

Projects and Actions: Needs for Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plans

Background:

In January 2018, the Legislature passed the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94) that helps restore streamflows to levels necessary to support robust, healthy, and sustainable salmon populations. The law established local Committees with the responsibility of developing watershed plans that offset water use from rural development through identification and implementation of projects and actions. The Cedar-Sammamish (WRIA 8) Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee is soliciting ideas for projects and actions from partners in the watershed. Projects and actions should support putting more water in the stream or enhance habitat for fish. Compensatory mitigation projects are not allowed, but complementary projects that go above and beyond mitigation requirements are allowed. The Committee seeks project and action ideas at all stages of development: conceptual, planning, or ready for implementation.

Examples of Projects:

- Purchase of water rights (full water right or seasonal use)
- Water Offset Projects:
 - Managed aquifer recharge projects involving the addition of water to an aquifer through infiltration basins, injection wells, or other methods.
 - Projects that switch the source of withdrawal from surface to groundwater, or other beneficial source exchanges.
 - Streamflow augmentation projects that involve pumping groundwater and discharging it into a stream.
 - Off-channel storage projects that capture and store water for release back into the stream channel during critical low flow periods.
- Habitat and Other Related Projects:
 - Projects that focus on returning stream habitat to a more natural state such as through river-floodplain restoration, instream habitat restoration, beaver reintroduction, and beaver dam analogs.
 - Projects that protect current habitats through riparian or upland conservation and management, forest management, or water conservation.
 - Projects that increase connectivity and fish passage between habitats such as fish barrier removal, or reconnection of off-channel habitat.
- Regulatory or Policy Actions:
 - New, or amended, state regulations, or local ordinances that are enacted to contribute to the restoration or enhancement of streamflows (must be in effect after January 19, 2018).

Project and action ideas can be discussed with your local Committee representatives, or Ecology staff.

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Visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Water-supply/Streamflow-restoration/Streamflow-restoration-planning> to find your watershed and learn more about streamflow restoration planning.