Applicant’s To-Do List
Land and Water Conservation Fund

Updated May 26, 2022

This to-do list is designed to help an applicant prepare and submit a grant application for the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Grants may be used for the acquisition or development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Applicants must submit the information required through PRISM Online, the online project data system used by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). These steps will guide the applicant through RCO’s application process.

NOTE: for all documents, forms, and manuals referenced here, go to the grant Web page and grant manuals Web page.

Step 1: Establish Eligibility

Eligible applicants: Cities, towns, counties, Native American tribes, park and recreation districts, school districts, state agencies, and certain other special purpose districts such as port and public utility districts are eligible, if legally authorized to acquire and develop public open space, habitat, or recreation facilities.

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

- Make sure the applicant’s current recreation plan is on file with RCO. Plans are due March 1, 2022. For RCO purposes, plans are good for 6 years, so an applicant already may have a plan on file establishing eligibility. See Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines and RCO planning requirements.

Step 2: Review Materials

- Review the appropriate Recreation and Conservation Funding Board manuals for this grant category:
  - Manual 15: Land and Water Conservation Fund
SecureAccess Washington Account

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

PRISM Online Application

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

PRISM Attachments

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

- **Application and Revision (A&R) Form.** Please use the form available on the grant program page and follow the instructions. You will note that there are a few sections to leave blank since RCO staff will fill them out.

- **Assurances for Construction Programs (SF-424D)** (required for all project types).

- **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** (due by the technical completion deadline) shows the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant’s organization. An applicant must adopt the text verbatim even if using a different format.

- **Control and Tenure Documentation** (development projects only). Include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. See Manual 4: Development Projects, for additional details about control and tenure.

- **Landowner Acknowledgement Form** (acquisition projects only). An applicant must demonstrate that the landowner is aware of the applicant’s interest in purchasing the
property. There are several options to meet this requirement (see Section 3: Application Requirements in Manual 3: Acquisition Projects).

- **Map: Boundary Map-Draft** shows the park area the applicant proposes to be covered by federal anti-conversion protections. NOTE that in most cases NPS will require that the entire park be included in the boundary. For detailed map requirements, see Boundary Map in Section 2 of Manual 15.

- **Map: Parcel Map** (acquisition projects only) shows the parcels to be acquired in the scope of work as well as adjacent land ownership. Show the parcels in relation to local roads, landmarks, etc. Include the county parcel numbers on the map.

- **Photograph.** Every application requires at least one general project photograph in .jpg format. A current ground shot or aerial view of the project site is appropriate.

- **RCO Fiscal Data Collection Sheet**

- **Site Plan: Conceptual Site Plan** (acquisition projects only) provides a visual diagram of the intended future use and development of the property.

- **Site Plan: Development Site Plan** (development projects only) shows the proposed improvements at the project site. This plan should show site boundaries, major site features, and proposed project elements. Existing and future elements should be distinguished from those in the current project. Master, schematic design, design development, and construction document level plans are suitable for a development site plan.

The following attachment types are not required, but where applicable, applicants should also attach:

- **Existing cultural resource surveys or reports, or environmental studies** that have been completed at the park or project site.

- **Project Support/Concern Documents.** Letters and other documented expressions of project support or concern. Note that they will be made available for advisory committee review, but applicants should also summarize this in the presentations for technical review and evaluation. **All letters should be combined into one PDF and attached to the project in PRISM.**

Note that except for a few protected items, such as cultural resources data or confidential appraisal documents, as soon as the application is started in PRISM, it and most attachments will be available for review by RCO staff, evaluators, and the public.
Step 4: Present Project for Technical Review–June 8-10, 2022

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

- Prepare a PowerPoint presentation responding to the evaluation criteria in Manual 15. Note that handouts or other materials will not be permitted. See Tips for Developing a PowerPoint Presentation for Grant Applicants for more information. RCO will schedule a time for the presentation to the evaluation team.

- Attach the PowerPoint presentation to PRISM Online at least 3 business days before the scheduled review meeting.

