

Manual 20

Family Forest Fish Passage Program

June 2023

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Section 1:

Introduction

In this section, you'll learn about the following:

- ✓ The Family Forest Fish Passage Program
- ✓ Where to get information

About Family Forest Fish Passage Program

The Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) is a grant program established by the Washington State Legislature in 2003¹ to help small forest landowners correct fish passage barriers on their forestlands. The program provides 75-100 percent of the cost to correct the passage barrier.

Each year, projects are funded based on a prioritized list. Projects that provide the most benefit to native fish populations are considered the highest priority and are funded first. Eligible projects that are not funded in any year remain on the list until funding becomes available. Project applications are scored as they are received and are inserted into the ranked list, sorted by the project score.

The program is administered jointly by the Department of Natural Resources, the Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). The FFFPP Fish Team is staffed by employees from these three partnering agencies. The Fish Team provides information and assistance to small forest landowners and project sponsors through the entire process, from project eligibility through completion. Each agency has its own unique role in supporting the program.

- **Department of Natural Resources:** This state agency's Small Forest Landowner Office assists landowners in enrolling in FFFPP and determines landowner eligibility for the program.

¹Revised Code of Washington 76.13.150

- **Department of Fish and Wildlife:** This state agency evaluates fish passage barriers and ranks eligible projects.
- **Recreation and Conservation Office:** This state agency provides funding, grant administration, and project management. RCO writes, administers, and manages grant agreements using a project database known as PRISM.

Where to Get Information

This Manual

This manual provides information on fish passage restoration projects funded by FFFPP grants, outlines the primary responsibilities of the grant recipients (referred to as project sponsors), and explains how additional information and help may be obtained. To learn more information or attend a funded project workshop, contact a member of the Fish Team below.

The Fish Team

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Relay Service for the Hearing Impaired, call 711

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Other RCO Grant Manuals Needed

Visit RCO's website to obtain copies of these publications.

- [Manual 5: Restoration Projects](#)
- [Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations](#)
- [Manual 8: Reimbursements](#)

Resource Materials

The Fish Team has other publications designed to explain its programs. These include the following:

- [Program website](#)
- [FFPPP fact sheet](#)
- [Program guidelines](#)
- [Technical assistance guide](#)—*Water Crossing Design Guidelines*

Alternative Formats

Relay service for the hearing impaired: Call 711.

All publications can be made available in an alternate format. Contact a Fish Team member for assistance.

Workshops

The Fish Team hosts a workshop for project sponsors soon after funded projects are announced. This workshop is usually held once a year via a webinar and then is posted on the RCO [FFPPP website](#). The workshop includes important information on the following:

- **Project timeline and deliverables**—including compliance with the grant agreement.
- **Amendments**—including project changes, time extensions, and cost increases.
- **Construction Planning**—including construction plans, design requirements, bid procedures, match donations, specifications.

- **Permits**—including which permits may be needed for the project.
- **Project implementation**—including billings, milestones, progress reports, inspections, long-term compliance.

Section 2:

The Application Process

In this section, you'll learn about the following:

- ✓ Eligible projects, applicants, and sponsors
- ✓ The project workflow

Eligibility and Application

Eligible Projects

To be eligible, a project must meet all the following criteria:

- Located on forestland owned by a small forest landowner
- Located on a fish-bearing stream
- Be a barrier to fish passage
- Replace a structure that was installed before May 14, 2003
- Located at a road crossing

Eligible Applicants

Applicants are small forest landowners who harvests less than 2 million board feet of timber on average per year from their forestland in Washington.²

A small forest landowner may submit an [online application](#) to the Department of Natural Resources or mail an application form (Appendix A). The department will determine

²Revised Code of Washington 76.09.450

applicant and project eligibility. If more information is needed, the department may schedule a site visit with the landowner. Another site visit also may be arranged with a landowner by a Department of Fish and Wildlife biologist to determine if a structure is a barrier to fish. The Fish Team will assign a priority to the barrier based on barrier severity, habitat condition, number of fish species, and conservation status of the fish species affected by the barrier.

