

# Manual 21

## Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Grant Program

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June 11, 2024

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# At a Glance

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account	
<b>Purpose</b>	The program provides funding to acquire, restore, or improve aquatic lands for public purposes. Grants may be used to provide or improve public access to those lands and associated waters.
<b>Who may apply?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cities and towns</li> <li>• Counties</li> <li>• Native American tribes</li> <li>• Special purpose districts</li> <li>• State agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Is a plan required?</b>	No
<b>What are navigable waters?</b>	All projects must be associated with navigable waters of the state. Check with the Washington Department of Natural Resources <a href="#">aquatics land manager</a> to see if the project is on a navigable water body.
<b>What types of projects are eligible?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development or renovation</li> <li>• Combination acquisition and development and/or restoration</li> <li>• Land acquisition</li> <li>• Restoration</li> </ul>
<b>What are the grant limits?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acquisition: \$1 million</li> <li>• Development, renovation, and restoration: \$500,000</li> <li>• Combination of acquisition and development and/or restoration: \$1 million, of which not more than \$500,000 may be for development or restoration costs.</li> </ul>
<b>What must the project sponsor contribute?</b>	50 percent
<b>How is the project evaluated?</b>	An advisory committee hears in-person, virtual presentations and scores the projects.
<b>When are applications due</b>	May 1, 2024
<b>When are grants awarded?</b>	June 2025 estimated
<b>What's new this year?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Added a cost increase policy.</li> <li>• Changed the evaluation criteria to address priorities in RCO's equity review and state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan.</li> <li>• Included in this manual existing rules about time limits, extensions, inspections, acknowledgments, and signs.</li> </ul>

# Section 1: Introduction

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## This section covers the following:

- ✓ The Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Program
- ✓ Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
- ✓ Who makes decisions
- ✓ Where to get information
- ✓ Grant process and timeline
- ✓ Time limits and extensions

## Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Program

The Legislature created the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account<sup>1</sup> (ALEA) in 1984 as a way to invest revenue raised from Washington's shorelines into projects meant to preserve and restore these valuable lands.

Aquatic lands mean all tidelands, shore lands, harbor areas, and the beds of navigable waters. These lands were dedicated at statehood for maritime trade, transportation, agriculture, and commerce, and are vital to the state's economy.

ALEA grants are funded entirely by money raised by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources from activities on those lands, such as leases to marinas on state-owned waterfront sites and the sale of harvest rights for geoduck clams.

ALEA grants may be used to buy, improve, or protect aquatic lands for public purposes. Grants also may be used to provide or improve public access to aquatic lands. The ALEA program is guided by the multiple goals of re-establishing naturally, self-sustaining ecological functions; providing people with access to the water; and increasing public awareness of aquatic lands as a finite natural resource and irreplaceable public heritage.

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<sup>1</sup>Enabling legislation is Revised Code of Washington 79.105.

## Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

A portion of ALEA is administered by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, which is a governor-appointed board composed of five citizens and the directors (or designees) of three state agencies—Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, and Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) supports the board. RCO is a small state agency that manages multiple grant programs to create outdoor recreation opportunities, protect the best of the state's wildlife habitat and working lands, and help return salmon and orca from near extinction.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board recognizes its obligation to ensure its programs and policies are equitable and inclusive and has taken steps to address disparities. The board has resolved to continue to examine its policies and reach out to diverse partners to ensure that Washington's investments are not only for a few but reflect the board's values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Read the board's [Resolution 2020-35](#) in full online.

### Manual Authority

This manual provides policies and guidelines for the ALEA grant program. It is created under the board's authority in Chapter 79A.25.005 of the Revised Code of Washington and reflects the specific statutory requirements of Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150, Washington Administrative Code 286, and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board policies.

## Who Makes Decisions

### Staff Decisions

Staff will review grant applications to ensure they are complete, the projects are eligible to compete, the grant applicants are eligible to apply, and the match is certified. Staff also score objective evaluation criteria, such as those relating to Growth Management Act compliance. Finally, staff make routine grant management decisions about billings, reports, minor scope changes, short time extensions, and more.

### Advisory Committee Decisions

An advisory committee evaluates grant applications and scores them to create a ranked list of projects for the funding board to consider. The advisory committee also reviews proposed program policies and criteria changes, and in some cases makes

recommendations to the funding board or director about how funding should be distributed.

## Director Decisions

The RCO director, or designee, makes many project decisions based on rules and board policies. The decisions range from authorizing payments, to approving cost increases, to approving payment of charges in excess of lower bids, to terminating projects.

A project sponsor may request that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board reconsider a decision made by the director. To request reconsideration, the project sponsor must send a letter to the board chair at least sixty calendar days before a board meeting. The request is added to the board's meeting agenda and the project sponsor then may address the board at the meeting. The board's decision is final.

More detailed information about board and director decisions is available in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*, *Manual 4: Development Projects*, and *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*.

## Board Decisions

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board makes the final decisions for funding, policies, and project changes, although some decisions it has delegated to the agency director.

## Not a Public Hearings Board

The board is not a public hearings board and does not decide land-use issues. To the extent possible, all project proposals should demonstrate adequate public notification and review and have the support of the public body applying for the grant.

## Where to Get Information

Recreation and Conservation Office

Natural Resources Building

1111 Washington Street

Olympia, WA 98501

[Email](#)

Telephone: (360) 902-3000

FAX: (360) 902-3026

Hearing Impaired Relay Service: Call 711

[Website](#)

Mailing Address

PO Box 40917

Olympia, WA 98504-0917

RCO grants managers are available to answer questions about this manual and grant program. Please feel free to call. In addition, manuals, forms, and most other materials referenced in this manual are available on RCO's website on the [ALEA grant page](#).

## Other Grant Manuals Needed

The manuals below provide additional information for grants and are available on the [grant manual page](#) of the RCO website. Each can be made available in an alternative format.

- *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*
- *Manual 4: Development Projects*
- *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*
- *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations*
- *Manual 8: Reimbursements*

## Grant Process and Timeline

RCO offers grants in even-numbered years, in conjunction with the state budget. The grant process, from application to grant award, spans eighteen months, and is outlined below. While the order of the steps in this process remains consistent, visit the RCO website for precise dates.

## Even-Numbered Years

**Webinars.** RCO conducts workshop webinars in the winter or early spring to provide information about the grant programs offered that year.

**Entering Applications.** RCO strongly encourages applicants to start the online application early. PRISM Online usually opens by March 1.

To enter an application, sign up for a [SecureAccess Washington](#) account and submit a [PRISM account form](#). When using either of these databases for the first time, the applicant must complete a double sign-in.

1. Using SecureAccess Washington credentials, login to PRISM.
2. When redirected to the SecureAccess login page, enter the SecureAccess credentials.
3. When redirected to a one-time PRISM sign-in page, enter the PRISM login credentials.
4. The applicant will be directed back to the PRSM home page.

This double sign-in will happen only once. After completing the double sign-in, the applicant will use SecureAccess Washington credentials to log into PRISM.

To begin an application, log into PRISM Online and select the *+New Application* button to enter grant application information. RCO uses this information to assign an outdoor grants manager. This manager guides the applicant through the process, reviews application materials, helps determine whether the proposal is eligible, and may visit the project site to discuss site-specific details. Learn more about [PRISM's components and technical requirements](#).

**Applications Due.** Applications typically are due in early May of even-numbered years. They are due at least four months before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves funding (Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040).<sup>2</sup>

The application includes the data entered into PRISM and all required attachments. The applicant should “*submit*” the application before the deadline. The *Check Application for Errors* button on the *Submit Application* screen will indicate which pages are incomplete. An incomplete application and an application received after the deadline will be rejected unless RCO’s director has approved a late submission in advance. Follow the requirements in the Applicant’s To-Do List online.

**Technical Reviews.** RCO staff review the project to ensure it is eligible, identify any issues of concern, and provide feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposal. RCO encourages the applicant to attend a technical review meeting to present the project virtually to the ALEA advisory committee and RCO staff. At this meeting, the applicant makes an oral presentation, illustrated with maps, graphics, and photographs using PowerPoint.<sup>®</sup> After hearing feedback from the advisory committee and RCO staff, the applicant may make changes to improve the project, if needed. The applicant must complete all changes and resubmit the application by the technical completion deadline.

**Technical Completion Deadline.** RCO establishes a technical completion deadline by which the application must be in its final form. After this date, the applicant will not be able to make any further changes. RCO will score applicable evaluation criteria as of this date.

**Board Submits Biennial Budget Request.** The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board sends the Governor a recommended funding amount for ALEA for the next biennium.

