



6 STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE LOCAL RESTORATION GOALS

This section discusses strategies that Whitman County and the Cities can use to foster shoreline restoration and achieve an immediate trend towards and over time a net improvement in shoreline ecological processes, functions, and habitats. The County and Cities are constrained in their ability to implement restoration projects or programs on their own by projected budget and staff limitations. However, the SMPs represent an important vehicle for facilitating and guiding restoration projects and programs that can be implemented through partnerships with private and/or non-profit entities. These partnerships can be considered an important part of the overall strategy to achieve

implementation since they offer incentive-based solutions to landowners, as well as funding for their implementation. These partnerships allow local governments to provide direction and leadership to assure that restoration designs meet the identified goals of the various plans. Critical to the success of these partnerships is a mechanism to coordinate a watershed-wide approach to achieving a net gain in watershed health.

Presented below is a suite of restoration strategies and tools that the County or Cities may potentially implement as part of the proposed SMPs, as well as assist restoration activities managed by other governmental and non-governmental organizations.

6.1 Partnerships and Tools for Implementing Restoration

Restoration and protection goals have the greatest potential for being met when stakeholders clearly understand what opportunities are available, how they work, and how they will benefit them directly. If the opportunities provide both environmental and fiscal benefits to a landowner, then the measure providing the benefits becomes an “incentive.” Provided below is a description of the leading incentive opportunities and funding that are available or can be developed through partnerships in Whitman County.

6.1.1 Conservation Reserve and Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CRP & CREP)

This voluntary federal program is administered by the USDA Farm Service Agency and is the county’s largest private-land conservation program. Participating landowners, are paid an annual rental rate for a contract period of 10 to 15 years in exchange for both removing environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and implementing conservation practices (CREP only). While the CRP just targets specific types of habitat, the CREP program is designed to address high-priority conservation issues as set forth in a signed agreement between state of Washington and the Federal government.

Examples of Programs: <http://www.whatcomcd.org/crep-wildlife>
<http://www.whatcomcd.org/one-millionth-crep-tree-planting>

Effectiveness. In Whitman County, vegetative buffer strips installed under this program have helped reduce erosion on over 4,000 acres of steep, erosive farmland. One farmer, Clark Miller, has planted 234,000 trees and shrubs and installed water improvements as part of the program. The new habitat has brought in hawks, eagles, and coyotes which in turn has helped reduce an increasing mice population.

6.1.2 **Regional Conservation Partnership Program (NRCS)**

Using “partnership agreements,” the Natural Resources Conservation Service works with local partners such as Conservation Districts to assist rural landowners implement practices that protect and restore natural resources, including soil, water and habitat. The “agreements” outline the specific practices and activities to be undertaken within a defined geographic area and also include funding for implementation.

For Whitman County, the NRCS has formed a partnership with the Palouse Conservation District and other partners in order to address TMDL issues in the Palouse River watershed (WRIA 34), which include erosion and sediment problems. A program to monitor water quality is underway to understand the specific sources and processes contributing to these problems and to develop effective solutions to address them. This includes promotion of the Farmed SMART Certification program, establishment of environmental markets, riparian buffer establishment, and monitoring of the effectiveness of implemented solutions. The NRCS also provides for the funding of conservation easements under the Agricultural Conservation Enhancement Program (ACEP).

Examples of Partnership Programs:

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmland/rcpp/>

6.1.3 **Farm Conservation Plans**

Conservation Districts throughout the state of Washington assist farmers and rural landowners increase farm productivity and reduce impacts to the environment through the preparation of farm plans. These plans typically employ the use of state of the art “Best Management Practices” which have been applied and tested by farmers elsewhere with similar crops and environmental conditions.

The critical areas identified under the CAO and restoration areas identified by the SMP can be used by farmers and the Conservation District to develop farm plans that effectively protect critical areas and improve farm operations. For example, Whatcom County developed a Conservation Plan for Agricultural Lands (CPAL) as part of their comprehensive plan that assists the Conservation District in formulating farm plans. The Whitman Conservation District employs a “cost sharing” mechanism to encourage farmers to employ BMPs. These practices, in turn, are being developed under the NRCS Regional Conservation Partnerships.

Examples: <http://www.whatcomcd.org/small-farm>

6.1.4 **Public Benefit Rating System (PBRs) and Current Use Taxation**

This measure allows a landowner to reduce the taxes on a property based on current land use value rather than on “highest and best use.” For example, if there are areas of former wetland or riparian habitat, a rural landowner could propose to protect these areas and thereby reduce their value relative to other areas on their land that may be used for farming. This would reduce the overall property taxes for the landowner.

