

Section 7

Plan Implementation Considerations

7.1 Introduction

This plan identifies a range of recommended basin-wide and implementation area-specific actions concerning water supply, stream flow management, surface water quality, groundwater quality, and aquatic habitat. This section addresses overall implementation needs necessary for providing a solid foundation for individual actions. Implementation considerations for these actions include identifying the organizations that would have implementation responsibilities, implementation timeframe, cost of implementation, and potential sources of funding. This section also builds on information and recommendations presented in a Report to the Legislature prepared by the Phase 4 Watershed Plan Implementation Committee in 2002. These recommendations have been reshaped to match local circumstances in the WRIA 35.

7.2 Plan Adoption Process and Resulting Obligations

The Watershed Management Act prescribes a specific process for adoption of a watershed plan, and voluntary acceptance of obligations under the plan (Section 90.82.130 RCW). This is a two-stage process. First, the Planning Unit considers the plan for approval, and individual members of the Planning Unit consider what actions they will commit to carrying out. Once this is completed, the plan is sent to the Boards of County Commissioners of Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman Counties for their consideration. If the Commissioners adopt the plan, there will be expectations regarding the commitments made, recognizing funding and resource limitations.

Through this process, no organization or person is required to take on a commitment outlined in the plan. However, once an organization has formally agreed to implement actions identified in the plan, the Planning Unit expects these commitments to be honored; recognizing funding limitations. The Planning Unit requests all state and local government agencies accept all applicable obligations and if appropriate, consider taking action through a MOA to be developed during Phase IV – implementation.

This watershed plan does not create any obligations for private businesses, citizens or landowners. However, there are actions identified for *voluntary* action in the private sector.

Actions recommended in this plan are intended to be specific enough to clearly identify the actions and results; yet general enough to permit some flexibility in carrying them out. The Planning Unit recognizes that some actions require further investigation prior to full implementation. The Planning Unit also recognizes that some actions can be carried out only if funding is provided by the State Legislature or other funding agencies, and that funding decisions will be made over a period of months or years following plan adoption. The recommendations made in this plan have been crafted to recognize these limitations.

It will be important that any rules adopted by the State of Washington to implement this watershed plan remain consistent with the intent expressed by the Planning Unit in this watershed plan. The strategies presented in this watershed plan are intended to provide a balanced suite of actions to manage water resources in the WRIA 35 planning area. In the event that a State rule-making process, legislative action, or court decision substantially alters implementation of the provisions outlined in the plan, the other organizations with implementation responsibilities reserve the right to re-visit their implementation commitments in light of these changed conditions. If changes in commitments are being considered that would substantially alter the plan strategies and actions, then these changes would go through a watershed plan amendment process to update the plan to reflect changed conditions or new information, depending upon available funding. This is particularly true for County governments, which have the role of adopting the plan through the approval process under Chapter 90.82.130 RCW.

7.3 Grant Funding for Implementation Phase

In 2003 the Washington State Legislature amended the watershed planning grants program to provide Phase 4 grants to support implementation of watershed plans (Section 90.82.040 RCW). Application for the grants can be made following approval of the watershed plan by Planning Unit and adoption by the Counties, following the procedure described in Section 90.82.130 RCW.

As an example of grant funding, the WRIA 35 Planning Unit is eligible for up to \$100,000 per year in each of the first three years of implementation. Following this, \$50,000 per year can be awarded in the fourth and fifth years of implementation. A match of ten percent is required, which can include either financial contributions or in-kind goods and services.

It is not expected that this limited amount of funding will cover implementation of the projects and programs discussed in this watershed plan. Instead, these funds should be considered “seed money” to strengthen the organizational foundation for plan implementation and to pursue more substantial funding for the many activities recommended in this plan.

The Legislature also provided that the Planning Unit must complete a detailed implementation plan within one year of accepting the Phase 4 funding. Disbursements of Phase 4 funding for subsequent years is conditioned upon completion of the implementation plan. The implementation plan must contain strategies, timelines and milestones; define coordination and oversight responsibilities, any needed interlocal agreements, rules or ordinances; any needed state or local administrative approvals and permits, and specific funding mechanisms. In addition, the Planning Unit must consult with other organizations developing plans in the same area, and identify and seek to eliminate activities or policies that are duplicative or inconsistent.

The Planning Unit anticipates applying for the Phase 4 grant funding at such time as this watershed plan is adopted. The discussion of implementation considerations in the plan provides a starting point for eventual development of the detailed implementation plan described above.

The Planning Unit anticipates that full implementation of plan recommendations will require a time frame on the order of five to twenty years. Many actions can be carried out in the first five

to ten years; while others will require more time to obtain funding, permits, and other necessary approvals. As noted above, the current grant funding program is designed only for the first five years of this time frame.

7.4 Overall Coordination of Plan Implementation

The recommendations presented in this watershed plan span a range of natural resources, activities, and organizations. Recommendations are identified for county governments, public water systems, several state agencies, private industry, landowners and others.

