

September 16-17, 2015

Red Lion Hotel, W. 303 North River Drive, Spokane, WA

Time: Opening sessions will begin as shown; all other times are approximate.

Order of Presentation: In general, each agenda item will include a presentation, followed by board discussion and then public comment. The board makes decisions following the public comment portion of the agenda item.

Public Comment: If you wish to comment at the meeting, please fill out a comment card and provide it to staff. Please be sure to note on the card if you are speaking about a particular agenda topic. The chair will call you to the front at the appropriate time. Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person. You also may submit written comments to the Board by mailing them to the RCO, attn: Wendy Loosle, Board Liaison, at the address above or at wendy.loosle@rco.wa.gov.

Special Accommodations: If you need special accommodations to participate in this meeting, please notify us at 360/725-3943 or TDD 360/902-1996

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

The meeting will be held in Ballroom D, Red Lion Hotel

OPENING AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS

8:30 a.m. Call to Order*Chair*

- A. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum
- B. Review and Approval of Agenda

8:35 a.m. 1. Approval of Meeting Minutes (Decision)*Chair*

- A. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – June 24-25, 2015
Resolution 2015-18

8:40 a.m. 2. Director's Report

- A. 2016 Board Meeting Calendar (*Decision*)

Wendy Loosle

- B. Director's Report (*Briefing*)
 - Biennial Workplan Overview
 - Grant Management Report
 - Fiscal Report (*written only*)
 - Performance Report (*written only*)

*Kaleen Cottingham
Scott Robinson
Marguerite Austin*

- C. Legislative, Budget, and Policy Update (*Decision*)
 - Supplemental Budget Request

*Wendy Brown***9:25 a.m. 3. State Agency Partner Reports**

- Department of Natural Resources
- State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Department of Fish and Wildlife

*Jed Herman
Peter Herzog
Joe Stohr*

9:40 a.m. General Public Comment for issues not identified as agenda items. Please limit comments to 3 minutes.

Chair

BOARD BUSINESS: DECISIONS

9:45 a.m. 4. Land and Water Conservation Fund: Legacy Program Nationwide Competition *Marguerite Austin*
Resolution 2015-19

Public comment: Please limit comments to three minutes.

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFINGS & DISCUSSIONS

10:00 a.m. 5. Revised Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Farmland Preservation Evaluation Criteria and Policies *Leslie Connelly*

Public comment: Please limit comments to three minutes.

10:30 a.m. BREAK

10:45 a.m. 6. Overview of Potential Changes to the Grant Programs and Criteria for 2015-17 *Leslie Connelly*

11:45 a.m. 7. Overview of Changes to the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program *Marguerite Austin*

12:15 p.m. LUNCH BREAK (*Lunch will be provided to board members at the meeting*)

12:30 p.m. 8. Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules *Leslie Connelly*

1:15 p.m. 9. Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Review – Opportunity for the Board to Provide Input *Kaleen Cottingham
Facilitator*

2:15 p.m. BREAK

2:30 p.m. 10. Board Discussion on Scope of Recreation and Conservation Policy Planning *Kaleen Cottingham
Leslie Connelly*

4:00 p.m. Leave for Riverfront Park (*Walking tour from the hotel*)

4:15 p.m. Riverfront Park Tour, City of Spokane Parks and Recreation *Leroy Eadie
Al Vorderbrueggen
Garrett Jones
John Bottelli*

- Havermale Island Acquisition ([#67-050](#))
- Central City Riverfront Acquisition ([#72-040](#))
- Central City Riverfront Development ([#73-019](#))
- River Park Acquisition and Development ([#77-053](#))
- West Riverside Park ([#87-9055](#))
- Spokane River Falls YMCA Site Acquisition ([#10-1497](#))
- Potential Future Projects

6:00 p.m. ADJOURN FOR THE DAY / Return to Hotel

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

PROJECT SITE TOUR

8:15 a.m. Gather in Lobby of the Red Lion Hotel in Advance of the Tour

8:30 a.m. Depart for Tour *(Transportation provided to board members and staff)*

8:50 a.m. City of Spokane Parks and Recreation (Map Point 1)

- WWRP Trails – Historic Iron Bridge Renovation ([#08-1698](#))
-

10:00 a.m. Spokane County Parks, Recreation and Golf (Map Point 2)

- WWRP Urban Wildlife – Antione Peak Acquisition ([#06-1859](#), [#08-1334](#), [#10-1264](#))
 - NOVA Non-Motorized – Antione Peak Access Development ([#14-1952](#))
 - NOVA Non-Motorized – Mica Peak Recreation Plan ([#14-1945](#))
-

11:00 a.m. Spokane County Parks, Recreation and Golf (Map Point 3)

- WWRP Trails – Centennial Trail Realignment at Gateway Park ([#08-1332](#))
-

12:00 p.m. LUNCH *(Box lunches served at Rocky Hill Park Picnic Shelter to board members and staff)*

12:30 p.m. City of Liberty Lake Parks and Recreation (Map Point 4)

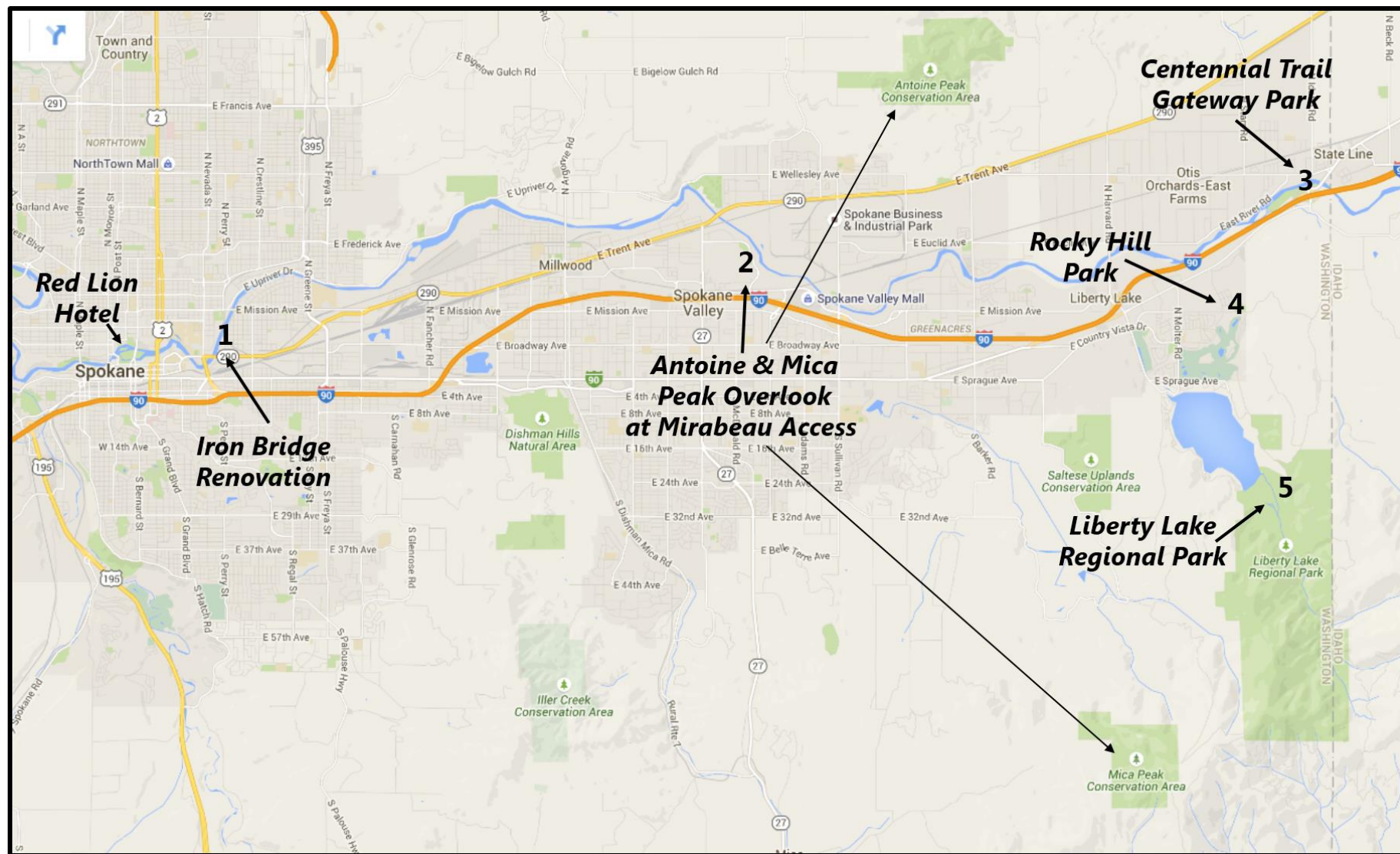
- WWRP Local Parks – Rocky Hill Park Acquisition and Development ([#08-1630](#))
 - WWRP Local Parks and YAF – Pavillion Park Acq. and Dev. ([#93-104](#), [#96-1212](#), [#07-1963](#))
-

1:30 p.m. Spokane County Parks and Recreation (Map Point 5)

- LWCF – Miller Ranch Acquisition ([#66-005](#))
 - Bonds – Liberty Lake Development ([#72-039](#))
 - NOVA ORV – Liberty Lake ORV Acquisition ([#79-9032](#))
 - NOVA ORV – Liberty Lake Riding Area Development ([#93-051](#))
 - NOVA E&E – Liberty Lake Riding Area Education and Enforcement ([#04-1783](#), [#05-1072](#))
 - RTP – Loop Trail Renovation at Liberty Lake Park ([#10-1265](#))
-

3:00 p.m. End Tour – Depart for Hotel and Airport

Tour Map



**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution #2015-18
September 2015**

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following items are approved:

- A. Board Meeting Minutes – June 24-25, 2015

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted Date: _____

Funds for Alternate and Partially-Funded Projects

Table A-1: Funds for Alternate Projects

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Funds Approved	Category
14-1989M	Pomeroy Backcountry and Wilderness Trails Maintenance and Operations	U.S. Forest Service, Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District	\$75,000	\$75,000	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized
14-1090A	Heart of the Cascades	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$4,000,000	\$2,312,560	WWRP Critical Habitat
14-1522A	Olma North Ranchland	Okanogan Land Trust	\$762,000	\$249,491	WWRP Farmland Preservation
14-1482R	Coastal Forest Restoration	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$188,800	\$45,503	WWRP State Lands Restoration
14-1626D	Tolmie State Park Parking	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$553,420	\$553,420	WWRP State Parks
12-1341D	Rasar State Park Group Camp Improvements	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$435,000	\$435,000	WWRP State Parks
14-1251A	Stavis Natural Resources Conservation Area and Kitsap Forest Natural Area Preserve	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$3,765,352	\$1,402,825	WWRP Urban Wildlife Habitat

*WWRP = Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program

Table A-2: Funds for Partially Funded Projects

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Original Grant Funding	Current Total Grant Funding	Grant Program
14-1963D	Odlin Park Float and Gangway Replacement	San Juan County Public Works	\$214,528	\$115,453	\$170,311	Boating Facilities Program, Local Agency
12-1332D	Levee Street Boat Launch Renovation	Hoquiam	\$525,000	\$511,948	\$525,000	Boating Facilities Program, Local Agency
14-1139A	Chapman Lake Access	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$1,150,000	\$474,000	\$653,239	Boating Facilities Program, State Agency
14-1885D	Expand Sporting Clays Range	Seattle Skeet and Trap Club	\$63,000	\$16,803	\$17,678	Firearms and Archery Range Recreation
14-2017D	Alpine Baldy Multi-Use Trail Construction	U.S. Forest Service, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Skykomish Ranger District	\$96,147	\$63,299	\$96,147	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized Category
14-2052E	Snoqualmie Pass I-90 Corridor Winter Education	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Cle Elum Ranger District	\$20,000	\$5,359	\$5,638	Recreational Trails Program, Education Category
14-1804M	Naches Wilderness Trails Deferred Maintenance and Operations	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	\$44,930	\$24,775	\$33,799	Recreational Trails Program, General
14-1765M	Mount Baker Snowmobile SnoParks and Trails	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$102,245	\$39,139	\$54,772	Recreational Trails Program, General
14-1096A	Simco	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$3,000,000	\$2,942,996	\$3,000,000	WWRP Critical Habitat
14-1087A	Mid Columbia – Grand Coulee	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$4,000,000	\$2,821,250	\$4,000,000	WWRP Critical Habitat
14-1756A	Maple K Meyers Place	Palouse Land Trust	\$540,250	\$35,987	\$540,250	WWRP Farmland Preservation

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Original Grant Funding	Current Total Grant Funding	Grant Program
14-1722A	Queets River	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$1,643,135	\$103,897	\$1,643,135	WWRP Natural Areas
14-1247A	South Lake Ozette Natural Area Preserve	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$1,588,360	\$100,433	\$1,588,360	WWRP Natural Areas
14-1095A	Merrill Lake Riparian Protection	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$3,000,000	\$1,028,419	\$1,610,755	WWRP Riparian Protection
14-1520D	Mailbox Peak Trail Final Phase	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$178,400	\$135,320	\$178,400	WWRP State Lands Development
14-1525R	Trout Lake Meadow Restoration Phase 2	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$72,000	\$42,716	\$72,000	WWRP State Lands Restoration
14-1622D	Willapa Hills Trail - Trail Development Pe Ell Area	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$962,400	\$562,030	\$962,400	WWRP State Parks
14-1603A	Fudge Point Additional Uplands	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$497,623	\$350,319	\$497,623	WWRP State Parks
14-1100C	Kettle River Access	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$995,000	\$799,300	\$995,000	WWRP Water Access
14-1098A	West Rocky Prairie	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$3,000,000	\$2,588,915	\$3,000,000	WWRP Urban Wildlife Habitat

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015

Title: Director's Report

Summary

This memo is the director's report on key agency activities.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

In this Report:

- Agency update
- Grant management report
- Fiscal report*
- Performance report

**The fiscal report will be updated at a later time prior to the meeting.*

Agency Update

Staff Changes

There have been several recent staff changes at the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO). Sarah Thirtyacre, Senior Outdoor Grants Manager (OGM) and Cultural Resources Specialist, will shift from being a part of the Recreation and Conservation Section and will report directly to the Deputy Director on cultural resources and other special agency projects. We are currently recruiting internally for a new Senior OGM in the Recreation and Conservation Section. In addition, due to the increased budget, we are hiring another OGM in the Recreation and Conservation Section. The team interviewed five candidates in August. Staff will introduce the new agency members to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) this fall.

There also was a change in the Fiscal Section when Kiko Freeman moved to Louisiana. She was replaced by Sabrina Subia, who started in July. We have also hired a new OGM in the Salmon Section, Josh Lambert, and are in the final stages of hiring a new policy specialist.

Meetings with Partners

- **Washington Recreation and Parks Association** – At this meeting, the RCO director gave a legislative update, discussed the status of electronic billing, mentioned the deadlines for upcoming grant rounds, and reported on the findings of the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Committee's public lands economic study.

- **Boating Groups** – The RCO director met with representatives of the Washington Boating Alliance, Recreational Boating Association of Washington, and Northwest Marine Trade Association and provided an update on the legislative session and budget, grant applications for Tier 2 Boating Infrastructure Grants, grant program changes to be presented at the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board meeting in September, and the aquatic invasive species stencil pilot project and funding advisory committee.
- **Capital Land Trust** – The Land Trust invited RCO to participate in a round table discussion about updating its strategic plan for conservation efforts. Representatives from state, local, and federal agencies; conservation districts; private landowners; and nonprofit organizations spent the day discussing trends in conservation and offering suggestion to help the organization shape its strategic plan and identify conservation priorities. The plan is intended to cover 2015-2020 and will be adopted at their August board meeting.

Dedication at Evans Creek

Karl Jacobs, Outdoor Grant Manager, joined the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest, Snoqualmie Ranger District on August 17 for the grand opening of a recently completed project at the Evans Creek Off-road Vehicle (ORV) Area in Pierce County. The District used a Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) grant of \$267,500 for campground expansion and day-use improvements. USFS constructed an entrance road and campground loop with 20 sites. Each site has a picnic table and fire ring. It also built a picnic shelter in the day-use area near the campground. This is an important gathering area for groups using the trails. A local ORV association donated more than 1,000 hours of labor to help complete the project. This is the first phase of development outlined in the *Evans Creek ORV Improvement Plan*, funded with a NOVA grant. Evans Creek is 3 miles outside of the Mowich Lake entrance to Mount Rainier National Park.

Washington State Trails Coalition

The Washington State Trails Coalition is making plans for its biennial caucus, which is focused on emerging trail issues. This year, RCO grants staff will offer a training session on how an applicant can improve its chances for success in receiving grants. The coalition will host the caucus meeting November 9 at the Lacey Community Center.

As mentioned at the board's meeting in June, RCO has been working on developing a Memorandum of Agreement with the coalition. Through the agreement, RCO will provide up to \$12,500 to support the coalition in planning and hosting the 2015 Washington State Trails Caucus and the 2016 Washington State Trails Conference. Entering into the agreement is a step at helping meet one of the priorities in the 2013-18 *Washington State Trails Plan* to encourage and assist with the coordination of statewide trails coordinating organization.

Update on Sister Boards

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)

Meeting preparations are underway for the October 15-16 meeting in La Conner. The SRFB will hold a regular business meeting on the first day and tour several funded sites on the second day. On the evening of the first day there will also be a joint dinner meeting with the Puget Sound Partnership's Leadership Council.

Washington Invasive Species Council

The council held a conference on New Zealand mud snails on June 16-17 in Seattle, had a quarterly meeting on June 18 in Olympia, and provided an overview of its work to the Senate Natural Resources

and Parks Committee on June 19. The council is finalizing a draft of its strategic plan for public comment in September, with the goal of adopting a new plan in December. The council also is beginning work on a legislatively mandated, 1-year aquatic invasive species funding task force that will make recommendations to the Legislature on a future funding structure for aquatic invasive species management and ballast water issues by June 1, 2016.

Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group

The Lands group met July 9 for its annual land acquisition funding forum and its regular quarterly meeting. Topics on the agenda included legislative session updates, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program proviso, and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Committee's (JLARC) Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and state land acquisition study. JLARC staff were invited to present the findings of their public lands economic impact study.

Biennial Work Plan Overview

At the beginning of each biennium, the agency develops a workplan that includes a list of larger-scale efforts that will be a point of emphasis during the next two years. This includes items such as legislative assignments, technology enhancements, and policy and other work assigned by RCO's boards and councils. RCO's 2015-17 Biennial Work Plan and its attachments are included and will be reviewed briefly with the board at its September meeting.

Grant Management Report

Funding for the 2015-17 Biennium

At its June meeting, the board approved ranked lists for its grant programs and delegated authority to the director to award funding to the approved projects, contingent on approval of a 2015-17 Capital Budget and approval of federal funding authority for federal programs. The director now has awarded 219 grants for 8 Recreation and Conservation Funding Board programs and 61 grants for the new RCO Recreation Grants Program.¹ With the new federal Omni-Circular, Leslie Connelly, working with our assistant attorney general, has just updated or created three project agreements for these grants. One agreement is for board programs, the other for funding U.S. Forest Service projects, and the third is for line-item appropriations and RCO projects. Scott Chapman, RCO's database manager, has uploaded the agreements into the PRISM database and staff now are writing and issuing agreements to 113 organizations. The goal is to issue 85-95 percent of the agreements by the end of October.

Master Agreement

After nearly 18 months of collaboration, RCO entered into a new Master Collection Agreement with the U.S. Forest Service (USFS). The master agreement establishes the framework for funding projects to develop, enhance, or maintain recreational facilities in Washington's national forests. These projects use grants from the Recreational Trails Program (RTP) and the Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Program. The master agreement outlines the process for applying for grants, amending RCO grant agreements, and reimbursements. It includes the role of USFS in satisfying the National Environmental Policy Act and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act for projects in national forests. This includes projects sponsored by third parties, such as nonprofit organizations. In addition, the master agreement establishes the standard terms and conditions for USFS agreements and incorporates

¹ A project that receives funds from more than one board-funded grant may be consolidated into a single project that includes all fund sources.

the ongoing obligation and conversion requirements. The master agreement is an important document because the USFS may not enter into agreements with RCO without having a master agreement in effect. The USFS is a major recreation provider in Washington State and is the recipient of nearly 50 percent of all grant requests in NOVA and RTP.

Successful Applicant Webinar

On August 5, RCO staff presented a Successful Applicant Webinar for applicants awarded grants following the Legislature's approval of the 2015-2017 Capital Budget. Darrell Jennings, Sarah Thirtyacre, and Rory Calhoun presented this training to share tips on how to implement a funded project and comply with the terms of the project agreement. Topics included:

- Learning about the project agreement
- Implementing and managing projects
- Project design considerations
- Project deliverables and close-out
- Long-term obligations and stewardship requirements

Nearly 100 people logged in to hear this webinar. Karl Jacobs monitored the live feed and responded to questions submitted during the webinar. Interested parties may register and view the webinar [online](#).

2015 Grant Applications

The deadline for accepting grant applications in 2015 has come and gone. RCO received 46 applications for the Youth Athletic Facilities program by the July 1st deadline. This program provides funds to renovate and expand outdoor athletic facilities such as ball fields, sport courts, swimming pools, and other facilities used for competitive sports. The program focuses on serving people through the age of 18 who participate in sports and athletics. Applicants, which include 29 cities and counties, 5 nonprofit organizations, 4 park districts, and 1 Native American tribe, are requesting \$9.1 million in grants. The Legislature approved \$7 million for competitive grants for the 2015-17 Biennium, with the remainder of the \$10 million appropriation going to specifically named projects and administration. The technical completion deadline was August 14. RCO staff is reviewing the final proposals to make sure the applications are complete and meet all of the eligibility requirements. The advisory committee will evaluate projects in September for board consideration in November.

Federal Grant Programs

Boating Infrastructure Grants

The RCO director approved submittal of two grant applications for funding through the federal Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program. Congress created the program under the Sportfishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998. The program is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and provides funds to develop or renovate boating facilities and support amenities for recreational boats 26 feet and larger. These are Tier 1 - State projects, which means the grant request may not exceed \$95,000. The Boating Programs Advisory Committee evaluated and ranked the projects in 2014. These are the last two unfunded alternates and the RCO director is asking USFWS to allocate federal Fiscal Year 2015 funds to the projects shown in the table below. Pending federal approval, the RCO director will award grants early next year.

Table 1: BIG Projects

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Applicant Match	Total
14-1324 Development	Port of Poulsbo Guest Marina Facility Upgrades	Port of Poulsbo	\$56,804	\$19,958	\$72,762
14-1304 Development	Port Angeles Boat Haven Laundry Facility	Port of Port Angeles	\$48,960	\$53,040	\$102,000
Total			\$105,764	\$178,762	\$174,762

Land and Water Conservation Fund

Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell sent a letter to Governor Jay Inslee announcing congressional approval of Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWCF) for federal Fiscal Year 2015. The apportionment for Washington State is \$895,161. The amount available represents a 1 percent decrease from last year. The board approved the ranked list of LWCF projects at its June meeting. Table 2 shows the top ranked projects and the grant funds approved for each project. The total grants awarded is less than the total available to the state because it reflects the amount deducted for RCO administration and \$50,000 set aside to begin development of the 2017 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

Table 2: LWCF Projects

Project Number	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Grant Funds Approved	Unfunded Balance
14-1362 Acquisition	North Creek Forest Acquisition Phase 3	Bothell	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$0
14-1537 Development	Covington Community Park Phase 2	Covington	\$500,000	\$311,718	\$188,282
Total			\$1,000,000	\$811,718	\$188,282

In her letter, Secretary Jewell stated that "Since 1965 Washington's apportionments have totaled \$72,530,426 to be used for creating, developing and enhancing a wide variety of close-to-home park and recreation projects." RCO records show the actual apportionment for completed projects is more than \$114 million with \$72 million in matching resources. This represents an investment of more than \$187 million for recreation and conservation areas in our state.

Recreational Trails Program Grants

The Federal Highway Administration authorized funding of more than \$1.8 million in federal fiscal year 2015 funds for Recreational Trails Program (RTP) projects in Washington. As a result, the director approved grant awards for 25 projects. When the U.S. Congress approves the budget for federal fiscal year 2016, grant funds will go to alternates on the board-approved ranked list as part of the biennial grants cycle. Additional information about RTP is included in Item 2C.

