

Summary of RCO Grant Funds for the Orca Task Force

Update from the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

This update demonstrates how Chinook recovery projects benefit Southern Resident Killer Whale recovery as described in the Executive Order:

- PSP, WDFW, GSRO—By December 15, 2018, demonstrate how Chinook recovery projects benefit Southern Resident recovery, beginning in the 2018 grant round, for the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund, the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Program, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration program and the Washington Coastal Restoration Initiative.

The Recreation and Conservation Office, in partnership with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP), administers several grant programs that support salmon recovery efforts, especially by funding on-the-ground salmon recovery projects. These six programs are:

- Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant program (SRFB, state and federal funds)
- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration grant program (PSAR)
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration grant program (ESRP)
- Washington Coastal Restoration Initiative. (WCRI)
- Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFPP)
- Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB)

The primary purpose of the projects funded through these grant programs is to increase salmon abundance or resiliency by improving one or more of the following: floodplains, estuaries, nearshore habitat, riparian habitat, fish passage, stream flow, instream habitat and other key elements of salmon habitat. The grant programs focus on all species of salmon in all of their life cycles stages – several of which comprise the diet of the Southern Resident Killer Whales. While all salmon are important to Southern Resident Killer Whales, their primary diet is Chinook salmon. Improving habitat is a key component or action for the survival of Chinook juvenile and adult fish in our rivers, estuaries and nearshore environments. Chinook salmon are the targeted species in about 80 percent of the projects funded through the four programs identified in the Governor’s Executive Order: SRFB, PSAR, ESRP, and WCRI. There are currently 304 funded projects restoring or protecting Chinook salmon habitat funded in the current or previous budgets over the last 5 of years.

Currently Funded Salmon Projects

Primary Program	Total # of Projects	RCO Total Funding	Projects Targeting Chinook	RCO Funding Targeting Chinook
Coast Rst Initiative Projects	24	\$ 14,346,006.00	17	\$ 11,363,440.00
Estuary & Salmon Restoration	14	\$ 10,369,954.00	13	\$ 10,290,655.00
PSAR Large Capital Projects	5	\$ 23,356,286.00	5	\$ 23,356,286.00
Puget Sound Acq. & Restoration	95	\$ 72,467,727.00	84	\$ 67,532,620.00
Salmon Federal & State	246	\$ 62,133,080.00	185	\$ 49,394,541.00
Totals	384	\$ 182,673,053.00	304	\$ 161,937,542.00

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For 2018, there are two opportunities for salmon recovery projects to be funded: The first includes projects funded or to be approved with funding available in the 2017-2019 capital budget and the second opportunity is project recruitment and approval for the 2019-2021 capital budget request. Most of the projects receiving 17-19 funds have already been approved and funded with the exception of \$18 million remaining for the 2018 annual Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant round, with decisions to be made in December 2018. As of August 10, there are 140 applications that total 28.3 million being evaluated for this \$18 million; of those projects, 105 benefit Chinook salmon.

2018 SRFB Grant Round Proposals (2017-2019 Funding)

Primary Program	Total # of Projects	RCO Total Funding	Projects Targeting Chinook	Requested Amt Targeting Chinook	RCO Total Funding Available
Salmon State Projects	140	\$ 28,393,000.00	105	\$ 23,522,000.00	\$18,000,000

The second opportunity for funding includes projects proposed in 2018 for funding in the 2019-21 Budget. Currently, in the three programs (PSAR, ESRP, and WCRI) there are a total of 132 projects being prioritized at the local watershed level totaling \$110 million. Of these applications, 119 projects (90 percent) are specifically targeting chinook habitat, totaling \$93.9 million in request. Cost share or match is not included in this analysis but that data is available. Following is a summary of these applications:

2018 Proposals for PSAR, WCRI, and ESRP (2019 – 2021 biennium requests)

Primary Program	Total # of Projects	RCO Total Funding	Projects Targeting Chinook	Requested Amt Targeting Chinook
Coast Rst Initiative Projects	27	\$ 21,393,760.00	19	\$ 11,700,995.00
Estuary & Salmon Restoration	36	\$ 18,423,000.00	36	\$ 17,420,000.00
PSAR Large Capital Projects	11	\$ 46,207,214.00	9	\$ 41,394,605.00
PSAR	58	\$ 24,328,000.00	55	\$ 23,375,000.00
Totals	132	\$ 110,351,974.00	119	\$ 93,890,600.00

In addition to these grant programs with pre-approved project lists, the Salmon Recovery Funding Board will be recommending a budget request to address its grant rounds in the 2019-21 biennium. The SRFB conducts annual grant rounds combining state and federal funds after budgets are approved. The SRFB has proposed a capital budget request of \$88.9 million, which along with federal funds would total approximately \$126.5 million for the 2019-21 biennium. This amount is expected to result in approximately 200 projects in 2019 and another 200 in 2020, for a total of approximately 400 salmon recovery projects. Based on the history of funding by the SRFB, it is expected that 75% of these projects would target Chinook salmon.

The Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board (FBRB) received \$19.7 million in the 2017-2019 capital budget. Thirteen high priority fish passage projects will be accomplished, from a list of 86 projects submitted for consideration in 2017-2019. During the 2018 project solicitation process, 60 proposals were submitted to correct 75 barriers, for a total request of \$26.7 million for the 2019-2021 biennium. This program is intended to remove barriers to fish passage throughout the state.

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And finally, the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) has a waiting list of 1100 applicants to remove fish passage barriers on small forest landowners' properties. The \$5 million in the current biennium is expected to eliminate approximately 35 barriers. The budget request for 2019-21 is expected to be \$20 million, which is expected to remove 140 barriers.

In summary, the majority of projects that are currently active, awaiting funding decision, or proposed for funding (2019-21) through the salmon recovery grant programs at the Recreation and Conservation Office benefit Chinook salmon populations. Specifically:

- 80 percent of projects currently funded in the four programs identified in the Executive Order benefit Chinook.
- 82 percent of projects proposed for future funding in the four programs identified in the Executive Order benefit Chinook.

RCO has built a dashboard that shows data regarding salmon recovery projects that target Chinook salmon in the four programs identified in the Executive Order. It should be noted that these programs are not focused solely on Chinook salmon but rather high priority projects for recovery or conservation of all salmon species across the state. The interactive on-line "[data dashboard](#)" depicts historic and future funding opportunities in support of Chinook recovery (best viewed using Google Chrome or Firefox).

Fact sheets about each of the grant programs and the general project categories (estuary, nearshore, floodplain, habitat, fish passage, stream flow and acquisitions) can be found at the RCO website: [Fact Sheets](#).

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