

APPENDIX H: 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 CC will base its scoring of project benefits on the contents of the application and not on other knowledge that the committee members may have that is not included in the application. CC members are encouraged to share benefits of a project that they don't see reflected in the application with the sponsor at sponsor presentations and site tours; this gives the sponsor an opportunity to add that information to the final application.

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

Scores are added together 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 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 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 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 (beyond contributing to salmon recovery)?
2. How does the project affect agricultural interests?
3. How does the project affect recreational opportunities within the basin?
4. Will the project significantly increase or decrease ESA liabilities, or have no significant effect?
5. Will the project have significantly more benefit, similar benefits, or significantly less benefit for other wildlife (besides target species) and their habitat, as compared to a typical restoration project?
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 people/groups/authorities involved to make the project succeed?
11. Does the project have community support?
12. Are the landowners who are directly affected by the proposed project in strong support of this proposal?
13. Is the project sponsor bringing in other non-SRFB funding to support the project?

Guidance for Specific Questions

General

Project Strengths and Shortcomings

Consider *noteworthy* strengths and/or shortcomings of the project to inform committee scoring discussions.

Is there anything the CC would recommend to improve the project or help it be successful?

This question is not meant to encourage the CC to go looking for something to recommend; rather, to check whether there's any weakness of the final application that rises to the level that the CC would like to formally recommend a change or addition. The committee has already given feedback earlier in the process, after all.

In rare cases, the CC may place a condition on a project for funding; that may arise from a strong recommendation.

Cultural & Social Considerations

1. How does the project affect the Yakama Nation and its members (beyond contributing to salmon recovery)?

Consider project impacts to the protection of cultural resources, access for traditional activities, traditional food/plant gathering, and other benefits or issues of concern. The committee should rely heavily on input from representatives from the Yakama Nation for scoring.

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

2. How does the project affect agricultural interests?

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 to agricultural interests 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. Consider whether the project impacts access to recreational areas, recreational non-tribal hunting and gathering, impacts anglers, increases or reduces risk for recreationalists, and other benefits or issues of concern.

4. Will the project significantly increase or decrease ESA liabilities, or have no significant effect?

NOTE: Scoring this project is unintuitive: increasing liability means a negative score, while decreasing means a positive score.

Consider whether the project increases or decreases potential liability for 'take' under the federal Endangered Species Act (defined as harming of a listed species). Also consider if the project lowers the cost and/or complexity of ESA regulatory compliance. Does the project change ESA liabilities in a way that makes it safer, easier, or cheaper for community members to pursue desired activities?

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

Review any TAG comments from the TAG qualitative evaluation form regarding project impacts on ESA liability for help with scoring this question. (While the TAG may generate an opinion on any changes to ESA liability, they don't incorporate that information into their ranking; it is just to help the CC with their scoring.)

5. Will the project have significantly more benefit (+1), similar benefits (0), or significantly less benefit (-1) for other wildlife (besides target species) and their habitat, as compared to a typical restoration project?

Consider benefits to other wildlife (besides target species) and their habitat.

Review any TAG comments from the TAG qualitative evaluation form regarding project impacts on wildlife and their habitat for help with scoring this question. (While the TAG may generate an opinion on any impacts on wildlife and their habitat, they don't incorporate that information into their ranking; it is just to help the CC with their scoring.)

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 increasing or reducing 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 also incorporates cost-to-biological-benefit of projects into its ranking. This is the place for the CC to reward projects that model particularly cost-effective approaches or have high benefits relative to cost for other public interests (e.g., reduced flood risk, increased fishing access), and/or to factor in concerns about specific budget items that the CC considers to be clearly unreasonable (either unrealistically low or too high).

(Match should be evaluated separately under question #12.)

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 (including non-habitat recovery related actions/projects; e.g., municipal, residential, road infrastructure, etc) and how the overall sequence affects the community: Is this the right time to do the project? Is there another action that needs to be completed beforehand? Would the benefits immediately be achieved if the project is implemented, or would another action need to be completed first (e.g., a passage project downstream)? Is there a specific reason that doing the project now will be more effective?

