

2023-2025 Draft Budget Development Worksheet

Work Element

New Integrated Additional Projects

Summary of 2023-2025 Work

OCB staff have identified a small number of additional tasks the Board could choose to take on in the 23-25 biennium that would benefit both the flood damage reduction and aquatic species enhancement sides of the strategy. They include:

- Dedicated Grant Writer
- Initiative for Working Riparian Lands

Description of Needs

Most of the projects the Chehalis Basin Strategy undertakes are identified through established programs and partnerships, such as the ASRP, the Flood Authority, and the Flood Control Zone District. In OCB's role as steward of the Strategy as a whole, we sometimes identify gaps or needs that can advance the entire strategy. The programs or actions needed to address these gaps are generally unique and distinct from one another.

Dedicated Grant Writer

The Washington Legislature has invested significant funds into developing the Chehalis Basin Strategy. There are several areas where projects led, developed, or otherwise funded by the Strategy have successfully obtained funding from other sources (in particular, the Aberdeen-Hoquiam North Shore Levee project and several ASRP projects). In these cases, the project sponsors have applied for other funds themselves.

In addition, there are many sources of federal funds available. NOAA, through the National Marine Fisheries Service; USDA, through the Natural Resource Conservation Service; DOD, through the US Army Corps of Engineers; and many other federal agencies and services have both regular grant programs, and new infusions of money from the recently passed Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill.

The Strategy would benefit from a person or consultancy with the expertise to put together the needs of Strategy partners with federal funding programs, and to assist in writing the grant applications to obtain funding. This would serve to more effectively leverage the money the State invests into the Chehalis Basin Strategy and expand the capabilities of both OCB and the Strategy partners.

Initiative for Working Riparian Lands

The Washington State University Extension is working to create an interdisciplinary initiative focused on identifying and developing opportunities to adopt "working" riparian buffers on private lands in Washington State. They plan to achieve this through a triple bottom line approach that emphasizes the production of agronomic, environmental, and social benefits on riparian lands.

This Initiative (IWRL) would accomplish its goals primarily by coordinating with existing agroforestry initiatives and working with local farmers and resource managers to create demonstration sites, promote adoption, and develop the tools and networks to make those agroforestry techniques succeed

in a riparian context. In the context of the Chehalis Basin Strategy, wider adoption of agroforestry in riparian zones would be a powerful compliment to ASRP restorations, reduce the need for erosion management over time, improve local buy-in for restoration activities and environmental group buy-in for agricultural activities, and create economic opportunities.

IWRL is envisioned as a state-wide, or at least western-Washington-wide, initiative. By funding part of the effort, the Strategy would benefit in two ways. First, supporting this state-wide effort means more resources available to farmers interested in riparian agroforestry. Second, funding from the Office of Chehalis Basin would guarantee direct outreach to and involvement of farmers in the Chehalis Basin.

List of Key Tasks & Assumptions

All efforts in the Integrated Additional Projects will be funded with Integrated funds.

Dedicated Grant Writer: In 23-25 OCB will contract with consultant experienced in grant writing. That consultant will review the list of projects taking place during the biennium, identify Federal funding sources with a high likelihood of funding a subset of those projects, and write grant applications for those projects. This will require close coordination with project sponsors and OCB staff.

Initiative for Working Riparian Lands: A dedicated UW Extension worker will promote agroforestry in riparian areas throughout the Chehalis Basin. They will work with local conservation districts and other organizations to identify potentially interested farmers. Once connected with those farmers, they will help the farmers apply knowledge gained from other agroforestry initiatives around the state on their own land. This includes understanding geomorphic conditions, identifying tools, setting up product distribution networks, holding public demonstrations, and more.

Preliminary Cost Estimates

These estimates assume no reappropriated 21-23 funds applied to this program.

- **Dedicated Grant Writer:** These estimates reflect different amounts of consultant time contracted by OCB.
 - Low: \$32,000 – 0.1 FTE.
 - Mid: \$80,000 – 0.25 FTE.
 - High: \$160,000 – 0.5 FTE.
- **Initiative for Working Riparian Lands:** These estimates reflect different levels of support for the statewide initiative and would result in different levels of effort in the Basin.
 - Low: \$25,000. This nominal sum would reflect the Board's support of the IWRL concept.
 - Mid: \$50,000. This is approximately ¼ of the \$200,000 that UW Extension estimates would be the minimum amount required to operate the Initiative for 2 years (one biennium).
 - High: \$100,000. This level of funding could help UW Extension find additional funding above and beyond the \$200,000 minimum required to kick off the initiative, potentially adding additional resources to the project.

Prioritization

OCB feels the “mid” range of funding for these projects strikes a good balance between expenditures and benefits. Additional funding for the grant writer position could result in grants identified for

additional Strategy programs and projects. Additional funding for the IWRL could result in additional farmers recruited and more resources to support them. Reduced funding would lead to the opposite, for both projects.

If the Board lacks funding for both projects, OCB staff recommend prioritizing the grant writer.

Contact Information

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