With a range of organizations involved, and an implementation period spanning many years, it will be important to put in place some mechanism for coordination and oversight. Some of the activities included under coordination and oversight are:

- Tracking implementation of plan actions by the many organizations involved to ensure actions are being carried out in a timely fashion, that the balanced nature of the plan is retained as actions are implemented, and that the most important priorities defined by the Planning Unit are being addressed.
- Coordinating efforts to seek funding for plan actions to avoid duplication of effort and ensure the State legislature and funding agencies see well-organized and unified support for funding requests on an ongoing basis.
- Providing information to the public on plan implementation and resulting improvements in watershed conditions.
- Providing early warning systems and joint responses to changing conditions, including physical conditions in the watershed, new regulatory developments, and new project proposals that may emerge from time to time.
- Monitoring of watershed conditions across jurisdictional boundaries, data management, and providing data access.
- Periodic review of the plan, and updating the plan if warranted.
- Other consideration and oversight activities will be added as necessary.
- In order to provide a venue for these activities, it is recommended that the Middle Snake Planning Unit transition from planning functions to coordination and oversight functions as listed above. The purpose is to foster an organized and collaborative approach as many individual organizations carry out specific actions under their jurisdictions, and to secure funding for implementation. The Watershed Planning Director, hired in April 2006, would play a key role in coordinating the transition and assisting the Planning Unit in activities related to plan implementation.

The Planning Unit supports the establishment of an Implementation Working Group (IWG) as a subcommittee to the larger Planning Unit. The purpose of the IWG would be to coordinate implementation of the watershed plan along with the subbasin and Snake River salmon recovery plan as part of an integrated implementation approach. The IWG could assume the following activities:

- Outline a schedule of restoration planning and implementation activities for the next two years.

- Identify associated funding needs for these projects.
- Identify roles and responsibilities for securing additional funds needed to implement the two-year plan, and which organization(s) are responsible for implementing these projects.
- Identify opportunities for coordination and collaboration among basin organizations and individuals.

Project funding requests that will be submitted to the Washington Department of Ecology will need to go through a regional review and prioritization process led by the WRIA 35 Planning Unit. Under this process, project proponents propose projects that will go through a Planning Unit review committee (assumed IWG) and the Snake River regional review process before being submitted to the State for funding consideration.

More details on IWG responsibilities will be developed during Phase 4.

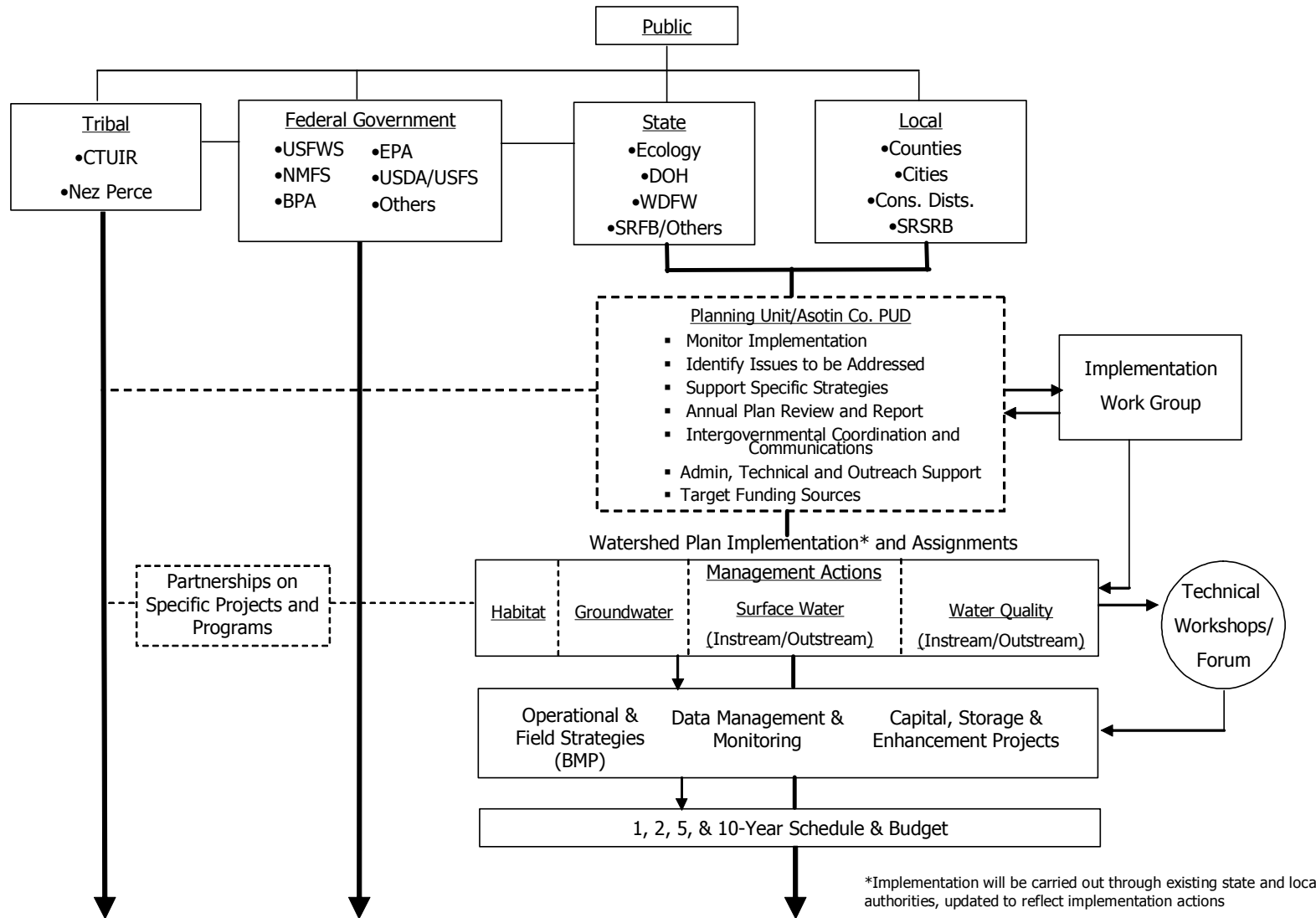
To support the Planning Unit and its subcommittees, such as the IWG, during implementation, the Watershed Director and Initiating Governments are encouraged to develop a strategy that would allocate funding to provide staff resources, including the continued financial support of the Watershed Director position, to assist the Planning Unit in this activity. Funding could be based on the State Phase 4 grants for the first five years of the implementation phase, or other funding sources. This and other roles and responsibilities will need to be worked out during early plan implementation.

