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Location In-person: Room 172, First Floor, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street, SE, Olympia, WA. This public meeting location will allow for the public to provide comment and listen to the meeting as required by the Open Public Meeting Act. This requirement can be waived via HB 1329 if there is a declaration of emergency or if an agency determines that a public meeting cannot safely be held. If an emergency occurs, remote technology will be the primary meeting source.

Location Virtually: https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tERXKKAgTWckPsvmUN2GA

Phone Option: (669) 900-6833 - **Webinar ID:** 834 1386 8891

Order of Presentation: In general, each agenda item will include a short staff presentation, 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 of 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.

COVID Precautions: Masking is not required at this meeting, as the mask mandates have been updated by the Governor and local public health departments. If mask mandates change, there will be notification. However, masks and hand sanitizer will be made available. The meetings rooms will be set to allow for as much social distancing as possible and air purifiers will be placed throughout.

TUESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2023

OPENING AND MANAGEMENT REPORTS

9:00 a.m. Call to Order

Chair Willhite

- Roll Call and Determination of Quorum
- Review and Approval of Agenda – January 24, 2023 **(Decision)**
- Remarks of the Chair

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

Chair Willhite

- A. Board Meeting Minutes
 - October 25-26, 2022
- B. Time Extensions:
 - City of Bonney Lake, Allan Yorke Park East Ballfield with Lighting, [18-1326](#)
 - Ferry County, Ferry County Rail Trail Phase 4, [16-1936](#)
 - Tonasket Junior Baseball Association, Chief Tonasket Park Ball Field Complex Renovation, [16-2033](#)
 - Town of Twisp, Twisp Sports Complex Renovation, [16-2084](#)
- C. Volunteer Recognitions (3)

Resolution 2023-01

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

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

Megan Duffy
Brock Milliern
Marguerite Austin
Kyle Guzlas
Bart Lynch
Mark Jarasitis

9:45 a.m. 3. Equity Review Action Plan Overview

Leah Dobey

10:15 a.m. General Public Comment for issues not identified as agenda items. Please limit comments to 3 minutes.

10:25 a.m. BREAK

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFING

10:40 a.m. 4. Addressing Cost Increases Process .

Brock Milliern

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFING

11:10 a.m. 5. Cultural Resources Overview

*Sarah Thirtyacre
Sarah Johnson-Humphries*

11:45 a.m. LUNCH

BOARD BUSINESS: DECISION

12:45 p.m. 6. Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan
(SCORP): Approval of 2023 Plan

Ben Donatelle

Resolution 2023-02

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

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFING

1:45 p.m. 7. Farmland Preservation: Buy-Protect-Sell

Kim Sellers

BOARD BUSINESS: DECISION

2:20 p.m. 8. Farmland Cost Increases

Kim Sellers

- Columbia Land Trust, Trout Lake Valley Phase 4
Agricultural Easement, [19-1539](#)
- Methow Conservancy, Fort Conservation Easement,
[19-1431](#)
- Methow Conservancy, Woodward (Highway 20)
Conservation Easement, [19-1360](#)

Resolution 2023-03

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

3:00 p.m. 9. Department of Fish and Wildlife Policy Waiver
Request: Boating Facilities Program Multi Site Cost
Limits Increase

Ashly Arambul

Resolution 2023-04

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

3:10 p.m. BREAK

BOARD BUSINESS: BRIEFINGS

3:30 p.m. 10.Compliance Report

Myra Barker

- Annual Compliance Report
 - Policy Proposal - Additions to the Exception to Conversion Policy
-

4:30 p.m. 11.State Agency Partner Reports

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

Jon Snyder

Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn

Peter Herzog

Amy Windrope

5:00 p.m. ADJOURN

Next Meeting: Regular Meeting – April 25-26, 2023 - Online and in Room 172, First Floor, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street SE, Olympia, WA 98501

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: October 25, 2022

Place: Hybrid- Room 172, 1111 Washington St. SE Olympia, WA, 98501

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members:

Ted Willhite, Chair	Seattle	Shiloh Burgess	Wenatchee
Kathryn Gardow	Seattle	Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn	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 (board) meeting at 9 AM. He requested roll call, determining quorum.

Motion: Approval of October 2022 Meeting Agenda
Moved By: Member Herzog
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**

Chair Willhite highlighted the opportunities presented by the board to not only promote quality projects, but also projects that work to mitigate climate change.

Item 1: Consent Agenda

Chair Willhite shared that the consent agenda included the July 2022 meeting minutes, volunteer recognitions and several time extensions.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-13
Moved By: Member Shiosaki
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**
Motion: Approval of 2023 Calendar
Moved By: Member Gardow
Seconded By: Member Herzog
Decision: **Approved**

Item 2: Director's Report

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) Director **Megan Duffy** summarized key agency activities. Director Duffy shared that the Centennial Accord is occurring on October 25, 2022; the Equity Review was submitted to the Legislature; and there were several staff changes including two new outdoor grants managers, an administrative assistant, and a new Governor's Salmon Recovery Office policy lead. The agency will also be hiring a board administrative assistant and a cultural resources specialist.

Chair Wilhite asked if the agency is considering the Inflation Reduction Act. Director Duffy shared that there are ongoing conversations with relevant state agencies to track what funds are available, for what purposes and who might be best able to access those funds.

Legislative Update

Brock Milliern, RCO Legislative and Policy Director, shared legislative updates regarding the five decision packages within the operating budget. These requests include \$4.47 million capacity for salmon lead entities and recovery regions; funding for a diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) coordinator, tribal coordinator, and data coordinator; and \$50 thousand for the Flowering Rush program on behalf of the Washington Invasive Species Council.

Member Windrope asked what percentage increase was the \$4.47 million for the lead entities and regions. Director Duffy explained where the funding oriented from and Mr. Milliern noted that it was approximately a 55-60 percent increase.

Mr. Milliern shared the state revenue forecast is showing consistent predictions. There will be a \$43 million increase for the 2021-2023 biennium and a \$465 million decrease

for the 2023-2025 biennium. The next revenue forecast will be release in November, which will be the basis for the Governor's budget that is released in December.

Finally, Mr. Milliern noted that the Planning for Recreational Access Grants opened in early October and will close on November 14. Agreements will be written in December.

The [Grant Management, Grant Services, Performance and Fiscal Reports](#) were written only.

General Public Comment:

None.

Item 3: Introduction of New State Parks Director

Chair Willhite introduced the new State Parks Director, **Diana Dupuis**.

Director Dupuis noted that she had worked with State Parks for over 15 years. She has been the director at State Parks for 8 months. In her brief time as director, discussions between the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), Department of Natural Resources (DNR), and State Parks have occurred with a focus on state land usage and access; there has also been the addition of a DEI Director and Tribal Affairs Director at State Parks; and the Stewardship Program Lead has been elevated to the Executive Management team.

Board members inquired about access inequity due to cost, avenues for generating more funds, and how multi-use effect the user experience.

Director Dupuis explained that 70-80 percent of the agency is self-funded and losing funds would be detrimental to the land. However, these inequities need to be examined and State Parks programs need updating to address inequities. Unfortunately, outside of vendor proceeds, Discover Pass funds, and allocated funds from legislature, State Parks does not have another pathway for funding. As for the multi-use on state lands, Director Dupuis mentioned that this is a greater issue at smaller state parks than the larger parks, but users are typically good at navigating multi-use lands.

General Public Comment:

Note: The Department of Natural Resources state agency report was given here and is detailed under Item 14 with the other agency partner reports.

Doug Levy, Washington Recreation and Park Association representative, stated that the organization has asked to form a work group in partnership with RCO before the 2024

grant round to consider match surrounding the \$350,000 maximum for the Youth Athletic Facilities Large projects because cost inflation makes it difficult for projects to remain under this amount. He asked the board to consider the growing number of sports and activities his constituents must manage.

Note: The Department of Fish and Wildlife Agency Report was included here but can be found in detail below in Item 14.

BREAK: 10:37 – 10:57 AM

Item 4: Equity Review

Leah Dobey, RCO Policy Specialist, provided an update of the Equity Review Action Plan process, which was completed by the Prevention Institute in collaboration with RCO, to identify barriers for historically underserved communities in need of recreational opportunities.

The report, which can be found on RCO's website, included 13 findings, six high-level recommendations, and 45 detailed recommendations. The high-level recommendations include:

1. Prioritizing funding in high need areas
2. Modifying scoring criteria
3. Supporting proposal development and review
4. Building applicant capacity
5. Promoting community involvement
6. Funding intersectional projects

RCO staff identified priority levels for recommendations to determine what actions to take first and how impactful each would be. Twenty-five of the 33 priorities have a near-term need, but completion depends on staff capacity. The final action plan is expected to be completed by the end of the year.

Member Ohlson-Kiehn asked about the scoring criteria process. Ms. Dobey emphasized that while the advisory committee works with the agency, RCO has the final decision to implement or not for office programs. The board would have the final decision for any board programs.

Member Shiosaki highlighted the intersection with housing, safety, and accessibility and asked how RCO will keep the grant programs from becoming more complicated. He highlighted the importance of hiring a DEI Coordinator who is focused on ensuring this work is completed to the best of its ability.

Member Herzog questioned the efforts that can be completed within an inequitable system. Director Duffy shared that there are many considerations taking place in terms of sequencing the recommendations, including the importance of performance measures and where external partners will have a role. For example, small governments might have limited capacity, so how can we support them? Several recommendations will require additional resources.

Member Gardow asked how the reduced match program has affected RCO project outcomes. Marguerite Austin, RCO Recreation and Conservation Section Manager, provided a Ferry County trail project as an example. The sponsor was approved for a 10 percent match and without the policy, the trail would probably not exist. This applies to other applicants as well. Mr. Gardow also asked if a map existed where there are project gaps. Ms. Dobey explained that the Planning and Recreation Grant program will target areas like this to improve equity.

Chair Willhite highlighted the importance of DEI and how can this be sustained as a state. **Director Duffy** explained that the Washington State Office of Equity plays a major role statewide in setting policy and direction for the state and that state agencies are moving forward with planning and implementing efforts to improve equitable access.

Member Burgess requested future clarification on who holds decision-making authority for large scale changes to programs, be it the director, the board, or the legislature.

