



Conservation Technical Assistance

CHALLENGE

Conservation districts need more capacity to provide the level of hands-on expertise, or *conservation technical assistance*, required to employ a targeted approach to incentive-based conservation. Using a targeted approach can demonstrate large-scale results, but it requires staff and time to:

- Proactively establish trusting relationships with landowners in a targeted area.
- Coordinate with partners to focus available funds on specified natural resource concerns.
- Collect and monitor data to establish a baseline for resource conditions, and adaptively manage the approach based on measured impacts to the resource.

PROPOSED SOLUTION

The Washington State Conservation Commission (SCC) 2017-19 Operating Budget Proposal includes \$5.03 million for Conservation Technical Assistance.

This will:

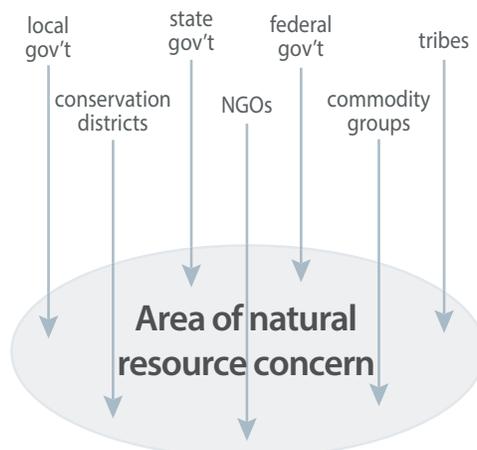
- Enable at least 30 conservation districts to apply a targeted approach to incentive programs.
- Increase the efficiency of program implementation by coordinating with various partners to focus available funds on a targeted area.
- Advance measureable progress toward local and state natural resource priorities.
- Improve ability to track, report on, and share results of state investments in resource conservation.

SUMMARY

- \$5.03M budget proposal enables conservation districts to respond to service requests *and* initiate a targeted approach that yields large-scale resource impacts.
- Current base operations funding (carry-forward) helps conservation districts cover: 1) basic administrative costs, and 2) staff capacity to provide *conservation technical assistance* (hands-on expertise and help).
- High-demand for conservation district services (e.g. landowner-initiated requests and referrals from other agencies) expends districts' conservation technical assistance capacity.
- Districts need to build more technical assistance capacity to initiate a proactive, targeted approach.

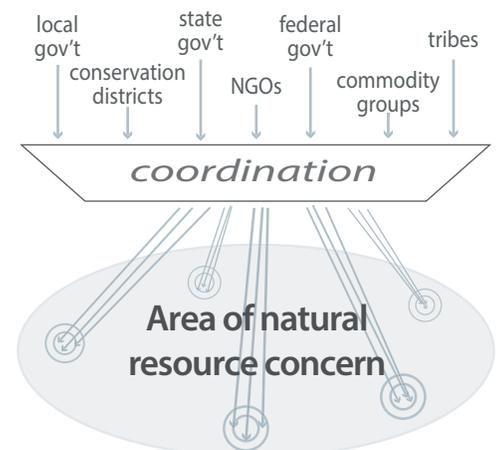
TRADITIONAL "SILO" APPROACH

Entities plan and distribute funds to conservation projects spread across large geographic area with limited coordination



NEW TARGETED APPROACH

Entities coordinate about project plans and funding, allowing them to collaboratively target projects located in priority areas



EXAMPLES OF SUCCESS

With more capacity for conservation technical assistance, the SCC and conservation districts aim to replicate the proven success of targeted efforts, such as:

Upgrading shellfish harvest areas in Dungeness Bay

- Early 2000s - bacterial contamination in Dungeness Bay forces the state to downgrade 1,700 acres of shellfish growing area.
- Working with partners and landowners, Clallam Conservation District uses a targeted approach to identify and treat sources of contamination, including failing septic systems, open irrigation ditches, and agricultural runoff.
- These efforts result in over 1,500 acres of shellfish harvest upgrades in the bay, to date.

