

PRAMILA JAYAPAL
7TH DISTRICT, WASHINGTON

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
IMMIGRATION AND BORDER SECURITY
SUBCOMMITTEE ON REGULATORY REFORM,
COMMERCIAL, AND ANTITRUST LAW

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4707

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November 27, 2018

RECEIVED

DEC - 3 2018

Mr. Ted Willhite
Chair
Washington Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
1111 Washington St. S.E.
Olympia, WA 98501

WA STATE
RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

Dear Ted:

Thank you for contacting me with your support for protecting the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). I am honored to represent Washington's Seventh District in Congress, which is home to incredible diversity, innovation and progress. I am committed to fighting for a just economy that works for everyone, fairness and equality, health and safety and livable communities that will serve as a model for the rest of the nation. Participation is key to the democratic process, so I encourage you to continue to contact your elected officials to express your opinions.

I have been a relentless advocate for our wildlife during my time in Congress, which has included fighting to preserve the LWCF. I was proud to cosponsor H.R.502, my colleague Rep. Raul Grijalva's bill to permanently reauthorize the LWCF. I also signed letters to House Appropriators to provide strong funding for the LWCF in both FY18 and FY19, and joined a letter specifically urging Appropriators to fund the LWCF National Trails program. I have opposed all efforts to cut funding for the LWCF and other programs to protect our wildlife, including voting against H.R.6147—the Department of the Interior, Environment and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for FY19—which would cut funding for the LWCF by \$65 million.

The LWCF is one of our country's most important conservation and recreation programs and has a long legacy of success for our district and our state. It fuels our nation's \$887 billion outdoor recreation economy, which supports 7.6 million homegrown, non-exportable American jobs across the country. The LWCF has invested close to \$600 million in over 600 projects in Washington State, where outdoor recreation generates \$21.6 billion a year in spending on trips and equipment and supports nearly 200,000 jobs. Grants from the LWCF ensure that our state remains a place where people want to live and visit, and enjoy the shores of Puget Sound, the valleys of the Olympic National Park, the peaks of the Cascades and the spectacular views of the Columbia River Gorge.

My work in Congress to expand wildlife conservation extends beyond supporting the LWCF. I have opposed every single anti-environmental or anti-wildlife bill that has been put forward by the Republican majority. This includes efforts to dismantle the Environmental Protection

Agency, weaken the role of environmental experts in the regulatory process and undermine rules that protect public health, food safety and water. In March, I signed a letter opposing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's announcement that it will allow imports of certain trophy-hunted animals on a "case-by-case" basis. I have fought vociferously against Republican-led efforts to dismantle key protections in the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

I have also proactively sought out opportunities in Congress to protect our public lands and wildlife. I was an original co-signer of a resolution proclaiming June as National Orca Protection Month and cosponsored a bill designating over 1.5 million acres of land in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as a component of the National Wilderness Preservation System. In numerous letters to Congressional leadership and to Trump administration officials, I have advocated for additional funding to protect wildlife and endangered species in the 2018 and 2019 fiscal years, including to prevent the approaching extinction of the vaquita porpoise by fully funding the Marine Mammal Commission. I also joined my colleagues in a bipartisan letter to request robust funding levels for the "wet side" coastal programs under the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA).

From gray wolves to humpback whales to Western pond turtles, we must do more to protect our wildlife. Unfortunately, too many special interest groups seek monetary gains rather than the conservation of our national treasures. You can be assured that I will continue to lead on efforts to reauthorize the LWC and protect our wildlife from those who will exploit, rather than respect it.

Again, thank you for getting in touch with me. It is an honor to represent Washington's Seventh District in the U.S. House of Representatives. If you have further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to call us at 202-225-3106.