**Project Evaluation.** The applicant makes a virtual, oral presentation, illustrated with maps, graphics, and photographs in PowerPoint<sup>®</sup> to the advisory committee, which scores the proposal against a set of criteria approved by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

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<sup>2</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040



**Post-Evaluation Conference.** After project evaluations, RCO staff tabulate the scores and share the results with the advisory committee. The committee discusses the preliminary ranked lists and the application and evaluation processes. The public may join the advisory committee conference call; however, to ensure a fair and equitable process, guests may not testify. Shortly after the conference call, staff posts the preliminary ranked list on RCO's website. The resulting ranked list of projects is the basis for the funding recommendation to the board.

**Board Approves Project List.** In an open public meeting, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board considers the recommendations of staff, written public comments submitted before the meeting, and public testimony at the meeting. The board then approves the list of projects for submittal to the Governor for inclusion in the state capital budget.

When considering a list of projects for submittal, the board will use both anticipated available funding and project evaluation results to determine the length of the list. This list normally will exceed anticipated funding and will include alternate projects. More projects are recommended than requested funding so that alternate projects can be ready if projects higher on the list fail or use less money than requested.

Applicants are cautioned that the board's recommendation of the project list to the Governor is not the same as funding approval.

**Governor Submits Budget.** Typically, the Governor's capital budget request to the Legislature includes funding for the ALEA list.

## Odd-Numbered Years

**Legislature Approves Projects.** When it develops the state capital budget, the Legislature generally approves funding for ALEA and considers the project list submitted by the Governor.

**Proof of Matching Funds.** An applicant with match included in their applications must provide proof of the availability of matching funds by the match certification deadline, which is at least one calendar month before board approval of funding.<sup>3</sup>

**Board Awards Grants.** After the Legislature and Governor approve the capital budget, the board makes the final grant awards, again in a public meeting. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to attend.

**Grant Agreements Issued.** After grant awards, the applicant has two calendar months<sup>4</sup> to submit pre-agreement documents (checklist provided by grants managers). RCO staff

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<sup>3</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(3)

<sup>4</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(4)

then prepare and issue the grant agreement. The applicant must return the signed agreement within three calendar months.<sup>5</sup> Once the agreement is signed, the applicant, now referred to as a project sponsor, may begin the project, according to the terms of the grant agreement. Each agreement will be written and monitored for compliance by RCO staff. See *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations* for more information.

**Successful Applicant Webinar.** After the board approves funding, RCO publishes online a recorded webinar for successful grant applicants. This webinar covers sponsors' responsibilities to comply with the RCO grant agreements, issues that might come up when implementing projects, billing procedures, amendments for changes and time extensions, closing project procedures, and long-term compliance.

## Time Limits and Extensions

A sponsor must complete the funded project promptly. For this reason, RCO staff, with applicant assistance, establishes a timetable for project completion, including enforceable milestones and a project completion date. To avoid the risk of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board or director withdrawing the grant, the board adopted the following guidance for each project phase.

## Application Phase

An applicant must provide reasonable assurance that the project can be completed on time and meet milestones. Reasonable assurance may include such evidence as the following:

- Appraisals and review are completed.
- Designs are completed.
- Bid documents are prepared.
- Environmental assessment is completed.
- Hazardous substances review is completed.
- Option agreements are signed.
- Permits are in-hand.
- Property is in escrow.
- Waiver of Retroactivity is in-hand and signed.

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<sup>5</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(5)

At least one calendar month before the funding meeting, when requested by RCO, the applicant must provide written certification of matching fund availability.<sup>6</sup>

An applicant may submit only a project that is likely to be completed within four years.

### Pre-Agreement Phase

An applicant must submit the pre-agreement materials requested by RCO within two calendar months of funding approval.<sup>7</sup>

With RCO staff assistance, the applicant must develop milestones, to be included in the grant agreement and a timeline that does not exceed two to three years.

### Implementation Phase

To help ensure reasonable and timely project completion, accountability, and the proper use of funds, the applicant must do the following:

- Develop milestones for project implementation that ensure timely completion of projects as follows:
  - Acquisition (single site) projects 1-2 years
  - Acquisition (multisite) projects 2-3½ years
  - Combination projects 2-3½ years  
(The acquisition portion must be completed in ninety days. See “Combination Projects” below for more information)
  - Development projects 2-3 years
  - Restoration projects 2-3½ years
  - Exceptionally complex projects 3½ years

RCO staff monitors critical project milestones (for example, ordering appraisals and reviews, starting construction). RCO may terminate projects that do not meet critical milestones established in the grant agreement. (See the grant agreement section on termination and other remedies). Any RCO director decision may be appealed to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

- Begin project implementation quickly and aggressively to show measurable progress towards meeting the milestones.

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<sup>6</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(3)

<sup>7</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(4)

- Submit a reimbursement request at least once a year.<sup>8</sup>
- Submit progress reports at intervals as designated by the RCO grant agreement.

## Extensions

The director may approve a project for up to four years. When one Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant is used to match another, RCO staff will use the earliest grant to determine the four-year window.

Requests for extensions that would exceed four years may be referred to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board for action.

Extension requests must be in writing and provided to RCO not less than sixty days before expiration of the project's completion date.<sup>9</sup> The request must justify the need and commit to a new set of specified milestones.

## Project Completion

The grant agreement end date will be written into the grant agreement. It is the date that is the end of the period of performance and all project work must be complete and may be extended only when authorized by the board or director.

When a project is completed, the sponsor must submit the final bill, final report, and supporting documents needed to close the project as specified in the agreement.<sup>10</sup> If the bill and documentation are not submitted within six months of the end date in the agreement, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board may terminate the agreement without payment.

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<sup>8</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040

<sup>9</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(8)

<sup>10</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(7)

# Section 2: Policies

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## This section covers the following:

- ✓ Program goals and objectives
- ✓ Eligible locations
- ✓ Eligible applicants
- ✓ Eligible project types and activities
- ✓ Environmental requirements
- ✓ Property requirements
- ✓ Other requirements and things to know
- ✓ Project area stewardship and ongoing obligations

## Program Goals and Objectives

### Board Priorities

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board encourages projects that involve both access to aquatic lands and the enhancement, improvement, and protection of aquatic lands.

### ALEA Goals

ALEA grants are awarded to projects that support one or more of the following goals:

#### Protection and Enhancement

- Improve the ecological function of aquatic resources through the restoration and enhancement of critical marine, estuarine, and freshwater aquatic land.
- Protect existing, high-quality aquatic land that will contribute to important ecological functions and processes.

## Public Access

- Provide new opportunities for people to get to the water and access aquatic resources for recreation and education.
- Renovate or improve existing public access to aquatic lands for recreation and education.
- Create small boat and pedestrian-oriented access to aquatic lands that is designed to protect the integrity of the environment.
- Increase public awareness of aquatic lands as a finite natural resource with irreplaceable public heritage.

## Program Objectives

To accomplish the above goals, the ALEA grant program seeks to fund projects that meet the following objectives:

- Preserve, enhance, or improve naturally self-sustaining aquatic and riparian areas that are priorities in the larger ecological landscape.
- Address deficiencies in public access opportunities or improve existing facilities.
- Provide immediately useable waterfront access.
- Integrate public access in a way that is compatible with the physical features of the site and minimizes impacts to the environment.
- Include interpretive or educational elements.

## Choosing a Primary Purpose

A grant applicant submits a proposal and selects one of three program purpose options:

- Protection and enhancement
- Public access
- Protection and enhancement and public access

An applicant should attempt to select the option that best fits the overall project after considering the ALEA program goals and evaluation criteria for each option. RCO staff review the applicant's choice and may recommend changes based on the scope of work. The advisory committee makes the final recommendation as part of the technical review

of the proposal. An applicant may appeal the decision to RCO's director and, if necessary, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

An applicant must concur with the advisory committee's recommendation or meet the criteria for another option by the technical completion deadline, unless otherwise authorized by the director. The advisory committee will evaluate the project using the evaluation criteria for the final option selected.

### Eligible Project Locations

ALEA projects must be associated with navigable waters of the state as defined by Washington Administrative Code 332-30-106, Revised Code of Washington 79.105, and Article 17 of the State Constitution.

All marine waters are, by definition, navigable, as are portions of rivers influenced by tides. Navigable rivers and lakes are those determined by the judiciary, those bounded by meander lines, or those that could have been used for commerce at the time of statehood. RCO staff can help determine whether a freshwater body meets the navigability criteria.

Land adjacent to a navigable water body may be purchased with ALEA grants only if the land will contribute to the enhancement, improvement, or protection of aquatic lands or improve public access to aquatic lands.