Using Returned Funds for Alternates and Partially-Funded Projects

The RCO director recently awarded grants for 7 alternate projects (Attachment A, Table A-1). The funds are from projects that did not use the full amount of their grant awards. Also, as unused funds have become available from other projects, the director has approved additional funding for 20 partially-funded projects. Attachment A, Table A-2 shows the projects' original grant award and the total grant funds now approved.

Project Administration








Staff administer outdoor recreation and habitat conservation projects as summarized in the table below. "Active" projects are under agreement and are in the implementation phase. "Director Approved" projects includes grant awards made by the RCO director after receiving board-delegated authority to award grants after approval of the state capital budget, and alternate projects on the approved funding list that received unused funds from higher ranked projects. Staff are working with sponsors to secure the materials needed to place the Director Approved projects under agreement.

Program	Active Projects	Board Funded Projects	Director Approved Projects	Total Funded Projects
Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)	11	0	14	25
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	19	0	18	37
Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)	2	0	3	5
Firearms and Archery Range Recreation (FARR)	6	0	8	14
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	3	0	4	7
Marine Shoreline Protection (MSP)	2	0	0	2
Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA)	82	0	82	164
Recreation and Conservation Office Recreation Grants (RRG)	0	0	60	60
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	51	0	25	76
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)	99	0	75	174
Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF)	3	0	0	3
Total	278	0	289	567

Performance Measures for Fiscal Year 2016

The following performance data are for recreation and conservation projects in fiscal year 2016 (July 1, 2015 – June 30, 2016). Data are current as of August 17, 2015.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Performance Measures

Measure	Target	Fiscal Year-to-Date	Status	Notes
Percent of Projects Issued Agreement within 120 Days of Board Funding	85-95%	100%		Three projects were set to come under agreement this fiscal year and agreements were issued within 120 days for all three.
Percent of Projects Under Agreement within 180 Days of Board Funding	95%	50%		Two projects were scheduled to be under agreement so far this fiscal year. One of those agreements was issued within 180 days.
Percent of Progress Reports Responded to On Time	65-75%	96%		To date, 47 progress reports have been due this fiscal year. Of these, 45 were responded to within 15 days or less.
Percent of Bills Paid within 30 days	100%	100%		To date, a total of 142 bills have come due this fiscal year, and all were paid within 30 days.
Percent of Projects Closed on Time	60-70%	100%		There were two projects and both closed on time.
Number of Projects in Project Backlog	0	8		Staff continue to work with sponsors to get the proper documentation to close backlog projects.
Number of Post-Completion Inspections	No target set	10	N/A	
Percent of Project Sponsors Submitting Annual Bill	100%	40%		Of the 253 active recreation and conservation projects, 100 have submitted a bill this fiscal year. The remaining sponsors have until June 30, 2016 to submit a bill.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015
Title: Legislative, Budget, and Policy Update
Prepared by: Wendy Brown, Policy Director

Summary

This memo summarizes Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) decision packages and a supplemental budget request which the agency will submit to the Legislature in October 2015 in preparation for the 2016 legislative session. An update of key federal grant program reauthorizations is also included.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Agency Decision Packages

Washington Invasive Species Council, Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group, and the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program

With the end of the legislative session, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff are looking toward next session and working on two, perhaps three, decision packages for request legislation. A "decision package" is essentially an agency memo to the Governor's Office and the Office of Financial Management seeking permission to introduce legislation, known as an agency request bill. The first such decision packet is to request reauthorization of the Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC), which sunsets June 30, 2017. RCO would do this on behalf of WISC.

RCO also may seek legislative reauthorization of the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group, which also sunsets in 2017. Staff are consulting with key legislators and their staff to determine the best strategy, including whether to seek this reauthorization in 2016 or 2017.

The last decision package will serve as a placeholder for any potential statutory changes to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (RCW 79A.15) that may result from the facilitated stakeholder review process currently underway (see Item 9 of the board materials).

Agency Capital Supplemental Budget Request

Boating Facilities and Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities Programs

During the 2015 legislative session, the Legislature passed a transportation revenue package that increased the gas tax by 7 cents per gallon. As a result, more money will be deposited into the accounts that fund the Boating Facilities Program (BFP) and the Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities

(NOVA) program. RCO will submit a capital budget request seeking spending authority to use the increased funds. We anticipate about \$3.5M more for BFP and \$1.3M more for NOVA. RCO plans to use this additional money to continue to fund projects on the lists approved by the board in June 2015.

Status of Federal Grant Program Reauthorizations

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)

On August 13, the Department of Interior announced \$42 million in funding for state recreation and conservation projects through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) in the last allotment of grant money to states for Fiscal Year 2015. Washington State will receive \$895,161. These funds will go to projects approved by the board at June 2015 meeting.

For the past several years, national organizations have been very actively seeking to continue the LWCF into the future. Authorization of the LWCF, which provides funds to states and territories for the acquisition, maintenance, and development of outdoor recreation facilities, expires [September 30, 2015](#).

A provision that would permanently reauthorize the LWCF was included in the [Energy Policy Modernization Act of 2015](#) recently approved by the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee. The provision, sponsored by committee chair Lisa Murkowski (R-Alaska) and ranking Democrat Maria Cantwell (D-Wash.), would require for the first time that not less than 40 percent be allotted to nonfederal programs like the state grants. However, unlike the stand-alone bill (S 890) extending the LWCF that Senator Cantwell introduced earlier this year, the committee leaders' new measure would not guarantee LWCF money. The program still would be subject to annual appropriations. The House Natural Resources Committee may consider LWCF reauthorization when it returns from the August recess.

Washington has weighed in on the various efforts to reauthorize the LWCF. The RCO director is participating with peers in the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers (NASORLO) to strengthen the role of the states in administering the funds. Governor Inslee weighed in with our Congressional Delegation. Various national groups (LWCF Coalition, National Governors' Association, and the National Recreation and Parks Association) are also actively lobbying for the reauthorization.

Recreational Trails Program (RTP)

Concurrent to the LWCF reauthorization process is an effort in the Senate to move a 6-year surface transportation bill (HR 22) that would retain a base park and recreation program known as the Transportation Alternative Program, which funds the Recreation Trails Program. Negotiations are underway, so the final outcome is unknown.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015
Title: Land and Water Conservation Fund: Legacy Program Nationwide Competition
Prepared By: Marguerite Austin, Recreation and Conservation Section Manager

Summary

This memo summarizes the 2014 National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program and outlines plans for the 2015 program. Because of the short timeline, staff requests that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board delegate authority to the Recreation and Conservation Office director to approve projects for submittal to the national competition.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Resolution: 2015-19

Purpose of Resolution: Delegate authority to the RCO director to solicit and submit projects to the National Park Service for funding consideration.

Background

The federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Program provides matching grants to states to preserve and develop quality outdoor recreation resources. Rules governing the program are in the [Land and Water Conservation Fund Federal Financial Assistance Manual](#). The National Park Service (NPS) announced plans in 2014 for a new national competitive grant program. Congress added an appropriation of \$3 million to the LWCF and each state was given an opportunity to submit two projects for consideration.

The National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program was for projects designed to acquire or develop outdoor recreation sites in large urban areas (population of 50,000 or more). The NPS prioritized projects that:

- Directly connected people to outdoor places in their communities;
- Engaged and empowered underserved communities and youth;
- Provided opportunities for youth employment or job training;
- Involved and expanded public-private partnerships, particularly for leveraging resources; and
- Relied on a high degree of coordination among all levels of government, to improve recreation opportunities for all.

In addition to the objectives listed above, projects had to advance the goals or meet needs identified in their specific State's SCORP and the merit panel evaluated "readiness" and favored projects that could be completed in shorter timeframe (less than three years).

Outlined in the Announcement for the Federal Funding Opportunity were other rules governing the national competitive program were. Specific policies were:

Eligible Applicants:	State agencies, local governments (cities, counties, park districts, port districts, special purpose districts), and tribal governments
Eligible Projects:	Acquisition, development, renovation, and restoration
Match Requirements:	Grant recipients must provide at a minimum 1:1 match from state local or private sources.
Funding Limits:	<p>Minimum grant request: \$250,000¹ per project Maximum grant request \$500,000 per project.</p> <p>The cost estimate defines the maximum federal share. This policy is to prevent scope changes that might alter the competitive nature of the project. In other words, no cost increases.</p>
Public Access:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Required for the whole (entire park or outdoor recreation area) project area.• The conversion rules found in section 6(f)(3) of the Land and Water Conservation Act applies.• Applicants must record language against the deed of the assisted property stating the property must be preserved for outdoor recreation uses in perpetuity.
Other Requirements:	Projects must be in located within or serve jurisdictions delineated in the 2010 Census as having populations of 50,000 or more people and consisting of densely settled territory.

2014 National Competition

As part of RCO's regular grants cycle, applicants submitted 22 LWCF grant proposals in 2014. When NPS published the notice about the new national competitive program, the LWCF advisory committee had already reviewed and ranked the 2014 applications. The timing of the national competition was extremely short. Therefore, the Director suggested reviewing the list of already submitted projects. Three of the 22 projects met the qualifications for the national competition. The director asked the advisory committee to review and rank those three projects against the federal evaluation criteria. Because of the tight federal timeline, the director selected the top two projects for submittal to NPS. Unfortunately, the projects submitted did not receive funding. We do not know specifically why our projects were not selected, but it appears that the NPS is looking for projects focused directly on disadvantaged neighborhoods. Five of the eight grants awarded involve development of vacant or former industrial properties and five of the recipients were in large urban areas.

2015 National Competition

We have received word that NPS will be accepting grant applications for another national competition in 2015. RCO staff wants to ensure applicants from the State of Washington have an opportunity to participate in this competition. NPS has not published the federal funding opportunity yet because they

¹ The Board's policy for the state competitive program is a minimum of \$25,000.

are modifying the announcement and the evaluation criteria to make it easier for sponsors to develop applications that meet the requirements and easier for the merit panel to evaluate and score projects. In addition, NPS plans to share with the regional program managers an overview of the 2014 process and the overall ranked list of projects submitted. We hope this information will help applicants with the 2015 project selection process since it appears the process and eligibility requirements will generally be the same.

NPS is encouraging states to solicit proposals in anticipation of a funding opportunity announcement coming out later this fall. Although they plan to extend the application period from 60 to 90 days, we do not believe the dates will coincide with any of the board's scheduled meetings. Because of this concern, and because it's a national competition evaluated by a national panel, we are asking the board to delegate authority to the director to select projects to submit for the National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program competition.

Rather than relying on the existing LWCF list of projects, staff suggests opening up the process to solicit new projects specifically targeted to the elements of the national competition.

Strategic Plan Link

Consideration of submitting projects for this federal funding opportunity supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends that the board approve delegation of authority to the director to submit projects, consistent with the LWCF Advisory Committee's ranking or recommendation, to the National Park Service for the national competition for federal fiscal year 2015.

Next Steps

If the board approves the recommendation staff, will solicit grant proposals and review the projects to ensure they meet the eligibility requirements beginning in September 2015. RCO will establish the final application deadline after NPS publishes the federal opportunity announcement to ensure applicants receive the complete 2015 guidelines and evaluation criteria. Staff will ask the LWCF Advisory Committee to review the proposals as well and make a recommendation for the director's consideration. If the number of applications submitted exceed the maximum submittal allowed for the State of Washington, staff will ask the LWCF Advisory Committee to review and rank projects for RCO's director. The director will select projects and submit to the National Park Service for the national completion. Staff will provide the board with a list of all proposals and the director's decision.

Attachments

A. Resolution 2015-19

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2015-19
National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program
Delegation of Authority to the Director**

WHEREAS, the National Parks Service will solicit federal fiscal year 2015 grant applications for the National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (LWCFPP), and

WHEREAS, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee will review and evaluate these projects to help ensure consistency with the objectives of the LWCFPP and will create a ranked list of projects or recommendation for consideration, and

WHEREAS, this assessment by the committee promotes the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) objectives to conduct its work with integrity and in an open manner; and

WHEREAS, the projects must meet the program requirements stipulated in Manual #15, *Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund Federal Financial Assistance. Manual*, and rules established in the *Federal Funding Opportunity*, thus supporting the board's strategy to fund the best projects as determined by the evaluation process; and

WHEREAS, the timing for the solicitation of projects and the deadlines for submittal to the National Park Service may not meet established timelines for the board's scheduled meetings; and

WHEREAS, consideration of this grant opportunity supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the director is authorized to solicit and submit applications to the National Park Service for evaluation and funding consideration in federal fiscal year 2015 consistent with the LWCF Advisory Committee's recommendation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board authorizes the director authority submit and execute all project agreements and amendments necessary to facilitate implementation of the approved projects.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: _____

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015

Title: Revised Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Farmland Preservation Evaluation Criteria and Policies

Prepared By: Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo summarizes and provides an update on the stakeholder review process for the proposed changes to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's Farmland Preservation Account (FPA) evaluation criteria and program policies. Staff requests direction from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board on how to address feedback from the FPA Advisory Committee before soliciting formal public comments.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

In June 2015, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff briefed the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) on proposed changes to the evaluation criteria and some of the program policies in the Farmland Preservation Account (FPA) of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). Attachment A includes the proposed changes to program policies as presented in June. Attachment B is the revised evaluation criteria as presented in June. Please refer to Item 5 of the [June 2015 meeting materials](#) for additional background information.

Stakeholder Review

Since the June meeting, RCO staff briefed two main stakeholder groups on the proposed changes to the FPA program: the FPA Advisory Committee and the Farmland Preservation Committee of the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT). In general, the WALT committee members were supportive of the program changes and asked questions about the intent of the policies and changes to the criteria. WALT members are waiting for a formal opportunity to provide specific comments and feedback.

Staff requested formal feedback from the FPA Advisory Committee. Three committee members participated in a discussion about the changes. Below is a summary of their feedback.

Details of the proposed changes to policies in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account are included in Attachment A; Details of the proposed changes to the evaluation criteria are included in Attachment B.

FPA Proposed Changes and Advisory Committee Feedback

Proposed Change	FPA Advisory Committee Feedback
Revised Policy: Parcels Eligible in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the revised policy. • Concerns there may be inconsistency on how each county assessor interprets the definition of farm and agricultural land.
New Policy: Applications May Include One or More Parcels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the new policy. • Recommended defining landowner to include an individual or individuals, a corporation in which the individual(s) holds an interest in, and immediate family members.
Revised Policy: Amount of Impervious Surface within the Farmland Conservation Easement Area is Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for consistency with the federal program, when needed. • No specific guidelines on when to approve an impervious surface limit over 6 percent. • Requested data on the impervious surface limit on projects funded to date.
New Policy: Public Trails are Allowed within a Farmland Conservation Easement Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong concerns for including this new policy. • Concern the policy may conflict with the intent of the program. • Recommended the board not approve it and to consider a statutory change to provide clear direction.
New Policy: WWRP Farmland Advisory Committee Reviews All Requests to Change a Parcel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the new policy.
Revised Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for the overall revisions to the criteria. • Recommended changing question 1.A. about the amount of prime farmland soils on site to be a subjective assessment of the viability of the site based on soil types, the variety of crops, and water availability.¹ Allow separate responses to the question for different types of farmland: rangeland, pastureland, and cropland. • Reduce the maximum points for community values from ten to six points. • Increase the maximum points for stewardship from six to ten points.

Request for Direction

RCO seeks direction from the board on how to address the feedback and recommendations from the FPA Advisory Committee. Specifically, staff requests direction on:

- Expanding the policy on applications with one or more parcels to allow for an individual or individuals, a corporation in which the individual(s) holds an interest in, and immediate family members in the same application.
- Providing guidance for approving impervious surface limits over six percent.
- Removing or reframing the policy on allowing trails as a permitted use on farmland easements.
- Whether to change the first evaluation question from prime farmland soils to the viability of the site.
- Reducing the maximum points for the community values question and increasing the maximum points for the stewardship question.

¹ RCW 79A.15.130(9(h))

Timeline

Staff proposes the following timeline to accomplish the work described in this memo.

2015 Dates	Task
September 16	Staff briefing to the board on this memo and receive direction on which issues and options to move forward with for public comment.
September 23 – October 14	Staff distributes draft policies and evaluation criteria for public comment for a three-week public comment period.
October 15 – 21	Staff reviews public comments, incorporates any changes, and prepares final draft policies and evaluation criteria.
November 18 – 19	Board meeting in which the board considers the final policies and evaluation criteria. Public comments accepted at the board meeting.

Link to Strategic Plan

Revising the board's policies and evaluation criteria addresses Goals 1, 2 and 3 in the board's *Strategic Plan*:

1. We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.
2. We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.
3. We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.

Attachments

- A. Proposed Changes to Policies in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account
- B. Proposed Evaluation Criteria in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account

Proposed Changes to Policies in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account

A. Definition of Farmland

CURRENT POLICY:

Farmland is interpreted as “farm and agricultural land” and is defined in Appendix A. [Appendix A is the text from the Open Space Tax Act.]

REVISED POLICY: PARCELS ELIGIBLE IN THE WWRP FARMLAND PRESERVATION ACCOUNT

This policy applies to each parcel included in a grant application to the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account.

1. State Law Defines “Farmland” in WWRP² the Same as “Farm and Agricultural Land” in the Open Space Tax Act³

The Director will ensure each parcel included in a grant application for funding from the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account meets the definition of farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act.

2. Staff Relies on the Open Space Tax Enrollment Status of a Parcel to Determine Whether it is Eligible

When determining whether a parcel meets the definition of farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act, staff relies on the information provided by the grant application. Applicants must provide the necessary information as part of their grant application.

3. Open Space Tax Enrollment Status as Farm and Agricultural Land is Determined at the Application Due Date

To be eligible for funding, each parcel must meet the definition of farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act by the application due date.

4. Parcels Not Enrolled as Farm and Agricultural Land in the Open Space Tax Act Are Not Eligible for Funding

A parcel not enrolled as farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act is not eligible for funding.

EXCEPTION: an applicant may seek a preliminary determination from the county assessor where the parcel is located as to whether the parcel would be eligible for enrollment as farm and agricultural land in the Open Space Tax Act if the landowner applied. Preliminary determinations from the county assessor are due by the Technical

² RCW 79A.15.010(4)

³ RCW 84.34.020(2)

Completion Deadline. The landowner is not required to participate in the Open Space Tax Act if they are eligible but are not enrolled.

B. Project Scope May Include One or More Parcels

NEW POLICY: APPLICATIONS MAY INCLUDE ONE OR MORE PARCELS IN THE WWRP FARMLAND PRESERVATION ACCOUNT

This policy applies to each grant application to the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account.

1. All Parcels Proposed for Acquisition Must be Identified in the Grant Application

The Director will ensure each application identifies all parcels proposed for acquisition in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account.

2. Each Parcel Must be Identified by a Map and a County Parcel Number

Each application must include a map that identifies each parcel in the application and the parcel's identification number.

3. All Parcel Must Be Contiguous or Owned by the Same Landowner

If there is more than one parcel in an application, the parcels must be:

- Contiguous, if the parcels are owned by different landowners, or
- Contiguous or non-contiguous, if the parcels are owned by the same landowner.

4. A Separate Conservation Easement is Required for Each Landowner

If there is more than one landowner in the application, the director will enter into separate farmland conservation easements with each landowner.

C. Limits on the Amount of Impervious Surface

CURRENT POLICY:

For the purpose of the agricultural conservation easement, "impervious surfaces" means all hard surface areas that either prevent or retard water runoff and absorption. Impervious surfaces have the effect of removing soil from cultivation. Because the goal of this program is to preserve the opportunity for agriculture, impervious surfaces limits will be based on a sliding scale related to farm size.

Farm Size	Amount of Impervious Surfaces Allowed
50 acres	6 percent+
51-100 acres	6 percent
101-200 acres	5 percent
201-500 acres	4 percent
501-1,000 acres	3 percent
1,001+ acres	2 percent

This sliding scale is a general guideline, with adjustments made on a case-by-case basis.

If the federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program is a funding partner, the limit is 2 percent. The 2 percent maximum may be waived by the easement program's state conservationist on a case-by-case basis.

REVISED POLICY: THE AMOUNT OF IMPERVIOUS SURFACE WITHIN THE FARMLAND CONSERVATION EASEMENT AREA IS LIMITED

This policy applies to each farmland conservation easement in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account.

1. Impervious Surface is All Hard Surface Areas

The board defines impervious surface as all hard surface areas that either prevent or retard water absorption into the soil and have the effect of removing soil from cultivation.

2. Impervious Surface Limits are Based on Farm Size

The maximum percent land within the farmland conservation easement area allowed to be impervious surface is:

Size of the Easement Area	Percent of Land Allowed to be Impervious Surface
50 acres	6 percent or more
51-100 acres	6 percent
101-200 acres	5 percent
201-500 acres	4 percent
501-1,000 acres	3 percent
1,001+ acres	2 percent

EXCEPTION: When the Natural Resources Conservation Service partially funds a WWRP Farmland Preservation Account farmland conservation easement, the director may use the definition of impervious surface used by the Natural Resources Conservation Service as long as it does not exceed the maximum amount as described in the table above.

EXCEPTION: The director may approve a higher percentage of land as impervious surface on an individual project basis.

D. Trails on Farms Encouraged

NEW POLICY: PUBLIC TRAILS ARE ALLOWED WITHIN A FARMLAND CONSERVATION EASEMENT

This policy applies to each farmland conservation easement in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account.

1. Public Recreational Trail Systems Are Allowed Within a WWRP Farmland Conservation Easement

The board encourages sponsors and landowners to include current or future development of public trail systems as a permitted use within the farmland conservation easement. The landowner may wish to defer for a certain period the right to develop a trail as a condition on the permitted use.

2. Trail Systems Are Impervious Surfaces

If the footprint of the trail system meets the definition of an impervious surface, the trail system must be included in the amount of impervious surface in the farmland conservation easement.

3. Preserving the a Trail is an Eligible Cost

The cost for preserving the development right for a trail in the future is an eligible cost as part of acquiring the farmland conservation easement from the landowner. Development of the trail is not an eligible cost.

E. Amendments to the Project Scope Must be Reviewed by the Advisory Committee (new)

NEW POLICY: THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEWS ALL REQUESTS TO CHANGE A PARCEL IN A WWRP FARMLAND PRESERVATION PROJECT

This policy applies to projects funded in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account during the project agreement period of performance.

1. The Director Consults with the WWRP Farmland Advisory Committee on all Requests to Change a Parcel

The director will consult with the WWRP Farmland Advisory Committee on a request to change a parcel in a project funded in the Farmland Preservation Account. A parcel change includes requests to remove parcels or add new parcels to the scope of a project.

2. WWRP Farmland Advisory Committee Provides a Recommendation to the Director on all Requests to Change a Parcel

The WWRP Farmland Advisory Committee reviews a request to change a parcel to determine whether the change would result in similar conservation values as those presented in the application. The Committee provides one of the following types of recommendations to the director:

- The change provides similar conservation values as the parcel(s) presented in the application,
- The change provides less conservation value compared to the parcel(s) presented in the application, or
- The change provides more conservation values compared to the parcel(s) presented in the application.

3. Requests to Change a Parcel Must Comply with the Scope Change Policy

A request to change a parcel in a project funded from the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account must comply with the board's policy on scope changes as described in Manual 3: *Acquisition Projects*.