The Planning Unit requests all state and local government agencies to accept all applicable obligations and if appropriate, consider taking action through a MOA to be developed during Phase IV – implementation. Such an agreement will be beneficial in further defining other implementation commitments among the organizations involved, beyond the level of detail presented in this plan.

The Planning Unit consistent with RCW 90.82.110, does not incur any regulatory responsibilities or authorities. Regulatory activity will continue to be the responsibility of state or federal agencies and local governments, consistent with existing laws.

For the Planning Unit to be effective in the coordination and oversight role, local jurisdictions such as Asotin, Columbia, Garfield and Whitman Counties, cities and conservation districts will need to continue to make staff resources available. Other groups such as the Nez Perce Tribe, Tri-State Steelheaders, Washington Wheatgrower's Association, Blue Mountain Land Trust should also participate, and coordination should continue with the Snake River Salmon Recovery Board. Exhibit 7-1 identifies a conceptual coordination approach. This coordination approach will be refined during the development of the implementation plan (Phase IV of watershed planning).

Exhibit 7-1
Middle Snake Watershed Plan Organization and Implementation



7.4.1 Detailed Implementation Planning

Washington State watershed planning (Chapter 90.92 RCW) and salmon recovery planning include the development of Detailed Implementation Plans (DIP). A coordinated regional-watershed DIP has previously been prepared for WRIA 35 (Walla Walla Basin) and the Snake River Salmon Recovery Planning Area, with the intent that WRIA 35 will be incorporated into this process upon adoption of the Middle Snake Watershed Plan. See Exhibit 7-2 for regional planning boundaries.

Implementation of actions, programs and management activities identified in this watershed plan occurs on both a regional and watershed level. Rather than develop individual plans for each WRIA and for the region, a combined plan and regional implementation framework better serve the needs of the Snake River region and the individual watersheds. The DIP provides a framework for how to implement projects, programs, monitoring and assessment for water quantity, instream flow, and water quality, aquatic habitat enhancement and protection across the region and within the WRIA 35 watershed. The DIP addresses specific requirements for watershed and salmon recovery planning.

Within one year of receiving funding for watershed implementation, each WRIA is required to complete a DIP in order to receive grants for the next four years of the grant. Per RCW 90.82.043, the DIP must:

- Contain strategies to provide sufficient water for: (a) production agriculture; (b) commercial, industrial, and residential use; and (c) instream flows.
- Timelines to achieve strategies and milestones to measure progress.
- Define coordination and oversight.
- Describe any needed interlocal agreements, rules or ordinances.
- Describe any needed state or local administrative approvals and permits that must be secured.
- Describe specific funding mechanisms.

In addition, the Planning unit must consult with other watershed planning entities to reduce duplication and ensure consistency. This is one of the reasons why the WRIA 35 DIP will be combined with the WRIA 35 and SRSRP implementation plans.