### Eastern Washington Navigable Water Bodies

The ALEA grant program strives to fund projects across the state of Washington. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board encourages applications from eastern Washington. Known navigable freshwater bodies in eastern Washington include the following:

- Calispell Creek
- Calispell Lake
- Lake Chelan
- Cle Elum Lake
- Columbia River
- Curlew Lake
- Deer Lake
- Diamond Lake
- Eloika Lake
- Fishtrap Lake
- Kachess Lake
- Keechelus Lake
- Liberty Lake
- Loon Lake
- Lost Lake
- Medical Lake
- Methow River (lower)
- Moses Lake
- Newman Lake
- Okanogan River
- Osoyoos Lake
- Pacific Lake
- Palmer Lake

- Pend Oreille River
- Rock Lake
- Snake River
- Spirit Lake
- Spokane River
- Sprague Lake
- Waitts Lake
- Wenatchee Lake
- Wenatchee River
- West Medical Lake
- Yakima River (portions)

## Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include the following:

- Cities, counties, towns
- Federally recognized Native American tribes
- Special purpose district, port district, or other political subdivision of the state if legally authorized to acquire and develop public open space, habitat, or recreation lands.
- State agencies

Federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private entities are not eligible, but are encouraged to seek a partnership with an eligible entity.

## Legal Opinion for First-time Applicants

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board requires all organizations wishing to apply for a grant for the first time to submit a legal opinion that the applicant is eligible to do all the activities below. The legal opinion is required only once to establish eligibility.

- Contract with the State of Washington and/or the United States of America.
- Meet any statutory definitions required for board grant programs.
- Receive and spend public funds including funds from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.
- Acquire and manage interests in real property for conservation or outdoor recreation purposes.
- Develop and/or provide stewardship for structures or facilities eligible under board rules or policies.



- Undertake planning activities incidental thereto.
- Commit the applicant to statements made in any grant proposal.

## **Eligible Project Types**

### **Acquisition Projects**

An acquisition project is one that purchases or receives a donation of fee or less-than-fee interests in aquatic lands or adjacent lands. These interests include, but are not limited to, conservation easements, access and trail easements, covenants, water rights, leases, and mineral rights. Acquisition of less-than-fee interests must be for at least fifty years and may not be revocable at will. Properties must be developed within five years from the date the property was acquired. Acquisition must result in an opportunity for reasonable public access. Additional rules for land acquisition are in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

### **Restoration (Enhancement) Projects**

A restoration project brings a site back to its historic function as part of a natural ecosystem or improves the ecological functionality of a site. Restoration projects may include planting native vegetation, altering or removing structures, and other activities that would make the site a self-sustaining, predominantly natural ecosystem that doesn't require continual intervention to function. Restoration projects must allow or provide public access to aquatic lands. Restoration projects with interpretive or educational elements are strongly encouraged. Additional requirements for restoration projects may be found in *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*.

### **Development or Renovation Projects**

A development project is construction or work resulting in new elements, including but not limited to structures, facilities, and/or materials to enhance outdoor recreation resources. A renovation project is intended to improve an existing site or structure in order to increase its useful service life beyond current expectations or functions. This does not include maintenance activities. Applicants submitting projects for development and/or renovation must select development as the project type in PRISM Online. Guidelines for development and renovation projects are in *Manual 4: Development Projects*.

## Multisite Trails<sup>11</sup>

Applications for development or renovation of trails or water trails may include more than one location under the following conditions:

- The proposed trail or water trail development at each location meets one of the following descriptions:
  - On the same body of water in the same county for water trail systems
  - On the same trail in the same county for land-based trail systems
  - On the same land or water trail system within two counties of the sponsor's management unit
- The proposed development at each location must result in a contiguous trail experience under the control of the sponsor when the project is complete. The contiguous trail experience does not need to be fully developed, but it must be open and maintained for use by the public.
- Sponsors must maintain the area developed at the locations funded in the grant as well as the area of the contiguous trail experience for the period of ongoing obligations in the grant agreement.

## Combination Projects

Combination projects involve two or more of the following project types: acquisition, development, or restoration. To help ensure that combination projects with an acquisition component are finished on time, at least one month before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board considers approval of funding, an applicant must secure the property by one of the following methods:

- Acquisition under the Waiver of Retroactivity policies and procedures in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.
- Have property in escrow pending board grant approval. Closing must occur within ninety days after the funding meeting.
- Obtain an option or purchase and sale agreement on the property that extends past the board's funding meeting. Execution of the option or agreement must occur within ninety days after this meeting.

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<sup>11</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2015-24

If the acquisition is for less-than-fee interest, and if not already acquired via a Waiver of Retroactivity, the applicant also must provide draft copies of all leases or easements to RCO for review. Execution of the leases or easements must occur within ninety days after the funding meeting.

For the acquisitions to remain eligible, the sponsor must follow all the requirements and procedures outlined in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

## **Other Considerations**

### Phased Projects

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board recommends that applicants consider the potential problems expensive and large-scale projects usually create and discuss phasing them with RCO staff. Phased projects are subject to the following rules:

- Approval of any single phase is limited to that phase. No approval or endorsement is given or implied toward future phases.
- Each phase must stand on its merits as a viable or complete recreation experience and not be dependent on the completion of future phases or work.
- Each phase must be submitted as a separate application.

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board may consider progress and sponsor performance on previously funded project phases when making decisions on current project proposals.

### Puget Sound Projects

The law<sup>12</sup> prevents the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board from funding any project in this grant program that is in conflict with the Puget Sound Partnership's *Action Agenda*. A project may be in conflict with the *Action Agenda* if it results in water quality degradation in Puget Sound or the loss of ecosystem processes, structure, or functions, and the impacts are not fully mitigated using state-approved protocols.

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 *Action Agenda*.

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<sup>12</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150

The law<sup>13</sup> requires the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to give funding consideration to projects in this program that are referenced in the *Action Agenda*. An applicant for a project in the Puget Sound area may address a question in the evaluation criteria that addresses whether the project is referenced in the *Action Agenda*. There are no additional points for this question, but the evaluator has the ability within the current point system to give points based on the answer to this question. The *Action Agenda* may be found on the [Puget Sound Partnership's website](#).

## Eligible Project Activities

### Incurring Pre-agreement Costs<sup>14</sup>

RCO may reimburse a sponsor for certain allowable expenses incurred before the start date of a grant agreement. However, any costs associated with the preparation or presentation of the grant application are ineligible.

For acquisition projects, most incidental costs incurred before a RCO grant agreement are allowable for reimbursement. Land costs are not allowable as a pre-agreement cost unless RCO has approved and issued a Waiver of Retroactivity. See *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

For development, renovation, and restoration projects, preliminary costs necessary to get a project ready for the construction phase (i.e., architecture and engineering, permits) are allowable for reimbursement. The sponsor may not incur any construction cost before the period of performance in the agreement, except those defined by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board. See *Manual 4: Development Projects* or *Manual 5: Restoration Projects* for further information.

### Acquiring Land

Grants typically are used for purchasing or receiving a donation of fee or less-than-fee interest in real property. Incidental costs related to acquisitions are eligible. Additional rules for land acquisition are in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

### Developing or Renovating Facilities

Grants typically are used to improve, renovate, or provide new facilities that help people get to the waterfront for water-dependent activities. Examples include the following:

- Fishing piers and platforms

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<sup>13</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150

<sup>14</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-085 and Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2017-29

- Interpretive signs and kiosks
- Launch and moorage facilities for small boats<sup>15</sup>
- Non-motorized circulation paths or access routes, trails, ramps, stairs
- Open-water swim areas
- Park furniture including benches and tables
- Parking lots and entry roads
- Restrooms
- Viewpoints, platforms, blinds for observing wildlife

Development projects including interpretive or educational features are strongly encouraged. Additional guidelines for development projects are found in *Manual 4: Development Projects*. Applicants who propose developing archery or firearm ranges must meet RCO's safety policy found in *Manual 11: Firearms and Archery Range Recreation*.<sup>16</sup>

## **Restoring Habitat**

Guidelines for restoration and enhancement projects are in *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*. Eligible project elements include the following:

- Ecological restoration
- Equipment and boot decontamination facilities
- Estuary and shoreline restoration
- Fencing, gates, and signs
- In-stream habitat such as bank stabilization, channel reconfiguration, and woody materials placement
- In-stream passage improvements
- Habitat enhancement such as native plantings and invasive plant removal

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<sup>15</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2004-03. "Small boats" are non-motorized boats that may be launched by hand, or motorboats under sixteen feet and with motors of less than ten horsepower.

<sup>16</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2016-21

- Removal of structures like bulkheads, dikes, levees, tide gates, and piling
- Site augmentation to establish restoration elements
- Transplanting and re-vegetation
- Upland erosion control

Aquatic restoration projects should follow the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's aquatic habitat guidelines for water crossings, stream restoration, and stream bank protection.

- [Water Crossing Design Guidelines](#)
- [Integrated Streambank Protection Guidelines](#)
- [Stream Habitat Restoration Guidelines](#)

## Ineligible Project Elements

Several sources are used to determine project eligibility. The following project elements are ineligible for ALEA grants:

- Animal species introduction or propagation, other than biological controls for invasive species, etc.
- Concessionaire buildings or concessionaire.
- Costs associated with meeting a mitigation requirement unrelated to the funded project. See Mitigation Funds as Match below.
- Costs not directly related to implementing the project such as indirect and overhead charges.
- Crop plantings and other agricultural activities.
- Environmental cleanup of illegal activities (i.e., removal of contaminated materials or derelict vessels, trash pickup, methamphetamine labs).
- Fish or other wildlife production facilities such as fish hatcheries for the production of sport fish populations.
- Indoor facilities such as swimming pools, community centers, museums, and interpretive or environmental learning centers.
- Monitoring costs related to long-term compliance (i.e., conservation easements).

