

Proposed Agenda
April 26, 2022
Online **Regular Meeting**

Special Accommodations: People with disabilities needing an accommodation to participate in RCO public meetings are invited to contact Leslie Frank by phone (360) 789-7889 or e-mail Leslie.Frank@rco.wa.gov; accommodation requests should be received April 12, 2022, to ensure availability.

Protecting the public, our partners, and our staff are of the utmost importance. Due to health concerns with the novel coronavirus this meeting will be held online. The public is encouraged to participate online and will be given opportunities to comment, as noted below.

Zoom Registration: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_kTE4qzvRXi6rH6rJ6JHTA

Phone Option: (669)900-6833 - **Webinar ID:** 885 5635 0018

Location: RCO will also have a public meeting location for members of the public to listen via phone as required by the Open Public Meeting Act unless **this requirement is waived by gubernatorial executive order**. In order to enter the building, the public must not exhibit symptoms of the COVID-19 and will be required to comply with current state law around personal protective equipment. RCO staff will meet the public in front of the main entrance to the natural resources building and escort them in.

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

Public Comment: General public comment is encouraged to be submitted in advance to the meeting in written form. Public comment on agenda items is also permitted. If you wish to comment, you may e-mail your request or written comments to Julia.McNamara@rco.wa.gov, board liaison.

TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 2022

OPENING AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS

9:00 a.m. Call to Order

Chair Willhite

- Roll Call and Determination of Quorum
- Review and Approval of Agenda – April 26, 2022 (**Decision**)
- Remarks of the Chair

9:10 a.m. 1. Consent Agenda (**Decision**)

Chair Willhite

A. Board Meeting Minutes – January 25-26, 2022

B. Time Extensions:

- King County, Preseton Mill Park Phase II Development, [16-1740](#)
- Pierce County, Chambers Creek Canyon Trail Development, [18-1267](#)
- Washington State Conservation Commission, Blain Ranches, [16-1922](#)
- Washington State Conservation Commission, Lazy Cross Ranch, [16-1923](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Larrabee – Clayton Beach Railway Overpass, [14-1555](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Stuart Island Moorage Replacement, [16-2602](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Sucia Island Moorage Replacement, [16-2605](#)

C. Cost Change:

- City of North Bonneville, Outdoor Community Sport Court and Public Restrooms, [20-1662D](#)

D. Volunteer Recognitions (6)

Resolution 2022-04

9:15 a.m. 2. Director's Report

- A. Director's Report
- B. Legislative Update
- C. Grant Management Report
- D. Performance Report (*written only*)
- E. Fiscal Report (*written only*)

*Megan Duffy
Brock Milliern
Marguerite Austin
Brent Hedden
Mark Jarasitis*

9:45 a.m. General Public Comment for issues not identified as agenda items. Please limit comments to 3 minutes.

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFINGS

9:50 a.m. 3. Policy Updates:
• SCORP/Trails Update *Ben Donatelle*
• Equity Projects *Leah Dobey*

10:10 a.m. BREAK

10:25 a.m. 4. Stadium Funding Plan Review and Advisory Council Meeting Debrief *Adam Cole*

11:05 a.m. 5. Chelan County Wenatchee River Park Conversion *Myra Barker*

BOARD BUSINESS: DECISIONS

11:25 a.m. 6. Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farm and Forest Account Policy Changes *Kim Sellers and Marguerite Austin*
Resolution 2022-05

Public comment will occur prior to adopting the resolution. Please limit comments to three minutes.

12:00 p.m. LUNCH

BOARD BUSINESS: DECISIONS

1:00 p.m. 7. WDFW Scope Change to South Sound Prairies *Kim Sellers*
Resolution 2022-06

Public comment will occur prior to adopting the resolution. Please limit comments to three minutes.

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFINGS

1:30 p.m. 8. Featured Projects *Jesse Sims and Brian Carpenter*

- Northwest Motorcycle Association (NMA), Statewide Heavy Trail Maintenance, [18-2538M](#)
- U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Wenatchee River Ranger District, Motorized Trails Maintenance and Operation, [16-2334M](#), [18-2292M](#)
- Eastmont Parks & Recreation, East Wenatchee 9th Street Acquisition, [16-1778A](#)
- City of Wenatchee, Hale Park, [14-1131C](#), [16-1584D](#), [16-1666D](#)

2:00 p.m. BREAK

2:15 p.m. 9. Recreation Use on State Lands Update

*Melinda Posner,
Andrea Martin, and
Joel Sisolak*

3:00 p.m. 10.State Agency Partner Reports

- Governor’s Office
- Department of Natural Resources
- State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Department of Fish and Wildlife

*Jon Snyder
Angus Brodie
Peter Herzog
Amy Windrope*

3:30 p.m. ADJOURN

Next Meeting: Travel Meeting – July 26-27, TBD

Subject to change considering COVID Restrictions

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: January 25, 2022

Place: Online

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members:

Ted Willhite, Chair	Seattle	Shiloh Burgess	Wenatchee
Kathryn Gardow	Seattle	Angus Brodie	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Michael Shiosaki	Seattle	Amy Windrope	Designee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
VACANT	Vacant	Peter Herzog	Designee; Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

This summary is to 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 meeting.

Call to Order

Chair Ted Willhite opened the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) meeting at 9 AM and asked **Julia McNamara**, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) board liaison, to call roll, determining quorum. **Member Amy Windrope** was absent during roll call but joined shortly after. Next, Ms. McNamara provided an overview of webinar rules and etiquette.

Motion: Approval of January 25th Meeting Agenda

Moved By: Member Shiosaki

Seconded By: Member Gardow

Decision: **Approved**

Item 1: Consent Agenda

The October 5-6, 2021, meeting minutes were reviewed and accepted. **Chair Willhite** addressed time extensions and cost changes associated with various projects. Chair Willhite recognized 23 volunteers and spoke about agenda changes to be considered by the board due to member scheduling conflicts. Items 10, 11 and 12 were proposed to be moved from January 26 to January 25. Item 9 will be postponed until the April 2022 meeting. The proposed amendments to the agenda were voted on and approved by the board through Resolution 2022-01.

In making Chair comments, Chair Willhite spoke about challenging issues now and ahead for the board, including issues associated with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), climate change, increased use of public recreation areas, and outreach efforts. He stated the importance of listening intently to the presentations as the board works to move forward with their decisions.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-01

Moved By: Member Burgess

Seconded By: Member Brodie

Decision: **Approved**

Item 2: Director's Report

Director's Report

RCO Director, Megan Duffy spoke on key agency activities, including the equity study, trails caucus, the Director's Award of Excellence, the Director's Achievement Award, and new staff introductions. Greater detail on those topics can be found in memorandum 1 of the meeting materials.

Legislative Update

The board inadvertently skipped the Legislative Update, moved to the Grant Management Report, then returned to this update. **Director Duffy** shared RCO's items in the Governor's budget, which includes: funding for the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) to implement the Statewide Salmon Strategy; \$250,000 for RCO to study and determine long term funding recommendations for salmon recovery efforts; \$100 million for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Riparian Grant program; \$300,000 for a Lake Union boating education program; and \$52 million for the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) for outdoor education grants for 5th and 6th graders, which may intersect with RCO.

Director Duffy also relayed that RCO is watching Senate bill 5925 and companion House bill 2078 which seek to establish the "Outdoor School For All" program; House bill 1882, which encourages better outdoor state recreation leadership and development through a committee; House bill 1838 (the "Lorraine Loomis Act") which focuses on preserving riparian areas for salmon recovery; House bill 1653 which aims to improve statewide fish recovery coordination; and Senate bill 5793 which focuses on stipends for low income and/or unrepresented community members sitting on state boards, committees, councils etc. Several other items being monitored within the House, including bill 1672,

which offers local property tax levies for conservation features, and bill 1025, which focuses on local parks funding options.

Lastly, Director Duffy shared that the Outdoor Recreation Caucus (ORC) is meeting weekly to discuss pending legislation, policy, and outdoor recreation information.

Member Gardow asked for a list of individuals on the caucus, including their affiliations.

TASK:

Provide RCFB members with the ORC representatives list. This request was fulfilled by Leah Dobey, Policy Specialist.

Grant Management Report

Marguerite Austin, RCO Recreation and Conservation Grants Section Manager, announced that staff will kick-off the 2022 grant cycle with three application webinars. They will be held February 17, February 22, and August 10. The webinar on February 17 will focus on the habitat conservation and outdoor recreation programs. The February 22 webinar will focus on the community forest, farmland, and forestland preservation programs. The webinar on August 10 will focus on grants for backcountry trails, motorized boating, and shooting ranges. More information regarding these webinars can be found on the [RCO website](#).

Grant Services Report

Kyle Guzlas, RCO Grant Services Section Manager, did not have a verbal report for this meeting, but stated he was available for questions.

General Public Comment

None.

Item 3: Policy Updates

Community Forest Update

Leah Dobey, RCO Policy Specialist, provided a general overview of the program, sharing that RCO had established an advisory committee in 2020 to develop the Community Forest Program (CFP). During the first grant round 15 applications were submitted and six projects were funded from the allocated \$16.2 million. Feedback was gathered from the advisory committee and applicants to improve the 2022 grant cycle.

Ms. Dobey emphasized that the CFP is an office program, so it does not fall under board jurisdiction. However, the board remains involved in the program progress and reviews

the project ranked list prior to legislative submission. Application updates were added after the first grant cycle. These changes included adding an unscored project introduction, an expansion to the forestland benefits criteria to include additional benefits like public access and climate resiliency and adding edits to the stewardship and management criteria to show the project economic viability.

To support applicants, a checklist and formal manual have been developed. The second grant round will be open from February 17 to May 3.

Member Gardow asked the difference between the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Forestland Preservation Category and the CFP. **Marguerite Austin** explained that CFP applicants can purchase land in fee simple while the WWRP Forest Land Preservation category only allows the purchasing of conservation easements.

Member Gardow then asked if there was variation in who would apply for these programs. Ms. Austin stated some differences exist: eligible WWRP Forestland applicants are cities, counties, nonprofit nature conservancies and the Washington State Conservation Commission. CFP applicants are local governments (cities, counties, public development authorities, and special purpose districts), Native American tribes, nonprofit nature conservancies and state agencies if they partner with one of the other eligible entities. When asked about funding, staff indicated that there is more funding available in CFP while the Forestland Preservation category receives only 10 percent of the total Farm and Forest account.

Stadium Youth and Community Athletic Facilities Funds

Adam Cole, RCO Policy Specialist, gave background information regarding the Stadium Youth and Community Athletics Facilities Funds program. Funding for this program was provided from excess revenue from the Seahawks Stadium bonds, totaling \$43 million. An advisory committee will be formed to assess and determine the program structure.

Funding is made available to applicants through a competitive grant process, is only applicable for outdoor community recreation facilities, and applicants include cities, counties, and nonprofits.

The program, which focuses on providing equitable access to communities in need, stipulates that the funding be split equally by thirds between new projects, improvement/development, and maintenance projects, and will be awarded proportionally to the state population.

The advisory committee will ideally have its first meeting in February or March 2022. The timeline is still in progress, but RCO staff is considering offering an initial expedited

program to make funding available in 2022 for planning grants, in preparation for a larger capital grant process in 2023.

Mr. Cole provided a project flowchart that included possible leadership, tasks, and interactions. The timeline provided short- and long-term steps necessary to achieve the funding release date goals.

After commending Mr. Cole on his work and the program, **Chair Willhite** asked if the ultimate rankings would be brought to the board and what their role will be. **Director Duffy** shared that RCO is still reflecting on the board's role, as the statute does not dictate an action role; she added that the advisory committee would help define that scope after formation.

Chair Willhite suggested following the traditional method of grant projects, allowing the public to have a say in the ranking process and taking a board vote. He then asked if these funds applied strictly to capital projects, and not routine maintenance projects. Mr. Cole responded that there is room for routine maintenance to be funded per the "maintenance" project type stipulated in statute.

Member Shiosaki asked if there was a specific deadline or if the "spend down" was general. He also stressed the importance of an equity focus on this program. Mr. Cole responded that there is no time limitation and that leaves several possibilities for funding distribution, and the idea of an endowment was briefly discussed. **Member Gardow** asked if there was a statutory project scale or if that would be determined by the advisory committee. Mr. Cole responded that it is another decision for the advisory committee.

Member Brodie asked for further expansion on the equity focus. Mr. Cole explained that RCO is awaiting feedback on an equity study that focuses on recreation and conservation grants programs. The results of this study will guide funding distribution.

Member Brodie followed up by asking the timeline of the several reports and studies taking place within RCO, including the Equity Study and SCORP. Director Duffy responded, stating the Physical Activity Task Force Report is due to the Legislature in February 2022 and the external equity reviews are due to the Legislature on June 30, 2022. She then shared the background in lining up the dates to ensure these crucial studies were used to inform the stadium funds program.

Before moving to the next agenda topic, Director Duffy asked for the board to reflect on whether the April meeting would be in person or virtual. Board members agreed to

allow Chair Willhite and Director Duffy to make a decision on whether the April meeting would be in-person/hybrid or online only.

TASK:

Chair Willhite asked that Adam provide updates at future board meetings concerning the funding program until completion.

BREAK: 10:05 AM – 10:20 AM

Item 4: Annual Compliance Report

Myra Barker, RCO Compliance Specialist, provided an annual compliance report on the agency's compliance program.

During the presentation, Ms. Barker explained the compliance portfolio contains over 6,100 worksites. Staff completed 319 inspections in 2021 and resolved 213 compliance issues. Staff apply the board's compliance policies to requests for changes to project areas; four allowable use requests and seven exceptions to conversion requests were approved.

The 2022 inspection strategy includes a goal of completing 500 compliance inspections. Staff will continue to focus on resolving compliance issues with an emphasis on unapproved conversions.

Factors impacting compliance issue resolution are being reviewed, including asking if the agency is effectively communicating with sponsors. Sponsor priorities, sponsor resources, RCO staff capacity, and public interest all impact resolving issues.

Ms. Barker highlighted several projects where sponsors continue to meet the long-term obligation of the grant of providing public outdoor recreation and habitat protection and conservation. This included projects that were completed over 50 years ago.

Member Shiosaki asked how many agencies qualify as high-risk sponsors. By policy, a high-risk sponsor is one with an unresolved conversion of at least two years with no substantial progress towards resolution. Ms. Barker explained she was unable to provide that information at this time but will follow-up with Member Shiosaki after the meeting.

Member Gardow asked what percentage of completed projects are considered "compliance projects" and how long project compliance has been established. Ms. Barker clarified there are 6,100 work sites in the compliance portfolio, and while the specific data is not readily available for every worksite, overall, staff are finding less than

two percent are not in compliance with the grant agreement. Ms. Barker also explained that the long-term compliance obligation has been in effect since the first project was funded.

Chair Willhite asked whether or not sponsors self-inspection compliance reporting would be a useful compliance tool or not. . While staff is open to more discussion on sponsor self-inspection reporting, Ms. Barker and Director Duffy reminded board members that agency capacity is a concern when it comes to self-reporting and any changes will be a long-term consideration. Chair Willhite suggested adding this topic as a future agenda item.

Addressing compliance themes, Ms. Barker reported that the most common compliance issues were due to encroachment on the project boundary by adjacent landowners, ineligible structures built within the project area, and permanent closures.

TASK:

Ms. Barker will provide Mr. Shiosaki with the number of sponsors who could be designated as a high-risk sponsor.

Item 5: Land and Water Conservation Fund: Increasing Grant Limits

Marguerite Austin presented the request for a decision concerning increasing the grant limits for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF).

In part, this request was made due to increasing revenue for this program, the percent of applicants requesting the full grant amount, the fact that funding limits are not aligning with inflation, and to make the program more attractive to potential sponsors.

When considering public comment regarding the minimum grant limit, the majority (over 45 percent) of the respondents supported "10 percent of the maximum grant limit." The public was also asked about the maximum grant limit and 39 percent (the majority) preferred the \$2 million limit. Concerns regarding the maximum focused on ensuring smaller projects are still competitive and that grants fund more than one large project, which could happen if there were no limits.

During discussion, board members expressed support for the resolution, which would approve a minimum grant limit of 10 percent of the maximum and a maximum request of \$2 million.

Public Comment

Paul Simmons, Olympia Parks, Arts and Recreation Director, commended Ms. Austin for her thorough work. He spoke to the importance of this resolution and how much costs have increased over the years, which affects the amount of funding provided. He then stated projects are in planning several cycles ahead, and how this resolution will have a positive impact on agencies.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-02

Approved By: Member Gardow

Seconded By: Member Shiosaki

Decision: **Approved**

Item 6: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP): State Parks Category Evaluation Criteria Changes

Karl Jacobs, RCO Senior Outdoor Grants Manager, presented on criteria changes for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) State Parks category. Draft changes to the program were reviewed by the board at its June 2021 meeting and public response was reviewed by the board at the October 2021 meeting. In response to the public comment, RCO staff incorporated additional changes to the criteria with approval from the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission. This included incorporation of DEI language to criteria 3 and 4.

The DEI language is intended to enhance and expand inclusion to communities from diverse backgrounds and communities lacking representation. The State Parks DEI Director reviewed the criteria and aided in developing these recommendations, which also included changes to criteria 7 and 8, changing the language from “marginalized and/or underrepresented populations” to “historically marginalized or excluded” and from “underrepresented groups” to “community-based organizations.”

Chair Willhite stated that this discussion is consistent with a previously approved proposal, adoption of a DEI statement, via Resolution 2020-35.

Member Herzog recognized Mr. Jacobs and the assistance of State Parks’ DEI director to appropriately guide the criteria to be more reflective of Washington communities.

Member Shiosaki thanked Mr. Jacobs and the work of RCO in improving the language and establishing consistency of the board’s focus on DEI. **Member Gardow** also expressed her appreciation of the team’s work and the resulting resolution.

Public Comment

None.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-03

Approved By: Member Herzog

Seconded By: Member Shiosaki

Decision: Approved

LUNCH: 12:05 PM – 1:20 PM

Member Brodie returned to the meeting at 1:25 PM.

Item 7: SCORP and Trails Plan Update and Survey Results

Katie Knight Pruitt and **Ben Donatelle**, RCO Policy Specialists, gave updates on the State Recreation and Conservation Plan (SCORP) and Trails Plan.

Ms. Pruitt provided a timeline of the current SCORP activity, detailing that the final plan draft would be submitted to the board and Governor in fall of 2022 for approval before being submitted to the National Park Service.

Ms. Pruitt noted that public engagement is happening via several public engagement surveys. The Provider and Experience surveys have closed, but the Demand, Map, and Tribal surveys are all still ongoing. To engage more closely with the tribes, the Tribal Survey was developed separately from the Direct Survey to gain tribal insight.

Ms. Pruitt provided preliminary findings of the inclusive Experience Survey. She emphasized the results should be regarded with caution, as the committee is aware that it did not accurately represent Washington demographics. The majority of the 5,340 results came from respondents identifying as white, over the age of 25, with an above average median household income. Some of the preliminary findings concluded that individuals travel most using personal vehicles to destinations up to an hour away; people go outdoors to connect with nature or exercise; and available time, distance, and sites exceeding capacity were deterrents from recreating.

Additionally, the Demand Survey will provide more in-depth analysis. The Experience Survey served to provide an additional sampling to give more general information.

Mr. Donatelle presented the results from the Washington State Trails Caucus survey. Most of the questions from this survey were adapted from the Experience Survey. In summary, the survey results indicated that trails are most used for walking, the top snow

activity is snowshoeing, barriers to recreating are linked to time and limited capacity at trails, and people want dedicated sustainable funding for trails.

As there are several surveys still open and survey data is being analyzed, Mr. Donatelle stated the importance of compiling the information into a holistic report to be used by the advisory committees as they create recommendations in the SCORP plan.

Displaying the Map Survey, Mr. Donatelle explained that members of the public can add their favorite spot for recreation and a tree will populate the map.

Chair Willhite, Members Gardow, Shiosaki and Burgess thanked Ms. Pruitt and Mr. Donatelle for their hard work.

Member Gardow expressed interest in sharing the map on social media and asked the committee to focus more intently on that effort.

Chair Willhite asked if the Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan would address the challenges presented by climate change and if the project timeline was on track. Ms. Pruitt shared that climate change concerns are frequent issues raised in the surveys and steering committee and is part of the conversation. Ms. Pruitt also said there were several timing setbacks and with her moving to a new position in the GSRO, RCO is pursuing approval for an extension of the previous SCORP plan. An extension will ensure that RCO maintains eligibility for LWCF funding through NPS.

Chair Willhite suggested the continued involvement of tribes as the process continues.

Closing the topic, he asked Director Duffy how staff was handling this important project. Director Duffy shared that Mr. Donatelle will be taking lead, but the agency has reached out to several universities for contracting assistance on specific priorities.

TASK:

Email the board members links to all the SCORP/Trail Plan surveys.

Item 8: Physical Activity Task Force Update

Katie Pruitt, RCO Policy Specialist, and **Dr. Julie McCleery**, Research Director of the Center for Leadership in Athletics at the University of Washington, presented on the Physical Activity Task Force findings and recommendations.

This project resulted from a legislative proviso to address and improve equitable access to K-12 school and local park athletic facilities and fields. The final report is due to the Legislature February 1, 2022.

The task force was made up of 20 individuals representing local parks, school organizations, sports leagues, health agencies, tribal governments, and ethnic commissions. Task force work was supported by Ms. Pruit, Dr. McCleery, Adriene Moore with AM Consulting for the Center for Healing and Justice through Sport, and Jon Snyder, Senior Policy Advisory for the Governor's Office.

The task force met six times in 2021 and 2022, where they reviewed access barriers and provided recommendations to increase K-12 access to recreation areas. Sixteen task force members and eight recommended stakeholders were interviewed by Dr. McCleery. As a result of the interviews, policy recommendations were developed and feedback on the statewide map and final report was provided.

Dr. McCleery discussed the inequitable access to facilities, specifically stating that low-income communities and communities of color have the fewest number of recreational facilities available. The following facility usage barriers were identified: mission misalignment, silos, cost, scheduling, and liability. All these barriers are overlaid by several systemic barriers: "institutional racism, institutional inertia and risk aversion, and lack of data and accountability for use of community assets." Details on these barriers can be found in memorandum eight.

While joint use agreements between schools and the community are one way to address these issues, Dr. McCleery recognized that it would not solve the entirety of the problem.