Per RCW 90.82.048, the DIP also “must address the planned future use of existing water rights for municipal water supply purposes, as defined in RCW 90.03.015, that are inchoate, including how these rights will be used to meet the projected future needs identified in the watershed plan, and how the use of these rights will be addressed when implementing instream flow strategies identified in the watershed plan.” Table 7-1 provides a list of Group A water systems within WRIA 35 that will be involved in the municipal water supply planning effort during development of the DIP.

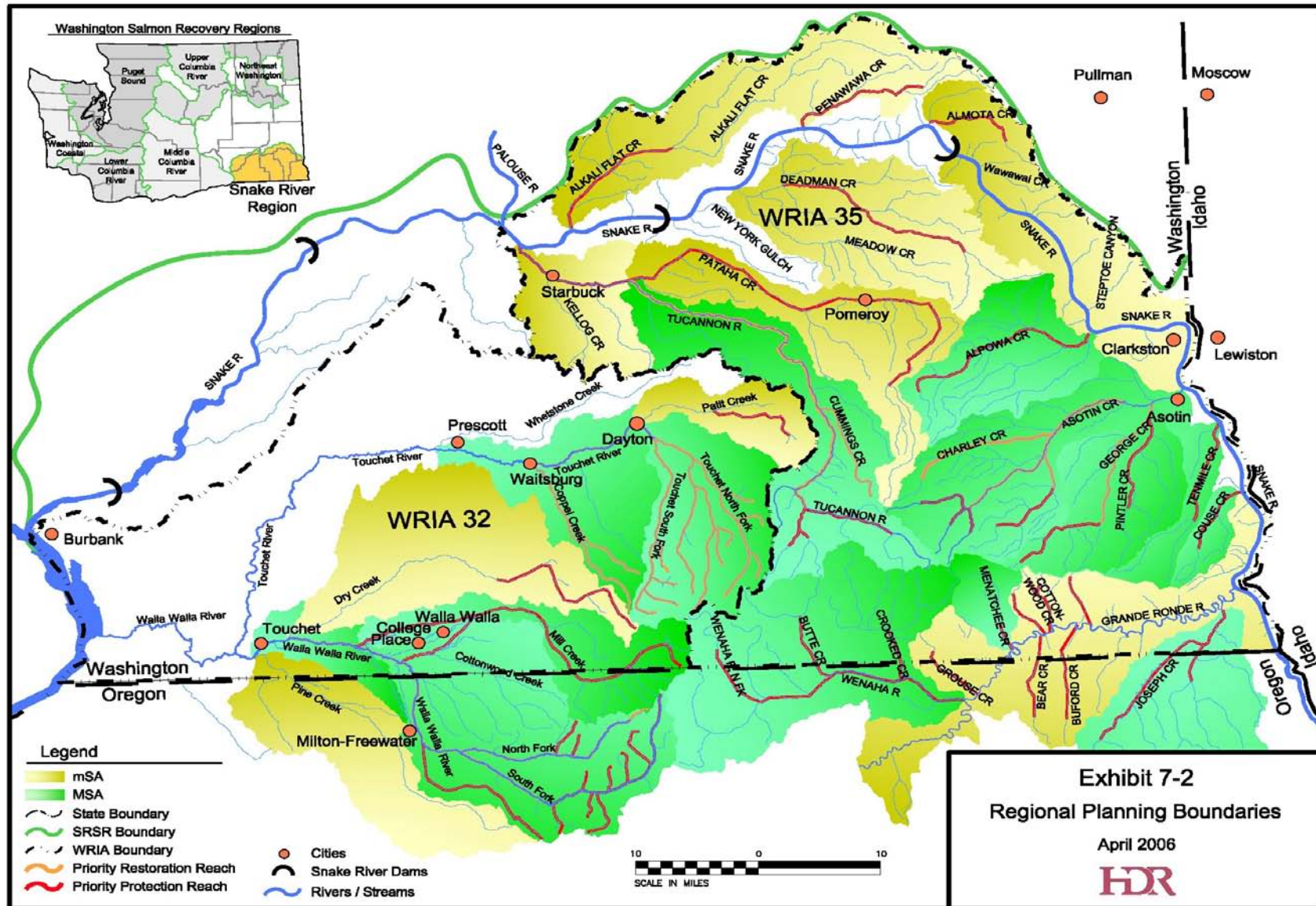


Table 7-1 Group A Water Systems

System Name	County	OwnerTypeDesc	ResConn	TotalConn	PWSAddress1	PWSCity	WSState	WSZipCode
FIELD SPRINGS STATE PARK	ASOTIN	State	2	12	922 PARK RD	ANATONE	WA	99401
ASOTIN WATER DEPT	ASOTIN	City/Town	520	544	PO BOX 517	ASOTIN	WA	99402
GRAND RONDE RANCHES #1	ASOTIN	Private	15	15	38199 SNAKE RIVER RD	ASOTIN	WA	99402-9512
CHIEF TIMOTHY PARK	ASOTIN	Federal	1	49	13766 HWY 12	CLARKSTON	WA	99403
PUD #1 OF ASOTIN COUNTY	ASOTIN	Special District	6260	6,260	PO BOX 605	CLARKSTON	WA	99403
LAST RESORT WATER SYSTEM	COLUMBIA	Investor	1	37	2005 TUCANNON RD	POMEROY	WA	99347
CAMP WOOTEN STATE PARK	COLUMBIA	State	1	22	2711 TUCANNON RD	POMEROY	WA	99347
STARBUCK, CITY OF	COLUMBIA	City/Town	88	88	PO BOX 276	STARBUCK	WA	99359-0276
LYONS FERRY MARINA	COLUMBIA	Private	1	5	PO BOX 189	STARBUCK	WA	99359-0189
ALPOWA SUMMIT REST AREA	GARFIELD	State	0	2	1501 BRIDGE ST.	CLARKSTON	WA	99403
POMEROY, CITY OF	GARFIELD	City/Town	738	739	PO BOX 370	POMEROY	WA	99347
GARFIELD COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS	GARFIELD	County	0	6	PO BOX 370	POMEROY	WA	99347
LOWER GRANITE LOCK & DAM	GARFIELD	Federal	0	1	885 ALMOTA FERRY RD	POMEROY	WA	99347-9632
BAKERS POND WATER USERS CORP	GARFIELD	Private	3	42	PO BOX 771	POMEROY	WA	99347
VAN VOGT WATER SYSTEM	GARFIELD	Private	1	2	10 MUNICH RD	POMEROY	WA	99347
DYE SEED RANCH 1	GARFIELD	Private	0	1	PO BOX 610	POMEROY	WA	99347
CENTRAL FERRY PARK	WHITMAN	Federal	3	84	13766 HWY 12	CLARKSTON	WA	99403
WAWAWAI COUNTY PARK	WHITMAN	County	1	6	N 310 MAIN	COLFAX	WA	99111

Many of the elements and requirements cited above will be addressed in individual sections of the DIP. To avoid duplication of information, some elements or requirements will be demonstrated as being met by referencing sections of the watershed plan and/or SRSRP.

The DIP will include information on the implementation approach and framework, including:

- Regional Coordination – This section will discuss SRSRB structure, responsibilities, and project support, as well as how the Board will coordinate on a regional level, and with the lead entity program, regional technical team, watershed-level planning efforts, other agencies, and with the public.
- WRIA 35 Watershed Coordination – This section discusses the role of the Planning Unit in coordinating with regional and other local watershed efforts, individual organization responsibilities, funding strategies, incorporation of monitoring and adaptive management in plan implementation, public involvement and how the plan will be maintained and updated.
