



Shellfish Programmatic Guidelines

Program Background:

Ongoing closures of shellfish growing areas in Puget Sound and along the Pacific coast indicate continuing problems in water quality. With concerns over the impacts of ocean acidification on shellfish, all natural resource issues impacting shellfish need to be addressed to support the resiliency of shellfish production.

Since 2013, funding has been provided to the State Conservation Commission (SCC) to address inputs contributing to ocean acidification and shellfish bed closures. The SCC has used this funding to implement a “targeted conservation practice” approach where funded activities would be clustered near other activities in an effort to positively impact water quality and other natural resource goals. These guidelines are intended to continue the approach used for allocation of shellfish funding.

Program Rules:

- All proposed projects must be entered into the SCC Conservation Practice Data System (CPDS) consistent with these guidelines.
- Cost share awards are allocated based on the information provided and the dollar amount requested in the CPDS.
- Based on the cost share award, an additional 25% will be awarded to include the costs of technical assistance, engineering, travel and overhead.
- Cultural resource costs are awarded on a case by case basis in addition to cost share funding.
- Ineligible costs:
 - Goods and services
 - Education and outreach
- Significant movement on the project must begin within 120 days of the funding allocation.

Cost Share Policy:

- All cost share projects must be in compliance with the Conservation Commission policy adopted on March, 21, 2013, **Cost Share Assistance Policy #13-05**.
- The maximum cost share **per** land owner **per** fiscal year is \$50,000.
- All practices must meet NRCS standards and specifications, or be designed and approved by a certified engineer.

Funding Criteria:

- Projects must be:
 - In a watershed that has a shellfish growing area **or**
 - Watersheds with a resource concern of ocean acidification.

Projects must be clustered together or near other proposed projects or projects previously funded to address shellfish or similar natural resource concerns. This unique targeted approach of clustering projects allows for more effective and efficient use of capital funding targeting focused geographic areas for measurable resource improvement.

- Must meet one of the following resource impacts:
 - **Ocean acidification**--Ocean acidification is a reduction in the pH of seawater for an extended period of time due primarily to the uptake of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere by the ocean. Local sources of acidification include nitrogen oxides and sulfur oxide gases, or nutrients and organic carbon from wastewater discharges and runoff from land-based activities.
 - **Shellfish growing areas**--Growing area restoration involves finding and correcting nonpoint fecal pollution sources that reduce marine water quality and cause closure of commercial and recreational shellfish beds. Examples of nonpoint fecal pollution are failing on-site sewage systems, improper management of animal waste, or any fecal pollution that finds its way to a creek, river, or storm drain and eventually ends up in marine waters.
- Project proponents must describe how the proposed project addresses the following criteria:
 - Projects are implemented in areas with identified pollution inputs with particular focus on areas with 303(d) listings for nutrients. Funded projects will include those implementing an Ecology TMDL implementation plan.
 - Proponents are encouraged to identify projects that support local plans and multi-stakeholder processes.

- Projects support tribal efforts to re-open or maintain existing shellfish growing areas.
- All projects must be completed by June 30, 2019.
- Projects must have a detailed project description unique to each project (see example descriptions below).

Detailed Project Descriptions

Funded Project (Example)

This is a shellfish growing area project. The landowner's objectives include the desire to continue to expand their existing small farming operation and to identify and implement economically feasible Best Management Practices which will improve and protect the farms' natural resources. Since the property is bordered by a tributary to Jarrel's Cove and oversaturated through much of the winter, reducing water quality impacts is a priority of the landowners and their future operation expansion. The landowner is currently already implementing exclusion fencing (Exclusion Fencing B.M.P. # 382) along the main agricultural ditch and a portion of the unnamed tributary along the eastern edge of the parcel. Livestock were allowed full access to the main agricultural ditch that flows freely for most of the year, drying up in the summer months. The landowners are interested in excluding livestock from the drainage system and installing a vegetative buffer for pollinator habitat, reducing sediment, fecal and nutrient runoff and provide shade for temperature mitigation. In conjunction with the implementation of the exclusion fencing, enhancement of unnamed tributary and the drainage system and associated wetlands with an established riparian buffer (Tree/Shrub Establishment B.M.P. # 612) will help achieve their conservation goals.