Six recommendations were formed from this study and presented to the Legislature in the report. These include:

1. Establish three new policies in statute: 1) Update shared use policy language to designate schools as community centers, 2) establish a directive to the Washington State School Directors' Association to develop a model policy supportive of schools as community centers, and 3) offer financial incentives to districts that adopt and implement the model policy.
2. Develop communication campaigns to help schools and municipalities understand the importance of shared use agreements and schools as community assets.
3. Fund shared use innovation hubs.
4. Task state agencies, such as RCO, the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, and the Department of Commerce, to embed shared use practices and equitable access within grant programs.

5. Use of athletic fields and facilities inventory as a planning tool to prioritize facility need.
6. Commission a health study to understand the patterns associated with declines and inequitable gaps in youth physical activity.

Chair Willhite asked if the focus of this proviso was placed on youth or if it was expanded to elderly communities and youth facing disabilities. Dr. McCleery stated the legislative focus was on youth activity solely and discussed how Washington's weather adversely affects the participation of students with disabilities in outdoor activities.

Member Gardow asked if the studies would take personal devices and technology into account. Dr. McCleery shared an anecdote regarding parents choosing to give their children devices, because there are no easily accessible recreation areas close to their home and devices can be less expensive than signing their children up for sports.

BREAK: 2:35 PM – 2:50 PM

Member Burgess was absent from the meeting from 2:30 PM to 3:03 PM.

Item 9: Featured Projects

This item was moved to the April 2022 meeting.

Item 10: Equity Review

The board moved to the DNR update in item 12 due to scheduling conflicts, then returned to this item.

Leah Dobey, RCO Policy Specialist, spoke on the recreation and conservation grants equity review progress. RCO is conducting a comprehensive review that was mandated by the Legislature. The review analyzes policies and operational practices and will produce recommendations to reduce barriers to funding and improve equitable distribution of recreation and conservation grants.

There were three components and three contractors hired for this review: project maps (ESRI), community engagement (The Vida Agency) and a comprehensive review of the RCO grant process (Prevention Institute).

Community engagement was done through various multi-lingual listening sessions, one-on-one interviews, and comment form submission. Schools, local governments, environmental organizations, tribes, and previous applicants were some of those included in engagement.

As a result of the community engagement, one theme noted was the need for increased support to all, but especially small entities, entities lacking experience, and those for whom English is a second language. Increased support could include webinars, one-on-one direction, and increased instruction to help understand grant processes. Some participants expressed interest in additional trainings, education and/or clarity regarding eligibility.

To address barriers and improvements, many ideas were brought to the conversation, including collaboration between governments and community groups, options for presentations as an alternate to applications (to negate language barriers), mentorship, increased numbers of grant managers and establishing technical advisory committees.

The Vida Agency is analyzing the first round of data to incorporate into draft recommendations. A second round of engagement will take place in March before final recommendations are submitted in June. Ms. Dobey noted that RCO worked with the Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) to create two maps to represent equity across Washington. The base information for these maps is from the Department of Health's Washington Environmental Health Disparities Maps. The second map shows RCO project locations relative to health and social disparity information.

A cross comparison of the bivariate map and the funded vs. unfunded projects map can provide a more in-depth analysis of the relationship of project funding and disparities. Looking forward, the equity maps, analysis from community engagement and the Prevention Institute's analysis will be used to draft recommendations, after which the recommendations will be refined and delivered as a report to the Legislature by June 2022.

Member Windrope asked about the main staff takeaways from these maps. Ms. Dobey stated the importance of keeping RCO opinions out of the review and letting the data be analyzed once fully compiled. **Director Duffy** supported Ms. Dobey's statement and said that the maps are only one piece to inform the recommendations.

Member Gardow inquired if we know how this information will be used in the future. Director Duffy stated that the report will contain recommendations that may guide future efforts. Director Duffy suggested that there are several avenues the recommendations could follow, whether internally or externally, or a combination of systemic changes, but we know that recommendation implementation will be a several year process. Ms. Dobey also stated that the Department of Commerce has an ongoing equity review, and RCO plans to have standing meetings with Commerce staff to update and coordinate efforts between the two agencies.

Member Herzog asked if the Prevention Institute was familiar with the themes in the compiled data, and if there was overlap in previous completed work. Ms. Dobby shared that the Prevention Institute has vast experience with these reviews, and she thinks there are potentially similar themes and topics the institute will be able to identify.

Item 11: Results of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Board Survey

Scott Robinson, RCO Deputy Director, spoke on the results of the member surveys.

There are several DEI efforts underway, including the grants program equity review and an internal DEI Assessment. RCO partnered with DeMarche Consulting Group Inc. to conduct surveys and interviews, analyze policies and report findings and recommendations as part of the internal DEI Assessment.

The survey was distributed to all RCO board and council members and about 40 percent participated. Most answers were positive; however, a need was identified for additional resources for individuals whose first language is not English. Further, there are opportunities to offer training and resources to members.

The conclusions of this report will be analyzed and, along with the recreation and conservation grants equity review, may lead to additions to the board's strategic objectives. Deputy Director Robinson stressed the importance of continuing education and keeping an open mind when approaching DEI work.

Member Gardow inquired why so few board members participated in the survey. Deputy Director Robinson suggested that with number recent RCO surveys, perhaps board members were not enthusiastic about completing more, or maybe just had too much going on and did not have enough time to participate.

Item 12: State Agency Partner Reports

Member Brodie left the meeting at 4 PM.

Governor's Office

Jon Snyder, Senior Policy Advisor, shared the policies of interest in the Governor's Office.

Mr. Snyder stated that there are more than 40 outdoor recreation bills demonstrating the continued interest in outdoor activities despite the pandemic.

He expressed the Governor's interest in expanding access to outdoor school, specifically for 5th and 6th graders. Concerning outdoor school, the Governor's operating budget includes funding via proviso and there are currently two bills in both the House and

Senate in support of the proviso. While Washington has several outdoor programs currently, he stated the Governor's emphasis on expanding access to students from diverse backgrounds and students with disabilities.

There are several bills and packages regarding climate and salmon being discussed in session.

Department of Natural Resources

This item was presented before item 10 due to scheduling conflicts. After presenting on this report **Member Brodie** left the meeting for the day.

Member Brodie, DNR Uplands Deputy Supervisor, said that due to flooding, there have been several statewide closures and the agency is working to keep closures updated on its website.

DNR has implemented capital projects around the state. This includes ongoing bridge replacements on the Sadie Creek Off Road Vehicle (ORV) trail, trail expansion is ongoing on the Jones Creek trailhead in Yacolt Burn State Forest, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) improvements in Eagle's Nest Vista in the Ahtanum State Forest, and trail development in the Marckworth State Forest (south Puget Sound region).

A new snow park was established in the northeast region near the Radar Dome Trailhead to divert traffic from the Little Pend Oreille National Wildlife Refuge parking. It is being managed by the Washington State Parks Winter Recreation program.

Two legislative budget requests were submitted. The first for \$3.2 million related to operation and maintenance, which was included in the Governor's budget, and the second was a capital request for \$3.3 million for expansion of the Puget Sound Corps program.

DNR submitted a grant application for trailhead development through the American Rescue Plan Act. The project application is for \$1.8 million in the Reiter Foothill State Forest.

State Parks and Recreation Commission

Member Herzog, Washington State Parks and Recreation Development Director, began by discussing the winter recreation season, noting the high demand. There have been agency challenges partially due to hiring difficulties of park aides and engineers. The agency director position is open and will ideally be filled by April.

Moving on to legislative updates, Member Herzog stated that the governor's supplemental budget listed \$9.8 million in spending authority and \$1.8 million in

general support to fill shortfalls and expand opportunities. This funding will go towards equipment, website design, and hiring a Tribal Liaison in alignment with the Governor's 21-02 Executive Order. Parks is also hiring a Climate Change Adaptation Coordinator to aid the agency focus on climate change.

Member Herzog shared that two trestles in Crab Creek were burned in wildfires, but Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will partially fund the restoration and supplemental funding may assist in the rest.

The agency is tracking several legislative bills, specifically 5721 (which would move WDFW and Parks under the Commissioner of Public Lands) as well as several Discover Pass elimination bills. Many bills are seeking to eliminate the Discover Pass for equity purposes, but the funding has largely been aiding State Parks programs. The agency is also tracking the Joint Select Committee on Better Washington Outdoor Recreation Leadership, personal floatation device bills, and a historic property tax exemption bill.

He announced that Lisa Anderson was hired as the Trails Program Manager and will be working with Randy Klein, the Trails Coordinator, to hire for the Scenic Bikeways Program Coordinator position.

State Parks has partnered with the Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) and the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to assess recreation impacts across state land, specifically the issue of crowding. A work group has been formed to research recreation and management tools, cooperate planning activities, and identify key landscapes. Multiple pilot projects have been launched including establishing a forum modeled after the Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordination Group to assess current management tools and consider new alternatives, communication coordination and integration of tribal treaty rights impacts. An update on this group will ideally be available at the April meeting.

Member Gardow asked how employment advertising was being focused. Member Herzog said that the posting was available online but could also be sent directly to the members.

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Member Windrope, WDFW Deputy Director, shared agency updates. She started by thanking Member Herzog for coordinating the multi-agency efforts to look at recreation usage impacts.

Member Windrope shared that the WDFW's Ten Year Recreation Strategic Plan has opened for input from the public. Online meetings for the plan will take place February 10 and 24.

She also noted that three new commissioners were appointed. WDFW is hiring and employment postings are available on the [government jobs website](#).

There have been several flooding issues impacting boat ramps statewide, and the agency is dealing with these affects while simultaneously recognizing that fire season is approaching. The Forest Health team has treated 20,000 acres since 2014 – which is a significant milestone.

Regarding budget, there was a priority focus surrounding salmon recovery with about \$11 million proposed in the Governor's budget and an additional \$14 million requested by WDFW. About \$3.5 million was included in the Governor's budget to advance land recreation and management. WDFW also requested \$5 million for backlogged infrastructure efforts.

Chair Willhite asked if there was any coordinated effort with regards to treating acreage and Member Windrope responded that there is significant coordination between WDFW and DNR, specifically the fire teams.

RECESS: 4:30 PM

Due to Open Public Meeting Act (OPMA) requirements, Chair Willhite shared that he would call to order the January 26 meeting and then immediately adjourn as there were no agenda items to discuss. No other board members are required to attend, although all are welcome. He thanked everyone for their attendance today despite the ongoing pressures of legislative session.

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: January 26, 2022

Place: Online

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members:

Ted Willhite, Chair	Seattle	Shiloh Burgess (absent)	Wenatchee
Kathryn Gardow (absent)	Seattle	Angus Brodie	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Michael Shiosaki	Seattle	Amy Windrope (absent)	Designee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
VACANT	Vacant	Peter Herzog (absent)	Designee; Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

This summary is to 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 meeting.

Call to Order

Chair Ted Willhite opened the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB/Board) meeting at 9AM and had **Julia McNamara**, board liaison, call roll, to determine quorum. Quorum was not established, although Members Shiosaki and Brodie were present. As all business was concluded on January 25, Chair Willhite adjourned the meeting.

ADJOURN: 9:01 AM

Next Meeting: Regular meeting – April 26-27 – Room 172, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington St SE, Olympia, WA 98501.

Subject to change considering COVID restrictions

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Decision Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Time Extension Requests

Prepared By: Recreation and Conservation Outdoor Grants Managers

Summary

This is a request for the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to consider the proposed project time extensions shown in Attachment A.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Resolution: 2022-04 (Consent Agenda)

Purpose of Resolution: Approve the requested time extensions.

Background

Each grant [program policy manual](#) outlines the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's (RCFB) adopted policy for progress on active funded projects. The key elements of this policy are the sponsor's responsibility to complete a funded project promptly and meet the project milestones outlined in the grant agreement. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) director may give an applicant up to four years (from the award date) to complete a project. Extensions beyond four years require board action.

RCO received requests for time extensions for the projects listed in Attachment A. This document summarizes the circumstances for the requested extensions and the expected date of project completion.

General considerations for approving time extension requests include:

- Receipt of a written request for the time extension,
- Reimbursements requested and approved,
- Date the board granted funding approval,
- Conditions surrounding the delay,
- Sponsor's reasons or justification for requesting the extension,

- Likelihood of sponsor completing the project within the extended period,
- Original dates for project completion,
- Current status of activities within the grant, and
- Sponsor’s progress on this and other funded projects.

Strategic Plan Link

Consideration of these requests supports the RCFB’s goal of helping its partners protect, restore, and develop habitat, working lands, and recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the time extension requests for the projects listed in Attachment A.

Attachments

A. Time Extension Requests for Board Approval

Time Extension Requests for Board Approval

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
16-1740 Development	Preston Mill Park Phase II	WWRP ¹ – Local Parks	\$168,333 (83%)	6/30/2022	3/31/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks is requesting a 9-month time extension to complete construction of Phase II of Preston Mill Park. Phase II consists of constructing a restroom, adding two ADA parking spots to an existing lot, and upgrading utilities.

Progress on this project has been delayed for three reasons. First, staffing has been an issue because of the COVID-19 pandemic and an extensive reorganization of King County Parks. Second, there has been a significant expansion of permitting requirements by King County and an increase in required studies, design, and engineering scopes for this project. Third, there has been an increase in project costs due to the current construction market that required additional fundraising.

King County is now able to proceed with the project. They received their permits at the end of 2021 and added an additional \$400,000 in funding for the project. The bidding process is starting now and construction should begin by June 2022. The construction is expected to wrap up in November 2022. This extension request includes a 90-day buffer for closeout after the holidays.

Pierce County Parks and Recreation

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
18-1267 Development	Chambers Creek Canyon Trail Development	WWRP – Trails	\$629,893 (88%)	4/30/2022	1/31/2024

¹Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

Pierce County Parks and Recreation is partnering with the cities of University Place and Lakewood to construct a 140' pedestrian suspension bridge across Chambers Creek Canyon. This bridge site is downstream of Kobayashi Park and a recently completed Recreational Trails Program bridge funded via Chambers Creek Canyon Bridge Crossing (16-2616). In addition to the suspension bridge, which will connect trails on each side of the canyon, the project scope includes a small footbridge over Peach Creek, an almost 2,000 feet boardwalk, and a new trailhead on the Lakewood side of the canyon.

Pierce County expects 90 percent of the project design to be completed in June 2022 and the cultural resource work is nearing the end of the consultation period. A time extension of 20 months is necessary due to setbacks related to coordination with the other bridge project, permitting challenges, the ongoing effects to the construction industry from COVID-19, boardwalk and bridge alignment analyses, and construction window stipulations on a salmon-bearing stream.

Washington State Conservation Commission

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
16-1922 Acquisition	Blain Ranches	WWRP – Farmland Preservation	\$727,439 (94%)	6/30/2022	6/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

In 2018, the Conservation Commission received a grant to extinguish 385 development rights on 1,925 acres of farmland in Klickitat County. The landowner of the property has been active in development of the conservation easement, which has increased the amount of time needed to complete this document. To date, the Conservation Commission has completed the appraisals and has ordered and reviewed the preliminary title report. Because the landowner is very much aware of what the Commission has included in other recently negotiated farmland preservation projects, there is reason to believe that the easement will be completed quickly.

A 12-month extension will allow the Commission to complete final negotiations on the easement language, complete necessary baseline documentation, and ultimately purchase the conservation easement.

Washington State Conservation Commission

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>16-2602</u> Acquisition	Lazy Cross Ranch	WWRP – Farmland Preservation	\$1,700,000 (96%)	6/30/2022	6/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The Conservation Commission received a grant in 2018 to extinguish 313 development rights on 4,351 acres of farmland in Klickitat County. The landowner of the property has been active in development of the conservation easement, which has increased the amount of time needed to complete this document.

The Commission unexpectedly discovered when they ordered a title report on the property, that about 1,300 acres of this property was encumbered by a prior easement to allow the placement of wind turbines. Board policies for the Farmland Preservation Category are clear that construction of wind generation for commercial purposes are not allowed, so the area covered by the wind turbine easement must be removed from the project scope. Board policy further requires that changes in acreage after evaluation must be reviewed and approved by the Farmland Preservation evaluation panel. After removing the previously encumbered acres, this project will now remove 205 development rights on about 2,850 acres. RCO provided briefing materials for this scope change and received approval from the evaluation panel for the change in acreage.

To date, the Commission has received completed appraisals, ordered and reviewed the preliminary title report, and is very close to reaching consensus on the terms of a final conservation easement. With a 12-month extension, the Commission will complete the final negotiations on the easement, finish the baseline documentation, and ultimately purchase the development rights.

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>14-1555</u>	Larrabee – Clayton Beach Railway Overpass	WWRP State Parks	\$1,003,465 (43%)	6/30/2022	6/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

State Parks is requesting a 12-month extension. Construction is underway and anticipated to be substantially completed by the end of this year. However, permitting delays will result in missing the restoration planting window, and that work may need to extend into 2023.

This project is solving a crucial safety and public access issue by building a pedestrian bridge over an active rail line at Larrabee State Park to Clayton Beach. The work, however, has proven to be very complex including coordinating approvals from various jurisdictions and regulators with authority over the project or project area. These include Puget Sound Energy, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission, the Army Corps of Engineers, Skagit and Whatcom Counties, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington State Department of Ecology, and the Washington State Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation.

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>16-2602</u> Planning	Stuart Island Moorage Replacement	Boating Facilities Program – State	\$20,000 (10%)	6/30/2022	6/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The purpose of this project is to design and permit a replacement moorage facility in Stuart Island State Park within the San Juan Marine Area to support motorized boating. State Parks is requesting a 12-month time extension to prepare and submit the environmental regulatory permit applications. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to start up delays, staff turnover, and associated project setbacks.

The project sponsor anticipates applying for all required permits in May 2022. After these permits are received, bid documents can be completed and the project can be closed.

Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
16-2605 Planning	Sucia Island Moorage Replacement	Boating Facilities Program – State	\$20,000 (10%)	6/30/2022	9/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The purpose of this project is to design and permit a replacement moorage facility in Sucia Island State Park within the San Juan Marine Area to support motorized boating. State Parks is requesting a 15-month time extension to prepare and submit the environmental regulatory permit applications. The COVID-19 pandemic contributed to start up delays, staff turnover, and associated project setbacks.

The project sponsor anticipates applying for all required permits in Summer 2022. After these permits are received, bid documents can be completed and the project can be closed.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Decision Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Cost Increase Request: City of North Bonneville, Outdoor Community Sport Court, and Public Restrooms, RCO #20-1662D

Prepared By: Jesse Sims, Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

The City of North Bonneville is asking the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) for approval of a cost increase for the Outdoor Community Sport Court and Public Restrooms ([20-1662D](#)) project. The cost increase will help offset the unexpected increased cost of construction and inflation caused by the pandemic.

The requested cost increase exceeds ten percent of the total cost; therefore, policy requires board consideration of the request.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Resolution: 2022-04 (Consent Agenda)

Purpose of Resolution: Approve the cost increase request.

Background

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) awarded the City of North Bonneville (city) a \$153,000 Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) grant. North Bonneville's plan was to renovate an existing restroom and redevelop a basketball court to turn it into a new multi-use sport court. The project is located in Skamania County (see Attachment A). The existing facilities, which are more than 40 years old, include an outdated and nonfunctional shallow cement ice rink that currently serves as the city's only sport court. Due to the need for renovations, the court is used in a limited and unorganized way for pick-up basketball and skateboarding. It is estimated that the proposed new sport court facility will serve between 2,000 and 4,000 people each year.

Project Status

The City of North Bonneville is a small community of about 1,000 people located within the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic area along the Columbia River. When the city originally applied for grant funds, they did so to support a local nonprofit organization, the Bonneville Trails Foundation (Foundation). The Foundation is not an eligible YAF sponsor, so the city agreed to sponsor a grant application on its behalf. The budget for the project was based largely on this partnership and the Foundation's pledge to provide volunteer labor to complete the actual construction of the new facilities. After the application was submitted, the Foundation found that they were no longer able to provide these volunteer services, which left the city to complete the project on its own. Because a paid construction crew will be working in place of volunteers, more funds are needed for project implementation.

Additionally, the significant rise in inflation was not anticipated in 2020. While RCO has seen many projects impacted by the sudden and drastic rise in the cost of construction materials, the impact to small communities like North Bonneville is especially difficult. At this point, the city will not be able to complete this project without additional grant funds from the board.

The YAF grant program typically requires a 50 percent match. North Bonneville qualified for reduced match, so their share of the project cost is 25 percent. While the city's matching share is lower, if they request more grant funds, they must bring more match to the project. Because of this, the city determined that it would need to remove renovation of the restrooms from the project scope to limit the required match. This reduced the project scope to sports court renovation only.

Discussion and Analysis

North Bonneville is requesting an additional \$44,230 in YAF funds to complete this project. The original budget was \$153,000. The new budget is \$211,973. This updated budget reflects an increase of the total project cost by \$58,973.

Cost Increase for the Outdoor Community Sport Court and Public Restrooms 20-1662

	Original Project Agreement	Cost Increase Request	Proposed Project Agreement
YAF Grant (75%)	\$114,750	\$44,230	\$158,980
Sponsor Match (25%)	\$38,250	\$14,743	\$52,993
Total Project Cost	\$153,000	\$58,973	\$211,973

Cost Increase Policy

The board's policy on cost increases is outlined in *Manual 4: Development Projects* on page 33. Specifically, the policy states:

On occasion, the cost of completing a project exceeds the amount written into the agreement. Such overruns are the responsibility of the project sponsor. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board may consider a cost increase in some grant programs if funds are available, and the grant sponsor submits a written request. The director may approve requests for increases up to 10 percent of the total project cost and the board may approve increases above 10 percent.

To request an increase, the project sponsor must submit a written request to RCO addressing the following:

- The sponsor must have fully explored all practical alternatives to completing the intent of the agreement.
- The sponsor must have had little control over the conditions causing the overrun.
- Any increase must be used only for elements in the grant agreement.

A sponsor must obtain director or board approval for any significant change in project scope or design that results in a cost increase request. This approval must be granted before or simultaneously to the cost increase.

Analysis

There are enough uncommitted funds available in the YAF Account to cover the amount requested. This request exceeds 10 percent of the project's initial approved grant amount, and therefore the request is presented for the board's consideration.