Public Comment:

David Olson, Mayor of the town of Cathlamet, shared that small entities often feel they are left out of the grant disbursement process. He said that Cathlamet has applied to the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks Category the last two grant rounds (2020 and 2022), without success. He expressed that there is a perception of or a correlation between successful grants and who serves on the advisory committee.

LUNCH: 11:45 AM – 12:44 PM

Item 5: Land and Water Conservation Fund: Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program Projects

Karl Jacobs, RCO Senior Grants Manager, provided background information regarding the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership Program, which is a nationally competitive program. He also offered the 2023 grant round timeline and expressed that this presentation time provides public comment opportunity.

Mr. Jacobs highlighted the two project applications in progress:

1. The City of Everett's Holly Neighborhood Wetland Park, 22-2066
2. The City of Yakima's Martin Luther King Jr. Community Pool, 22-2059.

Chair Willhite questioned why there were not more applicants. Mr. Jacobs shared it was likely due to the specificity of the program that requires the project proposal be in an area considered to be a "park desert". However, application submissions have historically been low. **Marguerite Austin** shared that this is not due to lack of interest, but the eligibility requirements tend to limit who can apply. While additional outreach might help, there are few entities that will meet these eligibility criteria.

Member Gardow questioned where the entities are receiving match. Mr. Jacobs said any non-federal sources can be used and a limited number of federal funds.

Item 6: Grant Program Framework

Marguerite Austin, RCO Recreation and Conservation Grants Section Manager, presented the grant program framework.

Ms. Austin shared that five RCO programs accepted applications in May, including the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA), the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), WWRP, the Community Forests Program (CFP), and the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF). Entities from thirty-six of Washington's 39 counties applied.

During the grant round RCO staff offered application webinars, conducted site visits, completed project reviews, and hosted technical review meetings for volunteer advisory committees who later served as evaluators.

Ms. Austin mentioned several changes to the grant round, which included a requirement for applicants to create a Secure Access Washington (SAW) account to access the PRISM application, enhancements to PRISM online summary pages, cultural resources mapping tool and metric data, and board approved policy changes, such as grant limits for LWCF, written evaluations for the WWRP farm and forest programs, carbon credit payment, and the reinstatement of match requirements.

There were 269 projects submitted initially, with 241 moving forward on the ranked project lists for \$218 million in requests.

Ms. Austin highlighted that the RCO grants managers will present the ranked list for board discussion and approval. The board has the authority to adopt, reorder, remove

and/or add to the lists, but Ms. Austin said the agency is recommending the board approve the ranked lists as presented.

Item 7: Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF): Approval of Final Ranked List and Delegation Authority for Awarding Grants for 2023-25

DeAnn Beck, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided the LWCF program overview and the ranked lists of projects. The 25 projects requested a total of \$32,880,756 from the board and with match will total \$90,291,296 of overall funding.

After reviewing other projects from the ranked list, Ms. Beck highlighted the number one ranked project, city of Kent's Ruth Property at Clark Lake Park ([22-1779](#)).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-14

Moved By: Member Gardow

Seconded By: Member Shiosaki

Decision: **Approved**

Public Comment:

None.

Item 8: Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA): Approval of Ranked List

Andrea Hood, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided an ALEA program overview and presented the 2022 ranked list. The ten presented projects amount to about \$29 million in funds including match.

Ms. Hood highlighted presented components of the full project list before covering the number one ranked project from the City of Bellingham: Boulevard Park Shoreline Access and Enhancement ([22-1475](#)).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-15

Moved By: Member Herzog

Seconded By: Member Burgess

Decision: **Approved**

Item 9: Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF): Approval of Ranked List

Ashly Arambul, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided an overview of the YAF program and presented the 2022 ranked list.

Ms. Arambul presented the activities that qualify for funding and shared that 34 projects were submitted to the large grants category and two projects submitted to the small grants category, totaling about \$44,313,614, with about \$34 million in match and \$10.4 million requested in board funds.

Ms. Arambul highlighted the City of Seattle's Soundview Playfield Renovation project ([22-1261](#)), which is the top-rated project in the YAF large category, and Pacific County's Lions Park Field Renovation project ([22-1539](#)), which is the top rated YAF small category project.

Member Shiosaki highlighted the limited funding for this program and Member Gardow sought details on how much funding would be requested. Director Duffy explained that the full amount to fund the entire lists would be requested.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-16
Moved By: Member Burgess
Seconded By: Member Shiosaki
Decision: **Approved**

Item 10: Community Forests Program (CFP): Approval of Ranked List

Marguerite Austin provided an overview of the CFP, which is an office program, and submitted a ranked project list.

For the 2022 cycle, five projects were submitted totaling \$18,789,016, with \$5.7 million in match and \$13.03 million in grant funds. Ms. Austin highlighted each of the five projects, with the top-rated project being from Forterra. This is the Montesano Community Forest project ([22-1568](#)).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-17
Moved By: Member Herzog
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**

Public Comment:

None.

Item 11: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Outdoor Recreation Account: Approval of Ranked Lists

Local Parks

Allison Dellwo, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided an overview of the WWRP Local Parks category and the ranked project list.

She noted that 59 applications were submitted totaling in \$136,303,173, with \$29.3 million in requested grant funds and \$106.9 million in matching funds.

After highlighting several projects, which included projects requesting funding for pickleball courts, sports field renovations, acquisitions, playgrounds, splashpads, skateparks, and pools, she highlighted the top ranked project from City of Seattle's Parks Department, the Rainier Beach Playfield Skatepark ([22-1255](#)).

Member Gardow asked how many projects would be funded with the request made. Ms. Dellwo explained that acquisition projects take priority (By statute, no less than 40% and no more than 50% of the funds in the Local Parks category shall be for acquisitions.), and remaining funds are to be used to fund other projects. She noted it is not clear how many projects will be funded yet.

Public Comment:

None.

Motion:	<u>Approval of Resolution 2022-18</u>
Moved By:	Member Shiosaki
Seconded By:	Member Gardow
Decision:	Approved

State Lands Development

Dan Haws RCO Grants Manager provided an overview of the WWRP State Lands Development category and the ranked project list.

There were ten projects requesting nearly \$3 million, including trail head development, shoreline access development, and camping ground renovations. Department of Natural Resources had the top ranked project called the North Bend Community Connection ([22-1559](#)).

Public Comment:

None.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-19
Moved By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Seconded By: Member Herzog
Decision: **Approved**

State Parks

Hayley Edmonston, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, presented the WWRP State Parks category overview and the ranked project list.

There were 14 applications, which included acquisition and development projects. The top ranked project from State Parks is Improving the Palouse to Cascade Trail (22-1480).

Public Comment:

None.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-20
Moved By: Member Herzog
Seconded By: Member Shiosaki
Decision: **Approved**

Trails

Jesse Sims, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided an overview of the WWRP Trails Program and the ranked project list.

There were 16 applications submitted. The projects total came to \$54,351,522, with \$20 million in grant funds and \$34.3 million in matching funds.

The top ranked project is City of Lynnwood's Scriber Creek Trail Phase 3 (22-1265).

Public Comment:

None.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-21
Moved By: Member Shiosaki
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**

Water Access

Henry Smith, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, provided an overview of the WWRP Water Access category and the ranked project list for approval.

There were four projects submitted, totaling \$9,099,204, with \$4.9 million in grant funding and \$4.1 million in matching funds. City of Lynnwood's Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Arts Department held the top ranked project known as Sprague's Pond Park Addition (22-1266)

Member Shiosaki questioned where funds would end up if 75 percent of funding could not be allocated to acquisitions, which is a requirement of this category. Ms. Austin clarified that if 75 percent of projects are not acquisition, then funding can be allocated to different project types.

Public Comment:

None.

Motion:	<u>Approval of Resolution 2022-22</u>
Moved By:	Member Gardow
Seconded By:	Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision:	Approved

Item 12: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farm and Forest Account: Approval of Ranked Lists

Kim Sellers, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager, presented the WWRP farm and forest categories background and the 2022 ranked lists.

Farmland Preservation

In the Farmland Preservation category, there were 18 projects submitted totaling \$28,280,526, with \$19.4 million in grant funding and \$8.9 million in matching funds.

The top ranked project was by Whidbey Camano Land Trust, Bell's Farm Expansion ([22-1662](#)).

Public Comment:

David Kuhl, Development Services Director for the City of Oak Harbor, shared his opposition to the Bell's Farm Expansion proposal, noting that two letters of opposition were supplied, including one from Oak Harbor's Mayor. The project is being opposed because it impedes on future urban growth opportunities for the city under the growth management act (UGA).

During discussion, the board inquired about a plan for annexation of project property in question into the or the city's Joint Planning Area (JPA) boundary. In response, Mr. Kuhl explained that there was no annexation planned.

Ms. Sellers noted that the Northern portion of Bell's farm is within the JPA, but not within the UGA, which indicates that development is not imminent. Mr. Kuhl explained that most of the area within the JPA boundary, including the nearby military and conservation easements, cannot be developed for various reasons.

It was unclear if or when the UGA boundary could be expanded to include Bell's farm.

Ryan Ellting, Executive Director of Whidbey-Camano Land Trust, shared that neither the land trust nor the farm owners intended to cause zoning conflicts for the city. They followed RCO's protocol and reached out to the city to notify them of the grant application. He also noted that the farm owners want to protect this land and that properties like theirs are important to conserve, as food resources on the island could be limited in the event of a natural disaster.

The board discussed the project boundaries and what would happen if the project became a conversion in the future. Ms. Sellers communicated that the land trust would have to pay back the funds or replace the property.

Chair Willhite, Member Ohlson, and Member Gardow voiced their support of keeping the project on the list and approving it has presented while Member Herzog voiced opposition.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-23

Moved By: Member Gardow

Seconded By: Member Shiosaki

Decision: **Approved**

Forestland Preservation

Kim Sellers noted that there were two projects totaling \$4,023,490, with \$3 million in match and \$1 million in grant funds. It was emphasized that these lands are used for timber harvesting.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-24
Moved By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Seconded By: Member Burgess
Decision: **Approved**

Public Comment:

None.

