

# Applicant's To-Do List

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## Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Farmland Preservation Program

This to-do list is designed to help applicants prepare and submit grant applications for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's Farmland Preservation Program.

*Grants may be used for the acquisition of development rights on farmlands in Washington to ensure the lands remain available for agricultural practices. Limited restoration is a secondary goal of the farmland program.*

Applicants must submit the information required through [PRISM Online](#), the online project data system used by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). These steps will guide applicants 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:** Cities, counties, nonprofit nature conservancy corporations or associations, and the Washington State Conservation Commission.

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

ALL projects must include acquisition of an agricultural easement or lease. Fee simple acquisition is not allowed in this category.

Nonprofit, nature conservancy corporations or associations must meet the following eligibility requirements:

- Be registered in the State of Washington as a nonprofit as defined by Revised Code of Washington 84.34.250.
- 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 Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program grants received by the corporation or association.

- Demonstrate at least 3 years' activity in managing projects relevant to the types of projects eligible for funding in the farmland preservation category. "Activity in managing projects" means the tasks necessary to manage an on-the-ground farmland project, such as negotiating for acquisition of property rights, closing on an acquisition, developing and implementing management plans, designing and implementing projects, securing and managing the necessary funds regardless of fund source, and other tasks.
- Nonprofit applicants must provide a copy of their Articles of Incorporation and bylaws. Please e-mail these documents directly to the RCO grants manager.
- All applicants must demonstrate the following:
  - The preservation of agricultural lands is a priority of the organization.
  - A proven ability to draft, acquire, monitor, and enforce conservation easements.

## Step 2: Review Materials

- ❑ Review the appropriate Recreation and Conservation Funding Board manuals for this grant category:
  - *Manual 10f: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farmland Preservation Program*
  - *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*
  - *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*

## Step 3: Submit Application—June 1, 2020

### 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. Attach the documents below before submitting your application. Include the applicant name, project name, and RCO grant number on each attachment. Maps 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 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. Applicants must adopt the text verbatim even if they choose to use their own format.
  
- ❑ **Landowner Acknowledgement Form.** 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.** 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 RCO’s Web site. For applicants acquiring property within their own jurisdictions, the authorizing resolution meets this requirement.
  
- ❑ **Map: Area of Potential Effect** (for projects with restoration components only) showing the location of all proposed ground-disturbing activities, including access and staging areas. The map must include a polygon of the entire project area and must include section, township, and range information, project name and number, and sponsor name. A U.S. Geological Survey quad map is the preferred base map, though the applicant may use an aerial base map, as long as section, township, and range information are included on the map. Section lines and numbers must be clearly visible in the map. Applicants may need to attach more than one map—one zoomed out far enough to depict section lines and numbers, and another zoomed in close enough to clearly depict the boundaries of all proposed ground-disturbing activities.
  
- ❑ **Map: Parcel Map** shows the parcels to be acquired in the scope of work as well as adjacent land ownership. Show the parcels in relation to local roadways, landmarks, etc. Include the county parcel numbers on the map.
  
- ❑ **Photograph.** 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.
  
- ❑ **Property Designation.** Documentation that each parcel in the grant application is classified as farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act. Acceptable forms of documentation are a written document from the county assessor, a current property tax notice, or a recent title report that shows the classification as an encumbrance on the property.

If a parcel is not classified as farm and agricultural land, an applicant may seek an informal or preliminary determination from the county assessor that the parcel could be classified as farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act. Acceptable

documentation are a letter from the county assessor or the county assessor's approval of an application for farm and agricultural land classification.

- ❑ **Site Plan: Restoration Site Plan** (for combination acquisitions and restoration projects only) shows the restoration activities to take place on the project site. Existing and future restored areas should be distinguished from those in the proposed project scope.

Note that letters and other documented expressions of project support or concern submitted with the application will be made available for advisory committee review. Applicants also should summarize this in their presentations for technical review and evaluation. **All letters must be combined into one PDF and attached to the project in PRISM.**

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—June 17-18, 2020**

Applicants will present their projects to the advisory committee. Participation in this in-person technical review is not required but is highly recommended. It serves as a practice session for the upcoming evaluation and gives applicants valuable feedback. The focus of 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 10f. Respond to the criteria in order. 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 3 business days before the scheduled review meeting.
- ❑ Present the project to the advisory committee. Technical review sessions are 30 minutes. An applicant will have up to 20 minutes to present a project. The remaining 10 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: Re-Submit Application by Technical Completion Deadline–August 5, 2020

- Address issues raised during technical review and make modifications, if needed.
- Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** shows the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant's organization. Applicants must adopt the text verbatim even if they choose to use their own format.
- Local Jurisdiction Review and Conferral.** Attach documentation demonstrating that this process has been completed (see Section 3: Application Requirements in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*). A sample form is available in the [Acquisition Project Tool Kit](#) on RCO's Web site. For applicants acquiring property within their own jurisdictions, authorizing resolutions meet 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–September 14-15, 2020

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

- Prepare (or update from technical review) a PowerPoint presentation responding to the evaluation criteria found in Manual 10f. Respond to the criteria in order. Handouts or other materials will not be permitted. RCO will schedule time for the presentation to the evaluation team.
- Attach the PowerPoint presentation and presentation notes to the application in PRISM Online at least 3 business days before the scheduled evaluation.
- Present the project to the evaluation team. Evaluation sessions for this program are 30 minutes. An applicant will have up to 20 minutes to present a project. The remaining 10 minutes are reserved for questions and deliberation by the advisory committee.

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

RCO staff tabulates the results and shares 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 lists on its Web site.

RCO staff present the preliminary ranked list to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board October 7-8, 2020 for final approval and inclusion with the board's recommendation to the Governor and the Legislature.

### Step 7: Submit Pre-Agreement Materials–May 1, 2021

- Provide a **Certification of Applicant Match** to show what amounts and sources of match are in hand for the project. Attach this document to the application in PRISM Online.
- Provide any other requested pre-agreement materials as required by RCO.

### Step 8: Sign Project Agreement–After July 1, 2021

The board approves grant funding after the Legislature adopts a budget. RCO works with each applicant to execute a project agreement before work begins.

- Applicants review other RCO policy manuals:
  - *Manual 7: Long-term Obligations*
  - *Manual 8: Reimbursements*
- Applicants review the Successful Applicant Workshop materials, then complete their projects.