- Implementation Funding Sources and Prioritization Approaches. Included will be a template that outlines application processes, screening criteria and deadline dates for various funding mechanisms.
- Regional Priorities - The regional priorities includes a list of prioritized projects and other activities for years 1-5 for major spawning areas (MSA) and minor spawning areas (mSA) and non-prioritized projects for years 6-20.
- WRIA 35 Watershed priorities – The projects and activities that will be prioritized by the Planning Unit for the watershed are presented for years 1-5, while non-prioritized projects and activities are listed for years 6-20.
- Planned Future Water Use per RCW 90.82.043, and 048.

The Planning Unit can address other implementation topics in the DIP, if desired.

In anticipation of Phase IV, the Planning Unit has identified an initial work plan through plan adoption and the first five years of implementation, relating to instream flow and groundwater management.

Remaining Phase III Planning Timeframe (June 2007 thru September 2007)

- 1) Vision – describe the vision for addressing groundwater use in the basin
- 2) Goals – describe the goals that help realize the vision
- 3) Strategies – list the strategies that help achieve the goals; eg develop ground water monitoring network in sensitive areas around basin
- 4) Implement – Resources permitting, place available data loggers in existing wells + drill new monitoring wells if needed

Phase IV Implementation Timeframe

Year 1 (100k)

- Complete Detailed Implementation Plan & Budget for 5 years
- Develop Instream Flow SOW and QAPP for designated tributaries
- County coordination and public outreach
- Fund implementation projects

Year 2 (100K)

- Conduct Instream Flow data collection and analysis
- Oversight and review of hydrogeo work
- Oversight and review of groundwater data collection
- County coordination and public outreach
- Fund implementation projects

Year 3 (100k)

- Develop Instream Flow Management package on tributaries
- Work on Groundwater Management package
- County coordination and public outreach
- Fund implementation projects

Years 4 (50k) & 5 (50K)

- Start rule making process
- Develop rule language
- County coordination and public outreach
- Fund implementation projects

7.5 Implementation Actions by Individual Organizations

The involvement of individual organizations in carrying out their commitments is vital to this plan. The Planning Unit has no independent capability to implement plan actions. It is the counties, cities, conservation districts, water purveyors, Nez Perce Tribe, and State agencies, among others, that will ultimately carry out plan elements. Therefore, it is critical that their management and governing elected bodies take note of responsibilities recommended by the Planning Unit. Also, it is important to recognize that the mix of actions in this plan results in a sharing of commitments. This will help to spread the burden of carrying out plan actions, and will also deliver real benefits across the region's jurisdictions.

