ESRP Request for Learning Program Project Proposals

December 7th, 2023

2025-27 INVESTMENT PLAN

LEARNING PROJECTS APPLICATION SCHEDULE (REGIONAL FEASIBILITY AND PREDESIGN)

TASK	DATE	DESCRIPTION
ESRP Grant Program Informational Webinar	November 28, 2023	ESRP will host an informational webinar to answer any questions about our Small Grants, Learning Program, and Restoration and Protection Grants application process. Link to webinar recording.
Request for pre-proposals	December 7, 2023	Publication of ESRP Learning Project RFP
Pre-proposals due in PRISM	February 8, 2024 11:59 PM	**Pre-proposals will be submitted** in PRISM Online.
Initial review complete, invitation to submit full proposal	April 4, 2024	An ad-hoc science team will review, evaluate, and provide feedback to applicants
Presentations to review team for invited full proposals	May 6-7, 2024	Full proposal applicants will give presentations to the review team
Full-proposals due in PRISM	June 15, 2024	Applicants invited to submit full proposals will submit final applications in PRISM Online.
2025-27 ESRP Preliminary Investment Plan Published	October 1, 2024	Preliminary ranked project list and funding recommendations published and submitted to OFM.
Final investment plan	Spring 2025	Determined by WA Legislature
Anticipated contract start	July 1, 2025	First day of FY 2025
Anticipated grant period	July 2025 - June 2027	Biennium

CONTACT INFORMATION

The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) is jointly administered by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). RCO functions as ESRP's fiscal agent. Questions regarding this RFP should be directed towards:

- Tish Conway-Cranos, Nearshore Science Manager –Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (360) 902-2540, tish.conway-cranos@dfw.wa.gov, or

- Kay Caromile, ESRP/RCO Grants Manager- Recreation and Conservation Office (360) 867-8532, kay.caromile@rco.wa.gov

ESRP NEARSHORE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The mission of the ESRP is to *restore and protect the natural processes that create and sustain the Puget Sound nearshore ecosystem.* We seek exemplary projects of regional importance that advance learning about cutting-edge ecosystem restoration tactics and strategies for the **purpose of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of future capital restoration projects**. Our work is centered on the scientific principles and ecosystem restoration strategies developed by the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP).

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 maintain nearshore structure will result in self-sustaining improvements in ecosystem functions, goods, and services, thereby justifying our capital investments in nearshore ecosystem projects (Cereghino et al. 2012). 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 the effectiveness of program actions.

The most competitive ESRP learning proposals will be those that directly support planning, design or implementation of priority management measures (Clancy et al. 2009) and **actions that will most fully address the source of degradation of these natural processes or that are focused on protection of intact areas.** Strong proposals will also generate results that are **applicable across multiple geographies** within Puget Sound.

LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Regional Feasibility and Predesign Projects (learning projects) are necessary to *support restoration of large and complex ecosystems* or to *improve effectiveness or efficiency of a class of restoration or acquisition projects where there is uncertainty about ecological outcomes*. This component of ESRP's investment strategy aims to clearly identify the needs/problems to be addressed that will influence restoration and protection project development and selection in Puget Sound. ESRP learning projects will provide insight and analysis into the options available to solve complex problems leading to nearshore and salmon recovery in Puget Sound's nearshore. **We intend to fund efforts that use scientific methods during the 2025-2027 biennium to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of future ESRP program investments.** ESRP's learning project program is required by our authorizing program guidance, developed by the Puget Sound Nearshore and Ecosystem Restoration Project (PSNERP).

Strong learning projects improve our ability to select treatment locations and management measures, and help designers evaluate the consequences of alternative actions. We organize our learning by landform to consider the unique dynamics of delta, beach, and embayment ecosystems. Examples of past learning projects include development of design goals for delta channel formation, evaluation of how tide gate function affects estuarine fish passage, and assessment of density-dependent rearing limitations of estuarine habitats for fish. Projects that require more than a biennium to achieve strong results shall be considered, but must compete with shorter duration efforts based on importance and applicability.

For our 2024 RFP we have identified a set of six broad learning project objectives. We will review learning project proposals through a multi-step process, beginning with a pre-proposal **due February 8, 2024.** We use a criteria-based, peer-review process to inform a final scope and budget for selected efforts.

Learning projects have constituted approximately 10% of our biennial ESRP project portfolio. We anticipate that up to $2,500,000 will be available for learning project investments over the 2025-27 biennium, depending on final appropriations and proposals. Additional details and evaluation criteria can be found in Appendix A. For a complete set of ESRP's learning objectives see Appendix B.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

ANTICIPATED FUNDING SOURCES

STATE FUNDING

This RFP will be used to develop the 2025 - 27 ESRP Investment Plan containing a ranked project list and funding recommendations. This investment plan will be used to direct 2025-27 state capital appropriations to sound conservation investments in Puget Sound. ESRP anticipates a $25 million

request for the biennium, of which 10% will be made available for ESRP Learning Projects. ESRP received a $14,309,000 biennial appropriation during the 2023-25 fiscal period.