Alternatives Considered

The city considered three options:

1. The city's request for additional funds is their preferred alternative. This alternative allows them to remove renovation of the restrooms from the project scope and provides them with additional funds to complete the project.
2. The city considered requesting \$94,230 to complete the project as originally scoped, which included renovation of both the sports court and the restroom. However, this option would have required them to add an additional \$12,500 in sponsor match. This amount on top of the \$14,743 required for their preferred alternative would have meant that the city needed to bring \$27,243 in sponsor

match. The city is not in a position to commit that amount to the project at this time.

3. Lastly, the city considered returning the grant funds they currently have and applying for grant funds again in 2022. However, the city is concerned that they will not be able to commit staff time to the application process when they are not sure if they will be awarded another grant. Also, they anticipate that the cost of construction and materials are likely to increase again in the upcoming years.

Conditions Causing the Overrun

The sponsor had little control over the conditions causing the overrun. North Bonneville was caught unaware when the Foundation suddenly pulled their support for this project. Additionally, the city could not have predicted the drastic increase in the cost of building materials and labor in 2022 when they submitted their application in 2020. Both the loss of their planned match and the increase in construction costs are reasons the city is requesting a cost increase for this project.

Elements in the Agreement

If approved, the increased budget will only pay for costs associated with elements included in the approved grant agreement.

Strategic Plan Link

Consideration of this proposal supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect, preserve, restore, and enhance recreation opportunities statewide.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the cost increase as requested.

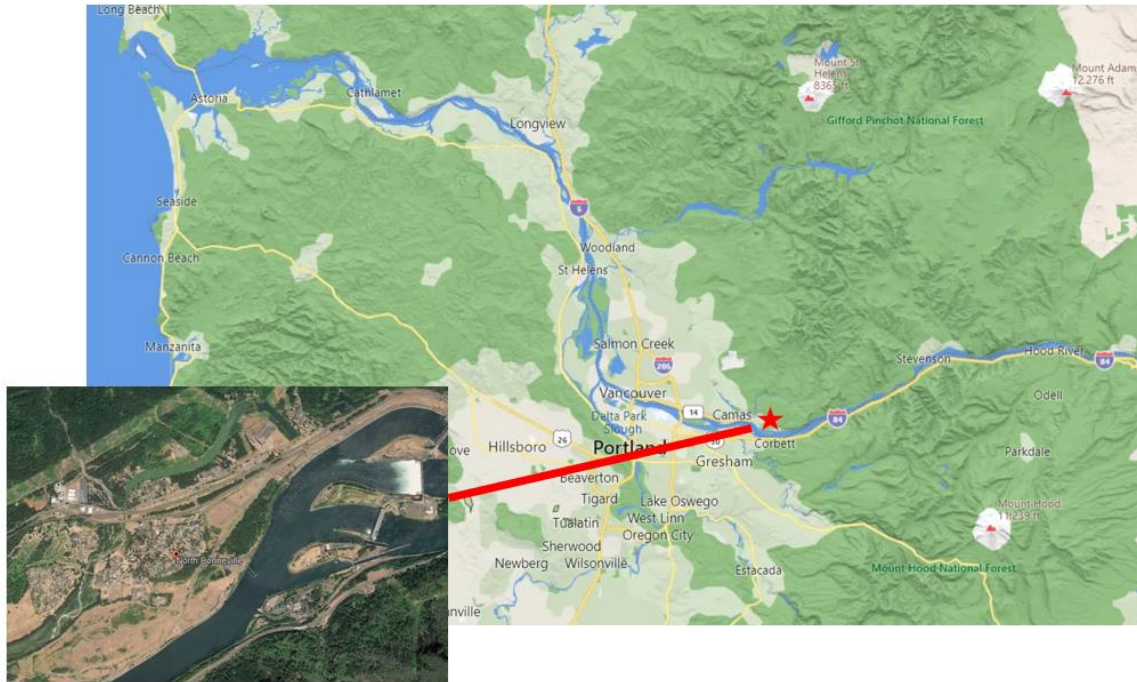
Next Steps

If the board approves the cost increase request, RCO staff will execute the necessary amendment to the grant agreement.

Attachments

Attachment A: Location Map and Photo of the Existing Basketball Court

Location Map and Photo of the Existing Basketball Court



North Bonneville City of; Outdoor Community Sport Court and Public Restrooms (#20-1662)

Attachment #424562, ParkStil05.jpg

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Decision Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Recognition of Volunteer Service

Prepared By: Tessa Cencula

Summary

This memo summarized the years of service by agency and community member volunteers on the advisory committees that the Recreation and Conservation Office uses to assist in its grant programs.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a: Request for Decision
 Request for Direction
 Briefing

Resolution: 2022-04

Purpose of Resolution: Approve the proposed recognitions.

Background

The Recreation and Conservation Office relies on volunteers to help administer its grant programs. Volunteers provide a strategic balance and perspective on program issues.

Their activities, experience, and knowledge help shape program policies that guide us in reviewing and evaluating projects and administering grants.

The following individuals have completed their terms of service or have otherwise bid farewell after providing valuable analysis and excellent program advice. Outdoor recreationists and enthusiasts in Washington will enjoy the results of the hard work and vision of these volunteers for years to come. Staff applauds their exceptional service and recommends approval of the attached resolutions via Resolution 2022-04 (consent).

Boating Programs Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Guy Glenn Jr.	Local Agency Representative	6

Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Frana Milan	Local Agency Representative	3

Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Paul Willard	Federal Representative	4

WWRP Forestland Preservation Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Gretchen Lech	Landowner Representative	4

WWRP Habitat Restoration Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Chrissy Bailey	State Agency Representative	10

WWRP Local Parks Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Frana Milan	Local Agency Representative	5

WWRP Trails Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Frana Milan	Local Agency Representative	2
Lori Moholt-Phillips	Community Member Representative	6

Attachments

Attachment A: Individual Service Recognitions



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Guy Glenn Jr.

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2016 to 2021, Guy Glenn Jr. served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Boating Programs Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of Boating Programs projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Mr. Glenn's dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Mr. Glenn.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington
on April 26, 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. W. W. W.", written over a horizontal line.



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Frana Milan

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2012 to 2021, Frana Milan served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Local Parks and Trails Advisory Committees as well as the Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of recreation projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Ms. Milan dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Ms. Milan

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington
on April 26, 2022



Ted Willhite, Chair



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Paul Willard

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2018 to 2021, Paul Willard served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Nonhighway and Off-Road Vehicle Activities (NOVA) Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of NOVA projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Mr. Willard's dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Mr. Willard.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington
on April 26, 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Willhite". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Ted Willhite, Chair



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Gretchen Lech

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2018 to 2021, Gretchen Lech served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Forestland Preservation Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of WWRP Forestland Preservation projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Ms. Lech's dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Ms. Lech.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Willhite". The signature is written over a horizontal line.

Ted Willhite, Chair



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Chrissy Bailey

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2012 to 2021, Chrissy Bailey served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Habitat Restoration Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of WWRP Habitat Restoration projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Ms. Bailey's dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Ms. Bailey.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington
on April 26, 2022

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Winter", written over a horizontal line.



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Lori Moholt-Phillips

To the Residents of Washington State and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

WHEREAS, from 2016 to 2021, Lori Moholt-Phillips served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Trails Advisory Committee; and

WHEREAS, the result of this service was the provision of valuable analysis and excellent advice that assisted in the development of exemplary program policies, program planning, and the evaluation of WWRP Trails projects for funding;

WHEREAS, members of the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board wish to recognize this support and service,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Ms. Moholt-Phillips dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent along with a letter of appreciation to Ms. Moholt-Phillips.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia, Washington
on April 26, 2022



Ted Willhite, Chair

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2021-04
April 26, 2022 - Consent Agenda

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following April 26, 2022 Consent Agenda items are approved:

Resolution 2022-04

A. Board Meeting Minutes – January 25-26, 2022

B. Time Extensions:

- King County, Preseton Mill Park Phase II Development, [16-1740](#)
- Pierce County, Chambers Creek Canyon Trail Development, [18-1267](#)
- Washington State Conservation Commission, Blain Ranches, [16-1922](#)
- Washington State Conservation Commission, Lazy Cross Ranch, [16-1923](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Larrabee – Clayton Beach Railway Overpass, [14-1555](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Stuart Island Moorage Replacement, [16-2602](#)
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Sucia Island Moorage Replacement, [16-2605](#)

C. Cost Change:

- City of North Bonneville, Outdoor Community Sport Court and Public Restrooms, [20-1662D](#)

D. Volunteer Recognitions (6)

Resolution moved by: Member Kathryn Gardow

Resolution seconded by: Member Shiloh Burgess

Adopted/~~Defeated~~/~~Deferred~~ (*underline one*)

Approved Date: April 26, 2022

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Recreation and Conservation Office Report (Director's Report)

Prepared By: Megan Duffy, Marguerite Austin, Mark Jarasitis, Susan Zemek, and Brent Hedden

Summary

This memo summarizes key agency activities.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Agency Updates

Physical Activity Task Force Concludes Work

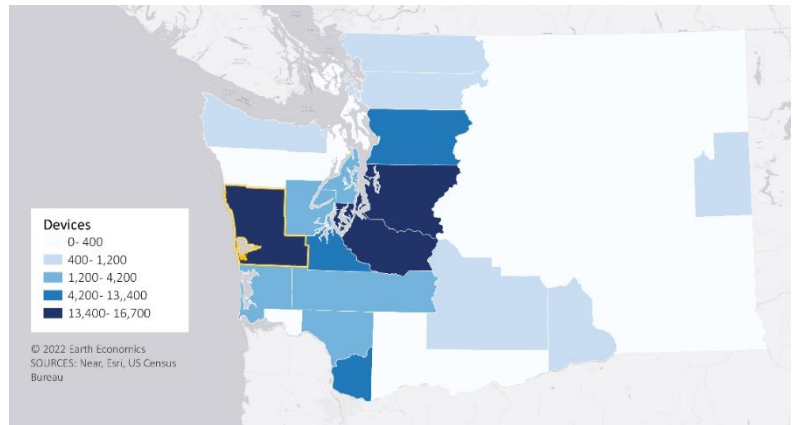
The Physical Activity Task Force, which was staffed by the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), concluded its work in February with a report to the Legislature on how to improve access to athletic facilities for underserved youth. The focus of the group was to understand the ways strengthened shared-use agreements between schools and local governments could be a solution to the crisis of youth physical inactivity. The report notes that youth inactivity is a public health hazard and lack of access to physical activity is a health equity crisis. The task force recommends changes to state law to require shared use and funding to support schools as community hubs; a communications campaign to explain the benefits of shared use; funding of shared-use innovation hubs to implement task force model shared-use agreements; changes to state grant criteria to embed shared-use best practices (this includes RCO grants that fund athletic facilities); application of a new facilities inventory to encourage shared use; and a statewide health study to more fully



understand the patterns associated with gaps in youth physical activity and the social costs on education, juvenile justice, health care, and productivity. Read the [task force report](#) to the Legislature and see the [Athletic Fields and Facilities Inventory](#).

RCO Uses Cell Phone Data to Study Visitation to Recreation Sites

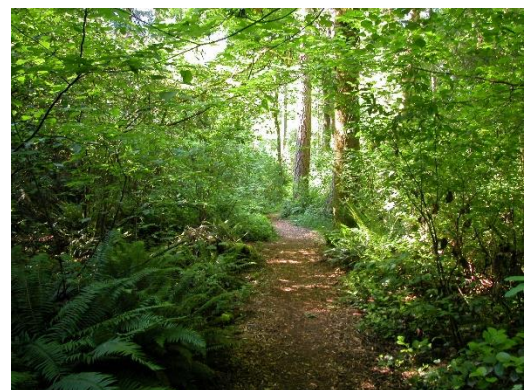
RCO and state agency partners are nearing completion of the first phase of a new study that uses anonymized location data from mobile devices to estimate recreation use more accurately on state-managed lands and the associated spending. The study indicates a 12 percent increase in visitation between 2019 to 2020, with a higher increase in day-use visits than overnight visits. Annual visitor expenditures averaged about \$3 billion in both years. Upon completion of the study, RCO and its partners will move to the project’s second phase, which will develop an interactive dashboard that allows users to see visitation and economic contribution information. The information will help state agencies and communities make decisions about land management and investments. The study is a partnership with RCO, the State Parks and Recreation Commission, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources.



Origin of in-state mobile devices that visited state recreation lands in Grays Harbor County

RCO Working on Statewide Trail Map

In 2021, the Legislature directed RCO to develop an official, statewide database of paved and unpaved trails. RCO recently partnered with Environmental Systems Research Institute (ESRI) to develop a database tool that will guide stewardship of the statewide trail system. The database will show existing trails and enable trail managers and policy makers to work



collaboratively across boundaries to increase trail connectivity and access opportunities for all Washington residents. One critical advance from previous trail database efforts will be a Web-based portal that enables managers to regularly update the data. ESRI and RCO will convene a series of workshops with trail managers across the state later

this spring to design and build the database. RCO anticipates a public launch of a prototype by early fall.

Recreation and Conservation Grant Round Begins

The first of two recreation and conservation grant rounds began February 17 with a Webinars for prospective grant applicants. The February 17 Webinar included information about the grants, eligibility requirements, deadlines, program changes, and how to apply for a grant. Staff focused on the following grant programs: Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account, Boating Infrastructure Grant, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (recreation and conservation programs), and Youth Athletic Facilities. A second Webinar was offered February 22 for applicants interested in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program’s farmland and forestland categories and in the Community Forests Program. Applications are due for these grants May 3. A third Webinar is scheduled in August for boating, firearms, and trail grant programs, with applications due in November.



New in PRISM This Year

Every new year brings new challenges, and for the PRISM Team that means two big projects. First, in 2022, staff will complete the design and begin development of a new cultural resources module that will allow RCO staff to better manage cultural resource reviews of projects. The module also will allow better data sharing between RCO and the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation. Second, staff will modify the financial reporting components of PRISM to align with the new One Washington’s WorkDay program. One Washington, led by the Office of Financial Management, is a statewide program to replace current 1960s-era technology with a cloud-based solution for finance, procurement, budget, human resources, and payroll processes. Staff are waiting on final design documents from One Washington to begin design and development.



Sharing Information on Boating Grants

In December, Karl Jacobs presented our Boating Facilities Program and Boating Infrastructure Grant program at a free virtual boating workshop sponsored by Washington Sea Grant. There were about 30 participants, and several joined our staff in a follow-up break-out session to ask detailed questions about their projects. While the emphasis was on motorized boating, staff also shared information about other RCO grant programs that fund non-motorized boating facilities.



Staff Changes

Brock Milliern joined RCO on January 16 as the policy director and legislative liaison. Brock has long interacted with RCO. While serving as the division manager for the Recreation, Conservation and Transactions Division at the Department of Natural Resources, he also represented that agency on the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board. He most recently has served as the manager of the Toxics Cleanup Program at the Department of Ecology. Before that, he was a park ranger, cut trail, and led park maintenance crews. He also has managed a staff of 165 people and budgets between \$30 million and \$100 million. He has engaged with the Legislature in a variety of his past positions.



Chelsea Krimme joined the Washington Invasive Species Council staff as the community outreach and environmental education specialist in March. Originally from New Hampshire, Chelsea came west in 2013 when she joined the Washington Conservation Corps. There she worked for 2 years on conservation projects throughout the state before being hired as a supervisor. In that role, she trained and led crews on habitat restoration and backcountry trail projects across the state, focusing on invasive species management. In addition, she served on the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee, working with supervisors and staff to integrate those principles into everyday functions. Committee activities included creating and facilitating trainings for more than 400 young adults and staff. Chelsea also was heavily involved in the Washington Conservation Corps' disaster response program, deploying nationally and locally to help communities after natural disasters. On these deployments, Chelsea filled roles including incident commander and Planning Section chief for the Americorps Disaster Response Team. Chelsea earned her



bachelor of science degree from Southern New Hampshire University. In her free time, Chelsea enjoys hiking, traveling, and hanging out with her dog.

Katie Pruitt, one of RCO's policy analysts, changed roles on January 18 to become the policy specialist with the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office. Katie is responsible for tracking and communicating progress for salmon and orca recovery, including the biennial state of salmon report. As many of you know, Katie has been with RCO since 2019 and has worked on many key policies and projects for both our funding boards.



Some of her recent accomplishments include the targeted investment policy for salmon and orca recovery and the kickoff of the planning effort to update the state's recreation and conservation plan. Katie lives in Olympia with her husband and two children and enjoys getting outside to ski and hike whenever possible.

News from the Boards

The **Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group** canceled its February 8 meeting and will meet August 24.

The **Washington Invasive Species Council** met March 10. An important focus of the meeting was the European green crab emergency, including a briefing from the Lummi Nation on its emergency proclamation and task force, as well as a briefing from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on its requested emergency measures. The council also discussed improvements to the guidance for the State Environmental Policy Act checklist and changing insensitive common names for invasive species.



The **Salmon Recovery Funding Board** held its first meeting of the year on March 2-3. At this meeting the board approved cost increases for the Stillaguamish Tribe of Indian's Gold basin project and Clallam County's Dungeness project. The board also approved \$250,000 for cost increase requests and decided how potential increases in federal funding from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund will be used for projects. The board also heard partner reports and region presentations, and briefly discussed the results of the diversity, equity, and inclusion board survey.

Legislative Update

The Legislature concluded its session on time and passed supplemental operating and capital budgets favorable to RCO and other natural resource agencies. RCO did not have request legislation but did request a new position in the Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office, and funding to act as match in the battle against flowering rush. Both were successful, though the flowering rush funding was a one-time allocation and will have to be requested next year as an addition to RCO’s base budget.

Policy bills that made it all the way through and are connected to our work include:

Bill	Relation to RCO
HB 1329 Concerning the Open Public Meetings Act	RCO is assessing the continuance of remote board meeting options
HB 2078 Outdoor School for All Program	The Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction may choose to work with RCO on implementing the new program
HB 5793 Stipends for board and committee participation targeting eligible members	RCO and the Office of Equity are working together on bill implementation and updating RCO policies.

Budget:

Most new funding from this supplemental budget for RCO was focused on salmon recovery. The total is approximately \$118,000,000 in new salmon funding. This funding will go toward the Duckabush Estuary, eleven fish barrier projects in Skagit County, and other Salmon Recovery Funding Board projects.

For recreation related funding, RCO was granted \$300,000 to work with a local government or non-profit to address boating safety on Lake Union. Also, there was \$418,000 for design work on the Dash Point Park and Pier with Metro Parks Tacoma.

The state agency partners of RCFB were successful in procuring additional recreation funding, particularly for deferred maintenance.

Grant Management Section

Point Defiance Park

Shon Sylvia, Executive Director of Metro Parks Tacoma, hosted a tour of the Point Defiance Park on March 31st. RCO Director Megan Duffy, Scott Robinson and Beth Auerbach met with Mr. Sylvia and staff members, Joe Brady and Roger Stanton to get a visual update on a proposed scope change, time extension, and waiver request for a funded project.



The park district has two grants totaling \$5.5 million for renovation of Owen Beach Park and the 5-Mile Loop Trail. These are two very popular recreation areas in this 760-acre park that houses a marina, zoo, gardens, a living history museum, off-leash dog park and much more. The Director has approved the changes requested for the 5-Mile Loop Trail, provided construction begins no later than November 2022.

Boating Conference in 2023

The States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) is a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to improving access to waterways by promoting land acquisition, development, and maintenance of recreational boating facilities. Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, RCO, and Department of Fish and Wildlife staff met with SOBA officials in March to begin discussions about hosting the national SOBA conference in 2023.



The conference, which attracts a few hundred people each year, offers training for coordinators of the Boating Infrastructure Grant, Clean Vessel Act, and Boating Access Grant Programs. Selecting a venue is a key priority along with identifying key boating sites for the annual tour. Staff is focused on sites along Puget Sound, one of Washington's most significant waterways.

Using Returned Funds for Alternate and Partially Funded Projects

The director has approved grants for alternate and partially funded projects. The awards are comprised of unused funds from previously funded projects that did not use the full amount of their grant award. Attachment A, Funds for Alternate and Partially Funded Projects, shows the grant awards for alternate projects (Table A-1) and the additional funding for partially funded projects (Table A-2).

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 include grant awards made by the RCO director after receiving board-delegated authority to award grants. Staff are working with sponsors to secure the materials needed to place the director approved projects under agreement.

Program	Active Projects	Director Approved Projects	Total Funded Projects
Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)	29	2	31
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	67	4	71
Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG)	10	1	11
Community Forests Program (CFP)	2	3	5
Firearms and Archery Range Recreation (FARR)	15	1	16
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	18	19	37
No Child Left Inside (NCLI)	80	3	83
Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA)	82	41	123
Recreation & Conservation Office Recreation Grants (RRG)	7	1	8
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	37	9	46
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)	267	7	274
Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF)	57	11	68
Total	671	102	773

Viewing Closed Projects

Attachment B lists projects that closed between December 16 and March 31, 2022. This quarter the team closed 92 projects! Click on the project number to view the project description, grant funds awarded, photos, maps, reports, etc.

Fiscal Report

For July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023, actuals through February 28, 2022 (Fiscal Month 08). Percentage of biennium reported: 33.3 percent. The "Budget" column shows the state appropriations and any received federal awards.

Grant Program	BUDGET	COMMITTED		TO BE COMMITTED		EXPENDITURES	
	Includes Re-appropriations 2021-2023	Dollars	% of Budget	Dollars	% of Budget	Dollars	% Expended of Committed
Grant Programs							
ALEA	\$19,152,000	\$17,194,711	90%	\$1,957,289	10%	\$1,960,413	11%
BFP	\$35,395,000	\$32,825,086	93%	\$2,569,914	7%	\$3,524,381	11%
BIG	\$4,894,722	\$4,894,722	100%	\$0	0%	\$302,282	6%
FARR	\$1,742,000	\$1,299,045	75%	\$442,955	25%	\$116,103	9%
LWCF	\$5,876,000	\$5,876,000	100%	\$0	0%	\$1,485,927	25%
NOVA	\$19,270,000	\$17,961,717	93%	\$1,308,283	7%	\$2,919,469	16%
RTP	\$5,012,157	\$4,720,593	94%	\$291,564	6%	\$1,320,484	28%
WWRP	\$198,928,000	\$184,913,445	93%	\$14,014,555	7%	\$14,828,449	8%
RRG	\$5,991,000	\$5,788,639	97%	\$202,361	3%	\$511,160	9%
YAF	\$21,422,000	\$19,250,274	90%	\$2,171,726	10%	\$2,888,885	15%
Subtotal	\$317,682,879	\$294,724,232	93%	\$22,958,647	7%	\$29,857,647	10%
Administration							
General Operating Funds	\$9,804,831	\$9,804,831	100%	\$0	0%	\$2,747,140	28%
Grand Total	\$327,487,710	\$304,529,063	93%	\$22,958,647	7%	\$32,604,693	11%

Acronym	Grant Program
ALEA	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account
BFP	Boating Facilities Program
BIG	Boating Infrastructure Grant
FARR	Firearms and Archery Range Recreation
LWCF	Land and Water Conservation Fund
NOVA	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities
RTP	Recreational Trails Program
WWRP	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
RRG	RCO Recreation Grants
YAF	Youth Athletic Facilities

Board Revenue Report:

For July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023, actuals through January 31, 2022 (Fiscal Month 07).
Percentage of biennium reported: 29.2%.