Specific actions have been identified in Section 6 of the watershed plan. Detailed implementation plans for completing these actions will be developed in Phase 4 – Implementation. Section 6 also contains recommended actions for each implementation area, and also identifies recommended responsible agencies. These assigned actions were based on Planning Unit understanding of existing roles and responsibilities for the various federal, state and local agencies, tribal government, and other organizations that will be participating in plan implementation. There may be some cases, where additional discussion may be needed to

determine lead and supporting organizations responsible for recommended actions. These discussions will occur during plan implementation. Appendix E includes preliminary listings of the implementation actions and corresponding proposed responsible agencies. The tables list the actions and whether the agency is recommended or obligated to take the lead or supporting role for implementation.

For each organization carrying out actions under the plan, several steps will be needed. First, it is critical that elected decision-makers and top managers of the organizations understand the recommended actions they have been assigned to implement. Second, after the plan is adopted by the Counties, organizations will need to begin budgeting annually for actions and/or identify and pursue targeted funding sources for actions that cannot be funded through existing sources. This should be incorporated in each organization's budget process each year (or biennium for State agencies). Third, it is important to identify staff that will be responsible for carrying out specific actions. Finally, depending on the action and how the organization operates, there may be a need for work plans to be prepared to define actions and schedule. Coordination with the Planning Unit should occur regarding funding or staffing issues that arise during implementation, and coordinated funding strategies developed to secure funding to implement priority actions.

Budgeting of actions, identification of funding sources and implementation of actions has occurred throughout the planning process. This will also continue after plan adoption, as the plan is implemented over time. Plan adoption is not contingent upon secure funding. See Section 7.2 for funding caveats on recommended actions. It is recognized that actions cannot be implemented without commensurate funding. Also, the Planning Unit requests each organization consider its recommended role(s) and responsibilities and consider entering into a MOA for implementation purposes.

7.6 Funding Strategy

Tables have been presented in earlier sections of this watershed plan that summarize implementation considerations¹. These tables include a preliminary estimate of the magnitude of costs and suggested time frame. A mix of potential funding sources has been identified for different activities in the plan. These sources include:

- Appropriations from the Washington State Legislature for state agency budgets (Ecology, WDFW, DOH, DNR, and Conservation Districts). This would provide funding and/or staffing that could be utilized under existing state programs to implement elements of the plan;
- Direct appropriations from the Washington State Legislature for specific projects in the Middle Snake basin, based on requests to be formulated as the plan is implemented;
- Appropriations from the U.S. Congress for federal agency budgets (ACOE, NRCS, USGS, USFS) under existing programs;
- Grants or low interest loans from existing funding programs, such as the Public Works Trust Fund, the salmon recovery funds (state and federal), the State Revolving Fund for drinking water and many other sources may be used for funding

¹ Tables listing implementation considerations for specific actions appear in Section 6.

- management actions. A more detailed listing of grant and loan programs and descriptions of the types of watershed management actions will be developed in the detailed Implementation Plan.
- Rates and hookup charges collected from customers by public water systems (including cities that operate a water system, CPU, etc.)
 - County permitting fees or general fund revenues;
 - Assessments on property through local improvement districts, for projects that benefit those properties (subject to local approval);
 - Private industry funds, for voluntary projects at selected industrial facilities (supplemented by public funds where possible); and
 - Landowners, for voluntary projects at selected sites (supplemented by public funds where possible).

While not called out for any specific actions under the plan, Public Utility Districts and Conservation Districts have authority under State law to levy property taxes up to certain limits. If this source of funding is desired, it must be subjected to a vote of the affected public. This is a potential supplementary source of funding, particularly for activities that cross local jurisdictional boundaries.

Many agencies and jurisdictions are currently funding programs that align closely with the objectives and recommendations of this plan. In many cases, existing expenditures can be effectively integrated with this plan, reducing the overall financial impact. Appendix F includes a listing of applicable grant and loan programs for implementing the recommended actions in the plan.

In developing a funding package for implementing the plan, it is important to match funding to benefits. Some of the actions listed in the plan, such as development of new groundwater supplies, will benefit a specific community. In these cases, it is appropriate that the specific community contribute a proportionate share of the cost.

Other actions may be carried out by one community, but the purpose is to serve broader needs (i.e., national, regional, tribal needs). For example, if a local community voluntarily wishes to switch from an existing source of supply to an alternate source (e.g., ASR well) to help restore populations of listed species, there will likely be considerable costs. The purpose of a project of this nature is to restore fish populations for the good of the region, the State of Washington and the Nation as a whole. In this case, it is not equitable for a local community to bear the entire project cost. While some cost burden may be acceptable at the local level, the majority of funding for this type of project should come from regional, state or federal sources.