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FUNDING PARTNERSHIPS

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Establishing Awards for Funding Partnerships- The 2025 - 27 Investment Plan process and the resultant ranked project list can be used to identify funding opportunities through other state and federal partners (e.g., NOAA, PSAR, EPA, FEMA, PSP, and Strategic Initiative Leads) as part of a coordinated investment strategy. ESRP has successfully leveraged supplemental funding from federal and state partners in the past to support projects on the ESRP funding list that align with the core criteria and goals of those partner programs. Projects funded through this mechanism will also be subject to the requirements of the specific funding source.

OTHER 2024 ESRP FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

The Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) will release separate RFPs for ESRP's Small Grant program and for ESRP's Acquisition and Restoration Grant program November 2023 and December 2023, respectively. The ESRP Shore Friendly program will release a request for proposals on January 17, 2024.

AWARD AMOUNTS AND AWARD PERIOD

There is no maximum or minimum funding limit for proposed projects. However, funding is limited. The final award amount and scope may differ from those proposed and will reflect a thorough evaluation of investment plan alternatives and a project sponsor's readiness to complete work within the award period.

Project awards are for work to be completed between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2027, unless additional time is necessary and approved by the ESRP management team.

PHASED PORTFOLIO FUNDING

ESRP strives to support project activities that can be completed within a 2-year time frame to align with our biennial budget cycle. However, we recognize that some projects require multiple years and phases to complete to fully achieve their goal.

To support phased funding, ESRP has developed a streamlined application or "portfolio" process for projects that: 1) have won an award in a previous ESRP grant competition, 2) during the previous biennium, worked together with ESRP to demonstrate the scope of their project requires more than 2 years for completion, and 3) have not substantively altered project scope. ESRP anticipates balancing new and existing project funding needs. A given project may seek portfolio funding within the first two grand rounds following their original grant competition application. After that period, they will need to seek funding through a normal competitive grant application.

Please contact the ESRP Science Manager (Tish.Conway-Cranos@dfw.wa.gov) to determine the eligibility status of your project in our Portfolio process and the required portfolio application material.

Applications for portfolio learning projects must be received by the same application due date as the full proposal applications (see above schedule and timeline).

ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

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

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR LEARNING PROJECTS

1. The proposed project is located within Puget Sound (East of Cape Flattery to the Canadian border). ESRP defines the nearshore zone as 200 meters immediately upland of tidal influence to the end of the photic zone in the marine shoreline. It includes the shoreline bluffs, the tidal portions of streams and rivers, and shallow water areas out to a depth where sunlight no longer supports marine vegetation.

2. The proposed project need must directly support implementation of priority management measures and actions identified by PSNERP, a salmon recovery Lead Entity, a Shore Friendly Lead Organization, or Marine Resource Committee, and be listed in a current watershed, salmon recovery, or nearshore habitat restoration or protection plan.

3. The primary purpose of the proposed project must be to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of future capital restoration projects by informing the planning, design or implementation phases of projects to restore or protect Puget Sound nearshore ecosystem processes or functions.

4. The proposed project must meet the Learning Project Evaluation Criteria described in Appendix A.

5. Project awards will not be provided for work that relieves obligatory compensation or mitigation requirements incurred by the sponsor or a third-party. 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.

MATCHING REQUIREMENTS

ESRP requires that projects provide a match of cash or in-kind services equaling 30% of the ESRP award. This match must be incurred according to RCO policies. Some of this match must be non- state funds. Match eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Match may include cash, bond funds, grants (unless prohibited by the funding entity), labor, equipment and equipment use (see RCO Manual 8 for restrictions), materials, staff time, and donations. All match must be an integral and necessary part of the approved project, must be for ESRP-eligible elements for the project, and must be committed to

the project. Match expenses are reviewed for eligibility, and with the same criteria, that reimbursement requests are reviewed.

No funds administered by the ESRP may act as match for an ESRP grant. Other funds administered by RCO may be used as match; consult with the ESRP/Salmon Project Manager to determine whether a specific grant may be used as match for the ESRP project.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Sponsors are required to enter two progress reports per year for all funded projects using the PRISM Online progress reporting tool. Sponsors are also required to complete and submit a final report in PRISM Online at the completion of their projects. Through the online final report, sponsors essentially update their original application to provide a final project description, narrative, and information about the project scope, metrics, and costs. Note that the online final report in PRISM is different from your detailed project deliverables.

