

Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board Targeted Investment Program: 2024 Request for Proposals

Background

On January 16, 2024, the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board's (SRFB) 2024 Targeted Investment grant round. The RCO's [2024 Targeted Investment Program RFP](#) and associated [Manual 18 Appendix J](#) together outline the background, funding parameters, general investment priorities, and associated grant round evaluation and scoring procedures for the 2024 Targeted Investment project solicitation. **These documents provide the overall statewide guidance and criteria and are hereby incorporated by reference. Lower Columbia regional organization supplemental information and requirements are detailed below.**

The intent of the Targeted Investment Program is to allocate additional state and federal funding to support high-impact projects with significant salmon recovery benefits outside of typical regional SRFB project allocations. Specifically, the SRFB intends to invest in projects through the Targeted Investment Program that 1) drive significant population-scale benefits consistent with regional recovery priorities and 2) accelerate the on-the-ground pace and scale of project implementation.

Lower Columbia Regional Review and Scoring Process

The regional recovery organizations are given the sole authority to determine which Targeted Investment proposals within their salmon recovery region will be considered for funding by the SRFB. This is accomplished through a letter of support from the associated regional recovery organization prior to final application submission, which details the proposal's alignment with specific population-level recovery objectives and/or limiting factors prioritized for this funding by the regional recovery organization. The regional recovery organization in the Lower Columbia is the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB).

The 2024 Targeted Investment Program will be administered in conjunction with the LCFRB's standard regional and lead entity SRFB grant round process. As such, Targeted Investment applicants must follow the application schedule and requirements for the grant round outlined in the RCO's 2024 Request for Proposals and Manual 18 Appendix J, and the LCFRB 2024 schedule and region specific requirements.

Each regional recovery organization may submit no more than six proposals for Targeted Investment funding consideration. To support this process, the LCFRB Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Board will evaluate and rank proposals along with all other submitted and eligible SRFB project proposals following the regional organization and lead entity process and scoring criteria outlined in the 2024 LCFRB Grants Manual, and the additional guidance herein. Additional points will be assigned to the SRFB Review Panel's final scores based on the regional ranking.

Lower Columbia Targeted Investment Focal Areas

Regional recovery organizations are responsible for identifying specific population-level recovery objectives and/or limiting factors to prioritize for targeted investment funding. Targeted Investment priorities for this solicitation are grounded in a Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) and LCFRB's population viability assessment. Based on this assessment, the LCFRB has identified a two-pronged strategy for the 2024 Targeted Investment Program, aimed at 1) bolstering viability of

populations that are currently at “high” or “very high” viability and serve as high priority “strongholds” for recovery and future ESA delisting, and 2) restoring populations that are currently at very low to low viability, but for which substantive viability gains are still needed to achieve established recovery scenario targets – these are considered “restoration priority” populations. The latter category includes Primary and Contributing populations with 12-year geometric natural-origin adult abundance less than or equal to 25% of ESA delisting abundance goals. Some populations are excluded from this strategy for the following reasons:

- Populations that are the focus of reintroduction programs in the Cowlitz and Lewis basins are excluded because funding to address habitat bottlenecks is already established and lack of fish passage collection goal achievement remains the primary recovery bottleneck for these populations; and,
- Lewis River bright fall Chinook are excluded because they are already at Very High viability and are considered “healthy and harvestable”.

Focal populations meeting the stronghold and restoration priority definitions are depicted in Table 1 and Figure 1. These populations are expected to benefit species-scale recovery needs the most given All-H impacts and viability improvements to date.

Table 1. Focal populations for Lower Columbia Targeted Investments. Stronghold populations are those that have a High or Very High viability status (orange highlight); Restoration Priority populations are Primary and Contributing populations with low numbers of returning natural-origin spawners (12-year geometric mean abundances are 25% or less of delisting abundance goals, green highlight).

Subbasin(s)	Population	Run Type	Focal Type
Estuary Tributaries, Grays	Grays-Chinook	Fall Chum	Stronghold
		Coho	Restoration Priority
		Fall Chinook	Restoration Priority
Elochoman-Skamokawa	Elochoman-Skamokawa	Fall Chinook	Restoration Priority
Mil-Abernathy-Germany	Mil-Abernathy-Germany	Fall Chinook	Restoration Priority
		Fall Chum	Restoration Priority
Lower Cowlitz, Toutle, Coweeman	Cowlitz	Fall Chum	Restoration Priority
Lower Cowlitz	Lower Cowlitz	Coho	Stronghold
Toutle	Toutle	Fall Chinook	Restoration Priority
South Fork Toutle	South Fork Toutle	Winter Steelhead	Stronghold
Coweeman	Coweeman	Coho	Stronghold
		Winter Steelhead	Stronghold
Kalama	Kalama	Winter Steelhead	Stronghold
		Coho	Restoration Priority
		Fall Chum	Restoration Priority
North Fork Lewis, East Fork Lewis	Lewis	Fall Chum	Restoration Priority
East Fork Lewis	East Fork Lewis	Summer Steelhead	Stronghold
		Winter Steelhead	Stronghold
Salmon	Salmon	Coho	Stronghold
Washougal	Washougal	Fall Chum	Stronghold
		Summer Steelhead	Stronghold
		Coho	Restoration Priority
Lower Gorge Tributaries	Lower Gorge Tributaries	Fall Chum	Stronghold