Beyond what is already being implemented, the landowners have expressed a particular need for a heavy use protection area (Heavy Use Area B.M.P. #561) in order to preserve the integrity of the soil structure around the winter confinement barn and be able to capture all animal waste during these confinement months. In conjunction with the manure composting facility and heavy use area, the landowners are in need of a Nutrient Management Plan (Nutrient Management Plan B.M.P. #590) to ensure proper composted manure application and management of soils to prevent nutrient runoff and vegetative productivity.

Lastly, the barn and production area structures are in need of a roof runoff structure and subsurface drainage systems (Roof Runoff Structure B.M.P. # 558; Subsurface Drain B.M.P. # 606) to properly manage stormwater runoff surrounding these production areas and prevent further manure/nutrient runoff into the pasture drainage system.

Unfunded Project (Example)

Project will implement practices that will improve water quality in a stream by reducing the amount of chemicals that can enter the stream which flows to shellfish beds.

****Frequently asked question:**

Why do we need to describe the project with so much detail?

Answer: The Commission will need to write a detailed, narrative report for the Legislature and other interested entities on how this funding was spent and what the benefit was to natural resources, nutrient and pathogen pollution and any other resource concern. The Commission will also need to explain how these funded projects measurably improve water quality; natural resource needs overall, and partnerships with other entities to make significant measurable improvements to these resource concerns. We must report how the funding impacted the watershed, or what water bodies were improved, the number of new BMPs installed and what benefit they brought to the problem of a local county partnership, Ecology's 303(d) listed water bodies or a county or local issue.

If you were to read the examples above, which one would you be able to "tell the best story with?"

District Responsibilities:

- All projects must be entered into the CPDS.
 - Input the cost share amount needed for the project. It's not necessary to input engineering, travel, or other costs.
- The CPDS will have a Shellfish tab with unique shellfish project questions that will need to be answered regarding the project.
- Cost share contracts must be printed from the CPDS
 - For project input instructions, please refer to the CPDS "Quick Reference Guide" at <http://scc.wa.gov/cpds-2/>
- "Before" pictures are required for each practice
- "Planned" implementation measures are required for each practice
- Accurate coordinates (longitude/latitude) are required. SCC develops a map for each conservation district showing completed and planned projects. This map is used to assist with making funding decisions.
- Each district is responsible for keeping project entries in CPDS up-to-date.

State Conservation Commission Responsibilities

- On the 1st of each month, a Planned Funding Report is pulled from the CPDS.
 - If a project misses the 1st of the month “pull date” deadline, the project will have to wait until the next month’s pull date.
- Funding decisions are made on the 15th of each month. Districts will be notified when a project is funded. Work on a project should not be initiated until notified of funding award by SCC financial staff. If work is started before a project is awarded funding it will not be eligible for funding reimbursement.

****NOTE: Periodic reports of Supervisors and Associate Supervisors receiving cost share funding will be given to the Conservation Commissioners.*

Cultural Resources

Cultural resources review is required by the *Governor’s Executive Order 05-05* for all projects using both state operating and capital funding provided by WSCC. Please refer to the WSCC Cultural Resource Policy located on the SCC website: <http://scc.wa.gov/cultural-resources/>

All projects must have a cultural review before a project can be started. A cultural resources review begins only after the final design is complete to expedite the process. Please plan ahead to ensure enough time is permitted prior to implementation, which could be 45 days or more.

Vouchering Process:

- Monthly grant vouchers are required.
- Refer to the Grants and Procedures Manual for more detailed information about vouchering <http://scc.wa.gov/grant-and-contract-procedure-manual/>.