

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS – 2008 RFP

GENERAL

- ◆ Where do I put ESRP application information in PRISM?
- ◆ I cannot save the ESRP Datasheet without erasing the data I have entered.
- ◆ Will ESRP fund assessment projects?
- ◆ How does that ‘portfolio’ thing work?
- ◆ What if I am completing a feasibility award, but won’t get done until just after an ESRP competition. Can I apply for design or construction funds?
- ◆ Is there a presentation component to the grant application, or is competition based solely on the submitted application packet?
- ◆ Can we provide state funds as ESRP Match?
- ◆ In the database sheet, why do you have to choose a Lead Entity or MRC as a Co-Sponsor?

AQUISITION

- ◆ The budget table doesn’t have tasks for acquisition, what should we do?
- ◆ May our grant request cover more than one phase, such as both the (Protection) Negotiation and Implementation stages?
- ◆ Our practice is not to get an appraisal done until we are well into the negotiation phase of a project. Thus, while we feel we are in the negotiation phase we don't have appraisals on them. Is this going to be a problem?
- ◆ Will the grant pay to cover the appraisals for the properties?

RESTORATION

- ◆ What should we know about including a project that is part of a mitigation or mandatory clean up?
- ◆ Do you work upstream on small creeks? What projects are eligible?

GENERAL

Where do I put ESRP application information in PRISM?

The ESRP application and review process occurs outside of the PRISM system. PRISM nearshore data, jointly managed by ESRP and PSNERP, are not directly related to your ESRP proposal review and award. We are building and managing the PRISM nearshore database to support regional restoration and protection planning. We anticipate moving these data to the *Ekosystem platform* (housing Habitat Work Schedule) as data structure becomes better defined.

I cannot save the ESRP Datasheet without erasing the data I have entered.

The worksheet marked 'de' is protected, preventing the original datasheet from working as planned. You may use a unprotected datasheet now loaded to the ESRP website, unprotect the worksheet from the [tools]... [protection]... [unprotect sheet] dialog box by using the password "ESRP".

Will ESRP fund assessment projects?

ESRP funds assessment as the first stage in a restoration or protection effort when it leads directly to the completion of project feasibility. At the end of the assessment procedures, you should have identified a preferred alternative, completed assessments necessary to be confident in the viability of that alternative, and secured landowner willingness. We attempt to evaluate proposals based on their ability to deliver ecosystem benefit, and so assessments that do not lead to protection or restoration actions are a low priority. Real estate feasibility would end in completed parcel identification (based on clear prioritization and assessment of land owner willingness) and lead to negotiation phase activities.

How does that 'portfolio' thing work?

The ESRP portfolio is made of "known quantity" projects that have already been awarded funds through competition, that qualify for streamlined re-application for additional funds. It was designed to compliment phased funding and reduce unproductive work. Projects are considered for 'portfolio' status during their initial funding competition. Projects given portfolio status are those projects that are awarded funds when they are a 'known quantity' by having completed feasibility tasks, or will do so shortly without substantively changing scope of work. ESRP considers feasibility complete when a project has completed a conceptual design, completed assessments necessary to determine the viability of that design, and have secured land access. Portfolio requests involve less cost-benefit narrative, are ranked separately considering different criteria, and are apportioned a place in the spending plan based on Steering Committee analyses.

What if I am completing a feasibility award, but won't get done until just after an ESRP competition. Can I apply for design or construction funds?

You are welcome to compete for post-feasibility funding at any time. You must provide compelling evidence that feasibility either is complete or will complete quickly. Under such circumstances we may consider funding design pending completion of feasibility, given that there is a high level of certainty about the conclusion of feasibility. In these cases we will likely include delivery of feasibility deliverables under a strict timeline as a precondition for reimbursement for design activities, and completion of the contract.

Is there a presentation component to the grant application, or is competition based solely on the submitted application packet?

There is not a presentation component to the ESRP grant application. Please consider the section "Additional Supporting Documents" in the RFP. This component of the application could add some of the same aspects that a presentation would. We are planning time for one exchange (RFP, 2nd from last Paragraph, p6) where reviewers can identify key questions/confusion affecting their ability to review the proposal. We are anticipating sending out that request Nov 17 (Monday) with a response due by Nov 21, Friday.