- Offices, shops, residences, and meeting and storage rooms.
- Operation and maintenance costs.
- Legally mandated clean-up or costs of actions required as mitigation not associated with the approved project. Costs associated with mitigation directly related to the funded project are eligible, provided the cost does not exceed 25 percent of the total project cost.
- Projects identified as mitigation as part of a habitat conservation plan approved by the federal government for incidental take of endangered or threatened species or other projects identified for habitat mitigation purposes.

Applicants may want to review, *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*, *Manual 4: Development Projects*, and *Manual 5: Restoration Projects* for other ineligible costs.

## Environmental Requirements

### Cultural Resources Review

Governor's [Executive Order 21-02](#), *Archaeological and Cultural Resources*, requires that state agencies review acquisition and construction projects for potential impacts to cultural resources, which are defined as archeological and historical sites and artifacts, and traditional tribal areas or items of religious, ceremonial, and social uses. The goal is to ensure that reasonable action is taken to avoid, minimize, or mitigate harm to those resources.

The federal government, through section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, requires similar compliance for projects with federal involvement, for example, projects on federal land, with federal funds, or requiring a federal permit.

### Review Process

RCO facilitates review under the Governor's executive order. Federal agencies facilitate review under the National Historic Preservation Act. If the federal review covers the entire RCO project area, there is no additional review needed to meet state requirements. Both processes require review, analysis, and consultation with the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and affected Native American tribes.

RCO evaluates all projects before funding and initiates consultation with the affected tribes and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. An applicant should not initiate consultation with either of these groups. The review may require a sponsor to conduct cultural resources surveys or may add requirements to a grant agreement.

An applicant should budget for cultural resources work for most projects. The costs of a cultural resources investigation are highly dependent upon the size, scope, and location of the project. RCO encourages the applicant to work with qualified cultural resources professionals to estimate costs. The Association for Washington Archaeology maintains a [list of qualified consultants](#) on its website. Costs for compliance actions (e.g., survey, monitoring, permitting, redesign, and mitigation) are eligible for reimbursement and should be included in the grant application.

Any required cultural resources investigations or documentation must be complete before a sponsor may start any ground-disturbing activities, such as demolition, planting, or installing signs. Ground disturbance or demolition started without approval are breaches of the grant agreement. Typically, cultural resources approval will be authorized as part of the notice to proceed.

For acquisition projects, cultural resources requirements must be completed before final reimbursements will be made.

## State Agency Lands

Cultural resources compliance for projects on lands owned or managed by the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, or the Washington Department of Natural Resources, is the responsibility of the respective agency regardless of the sponsor. The sponsor must provide RCO with documentation of compliance with the Governor's executive order or section 106 before a notice to proceed will be issued or acquisition will be paid in full.

See RCO Manuals 3, 4, or 5 for additional details on the RCO cultural resource review process.

## Invasive Species

The Washington Invasive Species Council developed [protocols](#) for preventing the spread of invasive species while working in the field. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board encourages grant sponsors to consider how their projects may spread invasive species, and work to reduce that possibility. Invasive species can be spread unintentionally during construction, maintenance, and restoration activities. Here are examples of how it could happen:

- Driving a car or truck to a field site and moving soil embedded with seeds or fragments of invasive plants in the vehicle's tires to another site. New infestations can begin miles away as the seeds and fragments drop off the tires and the undercarriage of the vehicle.



- Working in streams and moving water or sediment infested with invasive plants, animals, or pathogens from one stream to another via boots, nets, sampling equipment, or boats.
- Moving weed-infested hay, gravel, or dirt to a new site, carrying the weed seeds along with it, during restoration and construction activities. Before long, the seeds germinate and infest the new site.

The key to preventing the introduction and spread of invasive species is twofold: Use materials that are known to be free of invasive plants or animals in the project and clean equipment both before and after the job. Equipment to clean should include, but not be limited to, footwear, gloves, angling equipment, sampling equipment, boats and their trailers, and vehicles and tires.

## **Sustainability**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board encourages grant recipients to design and build sustainable projects to maximize the useful life of what they build and do the least amount of damage to the environment.

The board encourages sponsors to use sustainable design, practices, and elements in their projects. Examples may include use of recycled materials; native plants in landscaping; pervious surfacing material for circulation paths and access routes, trails, and parking areas; energy efficient fixtures; onsite recycling stations; and composting.

## **Property Requirements**

### **Landowner Acknowledgement for Acquisition Projects<sup>17</sup>**

As part of any grant application for acquisition of real property, the project sponsor must demonstrate that the landowner is aware of the sponsor's interest in purchasing property rights. An applicant may meet this requirement by completing one of four options as detailed in *RCO Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

### **Control of the Land (Development or Restoration Projects)**

To protect investments made by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board and to assure public access to those investments, a sponsor must have adequate control of a project site to construct, operate, and maintain the area for the term required by the grant program and grant agreement. This "control and tenure" may be through land ownership, a lease, use agreement, or easement. See *Manual 4: Development Projects* or *Manual 5: Restoration Projects* for more information.

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<sup>17</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2010-34

## Projects on State-Owned Aquatic Lands<sup>18</sup>

If a project will occur over, in, or alongside a navigable body of water, an authorization to use state-owned aquatic lands may be needed.

All marine waters are, by definition, navigable, as are portions of rivers influenced by tides. Navigable rivers and lakes are those determined by the judiciary, those bounded by meander lines, or those that could have been used for commerce at the time of statehood. The Department of Natural Resources' aquatic land managers will help the grant applicant determine if the project will fall on state-owned aquatic lands and provide more information on its authorization process. See the [land manager coverage map](#) online for contact information for the Department of Natural Resources aquatic land managers.

If the project is on state-owned aquatic lands, the grant applicant will need to secure a lease or easement (use authorization) to use those lands from the Washington Department of Natural Resources. Securing a lease or easement may take up to a year. RCO requires the executed lease or easement within sixty days after board funding approval to show control and tenure for the site. The lease or easement is required before the project will be placed under agreement, unless RCO's director approves an extension in advance. Review the control and tenure requirements in *Manual 4: Development Projects* or *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*.

The following online resources may be helpful to review:

- [Grant Projects on State-owned Aquatic Lands](#)
- [Leasing State-owned Aquatic Lands](#)
- [Boundaries of State-owned Aquatic Lands](#)
- [Caring for Washington's Nearshore Environments](#)

## Department of Natural Resources' Review of Project Scope

Applicants who need to secure a use authorization meeting board policy must do all the following:

- Meet with the Department of Natural Resources to review the proposed scope of work.
- Complete a Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) and give a copy to the Department of Natural Resources.

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<sup>18</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2018-03

- Attach to the grant application a Scope of Work Acknowledgement Form (signed by the Department of Natural Resources) by the technical completion deadline.

State agency applicants must follow the same procedure when developing a new facility where one currently does not exist. RCO will coordinate an interagency, in-person review of proposals for all other state agency projects.

## Other Requirements and Things to Know

### Carbon and Ecosystem Service Credits<sup>19</sup>

Land acquired or encumbered with a RCO grant may be enrolled in carbon credit and other payments for ecosystem service programs. These programs issue credits or direct payments to landowners for activities such as protecting land, planting trees, or improving management practices that reduce, sequester, or prevent future carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions. Read more information in *RCO Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*.

### Number of Grant Proposals Allowed

In general, RCO does not limit the number of grant proposals from a single applicant during the biennial grant cycle. However, each proposal must be for a different scope of work. Each application must stand alone on its own merits with a viable, recreation experience and not be dependent on other projects or future phases of work.

A grant proposal for the same project or scope of work may be submitted to another RCO grant program only if it is being used as match. Each proposal must identify the other RCO matching grant proposal. RCO recommends an applicant contact staff to discuss options for phasing costly, interrelated, or complex project proposals.

See “Multisite Trails” earlier in this section for exceptions.

### Accessibility

Facilities or elements<sup>20</sup> constructed with RCO grants and sponsor match are required by law to be accessible regardless of whether there are specific standards adopted in the State Building Code, Americans with Disabilities Act, or Architectural Barriers Act, as amended. Other federal laws, guidelines, and best practices also may apply to achieve accessibility.

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<sup>19</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2021-02

<sup>20</sup>A facility is all or any portion of buildings, structures, site improvements, elements, and pedestrian routes or vehicular ways located on site. An element is an architectural or mechanical component of a building, facility, space, or site (2010 ADA Standards for Accessible Design, Department of Justice, September 15, 2010).

