

AGENDA

WRIA 14 Lead Entity Workgroup

Mason Conservation District Board Room

450 W Business Park Road, Shelton, WA 98584

1/16/2020

10:00 – Welcome and Introductions

10:05 – Review Grant Round and Timeline

10:10 – Letter of Intent Presentations

- Sponsors will briefly present each Letter of Intent followed by an opportunity for Committee Members to ask questions and provide feedback.

11:30 – 2020 4-Year Workplan Review and Approval

- Information from Letters of Intent will be used to update the 4-Year Workplan prior to the meeting
- Committee members and sponsors will have an opportunity to update existing projects or add projects to the list. Proposed updates in writing to the Lead Entity prior to the meeting are encouraged.

11:55 – Public Comment

12:00 – Adjourn

WRIA 14 - Lead Entity Committee Meeting

Minutes 01/16/2020

Name	Affiliation
Evan Bauder	Mason CD
Ryan Williams	Mason CD
Brenna Thompson	Great Peninsula Conservancy
Laurence Reeves	Capitol Land Trust
Scott Steltzner	Squaxin Island Tribe
Brian Combs	SPSSEG
Dan Calvert	Puget Sound Partnership
Gary Schuyten	Citizen
Barbara Adkin	Mason CD
Josh Lambert	RCO
Alissa Ferrell	RCO
Allison Cook	WDFW
Randy Neatherlin	Mason County
Erik Schwartz	Mason County Public Works
Darcey Hughes	Forterra
Shelly Spalding	Citizen
Kay Caromile	RCO

Welcome and Introductions

EB led a round of introductions; a high number of attendees present given that this day is for project sponsors to present their Letters of Intent (LOIs) for the 2020 SRFB grant round to the committee.

Review Grant Round and Timeline

EB provided a reminder about the 2020 grant round timeline, including the shortened review period between project sponsors and the Review Panel.

Letter of Intent Presentations

Sponsors presented LOIs to the committee. A total of 10 LOIs were submitted, eight for regular Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funds, and two proposals for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund (PSAR) Large Capital (Large Cap) Projects dollars. Summaries of the presentations are presented as follows:

1. Skookum Inlet Forest and Shore Protection Phase 2

Darcey Hughes (DH) of Forterra presented a project to complete an acquisition project around Skookum Inlet. The project aims to acquire 111 acres as a second phased approach. [The original 2016 project, which had planned to acquire this portion, was not fully successful in terms of funding, so Forterra seeks to phase their acquisition instead. They will seek approval from the LE Committee to make a scope change request to their 2016 project (to be thought of Phase 1)]. This project aims to protect forestland, riparian habitat, and ~1620 feet of shoreline on Little Skookum Inlet via a conservation easement to extinguish development rights and to expand no-cut riparian buffers to the salmon-bearing streams and

marine shoreline on the property. Forterra is seeking \$198,622 from SRFB a project estimated at \$710,244 (remaining match).

The committee discussed the high dollar value per acre of this site, and clarified the details of riparian buffers to be implemented with this project. The committee also discussed the challenge of seeking such a high percent match, especially since this project may not be very competitive with the ESRP program, and some members provided the recommendation to seek a higher request from SRFB with a lower percent match.

Goldsborough and Mill Creek Riparian Restoration

Ryan Williams of Mason CD presented on the Goldsborough and Mill Creek Riparian Restoration project. This project aims to maintain past planting projects and continue knotweed control in Mill and Goldsborough Creek that need revegetation after knotweed control efforts. Mason CD seeks \$80,000 from SRFB, with a \$15,000 secured match.

The committee asked if the creeks have been fully mapped for knotweed and RW confirmed they had. The committee noted the challenge of these sorts of progress to demonstrate clear progress/goals if an ongoing program, as SRFB may not want to fund repetitive weed control efforts if they don't appear to be strategic or re-treating the same areas. RW confirmed this project builds on continued strategic efforts and this project is important in sustaining the progress made along these creeks.

Harstine Island Bulkhead Removal Project

Ryan Williams of Mason CD presented on the Harstine Island Bulkhead Removal Project, a project to implement marine shoreline habitat enhancements on a private property on the west shore of Harstine Island. Construction would involve: (1) removal of ~147 linear feet (LF) of wood piling bulkhead adjacent to a small estuary, (2) removal and disposal of creosote-treated pilings and trash fill, and (3) re-establishing native marine riparian vegetation in approximately 1500 square foot area along the shoreline bank. Design and permit submission for this project will be complete by summer 2020; this proposal aims for late summer 2021 construction. Mason CD seeks \$42,398 SRFB funds, with a \$7,500 match already secured.

The committee discussed some of the challenges with creosote removal, including if creosote pilings are cut, they will leach. Brian Combs (BC) recommended that BMPs for creosote removal included to remove pilings entirely if possible, and if cutting is necessary, to cut below the mudline, and that there are no good ways to cap the area. BC recommended following up with the Ecology Toxics program, and DNR's creosote removal resources.

West Oakland Bay Restoration & West Oakland Bay Restoration (Large Cap)

Scott Steltzner (SS) of Squaxin Island Tribe (SIT) provided an overview of proposals for SRFB and PSAR Large Capital projects. The proposed project will complete the north salt marsh lobe project, Component 3C of Phase 2 of the existing tidal restoration project. Restoration components will include the removal of 1/3 mile of bulkhead and the enhancement of 17 acres of saltmarsh to promote the

growth of intertidal vegetation. The SRFB ask for this project was for \$333,334 and the PSAR Large Cap request was for \$6,077,362. A \$1 million National Coastal Wetlands grant has been applied for match.

