

Applicant's To-Do List

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Critical Habitat Category

This to-do list is designed to help an applicant prepare and submit a grant application for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's (WWRP) Critical Habitat Category.

Grants may be used to acquire and develop habitat for wildlife.

An applicant must submit the required information through [PRISM Online](#), the online project data system used by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). These steps will guide an applicant through RCO's application process.

NOTE: for all documents, forms, and manuals referenced here, go to the [grant web page](#) and [grant manuals web page](#).

Step 1: Establish Eligibility

Eligible Applicants: Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission and the Washington State Departments of Enterprise Services, Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resources; cities, counties, and towns; federally recognized Native American tribes; nonprofit nature conservancy organizations; and special purpose districts or other political subdivisions of the state providing services to less than the entire state if legally authorized to acquire and develop public open space, habitat, farmland, riparian habitat, or recreation facilities.

A first-time applicant must submit a legal opinion to establish eligibility.

An applicant's current comprehensive habitat conservation plan must be on file with RCO by March 1, 2024. A plan establishes eligibility for six years with RCO so check to see if a plan already is on file. See *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines* and the [RCO Planning Requirements](#).

A nonprofit applicant must verify eligibility by meeting all the following criteria:

- Be registered in the State of Washington as a nonprofit as defined by Revised Code of Washington 84.34.250. Verify "active" status with Washington's Secretary of State at www.sos.wa.gov/corps/.

- Consistent with Revised Codes of Washington 24.03.220, 24.03.225, and 24.03.230, identify a successor organization fully qualified to ensure management continuity of any WWRP grants received by the corporation or association.
- Demonstrate at least three years of actively managing projects relevant to the types of projects eligible for funding in this WWRP category. “Actively managing projects” means performing the tasks necessary to manage an on-the-ground habitat conservation project such as negotiating for acquisition of property rights, closing an acquisition, developing and implementing management plans, designing and implementing projects, securing and managing the necessary funds regardless of fund source, and other tasks.
- Provide a copy of its Articles of Incorporation and bylaws. Please email these documents directly to the RCO grants manager.

Step 2: Review Materials

- ❑ Review the appropriate following Recreation and Conservation Funding Board manuals for this grant category:
 - *Manual 10b: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Habitat Conservation Account*
 - *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines*
 - *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*
 - *Manual 4: Development Projects*
 - *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*

Step 3: Submit Application–May 1, 2024

SecureAccess Washington Account

Before beginning an application, an applicant must sign up for a [SecureAccess Washington](#) account and submit a [PRISM New User Account Form](#). When using either of these databases for the first time, an applicant must complete a double sign-in.

PRISM Online Application

PRISM will open in February. To start an application, go to [PRISM Online](#) and select + *New Application*. Follow the prompts to fill out the application. On-screen instructions, tool tips, and links are available throughout the *Application Wizard*.

PRISM Attachments

There is an *Attachments* screen for each PRISM Online application. An applicant must attach the documents below before submitting an application. Include the applicant name, project name, and RCO grant number on each attachment. Maps also must include a north arrow, scale, and labels for any major highways, roads, cities, water bodies, etc. If the project includes any combination of acquisition, development, or restoration, attach the documents required for all relevant project types.