RCO encourages sponsors to exceed the minimum accessibility standards and use a design principle that maximizes universal accessibility for all. See *Manual 4: Development Projects* and the RCO website for detailed information about how to make the facility meet [accessibility requirements](#). Plans, project applications, cost estimates, and construction drawings must reflect compliance with facility access and signing requirements.

## Competitive Bid Requirements<sup>21</sup>

Grant sponsors shall follow current state procurement procedures or write their own. When buying things, grant sponsors shall provide open and free competition, to the maximum extent practical. Be aware of organizational conflicts of interest. Contractors that develop specifications, requirements, statements of work, invitations for bids, or requests for proposals cannot be hired for the resulting work. Grant sponsors receiving federal money also must follow federal laws and regulations.

## Fees and Income

User or other fees may be charged for areas and facilities acquired or developed with RCO grants. See *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects* or *Manual 4: Development Projects*, and Washington Administrative Code 286-13-110 for more information.

## Inspections

The sponsor shall provide the right of access to the project area to RCO to conduct pre-award inspections. After project funding, this access is expanded to include RCO, or any of its officers, or to any other authorized agent or official of the State of Washington or the federal government, at all reasonable times, in order to monitor and evaluate performance, compliance, and quality assurance. Normally, RCO staff conducts four types of project site visits:

- **Pre-award.** Made during the application phase, normally with the applicant to assess the project area and scope of work for eligibility concerns and compatibility with the grant program.
- **Interim.** This inspection, normally coordinated with the sponsor, is made sometime during the project implementation phase to help resolve any apparent or anticipated problems and to monitor project progress.
- **Final.** Before final acceptance of the contractor's work or accepting a project as complete, the sponsor shall request a final inspection by RCO. This request must

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<sup>21</sup>RCO's grant agreement standard terms and conditions, Compliance with Applicable Law and Procurement Requirements.

be made only after the project is complete, architects and/or engineers have made their inspections, and defects have been corrected. It should be scheduled near project completion but still within the performance period of the contractor. The project must be constructed and functional as described in the grant agreement. The final inspection will review the following:

- Completion of the project scope of work as described in the agreement.
- Site appearance and construction quality.

Location of the funding or grant program acknowledgement sign. See “Grant Program Acknowledgement and Signs” below. When RCO staff’s final inspection verifies that the project is complete, the final payment, including retainage, will be made.

- **Compliance.** Performed about every five years to ensure the site is managed and maintained as specified in the grant agreement.

## Grant Program Acknowledgement and Signs<sup>22</sup>

### Acknowledgement

Sponsors must acknowledge Recreation and Conservation Funding Board funding assistance, by program if possible, in all projects. This includes the following:

- Written acknowledgement in any news release or publication developed or modified for the funded project.
- Verbal acknowledgement during all ground-breaking and dedication ceremonies.

A sponsor should notify RCO at least two weeks before any project dedication ceremony and thirty days in advance if an RCO representative or speaker is requested at the ceremony.

### Signs

The sponsor must provide prominent placement of signs at entrances and other locations unless exempted by board policy or waived by the RCO director. The sponsor may build such signs to harmonize with an existing design standard or request a standard acknowledgement sign from RCO.

For sponsor’s developing its own signs, below are suggestions for how to incorporate appropriate acknowledgement:

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<sup>22</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-120

- Funding provided by the Aquatic Lanes Enhancement Account.
- Grant funding from the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account made available by the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Funding Board.

Funding acknowledgement signs must be posted before the grant agreement end date and final reimbursement. RCO may provide free funding acknowledgement signs for this grant program upon request. A sponsor must provide proof of the funding acknowledgement by attaching photographs or other evidence to PRISM.

## Public Disclosure Rules

RCO records and files are public records that are subject to the Public Records Act.<sup>23</sup> More information about [RCO's disclosure practices](#) is available online.

## Additional Rules and Instructions

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and the office programs may issue additional or modified rules, instructions, interpretations, and guides from time to time as it believes necessary for the effective conduct of the grant program. Such changes may apply to all projects. Whenever possible, sufficient lead time will be given between the announcement and the effective date to minimize impacts to projects already in process at the time of announcement.

## Project Area Stewardship and Ongoing Obligations<sup>24</sup>

A RCO grant comes with long-term obligations to maintain and protect the project area<sup>25</sup> after a project is complete. The long-term obligations are in RCO's grant agreement. A [sample grant agreement](#) may be found on RCO's website.

RCO recognizes that changes occur over time and that some facilities may become obsolete or the land needed for something else. The law discourages casual discards of land and facilities by ensuring that grant sponsors replace the lost value when changes or conversions of use take place.

In general, the project area funded with a RCO grant must remain dedicated to the use as originally funded, such as outdoor recreation, habitat protection, farmland preservation, or salmon recovery purposes, for as long as defined in the grant

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<sup>23</sup>Revised Code of Washington 42.56

<sup>24</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25, Washington Administrative Code 286, RCO's grant agreement standard terms and conditions, and *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations*.

<sup>25</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-04-010(19). Project area is the geographic area that delineates a grant-assisted site that is subject to application and grant agreement requirements.

agreement. For development and restoration projects, the period is determined by the type of control and tenure provided for the project.

A conversion occurs when the project area acquired, developed, or restored with RCO grant funding is used for purposes other than what it was funded for originally. See RCO *Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations* for a discussion of conversions and the process required for replacement of the public investment. Non-compliance with the long-term obligations for a RCO grant may jeopardize an organization's ability to obtain future RCO grants.

After a project is complete (that is, after RCO's final reimbursement and acceptance of the project), RCO documents that were signed by the sponsor continue to govern the project area described in the boundary map for which funds have been granted.

Changes may be made only with the prior approval of the board. If a compliance issue arises, RCO staff works with the sponsor to resolve the issue. Unresolved, identified issues could result in restrictions on applying for or receiving future grants.

# Section 3:

## Money Matters

### This section covers the following:

- ✓ Grant limits
- ✓ Matching share
- ✓ Types of match
- ✓ Federal rules
- ✓ Records and reimbursement

### Grant Limits

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants are intended to expand the sponsor's existing capacity, not replace funding that would have been used for a project without the grant<sup>26</sup>

The board establishes grant limits for its programs. The grant limits for each project type are shown in the table below. ALEA funds may not exceed 50 percent of a project's total cost.

Category	Maximum Grant for Each Project
Acquisition	\$1 million
Development	\$500,000
Restoration	\$500,000
Combination project (acquisition with either development or restoration)	\$1 million, not more than \$500,000 may be for development or restoration costs.
Combination project (development and restoration)	\$500,000

<sup>26</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-045



## Cost Increases

Cost increases for approved projects may be granted by the board or director if financial resources are available. Each cost increase request will be considered on its merits. The RCO director may approve cost increases up to 10 percent of the total project cost. Increases above 10 percent would be referred to the board for consideration.<sup>27</sup> The director's approval of an acquisition project cost increase is limited to a parcel-by-parcel appraised and reviewed value. See *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*, *Manual 4: Development Projects*, or *Manual 5: Restoration Projects* for more details on cost increases.

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board will not reimburse more than the sponsor's actual out-of-pocket expenditures.

## All Projects: Administration, Architecture, Engineering

Direct administrative costs for acquisition of real property are limited to no more than 5 percent of the total acquisition cost.

Administrative (including architecture and engineering) costs for development, renovation, and restoration projects are limited to 20 percent of the total development, renovation, and restoration project cost.

Additional information about eligibility and reimbursement maximums for these elements is contained in *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects* (administration costs), *Manual 4: Development Projects* (architectural and engineering costs) and *Manual 5: Restoration Projects*, (architectural and engineering costs).

## Matching Share

Match is the project sponsor's contribution to a project. By requiring a match for grants, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board intends to foster and demonstrate local commitment to the projects and to spread the money from the grant program to a greater number of projects.<sup>28</sup>

Applicants must contribute matching resources of at least 50 percent of the project's total project cost.<sup>29</sup>

Applicants must provide a minimum of 10 percent of the total cost of a project in the form of a local contribution, not from a state or federal source. This policy does not apply to Native American tribes.<sup>30</sup> For example, if a total project cost is \$500,000, the

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<sup>27</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-07

<sup>28</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-045

<sup>29</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolutions 2003-24 and 2015-02

<sup>30</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2005-24

applicant must provide \$50,000 in matching share from a local source such as local government appropriation, cash, grants, or in-kind donations.

### **Eligible Match**

Applicant resources used to match board funds must be eligible in ALEA, and may include one or more of the following:

- Appropriations and cash
- Bonds—council or voter
- Conservation futures
- Corrections labor
- Donations—the value of using donated cash, equipment use, labor, land, materials, property rights, or services (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Force account—the value of using the sponsor’s equipment, labor, or materials (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Grants—federal, state, local and private (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Local impact and mitigation fees (see “Types of Match” section below)
- Proceeds of a letter of credit or binding loan commitment
- Other Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants that meet the requirements outlined below.

