RCW 70A.65.270  Natural climate solutions account.  (1) The
natural climate solutions account is created in the state treasury.
All moneys directed to the account from the climate investment account
created in RCW 70A.65.250 must be deposited in the account. Moneys in
the account may be spent only after appropriation. Moneys in the
account are intended to increase the resilience of the state's waters,
forests, and other vital ecosystems to the impacts of climate change,
conserve working forestlands at risk of conversion, and increase their
carbon pollution reduction capacity through sequestration, storage,
and overall system integrity. Moneys in the account must be spent in a
manner that is consistent with existing and future assessments of
climate risks and resilience from the scientific community and
expressed concerns of and impacts to overburdened communities.

(2) Moneys in the account may be allocated for the following
purposes:
(a) Clean water investments that improve resilience from climate
impacts. Funding under this subsection (2)(a) must be used to:
(i) Restore and protect estuaries, fisheries, and marine
shoreline habitats and prepare for sea level rise including, but not
limited to, making fish passage correction investments such as those
identified in the cost-share barrier removal program for small
forestland owners created in RCW 76.13.150 and those that are
considered by the fish passage barrier removal board created in RCW
77.95.160;
(ii) Increase carbon storage in the ocean or aquatic and coastal
ecosystems;
(iii) Increase the ability to remediate and adapt to the impacts
of ocean acidification;
(iv) Reduce flood risk and restore natural floodplain ecological
function;
(v) Increase the sustainable supply of water and improve aquatic
habitat, including groundwater mapping and modeling;
(vi) Improve infrastructure treating stormwater from previously
developed areas within an urban growth boundary designated under
chapter 36.70A RCW, with a preference given to projects that use green
stormwater infrastructure;
(vii) Either preserve or increase, or both, carbon sequestration
and storage benefits in forests, forested wetlands, agricultural
soils, tidally influenced agricultural or grazing lands, or
freshwater, saltwater, or brackish aquatic lands; or
(viii) Either preserve or establish, or both, carbon
sequestration by protecting or planting trees in marine shorelines and
freshwater riparian areas sufficient to promote climate resilience,
protect cold water fisheries, and achieve water quality standards;
(b) Healthy forest investments to improve resilience from climate
impacts. Funding under this subsection (2)(b) must be used for
projects and activities that will:
(i) Increase forest and community resilience to wildfire in the
face of increased seasonal temperatures and drought;
(ii) Improve forest health and reduce vulnerability to changes in
hydrology, insect infestation, and other impacts of climate change; or
(iii) Prevent emissions by preserving natural and working lands
from the threat of conversion to development or loss of critical
habitat, through actions that include, but are not limited to, the
creation of new conservation lands, community forests, or increased
support to small forestland owners through assistance programs
including, but not limited to, the forest riparian easement program
and the family forest fish passage program. It is the intent of the legislature that not less than $10,000,000 be expended each biennium for the forestry riparian easement program created in chapter 76.13 RCW or for riparian easement projects funded under the agricultural conservation easements program established under RCW 89.08.530, or similar riparian enhancement programs.

(3) Moneys in the account may not be used for projects that would violate tribal treaty rights or result in significant long-term damage to critical habitat or ecological functions. Investments from this account must result in long-term environmental benefits and increased resilience to the impacts of climate change. [2021 c 316 § 30.]