7.7 Monitoring and Adaptive Management

Implementing an adaptive management program for the watershed plan is an important part of plan implementation. Adaptive management has been defined in State law as “reliance on scientific methods to test the results of actions taken so that the management and related policy can be changed promptly and appropriately” (RCW 79.09.020). Adaptive management is a continuing attempt to reduce the risk arising from the uncertainty associated with information used to develop the management actions.

Three general components of an adaptive management program include validation, implementation and effectiveness monitoring,

7.7.1 Validation Monitoring

Validation monitoring determines whether the assumptions used to develop the plan recommendations are valid. Many of the general recommendations were developed based on certain assumptions about population trends, land use trends, and flow information, among other information. The recommendations may need to be changed if it is determined that some of these assumptions are not valid.

7.7.2 Implementation Monitoring

Implementation monitoring involves tracking whether the recommendations and commitments adopted in the watershed plan are being implemented and whether or not these activities have been properly completed (i.e., yes or no). Implementation monitoring generally involves measures whose results or benefits are fairly certain and do not require complex study designs, e.g., confirmation of whether a flow monitoring gauge has been installed at the proper location.

7.7.3 Effectiveness Monitoring

Effectiveness monitoring is commonly applied in those cases where the benefit of a management action is less certain. For those commitments where the benefit is less certain, scientific study is needed to make a judgment of their effectiveness. The study can then also be used in developing or updating management responses that are appropriate. For example, the effectiveness of reconnecting a floodplain through removal of a levee may provide some flow benefits, but the magnitude of the benefit would require some further study. Once the actual benefit is measured, then a judgment can be made whether similar projects are worthwhile and should be continued or whether other options may be more beneficial. Effectiveness monitoring is commonly applied in those cases where the benefit of a management action is less certain.

7.7.4 Adaptive Management Implementation Considerations

General recommendations to consider during plan implementation include:

- Build upon existing monitoring efforts and use the Technical Work Group or other group as a coordinating body to fill data gaps;
- Adopt monitoring protocols to provide a consistent means for comparing information across geographical and temporal scales;
- Continue efforts to develop the basin-wide database with a universal interface from which to share the database, and share data; and
- Conduct all three types of monitoring (implementation, effectiveness, and validation).

7.8 Public Involvement for Plan Implementation

As the watershed plan is implemented, continued stakeholder involvement and public communications, like those that have occurred during plan development, will be necessary to provide final shaping, support and effective execution of recommended management strategies and actions.

7.8.1 Public Participation and Ongoing Education

The WRIA 35 Planning Unit direct the public involvement process during plan development. Public involvement was sought through direct participation in the Planning Unit and/or one of its subcommittees and through participation in one or more of a series of outreach workshops. Information on ongoing assessments and plan development was made available to the public through the Asotin PUD web site (www.asotinpud.org) and notices in local newspapers.

From May 21 – 28th, 2004, individuals interested in the health of the Middle Snake Watershed (WRIA 35) gathered in public workshops to discuss issues that impact the health of the watershed. Workshops were held in the Tucannon Subbasin (May 21), Pataha & Lower Snake Subbasins (May 22), Asotin Subbasin (May 27), the Lower Snake (Whitman County) Subbasin (May 28), and with the Nez Perce Tribe (May 28). Although sponsored under WRIA 35 watershed planning (2514), the workshops addressed relevant issues for the three primary planning processes in the basin: watershed planning, subbasin planning, and salmon recovery planning. Coordination between these three planning processes is vital for efficiency and to ensure consistency among the plans and their objectives.

The purpose of these workshops was three-fold: 1) to introduce watershed planning, salmon recovery planning, and subbasin planning efforts and report on their current status; 2) to develop a list of specific concerns in the watershed related to low flows, instream habitat, riparian vegetation, upland management, water supply, water quality, and other issues and identify where those issues are of primary concern; and 3) to initiate a continuing dialogue between the various stakeholders in the watershed. Benefits that were realized across all sub-basins included enhanced education and involvement of local stakeholders, development of an information foundation for Phase 2 watershed planning, improved communication/understanding between Nez Perce staff and local resource managers, and input for subbasin planning and salmon recovery planning goals, objectives and potential strategies.

A second series of workshops was held in September of 2005. They were focused on seeking additional public input on objectives and recommended basin-wide and management area-specific action plans. This was accomplished by conducting workshops in each management area. Breaking up WRIA 35 into smaller areas gave the opportunity for focused outreach efforts with local stakeholders in each management area.

Benefits that were realized across all subbasins included enhanced education and involvement of local stakeholders, development of an information foundation for Phase 2 watershed planning, improved communication/understanding between Nez Perce staff and local resource managers,

and input for subbasin planning and salmon recovery planning goals, objectives and potential strategies.