The program, which is not currently offered in Whitman County, can be implemented by the County under RCW 84.33 and 84.34 and requires the identification of those land use types (i.e. habitat, wetlands, riparian corridors) that would qualify for tax reductions. Under the PBRs, a point system is developed for the public benefit provided, which allows a tax reduction up to 90%. Once a landowner enrolls in the program, they receive the tax benefits on a yearly basis; the landowner can elect to withdraw from the program at any time, but must repay the tax benefits received under the program. The program has been successful elsewhere in Washington, including Island, Snohomish and King Counties.

Examples of Programs:

<http://www.kingcounty.gov/environment/stewardship/sustainable-building/resource-protection-incentives.aspx>

Examples of Application Forms:

http://www.islandcounty.net/planning/documents/PBRsAPPLICATION3-12_001.pdf

Estimate of Degree of Success: Over the past 15 years, King County reports enrolling about 60-80 landowners and 500-600 acres per year.

6.1.5 **Conservation Easement**

A conservation easement is a useful tool for clearly identifying the exact location of a valuable natural resource that a landowner has agreed to set aside for long-term protection. Typically, these easements are used in conjunction with programs that provide a benefit to the landowner, such as reduced taxes through the Public Benefit Rating System. Additionally, landowners can elect to donate lands with a conservation easement to a non-profit organization, such as a land trust, which also provides for tax benefits to the landowner.

The advantage of a conservation easement is that it specifically lists the type of activities allowable on the easement, including activities important to an agricultural operation

(i.e. maintenance of access roads, wells, ditches) as well as restoration activities, such as the replanting of riparian vegetation or other suitable cover. This allows for the long-term protection and restoration of biologically important areas in a manner that is compatible with the landowner's needs. Restoration and the monitoring of restoration activities is typically borne by the holder of the easement (i.e. land trust, fish and wildlife conservation organization).

6.1.6 **Riparian Easements - DNR**

The Washington Department of Resources owns and manages numerous agricultural properties throughout Whitman County (see: <https://www.arcgis.com/home/webmap/viewer.html?webmap=f96e475a649a4ef1a8b45f74f9476adf&extent=-127.4292,43.8952,-112.8723,50.3921>).

DNR works with lessees to assure that appropriate investments are made in the lands to keep them ecologically sustainable and productive while protecting public resources such as water, fish and wildlife. The legislature provides funding for the Department of Natural Resources to pay a landowner for easements that protect riparian corridors (RCW 76.13.120).

6.1.7 **Outright Purchase**

In circumstances where a landowner has no interest in a property which provides valuable watershed functions, and is otherwise in threat of conversion, then purchase of a property "in fee" may be considered if no other options are available. Acquisition must be made by an entity that is capable of protecting, managing and monitoring the natural resources onsite over the long term.

While this is one of the most expensive tools to protect natural resources, it is one of the most effective ways to permanently protect these resources. Use of this tool can raise issues such as cost and value to the public, as well as the loss of existing farm or range land.

Table 3 outlines potential funding sources for implementation of a variety of efforts that could improve shoreline ecological function.

Table 3. A partial list of potential public and private funding sources for restoration and protection of shoreline ecological functions available to agencies or organizations

Agency/Group	Grant Name	Description
<i>Public Funding Sources:</i>		
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) Volunteer Cooperative Grant Program http://wdfw.wa.gov/grants/alea/index.html	Funding to buy, protect, and restore aquatic lands habitat and to provide public access to the shoreline. Eligible applicants include individual citizens, non-profit organizations, schools, political subdivisions such as conservation districts and tribes. For-profit businesses, State, and federal agencies may not apply.
Washington Department of Ecology	Watershed Planning Implementation and Flow Achievement Grants http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/funding/flow-achievement.html	Funding to implement watershed plans, with focus on achieving “flow achievement” by: increasing flows below project site; improving instream and riparian zone conditions; reorganizing or concentrating existing points of diversion; establishing water banks, exchanges or trust water opportunities; water savings through improved infrastructure for public and agricultural water systems; installing water use monitoring devices (meters, stream gages, groundwater monitors) that encourage wise water use.
	Centennial Clean Water Fund http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/funding/FundingPrograms/Centennial/Cent.html	Funds water quality infrastructure and projects to control non-point source pollution.
	Section 319 http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/funding/opportunities/319.html	Funds non-point source pollution control projects. Applications accepted annually in the fall for projects such as agricultural BMPs, education and stewardship, water quality monitoring, riparian and wetlands habitat restoration and enhancement, stream restoration, TMDL plan development and implementation and wellhead protection. Requires 25% match. Grant limits of \$250,000 with any combination match option or \$500,000 with cash only match option.
	Clean Water State Revolving Fund http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/cwsrf/cwsrf_index.cfm	Provides low interest and forgivable principal loan funding for wastewater treatment construction projects, eligible nonpoint source pollution control projects, and eligible Green projects. Available to municipalities and private landowners.
	Floodplains by Design http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/floods/	Funding for projects that restore floodplain habitat and reduce flooding risks.