Proposed Evaluation Criteria in the WWRP Farmland Preservation Account

Summary of Proposed Evaluation Criteria in the Farmland Preservation Account	Total Points	Percent of Total
1A. Land - What percent of the land contains prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or farmland of unique importance?	16	29%
1B. Land - What is the likelihood the land will not stay in an agricultural use?	10	18%
2A. Infrastructure - How is the land's agricultural productivity supported by access to markets?	4	7%
2B. Infrastructure - How well is the land's agricultural productivity supported by on-site production and support facilities such as barns, irrigation systems, crop processing and storage facilities, wells, housing, livestock sheds, and other farming infrastructure?	4	7%
3. Stewardship - What stewardship practices are in place to benefit fish and wildlife habitat?	6	11%
4. Community Values - How will protection of the land for agricultural purposes provide other benefits to the community? Does the community support the project?	10	18%
5. Building Envelope - How much of the property is included in the building envelope?	4	7%
6. Match - Is the applicant providing additional match above the minimum requirement?	2	3%
7. Easement Duration - What is the Duration of the Conservation Easement?	0	0%
Total Points Available	56	

1. Land

A. What percent of the land contains prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance, farmland of local importance, or farmland of unique importance?^{4,5}

- Less than 60 percent (0 points)
- 60 – 69.99 percent or more (1 – 4 points)
- 70 – 79.99 percent or more (5 – 8 points)
- 80 – 89.99 percent or more (9 – 12 points)
- 90 percent or more (13 – 16 points)

B. What is the likelihood the land will not stay in an agricultural use?⁶

Score the question based on the severity of the threat that the property will be converted to some other use than agriculture.

- Low likelihood it will not stay in agricultural use (0 point)
- Medium likelihood it will not stay in agricultural use (1 – 5 points)
- High likelihood it will not stay in agricultural use (6 – 10 points)

2. Infrastructure

A. How is the land's agricultural productivity supported by access to markets?⁷

Available markets may include formal private markets, commodity exchanges and auctions, and public markets.

- There are little to no market opportunities that support agricultural productivity of the land. (0 points)
- There are adequate market opportunities that support agricultural productivity of the land. (1-2 points)
- There are superior market opportunities that support agricultural productivity of the land. (3-4 points)

B. How well is the land's agricultural productivity supported by on-site production and support facilities such as barns, irrigation systems, crop processing and storage facilities, wells, housing, livestock sheds, and other farming infrastructure?⁸

⁴ See maps at: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/services/GIS/maps/county/soils/soils.htm>

⁵ The viability of the site for continued agricultural production, including, but not limited to: Soil types; suitability for producing different types or varieties of crops; and water availability. (RCW 79A.15.130(9(h))

⁶ The likelihood of the conversion of the site to nonagricultural or more highly developed usage. (RCW 79A.15.130(9(c))

⁷ Farm-to-market access. (RCW 79A.15.130(9(h))

⁸ The viability of the site for continued agricultural production, including, but not limited to: On-site production and support facilities such as barns, irrigation systems, crop processing and storage facilities, wells, housing, livestock sheds, and other farming infrastructure. (RCW 79A.15.130(9(h))

- There are no on-site production and support facilities, even though they are needed, to support the agricultural productivity of the land.
- The agricultural productivity of the land is supported by production and support facilities off-site.
- There are on-site production and support facilities to support the agricultural productivity of the land.

Score 0 - 4 points based on how well the land's agricultural productivity is supported.

3. Stewardship

What stewardship practices are in place to benefit fish and wildlife habitat?

The focus of the stewardship practices is on providing habitat for salmon, other fish and wildlife species, migratory birds, and endangered, threatened or sensitive species.⁹

Types of stewardship practices may include:

- ✓ Enrollment in one or more conservation incentive programs through the Natural Resources Conservation Service,
 - ✓ Participation in the voluntary stewardship program administered by the Washington State Conservation Commission, and
 - ✓ Agreements or voluntary commitments made to support habitat for specific species.
- There are no specific stewardship practices in place. (0 points)
 - There are one or more stewardship practices planned for the future. (1-2 points)
 - There are one or more stewardship practices in place. (2-4 points)
 - The conservation easement permanently protects the stewardship practices implemented.¹⁰ (4-6 points)

4. Community Values

How will protection of the land for agricultural purposes provide other benefits to the community? Does the community support the project?¹¹

- The project will provide few additional benefits to the community. (0 - 4 points)
- The project will provide many additional benefits to the community. (5 - 8 points)
- One or more letters of support included in the application that demonstrate community support for the project. (2 additional points)

⁹ Benefits to salmonids (RCW 79A.15.130(9(e))), benefits to other fish and wildlife habitat (RCW 79A.15.130(9(f))), integration with recovery efforts for endangered, threatened, or sensitive species (RCW 79A.15.130(9(g))), and migratory bird habitat and forage area (RCW 79A.15.130(9(i)(v))).

¹⁰ RCW 84.34.020(2)(e) limits the amount of a farm or agricultural land that may be set aside for incidental uses, including habitat preservation, to 20 percent of the land

¹¹ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(a)))

Benefits to the community include:

- ✓ The project is identified as a recommendation in a:
 - Coordinated region-wide prioritization effort,
 - Critical pathways analysis,
 - Habitat conservation plan,
 - Limiting factors analysis, or
 - Watershed plan.¹²
- ✓ The project is consistent with a:
 - Local land use plan, or
 - Regional or statewide recreational or resource plan.¹³
- ✓ The project assists in the implementation of:
 - A local shoreline master plan updated according to RCW 90.58.080, or
 - A local comprehensive plan updated according to RCW 36.70A.130.¹⁴
- ✓ The project provides protection of a view or an aquifer recharge.¹⁵
- ✓ The project will provide occasional or periodic collection of storm water runoff.¹⁶
- ✓ The project will create agricultural jobs.¹⁷
- ✓ The project will provide some educational opportunities.¹⁸

5. Building Envelope

How much of the property is included in the building envelope?

- The size of the building envelope is not appropriate for the size of the farm. (0 points)
- The size of the building envelope is appropriate for the size of the farm. (1 - 4 points)

OBJECTIVE SCORED QUESTIONS

6. Match

Is the applicant providing additional match above the minimum requirement?

- The applicant is not providing additional match above the minimum requirements. (0 points)
- The applicant is providing 5 percent or more additional match above the minimum requirements. (2 points)

¹² (RCW 79A.15.130(9(b))

¹³ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(d))

¹⁴ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(d))

¹⁵ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(i))

¹⁶ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(i))

¹⁷ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(i))

¹⁸ (RCW 79A.15.130(9(i))

7. Easement Duration

What is the Duration of the Conservation Easement?

- The duration of the conservation easement is forever (perpetual). (0 points)
- The duration of the conservation easement is not forever (less than perpetual). (-12 points)

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015
Title: Overview of Potential Changes to the Grant Programs and Criteria for 2015-17
Prepared By: Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo presents proposed changes to policies and evaluation criteria for Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) grant programs. The changes proposed would apply to grant applications received in 2016. Staff requests direction from the board on the proposed options in advance of distributing for public review. Staff will bring final proposals to the board in November 2015 for approval.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

At the June 2015 meeting, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff presented to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) a list of potential policy and evaluation criteria changes in preparation for new grant applications in 2016 (see [Item 19](#) of the June meeting materials).

At the September meeting, staff will present specific changes to the WWRP Farmland Preservation Program in Item 5, the Boating Infrastructure Grants program in Item 7, and the federal Omni Circular in Item 8. This memo includes specific changes on 5 additional topics:

- Control and Tenure
- Preference for Boats on Trailers in the Boating Facility Program
- Multi-Site Acquisition Strategy for WWRP Habitat Categories
- Multi-Site Development for Trails and Water Trails
- Invasive Species Prevention

Control and Tenure

Background

Board policy¹ requires sponsors to have control and tenure over the property where the project is located.

¹ Resolution #96-10

The current board policy is as follows:

"To protect the RCFB assisted capital investment, sponsors must have adequate control and tenure of development project areas. This may be documented in several ways, including by showing land ownership, lease, use agreement, or easement.

Before executing a project agreement, the applicant must provide RCO with:

- 1. Current title information for project property owned by the applicant, but not acquired with RCFB assistance. This information must include:*
 - Legal description,*
 - Deed description,*
 - Encumbrances,*
 - Documentation of current owner, and*
 - Easements.*

Explain the immediate or potential impact of any restriction, easement, or encumbrance.

- 2. Copies of applicable leases, easements, or use agreements on the area or property to be developed, if not owned by the sponsor. Under this option:*
 - The lease, easement, or use agreement must extend for 25 years from the date of RCFB approval (10 years for Firearm and Archery Range Recreation Program grants).²*
 - The lease, easement, or use agreement may not be revocable at will.*
 - Evidence must be provided by the sponsor that the proposed development and its intended uses are consistent with and legally permissible under the conditions of the lease, easement, or agreement."*

The purpose and timing of the Control and Tenure policy is two-fold. First, it ensures RCO enters into an agreement with a sponsor that has the authority to implement a project on the subject lands. Second, it ensures the control and tenure is secured at the time the agreement is issued so as not to delay project implementation. The tenure period also sets the compliance period for the long-term obligations of the project and assures use of the facility by the public for a reasonable length of time.

Issue

Sponsors are finding it increasingly difficult to obtain the required tenure of a property under part two of the policy when they are working on lands owned by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) or the Washington Department of Transportation (DOT). RCO evaluates tenure issues on a project by project basis, but there is an increasing need to address this issue with a board policy.

There are different reasons why the two state agencies are reducing the length of time a sponsor can control a property.

For DNR, there are constitutional and statutory limitations on the length of time they can issue a lease or easement on certain types of aquatic lands. For example, for first and second class, platted shorelands and tidelands, the maximum statutory length of time for a lease is 55 years. For bedlands in front of second class tidelands or shorelands, it is 30 years. See Appendix A for details on the DNR terms for leases and easements on state-owned aquatic lands.

² The Boating Infrastructure Grants program and Youth Athletic Facilities Program are 20-year terms.

DNR has identified preferred terms for easements to ensure the language in the easement is updated periodically to reflect current management practices and to adaptively manage the site based on the use and site-specific conditions. For the same reason, DNR often has an interest in maintaining a shorter-term period for certain leases to ensure the lease language is periodically updated and to better adaptively manage the site. The DNR sometimes issues a lease for less than the maximum period as a way to provide an opportunity in the future to renegotiate the lease terms, modernize lease language, and include new best management practices as they develop that may benefit both the DNR and the tenant. RCO works with DNR on a project by project basis towards meeting the agencies' mutual goals for the authorization term.

For DOT, the agency right-of-way manual specifically discourages allowing RCO-funded projects in the right-of-way. If a lease is secured, sometimes it is for less than the required period. DOT has an interest in limiting the number of new recreational projects within the right-of-way because federal law protects any recreational resource impacted by a DOT project if federal funds are involved in the DOT project. This federal protection is called to Section 4(f) of the U. S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966. Section 4(f) requires consideration of park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transportation-related project development funded by the federal government. Therefore, when DOT allows a project within their right-of-way, they are expanding their potential future liability for impacts to that recreational resource if they have a need to change the road in some way.

Finally, sponsors sometimes need RCO to issue the project agreement before they secure the control and tenure so they can include the costs of meeting the control and tenure requirements in the agreement. Their perspective is that they want to secure funding before they obtain a lease or other time of use agreement with the property owner. If sponsors wish to seek funding for the costs to secure a lease or easement for control and tenure, those costs are eligible as an acquisition project. In this situation, the projects changes from a development project to a combination project.

Options for Consideration

Staff identified the following options for the board's consideration:

Option 1 – Maintain existing policies.

The board could choose to maintain the existing tenure policies.

Option 2 – Address control and tenure issues on a project by project basis.

The board could choose to address tenure issues on a project-by-project basis. If the board chooses this option, the board should develop guidance on the when the director may reduce tenure terms and when the board would want to decide such issues.

Option 3 – Change the policy on tenure to be a minimum of thirteen years for all programs.

The capital budget instructions from the Office of Financial Management (OFM) state that the minimum useful service life for any capital project is typically thirteen years. The board could allow a minimum thirteen years tenure period based on this guidance from OFM.

Option 4 – Change the policy on tenure to be a period of useful service life for the facilities developed or restored.

The useful service life for certain facilities could range between five and fifty years. The tenure of a project could be related to the expected useful service life of the facility constructed. The board would need to provide policy guidance for setting the period of useful life under this option.

Option 5 – *Make an exception for projects located on DNR and DOT property.*

Allow for a reduced tenure period for projects specifically located on DNR or DOT property and maintain the twenty-five year period for all other projects.

Option 6 – *Allow RCO to issue the project agreement before the sponsor secures the control and tenure.*

The board could choose to change the policy to allow RCO to issue a project agreement first, and then the sponsor works to secure control and tenure from the landowner. With this option, the board could require landowner acknowledgement for the project to ensure that the sponsor communicates the project needs to the landowner before grant funds are obligated.

Option 7 – *Combine certain options described above.*

Combining the options described above could provide a comprehensive policy to address different situations. For example, the board could change the tenure policy to be linked to the period of useful service life of the facility developed or restored, grant the director authority to reduce a specific project's tenure period to a minimum of thirteen years, and bring any tenure issues that are less than thirteen years to the board. Any tenure issue that could not be resolved, would result in RCO terminating the project and the sponsor losing the grant funding.

Option 8 – *Terminate funding of projects that cannot meet the tenure requirements.*

Regardless of whether the board maintains the current tenure policies or changes them, the board should develop a policy or guidance for staff on what to do if a sponsor cannot secure the required period of tenure.

Preference for Boats on Trailers in the Boating Facility Program

Background

Before 2011, there was a preference in the Boating Facilities Program (BFP) to fund facilities that would be primarily used for motorized vessels small enough to be moved around on trailers. Typically, boats on trailers are twenty-six feet or less, but they can be longer. The board removed this preference for smaller boats in 2010, thereby making the process less competitive for facilities serving smaller boats to get funding. The change occurred primarily in response to the boating plan's expanded scope to include all types of boating, including larger motorized vessels. As a result of this change, projects for vessels over twenty-six feet in length were eligible in both the BFP and Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) programs.

Twenty percent of residents report boating on a motorized vessel that is twenty-six feet or less according to the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) adopted by the board in 2013. Four and a half percent of residents boat on vessels larger than twenty-six feet in length. The Boating Grants Program Plan adopted by the board earlier this year calls for funding for the construction of boating facilities to address the most important boater needs and the most popular types of boating (Strategy 1). The plan also called for defining grant programs' priorities to fund different types of boating facilities in different grant programs and not have overlap in funding (Strategy 2). The 2007 Boater Needs Assessment called on RCO to fund more motorized boat launches as the top priority rather than marinas and other boating facilities.

Issue

Five times as many residents participate in boating on smaller motorized vessels than larger boats. However, grant funding is increasingly being awarded to projects that are focused on larger vessels, which need marinas and other types of facilities than smaller boats. While smaller vessels may be allowed to use

the larger facilities, there is generally a preference for the larger vessels as they can generate more revenue than the smaller vessels.

The issue for the BFP is whether it should continue to serve as a program for any type of motorized boating or return to providing a preference for the types of facilities the majority of boaters need.

Options for Consideration

Option 1 – *Maintain existing policies and allow all lengths of boats to use facilities constructed in the BFP.*

The board could choose to maintain the existing approach and allow all lengths of boats to use facilities constructed in the BFP.

Option 2 – *Provide a preference for boats on trailers in the BFP but still allow boats of all lengths.*

The board could return to a preference for boats on trailers in the BFP through additional points in the evaluation criteria. Facilities for motorized vessels longer in length would still be eligible to apply but not have a preference in the evaluation criteria. Facilities for motorized vessels twenty-six feet or longer would still remain eligible for funding in the BIG program.

Option 3 – *Restrict the BFP to boats on trailers only.*

The board could choose to limit the BFP program to boats on trailers only. This would reduce the overlap with the BIG program. Sponsors could submit projects that serve all lengths of boats, but only the costs associated with the facilities for board on trailers would be eligible for funding.

Multi-Site Acquisition Strategy for WWRP Habitat Categories

Background

In 2005, the Legislature amended the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) statute to require applicants to notify the governing body of the local jurisdiction of the proposed land acquisitions in their area. This was to provide the local jurisdiction the opportunity to be informed of public land acquisitions that occur within their jurisdiction and to provide them an opportunity to provide comment to the Governor and Legislature. Applicants provide notice of the WWRP grant application to the local governing body and typically include a description of the proposed project and a parcel map or map of the geographic envelope. The statute³ says:

"A state or local agency shall review the proposed project application with the county or city with jurisdiction over the project area prior to applying for funds for the acquisition of property under this chapter. The appropriate county or city legislative authority may, at its discretion, submit a letter to the board identifying the authority's position with regard to the acquisition project. The board shall make the letters received under this section available to the governor and the legislature when the prioritized project list is submitted under RCW 79A.15.120, 79A.15.060, and 79A.15.070."

Also in 2005, the board adopted the Multi-Site Acquisition Policy to allow for multi-site acquisitions in WWRP Critical Habitat, Natural Areas, and Urban Wildlife categories and the WWRP Riparian Protection Account. The policy says:

"Typically, applicants submitting habitat or riparian acquisition projects identify the specific parcel(s) of land they wish to purchase. Occasionally, however, an applicant will target an area that includes a larger number of parcels with the stated intention of acquiring only a portion of them. The Multi-Site Acquisition Strategy is designed to give clarity to elected officials, the public, WWRP evaluation teams,

³ RCW 79A.15.110

and the board on what properties will be acquired, while maintaining flexibility for agencies to acquire the highest priority habitat lands.

- *Grant applicants should identify all parcels targeted for possible acquisition. If this is not feasible, would create a hardship for targeted landowners, or would jeopardize potential acquisitions, applicants may instead identify a geographic envelope containing all parcels to be considered.*
- *Proposed parcels should be contiguous with one another or contiguous with property currently protected through public or nonprofit ownership. Parcels may be non-contiguous if applicants can demonstrate that siting the project anywhere within a geographic envelope will be effective in achieving the goals of the project.*
- *RCO staff may request that projects targeting acquisitions in more than one geographic envelope or containing non-contiguous parcels be submitted as separate grant applications. Staff shall consider the distance between geographic envelopes or non-contiguous parcels, political jurisdictions involved, similarity of ecological features, and difficulty in evaluation in making their determination.*
- *Applicants must provide an acquisition strategy in their application. The strategy should show how the agency will approach selecting parcels to pursue and what will be done if negotiations are not successful. The acquisition strategy should be justified based on factors including ecological significance, threat, access, land management issues, real estate issues, degree of completion of the site, location of parcels previously acquired, and landowners.*
- *During the evaluation of the grant proposal, evaluators may recommend that the board place conditions on a project to ensure there is not a significant scope change resulting from acquiring parcels with lower conservation values.*
- *If the sponsor anticipates that the project may have opposition from the community or local elected officials, the sponsor should work with concerned parties to resolve concerns as soon as possible.*

Issue

The level of detail provided in the application can be a significant factor in the level of information provided to the local jurisdiction about the land proposed for acquisition. Because the multi-site acquisition policy allows an applicant to display a geographic envelope without specific parcels identified, the local governing body may not have enough information about the application. The applicant notifies the local governing body of the potential area, but the local members of the governing body may desire more details about which parcels are subject to the grant application. Since the parcels are not identified in the application, RCO does not have the information.

The scope of the geographic envelope has also been challenging for the advisory committee members during evaluations. It can be difficult to evaluate whether the habitat conservation aspects within the geographic envelope will be realized with the acquisition of specific parcels that are not disclosed in the application.

Finally, the policy allows RCO staff to request that an applicant submit separate grant applications for different geographic envelopes or non-contiguous parcels, but the policy does not give the RCO authority to reject applications if the sponsors do not act as requested.

For these reasons, there is a need to have more detail in the application about the scope of multi-site acquisition projects while respecting the sensitive nature of negotiations with private landowners.

Options for Consideration

Option 1 – *Maintain existing multi-site acquisition strategy.*

The board could choose to maintain the existing multi-site acquisition policy and allow applicants to identify a geographic envelope absent specific parcels proposed for acquisition. Applicants could provide more detailed information to the local governing body as their discretion and agreeable to the landowner in order to maintain landowner confidentiality.

Option 2 – Require parcels to be identified in the multi-site acquisition strategy.

The main purpose of the multi-site acquisition policy was to allow sponsors to identify priority parcels for acquisition, but also allow a geographic envelope to be identified in which similar parcels existed should the priority parcels fall through. In short, the applicant could have a “back-up plan” of secondary parcels to acquire should the priority parcels fall through. The board could choose to require applicants to disclose the priority and secondary parcels as part of a specific acquisition strategy. Geographic envelopes without specific parcels identified would not be acceptable.

Option 4 – Limit the size of the geographic envelope.

The size of the geographic envelope could be limited in the multi-site acquisition policy. The policy allows applicants to have a geographic envelope of non-contiguous if they can “demonstrate that siting the project anywhere within a geographic envelope will be effective in achieving the goals of the project”. This policy statement allows for large envelopes at a landscape scale. The board could choose to narrow the size of a geographic envelope to a specific management boundary or radius from existing public lands.

Option 5 – Rescind the multi-site acquisition strategy policy.

The board could choose to rescind the multi-site acquisition strategy policy and require each application to identify all the parcels proposed for acquisition. If some or all of the parcels failed to be acquired, the sponsor could seek a scope change to add new parcels into the application. Any scope change request would need to meet the board’s existing policy on scope changes.

Multi-Site Development for Trails and Water Trails

Background

Current policy prohibits grant proposals in most programs from performing project work at more than one work site. A work site is a single area where work occurs. Trail projects, both upland and water based trails, can sometimes include work at multiple worksites that benefits the trail or trail system in the same project. Applicants must submit separate applications for each project occurring at a separate worksite, even if they directly benefit or are dependent upon one another.

Trail projects are funded in many of the board’s grant programs, but mostly in the following grant programs:

- Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account,
- Land and Water Conservation Fund,
- Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities,
- Recreational Trails Program, and
- Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Trails and Water Access categories.

Issue

Under the current policy, applicants either submit separate applications for each trailhead or put-in site and compete against themselves for funding, or they phase the project and delay implementation until the subsequent year. Under either scenario, applicants must break up projects, which may be counterproductive to building or completing a regional trail system. The result is increased work and risk

to the applicant, and only a portion of the trail system is complete if only one phase is completed. Other consequences may be that users may create their own trailhead or put-in site to get by until facilities are built causing natural resource damage from the user-built trailheads and put-in site and increase the expense of the project in the future to restore damaged habitat.

Options for Consideration

Option 1 – *Maintain the existing policy.*

The board could choose to maintain the existing policy and require applicants to submit separate applications for each trailhead or put-in site. The merits of each site would be evaluated independently.

Option 2 – *Allow more than one work site in the same application if the work sites are part of the same trail and will result in a complete, contiguous, or uninterrupted recreational experience.*

The board could choose to allow more than one work site in the same application. The sites would need to relate to one another through a land or water trail system. Examples would be trailheads at multiple sites along an upland trail, water access put-in and take-out sites, or stops along a water trail system. The board could also limit the number of work sites within the same application or place a cap on the cost of each work site. The existing multi-site development policy in the State Lands Development and Renovation category of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program could serve as an example for this new policy in the programs listed above.

Invasive Species Prevention

Background

The Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC) developed protocols for preventing the spread of invasive species while working in the field and when enjoying the outdoors. The prevention protocols are on the [WISC website](#). The WISC strategic plan identifies coordination as a key implement to increasing awareness of invasive species issues and prevention. Incorporating invasive species prevention into the board's funding programs fits within the board's policy on sustainability. The sustainability and environmental stewardship evaluation criteria specifically asks questions about whether invasive species have been identified on the project site, and if so, what is the plan to remove them.

Issue

Costs related to the removal of invasive species and tools to remove and prevent the spread of invasive species at project sites are not specifically identified in some of the board's grant programs. Identifying them as eligible costs would further bring awareness to the issue and encourage sponsors to incorporate such costs into their grant applications.

Examples of ways to incorporate invasive species costs into specific grants programs are:

All Development and Restoration Projects

- Add "equipment and boot decontamination at facilities" to the list of eligible project elements.

All Maintenance Projects in the Recreation Trails Program

- Add "noxious weed removal" and "decontamination facilities" to the list of eligible project elements.

Boating Access and Backcountry Trail Projects

- Add “invasive species prevention signage” and “boat and equipment decontamination facilities” to the list of eligible project elements.

The evaluation criteria on sustainability could also be strengthened to address the prevention of invasive species by adding secondary questions such as:

- Does the project include decontamination facilities to prevent the spread of invasive species?
- How will this project address the spread of aquatic invasive species on recreational boats and other vehicles (i.e., signage, decontamination facilities, etc.)?