- ❑ **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** (due by the technical completion deadline). Shows the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant's organization. An applicant must adopt RCO's text verbatim even if using a different format.
 - *Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda Certification*. An applicant for a project in the Puget Sound area, which is defined as the geographic areas within Water Resource Inventory Areas 1 through 19, inclusive, must include in the adopted resolution or application authorization a statement certifying that the project is not in conflict with the Puget Sound Partnership *Action Agenda*. There is certification language in the resolution/authorization template on RCO's website.
- ❑ **Control and Tenure Documentation** (development or restoration projects only). For properties the applicant already owns or has control over, include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. See *Manual 4: Development Projects* and *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*, for additional details about control and tenure.
- ❑ **Environmental Benefits Statement**. Provide a statement on the environmental benefits of the project.
 - The statement must not exceed one, single-sided page.
 - It should be typed, using single-spacing, on white, 8½" by 11" paper, with 1" margins.
 - Use a regular typeface, such as Arial or Times Roman, twelve-point size.
 - Include the applicant name, project name and number, and the date written.
- ❑ **Expanded Project Description**. *In addition to the standard PRISM description*, provide detailed descriptions of the project. Key information to include: the number of acres being purchasing; how they fit into a phased purchase (if applicable); the type of habitat (core habitat, buffer, etc.); significance and characteristics of the property; past successes with securing habitat in this area; etc. An applicant may want to use the evaluation criteria as a basis for the expanded description.

- The description must not exceed three, single-sided pages.
 - Pages should be typed, using single-spacing, on white, 8½" by 11" paper, with 1" inch margins.
 - Use a regular typeface, such as Arial or Times Roman, twelve-point size.
 - In the header of each page, include the applicant name, project name and number, and date written.
- ❑ **Landowner Acknowledgement Form** (acquisition projects only). An applicant must demonstrate that the landowner is aware of the applicant's interest in purchasing the property. There are several options to meet this requirement (see "Section 3: Application Requirements" in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*).
 - ❑ **Local Jurisdiction Review and Conferral** (acquisition projects only). An applicant must review the proposed project application and confer with the county or city with jurisdiction over the project area. Attach documentation demonstrating that this process has begun (see "Section 3: Application Requirements" in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*). A sample letter is available in the [Acquisition Project Tool Kit](#) on the RCO website. If acquiring property within the applicant's own jurisdiction, the authorizing resolution meets this requirement.
 - ❑ **Map–Parcel Map** (acquisition projects only). Shows the parcels to be acquired in the scope of work as well as adjacent land ownership. Show the parcels in relation to local roads, landmarks, etc. Include the county parcel numbers on the map.
 - ❑ **Photo**. Every application requires at least one general project photograph in .jpg format. A current ground shot or aerial view of the project site is appropriate.
 - ❑ **Site Plan–Development Site Plan** (development projects only). Shows the proposed improvements at the project site. This plan should show site boundaries, major site features, and proposed project elements. Existing and future elements should be distinguished from those in the current project. Master, schematic design, design development, and construction document level plans are suitable for a development site plan.
 - ❑ **Species with Special Status Table**. List each species, community, or habitat type with special status present on the property or in the work site. Include the occurrence, status and source, and the property or work sites where each species occurs. Further details are in the evaluation criteria (please see the grant program manual).

For multisite acquisition projects only:

- Map–Multisite Acquisition.** Identify all parcels being considered for acquisition. Proposed parcels should be contiguous with one another or contiguous with property currently protected through public or nonprofit ownership. Parcels may be non-contiguous if an applicant can demonstrate in the acquisition strategy that acquiring land anywhere within the geographic envelope will achieve the goals of the project. Show the parcels in relation to political subdivisions, roads, landmarks, other protected property, etc.

OR

- Map–Geographic Envelope.** If identifying specific parcels would create a hardship for targeted landowners or would jeopardize potential acquisitions, an applicant instead may identify a geographic envelope containing all parcels under consideration. Proposed parcels should be contiguous with one another or contiguous with property currently protected through public or nonprofit ownership. Parcels may be non-contiguous if an applicant can demonstrate in the acquisition strategy that acquiring land anywhere within the geographic envelope will achieve the goal of the project. Show the geographic envelope in relation to political subdivisions, roads, landmarks, other protected property, etc.

Note that letters and other documented expressions of project support or concern submitted with the application will be made available for advisory committee review. **These should be combined into one PDF and attached to the project in PRISM–use the attachment type *Project Support/Concern Documents*.** An applicant also should summarize this in the presentations for technical review and evaluation.