GRANT REIMBURSEMENT

RCO pays sponsors through a reimbursement process. This means that sponsors will not receive a lump sum grant in advance. That said, short-term advances may be available to eligible sponsors. Sponsors must provide documentation for all expenditures before receiving compensation. Sponsors must provide documentation for all match. RCO requires a minimum of one billing a year and a maximum of one a month. RCO *Manual 8- Reimbursements* describes RCO reimbursement policies and procedures. Reimbursement workshops are available online on the RCO Website.

ELIGIBILE COSTS

All project costs and donations submitted for reimbursement or match must directly relate to the work identified in the grant agreement and be considered reasonable, necessary, and eligible.

Indirect Costs: The ESRP program allows indirect costs for learning projects. Project applicants that plan to bill for indirect charges need to provide RCO documentation that confirms their indirect rate prior to their project going under agreement. For indirect costs to be eligible, select the "Agency Indirect" work type on the metrics page of your full application and enter an associated cost.

Pre-Agreement Costs: Generally, RCO will not reimburse costs incurred before the project start date of the grant's project agreement. However, certain pre-agreement costs within the project scope may be eligible for reimbursement (or to be used as match) if approved by the ESRP management team in writing.

CULTURAL RESOURCES COMPLIANCE

Governor's Executive Order 21-02, Archaeological and Cultural Resources, directs state agencies to review all projects for potential impacts to cultural resources to ensure that reasonable action is taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate adverse effects to these resources. The federal government, through Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, requires the same compliance for projects with

federal involvement, for example, projects on federal lands, with federal funds, or those that require a federal permit. RCO facilitates review under the Governor's executive order. The appropriate lead federal agency facilitates review under the National Historic Preservation Act. Both processes require review, analysis, and consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and affected Native American tribes.

After the initial consultation, a funded project may be required to complete further cultural resources review and continue the consultation process to determine next steps. Those most likely to require additional review are those with ground-disturbing activities. Examples of ground-disturbing activities sometimes associated with learning projects include **benthic sediment cores and data collection instrument installation.**

Costs for cultural resources review (survey, monitoring, etc.) are eligible for reimbursement and should be included in the grant application. Sponsors must complete the consultation process and satisfy all requirements before beginning any ground-disturbing activities. Ground disturbance started without approval will be considered a breach of the grant agreement.

LEARNING PROJECT PROPOSAL PROCESS

AT-A-GLANCE

Pre-proposal Due – Pre-proposals will be submitted in **PRISM Online** prior to midnight on **February 8, 2024**. A pre-proposal will briefly describe the deliverables, scope, estimated costs, and value of the proposed work.

Initial review – An ad hoc science review panel will identify how the project meets criteria, and ESRP staff will identify how the proposal could better interact with other regional activities. ESRP staff will flag projects that, as written, are likely to fall outside the narrow ESRP learning project objectives and criteria. A written response to the pre-proposal will be added to the proposal record and a subset of project applicants will be conditionally invited to submit a full-proposal.

Oral Presentation- Those applicants that are invited to submit a full proposal will be asked to deliver a short (10-15 minute) oral presentation of their project concept, methods, intended analyses and how the project will inform future restoration on **May 6 or 7, 2024.** Reviewer questions following the presentation will help to guide the development of Full Proposals.

Final Application Due – Final applications for the learning program must be submitted via **PRISM Online** before midnight on **June 15, 2024.** Final applications should address the comments and conditions raised by reviewers during the initial review and oral presentation. Refer to the *Full Application Format* below for details.

Final investment plan - The ESRP ad hoc science review panel will evaluate application material using the ESRP criteria provided in Appendix A. They will complete a final ranking of projects and identify projects to include on the ESRP investment plan. Once the list is developed there will be no changes to the project ranking, although funding award recommendations may differ from requested amounts.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS & FORMAT

PRE-PROPOSAL FORMAT

The pre-proposal provides a technical briefing on the scope, deliverables, and value of a scientific investigation. Please focus on the specific tasks that will be completed with proposed funding, project deliverables, and how that deliverable increases the efficiency or effectiveness of capital project work. Pre-proposals must be submitted **via PRISM Online by February 8, 2024.** See Appendix C for PRISM instructions.

Optional Pre-Proposal Worksheet. You will respond to all Pre-Proposal questions directly in PRISM (rather than filling out a separate form and attaching it PRISM). For your convenience, we prepared a Pre-Proposal Worksheet for you to use if you wish to craft your responses to many of the application questions before copying them into PRISM. **Use of this worksheet is optional**. Its intent is to serve as a tool as you develop your responses. **There is no need to attach this worksheet to PRISM.** Pay close attention to the character limits established for each response as PRISM will cut off all text that exceeds the limit. If you are having trouble staying within the character limit, please notify your ESRP/RCO Grants Manager so we can determine if it is necessary to extend the limit.