Finally, the board could add a general policy statement to all programs that raises the issue of invasive species. An example policy statement is:

Invasive Species

Invasive species can spread unintentionally during construction and restoration activities. Here is 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.
- Sampling streams and moving water or sediment infested with invasive plants, animals, or pathogens via your boots, nets, sampling equipment, or boats from one stream to another.
- Moving water or sediment infested with invasive plants, animals, or pathogens via your boots, nets, sampling equipment, or boats from one stream to another.
- 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 at a project site is twofold: Use materials that are known to be non-infested with invasive plants or animals in a restoration or landscaping project and ensure equipment is cleaned both before and after construction and restoration. The Washington Invasive Species Council has developed prevention protocols for this purpose. Equipment to clean should include, but not be limited to, footwear, gloves, angling equipment, sampling equipment, boats and their trailers, and vehicles and tires.

Options for Consideration

Option 1 – Take no action.

The board could choose to wait to take action on invasive species prevention issues until a later time. Potentially reasons to delay might be to further understand how invasive species might be spread at board-funded projects or to work more closely with stakeholders on specific issues.

Option 2 – Allow invasive species prevention as an eligible cost.

The board could choose to allow the costs of preventing the spread of invasive species to be an eligible project cost as well as the cost of educational signage to inform recreationists about the issue.

Option 3 – Amend the sustainability and environmental stewardship evaluation criteria.

Invasive species prevention could be expanded upon as a secondary question in the sustainability and environmental stewardship evaluation criteria for development and restoration projects. This would

provide an opportunity for applicants to highlight their invasive species prevention protocols and evaluators an opportunity to assess more elements under this criteria.

Option 4 – *Add a general policy statement to all grant programs.*

The board could add a general policy statement that highlights the board's commitment to preventing the spread of invasive species at project sites similar to how it adopted its policy on sustainability.

Option 5 – *Combine any of the options listed above.*

The board could choose to combine any of the options 1 to 4 above.

Other Proposed Changes

At the June 2015 board meeting, staff identified potential changes to the evaluation criteria for most of the board's grant programs. A list of potential changes is in Attachment B. Specific changes are still being drafted as of the writing of this memo. Staff will continue to work on the evaluation criteria and discuss progress made at the September 2015 meeting.

Timeline

Staff proposes the following timeline to accomplish the work described in this memo.

2015 Dates	Task
September 16	Staff briefs the board on this memo and receive direction on which issues and options to move forward with for public comment.
September 23 – October 14	Staff distributes draft policies and evaluation criteria for public comment for a three-week public comment period.
October 15 – 21	Staff reviews public comments, incorporates any changes, and prepares final draft policies and evaluation criteria.
November 18 – 19	Board meeting in which the board considers the final policies and evaluation criteria. Public comments accepted at the board meeting.

Link to Strategic Plan

Revising the board's policies and evaluation criteria addresses Goals 2 and 3 in the board's *Strategic Plan*.

1. We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.
2. We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.
3. We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.

Attachments

- A. Department of Natural Resources' Lease and Easement Terms for State-Owned Aquatic Lands
- B. Potential Changes to Evaluation Criteria in 2015

Department of Natural Resources' Lease and Easement Terms for State-Owned Aquatic Lands

Agreement type	Location	DNR Preferred Term	Maximum Term allowed by Statute	Authority
Easements – all others	Bedlands – in front of second-class tide/shorelands	12 years	NA	RCW 79.36.355
	Bedlands – in front of unplatted first-class tide/shorelands	10 years	NA	
	First and second-class platted tidelands and shorelands	12 years	NA	
	First class unplatted tide/shorelands	10 years	NA	
	Harbor Areas	12 years	NA	
	Waterways	5 years	NA	
Lease	Bedlands – in front of second-class tide/shorelands	12 years	30 years	RCW 79.130.020
Lease	Bedlands – in front of unplatted first-class tide/shorelands	10 years	10 years	RCW 79.130.020
Lease	First and second-class platted tidelands/shorelands	12 years	55 years	RCW 79.125.200
Lease	First class unplatted tide/shorelands	10 years	10 years	RCW 79.125.410
Lease	Harbor Areas	12 years	30 years	State Constitution, Article XV, §2, RCW 79.115.110 & 120
Waterway permit – Salmon Bay and East and West Duwamish River	Tidelands and shorelands	5 years	30 years	RCW 79.120.040
Waterway Permit – elsewhere		Up to 1 year	1 year	WAC 332-30-117 (3)
Waterway Permit – certain uses		Up to 5 years	5 years	WAC 332-30-117 (4)

Potential Changes to Evaluation Criteria in 2015

Criteria	Description of Change	Programs Affected	Reason for Change
Cost Efficiencies	Clarify the language in the cost efficiencies question, provide better direction on how to score it, and use the same question in all programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boating Infrastructure Grants Land and Water Conservation Fund Recreational Trails Program WWRP Local Parks, Trails, and Water Access 	The advisory committee found the question confusing when applying the extra point for government-related cost efficiencies. It would be simpler to apply the same question to all six programs.
Proximity to People	Review the question to determine whether the total possible points is appropriate for the program or category and consider whether the question is included in all of the appropriate programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boating Facilities Program Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities Program Land and Water Conservation Fund WWRP Local Parks, State Lands Development, State Parks, Trails, Water Access, Urban Wildlife 	The proximity to people question is required by RCW 79A.25.250. The question is the same in most programs, but the total possible points differs between programs. The review should also include a look at which programs currently do not have the question but should.
Sustainability	Add the board's sustainability question to the Boating Facilities Program. Modify the acquisition considerations in the sustainability criteria for sites proposed for active recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boating Facilities Program WWRP Local Parks category 	The Boating Grants Program Plan calls for adding the board's sustainability criteria to Boating Facilities Program evaluation criteria. Because the criteria for scoring acquisitions focuses on the environmental features of the site, the advisory committee believes the question disadvantages acquisition of property for development of a park.
Natural Surface Trails	Revise the evaluation criteria to remove any disadvantage for natural surface trails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWRP Trails category 	Stakeholders raised a concern that the evaluation criteria in the WWRP Trails category may create a disadvantage for applications to construct natural surface/dirt trails. The board may want to modify the evaluation criteria to ensure no such disadvantage exists.

Criteria	Description of Change	Programs Affected	Reason for Change
Combination Projects	Apply the question for combinations projects as used in other grant programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account 	Most other grant programs include an evaluation question for scoring the acquisition and development/restoration parts of a project when combined together in the same grant application. Staff suggests restructuring the ALEA evaluation criteria to allow scoring of both parts of the application.
WWRP Critical Habitat Category	Revise the criteria to address local agencies as an eligible applicant.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWRP – Critical Habitat category 	The Legislature added local agencies as eligible applicants in the WWRP Critical Habitat category in 2005. Staff recommends updating the evaluation criteria to reflect this eligible applicant.
WWRP Riparian Protection Account	Revise criteria to make them easier to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWRP Riparian Protection Account 	The WWRP Habitat Conservation Advisory Committee recommended revisions to the WWRP Riparian Protection Account to make it easier to use. Examples included splitting apart some of the existing criteria and scoring questions separately.
Wildlife Habitat Connectivity	Modify the evaluation question to ensure the criterion meets the statutory intent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWRP Trails category 	The advisory committee wants the board to consider modifying the question to measure how well a project enhances continuity or creation of new habitat and to change the title to mirror the language in RCW 79A.15.070.

Criteria	Description of Change	Programs Affected	Reason for Change
Trails of Statewide Significance	Create a new question to give a preference for trail projects that support trails of statewide significance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account • Land and Water Conservation Fund • Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities • Recreational Trails Program • WWRP Local Parks, State Lands Development and Renovation, Trails, and Water Access 	The State Trails Plan suggests staff evaluate designating trails of statewide significance per RCW 79A.35 and providing a scoring preference for projects that acquire or develop system of recreational trails. Preference for a project that implements a portion of a statewide trail could be included in one or more of the different grant programs as listed.
Accessibility	Create a new question to give a preference for projects that provide accessibility elements above the required standards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All development projects 	In 2010, the Department of Justice adopted <i>Standards for Access Design</i> . These standards now provide clear direction to applicants on the legal requirements for meeting accessibility. Staff recommends the board create a new question for all development projects that would encourage applicants to provide accessible elements that are above the required standards.
Diversity	Create a new question to give a preference for projects that will provide more opportunity for diverse users (youth, women, people over 65, and people of color)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account • Boating Facilities Program • Land and Water Conservation Fund • Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities • Recreational Trails Program • WWRP Local Parks, State Lands Development and Renovation, Trails, and Water Access 	The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies youth, women, people over 65, and people of color as target audiences that are in need for more outdoor recreation opportunities. Staff recommends the board create a new question for the programs listed that would encourage applicants to provide outdoor recreation opportunities for these target audiences.

Criteria	Description of Change	Programs Affected	Reason for Change
Health Benefits	Create a new question to give a preference for projects that will improve the health of residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All recreation based programs 	The 2013 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan identifies health benefits as a positive benefit of outdoor recreation. Staff recommends the board create a new question for all recreation-based programs that would encourage applicants to provide outdoor recreation opportunities that focuses on improving health or healthy living.
State Parks Criteria	Revisions to make the criteria more robust and it easier to use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> WWRP State Parks category 	The WWRP State Parks advisory committee wants the board to consider expanding the annotated explanations for the some of the evaluation questions and to consider adding criteria for need satisfaction and project support.
NOVA Planning Grants	Modify to better address criteria for planning grants in light of the addition of Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship criterion added in 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) 	The addition of the Sustainability and Environmental Stewardship criteria created an evaluation scoring disadvantage for planning project proposals. At the last minute, staff proposed a modification to the criteria to remove the scoring imbalance, but it was only a temporary fix. The NOVA evaluation criteria for planning projects need more analysis.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015
Title: Overview of Changes to the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program
Prepared By: Laura Moxham, Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service adopted and published new rules for the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program. This memo provides a summary of changes to the program, outlines policy issues and options for consideration, and provides an overview of the next steps. Staff is asking the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to provide guidance on the preferred options for public comment and final consideration.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

At the June Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) meeting, staff provided a briefing on the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program and the applications moving forward for national competition for federal fiscal year 2016. In addition, staff covered some of the notable changes in the federal rule that govern the BIG program.

The Sport Fishing and Boating Safety Act of 1998 established the BIG program. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) carries out the program through the *Code of Federal Regulations, Title 50, Part 86 (50 CFR part 86), Boating Infrastructure Grant Program*. On May 6, 2015, the USFWS published updated rules that became effective 30 days later on June 5. This is the first comprehensive update since 2001 and requires the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to update BIG policy and procedures to reflect the new federal rule.

At the September 2015 meeting, staff will present specific changes from the old rule to the new federal rule and request direction on policy considerations for the BIG program.

There are two sections provided for board review and consideration. Section one outlines nine changes in the new federal rule that do not require board action. Section two provides an inclusive table of three BIG policy topics for board direction. The tables include information on the federal program changes, current board policy, options for board consideration, followed by an analysis of the options considered.

Section 1: Federal Rule Changes to the BIG Program – Not Requiring Board Action

The USFWS considered and adopted many changes when they updated the federal rule for the BIG program. The nine items below are highlighted for your information and do not require board action because there is no discretion under the new rule.

1. Subprogram name change. The BIG grant program has two subprograms or categories based on the value of the grant request. The new rule updated the name of these subprograms to reflect by reference where they compete, state or national. The new names are Tier 1 – State Grants and Tier 2 – National Grants.
2. Transient moorage definition. The definition for transient moorage changed from up to a 10-day maximum stay to a 15-day maximum stay at a BIG funded facility.
3. Eligible Sub-grantees. The USFWS added Institutions of Higher Education to the list of eligible sub-grantees in the new rule.
4. Ineligible Costs. The USFWS added constructing, renovating, or maintaining roads or parking lots to the ineligible actions for BIG funding.
5. Record the federal interest in the real property. Recording the federal interest on property funded with BIG is a new requirement. Cost associated with recording the federal interest are eligible.
6. Pump outs. Pump out stations have always been eligible for funding under the BIG program. The new rule now specifies that a pump out is required when:
 - Eligible vessels stay overnight,
 - Available pump out service is not located within 2 nautical miles, or
 - Local laws require one on site.

There are four circumstances outlined in the new rule that would allow an applicant to ask the USFWS to waive this requirement.

- a. Because of a hardship due to a lack of facilities or other obstacle;
- b. State or local law does not allow septic or waste disposal facilities at the location;
- c. Sub-grantee is in the process of applying for a Clean Vessel Act (CVA) Program grant to install a pump out as part of the BIG funded facility; or
- d. Sub-grantee has a CVA grant and will install a pump out, by project completion, as part of the BIG funded facility.

It has been clear in federal rule that BIG or the CVA Program can pay for a pump out station. A state may now require sub-grantees to apply for a CVA grant to pay for the pump out. RCO will incorporate into the policy manual the federal rule shown above and will add language to *encourage* applicants to apply for CVA funds to pay for pump out stations.

7. Federal funding availability. The 2001 BIG rule stated that each year's funds remain available for obligation for a total of three fiscal years. The USFWS has now provided additional clarification about the availability of funds. The term "grant period" changed to "period of performance" and has a 3-year limit. In addition, the "period of obligation" is the time it takes to get the agreement in place and that has a 3-year limit. Combined, states could take up to 6 years to fund and complete a BIG project. Board policy requires applicants to complete projects within four years of funding approval. There are no changes proposed for this requirement.

8. Dredging. Dredging costs were limited to a maximum of 10 percent of the total project cost and maintenance dredging was ineligible. Under the new rule, applicants may request a maximum of \$200,000 in grant funds for dredging related activities. In addition, the new rule removed maintenance dredging from the list of ineligible project elements and outlines when dredging is an eligible action. The new rule states that when a project is complete, the dredged area must:
 - Have navigable water depth to accommodate eligible vessels.
 - Allow safe, accessible navigation by eligible vessels to, from, and within the BIG funded facility.
 - Allow eligible vessels to dock safely and securely at transient slips.
9. Maintenance. Currently, the board's list of eligible project types or costs do not include maintenance. However, maintenance has always been eligible in the BIG Program. The new rule updates the term "maintain" to "maintenance" and further defines it as keeping structures or equipment in a condition to serve the intended purpose. It includes cyclical or occasional actions to keep facilities fully functional. It does not include operational actions such as janitorial work.

Section 2: Federal Rule Changes to the BIG Program – Board Direction Requested

The three proposed policy changes are outlined with policy options and analysis for board consideration and direction.

1. BIG FUNDING

Federal Rule

BIG Program Tier 1 – State Grants

- Maximum request for each state increases from \$100,000 to \$200,000 each year.
- States may submit one or multiple applications, but the total project costs may not exceed the maximum.
- New – There is the potential for additional funding, but this is at the discretion of the USFWS who would announce it in the annual Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- New – States may use all or part of the funds to administer the BIG Program statewide.

BIG Program Tier 2 – National Grants

- Minimum request was \$100,001 per project. The new rule does not provide a minimum however; the implication is that Tier 2 covers any request over \$200,000
- The suggested maximum of \$1.5 million did not change.
- States may submit multiple projects.

Existing Board Policy

BIG Program Tier 1 – State Grants

- Minimum request per project is \$5,000; maximum request is \$95,000. This allows up to \$5,000 for administration.

BIG Program Tier 2 – National Grants

- Minimum request per project is \$100,001; maximum request is \$1,455,000. This allows up to \$45,000 for administration.

Policy Options and Analysis

BIG Program Tier 1 – State Grants

Option 1: No change. Maximum request remains \$95,000.

Pros –

- a. By leaving the grant maximum at \$95,000 there is a potential to fund more, small projects annually.
- b. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. There may be small BIG projects that exceed \$95,000, but are limited by the maximum request.
- b. There would be a larger gap between our Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects because we would not accept funding requests between \$95,000 and \$200,000.
- c. This option may not provide adequate compensation for program administration. Currently the indirect rate is 4.12 percent, which translates into approximately \$4,000 per project. Administration of these projects can last 2 to 4 years.
- d. Administration funding applies to funded projects only.

Option 2: Increase the allowable grant award maximum to \$191,760. Retain \$8,240 (4.12 percent) for project administration.

Pros –

- a. Allows applicants to submit a larger scale project, before having to compete nationally.
- b. Maintains the potential to fund multiple projects.
- c. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. There would be a small gap between our Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects because we would not accept funding requests between \$191,000 and \$200,000.
- b. The administration funding is limited to \$8,240 for these projects. The administration of these projects can last 2 to 4 years, not necessarily compensating for the true administrative costs.
- c. Administration funding applies to funded projects only.

Option 3: Increase the allowable grant award maximum to \$150,000 (or other amount), retain the minimum grant request of \$5,000, and use \$50,000 (or other amount) for administration of the State's BIG program. The additional administration amount would provide funding for planning and other identified boating priorities annually such as the Washington Water Cruiser app, upgrades to PRISM (RCO's database), etc. RCO would not charge the standard indirect rate of 4.12 percent per project.

Pros –

- a. Allows applicants to submit a larger scale project.
- b. Maintains the potential to fund multiple projects.
- c. Provides consistent administration funding for both subprograms and is not dependent on whether we receive funding for new projects.
- d. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. There would be a gap between our Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects because we would not accept funding requests between \$150,000 (or other amount) and \$200,000. Requests exceeding \$200,000 compete in Tier 2 – National grants competition. Under \$200,000 is Tier 1 – State grants competition.
- b. There may be some challenges in tracking the indirect rate for projects versus BIG program administration.

Option 4: Increase the allowable grant award maximum to \$150,000 (or other amount), retain the minimum grant request of \$5,000, and use \$50,000 (or other amount) for administration of the State's BIG program. The additional administration amount would provide funding for planning and other identified boating priorities annually such as the Washington Water Cruiser app, upgrades to PRISM (RCO's database), etc. RCO would continue to charge the standard indirect rate of 4.12 percent per project.

Pros –

- a. Allows applicants to submit a larger scale project.
- b. Maintains the potential to fund multiple projects.
- c. Provides consistent administration funding annually for BIG programmatic improvements.
- d. Provides separation of the state's program administration funding and the standard indirect rate per project.
- e. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. There would be a gap between our Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects because we would not accept funding requests between \$150,000 (or other amount) and \$200,000. Requests exceeding \$200,000 compete in Tier 2 – National grants competition. Under \$200,000 is Tier 1 – State grants competition.

BIG Program Tier 2 – National Grants

Big Tier 2 – National Grants must follow the federal guidelines. This means increase the minimum request to \$200,001. There are two options for the maximum request allowed.

Option 1: Allow a maximum request of \$1.5 million and not charge the standard indirect rate of 4.12 percent per project. RCO would use Tier 1 – State funds for BIG program administration. See pros and cons under Option 3 above.

Option 2: Allow a maximum request of \$1,438,200. This reflects retainage of the standard indirect rate of 4.12 percent per project.

2. LONG-TERM COMPLIANCE

Federal Rule

The long-term compliance period for BIG has changed from 20 years to a useful life¹ determination in the new federal rule. As shown below, states have two different options for establishing a useful life period for compliance purposes.

Existing Board Policy

The long-term compliance period for the BIG Program is 20 years after final reimbursement of the grant.²

Policy Options and Analysis

BIG Program (Both Tiers 1 and 2)

Option 1: Change the 20-year compliance period to a useful life period of each individual capital improvement identified in the BIG funded project.

Pros –

- a. The long-term compliance obligation may be more accurate/realistic for each capital improvement identified in a BIG funded project. This may be consistent with and/or supported by an applicant's overall capital improvement plan.
- b. Could help in applying the obsolescence policy for the Boating Facilities Program for similar elements in similar environments.
- c. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. There may be multiple compliance periods at a BIG funded site for each funded element resulting in variable compliance reporting and inspection timeframes.
- b. It has the potential to increase RCO administration of ensuring accurate long-term compliance on BIG funded projects, including previously funded projects (2001 – 2013) that have a 20-year compliance period. For example:
 - Ensuring that the useful life terms are somewhat consistent between different projects, for the same facilities, under similar conditions.
 - Developing guidance and verification procedures for applicants on determining useful life.
 - Clearly identifying the compliance period for each element in the deed recorded on the property.
 - Documenting in the state agreement the long-term compliance period of each capital improvement identified in the BIG funded project.

Option 2: Change the 20-year compliance period to a single useful life period for the entire project based on the longest useful life period identified for the capital improvements proposed in the BIG funded project.

Pros –

- a. The long-term compliance obligation is based on the longest useful life identified at the site, which may be a more accurate/realistic compliance term for a BIG funded project.
-

¹ Code of Federal Regulations 86.43(3)(f) Useful life. Estimate the useful life in years of each capital improvement for the proposed project. Explain how you estimated the useful life of each capital improvement. You must reference a generally accepted method used to determine useful life of a capital improvement.

² Board adopted compliance period based on 2001 federal program rules.

- b. This option avoids a variable compliance period for elements.
- c. This option is not in conflict with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. Basing the compliance term on the longest useful life facility identified at the site, may not be an accurate/realistic compliance term for some BIG funded facilities.
- b. It has the potential to increase RCO administration, initially, of ensuring accurate long-term compliance on BIG funded projects. For example:
 - a. Clearly identifying the compliance period for each element in the deed recorded on the property.
 - b. Documenting in each state agreement the long-term compliance period identified for the project, which may vary between BIG funded projects.

3. EVALUATION CRITERIA

Federal Rule:

BIG Program Grants

- The total points available decreased from 90 to 36 points.
- The criteria added to the new evaluation questions are: Need and Sustainability.
- The criteria removed from the evaluation questions are Economic Impacts and Multi-state efforts.

Tier 1 – State Grants can have the same evaluation criteria as Tier 2 – National grants. However, because they are evaluated on the state level, we can modify the Tier 1 – State grant evaluation criteria to reflect priorities in our State Boating Grants Program Plan and comments received from our State Boating Advisory Committee.

Tier 2 – National Grants are evaluated on the national level with the new federal rule criteria, effective June 5, 2015. See *Attachment B: New Federal Rule Criteria questions for BIG Tier 2 – National grants*.

Existing Board Policy

BIG Program Tier 1 – State Grants

Evaluation criteria are attached, *Attachment A: Current Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria*

Policy Options and Analysis

BIG Program Tier 1 – State Grants

Option 1: BIG Tier 1 – State grant evaluation criteria remains the same as BIG Tier 2 – National grant evaluation criteria. See *Attachment B, New Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 2 – National Grants*.

Pros –

- a. This option is consistent with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. Does not address priorities identified in the State Boating Grants Program Plan for Growth Management Act.

- b. Does not address the recommendation from the State Boating Advisory Committee to include a design question. The new rule evaluation criteria does not include a design question.
- c. Does not address statutory requirements to give preference to projects in populated areas.

Option 2: Update BIG Tier 1 – State grant evaluation criteria by adding a Design, Proximity to People, and Growth Management Act (GMA) question, with an increase in total points available to 40 points. See Attachment C, *Proposed Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 1 – State Grants*.

Pros –

- a. Addresses priorities identified in the State Boating Grants Program Plan and statutory requirements to give preference to projects in populated areas, and consideration for whether the applicant is meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act.
- b. Addresses requests from the State Boating Programs Advisory Committee to include a design question.
- c. This option is consistent with the new rule.

Cons –

- a. None.

BIG Program Tier 2 – National Grants

Follow the federal guidelines. The USFWS coordinates evaluation of Tier 2 – National grants. The evaluation panel will use the criteria adopted in the new rule. See Attachment B.

Plan Link

Consideration of the policy and procedural changes to the BIG program enable the board to fulfill its goals and supports the following objectives and strategies:

Objective 1.A. – Provide leadership to help our partners strategically invest in the protection, restoration, and development of habitat and recreation opportunities. We do this through policy development, coordination, and advocacy.

- Strategy 1.A.1. – Evaluate and develop strategic investment policies and plans so that projects selected for funding meet the state's recreation and conservation needs.
- Strategy 1.A.2. – Gather and interpret data that inform plans and help the board to provide grant programs that balance investments across a range of activities.

Next Steps

RCO staff will prepare BIG policy updates for public comment, September 13 - October 14, 2015 and bring final policy recommendations for board decision at the November 2015 meeting.

Attachments

- A. Current Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria
- B. New Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 2 – National Grants
- C. Proposed Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 1 – State Grants

Current Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has evaluated and ranked Tier 2 projects, since 2000, using the criteria³ shown below. Per board policy, the Boating Programs Advisory Committee used the same criteria to evaluate and rank Tier 1 projects as part of a written evaluation process.