BREAK: 3:45 PM – 4:00 PM

Item 13: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Habitat Conservation Account: Approval of Ranked Lists

Critical Habitat

Marguerite Austin provided an overview of the WWRP Critical Habitat category and the 2022 ranked list on behalf of Brian Carpenter, RCO Outdoor Grants Manager. There were seven applications submitted. The total project costs are \$22,005,300, with \$15.9 million in grant funds and \$6.1 million in matching funds.

Columbia Land Trust had the top ranked project, which is Klickitat Oaks Phase 1 (22-1630).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-25
Moved By: Member Burgess
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**

Natural Areas

DeAnn Beck provided an overview of the WWRP Natural Areas category and presented the nine projects for approval on the 2022 ranked list.

Because this category does not require match, the total project costs is \$11,710,153 in requested grant funds.

Washington's DNR top ranked project was the Upper Dry Gulch Natural Area Preserve (22-1380).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-26
Moved By: Member Shiosaki
Seconded By: Member Ohlson-Kiehn
Decision: **Approved**

Riparian Protection

Karl Jacobs provided the WWRP Riparian Protection category overview and presented the 2022 projects for approval.

There were 13 projects submitted, which totaled \$35,969,355 and requested \$18.4 million while raising \$17.5 million in match totaling \$35.9 million.

Columbia Land Trust had the top ranked project, which is the West Fork Washougal Conservation project (22-1623)

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-27
Moved By: Member Ohlson
Seconded By: Member Herzog
Decision: **Approved**

State Lands Restoration

Dan Haws presented an overview of the WWRP State Lands Restoration category and the 2022 ranked project list for approval.

There were eight projects submitted, totaling in \$2,289,600. Because this category does not require match, the total funding is from grants.

RCO staff clarified that any additional funds remaining in this category are reappropriated to the Riparian Protection category.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-28
Moved By: Member Gardow
Seconded By: Member Shiosaki
Decision: **Approved**

Urban Wildlife Habitat

Marguerite Austin provided an overview of the WWRP Urban Wildlife category and the 2022 ranked list for approval.

There were five projects submitted, which totaled in \$14,465,186. The grant request was nearly \$9.7 million, with \$4.8 million in matching funds being provided.

The top ranked project in this category is from Spokane County. It is project Rimrock to Riverside Acquisition (22-1464).

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-29
Moved By: Member Burgess
Seconded By: Member Gardow
Decision: **Approved**

Ms. Austin shared that although this part of the grant process has concluded, there could be changes to project lists, such as if a sponsor is unable to secure match, before funding is approved by the Legislature and disbursed in 2023.

Item 14: State Agency Reports

Governor's Office

Jon Snyder, Senior Policy Advisor, provided updates regarding the annual centennial accord meeting, bike-pedestrian safety, and budget updates.

From the centennial accord, he noted the discussion on how recreation impacts cultural resources. Concerning bike-pedestrian safety, there has been an increase in accidents due to a lack of supporting infrastructure, such as sidewalks. For the state budget, there is a \$895 million request for the Western State Psychiatric Hospital replacement, which could take up much of the State's bonding capacity.

Revenue predictions are unsteady. The state is looking to pursue funding options through the inflation reduction act.

Department of Natural Resources

Given after item 3, at 10:05 AM.

Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn, DNR Assistant Division Manager, provided a fourth quarter update on the agency.

She noted that several funding decision packages concerning agency priorities were submitted to legislature. This funding will be put toward supporting the state lands, specifically for recreation and the damage that it causes to the lands. Unfortunately, DNR is understaffed to manage the 5.6 million acres of acquired land.

The decision packages include funding for:

- 10 new law enforcement officers at a cost of \$5.5 million in general fund dollars
- \$2.3 million for three sustainable projects
 - The first project will create a tool to understand sensitive ecosystems, cultural resources, and treaty rights
 - Request of \$500,000 for a statewide recreation and planning process
 - \$450,000 towards a pilot project that provides access to Tribes' native foods on state lands
- Using Data from the National Heritage Program to understand where the most sensitive ecosystems are to priority conservation in Washington. There will also be mapping of at-risk forest lands and providing treatment to forests in need.

Member Gardow asked about forest fires, to which Member Ohlson-Kiehn communicated the DNR has a package that addresses forest fires and can bring back more information at a future meeting.

Chair Willhite asked about technological usage for safety purposes, specifically in areas where there is no cell service. Member Ohlson-Kiehn noted that this was not included within DNR's submitted legislative packages.

State Parks and Recreation Commission

Peter Herzog, Washington State Parks and Recreation Development Director, shared that the agency has a large DEI decision package with the Legislature. There is an interpretive proposal (increase interpretation accessibility). There was also funding requested for the Climate Change Adaptation plan implementation and managing recreational impacts on state lands.

On the capital side, there is a request for \$145 million request.

There is also an operating budget request of \$35 million for Nisqually state park and there will be a new Miller Peninsula state park request.

Department of Fish and Wildlife

Given after general public comment, at 10:25 AM

Amy Windrope, WDFW Deputy Director, provided an overview of the agency's last quarter and legislative requests.

She noted that \$5 million was received for Recreation Infrastructure funding in the last legislative session and it has enabled the agency to carry out necessary processes,

including the hiring of Partnership Coordinator and a Lands Stewardship Section Manager.

For the upcoming 2023 session, they have several packages being submitted. One package includes three policy asks:

- New license for fresh water smelt, crawfish and carp
- Setting authority for voluntary check stations to avoid the spread of aquatic invasive species
- An account to provide shoreline restoration revolving funds

Three of their additional asks include:

- Funding for data management of impact on state lands between WDFW, State Parks, and DNR
- \$9 million for the "Living with Wildlife" Program to assist with safety for those living among nature via education versus law enforcement
- \$47 million to increase the biodiversity of Washington

Unrelated to the 2023 legislative session, Member Windrope mentioned that the DNR Electronic Bike Report was finished.

RECESS: 5:16 PM

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION FUNDING BOARD SUMMARY MINUTES

Date: October 26, 2022

Place: Hybrid- Room 172, 1111 Washington St. SE Olympia, WA, 98501

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Members:

Ted Willhite, Chair	Seattle	Shiloh Burgess	Wenatchee
Kathryn Gardow	Seattle	Kristen Ohlson-Kiehn	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 requested roll call, determining quorum.

Member Windrope joined the meeting at 9:02 AM and Member Shiosaki joined at 9:04 AM.

[Item 15: Washington Recreation and Conservation Plan \(SCORP\) Update](#)

Ben Donatelle, RCO Policy Specialist, presented an update on the draft 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan (SCORP). He described the updates that have occurred since the last meeting, the requirements of the plan, the plan report, the highlights of the drafted plan, and the plan priorities and goals.

The board's role for this plan includes the development of a "unified strategy", identifying action to address statewide issues, advising the draft plan, adopting it, and submitting it to the Governor's office and the National Park Service.

From the report, he covered the rapidly increasing Washington population, and the increasing age of Washington's population.

He next covered three surveys: The Resident Demand, Experience, and Provider surveys.

The Resident Demand survey asked what activities people participated in; the Experience Survey addressed barriers to participation, the importance of outdoor recreation, and how to encourage Washingtonians to get outdoors; and the Provider Survey targeted land managers and volunteer organizations that assist them to address management issues, challenges to addressing issues, and land priorities.

He next covered the goals of SCORP, which include meaningful access to outdoor recreation for all, demonstrating essential nature of outdoor recreation, supporting communities, and protecting natural and cultural resources and meeting the outdoor recreation demand.

Moving to the unified strategy, Mr. Donatelle communicated that there were seven strategies, which would achieve the overall goals.

For next steps, public feedback will be collected in November, the final plan will be created in winter, and the board and governor will be asked to adopt the plan in January 2023.

During board discussion, several board members commended Mr. Donatelle for the work on SCORP. The board provided guidance, including encouraging RCO staff to add more pictures of youth in the report.

There was consensus with the board to distribute the draft plan for public review.

BREAK: 10:10 – 10:25 AM

Item 16: Cost Increase Decision

Brock Milliern, RCO Policy and Legislative Director, summarized the current process for proposed project cost increases in the WWRP Habitat and Outdoor Recreation Accounts and ALEA and offered prospective solutions.

Currently the two programs above do not allow for cost increases. To address any cost increases that many arise, applicants currently decrease the project scope, they seek board approval, or they seek different funding opportunities.

Mr. Milliern proposed several options to address these cost increase issues:

- Change the policy to allow cost increases in all WWRP programs and ALEA
- Provide input or direction on prioritizing unused, returned funds
- Direct funding set asides for 2022 project cost increases
- Legislative alterations

Addressing next steps, Mr. Milliern noted that policy options concerning match will be provided at the January 2023 meeting and an update on any legislative options.

During discussion, board members made several suggestions:

- Sponsors plan for cost increases during the planning process
- The board could use OFM's cost escalation to determine how much funding for cost increase should be set aside
- Legislative options
- Provide technical assistance to smaller entities with limited capacity

Mr. Milliern expressed that he would develop some options for the board to consider at the January 2023 meeting.

Item 17: Tacoma Eastside Pool, RCO #82-063 Conversion Decision

Myra Barker, RCO Compliance Unit Manager, explained the background for the Tacoma Eastside Pool conversion and proposed replacement, which would be a sprayground and restroom built at Portland Avenue Park.

Members inquired about funding, the project timeline, and why the Eastside Community Center pool was not used as replacement. Ms. Barker explained that the Eastside facility was not proposed as replacement due to the various requirements, partnerships, and land ownership related to its funding and operation.

The Portland Avenue Park will serve as the new project area. The replacement facilities would not be built for about two years when the park's master planning process is completed. There has been funding set aside for the replacement.

Public Comment:

Debbie Russel, Director of Administration and Planning for Metro Parks, shared that the demographics are the same in both the original location and the replacement location. The recreation center has swimming classes, so the spray park is trying to fill a different need.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-30
Moved By: Member Burgess
Seconded By: Member Gardow
Decision: **Approved**

Item 18: Bellingham Frank Geri Complex Field 4, RCO #96-1178 Request for Time Extension of Non-conforming Use Decision

Member Ohlson left the meeting from 11:16AM – 11:19AM

Myra Barker, RCO Compliance Unit Manager, explained City of Bellingham's time extension request of non-conforming use. In response to a housing emergency, the City of Bellingham utilized a parking lot in the Frank Geri Complex, Field Four, as temporary housing for Bellingham's homeless population. The use is permitted and licensed by the city. The city is requesting an 18-month extension of the temporary housing use. The temporary housing units will be relocated to another city-owned property that will not be available until late spring 2024.

