ESTUARY & SALMON RESTORATION PROGRAM

Advancing nearshore protection and restoration

Request for Project Pre-Proposals revised September 5, 2012

2013 Investment Plan

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PROGRAM OVERVIEW

CONTACT INFORMATION

Questions regarding this RFP should be directed towards:

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PURPOSE OF THE REQUEST FOR PRE-PROPOSALS

The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program is seeking project pre-proposals for nearshore protection and restoration projects in Puget Sound. Proposed project actions will be screened for basic eligibility then competitively evaluated based on assessment of completed project costs and benefits. A subset of proposals will be eligible to submit a full proposal. A competitive review of full proposals will result in a ranked project list. This ranked list along with funding recommendations will be the basis for ESRP's 2013 Investment Plan. A draft Investment Plan will be presented to the State Legislature in consideration of 2013-15 state appropriations.

Establishing Awards for Federal Funding Partnerships- The 2013 Investment Plan process will also be used as a competitive mechanism to distribute additional federal partnership funds from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Awards may include state, federal or a mix of fund sources.

SCHEDULE AND IMPORTANT DATES

TASK	DATE	DESCRIPTION
RFP published	Aug 17	Request for proposals to ESRP mailing list and posted on website
Workshops	Sept 12/13	One in person and at least one recorded web-ex workshop
Pre-proposals due	Sept 21	Expected length 2-3 pages
Invite to submit full	Oct 15	A ranked list of projects eligible to submit full proposals released
Presentations	Nov 5-9	Presentations by sponsors to technical evaluation team (Seattle/Edmonds area)
Final proposals due	Nov 28	Proposals submitted via HWS/Nearshore Data Site and PRISM
Draft investment plan	Dec 30	Ranked project list and funding recommendations published
Endorsement by LC	TBD	Funding recommendations presented to PSP Leadership Council at first meeting in 2013
Funding notification	TBD	Funding notification dependent upon final 2013-15 state budget. Funds available July 1, 2013

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) is housed within the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and is jointly administered by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) which functions as ESRP's fiscal agent. The mission of the ESRP is to ***restore the natural processes that create and sustain the Puget Sound nearshore ecosystem.*** We seek exemplary projects of regional importance that either: 1) provide substantial and cost effective nearshore ecosystem restoration or protection of ecosystem functions, goods, and services, or 2) advance learning about cutting-edge ecosystem restoration tactics and strategies for the purpose of increasing efficiency and effectiveness of future restoration. Our work is centered on the scientific principles and strategies of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP).

PROTECTING AND RESTORING NEARSHORE ECOSYSTEM PROCESSES

The nearshore ecosystem of Puget Sound is a dynamic environment strongly shaped by physical and ecological processes. PSNERP guidance suggests that projects designed to protect and restore the ecosystem processes that shape and sustain nearshore structure are most likely to provide sustained improvements in ecosystem functions, goods, and services, thereby justifying our capital investments in nearshore ecosystem projects. The broad restoration objectives identified by PSNERP and used by ESRP include:

1. Restore the size and quality of large river delta estuaries and the nearshore processes deltas support
2. Restore the number and quality of coastal embayments
3. Restore the size and quality of beaches and bluffs
4. Increase understanding of natural process restoration in order to improve effectiveness of program actions

PSNERP also defined the primary natural processes associated with the individual shoreform types in Puget Sound. The most competitive ESRP proposals will be those that employ management measures that can most fully addresses the source of degradation of these natural processes or that are focused on protection of intact areas. These include ***tidal flow and freshwater input for river deltas*****, coastal inlets and embayments; and sediment supply and tidal flow for beaches and barrier embayments.**

Beach Restoration- During previous grant competitions, beach projects that restore sediment supply and transport (e.g. shoreline armoring removal in sediment source areas) have been consistently under-represented in our portfolio yet are vital to fully address PSNERP's nearshore protection and restoration objectives. ***We strongly encourage projects that restore sediment supply to submit a pre-proposal.*** Up to $2.5 million in federal funds from EPA's National Estuary Program will be available, in addition to state funds, this type of project.

LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

The last of the restoration objectives identified above *"Increase understanding of natural process restoration in order to improve effectiveness of program actions"* is the basis for ESRP's Learning and Adaptive Management strategy which funds project-specific monitoring and other project "enhancements" or learning activities that improve our ability to efficiently and effectively restore ecosystems. In addition to a number of project monitoring

projects, examples of previously funded "learning" projects are development of river delta adaptive management objectives, and evaluation of tide gate function with respect to fish passage and use.

ESRP recognizes that funding programs play a critical role in improving restoration practices and that field implementation offers a critical opportunity to evaluate tactics and strategies. ESRP manages its project portfolio under an adaptive management model, by planning scientific investigations to resolve management questions important for project success. Through this process we have an opportunity to learn about cutting-edge ecosystem restoration tactics and strategies for the purpose of increasing efficiency and effectiveness of future activity.

Beginning with this 2012 grant cycle, ESRP is changing its approach to project enhancement, monitoring, project learning, and adaptive management. Requests to implement these types of learning projects, activities that go beyond the required basic project evaluation, will be considered 'learning projects'. For projects requesting more than $10,000 for monitoring or other learning activities you must complete a learning project pre-proposal separate from any other project proposal. Learning projects will be evaluated by a sub-set of our review team using a different set of criteria developed specifically for learning projects. Learning projects will compete against other learning projects for funds set aside specifically for these investments. By developing new criteria specially geared toward these types of projects, we will improve the rigor with which these proposals are evaluated and allow them to compete for funding against other similar projects.

ESRP PROGRAM GUIDANCE

In addition to the information contained in this RFP, additional program information can be found at the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program and PSNERP web pages. Available materials summarize our current understanding of the important processes and functions of the nearshore ecosystem as well as restoration and protection strategies.

Another relevant source of information is the ESRP Strategy and Guidance document which is currently being updated for the 2012-13 competition and will be available on the ESRP website shortly. The Guidance provides additional program context, a thorough description of the ESRP funded project lifecycle, numerous technical resources, contracting information and references to other on-line sources of information that can be used for proposal development. Information particularly relevant to this RFP and development of the 2013 Investment Plan development include the following:

- ESRP stewardship and learning strategies
- Strategies for nearshore ecosystem restoration and protection
- PSNERP objectives and target ecological processes
- A definition of what constitutes a 'project' and status categories and associated evidence of readiness
- Evaluation criteria that will be used to rank your project
- PSNERP Management Measures and shoreline classification
- A summary of the PSNERP shoreline classification

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCES

STATE FUNDING

This RFP will be used to develop the 2013 ESRP Investment Plan containing a ranked project list and funding recommendations. This spending plan will be used to direct state capital appropriations for the 2013-15 biennium to sound conservation investments in Puget Sound. ESRP anticipates a $10 million request for the biennium.

FEDERAL FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

ESRP has and continues to offer ESRP's competitive project selection and evaluation process and ranked project list to external partners as an effective mechanism for distributing capital dollars to the most compelling ecosystem restoration opportunities in Puget Sound. In addition to state funding, ESRP is able to provide federal partnership funds to select projects as described below.

NOAA Funding- Since 2008, federal funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA) has been available to ESRP projects through a 3-year partnership agreement between WDFW and NOAA's Restoration Center. While funds available through this partnership have been expended, ESRP's ranked project list will continue to be a source of potential projects for NOAA under a new partnership agreement between NOAA's Restoration Center and the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP). As part of this new partnership agreement both ESRP and state salmon recovery project lists will be evaluated for NOAA funding.

Note: All eligible projects on our ranked list will be considered for these funds. No extra application steps are required.

NEW EPA Funding – As part of this grant competition, up to $2.5 million in federal funds from the Environmental Protection Agency may be available for eligible beach restoration projects. Through its National Estuary Program, EPA has granted federal funding to WA Departments of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and Natural Resources (DNR) to advance Marine and Nearshore Restoration and Protection efforts in Puget Sound. EPA funds targeted towards strategic capital investments in Puget Sound will be distributed using ESRP's competitive project evaluation mechanism.

The focus of EPA Federal Fiscal Year 2012 funds will be on beach restoration projects that: 1) improve habitat and ecosystem processes, *as well as 2)* contribute to reduced demand for armoring along Puget Sound shorelines through restoration, public outreach and education opportunities. Up to approximately $2.5 million will be available for compelling, eligible projects as described in more detail in the eligibility section below.

Note: All eligible projects beach projects on our ranked list will be considered for these funds. Applicants interested in being considered for EPA funding will have an additional criterion to address in their project narrative.

Projects receiving EPA funding should be aware that there will be additional contract requirements associated with these funds including but not limited to:

1. *Bi-Annual and Final Performance Reports*: Award recipients are required to submit performance reports every six months using an EPA form provided by WDFW.
2. *Quality Assurance Project Plans (QAPP)*: QAPPs are required for any project involving direct measurements or data generation, environmental modeling, compilation of data from literature or electronic media, and/or data supporting the design, construction, and operation of environmental technology. More information is available at: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/eap/qa/docs/NEPQAPP/index.html
3. *Peer Review of Significant Technical Products*: Prior to finalizing any significant technical products, the award recipient must solicit advice, review, and feedback from relevant subject matter specialists.

AWARD AMOUNTS AND AWARD PERIOD

There is no maximum or minimum funding amount for proposed projects. Previous awards have ranged from $25,000 to $2,600,000, with average requests in the $200,000-$400,000 range. Final award amount and scope may differ from proposed amounts, and will reflect a thorough evaluation of investment plan alternatives, and a project sponsor's readiness to complete work in the award period.

Project awards will target work to be completed between July 1, 2013 and June 30, 2015. Exceptions to this would be projects receiving EPA funds which are available before July 1st and land acquisition projects that have sought and received a "Waiver of Retroactivity". ESRP has adopted the Washington State Restoration and Conservation Office's 'Waiver of Retroactivity' policy, allowing some real estate acquisition and protection project costs to be eligible for reimbursement despite being incurred prior to grant agreement, given that specific criteria are met. This policy is described in RCO/SRFB Acquiring Land: Policies, Manual #3 which can be found at: http://www.rco.wa.gov/documents/manuals&forms/Manual_3_acq.pdf.

PHASED PORTFOLIO FUNDING

ESRP provides awards for project activities that can be completed within a 2-year time frame as aligned with our biennial budget cycle. However, we recognized that many projects require years and multiple phases for completion. To support phased funding, ESRP has developed a streamlined application or "portfolio" process for projects that: 1) have completed feasibility tasks AND have won an award through a regional ESRP competition, and 2) have not substantively altered project scope. Portfolio projects may apply for supplemental funds without preparing a full competitive application. ***With the exception of proposals for monitoring, portfolio project proposals do not have to compete in the full technical review process, but instead are evaluated and ranked by ESRP staff*** *(see learning section below for additional details).*

If you are uncertain about whether your project is eligible to compete in the portfolio process, please contact the ESRP Manager.

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Applicants may be state, federal, local, or tribal agencies, non-governmental or pseudo- governmental organizations, and private or public corporations.

ELIGIBLE GEOGRAPHIES AND PROJECT SCOPE

BASIC ESRP ELIGIBILITY

1. Within Puget Sound (East of Cape Flattery)
2. With the exception of shoreline projects, the proposed project need must be identified by PSNERP, a salmon recovery Lead Entity or Marine Resource Committee, and listed in a current salmon recovery, watershed, or nearshore habitat restoration or protection plan.

3. The primary purpose of the project must be to restore or protect Puget Sound Nearshore ecosystem processes or functions.
4. Projects with the primary objective of providing recreational access, or remediating chemical contamination are not eligible as stand-alone projects; however these activities may be eligible components of larger efforts.
5. Projects awards will not be provided for work that relieves obligatory compensation or mitigation requirements incurred by the sponsor or a third-party, as determined by the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project or WDFW. Funding, however, may be provided for actions associated with compensation or mitigation, if those elements are above and beyond the mitigation requirements and can be easily isolated from the required mitigation activities.
6. For a full proposal to be eligible for final ESRP review it must have a corresponding record in the Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site (Nearshore Data Site) or in Habitat Work Schedule (HWS). Instructions for entering or updating project records in these systems can be found in Appendix B.

ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR LEARNING PROJECTS

The following additional criteria apply to applications requesting funding for monitoring or other learning activities:

1. The project proponent must be a qualified applicant.
2. The activities are not motivated by monitoring requirements associated with a legal obligation for mitigation or to in some way compensate for damages (although a learning plan may leverage compensatory restoration work sites as part of resolving adaptive management objectives.)
3. The project must provide information relevant to decision making at a current ESRP project site.

ADDITIONAL ELIGIBILITY FOR FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP FUNDS

Although the majority of ESRP funds are state capital funds, as described above our program is also able to provide federal funds from program partners (NOAA and EPA) to qualifying projects as a replacement for or in combination with state funding. For projects wishing to be considered for these funds sources, some additional eligibility criteria apply as noted below.

NOAA funds are restricted to restoration projects (preferably construction phases). Land acquisition projects are not eligible for these funds. Potential NOAA funding may be available to projects that:

- Restores the floodplain or delta of a wild Puget Sound Chinook or Hood Canal Summer Chum salmon natal system, or a coastal wetland in close proximity to such a system that historically supported juvenile rearing.
- Provides direct benefits to NOAA trust species and results in the recovery of ecosystem services that can be estimated in acres or stream miles. Funding for design may be considered if there is evidence that it will lead to restoration.
- Preferably are located in a preference for projects in Skagit, Snohomish, Stillaguamish, Nooksack, Skokomish or Dungeness watersheds.

EPA funds for this grant competition are restricted to beach shoreline restoration projects that:

- Improve habitat and ecosystem processes along marine shorelines by removing armoring or other shoreline modifications
- Have high visibility, and provide public access and opportunities for public education about alternatives to shoreline armoring and the feasibility and beauty of restored beaches
- Provide long-term public access and protection of restored sites
- Preferably, are ready for construction, although proposals to develop designs that meet these goals may be considered
- Eligible applicants include: 1) state agencies, local governments, tribal governments and non-profit organizations.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

ESRP authorizing legislation has to date required that projects provide a match of cash or in-kind services equaling 33% of the ESRP award. This match must be incurred during the award period. Some of this match must be non-state funds. Match requirements are typically consistent with RCO-SRFB definitions; however, match eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Matching funds must be incurred during the project period (July 1, 2013-June 30, 2015).

PRE-PROPOSAL PROCESS

DEADLINE AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Pre-proposal Due Date: by midnight September 21, 2012

Requirements: All new projects are required to submit pre-proposals. Proposals requesting funding greater than $10,000 for monitoring or other 'learning' activities should submit a separate proposal for monitoring. Portfolio projects are not required to submit pre-proposals.

Submittal Process: Pre-proposals (3 pages max.) and accompanying documents must be submitted in electronic format via email to: ESRP@dfw.wa.gov with a subject line of "ESRP Pre-proposal - *name of proposal.*" Proposals received after this time or not in the described format may not be considered for competition.

Required Pre-proposal Material: A complete pre-proposal includes: 1) a narrative, including a budget table that is no more than 3 pages; 2) a project map and 3) one other project attachment. Additional detail on contents and format for application materials is provided in the next section of this document.

Nearshore Data Site or Habitat Work Schedule (HWS): Applicants submitting pre-proposals will not be required to have a project entry in the Nearshore Data Site or HWS. However, submittal of a full proposal will require sponsors to have a completed record in HWS or the Nearshore Data Site and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. We encourage applicants to add or update existing records on those sites as soon as possible using instructions in Appendix B.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

IDENTIFYING THE PSNERP SHORELINE PROCESS UNIT (SPU) OR DELTA PROCESS UNIT (DPU)

Both the pre-proposal and full proposals required projects to identify the 'nearshore ecosystem site' which is the PSNERP process unit in which their project is located. This information is used by ESRP and the technical evaluation team in linking proposed actions to PSNERP strategic recommendations for restoration and protection which are made at the process unit scale.

The Nearshore Data Site map has a feature that allows users to select an area of interest and view summary data including the process unit number(s) of a site. The following instructions are provided:

- Select "Map Features"
- Click "+" next to PSNERP
- Click box next to PS_Process Units
- Uncheck other boxes
- Close maps features
- Zoom to area of interest (SPU/DPU numbers available at 2000 ft)

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Required application information for pre-proposals includes:

- **Document 1:** Project narrative (3 pages maximum) addressing ESRP pre-proposal criteria and including a budget table. The required templates for pre-proposals are found in the Appendix C. *Please note: there is a separate template for restoration and protection projects, and another for learning projects.*

- **Document 2:** Map of project site

- **Document 3:** One additional attachment of your choice can be included*. Please note that technical reviewers will not have the capacity at this stage of review to read voluminous documents. If you are attaching a lengthy document or complicated design plans, please reference specific sections where reviewers could focus.*

EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Step 1. ESRP staff screen proposals for basic eligibility (using ESRP eligibility criteria described above)

Step 2. Technical evaluation team reviews and ranks all eligible pre-proposals. Restoration and protection projects will be evaluated with a condensed version of ESRP's full criteria. *Learning projects will be evaluated using newly developed criteria specifically for this category of projects. All evaluation criteria are found in Appendix D.*

- Proposals are scored by individual reviewers and ranked list developed
- Projects may be flagged by the review team for the following reasons:
  - *other more appropriate funding source* … encourage funding by more appropriate source, better aligned with project goals
  - *not ready*…projects with design or feasibility issues that are anticipated to strongly affect ecosystem benefits or implementation timing that cannot be expediently resolved through contract negotiation.
  - *not process-based* …projects not consistent with process-based approach to restoration.

