

Applicant's To-Do List

Land and Water Conservation Fund

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.

An applicant 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 an 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.
- An applicant's current recreation plan must be on file with RCO by **March 1, 2024**. A plan establishes eligibility for six years with RCO so check to see if a plan already is on file. See *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines* and the [RCO Planning Requirements](#).
- NOTE:** Only those projects that have met all federal permitting, cultural resources, and environmental requirements will be referred to National Park Service for grant agreements following completion of the RCO grant evaluation and ranking process. For any questions about readiness to apply for Land and Water Conservation funds, please check with the RCO grants manager.

Step 2: Review Materials

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

- *Manual 2: Planning Policies and Guidelines*
- *Manual 3: Acquisition Projects*
- *Manual 4: Development Projects*

Step 3: Submit an Application—May 1, 2024

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 on February 14, 2024. 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.

- 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 RCO's text verbatim even if using a different format.
- Control and Tenure Documentation** (development projects only). For properties the applicant already owns or has control over, include property ownership information, such as a deed or an easement providing permanent control of the property commensurate with the proposed development. See *Manual 4: Development Projects*, for additional details about control and tenure and consult with the grants manager to confirm easement eligibility for properties that are less-than-fee simple ownership.
- Environmental Resources Survey**. Please use the form available on the grant program page and follow the instructions.

- ❑ **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–Proposed Boundary Map**. Shows the park area the applicant proposes to be covered by federal anti-conversion protections. Note that the National Park Service requires the entire park be included in the boundary. Contact the RCO grants manager before submitting the application if considering requesting approval for an exception to the park boundary. For detailed map requirements, see “Boundary Map” in section 2 of *Manual 15: Land and Water Conservation Fund*.
- ❑ **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.
- ❑ **Map–Regional Location**. One, single-sided page that shows the location of the project in a geographic region of the state. The regional map should identify the county, incorporated areas, major highways, and water bodies, etc., so RCO staff and evaluators can locate the general worksite within a few miles.
- ❑ **Map–Site Location**. One, single-sided page showing the specific location of the project. This map must show the project in relation to local roads, park or ranger district boundaries, water bodies, landmarks, etc. If possible, show the boundaries of the site on the map.
- ❑ **Photo**. 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. While not required, at least a 30 percent level design is most helpful to understand general scope and location of the project.

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

- ❑ **Existing cultural resource surveys or reports, or environmental studies** (including State Environmental Policy Act/National Environmental Policy Act documentation or critical area reports) that have been completed at the park or project site.
- ❑ **Project Support/Concern Documents.** Note that letters and other documented expressions of project support or concern will be made available for advisory committee review. **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 5-7, 2024

An applicant may present the project virtually 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 the 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: Land and Water Conservation Fund*. 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 committee.
- ❑ Attach the PowerPoint presentation to PRISM Online at least three business days before the scheduled review meeting.
- ❑ Present the project to the advisory committee virtually. Technical review sessions are twenty minutes. Applicants have up to twelve minutes to present the project. The remaining eight 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 also will provide feedback on budgets for cultural resources and environmental assessments and where possible, will provide direction regarding additional work needed to complete section 106 and National Environmental Policy Act requirements.

Step 5: Resubmit Application by Technical Completion Deadline–July 18, 2024

- Address issues raised during technical review and make modifications, if needed.
- Attach an **Authorizing Resolution/Application Authorization** (if not already attached) 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 RCO’s text verbatim even if using a different format.
- Attach **Control and Tenure Documentation** for property to be developed (development projects only–if not already attached). Include property ownership information, such as a deed, and all applicable leases, easements, and use agreements. See *Manual 4: Development Projects* for details.
- 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 21-23, 2024

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: Land and Water Conservation Fund*. Respond to the criteria in order. Handouts and other materials will not be permitted. RCO will schedule time for the presentation to the evaluation committee.
- Attach the PowerPoint presentation and presentation notes to the application in PRISM Online at least three business days before the scheduled evaluation.
- Present the project to the evaluation committee. Evaluation sessions are twenty minutes. An applicant will have up to twelve minutes to present a project. The remaining eight 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 website.

Step 7: Certification of Applicant Match–September 16, 2024

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

After the evaluation, RCO will contact the applicant about additional federal pre-agreement materials and due dates, see “Step 9” below.

Step 8: Board Approval of Ranked List–October 29-30, 2024

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves the ranked list and delegates authority for grant awards. The awards are subject to National Park Service approval and congressional funding.

Step 9: Submit All Pre-Agreement Materials–December 23, 2024

- Cultural Resources Survey** or other associated work, if required by the National Park Service for the project.
- Environmental Assessment** or other associated work, if required by the National Park Service for the project.
- Federal Permits.** If required for the project, provide copies of any federal permits not limited to and including the U.S. Army Corps permit. If federal permits aren’t needed, provide documentation of that decision including which federal regulator made this determination.
- Map–Final Boundary Map.** 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: Land and Water Conservation Fund*. 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.
- Title Report.** Report must describe entire park boundary to be contained within final boundary map.

Step 10: RCO Transmits Applications to National Park Service–After January 2025

RCO prepares federal application materials and forms for transmittal to the National Park Service. The Service uses this information to issue federal agreements to RCO for awarded projects. If there are any unmet federal requirements (i.e., federal permits, section 106, National Environmental Policy Act, etc.), RCO will not transmit applications to the National Park Service and the Service will not issue an agreement. Once all federal requirements are met and

applications are transmitted to the National Park Service, it may take up to three months for the Service to issue a federal agreement.

Step 11: Sign Grant Agreement—After July 2025

Once RCO receives a federal agreement from the National Park Service, RCO works with the applicant to execute a state grant agreement before work begins. Please contact the RCO grants manager with 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.

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