage of the proposed project, is the project sponsor using SRFB funding to leverage other funding sources?

Guidance for Specific Questions:

Cultural & Social Considerations

1. How does the project affect the Yakama Nation and its members?

Citizen Committee members should consider project impacts to the protection of cultural resources, access for traditional activities and other benefits or issues of concern.

Elements of a project that benefit fish and their habitat should be considered neutral, positive points should be given for projects that create additional benefits or negative points for elements that create challenges for the Yakama Nation.

2. How does the project affect agricultural interests?

For agricultural operations, Citizen Committee members should consider project impacts to agricultural infrastructure, impacts on adjacent landowners, removal of land from agricultural production, impacts on agricultural water use and management, and other benefits or issues of concern. This is the space to evaluate whether there will be flood impacts that increase or decrease because of this project. Changes in ESA liability for community members should be evaluated separately under question 4 below and not as part of this question.

3. How does the project affect recreational opportunities within the Basin?

This question should foster discussion on how the project affects recreational opportunities within the Basin. Citizen Committee members should consider whether the project impacts access to recreational areas, impacts anglers, increases or reduces risk for recreationalists, and other benefits or issues of concern.

4. How will the project change ESA liabilities for community members?

Citizen Committee members should review TAG comments and utilize as the basis for their evaluation. The TAG will provide their consensus opinion on any changes to ESA liability but will not incorporate that information into their ranking.

CC members should focus on whether the project increases or decreases specific parties' potential liability for 'take' under the federal Endangered Species List (defined as harming of a listed species) – for example, if two projects are scored by the TAG as having similar biological benefits but one project significantly reduces a land manager's ESA liability and another does not, the CC may express a preference for the project that reduces community member ESA liability.

This is not the place to evaluate the broader biological benefits of the project to target species.

5. Does the project include a substantive benefit for wildlife or other habitat?

Citizen Committee members should review TAG comments and utilize as the basis for their evaluation. The TAG will provide their consensus opinion on any positives or negatives for wildlife or other habitat but will not incorporate that information into their ranking.

Citizen Committee members should focus on additional benefits to wildlife or other habitat noted by the TAG. For example, if two projects are scored by the TAG as having similar biological benefits for targeted fish species, but one project is likely to have additional benefits for wildlife, the CC may express a preference for the project with broader benefits for non-target species of interest to the community.

6. Does the project include substantive and compelling education and outreach components?

Consider whether the project proposes to involve students and the public in the project implementation, provide educational signage, serve as sites for outreach events and tours, or otherwise serve as a venue where the public can learn about and become engaged in salmon recovery. An example would be a project that hosts a classroom tour to learn about salmon recovery and/or habitat restoration projects.

Economic Considerations

7. Are there economic effects associated with this project?

Consider whether the project has significant economic impacts such as changing local infrastructure, creating or limiting recreational opportunities, creating or limiting (new or existing) economic opportunities and/or either increases or reduces the need for future investment in project maintenance or repair. For example, a floodplain restoration project that also reduces flood risk to existing developed areas would be given a positive point. A project that severely limits access to an existing recreational area may be given a negative point.

8. Are there specific elements of the project budget that either raise concerns or are particularly cost-effective?

The TAG has already incorporated the cost versus the biological benefit of the project into its ranking. This is the place for the Citizen Committee to reward projects that model particularly cost-effective approaches and/or to raise concerns about specific budget items that the Citizen Committee agree to be clearly unreasonable (either unrealistically low or too high). Match should be evaluated separately under question 12 below.

Project Context & Organization Considerations

9. How is the project coordinated with other past, present, and future actions?

Consider whether the project's benefits are dependent upon the sequencing of other actions and how the overall sequence affects the community. The Citizen Committee should review TAG notes on project sequencing and if all known actions that might influence a project positive or negatively have been identified, a zero may be given. A project should receive a positive point (+1) if it clearly complements ongoing or planned activities, and a negative point (-1) if the project is out of sequence with other actions in a way that would impact project efficacy and/or

unnecessarily complicate other activities of importance to the community. A zero should be used for project where sequencing is irrelevant. For example, a salmon recovery land acquisition that also enables a planned or in progress dike setback that reduces community flood risk would be given a positive point. A salmon recovery land acquisition that complicates a planned municipal infrastructure project would be given a negative point.

Partnerships & Community Support Considerations

10. Are the right partners involved to make the project successful?

Consider positive/neutral/negative aspects of the partnerships demonstrated in the proposal. Appropriate partners might be a water trust, conservation trust, riparian restoration experts, etc. This is also an opportunity for Citizen Committee members to consider community involvement in the project. For example, a project that is not only involving the right partners but also has strong community support may warrant a positive point (+1).

The following table is an example of how the two elements can be combined to derive a positive/neutral/negative score.

		Community Support and Involvement		
		Low	Med	High
Certainty that the right partners are involved	Low	-1	-1	0
	Med	-1	0	+1
	High	0	+1	+1

11. Are the landowners who are directly affected by the proposed project in strong support of this proposal?

Citizen Committee members should review the TAG comments related to landowner commitment on the TAG evaluation form. If the CC agrees the TAG has sufficiently captured pros and cons, a zero should be given. If not, CC members should use the guidance below.

A proposal should receive a positive score (+1) when there is clear landowner support for the project. This can be shown through involvement in project development, in-kind or cash support, etc. Projects that complete the minimum related to landowner commitment (i.e. signed landowner acknowledgement form) should receive a neutral score (0). A proposal that is missing the signed landowner acknowledgement form(s) at the time of the TAG meeting and/or has landowner opposition should receive a negative point (-1).

12. At the current stage of the proposed project, is the project sponsor using SRFB funding to leverage other funding sources?

Consider the project assessment, design, and implementation.

The project should receive a positive point (+1) if the sponsor demonstrates that they are using SRFB funds to leverage significant amounts from other funding sources (only 15% of which needs to be claimed for match within the SRFB grant), and/or the sponsor shows that they have received in-kind and/or financial support from the landowner or other source not generally dedicated to salmon recovery. An average match should receive a neutral point (0). This is the only question in which only a neutral or positive score are an option.

Please note: Project sponsors are required to submit reimbursements with the same percentage of match they put into PRISM. (i.e. if they designated a 35% match in PRISM, they would need to show receipts for 35% of every reimbursement request.) Because this can be an administrative headache, many sponsors list additional match beyond what is required in a separate column in their budget spreadsheet. Be sure to check the budget spreadsheet and not just the numbers noted in PRISM to ensure accurate match.

APPENDIX J: Amendment Request Form

SRFB AMENDMENT REQUEST SRFB Subcommittee (or RCO Director) Decision

Project Name:
Project Number:
Project Sponsor:
Lead Entity:
Ranking by Lead Entity:
Source of Funding:
SRFB Funds:
Sponsor Match:
Project Total:

Request:

Background:

Attach maps, any letters of support, LE support document, etc.

Staff Recommendation:

SRFB Subcommittee (or RCO Director) Decision: