Preliminary Project Description Template

**Water Offset Projects (Recommended)**

**Recommended Template for Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committees (WRIA 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, and 15)**

April 23, 2020

# General Template

This document provides project description recommendations for watershed plans. Committees are not required to use this template and may modify it if they choose. This template follows Ecology’s NEB guidance, and provides additional detail on the types of information that can be provided to allow adequate analysis of watershed plans. Use of this template is optional, but following this will help committees develop concise project descriptions to support their NEB evaluations. Note that the technical consultants are available to develop detailed project descriptions for a limited number of projects and that information could be provided in an appendix to the WRE Plans.

To the extent possible, committees should prepare summary sheets for each project or action included in the Plan. Summary sheets should be approximately one page per project, but may vary in length depending on how much information is available on the project.

To the extent possible and applicable the following types of information should be provided on one page summary sheets:

1. Project name.
2. Narrative description.
3. Quantitative or qualitative assessment of how the project will function, including anticipated offset benefits, if applicable. Show how offset volume(s) were estimated.
4. Conceptual-level map and drawings of the project and location.
5. Description of the anticipated spatial distribution of likely benefits.
6. Performance goals and measures.
7. Descriptions of the species, life stages and specific ecosystem structure, composition, or function addressed.
8. Identification of anticipated support and barriers to completion.
9. Potential budget and O&M costs.
10. Anticipated durability and resiliency.
11. Project sponsor(s) (if identified) and readiness to proceed/implement.
12. Timeline for project implementation.
13. Documentation of sources, methods, and assumptions.

Some projects may warrant having more than a one-page summary sheet. For example, if a particular project is integral to making the case that a plan meets the water offset requirements, and that project plan is well developed, it may be useful to provide some additional information. If additional technical analyses have been conducted for a specific project and a report on those analyses is available, that information can be provided in an appendix.

# Additional questions for each project type

For each of the specific project types listed below, to the extent available and applicable the following information should be provided. This is not a comprehensive list of the types of projects that committees may choose to include in their plans, and there may be others not shown below.

* Water Right Acquisitions
  + Has the water right been put to beneficial use? Are there any relinquishment concerns? Has work already been conducted to estimate consumptive use, and, if so, what is the estimated consumptive use?
  + Is the water right uninterruptible (that is, senior to instream flow rules or other senior water rights)?
  + Where is it anticipated that the benefits would occur? What is the anticipated rate and volume of the benefits?
* Water Storage and Retiming Projects
  + How much water is likely to be stored?
  + Has the surface water source for the project been evaluated, and, if so, what is that source? During what period(s) can water be diverted? Is there an instream flow? How often is the flow above the minimum instream flow? What is the proposed rate of diversion? What type of water rights would need to be acquired to provide water from that source?
  + What stream reach likely would benefit from this project and what is the anticipated benefit to that reach?
  + If this is a managed aquifer recharge (MAR) project, is the geology suitable and is the land available? Has a feasibility study been conducted, and, if so, have the anticipated timing of streamflow benefits been estimated? What is the potential diversion method(s)?
* Streamflow Augmentation
  + What water right will be used?
  + Where and when will flows be augmented? What amount?
  + What infrastructure would be needed?
* Conservation and Efficiency Projects
  + What water right would be changed?
  + Would the water right be placed into trust?
  + What has been the previous diversion and water use infrastructure? What would be the new, proposed diversion and water use infrastructure?
  + What reach(s) would likely be benefitted? What would the streamflow benefit likely be in that reach?
* Reclaimed and reused water[[1]](#footnote-2)
  + Does the existing facility discharge treated wastewater into Puget Sound?
  + Is the current reclaimed water already needed for other uses?
  + What is the current capacity of the facility and is the facility meeting that capacity?
  + What purple pipe infrastructure already exists in relation to the proposed water user or infiltration facility?
  + If providing an alternative water source to replace an existing water right that would be acquired for the trust water rights program, what water right? What amount? And where is the streamflow benefit?
* Modification to Reservoir Operations
  + When would the additional water be released? (specify above and beyond existing Federal Energy Regulatory Commission [FERC] flows, and other existing minimum flow requirements, if applicable).
  + How much water would be released?
  + Would existing water rights allow this to happen, and, if so, which water rights? What is the source of water permitted under the proposed modification and/or the associated water rights?
  + What stream reach would likely benefit?
  + How would streamflow releases be measured?
* Stormwater projects
  + How will stormwater be intercepted and stored?
  + What are the anticipated permitting requirements?
  + How does this project go above and beyond existing stormwater requirements?
  + How will the stormwater be treated, if applicable?
  + What is the river and reach that the discharge will benefit?
  + What is the estimated amount of benefit within the target river and reach?
* Water Right Source Switches[[2]](#footnote-3)
  + What water right would be changed?
  + What would the original point of diversion and the new point of diversion/withdrawal be?
  + What stream reach would likely benefit and what would the anticipated benefit to that reach be?
  + Is this a groundwater right that’s potentially in hydraulic continuity to any surface water (and subject to impairment issues)?

1. Reclaimed and reused water could be included as an element of another project type, including water right acquisition, water storage and retiming project, streamflow augmentation, conservation and efficiency project, or source switch. It is included as a separate category due to its special considerations. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Ecology is currently assessing legal viability of source switches in light of the WA Supreme Court Foster decision [↑](#footnote-ref-3)