Question	Subject	Maximum Points
1	Partnerships	15
2	Innovative techniques	15
3	Non-federal match	15
4	Cost efficiency	10
5	Link to prominent destination	10
6	Opportunities of national, regional, or local significance	15
7	Economic impacts to a community	5
8	Multi-state efforts	5
Total possible points		90

1. **Partnerships.** Provide for public/private and public/public partnership efforts to develop, renovate, and maintain BIG facilities. These partners must be other than the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and RCO.

To receive points for this criterion, applicants must document partner contributions with a signed letter of commitment from an authorized representative of the match provider/partner and such costs must be necessary and reasonable to accomplishing the proposed project objectives. An agency that contributes only because of mandatory duties, such as issuing a permit, is not a partner.

▲ Point Range: 0-15 points

5 points	One partner
10 points	Two partners
15 points	Three partners

2. **Innovative Techniques.** Use innovative techniques to increase the availability of BIG facilities for transient, non-trailerable recreational vessels (includes education/information).

To receive points, applicants must detail how or why the proposed techniques or education/information materials are innovative, unique, forward thinking, serves a special purpose, or adds to the project in a special way that other marinas do not, and how they increase the availability of facilities.

▲ Point Range: 0-15 points

3. **Non-federal Match.** Include private, local, or state funds above the required non-federal match. If so, identify the percentage of non-federal match.

³ The original criteria included a question that addressed priorities in the State's program plan (as approved by the Secretary of Interior); however, the USFWS never used the question and dropped it in 2004.

Note: Non-federal match contributions must be reasonable and necessary to accomplishing the proposed project objectives. Do not include items or costs that are not part of the BIG project.

▲ Point Range: 0-15 points

5 points	26-35 percent
10 points	36-49 percent
15 points	50 percent and above

4. **Cost Efficiency.** Be cost efficient. Projects are cost efficient when the BIG facility or access site features add a high value of economic return and/or public use compared with the proposed funding.

For example, an application that proposes to construct a small feature such as a transient mooring dock using BIG funds, within an existing facility with existing features (restrooms, utilities, etc.), adds higher value and opportunity than an application that proposes to install all of those features (restrooms, utilities, etc.)

- A. Applications may receive between 0-5 points for an application based on whether the proposed project is an enhancement to an existing facility, or additional services, or if the application is for the development of entirely new supporting infrastructure for the proposed project (e.g., new marina development). Applications to increase the transient space at an existing marina or services will receive a higher score (3-5 points) compared to projects that propose the development of a brand new marina or supporting infrastructure (0-2 points).

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points

- B. To demonstrate cost efficiency, applicants should include the number of boat slips for transient, non-trailerable recreational vessels that your project proposes to construct or renovate. This information helps the review panel determine a federal cost share per slip estimate, which accounts for half of the points for this criterion. Points will not be awarded for this part of the cost efficiency ranking criterion unless projects include construction or renovation of slips for transient, non-trailerable recreational vessels (e.g., 0 points to build a fuel dock only). The point breakdown follows:

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points

5 points	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is < \$12,500
4 points	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is \$12,501-\$24,999
3 points	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is \$25,000-\$54,999
2 points	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is \$55,000-\$79,999
1 point	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is \$80,000-\$104,999
0 points	If the federal cost share per new or renovated slip is > \$104,999, or if no slip construction or renovation is proposed in your project.

Points from 4a and 4b are added together for a possible total of 10 points.

5. **Link to Prominent Destination.** Provide a significant link to prominent destination way points such as those near metropolitan population centers, cultural or natural areas, or that provide safe harbors.

Note: Applications that propose to construct or renovate facilities that do not include boat slips or tie-ups will receive 0 points for this ranking criterion, e.g., fuel dock only.

▲ Point Range: 0 or 10 points

6. **Opportunities of Significance.** Provide access to recreational, historic, cultural, natural, or scenic opportunities of national, regional, or local significance. Projects that provide access to opportunities of national, regional, or local significance receive 5 points for each, for a maximum of 15 points.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service suggests that applicants list examples of opportunities, the type of opportunity (i.e., nationally, regionally, or locally significant), and the time and distance to access such opportunities by boat, car, and bicycle from the project site (if appropriate). To receive points, access to the opportunity of significance must be within a reasonable distance of the project location.

Note: Applications receive 5 points for providing access to at least one nationally significant opportunity, 5 points for providing access to at least one regionally significant opportunity, and 5 points for providing access to at least one locally significant opportunity. Applicants will not receive more than 5 points for having multiple significant opportunities in any of the above categories.

▲ Point Range: 0-15 points

7. **Economic Impacts.** Provide positive economic impacts to a community. For example, a project that costs \$100,000 and attracts a number of boaters who altogether spend \$1 million a year in the community would be providing significant positive economic impact to a community. (1-5 points)

Applications that do not address or inadequately address the economic benefits of a project will receive the minimum score (1).

To receive higher scores (2-5) an application must address the potential economic impacts to the local community. Applicants may use a variety of sources to estimate the economic impacts of a project, including previously completed studies from the local or surrounding area. Although the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recognizes the importance of boating in general to state and regional economies, the application must address the specific potential economic impact of the project on the local area to receive 2-5 points for this criterion.

▲ Point Range: 1-5 points

8. Include multi-state efforts that result in coordinating location of tie-up and other facilities. To receive points for this criterion, an application must include formal documentation of multi-state efforts (e.g., signed memorandum of agreement, signed letter, etc.)

▲ Point Range: 0 or 5 points

New Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 2 – National Grants

Criteria for reviewing and ranking BIG Tier 2 – National Grant applications are in the Final Rule for BIG (50 *Code of Federal Regulations* 86.51) published May 6, 2015 in the Federal Register. There are a total of 36 points possible per application.

Question	Subject	Maximum Points
A	Need, Access, Cost Efficiency	20
B	Match and Partnerships	10
C	Innovation and Environmental Stewardship	6
Total possible points		36

A. Meet a Documented Need, Improve Eligible Boater Access, and Demonstrate Cost Efficiency (20 total possible points.)

- (1) Will the proposed boating infrastructure meet a need for more or improved facilities? (0–10 points)

In evaluating a proposed project under this criterion, we consider whether the project will:

- Construct new boating infrastructure in an area that lacks it, but where eligible vessels now travel or would travel if the project were completed;
 - Renovate a facility to improve its physical condition, follow local building codes, improve safety, or adapt it to a new purpose;
 - Create accessibility for eligible vessels by reducing wave action, increasing depth, or making other improvements;
 - Expand an existing facility that is unable to accommodate current or projected demand by eligible vessels; or e. Make other improvements to accommodate an established need.
- (2) Will eligible users receive benefits from the proposed boating infrastructure that justify the cost of the project? (0–7 points)

In evaluating a proposed project under this criterion, we consider the total cost of the project, the benefits made available to eligible users, and the objectivity or reliability of the data and information used to demonstrate benefits relative to costs. Relate costs and benefits to the need for the project (See § 86.43(a)). We may consider the availability of preexisting structures and amenities, but only in the context of the identified need. As costs vary depending on local factors, we do not use a cost per slip to compare projects. Describe in your application any factors that would influence costs such as:

- The need for specialized materials to meet local codes, address weather, future sea level rise, or terrain, or extend useful life;
- Increased transportation costs due to facility location; or
- Other factors that may increase costs but support needed benefits.

Describe any costs associated with providing a harbor of safe refuge, if applicable.

- (3) Will the proposed boating infrastructure accommodate boater access to significant destinations and services that support transient boater travel? (0–3 points)

In evaluating a proposed project under this criterion, we consider:

- a. The degree of access that the BIG-funded facility will provide;
- b. Activities, events, or landmarks near the facility, how well known they are, how long they are available, and how likely they are to attract boaters to the facility.
- c. The availability of services and the degree of safety at and around the facility, the ease of access to these services, and how well they meet the needs of eligible boaters.

B. Meet Match Requirements and Demonstrate Partnerships (10 total possible points)

- (1) Will the proposed project include private, local, or State funds greater than the required minimum match? (0-7 points)

As given in § 86.56, we will award points under this criterion as follows. Please note that, while in-kind services and materials may be included in the minimum 25 percent match requirement, *your proposal will only be scored on this criterion for additional cash match.*

Percent Cash Match	Points
26–30	1
31–35	2
36–40	3
41–45	4
46–50	5
51–80	6
81 or higher	7

- (2) Will the proposed project include contributions by private or public partners that contribute to the project objectives? (0–3 points)

Partners may include non-Federal entities such as sub grantees, private businesses, other State agencies other than the primary recipient of BIG funds, non-profit organizations, or Federal agencies other than the Service. To be considered a partner, the entity must commit a financial or in-kind contribution or take a voluntary action that is necessary for, and directly and substantively contributes to, completion of the project. See § 86.55 and § 86.57 for additional guidance. In evaluating proposed projects under this criterion, we consider:

- a. The significance of the contribution to the success of the project;
- b. How the contribution supports the actions proposed in the project statement;
- c. How the partner demonstrates its commitment to the contribution; and
- d. The demonstrated ability of the partner to fulfill its commitment.

C. Demonstrate Innovation and Environmental Stewardship (6 total possible points)

- (1) Will the proposed project include physical components, technology, or techniques that improve eligible user access? (0-3 points)

In evaluating a proposed project under this criterion, we consider whether the project will increase the availability of the BIG-funded facility for eligible users or improve eligible boater access to the facility. Describe whether you will be:

- a. Using a new technology or technique;
- b. Applying a new use of an existing technology or technique;

We will consider if you choose to complete the project using an optional or advanced technology or technique. If you choose to go beyond the minimum technical requirements for a project

component, you must describe the current standard and how you will exceed the standard. We will not award points for following standards set by law.

- (2) Will the proposed project include innovative physical components, technology, or techniques that improve the BIG-funded project? (0–2 points)

In evaluating a proposed project under this criterion, we consider if the project will include physical components, technology, or techniques that are newly available, or repurposed in a unique way. Examples include components, technology or techniques that:

- a. Extend the useful life of the project;
 - b. Are designed to help save costs, decrease maintenance, or improve operation;
 - c. Are designed to improve services or amenities for BIG-eligible users;
 - d. Reduce the carbon footprint of the facility;
 - e. Reduce negative environmental impacts (beyond compliance requirements); or
 - f. Improve facility resilience.
- (3) Has the facility where the project is located demonstrated a commitment to environmental compliance, sustainability, and stewardship and has an agency or organization officially recognized the facility for its commitment? (0–1 points)

In evaluating a project under this criterion, we consider if the application documents that the facility has received official recognition for its voluntary commitment to environmental compliance, sustainability, and stewardship by exceeding regulatory requirements. The official recognition must be part of a voluntary, established program administered by a Federal or State agency, local governmental agency, Sea Grant or equivalent entity, or a State or Regional marina organization. The program must require the facility to use management and operational techniques and practices that will ensure it continues to meet the high standards of the program and must contain a component that requires periodic review. The facility must have met the criteria required by the program and received official recognition by the due date of the application.

Proposed Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Evaluation Criteria for Tier 1 – State Grants

If the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves Option 2, the Boating Programs Advisory Committee will use the new federal criteria shown in Attachment B to evaluate and rank Tier 1 – State Grants along with the three additional criteria shown below. Applicants would address in writing (maximum of five, single-sided pages) each criterion for each project application.

Scored by	Question*	Subject	Maximum Points	Priority
Advisory Committee	1 (A)	Need, Access, Cost Efficiency	20	Federal
Advisory Committee	2	Project Design	3	State
Advisory Committee	3 (B)	Match and Partnerships	10	Federal
Advisory Committee	4 (C)	Innovation and Environmental Stewardship	6	Federal
RCO Staff	5	Proximity to People	1	State
RCO Staff	6	Growth Management Act	0	State
		Total possible points	40	

**The "letter" in the question number section is a reference to specific evaluation questions shown in Attachment B.*

2. Project design (development projects only). Is the proposal appropriately designed for the intended use?

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board policy rewards design standards and construction techniques intended to maximize service life, minimize routine maintenance, and avoid environmental impacts.

For example, if users of a proposed boat ramp can be expected to be power loading, solid concrete ramp construction may be more appropriate than concrete plank construction. In harsh marine conditions, steel piling or concrete could be expected to have a longer service life than timber piling.

Evaluators should consider design and construction elements such as:

- Accurate cost estimates
- Aesthetics
- Environmental impacts
- Future maintenance needs*
- Innovative and creative elements*
- Materials and specifications*
- Risk management
- Space relationships*
- User friendly elements
- Universal accessibility

5. Proximity to People. Is the project site in a populated area?

State law requires the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to give 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.⁴ Is the project in an area meeting this definition?

▲ Point Range: 0 to 1 point

0 points No

1 point Yes

6. Growth Management Act Preference. Has the applicant made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act?

State law requires that:

- A. Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant⁵ has adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations as required by Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040 ("state law").
- 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:
 - i. Adopts or has adopted within the time periods specified in state law;
 - ii. Adopts or has adopted by the time it requests a grant or loan; or
 - iii. 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.

Scores for 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 the appeal. Scoring occurs after RCO's technical completion deadline.

▲ Point Range: -1 to 0 points

-1 point Applicant does not meet the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.

0 points Applicant meets the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.

0 points Applicant is a nonprofit organization, or state or federal agency.

⁴ Revised Code of Washington 79A.25.250

⁵ All references to applicants in this question refer to counties, cities, and towns only.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015

Title: Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules

Prepared By: Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo summarizes administrative requirements for all federal grant programs as of December 26, 2014. The requirements affect three of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's grant programs. This memo identifies how the federal requirements affect administration of the federal programs and five policy issues for which Recreation and Conservation Office staff seek direction from the board.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

Federal Programs Administered by the Board

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) is authorized to administer federal programs.¹ The board currently administers the following federally funded programs:

Federal Grant Program	Federal Awarding Agency
Boating Infrastructure Grants	US Fish and Wildlife Service, US Department of Interior
Land and Water Conservation Fund	National Park Service, US Department of Interior
Recreational Trails Program	Federal Highway Administration, US Department of Transportation

As the administrator of these federal programs, the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is considered the pass-through entity and is responsible for ensuring all federal funding requirements are met. The state may adopt additional policies and procedures as the program administrator, if so delegated by the federal funding agency. Absent of such authority, the state must apply the federal requirements as prescribed.

For example, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) allows funding of certain indoor recreation facilities; however, the board chose to limit the types of indoor facilities eligible for funding based on

¹ RCW 79A.25.130

authority from the National Park Service (NPS) to apply additional eligibility criteria in the program that fits within the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

Federal Program Requirements

Each federal grant program has its own program requirements described in federal law, rules, and program guidance. In addition, all federal agencies follow the administrative requirements prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The OMB adopted new rules for all federal grant program administration which became effective December 26, 2014.² These rules, informally called the Omni-Circular, apply to the grants the board either recommended or approved for funding at its July 2015 meeting and all future grant awards.

Each federal agency also adopted agency specific rules that adhere to or deviate from the OMB rules. For the three programs the board administers, the following rules apply:

Federal Grant Program	Federal Law	Federal Rules	Federal Program Guidance
Boating Infrastructure Grants	16 U.S. Code 777g-1	50 C.F.R. Part 86, 2 C.F.R. Part 1402	n/a
Land and Water Conservation Fund	16 U.S. Code 4061 Sections 4-11	39 C.F.R. Part 56, 2 C.F.R. Part 1402	State Assistance Program Manual
Recreational Trails Program	23 U.S. Code 206	2 C.F.R. Part 1201	Recreational Trail Program Guidance

Changes to Grant Administration

The new Omni-Circular rules, and the specific federal agency rules, will require RCO to administer projects differently in a number of ways. Below is a summary of the changes that RCO is making to how it administers federal grant programs on behalf of the board.

Topic	What's Different
Pre-award costs/project start date	Costs incurred before the federal agency awards grant funds to the state are ineligible unless specifically approved by the federal agency.
Indirect costs/indirect rate	BIG and RTP programs allow sponsors to include an indirect cost at a set indirect rate as an eligible cost in the grant. ³
Administration costs	Certain administration costs are covered under indirect costs. Project administration is considered a direct project cost.
Unallowable costs	Specific costs are unallowable such as advisory councils, social events, and organizational expenses.
Eligible match/donations	Specific rules governing match requirements and donations from third-parties.
Insurance requirements	Requires insurance for real property and equipment.
Procurement requirements	Specific procurement standards for LWCF and BIG. RTP allows for states to apply their own procurement standards to sub-awards.
Conflict of interest policy	Each federal agency establishes conflict of interest policies.
Equipment tracking	The asset value of equipment purchased with grant funds is \$5,000 and over.

² 2 C.F.R Part 200

³ Indirect costs for funded projects through the Land and Water Conservation Fund are not allowed by the National Park Service.

Topic	What's Different
Real property and disposition	Specific requirements for disposal of real property (land and equipment).
Reporting requirements	Non-construction projects require annual performance reports 90 days after each reporting period.
Project closeout	Final reporting due 90 days after the project end date.
Compliance reporting	Requires annual reports on the status of real property (land and equipment).

Issues

Conflicts with Board Policies

The new Omni-Circular rules create a situation where RCO will administer the board's grant programs in two different ways: compliance with federal rules for federally funded grant programs and compliance with state rules and board policies for state funded grant programs. In some instances, it may be possible and reasonable to align the board's policies with the federal requirements to streamline grant project administration overall.

Following is a brief description of specific federal requirements that conflict with current board policy. Staff will work on vetting these issues over the next year to determine the best opportunities for streamlining the board's policies with the federal requirements.

Pre-award Costs/Project Start Date

Board policy currently allows two types of costs before a grant project agreement is executed: land acquisitions and certain incidental costs approved by a waiver of retroactivity and architectural and engineering costs up to three years before the grant agreement. The federal requirements do not allow costs before the federal award date. Depending on the federal award date and the specific grant program rules, the board's policy on eligible pre-agreement costs may conflict the federal rule on pre-award costs.

Because of the conflict between federal pre-award costs rule and the board's pre-agreement costs policy the following actions are needed immediately:

- Suspend all waivers of retroactivity for acquisitions of land for federal programs until specific grant program terms can be clarified with the federal awarding agency; and
- Limit all pre-agreement costs for all projects to the federal award date when issuing new project agreements for federal programs (including those state programs used as match to the federal program).

In addition, the board may consider expanding eligible pre-agreement costs for development projects to include construction costs as of the federal award date. Under current board policy, construction costs are not eligible pre-agreement costs.

Matching Grants and Indirect Rates

The federal rules require RCO to honor any federally approved indirect rate on the federal project, which includes the matching share. When a state funded project is used to match a federally funded project, there is a conflict with the board's policy prohibiting indirect costs. An example of this could occur with a boating project partially funded in the Boating Infrastructure Grant program (federal funds) and the Boating Facilities Program (state funds).

The board could address this conflict in two ways:

1. Not allow the federal and state funds to be mixed together in the same project, thereby honoring the indirect rate in the federally funded project but maintaining the board's policy prohibiting indirect rates in the state funded project.
2. Allow the indirect rate on the state funds only when used as match to federal funds administered by the board.

Project Administration and Indirect Costs

Currently, sponsors may charge administration costs directly attributable to the cost of implementing a project. Project administration costs may include the costs of salaries and benefits, office space, telephone, computers, copiers, and other office-related charges, as long as they are directly attributable to the project. Current policy does not allow sponsors to charge indirect costs because there is a long-standing interest on behalf of the board to have grant funds go directly to the costs of implementing a project. Additionally, guidance from the Office of Financial Management limits the use of bond funds to those administrative and staff costs that are directly related to the execution of a capital project.

With the addition of indirect costs in federal programs, the board may want to revisit its policy on eligible administration costs and the maximum allowed amount. Currently, the maximum administration amount on a construction project is 20 percent and the director may increase the amount to 35 percent on an individual project basis. The maximum administration amount on an acquisition project is five percent and the director may increase the amount to ten percent on an individual project basis.

For the federally funded programs, the board may wish to:

- Provide a distinction between project administration and indirect costs to ensure costs are not double billed to the project; and
- Reduce the amount of allowable project administration costs when indirect costs are eligible in the program.

Eligible Costs and Ineligible Costs

The federal rule identifies allowable and disallowed costs (the board policies use the terms "eligible" and "ineligible" costs). In addition, each federal agency has further guidance on which costs are allowed in the specific grant program. At a minimum, the board may not allow costs in a specific grant program that would otherwise be disallowed by the federal government. However, the board may wish to revisit the eligible and ineligible costs in each federal program to assess whether to broaden or constrict the scope of eligible costs allowed by board policy.

Equipment tracking

A sponsor that acquires equipment valued at \$1,000 or more must follow the board's policy on equipment tracking and continue to use that equipment for the project purposes after the project agreement is over. The federal rules require tracking of equipment valued at \$5,000 or more.

The board may wish to consider raising the threshold asset value for equipment purchased with state funding to provide consistency with the federal equipment rules. Staff would conduct additional research to determine whether any state law or rule would prohibit the board increasing the threshold from \$1,000.

Recommendation for Next Steps

Staff recommends the board direct staff to review the policies identified above to address any potential conflicts with the Omni-Circular rules and identify opportunities to align the board's policies with the federal rules where appropriate. If so directed, staff will identify an internal team to work on the issues identified and report back to the board at the November meeting.

Strategic Plan Link

Acting quickly to implement the federal Omni-Circular rules, and address any board policies that might conflict with the federal rules, supports the implementation of Goal 3 of the board's strategic plan which states: "We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us."

Swift action also addresses Principle 1 of the board's strategic plan, which states: "The Board's primary roles are to (1) ensure the best possible investment of funds in protecting and improving habitats, ecosystems, and outdoor recreation opportunities, (2) provide accountability for those investments, and (3) provide citizen oversight to the funding process."

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015

Title: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Review – Opportunity for the Board to Provide Input

Prepared By: Wendy Brown, Policy Director

Summary

This memo summarizes the Legislative direction and the Recreation and Conservation Office process for conducting a review of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program and to provide recommendations for statutory changes by December 1, 2015. The memo also frames some questions so that the board can provide input to the facilitators of the stakeholder process.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Background

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)¹ is a statewide grant program that provides funding for a broad range of land protection and outdoor recreation projects, including park acquisition and development, habitat conservation, farmland preservation, riparian protection, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities. Authorized in 1990, the WWRP was envisioned as a way for the state to acquire valuable recreation and habitat lands before they were lost to other uses and to develop recreation areas for a growing population.

In Section 3163² of the 2015-17 capital budget, the Legislature directed the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to convene and facilitate a stakeholder process to review and make recommendations for statutory revisions to the WWRP. The report is due to the Legislature on December 1, 2015.

At the September 2015 Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) meeting, RCO staff and two facilitators, Jim Waldo and Jane North, will discuss the progress made to date on the WWRP Review Process and solicit input from the board.

WWRP Review Process

The Legislature directed RCO to convene and facilitate a stakeholder process to review the WWRP and make recommendations for statutory revisions. RCO extended an invitation to local governments, state agencies, tribes, nonprofit organizations, legislators, previous WWRP applicants, and other interested parties, asking for recommendations and input. This feedback will be used to objectively evaluate the

¹ See [Chapter 79A.15](#) of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW).

² Senate Bill [5097](#), House Bill [1115](#)

WWRP and consider the most effective way to meet the recreation and conservation needs for future generations. Balancing fairness, transparency, and regional diversity while considering funding priorities for future generations are important principles underlying the WWRP.

Given the instructions from the Legislature and the compressed time frame, the review will be focused on several particular items, some of which include:

- The program design and how projects proceed through the ranking and selection process.
- How well the current allocation categories and percentages balance the many statewide needs.
- How well the program serves the needs of smaller and traditionally underserved populations.
- The ability of the public to access program-funded projects.
- The ways in which state agencies acquire lands through the program.
- Acquisition and stewardship costs, timing of land availability compared to funding availability.
- Other conservation alternatives that could be used by the state.