The Fish Team notifies applicants when their projects are approved for funding. Because most small forest landowners do not have experience implementing government-funded fish passage projects, they are strongly encouraged to work with a third-party project sponsor. The Fish Team maintains a list of project sponsors and works with landowners to identify and assign third-party sponsors for their projects. To be added to the project sponsor list, contact a Fish Team member.

Eligible Project Sponsors

Once a project is approved for funding, the Fish Team assigns a project sponsor, and often a project engineer, to manage project design, engineering, and construction.

Eligible project sponsors include the following:

- The owner of the fish barrier
- Salmon enhancement groups
- Conservation districts
- Nonprofit organizations
- Tribes
- Counties

A project sponsor is the person or organization that receives the grant and signs the project grant agreement with RCO. The project sponsor is responsible for working with the landowner (if a third-party sponsor), engineer, and Fish Team to administer and implement the funded project. Section 3 of this manual covers funded project management in more detail.

The FFFPP grant process from start to finish is in the project workflow, below. The workflow identifies project tasks, who is responsible for each task, and the relative timing in a typical project scope of work.

Workflow

Date	Person Responsible	Activity	Notes
Year-round	Landowner	Submit application	Annual deadline is May 1
Year 1			
May-June	Fish Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects funded • Landowners notified • Sponsors selected • Engineers assigned • Grant agreements developed 	
June	Fish Team, Sponsor	Grant management workshop	Training for project sponsors and their fiscal staff
June	Engineer, Sponsor	Initial site visit	Sponsor schedules initial site visit with permitting agencies, engineer, landowner, and Fish Team
Summer	Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site survey • Alternative development • Initial cost estimate 	Submit Correction Analysis Form and budget to Fish Team
Summer	Sponsor	Cultural resources survey	Conduct cultural resources survey if required. Submit report to RCO grants manager at least 90 days before construction or geotechnical work.
Fall	Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final design • Engineer's final cost estimate 	
Fall	Fish Team	Amend grant agreement	Amend grant agreement to reflect engineer's estimated cost of construction
Fall	Sponsor	Permitting	Apply for permits
Year 2			
January-March	Engineer, Sponsor	Bid solicitation	Engineer works with sponsor to develop bid package and solicit for construction contract (including bridge or culvert procurement)

Date	Person Responsible	Activity	Notes
July-September	Engineer, Sponsor	Construction	
October-December	Fish Team	Post construction inspection	
January-March	Sponsor	Project closeout	Sponsor works with RCO grants manager to close project.

Section 3:

Project Implementation

In this section, you'll learn about the following:

- ✓ Grant agreement
- ✓ State fish passage criteria
- ✓ Project design
- ✓ Cultural resources
- ✓ Project management
- ✓ Reporting
- ✓ Amendments

Grant Agreement

After a FFFPP project is awarded funding, RCO will work with the project sponsor to complete an application in PRISM, RCO's online project management database. Materials required to complete the application include the following:

- [Authorizing Resolution Form](#)
- [Landowner Acknowledgement Form](#)
- Photograph (provided by the Department of Fish and Wildlife)

The application forms the basis of the contract between RCO and the project sponsor, called a grant agreement. A [sample grant agreement](#) is on the RCO website. It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to comply with the terms and conditions of this agreement.

Public Disclosure Rules

RCO records and files are public records that are subject to the Public Records Act.³ More information about [RCO's disclosure practices](#) is available online.

State Fish Passage Criteria

All fish passage projects in Washington must meet state fish passage criteria. Department of Fish and Wildlife staff can provide design assistance and the local habitat biologist will assist during the permitting process to ensure the chosen design option meets state standards.

Several alternatives are available to determine the best option for barrier correction. The [Water Crossing Design Guidelines](#) provide an in-depth discussion of each alternative and the considerations that should be addressed during design.