- Flagged projects are discussed at the review team meeting. A compelling rationale should be presented by the technical review team for removing a flag.
- Reviewers develop useful feedback for individual project sponsors

All projects without a flag at the end of this step will be invited to submit a full proposal.

Step 3. Invitations for Full Proposals

- Proposals with flags remaining after step 2 will be notified that they are not invited to submit a full proposal and provided with the reason for the red flag and any other clarifying feedback.
- Applicants with un-flagged projects will be invited to submit full proposals and provided with the their project rank and a short narrative that that will include:

  "Strengths of the proposal are…."
  "Suggestions to strengthen the proposal are..."
  "To be competitive, the following concerns or uncertainties need to be addressed…"

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Pre-proposals will be evaluated and individually scored by ESRP's peer technical evaluation team resulting in a ranked project list.

1. Restoration and Protection project criteria – are a condensed version of ESRP's new project evaluation criteria tailored to the level of information likely available at the pre-proposal stage.

2. Learning project criteria- new criteria were developed for monitoring and other learning projects and will be used to evaluate both full and pre-proposals.

FULL PROPOSAL APPLICATION PROCESS

DEADLINE AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

New Projects – All new eligible (invited) projects must submit a full proposal

*If you are requesting funding for monitoring in excess of $10,000 you must submit a separate proposal for monitoring activities and address the "learning" criteria. If your request is less than $10,000 and focused on basic implementation or compliance monitoring and/or development of a monitoring plan you should include your request as an element of your larger proposal and are NOT required to address the separate monitoring criteria.

Project Presentations: All applicants wishing to be considered for funding are required to give a 15-20 minute presentation to the Technical Evaluation Team which will be scheduled for the week of Nov. 5-9, 2012. The purpose of the presentations is to provide applicants with direct feedback from the Technical Evaluation Team prior to finalization of project proposals. The presentations are also intended to improve reviewer's understanding of complicated projects and enable more accurate scoring. Presentations guidelines are being develop and will be provided to applicants who are invited to submit full proposals.

Full Proposal Due Date: by midnight November 28, 2012.

Nearshore Data Site or Habitat Work Schedule (HWS): Applicants submitting full proposals will be required to have a completed record in the Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site (NDS) or in Habitat Work Schedule

(HWS) and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. Project information contained on these sites should be up to date as it will be a relevant source of information available to the technical evaluation team.

Submittal Process: Full proposal application material must be submitted by uploading required documents to the appropriate record in the Nearshore Data Site (NDS) or Habitat Work Schedule and sending an email to: ESRP@dfw.wa.gov with "ESRP Proposal" in the subject line. The project name and PRISM Snapshot URL should be provided in the body of the message. Proposal documents should be clearly labeled as such (e.g. Document 1, Document 2, etc.)

Minimum requirements and instructions on creating or editing a project records is included in Appendix B and in the ESRP Guidance. More detailed instructions for creating the link to PRISM through the new "contract module" will be provided to applicants invited to submit full proposals. The process will mirror that used by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. *For assistance adding or updating your project record in HWS, please work with your local lead entity coordinator. For assistance with the nearshore data site or to obtain a user account, contact Jenna Jewett, 360-902-2658 or jenna.jewett@dfw.wa.gov.*

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

A complete ESRP application consists of three electronic documents and a corresponding project record in Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) or the Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site. All files should be decipherable when printed on standard letter or legal size paper and readable by Windows™ operating systems. Application material will not be accepted via email but should be uploaded to HWS or the Nearshore Data Site.

- **Document 1:** project narrative and budget narrative as a single MS Word™ or PDF document. The required template for the narrative is found in the Appendix C. *Please note: there is a separate template for restoration and protection projects, and another for learning/adaptive management projects.*
- **Document 2:** completed ESRP budget worksheet as a single XLS workbook (readable by Excel 2000)
- **Document 3:** and all other supporting materials as a second MS Word™ or PDF document.

All communications, some of which may affect eligibility or evaluation of proposals, will be completed by e-mail. Please carefully select primary contact and secondary contact e-mail addresses to reflect this importance of maintaining e-mail contact. ESRP communications will be sent 'high priority' and contain 'ESRP' in the subject line. ESRP is not responsible for lack of response following successful e-mail transmission to the two e-mail addresses provided by the sponsor.

BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget narrative is an essential and important part of Document 1. To evaluate project costs, we require disclosure of whole project cost estimates, recognizing that an ESRP award may only result in phased funding, or may only pay for a portion of whole project costs. Competitive projects define a whole project scope of work, and accompanying whole project cost estimates. Applicants will not be required to meet future cost projections that are outside the proposed phase of work but this information helps us gauge the extent to which ESRP funding will contribute to completion of the whole project.

You may use your own project budget spreadsheets to support the project budget worksheet, but budget narrative materials must allow reviewers to understand the purpose and source of cost estimates. The budget narrative should, at minimum, justify total task cost. The following guidance is provided for what is considered adequate justification. Absence of adequate justification will be inferred as meaning that costs are rough estimates not based on a project specific analysis, thereby reducing confidence in the project status.

'Personnel' refers to wages and salaries for staff engaged in project implementation. Narrative should break down costs by staff type, by rates, and hours. Identify project roles for whom a curriculum vitae or resume has been provided. Only include support staff if their time is not being considered for calculation of an indirect rate.

'Fringe Benefits' are those costs employers incur for providing a package of benefits beyond salary or wages, and can be described as a percentage of wage costs.

The description of **'Travel'** should include the method used to calculate travel costs. (e.g. mileage rate; estimated miles traveled).

'Equipment' includes items with a value greater than $5,000, as well as 'Inventoriable items' with a value greater than $300, including: vehicles, engines, licensed equipment, chain saws, space heaters, communications equipment, GPS units, optical devices and cameras, projectors, computers, and audio/video equipment. Please provide an itemized list of equipment.

'Supplies' are material costs that are not equipment. Please describe quantities and unit costs of supplies.

'Contractual' Individual contracts should be itemized with a brief description of scope, the basis for the estimate (i.e. engineers estimate, firm fixed bid, etc.) and the status of the contract (bid documents prepared, RFP released, etc.) Where labor costs are fixed and fully loaded (like a conservation corps crew day) they could be included as contractual costs.

'Land' refers to costs of real property, as based on appraisal or estimated costs of specifically identified parcels.

'Other' costs should be described by the nature of the expense and the method of estimation.

'Indirect' costs are not eligible for funding or as match contribution.

BUDGET WORKSHEET

Applicants must complete and submit ESRP's "whole budget worksheet" that presents whole project costs defined by project tasks (e.g. feasibility, design or construction) and by object class (e.g. salaries, supplies, contract expenses etc). The worksheet must be supported by the budget narrative and /or other supporting materials that justify tasks costs. Project funding is typically limited to what sponsors can commit to accomplish within a 2 year award periods, with the understanding that the initial award may be amended to include additional tasks. It is understood that the whole project costs are estimates and exact amounts defined at the contract stages. The "whole project worksheet" will be provided to applicants invited to submit full proposals and posted on the ESRP website.

ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

The following suggested supporting documents improve the ability of reviewers to evaluate projects based on criteria. Reviewers are instructed to treat absence of information as an indicator of insufficient capacity or resources. The following are suggested supporting documents:

- A resume or curriculum vitae for project managers and key technical staff.

- Evidence that the landowner is aware of the project and supportive of the application in cases where the landowner is not also the applicant.
- Letters of support.
- Maps or project site aerial photographs indicating the boundaries of proposed work. Please include Washington Department of Ecology oblique aerial photos if relevant.
- Feasibility studies and design drawings (if applicable) useful for understanding project scope and configuration.
- Monitoring or stewardship plans if available.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Proposals are expected to provide accurate and precise information about predicted project benefits and costs. ESRP uses a competitive peer-reviewed ranking process to compare the costs and benefits of projects. Review procedures are intended to evaluate anticipated whole project value. Applicants are strongly encouraged to present their project as a cohesive and complete restoration or protection action. Evaluation will result in definition of a 'whole project scope' consistent with ESRP project scoping guidelines (see ESRP Guidance), and a proposed funding level and scope of work. *Learning projects will be evaluated using newly developed criteria specifically for this category of projects.*

Step 1. Sponsor Presentation to Technical Evaluation Team

Step 2. Submittal of full proposal material and creation of a contract link to PRISM

Instructions for entering project information into Habitat Work Schedule or the Nearshore Data Site is provided in Appendix B. More detailed instructions for creating the PRISM link will be provided to applicants along with their formal invitation to submit a full proposal.

Proposal material will be evaluated by the ESRP technical evaluation team using the relevant ESRP criteria provided in Appendix C. A ranked list will be developed based on reviewer scores. Once the list is developed there will be no changes to the project ranking, although funding award recommendations may vary from requested amounts.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Restoration and protection proposals will be evaluated by the Technical Evaluation Team based on four primary criteria: 1) Ecological Importance, 2) Technical Merit and Readiness, 3) Cost Justification and 4) Public Support and Involvement. Specific sub-criteria, evidence reviewers will be looking for and point allocation can be found in Appendix C.

LEARNING PROCESS

OVERVIEW OF NEW PROCESS

The purpose of ESRP's learning and adaptive management strategy is to fund project-specific monitoring and adaptive management, other project "enhancements" or learning activities that improve our ability to efficiently and effectively restore ecosystems.

Learning projects may be developed and advanced in one of two ways:

1) **Direct submittal by project sponsors** - Beginning with this 2012 grant cycle, ESRP is changing its approach to project, monitoring and other learning projects. Requests to implement monitoring that goes beyond the required basic project evaluation, must now go through a competitive review process. **For new projects requesting more than $10,000 for monitoring or other learning activities a learning project pre-proposal must be submitted in addition pre-proposals for other restoration or protection activities.** These proposals will be reviewed with a subset of the review team using newly developed learning criteria. Learning projects will compete against other learning projects for funds set aside specifically for investments to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of nearshore ecosystem restoration.

   Note: Data needed for design, construction or development of as-built documentation can be included in the design or construction line items and does not need to be identified as a monitoring element.

2) **Recommendation by ESRP technical evaluation team or staff** - During the project evaluation process, some projects may be identified as candidates for "enhancements." Enhancements are learning opportunities developed by comparing Adaptive Management Objectives to opportunities presented by projects and the overall composition of the ESRP portfolio. Enhancement contracts developed by the ESRP review team or staff are offered to relevant project sponsors or third parties, in association with a project or group of projects. These additional awards are intended to enhance restoration and protection capacity through completion of additional assessment, design, implementation or evaluation activities.

ESRP expects that development of a learning plan is part of the design phase of your ESRP project, and is at a minimum focused on compliance or implementation monitoring as required under ESRP project agreements. Sponsors who would like funding to implement a learning plan that goes beyond basic compliance monitoring should prepare a learning project pre-proposal. Sponsors seeking funding for a learning project should be prepared to submit a complete learning plan should they be invited to compete for learning funds. A complete learning plan would include not just what would be done in a 2-year grant timeframe, but would include the whole of what is needed to address the learning objectives identified in your plan. Because we require a complete learning plan to complete for learning funding, we encourage project proponents to scope and develop their learning approach early in project development, or to collaborate with entities that are able to do so.

DEADLINE AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Pre-Proposals: As described above in the pre-proposal section of this RPF, new projects requesting monitoring or learning funds in excess of $10,000 are required to submit pre-proposals and may be invited to move forward to the full proposal process. ***Portfolio projects do not need to submit pre-proposals for monitoring activities, but will be required to submit full proposals for monitoring requests above $10,000.***

Project Presentations: All eligible applicants (those invited to submit full proposals) are required to give a 15-20 minute presentation to the Technical Evaluation Team which will be scheduled for the week of Nov. 5-9, 2012. The purpose of the presentations is to provide applicants with direct feedback from the Technical Evaluation Team prior to finalization of project proposals. Presentations guidelines are being develop and will be provided to applicants who are invited to submit full proposals. ***Presentations are optional for portfolio projects***.

Deadline for Submittal of Full Proposals: November 28, 2012

Nearshore Data Site or Habitat Work Schedule (HWS): Applicants submitting proposals will be required to have a completed record in the Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site (NDS) or in Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. Project information contained on these sites should be up to date as it will be a relevant source of information available to the technical evaluation team.

Submittal Process: Application material must be submitted by uploading required documents to the appropriate record in the Nearshore Data Site (NDS) or Habitat Work Schedule and sending an email to: ESRP@dfw.wa.gov with "ESRP Proposal" in the subject line. The project name and PRISM Snapshot URL should be provided in the body of the message. Proposal documents should be clearly labeled as such (e.g. Document 1, Document 2, etc.)

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

The same documents are required for learning projects at the pre- and full proposal stage with some minor differences as noted below:

- **Document 1:** project narrative (not to exceed 3 pages for pre-proposals and 8 pages for full proposals) and budget narrative for full proposals. These documents should be a single MS Word™ or PDF document.
- **Document 2:** completed "frequency and budget" table
- **Document 3:** supporting materials should be provided as a second MS Word™ or PDF document. Supporting documents should include site and vicinity maps and a CV of the principal investigator. Full proposals should also include a detailed learning plan including a sampling and analysis plans, or other relevant documents.

Additional details and requirements can be found in Appendix C.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

Pre-proposal review - After the ESRP program reviews pre-proposals for threshold criteria, a review team will score learning pre-proposals based on ranking criteria to produce a ranked list of learning opportunities. A team review following ranking will consider if projects have a deficit in one of the criteria such that they are a poor fit for ESRP learning funding, or if project scope could be reduced to make the project better aligned with criteria and program objectives. This initial ranking and recommendation will be shared with applicants, along with our anticipated budget range.

Full proposal review – Applicants meeting basic eligibility will be invited to continue the review process at that time by providing a complete learning plan that provides additional detail about the scope, schedule and costs of proposed work. Learning plans will be reviewed in rank order, and an anticipated scope of work and final project cost will be developed for inclusion in the 2013 ESRP Investment Plan. Projects may have more comprehensive monitoring and adaptive management strategies than are of interest to ESRP, and so proposals may be partially funded, and large complex proposals that only partially meet criteria my rank lower. While not all learning project may be supported by ESRP in a given year, ESRP staff will continue to identify opportunities to support highly ranked projects over time.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Newly developed "learning" criteria were designed to evaluate the extent to which learning project s would address ESRP's Adaptive Management objectives and improve program learning. The same learning project evaluation criteria will be used at both the pre- and full-proposal review stages. See Appendix D for more detail.

PORTFOLIO PROCESS

DEADLINE AND SUBMITTAL PROCESS

Portfolio Projects – Portfolio projects are those that have successfully competed for ESRP funding beyond the feasibility stage and have made good progress on their previous award(s). These projects are not required to go through the full technical review process. If you are not sure whether your project qualifies as a portfolio project please contact the ESRP Manager to confirm. Projects that entered ESRP by a legislative proviso are not immediately eligible for inclusion in ESRP's Portfolio process unless they have gone through a subsequent ESRP competition and technical review process.

Deadline for Submittal: November 28, 2012

Nearshore Data Site or Habitat Work Schedule (HWS): Applicants submitting proposals will be required to have a completed record in the Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site (NDS) or in Habitat Work Schedule (HWS) and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. Project information contained on these sites should be up to date as it will be a relevant source of information available to the technical evaluation team.

Submittal Process: Application material must be submitted by uploading required documents to the appropriate record in the Nearshore Data Site (NDS) or Habitat Work Schedule and sending an email to: ESRP@dfw.wa.gov with "ESRP Proposal" in the subject line. The project name and PRISM Snapshot URL should be provided in the body of the message. Proposal documents should be clearly labeled as such (e.g. Document 1, Document 2, etc.)

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND FORMAT

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Required portfolio project materials will be posted to the ESRP website and include**:**

Document 1: Portfolio status update sheet

Document 2: Budget update using whole project worksheet

Document 3: Narrative addressing "learning criteria" if applying for monitoring implementation in excess of $10,000.

EVALUATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

ESRP's portfolio process is a unique approach to advance high-quality projects with a good track-record as quickly as possible to completion. This is done through a streamlined application process and more frequent opportunities to apply for funding. A project that has completed feasibility has previously competed well for ESRP funding based on the results of that feasibility, and has shown good progress on previous ESRP awards. Portfolio projects do not go through the full technical review, but are evaluated and ranked by ESRP staff resulting in a ranked list of portfolio projects.

Portfolio project submittals for monitoring implementation will be routed to the "learning" category and reviewed with other learning project requests by a sub-set of the ESPR technical review team using the learning criteria.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Portfolio project requests are evaluated using the ESRP portfolio ranking criteria or "learning" criteria if the request is for monitoring implementation. The full criteria are provided in the Appendix C.

INVESTMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

INTEGRATING RANKED PROJECT LISTS

The ESRP review process results in three separate projects lists:

1. Ranked new project list
2. Ranked portfolio project list
3. Ranked learning project list

The new and portfolio project lists are "zippered" together with the top ranked portfolio project becoming the top ranked ESRP project, followed by the top ranked new project, then 2nd ranked portfolio project, and so forth. Learning projects will compete against other learning projects for a portion of ESRP's total appropriation that will be set aside for these learning opportunities.

During the review process, ESRP's technical review team will also look for opportunities contained with the suite of proposals being reviewed that address ESRP's Adaptive Management objectives or other critical questions or issues that could be resolved with additional funding. In some cases, additional funding may be provided to complete this work. Achievement of these objectives may involve collaboration in monitoring across projects, or increasing or changing the scope of a proposal to increase the effectiveness of monitoring.