During discussion, Member Burgess asked about the outreach process, as it appears this was brought to the board late.

Public Comment:

Nicole Oliver, City of Bellingham Parks and Recreation, responded to Member Burgess' question referring to the time that the board was made aware of the time extension. Ms. Oliver explained that the board was brought in late in the process. The intent of the emergency response was to put housing up for a few months; however, a cold spell led to an additional need for housing and the city was not aware of the encumbrance from RCO over the parking lot until later in the process. The city does have a new permanent housing location in the works. It requires additional time to finish it and then remove the housing at Frank Geri field.

During discussion, the board discussed concerns surrounding their obligations for recreation, health, and safety. The board ultimately voiced support but requested an update at the June 2023 meeting.

Motion: Approval of Resolution 2022-31
Moved By: Member Shiosaki
Seconded By: Member Burgess
Decision: **Approved**

Member Gardow shared that this is her last official meeting until her replacement is found. Chair Willhite thanked Member Gardow for her work.

ADJOURN: 11:52 AM

Next meeting: January 24 - 25, online via Zoom and in-person at room 172, Natural Resources Building, 1111 Washington Street, SE, Olympia, WA 98501

Approved by:

Chair Willhite



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Decision Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

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: 2023-01 (Consent Agenda)

Purpose of Resolution: Approve the requested time extensions.

Background

Each grant [program policy manual](#) outlines the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board's (board) 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,
- Status of activities within the grant,
- Sponsor's progress on this and other funded projects.

Strategic Plan Link

Consideration of these requests supports the board'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

City of Bonney Lake

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
18-1326 Development	Allan Yorke Park East Ballfield with Lighting	Youth Athletic Facilities: Large Grants	\$163,806 (47%)	3/31/2023	09/30/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The city of Bonney Lake, located in Pierce County, received a grant to develop a new multi-use athletic field with synthetic turf and lighting at Allan Yorke Park. The primary recreation use provided by this project is year-round active recreation and competitive youth play.

Due to a wetter spring and silty soils on-site, completing mass grading and compaction was delayed by six weeks, which caused the contractor to reschedule most of the remaining subcontractors. Some subcontractors were replaced and Bonney Lake established a new construction schedule.

By December 2022, the contractors completed mass grading of the site, installation of field and storm drainage systems, laid the base drainage rock for the field, completed 80 percent of the porous concrete walkway, constructed the public restrooms, set up fencing, and installed the electrical poles, lighting, and scoreboard. Remaining work includes final preparation of the field turf, wiring for electricity on site, installation of water and sewer lines, and finishing the parking lot, concrete walkways, and landscaping.

Bonney Lake is requesting a six-month time extension to allow for completion of the construction in early summer 2023. This timeframe will accommodate weather-related delays and give ample time for final billing, reporting, and project closeout.

Ferry County

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>16-1936</u> Development	Ferry County Rail Trail Phase 4	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program: Trails	\$82,000 (100%)	1/31/2023	12/31/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

Ferry County received a grant to resurface three and a half miles of the 25-mile Ferry County Rail Trail. The project will expand Ferry County's current trail holdings and allow for a variety of nonmotorized recreational uses including biking, walking, and winter activities such as cross-country skiing. Additional project components include installation of a bridge over Lone Ranch Creek and development of a small trailhead in Danville.

The cultural resources work on this project has been delayed due to unforeseen circumstances with the archeologist selected to complete the cultural resources survey. The draft cultural resource report was completed this fall. All surfacing material has been purchased and stockpiled near trailheads and is ready to be placed on the trail surface, pending completion of all cultural resources work and receipt of a notice to proceed. Ferry County estimates the construction can be completed in about three weeks, including eight days to place crusher fines and two days for compaction. Construction of a simple trailhead facility at Danville will take about three days.

While the construction will not take long, Ferry County is asking for an 11-month extension to ensure all preconstruction activities are done per the terms of the grant agreement, the construction is completed, and there is time for the final inspection and project closeout.

Tonasket Junior Baseball Association

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>16-2033</u> Development	Chief Tonasket Park Ball Field Complex Renovation	Youth Athletic Facilities: Renovation	\$241,365 97%	1/31/2023	12/31/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The Tonasket Junior Baseball Association received a grant to renovate the baseball/softball fields at Chief Tonasket Park in the city of Tonasket in Okanogan County. The improvements include new infields, drainage and irrigation, landscaping, and upgraded dugouts, bleachers, fences, pathways, and restrooms.

The association experienced continuing restrictions and delays as a result the COVID-19 pandemic. Verification of the project scope and the specific location of elements within the city's park, in relation to cultural resources, had to be resolved before completion of the survey and consultation. Not being able to conduct meetings at the field with city staff and the baseball association impacted project momentum.

With restrictions loosened, the Tonasket Junior Baseball Association will meet with city staff, the contractor, and community members to make sure construction of the multipurpose field begins early next spring, as weather conditions have halted efforts to construct this winter.

The association is requesting a one-year extension to allow for any unforeseen weather-related delays and to ensure ample time for construction and close-out of this project.

Town of Twisp

Project number and type	Project name	Grant program	Grant funds remaining	Current end date	Extension request
<u>16-2084</u> Development	Twisp Sports Complex Renovation	Youth Athletic Facilities: Renovation	\$30,000 (5%)	1/31/2023	08/31/2023

Reasons for Delay and Justification of Request

The Town of Twisp received a grant to renovate a baseball and soccer field at the Twisp Sports Complex, with associated turf, bleachers, backstop, dugouts, irrigation, and drainage.

Initial bids exceeded the project's planned funding, so the town had to raise additional funds and regroup. Funds raised include a contribution from the school district and a board-approved cost increase. The project was rebid and construction is now complete. Twisp, however, has not been able to pay the turf contractor, because the grass did not grow uniformly enough following the install this summer. If approved, this seven-month extension will provide additional time for the contractor to overseed and fertilize to assure a uniform stand of grass.



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Recognition of Volunteer Service

Prepared By: Tessa Cencula, Volunteer and Grants Process Coordinator

Summary

This memo summarizes the years of service by agency and community member volunteers on the advisory committees 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: 2023-01

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.

Community member volunteers' 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 in Washington will enjoy the results of these volunteers' hard work and vision for years to come. Staff applauds their exceptional service and recommends approval of the attached resolutions via Resolution 2023-01 (consent).

Land and Water Conservation Fund Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Lisa Clausen	Community Member Representative	7

Recreation Trails Program Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
James Hall	4x4 Representative	8

Youth Athletic Facility Advisory Committee

Name	Position	Years
Michelle Bly	Community Member Representative	8

Attachment A

Individual Service Recognitions



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Lisa Clausen

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

WHEREAS, from 2016 to 2022, Lisa Clausen served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) 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 LWCF 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. Clausen'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. Clausen.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia,
Washington
on January 24, 2023

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

Ted Willhite, Chair



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Jim Hall

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

WHEREAS, from 2015 to 2022, Jim Hall served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Recreation Trails Program (RTP) 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 RTP projects for funding;

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

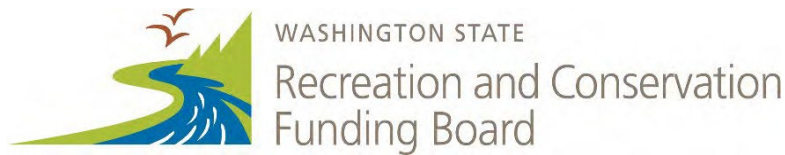
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that in recognition of Mr. Hall dedication and excellence in performing these services, the board and its staff extend their sincere appreciation and compliments on a job well done, and

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

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia,
Washington
on January 24, 2023

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

Ted Willhite, Chair



A Resolution to Recognize the Service of

Michelle Bly

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

WHEREAS, from 2015 to 2022, Michelle Bly served the citizens of the state of Washington and the Recreation and Conservation Office by participating on the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) 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 YAF 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. Bly'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. Bly.

Approved by the Recreation and
Conservation Funding Board in Olympia,
Washington
on January 24, 2023

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

Ted Willhite, Chair

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2023-01
January 24, 2023 - Consent Agenda

BE IT RESOLVED, that the following January 24 Consent Agenda items are approved:

Resolution 2023-01

- A. Board Meeting Minutes
 - October 25-26, 2022
- B. Time Extensions:
 - City of Bonney Lake, Allan Yorke Park East Ballfield with Lighting, 18-1326
 - Ferry County, Ferry County Rail Trail Phase 4, 16-1936
 - Tonasket Junior Baseball Association, Chief Tonasket Park Ball Field Complex Renovation, 16-2033
 - Town of Twisp, Twisp Sports Complex Renovation, 16-2084
- C. Volunteer Recognitions (3)

Resolution moved by: Member Peter Herzog

Resolution seconded by: Member Kathryn Gardow

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (*underline one*)

Approved Date: January 24, 2023



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

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

Prepared By: Megan Duffy, Marguerite Austin, Kyle Guzlas, Mark Jarasitis, Bart Lynch, and Susan Zemek

Summary

This memo summarizes key agency activities

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

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

Agency Updates

Washington Trails Conference a Success!

About 175 people participated in the Washington State Trails Coalition's state trails conference October 17-19 in Everett. The conference theme, "Common Ground," was emphasized in sessions addressing equity, barriers, collaboration, and increased trail use during the pandemic. The new emphasis on collaboration differed from the conference's historical focus on managing user conflict. Most government agencies and nonprofits are finding ways to work together to find "common ground" to protect and maintain trail systems that benefit all trail users! RCO staff, Beth Auerbach, Ashly Arambul, Brian Carpenter, Hayley Edmonston, Karl Jacobs, and Jesse Sims participated. Director Duffy welcomed participants to the conference and helped kick off the conference. .



