

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: November 7, 2016

Title: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program:
Funding Allocation in the State and Local Parks Categories

Prepared By: Wendy Brown

Summary

Recreation and Conservation Office staff requests a decision from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board that will adjust the funding allocations for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program – State and Local Parks categories.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Resolution: 2016-52

Background

At the October 26, 2016 meeting, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) adopted policy related to the implementation of Senate Substitute Bill (SSB) 6227, which establishes new funding percentages for acquisition and development in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) - State Parks and Local Parks categories. See Item 5A and Item 5B of the [October 2016 materials](#) for more information.

The Legislature requires that 'no less than 40 percent and no more than 50 percent of funding allocation shall go to acquisition costs' in both of these two categories, leaving the board with some discretion on implementation between the 40-50 percent range. In creating the project funding lists for 2017-19, staff identified unforeseen consequences resulting from the board's new policy of leaving no partially-funded acquisitions, which places constraints on project funding. For this purpose, staff requests a modification to the existing policies.

There are two major concerns with implementation of the new board policy for these two WWRP categories:

- At various funding levels, the percent of acquisition either falls below 40 percent or above 50 percent and violates state law.
- Implementing the new board policy requires RCO to manually create the list, rather than having it be automated, leaving it less transparent and predictable to the Legislature, stakeholders, and the public.

State Parks Category

In the State Parks category, the policy adopted is to: “Fund acquisition costs up to 50 percent, but fund no partially-funded acquisition projects. The remainder of funds go to development costs.”

When there is a partially-funded acquisition project in this category, funds are pulled from that acquisition and put into the next development project or projects on the list (which may or may not be partially-funded).

While the policy is implementable at many funding levels, there are numerous other funding levels where the acquisition costs fall below 40 percent and we violate the existing statute. On the current list, this situation is best illustrated at the \$40 million level (Table 1); however, it occurs at multiple funding levels between \$40 and \$100 million.

**Table 1. State Parks Category:
Comparison of Funding Levels at the ‘Straight 50-50’ and ‘New Board Policy’ Formulas**

Rank	Type	Project Name	Grant Request	\$40 million	
				Straight 50-50	New Board Policy
1	D	Lake Sammamish Picnic Area – Sunset Beach Phase 7	\$2,739,500	\$2,588,760	\$2,739,500
2	D	Iron Horse-Tekoa Trestle Decking and Railing	\$1,450,612	Alternate	\$1,438,020
3	A	Inholdings and Adjacent Properties	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
10	A	Moran- Lawrence Point Acquisition	\$2,874,520	\$1,588,760	Alternate
Funding Total				\$5,177,520	\$5,177,520
Percent of Acquisition Funding				50%	19.3%

Local Parks Category

In the Local Parks category, the policy adopted essentially works in the reverse of the State Parks policy, whereby the direction is: “Fund acquisition costs at 40 percent and development costs at 60 percent, but fully fund any partially-funded acquisition projects or project costs.”

When there is a partially-funded acquisition project in this category, funds are pulled from the lowest-ranking development project or projects (which may or may not be partially-funded) and put into that partially-funded acquisition project.

Again, while the policy is implementable at many funding levels, there are multiple funding levels where acquisition costs rise above 50 percent and we violate the existing statute. On the current list, this situation is best illustrated at the \$40 million level (Table 2).

**Table 2. Local Parks Category:
Comparison of Funding Levels at the 'Straight 40-60' and 'New Board Policy' formulas.**

Rank	Type	Project Name	Grant Request	\$40 million	
				Straight 40-60	New Board Policy
1	D	Phil Johnson Ballfields Renovation	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
2	D	Kiwanis Methow Park Revitalization	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
3	D	Wilkeson's Roosevelt Park	\$43,122	\$43,122	\$43,122
4	D	Edgewood Community Park	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
5	D	Cougar Mt Precipice Trailhead Dev	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000
6	D	Selah Skate Park	\$45,000	\$45,000	\$45,000
7	D	Hale Park Phase 2 Construction	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$372,522
8	D	Woodruff Park Sprayground & Picnic Shelter	\$446,380	\$446,380	Alternate
9	D	Manette Park Renovation	\$500,000	\$72,010	Alternate
10	D	Bidwell Park Development	\$500,000	Alternate	Alternate
11	A	Clark Lake Park Expansion: Walla Acquisition	\$716,876	\$716,876	Alternate
12	A	LBA Woods Morse-Merryman Parcel Acquisition	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000	\$1,000,000
28	A	Mount Grant Preserve	\$1,000,000	\$354,132	\$1,000,000
Funding Total				\$5,177,520	\$5,177,520
Percent of Acquisition Funding				40%	52.5%

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the following:

- Fund the State Parks category at 50 percent acquisition costs and 50 percent development costs 1) to accomplish the goals and needs of the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and their stakeholders and 2) to enable the Legislature to fully understand what it is they would be funding in the final budget bill.
- Fund the Local Parks category at 40 percent acquisition costs and 60 percent development costs 1) to accomplish the goals and needs of the local parks community and 2) to enable the Legislature to fully understand what it is they would be funding in the final budget bill.
- Per board decision in October 2016, revisit this new policy on an as-needed basis.

Next Steps

If adopted by the board, the new funding formulas will be immediately applied to the WWRP – State Parks and Local Parks ranked lists.

Attachments

A. Resolution 2016-52

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2016-52
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks Category**

WHEREAS, the Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 79A.15.050(2)(a and b) authorizes the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to allocate between 40 and 50 percent of the appropriations to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Local Parks and State Parks categories for acquisition project costs; and

WHEREAS, in an open public meeting on October 26, 2016 the board adopted resolutions 2016-34 and 2016-35 establishing its funding frameworks for allocating funds between development and acquisition costs in the WWRP Local Parks and State Parks categories; and

WHEREAS, following these adopted funding frameworks could result in funding acquisition costs outside of the statutory constraints set forth in (RCW 79A.15.050(2)(a and b)); and

WHEREAS, the board held an open public (special) meeting on November 7, 2016 and accepted public comment on the new proposed funding frameworks from November 3 through November 7 2016, and

WHEREAS, staff reviewed and considered public comments on the recommendations in Item 1;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board rescinds its adopted resolutions 2016-34 and 2016-35, and adopts the following funding frameworks in the WWRP Local Parks and State Parks categories as described in Item 1:

State Parks Category

Fund the State Parks category at 50 percent acquisition costs and 50 percent development costs.

Local Parks Category

Fund the Local Parks category at 40 percent acquisition costs and 60 percent development costs.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board shall revisit this new policy on an as-needed basis.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: _____