FINALIZING AN INVESTMENT PLAN

A draft investment plan which integrates the three lists and provides funding recommendations is developed by ESRP staff with guidance from PSNERP nearshore teams and project partners. The Draft Investment Plan will include one ranked list that contains the integrated new and portfolio projects, and a separate ranked list of proposed learning investments. The draft plan is then presented to the Leadership Council of the Puget Sound Partnership for endorsement. Once endorsed, the plan is presented to the Legislature for funding consideration. Awards will be available starting July 1, 2013.

AWARD ADMINISTRATION

AWARD AND CONTRACT INFORMATION

ESRP awards will be administered through contracts between project sponsors and the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office, ESRP's fiscal partner. All discussion of award funding level, scope, and project implementation schedules are preliminary until publication of the Final Spending Plan and distribution of award

notices. The project sponsor assumes full risks for any costs incurred prior to publication of the Final Spending Plan and subsequent award notification.

Contracts will be developed and executed using RCO documents. These materials will be made available upon request. Projects selected for streamlined review in future spending plans (the ESRP Portfolio) are not assured funding in future spending plans. Project sponsors should not assume that funding of a project phase will result in funding of future phases. Projects receiving federal funds must also comply with the relevant federal terms and conditions associated with the funding agency.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through a series of workshops, the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program has begun to develop a set of adaptive management strategies to inform how we invest in monitoring and project evaluation, as a tool to improve program efficiency. The following postulates reflect a set of poorly tested assumptions that can be tested and refined through project design, implementation and monitoring. We offer them as an initial set of targets around which to design learning projects. Ultimately, such learning can improve restoration practice and increase the effectiveness of nearshore ecosystem restoration.

BEACH SYSTEMS

Limited work has been completed to refine a beach adaptive management strategy. The following postulates are presented as a minor update based on 2010 work. The rigorous testing of some of these postulates may be beyond the scope of a beach restoration learning project.

1. **As the structural complexity and standing biomass of shoreline vegetation increases, the services to beach-dependant biota also increase.**

Some evidence suggests that insect fallout increases dramatically between forested and un-forested shorelines, and that overhanging vegetation decreases beach temperature improving survival of forage fish eggs. However there is no evidence to determine the extent of character of vegetation necessary to provide a range of ecosystem services in association with beaches.

2. **As beach texture and profile changes, either naturally or due to restoration, benthic fauna shift composition and productivity, changing the way that beaches provide ecosystem services.**

We have some evidence that forage fish spawning is dependent on a particular sediment texture within a particular elevation range, and that juvenile salmon prefer finer textured beaches with low slope and submerged aquatic vegetation, and that beach texture varies somewhat systematically in the landscape based on sediment source wave energy environment. It is unclear if there are consistent mechanisms whereby beaches of different textures and profiles provide different services to a range of biota, thus supporting the assessment of targets for beach restoration. Similarly, in some systems we may predict that loss of sediment supply results in coarsening and steepening of beach profiles, but we have limited basis for linking this to specific losses in services beyond forage fish spawning.

3. **Beach texture and morphology is dependent on the maintenance of historical rates of sediment input.**

While loss of sediment supply has been observed to change beach morphology in a number of settings, these phenomena are poorly investigated in Puget Sound. Puget Sound beaches vary dramatically in their level of wave energy, the texture of sediment sources, and the influence of historical sediment deposition events. The threshold below which beach texture and morphology will change is unknown in most settings. The effects of sea level rise on this postulate are only conceptual. Understanding the relative importance of sediment supply on beach texture and morphology (and thus on beach functions and services) will improve the efficiency of restoration and protection effort by helping prioritize among sediment management opportunities.

4. **As the local representation of beach components increases, so do the diversity of ecosystem services.**

Beaches are not uniform in structure and are made heterogeneous by depositional structures like spits, creek mouths, low tide terrace morphology, and the character of the upland nearshore. Given the trend of historical development to decrease system complexity, as evidenced by clearing of shoreline forest, filling lagoons, estuaries, and beaches, and channelizing creeks, we currently assume that restoration of the historical complexity of these features results in an increase in ecosystem services. Some study in other systems suggests that some biota benefit from being able to utilize edges or move between habitats cyclically. Understanding how these features and their configuration provide ecosystem services may provide a stronger basis for strategic project development.

5. **Landowners will remove or not install armoring, and setback development from eroding shorelines given a sufficient level of regulatory and financial incentives.**

The overwhelming majority of sediment sources in Puget Sound are under private ownership. Engaging the cooperation of those communities in beach management is anticipated to be crucial in sediment management, particularly under existing climate change and sea level rise scenarios. An effective tool in engaging that cooperation will be the deployment of a combination of regulatory and capital project efforts sufficient to convince landowners to allow the erosion of their property. We don't understand what level of incentives and disincentives are acceptable to landowners or other stakeholders, or how to effectively target these efforts in the landscape. Outreach efforts to date have resulted in minimal change in project opportunity.

DELTA SYSTEMS

A series of workshops hosted by ESRP, NOAA and The Nature Conservancy has supported the development of the following draft postulates. Refinement and peer review of these postulates will result in an update in the next round of ESRP.

1. **Dike and levee removal projects that allow for distribution of river flow increase downstream marsh formation, while projects without river connectivity may reduce the stability of existing marsh in the vicinity.**

The distribution of sediment, freshwater and other materials is key to system-wide habitat development and the ability to adapt to climate change impacts such as sea level rise and altered flow regime. The landscape location and the design of levee and dike removal projects may affect wave energy, freshwater and suspended sediment routing, and patterns of salinity intrusion. These may substantially affect the function of existing wetlands. Thus some projects may substantially improve ecosystem resilience to climate impacts by increasing retention of river sediment in wetlands. On the other hand some actions may create unstable systems, or degrade existing marsh as a new hydrodynamic and sediment regime may result in marsh erosion. Existing projects are commonly located opportunistically, based on landowner willingness, and hydrodynamic design may be poorly informed or constrained by infrastructure or stakeholder interests (like trails development requiring retention of levees). We need exemplary projects that predict and verify the effects of site position and design on off-site marsh formation processes in a way that builds a more generalized project development policy.

2. **In deltas where distributary networks have been simplified, the restoration of distributary channels increase the area of delta exposed to the flow of sediments, wood and biota, increasing marsh formation and delta resilience to sea level rise.**

A major impact of historical land use in many estuaries is the simplification of distributary networks. Distributary configuration affects the routing of sediment, large woody debris and freshwater, and the connectivity of estuarine habitats for fish. While some projects may result in distributary reconnection (Stillaguamish Old Channel, Nisqually and Red Salmon Levee Removal) and distributary projects have been proposed in the Skagit, Snohomish deltas, we have limited opportunities for verifying benefits.

3. **Over time, tidal channel geometry will reach parity with reference conditions without intervention, given restoration of tidal prism.**

Channel networks affect sediment transport, inundation periods, fish access, and the distribution of prey and organic matter affecting food webs. We have predictive models for equilibrium channel development, based on empirical data from reference sites, but these haven't been widely tested at restoration sites. Restoration sites may have compacted soils, reduced organic matter, ditch and drainage tile networks, altered topography, subsided elevations, and remnant levee systems, each potentially affecting channel development. Restoration actions may employ tillage, ditch filling, channel excavation or contouring, affecting project costs. These efforts may facilitate or inhibit channel development, qualitatively change outcomes, or may simply be a waste of effort due to strong natural forces that rework the site following restoration.

4. **Delta projects will accrete at a rate sufficient to restore historical wetlands and will keep up with sea level rise, given restoration of tidal prism.**

On many deltas, the delta plain has subsided following agricultural development. River system sediment and large wood budgets are commonly reduced, and suspended sediments may be piped through delta systems by levee infrastructure. The unusual delta plain structure in partially restored delta ecosystems may create delta forming conditions very different from those observed in naturally forming deltas. A learning project to evaluate on-site sediment dynamics will necessarily consider changes to river basin processes in addition to project design elements, and consideration of alternative treatments, control, and reference sites. Learning is useful to the extent that it can improve future project selection and design.

5. **Given adequate seed source, sites with restored tidal prism will develop vegetation that reflects elevation, salinity, and sediment texture, largely observable through remote sensing, and systematic qualitative observation.**

Naturally occurring tidal marsh zonation has been studied extensively for over 30 years. In the presence of seed source, vegetation has repeatedly established on restoration sites in zones driven by elevation, salinity, as well as the porosity and topography that affect redox conditions. Vegetation appears to be relatively predictable and symptomatic of site conditions. Despite the extent of this scientific record, projects continue to propose extensive sampling of relative species dominance, often without stratification based on known vegetation controls, or prediction of vegetation based on site assessment. Spatially explicit predictions provide a basis for replacing extensive field vegetation data collection, with remote sensing and verification methods that more efficiently and accurately represent patterns of whole system development, and can be related to hydrodynamic and topographic observations. Development of these methods should enable implementation and verification of remote sensing methods on multiple sites. Verification need not be annual, and if delayed, could include productivity estimates that would more strongly document recovery of vegetation processes than measures of species composition.

6. **The combination of inadequate wood recruitment, limited seed source, and introduced species will prevent the development of tidal swamp similar to reference conditions, without extensive intervention.**

Over 90% of freshwater and oligohaline tidal swamps have been extirpated in Puget Sound, limiting seed source on restoration sites, and the availability of reference conditions. There is evidence that swamp development is dependent on the capture of large woody debris as platforms for woody plant recruitment. Some initial study has suggested that wood recruitment may be limited on sites with remnant levees, and that wood levels in rivers are far lower than historical levels. Revegetation in freshwater tidal settings is further challenged by a number of very competitive introduced species (e.g. reed canary grass and purple loosestrife) that have been observed to persist following restoration of tidal inundation, and may limit development of woody vegetation in wetland restoration, and the intensive planting increases the dominance of native species. The traits, tolerances and natural community structures of freshwater tidal species have been poorly described, and so even horticultural introduction of more diverse communities is largely experimental.

7. **The development of benthic invertebrate populations on par with reference marsh is dependent on a period of soil development that requires sediment and organic matter accretion for a period of 15-20 years.**

Long term monitoring of restored east coast Spartina marsh suggests that development of surface soils under vegetation, over a period 15 to 20 years, results in the development of detrital food webs, similar to reference conditions, providing forage opportunity for many estuarine dependent species. The recovery of reference levels of productivity and diversity in detrital food webs has not been verified in restored Puget Sound delta wetlands. Changes in basin water quality and poor recovery of tidal sediment and soil attributes may reduce productivity of key taxonomic groups, increasing the area necessary to provide the ecosystem services provided by less modified ecosystems. Standard, robust and comparable methods of assessing biological benthic communities may not need to be frequent, but should account for the many spatial and temporal factors that can confound comparison of benthic invertebrate communities. Proposals for evaluation of soil food web development should synthesize and build on existing work to establish performance measures that reduce the costs of extensive sampling and quantification of benthic communities.

8. **Delta rearing of juvenile Chinook salmon depends on representation of multiple wetland types across salinity gradients, and a deficit in one wetland type limits rearing carrying capacity.**

Delta restoration is anticipated to be partial and incremental. There may be extensive economic and social tradeoffs among restoration opportunities. Use of the delta landscape varies among salmon species and over the period of juvenile outmigration. The size of outmigration has been observed to change Chinook density patterns in a way that suggests competition for rearing space. Lack of particular habitats within a delta may present a limiting factor to the carrying capacity of the overall delta landscape for a particular species or life history group of salmon. Understanding of how whole delta composition affects salmonid rearing may strongly affect site selection, and our prediction of the delta landscape necessary to sustain target populations.

9. **The connectivity of channel networks, woody debris, low tide pools (including beaver pools), and reference levels of tidal channel geometry all cumulatively affect rearing capacity for juvenile salmon.**

Specific habitat attributes have been suggested to affect rearing capacity for juvenile salmon. The processes necessary to form these structures may or may not be present at a site in restoration, preventing development of full habitat function. On the other hand, costly habitat enhancement may or may not provide anticipated value for the investment if implemented without evidence or evaluation. Predicting the effect of habitat characteristics on salmonid rearing capacity can inform the costs and benefits of habitat enhancement or the potential for enhancement to offset permanent loss of estuarine area or to meaningfully accelerate recovery. However, use of

density estimates alone to evaluate the effects of localized structures is fraught with statistical and conceptual hurdles, like density dependence and connectivity gradients that make the inference of benefits difficult.

10. **Establishment of extensive patches of woody vegetation, based on large wood jams is necessary to support beaver modification of delta landscapes.**

We have no ability to predict the conditions necessary to support beaver modification and management of habitat structure on delta islands. As in freshwater systems, beaver modify the hydrologic structure of freshwater and oligohaline tidal systems by the construction of channels, dams and pools. These modifications affect habitat qualities anticipated to benefit salmonid rearing. In freshwater systems, adequate woody plants for forage and dam building have been suggested to limit beaver populations, with local depletion of forage resulting in emigration. If beaver architecture has a demonstrated benefit to fishery habitat, delta restoration would benefit from development of conditions sufficient to support beaver colonization.

Delta Social Dynamics

Delta ecosystems are intertwined with human communities. The real and perceived interests of delta stakeholders may either enable or disable restoration efforts, and restoration efforts can in turn impact stakeholders. We anticipate that efforts to evaluate the relationships between delta ecosystems, restoration efforts, and human communities may be critical to project success and ecosystem restoration.

The following list describes potentially important project-based learning opportunities. Projects that assess the risks, impacts, and benefits to communities, and the perceptions of restoration by communities, are important to ESRP where community perceptions are anticipated to critically enable or disable current or future restoration effort.

Social investigations are expected to increase two-way communication between stakeholders and project proponents. Effective projects involve clear collaboration between project proponents and stakeholders to define values, goals, objectives and the evidence necessary to satisfy all parties. Learning projects around social dynamics are expected to demonstrate with letters of support, the relationships necessary to adequately engage stakeholders.

11. **If we measure the right economic value of delta restoration, community members will change their preferences, enabling delta restoration.**

We have no broadly recognized measurement or documentation of specific non-ecological benefits of delta restoration. Both the maintenance of status quo tidal defenses and drainage, and restoration alternatives, have social and economic costs and benefits, in addition to ecological effects. How stakeholder groups value different delta conditions is likely to vary. The standards of evidence necessary to influence stakeholder opinion may also vary, and need to be considered. Valuation methods should build from the stated interests and values of diverse stakeholders so that findings can be shared among stakeholders. Development of projects that use innovative techniques to demonstrate diverse values may increase community willingness to participate in restoration.

12. **If we demonstrate flood hazard mitigation as a product of restoration, community members will change their preferences and enable delta restoration.**

We lack broadly accepted methods for evaluating the effect of projects on flood hazards, or whether innovative restoration design can mitigate flood impacts. Restoration of tidal prism can alter water levels and flow pathways through the delta, potentially increasing or decreasing the risk that existing flood defenses will fail. Sea level rise

and climate change effects are anticipated to reduce the effectiveness or increase the costs of flood defenses. Innovative methods of restoration may be able to reduce flood hazards, potentially leveraging funding sources appropriated for flood management. In the absence of planning or evaluation, restoration may be perceived as increasing flood risk, potentially disabling restoration efforts. Evaluation should consider the condition, continuity, and the current and future maintenance costs of existing flood defenses in comparing restoration/flood tradeoffs, and result in specific increased project opportunities.

13. **Local community members will increase their support for delta restoration if they are more educated about and involved in delta restoration.**

We have limited examples of how local and regional stakeholders perceive delta restoration, and how project related engagement may affect those perceptions. While scientists working on the recovery of historical ecosystem services are focused on ecosystem dynamics, local, regional, and national observers, and stakeholders of restoration may have an entirely different set of assumptions about the purposes and value of restoration. How can monitoring and evaluation affect those assumptions? Each restoration project has the potential if perceived as a success or a failure, to either enable or disable further restoration. Communication and engagement efforts may affect stakeholder perception, but there have been limited efforts to evaluate how different approaches to stakeholder engagement affect stakeholder perceptions or future behavior.

14. **By developing a transparent approach to evaluating the effects of delta restoration on agricultural drainage, local community members will change their preferences and enable restoration efforts.**

We lack broadly accepted and efficient methods for evaluating and monitoring the effects of delta restoration on adjacent agricultural field drainage. Restoration actions using public funds are required under state and federal law to make informed decisions based on an understanding of the effects of restoration actions on adjacent land uses. The delta ecosystem currently provides drainage channels for removing water from agriculturally developed lands. Changes in flow pathways and sediment routing may affect the effectiveness of drainage infrastructure, or alter groundwater flow patterns. Even where restoration has no impact on drainage systems, perception of impact may disable future restoration efforts.

15. **Evaluating and monitoring the potential for increased tidal prism to cause adjustments in downstream distributary channel structure will increase community support for restoration.**

We lack the ability to predict the effect of restoration as downstream distributary channels adjust to increased tidal prism. Restoration projects alter tidal prism and may result in channel migration or widening. Channel instability may increase the likelihood of channel bifurcation or flipping, altering the pathways for distribution for sediment, fish, freshwater and wood. Increased tidal prism resulting from restoration may lead to downstream or upstream changes in channel geometry and flow velocities and vectors which could increase or decrease risks to infrastructure such as bridges, levees, drainage outlets, or shipping channels. A better understanding of off-site restoration effects would inform project selection, prioritization, design, funding and monitoring.