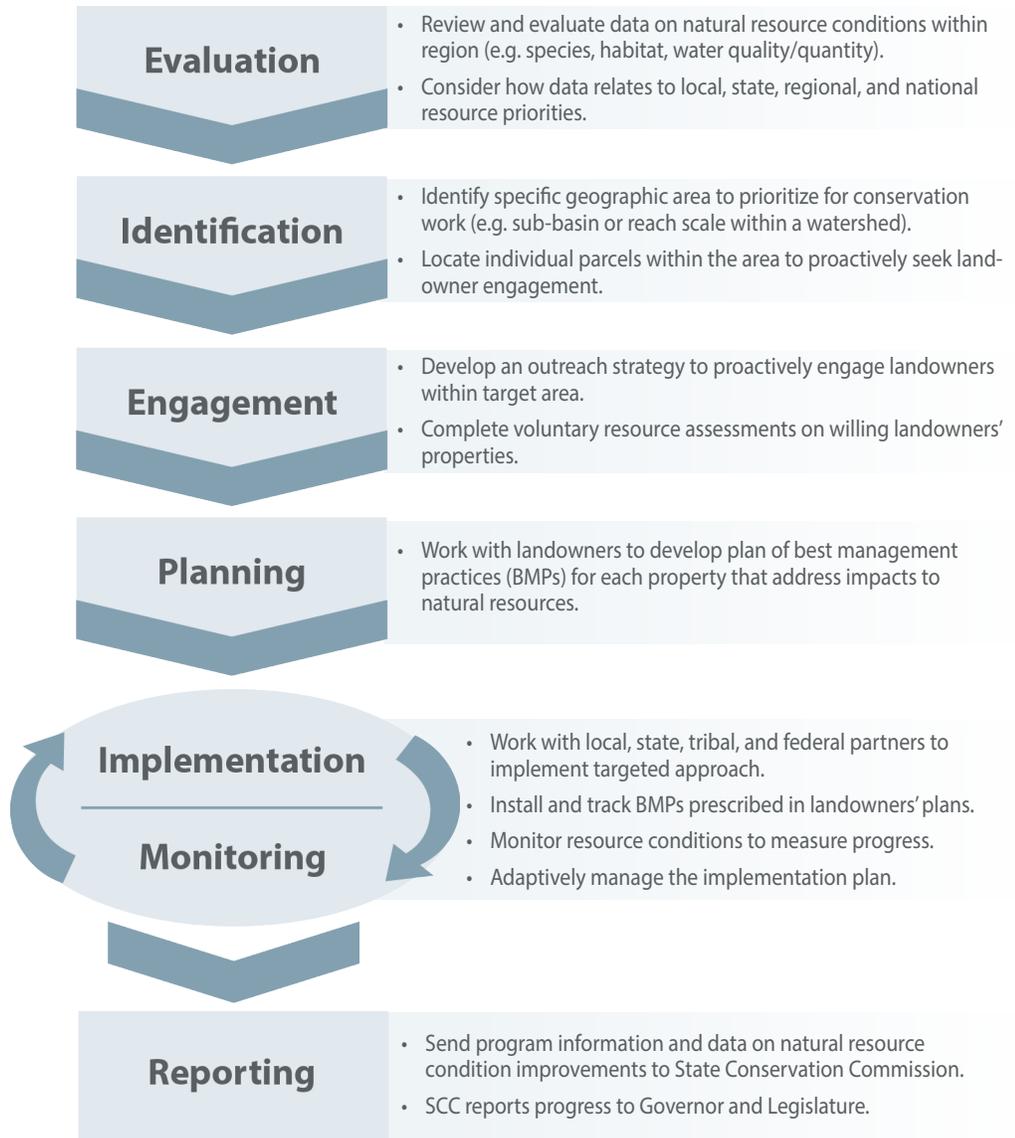
Lowering stream temperature for salmon in the Tucannon

- Late 1990s - summer stream temperatures in the Tucannon River, a tributary to the Snake River, regularly reach lethally warm temperatures for salmon.
- Columbia Conservation District works with partners and landowners in targeted reaches of the river to restore and plant vegetation along more than 1,100 acres of riparian area.
- Nearly 10 years later, after trees and vegetation grow tall enough to shade the river, summer water temperatures drop about 10 degrees F, and salmon returns increase.

HOW IT WORKS

This funding request would allow conservation districts to provide conservation technical assistance proactively to landowners using a targeted approach.

To do this, conservation districts would follow these steps:



Washington State Conservation Commission

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