

DRAFT Suggestion/Opportunity Template

Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Suggestion/Opportunity

Origin/Submitted By: *Break out group 2/12/2-14. Micah Wait, Jarvis Keller, Sally King....*

Short Title: *Combine multiple drainage channels into single meandered channel*

Issue: *Buffers and drainage.*

Brief Description and Scope:

To reduce total productive ag land lost to buffers on a farm, combine flow from several smaller drainage channels into single, deeper, meandered channel with greater instream habitat benefits and a single buffer area.

Background:

Many farms have multiple drainage channels crossing farm fields. The combined buffer footprint could take substantial land out of production. Moreover, straight artificial channels do not provide high quality instream habitat, though they are still used extensively by fish when accessible. Wild Fish has constructed a project of this type in Cherry Valley, though the emphasis is not on the buffer footprint per se. That project will yield good data on the drainage function provided by the new channel.

Describe the problem this suggestion/opportunity will address:

Innovative solution to working on farms that have dense drainage networks to improve fish habitat while potentially reducing overall acreage needed for restoring riparian vegetation around streams.

Describe how this Suggestion/Opportunity provides benefits to Farm Fish and Flood:

(+ fish) Potential improvement in localized fish habitat in small floodplain tributaries.

(+ farm) Potential reduction in overall space that is unavailable for production due to drainage channel and associated buffer.

(+farm) Could make fields easier to work due to reducing overall drainage network and required crossings.

(-farm) If meandered stream planted with tall trees and wide buffer, could produce some negative effects of shade on proximate field, attracting wildlife near horticultural operation, trapping flood debris, etc.

Note that for small drainages, large buffers are not required per se, but mitigation plantings or potential voluntary plantings could subsume ag land over time. The suitability of this solution could be limited to very specific settings where many small channels in close proximity are used to drain fields.

PROS (Committee generated):

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CONS (Committee generated):

What action(s) required for implementation of this suggestion/opportunity?

Funding and possibly permitting flexibility for pilot project(s) with willing landowners. Assistance with other permitting agencies. Extensive monitoring to assess drainage function for new channel and quality of fish habitat.

Near or long term recommendation:

Project site identification and discussions with landowners could be immediate. Funding timing could make implementation possible in 2016.

Preliminary cost estimate or description of cost components:

N/A. Use Cherry Valley project as example for costs.

Committee Recommendation: