Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee Decision Document – 2026-08

Project Name	2026 CRR Ranked List Approval
Date Proposal Submitted	9/1/2026
Date of Requested Decision	10/6/2026
Requested By	Steve Manlow, LCFRB
Date of Decision[1]	10/6/2026

[1] Decision will become final if committee members who were not present at this meeting do not oppose this proposed decision within 7 days

FTC Decision and Justification

The FTC approves the LCFRB recommendation to fund all four projects described below for the 2026 Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery Program grant round.

FTC Members present: WDFW (B. Glaser), Ecology (A. Luymes), Yakama Nation (B. Sharp), Tacoma Power (M. Shelton), Trout Unlimited/American Rivers (J. Stumpf).

Proposed Decision or Consideration

The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) recommends the Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) approve the LCFR Board recommended habitat project list for the 2026 Cowlitz Restoration and Recovery Program (CRR) grant round. The list includes two habitat restoration projects and two habitat restoration design projects for a total of $4,106,228 in requested CRR funds (Table 1). The FTC has granted $4,564,004 in CRR award funding to date. The remaining unallocated portion of the CRR Fund is $14,030,579 (2025 year-end balance).

Table 1. shows the total project cost, the CRR request, and leveraged funding provided by the applicant for each of the project proposals. It also shows the total cost, request, and match funding for the 2026 CRR grant round.

Table 1.

Proposal	Total Project Cost	CRR Funding Request	Leveraged Funding
CRR-2026-01- Cispus-Yellowjacket Restoration Phase 5A	$4,321,810	$2,299,083	$2,022,727
CRR-2026-02- Kiona Creek Restoration Project Design - Phase II	$157,953	$110,567	$47,386
CRR-2026-03- Lower Woods Creek Design (RM 0.0- 0.7)	$191,928	$191,928	$0
CRR-2026-04- Dark Divide Restoration Phase I	$2,041,150	$1,504,650	$536,500
Total	**$6,712,841**	**$4,106,228**	**$2,606,613**

Refer to the 2026 CRR Grant Round folder for application materials, evaluation questions, and project-specific LCFRB Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) comments, rationales, and scoring metrics. This link is to facilitate review during this decision process. Copies of the information in this folder will be maintained by both the LCFRB and Tacoma Power and made available upon request by staff at those organizations or coordinated through Tacoma's Cowlitz FTC contact at CowlitzFTC@tacoma.gov.

Background

The CRR fund supports activities that protect and promote recovery of listed species in lieu of construction and operation of volitional upstream passage facilities on the Upper Cowlitz River. The CRR program assists in the protection and recovery of listed populations consistent with the recommendations in the Upper Cowlitz River Subbasin Plan of the Washington Lower Columbia Salmon Recovery and Fish & Wildlife Plan (LCFRB 2010, Vol. II.F).

The FTC has partnered with the LCFRB to assist in implementing the CRR program for habitat projects beginning in 2023 (DD 2021-03). Per agreement with Tacoma Public Utilities, the LCFRB reviews, evaluates and ranks CRR habitat proposals for funding consideration by the FTC. The LCFRB TAC provides an initial review of projects in conjunction with the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grant round using their standard scoring, ranking, and review process. The TAC also reviews and evaluates the CRR proposals to ensure alignment with CRR priorities by scoring, using CRR evaluation questions. The TAC provides a recommended ranked list of SRFB and CRR proposals for the LCFR Board to approve. The LCFRB then provides their final recommended ranked list of CRR proposals for the FTC to approve.

The LCFRB TAC reviewed CRR projects based on the FTC's evaluation questions, as well as benefits to fish, certainty of success and cost questions (standard evaluation questions) that describe the relationship of proposals to watershed and region scale recovery priorities and needs. Both the LCFR Board and TAC decided by consensus that all projects should be funded. Note, the FTC removed the biennial $3M cap for the 2026 grant round (DD 2026-04).

On August 7, 2026, the LCFR Board met and adopted the TAC recommended ranked list for 2026 as submitted (Table 2). Approval of this list by the FTC means all proposals would be funded as requested. Both the LCFRB TAC and Board determined that none of the projects were fatally flawed, and all warranted funding. However, if the FTC believes that one or more projects should not be funded, partial project list approval is an option.

The LCFRB presented each project proposal to the FTC at the August meeting and shared the additional information and application materials for each proposal as described above.

Table 2.

Project Number	Project Name	Project Rank		Recommended Allocation
		SRFB (19 Total)	CRR (4 Total)	
CRR-2026-01	Cispus-Yellowjacket Restoration Phase 5a	2	1	$2,299,083
CRR-2026-02	Kiona Creek Restoration Project Design - Phase II	19	4	$110,567
CRR-2026-03	Lower Woods Creek Final Design	9	3	$191,928
CRR-2026-04	Dark Divide Restoration Phase I	3	2	$1,504,650
		TOTAL		**$4,106,228**

Coordination Need

There is a high need for coordination and discussion between the LCFRB, Tacoma Power, and the FTC through all stages of the project review process. At this stage, once the final list is approved, the LCFRB enters into contract with the sponsors to implement the projects. The LCFRB will continue to work with Tacoma Power on schedules and fund payments and will update the FTC during regular FTC meetings regarding project status. All partners will coordinate to ensure future grant rounds are successful and build upon progress to date.

Tacoma Power, with input from the LCFRB and the FTC, will describe the 2026 CRR grant round in the Article 3 CRR report to FERC. Annual reports are distributed to the FTC for 30-day review prior to FERC filing.

Summary of Potential Impacts

If the recommended list is not approved, some or all of the projects on the list will not be funded, and/or implemented as proposed. Applicants of projects not approved may be able to apply again in a future CRR grant round, however, most of the projects on the list are time sensitive and are scheduled to be implemented with other projects. There is also potential that future submittal of unfunded projects may be foreclosed due to loss of landowner support or leveraged resources, or logistical or capacity constraints.