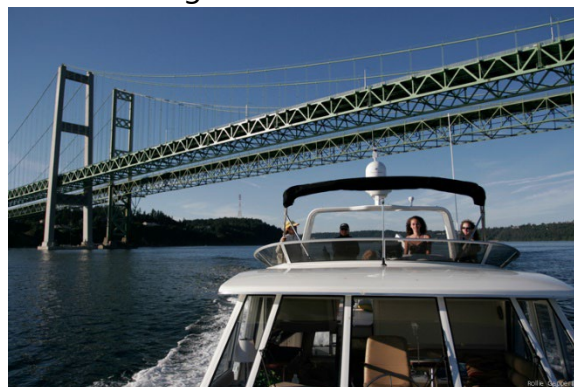
RCO Attends the NASORLO Conference

Director Duffy attended in person and DeAnn Beck participated via Zoom in the hybrid National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers (NASORLO) Conference held in Missouri. Representatives from most states and U.S. territories participated in the annual meeting that provided training for Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) administrators and addressed key policy issues. Keynote speaker Mike Reynolds, deputy director of the National Park Service (NPS), had some great speaking points about the agency doing more of the following: lending leadership support to the LWCF program, delegating authority to new park service hires, maintaining relationships with states, committing to consistent policy determinations and decisions, and increasing communication throughout the grant award process. NASORLO shared its priorities for the LWCF program, which includes increasing administrative funding for states, delegating authority to the states to resolve small conversions, reducing the match requirements, developing and maintaining a retrievable digital database of projects nationwide, extending the state comprehensive plan requirement from every five years to 10, and more. Director Duffy is a member of the board of directors.



Washington Hosts Boating Conference

RCO will be co-hosting the 2023 SOBA (States Organization for Boating Access) National Conference with the State Parks and Recreation Commission (State Parks) and Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW). Staff from all three agencies have formed a planning committee and are working with the SOBA board and national staff to prepare for the conference, which will be held the last week of August 2023 in Tacoma. This conference brings together state and federal boating officials, consultants, engineering firms, manufacturers, suppliers, publishers, and other businesses interested in boating access. The conference features a full-day federal aid training, two days of educational sessions, and a field trip.



SOBA staff visited Washington on November 14 and 15 to tour potential venues. The Greater Tacoma Convention and Trade Center has been selected as the conference facility. The new Marriott Tacoma Downtown Hotel, which connects to the convention center, is being recommended for lodging. Karl Jacobs and Allison Dellwo accompanied SOBA staff on their tour of venues and funded boating sites that may be suitable for the conference field trip. The focus will be on sites that showcase Washington's unique waterway, Puget Sound.

Employee News

Daniel Homan will join RCO in January as an information technology intern working for the Puget Sound Partnership. Daniel comes to us through the Internship Program at South Puget Sound Community College. His previous careers included managing a warehouse, order fulfillment, and customer service.

Jessica La Belle joined RCO in October as a program specialist working for the Washington Invasive Species Council (WISC). She comes to RCO from the Washington Department of Agriculture's Pest Program, where she worked on several invasive species projects from apple maggot to vineyard snail.



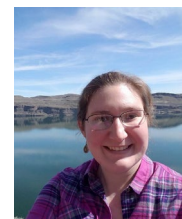
Maria Marlin joined RCO in November as a community outreach and environmental education specialist working on behalf of WISC. Maria comes to the agency from Oregon State University, where she served as a research and extension agent at a satellite station in Aurora.



Megan Montgomery joined RCO in January. She has a bachelor of science degree in geology; experience in drafting, mapping, and forest practices; a strong background in customer service, and creative experience doing marketing for a number of local small businesses. Previously, she was involved in her kids' cooperative preschool board and served as a barista.



Sarah Steinkrause joined RCO's Grant Services Team in January as the newest archeologist. Sarah is a Secretary of the Interior qualified archaeologist and architectural historian with 15 years of experience in the Pacific Northwest, Great Basin, Midwest, and Mexico. She has a bachelor of science degree from Central Washington University and a master of science degree from the University of Central Lancashire in the United Kingdom. Sarah has experience working on a variety of RCO-funded projects during her time as a senior archaeologist at Stell, Tierra Right of Way and Central Washington University. Sarah regularly trains construction crews and land managers to



help them recognize archaeological sites and understand how cultural resources law and policy apply to their projects.

News from the Boards

The **Habitat and Recreation Lands Coordinating Group** met November 30 and heard a briefing on the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan and legislative updates and discussed the impacts recreation has on cultural resources.

The **Invasive Species Council** finalized its 2021-2022 biennial report to the Legislature and held a December 15 meeting. At the meeting, the council elected new leadership, discussed council bylaws, introduced new staff, and heard updates on projects such as the spotted lanternfly action plan and state European green crab emergency response.



The **Salmon Recovery Funding Board** met in September and awarded nearly \$76 million in salmon recovery and monitoring grants and approved another \$59 million to submit to the Legislature for funding consideration in 2023. The board met again December 7 and funded four projects costing more than \$5 million each, approved Manual 18 policy updates and an upland acquisition policy, and discussed funding pathways for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund in relation to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Legislative and Policy Updates

Legislative Update

Legislative session started on January 9 and is scheduled to wrap up on April 24th. Staff will provide an update on policy and budget items

Grant Management Section

Applications Are In!

With the November 1 deadline past, applications are in for several grant programs. Applicants submitted 176 projects requesting just under \$47 million.

- Boating Facilities Program (28)
- Firearms and Archery Range Recreation (7)
- LWCF: Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (1)
- Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (97)
- Recreational Trails Program (43)



Staff and advisory committees reviewed applications in November. Applicants are currently updating their proposals before the technical completion deadline in January. Following evaluations in early 2023, projects will be forwarded to the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) for approval of the ranked lists in April. Staff anticipates grant awards will occur in June.

National Park Service Staff Visit Washington



Through sunshine, cold, and rain, National Park Service (NPS) staff Samantha Stivers and Brandon Pace, braved the elements for a visit to parks in King County. NPS is relocating its regional office functions from Seattle to Denver. Sam and Brandon, from the Omaha office, were here to pack and prepare grant records for shipping to the Denver facility.

RCO's Allison Dellwo, DeAnn Beck, Hayley Edmonston, Henry Smith, Karl Jacobs, Sarah Johnson Humphries, and Sarah Thirtyacre hosted a tour on November 7 of Seattle's Gas Works, Green Lake, and Kubota Gardens. They also toured King County's Skyway Park and Renton's Gene Coulon Park. Moshe Hecht, Seattle's Senior Projects Funds and Contracts Coordinator, joined part of the tour and provided additional insight into some of Seattle's iconic parks.

Myra Barker and Chris Popek took the NPS staffers on a tour of South Lake Union and the Elliott Bay Pier on November 8 for a more focused discussion on compliance.



Boating Facilities Workshop

Karl Jacobs presented RCO's boating programs at a Boating Facilities and Marina Grants Workshop hosted by Washington Sea Grant. This virtual workshop was designed to help applicants learn how to access several state and federal grants to cover up to 75 percent of infrastructure and maintenance costs for motorized boating facilities. Staff also described how to leverage different grants to maximize funding. In addition to the board's Boating Infrastructure Grants and Boating Facilities Program, there was a session on the Clean Vessel Pump out Program administered by Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.



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.. 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 approved projects under agreement.

Program	Active Projects	Director Approved Projects	Total Funded Projects
Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA)	29	1	30
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	59	1	60
Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG)	10	0	10
Community Forests Program (CFP)	6	0	6
Firearms and Archery Range Recreation (FARR)	8	0	8
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	19	5	24
No Child Left Inside (NCLI)	73	0	73
Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities (NOVA)	86	2	88
Outdoor Learning Grants (OLG)	15	2	17
Recreation & Conservation Office Recreation Grants (RRG)	6	1	7
Recreational Trails Program (RTP)	37	2	39
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP)	230	7	237
Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF)	48	4	52
Total	626	25	651

Viewing Closed Projects

Attachment B lists projects that closed between October 1 and December 31, 2022. This quarter the team closed 33 projects! Click on the project number to view the project description, grant funds awarded, photos, maps, reports, etc.

Grant Services Section

No Child Left Inside Grant Program Update

The Washington State Legislature created the No Child Left Inside (NCLI) grant



program to provide underserved youth with quality opportunities to experience the natural world. This State Parks grant program intends to embolden local communities to engage youth in outdoor education and recreation experiences and

focuses on serving youth with the greatest needs. Since 2015, this program has provided critical funding for more than 100,000 youth to learn, play, and be outdoors. Research over the past two decades has shown that spending time outdoors produces powerful benefits for children, including reduced depression and anxiety, improved focus, better social connections, and enhanced learning and creativity.

2022 Grant Applications

The grant application funding request for 2022 is the largest in the history of NCLI with 175 applications requesting a total of \$12,379,097 in grant assistance.