Subbasin(s)	Population	Run Type	Focal Type
		Winter Steelhead	Restoration Priority
Upper Gorge Tributaries	Upper Gorge Tributaries	Fall Chum	Restoration Priority
		Coho	Restoration Priority
Wind	Wind	Summer Steelhead	Stronghold

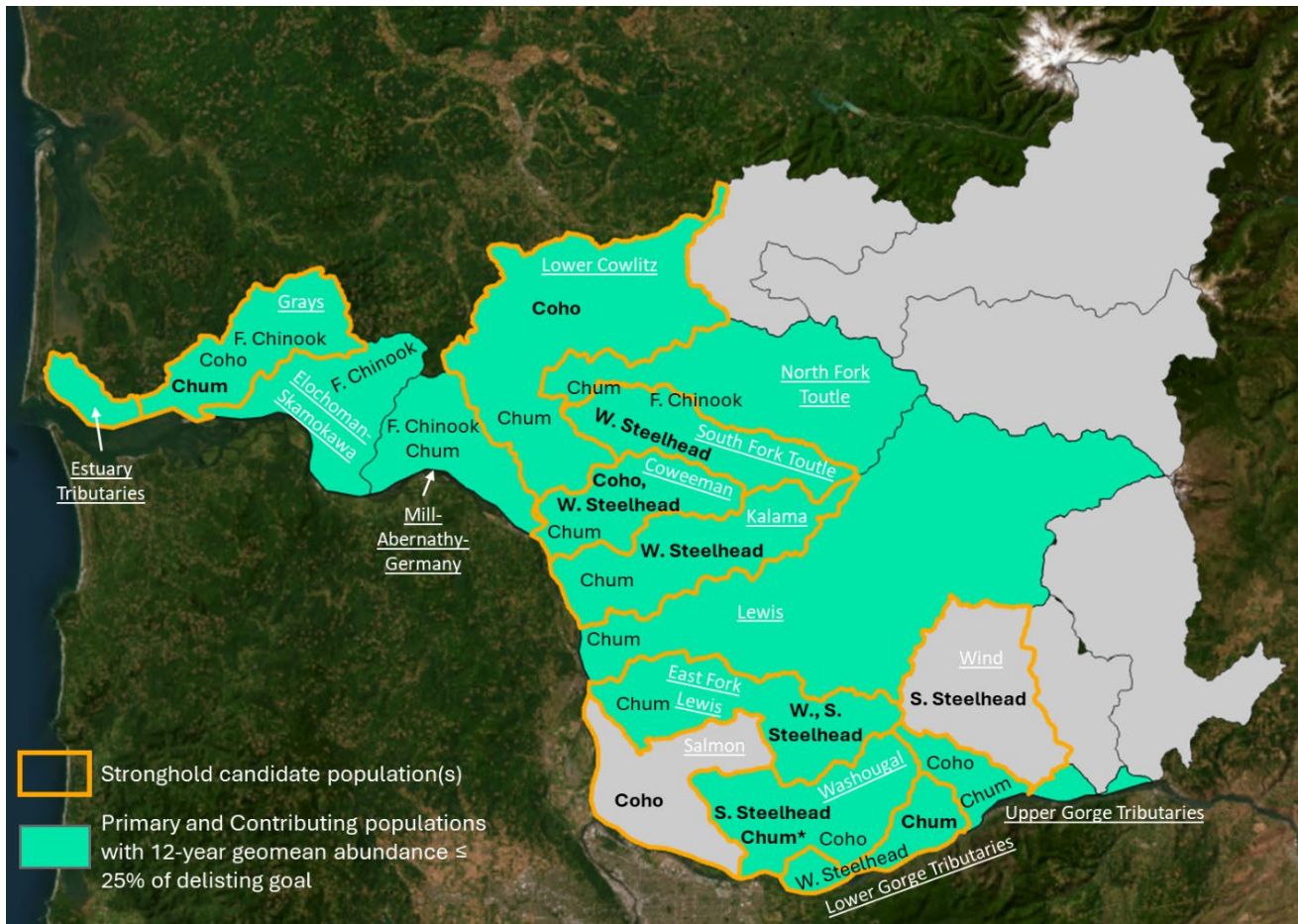


Figure 1. Focal populations for 2024 Targeted Investment grant round by subbasin. Focal population subbasin names are in white and underlined. Stronghold populations are labeled in bold, black font and restoration priority populations are in black font.