RCO contracted with facilitators Jim Waldo and Jane North to assist with the stakeholder process. As part of the scoping process, RCO identified some key objectives for the stakeholder process:

- Review and objectively evaluate the WWRP statutory framework.
- Answer questions raised by the Legislature in the Section 3163 proviso.
- Address how the WWRP can reach out to underserved communities and increase participation in the program.
- Strengthen partnerships among non-profit organizations, local governments, and state agencies.
- Communicate with and coordinate input from stakeholders and tribes to gather recommendations for statutory revisions to the WWRP.

We will use various methods to engage stakeholders, including some individual interviews, small group meetings, larger group discussions, and surveys or online town hall forums.

Questions for Board Consideration and Discussion

1. What successes, issues, and concerns with the WWRP have you experienced as an applicant, evaluator, sponsor, or board member? (Considering your past and present involvement in the WWRP, what experience would you share to address the importance of the program?)
2. How can the board best ensure that the WWRP strategically responds to statewide needs and opportunities for recreation and conservation in a coordinated and integrated manner?
3. Are there any statutory changes you individually or collectively want to recommend to the Legislature?
4. What elements of the WWRP are important to preserve for the future? How do we best build on the successes of the past and chart our way into the future?

Timeline and Next Steps

The WWRP Review will begin in September 2015, with the goal of having draft recommendations by late October or early November. RCO will seek input and comments on draft recommendations at that time. A revised set of recommendations will then be forwarded to the Legislature by the December 1 deadline. Staff will continue to keep the board apprised of the status of the stakeholder process and the resulting recommendations.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16, 2015
Title: Board Discussion on Scope of Recreation and Conservation Policy Planning
Prepared By: Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo summarizes the scope and options for strategic planning related to statewide outdoor recreation and conservation needs in Washington State. Recreation and Conservation Office staff seek direction from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board on how to continue meeting statutory requirements and federal grant program obligations while providing a useful and practical plan that is used by multiple stakeholders at the federal, state, and local levels.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Planning Requirements

Why Do We Plan?

While this may seem like a simple question, the answer is complex. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) and the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) are directed to conduct certain strategic planning activities on behalf of the state. Many of the board's funding decisions are expected to be based on a strategic framework that either implicitly or explicitly requires a plan approved either by the board or by an applicant (or in some situations, like salmon recovery, a regional entity).

The federal government also requires specific planning in order to receive certain federal funds. The reason the federal government requires planning is to ensure states spend federal funds in a strategic way.

More importantly, beyond meeting state and federal requirements, planning is an opportunity to assess where we've been, where we want to go, and who can help us get there. An effective statewide plan includes partners to scope it, review it, and sign on to implement it. It is like a business plan for how to make decisions and invest limited funding on the most important recreation and conservation needs.

Who is Required to Adhere to Board-Approved Plans?

This also is a complex question. If the plan is adopted only by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, it only governs programs under the authority of the board. It is not a document that would be enforceable against other agencies. It can contain recommendations for others, but it would only be used to direct how the board chooses to, for example, distribute or prioritize grant funds. In this way, it could indirectly guide the actions of those who apply for or are unable to obtain funding from the board.

But if the board wanted to have a broader plan that had more impact on all conservation and recreation efforts within Washington, the board would have to scope, develop, approve and implement such a plan hand-in-hand with other governing entities. Or, alternatively, to incorporate the existing or future plans adopted by other governing entities into the board's plan. All three of these options (board-only, board linked to others, and jointly adopted plan) are fully explored in this memo.

Legal Requirements for Planning

Federal Requirements

There are legal requirements for planning. At the federal level, the National Park Service requires a statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan (SCORP) in order for states to receive Land and Water Conservation Funding. Most SCORPs address the demand for and supply of recreation resources (local, state, federal, tribal, and private) within a state, identify needs and new opportunities for recreation improvements, and set forth an implementation program to meet the goals identified by its citizens and elected leaders.¹

The Federal Highways Administration also requires states to use SCORP, or a state recreational trails plan, as a means to identify projects for funding in the Recreational Trails Program (RTP).² Most states incorporate priorities from SCORP into their project selection criteria for RTP. For examples see [New York](#), [Georgia](#), and [Idaho](#) to name a few. The RTP criteria for the board includes a reference to SCORP in the evaluation criteria under the "need" question.³

State Requirements

In addition to the federal planning requirements, the board must also produce a nonhighway and off-road vehicle activities plan⁴ and may produce a strategic plan for the development, maintenance, and improvement of community outdoor athletic fields in the state.⁵

The RCO director is tasked with producing a state trails plan as part of the SCORP⁶, and a comprehensive guide of public parks and recreation sites in the state of Washington.⁷

Local jurisdictions also plan for recreation facilities and conservation areas in Growth Management Plans. State plans can inform these local plans when the local jurisdiction needs to identify priorities in their area.

Unified Statewide Strategy Plan

The statutory mission of the board identifies as a board action to create and work actively for the implementation of a unified statewide strategy for meeting the recreational needs of Washington's citizens.⁸ The scope of the unified strategy is not described in statute.

Related Plans and Reports

The board and RCO produce a couple of other plans and reports to address needs of specific recreation groups or legislative requests. For example, the boating grants program plan is produced at the board's

¹ [LWCF Web site](#)

² 23 U.S.C. 206

³ See [Manual 16](#).

⁴ RCW 46.09.370

⁵ RCW 79A.25.820

⁶ RCW 79A.35.040

⁷ RCW 79A.25.170

⁸ RCW 79A.25.005

discretion; RCO produced a public lands inventory and economic analysis of outdoor recreation at the direction of the Legislature last year.

Idea for a Universal Plan

While there are many different mandates for plans and reports, the board and RCO have an opportunity to consider a coordinated approach to planning that fulfills multiple objectives. Consider a “universal plan” that meets the federal and state obligations described above and includes a comprehensive approach to addressing recreation and conservation needs statewide. Depending on the scope, a “universal plan” may require partners to steer it, create it and implement it.

Depending on the scope of a universal plan, it could identify recommendations that just apply to the programs over which the board has authority or it could include recommendations for the board and other state agencies, federal partners, local jurisdictions and private recreation providers. Partners in the plan could have an informal review of it or formally adopt the universal plan with a commitment to carry out the recommendations in the plan specific to them. See the section below on how a universal plan could relate to SCORP and how partners used to be involved in the board’s planning work. Other states have worked to this degree to get formal approval from key partners.

What Could a Universal Plan Include?

A universal plan could include many different elements that are relevant today. Most importantly, a universal plan would incorporate all the board’s required plans and inventories. But it could also have elements related to the recent Legislative interests like the public lands inventory and the economic analysis of recreation lands.

A universal plan could include:

- Statewide comprehensive outdoor recreation plan requirements,
 - Assessment of recreation and conservation needs,
 - Demographic information such as health, ethnicity and age,
 - Inventory of public and private parks and recreation sites,
 - Inventory of public lands and recreation facilities,
- Nonhighway and off-road vehicle activities plan requirements,
- Trails plan elements,
- Boating plan elements,
- Community athletic field elements, and
- Analysis of the economic benefits of outdoor recreation.

A universal plan could also include plans adopted by other governing boards and agencies as source material. Examples of other state plans that related to statewide recreation and conservation include:

- Department of Natural Resource’s Natural Heritage Plan (conservation elements),
- Department of Fish and Wildlife’s Game Management Plan (hunting and fishing elements),
- Department of Fish and Wildlife’s State Wildlife Action Plan (conservation elements),
- State Parks and Recreation Commission’s Boating Safety Plan (recreation elements),
- Department of Ecology’s Wetlands Program Plan (wetlands elements),
- Department of Transportation’s Bicycle and Trail Plan (recreation elements),
- Department of Health’s Plan for Healthy Communities, and
- Department of Commerce’s guidance for parks, recreation and open space elements in the Growth Management Act plan (recreation and conservation elements).

How Would a Universal Plan Relate to SCORP?

At its highest potential, SCORP is a universal plan that includes recreation and conservation elements important to a state. SCORPs are often a multi-agency, multi-stakeholder effort that include specific action items for state, local and private partners. Partners endorse the plan and commit to implementing their piece of it. SCORPs are used to guide multiple grant programs.

The board used to combine the requirements of unified statewide strategy in RCW 79A.25.005 with the requirements for SCORP into one plan called the *Assessment and Policy Plan*. The last iteration was in 2002 and it specifically stated:

Washington's rapidly-growing population, changing demographics, and heightened public awareness of the relationship between a healthy outdoors and a healthy citizenry, combine to make statewide recreation and open space planning essential. This is recognized in RCW 79A.25.020(3), a statute calling for the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation (IAC) to *"prepare and update a strategic plan for the acquisition, renovation, and development of recreational resources and the preservation and conservation of open space."*

The *Assessment and Policy Plan* (Assessment) is written to meet this statutory requirement. The *Assessment*, if accepted by the National Park Service, also maintains the state's eligibility for federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) support.

The *Assessment and Policy Plan* was guided by a planning advisory committee and written by agency staff. The 2002 included:

- Assessment of demand for recreation and conservation resources,
- Inventory of the supply of recreation lands using the public lands inventory
- Recreation needs analysis
- Recommendations for state agencies, including the board and other agencies, federal agencies, local jurisdictions, and private providers.

The following iteration of SCORP was in 2007 and it changed shape. The board took a different approach and contracted out for services to create a new tool called the *level of service*. It allowed recreation service providers to conduct a self-assessment of how well they were meeting recreation needs of their user groups. The level of service model was considered an experiment at the time. It was included in the 2013 SCORP, too, but to a lesser extent.

Most states continue to maximize the requirements of SCORP to meet multiple statewide planning needs. Here are examples of the diversity in scope and content of SCORPs from a few key states:

Oregon

[The Changing Face of the Future](#) provides guidance for the LWCF program and information and recommendations to guide federal, state, and local units of government, as well as the private sector, in making policy and planning decisions. The plan also provides guidance for other OPRD-administered grant programs and recommendations to the Oregon State Park System operations, administration, planning, development, and recreation programs.

Virginia

[The Virginia Outdoor Plan](#) provides guidance to all levels of government and the private sector in meeting the state's conservation, recreation, and open space needs.

Delaware

[Delaware Outdoors: Building an Outdoor Legacy](#) identifies needs in outdoor recreation and guides the investment of funding for outdoor recreation, specifically in the distribution of LWCF funds and Delaware Trust Funds, as well as other public and private funds.

Pennsylvania

[Pennsylvania's Natural Connections](#) plan helps to guide strategy for local governments, state government and other outdoor recreation providers. Priorities, recommendations, and action items delineate a course of action for investments in recreation.

How Would the Board Lead Development of a Universal Plan?

Planning Advisory Committee

A universal plan would require collaboration. Depending on the scope of the plan set by the board, collaboration could include academics; federal, state, and local agencies; tribes; private sector providers; and interest groups. A planning advisory committee best embodies a broad-based effort like this.

In fact, the board used to develop SCORP this way. The board had a planning advisory committee to guide the development and implementation of the plan. It also had a technical advisory committee to guide the research and survey aspects of SCORP. The committees disbanded about 1994, and the nature of SCORP changed. Most states continue to use an advisory committee to guide their SCORP planning, development, and implementation. See the examples above for the types of committees in other states.

Research, Data and Survey Work

Opportunities exist to coordinate the research, data and survey work that builds a plan. Other state agencies may be interested in specific survey information from residents that could be added to the existing survey used in SCORP. For example, RCO staff and State Parks staff would like to coordinate on the next survey to get more information about paddle sport users.

Many states collaborate with a college or university to do the data and survey work. Oregon State Parks has a long-standing relationship with Oregon State University as its provider for the residential and tourist surveys. The board used to contract with Western Washington University for its resident survey in SCORP.

A relationship with an in-state higher education institution provides advantages over contracting out for this work. A relationship is formed that can be sustained over time and the researcher becomes a partner in helping the board meet its goals for the plan. Research collection methods may be more consistent over time and provide opportunities for analysis of trends. Further, the state supports and engages our in-state professors and students in developing the plan.

Another opportunity could be applying for graduate student assistance with a [Marc Hershman Fellow](#) from Washington Sea Grant. Hershman fellows gain first-hand experience crafting marine and resource policies. For one year, fellows are teamed with mentors in state government or a non-profit organization working on ocean and coastal science and management issues. Depending on the needs for the universal plan, a Hershman fellow could assist with research, data, and survey work and help develop implementation actions in the plan as they relate to marine recreation and conservation issues.

Finally, a broad based research and survey effort that may meet the needs of multiple stakeholders warrants production of a stand-alone report that clearly describes the results of the information and the data collected.

Preparing the Plan

Development of SCORP or a universal recreation and conservation plan should ultimately come from the state. In this regard, it seems important for the RCO staff, in consultation with the advisory committee, to write the plan based on the research report described in the previous section.

The plan could be streamlined and summarize recreation and conservation demands and inventories. It could have clear implementation actions and benchmarks for how to use limited state funds from all of the boards grant programs. It could be Web based rather than a traditional narrative report.

The report could be endorsed by planning committee members and other agencies that have a role to play in implementation of the plan.

How comprehensive the plan needs to be is up to the board. The plan can vary to encompass all dimensions of public outdoor recreation and conservation in the state plus all the outdoor recreation providers, users, and other stakeholders. If the plan is too broad, it may have no clear or achievable goals or priorities. If the plan is too narrow, it might not be sufficiently thorough or flexible to meet varied state needs.

Following the SCORP model, the minimum elements of the plan must include an evaluation of the demand for and supply of outdoor recreation and conservation resources and facilities in the state and a program for the implementation of the plan. Beyond these minimum requirements, states have flexibility in developing the plan to meet future state needs.

Other Options for Planning

The concept of combining planning efforts into one universal plan may not be how the board wants to address planning requirements. However, it may streamline staffing needs to be able to focus on one large planning effort rather than five or six separate plans.

Other ways the board could accomplish its planning tasks is to continue to prepare each plan separately. The board could also choose to streamline SCORP and focus on making it more relevant to the board's statutory mission. Another method would be use SCORP as an umbrella that includes specific recreation plans as appendices to the SCORP. The Trails Plan is already an appendix of SCORP. The NOVA, Boating, and Athletic Fields plans could also be appendices of SCORP.

In terms of funding, the National Park Service (NPS) provides financial assistance to prepare SCORP. RCO typically receives \$125,000 from NPS and is required to provide \$125,000 in matching funds. Additional funding may be used from other accounts administered by the board such as the nonhighway and off-road vehicles activities account to support NOVA planning within the SCORP. Also, if the resident survey efforts are coordinated with other state agencies, it may be possible to share the cost of the research. As a reference, the 2013 SCORP (including the Trails Appendix) cost \$272,400 and the NOVA plan cost \$87,700. RCO staff wrote the Boating Plan so the cost was internal staff costs only. RCO has budgeted \$250,000 for SCORP planning during this biennium, including the NPS grant. Some additional funds may be available to cover NOVA, Trails, and Youth Athletic Facilities planning.

Request for Direction

Staff requests direction from the board on how to proceed with its planning tasks. The next SCORP must be completed by December 2017. Staff plans to start scoping SCORP this fall. Direction from the board now will let staff know what to include in that scoping effort. Staff will prepare a draft scope of work and detailed budget based on the direction of the board and present it at the November meeting.

Link to Strategic Plan

Revising the board's planning process addresses Goal in the board's *Strategic Plan*.

1. We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.
2. We achieve a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us.
3. We deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR KALEEN COTTINGHAM

Meeting Date: September 16-17, 2015
Title: Project Tour Preview
Prepared By: Kyle Guzas, Recreation and Conservation Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

This memo notes the projects that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board will tour on September 16-17, 2015. More information about each project site will be provided in the staff presentation at the meeting and from project sponsors during the tour.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Decision
<input type="checkbox"/>	Request for Direction
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Briefing

Tour Overview

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board), Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff, and interested parties will convene in the lobby of the Red Lion Hotel at 8:15 a.m. for a scheduled tour of sites on September 17, 2015. Beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 3:00 p.m., the tour will consist of five board-funded sites including parks, natural areas, and trails that have received more than 20 RCO grants since the late 1960's. Three project sponsors will be highlighted, including the City of Spokane, Spokane County, and the City of Liberty Lake.

Project Site Descriptions

Under each corresponding map point, projects are listed with the primary grant funding source and a description of each project. A map is included in Attachment A. Driving directions will be provided at the meeting. The times shown on the tour agenda are approximate.

City of Spokane Parks and Recreation (Map Point 1)

Historic Iron Bridge Renovation

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Trails Category

Spokane used this grant to renovate and open Spokane's Historic Iron Bridge for bicycle and pedestrian use. Once used by railroad companies to service mining areas throughout the region, the Iron Bridge now represents a key connection in Spokane's regional trail network. The bridge provides safe, scenic, non-motorized access across the Spokane River that currently does not exist on the city's east side. The Iron Bridge will link directly with the 37-mile Spokane River Centennial Trail, and provide connections with other key regional trails. The city contributed \$530,026 in a federal grant and donations of cash, labor, land, and materials. (RCO Project #[08-1698](#))

Spokane County Parks, Recreation and Golf (Map Point 2)

Antoine Peak Acquisition

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Category

Antoine Peak forms a prominent backdrop to Spokane, Spokane Valley, Liberty Lake, and Newman Lake. The County has protected 1,061 acres of this critical habitat that included three phases of WWRP Urban Wildlife grants. It is rare, if not unique, for a natural area of this size and diversity to be within 1 mile of an urban growth boundary. The land offers a broad range of year-round outdoor activities such as hiking, wildlife watching, equestrian use, mountain biking, picnicking, trail running, and cross-country skiing. Part of an important wildlife corridor that stretches north to Mount Spokane State Park and up into the Selkirk Mountains, it is used year-round by elk, moose, black bear, deer, and many other animals. A pond and many streams transect the property and help recharge the Rathdrum Prairie-Spokane Aquifer, the sole source of drinking water for more than 500,000 people. More than eight federal or state species with special status use the area. (RCO Projects [#06-1859](#), [#08-1334](#), [#10-1264](#))

Antoine Peak Access Development

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program, Non-Motorized Category

In 2015, Spokane was awarded this NOVA non-motorized grant to design and construct a new trailhead and construct and renovate approximately 6 miles of trail at the Antoine Peak. The development of the Brevier Road Trailhead will include 12 passenger parking spots, 4 truck and trailer spots, horse hitching posts, a water hand pump, and a CXT accessible toilet. The trail construction and renovation will be conducted by Washington Trails Association volunteers and crews. The primary recreational opportunity that this project will create is access for hiking, horse riding, and biking. (RCO Project [#14-1952](#))

Mica Peak Recreation Plan

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program, Non-Motorized Category

Spokane County recently acquired the Mica Peak Conservation Area utilizing conservation futures funding. Partnering with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and user groups this new NOVA non-motorized grant will develop a non-motorized recreation plan ("Trail Plan") for Mica Peak. The project focuses planning efforts on a 1,500-acre wilderness-like area that will be able to provide four season, multiple-use recreation opportunities within a 30-minute drive of 600,000 area residents. The project will produce a trail plan for this area that will layout a sustainable, multiple-use trail system, establish recreation management policies, locate and design trail signage, create needed design plans, and obtain all necessary permitting to create a "shovel-ready" project. (RCO Project [#14-1945](#))

Spokane County Parks, Recreation and Golf (Map Point 3)

Centennial Trail Realignment at Gateway Park

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Trails Category

This project realigned part the Centennial Trail to pass safely beneath the new Appleway (Old "I-90") Bridge which was replaced in 2010. This realignment was critical to resolve two at-grade trail-and-road intersections near the I-90 on/off ramp at the entrance to Gateway Park and at the shared road-and-trail parking entrance to the DOT Visitor's Center and County Dog Park within Gateway Park. By coordinating with the County Engineer's Department, State Parks and DOT, County Parks secured a role in this project by ensuring the construction of a suitable under-pass to accommodate the trail. This project completely eliminated two dangerous crossings and perfected an "incomplete link" by removing a shared-road segment. The trail design also improved aesthetics along the first mile of the trail and provided ramp-access from the Appleway Bridge deck to connect the Greenacres neighborhood to the 69-mile interstate Centennial Trail. (RCO Project [#08-1332](#))

City of Liberty Lake Parks and Recreation (Map Point 4)

Rocky Hill Park Acquisition and Development

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks Category

With this grant, the City of Liberty Lake acquired and developed 13.2 acres known as Rocky Hill Park. Development activities included landscaping, restrooms, paved pathways, two tennis courts, a community garden, a playground, picnic areas, and an informal amphitheater. The park is surrounded by neighborhoods and contains large expanses of open land. Rocky Hill is unique because it has some of the oldest existing structures in the town of Liberty Lake, including a historic 1940s barn and an early 1900s well house. Liberty Lake is one of the fastest growing cities in Eastern Washington, with a population that has more than doubled to 7,500 since incorporation in 2001. Rocky Hill Park is being created to relieve the congestion at Pavilion Park, which is the city's only other park. (RCO Project #[08-1630](#))

Pavilion Park Acquisition and Development

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Trails Category and the Youth Athletic Facilities Program

The City of Liberty Lake acquired approximately 15 acres for their first community park in 1994. The first grant involved both the acquisition and first phase of development including a playfield, accessible pathways, restrooms, and parking. Phase two development activities included the addition of children's play equipment, tennis and volleyball courts, amphitheater enhancement, concrete pathways and landscaping, wading and interactive water spray pool, and exercise and fitness stations. In 2007, the city applied for Youth Athletic Facilities funding for the development of a new skate park. (RCO Projects #[93-104](#), #[96-1212](#), #[07-1963](#))

Spokane County Parks and Recreation (Map Point 5)

Miller Ranch Acquisition

Land and Water Conservation Fund

In the late 1960's, Spokane County acquired the 2,930 acre Miller Ranch, 12 miles east of the City of Spokane utilizing Land and Water Conservation and state bond funding. The park was acquired to provide swimming, beach access, hiking, trail riding, winter sports, camping, boat launching and parking. (RCO Project #[66-005](#))

Liberty Lake Development

General Fund Bonds

This development project constructed additional infrastructure at the park for approximately 75 picnic sites, 25 new campsites, restrooms, outdoor amphitheater, water tank, interpretive walkways, and landscaping. (RCO Project #[72-039](#))

Liberty Lake Off-Road Vehicle Acquisition

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program, Off-Road Vehicle Category

In 1980, Spokane County acquired an additional 54 acres that would create easier access to the 340-acre off-road vehicle park that was associated with the original Miller Ranch acquisition in the late 1960's. (RCO Project #[79-9032](#))

Liberty Lake Riding Area Development

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program, Off-Road Vehicle Category

This project consisted of hardening existing trails, closure of trespass and eroding trails, installation of drainage structures, parking area renovation, and the construction of a new vault toilet. (RCO Project #[93-051](#))

Liberty Lake Riding Area

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Program, Education and Enforcement Category

For nearly three decades, Spokane County has utilized numerous NOVA Education and Enforcement grants for Liberty Lake and other NOVA supported facilities in the county's ownership. These grants have been used for funding a full-time officer and to provide the county park ranger with adequate equipment. These grants have also resulted in thousands of Sheriff Deputy hours in patrolling NOVA sites throughout the county. The goal of these grants was to ensure a positive recreational experience for off-road vehicle users, hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians using more than 8,000 acres of recreational trail sites managed by the county. (RCO Projects #[78-9019](#), #[04-1783](#), #[05-1072](#), #[07-1991](#), #[11-1071](#), #[12-1562](#))