Can we provide state funds as ESRP Match?

Matching Requirements (RFP page 5) state that ESRP authorizing legislation has to date required that projects provide a match of cash or in-kind services equaling 33% of the ESRP award. This match must be incurred during the award period. **Some of this match must be non-state funds.** While “some” is imprecise, more is better. Match requirements are typically consistent with RCO-SRFB definitions; however, match eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis.

In the database sheet, why do you have to choose a Lead Entity or MRC as a “Co-Sponsor”?

The Co-Sponsor field is a response to legislative proviso language, which states that projects must be “identified by a Lead Entity or MRC”. This assures that your project has gone through some local recovery program review before being proposed to ESRP. This designation does not obligate the LE or MRC to a future action, but indicates that they know that your proposal will seek ESRP funding.

AQUISITION

The budget table doesn't have tasks for acquisition, what should we do?

Specific tasks and descriptions are negotiable, but should align with status categories in Appendix D of ESRP Guidance. For acquisition, replace the existing tasks with ones suited to your project status and objectives under funding. For acquisition the crux of the agreement typically occurs following property rights acquisition and execution of the protective deed or easement, and provision of the documents in question.

May our grant request cover more than one phase, such as both the (Protection) Negotiation and Implementation stages?

You may request funding for multiple phases. While you may ask for funding for multiple phases, contract negotiation following ranking may result in partial or phased funding for fewer phases than requested. Partial funding may be motivated by how the timing of future spending plans aligns with project work, and the confidence that project phases will be completed expeditiously and consistent with proposed project scope.

Our practice is not to get an appraisal done until we are well into the negotiation phase of a project. Thus, while we feel we are in the negotiation phase we don't have appraisals on them. Is this going to be a problem?

When the state provides funds to acquire real property it is legally bound to provide just compensation. As early as possible in a state funded process, the seller must be notified of estimated fair market value as documented by appraisal. See appendix B-1 of SRFB manual for sample language. This is based on RCW 8.26.010. If you neither control nor have appraised the property, this reduces our confidence in your ability to complete the protection action. As you well know aligning real estate acquisition and grant awards is a tricky balancing act. If your project is identified as a high priority (right parcel, right processes, appears likely to succeed), we will negotiate contract terms that appropriately share risk. Part of your challenge is to provide evidence that you are likely to succeed.

Will the grant pay to cover the appraisals for the properties?

Appraisal and appraisal review costs are eligible for reimbursement under ESRP awards.

In the (Protection) Negotiation Phase, it states that a letter of intent signed by the landowner(s) should be provided. Does ESRP have a form they would like us to use for this, or should we provide our own? I've attached the SRFB landowner acknowledgement form, if we change the wording slightly, will this suffice?

Your entire project feasibility rests on the strength of landowner commitment to the idea of a conservation sale. I would secure as strong a commitment as you can, and this will be reviewed by peers as part of the 'likelihood to succeed and readiness' criteria.

RESTORATION

What should we know about including a project that is part of a mitigation or mandatory clean up?

ESRP has funded actions that increase the scope of mandatory restoration actions. The challenge is to clearly define the extent of mandatory activity, and separate that financially from the voluntary publically funded activity. ESRP will not provide resources that in part or in full relieve a party of regulatory or legal obligations.

Do you work upstream on small creeks? What kind of projects are eligible?

ESRP works in the footprint being analyzed by the Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership, which includes all of Greater Puget Sound from Cape Flattery eastward, and projects that substantially restore the 'nearshore ecosystem' from the depth of light penetration (photic zone) to the landward extent of direct influence (nearshore riparian), to the upstream extent of tidal influence (typically not very far on small creeks). We do not exclude projects that occur outside this nearshore footprint, however these projects will must provide compelling evidence that they directly protect or restore nearshore ecosystem processes and functions within the described footprint. Such projects may generate policy discussions that result in re-evaluation of eligibility criteria.