

Draft Prioritization Process for Flow Control
Updated 3-31-15

Level 1: Fish Use – Biological conditions and potential for lift: can support actual or potential fish use

- Presence of culverts or other barriers, including natural barriers
- Tree canopy/condition of buffer, with the provision that these may be considered at Level 2.
- BIBI
- Known water quality impairment- 303 listings and TMDLs, or low instream flows

Level 2: Flow control opportunities

- Physical flow control
 - Percentage of impervious area/land cover
 - Age and condition of infrastructure
 - Jurisdictional influence, within jurisdictional control
 - Ripeness to proceed (local knowledge, aligns with programs such as tree planting, capital improvement plan, etc.)
 - Watershed area data (inside vs. outside jurisdictional boundaries)
- Coordination with state, regional and local plans
 - Comprehensive plans and zoning – potential for growth
 - Salmon recovery plans (3-year workplans, WRIA priorities)
 - TMDL plans (active and planned)
 - Regional ecosystem goals, e.g. BIBI

The group agreed that:

- The guidance shouldn't use the term "phasing" because it could be confused with the Phase I and Phase II permits. Use the term Level 1 screen, or step, etc. Folks will think about other terms that might be most useful. An introductory paragraph in the guidance will explain the function of the levels for purposes of prioritization. (Erika noted we also had trouble with the term screen because people thought of it as screening out. Step is probably safer.)
- Level 1 evaluation should be a "preponderance of the evidence", rather than a determination of whether a watershed is in or out of the prioritization for retrofits. It was noted that Redmond does not leave any watershed out - its prioritization simply determined which watersheds will be retrofitted first. The group noted that while Level 1 is not limited to fish use, it is likely to be the highest beneficial use in urban areas. Using a case study to explain this would be helpful.
- There should be two levels of process, not three - levels 2 and 3 from the meeting handout should be combined.
- Level 1 is not a higher priority than Level 2, they are just different steps in the process. The goal is to make the process easier by providing an analytical tool.
- The group will need to go back and look at possibly including other beneficial uses besides fish use (e.g., recreational use or shellfish harvest). However, it was noted that in urban areas fish use is the probably the highest beneficial use.