EMBAYMENTS AND INLETS

PSNERP Strategy analyses suggest huge variability in the structure and processes affecting Puget Sound embayments. Some systems appear to be very dependent on beach processes and structures, while other embayments are located within drowned creek channels. Some coastal inlets are large stream deltas with many of

the attributes of river deltas. Considerable work has yet to be completed in testing our postulates about embayment condition and restoration.

1. **Embayments provide a range of ecosystem services that are unique to these systems that can be predicted based on structural attributes.**

We have a very strong set of regional data to describe and compare the structure and setting of Puget Sound embayments. Some work has been completed to predict biotic communities based on nearshore habitat attributes like texture, exposure, and salinity. We have not isolated a set of valued ecosystem services that we believe to be unique to embayment systems, and to evaluate whether we can predict the relative quantity and quality of these services based on our existing ability to describe embayment ecosystems. Alternately, the configuration or concentration of embayments in the landscape, or spatial relationship of embayments to oceanographic variables like currents and upwelling zones may strongly affect the use of embayments by biota and thus their value to conservation. Without this kind of understanding we have very limited ability to prioritize restoration of one embayment over another except based on predicted density of salmon rearing.

2. **Embayment habitat services to chum and Chinook salmon are greatest in embayments that are close to the mouth of natal Chinook and Chum salmon streams, and decline with distance.**

A range of nearshore utilization studies suggest that as salmon increase in size, that they become increasingly less nearshore-dependant in their foraging habits. Strong preferential use has primarily been observed in the Whidbey Basin. The structural factors that increase carrying capacity, or the cost/benefit of restoring multiple small embayments, as compared to restoration of large embayments, has not been strongly evaluated.

Questions?

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Please note:

Salmon Recovery projects on a 3-Year Workplan should be entered in a Lead Entity Habitat Work Schedule (http://hws.ekosystem.us/) through your local coordinator.

All other ESRP projects should be entered in the Nearshore Data Site (http://www.psnerp.ekosystem.us/).

This document provides step-by-step instructions for entering your Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program project proposal in the Nearshore Data Site (NDS).

Pre-proposals: Applicants submitting pre-proposals will not be required to have a project entry in the NDS or in Habitat Work Schedule (HWS). However, submittal of a full proposal will require sponsors to have a completed record in HWS or the NDS and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. We encourage applicants to add or update existing records on those sites as soon as possible.

Full proposals: Applicants submitting full proposals will be required to have a completed record in NDS or in HWS and a completed "contract link" to PRISM. Project information contained on these sites should be up to date as it will be a relevant source of information available to the technical evaluation team.

More detailed instructions for creating the link to PRISM through the new "contract module" will be provided to applicants invited to submit full proposals.

The table below summarizes the fields and information required for a complete project entry into the NDS. Please refer to this list when entering project proposals into the NDS.

Data Fields	Required Information
Project Category	Restoration/Acquisition/Combined/Non-capital
Project ID #	Project Name (50 characters or less)
Project Name	Project Name (50 characters or less)
Project Status	Primary and Secondary Status (Use PSNERP source codes where applicable)
Start/End Date	Start and end dates for the project
Project Description	Summary description including quantities where applicable (1500 characters or less)
Project Sponsor	Sponsor
Primary Contact	Two contacts (Email/Phone/Address/Position Title)
Application Amount	Requested funding amount in application
Reporting Codes	Primary management measures Puget Sound Shoreform
Project Location	Latitude and Longitude

Questions?

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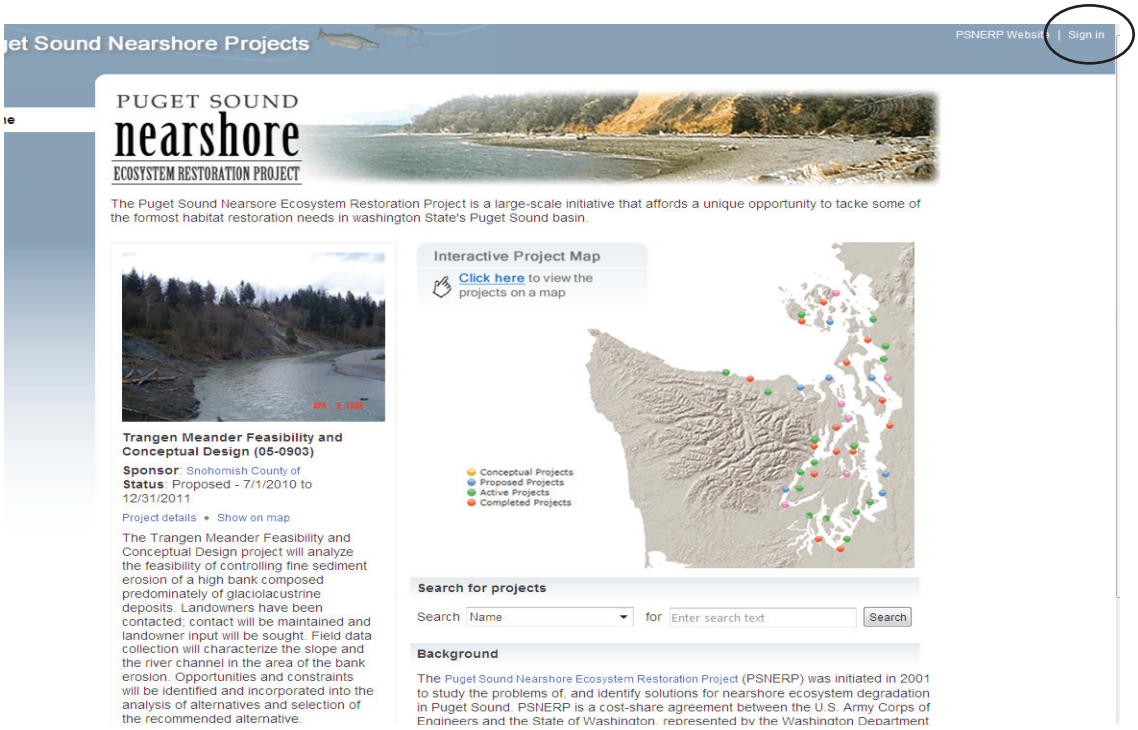
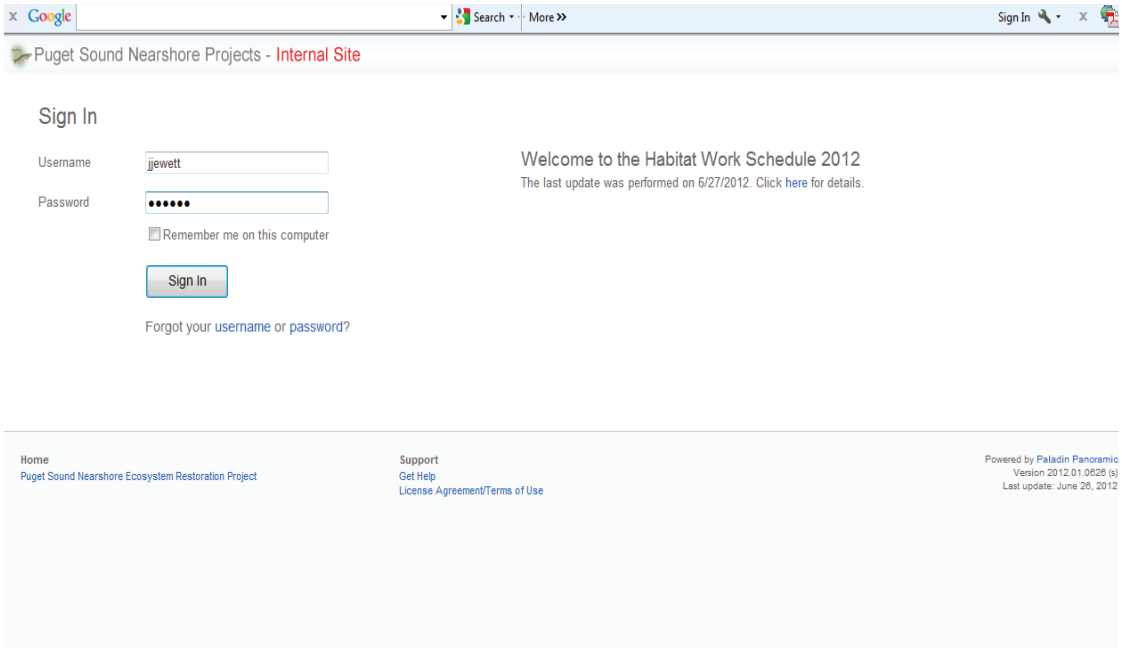
Step 1:
Sign in to the Nearshore Data Site: http://www.psnerp.ekosystem.us/



Contact Jenna Jewett jenna.jewett@dfw.wa.gov to obtain a user name and password.



Questions?

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Please note:

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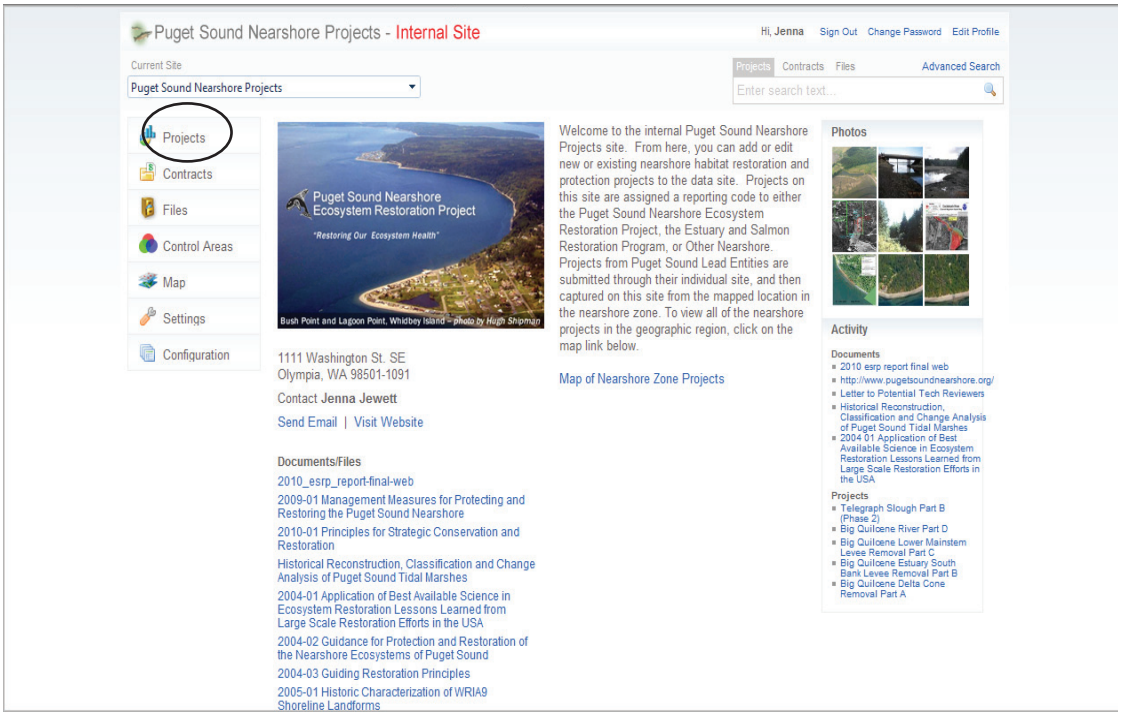
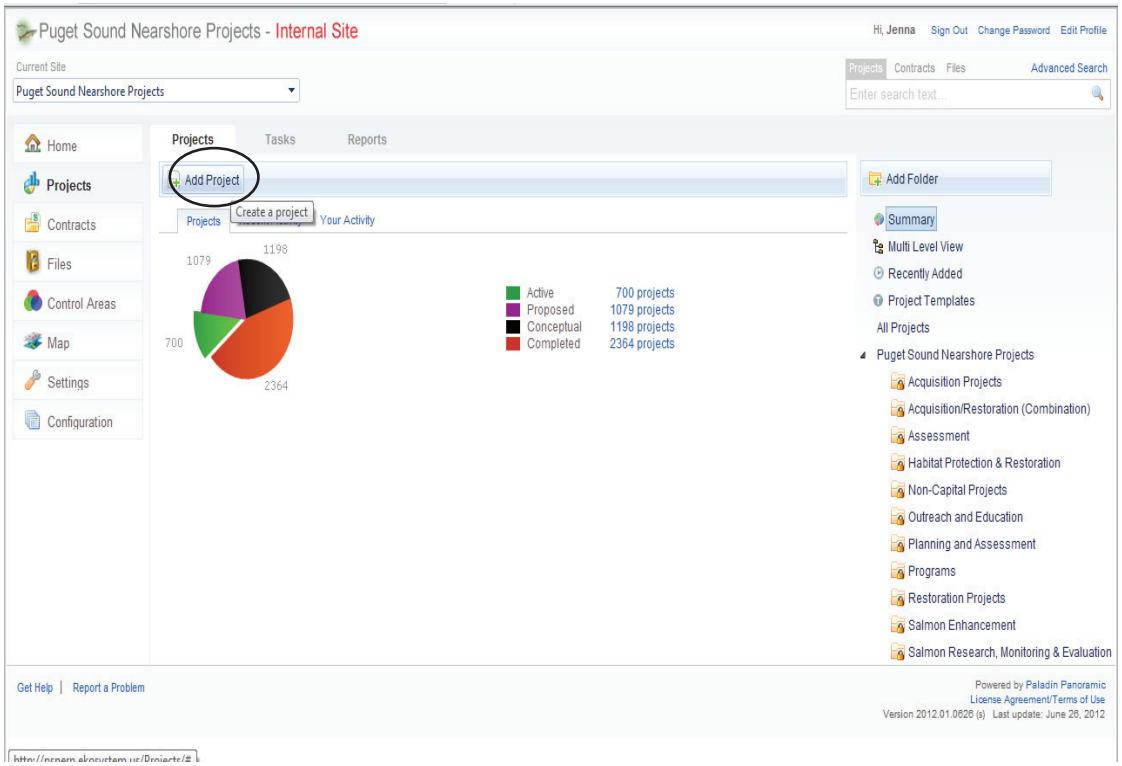
All other ESRP projects should be entered in the Nearshore Data Site (http://www.psnerp.ekosystem.us/).

Step 2:
Click Projects, and then Add Project





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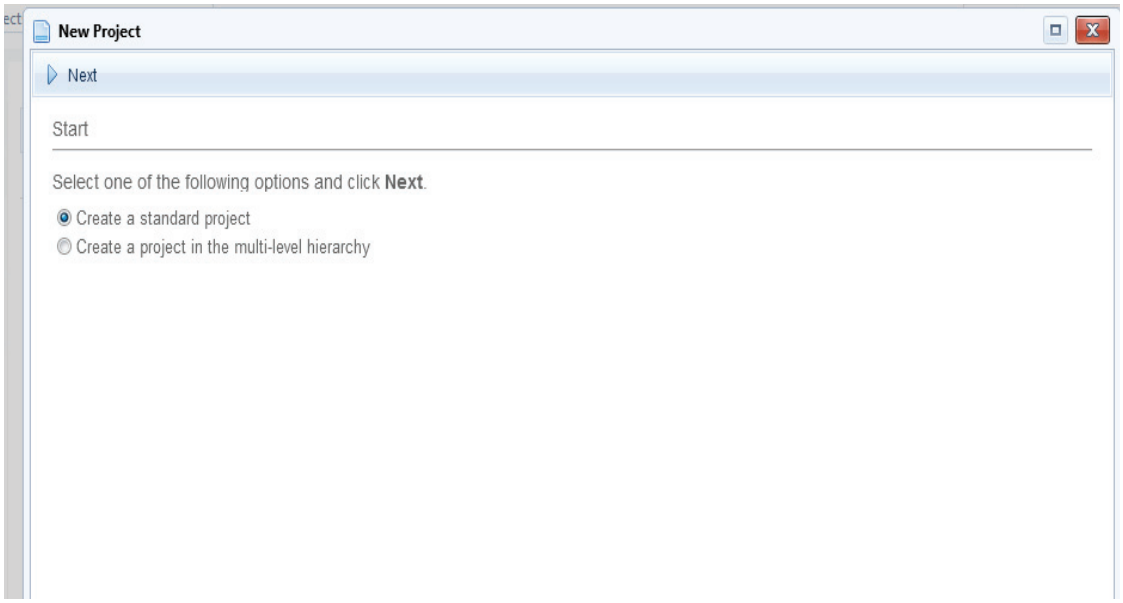
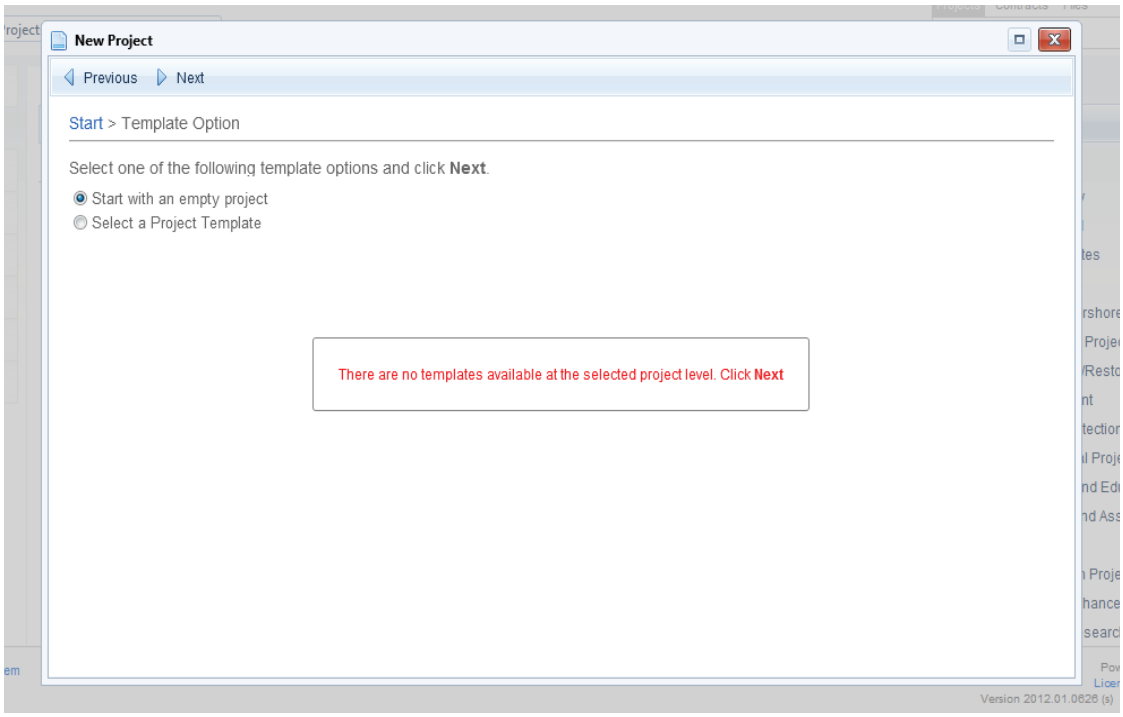
Step 3:
Create Standard Project, Next