The Pre-Proposal will consist of *brief descriptions* of the following elements. Please see the optional worksheet for more detail about each pre-proposal element. All answers will be submitted directly into PRISM Online.
1. **Proposal title**
2. **Cost**
3. **Project Partners**
4. *Abstract/Project Description*
5. *Problem statement*
6. *Methods and Efficiency/Technical merit*
7. **Deliverables**
8. **Application to capital restoration or protection**
9. **Transferability**

Additional details and evaluation criteria can be found in Appendix A. For a complete set of ESRP's learning objectives see Appendix B. PRISM instructions can be found in Appendix C.

FULL APPLICATION FORMAT

ESRP staff will notify applicants who are invited to submit a full proposal by **April 4, 2024**. Those who receive an invitation must submit their final applications to the learning program **via PRISM Online.** See Appendix C for PRISM instructions.

In the final application, applicants **will be asked to expand upon answers given in the pre-proposal as well as to provide the following additional information.** Full Application Worksheets are available as a helpful tool if you'd like to craft your response to questions outside of PRISM before copying it to PRISM. **Please see the full proposal optional worksheet** for more detail about each full proposal element.
1. **Hypothesis statement**.
2. **Outputs and Outcomes**
3. **Task Description.**
4. **Budget Narrative**.

Required PRISM Attachments:
1. **Completed Budget Worksheet** (Excel spreadsheet)
2. **CV's of Project Personnel** (pdfs)
3. **Applicant Resolution and Authorization.** The applicant's governing body must pass a resolution that authorizes submission of the application for funding. This resolution will identify who may sign a contract and amendments on behalf of the organization. The Applicant Resolution and Authorization template will be provided to project sponsors who are invited to submit full proposals. The format of the authorization may change, but the text may not change. Only one form is required for each applicant, so long as each project name and number is included in the resolution. Forms filled out incorrectly, or unsigned, are not valid and will require revisions. For help, contact a RCO grants manager before signing the form. Secondary sponsors must also complete this form.

Optional PRISM Attachments:
1. **Supporting Figures.** Maps or diagrams that help describe the scope of your work, your sampling design, or the phenomena that you are observing.
2. **Letters of support**

INVESTMENT PLAN DEVELOPMENT

INTEGRATING RANKED PROJECT LISTS

The ESRP review process results in a separate prioritized project list for each sub-program:
1. Ranked new project list.
2. Ranked portfolio project list.
3. Ranked learning project list.
4. Ranked small grants project list.
5. Shore Friendly local program funding request.

These separate lists are "zippered" together to create a single integrated ESRP Preliminary Investment Plan to be submitted to the Governor's Office and the Washington State Legislature for funding consideration. The integrated ESRP investment plan is created 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 and small grants projects will compete against other learning projects/small grants projects for a portion of ESRP's total appropriation that will be set aside for these opportunities. (Learning grants receive 10% of the total ESRP appropriation and small grants receive a maximum of 5% of the total ESRP appropriation.) Shore Friendly's funding request to the legislature may be integrated at various incremental appropriation levels on the ESRP investment plan.

The ESRP Preliminary Investment Plan will remain preliminary until state capital funding is secured and a Final ESRP Investment Plan is published. Contact the ESRP Program Manager for more information on the integration of multiple ESRP grant programs into one investment plan.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION (DEI) AND ESRP

DEFINITIONS

Diversity: Any difference in the characteristics that make individuals unique. It is used to describe the various combinations of group/social differences (e.g., race/ethnicity, class, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, country of origin, and ability, as well as cultural, political, religious and other affiliations) and human differences (e.g., personality, learning style, and life experiences).

Equity: The act of developing, strengthening, and supporting procedural and outcome fairness in systems, procedures, and resource distribution mechanisms to create equitable (not equal) opportunity for all people, with a focus on eliminating barriers that have prevented the full participation of historically and currently oppressed groups.

Inclusion: Intentionally designed, active, and ongoing engagement with people that ensures opportunities and pathways for participation in all aspects of group, organization, or community, including decision-making processes. Inclusion refers to how groups show that people are valued as respected members of the group, team, organization, or community.

Environmental Justice (EJ): The fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, gender, physical and mental ability, or class with respect to the development, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations and policies. Justice will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, access to the decision-making process, and benefits of a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work.

