

Salmon Recovery Funding Board

Individual Comment Form



Lead Entity:	WRIA 8
Project Number:	15-1056
Project Name:	Meadowdale Beach Park
Project Sponsor:	Snohomish County Parks
Grant Manager:	Elizabeth Butler

	Date	Status ¹
Post-Application	10/1/15	NMI
Final	10/27/15	POC

PROJECT SUMMARY *(for Review Panel reference only)*

This project will producing a preliminary design as part of a larger \$1,555,000 design project for replacing a culvert under Burlington Northern tracks with a multi-span bridge and restoring the channel habitat for juvenile Chinook, coho, and chum salmon, as well as cutthroat trout and other fish species. A feasibility study is currently underway to define the preferred alternative. Another project feature is to enhance ADA and provide longer seasonal access to the park with interpretive signage offering educational benefits. From the site visit it appears the culvert is located near MHHW. The main fish benefit is the removal of the culvert and restoring nearshore habitat function. Counts of adult coho, chum and cutthroat trout indicate the culvert is not an upstream passage barrier. The culvert restricts the natural transport of sediment downstream.

FINAL REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: 10/28/15

Final Project Status: POC

Review Panel Member(s): Review Panel

1. If the project is a POC, please identify the SRFB criteria used to determine the status of the project:

4. The project has a high cost relative to the anticipated benefits and the project sponsor failed to justify the costs to the satisfaction of the review panel.

2. If the project is Conditioned, the following language will be added to the project agreement:

3. Other comments:

Not only are the design costs very high for the proposed project, but implementing the design will ultimately cost between \$10 to \$15 million to improve passage and habitat conditions for fish in a 1-acre pocket estuary area. The \$10 to \$15 million cost per acre is significantly higher than other estuary and shoreline restoration projects submitted for SRFB funding in the past. For example, one of the highest cost SRFB-funded nearshore projects presented to date is the Fir Island Farm restoration project (SRFB #12-1205), which is projected to cost about \$17 million but restores approximately 130 acres of nearshore/estuary habitat for a cost of about \$130,000 per acre. The total costs for a similar type of project to replace an active railroad culvert with a bridge and improve public park amenities (Titlow Estuary Restoration) is estimated to be about \$1.2 million per acre. The Review Panel recognizes that only a portion of the project is focused on salmon benefits and that the sponsor, therefore, has asked for only a portion of the design costs; however, the review panel believes that the project’s relative benefit to recovery of Puget Sound Chinook Salmon is still not commensurate with the project costs, particularly in the context of implementing the entire project.

¹ CLEAR: Cleared to proceed; CONDITIONED: Cleared to proceed with a condition; NMI: Needs More Information; POC: Project of Concern; NOTEWORTHY: Exemplary Project

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POST-APPLICATION REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: 10/1/15

Project Status: NMI

Review Panel Member(s): Full Panel

1. If the project is a POC, Form identify the SRFB criteria used to determine the status of the project:
2. If the project is a POC, identify the changes that would make this a technically sound project:
3. If the project is Conditioned, the following language will be added to the project agreement:
4. General comments:

The Review Panel still has concerns about the project budget and feels the Sponsor needs to further justify the costs. The design costs seem to be high by a magnitude of 10 when compared to other large construction projects. For projects of this nature (high construction costs), justification of design costs using a percentage of the construction costs may not be appropriate. Please note that cost was a concern when the project design was proposed as final at a cost of \$1,125,000 and now a Preliminary Design is proposed at a cost of \$1,550,000.



SPONSOR RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS:

If your project is not cleared (i.e. has a status of NMI, Conditioned, or POC) you must update your proposal, PRISM questions, or attachments as necessary to address the review panel's comments. Use track changes when updating your proposal. Fill out the section at the end of your project proposal to document how you responded to comments.

DRAFT APPLICATION / SITE VISIT REVIEW PANEL COMMENTS

Date: 4/29/15

Project Site Visit?

Yes No

Review Panel Member(s): Powers, Toth

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

A letter from BNSF noting their commitment to proceed with the project. The design costs seem very high. The main fish benefit is from the bridge placement that allows for expansion of the estuary area and formation of a more natural nearshore area. This bridge placement appears to be contingent on a formal commitment with BNSF. What role will BNSF play in the development and review of preliminary and final designs? Please justify the \$660,000 item for bridge design. What are the tasks which result in this cost? Also, for the \$75,000 for the survey? What new information is needed in addition to the feasibility study?

One of the fish benefits listed is for coho. What are the summer rearing conditions in terms of flow and water temperature in Lund's Gulch Creek? Please provide more information on the potential relocation or remeandering of the lower 300 feet of Lund's Gulch Creek. Will the width of the riparian area and the type of forest along the creek be sufficient to provide for a long-term source of large wood, or will wood have to be periodically added to promote better habitat conditions?

Urban streams generally have flashier runoff with greater flow and sediment transport than natural streams due to the increased amount of impervious area in the basin. Are there actions that can be taken in the upper basin area or in the stream corridor to reduce the impacts of the increased runoff and sediment inputs? What are the water quality conditions in Lund's Gulch Creek?

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2. Missing Pre-application information.

For a final design proposal there should be conceptual level plans available to review. Specifically, a bridge opening identified that supports restoration of habitat-forming processes.

3. General Comments:

The overall restoration plan seems to have good benefits for fish, but the costs for construction and design are very high (about \$10 million in total). It is unclear whether the costs are too high relative to the benefits provided by the project.

The project sponsor is encouraged to contact Chelan County Natural Resources Department to learn from their experiences working with BNSF in the replacement of culverts with bridges in Nason Creek (Nason Creek Lower White Pine Floodplain Reconnection Assessment - Project No. 09-1472).

4. Staff Comments:

Please be sure to address all comments I provided when I reviewed the application in May (if you haven't already done so), along with completing all other final application requirements listed in Section 3 of RCO Manual 18 http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_18.pdf. All changes to your proposal should be made using "Track Changes" in Word.



SPONSOR RESPONSE INSTRUCTIONS:

Revise your project proposals using "track changes" and update any relevant PRISM questions and attachments. Fill out the section at the end of your project proposal to document how you responded to comments.