Step 4:
Start with an Empty Project, Next



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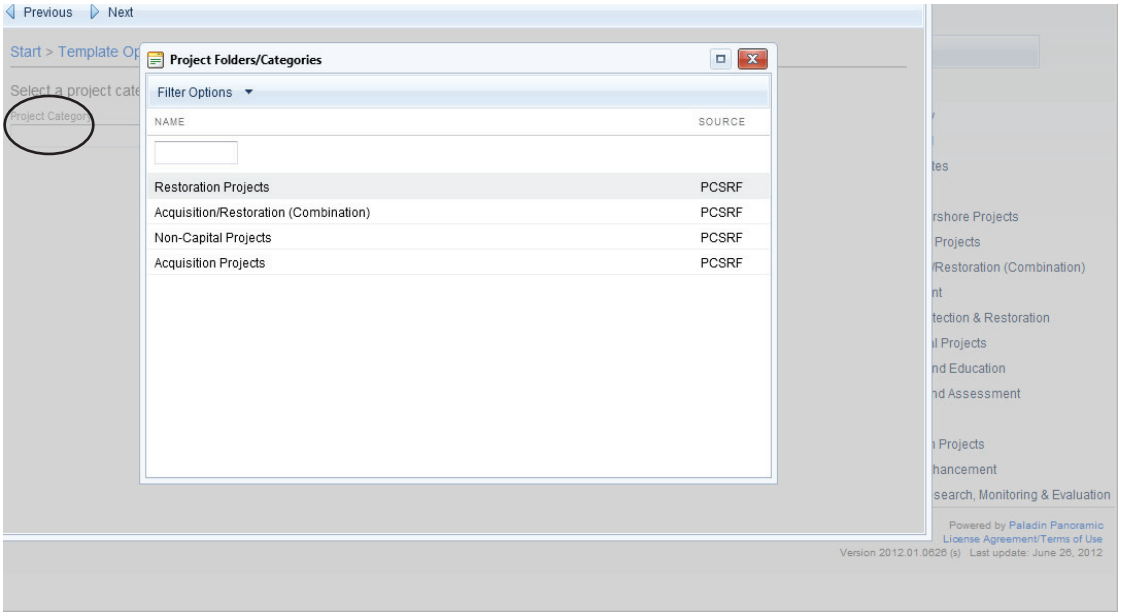
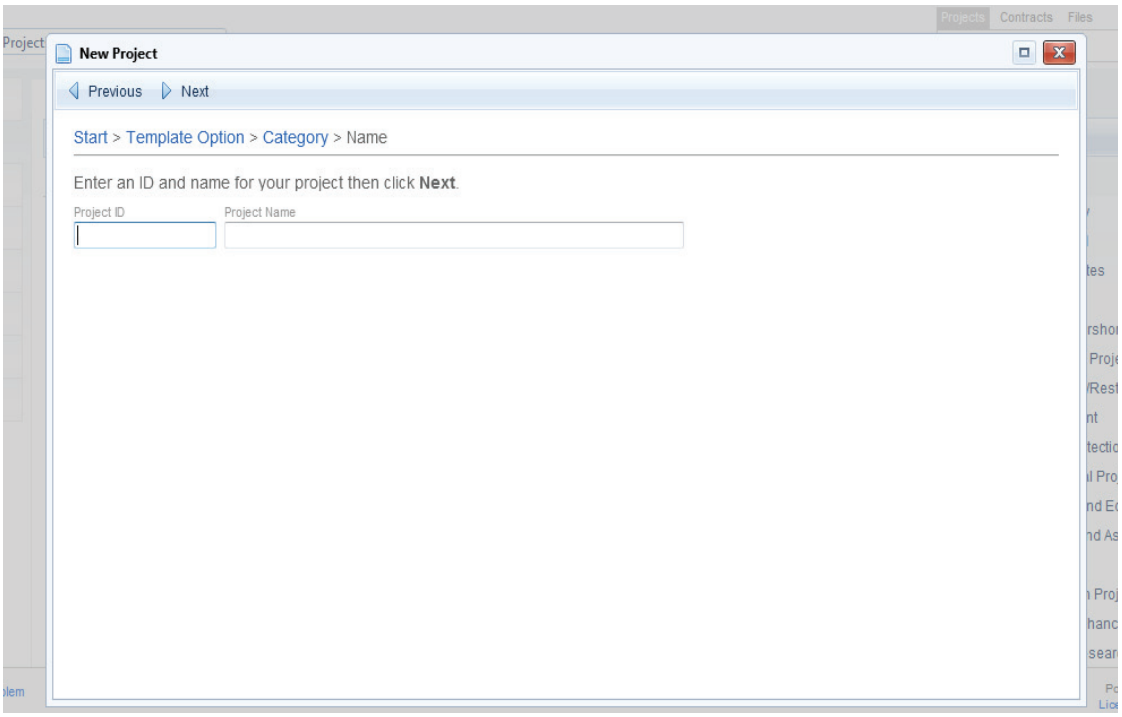
All other ESRP projects should be entered in the Nearshore Data Site (http://www.psnerp.ekosystem.us/).

Step 5:
Select a Project Category, Next



Step 6:
Enter the Project ID and Name, Next



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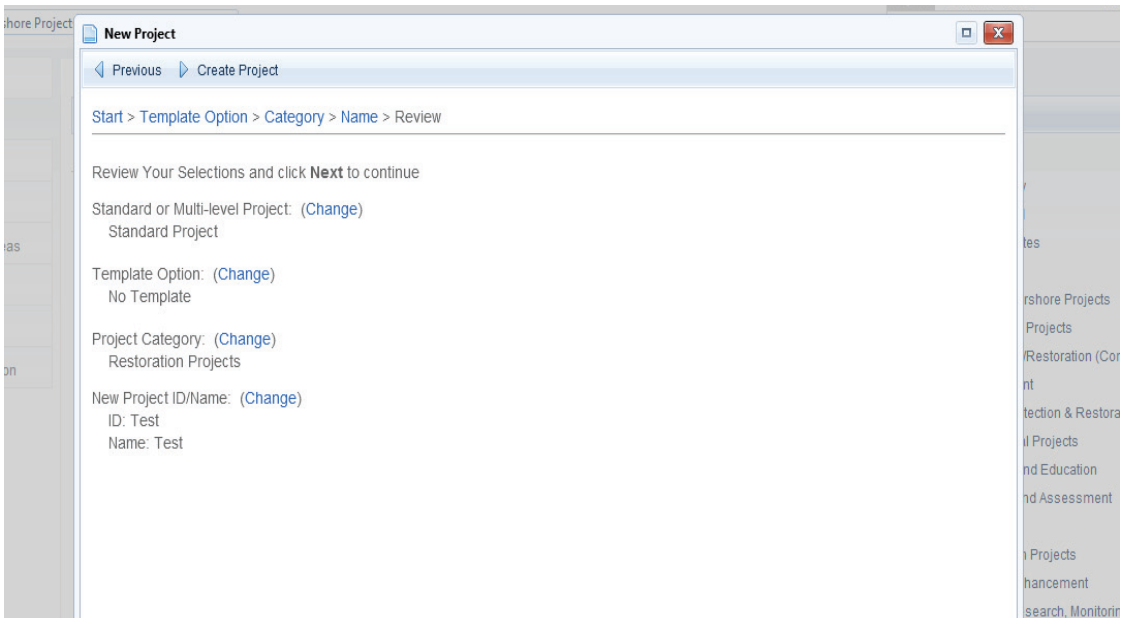
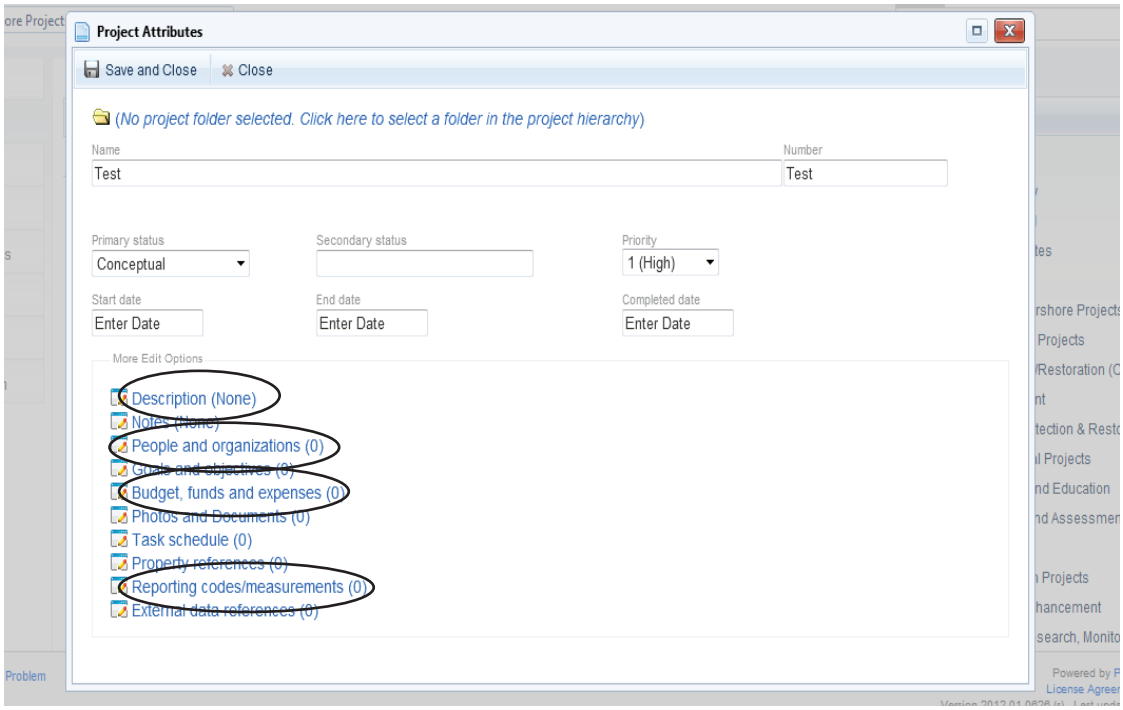
Step 7:
Review selections and Create Project



Step 8:
Input Start and End Date, Primary Status and Secondary Status



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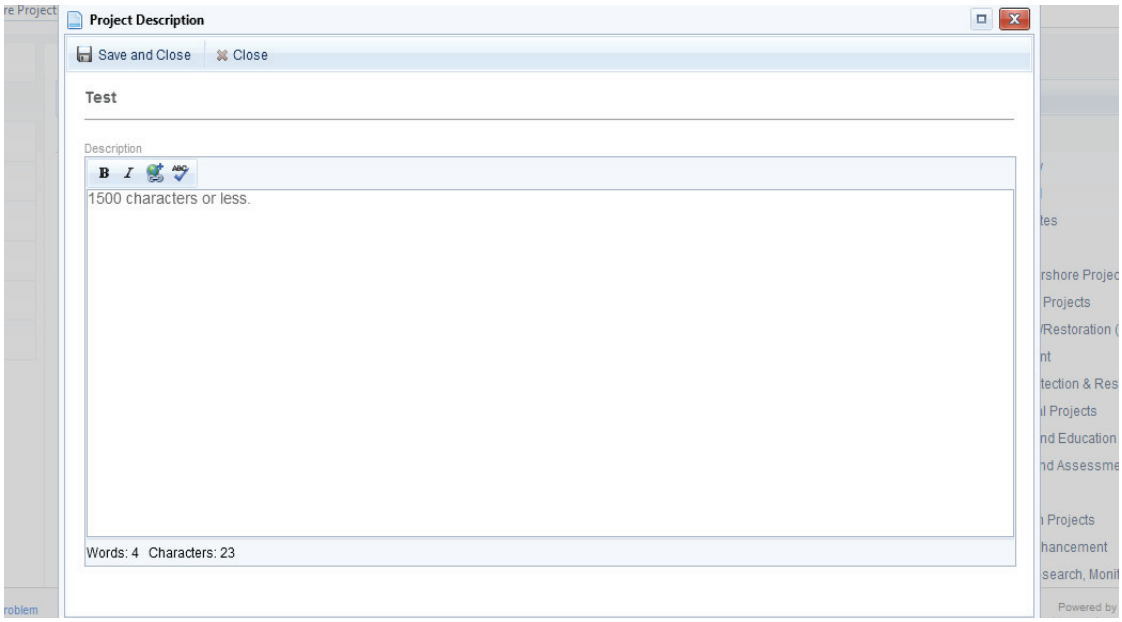
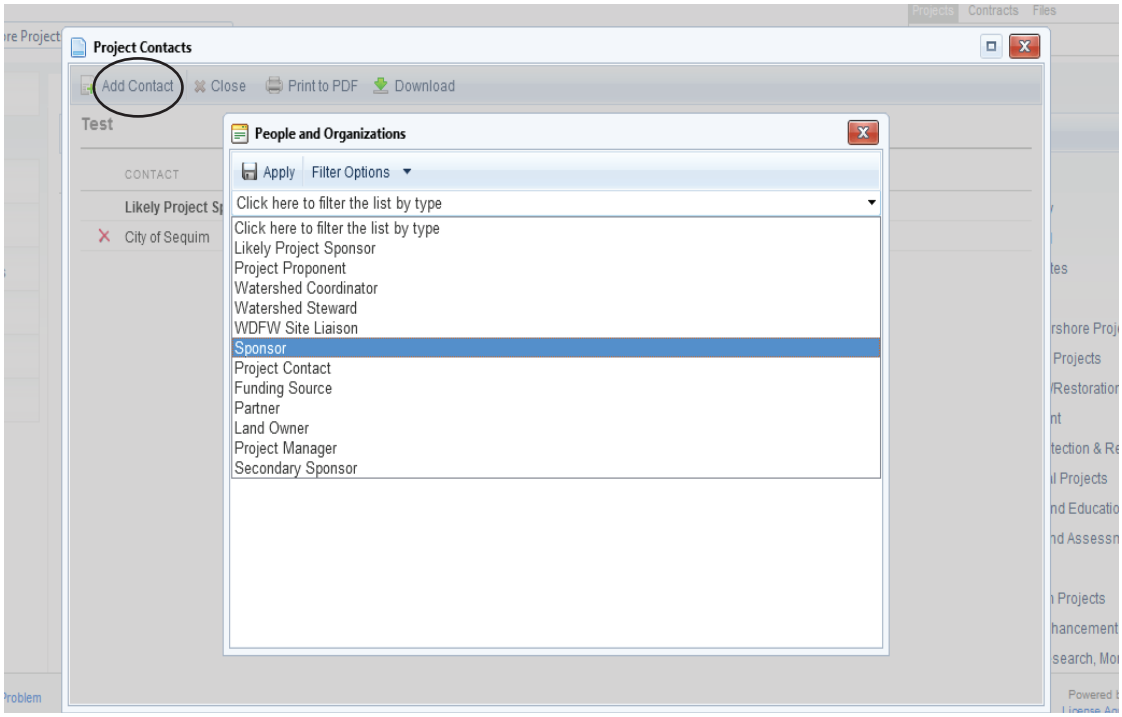
Step 9:
In Description, enter a Project Description, Save and Close



Step 10:
In People and Organizations choose two contacts and one sponsor (if your contact information or sponsor is not an available option, contact Jenna Jewett and she will add them into the system), Apply and Close