- Present the project to the advisory committee virtually. Technical review sessions are 20 minutes. Applicants have up to 12 minutes to present the project. The remaining 8 minutes are reserved for questions by the advisory committee.

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

RCO staff will review the application for eligibility, completeness, and clarity. RCO staff will also provide feedback regarding budgets for cultural resources and environmental assessments and where possible, will provide direction regarding additional work needed to complete Section 106 and NEPA requirements.

**NOTE:** Only those projects that have met all federal permitting, cultural resources and environmental requirements will be referred to National Park Service (NPS) for grant agreements following completion of the RCO grant evaluation and ranking process. If you have any questions about readiness to apply for Land and Water Conservation funds, please check with your RCO grants manager.

Step 5: Re-Submit Application by Technical Completion Deadline–July 19, 2022

- Address issues raised during technical review and make modifications, if needed.

- Provide an Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization to show that the application is supported by the elected council or commission, board, or executives of the applicant’s organization. An applicant must adopt the text verbatim even if using a different format.

- Provide Control and Tenure Documentation for property to be developed (if not already attached). Include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all

- If a **combination project**, the applicant must secure the property at least 1 month before the board considers approving funding (see *Manual 3*).

- Complete all revisions and **resubmit** the application in PRISM Online by the technical completion deadline or the application will be deemed ineligible.

### Step 6: Present Project for Evaluation—August 24-25, 2022

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

- Prepare (or update from technical review) a PowerPoint presentation responding to the evaluation criteria found in Manual 15. Respond to the criteria in order. Handouts and other materials will not be permitted. RCO will schedule time for the presentation to the evaluation team.

- Attach the PowerPoint presentation and presentation notes to the application in PRISM Online **at least 3 business days before** the scheduled evaluation.

- Present the project to the evaluation team. Evaluation sessions are 20 minutes. An applicant will have up to 12 minutes to present a project. The remaining 8 minutes are reserved for questions and deliberation by the advisory committee.

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

RCO staff tabulate the results and share the preliminary ranked list with the advisory committee to validate the results, establish the committee’s funding recommendation, and discuss any proposed process or policy changes.

RCO then announces the results of the evaluation and posts the preliminary ranked list on its Web Site.

### Step 7: Certification of Applicant Match – September 15, 2022

- Provide a **Certification of Applicant Match** to show what amounts and sources of match are in hand for the project.

After September 15, RCO will contact applicants regarding additional federal pre-agreement materials and due dates, see Step 9 below.
**Step 8: Board Approval of Ranked List – October 25-26, 2022**

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves the ranked list and delegates authority for grant awards. The awards are subject to NPS approval and Congressional funding.

**Step 9: Submit Pre-Agreement Materials – December 23, 2022, contact your OGM if you have questions**

- **Map: Boundary Map-Final.** Shows the park area the applicant proposes to be covered by federal anti-conversion protections. For detailed map requirements, see Boundary Map in Section 2 of *Manual 15*. This final map must be signed and dated by the applicant and RCO.

- **Milestone Worksheet.** Develop milestones for project implementation that ensure timely completion of the project.

- **Cultural Resources survey** or other associated work, if required by NPS for the project.

- **Environmental Assessment** or other associated work, if required by NPS for the project.

- **Federal Permits.** If required for the project, provide copies of any federal permits not limited to and including the United States Army Corps (USACE) permit. If it has been determined that the project does not need a federal permit, provide documentation of that decision including which federal regulator made this determination.

**Step 10: RCO transmits applications to NPS– After January 2023**

RCO prepares all required application materials for transmittal to NPS, along with RCO-prepared federal application materials and forms. NPS uses this information to issue federal agreements to the State of Washington for awarded projects. **NPS will not issue an agreement if there are any unmet federal requirements (i.e., federal permits, Section 106, NEPA etc.).**

**Step 11: Sign Grant Agreement– Between July 1, 2023 and June 30, 2024**

Once RCO receives a federal agreement from NPS, then RCO works with the applicant to execute a state grant agreement before work begins. **NOTE:** It may take up to 18 months for NPS to issue a federal agreement. Please contact your RCO grants manager if you have questions about this timeline.

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