

Increased LIO Capacity Proposal for LIOs

Objective:

Investing in the Local Integrating Organization (LIO) program and LIO coordination will help to invigorate local support of LIO Ecosystem Recovery Plans and the Action Agenda, as well as increase the influence that LIOs have in advancing ecosystem recovery in both their local geographies and regionally. A deeper engagement by the LIOs in local and regional planning and implementation processes, including ongoing programs, will mean greater progress on both local and regional priorities, resulting in a system of mutual benefit and cross-scale support.

Updated LIO Capacity Proposal for LIOs

On February 4, 2020 the LIO coordinators, Puget Sound Partnership's (Partnership) Executive Director, and Partnership staff discussed a draft capacity assessment and proposal that intended **to define and outline necessary resources to support both the current and ideal role of an LIO**. LIO coordinators took one week to provide further comments and recommend changes to the proposal.

The LIO coordinators provided feedback totaling over [160 comments and revisions](#) to the original draft capacity assessment document¹. The comments and revisions can be summarized as: 1) requesting clarity and specifics as to what a baseline LIO coordination entails, including hours, travel, and preparation required for participating in baseline subtasks; and 2) flexibility within the coordination grants for a variety of proposed high priority enhanced tasks.

The new proposal outlined in this document recommends a single coordination grant with equal amounts to each LIO (e.g., \$125K for FFY2020 funding). The contract and associated work plan will include two sections. The first section will outline standard baseline tasks for each LIO with specifics made more explicit including: how the baseline work advances local and regional priorities; intended outcomes for any planning subtasks; better outlined reporting requirements, and notification of which tasks are required by EPA versus the Partnership. The second section will remain more flexible and be designed to tailor enhanced subtasks to the needs and vision of each specific LIO; this section of the contract will offer a selection of items to choose from and further develop through contract negotiations. This section would include tasks that fulfill the following principles:

- Support individual LIO efforts for meaningful engagement in the Puget Sound ecosystem recovery system, including the Action Agenda.
- Support greater coordination and efficiency and does not simply increase process
- Support specific deliverables for implementing the LIO Plan and the Action Agenda
- Support the integration of salmon recovery priorities
- Align with Strategic Initiative Lead work plans

The Partnership proposes a baseline set of more standardized tasks (Tasks 1-4), plus an increased capacity funding amount for more flexible enhanced work (Task 5) for each LIO to accomplish one or more activities/initiatives that align with the vision of the LIO. The decision around which activities/initiatives to take on with the additional funds (any funds above and beyond baseline) should

¹ Written and verbal feedback (LIO coordinator meeting) received from San Juan, Island, Strait, Alliance, Whatcom, Sno-Stilly, PWR, WSPER, HCCC, and South Central

be an LIO committee decision, with close coordination with the respective Partnership Ecosystem Recovery (ER) Team liaison (e.g., “ERC”).

LIO Contract	Standard Baseline	\$75-100K	Task 1: Administrative	Convene, organize, communicate
			Task 2: Coordination	Coordinate with LE, MRC, elected officials, regional groups, NTA owners, direct funding decisions with SILs, etc.
			Task 3: Performance Management	Performance of LIO Plan (progress reporting, synthesis, etc.)
			Task 4: LIO Plan	Adaptively manage LIO Plan—outlined with very specific outcomes and objectives (climate change, ongoing programs)
	Tailored Enhanced	Any additional funds over \$50-75K	Task 5: LIO Initiatives: Implementation	Implementation of actions that support and/or enable NTAs, remove barriers, and fill gaps as described in the LIO Plan

STANDARD BASELINE

The standard baseline will include tasks 1-4 as titled above. It will include specific subtasks with detailed deliverables that are explicitly linked to the vision of the LIO program including how the subtasks will work toward advance of LIO Plans, the Action Agenda, and Implementation Strategies, and foster science-based, collaborative decision making. The standard baseline work plans will intend to keep all LIOs aligned and equitably participating in essential planning and implementation forums. Portions of the standard baseline will continue to be broad to allow for uncertainties in timelines and the opportunistic planning culture of Puget Sound recovery.

It is expected that on some years there will inevitably be (hopefully minimal) return funds as a result of unforeseen issues. In the event that there are more significant return funds (more than 5%), it will be recommended that the LIO coordination grant be reduced to better suit the needs of the LIO. Any remaining funds will be moved to regional support of the LIO program.

TAILORED ENHANCED

The LIO will be expected to commit to one or more LIO initiatives that are aligned with the Action Agenda regional priorities, the respective LIO Plan, and the Implementation Strategies. The LIO will work collaboratively with affiliated local governments, tribes, related watershed groups, businesses, and/or

the general public to implement these priorities. LIOs will need to develop highly specific deliverables with associated outputs and outcomes within this portion of the coordination grant.

The tailored enhanced portion of each contract may look to the following list of example activities/initiatives to further refine selected actions through contract negotiations:

- 1) Provide stipends and/or travel reimbursements to LIO and LE committee members for participation in regional decision making groups that are approved by the Partnership (e.g., SIAT, AACG, ISWG, etc.)
 - a. *This is not reimbursement for work hours*
 - b. *Could include additional work with IS Leads to develop and/or prioritize greater geographic specificity within IS*
 - c. *Could include coordination with area ECB representative(s)*
 - d. *This opportunity will need to be discussed and approved by EPA and refined with limits and guidelines*

- 2) Engage on policy with local decision-makers and elected officials
 - a. *Could include engagement with Partnership Boards and Management Conference*
 - b. *What are the limitations on the use of federal funding in this way?*
 - c. *Could include coordination with area ECB representative(s)*
 - d. *This opportunity will need to be discussed and approved by EPA and refined with limits and guidelines*

- 3) Provide seed money for launching 2018-2022 NTAs of highest priority to the LIO and the region
 - a. *This is for capacity funding only (not capital project implementation)*
 - b. *This opportunity will need to be discussed and approved by EPA and refined with limits and guidelines*

- 4) ECO Net(s) reengagement
 - a. *EPA NEP goals include a priority intersection with public education, communication, and outreach (i.e., social approaches)*
 - b. *ECO Net(s) as subcommittees of respective LIO—work should support local LE and LIO Plans*

- 5) Lead removal and/or reduction of identified priority LIO Plan barrier
 - a. *Could be accomplished through engagement with the Continuous Improvement claim process*
 - b. *This opportunity will need to be discussed and approved by EPA and refined with limits and guidelines*

- 6) Support priority NTAs through grant writing support, PS Info page updates, and more

- 7) Advance LIO & LE integration

- 8) Engage in structured decision making

- a. *Define and integrate biophysical and human wellbeing objectives, and prioritize actions within LIO Plan*
 - b. *Communicate and better coordinate with respective Implementation Strategies*
 - c. *This opportunity will need to be discussed and approved by EPA and refined with limits and guidelines*
- 9) Other well-aligned LIO Plan advancement ideas?

The Partnership is eager to invest and empower LIOs for the continued development and implementation of the Action Agenda and LIO Plans. Ultimately, ecosystem recovery goes beyond near-term actions and is addressed in ongoing programs and other avenues of local and regional influence in decision making. Sustainable ecosystem recovery and protection requires a socio-political and cultural shift. LIOs are powerful networks that recognize the local nuance of these elements and are the heart of driving the changes necessary to pursue them.