Sincerely,



PRAMILA JAYAPAL
Member of Congress

From: [Reed Waite](#)
To: [Lundquist, Wyatt \(RCO\)](#)
Cc: [Calhoun, Rory \(RCO\)](#)
Subject: RCO January 2019 Agenda Item 5
Date: Wednesday, January 9, 2019 8:42:54 PM

I urge the Board to approve Option 1 - Resolution 2019-02 - allowing the Department of Fish and Wildlife's Project 18-2422D to proceed with needed ADA restrooms at five sites within two adjacent counties. Although the per-site costs are above the arbitrary limit set in 1994, the total project cost is well below a maximum single site BFD dollar level. RCO staff and WDFW are right to streamline both application and processing costs with a single unified project that meets all but one of the stringent criteria of the Boating Facilities Program. It makes sense; saving valuable public dollars and volunteer time. The two staffs should be commended for this effort.

When next the Boating Facilities Program criteria are evaluated, the 1994-era multi-site limit should be reconsidered and changed.

Thank you,

Reed Waite
former member - RCO Boating Programs Advisory Committee 2008-2012
member - RCO WWRP Water Access Advisory Committee 2014-



Ted Willhite, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Attn: Wyatt Lundquist
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Chairman Willhite,

On behalf of the Washington Association of Land Trusts' 25 members, I am writing to strongly support the RCO staff recommendation to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Farmland Preservation Account, in order to provide applicants with another opportunity to submit proposals for the 2019-2021 biennium.

Washington's farm and ranch lands supply us with food and fiber, clean water and air, and critical wildlife habitat. But due to population growth, an aging farm owner population and other factors, we are losing agricultural land at a dangerous rate. The amount of agricultural land, particularly family-owned farmland, in Washington has declined significantly in recent years. The Puget Sound region alone lost over 750,000 acres, 57 percent of its farmland, since 1950, with some counties losing 70 percent. Nationally, we are losing 3 acres of farmland per minute.

WWRP Farmland Preservation is the only source of state funding for farm and ranchland protection. It is a critical tool to help conserve our most productive, at-risk agricultural land across the state.

This biennium, WWRP Farmland is undersubscribed at the funding level recommended by the Governor, but that does not reflect a lack of demand or need for this funding. Funding requests from non-profits for the 2019-2021 application round (9 projects, \$4.3M request) were comparable to the 2017-2019 biennium (10 projects, \$5.6M request). Land trusts across the state have indicated that there are at least 10 projects that could be eligible for submission as part of a supplemental grant round. These projects would likely have been submitted at the time of the original application round if not for several factors:

- First, WWRP Farmland Preservation funding has historically been very competitive and demand has far exceeded appropriated dollars. On average, only one in three applications have been funded. Given the highly competitive nature of the fund historically, land trusts make strategic decisions about which projects are timeliest, with the assumption that the likelihood of funding is limited. In all previous funding rounds in which land trusts competed for limited dollars, the State Conservation Commission and two County governments in particular submitted a high number of projects that received funding awards. For a variety of reasons, neither the State

Conservation Commission nor the two lead County applicants submitted their historical volume of applications.

- Second, a delayed Capital Budget limited land trust capacity to engage in the necessary relationship building and due diligence to submit a full suite of new projects for the current biennium. 2017-2019 Capital Budget funds were not allocated for farmland projects until July of 2018. This compressed timeline and the complex nature of an easement transaction meant that land trusts had to focus on getting 2017-2019 funded projects on the ground with land owners that had been waiting for extended periods or matching funds that were in jeopardy, rather than focus on outreach and due diligence for the 2019-2021 application round. Because conservation easements protect land that stays in private, working hands, these projects require a strong relationship with the landowner throughout the process and substantial technical due diligence.
- Third, a delayed Farm Bill left land trusts and other eligible entities with uncertainty about availability of both secured and expected matching funds, with a chilling effect on applications to WWRP. The federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is a vital source of matching funds for projects in the Farmland Preservation Account. Fortunately, the Farm Bill was passed in December of 2018 with a strong conservation title that provides robust funding for the ACEP program at \$450M nationally. As a result, there are now additional projects that are in a position to move forward.