Program	Biennial Forecast		Collections
	Estimate	Actual	% of Estimate
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	\$18,888,929	\$5,615,421	29.7%
Nonhighway, Off-Road Vehicle Program (NOVA)	\$13,965,180	\$4,008,304	28.7%
Firearms and Archery Range Rec Program (FARR)	\$662,320	\$178,265	26.9%
Total	\$33,516,429	\$9,801,990	29.2%

Revenue Notes:

- BFP revenue is from the un-refunded marine gasoline taxes.
- NOVA revenue is from the motor vehicle gasoline tax paid by users of off-road vehicles and nonhighway roads, and from the amount paid for by off-road vehicle use permits.
- FARR revenue is from \$2.16 of each concealed pistol license fee.
- These figures reflect the most recent revenue forecast in November 2021. The next forecast will be in March 2022.

WWRP Expenditure Rate by Organization (1990-Current)

Agency	Committed	Expenditures	% Expended
Local Agencies	\$353,971,973	\$314,833,337	89%
Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$234,202,548	\$203,008,483	87%
Department of Natural Resources	\$200,544,485	\$153,680,655	78%
State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$168,409,145	\$135,205,777	80%
Nonprofits	\$51,064,982	\$34,090,510	67%
Conservation Commission	\$5,709,899	\$1,552,548	27%
Tribes	\$2,807,431	\$1,741,411	62%
Other			
Special Projects	\$735,011	\$735,011	100%
Total	\$1,017,445,474	\$844,847,732	83%

Performance Measures for Fiscal Year 2022

The following performance data are for recreation and conservation projects in fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). Data current as of March 28, 2022.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Performance Measures

Measure	Target	Fiscal Year-to-Date	Status	Notes
Grant agreements mailed within 120 days of funding	90%	76%	●	223 of 294 agreements have been mailed on time this fiscal year.
Grants under agreement within 180 days of funding	95%	73%	●	219 of 302 projects were under agreement within 180 days.
Progress reports responded to within 15 days	90%	93%	●	RCFB staff received 631 progress reports and responded to them in an average of 7 days.
Projects closed within 150 days of funding end date	85%	66%	●	40 of 61 projects have closed on time.
Projects in Backlog	5	19	●	There are 19 RCFB projects in the backlog
Compliance inspections done	125	73	●	73 inspections have inspected 66 worksites.

Attachments

Attachment A: Table of funds for alternately and partially funded projects

Attachment B: Table of closed projects from December 16 – March 31.

Funds for Alternate and Partially Funded Projects

Table A-1: Funds for Alternate Projects,

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Grant Award	Grant Program, Category
20-2158D	North Cove Guest Moorage Development	Lake Stevens	\$116,245	\$116,245	Boating Facilities Program, Local
20-2006D	Tokeland Marina Fishers RV Park and Campground	Port of Willapa Harbor	\$764,000	\$177,349	Boating Facilities Program, Local
20-1742A	Illahee Preserve Kitsap County Heritage Park	Kitsap County	\$1,000,000	\$720,763	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat

Table A-2: Funds for Partially Funded Projects

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Grant Request	Previous Grant Awards	Current Grant Funding	Grant Program, Category
20-2384D	Kingston Guest Moorage Floats	Port of Kingston	\$421,250	\$392,944	\$421,250	Boating Facilities Program, Local

ⁱA=Acquisition, C=Acquisition and Development, D=Development, E=Education/Education and Enforcement, M=Maintenance, O=Operation R=Restoration

Projects Completed and Closed from December 16, 2021, to March 31, 2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
16-1690D	Sandy Cove Park, Acquisition and Expansion	Snoqualmie	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account	12/21/2021
16-2273D	Willow Grove Boat Launch Improvements	Port of Longview	Boating Facilities Program, Local	3/30/2022
16-2224D	Port of Poulsbo Public Boat Launch Rehabilitation	Port of Poulsbo	Boating Facilities Program, Local	3/15/2022
16-2462P	Fort Worden State Park Boat Launch	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Boating Facilities Program, State	3/23/2022
12-1343D	James Island Moorage Replacement	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Boating Facilities Program, State	3/15/2022
16-2606D	San Juan Marine Area Boating Facility Improvements	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Boating Facilities Program, State	3/9/2022
18-2300D	Lynden Shotgun Club Goes Wireless	Lynden Shotgun Club	Firearms and Archery Range Recreation	3/22/2022
16-2404D	North Cascades Sportsman's Club Rifle/Pistol Range Expansion	North Cascades Sportsman's Club	Firearms and Archery Range Recreation	1/14/2022
16-1829D	Riverfront Park Great Floods Play Area	Spokane	Land and Water Conservation	2/11/2022
19-1156E	Foster Kids Explore Washington	Catholic Community Services Tacoma	No Child Left Inside, Tier 1	1/20/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
19-1094E	Nisqually Tribal Youth: Explore and Connect	Nisqually River Foundation	No Child Left Inside, Tier 2	1/4/2022
18-2279E	Grant County Off-Road Vehicle Area Education and Enforcement	Grant County Sheriff Department	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/3/2022
18-2463E	Capitol State Forest Education and Enforcement	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/15/2022
18-2354E	Northwest Region Education and Enforcement Warden	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/9/2022
18-2507E	Pacific Cascade Education and Enforcement	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/9/2022
18-2452E	Reiter Foothills Education and Enforcement	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/9/2022
18-2330E	Snoqualmie Corridor and Middle Fork Valley Education and Enforcement	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/15/2022
18-2493E	Tahuya, Green Mountain Education and Enforcement	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	2/10/2022

Project Numberⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
18-2419E	Spokane County Parks Education and Enforcement Program: 2019-2021	Spokane County	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	1/20/2022
18-2512M	Capitol and Yaocolt Forest Facilities Maintenance and Operation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	2/7/2022
16-2434D	Indian Camp Campground Renovation and Expansion	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	3/28/2022
18-2245M	Samish Overlook and Lily-Lizard Lakes Campground Nonhighway Road Maintenance and Operations	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	2/9/2022
18-2246M	Southeast Region Maintenance and Operation North	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	2/14/2022
18-2490M	Naches Developed and Dispersed Maintenance and Operation 2018	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	3/3/2022
18-2291M	Wenatchee River Ranger District Trailhead and Dispersed Site Maintenance and Operation	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Wenatchee River Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	3/11/2022
18-2266M	Pomeroy Ranger District Campgrounds and Dispersed Sites Maintenance and Operation	U.S. Forest Service Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	1/19/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
18-2243M	Blanchard, Harry Osborne Trails and Facilities Maintenance and Operation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	2/7/2022
18-2464M	Capitol State Forest Nonmotorized Trail and Facility Maintenance and Operation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	2/7/2022
18-2492M	Elbe Hills - Nicholson Trail System Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	2/7/2022
18-2509M	Pacific Cascade Non-Motorized Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	2/10/2022
18-2328M	Snoqualmie Corridor Facilities and Trails Maintenance and Operation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	2/11/2022
16-2301P	Snoqualmie Corridor Gateway Facility and Trail Design	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/23/2022
16-2306D	Yacolt Burn Nonmotorized Trail Development	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/23/2022
18-2471M	Mt. Baker Ranger District Trail Maintenance 2019	U.S. Forest Service, Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest Mount Baker Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/15/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
14-2111P	North Summit Recreation Area	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Methow Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/29/2022
18-2397M	Naches Wilderness Trail Maintenance 2020-21	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/1/2022
18-2267M	Pomeroy Ranger District Backcountry-Wilderness Trails Maintenance and Operation	U.S. Forest Service Umatilla National Forest, Pomeroy Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	3/9/2022
18-2280M	Grant County Off-Road Vehicle Area Maintenance and Operation	Grant County Sheriff Department	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/3/2022
18-2260M	Ahtanum Off-Road Vehicle Facilities and Trail Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/4/2022
18-2465M	Capitol Forest Off-Road Vehicle Trail and Facility Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/15/2022
16-2400C	Elbe Off-Road Vehicle Campground Development	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	3/22/2022
18-2491M	Elbe Off-Road Vehicle Trail System Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/7/2022
18-2508M	Pacific Cascade Motorized Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/10/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
18-2449M	Reiter Foothills Off-Road Vehicle Maintenance and Operations	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/14/2022
18-2284M	Straits District Maintenance and Operations	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/8/2022
18-2505M	Tahuya 4x4 Trails Maintenance and Operation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/11/2022
18-2522M	Tahuya Water Quality	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/11/2022
18-2352M	Walker Valley Off-Road Vehicle Area Maintenance and Operations	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	2/14/2022
18-2322P	Master Plan for Spokane County Off-Road Vehicle Park	Spokane County	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	12/17/2021
18-2398M	Naches Motorized Trails Maintenance and Operation 2020-21	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	3/8/2022
18-2404M	North Zone Motorized Multi Use Trail Maintenance	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Tonasket Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	1/24/2022
18-2292M	Motorized and Multi-Use Trails Maintenance and Operation Wenatchee River Ranger District 2020-2021	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Wenatchee River Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	3/30/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
18-2268M	Pomeroy Ranger District Motorized Trails Maintenance and Operation	U.S. Forest Service, Umatilla National Forest Pomeroy Ranger District	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-Road Vehicle	3/17/2022
18-1615D	Willows Road Regional Trail Connection	Kirkland	RCO Recreation Grants, Trails	2/7/2022
20-2282E	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trailhead Ambassadors	Mountains to Sound Greenway	Recreational Trails Program, Education	1/14/2022
20-2131E	Middle Fork and Mount Si Natural Resources Conservation Area Education	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Recreational Trails Program, Education	1/18/2022
20-1980E	Protect Trails and Educate Users with Spill Kits	Pacific Northwest 4-Wheel Drive	Recreational Trails Program, Education	1/24/2022
18-2255M	Maintaining the Olympic Peninsula	Back Country Horsemen of Washington	Recreational Trails Program, General	1/19/2022
18-2587M	Western Washington Volunteer Trail Maintenance 2019-2021	Evergreen Mt Bike Alliance	Recreational Trails Program, General	2/3/2022
18-2408M	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trail Maintenance 2019	Mountains to Sound Greenway	Recreational Trails Program, General	1/24/2022
18-2329M	East Snoqualmie Corridor Backcountry Maintenance	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Recreational Trails Program, General	3/21/2022
18-2527M	Pacific Northwest Trail Statewide Stewardship	Pacific Northwest Trail Assn	Recreational Trails Program, General	2/3/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
16-2616D	Chambers Creek Canyon Bridge Crossing	Pierce County	Recreational Trails Program, General	3/11/2022
18-2312M	Cle Elum Ranger District Winter Trail Maintenance 2020-2022	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Cle Elum RD	Recreational Trails Program, General	1/3/2022
18-2413M	Naches Motorized Trails Deferred Maintenance and Operation 2020-21	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	Recreational Trails Program, General	3/1/2022
18-2384M	Naches Wilderness Trails Deferred Maintenance and Operation 2020-21	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Naches Ranger District	Recreational Trails Program, General	3/8/2022
18-2333M	I-90 to Blewett Snowmobile Trails and Sno-Parks	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Recreational Trails Program, General	3/4/2022
18-1944A	Dungeness Farmland Phase II	North Olympic Land Trust	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farmland Preservation	3/7/2022
19-1689A	Mount Adams Community Forest Outlet Creek Tract	Mt. Adams Resource Stewards	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Forestland Preservation	3/21/2022
18-1649D	Warren Avenue Neighborhood Park Renovation	Bremerton	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks	1/19/2022
16-1843D	Olympic View Park Development	Marysville	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks	2/7/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
16-1412A	Bone River and Niawiakum River Natural Area Preserves 2016	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Natural Areas	12/22/2021
16-1416A	Crowberry Bog Natural Area Preserve 2016	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Natural Areas	3/14/2022
12-1558A	Mount Saint Helens Pine Creek	Columbia Land Trust	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Riparian Protection	12/16/2021
14-1092A	Taneum Creek Riparian	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Riparian Protection	3/21/2022
16-1413A	Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve 2016	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Riparian Protection	12/22/2021
16-1957A	Clearwater Riparian Protection Phase III	The Nature Conservancy	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Riparian Protection	3/18/2022
18-1373A	Skookum Creek Acquisition	Whatcom Land Trust	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Development	1/3/2022
18-1603D	Camas Meadows Natural Area Preserve Interpretive Trail	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Development	3/23/2022
18-1614D	Morning Star Sustainable Backcountry Toilets	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Development	1/21/2022
16-1662D	Point Doughty Campground Renovation	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Development	3/11/2022
16-1461R	Methow Forest Restoration, Phase II	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Restoration	2/16/2022
18-1830R	Wenas Watershed Enhancement	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Lands Restoration	3/24/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Project Name	Sponsor	Program	Closed On
20-1241A	Antoine Peak Phase 4 Etter Ranch	Spokane County	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat	3/28/2022
18-1278A	Benton City Riverfront Park Acquisition	Benton City	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Water Access	2/15/2022
18-1460D	Lake Tye Park Synthetic Fields Renovation	Monroe	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	1/10/2022
18-1431D	Evergreen Playfield Turf Conversion	Mountlake Terrace	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	3/28/2022
18-1539D	Stevens Field #2 Synthetic Infield and Lights	Olympia	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	3/7/2022
18-1783D	Lower Woodland Park Playfield #2 Turf Improvements	Seattle	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	12/17/2021
18-1531D	Skagit Valley Playfields Artificial Turf Infields	Skagit County	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	1/24/2022
18-1550D	Cheney Park Field Lighting	South Bend	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	3/25/2022
18-2019D	Gable Park Athletic Field Lighting	Hoquiam	Youth Athletic Facilities, Small	1/11/2022

ⁱ A=Acquisition, C=Acquisition and Development, D=Development, E=Education/Education and Enforcement, M=Maintenance, O=Operation R=Restoration

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Stadium Funding Plan Review and Advisory Committee Meeting
Debrief

Prepared By: Adam Cole, Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo summarizes progress made on the Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Fund (working title) grant program. Staff will present background information, a framework for developing program goals and policies, and an implementation timeline. Staff will discuss the convening of a newly created advisory committee to assist in this effort. Staff propose a discussion on those major elements of this program that have a nexus with existing board grant programs and related works.

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

Bonds for the construction of Lumen Field in Seattle retired in January 2021. \$42 million in excess revenues to pay off the bonds exists and is governed by [RCW 43.99N.060](#). This statute directs the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to make the monies in the "Youth Athletic Facilities Account" of the state treasury available for community outdoor athletic facilities statewide.

Per statute, funds must be made available to cities, counties, and nonprofits via a competitive grant program. Funds must be equally divided between new projects, newly renovated/developed facilities, and maintenance of existing facilities. Per statute, program policies and fund allocation authority reside with the RCO Director. Awards must be made on a proportional basis to the state's population. These funds are in a non-appropriated account, so there is no prescribed timeline for making grants available, and legislative appropriation is not needed to spend or maintain these funds in the account over time.

The RCO has given this program a working title of “Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Fund” (COAFF)

Existing Youth Athletic Facilities Program.

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board’s (board) current Youth Athletic Facilities Program (YAF) was created and funded by the Youth Athletic Facility Account, either fully or partially, from 2000 to 2007. However, after 2007, the fund was limited to general obligation bonds, which the legislature continued to fund due to stakeholder input. Due to the shift in fund source, the YAF no longer adheres to the statutory sideboards of the Youth Athletic Facility Account and the program changed through RCFB policy setting into what it is today.

As part of the board’s 2022 grant round, YAF applications are being accepted alongside other board grant programs. The current list of projects will inform the board’s next biennial funding request.

Moving Forward

Opportunities exist in managing the YAF and COAFF independently, in line with their fund sources. Stakeholders have expressed an interest in continuing the YAF as is, as they value its utility and stability. RCO, with the guidance of the board, an advisory committee, and public input, will use this one-time allocation to the Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Fund (COAFF) to address demand for community athletic facilities in underserved communities, state-wide. New policies and procedures will be required to guide this investment, which will be developed with input from the advisory committee.

Project Way Ahead

Developments to Date

Since the summer of 2021, when the excess bond revenues were deposited to the Youth Athletic Facilities Account, staff have been assessing what unique recreation needs should be addressed with the \$42 million. To date, RCO has:

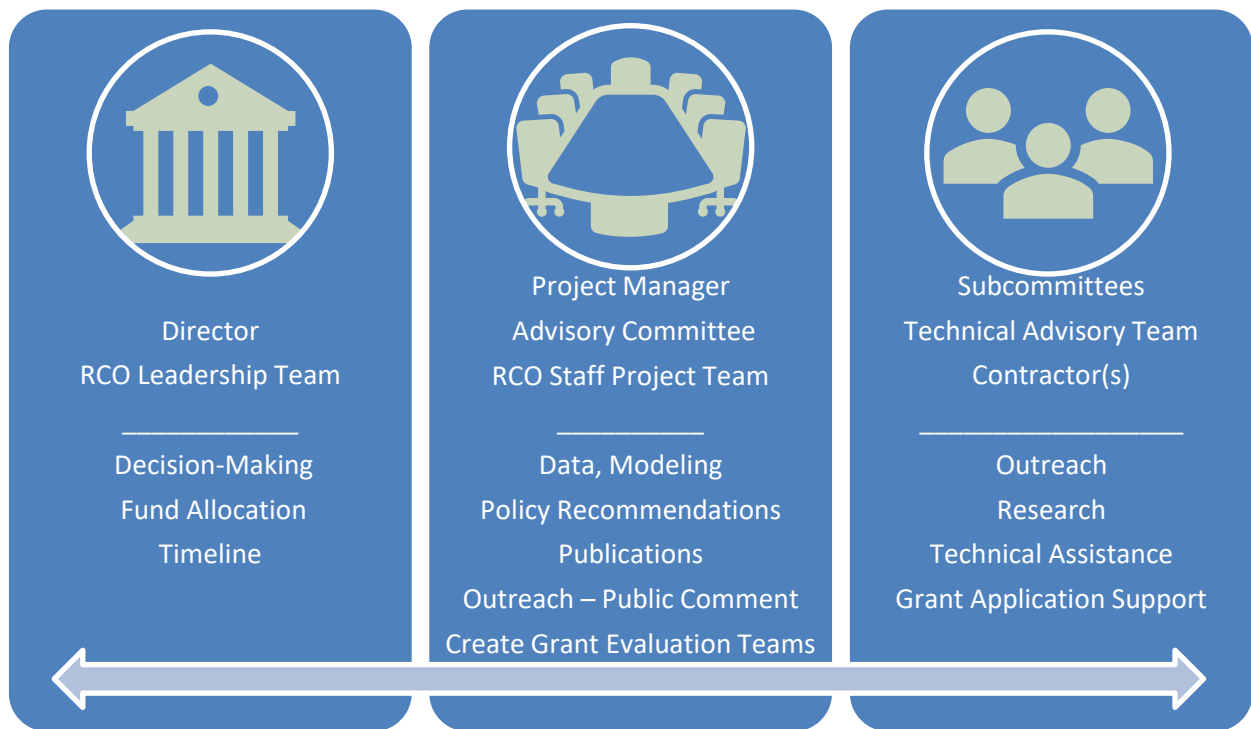
- Talked with key stakeholders about program goals.
- Convened a program advisory committee (see Attachment A), which meets quarterly and as needed until grants are awarded in mid to late 2023.
- Hired Julie McCleery, a Strategic Planning and Facilitation consultant, to assist staff with program development.

- Established project management and workflow (see below), which identifies project teams, outreach and research, project evaluation, and grant awards structure.
- Drafted a fund plan that outlines program goals, policy considerations, and timeline.
- Submitted a general spending plan to the Office of Financial Management.

Project Management and Timeline

RCO’s Adam Cole, Policy Specialist, and Kyle Guzlas, Grant Services Section Manager, will lead the project and advisory committee. RCO staff will propose the program and the advisory committee will offer feedback on all facets. Staff will convene a technical work group of potential applicants to provide preliminary feedback on program policies and procedures before seeking public comment. Similarly, staff will present policy and procedure options and the results of public comment to the board for further feedback.

Project Management and Workflow



Timeline (DRAFT)

2022	Goals
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Advisory Committee Meeting • Present Draft Fund Plan

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss Policy Proposals, Project Timeline • Consider “Early Action” Planning Grant Round to Applicants in Need
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If applicable, Make Early Action Planning Grants Available to Applicants • Finalize Draft Fund Plan Policies and Procedures • Solicit Public Comment on Fund Plan • Identify Any Desired Legislative Changes
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Public Comments (and other outreach efforts) • Revise Fund Plan with Advisory Committee • Finalize Any Desired Legislative Changes

2023	Goals
Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Produce Grant Program Manual • Set Grant Application, Evaluation, and Award Timeline • Outreach and Technical Assistance to Applicants
Spring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open Grant Application System • Offer Technical Assistance to Applicants • Recruit Grant Evaluation Teams
Summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate Grant Proposals • Create Ranked Lists • Public Comment • Approve Ranked Lists
Fall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Award Grants • Manage Grants

2024	Goals
Winter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debrief Processes • Identify Next Steps (with board)

Fund Plan (Draft)

Program policies, requirements, and administration of the COAFF will be detailed and published in a Fund Plan. The draft plan being developed with the Advisory Committee includes:

Section	Policy Considerations
Program Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need Identification • Equity Goals

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outcomes • Grants, Endowment, Maintenance Needs • Support Partnerships
Participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligible Applicants • Qualifications • Grant Timeline • Co-Managers/Partnerships • Application "Light" Procedures • Technical Assistance
Grant Categories and Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like Projects Compete Against Like Projects • Fund Split ("Urban" counties, "Rural" Counties) • Large v Small Project Categories • Operations and Maintenance
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Request Maximum/Minimums • Matching Resources Requirements and Flexibilities • Direct Payments/Reimbursements • Organization Capacity Funding/Administration Rates
Eligible Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New, Renovation/Development, Maintenance • Combination Projects • Phased and "Complete" Projects (Planning, Acquisition, Development, Maintenance funding bundled) • Public Access Requirements and Flexibilities • Eligible Project Costs/Elements
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grant Proposal Evaluation Teams/Framework • Evaluation Criteria Questions and Methods • Due Process Considerations/Public Process
Grant Management Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement Language • Reporting • Income and Maintenance • Long-Term Compliance and Obligations

Nexus to Other Board Programs

At this stage, staff is interested in those aspects of program development that have the strongest nexus to board programs and priorities. Staff will discuss the following nexuses between this program development and the work of the board:

1. Board/RCO Plans and Studies
2. Timeline and Coordination with Board Grant-Making

3. Next Steps, Post-COAFF

Next Steps

RCO staff will present project updates and seek feedback on COAFF from the RCFB throughout program development.