The committee discussed with SS about the potential for funds to be used in a scalable fashion; that is, if the project(s) were only funded in part, each dollar would go to support x cubic feet of sediment, etc. EB clarified the need to differentiate the scope requests for the SRFB and PSAR proposals.

Skookum Creek Valley Phase 2 Conservation (Large Cap)

SS also introduced SIT's project for PSAR Large Cap. SIT proposes to purchase 322 acres in the Skookum Creek watershed to protect and enhance fish and wildlife species. This includes 170 acres of wetlands and almost three miles of Skookum Creek and tributaries. Skookum Creek supports healthy runs of fall chum, a declining but stable run of coho, an unknown population of ESA listed steelhead trout and an extremely strong run of cutthroat trout. In Phase 1 of this project, 164 acres were purchased and conserved. Another 163 acres are being negotiated at this time. The SRFB request is for \$1,572,095 with a \$549,000 anticipated match. SS discussed with the committee that some properties in this area have been difficult to negotiate.

Twin Rivers Ranch Restoration

Laurence Reeves (LR) introduced Capitol Land Trust's restoration project at Twin Rivers. This project is in the final phase, the goal of removing structures and septic tanks from the residential area of the property, while planting the 5-acre residential area with native vegetation. Multiple earlier phases have occurred on this property following CLT's acquisition in 2010, with the removal of the house, foundation and many of the surrounding outbuildings happening in the last two years. Using other funding sources not included in this proposal, the bridge will be removed and the driveway re-routed to avoid crossing Cranberry Creek. This project seeks to remove the last residential structure, a mobile home, and decommission two existing septic tanks. It will also include invasive vegetation treatment and native vegetation planting in the former residential area (approx. 5 acres), including the driveway and bridge area. The SRFB request is for \$106,250 for a total project cost of \$125,000. LR mentioned that the bridge causes a 33% blockage. The committee discussed with LR the proximal salt marsh site that could serve as a reference site for Oakland Bay.

Skookum RM 6.5 Restoration

Brian Combs (BC) introduced SPSSEG's projects on Skookum Creek. This stream and riparian restoration project will treat both main-stem and off-channel habitat along this reach of Skookum Creek at River Mile (RM) 6.5. Within the project area, a network of groundwater channels occurs on the right-bank of Skookum Creek. These channels are known to be used by rearing juvenile salmonids however the condition of this off-channel area has been semi-degraded by reed canary grass, lack of native riparian structure, and a lack of floodplain roughness. SPSSEG proposes to remove red canary grass sod and to place large wood pieces in strategic locations in the floodplain to provide roughness to maintain the groundwater channels. Additional riparian work will include removing blackberry and reed canary grass thickets, and planting native trees and shrubs. Within the main-stem channel along this reach, logs and wood occur sporadically however, the quantity and quality of wood is lacking compared to historical

conditions. They propose to place approximately ten large wood jams or clusters on both sides of the banks to increase wood occurrence and habitat diversity. Another off-channel treatment area occurs on the right-bank of the creek, where they propose to treat reed canary grass and improve off-channel wetland conditions. Along both sides of the creek within the project area they propose to plant native riparian trees, particularly native conifers, to promote future wood recruiting and mature riparian conditions. SPSSEG is asking for \$195,000 from SRFB.

Skookum RM 0.9 Design

BC also introduced SPSSEG's project on RM 0.9 on Skookum Creek. This is a design/planning project for off-channel and in-stream elements. A distinct feature in this reach is an off-channel area on the right bank of Skookum Creek, likely a former oxbow, which has become largely disconnected from the main stem of Skookum Creek due to channel incision and a lack of roughening in Skookum. The goal of the project is to re-connect the off-channel area during moderate to high flows to provide rearing and flood stage habitat for juvenile salmonids, and to reduce scour effects in the main stem. In order to connect the off-channel habitat, excavation and sediment removal will likely be needed. Additionally, the addition of in-stream roughness, likely wood pieces, in Skookum Creek, may be needed. This planning project will yield a Preliminary Design and feasible options for restoration. SPSSEG is asking for \$49,000.

Coulter Creek Estuary Acquisition

Brenna Thompson (BT) of the Great Peninsula Conservancy (GPC) introduced an acquisition project at Coulter Creek, to protect approximately 4.5 acres of undeveloped property through fee simple acquisition. The primary project goal is to protect intact shoreline and high-quality nearshore habitat from development to support salmonid recovery within Puget Sound. By protecting this property now, GPC will prevent habitat degradation from conversion to residential development and the associated impacts of shoreline armoring, overwater structures, increased impervious surfaces, and loss of riparian cover. GPC is seeking a \$300,000 SRFB request, for an anticipated total project cost of \$350,000.

The committee was reminded that this project was outside the geography of WRIA 14, just on the border of WRIA 14 and 15, and that GPC submitted to WRIA 14 given the close proximity of the project in question, that the project was in-line with WRIA 14's strategy. Some concern from members regarding this project was raised during and after the committee meeting by email about WRIA 14's Process Guide not having any rules about how to dictate such a situation or determine whether the LE committee can reject/accept LOIs. The committee discussed the value of the land and the ecological benefit it may provide.

4-Year Workplan Review and Approval

The 4-Year Workplan (4YWP) will be updated to reflect current 2020 proposals. In addition, EB/LEC will reach out to project sponsors to request updates or modifications to the 4YWP.

Public comment

No public comments were recorded.

Adjourn