

# Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Strategic Plan

## Mission

Provide leadership and funding to help our partners protect and enhance Washington's natural and recreational resources for current and future generations.

## Goals

1. We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.
2. We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.
3. We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.

## Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are fundamental concepts that form the basis for board policy.

**Principle 1.** The board's primary roles are to (1) ensure the best possible investment of funds in protecting and improving habitats, ecosystems, and outdoor recreation opportunities, (2) provide accountability for those investments, and (3) provide citizen oversight to the funding process.

**Principle 2.** Successful protection and improvement of Washington's ecosystems and recreation requires coordination across all levels of government and geographic scales. Decisions and actions should be guided by a statewide perspective coupled with each local community's social, economic, and cultural values and priorities.

**Principle 3.** The plans and strategies (conservation and/or recreation) of federal, state, tribal, local government, and other partners should help guide the identification and prioritization of projects.

**Principle 4.** Projects must have explicit objectives, as well as appropriate designs and implementation plans to meet those objectives.

**Principle 5.** The board will continue to work with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies, stakeholder organizations, and other interested parties to evaluate and improve the funding process. The board also will continue to ensure that it funds the highest priority projects with integrity and impartiality and provides accountability to the Legislature and the public to sustain that funding and those investments.

## Objectives and Strategies

### **Goal 1: We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, wildlife, and ecosystems.**

#### **Objective 1.A.**

**Provide leadership to help our partners strategically invest in the protection, restoration, and development of habitat and recreation opportunities. We do this through policy development, coordination, and advocacy.**

- Strategy 1.A.1. – Evaluate and develop strategic plans and investment policies so that projects selected for funding meet the state’s recreation and conservation priorities and assist communities in need.
- Strategy 1.A.2. –Gather and interpret data that inform plans and help the board to provide grant programs that balance investments across a range of activities.
- Strategy 1.A.3. – Coordinate recreation resources information and priorities.

#### **Objective 1.B.**

**Provide funding to help partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation facilities and lands.**

- Strategy 1.B.1. – Provide partners with funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance habitats.
  - For example, this includes projects that help sustain Washington’s biodiversity; protect “listed” species; maintain fully functioning ecosystems; protect unique urban wildlife habitats; and/or protect game and non-game wildlife.
- Strategy 1.B.2. – Provide partners with funding to protect and enhance working farm and forest lands.
- Strategy 1.B.3. – Provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide.

- For example, this includes projects such as bicycling and walking facilities “close to home”; programs that assist with facility operation and maintenance; facilities most conducive to improved health; outdoor sports facilities; programs that provide improved recreation data; and/or access to nature and natural settings (includes fishing and hunting).
- Strategy 1.B.4. – Help sponsors maximize the useful life of board-funded projects.

## **Goal 2: We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.**

### **Objective 2.A.**

**Ensure funded projects and programs are managed efficiently, with integrity, in a fair and open manner, and in conformance with existing legal authorities**

- Strategy 2.A.1. – Evaluate and develop policies and practices to reduce the number of projects not starting or finishing on time.
- Strategy 2.A.2. – Regularly monitor progress in meeting objectives and adapt management to meet changing needs.
- Strategy 2.A.3. – Ensure the work of the board and staff is conducted with integrity and in a fair and open manner.

### **Objective 2.B.**

**Support activities that promote continuous quality improvement.**

- Strategy 2.B.1. – Ensure the board has time on its agenda to discuss high-level policy issues.
- Strategy 2.B.2. – Implement a board member and staff feedback process.

## **Goal 3: We deliver successful projects by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.**

### **Objective 3.A.**

**Broaden public support and applicant pool for the board’s grant programs.**

- Strategy 3.A.1. – Expand the board’s support by developing key partnerships.
- Strategy 3.A.2. – Increase public understanding of project benefits including economic and ecosystem benefits.
- Strategy 3.A.3. – Increase the public and sponsor understanding of the relationship between projects and climate change.

- Strategy 3.A.4. – Perform regular assessments to determine the public’s priorities for outdoor recreation and conservation funding.
- Strategy 3.A.5. – Advocate for the protection of habitat and recreation through multiple venues.
- Strategy 3.A.6. – Expand reach of grant programs by broadening applicant pool for grant programs.

## Key Performance Measures

Goal	Framing Questions	Performance Measures
<b><i>We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, wildlife, and ecosystems.</i></b>	Within its authority is the board creating opportunities for recreation?	Projects funded by type, location, sponsor type.
	Is the board funding projects that have been identified as priorities through recognized planning efforts, such as SCORP?	Projects submitted for funding that address current gaps in service per SCORP and state-wide recreation plans.
	Within its authority is the board protecting and restoring natural systems and landscapes?	Acres protected (through acquisition).  Acres restored.
	Is the board funding projects that protect and restore natural systems and landscapes as identified in planning efforts?	Projects submitted for funding that address current gaps based upon recent planning efforts.  Projects implemented by natural resource agencies in relationship to their internal plans and priorities.
Goal	Proposed Framing Questions	Proposed Measures
<b><i>We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.</i></b>	Is the evaluation process objective and fair?	An increase in the percentage of project applicants rating their overall satisfaction with the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• application process,</li> <li>• technical review process</li> <li>• evaluation process</li> </ul> as ‘satisfied’ or ‘very satisfied.’

Goal	Framing Questions	Performance Measures
	Is the board fulfilling its statutory role to ensure statewide outdoor recreation and conservation needs are being met through grant programs?	Biennial board self-assessment points to a positive trend in fulfillment of its statutory role.
	How well do we maintain the state's investments?	Percent of completed projects in compliance with the grant agreement.  Number of sites inspected over a biennium.

Goal	Proposed Framing Questions	Proposed Measures
<p><b><i>We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.</i></b></p>	<p>Are stakeholders and the public involved in policy development and project selection?</p>	<p>The number of individuals and discrete organizations RCO reached out to for policy development and/or review.</p> <p>The number of hours donated by board volunteers.</p>
	<p>Are we achieving statewide participation in our grant programs?</p>	<p>Number of projects submitted by location (e.g. county or other geography).</p>