Other efforts of the Planning Unit included:

- Coordination and facilitation of public meetings to collect SEPA scoping comments and public input on planning objectives.
- Creation of a watershed planning website located on-line at <http://www.asotinpod.org>, with a schedule of meetings (agendas and meeting minutes), information on watershed planning, and links to reports, maps and planning products.
- Presentations to inform and update local governments, citizens and out-of-basin interests.

These and other measures should be continued to maintain and enhance stakeholder support for the plan during implementation. Outreach activities should be sustained during plan implementation by a coordinated group of knowledgeable, committed individuals.

Additional examples of useful outreach tools and activities that may be considered during implementation include:

- Facilitation of an email information distribution list to communicate periodic status reports or provide notification on forums dealing with specific issues;
- Hosting public conferences or forums, targeting both technical and non-technical audiences, to facilitate discussion among stakeholders and communicate watershed plan issues and successes; and
- Production of television and radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs).
- Development and distribution of watershed newsletters to advertise participation opportunities, provide updates on implementation efforts, and highlight the success in the watershed.
- Distributing information and educational materials, such as brochures, through a portable information booth at public events (County Fairs, community events, etc).

Communication efforts should continue to target stakeholders with implementation responsibilities and others whose water practices may be impacted, but also include a broader range of citizen groups with vested interests in the planning area and process. Information conveyed to the public may include: management strategy needs and priorities; status of plan implementation and associated performance measures; successful management actions and projects; innovative water management BMPs; and/or a summation of on-going monitoring programs. These outreach efforts should be closely coordinated with established communication efforts, such as those performed through Conservation District and Washington State University's Extension programs in the counties.

Involving stakeholders in the basin is the key to executing management strategies and actions. Examples of organizations to contact in targeted outreach efforts during implementation include:

- Conservation Districts and Farm Bureaus;
- Snake River Salmon Recovery office;
- Washington State University Extension;
- Nez Perce Tribe;
- WDFW;
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation;
- Agricultural commodity groups and trade associations;
- Environmental organizations and civic organizations;
- County Commissions and City Councils;
- Tri-State Steelheaders, Asotin County Sportsman and other hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation interest groups;
- Irrigation districts and organized ditch irrigators;
- Agri-businesses and timber companies;
- Economic development organizations, including Port Districts;
- Colleges
- Individual landowners.

Many plan actions will need various levels of public involvement. A more detailed public involvement strategy will need to be developed during plan implementation. This strategy should identify outreach elements and communication tools, messages, suggestions on communications relating to specific plan objectives, desired outcomes, capacity, budget, schedule and funding sources.

7.8.2 Funding for Public Involvement

A source of funding will be needed to support public involvement during implementation. This could be funded through a percent of future project and planning funding that comes into the Middle Snake region (e.g., a portion of project administration funding), and/or through a dedicated grant funding source. A funding strategy will need to be developed for sustaining public involvement during plan implementation. It could also be funded as a part of the budget for implementing individual actions, as appropriate.

7.9 Future Plan Updates

This watershed plan has been developed over a nearly four-year period, with input from dozens of local leaders, state and federal agency staff, and interested citizens. It is a vast effort to assemble a comprehensive portrait of water resource needs, issues and solutions. The actions recommended in this plan were devised given current understanding of conditions as they exist at the time the plan was developed. Over the next several years, new data will be collected, conditions may change, regulatory and funding programs may change, and new projects affecting water resources may be proposed within the region. In addition, the implementation

process may result in some modifications of the recommended actions as they are actually carried out.

To accommodate this ongoing evolution of information and events in the region, it is recommended that the watershed plan be reviewed from time to time to determine whether an update is needed. This review should be carried out by the Planning Unit, as one of its implementation responsibilities. The first review should occur within three years of the date this plan is adopted by the Boards of County Commissioners, and every five years after this initial review.

The Phase 4 Committee Report to the Legislature identified the following questions for a review of this type:

- Have the actions listed in the plan been implemented?
- Are the desired results being achieved?
- Is the overall intent of the plan being met?
- Are there new information gaps or changing conditions that require review?
- Are there new issues that were not considered during plan development, and that need to be addressed?

If the Planning Unit finds that an update is needed, this finding should be communicated to the original Initiating Governments that launched the Middle Snake watershed plan process. It should be noted that the Watershed Management Act does not require or address updates to watershed plans, and at this time no funding is available for such updates under the watershed planning program. The Watershed Planning Unit or its successor in coordination with County Governments should have the responsibility to determine whether to proceed with updating an adopted plan, and to identify means of funding and staffing an update.

The strategies listed in this plan were designed to function as a combined whole. If any key element is struck down by legislative or court action, or becomes otherwise infeasible to implement, the remainder of the plan should be revisited to determine whether other elements need to be modified.