Funding Program	Number of Applications	Grant Request	Sponsor Match	Total
Tier 1	61	\$1,371,363	No Match Required	\$1,371,363
Tier 2	60	\$3,673,139	\$3,098,895	\$6,772,034
Tier 3	54	\$7,352,595	\$7,796,661	\$15,149,256
Total	175	\$12,397,097	\$10,895,556	\$23,292,653

Grant Limits

Tier 1 - \$5,000-\$25,000* (no match required)

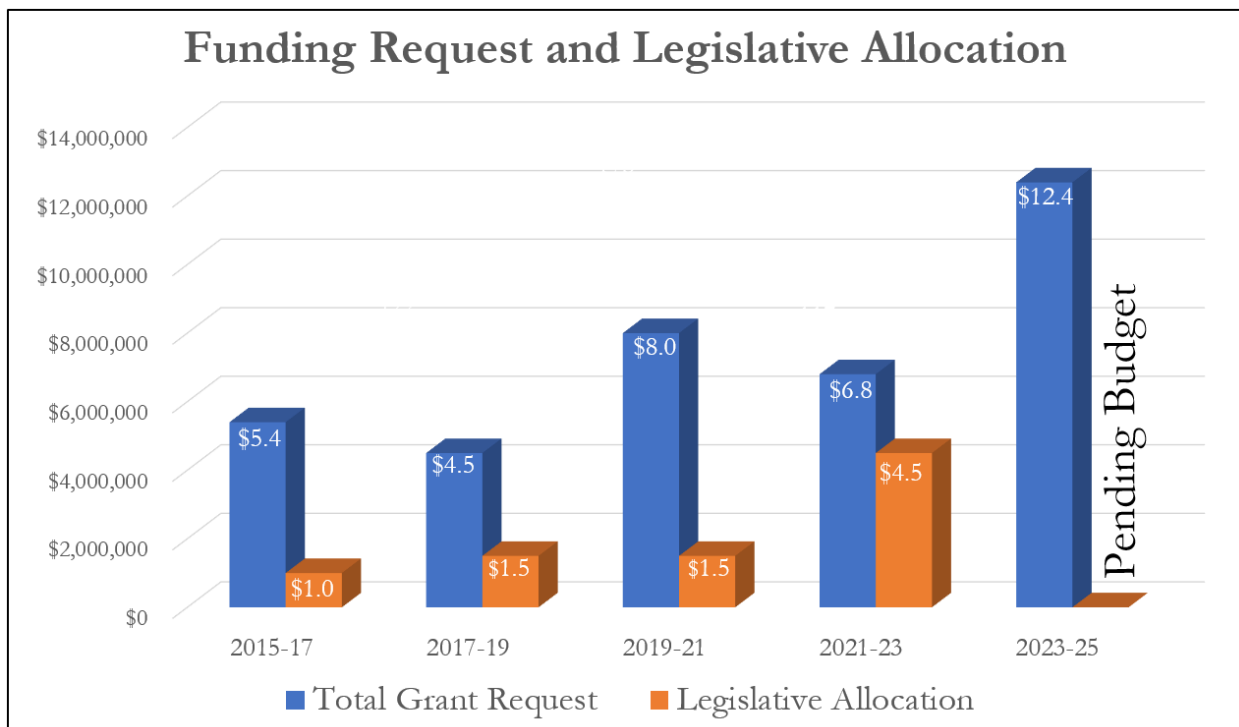
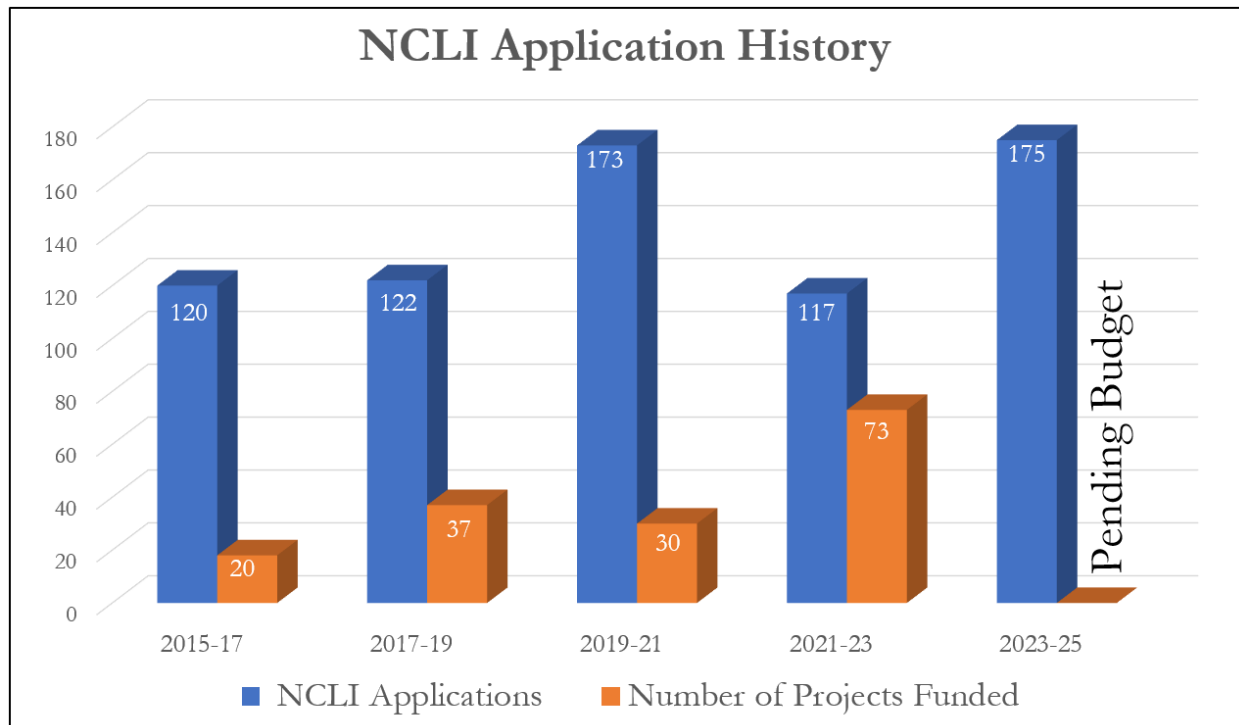
**Grants in this tier are open only to organizations that have not received NCLI funding in previous years.*

Tier 2 - \$5,000-\$75,000 (25 percent match required)

Tier 3 - \$75,001-\$150,000 (25 percent match required)

Estimate of Youth Served

The 175 applications could potentially serve more than 135,000 Washington State youth if every project received grant assistance. Average population demographics of all applications include approximately 70 percent eligible for free and reduced-price meals, 57 percent people of color, 17 percent English language learners, and 21 percent youth with disabilities.



Next Steps

Tier 1 and Tier 2 written applications will be evaluated by the NCLI Advisory Committee between January 18 – March 10, 2023. Tier 3 applicants will present their projects to the

NCLI Advisory Committee between February 8-9, 2023, and committee members will score the projects at that time. The ranked lists of projects will be presented to the State Parks Director in March for preliminary approval, pending budget.

Advisory Committee Members

Local and Education Agency Members

- Tsedenia Adno, Student
- Kandi Bauman, Evergreen State College/University of Washington, Freeland
- Kirk Beckendorf, Cascadia Conservation District, Wenatchee
- Gideon Cauffman, City of Oak Harbor, Oak Harbor
- Keli Regan Drake, City of Olympia & University of Washington, Olympia
- Jennifer Papich, City of Spokane, Spokane
- Stacey Selcho, Spokane Conservation District, Spokane
- Scott VanderWey, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle

Nonprofit and Other Agency Members

- Raina Baker, Camp Beausite Northwest, Port Hadlock
- Jamie Colling, REI, Seattle
- Julie Gardner, Vertical Generation, Seattle
- Jeremy Grisham, Empowered Response Counseling Services, Everett
- James E King, McKinney Center for Community and Economic Development, Seattle
- Martin LeBlanc, LBC Action, Seattle
- Chris Liu, Outdoor Asian, Seattle
- Siri Nelson, LOTT Clean Water Alliance, Olympia
- Jacqueline Reyes, The Wilderness Society, Seattle
- Esa Tilija, REI, Seattle
- Tammy VuPham, Outdoor Asian, Redmond

State Agency Members

- Leia Althaus, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Olympia
- Sarah Dettmer, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Olympia
- John Keates, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Bellingham
- Makaela Kroin, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Olympia
- Allison Lu, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Seattle
- Melinda Posner, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission, Olympia
- Elizabeth Schmitz, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia

Non-Grant Contracts

Every biennium RCO contracts with the private sector for a variety of services that include PRISM development, legislative required studies and reports, State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan surveys and data, Geographic Information System services, and a variety of policy consultants and other services.

In 2022, the Legislature directed the Department of Enterprise Services to develop procurement policies and procedures that encourage and facilitate the purchase of goods and services from Washington small businesses, microbusinesses, minibusinesses, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses to the maximum extent practicable. Supplier diversity adds value such as innovation, quality improvements, efficiencies, and cost savings.

Throughout 2023, RCO will be updating internal contracting policies and procedures to utilize legally compliant strategies that encourage and facilitate the purchase of goods and services from small, diverse, and veteran-owned businesses to the maximum extent possible.

Also, RCO recently updated its non-grant contract provisions related to COVID-19 vaccination requirements. The new provision requires that all suppliers, vendors, and other contractors working on-site at RCO headquarters to be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Fiscal Report

For July 1, 2021-June 30, 2023, actuals through August 31, 2022 (Fiscal Month 14). Percentage of biennium reported: 70.8 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	\$19,570,000	\$16,730,711	85%	\$2,839,289	15%	\$4,434,595	27%
BFP	\$35,395,000	\$32,918,893	93%	\$2,476,107	7%	\$7,441,090	23%
BIG	\$4,894,722	\$4,894,722	100%	\$0	0%	\$1,188,483	24%
FARR	\$1,742,000	\$1,125,804	65%	\$616,196	35%	\$461,253	41%
LWCF	\$5,876,000	\$5,876,000	100%	\$0	0%	\$3,871,310	66%
NOVA	\$19,270,000	\$17,339,975	90%	\$1,930,025	10%	\$5,361,493	31%
RTP	\$5,012,157	\$4,517,357	90%	\$494,800	10%	\$2,668,327	59%

WWRP	\$208,928,000	\$188,631,079	90%	\$20,296,921	10%	\$39,355,456	21%
RRG	\$5,991,000	\$5,199,436	87%	\$791,564	13%	\$1,786,091	34%
YAF	\$21,422,000	\$19,055,878	89%	\$2,366,122	11%	\$5,705,453	30%
Subtotal	\$328,100,879	\$296,289,855	90%	\$31,811,024	10%	\$72,273,551	24%

Administration

General Operating Funds	\$9,804,831	\$9,804,831	100%	\$0	0%	\$6,358,864	65%
Grand Total	\$337,905,710	\$306,094,686	91%	\$31,811,024	9%	\$78,632,415	26%

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 October 31, 2022 (Fiscal Month 16).

Percentage of biennium reported: 66.6 percent

Program	Biennial Forecast		Collections
	Estimate	Actual	% of Estimate
Boating Facilities Program (BFP)	\$18,751,290	\$12,610,996	67.3%
Nonhighway, Off-Road Vehicle Program (NOVA)	\$13,841,328	\$9,380,360	67.8%
Firearms and Archery Range Rec Program (FARR)	\$678,854	\$446,804	65.8%
Total	\$33,271,472	\$22,438,160	67.4%

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 2022. The next forecast will be in February 2023.