As a regional grant program serving nearshore restoration and protection project applicants that include state, federal, and local agencies, Native American tribes, and non-governmental organizations throughout Puget Sound, ESRP is committed to applying a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion/Environmental Justice (DEI/EJ) lens to each component of our work. To meet this goal, we are exploring ways to incorporate DEI/EJ values into all aspects of our grant program, including the way we form review teams, hire staff, evaluate projects, make decisions, and develop communication materials. As a starting place, for the 2024 grant round (projects to be funded in the 2025-2027 biennium), we will ask applicants about how their project or organization is supporting the values of DEI and EJ. We anticipate using the responses to inform a programmatic approach toward a holistic and thoughtful application of a DEI and EJ lens throughout our work to restore and protect Puget Sound nearshore ecosystems. Links to DEI and EJ resources are provided in Appendix D: Other Resources.

APPENDIX A: LEARNING PROJECT EVALUATION CRITERIA

#	Criterion	Description	Threshold for Deferral	Evidence
1	Importance to Restoration (10 pts.)	Strong proposals have examined our ability to predict project outcomes, and have recognized uncertainty resulting in a risk of failure to achieve restoration goals. Projects will address or inform substantial uncertainties in restoration outcomes.	The proposal does not improve a low predictive ability or resolve uncertainties that affect the ecological, social, or economic success or failure of ESRP capital restoration projects.	• Review of existing literature, which may include consideration of recent un- published work. • Identifies specific risk of failure associated with a capital project. • Personal communication with restoration project sponsors
2	Efficiency and Technical Merit (10 pts.)	Strong projects have identified an efficient pathway to obtaining new knowledge. Projects should be cost-effective, scientifically rigorous, and produce a clear deliverable within specific and disclosed time frame.	The proposed project is unlikely to reliably generate new and impactful knowledge in a known time frame.	• A timeline and budget for completion has been identified. • A rigorous analytical method has been proposed including sampling strategy related to an understanding of the parameters in question. • Factors affecting noise/signal ratio and temporal and spatial variation have been addressed. • Project team has the necessary qualifications to successfully complete the work.

3	Policy Impact (10 pts.)	Strong projects specifically identify how different study outcomes might directly affect capital program policies and decision that affect future efforts.	The proposal does not relate to the actions that are anticipated to be funded by the ESRP program, or will not affect decision making.	• The project type affected is an important component of nearshore process-based restoration. • A specific decision point has been identified in the project selection and design cycle that will be affected.
4	Transferability (10 pts.)	Strong projects produce evidence that is broadly applicable to a wide range of similar ecological systems.	The learning is specific to an individual site and will not provide substantive benefits to decision making at other sites.	• Clear analysis of the representativeness of the study site within a population of sites. • Strong isolation of factors and co- factors.
5	Learning Priority (5 pts.)	Strong projects address learning objectives defined in this RFP.	NA	• The proposal addresses the issues described in the learning objectives text.

APPENDIX B: LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The following learning objectives reflect our program's current assessment of what kinds of learning efforts are likely to improve our program efficiency and effectiveness. We will accept and review all eligible proposals. Full proposals that strongly align with one of these learning objectives may receive up to five additional points (out of a total possible score of 45 points). We have organized these objectives around geomorphic shoreform. For all shoreforms, strong proposals will:

1. Identify how results associated with near-term restoration projects may affect decision making around later projects.
2. Develop evidence that can be used to improve restoration decision making in other delta systems.
3. Integrate and leverage the resources and activities of partners.
4. Have specific deliverables that affect decision-making.
5. Make good use of the sequence and scope of planned restoration treatments to isolate factors that affect restoration effectiveness.

ESRP LEARNING OBJECTIVES

RIVER DELTAS

Delta project work has been focused on the removal or modification of levees and dikes. We anticipate that management of freshwater distributary flows may be critical to future restoration of delta systems. The following learning project topics will receive additional attention in the 2024 learning project review:

D1. Delta System Scale Analysis of Habitat Function. Some of the effects of restoration, such as hydrodynamics, sediment distribution, and salmon growth and survival, are best observed at the scale of a whole river delta system. A strong system-scale learning project will use analysis of system dynamics to inform the design and configuration of restoration efforts. Of particular interest are investigations that seek to understand and predict the relative benefit of alternate restored system configurations for salmonid rearing, and/or the resilience of system restoration strategies to sea level rise and future climatic conditions.

D2. Critical Design Decisions Surrounding Dike/Levee Removal or Connectivity Improvements. Levee and dike removal is our preferred management measure for delta restoration (Clancy et al. 2009) and increasing connectivity is a key objective of many delta restoration projects. There are multiple design decisions that affect project cost and are based on assumptions about how habitats will evolve following dike removal. A strong proposal would:

1. Leverage and synthesize existing regional and national work.
2. Result in specific tools or guidance to inform design.
3. Make use of variable or phased restoration treatments or natural experiments to isolate the effects of specific design elements.