Loop Trail Renovation at Liberty Lake Park

Recreational Trails Program

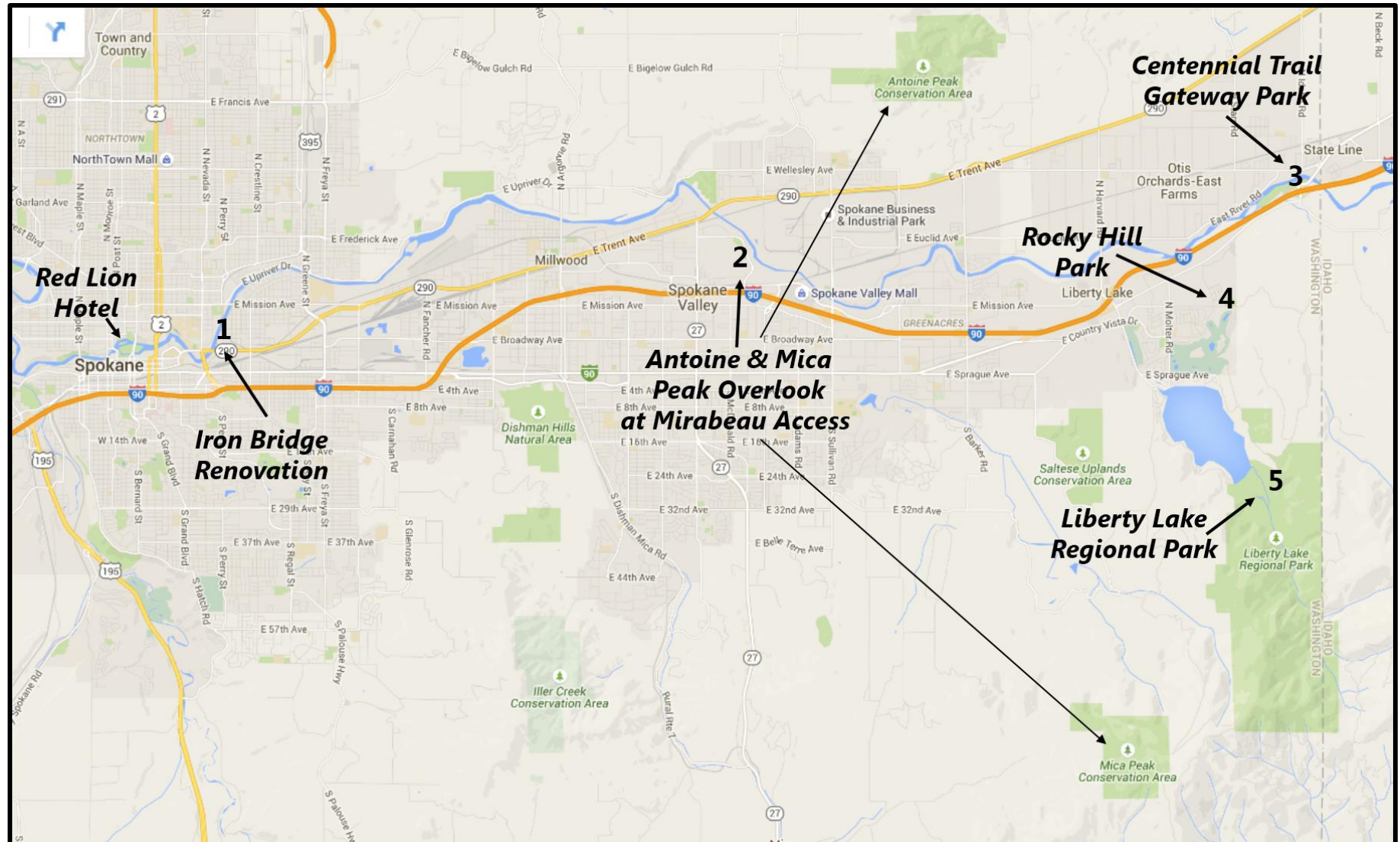
Spokane County Parks and Recreation Department used this grant to reroute the Liberty Lake Loop Trail and construct a major trail bridge within the Liberty Creek Watershed, which feeds into Liberty Lake, located approximately 20 miles from downtown Spokane. The primary recreation opportunity provided by this project is non-motorized trail use. It is estimated that this project serves approximately 600,000 local residents. The new bridge crosses Liberty Creek, accommodating horse, bike, and pedestrian traffic, and the trail reroute expands the existing loop trail by a half-mile while protecting beaver habitat and providing an improved trail experience for hikers, bicyclists and equestrian users. New way-finding signage as well as two interpretive signs compliment the improvements and provide a more user-friendly experience. (RCO Project #[10-1265](#))

Attachments

- A. Project Tour Map

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Project Tour Map
September 16-17, 2015
Spokane, WA

Attachment A



RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARIZED AGENDA & ACTIONS

September 16-17, 2015

Agenda Items

Item	Formal Action	Board Request for Follow-up
1. Approval of Meeting Minutes A. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – June 24-25, 2015	Motion to amend the June 24-25, 2015 meeting minutes: APPROVED Resolution 2015-18 Decision: APPROVED	No follow-up action requested
2. Director's Report A. 2016 Board Meeting Calendar B. Director's Report <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Biennial Workplan Overview• Grant Management Report• Fiscal Report (<i>written only</i>)• Performance Report (<i>written only</i>) C. Legislative, Budget, and Policy Update <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Supplemental Budget Request	Discussion Briefing Briefing	The board agreed to the following 2016 meeting dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• February 9-10 (regular)• April 27-28 (regular)• July 13-14 (combined budget and travel)• October 26-27 (regular) The board requested an update from the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group at the next regular meeting.
3. State Agency Partner Reports	Briefing	No follow up action requested
4. Land and Water Conservation Fund: Legacy Program Nationwide Competition	Resolution 2015-19, amended Decision: APPROVED	Staff will continue inform the board of activities between now and the November meeting, and provide an update at that time. If NPS releases the notice and applications are submitted, a public comment period will be scheduled as well.

Item	Formal Action	Board Request for Follow-up
5. Revised Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Farmland Preservation Evaluation Criteria and Policies	Briefing	Staff will work to revise the recommendations based on the board's direction, open a public comment period, and bring final recommendations for board decision to the November meeting.
6. Overview of Potential Changes to the Grant Programs and Criteria for 2015-17	Briefing	No follow up action requested
7. Overview of Changes to the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program	Briefing	After the public comment period, staff will bring options for board decision to a future meeting.
8. Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules	Briefing	Staff will work to incorporate the board's direction and report back at a future meeting.
9. Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Review – Opportunity for the Board to Provide Input	Discussion	Staff will continue to keep the board apprised of the progress of the review process.
10. Board Discussion on Scope of Recreation and Conservation Policy Planning	Discussion	Staff will prepare a draft scope of work and detailed budget based on the direction of the board and present it at the November meeting

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: September 16, 2015

Place: Spokane, WA

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members Present:

Harriet Spanel	Chair, Bellingham	Peter Herzog	Designee, State Parks & Recreation Commission
Betsy Bloomfield	Yakima	Joe Stohr	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pete Mayer	Renton		
Ted Willhite	Twisp		

It is intended that this summary be used with the materials provided in advance of the meeting. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) retains a recording as the formal record of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) meeting.

Call to Order

Chair Spanel called the meeting to order at 8:31 a.m. Staff called roll and determined a quorum. Member Herman and Member Deller were excused.

Chair Spanel asked the board to review and approve the agenda. Member Stohr moved to approve the agenda; Member Willhite seconded. The motion carried.

Item 1: Approval of Meeting Minutes

Chair Spanel called for a motion to approve the June 24-25, 2015 meeting minutes. Member Willhite moved to approve the minutes; Member Stohr seconded. Member Mayer shared several edits to the minutes, which the board reviewed and accepted. The board approved the June 24-25, 2015 board meeting minutes.

Resolution 2015-18

Moved by: Member Willhite

Seconded by: Member Stohr

Resolution: APPROVED

Item 2: Director's Report

The board discussed the meeting calendar for 2016, specifically the adjustment of the budget and travel meetings during the summer. The board settled on July 13-14, 2016 for combined travel/budget meeting.

Director Kaleen Cottingham provided a brief summary of the items highlighted in the board materials, including an update on the latest Salmon Recovery Funding Board meeting, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) stakeholder review process, and her recent attendance at a meeting of the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers (NASORLO) in South Carolina.

Director Cottingham brought the board's attention to the correspondence between herself and Senator Jim Honeyford regarding RCO Project 14-1097A, included in the board materials. Chair Spanel shared her support of the response's approach. If further correspondence is needed, Director Cottingham will communicate with the board.

Director Cottingham shared several recent RCO staff changes. Karl Jacobs was promoted to the Senior Outdoor Grants Manager (OGM) in the Recreation and Conservation Section. Adam Cole, was selected as a new policy specialist in September. Sarah Thirtyacre, Senior OGM and Cultural Resources Specialist will shift from being a part of the Recreation and Conservation Section and will report directly to the Deputy Director on cultural resources and other special agency projects like the No Child Left Inside Grant program. Karen Edwards has joined RCO from the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. There is still one more OGM position to fill. In the fiscal section, Brent Hedden, RCO's chief accountant, accepted a promotion at the Department of Social and Health Services, and the agency is recruiting to fill that position. Kiko Freeman, one of RCO's fiscal analysts, moved to Louisiana and was replaced by Sabrina Subia, who started in July. We have also hired a new OGM in the Salmon Section, Josh Lambert.

Director Cottingham shared that she meets quarterly with many stakeholder groups (boaters, land trusts, etc.). RCO recently created a new stakeholder group focused on trails. At the first meeting, twelve trail organizations discussed meeting with the director and RCO staff on motorized and non-motorized trail issues. They decided to meet twice a year.

Biennial Work plan Overview: Scott Robinson, Deputy Director, provided an overview of the agency's biennial work plan, highlighting the implementation of the federal Omni-Circular, new grant programs,

legislative assignments, policy development, board priorities, and IT enhancements. IT enhancements include moving RCO servers to the cloud, improving PRISM performance, the second phase of e-billing, a new mapping solution for staff, and developing an electronic technical review and evaluation module and scoring solution.

Member Willhite asked about the intended "Cloud" hosting that RCO is considering. Both Director Cottingham and Deputy Robinson confirmed that it will be hosted by Amazon, and perhaps hosted by a more secure authority at a later time.

Member Willhite asked if field staff will be able to sync in real time with internal agency programs. Deputy Robinson stated staff primarily do most of their work in the office, such as review applications, rather than in the field. However PRISM is available to staff from anywhere they have access to Wi-Fi.

Grant Management Report: Marguerite Austin, RCO Section Manager, reminded the board that at the June meeting the grant programs' ranked lists were approved and authority delegated to the director to award funding to the approved projects, contingent on approval of a 2015-17 Capital Budget and approval of federal funding authority for federal programs. Director Cottingham has since awarded 219 grants in 8 grant programs and 61 grants in the new RCO Recreation Grants Program.

Ms. Austin highlighted the work of RCO's Natural Resource Policy Specialist, Leslie Connelly, in modifying RCO project agreements. In collaboration with RCO's assistant attorney general, Ms. Connelly updated three project agreements to ensure incorporation of the new requirements related to the new federal Omni-Circular. One agreement is for board programs, the second for funding U.S. Forest Service projects, and the third is for line-item appropriations and RCO projects that do not go through the board.

Member Mayer asked Ms. Austin to describe the differences that may occur due to the Legislative appropriations outside the program. Ms. Austin explained that not many changes will occur at the grant applicant level. The primary difference is that certain kinds of project changes the director will have authority to approve, however, plans are to use existing policies for the projects awarded RCO Recreation Grants.

Member Mayer commented on the specific rules of the Outdoor Recreation Account (ORA), asking about the influence on conversions and funding in excess of project costs, where no rules are in place. Director Cottingham explained that there is no authority to spend returned funds or funds not appropriated to specific projects in the new RCO Recreation Grants category, but the agency may seek authority in the future. We will address that issue as we develop our budget requests for the 2017-2019 biennium. Ms. Austin explained that some projects were fully funded or use match funds, and seeking authority to spend the funds will support those projects; also, in contracts sponsors agree to follow the same rules, as the ORA does not speak directly to conversions.

Member Willhite asked about the unobligated \$4 million in funds and how the agency intends to approach the Legislature, and suggested building support to seek spending authority. Director Cottingham replied that the decision has not been made at this time and it's perhaps best to wait until next year as we develop our budget requests for the 2017-2019 biennium.

Member Mayer asked if the director will seek board direction; Director Cottingham confirmed this is part of the usual summer budget meeting of the board.

Legislative and Budget Update: Wendy Brown provided an overview of the recent legislative session, as well as a summary of the operating and capital budgets as they affect RCO. A new grant program that the agency will manage in conjunction with State Parks – *No Child Left Inside* – was funded at \$1 million. In

addition, funding was set aside to support a new recreation advisor position in the Governor's Office. Other new programs include the Washington Coastal Restoration Initiative, the Chehalis Catastrophic Flood Relief Program, and the Recreation Grant Program.

The Legislature included a proviso for a review of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) via a stakeholder process. The purpose is to examine potential statutory revisions. Another proviso was for the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) program to require grant recipients to provide accommodations for low-income families, such as fee waivers and scholarships.

In addition to the RCO WWRP proviso, the Joint Legislative and Audit Review Committee (JLARC) was directed to conduct a review of recreation and conservation programs in place since 1990, with the goal of examining land acquisitions across the state in all programs as well as regulations for land protection in various programs (e.g., hydrologic practice permits, forest practices, forest management, etc.). RCO anticipates providing information to support this effort.

Ms. Brown reported that during the 2016 supplemental budget session, or short session, RCO intends to submit three decision packages: reauthorization of the Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC), reauthorization of the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group (Lands Group), and potential statutory changes to the WWRP that may result from the facilitated stakeholder review process currently underway (see Item 3 of the board materials for decision package details).

During the 2015 legislative session, the Legislature passed a transportation revenue package that increased the gas tax by 7 cents per gallon. As a result, more money will be deposited into the accounts that fund the Boating Facilities Program (BFP) and the Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) program. RCO will submit a capital budget request seeking spending authority to use the increased funds, anticipating about \$3.5M more for BFP and \$1.3M more for NOVA. RCO plans to use this additional money to continue to fund projects on the lists approved by the board in June 2015.

Member Mayer requested information about the operations of the Lands Group, stating that according to statute they must seek input from this board prior to sunset. Ms. Brown shared that the intent is to bring the request to the Legislature and include a presentation at the next board meeting in November.

Member Willhite asked if a plan exists to coordinate any support or management with other agencies in response to this summer's wildfires. Director Cottingham explained that the board has minimal discretion to move allocated funds, but staff participate in support committees. Member Willhite encouraged these issues be part of the board's approach to grant policy and management. Ms. Austin explained that some time extensions were granted due to fires; staff will propose to move grant cycle later in the year in 2016 as staff are out working on fires in summer months and cause consistently tight timelines. Member Bloomfield suggested potential inclusion at the policy level, specifically referencing the WWRP Trails Category and consideration of trails as fire suppression mechanisms. She added that merging recreational areas with fire management practices may enhance support in statewide efforts.

Chair Spanel asked for motion to support agency submission of the supplemental budget. Member Willhite made a motion; Member Stohr seconded. Motion carried.

Item 3: State Agency Partner Reports

Washington State Parks: Member Herzog provided an update regarding the budget for State Parks. Revenues for 2013-15 biennium increased greatly. The reason for the increase is still unclear, but is important as it may support the future budget requests. He described the budget outcomes, including opportunities to increase staff, support programs and facility management. Member Herzog outlined the

increasing Discover Pass revenues and related projections. In terms of policy, State Parks is looking to restore or convert the Saint Edwards Seminary in Kenmore and is considering a potential land exchange on Lake Washington; both projects would involve a Land and Water Conversion Fund conversion, and thus may come before the board at a later time.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW): Member Stohr provided an update on behalf of WDFW. Despite controversial issues (land acquisition, wolves, fish hatcheries, enforcement roles), the agency's operation and capital budgets increased, including a substantial general fund addition. The agency received funding for several policy requests. With a new director in place and the legislative session complete, the agency is seeking input on policy changes that deal with public relevancy and transparency in preparation for the next session. Workshops are scheduled across the state to provide opportunity for public comment as part of [Washington's Wild Future](#).

Member Willhite asked Member Stohr to provide information about the Lands 20/20 Program progress in future partner reports. He then asked Member Herzog about the economic impact to State Parks' information being put on online for public access. Member Herzog stated that there has been an impact, but the agency has a public relations rollout plan. Member Stohr added that he would make copies of comments sent to the coalition for distribution.

Member Willhite asked whether the McDonald property on Lake Washington was targeted for traditional park development or open space development. Member Herzog replied that the property has an informal trail for public use, but no additional plans other than opportunities for formalized shoreline activity (swimming, etc.). Director Cottingham added the McDonald property is the only undeveloped stretch of land on Lake Washington.

General Public Comment: No public comment was received.

Board Business: Decisions

Item 4: LWCF: Legacy Program Nationwide Competition

Marguerite Austin, Recreation and Conservation Section Manager stated that in 2014 the National Park Service (NPS) announced plans for a new national competitive grant program. The Legacy Program is intended to fund the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Ms. Austin described the program policies, eligibility criteria, priorities and funding. She reminded the board that because of the tight timeline, last year the board delegated authority to the director to select and submit projects for the national competition. Following review by the advisory committee, the director selected the top two projects for submittal to NPS. Unfortunately, the projects submitted did not receive funding.

NPS will be accepting grant applications for another national competition in 2015. RCO staff wants to ensure applicants from the State of Washington have an opportunity to participate in this competition. Because the timeline is unknown, staff is asking the board to delegate authority to the director to select and submit projects for the national completion. Staff will ensure the board is aware of the projects and any decisions made should the NPS notice not arrive in time for the next regular meeting. The board discussed an amendment to the resolution, which includes informing the board of any decisions made.

Member Stohr asked about potential outcomes due to project competitions. Ms. Austin explained that new discussions with potential sponsors have not been held; however, last year there was strong interest from Seattle and Tacoma. Staff intend to work with local governments to submit proposals. Member Stohr addressed the need for public comment; Ms. Austin explained that at the November meeting an update

would be provided and at that time the public would be invited to comment. All is dependent upon the timing of NPS's notice of the federal funding opportunity.

Resolution 2015-19 – As Amended

Moved by: Member Mayer

Seconded by: Member Bloomfield

Resolution: APPROVED

Item 5: Review of Revised Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farmland Preservation Evaluation Criteria

Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, provided an update on the feedback from the Farmland Preservation Advisory Committee and from the Department of Revenue. Additionally, since writing the board memo for this meeting, new staff recommendations have been drafted for board consideration. She requested board direction on how to address the recent feedback and recommendations.

Ms. Connelly described the policies and criteria for each item, providing background, a summary of the feedback received, the staff recommendation provided for board direction, and the pros and cons of each item.

Member Mayer asked for the definition of "prime farmland." Ms. Connelly explained the US Department of Agriculture defines prime farmland based on soil types. Prime farmland was part of the criteria presented in June but it is not in the criteria now.

Member Mayer asked about the term "property owner" versus "land owner" and why family is included in the expanded definition. Ms. Connelly explained that property owner and land owner mean the same thing; however, RCO could more clearly define the reference to "family member" in the definition of land owner. Ms. Connelly agreed that "property owner" could be the term to use, and that the family definition is largely driven by farm operations in practice. Family inclusion allows for parcels to be non-contiguous that are operated as a single unit. Director Cottingham explained that this policy would support multiple parcels under different ownership to be included in one grant application if they are contiguous. Member Mayer expressed concerns about missing the program intent by not being inclusive in the definitions.

Member Stohr asked about the complications in scoring that led to the recommendation for applications with more than one parcel. Ms. Connelly shared a project example, noting that the large grant projects had elements that were difficult to separate for scoring and appropriate funding.

Regarding the policy on impervious surface limits, Director Cottingham noted that the downside of aligning with the NRCS standards is that they change frequently, and would require the board to address new policies just as frequently if authority is not granted to the director to apply the NRCS standards on projects that have NRCS as match.

Member Bloomfield expressed a pre-disposition to allowing public access to lands funded by state dollars and programs. The term "trail" may be a non-inclusive term that is not accounting for diverse means of public access. She recommended a reframe of the policy away from the term "trail" to "public access." She believes it is critical that this be put out for public comment, and go to other organizations besides the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT). She stated that impervious surface should be reframed as well, as it clouds the definitions of public access and trails.

Member Herzog asked about existing trails: if a conservation easement is considered, is this a disadvantage? Ms. Connelly explained that a pre-existing trail would remain despite an additional farmland easement (since the trail existed first).

Member Willhite agreed with Member Bloomfield about highlighting public access when public funds are used, as well as each being put out for public comment with the feedback from the advisory committee.

Chair Spanel asked about public access and whether it should be defined. The board discussed the issues involved with requiring, incentivizing, or promoting public access in this grant program. Considerations to keep in mind include the landowner perspective, implications for trail connectivity, and public engagement in policy development.

Chair Spanel asked about the revision of the first question in the evaluation criteria. Ms. Connelly confirmed that many elements are removed from the version the board saw in June and the focus is on equal ground for consideration and scoring of farmland versus rangeland. Member Bloomfield agreed that this correction is important, but recommended some additional tweaks to the wording so that it accounts for a variety of crops (e.g., dry land for wheat) and range needs. Member Mayer also agreed with the Chair; however, he disagreed with the decrease of the community values aspect as it does not account for multiple needs and interests. Ms. Connelly explained how the point adjustments would be made to account for different elements.

Member Stohr agreed with Member Bloomfield regarding crop needs and adjusting the language to account for this issue, noting that water availability rights could be difficult to analyze. Chair Spanel read a comment received via email from Member Herman, who is in favor of not awarding point values for public access.

The board discussed the options for adjusting the scoring of community values and stewardship, including benefits and consequences. Ms. Connelly proposed a new timeline to accomplish the work described. Next steps include a public comment period and revising the policies based on comments received. The final revisions will be brought to the November 18-19 meeting for board decision.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided at this time.

Break: 10:52 a.m. – 11:05 a.m.

Board Business: Briefings & Discussions

Item 6: Overview of Potential Changes to the Grant Programs and Criteria for 2015-17

Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, summarized the policies and criteria brought before the board for direction. For each policy or criteria item, Ms. Connelly provided background, a summary of the feedback received, the staff recommendation provided for board direction, and the pros and cons of each item.

Control and Tenure Policy

The board discussed state and sponsor perspectives and potential impacts. Member Bloomfield recommended an amount threshold as a consideration and to allow for flexibility in the timeline for complex projects. Director Cottingham added that control and tenure has been an issue for a long time and there is desire to move away from the normal 25-year lease.

Chair Spanel read a comment from Member Herman that suggested developing a board policy for shorter (control and tenure) timeframes. Member Willhite stated that a standard policy would likely be insufficient, and building in flexibility is important, especially in land acquisitions for public purposes. Director Cottingham agreed, but explained that the policy is more relevant to development projects.

Member Mayer clarified that inequity is a larger issue, and it is important to ensure that the investments made today are not undone in the future. He recommended that those projects requiring a longer exception come before the board for consideration.

Trailerable Boats

The board discussed the potential options presented by staff. Member Herzog asked for clarification regarding the facility use for trailerable boats. Ms. Connelly explained that facilities exclusively designed for use by only large boats would not receive these points in the evaluation process.

Member Mayer was concerned about equity for large versus small vessels, specifically where investments are made to ensure keeping both boat types. Ms. Connelly described the BIG program's ways to balance investment and use. Chair Spanel recommended option 2.

Multi-Site Acquisition Strategy for WWRP Habitat Categories

Member Stohr suggested an approach where there is coordination with local authorities versus estimation of needs. Member Willhite agreed with an approach that includes more consultation with the local agencies. The board discussed maintaining the multi-site acquisition strategy policy and adding a policy on local jurisdiction to the scope change policy to allow for more coordination. The majority of the board agreed that the policy change on scope changes should be brought for public comment.

Multi-Site Development for Trails and Water Trails

In response to board questions, Ms. Connelly explained that this issue mainly impacts the ALEA Program and WWRP, while NOVA and RTP are not as significantly impacted. LWCF is more complex, and the recommendation does not include this program. Member Bloomfield and Member Willhite agreed with the staff recommendation. Member Mayer expressed concerns about the potential for additional problems to arise from the second option. After discussing the options further, the majority favored option two. Ms. Connelly shared that with this direction she would open the recommendations for public comments and gather feedback.

Invasive Species Prevention

Member Mayer questioned the rationale behind implementing policy regarding invasive species, considering that the main focus is sustainability. Member Bloomfield suggested that the policy is less a requirement, and more of an opportunity to count as an eligible cost. Member Willhite and Chair Spanel agreed with these ideas.

The board discussed the options for including this as a policy statement, best management practice to be aware of, or simply an advisory statement. The board directed Ms. Connelly to include it as an eligible cost, but public comment on this issue is not necessary.