Again, we urge you to accept the recommendation of staff to re-open a supplemental grant round, and thank you are all your work to help protect our critical agricultural resources across the state. We look forward to working closely with RCO to ensure that the Farmland Preservation Account remains competitive, effective, and well-funded into the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nick Norton", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nick Norton
Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trusts



Ted Willhite, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Attn: Wyatt Lundquist
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Chairman Willhite,

On behalf of the Washington Association of Land Trusts' 25 members, I am writing in to support the RCO staff recommendation to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Forestland Preservation Account, in order to provide applicants with another opportunity to submit proposals for the 2019-2021 biennium.

Forests are the hallmark of our state. Land Trusts across the region recognize that working forests – those dedicated to forestry activities – are vital for local economies as well as providing habitat and clean water. Washington is one of the greatest forestry producers in the world and one of our shared, core values is the desire to see forestland protected from development or other conversion. The Forestland Preservation Account supports the purchase of conservation easements on working forestland, which is an important tool to help address the multiple threats that forests face across Washington. At this time, however, the Forestland Preservation Account is undersubscribed if the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program is funded at the level requested in the Governor's budget.

Land trusts are uniquely qualified to purchase and hold conservation easements, and represent an important applicant to the Forestland Protection Account moving forward. Across the state, land trusts have the partnerships, landowner relationships, technical knowledge, legal expertise, and financial endowments to acquire and steward conservation easements in perpetuity. In addition, more than 85% of the land trusts in Washington are accredited by the Land Trust Alliance (LTA) – amongst the highest rate in the nation – meaning they adhere to the highest standards and practices in their transactional and organizational work.

Recent outreach to the land trust community has revealed that there are multiple projects that would be eligible for the Forestland Preservation Account if a supplemental grant round was to occur. However, there are existing constraints which currently limit the amount of high-quality land trust projects eligible to the program that may help to explain why it is currently undersubscribed and provide opportunities for future conversation and collaboration.

Land Trust forestland protection projects generally fall into three categories: purchasing and managing land for habitat and/or recreation, large-acreage easements on commercial forestland, and to a lesser

extent, easements with family forest landowners on smaller properties. Because of the limitations on fee-title acquisitions and \$350K grant cap for this program, the Forestland Protection Account is currently best suited for the latter type of project. Traditionally, however, many landowners with smaller acreage come to land trusts with a conservation intent beyond protecting the revenue-generating capacity of their forest. This results in “blended” easement projects that seek to balance timber harvest with other conservation values such as wildlife habitat and/or scenic values through the use of sustainable forestry, but which are not well-suited to the existing program criteria or the priorities of the review committee.

Ultimately, this is an important WWRP category supporting a vital resource, working forests. WALT fully supports the category and sees some opportunities to work within the current statute to help overcome the aforementioned constraints, and ensure that land trusts play a strong role in keeping the program competitive and well-funded into the future.

For one, WALT would benefit from increased collaboration with RCO to better educate land trusts across the state about the intent, ranking criteria, and review process associated with the program so that they can be more effective in identifying and soliciting eligible projects and submitting successful proposals over the long term. Second, WALT would invite the opportunity to working cooperatively with both RCO and the review committee to better understand the value of blended proposals that balance ecological and working forest benefits, and discuss the role of the current \$350K grant cap in influencing applications to the program.

Again, we support the recommendation of staff to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Forestland Protection Account, and would be fully committed to helping ensure that as many additional applications as possible are submitted. We look forward to continuing to work closely together in support of forest conservation across the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Nick Norton', is positioned above the typed name.

Nick Norton
Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trust

FORTERRA

FOR THE PEOPLE. FOR THE LAND. FOREVER

January 14, 2019

Item #6
Supplemental
Grant Cycle

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
PO Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members –

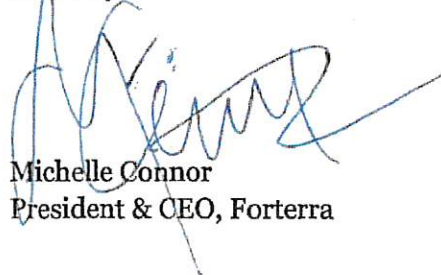
This letter is to express Forterra's support of the proposal before the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to open a grant cycle to solicit additional project proposals for the Farmland Preservation and Forestland Preservation categories.