D3. Planning for Multiple Benefits from Delta Restoration. We lack agreement within agricultural deltas about desired future delta condition. Different community partners may have competing interests in flood risk management, development, agricultural viability, or restoration. We are interested in learning projects that:

1. Create opportunities for community interested parties to clarify their objectives.
2. Lead to economic, physical or ecological analyses of delta landscape management alternatives.
3. Result in restoration strategies that integrate restoration, flood management, and the resilience of agricultural economies within river floodplains.

A strong effort would result in a set of viable and broadly endorsed restoration projects. A strong proposal will be finite in scope and endorsed by diverse community partners.

BEACHES

A limited but growing number of restoration actions restore beach sediment supply and are funded through the ESRP program. The majority of beach project funding has been used to acquire parcels with feeder bluffs prior to development, at a high cost. The following general topic will receive additional attention in the 2024 learning project review:

B1. Identification of Beach System Targets. Prior work has begun to integrate existing shoreline data to allow for more data-driven identification of beach systems most suitable for specific management measures and purposes (see Beach Strategies hub site). Further development of this approach will help project sponsors to identify actions, and funders to evaluate projects. We would like to support research that informs the development of beach decision support models that may consider:

1. The specific tools to be employed.
2. The specific services that we aim to protect and restore.
3. The relative importance of different beach ecosystems for providing these services.
4. The anticipated effects of sea level rise and global climate change.
5. Factors that create risk of failure of restoration actions to meet their objectives

A strong effort will both leverage best available spatial data and be compatible with the ESRP beach strategies. We further encourage efforts that investigate the connection between drift cell characteristics and measures of ecological function including forage fish, eelgrass, and invertebrate abundance.

EMBAYMENTS

A number of ESRP actions involve the restoration of coastal inlets and barrier embayments. Local assessments provide our primary basis for project selection. We have no tools for tracking our work compared to historical losses, or to estimate the relative value of different actions in the embayment landscape. The following learning project topics will receive additional attention in the 2024 learning project review:

E1. Inventory and characterization of Puget Sound sub-estuaries for restoration. Puget Sound has been identified as a single estuary of national significance. Within the Puget Sound are thousands of creek mouths, embayments, and inlets, each of which can be considered a sub-estuary within Puget Sound.

Existing data provides the foundation for identifying and characterizing protected coastal wetlands and their associated watersheds. An inventory of sub-estuaries and their relationship with adjoining beach systems and watersheds are necessary steps in developing sound-wide assessment methods or tracking restoration progress and potential. A strong proposal would:

1. Build on existing polygonal representation of Puget Sound sub-estuaries.
2. Relate these units to characteristics of related beach systems and watersheds.
3. Characterize these units using best available data to support assessment for restoration.

E2. Identification of Embayment System Targets. Initial work has begun to integrate existing shoreline data to allow for more data-driven identification of beach systems most suitable for specific management measures and purposes for beach systems (see Beach Strategies wiki page) and we would like to expand this work to include embayments to help project sponsors identify actions and to help funders evaluate embayment projects. We would like to support research that informs the development of embayment decision support models that consider:

1. The specific tools to be employed.
2. The specific services we aim to protect and restore.
3. The relative importance of different beach ecosystems for providing these services.
4. The anticipated effects of sea level rise and global climate change.
5. Factors that increase the risk of restoration actions failing to meet their objectives.

A strong effort will leverage best available spatial data, be compatible with ESRP beach strategies, and engage a range of community partners that are concerned about the beach services in question. We further encourage efforts that investigate the relative importance of different embayments for nearshore salmonid rearing services as well as the role of connectivity with upland ecosystems and other embayments in contributing to ecological function.

APPENDIX C: PRISM INSTRUCTIONS FOR ESRP LEARNING PROJECTS

Pre-Proposals and Final Applications for the learning program must be submitted via PRISM Online.

PRE-PROPOSAL PRISM APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS:

STEP 1. SIGN UP FOR A SECUREACCESS WASHINGTON ACCOUNT AND A PRISM USERNAME AND PASSWORD

All applicants must use PRISM Online to complete and submit applications. New PRISM users must fill out a New User Account Form to obtain a username and password and sign up for a SecureAccess Washington Account. When signing into PRISM for the first time, users will be asked to sign into both PRISM and SecureAccess. After the initial sign in, users will sign into PRISM using their SecureAccess credentials only. For more details on the double sign-in, visit RCO's PRISM information Web page.