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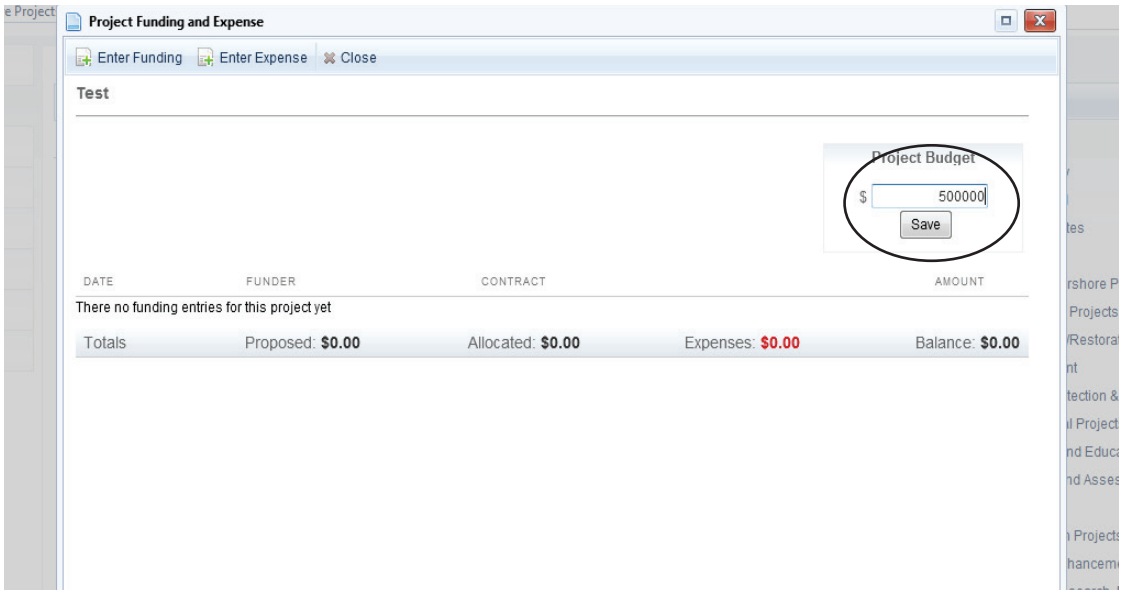
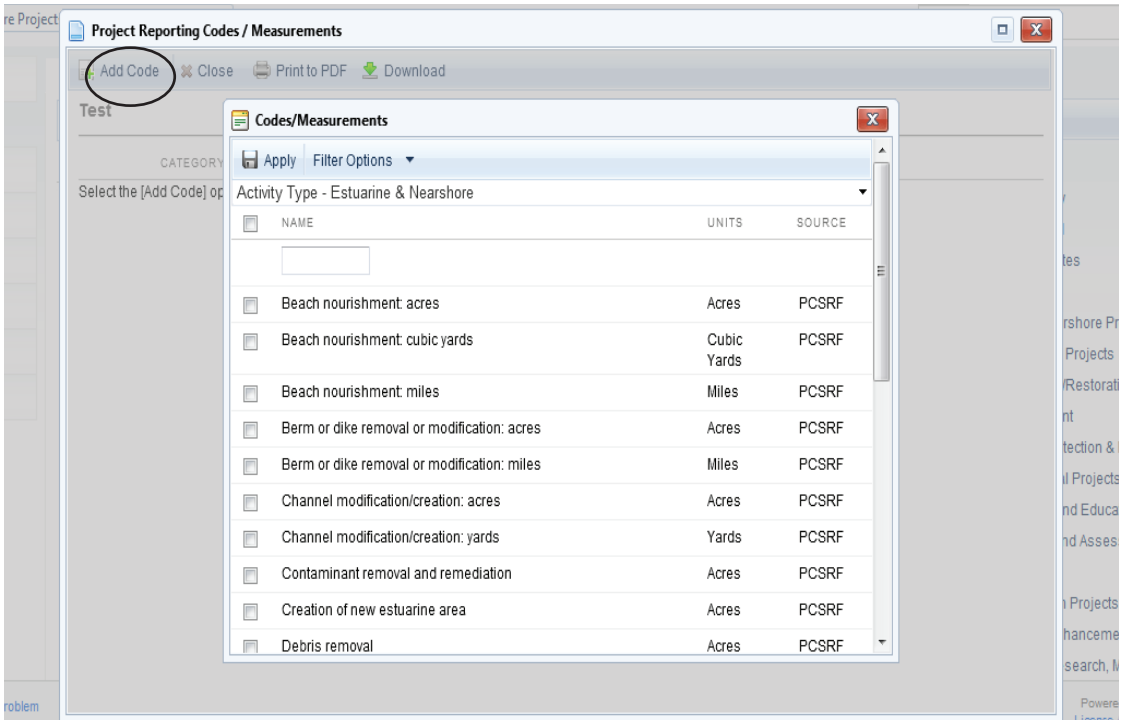
Step 11:
In Budget, Funds & Expenses, enter the Project Budget, Save and Close



Step 12:
In Reporting Codes/Measurements, choose Add Code, choose Activity Type – Estuarine & Nearshore, select management measures, Apply and Close



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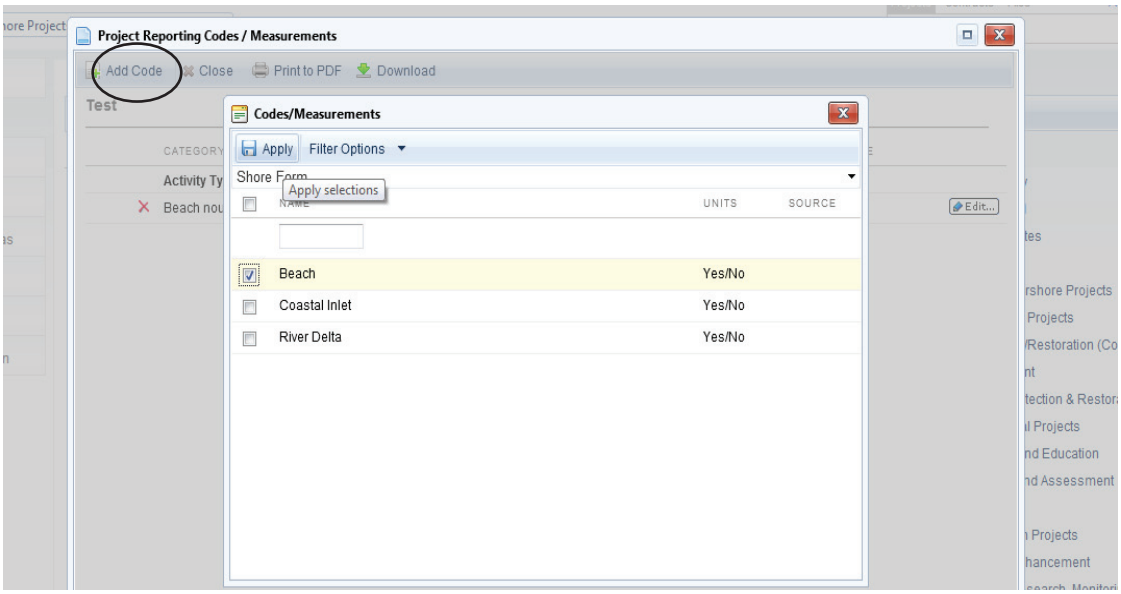
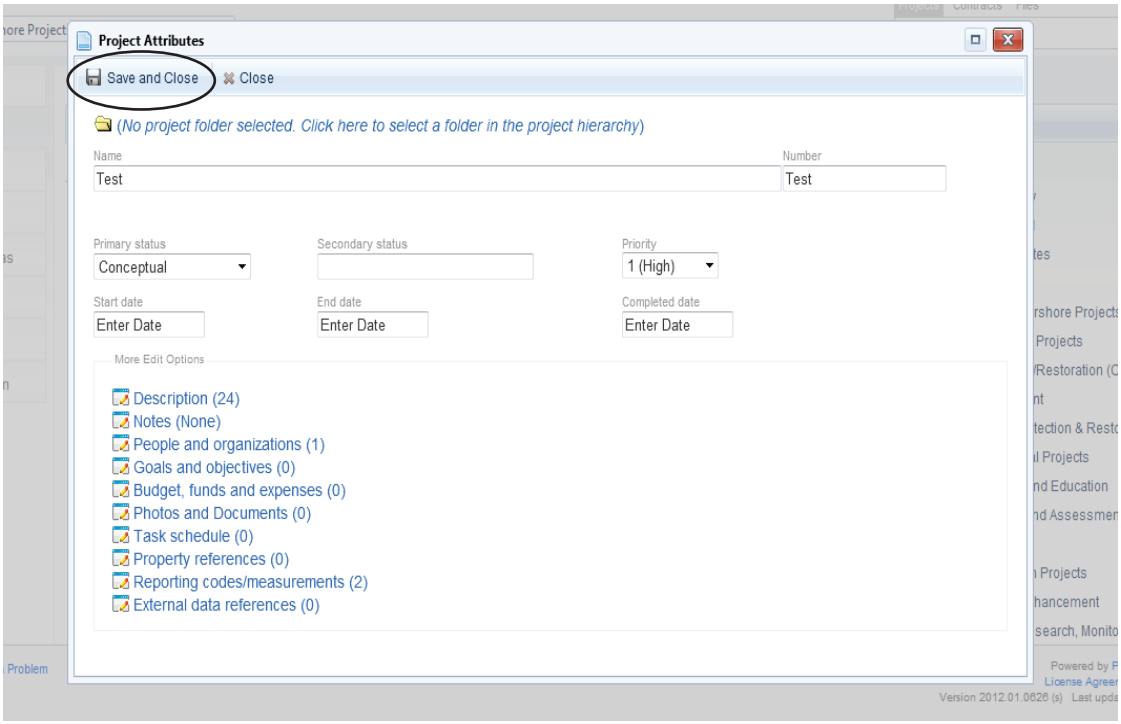
Step 13:
In Reporting Codes and Measurements, choose a Shoreform from the Category – Puget Sound Shore Forms, select shoreform, Apply and Close



Step 14:
Important: In Project Attributes, Save and Close



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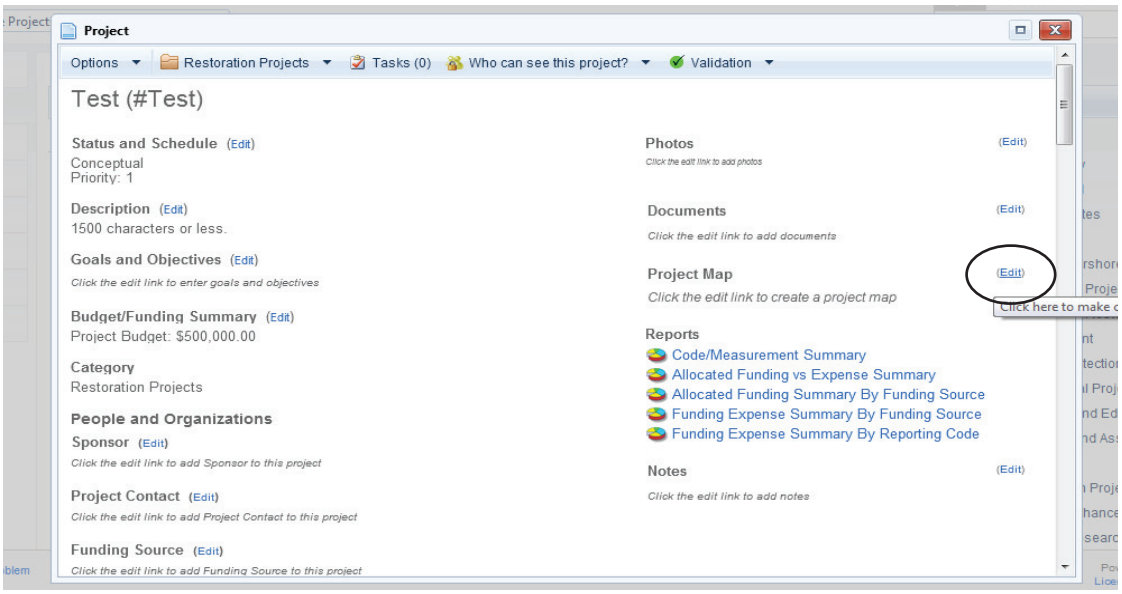
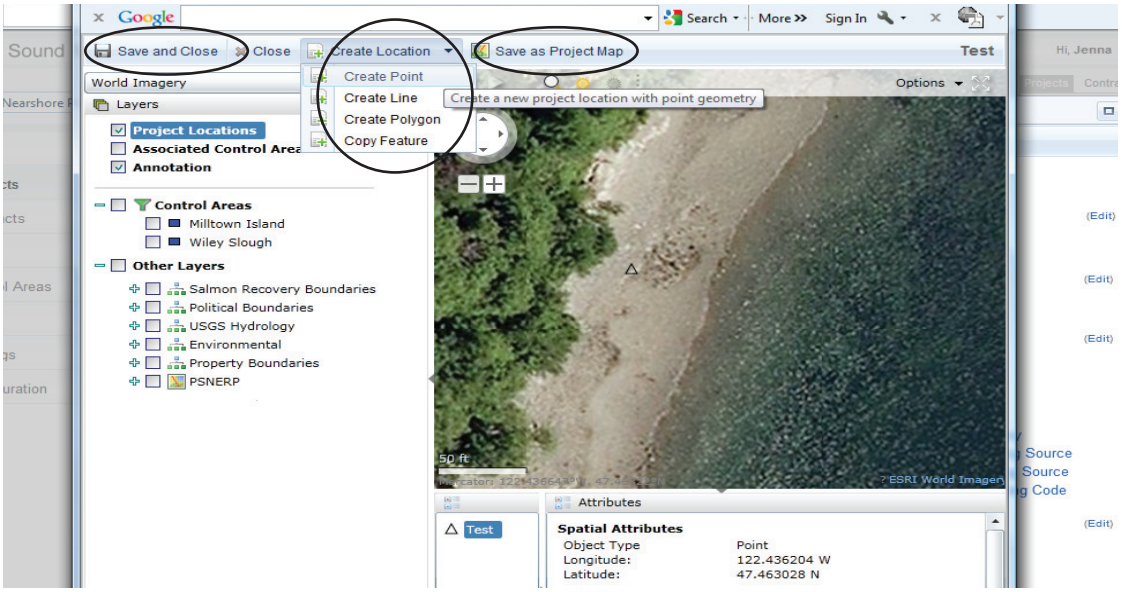
Step 15:
To create a project location, click on Edit next to the Project Map name.



Step 16:
Create Location and use a point, line, or polygon to outline the project on the map, Save as Project Map, Save and Close



APPENDIX C: APPLICATION TEMPLATES

PRE-PROPOSAL APPLICATION TEMPLATE- **RESTORATION OR PROTECTION PROJECTS**

A complete pre-proposal includes: 1) a narrative, including a budget table that is no more than 3 pages; 2) a project map and 3) one other project attachment. The template for the project narrative is provided below:

Cover Page:

Basic Project Information
Project Title/Name
Projected Grant Start /End Date
Project Location (water body and PSNERP process unit number)
WRIA and Lead Entity
Project type/category
HWS or Nearshore Projects Site # (if applicable)

Contact Information
Organization Name
Primary Contact
Position Title
Address
Phone
Email
Alternate Contact and email

Check the box to agree with the statement:

- ☐ This project is in no way associated with any legal requirement for compensatory mitigation, restoration, or mitigation banking or is otherwise compelled by legal settlement, contract, or agreement.

If not checked, please describe situation:

Project Narrative - Please use the following template for the pre-proposal narrative (not to exceed 3 pages):

Project Summary (1-2 paragraphs)

Criteria for Ecological Importance and Project Benefits (1-3 paragraphs) - Using the PSNERP Strategies report, indicate the recommendation for that site, a description of the primary ecological processes your project will address and the extent to which your project will protect or restore processes at the site.

Technical merit and readiness (completed table and narrative) - Describe the full scope of your project by completing the Tasks and Timeline table and demonstrate (using the "evidence" listed in Appendix G) that your project will be ready to move forward if funded. For construction projects, please itemize (at a high level) the actions or management measures to be completed, including quantitative estimates where possible. Identify how the proposed actions advance and are consistent with regional recovery actions (e.g. PSNERP strategy recommendations, Action Agenda). A sample tasks and timeline table is provided below.

Sample Task and Timeline Table to be completed as part of narrative

Task	Phase	Notes	Status	Target Date
Acquisition	Protection		NA	
Feasibility Study	Feasibility		Completed	
Final Design and Permits	Design		Completed	
Monitoring/ Stewardship	Design		Proposed ESRP	3/13
Contractor selected	Implement		Proposed ESRP	5/13

Construction	Implement		Proposed ESRP	7/13-10/13
Armor removal	Implement	Remove 100 ft. armoring		7/13-10/13
Revegetation	Implement	Plant along 50 ft. of shoreline		10/13
Monitoring	Evaluate		Proposed ESRP and future	5/13
Reporting	Admin		Future	

Budget - Using the tasks same identified above, complete the following budget table. Include a "whole project" budget to the best of your ability using ESRP's definition of "whole project' found in the ESRP Guidance section on "Project Scoping Guidelines". We understand costs are estimates and you are not limited in full proposal by what you include here. (You may combine the budget and task and timelines into a single table if desired). Describe what funding has been secured already, other pending or planned grant proposals and remaining need. For pending match, describe current status if known. Describe how you will intend to secure the required 33% matching funds for ESRP and remaining funds needed to start implementation.

Sample Budget Table to be completed as part of narrative (may be combined with table above, space permitting)

Task	Total Cost	ESRP Request	Match*	Leverage	Unmet Need
Acquisition					
Feasibility Study					
Final Design and Permits					
Monitoring/ Stewardship					
Contractor selected					
Construction					
Armor removal					
Revegetation					
Monitoring					
TOTAL COST					

* Please indicate in budget narrative whether matching funds are pending or secured.