Ms. Connelly reminded the board that Attachment B of Item 6 in the board materials is the full list of potential changes that will likely come before the board in future meetings. For the identified policies at this meeting, next steps include a public comment period and revising the policies based on comments received. The final revisions will be brought to the November 18-19 meeting for board decision.

Lunch 12:15 – 12:30 (Break to get lunch and return to meeting)

Item 7: Overview of Changes to the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program

Marguerite Austin, Recreation and Conservation Section Manager, presented an overview of the new federal rules and the recommended changes to the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program. She provided an overview of the program, outlined policy issues, and options for board consideration. There were eight (out of nine) federal rule changes shared with the board that do not require any action. Three policy topics were then covered for which staff requested board direction. Details of each change and policy options are in the board materials, Item 7.

The board briefly discussed three of the changes: federal funding availability, dredging, and maintenance. Ms. Austin clarified that two of these changes did not require board action. However, the board must decide whether or not BIG funds will be used for maintenance activities.

Ms. Austin proceeded to present the three policy items with various options for the board to consider. She also requested that the board recommend whether each should be opened for public comment.

BIG Funding – Tier 1

Ms. Austin summarized the four funding options outlined in the board materials, explaining that the options account for scenarios that support full use of grant funds. After providing scenario examples and some board discussion of which options provide the most funding for projects, optimizing the use of federal funds, and administrative costs, the board narrowed the preferred options to numbers 3 and 4. Member Mayer expressed support for maximum funds being applied to projects on the ground, and those straying from that direct application would need more board oversight.

BIG Funding – Tier 2

Ms. Austin summarized the options presented for board consideration, explaining how these policies may interact with Tier 1. Chair Spanel clarified that costs not covered in the program administrative costs are subsidized or paid for through another program; Ms. Austin confirmed. Chair Spanel stated this is an important consideration when looking at programs – those that are able to pay for themselves are of great interest. The board discussed potential impacts from indirect rates and limits to indirect rates that may trigger a project coming before the board, and also that projects put forth by RCO should go through the regular application process (app development, etc.).

BIG Long-term Compliance

Ms. Austin summarized three options for board consideration (two were outlined in the board materials). The board discussed. Initially, Member Herzog, Member Willhite, and Member Mayer agreed on option 1, but it seemed to be lacking some flexibility. Based on the examples and discussion of the board, Ms. Austin stated that option 2 may meet the desired needs. She suggested opening option 1 and 2 for public comment, and providing examples for clarification on the differences between the two; the majority of the board agreed with this approach.

Evaluation criteria for Tier 1 – State Grants.

Ms. Austin presented two options, with explanation of the differences between the categories and criteria and the number of points awarded for each. The board discussed the evaluation criteria, centering on the point values of each question and those that must remain due to state requirements (questions 6 and 5, respectively). Ms. Austin will confirm where discretion may be permitted while remaining consistent with the federal requirements. Member Mayer recommended option 2 for public comment; the majority of the board expressed general agreement.

Ms. Austin summarized next steps to modify the proposal, with a public comment period in fall and options for decision at the November 2015 meeting.

Board Business: Briefings & Discussions

Item 9: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Review – Opportunity for the Board to Provide Feedback to the Stakeholder Process

**Item 9 was presented out of order to allow for facilitator participation.*

Director Cottingham provided a brief overview of the purpose and process for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) review. The Legislature directed RCO to convene and facilitate a stakeholder process to review the WWRP beginning this month, and with the goal of having draft recommendations for statutory revisions by late October or early November. A revised set of recommendations will then be forwarded to the Legislature by the December 1 deadline. The feedback will be used to objectively evaluate WWRP and consider the most effective way to meet the recreation and conservation needs for future generations.

Director Cottingham explained the purpose of the meeting session, which is to provide an opportunity for the board to provide input into the review process with the support of a facilitator.

Facilitator Jim Waldo introduced himself, providing some background experience with revisions to the WWRP program. He introduced his co-facilitator, Jane North. Mr. Waldo described his intent for managing the feedback received during the process, including the goal of supporting draft recommendations to the Legislature by the December 1 deadline.

Considering the relatively short timeline, the facilitators and RCO staff crafted a survey that would allow some level of response and serve as a mechanism for interested parties to provide feedback. Additionally, Mr. Waldo and Ms. North have contacted approximately fifty individuals with WWRP experience to informally solicit input and opinions. Currently, they are in the process of contacting key legislators for the same purpose. In late October, a series of groups (approximately 20-25 people each) will convene to discuss the program and exchange ideas and concerns. Mr. Waldo also expressed the intent to engage legislators who have a deep interest or feelings of ownership in the program, hoping to build future support and continuing influence of the program. Finally, he asked for input regarding personal thoughts, comments, and ideas that pertain to the program.

Member Stohr thanked the facilitators for attending. He commented on what he thought the primary goals to be – holding the [Washington Wildlife and Recreation] Coalition together, maintaining support, and reducing fractures. He added that the federal match for this program is critical and would be limited by gaps in state support. Last, he commented on building common values into the program that serve multiple interests, e.g., beyond habitat. He mentioned several issues that should be addressed: multiple interests and coordinated efforts, joint land ownership, Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT), and operation and maintenance.

Mr. Waldo responded, stating that in terms of projects with multiple goals (habitat, recreation, etc.), other parties have expressed similar thoughts. He asked if other board members share this or have heard of other similar stories.

Member Bloomfield shared that she has experienced WWRP application process and there are categories of work that should be addressed. She described the collective failure of leadership to provide coalescence between the east and west sides of the state. She stated the need to return to the original intent of the program, and clarifying the need to separate Legislative recommendations. She recommended bringing a proposal to the Legislature for a local government seat on the board. She also recommended revising the Habitat account to remove riparian and farmland, and further dismantling the program to ensure needs across the state are met.

Member Mayer recommended that the highest use of capital funding should advance the state and take into consideration the most significant lands. He further addressed the eligibility silos, implying that they inhibit consideration of the best projects across the state.

Member Herzog stated that he agrees with Member Stohr's comments regarding keeping the Coalition together, as the collective voice helps to amplify issues. However, schisms exist – both on east versus west sides of the state, and also the issue of land acquisitions. To keep the coalition together, perhaps the 50% acquisition requirement should be adjusted so that the program's ranking process will decide versus an over-arching rule. He supported the idea of collaboration to keep the Coalition together, and solutions that support this effort.

Member Willhite thanked Mr. Waldo for his work. He recommended that the group use that past program experience to continue the program today, preserving the functional (good) policies. With a nationally recognized program, he stated that the approach should include recognition of the preceding efforts and maintain those aspects in the program. He stated that it seems that the conflicting agendas from a few voices should be heard, but the public as a whole and the best practices for the state should be paramount. He agreed with the mitigation of silos; however, he noted that more transparency regarding how agencies already work together is necessary, citing wildfire management as an example. Building stakeholder interest and creating buy-in, especially with legislators, is critical to the success of the program. Highlighting these relationships supports the requests to the Legislature, as evidenced by the outcome of the past session. Addressing fiscal issues are also critical, including communicating financial benefits to increase stakeholder involvement. He stated that the survey is a very important part of the process.

Chair Spanel agreed that there needs to be current advocates in the Legislature that are engaged in and support the WWRP. She stated that more effort beyond a meeting is necessary to make a difference, and that their support is key to the program. She shared story, noting that silos also can include a rural versus urban divide. She agreed with the retention of "what is good" in the program, noting that this may include retention of the categories and thus some silos. There is room for improvement, but not to the detriment of the process.

Mr. Waldo asked the board to address the issue of land acquisitions. He shared an example of the disproportionate state-owned land areas within counties that diminish tax revenues; this example highlights the gap between public support and fiscal conflicts. Chair Spanel mentioned that the PILT taxes are often misunderstood.

Member Bloomfield shared that the PILT issue will be discussed at an upcoming meeting of the Washington State Association of Counties in Ellensburg; she relayed that PILT is an anchor to the WWRP that needs to be resolved. Member Bloomfield will be attending and may relay feedback from this group.

Mr. Waldo spoke to the issue of land stewardship, specifically regarding acquisitions, stating that there is incongruence between the volume of land acquisitions and progress on goals.

Member Bloomfield stated that program sideboards and political realities inhibit a clear solution to projects that involve acquisitions. A new program or category that includes non-governmental organizations in such a way that they are working or aligning with state agencies, versus competing, will add value to each project. The way the WWRP is currently structured, these types of collaborative projects are not possible. The WDFW commission and county commissioners are on board with these recommendations; she suggested that this be brought to the Legislature as one of the final recommendations.

Member Mayer suggested an alternate annual fiscal strategy which separates funding for development, acquisition, and stewardship. This may alleviate issues similar to those experienced this past session, where there is a land base in a community but a lack of funding to make use of the area. He spoke to the inclusion of smaller or rural communities, and then advocated a balance between sponsor support and accountability.

Member Willhite spoke to the issue of acquiring land prior to the funding to develop or act on it. He stated that it is not always feasible to bring land to certain standard prior to acquisition, and a stewardship policy of any kind would need to acknowledge this reality. He agreed that a separate program for stewardship would provide an avenue for resolving these issues.

Mr. Waldo addressed Member Stohr's comment about maintaining the coalition, stating that consistency and predictability are necessary in meeting multiple needs. He spoke to comments he has received regarding a fear of losing the ability to direct the program if no action is taken. He then addressed the notion of a working landscape connected to recreation and other habitat values would benefit from information about the economic value or community value in that area.

Item 8: Administrative and Policy Impacts from New Federal Omni-Circular Rules

To conserve time, Chair Spanel requested that Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, proceed with presenting the issues for board direction regarding the new Omni-Circular rules. Ms. Connelly requested direction from the board on the recommendations provided in order to address any potential conflicts with the Omni-Circular rules and identify opportunities to align the board's policies with the federal rules where appropriate.

Member Bloomfield asked whether there are waiver projects currently underway that would be affected by the new rules. Ms. Connelly responded that staff do not see immediate conflicts with projects and the new rules.

Member Mayer asked about potential LWCF impacts related to encumbering costs for pre-agreements. Ms. Connelly explained that RCO does need to align with the federal award date. She added that RCO is also asking for permission on a project-by-project basis to allow pre-agreement costs before the federal award date until the program policies can be adjusted.

Ms. Connelly confirmed with Chair Spanel that revisions will be brought to the board at the November meeting.

Break: 2:20 – 2:35 p.m.

Item 10: Board Discussion on Scope of Recreation and Conservation Policy Planning

Leslie Connelly, Natural Resource Policy Specialist, provided background on the federal direction given to the board and RCO to conduct certain strategic planning activities on behalf of the state. Many of the board's funding decisions are expected to be based on a strategic framework that either implicitly or explicitly requires a plan approved either by the board or by an applicant. The federal government also requires specific planning in order to receive certain federal funds. The reason the federal government requires planning is to ensure states spend federal funds in a strategic way.

Ms. Connelly outlined the framework for the board's discussion, outlining the issues and staff recommendations as described in the board materials. Ms. Connelly requested direction from the board on how to proceed with planning tasks. The new SCORP plan, a process which takes about two years,

must be completed by December 2017. Direction from the board now will let staff know what to include in that scoping effort.

Chair Spanel asked how the SCORP addresses overlap between other state agency plans. Ms. Connelly explained that there are sections that address how it fits with RCO needs, and the SCORP planning committee includes subject matter experts in the field, local and state representatives, researchers from Western Washington University, and key stakeholders.

Member Mayer shared that the SCORP revisions should be influenced by the recommendations from the Outdoor Recreation Task Force, JLARC, and the Healthiest Next Generation Task Force outcomes. He mentioned that the Colorado State SCORP plan seems to be a good model as it is more balanced and accessible. He asked the board and staff to consider the turn-over of state agency positions and goals, and whether a SCORP plan could be crafted that includes stability and continued coordination.

Member Stohr responded, suggesting that the problem statement first be identified, then the necessary resources to address this statement should be identified. With multiple plans that include important work, he stated that it would be difficult to re-invest resources without having a new, clearer focus. Member Herzog added that the fiscal intent of agencies at the state level should be part of the SCORP. Long-term plans support the business processes of agencies and promote transparency and coordination.

Member Bloomfield responded to the question of a problem statement, suggesting that a measurement of some form could be beneficial. The metrics currently do not address the big questions of recreation and habitat land opportunities across the state; a plan should articulate the high order needs of the state that include the economic realities, increased population, shrinking land base, etc. and the metrics should address progress in achieving the best outcomes for rec and con in the State. She suggested that the executive summaries of state agencies' core work be appended to the SCORP, repeating her recommendation from the June meeting.

Member Willhite reminded the board of a comment made by today's facilitator, Jim Waldo, regarding the intent of the Legislature. He encouraged stronger communication and solicitation of support from legislative representatives to support the policy planning. He asked about the potential for support to take on this process. Director Cottingham explained that with the current available budget and accompanying requirements, contracting this work is an option and has been done in the past.

Member Mayer stated that, with the goals set in statute, the board has some flexibility in the approach and it is how the plan can articulate the various progress of each agency that will demonstrate how these goals are being achieved. He mentioned a previous board-issued report from 2005, recommending that the framework for the new SCORP begin with putting together various agency plans, targeting the goals in statute, and providing that direction to staff to begin.

Member Stohr supported the board direction, though expressed some uncertainty about potential workloads. Member Herzog spoke to the overarching goal of the SCORP, specifically defining a system and what that system should do for the state. He recommended reviewing the statutory goals and beginning with a discussion of each to define goal statements and provide more clarity.

Director Cottingham clarified that the plan governs this board and investment priorities and influences how others come to the board for funding; however, it will not attempt to govern or provide expectations for other agencies.

Member Bloomfield reiterated the importance of metrics, beyond the monetary allocations, to include how the other organizations engaged in this work will be included. Member Bloomfield added that a

program specifically geared towards monitoring and metrics is complex, but necessary. She provided examples of how metrics could be implemented to measure goal progress that are manageable at the board level.

Member Mayer referred to the State of Colorado's plan, suggesting a similar approach to the clarity of goals and strategies. He offered his support and time to staff to help craft a meaningful plan. Member Willhite agreed with the need to include metrics, and recommended looking at other mission statements and goals to inform the plan so that it aligns with other goals statewide.

Staff will prepare a draft scope of work and detailed budget based on the direction of the board and present it at the November meeting.

Riverfront Park Tour

Kyle Guzlas invited staff from the City of Spokane Parks and Recreation to provide a brief overview of the walking tour scheduled for this afternoon. He then summarized the second day's tour and highlighted the main sites that will be visited.

Closing

The meeting was adjourned at p.m. by Chair Spanel.

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: September 17, 2015

Place: Spokane, WA

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members Present:

Harriet Spanel	Chair, Bellingham	Peter Herzog	Designee, State Parks & Recreation Commission
Betsy Bloomfield	Yakima	Joe Stohr	Designee, Department of Fish and Wildlife
Pete Mayer	Renton		
Ted Willhite	Twisp		

Tour

The board began the tour of projects at 8:30 a.m. and proceeded as indicated on the agenda. The tour concluded at 3:00 p.m. Member Herman and Member Deller were both excused from the tour.

Approved by:


Harriet Chair Spanel, Chair

November 19, 2015

Date

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution #2015-18
September 2015 Consent Calendar

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following September 2015 Consent Calendar items are approved:

- A. Approve Board Meeting Minutes – June 24-25, 2015

Resolution moved by: Ted Willhite

Resolution seconded by: Joe Stohr

Adopted Date: September 16, 2015

Revised

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

Resolution 2015-19

**National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program
Delegation of Authority to the Director**

WHEREAS, the National Parks Service will solicit federal fiscal year 2015 grant applications for the National Land and Water Conservation Fund Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program (LWCFPP), and

WHEREAS, the Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee will review and evaluate these projects to help ensure consistency with the objectives of the LWCFPP and will create a ranked list of projects or recommendation for consideration, and

WHEREAS, this assessment by the committee promotes the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) objectives to conduct its work with integrity and in an open manner; and

WHEREAS, the projects must meet the program requirements stipulated in Manual #15, *Land and Water Conservation Fund Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund Federal Financial Assistance. Manual*, and rules established in the *Federal Funding Opportunity*, thus supporting the board's strategy to fund the best projects as determined by the evaluation process; and

WHEREAS, the timing for the solicitation of projects and the deadlines for submittal to the National Park Service may not meet established timelines for the board's scheduled meetings; and

WHEREAS, consideration of this grant opportunity supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the director is authorized to solicit and to submit applications to the National Park Service for evaluation and funding consideration in federal fiscal year 2015 consistent with the LWCF Advisory Committee's recommendation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board authorizes the director authority submit and execute all project agreements and amendments necessary to facilitate implementation of the approved projects and report back to the board regarding the outcome.

Resolution moved by: Pete Mayer

Resolution seconded by: Betsy Bloomfield

Adopted Date: September 16, 2015

Natural Resources Building
1111 Washington St. S.E.
Olympia, WA 98501

P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917



STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

(360) 902-3000
TTY (360) 902-1996
Fax: (360) 902-3026

E-mail: info@rco.wa.gov
Web site: www.rco.wa.gov

August 24, 2015

The Honorable Senator Honeyford
Washington State Senate
107 Irv Newhouse Building
PO Box 40415
Olympia, WA 98504-0415

Dear Senator Honeyford:

Thank you for your response letter on the Reardon Audubon Lake project.

I understand your concerns and I am sympathetic to the rush put on Legislators and staff at the end of the 2015 Legislative Session. Had you had time to be more deliberate, I understand that you would have removed the Reardon Audubon Lake project from the WWRP Riparian Protection list.

However, your request puts me and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) in an awkward position. You are asking me to take an action for which I do not have the legal authority per RCW 79A.15, and you're asking the board to establish a precedent of removing funding from a project that has been specifically funded by the Legislature. I recommend that you contact the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff directly to ask if they are willing to hold off on acquiring the property until a mutually-satisfactory solution can be found. The contact person for this project is Steve Pozzanghera, Region 1 Director of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, at (509) 892-7852.

Please let me know if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kaleen Cottingham".

Kaleen Cottingham
Director



Olympia Office:
107 Irv Newhouse Building
PO Box 40415
Olympia, WA 98504-0415
Phone: (360) 786-7684
E-mail: Jim.Honeyford@leg.wa.gov
Web: jimhoneyford.src.wastateleg.org

Washington State Senate

Senator Jim Honeyford
15th Legislative District

Eastern Yakima County
Including the towns of:
Buena Glead Grandview
Granger Mabton Moxee
Selah Sunnyside Toppenish
Union Gap Wapato
Yakima and Zillah

July 23, 2015

Kaleen Cottingham, Director
Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504

RECEIVED

JUL 27 2015

WA STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Dear Ms. Cottingham,

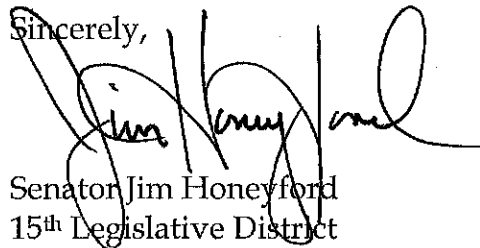
Thank you for your response to my letter requesting that funding for the purchase of land near Reardon's Audubon Lake be removed.

While your response outlined the RCO appraisal process, my concerns about this specific project remain intact and I am reiterating my original request. In addition to my initial reasons for my request, there are strong legislative member objections to funding a project that was slated to be removed from the list and, quite frankly, would not been included in the final budget if the House had not stalled the negotiations for 10 days and stopped them once more in the final days of the session. We would have been able to attend to all the details rather than being rushed and relying on staff on these items.

Another explanation of the appraisal process will not change the fact that this land is already owned by a conservation group and is not at risk of future development. Also, regardless of the final purchase price, or the appraised value, I am asking that the RCO pay nothing for this property by eliminating it from funding consideration.

I appreciate your attention to this matter,

Sincerely,



Senator Jim Honeyford
15th Legislative District

Natural Resources Building
1111 Washington St. S.E.
Olympia, WA 98501

P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917



(360) 902-3000
TTY (360) 902-1996
Fax: (360) 902-3026

E-mail: info@rco.wa.gov
Web site: www.rco.wa.gov

STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

July 16, 2015

The Honorable Jim Honeyford
Washington State Senate
107 Irv Newhouse Building
Post Office Box 40415
Olympia, WA 98504-0415

Dear Senator Honeyford:

I received your request to remove funding for the Reardan Audubon Lake project (#14-1097A – WWRP Riparian Protection Account). This project was included on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program LEAP list to receive funding in Section 3163 of the 2015-2017 Capital Budget (EHB 1115).

As I understand your concerns, it is with the valuation of the property. I share your concerns. I want to assure you that in funding the Reardan Audubon Lake project, our process allows only for reimbursement of the fair market value of the land as determined by an appraisal. All appraisals are done according to the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practices (USPAP). Every appraisal is then reviewed by a second appraiser to determine whether the appraisal was conducted appropriately.

At RCO, we have two different pathways for grant applications. Some of our programs allow cost increases, while most of our grant programs do not. The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program does not allow cost increases. Thus, applicants when estimating costs nearly two years in advance of funding try to anticipate the final value of the land, including increasing market value. Because appraisals are only valid for a short period of time, most applicants do not have the property appraised until they have certainty of funding. In the case of the Reardan Audubon Lake project, it appears the applicant over-estimated the property value when they applied. But as mentioned earlier, this does not mean that they will be reimbursed for that amount. As the statute requires, RCO will only reimburse for the actual value of the land. For example, if the appraised value of the land is \$150,000, then only \$150,000 will be allowed and reimbursed for these costs. There are rare occasions when an applicant may ask to pay over appraised value, but those require specific justifications and are usually related to inadequate comparable values. That will not be the case in this situation. The RCO has strict fiscal reporting and accountability standards.

We will also reimburse the applicant for incidental costs, such as the cost of the appraisal, initial noxious weed control, title insurance and other allowable expenses. Any remaining funds, after

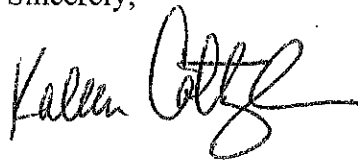
the project is completed, will roll down to the next alternate project on the Riparian Protection Account list according to the statute.

As you know the Legislature does have the authority to remove projects from the ranked lists in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. This has been done during the budget process and would then either be reflected on the LEAP list or in a budget proviso.

I hope my explanation has provided you with the assurances you need to allow the project to move forward knowing that RCO would only pay out the fair market value based upon an appraisal.

Please let me know if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kaleen Cottingham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Kaleen Cottingham
Director

cc: Brian Sims



Olympia Office:
107 Irv Newhouse Building
PO Box 40415
Olympia, WA 98504-0415
Phone: (360) 786-7684
E-mail: Jim.Honeyford@leg.wa.gov
Web: jimhoneyford.src.wastateleg.org

Washington State Senate

Senator Jim Honeyford
15th Legislative District

Eastern Yakima County
Including the towns of:
Buena Glead Grandview
Granger Mabton Moxee
Selah Sunnyside Toppenish
Union Gap Wapato
Yakima and Zillah

July 6, 2015

RECEIVED

JUL 13 2015

Kaleen Cottingham, Director
Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, Washington 98504-0917

WA STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Dear Ms. Cottingham,

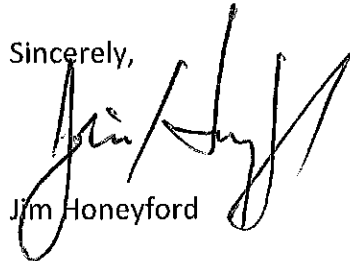
I am writing to ask that the funding be removed for the purchase of land near Reardan's Audubon Lake. This funding can be found in Section 3163 of EHB 1115. A member has asked that this project not be funded for the following reasons:

- The land is currently owned by a conservation group so it is not at risk of future development.
- The project budget is far in excess of reasonable cost, both for land purchase and for other costs such as appraisals and fencing. If the review committee overlooked these unreasonably high costs, I have concerns about how it evaluated the project overall. The land conservancy group purchased the property for \$150,000, yet the project budget shows a purchase price estimate of \$600,000.

Due to the intermittent negotiations with the House on the Capital Budget the concerns about funding this project were overlooked.

I appreciate your attention to this issue.

Sincerely,



Jim Honeyford