### **Not Allowed as Match**

- Costs that are not eligible for grant assistance.
- Costs that are not necessary or an integral part of the project scope.
- Costs that are double counted. (A cost incurred by a sponsor in a project that has been reimbursed by RCO shall not be used as a match on another RCO project.)
- Costs associated with meeting a mitigation requirement for another project or action (e.g., permit requirement Federal Energy Regulatory Commission relicensing, Habitat Conservation Plan, and legal settlement). See “Mitigation Funds as Match” below.
- Existing sponsor assets such as real property or developments.

## Match Requirements

Before the board awards a grant, the required match must be secured so the project can move forward. All matching resources must meet all the following criteria:

- Be an integral and necessary part of the approved project
- Be part of the work identified in the application and grant agreement
- Be for eligible work types or elements
- Be committed to the project

RCO rules governing projects apply to the grant applicant's match. For example, if a grant applicant uses donated land as a match, RCO rules requiring the land to remain in public recreation use forever apply to the donated land as well.

Except for grant applications submitted in the same biennium, matching resources or board grants committed in one board-funded project must not be used as match in another board-funded project.<sup>31</sup>

The board may require the applicant to provide a portion of its matching resources in local resources.<sup>32</sup>

## Match Availability and Certification

To help ensure the project is ready for implementation when approved, the applicant must have matching funds available for expenditure before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves funding. The applicant must sign and submit a Certification of Match Form to ensure the project is included in the funding recommendation. The applicant is advised to plan for a project with match dependent on a citizen vote or ballot measure. This certification is due at least one calendar month before board action.<sup>33</sup> The form and deadlines for certifying match are on the RCO website.

RCO may declare a project ineligible if there is no guarantee that matching funds are available. That project may be passed over in favor of a project with match in place. Such decisions are based on the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's confidence in the applicant's ability to have the match in place when required.

When another Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant is used as match, the certification of match will be conditioned on receipt of the other grant or on the sponsor

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<sup>31</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-045(7)

<sup>32</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-045

<sup>33</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-040(3)

providing the match from other resources. To prevent a backlog of unspent grants, the sponsor must finish the project by the earliest completion date of the two grants.<sup>34</sup>

## Types of Match

### Donations

Donations are eligible only as matching funds and are not reimbursable. This means RCO will not pay more than the sponsor's out-of-pocket expenses. Valuing donations of equipment, labor (including inmate or community service labor), and material is discussed in *Manual 8: Reimbursements*. RCO strongly encourages applicants to secure written confirmations of all donations planned as match and attach the donation letters to the PRISM Online applications.

Donated land must expand existing habitat land or stand on its own as a viable recreation or conservation area. Review *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects* before taking title to property that will be donated and used as match. Manual 3 outlines the requirements for valuing the property and for securing a donation statement from the seller.

### Force Account

Force account refers to use of a sponsor's staff (labor), equipment, or materials. These contributions are treated as expenditures for billing purposes.

### Other Grants

In some cases, a sponsor may use funds awarded from a separate grant program as its match. Other grants are eligible as long as the purposes are similar and grant sources do not restrict or diminish the use, availability, or value of the project area. These grants are eligible only as matching funds and are not reimbursable.

The eligibility of federal funds to be used as a match may be governed by federal and state requirements and thus will vary with individual program policies.

An applicant must clearly identify in the grant application all grants to be used as match. RCO will help determine if the source is compatible with Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants.

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<sup>34</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2004-08 and 2006-13b

## Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Grants as Match<sup>35</sup>

Another Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant may be used to help meet the match requirements if the following criteria are met:

- The grants are not from the same Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant program.
- Only elements eligible in both grant programs are counted as the match.
- Each grant is evaluated independently and on its own merits, as if the match were coming from elsewhere.
- Except for state agencies and Native American tribes, at least 10 percent of the total cost of the eligible elements being matched is provided in the form of a non-state, non-federal contribution.
- The grant applications are submitted in the same biennium.<sup>36</sup>

For evaluation scoring, a RCO grant used as match will not count toward the award of matching share points.<sup>37</sup>

Matching resources also must conform to the deadlines discussed in section 1, "Grant Process and Timeline."

## Mitigation Funds as Match

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board allows use of impact fees and mitigation cash payments, such as money from a fund established as a mitigation requirement, as match if the money has been passed from the mitigating entity to an eligible applicant, and the board's grant does not replace mitigation money, repay the mitigation fund, or in any way supplant the obligation of the mitigating entity.

## Federal Rules

For a project funded with federal funds or other grants that are used by RCO as match to a federal source, the grant sponsor must comply with [Part 200-Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards](#) and RCO may require additional information.

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<sup>35</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2005-24

<sup>36</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-045

<sup>37</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2014-06

## Records and Reimbursement

### Sponsors Must Pay First

RCO pays grants through reimbursement. A sponsor may request reimbursement only after paying employees and vendors. RCO does not provide money before vendors are paid. Except as otherwise provided below, RCO will pay only at the percentage identified in the grant agreement after the sponsor has presented an invoice documenting costs incurred and compliance with the provisions of the grant agreement.

RCO will not pay more than the sponsor's out-of-pocket costs.

Reimbursement shall not be approved for any donations, including donated land. RCO may pay an escrow account directly for RCO's share of the approved cost of land and related costs if the sponsor indicates a temporary lack of money to buy the land on a reimbursement basis. Before release of a RCO grant into escrow, the sponsor must provide RCO with a copy of a binding agreement between the sponsor and the seller, all required documentation, and evidence of deposit of the sponsor's share, identified in the grant agreement, into an escrow account. See *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects* for more information on escrow payments.

Billing procedures are explained further in Manual 8: Reimbursements.

### Records

Sponsors must keep detailed records of all funded project costs including force account values and donated contributions. Refer to *Manual 8: Reimbursements* for details and instructions regarding audits, record retention, and documents required for reimbursement.

### Audits

All records relevant to a project funded by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board must be on file with the grant sponsor and are subject to audit by the State and inspection by RCO. If the auditor's inspection of the records discloses any charges incorrectly claimed and reimbursed, cash restitution of the incorrect amount must be made to the board.

# Section 4: Project Evaluations

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## This section covers the following:

- ✓ How project evaluation works
- ✓ Evaluation criteria

## How Project Evaluation Works

The evaluation process begins when the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board adopts the evaluation process<sup>38</sup> and evaluation criteria during public meetings.

The RCO director appoints people to serve on an advisory committee to evaluate each grant proposal. In recruiting members for the committee, RCO seeks to appoint people who possess a statewide perspective and are recognized for their experiences and knowledge of aquatic lands in Washington. The director may appoint *ex officio* members to the advisory committee to provide additional representation and expertise. Visit RCO's website for [membership and other details](#).

An applicant prepares a PowerPoint presentation to address the evaluation criteria and delivers it to the advisory committee during a virtual, oral presentation.<sup>39</sup> Advisory committee members may ask follow-up questions before they score the grant proposal. The virtual online presentation process is broadcast live on YouTube for the public, but the public is not invited to comment.

The advisory committee then scores the grant application using the responses to the criteria, graphics included in the application or provided during the presentation, and summary application materials.

At the same time, RCO scores the objective sections of the application, such as the amount of matching share an applicant is providing and conformance to growth management planning. Staff scores are based on information submitted by the applicant and obtained from the state Departments of Commerce and Health and the state Office of Financial Management.

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<sup>38</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-020

<sup>39</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-24

The advisory committee and staff scores are combined for an application's total evaluation score. The resulting ranked lists are the basis for funding recommendations that the RCO director submits to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, which makes the final decision about funding in public meetings.<sup>40</sup> The public is given an opportunity to comment on the grant proposals before the board makes its decision.

### **Do Not Fund Recommendation<sup>41</sup>**

Occasionally during evaluations, the advisory committee may express significant concerns about a project, such that it would like to discuss a "Do Not Fund" recommendation. If this occurs, the advisory committee may discuss its concerns at the post-evaluation meeting, which takes place after application scores are tabulated.

If a "Do Not Fund" recommendation is scheduled to be considered, RCO will notify the applicant in writing, identify the significant concerns expressed by the evaluators, and invite the applicant to attend the post-evaluation meeting to respond to questions. The applicant also may submit a written response to the evaluators' concerns. To ensure all projects are treated equally, no additional testimony from applicants or visitors is taken at the post-evaluation meeting. The advisory committee determines a "Do Not Fund" recommendation by a simple majority vote of the committee members that participated in application evaluations.

RCO staff will forward to the board a summary of the "Do Not Fund" recommendation and any committee member comments. The board will consider the advisory committee's recommendation at a regularly scheduled public meeting, before the ranked list is adopted (consideration may take place at the same meeting, but the "Do Not Fund" recommendation will be discussed before the ranked list is adopted). The board retains discretion in awarding all grant funds.