Bridges, culverts, and, rarely, fords are acceptable options for providing fish passage on private forestland roads. In addition, barrier removal and road abandonment projects are also eligible for FFFPP grants. Barrier removal and road abandonment provide the highest benefit to fish and are cost-effective but may limit or eliminate access to landowner property.

Throughout the design process the project sponsor will coordinate with the landowner project engineer, permitting agencies, and the Fish Team. The goal is to produce a cost-effective design and correction option that will meet state fish passage criteria, landowner's needs, and permitting agencies' requirements.

Project Design

If the sponsor does not want to hire an engineer, the Fish Team can assign a program engineer to design the sponsor's project, which often saves the program time and money.

The first step in the design process is a pre-design site visit. The Fish Team will help the project sponsor set up a site visit with the landowner, engineer, permitting agencies, local Department of Natural Resources' forester, and Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist. The purpose of this initial site visit is to discuss the various fish passage options, solicit input from the permitting agencies, including fish passage design requirements, and work out any additional design considerations. The engineer may use the site visit as an opportunity to survey the site and collect other relevant site information necessary for the design.

³Revised Code of Washington 42.56

Project design starts with the engineer's site survey and completion of a [Correction Analysis Form](#) (also referred to as the CAF). The form provides one to three conceptual options and cost estimates for barrier correction for a project. The project engineer will complete the form and provide it to the project sponsor and Fish Team for review. The Fish Team, project sponsor, and engineer work together to select a preferred option. It is the project sponsor's responsibility to share and confirm the preferred option with the landowner. After this discussion, the project sponsor and engineer can move forward with final agreed design.

The project engineer will provide permit-ready designs to the sponsor for permit application and review. At a minimum, these designs include drawings with a plan view, stream cross section, stream profile, and road profile.

Permitting

Most projects are permitted as a Forest Practices Hydraulic Project by the Department of Natural Resources. Project sponsors are encouraged to consult with that department's forest practice forester and the Department of Fish and Wildlife's habitat biologist while planning projects to verify the appropriate permit pathway for the project.

If a project is a Forest Practices Hydraulic Project, the sponsor must submit a Forest Practices Application to the Department of Natural Resources. See [Forest Practices Forms and Instructions](#). The sponsor should indicate on the Forest Practices Application that the landowner has applied for FFFPP and include an activity map.

Design documents submitted as part of the Forest Practices Hydraulic Project process will need to meet the requirements of the Department of Natural Resources' engineering [checklist](#). For questions about the checklist, please contact the local Department of Natural Resources' [regional office](#).

If the Department of Natural Resources determines that the project is not a Forest Practices Hydraulic Project, the project will need a Hydraulic Project Approval permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project sponsor may submit an application to the Department of Fish and Wildlife's [Aquatic Protection Permitting System](#). If permits are required from multiple agencies (e.g., Army Corps of Engineers, Washington Department of Ecology, county), including the Hydraulic Project Approval permit, then sponsors may use the Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application, known as the JARPA. Information can be found at the [One-Stop JARPA Resource Center](#).

Sponsors are strongly encouraged to work with all relevant permitting agencies during the early stages of project development to avoid delays when applying for project permits.

Cultural Resources

[Governor's Executive Order 21-02](#), Archaeological and Cultural Resources, requires that state agencies review 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 the same compliance for projects with federal involvement; for example, projects on federal lands, 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 FFFPP 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. Sponsors should not initiate consultation with either of these groups. The review may require sponsors to conduct cultural resources surveys or may add requirements to grant agreements.

Sponsors 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 sponsors 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 applications.

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

Project Management

Preconstruction Required Documentation

The following must be completed and provided to RCO before a sponsor is eligible for reimbursement of project construction costs.

- Signed grant agreement
- Landowner agreement (see below)
- Final design
- Cultural resources documentation
- Permits
- Other required project milestones and/or special conditions as specified in the grant agreement

If the sponsor is a third-party organization and not the landowner, the project sponsor and landowner must sign a [landowner agreement](#). This agreement identifies and confirms the terms, conditions, and obligations of the project sponsor, who is undertaking a project, and the landowner, who owns the land on which the project will take place.