WWRP Expenditure Rate by Organization (1990-Current)

Agency	Committed	Expenditures	% Expended
Local Agencies	\$355,146,467	\$320,637,150	90%
Department of Fish and Wildlife	\$233,576,576	\$208,681,568	89%
Department of Natural Resources	\$198,758,835	\$158,217,447	80%
State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$168,562,206	\$139,123,489	83%
Nonprofits	\$52,228,445	\$36,399,414	70%
Conservation Commission	\$5,440,924	\$2,486,937	46%
Tribes	\$2,807,431	\$1,741,411	62%
Other			
Special Projects	\$735,011	\$735,011	100%
Total	\$1,017,255,895	\$868,022,427	85%

Performance Measures for Fiscal Year 2022

The following performance data are for recreation and conservation projects in fiscal year 2022 (July 1, 2022 – June 30, 2023). Data current as of December 19, 2022.

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) Performance Measures

Measure	Target	Fiscal Year-to-Date	Status	Notes
Grant agreements mailed within 120 days of funding	90%	83%		10 of 12 agreements have been mailed on time this fiscal year.
Grants under agreement within 180 days of funding	95%	83%		10 of 12 projects were under agreement within 180 days.
Progress reports responded to within 15 days	90%	92%		RCFB staff received 421 progress reports and responded to them in an average of 7 days.
Projects closed within 150 days of funding end date	85%	80%		47 of 59 projects have closed on time.
Projects in Backlog	5	24		There are 24 RCFB projects in the backlog needing to be closed out.
Compliance inspections done	125	17		10 inspections have inspected 17 worksites.

Attachments

Attachment A: Funds for Alternate and Partially Funded Projects

Attachment B: Table of Closed Projects from October 1 – December 31, 2022.

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
20-1253D	Cathlamet Waterfront Park	Cathlamet	\$500,000	\$500,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks
20-1243D	Curtin Creek Community Park Phase 1 Development	Clark County	\$500,000	\$500,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks
20-1488D	Gig Harbor Sports Complex Pickle Bo Spot	Gig Harbor	\$500,000	\$500,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks
20-1851D	Frontier Heights Phase 2	Lake Stevens	\$309,352	\$309,352	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks
20-1772D	Omak Eastside Park Skatepark Upgrade	Omak	\$401,070	\$68,465	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks
20-1528A	Riverside Little Spokane River Robinson Property	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$858,100	\$858,100	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Parks
20-1754A	Rockaway Bluff Preserve Acquisition	Bainbridge Island Land Trust	\$1,374,552	\$1,374,552	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat
20-1283A	Quimper Wildlife Corridor Additions	Jefferson Land Trust	\$610,400	\$610,400	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat
20-1426A	Onion Ridge Proposed Natural Area Preserve	Washington Department of Natural Resources	\$1,618,496	\$1,618,496	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
20-2006D	Tokeland Marina Fishers RV Park and Campground	Port of Willapa Harbor	\$764,000	\$177,349	\$316,390	Boating Facilities Program, Local
20-2189D	Stuart Island-Reid Harbor Moorage Replacement	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	\$1,872,500	\$1,843,000	\$1,872,500	Boating Facilities Program, State
20-1742A	Illahee Preserve Kitsap County Heritage Park	Kitsap County	\$1,000,000	\$720,763	\$1,000,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat
20-1862A	Lake Front Property	Lake Forest Park	\$2,603,000	\$856,949	\$1,350,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Water Access
18-1507D	Meadowdale Beach Park Access Development	Snohomish County	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$604,078	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Water Access
20-1252D	Liberty Lake Regional Park Phase 1	Spokane County	\$950,000	\$406,175	\$950,000	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Water Access

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

Projects Completed and Closed from October 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022

Project Number ⁱ	Sponsor	Project Name	Program	Closed On
18-1752R	Mukilteo	Mukilteo Waterfront Promenade Shoreline	Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account	11/1/2022
16-1610D	Deer Harbor Marina	Deer Harbor Marina Slip Expansion	Boating Infrastructure Grant, Tier 1	11/1/2022
18-1954D	Port of Port Angeles	Port Angeles Fuel Float	Boating Infrastructure Grant, Tier 2	12/2/2022
18-2337C	Port of Allyn	Ogren Property Purchase	Boating Facilities Program, Local	11/3/2022
18-2372P	Port of Chinook	Port of Chinook Boat Launch Planning	Boating Facilities Program, Local	12/16/2022
16-1858D	Entiat	Entiat Way Park	Land and Water Conservation Fund	11/3/2022
18-1212A	South Whidbey Parks and Recreation District	Waterman Trails Property Acquisition	Land and Water Conservation Fund	11/29/2022
20-1276A	Spokane County	Make Beacon Hill Public	Land and Water Conservation Fund	12/19/2022
19-1123E	Benton City	Benton City, Get Outside!	No Child Left Inside, Tier	12/21/2022
18-2358E	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Entiat Ranger District	Okanogan Wenatchee Central Zone Backcountry Education and Enforcement 2020-21	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Education and Enforcement	11/4/2022
18-2361M	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Entiat Ranger District	Entiat Ranger District Campgrounds and Dispersed Maintenance and Operation 2020-21	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonhighway Road	11/10/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Sponsor	Project Name	Program	Closed On
16-2646P	Snohomish County	Lord Hill Regional Park: Site and Management Plan	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	10/6/2022
16-2687D	U.S. Forest Service, Mount Baker Snoqualmie National Forest, Skykomish Ranger District	Frog Mountain Trail Construction	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Nonmotorized	10/4/2022
18-2359M	U.S. Forest Service, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, Entiat Ranger District	Entiat and Chelan Multiple Use Trail Maintenance and Operation 2020-21	Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, Off-road Vehicle	11/10/2022
16-2106A	Jefferson County	Olympic Discovery Trail: Discovery Bay to Larry Scott Trail Connection	RCO Recreation Grants, Trails	12/1/2022
21-1566E	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Middle Fork and Mt. Si Natural Resources Conservation Area	Recreational Trails Program, Education	12/16/2022
21-1567E	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Palouse Falls Education Resource	Recreational Trails Program, Education	12/2/2022
18-2411M	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Northeast Region: Motorized Trails-Grooming and Plowing	Recreational Trails Program, General	11/3/2022
18-1861A	Okanogan Land Trust	Miller 4-Bravo Farmland and Ranch	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farmland Preservation	12/21/2022
20-1210D	Jefferson County	Jefferson County Universal Movement Playground	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks	12/2/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Sponsor	Project Name	Program	Closed On
20-1275A	Spokane County	Make Beacon Hill Public	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks	11/29/2022
20-1288A	Monroe	Monroe North Hill Park Site	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Local Parks	12/1/2022
16-1419A	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Lacamas Prairie Natural Area 2016	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Natural Areas	12/29/2022
18-1520A	Washington Department of Natural Resources	Lacamas Prairie Natural Area 2018	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Natural Areas	12/29/2022
12-1341D	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Rasar State Park Group Camp Improvements	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Parks	12/14/2022
18-1839A	Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission	Inholdings and Adjacent Properties 2018	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, State Parks	11/17/2022
18-1355D	Bothell	Non-motorized Bridge at Park at Bothell Landing	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Trails	11/21/2022
16-1350A	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	West Rocky Prairie 2016	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat	11/23/2022
16-1352A	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife	Scatter Creek Addition	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Urban Wildlife Habitat	11/23/2022
16-1834A	Island County	Barnum Point West Tract Acquisition	Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Water Access	12/21/2022
18-1670D	Bellingham	Squalicum Creek Park Phase 4	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	11/29/2022

Project Number ⁱ	Sponsor	Project Name	Program	Closed On
18-1981D	Stanwood	Heritage Park Ball Field Renovation Phase IV	Youth Athletic Facilities, Large	11/16/2022
20-1864D	Milton	Milton Community Park Courts	Youth Athletic Facilities, Small	12/13/2022

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

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Equity Review Action Plan Overview

Prepared By: Leah Dobey, Policy Specialist

Summary

In 2021, the state legislature directed the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) to conduct an equity review of the agency's grant programs to identify opportunities toward improving equitable distribution of recreation grants and reducing barriers that might prevent underserved communities' success in RCO programs. This review was completed in August 2022 and included six broad recommendations, with 45 specific recommendations.

From the suite of detailed recommendations, RCO has considered the impact, level of effort required for implementation, and the desired timeframe to begin and complete work. This exercise prioritized topics for the agency and resulted in an action plan to guide the agency's equity work in the coming years.

This memo summarizes Phase I of the action plan, which staff will work on in 2023, and includes recommendations related to community engagement, evaluation criteria, evaluation process, and partner-oriented topics.

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

In August 2022, the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) completed an equity review of the agency's recreation and conservation grant programs. This review identified potential barriers that prevent historically underrepresented communities from participating in and receiving RCO grants and presented recommendations to help address those barriers. As part of the review, RCO contracted Prevention Institute to

analyze granting outcomes from the past three funding cycles (2016-2020), granting procedures, emerging research, and community feedback to produce findings and recommendations.

Within six broad recommendations, Prevention Institute provided 45 specific recommendations to guide RCO's steps moving forward. These recommendations range from less complex changes that can be made in-house within a shorter timeframe and no additional resources, to those that will require significant input from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board), stakeholders, and/or the legislature over a longer period, as well as additional staffing or funding. Many recommendations overlap or implementation of one may affect another, requiring that RCO consider recommendations together, to help avoid any potential unintentional consequences.

To guide prioritization, staff bucketed recommendations into like categories, considered their impact, level of effort required for implementation, and the desired timeframe to begin and complete work.

Implementation Phasing

The implementation timeline determined in the action planning process may shift over time as deeper analyses and outreach occur and as staff capacity is available, however Phase I work will begin this year. This phase will focus on four main categories of recommendations:

- Community engagement
- Evaluation criteria
- Evaluation process
- Partner-oriented topics

Subsequent phases will depend on the outcomes of Phase I.

Phase I

As of December 2022, several recommendations from the equity review are already in motion. For the 2023-2025 biennium, RCO has requested funding for a tribal liaison position, a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Coordinator, and a data management position. Each of these positions will tie into recommendations from the equity review. Additionally, some process changes are currently being tested in the new grant program Planning for Recreation Access, which falls under the authority of RCO's director.

