



Framework for Developing the Prioritized List

The framework for developing a prioritized list of activities that improve the quality of Washington’s natural resources relies on the following five major strategies:

- Preserving, maintaining and restoring natural systems and landscapes
- Achieving sustainable use of public resources
- Establishing safeguards and standards
- Providing good science, data and monitoring
- Improving individual practices and choices

The Evaluation Process:

The team made every effort to follow the Priorities of Government (POG) process of putting performance first, and looking at each item’s proximity to results. This group used a process similar to that of a traditional grant evaluation process. In doing so, the team selected three decision-making criteria and assigned each a relative weight:

1. Results: Does the activity demonstrate effectiveness?
2. Alignment: Does the activity align to our strategy map?
3. Investment Value: Is the activity a good return on our investment?

Team members first evaluated and ranked individual items according to these criteria, then assessed the reasonableness of the overall ranking. Team members also had opportunities to present data either not available on Office of Financial Management’s (OFM) Activity Inventory or provide new data updates as they became available. They then adjusted the relative positions of activities based on this additional information.

The Prioritized List:

The activities falling into the top half of the list can best be characterized as having very good performance measures or data and close alignment to the strategies and results. These activities support a wide range of endeavors that prevent harm to the state’s natural resources: improve the state’s air, water, habitat and populations of fish, protect wildlife and native plants, provide for the sustainable use of public resources, and more.

The results we can expect to see from making investments range from reducing vehicle emissions, to eradicating invasive species such as Spartina, to monitoring the status and trends of fish and wildlife populations.

Result Area: Improve the Quality of Washington’s Natural Resources

In one instance, the team divided an activity by moving a portion of its cost higher or lower on the list. For example, the team agreed that the new item “Puget Sound Investment Strategy” (with a total cost of \$66 million) would be better understood once the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) completes its long-term plan known as the *2020 Action Agenda* (which is due out later this Fall) charting the best course of action for restoring and preserving the Puget Sound. The team assumed that some money would be spent on this effort so they moved a portion of this activity (\$13.2 million out of \$66 million) up higher on the priority list.

The team also included a few items from other result areas where the items contribute in an important way to natural resources results. Examples include Community, Trade and Economic Development’s (CTED) Growth Management Act activity and Department of Health’s (DOH) Shellfish and Food Safety activity.

Of the many new activities presented, four agency request items received high ratings which placed these items closer to the top of the list. These activities include:

- Puget Sound Investment Strategy (in-part)
- Standby Emergency Response Tug
- Funding Greenhouse Gas Reporting
- Kittitas County Groundwater Support

In conclusion, the team often faced difficult tradeoffs, such as whether climate change is more important than salmon recovery, or cleaning up legacy toxic sites is more important than preventing new toxic pollution from occurring. In these situations, the team did its best to follow the prescribed process using the pre-selected criteria.