Also note that except for a few protected items, such as cultural resources data or confidential appraisal documents, as soon as the application is started in PRISM, it and most attachments will be available for review by RCO staff, evaluators, and the public.

Step 4: Present Project for Technical Review–May 22-23, 2024

An applicant may present the project virtually to the advisory committee. Participation in this technical review is not required but is highly recommended. It serves as a practice session for the upcoming evaluation and provides valuable feedback. The focus of the review is on eligibility and the technical aspects (scope, design, cost, feasibility, etc.) of the project.

- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation responding to the evaluation criteria in *manual 10b*. Handouts and other materials will not be permitted. See *Tips for Developing a PowerPoint Presentation for Grant Applicants* for more information. RCO will schedule a time for the presentation to the evaluation team.

- Attach the PowerPoint presentation to PRISM Online at least three business days before the scheduled review meeting.
- Present the project to the advisory committee virtually. Technical review sessions are thirty minutes. An applicant will have up to twenty minutes to present a project. The remaining ten minutes are reserved for questions by the advisory committee.

Committee members provide feedback and make suggestions about changes needed to improve the project and presentation.

RCO staff also will review the application for eligibility, completeness, and clarity, and will return the application with questions or suggested changes.

Step 5: Resubmit Application by Technical Completion Deadline–July 11, 2024

- Address issues raised during technical review and make modifications, if needed.
- Attach an **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** to show the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant’s organization. An applicant must adopt RCO’s text verbatim even if using a different format.
- Local Jurisdiction Review and Conferral** (acquisition projects only). Attach documentation demonstrating that this process has been completed (see “Section 3: Application Requirements” in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*). A sample form is available online in the [Acquisition Project Tool Kit](#). If acquiring property within the applicant’s own jurisdictions, an authorizing resolution meets this requirement.
- Complete all revisions and resubmit the application in PRISM Online by the technical completion deadline or the application will be deemed ineligible.

Step 6: Present Project for Evaluation–August 12-13, 2024

Participation in the project evaluation meeting is mandatory for all projects considered for funding. All presentations are given virtually.

- Prepare (or update from technical review) a PowerPoint presentation responding to the evaluation criteria found in manual 10b. Respond to the criteria in order. Handouts or other materials will not be permitted. RCO will schedule time for an applicant to make a presentation to the evaluation team.
- Attach the PowerPoint presentation and presentation notes to the application in PRISM Online at least three business days before the scheduled evaluation.

- ❑ Present the project to the evaluation team. Evaluation sessions for this category are thirty minutes. An applicant will have up to twenty minutes to present the project. The remaining ten minutes are reserved for questions and deliberation by the advisory committee.

Evaluators may ask clarifying questions and will score the project using the board-adopted evaluation criteria.

RCO staff tabulate the results and share the preliminary ranked list with the advisory committee to validate the results, establish the committee’s funding recommendation, and discuss any proposed process or policy changes. RCO then announces the results of the evaluation and posts the preliminary ranked list on its website.

RCO staff present the preliminary ranked list to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board for final approval and inclusion with the board’s recommendation to the Governor and the Legislature.

Step 7: Submit Pre-Agreement Materials–May 1, 2025

- ❑ Attach a **Certification of Applicant Match** to show what amounts and sources of match are in hand for the project.
- ❑ Attach **Control and Tenure Documentation** for property to be developed if not already completed in the application. Include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. For details, see *Manual 4: Development Projects*.
- ❑ For **combination projects**, an applicant must secure the property at least one month before the board considers approving funding (see manual 3).
- ❑ Provide any other requested pre-agreement materials as required by RCO.

Step 8: Sign Grant Agreement–After July 1, 2025

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves grant funding after the Legislature adopts a budget. RCO works with the applicant to execute a grant agreement before work begins.

- ❑ Applicant reviews other RCO policy manuals:
 - *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations*
 - *Manual 8: Reimbursements*
- ❑ Applicant reviews the Successful Applicant Workshop materials, then completes the project.

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