### **Growth Management Act Compliance**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board considers an organization's compliance with the Growth Management Act when awarding grants for public facilities.<sup>42</sup> The board gives preference through evaluation scoring to towns, cities, and county applicants who are required to plan under the Act.<sup>43</sup> Scoring for compliance with the Growth Management Act and other staff-scored evaluation criteria is based on the organization's status as of the category's technical completion deadline. RCO uses information reported by the Washington State Department of Commerce for scoring Growth Management Act compliance. Agencies in compliance receive a zero score on the question; out of compliance status results in a minus one score.

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<sup>40</sup>Washington Administrative Code 286-13-050

<sup>41</sup>Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2014-06

<sup>42</sup>Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250

<sup>43</sup>Revised Code of Washington 36.60A



At the time of application, an applicant should consult its organization’s planning department or contact the Washington State Department of Commerce’s [Growth Management Act Division](#) to determine the compliance status. If the organization is out of compliance, this advance inquiry may give the organization time to change its status before the technical completion deadline. RCO is not responsible for changing an organization’s compliance status with the Growth Management Act.

## Evaluating Combination Projects

Projects involving both acquisition and development and/or restoration are evaluated on all criteria for both types of projects. To ensure equal treatment for combination projects, the scoring multiplier for some evaluation criteria is half of that used for individual acquisition and/or development and/or restoration projects.

### Evaluation Criteria

The ALEA program strives to fund projects focused on the following two main program purposes:

- **Protection and Enhancement:** to improve or protect aquatic lands for public purposes
- **Public Access:** to provide and improve public access to aquatic lands.<sup>44</sup>

Below are three tables that reflect the evaluation questions based on the two project purposes above and the seven project types below:

- Acquisition
- Acquisition, Development, and Restoration
- Acquisition and Development
- Acquisition and Restoration
- Development
- Development and Restoration
- Restoration

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<sup>44</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(1)

## Projects Meeting **Both Purposes**: Protection and Enhancement AND Public Access Projects

**Project Types:** Acquisition; Acquisition, Development, and Restoration; Development and Restoration

Question	Project Type	Points	
<b>Unscored</b>			
Project Introduction	All Project Types	0 points	
<b>Scored by Advisory Committee</b>			
1	Fit with Public Access Goals	All Project Types	7.5 points
2	Fit with Protection Goals	All Project Types	7.5 points
3	Need for Public Access– Local Priorities	All Project Types	12.5 points
4	Need for Protection	All Project Types	12.5 points
5	Project Scope–Public Access	All Project Types	7.5 points
6	Suitability for Protection	All Project Types	7.5 points
7	Urgency and Viability	Acquisition Projects	15 points
		Acquisition, Development, and Restoration Projects	5 points
8	Development Design-Fit	Development and Restoration Projects	5 points
		Acquisition, Development, and Restoration Projects	2.5 points
9	Development Design-Budget	Development and Restoration Projects	2.5 points
		Acquisition, Development, and Restoration Projects	2.5 points
10	Restoration Design and Viability	Development and Restoration Projects	7.5 points
		Acquisition, Development, Restoration Projects	5 points
11	Project Engagement-Methods	All Project Types	7.5 points
12	Project Engagement-Community	All Project Types	7.5 points
13	Project Engagement-Partnerships	All Project Types	5 points
<b>Scored by RCO</b>			
14	Green Space Availability	All Project Types	3 points

**Section 4: Project Evaluations**

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Question	Project Type	Points
15 Social Vulnerability	All Project Types	3 points
16 Health Outcomes	All Project Types	3 points
17 Proximity to People	All Project Types	1 point
18 Growth Management Act Preference	All Project Types	0 points
<b>Total Points:</b>		<b>100</b>

## Projects Meeting the **Single Purpose** of Protection and Enhancement

**Project Types:** Acquisition, Acquisition and Restoration, and Restoration

Question	Project Type	Points
<b>Unscored</b>		
Project Introduction	All Project Types	0 points
<b>Scored by the Advisory Committee</b>		
2	Fit with Protection Goals	All Project Types 15 points
4	Need for Protection	All Project Types 20 points
6	Suitability for Protection	All Project Types 15 points
7	Urgency and Viability	Acquisition Projects 20 points
		Acquisition and Restoration Projects 10 points
		Restoration Projects 20 points
10	Restoration Design and Viability	Acquisition and Restoration Projects 10 points
11	Project Engagement-Methods	All Project Types 7.5 points
12	Project Engagement-Community	All Project Types 7.5 points
13	Project Engagement-Partnerships	All Project Types 5 points
<b>Scored by RCO</b>		
14	Green Space Availability	All Project Types 3 points
15	Social Vulnerability	All Project Types 3 points
16	Health Outcomes	All Project Types 3 points
17	Proximity to People	All Project Types 1 point
18	Growth Management Act Preference	All Project Types 0 points
		<b>Total Points: 100</b>

## Projects Meeting the **Single Purpose of Public Access**

**Project Types:** Acquisition, Acquisition and Development, and Development

Question	Project Type	Points
<b>Unscored</b>		
Project Introduction	All Project Types	0 points
<b>Scored by the Advisory Committee</b>		
1	Fit with Public Access Goals	All Project Types 15 points
3	Need for Public Access–Local Priorities	All Project Types 20 points
5	Project Scope–Public Access	All Project Types 15 points
7	Urgency and Viability	Acquisition Projects 20 points
		Acquisition and Development Projects 10 points
8	Development Design-Fit	Development Projects 15 points
		Acquisition and Development Projects 5 points
9	Development Design-Budget	Development Projects 5 points
		Acquisition and Development Projects 5 points
11	Project Engagement-Methods	All Project Types 7.5 points
12	Project Engagement-Community	All Project Types 7.5 points
13	Project Engagement-Partnerships	All Project Types 5 points
<b>Scored by RCO</b>		
14	Green Space Availability	All Project Types 3 points
15	Social Vulnerability	All Project Types 3 points
16	Health Outcomes	All Project Types 3 points
17	Proximity to People	All Project Types 1 point
18	Growth Management Act Preference	All Project Types 0 points
<b>Total Points:</b>		<b>100</b>

## Detailed Evaluation Questions

Applicants must look in the charts above and note which questions they need to answer based on the project purpose (protection and enhancement or public access or both) and project type (acquisition, development, restoration, etc.).

**Project Introduction.** In less than a minute, introduce the project’s location and goals to set the stage for the project.

- Locate the project on statewide, regional, and site maps to help orient the evaluators to the project area and its context in the service area.<sup>45</sup>
- Summarize the site’s condition; the project’s acquisition, development, or renovation goals; and the recreation opportunities the project will provide.

Adopted December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

**1. Fit with Public Access Goals.** How well does this project improve or provide public access to aquatic lands?<sup>46</sup>

- How will this project do the following:
  - Provide new opportunities for people to get to the water and access aquatic resources for recreational and educational purposes?
  - Renovate or improve existing public access to aquatic lands for recreational and educational use?
  - Create non-motorized boating or small boat and pedestrian-oriented access to aquatic lands that is designed to protect the integrity of the environment?
  - Integrate public access in a way that is compatible with the physical features of the site?
  - Increase public awareness of aquatic lands as a finite natural resource with irreplaceable public heritage?
  - What are the environmental benefits of the proposed project?<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>45</sup>NOTE: The service area is the geographic area where most of the anticipated users live, as defined by the applicant.

<sup>46</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150

<sup>47</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(2)

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by three.

Revised December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

**2. Fit with Protection Goals.** How well does this project fit the goals to enhance, improve, or protect aquatic lands?<sup>48</sup>

Additional guidance on ALEA program goals and objectives is in section 2 of this manual.

- How will this project do the following:
  - Protect existing, high-value aquatic land that will contribute to important ecological functions and processes?
  - Improve the ecological function of aquatic resources through the restoration and enhancement of critical marine, estuarine, and freshwater aquatic land?
  - Preserve or establish naturally, self-sustaining aquatic and riparian areas that are a high priority in the larger ecological landscape?
- What are the environmental benefits of the proposed project?<sup>49</sup>

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects meeting only the protection and enhancement purpose are multiplied later by three.

Revised December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

**3. Need for Public Access–Local Priorities.** Describe the need for new or improved recreation facilities, how the need is known, and why existing amenities in the service area do not satisfy the need. A complete response should include the following:

- A simple inventory and condition of relevant outdoor recreation opportunities in the service area.
- Description of gaps in access, opportunity, or service delivery.

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<sup>48</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150

<sup>49</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(2)

- Description of the current and/or anticipated use of the project site and any factors that contribute to fluctuations in use or demand for service.
  - Description of how the need for this project has been identified and prioritized, including whether it is linked to local recreation or open space plans.
- ▲ Point Range: zero to ten points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a quarter. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by two.

Adopted December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

**4. Need for Protection.** What is the need for this project and how will this project address the applicant's protection and enhancement priorities?