Questions about using PRISM? PRISM instruction and training videos are available on RCO's website. Feel free to also contact:

- ESRP/Salmon Grants Manager at kay.caromile@rco.wa.gov or (360) 867-8532 or

- RCO's PRISM support staff at prismsupport@rco.wa.gov or (360) 902-3086. *(Telephone Relay Service for the Hearing Impaired (800) 833-6388.)*

### STEP 2. CREATE AND FILL OUT YOUR PRE-PROPOSAL PRISM APPLICATION

To begin an application, log into PRISM Online using the SecureAccess credentials. On the PRISM home page, users can search for applications, apply for grants, manage grant agreements (active projects), and submit billings for reimbursement and progress and final reports.

From the PRISM Online home page, applicants can locate and click on the orange "+ New Application" button to launch the Application Wizard. You then will be prompted to fill out several screens of information about your project. When prompted to "select the program for which you are applying ", select "*Estuary & Salmon Rest – Activities Pre-Proposal*".
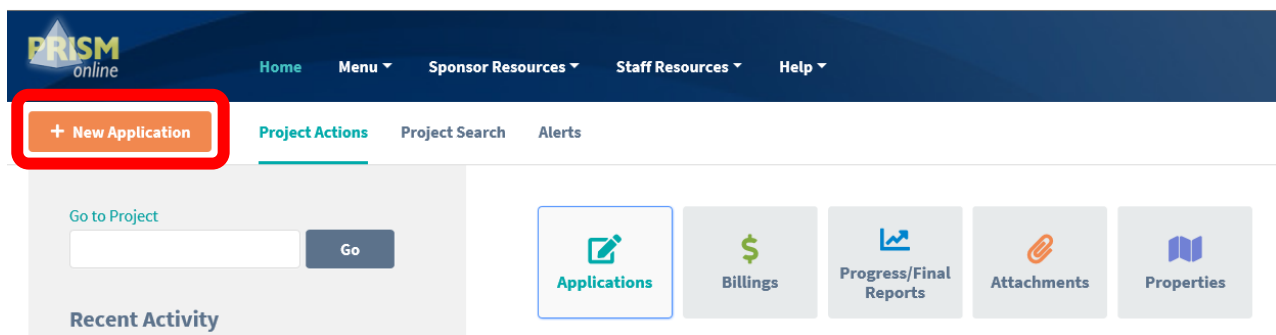
Once a PRISM project number is assigned, you may leave and return to your application at any time. To return to your application, sign in to PRISM Online, select "Project Actions," and enter the project

number in the "Go to Project" field. Doing so will open the "Application Wizard" for the project. Alternatively, in "Project Actions" select the Applications icon, which will display a list of applications for the applicant's organization.
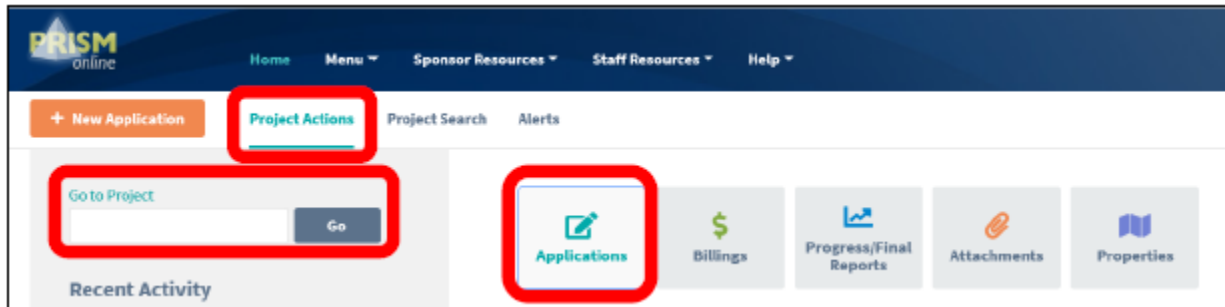
Complete the required information on each screen and click the "Next" button. This process will take the applicant through the entire application page by page. Be sure to save work often.

Multiple users may work on one application in PRISM, just add individuals to the Project Contacts list, but it is best not to have two people working in the application at the same time.

STEP 3. CHECK FOR ERRORS AND SUBMIT YOUR PRISM APPLICATION.

After completing all the application information and requirements, check the application for errors on the "Submit Application" screen. Pages indicated with a red exclamation mark (**!**) in the navigation table on the left of the screen require refinement. Continue to check for errors after making corrections. If errors persist, reach out to the ESRP/RCO grants manager for assistance. Once all pages are cleared of errors and show a green check mark, submit the application.

FINAL PRISM APPLICATION SUBMITTAL PROCESS, IF INVITED

ESRP staff will notify applicants whether they are invited to submit a full application for ESRP funding consideration. Only applicants who are invited should submit a full application. All applications must be submitted through the PRISM Online application process. The full application builds off the pre-proposal material already submitted, but requires much more information be entered into PRISM. RCO strongly encourages applicants to start the online application early.