Attachments

Attachment A: Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Advisory Committee

Attachment A

Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Advisory Committee

Elected Leaders

- Bob Bugert, Chelan County Commissioner
- Carolina Mejia, Thurston County Commissioner
- Iris Guzman, SeaTac City Councilmember
- Shawn Logan, Othello Mayor
- Alex Ybarra, State Representative, 13th District
- Cindy Ryu, State Representative, 32nd District

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

- Michael Shiosaki, Bellevue Parks and Recreation

Public Administration

- Paul Simmons, Olympia Parks and Recreation
- Kenneth Wilkinson, Yakima Parks and Recreation
- Warren Stevens, Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe

Private Enterprise and Community Organizations

- Wendy Armour, Compukidz, King County Play Equity Coalition
- Drew Johnston, Seattle Seahawks
- Vincent Berthillot, OL Reign
- Maya Mendoza, Seattle Sounders, RAVE
- Deb Brock, Spokane Youth Sports Association
- Sarneshea Evans, Trust for Public Land
- Mick Hoffman, WA Interscholastic Sports Association
- Ka'ohē Wong, School's Out WA
- David Wu, Special Olympics Washington

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Chelan County Wenatchee River Park Conversion

Prepared By: Myra Barker, Compliance Specialist

Summary

Chelan County is asking the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to recommend to the National Park Service (NPS) approval of a conversion of 8.6 acres at Wenatchee River Park. A portion of the park was converted in 2001 for farmworker housing. Staff will ask the board for any comments and/or questions to prepare for board decision at a later date.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Overview of the Board's Role and Applicable Rules and Policies

The subject of this memo is a conversion of property developed with grants using funding from state Bonds and the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The grants were used to develop park facilities in the community of Monitor in Chelan County. A portion of the park was converted in 2001 into farmworker housing.

Conversion Policy

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) projects for the Wenatchee River Park are [68-112](#), [69-208](#), [70-001](#) and [71-003](#). The first project received funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the other three projects were funded with state Bonds. A LWCF 6(f) boundary encumbers the entire park making it subject to compliance with NPS LWCF policies.

As a result of the combined funding, both the LWCF Act¹ and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) rules and policies govern the proposed conversion:

- Use of LWCF grant funds creates a condition under which property and structures acquired become part of the public domain in perpetuity.
- Board policy states that interests in real property, structures, and facilities that were acquired, developed, enhanced, or restored with board funds, including state bond funds, must not be changed (either in part or in whole) or converted to uses other than those for which the funds were originally approved, without the approval of the board.²
- The RCO project contract provides additional protections from conversion.

Because needs and values often change over time, federal law and board policy allow conversions of grant-funded property. If a LWCF or state-funded project is converted, the project sponsor must replace the converted interests in real property, structures, or facilities. The replacement must be at least of equal market value and have reasonably equivalent recreation utility and location.

The Role of the Board

Since one of the projects was funded by a LWCF grant, the entire park is encumbered with the federal grant boundary. The role of the board is to decide whether to recommend approval of the conversion to the National Park Service (NPS). To do so, the board evaluates the list of practical alternatives that were considered for the conversion and replacement, including avoidance, and considers whether the replacement property has reasonably equivalent recreation utility and location. The NPS has the legal responsibility to make the final decision of whether to approve this conversion.

The board does not have the authority in statute, rule, or policy to accept other types of mitigation, levy penalties or dictate the future use of the property or project area being converted.

Applicable Policies and Rules

The NPS LWCF policies define when a conversion occurs and the requirements for requesting approval. LWCF policy for a conversion requires compliance with the

¹ Title 36, Chapter 1, Part 59 - Land and Water Conservation Fund Program of Assistance to States; Post-Completion Compliance Responsibilities

² Policy is consistent with state law and administrative rule.

National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) and the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106.

The board has adopted Washington Administrative Code³ and a policy that defines when a conversion occurs, the appropriate replacement measures, and the steps that sponsors must take to request approval. The rule that applies to acquisition projects is as follows:

- The sponsor has demonstrated the need to convert the project area⁴. Further, the sponsor has considered practical alternatives, how the alternatives were evaluated, and the reasons the alternatives were not pursued;
- The sponsor has provided an opportunity for the public to participate in the identification, development, and evaluation of the alternatives, including a minimum public comment period of at least thirty days; and
- The sponsor has provided another property or project area to serve as replacement. The replacement for conversion of property acquired with a grant must:
 - Be interest in real property of at least equal current market value to the converted property;
 - Be of reasonably equivalent usefulness and location;
 - Be administered by the same sponsor unless otherwise approved by the board;
 - Satisfy need(s) identified in the sponsor's current plan or other relevant local or statewide plan;
 - Be eligible in the grant program of the original project unless otherwise approved by the board; and
 - Satisfy the conversion without grant assistance from the board.

Background

The projects that were funded are described below.

Project Name: Wenatchee River Park	Project #: 68-112
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³ WAC 286-13-160; WAC 286-13-170

⁴ WAC 286-04-010 (19) Project area is a geographic area that delineates a grant assisted site which is subject to application and project agreement requirements.

Grant Program:	Land and Water Conservation Fund	Board funded date:	1968
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LWCF	\$96,000	Original Purpose: The project was the first phase of development of campsites, play area, picnic shelter, utilities, and restrooms.
Project Sponsor Match	\$96,000	
Total Amount:	\$192,000	

Project Name:	Wenatchee River Park	Project #:	69-208
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Grant Program:	State Bonds	Board funded date:	1970
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State Bonds Amount	\$53,363	Original Purpose: The project developed the second phase of the park with campsites, playground, picnic shelter, and a park/administrative building.
Project Sponsor Match	\$17,787	
Total Amount:	\$71,150	

Project Name:	Wenatchee River Park	Project #:	70-001
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Grant Program:	State Bonds	Board funded date:	1970
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State Bonds Amount	\$56,250	Original Purpose: The project developed the third phase of the park with campsites, restroom, road, and parking.
Project Sponsor Match	\$18,750	
Total Amount:	\$75,000	

Project Name:	Wenatchee River Park	Project #:	71-003
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Grant Program:	State Bonds	Board funded date:	1971
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State Bonds Amount	\$56,191	Original Purpose: The project was the final phase of park development that included tent camping sites, picnic shelter, restrooms, and road.
Project Sponsor Match	\$18,730	
Total Amount:	\$ 74,921	

The Wenatchee River Park is an 18-acre park located adjacent to US Highway 2 in the community of Monitor (see Attachment A), Chelan County received four grants over

three years (1968-1971) to develop the park for overnight camping and to add day use facilities. As noted in the park's name, it is located adjacent to and provides access to the Wenatchee River.

The day use area includes a picnic shelter, restrooms, parking, and the park office. The RV campground includes picnic shelters, comfort stations, and a playground. A park maintenance area is in the eastern part of the park and contains the underground septic system for the park, which limits development in that area.

The Conversion

In May 2001, county and RCO staff discussed the planned farmworker housing that would be located at the park. A portion of the eastern area of the park was identified as the location for the housing. That area consisted of 24 RV pull-through campsites, an open grassy area, and an unpaved overflow parking area. At that time, it was expected the use would be limited to 28 days on a seasonal basis and consist of non-permanent structures.

Subsequently, the county received funding through the state Department of Commerce (formerly Commerce, Trade and Economic Development, CTED) to provide temporary housing for farmworkers at the park. The use became permanent over time. (see Attachment B).

The housing facility is occupied from June 1 to November 1 annually. The conversion area includes the housing and support facilities which includes 28 small modular housing units, 30 canvas tents on concrete pads, restroom/shower building, common kitchen/dining area, storage/maintenance structures, and a parking area. A playground and open play area are also within the conversion area.

Analysis

When reviewing conversion requests, the board considers the following factors, in addition to the scope of the original grant and the proposed substitution of land or facilities:⁵

- All practical alternatives to the conversion have been evaluated and rejected on a sound basis.
- The fair market value of the converted property has been established and the proposed replacement property is of at least equal fair market value.

⁵ Manual #7: *Long-term Obligations*

- Justification exists to show that the replacement property has at least reasonably equivalent utility and location.
- The public has opportunities for participation in the process.

Evaluation of Practical Alternatives - Conversion

In 1998, Governor Gary Locke declared farmworker housing to be the state's highest housing need and a Farmworker Housing Program was established in the Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (now the Department of Commerce). The park was identified as a site for locating farmworker housing.

The conversion occurred in 2001. The county has an ongoing contract with the Department of Commerce for the use of a portion of the park for farmworker housing.

The option to remove or relocate the housing use and related infrastructure is cost prohibitive.

Evaluation of Practical Alternatives - Replacement

The proposed replacement property is adjacent to the park's eastern boundary. It consists of 20 acres and is owned by the Washington Department of Transportation (WSDOT) (see Attachment D).

The WSDOT property would expand the park. Expansion of the park has been limited due to current boundaries. The river creates the park's southern boundary, the county road is on the park's western boundary, and the state highway is adjacent to the park's northern boundary.

The proposed replacement property is undeveloped and contains a riparian forest, wetlands, and riverfront. Future development may include creating a parking area and access in the northwest corner of the property, constructing a trail system throughout the property, and developing a trail along the river that will link the replacement property to the park.

The replacement property contains wetlands and NPS policy allows for wetlands to be considered as providing equivalent usefulness when wetlands are priorities in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which aligns with RCO's SCORP.

The county has been in discussion with RCO for several years on resolving the conversion. There have been different replacement properties considered but due to the lack of resources, the county was unable to proceed in seeking approval of the conversion.

The most recent properties considered as alternatives for replacement include a 10.7-acre undeveloped parcel adjacent to Ohme Gardens and a 15-acre property on Nason Creek (see Attachment C). The Nason Creek property is located south of Lake Wenatchee and adjacent to Hwy 2. The Ohme Gardens property is adjacent to the existing Ohme Gardens County Park in Wenatchee. These properties were deemed less desirable when compared with the ability to expand the existing park.

The county has identified the adjacent WSDOT property as the preferred replacement.

Evaluation of Public Participation

The county plans to conduct the public involvement and comment period after the appraisals have been completed.

Next Steps

RCO staff will work with Chelan County to comply with the LWCF and board conversion requirements and finalize the conversion request for board decision at a later meeting. These preparations will take into account any questions the board raises at its April meeting.

Attachments

- A. Wenatchee River Park - Site Location and Aerial Maps (2017; 1998)
- B. Conversion Area and Replacement Property Aerial Map
- C. Alternatives Considered for Replacement – Location and Parcel Maps
- D. Preferred/Proposed Replacement Property – Aerial Map
- E. Wenatchee River Park Photos

Attachment A – Location Map, 2017 and 1998 Aerial Maps





1998 Aerial Map – Prior to the partial conversion of the park

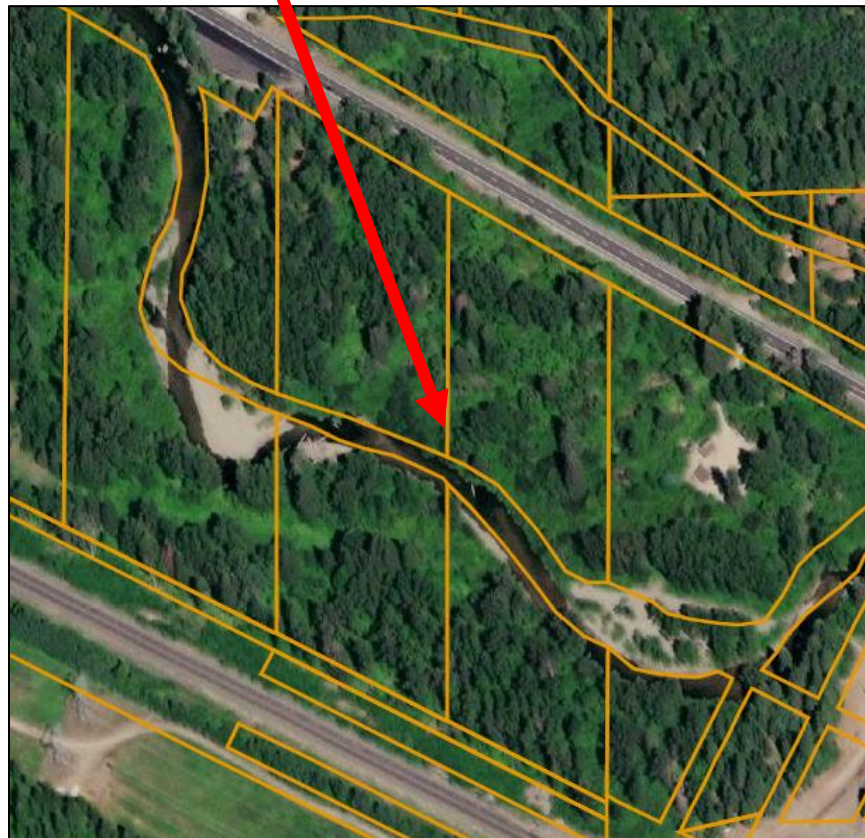
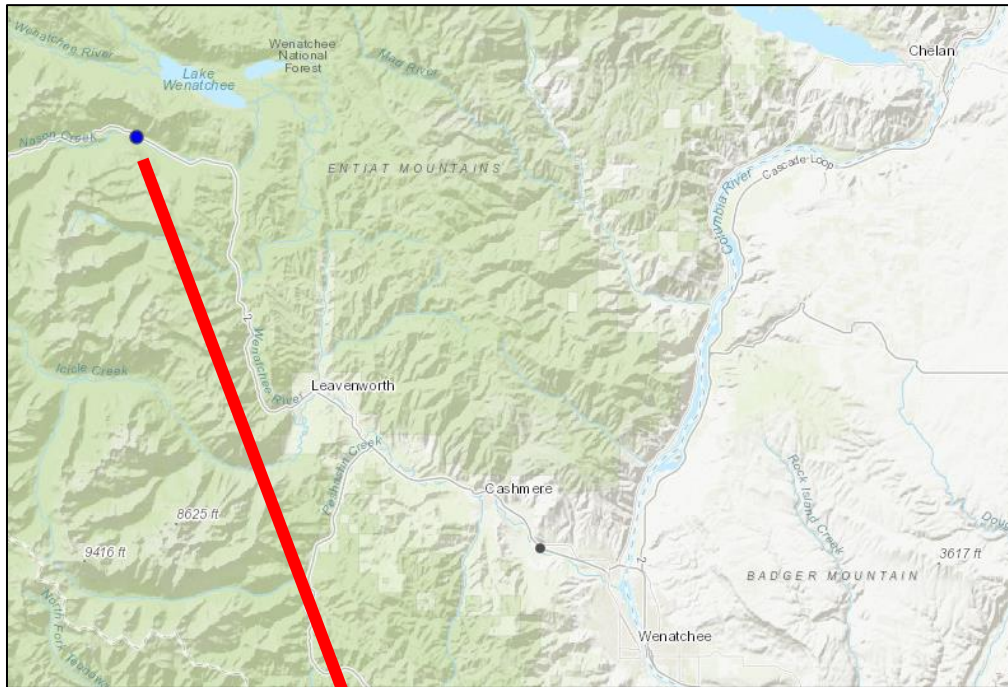


Attachment B- Conversion Area Aerial Map – Hatched Red Area

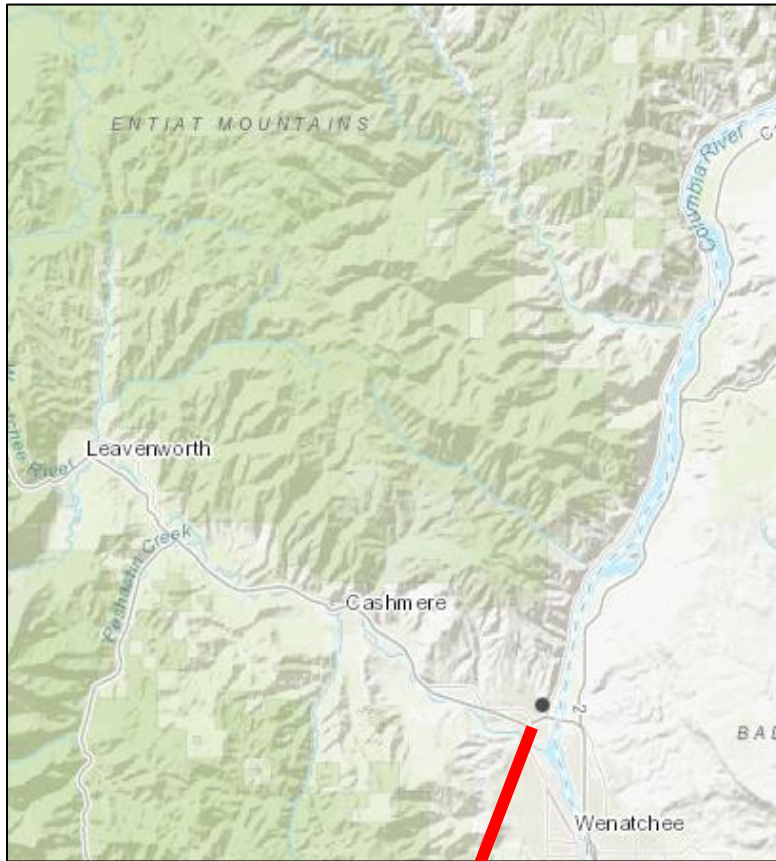


Attachment C – Maps of Alternatives for Replacement Property

Nason Creek



Ohme Gardens Property



Attachment D: Aerial Map of Preferred Replacement Property – Boundary Outlined in Green



Attachment E: Wenatchee River Park Photos





Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022
Title: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program: Farm and Forest Account Policy Changes
Prepared By: Kim Sellers, Outdoor Grants Manager
Marguerite Austin, Recreation and Conservation Section Manager

Summary

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff are asking the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to approve three proposed changes to the Farm and Forest Account. The changes would allow use of a written review and evaluation process for this grant cycle, reduce the non-state, non-federal share of sponsor match, and allow sponsors to request cost increases for projects that need additional funds. If approved, staff will immediately update the policy materials, notify potential applicants and advisors of the changes, solicit feedback about the changes as part of the biennial survey, and share the results with the board at an upcoming board meeting.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a: Request for Decision
 Request for Direction
 Briefing

Resolution: 2022-05

Purpose of Resolution: Approve proposed changes to the Farm and Forest Account.

Background

Funds for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) are divided into three accounts: Outdoor Recreation, Habitat Conservation, and Farm and Forest. As the name indicates, the Farm and Forest Account is comprised of the Farmland Preservation and the Forestland Preservation categories. The Farmland Preservation Category was established in 2005 through Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5396, with the first grant round being held in 2006. This grant category soon became popular with applicants, and by the 2010 grant round, farmland had become one of the most competitive WWRP categories.

In more recent years, however, the Farmland Preservation Category has been

undersubscribed, meaning that there have been fewer grant applications and less funds requested than past years. This has resulted in little to no competition since most, if not all, applications are funded. In addition to the regular grant rounds occurring in even numbered years, RCO offered a supplemental grant round in 2019 to increase the number of applications. Still, the farmland category remained undersubscribed in 2020, leaving more than \$3 million available from the 2021-23 biennial appropriation.

The Forestland Preservation Category was added in 2016 with passage of Substitute Senate Bill 6227. Although applicants submitted a few applications each grant cycle, they have struggled to implement funded projects. While this category is fairly new, staff is monitoring it to better understand the challenges applicants may be facing. In January 2020, the board approved increasing the maximum funding that applicants can request in this grant category to \$500,000. This change was successful in helping sponsors. To date the program has supported the purchase of four funded easements and an additional three pending forestland easements are almost ready to close.

Outreach

In anticipation of the current 2022 grant round, staff began working with potential applicants to identify barriers that may have kept them from applying for farmland grants in recent years. Specifically, this outreach included several one-on-one conversations with past applicants, a poll administered during the farm and forest application webinar held on February 22, and a recent online survey (see Attachment B) sent to previous applicants, current advisory committee members, and those who have expressed interest in the grants for working lands. Additionally, the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT) assisted RCO's efforts by hosting a listening session with several stakeholder groups to solicit feedback on barriers to applying for farmland preservation grants and they provided a summary of their discussion as shown in Attachment C.

Analysis: Results of the Stakeholder Outreach

Webinar Poll Results

For simplicity, RCO staff asked the participants of the webinar only one question, knowing there would be a full survey later. The intent of the poll was to determine if there was support among the applicants for a written process versus a virtual, in-person presentation process.

The question asked during the poll and the results are as follows:

For the 2022 grant cycle, should RCO use a written review and evaluation process instead of an in-person process?	
No Preference	42%
Written	35%
In-Person	23%
Total	100%

The responses to this poll indicate that most of the respondents had no preference for either in-person or written evaluations. This is likely because 65 percent of the attendees indicated that they were new to the RCO grant process and that this was only the first or second time they had applied for grant funding. Of those respondents that did have a preference, 35 percent said they would prefer a written process and 23 percent said they would prefer to stay with an in-person presentation.

Online Survey Results: Attachment B

Staff conducted an online survey that included five questions to identify barriers to applying for farmland grants. This survey was sent to farmland or forestland applicants from 2016 to present, all who indicated that farmland or forestland is an area of interest, as well as members of the applicable advisory committees. In addition, staff is currently contacting advisory committee members individually to discuss their preference and will share their thoughts at the April 26 meeting.

Survey questions were intended to capture as many aspects of the application process as possible. Staff made it clear in the survey that some of the issues identified were program aspects that could happen sooner because they were associated with RCO processes or board policies. Other items, particularly those that would require changes to the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) or the WWRP statute, would take longer to modify and require a more robust process after determining whether the board and other stakeholders approved the modifications.