The Citizen Committee should review TAG notes on project sequencing and if all known actions that might influence a project positively 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 a 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 people/groups/authorities involved to make the project succeed?

Consider positive/neutral/negative aspects of the partnerships demonstrated in the proposal. Does the project team (sponsor and partners) have the authority, expertise, and capacity needed for success for the project? Appropriate partners might be a water trust, conservation trust, riparian restoration experts, utilities, municipalities, etc.

If the committee gives a -1 for this criteria, they will provide written explanation.

11. Does the project have strong community support?

Consider community support for the project. Has the project sponsor shown strong support from portions of the community? Are there community needs or concerns that need to be addressed? Are there reasons to expect lack of community support would negatively impact the project? Has the sponsor done community outreach, or does their project proposal include plans to do community outreach?

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

Refer to the Landowner Acknowledgement summary table in the meeting packet. Consider the TAG comments related to landowner commitment on the TAG Qualitative Evaluation Form.

If not, see the following:

A proposal should receive a positive score (+1) when there is clear above-average 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 (including from adjacent landowners who are directly affected by the project) should receive a negative score (-1).

13. Is the project sponsor bringing in other non-SRFB funding to support the project?

Refer to the SRFB cost estimate spreadsheet, which should be an attachment in PRISM for each project.

The project should receive a positive score (+1) if the sponsor demonstrates that they are using SRFB funds to leverage significant amounts from other funding sources and/or the sponsor shows that they have received in-kind and/or financial support from the landowner or other sources not generally dedicated to salmon recovery. This question is meant for the CC to reward projects that are drawing in other funding sources to use SRFB funding efficiently. This is the only question in which only a neutral or positive score are the options.

Citizen Committee Matrix Scoring Sheet

General

Noteworthy Project Strengths	
Noteworthy Project Shortcomings	
Is there anything the CC would recommend to improve the project or help it be successful?	

Cultural & Social Considerations

#1 How does the project affect the Yakama Nation and its members (beyond contributing to salmon recovery)?

#2. How does the project affect agricultural interests?

#3. How does the project affect recreational opportunities within the basin?

#4. Will the project significantly increase or decrease ESA liabilities, or have no significant effect?

#5. Will the project have significantly more benefit, similar benefits, or significantly less benefit for other wildlife (besides target species) and their habitat, as compared to a typical restoration project?

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

Economic Considerations

#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?

Project Context & Organization Considerations

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

Partnerships & Community Support Considerations

#10. Are the right people/groups/authorities involved to make the project succeed?

#11. Does the project have strong community support?

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

#13. Is the project sponsor bringing in other non-SRFB funding to support the project?

TOTAL

APPENDIX H.1: Citizen Committee Criteria – Example Form for Sponsors

The Yakima Lead Entity encourages you to provide a document spelling out which Citizen Committee scoring criteria your project addresses (and/or is neutral on and thus should not be dinged for). This helps the CC to be fully aware of how you have addressed their criteria in your application. The CC closely reviews this document and it often improves project scores, which may be what gets your project over the funding line.

Criteria	Does your project address this criteria? Y/ N / N/a	How? / Where is this answer found elsewhere in your application?
How does the project affect the Yakama Nation and its members (beyond contributing to salmon recovery)?		
How does the project affect agricultural interests?		
How does the project affect recreational opportunities within the basin?		
Will the project significantly increase or decrease ESA liabilities, or have no significant effect?		
Will the project have significantly more benefit, similar benefits, or significantly less benefit for other wildlife (besides target species) and their habitat, as compared to a typical restoration project?		
Does the project include substantive and compelling education and outreach components?		

Are there economic effects associated with this project?		
Are there specific elements of the project budget that either raise concerns or are particularly cost-effective?		
How is the project coordinated with other past, present, and future actions?		
Are the right people/groups/authorities involved to make the project succeed?		
Does the project have community support?		
Are the landowners who are directly affected by the proposed project in strong support of this proposal?		
Are you, the project sponsor, bringing in other non-SRFB funding to support the project?		