At a minimum, the agreement allows the sponsor, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources, and RCO access to the land for project implementation, inspection, maintenance, and monitoring. It also clearly states that the landowner will not intentionally compromise the integrity of the project, and it describes and assigns all project monitoring and maintenance responsibilities.

A landowner agreement remains in effect for at least 10 years after the final payment to the project sponsor from RCO.

Pre-Agreement Costs

Pre-agreement costs are those costs associated with eligible project actions required before the grant agreement is fully executed. Before entering into an agreement with RCO, the project sponsor may conduct project-related activities such as landowner meetings and on-site consultation with the project engineer and permitting agencies. These activities are eligible pre-agreement costs and the project sponsor may request reimbursement for these costs once the project is under agreement.

Reimbursement and Eligible Costs

FFFPP is a reimbursement grant program, which means sponsors incur costs and then provide expenditure documentation to RCO for reimbursement. RCO [Manual 8: Reimbursements](#) describes reimbursement policies used by RCO.

However, RCO recognizes there are times project sponsors may not have the money to implement parts of a project. In that case, short-term cash advances are available. See RCO Manual 8 and [advance request policies](#) for more information.

If the project has a match component (see below), PRISM's e-billing system automatically calculates and credits the documented sponsor match in each reimbursement request submitted to RCO. PRISM automatically factors in the required project match into each reimbursement, so the project match percentage is maintained through the entire life of the project. RCO [Manual 5: Restoration Projects](#) describes eligible construction and administrative costs.

RCO will reimburse sponsors within thirty days of receipt of a complete and accurate invoice, though most payments are processed within two weeks. The last 10 percent, or final billing (depending on if the sponsor has billed at least 90 percent of the grant) of project costs will be retained until RCO completes a final inspection. The final billing must be accompanied by a final report submitted using the online PRISM reporting module.

Any significant change orders during project construction that may result in cost overruns or suggest a major change in project scope must be approved in advance by RCO.

After project work is complete, the final billing must be accompanied by a final report. All billings and reports are submitted through PRISM. The project retainage is released after the final report is approved by RCO.

Landowner Cost Share (Match)

The landowner may be required to share the costs of the project (referred to as match) if timber was harvested within three years of the project being funded by FFFPP. Match is a non-FFFPP grant contribution made to complete the project.

The Department of Natural Resources will consult with the Washington Department of Revenue to determine if match is required. Typically, landowners share about 25 percent of the cost of a project up to a maximum of \$5,000 for projects on the west side of the state and \$2,000 for projects on the east side. Landowners must provide 25 percent match or a maximum of \$500 for crossing abandonment projects.

The landowner and project sponsor will be informed if match is required, and that amount will be included in grant agreement budget. Match can include in-kind services, such as providing road gravel, an on-site location for spoils disposal, or large wood for habitat enhancement. More detail on eligible matching funds can be found in RCO [Manual 8: Reimbursements](#) an examples of eligible match are listed below:

- Appropriations or cash
- Corrections labor
- Donations—equipment, labor, materials
- Force account—the value of using sponsor’s equipment, labor, or materials
- Grants—local, state, federal, or private

Other RCO 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.

RCO will help determine if the source is compatible with the FFFPP grant.

Reporting

Progress Reports

Sponsors are required to enter two progress reports a year using the PRISM online progress reporting tool. Progress reports are identified in the grant agreement milestone dates. The progress report must answer the following five questions:

- Are there any significant challenges that might hinder progress on meeting the project milestones?
- What work was accomplished during the reporting period?
- Does the sponsor anticipate any changes to the project?
- What work is planned for the next reporting period?

- Does the sponsor anticipate the need to request an amendment to the grant agreement in the next six months?

PRISM automatically e-mails the sponsor when a report is due. RCO staff may provide feedback on the report or ask for clarification of submitted information. For more information and [training on the PRISM online reporting tools](#) see the RCO website.