The responses received from the survey showed clear patterns, specifically for farmland projects, that could generally be consolidated into four different groups:

1. RCO's biennial grant cycle.

Currently RCO accepts applications for the Farm and Forest Account every two years, which is consistent with most of RCO's other grant programs. The board adopted the policy for holding a biennial grant cycle because of the workload involved in conducting an application round. Having a year between applications allows RCO staff to issue agreements for funded projects and catch up on other critical work, such as

compliance issues, field inspections, and general grant management.

Survey respondents indicated that the biennial grant cycle causes two major issues. The first issue has to do with the 50 percent sponsor match, which is required of other categories in WWRP. This match typically comes from either a landowner who donates property value or from federal grants, specifically the Agricultural Conservation Easement Program, Agricultural Land Easements (ACEP-ALE), which is administered by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

NRCS accepts applications every year and they also require a 50 percent match, which must be secured at the time of application. If an applicant applies and it happens to be an even-numbered year when RCO is accepting grant applications, then the applicant may apply to both RCO and NRCS. However, if it happens to be an odd-numbered year when RCO is not accepting grant applications, then the sponsor may need to wait until the following year to apply to the NRCS program. For those NRCS funding partnerships this creates cyclical “boom” and “bust” years. In boom years NRCS receives many applications and there is tight competition for grant funds. In “bust” years they receive few applications and there is little competition.

The second issue is that the timing of RCO’s grant round makes it difficult for applicants to act quickly if a farm comes up for sale. Typically, a farmer decides to sell for financial reasons or because they are ready to retire. This means that most are not in a position where they can afford to wait several years for grant funding to become available. If a farmer expresses interest in placing an agricultural easement on their property, depending on when they come forward, they may have to wait two years before a sponsor can apply for grant funding. If it is a year when grant funds are not available, then the farmer may be forced to sell the land on the open market, in which case there is a good chance that the opportunity to conserve the farm is lost forever.

The results from the survey clearly demonstrate the benefits of holding an annual grant cycle, which would give applicants a chance to secure matching resources for an NRCS grant and the opportunity to be more responsive to a farmer who needs to sell their land. NRCS has indicated that an annual WWRP Farmland Preservation grant cycle would help their grant program have a steadier influx of grant applications.

While it appears an annual grant cycle would be helpful, the Farm and Forest Account-Use of Funds¹ section of the WWRP statute states:

“Before November 1st of each even-numbered year, the board will recommend

¹Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.130(14)

to the governor a prioritized list of all projects to be funded under this section. The governor may remove projects from the list recommended by the board and must submit this amended list in the capital budget request to the legislature. The list must include, but not be limited to, a description of each project and any particular match requirement.”

At the January 2019 board meeting, the board approved a one-time proposal to hold a supplemental grant cycle to use available Farmland Preservation grant funds. Resolution 2019-03 authorized this supplemental cycle provided there was appropriate guidance and support by the Governor and Legislature. RCO staff worked with the Office of Financial Management to secure support and subsequent Legislative approval of the board’s 2019 ranked list of projects submitted with the Governor’s supplemental capital budget request. If the board wishes to pursue holding an annual grants cycle, this may require a statutory change.

2. The match requirements of the program.

Land trusts are the primary applicants for acquisition of working lands. Acquiring funding is one of the most difficult aspects of a land trusts’ work. Typically, trusts have two options to generate funds: donations (land value or cash) or applying for grant funds. By law, the board may not approve a project where the local agency or nonprofit’s share is less than the amount awarded from the Farm and Forest Account.² In addition, board policy requires local agency and nonprofit applicants to contribute at least 10 percent of the total project cost from a non-state and non-federal source. This requirement supports the rule in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 286-13-045(4), where the board indicates that it may require an applicant to provide a portion of its match in local resources. Since this is a board policy and not a rule or statute, the board may want to consider waiving this requirement for farm and forest projects.

3. Differences between the state and federal farmland grants.

There are several areas where the requirements of NRCS and RCO differ. While RCO has addressed some of these differences, not all applicants are aware of the policy or procedural revisions. RCO staff is working to help communicate federal and state changes to everyone.

There are, however, still a few areas where conflicts between the programs remain. One is the timing of grant cycles as described above. Another critical area for consideration is the Buy-Protect-Sell (BPS) option that is allowed under the federal farmland grant program. A typical BPS scenario is where a farmer is retiring and has

²Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.130(9)

decided to sell the farm. While the farmer may want to sell to another farmer, the price of the land is extremely high in most parts of the state, so much so that it makes it difficult for a new farmer to afford the land and related start-up costs. RCO's farmland preservation grants help in lowering the cost of farmland for new farmers because the grant funds are used to purchase the development rights on the farm through a conservation easement, thereby significantly reducing the overall value of the underlying land.

When a farmer decides to retire, they typically do not want to wait eight to ten years until a new farmer is financially able to purchase the land. In the BPS scenario above, a land trust helps the transition from the current farmer to a new farmer by purchasing the land in fee title, placing a conservation easement on the land, and holding title to the property until the new farmer has enough funds to buy the underlying land.

Within the last year, NRCS has adopted policies that allow participation in a BPS transaction with a grant applicant. RCO does not have a BPS policy. While staff has helped grant applicants through BPS transactions, not having a policy to guide these transactions creates uncertainty and potential inconsistencies that can be difficult to maneuver. Staff is currently working to create a BPS model to help these types of land transactions. Once created, staff will bring the proposed policy to the board to consider implementation.

4. Various aspects of the grant application process.

Several survey comments identified a few other areas of RCO's grant application process that make it difficult for them to apply. These areas were generally not ranked as highly as the other issues discussed above, but they were still considered difficulties in the process. Specifically, respondents mentioned the amount of time that it takes from the start of an application to when grant funding is awarded, which is typically 18 months. Also mentioned was the amount of work required to apply for RCO grants, which includes the PRISM grant application, required attachments, and RCO's requirement for an in-person presentation instead of a written process.

WALT Listening Session Results: Attachment C

Staff of the Washington Association of Land Trusts, led by Executive Director Nick Norton, facilitated a listening session to solicit feedback on RCO's Farmland Preservation grant program. Attendees included representatives from seven land trusts, each with active farmland conservation programs; representatives from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRC); and the Conservation Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP). Discussions in this meeting identified six areas of concern that are listed below in order of importance:

1. The lack of federal matching funds from NRCS,
2. RCO's biennial grant cycle rather than a yearly grant cycle,
3. The 10% non-state, non-federal match requirement,
4. Inconsistent project review and ranking,
5. The lack of a viable pathway for buy-protect-sell projects, and
6. Due diligence complications.

WALT's memo, which provides additional details about each area of concern, is included as Attachment C. The first item on the list refers to the fact that NRCS has not issued many grant agreements for their farmland program in the last four years and in fact skipped distributing any grant funds at all in one of those years. This is likely due to a lack of funding from the previous federal administration. As described above, NRCS serves a vital role in providing match for Farmland Preservation grants, so a loss of federal funds has had a significant impact on RCO's program.

Items two, three and five (biennial grant cycle, match, and a buy-protect-sell program) have already been described in the discussion of RCO's online survey. However, it is important to note that WALT's listening session also identified concerns that were in line with what RCO heard from other sources, an indication of the significance of these issues.

Item four pertains to what appears to be inconsistencies in project review comments and rankings. This may indicate a need for: 1) more discussion with the advisory committee to ensure a common understanding of the intent of each evaluation question, 2) updating the criteria to include additional information to help both applicants and advisors, 3) an assessment of the criteria to ensure it meets the needs of both applicants and advisors.

Finally, item six regarding due diligence complications is a general category that focuses on RCO's farmland easement template. When the farmland program was initially established, the board approved an easement template for sponsors. Although board policy allows applicants to modify the specific wording and format of the template, staff has endeavored over the years to stay true to the intent of the specific requirements included in the template. The WALT memo identifies areas they would like to see changed when a new template is developed. RCO staff is working on a new template and will keep WALT's suggestions in mind. As staff get further along with development of the new template, any policy related impacts will be brought to the board for consideration.

Another thing included in item six of WALT's memo is consideration of cost increases for grants, particularly in cases where appraisals come in higher than anticipated or

additional funds are needed for more complex easement negotiations. Board policy does not allow cost increases for WWRP grants. The board may want to reconsider this policy for projects in the Farm and Forest Account.

Policy Proposal

As mentioned above, staff have been working with stakeholders to understand why the working lands categories are undersubscribed. While the information solicited to date is helpful, staff considers it simply a starting point for determining how to make these categories more successful. The poll, survey, and listening session helped identify three existing policies that the board could change now to help reduce barriers to Farm and Forest Account applicants. The following provides additional details about these three items, which include the evaluation process, the source of match, and cost increases.

Evaluation Process

First, staff ask the board to consider changing the review and evaluation process from an in-person process to a written process for the 2022 grant cycle only. While this was not identified as a high priority in the outreach efforts, staff believe this will alleviate some stress for applicants and evaluators.

Here are some of the pros and cons identified for this option:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adds flexibility for the evaluators by allowing them to score written proposals at their own pace within a limited time. • A written process is consistent with federal grants. • To save time, applicants would submit written responses to the criteria instead of producing and practicing an in-person presentation. • RCO successfully uses the “score-at-home” evaluation process in other grant categories and programs. • Reduces the impact to evaluators during prime farming season. This was highlighted as a challenge during the 2020 post-evaluation meeting. • Development projects are not allowed, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants would not have the opportunity to reinforce project benefits or strengths through an oral presentation. • Projects would not be evaluated in an open public meeting; however, preliminary ranked lists and application materials are available for review on RCO’s Web site. Also, board consideration of ranked lists occurs in a meeting where members of the public are given an opportunity to comment before the board approves the lists. • An evaluator would need to submit any follow-up questions to RCO staff who would refer the questions to the applicant. The applicant’s

thus there is little need for technical consideration during a review meeting.	response would be shared with all evaluation team members.
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Staff believe it would be premature to change the process permanently and is recommending this change for the 2022 grant cycle only. As a pilot, this one-time approval will allow time to determine if a written process works well for applicants and evaluators. Staff would prepare a recommendation for future grant cycles after assessing this round.

Non-state, Non-federal Match

Second, staff ask that the board eliminate the requirement for sponsor match to include 10 percent of the total project costs from a non-state, non-federal source.

This change was considered a high priority by respondents in recent outreach efforts. The purpose of this board policy is to ensure that grant applicants are committed to the projects and that the projects are a priority for the organization. However, in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is increasingly difficult for applicants to secure match.

In addition, the Farm and Forest Account only allows for the purchase of conservation easements, which traditionally are more complex and require additional staff time for review of these important acquisition documents. This work inherently ensures that applicants are committed to the projects they bring in for funding.

Here are some of the pros and cons identified for this option:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By law, applicants will still need to secure matching resources. • Pursuing grants as match does represent a commitment and an investment of time and staff resources from the sponsoring organization. • Applicants who provide match above the minimum, qualify for additional points via the Match evaluation criterion. • Alleviates the burden to ask farmers to donate property value during this challenging economic period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is inconsistent with the policy used for other WWRP categories. • This alleviates only some of sponsors’ financial concerns.

The board suspended the 10 percent non-state, non-federal requirement for some grant programs in 2020, which was met with gratitude from the applicants. However, the Farm

and Forest Account was not included.

Allow Cost Increases for the Farm and Forest Account

Third, staff ask that the board allow cost increases. This change was considered a high priority by respondents to recent outreach efforts. The board has a cost increase policy that is used for several grant programs. When WWRP was first created, it included a complex funding formula. To simplify, the board did not adopt a cost increase policy for the program, in part because there are typically lists of unfunded projects in each account and unused dollars are used to fund these alternates.

Although the funding formula has changed in the last few years, there are still many alternates in the Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Conservation Accounts. These accounts have several categories that are extremely competitive and RCO receives far more applications in each grant round than there are funds available.

Cost increases in Farm and Forest Account make sense for several reasons, but mainly for two significant reasons. First, because this account allows for the purchase of conservation easements only, it can be difficult to predict the actual cost of the easement during the application process. Typically, applicants wait and order appraisals after the board approves the grant award, because appraisals have a limited shelf life, as outlined in the board-approved Appraisal Shelf-Life Section of Manual 3, *Acquisition Projects*.

Appraising conservation easements is more complex because the purchase of development rights is a percentage of the overall land value. Easement values can range from 30 to 60 percent of the land value or more. This is due in part because different areas of the state have different infrastructure in place to support farm or forest products. Also, the appraised value of a conservation easement is determined by several factors, such as the location of the land, zoning which dictates the number of development rights available on a given property, available infrastructure such as access to utilities, the prevailing land use such as housing trends in the area, and many other factors. For example, a large ranch in eastern Washington or forestland in certain areas of southwestern Washington may have little development pressure compared to farm or forest land in western Washington counties where development pressure is significantly higher. All these factors lead to a high degree of uncertainty that can easily result in a sponsor underestimating the funds they will need to secure property rights.

If a sponsor underestimates the value of a conservation easement and does not request enough grant funds, then it usually results in one of three outcomes:

1. The sponsor may need to withdraw their grant proposal. When projects are withdrawn after a signed agreement, RCO still pays for work up to the point of

withdrawal, without the benefit of the grant program purpose being fulfilled.

2. The landowner may need to donate a portion of their land value. This can cause the landowner to have a bad experience, and through word of mouth, this may reduce the availability of other willing landowners in an area.
3. The sponsor may need to reduce the number of acres protected in an easement. This is a problem because part of the evaluation process is based on the ability of the land to generate enough income to make it financially worthwhile for the landowner to continue to invest in working the land (farm or forest). Reducing the number of acres can affect the likelihood that the operation will be viable in perpetuity.

A second reason why allowing cost increases in the Farm and Forest Account makes sense includes the length of time necessary to complete all the steps involved in the acquisition, including drafting an easement, developing the baseline documentation, and creating or updating the stewardship plan. Also, the more time that elapses before an appraisal is conducted, the greater the chance that the value will increase.

Here are some of the pros and cons identified for this option:

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost increases would only be approved if there are sufficient funds available in the account after viable applications are funded.• Sponsors will still need to provide match for cost increases.• Existing board policy governing cost increases would be used for the Farm and Forest Account (see Attachment D).• A cost increase option may reduce the number of scope changes or withdrawn projects.• Alleviates the burden of asking farmers to donate property value during this challenging economic period and/or when they are not in a position to donate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• This is inconsistent with the policy used for other WWRP categories, although the board may want to consider changing that policy later.• Could potentially mean that the account funds fewer projects.• This alleviates only some of sponsors' financial concerns.

Strategic Plan

Revising the board's grant program policies addresses goals and objectives in the board's strategic plan. Specifically, the proposed policies support the board's strategy to "Provide partners with funding to protect and enhance working farm and forest lands." Periodic revision of the policies helps ensure that the board achieves "a high level of accountability in managing the resources and responsibilities entrusted to us." The board's goal is to "deliver successful projects by inviting competition and by using broad public participation and feedback, monitoring, assessment, and adaptive management."

Recommendation

Staff recommends the board approve the three proposed changes to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farm and Forest Account as outlined in Resolution 2022-05.

Next Steps

RCO staff will incorporate any board-approved changes into the policy manuals and related application materials.

Staff plan to conduct a more intensive review of the evaluation criteria with the advisory committee before they are asked to score projects. Staff hope this will reduce real or perceived inconsistencies between project review and evaluations.

Further, staff will follow up on other items identified during the stakeholder outreach and will undoubtedly bring some issues back for board consideration.

Attachments

- A. Resolution 2022-05, *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program: Farm and Forest Account Policy Changes*
- B. RCO Online Survey Regarding Farmland Preservation Grants
- C. Washington Association of Land Trust – Summary of Discussion Session on Farmland Preservation Grants
- D. Existing Cost Increase Policy

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farm and Forest
Account Policy Changes
Resolution 2022-05**

WHEREAS Chapters 79A.15 and 79A.25 Revised Code of Washington (RCW) and Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 286-13-045 authorize the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to adopt policies and rules for the grant programs which it administers; and

WHEREAS Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff recently conducted outreach to identify areas that serve as barriers to applicants interested in grants for preserving farms and forests; and

WHEREAS the board acknowledges the challenges applicants face in securing matching resources and navigating the grant application process; and

WHEREAS RCO solicited public comments regarding this proposal through a poll, survey, listening session, and direct contact with stakeholders and advisory committee members; and

WHEREAS RCO staff recommend the board adopt changes outlined in memorandum 6 of the April 2022 meeting materials to help Farm and Forest Account applicants; and

WHEREAS approval of the proposed changes supports the board's goal of delivering successful projects by using broad public participation and feedback and adaptive management.

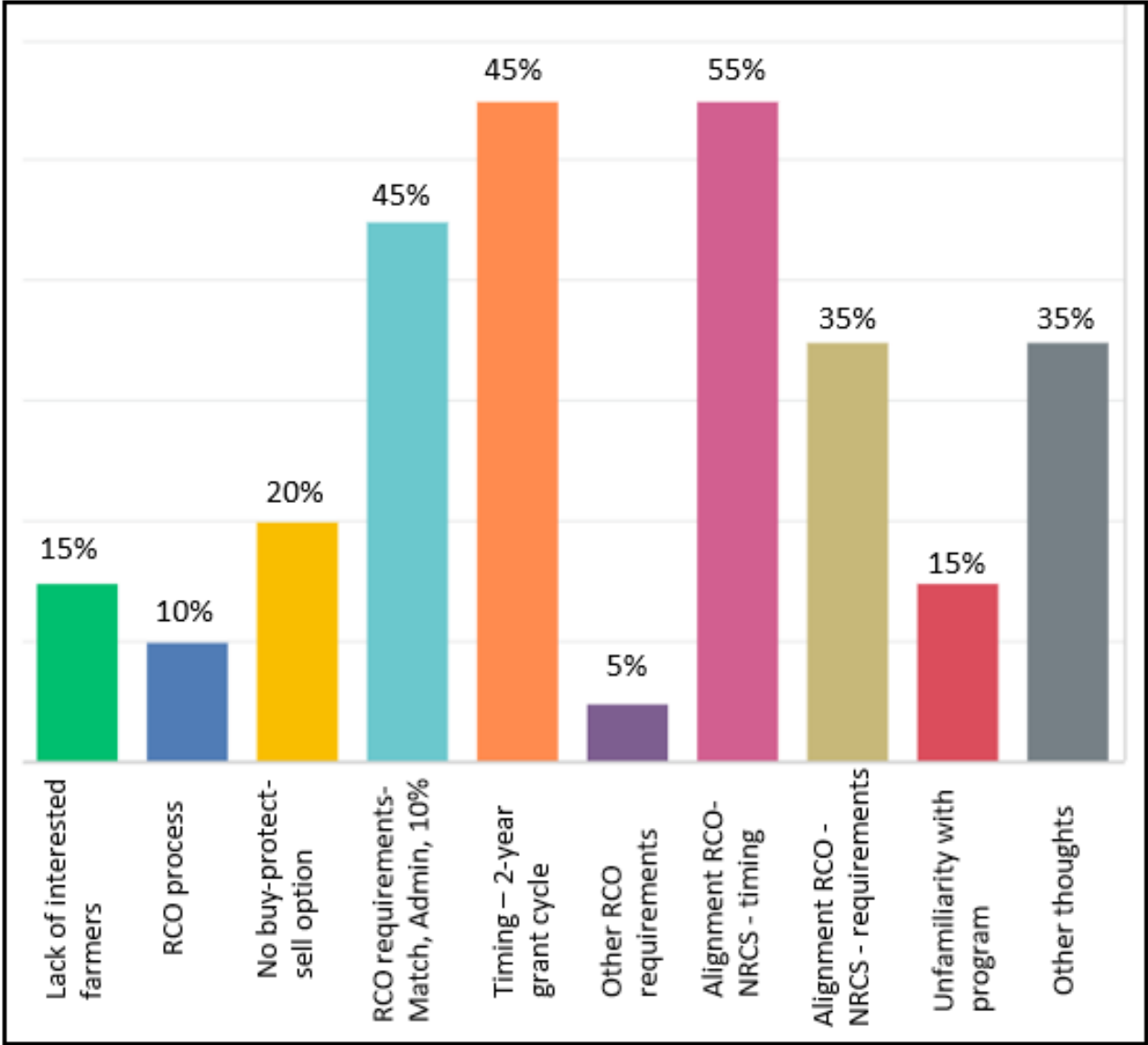
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the board hereby adopts use of a written review and evaluation process, eliminates the 10 percent non-state, non-federal match requirement, and allows cost increases for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program's Farm and Forest Account for the 2022 and 2024 grant cycles; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the board directs staff to immediately incorporate these changes into the application materials and applicable grant program manuals, and report back to the board on these changes in 2023.

<i>Resolution moved by:</i>	Member Shiosaki
<i>Resolution seconded by:</i>	Member Brodi
<u>Adopted</u> / <i>Defeated/Deferred (underline one)</i>	Adopted excluding Member Gardow
<i>Date:</i>	April 26, 2022

RCO Online Survey Regarding Farmland Preservation

Q1. While considering the last couple of grant cycles, has there been a farmland preservation project that you have not brought in for RCO grant funding because of one or more of the following (select all that apply):



Q2. Looking at the application process alone, please rank the items from the list below that RCO could change to reduce barriers to applying to the farmland program. Please rank these 1 - 10 with 1 being the most important barrier to reduce.

Rank	Item
1	Evaluation criteria
2	Length of time between PRISM being open for applications and a signed RCO agreement (typically about 18 months)
3	PRISM attachments (i.e., authorizing resolution, maps, county conferral, landowner notification statement, land designation as farmland, photos, letters of recommendation, etc.)
4	Incompatibilities with National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) requirements
5	Application process requiring in person presentation, as opposed to a written process
6	Technical reviews, which take place prior to final evaluation
7	PRISM application steps
8	Limits on combination acquisition/restoration projects (i.e., 90-day requirement for acquisition or limits)
9	Application feedback process
10	Lack of access to a knowledgeable RCO grant manager

Q3. Looking at RCO grant funding limits, please rank the items that RCO could change to reduce barriers to applying for the farmland program. Please rank these 1 - 6 with 1 being the most important barrier to reduce.