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR BEACH PROJECTS: Applicants with beach restoration projects that are interested in being considered for EPA funding should also address the following:

Beach restoration (1-2 paragraphs)
In addition to addressing criteria of the ESRP program, including clear articulation of ecosystem benefits of the proposed action, please de*scribe:*

- How and to what degree the project provides public access and educational opportunities
- The annual amount of visitors to the site
- How the project demonstrates compelling alternatives to shoreline armoring
- Assurances for long-term protection and accessibility

PRE-PROPOSAL APPLICATION TEMPLATE- **LEARNING PROJECTS**

2012 LEARNING PRE-PROPOSAL

A pre-proposal is required for any new monitoring or "learning" project where the sponsor is requesting funding above $10,000 to implement monitoring or other learning activities beyond the basic project evaluation required for all projects. Portfolio projects submitting learning requests do not need to submit a pre-proposal.

A complete pre-proposal includes: 1) a narrative (not to exceed 3 pages), 2) frequency and budget table, 3) supporting documents including a project vicinity map showing extent of nearshore ecosystem site and CV of the principal investigator.

Cover Page:

Basic Project Information

Project Title/Name
Projected Grant Start /End Date
Project Location (water body and PSNERP process unit number)
WRIA and Lead Entity
Project type/category
HWS or Nearshore Projects Site # (if applicable)
Affected ESRP Project

Contact Information

Organization Name
Primary Contact
Position Title
Address
Phone
Email
Principal Investigator and affiliation (if different than primary contact)

Check the box to agree with the statement:

- ☐ This learning project is in no way associated with any legal requirement to monitor the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation, restoration, or mitigation banking or is otherwise compelled by legal settlement, contract, or agreement.

If not checked, please describe situation:

<u>Narrative (up to 3 pages)</u>

Project Summary- the project narrative should describe the "who, what, where, and when" of your proposed actions and address learning project evaluation criteria:

1. **Importance**
    a. What aspects of project outcome are uncertain, and why you are unable to adequately predict those outcomes (indicate if this aligns with a ESRP adaptive management objective):
    b. Define your central postulates (working assumptions about system dynamic and predictions about what will happen). Define any terms not in common usage, and use these statements to identify the structures, processes, and functions of concern:
    c. Describe how the most current and relevant evidence from past investigations informs your approach:
2. **Viability (This section may have to be organized to address multiple postulates as needed for the study).**
    a. List (and define as necessary) your predictor and response variables as well as any co-factors you are considering in your analysis (these should relate to postulates defined in 1b above).

b. List principal factors (conceptual or quantitative) that you believe may compromise your ability make inference, and how your study design attempts to manage these factors (this could include spatial or temporal variability in parameters, confounding factors, lack of controls or reference, measurement error, limited duration of observation, extrapolation risks, poor replication, or other concerns):
c. Define the anticipated analytical methods to make the comparisons you anticipate will resolve the uncertainties identified above.
d. Indicate principal investigators (CV should be included)
e. Describe any approach used to solicit peer review of your methods, and the aspects of the study design that reflect incorporation of that critique.

3. **Policy or Management Relevance**
   a. Describe how new knowledge is anticipated to affect site prioritization or project selection.
   b. Provide specific examples about how new knowledge is anticipated to affect project design or management.
   c. Provide examples of how new knowledge is anticipated to affect the preferences and opinions of specific stakeholder groups.

Frequency and Budget- If proposed monitoring is part of a longer-term monitoring strategy; please describe using a format similar to the table below that provides an overview of the types and frequency. You may use your own elements or table as long as it provides comparable information.

	Duration (years) and frequency (year of sampling and number of samples per year)		**Cost**			
Monitoring Element	**Pre-project**	**Post-project**	**Total Cost**	**ESRP Request**	**Other Secured**	**Unsecured**
Remote sensing						
Topography (including channels)						
Hydraulic monitoring						
Sediment dynamics						
Vegetation and soils						
Invertebrates						
Fish sampling						
Analysis and synthesis						
Communications						

FULL PROPOSAL APPLICATION TEMPLATE – **RESTORATION AND PROTECTION PROJECTS**

Project narrative is limited to eight pages of text (12 point font; single spaced). This limit does not include the budget narrative, a bibliography, or additional attachments useful for understanding the project. The "basic project information" and "contact information" may be provided in a cover sheet which will not count towards the eight page limit. The narrative may cite attached technical documents as necessary. Reviewers will not comprehensively review all attachments, so if lengthy technical documents or complicated design plans are provided the proposal should explicitly reference sections by page and paragraph and indicate how it relates to important points being made in the proposal.

Cover page:

Basic Project Information
Project Title/Name
Projected Grant Start /End Date
Project Location (water body and PSNERP process unit number)
WRIA and Lead Entity
Project type/category
HWS or Nearshore Projects Site # (if applicable)

Contact Information
Organization Name
Primary Contact
Position Title
Address
Phone
Email
Alternate Contact and email

Check the box to agree with the statement:

- ☐ This learning project is in no way associated with any legal requirement to monitor the effectiveness of compensatory mitigation, restoration, or mitigation banking or is otherwise compelled by legal settlement, contract, or agreement.

If not checked, please describe situation:

Project Narrative - Applicants should use the following pre-proposal template for the project narrative (not to exceed 3 pages):

Project Summary (1-2 paragraphs)

Task	Phase	Notes	Status	Target Date
Acquisition	Protection		NA	
Feasibility Study	Feasibility		Completed	
Final Design and Permits	Design		Completed	
Monitoring/ Stewardship	Design		Proposed ESRP	3/13
Contractor selected	Implement		Proposed ESRP	5/13
Construction	Implement		Proposed ESRP	7/13-10/13
Armor removal	Implement	Remove 100 ft. armoring		7/13-10/13
Revegetation	Implement	Plant along 50 ft. of shoreline		10/13
Monitoring	Evaluate		Proposed ESRP and future	5/13
Reporting	Admin		Future	

Evaluation Criteria- This section of the narrative should specifically and concisely respond to the primary ranking criteria listed below as well as sub-criteria as described in Appendix D.

ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE- An ideal project would completely and rapidly restore natural ecosystem processes, structures and services, within a large complex process unit, resulting in site conditions where the composition and configuration of the landscape reflects historical complexity, and where the site is both resilient to current and future development impacts, and known to provide highly valued habitat services to target species.

TECHNICAL MERIT AND READINESS - A strong technical and social review of the project is well documented or proposed for current phase. Work will be done quickly, and the project is being designed to meet a range of contingencies, advance ecological science, and maximize resilience under climate change.

COST JUSTIFICATION - Ideal projects will have clear budgets that are appropriate for the type of actions proposed in the given location and demonstrate that cost-saving mechanism (design considerations, low-cost partners, diverse funding sources etc.) have been incorporated into the project.

PUBLIC SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT - The project will build community support for protection and restoration and/or encourages valuable partnerships.

ADDITIONAL CRITERIA FOR BEACH PROJECTS: Applicants with beach restoration projects that are interested in being considered for EPA funding should also address the following:

Beach restoration (1-2 paragraphs)
In addition to addressing criteria of the ESRP program, including clear articulation of ecosystem benefits of the proposed action, please de*scribe:*

- How and to what degree the project provides public access and educational opportunities
- The annual amount of visitors to the site
- How the project demonstrates compelling alternatives to shoreline armoring
- Assurances for long-term protection and accessibility

Please note, this criterion is not scored by ESRP in the initial review and will not affect the ESRP project rank or amount of funding recommended. It will however be used in a subsequent step by ESRP staff and EPA partnership staff to evaluate and rank projects eligible to receive EPA funding.

FULL PROPOSAL APPLICATION TEMPLATE- **LEARNING PROJECTS**

Full proposals for learning projects will use the same application template as for pre-proposals but with the following changes:

- Project narrative length is extended to 8 pages; a detailed budget narrative should also be included that provides important details on costs and assumptions used to make cost estimates.
- "Frequency and budget" table.
- In addition to the basic supplemental material (maps and CV of principal investigator), proposals should include a detailed learning plan that full describes the monitoring or adaptive management objectives the proposal would address and any relevant monitoring reports.

APPENDIX D: EVALUATION CRITERIA

PRE-PROPOSAL CRITERIA – **RESTORATION AND PROTECTION PROJECTS**

Criteria and Evidence	Points
Importance and Benefits	**40**
☐ Project restores/protects primary ecological processes appropriate to the landform. ☐ Project addresses all or large proportion of impairment at the PU scale (or has good rationale for incremental restoration). Projects sites that are large relative to other sites of the same shoreform are generally considered to provide more benefits (e.g. a large coastal inlet may provide ecological goods and services than a smaller coastal inlet). ☐ Project is identified in regional plans such as PSNERP, the Action Agenda, or other species recovery plans. ☐ The project will restore or protect an ecosystem that has experienced significant loss in size or quantity in Puget Sound or is located in a sub-basin or that contains rare, vulnerable or ecologically important species or resources.	
Technical Merit and Readiness	**35**
☐ Proposed actions are consistent with PSNERP strategy recommendations. ☐ Project has demonstrated readiness to proceed based upon ESRP status categories. ☐ Major technical uncertainties or constraints have been or will be addressed by project. ☐ General approach appears feasible and sustainable.	
Public Support and Involvement	**10**
☐ Project engages multiple partners in opportunities for outreach, education or other activities. ☐ Project provides benefits beyond ecological benefits (e.g. educational, recreational, flood control etc). ☐ Funds needed for project implementation are secured or pending and likely; matching funds are secured	
Cost Justification	**15**
☐ The diversity of funding partners reflect the diversity of benefits provided (e.g. if flood control benefits, match might include in-kind from flood control district; if strong salmon recovery funds, SRFB dollars included etc.) ☐ The majority of grant funds are targeted toward the most relevant management measures or project actions at the site. ☐ Costs seem reasonable based on needs, location, and project type.	

PRE-PROPOSAL CRITERIA – **LEARNING PROJECTS**

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate both pre- and full proposals for learning projects.

(Points) Definition	Evidence
(30) Importance The project addresses a strategic nearshore restoration or protection target. Critical project outcomes cannot be reliably inferred from past projects or investigations, and the uncertainty the restoration or protection of ecological services.	(10) The action(s) being evaluated for learning strongly meet restoration and protection project importance criteria used to evaluate ESRP projects (10) The sponsor has defined precise and carefully defined postulates that clearly link the structures and processes being studied to factors that affect the sustained and resilient delivery of ecosystem services. (5) The learning plan is focused on aspects of project work that are unknown, and this inability to make predictions is based on an assessment of the scientific record. (5) The learning approach is based the experiences of cited investigations, and integrates recent learning.
(30) Viability and Technical Merit The project has a finite time span and intensity of effort well fitted to the object(s) of study, and suited to the ESRP budget. It produces useful results either through prolonged low-intensity study, or intensive study over a brief period of time. A complete monitoring or learning plan clearly describes the proposed approach.	(10) The duration and intensity of study (frequency and number of samples) is clearly defined, and is well fitted to evaluating the identified postulates with either low annual costs, or duration of < 2-3 years. (5) The study design considers a range of potentially confounding factors such that a strong inference is likely at the end of the study. (5) The analytical method is robust, and sample size, and sampling approach is based on a described understanding of variability in the parameters being estimated. (5) The investigators have documented experience observing and measuring the system being observed, and in the sampling and analytical methods being employed. (5) The study design has received a high quality of peer review, ideally impartial professional critique, without conflict of interest, leaving a written record.
(40) Policy or Management Relevance The new knowledge would result in a change in decision making that improves the efficiency or effectiveness of how the project delivers ecosystem services, either within the project, within the nearshore ecosystem site, or among similar system types.	(10) The projects has performance targets suited to site and system conditions and a conceptual plan for what sequence of investigation and action will be triggered if those targets are not met. (10) The project tests postulates about the dynamics of the nearshore ecosystem site being restored, such that findings will determine the location, scale or design of the next project within the system. (10) The project tests postulates about the dynamics of similar systems that can be extrapolated to the selection and design of project s at the scale of a sub-basin or Puget Sound. (10) The learning project addresses an ESRP Adaptive Management Objective, as defined in current guidance.

FULL PROPOSAL CRITIERA – **RESTORATION AND PROTECTION PROJECTS**

UNDERSTANDING AND APPLYING ESRP's NEW CRITERIA

Defining nearshore ecosystem sites

Every action occurs within a landscape setting. The PSNERP approach proposes that important physical and ecological processes operate at large scales, drive ecosystem structure, and control the delivery of ecosystem services. Therefore our ability to evaluate the importance and technical merit of a nearshore action depends, in part, on understanding how an action effects and is affected by a larger landscape.

For the purposes of ESRP, the landscape context should be evaluated at the scale of one of three "process domains": shoreline process unit, delta process unit (Simenstad et al. 2011), or coastal inlet site (Cereghino et al. 2012) unless a compelling rationale (e.g. local assessment) demonstrates that a larger or smaller frame of analysis than the process unit is sufficient to insure sustained ecosystem services over time. Projects that fully restore processes within large complex landscapes (i.e. high potential sites in the sense of Cereghino et al 2012) are generally favored over comparable projects at smaller sites.

An application should clearly identify the 'nearshore ecosystem site' in which project actions are proposed. Typically this is a single shoreline process unit (SPU) or delta process unit (DPU), but may include a complex of multiple process units or a separable piece of a process unit such as a coastal inlet if that can be justified. The definition of a 'nearshore ecosystem site' is therefore somewhat subjective, and depends on what the applicant is willing to 'bite off' and what the scale of benefits is in relation to the scope of their proposed work. Larger more complex sites are generally encouraged, but within that site you must account for risks and the degree to which your action addresses the integrity of the system.

Changes and Recommendations

The requirement for a formal conceptual model has been eliminated. However, sufficiently meeting the restructured importance and technical merit criteria requires a conceptual understanding of how the site is presently functioning and how it would ultimately function following your proposed restoration action. Proposals should describe a logic chain that justifies how physical changes being proposed will deliver predicted ecological/ecosystem functions, goods and services (e.g. Restoration Action➔Restored Process➔Structural Changes➔Functional Response).

To adequately address the revised criteria an application should:

- **Define the 'nearshore ecosystem site' in which the action is being proposed.** Unless a compelling justification is provided, this should be the Process Unit or Delta Process Unit as found within the PSNERP Geodatabase or Nearshore Data Site. Instructions on identifying the process unit in which your project is located are found on page 10.
- **Define the effect of the action** in relation to the change from historical conditions. High ranking projects would substantively address the impacts to a site, rather than proposing superficial treatments that do not address impacts. Proposals should identify the documented (and undocumented) stressors, nearshore and watershed modifications influencing the site, and specifically list those that will be affected by the proposed restoration action.

- **Describe the 'target state' of the nearshore ecosystem site**—How will the composition and configuration of the site look when the site has reached a certain level of "restoration maturity?" Partial and incremental actions may be perfectly appropriate. However, if there is no pathway toward substantive restoration of a whole site, that is a concern that may affect prioritization. ESRP strives to fund actions that move us toward some target future condition that is sustainable and has integrity.
- **Describe how the project overcomes risks from degradation**, both from current process degradation, and potential future impacts. Currently Bolte and Vache 2011 data are our only Sound-wide estimates of predicted population changes. However local planning analyses, PSNERP Change Analysis upland and watershed modifications, zoning and other information can provide another perspective. Projects should address the extent to which existing protection mechanisms and/or land ownership patterns create risk.
- **Link the anticipated outcomes of an action to precise benefits for target species**. The presence of a species in the system does not necessarily indicate there is benefit to the population. If the applicant wishes to claim benefit to a valued species, the mechanisms that result in population benefits should be explicitly stated and supported.
- **Indicate a peer-review mechanisms employed** to insure that design is rigorous and the action maximizes ecological and social benefits. Many projects are developed in isolation. Transparent, independent, interdisciplinary, and well-documented peer review should increasingly become a standard feasibility task for restoration actions.
- **Be focused on primary restorative and prerequisite management measures** (in the sense of Clancy et al. 2009) to ensure the majority of funding is focused on actions that have the ability to protect or restore the target ecological processes at the site. A strong justification should be provided for funding requests that focus on other less significant management measures. Match or partnership funds may be more appropriate for these non-essential management measures.

Tailoring Proposal Review to Landform

Our criteria will be applied based on what we understand about the dynamics of different coastal landforms (following Shipman 2008). Deltas, beaches and their barrier embayments, and coastal inlets each are shaped by a different set of physical processes and provide a unique set of services, that are in turn degraded by distinct patterns of development. The interpretation of ESRP evaluation criteria will be informed by strategic recommendations developed for each landform (Cereghino et al. 2012).

The following describes how ecological *importance* may be differentially evaluated based on landform:

Deltas - ***Substantial benefits*** are derived for restoring large estuarine areas to both tidal flow and freshwater inputs, through dike and levee setback. ***System Integrity*** requires consideration of sediment deposition, and representation of diverse wetland types, particularly oligohaline transition and freshwater tidal components, which are delta components which have been disproportionately lost in Puget Sound (Fresh *et al.* 2011; Simenstad *et al.* 2011). ***Sustainability*** may be compromised in places where accretion rates are insufficient for keeping up with sea level rise, and/or where the potential for landward wetland migration in response to sea level rise is limited. ***Highly valued services*** include nursery services for estuarine dependant fish like Chinook and chum salmon.

Beaches – ***Substantial benefits*** are derived by restoring or protecting substantial sources of sediment or removing substantial barriers to sediment transport to large beach systems that support complex depositional features. ***System Integrity*** requires the presence of a critical mass of sediment supply and transport, nearshore forest, intact

groundwater and surface hydrology. ***Sustainability*** is threatened by residential clearing and shoreline stabilization in combination with sea level rise, and can be overcome through nearshore ecosystem site scaled local management of sediment and coastal forest resources. ***Highly valued services*** include forage fish spawning.