In addition to addressing the above focal priorities and those outlined in the LCFRB grants manual, Targeted Investment proposals must demonstrate the project addresses high priority stream reaches and watershed areas, key life history stages, and key and limiting factors for identified focal populations. Applicants must also describe how the proposed project approach, scope and scale will result in population level viability improvements and accelerate the on-the-ground pace and scale of project implementation for focal populations.

Recovery progress summaries for focal populations can be found in the [viability assessment](#) for all populations listed in Table 1 and Figure 1. Viability and priority stream reach details are also available in the [Lower Columbia Salmon Resource Map](#). These summaries provide details on focal population viability status and needs, and All-H threat reduction progress. Applicants are encouraged to incorporate relevant information from these summaries into their application materials to address regional and state level evaluation criteria in RCO Manual 18 and Attachment A for this RFP.

All application materials must meet regional and statewide eligibility requirements referenced herein. Projects not addressing the above considerations will not be certified by the LCFRB or recommended for funding.

Questions

Contact LCFRB staff with any questions.

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Attachment A: Lower Columbia Targeted Investment Evaluation Questions

Table 2. TAC scoring questions for Targeted Investment Proposals. Minimum thresholds for each scoring levels (High, Medium, and Low) are included for each question. Low scores indicate a fatal flaw, which may mean a project does not qualify for regional submittal to the SRFB for funding.

Benefits to Fish Scoring Questions and Guidelines			Points	
High Priority Populations	1. To what degree does the proposal demonstrate significant population-scale benefits consistent with regional recovery priorities and accelerate the on-the-ground pace and scale of project implementation?		0 – 50	
	High Score:	Proposal clearly demonstrates substantive population level benefits to multiple Targeted Investment focal populations, and will accelerate the pace and scale of project implementation in focal watersheds.	34 - 50	
	Medium Score:	Proposal clearly demonstrates substantive population level benefits to one Targeted Investment focal population, and will accelerate the pace and scale of project implementation in focal watersheds for that species.	17 - 33	
	Low Score:	Proposal does not clearly demonstrate substantive population level benefits to one or more Targeted Investment focal populations, and is not expected to accelerate the pace and scale of project implementation in focal watersheds for target species.	0 - 16	
	2. Does the proposal target key life history stages and limiting factors that likely require project-based habitat improvements (habitat restoration, connection, and/or protection) to achieve species-scale recovery?		0 - 50	
	High Score:	Proposal clearly targets multiple key life history stages and limiting factors that likely require habitat improvements or conservation actions to achieve recovery targets.	34 - 50	
	Medium Score:	Proposal targets single key life history stages and/or limiting factors that likely require habitat improvements or conservation actions to achieve recovery targets.	17 - 33	
	Low Score:	Proposal does not clearly demonstrate a focus on key life history stages and limiting factors that are a bottleneck to achieving recovery targets.	0 - 16	
	High Priority Population Points: 100			
	High Priority Habitat	3. Does the proposal target high priority habitat areas to maximize restoration/ protection benefits to the targeted populations?		0 - 50
High Score:		Proposal focuses on high priority watershed areas for overall population performance.	34 - 50	
Medium Score:		Proposal focuses on medium priority watershed areas for overall population performance.	17 - 33	
Low Score:		Proposal does not clearly focus on moderate or high priority watershed areas for overall population performance.	0 - 16	
4. Does the proposed approach support the highest priority salmon habitat needs for both short and long-term recovery by working with watershed processes and considering climate change impacts?		0 – 50		
High Score:		Proposal targets the root stressors of high priority salmon habitat needs and watershed processes, and considers long-term impacts of climate change.	34 - 50	
Medium Score:		Proposal targets symptoms that limit high priority salmon habitat and are compatible with watershed processes, and/or does not consider long-term impacts of climate change.	17 - 33	
Low Score:	Proposal targets symptoms in a way that is incompatible with watershed processes and does not consider long-term impacts of climate change.	0 - 16		
High Priority Habitat Points: 100				
Total Benefits to Fish Points Available: 200				

Table 3. TAC scoring questions for Certainty of Success. Minimum thresholds for each scoring levels (High, Medium, and Low) are included for each question. Low scores indicate a fatal flaw, which may mean a project does not qualify for regional submittal to the SRFB for funding.

