

# WRIA 8 Discussion Guide: Project Identification and Review Considerations for Watershed Planning Under RCW 90.94.030

December 2019

## Purpose of Discussion

This document provides considerations for the committee's approach to identifying and reviewing projects. This document is accompanied by a detailed memo on project screening criteria. This document does not address project list organization by priority, tier or sequencing, which will be further discussed in the spring or summer. A separate discussion guide will be provided to the committee for policy and regulatory actions.

## What is Required?

The NEB Guidance states that planning groups will prepare a watershed plan for their WRIA. These plans will include projects and actions intended by the planning group to both offset all new consumptive water use and achieve a NEB. (pg. 6)

The NEB Guidance defines projects and actions as general terms describing any activities in watershed plans to offset impacts from new consumptive water use and/or contribute to NEB. (pg.5) Examples of project types include: water right acquisition offset projects; non-acquisition water offset projects (e.g. managed aquifer recharge, streamflow augmentation); habitat and other related projects.

The NEB Guidance states that there is no minimum requirement for the number or distribution of offset projects or actions within each WRIA. Chapter 90.94 RCW allows offsets for permit-exempt domestic wells to occur anywhere within a WRIA, provided the watershed plan achieves a NEB within the given WRIA. This means planning groups have significant latitude to place offset projects at desired locations (e.g. most beneficial to fish, meet local feasibility considerations, etc.) regardless of whether these provide offsets within each of a WRIA's subbasins. (pg.9)

## Background and context

Technical consultants can support the committee in identifying and developing projects for the Plan and support to evaluate project benefits. Additional support is available to identify projects with water right acquisition opportunities. Technical consultants have developed draft project screening criteria for the committee's consideration. The intent of the screening criteria is to provide a tool that can evaluate relevant attributes of candidate projects and prioritize the most valuable projects for further evaluation and potential inclusion in the WRE plan for each respective WRIA.

## Considerations for the Committee

The committee needs to consider the following in determining how best to identify and evaluate projects:

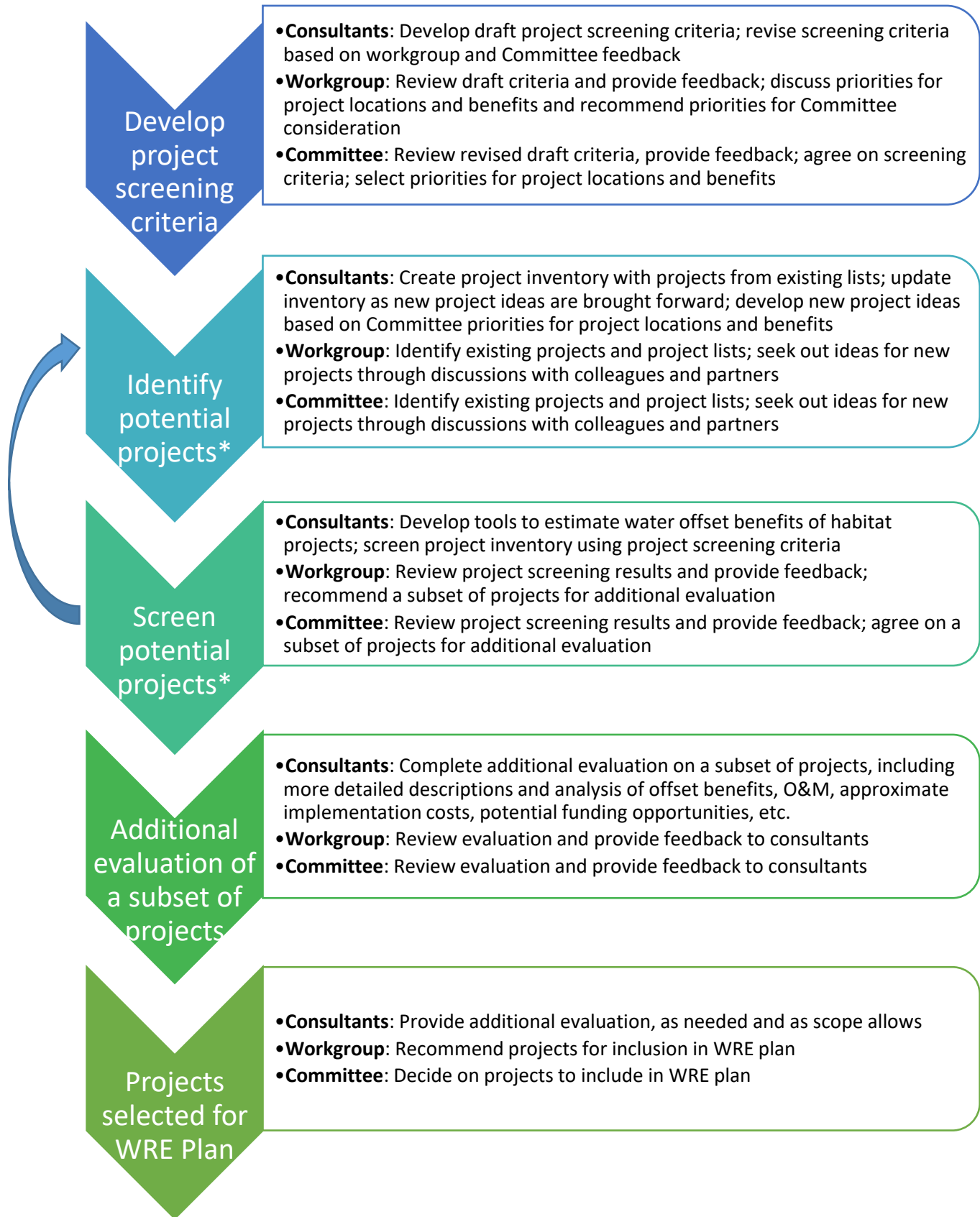
### Project priorities:

1. What are your thoughts about priority locations?
2. What are your thoughts about priority projects?
3. What is missing?

### Process:

1. What are the roles and responsibilities of the consultants, workgroup, and committee for reviewing the project?
2. Do you think developing project screening criteria would be useful?
3. Do you have suggestions for how to prioritize projects for the Committee and consultants to spend more time on?

# WRIA 8 WREC: DRAFT Process and Roles for Project Identification, Evaluation, and Selection



\*Identifying and screening projects will be iterative, with new project ideas brought forward throughout the process