


Manual 20

Family Forest Fish Passage Program

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Section 1: Introduction

This section covers the following:

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

Family Forest Fish Passage Program

The Washington State Legislature established the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (FFFPP) in 2003¹ to help small forest landowners correct fish passage barriers on their forestlands. The grant 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. Projects not funded remain on the list until funding becomes available. Project applications are scored as they are received and are inserted into the ranked list 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. 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. The program also is overseen by a Steering Committee, staffed by the three partnering agencies as well as a representative from the Washington Farm Forestry Association. The Steering Committee reviews and approves program

¹Revised Code of Washington 76.13.150

policies, funding decisions, and other significant program development considerations.

- **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.
- **Department of Fish and Wildlife:** This state agency evaluates fish passage barriers and ranks eligible projects.
- **Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO):** 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 or attend a funded project workshop, contact a member of the Fish Team below.

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Department of Natural Resources' Small Forest Landowner [Website](#)

Other RCO Grant Manuals

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](#)
- [FFFPP landowner application](#)
- [FFFPP brochure](#)
- [Technical assistance guide](#)—Department of Fish and Wildlife Water Crossing Design Guidelines
- RCO [FFFPP website](#)

Alternative Format

To get this manual and other publications in an alternative format, please contact a Fish Team member for help. People with hearing or speech impairments may request help by dialing 711 for the Washington Telecommunications Relay Service.

Sponsor Training

The Fish Team hosts a training for project sponsors as needed or requested, after funded projects are announced. A pre-recorded webinar is posted on the RCO FFFPP website. The [webinar](#) 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, and specifications.
- **Permits** including which permits may be needed for the project.
- **Project implementation** including billings, milestones, progress reports, inspections, and long-term compliance.

Additional Rules and Instructions

RCO 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.

Section 2: The Application Process

This section covers the following:

- ✓ State fish passage criteria
- ✓ Eligible projects, applicants, and sponsors
- ✓ Project workflow

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 also are eligible for grants. Barrier removal and road abandonment provide the highest benefit to fish and are cost-effective but may limit 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.

Eligible Projects, Applicants, and Sponsors

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 barrier that was installed before May 14, 2003
- Located at a road crossing that is accessing forestland

Eligible Applicants

Applicants are small forest landowners who harvest less than 2 million board feet of timber a year on average 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 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 the applicant when the project is 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.

²Revised Code of Washington 76.09.450

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.

Project Workflow

Year-round

Application

- Landowner submits application, which is accepted year-round.

Year One (Odd Years)

Spring-Summer

Project Preparation

- Fish Team funds project, notifies landowner, selects sponsor, assigns an engineer, and writes the grant agreement.
- Sponsor attends a training for the project sponsor and fiscal staff.
- Sponsor schedules initial site visit with permitting agencies, engineer, landowner, and Fish Team.

Summer

Surveys

- Engineer completes a site survey, develops alternatives and initial cost estimate and submits a Correction Analysis Form and budget to the Fish Team.
- Sponsor conducts a cultural resources survey if required and submits a report to RCO grants manager at least ninety days before construction or geotechnical work.

Fall

Cost Estimates

- Engineer completes final design and engineer's final cost estimate.

Fall-Winter

Permits

- Sponsor applies for permits.

Year Two (Even Years)

Winter-Spring

Construction Bids

- Engineer works with sponsor to develop bid package and solicit for construction contract (including bridge or culvert procurement).

Summer-Fall

Construction

- Engineer and sponsor begin construction.

Fall

Inspections

- Fish Team does post construction inspection.

Winter-Spring

Wrap Up

- Sponsor works with RCO grants manager to close project.

Section 3: Project Implementation

This section covers the following:

- ✓ Grant agreement
- ✓ Project design
- ✓ Permitting
- ✓ Cultural resources
- ✓ Project management
- ✓ Getting paid
- ✓ Landowner cost share (match)
- ✓ Reporting
- ✓ Amendments

Grant Agreement

After a 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](#)
- [Electronic Signature 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.

Project Design

The first step in the design process is a pre-design site visit. The project sponsor will schedule a site visit with the landowner, engineer, a member of the Fish Team, and the local permitting agencies (e.g., Department of Natural Resources forester and Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat biologist.) The purpose of this initial site visit is to discuss 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 site information necessary for the design.

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 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. A Basis of Design report also may be required if deemed necessary by the Fish Team.

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.

³Revised Code of Washington 42.56

Permitting

Most projects are permitted as a Forest Practices Hydraulic Project by the Department of Natural Resources. The project sponsor is encouraged to consult with that department's forest practice forester and the Department of Fish and Wildlife's habitat biologist while planning a project 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 in 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 or the Forest Practices Application, please contact the local Department of Natural Resources' [forester](#) for the region where the project is located.