Certainty of Success Scoring Questions and Guidelines			Points
Scope and Approach	5. Does the proposal have a well-defined scope and scale consistent with and appropriate for the stated goals and objectives?		0 – 50
	High Score:	proposal is highly likely to achieve the stated goals and objectives	34 - 50
	Medium Score:	proposal is somewhat likely to achieve the stated goals and objectives	17 - 33
	Low Score:	proposal is unlikely to achieve the stated goals and objectives	0 - 16
	6. Does the proposal apply appropriate and proven methods and technologies, including the use of acquisition, or addressing recovery information gaps?		0 - 50
	High Score:	Proposal uses appropriate and proven methods and technologies to achieve the desired outcomes	34 - 50
	Medium Score:	Proposal uses moderately appropriate and/or proven methods and technologies to achieve the desired outcomes	17 - 33
	Low Score:	proposal uses inappropriate and/or unproven methods and technologies to achieve the desired outcomes	0 - 16
Scope and Approach: 100			
Coordination, Sequence, Constraints, and Uncertainties	7. Is the proposal logically sequenced with other salmon recovery efforts in the watershed, including past habitat projects and actions across the H's?		0 – 25
	High Score:	Proposal is well sequenced with other recovery efforts in the watershed.	17 – 25
	Medium Score:	Proposal is moderately well sequenced with other recovery efforts in the watershed.	8 – 16
	Low Score:	Proposal is not sequenced well with other recovery efforts in the watershed.	0 – 7
	8. What is the potential for funding, scientific/technical, permitting, legal, and/or physical constraints or uncertainties to affect successful project implementation?		0 – 25
	High Score:	There is low potential for the described constraints or uncertainties that would affect project implementation success	17 – 25
	Medium Score:	There is moderate potential for the described constraints or uncertainties that would affect project implementation success	8 - 16
	Low Score:	There is high potential for the described constraints or uncertainties that would affect project implementation success	0 – 7
Coordination, Sequence, Constraints, and Uncertainties: 50			
Qualifications, Community Support, and Stewardship	9. How qualified and experienced is the project team in successfully completing projects of similar scope, nature, and magnitude on time and within budget?		0 – 25
	High Score:	The project team is well qualified in completing projects of similar scope, nature, and magnitude on time and within budget	17 – 25
	Medium Score:	The project team is moderately qualified in completing projects of similar scope, nature, and magnitude on time and within budget	8 – 16
	Low Score:	The project team is not well qualified in completing projects of similar scope, nature, and magnitude on time and within budget	0 – 7
	10. What is the demonstrated extent of community support for and involvement in the proposal? For instance, will local volunteers participate, will the project enhance public knowledge and support, and will the project build capacity and interest for future work?		0 – 25
	High Score:	There is extensive community support and involvement in the project	17 – 25
	Medium Score:	There is moderate community support and involvement in the project	8 – 16
	Low Score:	There is broad community opposition to the project	0 – 7
Qualifications, Community Support, and Stewardship: 50			
Total Certainty of Success Points Available: 200			

Table 4. TAC scoring questions for Cost. Minimum thresholds for each scoring levels (High, Medium, and Low) are included for each question. Low scores indicate a fatal flaw, which may mean a project does not qualify for regional submittal to the SRFB for funding.

Cost Scoring Questions and Guidelines		Points
Cost	11. Are the requested amount and total project cost reasonable relative to the likely salmon recovery benefits?	0 – 25
	High Score:	The requested amount and total project cost are highly reasonable relative to the likely salmon recovery benefits
	Medium Score:	The requested amount and total project cost are moderately reasonable relative to the likely salmon recovery benefits
	Low Score:	The requested amount and total project cost are not reasonable relative to the likely salmon recovery benefits
	12. Is the total project cost (grant request and match) reasonable relative to the amount and type of work proposed?	0 – 25
	High Score:	The total project cost is highly reasonable relative to the amount and type of work proposed
	Medium Score:	The total project cost is moderately reasonable relative to the amount and type of work proposed
	Low Score:	The total project cost is not reasonable relative to the amount and type of work proposed
	13. Are costs well described and justified?	0 – 25
	High Score:	Costs are well described and justified.
	Medium Score:	Costs are moderately well described and justified.
	Low Score:	Costs are not well described and/or justified.
	14. Are there more appropriate funding sources available for the proposed work?	0 - 25
	High Score:	This grant program is the most appropriate funding source for the proposed work
Medium Score:	This grant program is an appropriate funding source for the proposed work, but other programs may also support the work	
Low Score:	This grant program is not an appropriate funding source for the proposed work	
Total Cost Points Available: 100		