Final Report

Sponsors are required to complete and submit a final report in PRISM at the completion of their projects and within ninety days after the grant agreement expires. See the Section 4 for details.

Amendments

Cost Increases

On occasion, the cost of completing a project exceeds the amount written into the grant agreement. Project sponsors should contact RCO and discuss potential cost increases. If it is decided a cost increase is warranted, the project sponsor should provide a written request to RCO stating the amount of funding needed and a description of why the additional funds are needed. If funds are available, and the increased costs are determined to be eligible expenses, a cost increase will be considered by the Fish Team.

Time Extensions

Projects typically are completed within two years. Project milestone dates, including a project completion date, are written into the grant agreement. If milestones dates change, please contact RCO or request a time extension through a PRISM progress report. Sponsors can update project milestones via the progress report.

Section 4: Completing a Project

In this section, you'll learn about the following:

- ✓ Site inspections
- ✓ Project closeout
- ✓ Site maintenance and long-term obligations

Site Inspections

Interim

Interim inspections, normally coordinated with the sponsor and/or project engineer, may be made by the Fish Team during project implementation to help resolve any apparent or anticipated problems and to monitor project progress.

Final

Once construction is complete, RCO will schedule a final site inspection with the project sponsor. This will occur after all elements of the project scope have been completed and the sponsor is ready to invoice for final payment. The final site inspection is intended to ensure that all project elements have been completed as per the permitted design and as described in the project scope of work.

Post Project

Post project inspections occur by the project sponsor and RCO to inspect completed work and to monitor long-term success of the completed project. Except in case of emergency, at least 48-hour notice shall be given to the landowner before entry.

Project Closure

The final site inspection is the first step in closing out a completed project. If no changes are identified, the project sponsor can submit the final report and final invoice in PRISM. The project sponsor should ensure that all required documents have been attached in PRISM.

Materials Required for Project Closure

- Landowner agreement
- Final design/as-builts (only required if the completed project is significantly different from final designs)
- Final report in PRISM
- Final invoice

Final Report

Sponsors must complete and submit final reports in PRISM when they complete their projects. Sponsors are asked to provide final project descriptions, narratives, and information about the scope and costs of the project. Sponsors will verify or update metrics reported through earlier progress reports and billings.

RCO can return a report to provide feedback or ask for clarification of the information submitted. RCO will determine whether any amendments will be required before closing a project.

The grant agreement includes the deadline for the PRISM final report. PRISM will automatically e-mail sponsors when the report is due.

Audits

All records relevant to projects funded by FFFPP must be on file with the grant sponsors 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 program.

Site Maintenance and Long-term Obligations

The RCO landowner agreement is between the landowner and project sponsor. The agreement is in place for ten years and covers the constructed project. The purpose of this agreement is to identify and confirm the terms, conditions, and obligations agreed

upon between the grant sponsor, who is undertaking a project funded by RCO, and the landowner, who owns the property on which the project will take place. [Manual 7: Long-Term Obligations](#) includes information on the grant agreement and project compliance.

In addition to RCO requirements, the landowner is required to maintain fish passage in perpetuity as specified by [Revised Code of Washington 77.57.030](#). For questions about this requirement, contact the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Appendix A: Program Forms

[Landowner Application](#): This Department of Natural Resources form is the first step for landowners to enroll in the FFFPP program. More information on minimum program eligibility requirements for small forest landowners is in [Section 2](#).

[Applicant Authorization Resolution Form](#): Project sponsors are required to complete and attach this form when completing the PRISM application for a funded project.

[Landowner Acknowledgement Form](#): Project sponsors are required to complete and attach this form when completing the PRISM application for a funded project.

[Correction Analysis Form](#): The project engineer may use this form when considering potential project alternatives.

[Landowner Agreement Form](#): Third-party sponsors must complete and attach the form to PRISM before construction. More information on this form is in [Section 3](#).