- How does the project address priorities in an approved watershed plan, shoreline master plan, species recovery plan, or other state or local plan? Is the project mentioned specifically in the plan?
  - How does the project enhance or complement other nearby protection and enhancement efforts in the watershed or on the shoreline?
  - How is the need for this project supported in studies, surveys, and other analyses?
  - Will the project benefit sensitive, threatened, or endangered species or critical plant and animal communities? If so, how?
  - For Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19, how is the project referenced in the *Action Agenda* developed by the Puget Sound Partnership? The [Action Agenda](#) can be found at the Puget Sound Partnership's website. Evaluators should ignore this question for projects outside Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19.
- ▲ Point Range: zero to ten points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a quarter. The points for projects meeting only the protection and enhancement purpose are multiplied later by two.

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**5. Project Scope–Public Access.** Describe the site’s existing natural and built features. Describe what is being proposed in the project, including land acquisition and/or elements to be built or renovated, and for what purpose.

- What recreation opportunities will this project provide?
- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and half. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by three.

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**6. Suitability for Protection.** Is the site well suited for the intended uses?

- Are the location and natural features of the site, for example the size, topography, soil conditions, and natural amenities, well suited for the intended uses?
  - What are the historic and current human uses of the site?
  - What are the historic and current ecological functions of the site?
  - What steps will be taken to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to the site once it has been acquired, restored, enhanced, or developed? Possible impacts to address could include flooding, extreme tides, storms, sources of contamination, and long-term impacts due to development and climate change.
  - Are there similar sites available near the area that provide a similar opportunity or is this property a one-of-a-kind opportunity to address an ecological need?
  - Is the site size and configuration sufficient to meet the specified ecological goals on its own? Possible things to address include water quantity and flow patterns at the site, patch size and shape, edge and interior habitat, and habitat corridors.
  - Is the site contiguous with other conservation areas or actions that address similar ecological functions and processes?
- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects that meet both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects that meet enhancement and restoration only purposes are multiplied later by three.

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**7. Urgency and Viability.** Only projects including acquisition answer this question.

- Why purchase this particular property at this time? How viable are the anticipated future uses and benefits of the site?
  - If ALEA funding is not made available, will high-priority aquatic land habitat and/or public access be lost?
  - What are the alternatives to acquiring the property?
  - Is there an immediate threat or will the property be available for acquisition or enhancement at a later time?
  - What is the likelihood that the property will be converted to a non-recreational use or that aquatic habitat resources will be impacted or lost if the property is not acquired now?
  - Is there a threat to the public availability of the resources at the site?
  - Will the site be available immediately for public use or will the site require some improvement to make it available for public use? If improvements are necessary, when will the improvements be made?
  - What are the nature and condition of existing surrounding land use as well as future factors such as shoreline designation, zoning, or comprehensive or project-specific planning that may impact the viability of the site?
  - Describe land management practices in the area that may affect the viability of the site?
  - Who will maintain the site and what resources are necessary and available for that maintenance?
- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. For acquisition only projects, the points for projects meeting both purposes are multiplied later by three and for those meeting only one purpose are multiplied later by four. For projects that combine acquisition with either development or restoration and that meet only one purpose are multiplied later by two.

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**8. Development Design-Fit.** Only projects including development answer this question. Describe how the design aligns with the need, location, and project scope. Describe how the design addresses any constraints and whether the design provides access for users of all abilities. Applicants may choose to describe design elements such as parking and site access, accessibility features, environmental considerations,

green infrastructure, cultural or historic interpretation, mitigation of public use impacts, etc. If available, include design visuals.

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects that meet both protection and enhancement and public access purposes that combine acquisition, development, and restoration are multiplied later by a half point. The points for projects that meet public access purposes and are for development are multiplied later by three.

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**9. Development Design-Budget.** Only projects including development answer this question. Provide an overview of the project budget and how the cost estimate was determined. If the proposal includes additional site design and permitting, what is the process and anticipated schedule to be construction-ready?

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by a half.

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**10. Restoration Design and Viability.** Only projects including restoration answer this question.

- How does the project address the stated restoration or enhancement need? Is the project well designed? Will the project lead to sustainable ecological functions and processes over time?
- How will the site be treated to re-establish the desired ecological processes and functions?
- What habitat functions will be enhanced or restored?
- How well does the proposed restoration or enhancement design or actions address desired long-term results?
- What is the certainty that the restoration or enhancement actions will be successful?
- Will the project require decreasing involvement over time?
- What is the habitat quality and land management practices in the area that may affect the viability of the site?
- What is the nature and condition of existing surrounding land use as well as future concerns such as shoreline designation, zoning, or comprehensive or project-specific planning?

- How will the site be managed over time to maintain the desired ecological processes and functions?
- Who will maintain the site and what resources are necessary and available to do it?

▲ Point Range: zero to five points. The points for restoration-only projects are multiplied later by four. The points for projects that combine acquisition and restoration are multiplied later by two. The points for projects that combine development and restoration are multiplied later by one and a half.

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**11. Project Engagement-Methods.** RCO encourages applicants to use a variety of methods to gather input on projects. How were the people who will be most impacted by the project engaged? Describe what methods were used and the populations engaged, including underserved populations and/or Native American tribes. Describe the relevance of that participation for the population size, demographic or socioeconomic conditions of the community or service area.

▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are later multiplied by one and a half.

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**12. Project Engagement-Community.** How has community input influenced the project design?<sup>50</sup>

▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are later multiplied by one and a half.

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**13. Project Engagement-Partnerships.** Describe any community partnerships that are providing support for the project whether through financial, in-kind, project delivery, or other means. Partnerships may be formal or informal. Describe the significance of the partnerships within the community or service area.

▲ Point Range: zero to five.

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**14. Green Space Availability** (applicant does not answer in evaluation session).

Green space availability scores are determined using spatial data analysis from RCO's equity review of grant programs. For that review, census tracts were classified as having High (more than eight acres per one thousand residents), Medium (three to

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<sup>50</sup>For acquisition projects, RCO staff suggests focusing on how community input influenced site selection.

eight acres per one thousand residents), and Low (less than three acres per one thousand residents) green space per capita.

▲ Point Range: one to three points

One point      High green space

Two points     Medium green space

Three points    Low green space

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**15. Social Vulnerability** (applicant does not answer in evaluation session). Social vulnerability scores use a combination of sixteen social and economic conditions such as limited English, crowded housing, and population living in poverty. The scores are based on information from the Washington Tracking Network’s [Information by Location mapping tool](#).

▲ Point Range: zero to three points

Zero points     Vulnerability rating one to two

One point       Vulnerability rating three to five

Two points      Vulnerability rating six to seven

Three points    Vulnerability rating eight to ten

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**16. Health Outcomes** (applicant does not answer in evaluation session). This score is from the Washington Tracking Network’s [Information by Location mapping tool](#), which shows the Health Disparity Index scores and Poor Health Outcomes ranking.

▲ Point Range: zero to three points

Zero points     Health outcome rating one to two

One point       Health outcome rating three to five

Two points      Health outcome rating six to seven

Three points    Health outcome rating eight to ten

Adopted December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

**17. Proximity to People** (applicant does not answer in evaluation session). RCO is required by law to give funding preference to projects in populated areas. Populated areas are defined as a town or city with a population of 5,000 or more, or a county with a population density of 250 or more people per square mile.<sup>51</sup> Is the project in an area meeting this definition?

▲ Point Range: zero to one point

Zero points      No

One point        Yes

**18. Growth Management Act Preference** (applicant does not answer in evaluation session). Has the applicant<sup>52</sup> made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act?<sup>53</sup> State law requires the following:

- A. Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant has adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations as required by Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040.
- B. When reviewing such requests, the state agency shall accord additional preference to applicants that have adopted the comprehensive plan and development regulations. An applicant is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for adopting a comprehensive plan and development regulations if it:
  - Adopts or has adopted within the time periods specified in state law;
  - Adopts or has adopted by the time it requests a grant or loan; or
  - Demonstrates substantial progress toward adopting within the time periods specified in state law. An agency that is more than six months out of compliance with the time periods has not demonstrated substantial progress.
- C. A request from an applicant planning under state law shall be accorded no additional preference based on subsection (B) over a request from an applicant not planning under this state law.

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<sup>51</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25.250

<sup>52</sup>Applicant in this question means counties, cities, and towns only. This segment of the question does not apply to state agencies, tribes, nonprofits, or lead entities.

<sup>53</sup>Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250

Scores for this this question are based on information from the state Department of Commerce, Growth Management Division. If an agency’s comprehensive plan, development regulations, or amendments have been appealed to a Growth Management Act Hearings Board, they cannot be penalized during the period of appeal. Scoring occurs after RCO’s technical completion deadline.

▲ Point Range: RCO staff subtracts a maximum of one point.

- Minus one point      The applicant does not meet the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.
  
- Zero points            The applicant meets the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.
  
- Zero points            The applicant is a state, tribal, or federal agency.