As you are aware, the State Legislature will adopt a capital budget for the 2019-2021 biennium that includes funding for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program. As it stands today, there is a strong likelihood that funds provided for the Farm and Forest accounts would exceed the amount needed to fund the last round of applications.

An additional grant cycle would allow these remainder funds to be spent this biennium, allowing for additional Farm and Forest preservation projects to move forward and further justifying the Legislature's allocation for this important program. Forterra would have strong interest in applying in this additional grant cycle with at least one project proposal in the Forestland Preservation category. We believe other parties would also have interest in putting forward applications.

Again, Forterra is in support of an additional grant cycle to solicit project proposals for the Farmland Preservation and Forestland Preservation categories. Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact myself or Matt Ojala, Government Affairs Director, at 206-905-6910 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Michelle Connor
President & CEO, Forterra

CC: Kaleen Cottingham, Recreation and Conservation Office Director

MAIN OFFICE
1115 5TH AVE, SUITE 2200
SEATTLE, WA 98164

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206.212.5907



Item #6
Supplemental
Grant Cycle

From: [Peter Bahls](#)
To: [RCO MI Policy Changes \(RCO\)](#)
Subject: Supplemental grant round for Farm and Forest Account
Date: Monday, January 14, 2019 5:16:24 PM

Northwest Watershed Institute strongly supports the staff's preferred option 2 that would implement a supplemental grant round to make potential funding available sooner. We have two important forest projects that have tight timelines that could really use this funding. Thank you.

Peter Bahls, Executive Director
Northwest Watershed Institute
3407 Eddy Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368

360-385-6786

www.nwwatershed.org



Item #6
Supplemental
Grant Cycle

January 17th, 2019

Ted Willhite, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Attn: Wyatt Lundquist
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

Chairman Willhite,

On behalf of PCC Farmland Trust, I am writing to strongly support the RCO staff recommendation to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Farmland Preservation Account, in order to provide applicants with another opportunity to submit proposals for board consideration under the 2019-2021 funding biennium.

WWRP Farmland Preservation is the only source of state funding for farm and ranchland protection. It is a critical tool to help conserve our most productive, at-risk agricultural land across the state. Historically, the total demand from farmland conservation project applications to this fund greatly surpass the total funding available per biennium. Given the urgency of addressing farmland loss across the region and state, applicants to this highly competitive fund include lands trusts across the state, as well as state agencies and County governments. However, due to a confluence of unique circumstances, in 2019-2020 the Farmland Preservation Account will receive more funds than have been requested for the current biennium under the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) level recommended by the Governor. We believe this does not reflect the reality of current funding demand for high quality and priority farmland protection projects by land trusts across the state, and we are in strong support of the RCO proposal to proceed with a supplemental grant round in 2019.

A number of factors seem to have impacted the level of funding requested to date under the initial 2019-2020 funding round. WWRP Farmland Preservation funding has historically been very competitive and demand has far exceeded appropriated dollars. On average, only one in three applications have been funded. Given the highly competitive nature of the fund historically, land trusts make strategic decisions about which projects to submit applications for, with the assumption that the likelihood of funding is limited. In all previous funding rounds in which land trusts competed for limited dollars, the State Conservation Commission and two County governments in particular submitted a high number of projects that received funding awards. For a variety of reasons, neither the State Conservation Commission nor the two lead County applicants submitted their historical volume of applications.

In addition to limiting our applications due to historical oversubscription, applications to the funding round were also complicated by the delay of the 2017-2018 capital budget and the implications of that delay to

Dedicated to generations of family farms

pccfarmlandtrust.org



1402 Third Avenue #709, Seattle, Washington 98101
206.547.9855 | farmlandtrust@pccfarmlandtrust.org



project implementation. The delayed Capital Budget limited land trust capacity to engage in the necessary relationship building and due diligence to submit a full suite of new projects for the current biennium. The 2017-2019 Capital Budget funds were not allocated for farmland projects until July of 2018, which was only 9 months prior to the application deadline for the 2019-2021 biennium. This compressed timeline and the complex nature of an easement transaction meant that land trusts had to focus on getting 2017-2019 funded projects on the ground with land owners that had been waiting for extended periods or matching funds that were in jeopardy. Because conservation easements protect land that stays in private, working hands, these projects require a strong relationship with the landowner throughout the process and substantial technical due diligence.