Agency/Group	Grant Name	Description
	Coastal Protection Fund / Terry Husseman Grants http://www.ecy.wa.gov/progr/ams/sea/grants/cpf/moreinfo.html	Funding to restore or enhance environmental, recreational, archaeological, or aesthetic resources; investigate the long-term effects of oil spills; and develop and implement aquatic land geographic information systems. \$50,000 grant limit. No match required. Counties, municipalities and other state recognized local governments are eligible to apply.
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/alea.shtml	Funds the acquisition, improvement, or protection of aquatic lands for public purposes. Eligible applicants include local and State agencies and Tribes.
	Salmon Recovery Funding Board Grants http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/salmon.shtml	Funds projects to protect or restore salmon habitat and assist in related activities.
	Washington Wildlife Recreation Program http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/wwrp.shtml	Funds a range of land protection and outdoor recreation, including park acquisition and development, habitat conservation, farmland preservation, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities. Eligible applicants include local agencies, special purpose districts, state agencies, Native American tribes, salmon recovery lead entities and nonprofits. Most required to provide a 50% match and at least 10 percent of the total project cost must be from a non-state, non-federal contribution. State agencies do not have to provide match.
	Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) http://www.rco.wa.gov/grants/lwcf.shtml	Funding to State and local governments to preserve and develop outdoor recreation resources, including parks, trails, and wildlife lands. 50% match required.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Program http://www.fws.gov/pacific/Fisheries/FRIMA/applications.html	Funds State, local, and tribal governments, as well as individual water diversion operators to install fish screens and fish passage improvements associated with water diversions. At least one of the project applicants must be a local government. Applicant(s) must provide at least 35 percent matching funds or in-kind contributions.

Agency/Group	Grant Name	Description
	Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act) http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/	Grants to States to participate in a wide array of voluntary conservation projects for candidate, proposed, and listed species. Participation is only available to State agencies that have a current cooperative agreement with the Secretary of the Interior. However, individuals or groups (for example land conservancies, cities, counties, community organizations, or conservation organizations) may work with a State as a subgrantee. A proposal must include a minimum 25 percent non-Federal cost share as cash or in-kind contributions.
Washington Department of Ecology	Clean Water State Revolving Fund http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/cwsrf/cwsrf_index.cfm	Provides low interest and forgivable principal loan funding for wastewater treatment construction projects, eligible nonpoint source pollution control projects, and eligible Green projects. Available to municipalities and private landowners
Washington Department of Natural Resources	Funding provided by DNR to agricultural leasees on DNR land.	Under RCW 76.13.120 the legislature provides funding for the Department of Natural Resources to pay a landowner for easements on DNR leased lands that protect riparian corridors.
Whitman County Farm Service Agency	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)	This program provides funds to farmers who maintain riparian buffers for on-site waterbodies. The funds cover technical assistance, plant costs, and land "rental" fees.
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Partners for Fish and Wildlife http://www.fws.gov/partners/faq.html	Provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners to improve their property for targeted fish and wildlife species without a long-term easement contract.
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service	Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/easements/acep/?cid=stelpbdb1242695	Provides financial and technical assistance to help tribes, state and local governments, non-governmental organizations and private landowners conserve agricultural lands and wetlands and their related benefits.
U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service	Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farmland/rcpp/	Using "partnership agreements" the Natural Resources Conservation District assists rural landowners implement practices that protect and restore natural resources, including soil, water and habitat in selected areas.
Palouse-Rock Lake Conservation District	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) http://www.prlcd.org/crep.html	Provides funds to farmers who maintain riparian buffers on certain identified waterbodies in the Palouse watershed. The funds cover technical assistance, plant costs, and land "rental" fees. Serves the northwest quadrant of Whitman County.

Agency/Group	Grant Name	Description
Palouse Conservation District	http://www.palousecd.org/	Provides technical, financial and educational resources to farmers in the southeast area of Whitman County to help achieve conservation objectives.
Whitman Conservation District	http://www.whitmancd.org/	Provides technical, financial and educational resources and focuses or coordinates them so they meet the needs of the local land user for conservation of soil, water and related resources in the southwest portion of Whitman County.
Pine Creek Conservation District	http://www.pinecreekcd.com/	Provides technical, financial and educational resources to farmers in the northeast quadrant of Whitman County including the Towns of Malden and Rosalia and the City of Tekoa.
<i>Private Funding Sources:</i>		
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program http://www.cbwtp.org/jsp/cbwtp/program.jsp	Funds permanent acquisitions, leases, investments in efficiency and other incentive-based approaches to assist landowners who wish to restore instream flows for habitat. Established program partners called Qualified Local Entities (QLEs) are eligible to submit a proposal for funding. Private landowners interested in funding can work with QLEs on project proposals.
The Northwest Fund for the Environment	Northwest Fund for the Environment Standard Grants http://www.nwfund.org/application/	Provides grants to 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations ranging from \$3,000 – \$20,000 for projects to protect and restore aquatic ecosystems.
The Burning Foundation	http://fdnweb.org/burning/application-guidelines/	Provides grants to 501(c)(3) groups to protect threatened rivers and forests, nurture native fish populations, and conserve land and open space for ecological and recreational purposes. Average grant sizes range from \$5,000 to \$12,000
FishAmerica Foundation	http://www.fishamerica.org/grants/	A national group that provides grants, in partnership with the NOAA Restoration Center and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for community-based restoration of marine and anadromous fish species including restoration and enhancement of aquatic habitats such as stream buffer zones.