STEP 1. RCO WILL CONVERT YOUR PRE-PROPOSAL TO AN ESRP PROJECT APPLICATION IN PRISM.

This step will be completed prior to your invitation to submit a full application. **Your PRISM project number will remain the same.** The information in your pre-proposal will be transferred to your full application.

STEP 2. COMPLETE YOUR FULL APPLICATION:

Open your ESRP Project application in PRISM. The information in your pre-proposal will already be entered in your full application, but there will be many more questions and screens to fill out to ensure a complete application. Complete the required information on each screen and click the "Next" button. This process will take the applicant through the entire application page by page. While some of the information required in PRISM will not directly influence the technical evaluation process, it is required for all projects awarded ESRP funds. Be sure to save work often.

Cultural Resources Page of PRISM Application: Note that you only need to create an Area of Potential Effect map and respond to cultural resources questions if your project includes ground-disturbing activities (e.g., monitoring well installation, sediment cores, instrument installation, etc.).

STEP 3. ATTACH SUPPORTING PROJECT INFORMATION TO YOUR PRISM APPLICATION.

Your application includes the information you enter in PRISM as well as the material you attach. RCO offers a 2-minute training video to demonstrate how to add attachments to your PRISM application. Required attachments for ESRP Learning projects include:

- **Budget Worksheet** (Excel template sent by email)

- *Curriculum vitae* **(CV)** for key project personnel, along with a brief narrative describing the how each project participant is qualified to perform their identified role(s)

- **Applicant Resolution and Authorization** (MS Word template)

  The applicant's governing body must pass a resolution that authorizes submission of the application for funding. This resolution will identify who may sign a contract and amendments on behalf of the organization. The format of the authorization may change, but the text may not change. Only one form is required for each applicant, so long as each project name and number are included in the resolution. Forms filled out incorrectly, or unsigned, are not valid and will require revisions. For help, contact an RCO grants manager before signing the form. Secondary sponsors must also complete this form.

  Applicant Authorization Resolution Forms are not required from tribal sponsors at the time of application. However, RCO will need an organizationally drafted resolution from tribal sponsors before signing the agreement. Tribal sponsors should work with their grants manager to fulfill this requirement.

- **Additional Supporting Documents (OPTIONAL)**

  Attach any additional information you feel will be relevant to better your project and its significance (e.g., letter of support, maps or diagrams that help describe the scope of your work, your sampling design, or the phenomena that you are observing).

STEP 4. CHECK FOR ERRORS AND SUBMIT YOUR PRISM APPLICATION.

After completing all of the application information and requirements, check the application for errors on the "Submit Application" screen. Pages indicated with a red exclamation mark (**!**) in the navigation table on the left of the screen require refinement. Continue to check for errors after making corrections. If errors persist, reach out to the RCO grants manager for assistance. Once all pages are cleared of errors and show a green check mark, submit the application.

APPENDIX D: OTHER RESOURCES

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

WDFW's ESRP website	https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/nearshore/conservation/programs/esrp
PSNERP Publications	https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/nearshore/conservation/technical
PSNERP: Change Analysis Geodatabases	http://wagda.lib.washington.edu/data/geography/wa_state/#PSNERP
Puget Sound Partnership- Action Agenda	http://www.psp.wa.gov/action_agenda_center.php
Puget Sound Partnership- Salmon Recovery and Watershed Work Plans	https://www.psp.wa.gov/salmon-recovery-overview.php
Puget Sound Nearshore Project Data Site	https://wdfw.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=adfd521d37774e868e0e974cc03860df
Ecology Oblique Aerial Photography	https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/shorephotoviewer/
WA Dept. of Ecology Coastal Atlas	https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/coastalatlas/tools/Map.aspx
Beach Strategies Hub Site	https://beach-strategies-wdfw-hub.hub.arcgis.com/
Funded ESRP Learning Projects	https://salishsearestoration.org/wiki/ESRP/Learning_Program
2021 Nearshore Restoration Summit Proceedings	https://wdfw.wa.gov/species-habitats/habitat-recovery/puget-sound/nearshore-summit
DEI/EJ Resources	
US EPA Eco-Health Relationship Browser	https://enviroatlas.epa.gov/enviroatlas/tools/ecohealth_relationshipbrowser/index.html
Washington DOH Social Vulnerability Index	https://eig.org/distressed-communities/2022-dci-interactive-map/?path=state/WA
US EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Too	https://ejscreen.epa.gov/mapper/
Puget Sound Regional Council Opportunity Mapping	https://psregcncl.maps.arcgis.com/home/index.html
Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map	https://deohs.washington.edu/washington-environmental-health-disparities-map-project

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