

# Alliance for a Healthy South Sound Project Endorsement Criteria and Process

**August 2018** Working Draft – Subject to Revision

AHSS encourages and welcomes the opportunity to endorse and advocate for projects that are consistent with the South Sound Strategy. We are particularly interested in projects that accomplish habitat protection and restoration, protection and restoration of shellfish beds, and stormwater reduction and control.

There are a total of 35 points over possible. Projects that score 20 points or above will be automatically endorsed. Projects that score below 20 points will be endorsed on a case by case basis by the Executive Committee, based on a recommendation from the Technical Team.

Project review is available at any time; project proponents can initiate review by completing a project information sheet through the AHSS website and request endorsement.

## Scoring

Factor	Criteria/Considerations	Score
Consistency	Is the project consistent with the South Sound Strategy?	Yes/No (inconsistent projects do not move forward)
Benefit	<p>Scores should reflect the overall benefit to ecosystem processes anticipated. High scoring projects will have a greater intensity over a larger area or will address critical threats in a smaller area but in a substantial way and/or will result in meaningful actions in priority geographies. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is the size of the area the project will address? Does it address a large or small area? One or multiple reaches or watersheds?</li> <li>• How completely will the project address a threat or protect or restore ecosystem processes in the area it affects?</li> <li>• What are the measurable outcomes? E.g., how direct / tangible is the benefit to the target ecosystem attribute or process?</li> <li>• Does the project address a high-priority geography for protection and restoration of salmon as identified in the Lead Entity processes? Or, does the project address a high-priority marine geography for protection and restoration of shellfish beds?</li> </ul>	10 points possible

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For education and outreach projects: Is this a large-scale outreach or education project that would connect many stakeholders or have broader community benefits?</li> <li>• For education and outreach projects: would the education and outreach address people and decision makers who can take actions to alleviate known threats or stressors (e.g., septic systems)?</li> <li>• For education and outreach projects: what are the measurable outcomes e.g. how many people will the program reach; if targeting participation in programs what's the targeted % increase; if recruiting volunteers, how many?</li> </ul>	
<p>Opportunity</p>	<p>Projects that represent unique opportunities in terms of timing should be given priority. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would no action mean the loss of opportunity through, for example, property development, or loss of matching funds?</li> <li>• Is this a subsequent phase of a multiple phase project and would momentum / work be lost if the project is not continued at this time?</li> <li>• Is this a significant new effort in a new, priority geographic area or bringing in new partners that could improve relationships and/or pave the way to future work?</li> </ul>	<p>5 points possible</p>
<p>Likelihood of Success:</p>	<p>Scores should reflect the level of confidence that the benefits anticipated from the project will actually be achieved. High scoring projects are those where confidence is greater. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the project ready to go as evidenced by pre-project planning such as workplans and schedules, designs, permits underway, etc.?</li> <li>• Does the project use a well understood / proven technology appropriate to the geographic location?</li> <li>• If a new or innovative technology is proposed is there sound site or geography-specific justification for its use?</li> <li>• Can the project, as described, accomplish the objectives?</li> </ul>	<p>10 points possible</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does the project sponsor have the technical, administrative, and financial management capacity to manage / accomplish the action?</li> <li>• Is there sufficient planning for long-term project success, such as an adaptive management plan and/or a project stewardship plan?</li> </ul>	
Landowner/stakeholder support	<p>Support of affected landowners and stakeholders is key to project success. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the landowner aware of and supportive of the effort?</li> <li>• Is there known stakeholder support (or opposition) to the project?</li> <li>• Are landowner, interjurisdictional, and/or other necessary partnerships in place?</li> <li>• Does the project occur in an area where it can serve as an effective outreach tool to engage landowners or decision makers?</li> <li>• Does the proposal engage community groups, businesses, or other relevant organizations/groups as partners or volunteers?</li> </ul>	5 points possible
Cost	<p>Cost should be appropriate to the funding project and the anticipated project results. Consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is the funding amount requested within program guidelines and reasonably consistent with past program decisions to the extent known?</li> <li>• Would the project be a sound investment of public dollars as evidenced by the proposed budget being appropriate to the work?</li> </ul>	5 points possible

**Process and Timing for Review**

Project proponents seeking Alliance endorsement should submit a brief project information sheet along with any additional information that is needed to support evaluation based on the factors described above. A copy of the project grant/funding proposal (if available) also will suffice.

The Technical Team meets on an ad hoc basis and the Alliance Executive Committee meets approximately quarterly - meeting dates are published on the Alliance website. To ensure there is adequate time for review please submit information at least 2 weeks before an endorsement decision is needed. Ideally materials will be submitted with timing that allows for scoring and then review at a regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting. However, if this is not possible given project

application timelines the Alliance coordinator will make arrangements for special Executive Committee review, provided the 4-week time frame is met.

## Puget Sound Action Agenda -- Review of Proposed NTAs and Award of Local Funding

Approximately every four years, the Alliance participates in review of projects proposed as near-term actions for the Puget Sound Action Agenda. The Alliance uses the Regional Scoring Criteria and Rubric produced by the Puget Sound Partnership and will provide input to Puget Sound-scale reviewers on the results of our South Sound-scale review on the timelines specified by PSP for the Action Agenda process.

In general, the solicitation for NTA proposals is carried out at the Puget Sound scale by the Puget Sound Partnership and sister state agencies. The Alliance will provide input into development of these solicitations when asked and will use its regularly-scheduled Council and Executive Committee meetings, as well as the Alliance mailing list and website, to provide information about the process to potential project sponsors in South Sound.

Since 2017 AHSS has been given the opportunity to, each year, recommend one or more NTAs for funding. To date, approximately \$100,000 each year has been made available for this “local funding.” AHSS will use the scoring process described in this document to develop this funding recommendation. Because most NTA proposals have cost estimates in excess of \$100,000, as part of the decision-making process, a small amount of additional information may be requested by NTA owners to help understand whether/how projects could be scaled or phased to effectively apply the \$100,000.