6.2 Planning

The County, Cities and Town could incorporate shoreline restoration goals and projects into their capital improvement plans, parks facility plans, and road plans to facilitate implementation of restoration within their respective jurisdictions and cooperatively

with each other. They could also review the various elements of previously adopted and proposed plans that apply to shoreline areas and develop a prioritized list of projects.

6.3 Regional Coordination

Many partners are actively engaged in the restoration and protection of shoreline ecological functions in Whitman County. Budget and staff limitations limit the County's and Cities'/Towns' abilities to independently implement a comprehensive restoration program; however, coordination with the multiple active and interested parties in the County make the implementation of ecological restoration feasible. Projects can be implemented through partnerships with other agencies, non-governmental organizations, or private entities such as those identified in Section 4. Section 6.1 also recommends the establishment of a shoreline restoration committee that would help coordinate and track restoration activities.

The County should continue its association and involvement with the local watershed planning units for WRIAs 34, 35 and 56, as well as the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board.

The Cities of Colfax, Pullman and Palouse and the Towns of Albion, Rosalia and Malden should continue their association and involvement with local watershed planning for WRIA 34. The City of Tekoa should continue its association and involvement with the WRIA 56 Planning Unit.

The Counties and Cities/Towns may also look for other time-sensitive opportunities for involvement in regional restoration planning and implementation.

Based on the inventory completed as part of the Shoreline Analysis Report, approximately 83 percent of the area in shoreline jurisdiction in Whitman County is privately owned. Additionally, land use activities on privately owned lands outside of shoreline jurisdiction are known to play a significant role in hydrologic, water quality, and geomorphic functions and processes of a watershed. As a result, private landowners play an extremely important role in the condition of shoreline ecological functions. Outreach and education measures that help inform and engage the public to make voluntary actions that limit degradation and/or improve shoreline functions are essential to effectively maintain and restore conditions in the watershed. Several agencies and non-governmental organizations are actively involved in public outreach and education measures in the county and cities. In the future, development of a coordinated natural resource education center or program could be considered.

7 CONCLUSION

The Whitman County Shoreline Restoration Plan builds on the goals and policies proposed in the Shoreline Master Program. The Shoreline Restoration Plan provides an important non-regulatory component of the SMP to ensure that shoreline functions are maintained or improved despite potential incremental losses that may occur even with implementation of SMP regulations and mitigation actions.

The Shoreline Restoration Plan draws on multiple past planning efforts to identify possible restoration projects and reach-based priorities, key partners in implementing shoreline restoration, and existing funding opportunities. Many of the projects and strategies identified are focused on implementing best management practices for agricultural uses to improve water quality and restoring riparian buffer zones. The Shoreline Restoration Plan represents a long-term vision for restoration that will be implemented over time, resulting in ongoing improvement to the functions and processes in the County's shorelines.

8 WEBSITE RESOURCES

The following is a sampling of helpful web resources.

- Conservation Districts
 - Palouse Conservation District: <http://www.palousecd.org/default.htm>
 - Palouse Rock Lake Conservation District: <http://www.prlcd.org/>
 - Whitman Conservation District: <http://www.whitmancd.org/>
 - Pine Creek Conservation District: <http://www.pinecreekcd.com/>
- Washington State Conservation Commission CREP Program: <http://scc.wa.gov/crep/>
- Palouse-Clearwater Environmental Institute: <http://www.pcei.org/>
- Natural Resources Conservation Service Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP): <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/programs/easements/acep/?cid=stelprdb1242695>
- Native plant landscaping guides: http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/publications/Eastern_Garden_Wise.pdf and <http://www.palouseprairie.org/pplandscaping.html>

- Backyard wildlife sanctuary certification: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/backyard/>
- Landscape design for wildlife:
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/living/landscaping/index.html>
- Guide to noxious weeds – identification and removal:
<http://www.nwcb.wa.gov/publications/EasternFieldGuide2009.pdf>

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