If the Department of Natural Resources determines that the project is not a Forest Practices Hydraulic Project, the project sponsor must apply for a Hydraulic Project Approval permit from the Department of Fish and Wildlife. The project sponsor may apply in 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 the project sponsor may use the Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application, known as the JARPA. Information can be found at the [One-Stop JARPA Resource Center](#).

The sponsor is 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 similar 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 and all proposed project actions, 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.

RCO has an agreement with an archaeologist to conduct the cultural resources investigations and reporting for FFFPP projects. It is recommended, but not required, that sponsors use this archaeologist. If sponsors choose to use different archaeologists, they should budget for cultural resources work for their 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 project activities that have the potential to impact cultural resources. 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 ten years after the final payment to the project sponsor from RCO.

Getting Paid

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.

Eligible Costs

RCO [Manual 5: Restoration Projects](#) describes eligible construction and administrative costs.

Reimbursement

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

All billings and reports are submitted through PRISM.

RCO recognizes there are times when a project sponsor 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 RCO billing [web page](#) for information about advance request policies.

If the project has match (see below), PRISM's e-billing system automatically calculates and credits the match in each reimbursement request submitted to RCO, so the project match percentage is maintained throughout the entire life of the project.

RCO will reimburse a sponsor within thirty days of receipt of a complete and accurate invoice, though most payments are processed within two weeks. The last 10 percent of the grant will be retained until the project is complete, all required deliverables have been submitted, and RCO completes a final inspection and approves the final report. 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.

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 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. If match is required, typically a landowner must provide up to \$5,000 for a project on the west side of the Cascade Mountains and up to \$2,000 for a project on the east side. A landowner must provide up to \$500 for crossing abandonment projects.

The Department of Natural Resources will notify the landowner and project sponsor if match is required, and that amount will be included in the 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 is in RCO [Manual 8: Reimbursements](#). Eligible forms of math include the following:

- 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 Grants

In some cases, a sponsor may use funds awarded from a separate grant program as match. Other grants are eligible if 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.

In addition, if other RCO grants are used as match, the following conditions must be met:

- Only elements eligible in *both* grant programs may count as match.

- Each grant is evaluated independently and on its own merits, as if the match were coming from elsewhere.

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

The sponsor must enter at least two progress reports a year using the PRISM online progress reporting tool. Progress reports are identified in the grant agreement milestone dates. The progress reports 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 emails 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

The sponsor is required to complete and submit a final report in PRISM at the completion of the project and within ninety days after the grant agreement expires. See section 4 for details.

Amendments

Cost Increases

On occasion, the cost of completing a project exceeds the amount awarded to the grant agreement. The project sponsor should contact RCO and discuss potential cost increases before incurring the additional expenses. 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 money is needed. If money is available, and the increased costs are determined to be eligible expenses, a cost increase will be considered by the Fish Team.

Time Extensions

A project typically is completed within two years. Project milestone dates, including a project completion date, are included in the grant agreement. If milestone dates change, please contact RCO or request a time extension through a PRISM progress report. The project sponsor may update project milestones via the progress report.

Section 4: Completing a Project

This section covers the following:

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

Site Inspections

The landowner 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 any other authorized agent or official of the State of Washington or the federal government, at all reasonable times, to monitor and evaluate performance, compliance, and quality assurance as specified in the grant agreement. Normally, RCO staff conduct the following 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

Normally coordinated with the sponsor and/or project engineer, the Fish Team may inspect the site 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. 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

The project sponsor and RCO may inspect completed work and monitor long-term success of the completed project. Except in an emergency, at least forty-eight-hour notice shall be given to the landowner before entry.

Project Closure

The final site inspection is the first step in closing a 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.

Documents Required for Project Closure

- Landowner agreement
- Final design/as-builts (only required if the completed project is significantly different from final designs)
- Approved permits
- Approved cultural resources Inadvertent Discovery Plan, if required
- Final report in PRISM
- Final invoice

Final Report

When a project is completed, the sponsor must submit a final report, and supporting documents needed to close the project as specified in the agreement. The supporting documents include the final project description, narrative, and information about the scope and cost of the project. The sponsor also 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 email the sponsor when the report is due.

Audits

All records relevant to a project funded by FFFPP 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 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 project 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 a landowner 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](#): The project sponsor must complete and attach this form when completing the PRISM application for a funded project.

[Landowner Acknowledgement Form](#): The project sponsor must 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](#): A third-party sponsor must complete and attach the form to PRISM before construction. More information on this form is in [section 3](#).

[Electronic Signature Form](#): The project sponsor must complete and attach this form when completing the PRISM application for a funded project.