Finally, a delayed Farm Bill left land trusts with uncertainty about availability of both secured and expected matching funds, with a chilling effect on applications to WWRP. The federal Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is a vital source of matching funds for projects in the Farmland Preservation Account. Fortunately, the Farm Bill was passed in December of 2018 with a strong conservation title that provides robust funding for the ACEP program at \$450M nationally. As a result, there are now a number of projects that are now in a position to move forward.

Through our coordination and collaboration as a member of the Washington Association of Land Trusts, we know there is substantial unmet need for farmland funding this biennium, and we have multiple high-quality farmland preservation projects to submit to a supplemental grant round, should one occur. We deeply appreciate the Funding Board's thoughtful consideration of this issue and support for meeting the urgency of protecting our state's most critical agricultural lands and natural resources. Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to working closely with RCO to ensure that the Farmland Preservation Account remains competitive, effective, and well-funded into the future.

Sincerely,



Hilary Aten
Conservation & Stewardship Director
PCC Farmland Trust

Item #6
Supplemental
Grant Cycle

From: [Cynthia Nelson](#)
To: [RCO MI Policy Changes \(RCO\)](#)
Subject: Grant
Date: Friday, January 18, 2019 5:29:00 PM

Board Members: I recommend the board approve the Option 2 proposal. This would be the most efficient and best way to utilize the supplemental funding to it's best ability when it is past.

Thank You,

Cynthia Nelson, Nelson Ranch Owner
RCO Farmland Advisory Committee Member,



Ted Willhite, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Attn: Wyatt Lundquist
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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On behalf of the Washington Association of Land Trusts' 25 members, I am writing to strongly support the RCO staff recommendation to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Farmland Preservation Account, in order to provide applicants with another opportunity to submit proposals for the 2019-2021 biennium.

Washington's farm and ranch lands supply us with food and fiber, clean water and air, and critical wildlife habitat. But due to population growth, an aging farm owner population and other factors, we are losing agricultural land at a dangerous rate. The amount of agricultural land, particularly family-owned farmland, in Washington has declined significantly in recent years. The Puget Sound region alone lost over 750,000 acres, 57 percent of its farmland, since 1950, with some counties losing 70 percent. Nationally, we are losing 3 acres of farmland per minute.

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Again, we urge you to accept the recommendation of staff to re-open a supplemental grant round, and thank you are all your work to help protect our critical agricultural resources across the state. We look forward to working closely with RCO to ensure that the Farmland Preservation Account remains competitive, effective, and well-funded into the future.

Sincerely,

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Nick Norton
Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trusts



Ted Willhite, Chair
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Attn: Wyatt Lundquist
P.O. Box 40917
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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Ultimately, this is an important WWRP category supporting a vital resource, working forests. WALT fully supports the category and sees some opportunities to work within the current statute to help overcome the aforementioned constraints, and ensure that land trusts play a strong role in keeping the program competitive and well-funded into the future.

For one, WALT would benefit from increased collaboration with RCO to better educate land trusts across the state about the intent, ranking criteria, and review process associated with the program so that they can be more effective in identifying and soliciting eligible projects and submitting successful proposals over the long term. Second, WALT would invite the opportunity to working cooperatively with both RCO and the review committee to better understand the value of blended proposals that balance ecological and working forest benefits, and discuss the role of the current \$350K grant cap in influencing applications to the program.

Again, we support the recommendation of staff to authorize a supplemental grant round for the Forestland Protection Account, and would be fully committed to helping ensure that as many additional applications as possible are submitted. We look forward to continuing to work closely together in support of forest conservation across the state.

Sincerely,

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Nick Norton
Executive Director
Washington Association of Land Trust