

## **CULVERT REGULATORY COORDINATION - DRAFT Concept for Discussion 13 FEB 2019**

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NOAA Restoration Center intends to develop “best practices guide and recommendations” for organizing application material intended to facilitate regulatory review of culvert replacement projects.

NOAA is developing this product in an attempt to increase the efficiency of regulatory review, as state and local jurisdictions aim to increase their rate of culvert replacement. We hope that this guidance will be useful to groups such as the Regional Road Maintenance Program, Office of Regulatory Innovation and Assistance, the Joint Aquatic Resource Project Application (JARPA) Workgroup, and WDFW and NOAA Fish Passage Engineers, and the Ecosystem Coordination Board.

We will design a guide that:

- Includes design product checklists and samples, that integrate existing documents provided by WDFW, USACE, and others (for example: [WDFW drawing checklist](#), [WDFW sample drawings](#), [USACE guidance](#)).
- Provides a template for presenting the basis for culvert design in a simple and consistent manner, such as that provided in [Appendix F of the WDFW 2003 culvert design guidance](#), which will be applicable to a large majority of culvert replacement projects.
- Allows a culvert project developer to predict the level of information and detail, and provides a strategy for presenting that detail in a manner that is seamlessly integrated into the existing JARPA application.
- Proposes an approach for sequencing communications and organizing culverts into batches or groups that is likely to minimize the number of steps.
- Summarizes and presents in a useful format, a template of Best Management Practices that can be used to minimize project impacts for a range of culvert replacement projects,
- Provides predictable regulatory review and increases review efficiency.

This guide will not be a regulatory product, and will not prejudice the review or decision processes of any agency now or into the future. Use of this particular tool will not be required for regulatory review.

The Restoration Center will iteratively consult with 1) regulatory agencies, 2) local project developers, and 3) interested tribal representatives, to develop a guide that provides the greatest improvements in quality, cost, and delivery.

This guidance project is a “Standardize-Do-Check-Act” approach that sets the stage for future incremental improvements over time (Imai 2012).

We anticipate that this process may identify issues that currently reduce the efficiency of culvert regulatory review, but that are not solvable through this effort (for example the sequence in which a county replaces culverts). These issues will be noted, and could be the subject of future work.