Rank	Item
1	Reduce the 50% match requirement
2	Reduce the RCO requirement that 10% of funds being from a non-state, non-federal source
3	Increase the limit of 5% administration expenses
4	Add a Buy-Protect-Sell option
5	Correct incompatibilities with National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) requirements (please describe below)
6	Add an option to include other related fees, such as holding or other

transaction fees

Q4. Please describe your challenges matching RCO grants with National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) requirements.

# Of Times Mentioned	Comments
5	<p>RCO's grant cycle every two years leaves landowners waiting if they come in an in-between year. The long grant application and review process also causes us to miss NRCS grant cycles or have all entities in the state applying for the NRCS funding in the same year. This increases competition for NRCS funding in RCO grant cycle years and decreases overall number of projects funded. This really slows progress because organizational capacity makes it hard to bring more than one or two projects each funding cycle. As a result, if you prioritize one project, the other 2 or 3 landowners that are interested in selling an easement may not be willing to wait until the next biennium--so the opportunity is lost. Providing Farmland Protection grant opportunities each year would help.</p>
2	<p>NRCS criteria seem to skew towards large farms/ranchlands more readily present on the east side, while RCO criteria seem to skew toward small-scale, diverse farms on the west side. Eastern Washington ranches do not fit well into RCO's criteria, yet grasslands are important for raising livestock, fighting climate change, and sustaining wildlife.</p>
Each item listed was mentioned separately by different respondents (4)	<p>Differences between the NRCS and RCO requirements is frustrating. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both agencies have different language requirements in the conservation easement • NRCS and RCO should have the same definition of impervious surfaces. Currently RCO considers compacted gravel to be impervious, while NRCS does not. • Because of RCO's 50% match requirement, sponsors need to apply to both the NRCS and RCO. The lack of coordination of the Conservation Easement language requirements between both agencies is very frustrating. It's usually the grant sponsor that is left to try to iron out the differences, rather than the agencies sitting down and figuring it out.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For NRCS, including any land outside active farmland is problematic, while it's OK (as long as it's good habitat) for RCO.
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Q5. Is there anything else you would like to share with RCO?

# Of Times Mentioned	Comments
1	Increasing the funding limit from 50% to 75% would decrease the burden on land trusts/landowners to cover large portions of a project's hard costs.
1	The application is quite extensive and we're asked to provide a lot of information to then synthesize into a 15-20 minute presentation. If presentations are required, it would be nice for RCO to reduce the amount of information they want applicants to discuss in such a short amount of time. It seems like projects are selected based on the verbal presentations, which can be challenging.
1	In the past there have been some criteria questions that are interpreted in different ways, which causes inconsistencies between evaluators' scores. Scoring should be more balanced to be able to credit the benefits of the wide variety of farms in Washington. For example, a 14-acre organic carrot patch near Port Townsend vs a 1400-acre ranch near Ephrata.

WALT Summary of Discussion Session Farmland Preservation



Policy and Funding Memo: Non-statutory changes to the WWRP Farmland Protection Program

Prepared by the Washington Association of Land Trusts (WALT) at the request of RCO staff

As of 3/3/2022

Use and Restrictions

This is a public-facing document that represents the general feedback from the WALT membership on the issue at hand without any specific attributions. Permission is not required to share freely among agency staff, reference/quote/attach as part of public meetings materials, use for presentations to boards or other partners, etc.

Context and Summary

Heading into the 2022 grant round for the WWRP-Farmland Protection Program, there are significant additional funds available as a result of previous grant rounds being undersubscribed. RCO staff has actively begun to consider what types of application process and/or policy manual changes might help to increase the total amount of funds requested in any given application cycle.

In order to assist agency decision-making, WALT hosted a listening session to receive feedback on this issue. Attendees included representatives from 7 different land trusts with active farmland conservation programs, as well as representatives from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition (WWRC) and the Conservation

Commission's Office of Farmland Preservation (OFP). There were 6 major things that were noted as potentially impacting program demand, listed roughly in order of importance:

- 1) Lack of federal matching funds;
- 2) The biennial grant cycle;
- 3) The 10% non-state, non-federal match requirement;
- 4) Inconsistent project review and ranking;
- 5) Lack of a viable pathway for buy-protect-sell projects; and
- 6) Due diligence complications.

Each of these points is described in more detail below.

1) Federal Matching Funds

For three out of the last 4 federal fiscal years, there have been very few new cooperative

agreements and/or program agreements completed for the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). This is the result of a variety of different factors, but the result is that the main source of RCO matching funds has either not materialized or has been significantly delayed. It is difficult to overemphasize the impact this has had on applications to the WWRP Farmland Program. WALT members universally see RCO as an incredibly strong partner that runs a very solid program with responsive staff that would be oversubscribed were it not for the difficulties in securing federal match.

2) Biennial Grant Cycle

Though not universal, a handful of land trusts agreed that having a grant round only every two years represents a very big constraint for them that directly causes actionable projects to be lost that would otherwise be strong candidates for funding. Given how important the value of the land base is for producers as part of long-term economic viability, conservation opportunities tend to arise and fade quickly. In short, the project and landowner dynamics are fundamentally different with working lands easements vs fee title projects involving habitat or recreation. Lots of landowner interest fades over the course of the biennial process, or specific matching or ownership opportunities are lost in the wait for funding to become available. There was general agreement that maintaining a competitive grant process with more frequently timelines (i.e. annually) would align better with other programs (i.e. NRCS) and bring more projects in the door.

3) Non-state, Non-Federal Match

There was clear support for the idea of removing the programs 10% non-state, non-federal match requirement. There is a huge amount of variation in the availability of local conservation funding sources across the state so this requirement raises a lot of equity issues that disproportionately impact rural, eastside communities. In addition, land trusts that lack dedicated local matching funds often will use in-kind staff match to meet this requirement. However, the trend of increasing per-acre easement values over the last couple years means that this strategy no longer pencils out.

4) Advisory Committee Training

The general sentiment among the group was that the major application factor impacting the number of requests is not so much the criteria or the process (i.e. evaluation and presentation format) but rather the way the projects are reviewed. It has been the experience of land trust applicants that there is a large amount of variation among reviewers in how projects are perceived and scored, as well as some consistent preferences for certain types of projects. For example, there were examples of projects that were not submitted for funding because of concerns they would be seen as too small relative to county average farm size, having too much of a habitat nexus, or because the current practices and/or landowner don't tell a compelling story. There was general agreement that some clear advisory committee training on key interpretation issues would make the program stronger, indirectly impact overall demand, and possibly bring some past applicants back to the table.

There were recommendations around potential issues with certain criteria (ex. access to markets, understanding of threat, etc.) that might help promote more consistent evaluation of vastly different types of projects (ex. east side rangeland vs west side diversified vegetable farm), but which were not directly implicated in projects not seeking funding.

5) Buy-Protect-Sell Pathway

For a combination of different reasons (increasing technical capacity, volatile real estate markets, interest in land access), a sub-set of WALT member land trusts are increasingly interested in doing buy-protect-sell farmland projects. There are also new federal authorizations for this pathway, as well as state level loan financing that will become available soon. Despite this, buy-protect-sell is not currently a viable pathway through this program, which means they are not actively building the project pipeline. WALT has prepared a separate policy memo for RCO to provide some recommendations about aligning the current program with buy-protect-sell and which is available upon request.

6) Due Diligence Complications

There were a few other substantive comments on aspects of the due diligence process that might help projects make it to closing, with indirect impacts on overall funding utilization. For one, there were suggestions about changes to the easement template (remove prohibition on renewables, remove prohibition on compensatory mitigation, re-define gravel as non-impervious, etc.) that would improve alignment with other programs and reasonable landowner objectives. In addition, the lack of ability to increase the grant request when an appraisal comes in higher than anticipated was also mentioned as a constraint that may become more and more common (i.e. a more volatile market).

Existing Cost Increase Policy

On occasion, the cost of completing a project exceeds the amount written into the agreement. Such overruns are the responsibility of the project sponsor. If funds are available, however, and on written request, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board will consider a cost increase. The director may approve cost increase requests that do not exceed 10 percent of the total project cost, which includes both the grant and the sponsor's match. The board will consider approval of other amounts.

Requests for cost increases must include all of the following considerations:

1. Land acquisition project cost increases must meet the following criteria:
 - a. The sponsor must have diligently pursued the acquisition at the estimated fair market value, as appraised, and reviewed.
 - b. An appraisal developed using a technique accepted by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board must support the increased real market value.
2. A written report from the sponsor must explain any cost overruns.
3. An individual parcel or property review is the basis for any land acquisition cost increases. Compensation for the property and direct relocation cost is the basis for any condemnation increases allowed.³ Court or legal costs are not eligible for reimbursement.
4. The sponsor must have fully explored all practical alternatives to completing the intent of the agreement.
5. The sponsor must have had little control over the conditions causing the overrun.
6. Any increase must be used only for elements in the grant agreement.

Manual 3, *Acquisition Projects*
Manual 4, *Development Projects*

³ WWRP does not allow sponsors to use condemnation to purchase property rights.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Decision Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: April 26, 2022

Title: Scope Change: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, South Sound Prairie Projects

Prepared By: Kim Sellers, Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is asking the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to approve scope changes for two funded projects, West Rocky Prairie 2016 (16-1350) and Scatter Creek Addition (16-1352). WDFW wants to purchase 281 acres that are not contiguous with land in either funded project. These requests are considered major scope changes and must be presented to the board for consideration.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- Request for Decision
- Request for Direction
- Briefing

Resolution: 2022-06

Purpose of Resolution: Approve scope changes for the Scatter Creek Addition and the West Rocky Prairie 2016 projects.

Background

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) director used unspent funds from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Habitat Conservation Account to award two grants to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in 2019. These Urban Wildlife Habitat category grants were for projects targeting acquisition of prairie habitat within the South Puget Sound region in Thurston County (see Attachment B). The focus of the first acquisition, Scatter Creek Addition ([16-1352A](#)) was to buy 147.5 acres of high quality prairie within the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area located near Grand Mound. The West Rocky Prairie 2016 ([16-1350A](#)) acquisition was for purchase of 160 acres of prairie habitat in the West Rocky Prairie Unit of the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area.

WDFW entered into these grant agreements in good faith after the landowners indicated they were willing sellers. Unfortunately, WDFW was not able to purchase the targeted properties at either of these locations as both sellers declined WDFW's offers of the reviewed appraised value, leaving most of the grant funds unspent.

In the meantime, WDFW received a WWRP Critical Habitat category grant in 2019 for South Sound Prairies 2018 ([18-1333A](#)). The goal of this project is to purchase approximately 900 acres of prairie habitat. This grant targeted land that is also within the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area and is located between the West Rocky Prairie and the Scatter Creek properties. This acquisition is part of a larger effort to use state and federal funds to purchase Violet Prairie (see Attachment C), which consists of 1,567 acres.

All of these grants (Scatter Creek, West Rocky Prairie and South Sound Prairie) are designed to protect high-quality prairie habitat and associated wildlife species. Violet Prairie protects ecosystem types that include Willamette Valley upland prairie, Willamette Valley wet prairie, North Pacific oak woodland, and Temperate Pacific freshwater marsh. Species protected by the South Sound Prairies, Scatter Creek, and West Rocky Prairie grants include Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, Mazama pocket gophers, Western gray squirrels, streaked horned lark, Puget blue butterfly, Oregon vesper sparrow, Mardon skipper butterfly, hoary elfin butterfly, Puget Sound fritillary butterfly, and the valley silverspot butterfly. All acquisitions also provide recreational and educational opportunities for the public.

The properties in all three grants are in the Upper Chehalis watershed or Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 23 and are all in the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area. Waterbodies in the northern portion of the Violet Prairie property are headwater tributaries for Beaver Creek. These tributaries pass through the West Rocky Prairie property, continue through the Violet Prairie property's south slope, then drain into Scatter Creek running west to the Scatter Creek property as shown in Attachment B. This means Violet Prairie supports similar important aquatic species as listed for West Rocky Prairie and Scatter Creek, along with potential habitat to support Oregon Spotted frog, Olympic mudminnow, salmonids, and cutthroats.

WDFW currently has three federal grants and one state grant that total \$10.6 million to help purchase the Violet Prairie property. After combining the appraised value of the property, acquisition incidental costs, and post-closing expenses, WDFW needs approximately \$16.1 million to complete the transaction and secure this important prairie habitat.

WDFW is asking the board to approve scope changes for the Scatter Creek Addition and the West Rocky Prairie projects and allow them to use the remaining grant funds to help purchase the Violet Prairie property. Approval of these scope changes also would help WDFW meet the required match for their federal grants (Table 1). As shown in Table 1 below, combining funds from three RCO grants would give WDFW the money needed to purchase approximately 634 acres. The three Section 6 Endangered Species Act grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) support acquisition of an additional 762 acres (see Attachment C). To acquire the remaining Violet Prairie property (171 acres), WDFW plans to apply for the remaining amount needed during RCO's 2022 grant cycle.

Table 1. Estimated Breakdown of Proposed Funding for the Violet Prairie Property

Project Number	Project Name	Fund Source	Grant Amount	Estimated Acres*
16-1350A	West Rocky Prairie	Urban Wildlife Habitat	\$1,500,000	174
16-1352A	Scatter Creek Addition	Urban Wildlife Habitat	\$1,000,000	107
18-1333A	South Sound Prairie (Violet Prairie property)	Critical Habitat	\$3,000,000	353
3 federal grants	Violet Prairie	USFWS Federal Grants	\$7,600,000	762
Sub-Total			\$13,100,000	1,396
22-1234A	Violet Prairie (2022 WWRP application)	Critical Habitat	\$3,000,000 (pending)	171
TOTAL			\$16,100,000	1,567

*Cost per acre varies based on location (within city limits vs. county) as well as zoning, and other factors.

Analysis

Scope Change Policy

When a sponsor requests approval to purchase property that was not included in the original grant application, the property must meet the eligibility criteria, have equivalent habitat values as the originally targeted property, and be contiguous to the property identified in the grant agreement. If it meets all criteria, the director has authority to approve the change. If it does not, it is considered a major scope change and must be submitted to the board for consideration.

In this case, the Violet Prairie acquisition property does not meet the criteria that would allow the director to approve the requested scope changes, because it is not contiguous

with properties in either the Scatter Creek or West Rocky Prairie grants. However, the Violet Prairie property provides prairie connectivity (see Attachment A) and is located just 1.6 miles from the West Rocky Prairie property and 3.9 miles from the Scatter Creek property, all of which are managed as part of the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area.

Although WDFW received two Urban Wildlife Habitat grants and one Critical Habitat grant, all three projects qualify for grants from the Critical Habitat as well as the Urban Wildlife Habitat categories because they are all within five miles of an adopted urban growth boundary in a county that has a population density of 250 or more per square mile. The species protected by the South Sound Prairies 2018 grant are the same as those for the Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie grants, as referenced above.

Summary

The proposed scope change would allow WDFW to use funding from the Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie grants to purchase the Violet Prairie property targeted in the South Sound Prairies 2018 ([RCO #18-1333A](#)) grant. This change is a result of the Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie properties appraising for higher than originally anticipated. The ecological values of the Violet Prairie property meet the intent of the original scope of the Scatter Creek and West Rocky Prairie grants and includes similar habitat and species while providing similar education, recreation, and restoration opportunities.

If the board approves this scope change, WDFW would use the grant funds from the two 2016 grants to purchase approximately 281 acres of the Violet Prairie property and use this as match for a federal Section 6 grant to purchase another 762 acres of high-quality prairie habitat within the South Sound region.

Strategic Plan

Approval of this request supports the board's goal to help its partners protect, restore and develop recreation opportunities that benefit people, fish and wildlife, and ecosystems.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends the board approve the scope change requests for the Scatter Creek Addition ([16-1352A](#)) and the West Rocky Prairie ([16-1350A](#)) grants. This would allow purchase of an additional 281 acres of quality prairie habitat and provide WDFW with the match needed for their federal grants. Resolution 2022-06 is provided for board consideration (see Attachment A).

Next Steps

If the board approves the scope change, RCO staff will process the appropriate amendments to facilitate purchase of the Violet Prairie property.

Attachments

- A. Resolution 2022-06, *Scope Change Requests: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, West Rocky Prairie 2016 and Scatter Creek Addition*
- B. Map of Property Locations, Protected/Managed Prairie Lands, Prairie Habitat Connectivity, and Water Courses
- C. Violet Prairie Map with Funding Sources

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Scope Change Requests: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife,
West Rocky Prairie 2016 and Scatter Creek Addition
Resolution 2022-06**

WHEREAS the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) was awarded Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Urban Wildlife Habitat Category grants to acquire prairie habitat as part of the Scatter Creek Wildlife Area; and

WHEREAS the landowners for the properties proposed for purchase as part of the West Rocky Prairie 2016 (16-1350A) and the Scatter Creek Addition (16-1352A) are no longer willing sellers; and

WHEREAS WDFW has identified the Violet Prairie property, which is located in Thurston County, as a priority high-quality habitat property that offers protection of the same types of habitats and wildlife species that were included in the funded prairie projects; and

WHEREAS the Violet Prairie property meets all the eligibility criteria for the Urban Wildlife Habitat Category; and

WHEREAS the WWRP Habitat Acquisition Advisory Committee reviewed and evaluated both the Critical Habitat and the Urban Wildlife Habitat projects; and

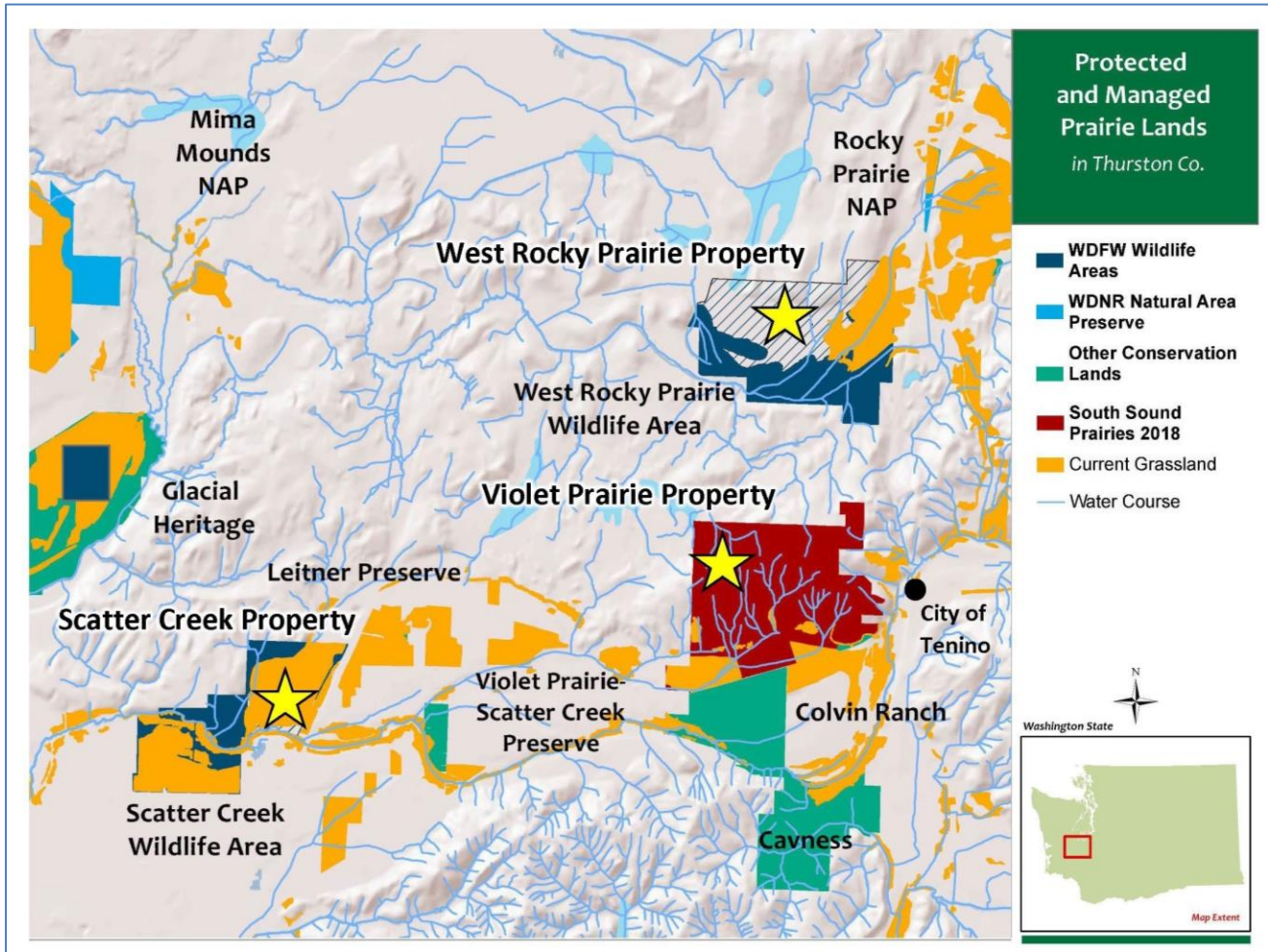
WHEREAS WDFW is asking for board approval of scope changes that would allow them to add the Violet Prairie property to the West Rocky Prairie 2016 and the Scatter Creek Addition 2016 projects and to use the remaining funds in these grant agreements to help facilitate the purchase of this prairie property; and

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

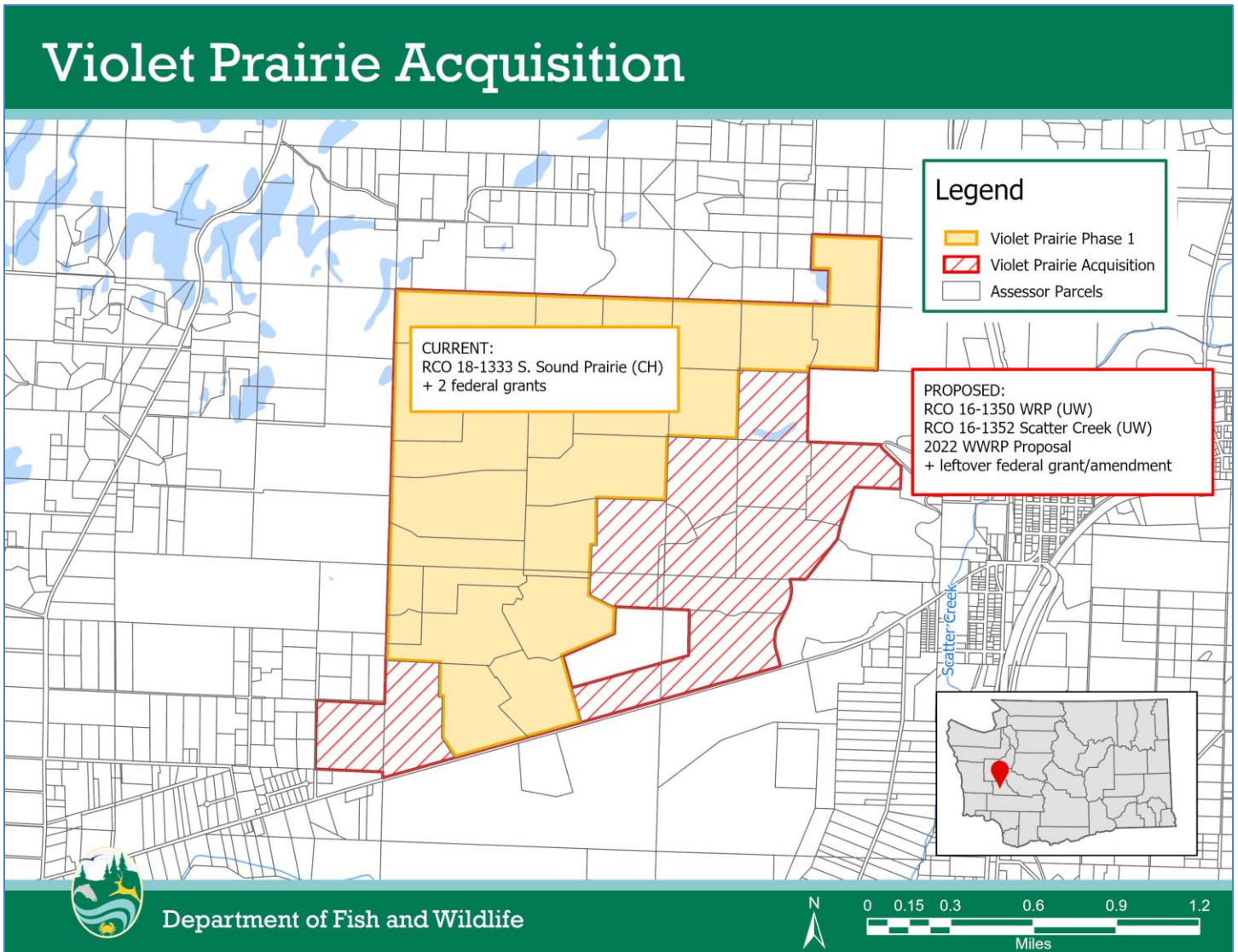
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board hereby approves the scope changes requested and delegates authority to RCO's Director to complete the appropriate paperwork to facilitate this approval.