Embayments (both barrier embayments and coastal inlets) – Substantial benefits are derived from reconnecting or reestablishing tidal flow to large historical embayments that have been lost or degraded, or reestablishing large areas of tidal wetlands where they have been lost. ***System Integrity*** requires management of coastal forest, and maintenance of freshwater quantity and quality through watershed management, and for barrier systems, the integrity and sustainability of the surrounding beach system. ***Sustainability*** is threatened by watershed development that degrades freshwater inputs, and where barriers sustain embayment structure, the degradation of updrift sediment supply. Sea level rise potentially affects both the sustainability of wetlands (similar to deltas) and increases the importance of sustained sediment supply. ***Highly valued services*** include nearshore rearing associated with natal salmon streams and rivers, and shellfish production.

Project proposals are reviewed and scored using four primary criteria. Each criterion is broken down into a number of sub-criteria each associated with evidence that sponsors can provide to demonstrate how a project meets criteria and sub-criteria. How well an applicant provides evidence will determine many points they receive for a given sub-criteria. For evaluation, Ecological Importance and Technical Merit are generally evaluated within the context of the "whole project" not just the current phase being proposed. For other criteria, evaluation will focus on the current phase of effort.

***CRITERIA*- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE**	**Pts**
1. ***ECOLOGICAL IMPORTANCE-*** *An ideal project would completely and rapidly restore natural ecosystem processes, structures and services, within a large complex process unit, resulting in site conditions where the composition and configuration of the landscape reflects historical complexity, and where the site is both resilient to current and future development impacts, and known to provide highly valued habitat services to target species.*	***35***
1a. Substantial Benefits – The project will maintain existing ecosystem services or provide a large increase in sustainable ecosystem services by protecting or restoring the most significant sources of degradation to ecosystem processes.	10
EVIDENCE: ☐ Proposed action restores or protects historical target processes appropriate to landform—(e.g. unconstrained tidal flows in deltas and embayments, freshwater inputs for river deltas and coastal inlets, and sediment inputs and transport on beaches and where barrier embayments are dependent on beaches for their structure). ☐ Proposed projects protects intact areas or restore the primary natural processes of the site and addresses a high proportion of the restoration or protection needs (i.e. degradation or future risk) within a site. Project site is large and complex relative to other sites of a similar shoreform (e.g. a large coastal inlet or a large beach process unit). ☐ Proposed action addresses the needs of a high potential site (based on PSNERP's potential score in Cereghino et. al. 2012 or other measure), or would cumulatively restore critical stressors within a group of smaller and simpler process units.	

CRITERIA- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE	Pts
1b. System Integrity – The project results in a highly functioning site that 1) reflects historical ecosystem dynamics and connectivity, and if not delivered fully by the project action, the proposal 2) describes how incremental work will reach this target condition at the site scale.	10
EVIDENCE: ☐ Expected future condition of target ecosystem state is clearly described including predicted changes over time. A full range of ecosystem components (Shipman 2008) or conditions (Cereghino et al 2012) will increasingly provide historical ecosystem services over time. ☐ Rare shoreform types (e.g. lost barrier estuaries, oligohaline and freshwater tidal marsh), and relatively rare ecosystem components (e.g. stream deltas) are recovered. ☐ Proposed actions will result in large contiguous patches of habitat that are hydrologically connected in a manner sustainable by natural processes, and open to unconstrained river and/or tidal processes. ☐ Adjacent areas support the function of the site (e.g. well-vegetated buffers deliver clean, cold water; up-drift bluffs provide sediment etc.). ☐ If incremental restoration is proposed, future restoration is feasible and designs do not preclude full restoration in the future.	
1c. Sustainability – The project approach is 1) responsive to potential risks of intense or complex site degradation, and 2) potential future impacts from population growth, and 3) demonstrates a preference for work where historical processes will be restored or protected at the scale of the process unit or 'nearshore ecosystem site' *(Note: climate change should be addressed in 2c).*	10
EVIDENCE: ☐ The project will protect or restore an ecosystem component or landform that is critical for increasing the integrity of the region, compared to historical composition. ☐ Project actions are consistent with the scientific record, respond to risks identified in Cereghino et al. 2012, and utilize local assessments. ☐ The whole of intact sites are protected, and/or target processes are comprehensively restored. The project addresses multiple stressors and their cumulative impacts. ☐ Upland and watershed modifications do not substantially limit the ability of the proposed actions to provide intended benefits and/or such modifications are or will be addressed through the project design. ☐ The potential for future development within and adjacent to the site is explicitly explored. The processes and services of the site will be resilient to anticipated change. Cereghino et al. (2012) provides a range of risk metrics following Simenstad et al. (2011) and Bolte & Vache (2010).	
1d. Valued Ecological Services - The site provides a high level of ecological habitat services to known species of concern compared to other similar landforms, based on an identified and accurately cited assessment.	*5*

***CRITERIA*- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE**	**Pts**
Evidence: ☐ Proposed actions restore or protect ecosystems that have experienced significant loss in size or quantity in Puget Sound or sub-basin, or that contain rare, vulnerable or ecologically important species or resources (e.g. PSP indicators: estuarine wetland, eelgrass meadow, seabirds, unarmored sediment sources, forage fish, and Chinook salmon; state or federal listed species, WDFW's priority habitats and species). ☐ Proposed action is logically linked to a change in habitat and other conditions that provide direct benefits for species of concern. The mechanism by which habitat change leads to species benefits is described (e.g. increases in tidal wetland area and re-establishment of channel networks is anticipated to increase juvenile salmon carrying capacity; predicted change in sediment texture and increase in overhanging shoreline vegetation increases forage fish spawning area). ☐ Proposed actions are clearly identified in regional or species recovery plans.	
2. TECHNICAL MERIT AND READINESS - *A strong technical and social review of the project is well documented or proposed for the current phase. Work will be done quickly, and the project is being designed to meet a range of contingencies, advance ecological science, and maximize resilience under climate change.*	***40***
2a. Certainty of Approach - 1) The project team includes the range of professional skills and experience suited to the scope of the project, ensuring high confidence the project will result in the predicted benefits, and 2) the project has been improved by critique from an independent and documented interdisciplinary technical review process.	15
Evidence: ☐ The project team contains the range of expertise needed to complete proposed actions. ☐ Proposal references or proposes an independent and well documented external review of project strategies and alternatives. Proposal has identified, by name, an interdisciplinary design team that supports the proposed project. ☐ The project addresses links between ecosystem elements and the processes that maintain them so that the project is likely to have the outcomes described in Ecological Importance (considers ecological context, confidence in predictions, and predictability of the management measures). ☐ <u>Acquisition</u> - risks to ecological processes at site can largely be controlled through acquisition. A strong stewardship plan is provided or is proposed as an early project deliverable, to be approved by ESRP, which clarifies how the site will be managed. ☐ <u>Restoration</u> - sponsor has engaged key stakeholders and technical experts to identify key uncertainties and constraints regarding project performance. Proposed approach is designed to address the uncertainties and constraints to the extent possible and consider alternative scenarios in the design process. For construction projects, the sponsor has a clearly defined contingency plan to address uncertainties.	
2b. Stewardship and Management – 1) The post-construction uncertainties and associated risks have been well defined, 2) a strategy for monitoring and managing uncertainty is defined, and 3) opportunities for learning are fully developed and integrated into the project design.	5

CRITERIA- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE	Pts
Evidence: ☐ Feasibility and design – proposal explicitly lists factors anticipated to create uncertainty in project outcomes, including impacts from partial restoration, landscape setting, future threats, ongoing human use, and fundamental assumptions about climate change. ☐ Acquisition - long-term stewardship and management plan has been (acquisition phase) or will be developed (site identification phase) based on known uncertainties and risks. ☐ Restoration - o Projects requesting monitoring funds should have completed a monitoring and adaptive management plan, which will be the basis for evaluating requests for monitoring funding. o A management strategy, including an appropriate level of qualitative or quantitative monitoring, has been (or will be) developed to monitor the evolution of natural processes and to observe characteristics of the site during and following implementation that are explicitly linked to outcomes. ☐ Proposal has identified specific learning objectives, and a systematic approach for achieving new knowledge, through the implementation of robust experimental design. Specific postulates and hypotheses are listed. ☐ Proposal will identify staff responsible for site management including the skills, knowledge, and experience needed for proposed outcomes.	
2c. Climate Change – action increases the resilience of both natural and human systems or fosters adaptation to anticipated sea level rise and local climate change.	5
EVIDENCE: ☐ Proponent demonstrates understanding of how climate change is likely to affect site processes and functions and demonstrates how the information has been considered in the site selection and design process, and monitoring. ☐ Opportunities to facilitate landward movement of coastal ecosystems subject to dislocation by sea-level rise and other climate change impacts are considered. For example: o Beach projects allow for landward migration area of shorelines within the project and sustained sediment supply necessary to adjust beach elevations. o Adequate opportunities for landward migration of tidal wetlands are available with the project area o The project design and system conditions allows for adequate and timely delivery of sediments to support marsh accretion within the project area and drift cell. ☐ Proposal identifies and addresses potential impacts of the project to adjacent land uses under climate change scenarios.	
2d. Project Readiness – proposed schedule is reasonable for project phase and not likely to be significantly delayed by social controversy or uncertainty over landowner willingness.	15
EVIDENCE: ☐ Proposals will be evaluated for readiness as defined within each of the ESRP status categories. ☐ Landowner has provided written support for the project. ☐ Proposed actions are consistent with local land use goals, policies, and regulations. ☐ There have been documented public communication efforts concerning the project and evidence that the sponsor has taken appropriate steps to prevent or limit controversy that would prevent or substantially delay implementation. ☐ Budget needs for the proposed phase of project, including matching funds, are secured or pending and likely. A clear strategy is provided for financing necessary additional phases that comprise the whole project.	

***CRITERIA*- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE**	**Pts**
3. COST JUSTIFICATION *- Ideal projects will have clear budgets that are appropriate for the type of actions proposed in the given location and demonstrate that cost-saving mechanism (design considerations, low-cost partners, diverse funding sources etc.) have been incorporated into the project .*	***15***
3a. Appropriate Costs - The relationship between expected outcomes and total project cost is appropriate for the project location and landform.	10
EVIDENCE: ☐ Conceptual design and costs are focused on the most relevant management measure(s). Only a limited proportion of funds are focused on supporting management measures. ☐ Operations and maintenance costs are minimized and cost-savings mechanisms are used (e.g. low cost partners; volunteers, partnerships etc.). ☐ Non-state funding sources are leveraged to maximize the ecological protection and restoration benefits.	
3b. Reasonable Budget and Oversight - The budget is complete and provides a fair estimate of all elements required for successful implementation of proposed actions.	5
EVIDENCE: ☐ The whole project budget is complete, sources of funding are explicit, and their status can be clearly discerned. ☐ Line item costs are clearly described in a budget narrative so that the nature of the costs and the estimation method can be easily discerned. ☐ Budget narrative describes uncertainties considered when developing the budget. Modest but reasonable contingency (based on specific and identified risks) is built into the budget at the task level. ☐ Funding partners and contributions reflect the diversity of benefits that will be delivered by the project (e.g. projects addressing drainage or flood control have contributions from agricultural groups or dike districts; if public access is improved, matching funds or in-kind from a user-group included; if salmon recovery project, SRFB dollars included etc).	
4. PUBLIC SUPPORTAND INVOLVEMENT - *The project will build community support for protection and restoration, engage the local community and/or encourages valuable partnerships*	***10***
4a. Multiple Benefits – The project provides benefits in addition to ecological restoration or protection.	**5**
EVIDENCE: ☐ The project references or provides documentation that the project will deliver multiple benefits to local communities including but not limited to public education or engagement, appropriate low-impact public use, flood hazard mitigation, drainage improvements, or infrastructure upgrades.	
4b. Partnership - The project engages many local and regional partners that will collaboratively support education, technology transfer, and stakeholder participation.	**5**

***CRITERIA*- Sub-criteria- EVIDENCE**	**Pts**
EVIDENCE: ☐ Letters of support indicate a broad and diverse base of support. ☐ Partners have been identified and specific mechanisms developed to support communications and collaboration relevant to successful completion of ESRP tasks and on-going project stewardship. ☐ Project is in a demonstrably visible location and proponent has a project communications strategy describing how specific groups of stakeholders will be made aware of project activities and related issues. ☐ Partners or key stakeholders actively involved in feasibility, design and/or implementation.	

FULL PROPOSAL CRITIERA – **LEARNING PROJECTS**

The following evaluation criteria will be used to evaluate both pre- and full proposals for learning projects. Please note, these criteria will also apply to portfolio project requests that are focused on project learning and are in excess of $10,000.

(Points) Definition	Evidence
(30) Importance The project addresses a strategic nearshore restoration or protection target. Critical project outcomes cannot be reliably inferred from past projects or investigations, and the uncertainty the restoration or protection of ecological services.	(10) The action(s) being evaluated for learning strongly meet restoration and protection project importance criteria used to evaluate ESRP projects (10) The sponsor has defined precise and carefully defined postulates that clearly link the structures and processes being studied to factors that affect the sustained and resilient delivery of ecosystem services. (5) The learning plan is focused on aspects of project work that are unknown, and this inability to make predictions is based on an assessment of the scientific record. (5) The learning approach is based the experiences of cited investigations, and integrates recent learning.
(30) Viability and Technical Merit The project has a finite time span and intensity of effort well fitted to the object(s) of study, and suited to the ESRP budget, producing for useful results either through prolonged low-intensity study, or intensive study over a brief period of time.	(10) The duration and intensity of study (frequency and number of samples) is clearly defined, and is well fitted to evaluating the identified postulates with either low annual costs, or duration of < 2-3 years. (5) The study design considers a range of potentially confounding factors such that a strong inference is likely at the end of the study. (5) The analytical method is robust, and sample size, and sampling approach is based on a described understanding of variability in the parameters being estimated. (5) The investigators have documented experience observing and measuring the system being observed, and in the sampling and analytical methods being employed. (5) The study design has received a high quality of peer review, ideally impartial professional critique, without conflict of interest, leaving a written record.
(40) Policy or Management Relevance The new knowledge would result in a change in decision making that improves the efficiency or effectiveness of how the project delivers ecosystem services, either within the project, within the nearshore ecosystem site, or among similar system types.	(10) The projects has performance targets suited to site and system conditions and a conceptual plan for what sequence of investigation and action will be triggered if those targets are not met. (10) The project tests postulates about the dynamics of the nearshore ecosystem site being restored, such that findings will determine the location, scale or design of the next project within the system. (10) The project tests postulates about the dynamics of similar systems that can be extrapolated to the selection and design of project s at the scale of a sub-basin or Puget Sound. (10) The learning project addresses an ESRP Adaptive Management Objective, as defined in current guidance.

PORTFOLIO CRITERIA

Membership in the ESRP Portfolio is not an assurance of funding. While the application process is streamlined, funding is still dependent on competitive evaluation among portfolio projects and across the Investment Plan. Instead of a full proposal, a portfolio project produces a ***Budget and Status Report*** in response to an annual request. These portfolio ranking criteria are intended to support consistent review and ranking of ***funding requests*** provided by partners.

Scoring is conducted by ESRP staff, and reviewed by the Nearshore Partnership Implementation Team. For additional phases of funding, projects must still satisfy eligibility criteria, particularly match requirements. Reviewers look for specific evidence that the proposed project meets the following criteria

Please note, for portfolio projects requesting monitoring implementation funds, their status update sheet should be accompanied by a narrative that addresses the learning criteria.

Portfolio criteria for restoration and protection projects

Pts	Criteria	Definition	Rubric
5	**Learning**	The project is part of an enhanced evaluation or learning strategy.	5 points
15	**Technical Ranking**	The project performed well within its last strategic competition.	Top 2% = 15 pts; top 5% = 12 pts; top 10% = 9 pts; top 15% = 6 pts; top 25% = 3 pts
15	**Leverage**	The project has secured additional matching resources for subsequent phases of work.	3:1 leverage for next phases = 15 pts 2:1 leverage for next phases = 10 pts 1:1 leverage for next phases = 5 pts
15	**Readiness**	The project has completed proposed work on time and on budget and has provided evidence of readiness to complete subsequent project phases.	on time under budget = 15 pts on time and within budget = 10 pts tasks complete = 5 pts
10	**Urgency**	Failure to provide additional funding may jeopardize initial investments or result in substantial cost increases beyond inflation.	Project may terminate without funding = 10 pts. Project may face substantial cost increases without funding = 5 pts
10	**Project type and location**	The project type or location has been identified as a high local or regional priority.	local AND regional priority = 10 pts local OR regional priority = 5 pts

APPENDIX E: OTHER RESOURCES

The following websites may provide additional information that supports your application:

ESRP website	http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/esrp
Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP): Publications	http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/technical_reports.html
PSNERP: Change Analysis Geodatabases	http://www.nws.usace.army.mil/Missions/CivilWorks/ProgramsandProjects/Projects/PugetSoundNearshoreEcosystemRestoration.aspx
Puget Sound Partnership- Action Agenda	http://www.psp.wa.gov/action_agenda_2011_update_home.php
Puget Sound Partnership- Salmon Recovery and Watershed Work Plans	http://www.psp.wa.gov/SR_threeyearworkplan.php
The Nature Conservancy Ecoregional Assessment	http://waconservation.org/ecoregionalAssessments.shtml
Puget Sound Nearshore Projects Data Site	http://www.psnerp.ekosystem.us/
Habitat Work Schedule	http://hws.ekosystem.us/
WA Dept of Ecology Oblique Aerial Photography	http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/shorephotos/index.html
WA Dept of Ecology Coastal Atlas	https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/coastalatlas/

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