<i>Resolution moved by:</i>	Member Windrope
<i>Resolution seconded by:</i>	Member Herzog
<u>Adopted</u> / <i>Defeated/Deferred (underline one)</i>	Adopted
<i>Date:</i>	April 26, 2022

Map of Property Locations, Protected/Managed Prairie Lands, Prairie Habitat Connectivity, and Water Courses



Violet Prairie Map with Funding Sources



RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: April 26, 2022

Place: Online

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members:

Ted Willhite, Chair	Seattle	Shiloh Burgess	Wenatchee
Kathryn Gardow	Seattle	Angus Brodie	Designee, Department of Natural Resources
Michael Shiosaki	Seattle	Amy Windrope	Designee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
VACANT	Vacant	Peter Herzog	Designee; Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

This summary is to 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 meeting.

Call to Order

Chair Ted Willhite opened the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) meeting at 9 AM, he requested roll call, determining quorum.

Motion: Approval of April 26, 2022 Meeting Agenda

Moved By: Member Shiosaki

Seconded By: Member Gardow

Decision: **Approved**

Item 1: Consent Agenda

Before approving the consent agenda, which included the January 2022 meeting minutes, time extensions and volunteer recognitions, **Chair Willhite** emphasized the importance of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion to the board and keeping these principles at the forefront while listening to the community and making decisions, which aligns with [Resolution 2020-35](#).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-04
Moved By: Member Gardow
Seconded By: Member Burgess
Decision: **Approved**

Item 2: Director's Report

Member Brodie temporarily left the meeting at 9:15 AM and rejoined at 9:30 AM.

Director's Report

Megan Duffy, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Director summarized key agency activities. The first stadium funding advisory committee meeting took place on April 18, the [Athena Group](#) has been contracted to perform an organizational structure review for the agency, and the grant equity review report is being drafted and due to legislature on June 30. The executive team held a retreat in March to discuss agency priorities and direction for the next year. The agency is hiring a Fiscal Tech, a Governors Salmon Recovery Office Strategy Coordinator, two Data Management positions and an Administrative Assistant for the salmon section.

More information on agency happenings can be found in the [item 2 meeting materials](#).

Legislative Update

Brock Milliern, RCO Policy Director, shared legislative updates from the 2022 supplemental budget. Approved House bills (HB) that directly or indirectly effect RCO include [HB 1329](#) concerning the Open Public Meeting Act, [HB 2078](#) concerning the Outdoor School for All program, and [HB 5793](#) concerning stipends for board and committee members. Funding was allocated for salmon and recreation projects, including \$300,000 to assist with boating and aviation conflicts on Lake Union.

The Outdoor Recreation Caucus met throughout session and members will continue to meet with legislators and partners in the interim. Budget and policy bill development for the next session is underway and RCO is collaborating with partners to update the board at the October meeting.

Further details on the approved policy bills and budget updates can be found in the [meeting materials](#).

Grant Management Report

Marguerite Austin, RCO Recreation and Conservation Grants Section Manager, announced the approval of \$1.8 million for the Recreational Trails Program, provided an update on the 2022 grant cycle, and discussed the two completed application workshops that announced the 2022 grant availability. Ms. Austin stated that grant applications have decreased by 17 percent between 2020 and 2022. However, the Land and Water Conservation Funding has increased. Ms. Austin hypothesized that this resulted from the grant limit increase. Ms. Austin highlighted that Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) applications significantly decreased, specifically for local parks, trails, and water access categories. Match reduction was approved in 2020 for these categories, but Ms. Austin hypothesized applications were still low due to pandemic impacts on entities.

Lastly, Ms. Austin focused on pandemic impacts to funded projects and application submission. She stated that staff has received record numbers of requests for time extensions, cost increases, and scope changes. Sponsors face many challenges including escalating construction costs and decreased revenue, permitting delays due to low staff numbers, high supply costs, and labor shortages.

Chair Willhite suggested adding pandemic impacts to the next meeting agenda.

Member Gardow questioned if fewer WWRP applications resulted from applicants being deterred due to application denial in years previous. Ms. Austin recognized this as a possibility, but said it was indeterminate until surveying is completed after the grant cycle. Ms. Austin theorized that match increase is also likely a contributing factor.

Chair Willhite asked the board to consider if the July board meeting should be virtual or in-person. The board supported attending in-person and **Member Herzog** suggested finding ways to enable the public to view the meeting remotely. **Director Duffy** stated that RCO is collaborating with other state agencies to arrange hybrid meetings, but those capabilities are not guaranteed for the July meeting.

General Public Comment:

None.

Item 3: Policy Updates

Member Burgess was absent from 10:07 AM – 10:16 AM.

Ben Donatelle, RCO Policy Specialist, provided an update on the 2023 State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and Trails plan. He shared a revised timeline and stated that the initial public engagement portion has ended. The draft plan will be developed with the advisory committees this summer. Public review and comment will be solicited in fall 2022. The plan will be finalized and submitted in early 2023.

A draft literature review was completed in early April and focused on five topics: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) in the outdoors, climate resiliency, outdoor recreation trends, responsible recreation, and societal benefits resulting from outdoor recreation.

Mr. Donatelle shared that the updated inventory map reflects over 66,000 records categorized into four different layers: areas, points (recreation asset locations), trails and travel routes.

Chair Willhite emphasized the importance of the SCORP plan for the community in capturing the needs and opportunities for recreation. He asked Mr. Donatelle to offer an update at the July meeting.

Leah Dobey, RCO Policy Specialist, provided an update on the two equity projects.

The Comprehensive Equity Review of RCO's recreation and conservation grant programs is nearing its final months. The public engagement phase has concluded and is providing data for the equity review and final report. The equity maps are nearing completion and a report is being drafted by the Prevention Institute. Anticipated recommendations include additional outreach and education, technical assistance and support, providing an update to the evaluation criteria, and increasing tribal engagement.

The Governor's Office and the Office of Financial Management will review the report before it is submitted to the Legislature by June 30. The report will be distributed to the board and presented at the July meeting. RCO staff will begin forming an implementation strategy once the report is finalized.

The Equity Planning Grants project is underway in coordination with the Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Fund (COAFF) program to better align planning grant efforts and ensure equitable access to these funds. The funds from the Equity Planning Grants project will likely be awarded by fall 2022.

BREAK: 10:13 AM – 10:30 AM

Item 4: Stadium Funding Plan Review and Advisory Council Meeting Debrief

Adam Cole, RCO Policy Specialist, provided an update on the Community Outdoor Athletic Facilities Fund (COAFF) program. Mr. Cole offered the development and implementation framework to define the program goals and policies. A draft fund plan has been created and the advisory committee had its first meeting on April 18; the second meeting will take place June 27. The advisory committee offered suggestions to expand on the program purpose and suggested including additional applicants, non-traditional sports, and the unique needs of small jurisdictions.

Mr. Cole stated that the program's development will ideally be an agenda item for each upcoming board meeting to update the board on program development progress and ask for perspective on specific policy proposals, timeline, and committee practices.

Mr. Cole will propose to the COAFF Advisory Committee offering early action grants in spring – summer 2022 to align with the equity grant program; receive and implement any legislative updates in fall 2022 – winter 2023; finalize the funding plan in winter – spring 2023; open grant applications in summer – fall 2023; and finally award grants in fall 2023 – winter 2024. A more detailed timeline is outlined in the [item 4 materials](#).

Chair Willhite commended the work of the advisory committee for expanding the purpose of the program to be distinct from other RCO grant programs, as this could ensure continued funding for all programs. He suggested adding fiduciary responsibilities and accountability to the program outline.

Member Gardow questioned if continued funding could be sought from private organizations. Mr. Cole discussed the possibility of future partnerships and collaboration between these organizations and RCO.

Member Shiosaki supported the idea of offering early funds to aid with planning before preparing for the larger capital grant round. Member Shiosaki also spoke to the unique qualities of this program as funding can be used for maintenance.

Item 5: Chelan County Wenatchee River Park Conversion

Myra Barker, RCO Compliance Specialist, provided information on the Wenatchee River Park conversion, which will require a decision from the board at a future board meeting.

Conversions occur when:

- Property rights are conveyed for private use

- Property rights are conveyed for non-public outdoor recreation use
- Non-outdoor recreation uses are made of the project area
- Unallowable indoor facilities are developed within the project area
- Public outdoor recreation use is terminated

Part of the property was closed from public use to provide housing to seasonal workers and used for non-outdoor recreation purposes, and therefore a conversion was created. The conversion area is about 8.6 acres. The county is proposing a 20-acre replacement property adjacent to the eastern park boundary. The property is owned by the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Details of the conversion and replacement proposal can be found in the [item 5 materials](#).

The board's responsibility is to evaluate alternatives for conversion and replacement, ensure this replacement meets the funding requirements, and provide a recommendation to the National Park Service (NPS). The NPS approves or denies the conversion request.

During board discussion, it was clarified that the county will retain ownership of the conversion area but the grant boundary (obligations) would be removed from that area. Ms. Barker also emphasized that there will be multiple points of connection within the new acreage. Several board members demonstrated support for the 8.6-acre conversion and the exchange with the proposed 20 acres to ensure quality housing for workers.

Member Brodie asked for more information on the appraisal process, to which Ms. Barker shared that the preferred replacement will be appraised to meet LWCF policy requirements. Ms. Barker also clarified that park improvements made after a project is closed are not considered in the value.

Member Burgess discussed irrigation easements as potential encumbrances and this property being a key connector between Wenatchee, Monitor, Cashmere and eventually to Leavenworth.

Item 6: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farm and Forest Account Policy Changes

Kim Sellers, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, and **Marguerite Austin**, RCO Recreation and Conservation Grants Section Manager, shared outreach efforts and background information leading to the proposed changes for the WWRP Farm and Forest Account. Detailed information can be found in the [item 6 meeting materials](#).

Based on outreach and feedback, RCO staff brought three proposals to the board for consideration: to allow use of a written review and evaluation process for the 2022 grant cycle; to eliminate the 10 percent non-state, non-federal share of match; and to allow sponsors to request cost increases for ongoing projects needing additional funding. Ms. Sellers discussed the challenges sponsors experience when faced with cost increases, often resulting in failed projects or sponsors having to request reduced project scope for the easements.

Other recommendations were received from the community that RCO will work to review internally. Some of these recommendations asked the agency for more consistency in scoring and evaluating projects, to develop a new easement template, and to offer a “Buy, Protect, Sell” alternative.

Public Comment:

Nick Norton, Executive Director of the Washington Land Trusts, and **Danny Madrone**, Pacific Northwest Policy Manager with the American Farmland Trust, offered support of Resolution 2022-05.

Mr. Norton discussed the costs of easements and how approval of cost increases will help relieve some of the financial strains. He also asked the board to consider how they evaluate the success of the category changes, opting to look at the quantity and quality of projects that stem from these changes rather than the overall program competitiveness.

Ms. Madrone shared that these category changes allow for more flexibility and accessibility for farmers.

Member Shiosaki questioned the uniqueness of this program to prompt the elimination of the 10 percent match. Ms. Sellers discussed the multiple forms of match available in other RCO programs, whereas funding alternatives are limited for farmland sponsors and they are more likely to struggle to raise match.

Member Gardow questioned where the money from cost increases would likely come from, and she also voiced her support for a “Buy, Protect, Sell” option and limiting the program changes time frame to one grant cycle so the board and agency can have more time for further analysis. **Ms. Austin** responded that the cost increase funding would come from the last funding cycle, as \$8.6 million was available while only \$5 million was requested. She further stated that there is an extensive process that entities must go through before being awarded cost increases.

Several members expressed concern over eliminating the 10 percent match and shared interest in limiting this change to one cycle. **Member Gardow** further indicated that her concerns stem from setting a precedent by removing the non-state, non-federal match and felt that this item required more consideration before approval. RCO staff, **Member Brodie**, and **Member Windrope** offered their concern in limiting the change to one year as the 2022 grant process is already underway and a time limitation might not offer full insights. The board decided to limit these proposed changes to the 2022 and 2024 grant cycles; **Member Gardow** did not support the amended resolution.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-05 as Amended
Moved By: Member Shiosaki
Seconded By: Member Brodie
Decision: **Approved**

LUNCH: 12:21 PM – 1:20 PM

Item 7: WDFW Scope Change to South Sound Prairies

Kim Sellers, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, shared background information regarding the South Sound Prairies and presented proposed scope changes from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) for two funded projects: West Rocky Prairie 2016 ([16-1350](#)) and Scatter Creek Addition ([16-1352](#)).

WDFW seeks to purchase additional acreage known as the Violet Prairie property using unspent funds from the two previously funded projects in combination with awarded federal grants and a pending 2022 WWRP grant application. Further details on these scope changes can be found in the [item 7 meeting materials](#).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-06
Moved By: Member Windrope
Seconded By: Member Herzog
Decision: **Approved**

Public Comment:

None.

Item 8: Featured Projects

Jesse Sims and **Brian Carpenter**, RCO Outdoor Grants Managers, provided overviews of several funded projects.

Mr. Sims provided an overview of the Northwest Motorcycle Association (NMA), Statewide Heavy Trail Maintenance ([18-2538M](#)) and U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Wenatchee River Ranger District, Motorized Trails Maintenance and Operation ([16-2334M](#), [18-2292M](#)) projects.

Supported by grant funding, NMA project volunteers completed 28 miles of maintenance, installed 200 rolling dips and 130 drains, removed 600 roots, and repaired 19 culverts. The Wenatchee River project enabled clearing downed trees and removing granite fallout from the trails. Volunteers were able to maintain over 100 miles of trails each year.

Mr. Carpenter shared background information and updates on the Eastmont Parks and Recreation District's, East Wenatchee 9th Street Acquisition ([16-1778A](#)) and the City of Wenatchee's Hale Park ([14-1131C](#), [16-1584D](#), [16-1666D](#)) projects.

The funding for the Eastmont Park project enabled completion of the park acquisition, including installing low-impact park features. The city will seek future grants for installation of a bathroom and other park amenities. The Hale Park project was completed in two phases, with phase one including installation of a dog park, and phase two including installation of a path, restroom, picnic area, playground, and a skate park.

Chair Willhite used the Hale Park project as an example to highlight the possibilities of expanding on the term "trail" as the new State Recreation and Conservation Plan (SCORP) is being written. He described trails as typically being thought of as surfaces for hikers, equestrians or motorized vehicles, but a trail can also be found in urban areas in the form of paths and sidewalks. He also noted the Eastmont Park project as a model for ensuring equitable access and opportunities across the state.

Item 9: Recreation Use on State Lands Update

Member Burgess was absent from 2:00 PM – 2:30 PM.

Melinda Posner, Washington State Parks Planner, **Andrea Martin**, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Statewide Recreation Manager, and **Joel Sisolak**, WDFW Planning, Recreation and Outreach Section Manager, shared the collaborative efforts on behalf of the natural resource agencies and as members of the Recreation Impacts Management Workgroup (RIMW).

The agencies have been focusing their efforts to better coordinate recreation management and planning across state lands. The priority focus areas include education and engagement, data development and management, recreation planning, and sustainable funding for recreation management.

Ms. Martin shared that there are further opportunities for education and engagement collaboration through engagement with tribes and expanding the agency messaging to encourage recreating responsibly.

Mr. Sisolak shared further opportunities for data development and management collaboration via implementing an impact monitoring framework and through visitation impact data collection and management. One such effort is ongoing between RCO, Parks, WDFW, DNR and Earth Economics to utilize mobile device data to estimate usage of Washington's state-managed public land and economic impacts associated with that use.

Ms. Posner discussed possible planning opportunities for expanded collaboration through developing a coordinated planning framework, and opportunities for sustainable funding collaboration by pursuing joint funding requests. Other potential alignment areas include Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and rulemaking. Ms. Posner stated that these collaborative opportunities will ensure continuity within the natural resource agencies and promote compliance.

Mr. Sisolak then asked the board if they could offer any insights into other potential areas for alignment or possibilities for partnerships.

Member Herzog spoke of tribal treaty rights moving to the forefront of recreation management. He also spoke of problems that have occurred over the past 30 years due to increased land usage. He discussed the importance of having a unified front in the natural resource agencies to ensure open spaces are protected.

Chair Willhite identified climate change, cross-boundary efforts for critical habitat, template sharing to standardize successful projects, offering a unified voice to legislature and stakeholders, and focusing outreach efforts on several target areas that will require collaborative efforts and response. He also suggested sharing the RCO PRISM database with other natural resource agencies. Chair Willhite stated that it is still crucial that each agency maintain their individual mission.

Member Shiosaki suggested better communicating the nuances between the agencies to the public and the importance of coordinating DEI efforts.

BREAK: 2:44 PM – 3:00 PM

Item 10: State Agency Partner Reports

Governor's Office

Jon Snyder, Senior Policy Advisor, shared that the Governor's Office is focusing on community engagement and getting the Governor out to local events. The Governor will be traveling to Eastern Washington University in Spokane to visit the Palouse Restoration Project.

Department of Natural Resources

Angus Brodie, DNR Uplands Deputy Supervisor, stated that the agency is preparing for wildfire season. The agency is continuing their work with forest health, carbon projects in state trust lands, and kelp forest reserves. During the supplemental session the Legislature allocated DNR \$5 million for recreation maintenance, which will be used for backlogged maintenance projects. DNR will be submitting about 17 grant applications to the upcoming WWRP grant round for land acquisitions, restoration, and development projects. Efforts will focus on the Teanaway Forest, Dabob Bay, Kennedy Creek, the north fork of the Nooksack River, and West Tiger trails among others.

Member Brodie shared that electric bicycle (e-bike) public engagement is ongoing as a result of [Senate bill 5452](#), and two virtual meetings are scheduled for May to discuss e-bike usage on managed lands. The information from these meetings and outreach surveys will be used to inform a report due to the Legislature in September 2022. The statewide recreation plan is ongoing; DNR has been working with stakeholders and engaging with the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission Recreation Group to inform this plan.

Member Brodie will be taking an extended leave of absence.

State Parks and Recreation Commission

Peter Herzog, Washington State Parks and Recreation Development Director, shared that the agency had several packages allocated in the Legislative session. Parks will receive funds for cultural resources and tribal relations; they will be hiring a Tribal Liaison and conducting archeological land surveys for acquisition projects. Funding was also allocated for a Climate Change Coordinator. Parks will be establishing several charging stations on state managed lands.

Parks was allocated \$1.25 million in general funds for maintenance projects, \$4 million in additional general funds support, and about \$14 million of additional spending authority. An additional \$5 million was allocated in capital funds for cost overruns and funding for trestle repairs. The Legislature passed [House bill 2058](#) which allows for exemptions for excise taxes for historic properties.

Member Herzog spoke of the staffing issues the agency has been facing and the resulting difficulty in completing projects. Parks hired **Diana Dupuis** as the new agency Director and **Mike Sternback** as the Deputy Director.

Chair Willhite invited Director Dupuis to the next RCFB meeting.

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Amy Windrope, WDFW Deputy Director, shared updates on legislative funding. The agency received funding for cultural resources related work and to hire two DEI positions and a Recreation Planner. \$5 million annually was allocated for investments in recreation maintenance for WDFW lands and water recreation sites.

The WDFW Recreation Plan has been completed and the agency will be focusing on travel management and designating official trails for public usage. Progress has been made on the Violet Prairies; Scatter Creek acquired about 94 additional acres; 1500 acres were acquired at Shrubsteppe; and about 94 acres were acquired at the Nemah Tidelands. Member Windrope offered two links to the board to promote [Every Day is Earth Day](#) and [This Land is Part of Us](#).

In closing, **Chair Willhite** said that he would coordinate with **Director Duffy** to schedule the next RCFB meeting and form the meeting agenda.

ADJOURN: 3:25 PM

Next meeting: Travel Meeting – July 26-27, TBD.

Subject to change considering COVID restriction.

Approved by:



Chair Ted Willhite