Moving forward into 2023, RCO staff will begin Phase I implementation of other higher priority recommendations as identified during staff's action planning process. These

topics are related to four categories including community engagement, evaluation criteria, partner-oriented topics, and evaluation process, and are summarized in the following table:

Category	What	Why	Lead Staff	Timeline
Community Engagement	Expand communications reach	Increase knowledge of RCO programs	Communications + Pending DEI Coordinator	Throughout 2023
Evaluation Criteria	Analyze and update specified criteria	Objectively elevate projects with significant need or community impact	Policy Staff	Briefings: Early 2023 Decision: Targeting Late 2023
Evaluation Process	Improve applicant support and committee representation	Expand opportunities for participation and success	Grant Services Section	Late 2023
Partner-Oriented Topics	Identify funding opportunities and resources for sponsors	Build capacity and support non-traditional applicants	Policy + Partners	2023 - 2024

Community Engagement

The Equity Review found that limited proposal activity is a driving factor in underinvestment in some communities and that RCO tends to focus outreach on existing and traditional contacts. Prevention Institute recommended that RCO's communications reach be broadened to ensure that a wide range of organizations and communities know about grant opportunities. Examples of efforts to address this during Phase I include expanding RCO's contacts list to include equity-focused and community development organizations throughout the state and developing and implementing a more robust communications strategy to reach those contacts.

This work will be led by RCO's Communications Director, as well as a new DEI coordinator (if funded by the 2023 legislature). Expansion of contacts and outreach may also benefit from coordination with RCO's existing partners.

Evaluation Criteria

Four of the six broad Equity Review recommendations include changes to or assessment of existing evaluation criteria to prioritize projects that address inequities, and to do so with more emphasis on objective measures. Because changes in one area may affect

another, staff will consider many of these recommendations in relation to each other during Phase I. Additionally, not all criteria-related recommendations may be applicable in all grant programs or categories. As such, RCO policy staff will start with an analysis of the feasibility and effect of Prevention Institute's criteria recommendations, then transition into engagement with stakeholders and the board.

Several recommendations to be assessed during Phase I include rewarding projects in low-income areas that include climate or accessibility related features, increased emphasis on Project Need and Project Support for projects that address park access, reassessment of Population Proximity criteria, and revising Project Support criteria.

Evaluation Process

While several broad-level recommendations pertain to changes or assessment of RCO's evaluation processes, several specific recommendations have been identified as high priority to address in Phase I and will be led by the agency's Grant Services Section. The recommendations focus on supporting less resourced applicants, increasing their level of competitiveness, and helping to ensure that advisory committees are representative of our diverse state and applicants. Recommendations in this category include providing additional webinars prior to application deadlines to help prepare applicants for the evaluation process, exploration of a permanent remote (virtual, web-based) grant presentation option, and improving representation on RCO's advisory committees by updating committee charters and conducting expanded recruitment.

Partner-Oriented Topics

Recognizing the strong role that RCO's stakeholders can play in furthering equitable recreation and conservation funding, the agency has identified several recommendations that may best be led by or coordinated with partners. The vantage point and flexibility of their organizations may provide more resources for potential project sponsors.

These partner-oriented topics include exploring funding options for non-profits for administration and overhead costs, developing memorandum of understanding templates to guide partnerships between organizations, and convening events to highlight innovative greenspace funding, or peer-to-peer learning.

Planning Grants

In fall 2022, RCO collected applications for a new grant program: Planning for Recreation Access. The goal of this program is to provide planning funding for diverse urban neighborhoods, small rural communities, and first-time applicants. Evaluation of these grants will conclude in January 2023 and, following approval by the RCO director,

grant awards will be made shortly after. The development of this program began concurrently with the work of the Equity Review and staff have incorporated several concepts and strategies recommended by Prevention Institute.

No match was required for this program and the application process was significantly reduced to allow more organizations the opportunity to apply. Staff also expanded communications and direct outreach efforts to include new organizations and governments that have not typically applied for RCO grants, while also expanding various avenues for direct support. These efforts led to an overwhelmingly positive response from communities across the state. Ninety-nine applications with a combined request of \$12.5 million are competing for \$3 million of available funding, which illustrates a significant need for planning funding and also the difference that a low-barrier to entry program can make.

Next Steps

Over the coming months, staff will conduct work toward Phase I implementation of Equity Review recommendations, including convening working groups of stakeholders and community members. Briefings on these topics will be provided to the board at the April and June meetings, with any decisions expected to be presented in October. This timing will allow approved changes to be incorporated into grant manuals for the 2024 grant round.



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023
Title: Cost Increases Approach
Prepared By: Brock Milliern, Policy Director

Summary

Project sponsors in Washington State are experiencing unprecedented increases in costs for land, labor, materials, and equipment for capital improvement projects. This has had a significant impact on Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) approved projects where budgets are set years before actual project implementation. This memo summarizes the status of the board's cost increase policies for grant programs and suggests possible changes to address this rising concern.

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

Cost Increases

Background

At the October 2022 Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) meeting, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff briefed the board on the rising costs of projects and options for cost increases in grant funded programs. The briefing included the following:

- Statistics for increases in costs for construction, according to the National Home Builders Association, from July 2020 – July 2021. At 26.1 percent, this was over four times higher than the previous record.
- A summary of the cost increase authority delegated to the director for salmon recovery programs (under 20 percent) and most recreation and conservation programs (under 10 percent).

- Clarification about which programs do not allow cost increases. While increases are allowed for several board programs, they are not allowed for the Aquatic Land Enhancement Account (ALEA) or the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP): Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts.
- Options for cost increases when authority is not delegated to the director, or the increase exceeds director authority, which may include:
 - Presenting the increase request to the board for consideration.
 - Down scoping the project to maintain critical elements, while reducing secondary elements and reducing costs.
 - Requiring project sponsors to procure additional funding to complete the scope of work as specified in the grant agreement.
- Staff provided four preliminary policy options:
 - a. Change the current policy to allow cost increases in all WWRP categories and ALEA.
 - b. Encourage or direct staff to prioritize returned funds for one or more of the following purposes:
 - i. Cost increases.
 - ii. Funding projects that only received partial funding.
 - iii. Funding alternates on a board approved ranked list.
 - c. Enact a and b simultaneously to comprehensively address rising costs.
 - d. Direct funding to be set aside for cost increases at the beginning of a biennium.

Board Direction

Following the briefing, the board asked staff to provide additional information for discussion at the January 2023 meeting. The follow-up topics include:

- A summary of why some programs do not allow cost increases.
- Data that may help clarify the significance of cost increases.
- Short and long-term policy options for cost increases in the currently ineligible programs.
- Implications of implementing new cost increase policies in those programs.

Follow-Up

Questions to Consider

Why are cost increases prohibited in some programs? While staff has not found anything explicitly stated in board materials, staff believe that the board primarily has not approved cost increases for some programs because they are historically oversubscribed and there is insufficient funding for increases. In recent years, all projects in programs such as the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) or the WWRP Farm and Forest Account have been fully funded. This means that any remaining funds in those accounts and/or any return funds in those programs are generally available for cost increases. The same is not true for the WWRP Outdoor Recreation and Habitat Conservation Accounts. There have always been alternate projects where unused funds could be invested to either fully fund a partially funded project or to fund the next highest-ranking alternate(s).

Another reason cost increases may not have been considered for WWRP categories is the complexity of the funding formula for that program. Statutory changes in more recent years have reduced some of the complexity and the current formula specifies a specific percentage of funds for each category.

Is there data to help clarify the need? Data to illustrate the full cost increase issue is difficult to collect, for these reasons:

- While sponsors may need additional funds for a project, they are unlikely to request funds from programs or categories where cost increases are not permissible.
- In some instances, the increased costs may be so large that the sponsor decides to withdraw the project, particularly if they cannot come up with the additional match or additional funds needed to implement the project.
- In many instances, by default, the sponsor finishes most of the elements and then submits a final bill and a final report that shows the elements they were unable to complete due to a lack of funds.

Staff will present recent data collected for cost increase requests at the board meeting.

Why should we consider cost increase for these two programs? RCO staff remain concerned that acquisition and construction costs will continue to increase over the next six to 12 months. Indicators such as the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index (CPI) show a significant increase in the cost of goods over the last two years. The 12-month average CPI increase in 2018-2019 was 3.02 percent, while in 2021-2022 it was 6.3 percent. Additionally, the National Home Builders Association showed a 26.1 percent increase in the cost of construction—the previous high was 6.1 percent.

Policy Options Being Considered

Although the board is not being asked to make any policy decisions at the January meeting, staff will present draft options for discussion and input.

Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account Options

The options proposed are comparable to the policies for other board programs, such as YAF and WWRP Farm and Forest, which may have funds available to cover costs without withholding funding from alternate projects. To bring this program in line with other programs, staff drafted the following recommendations:

- Option 1 (staff recommendation): Allow the RCO Director to use unspent funds to approve cost increases of up to 10 percent of the total project cost. Increases above 10 percent would be referred to the board for consideration.
- Option 2: No action.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Options

WWRP Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts never have more funding than projects. If one category in either account is undersubscribed, funds may be shifted to categories with viable alternate projects. Unused funds, per board direction, have historically been used to fully fund partially funded projects. Funds remaining are then used to fund qualified alternates.

Per the board's request to bring short and long-term options—the first two options could be applied permanently or with a sunset date in two to four years. Option three would only apply to the 2022 grant round. Staff has not selected a preferred option.:

- Option 1: Allow the RCO Director to use unspent funds to approve cost increases up to 10 percent of the total project amount for WWRP Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts.
- Option 2: Allow the RCO Director to use unspent funds to approve cost increases up to 10 percent of the total project amount for WWRP Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts. In addition, prioritize use of unspent funds in the following order: finish funding partially funded projects, approve pending cost increases, then fund alternates on the board approved ranked lists.
- Option 3: Hold back a small percentage (1 to 2.5 percent) of the 2023-2025 WWRP budgets for the Habitat Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Accounts and allow the RCO Director to use the holdback to cover future cost increases of up to 10 percent of the total project cost. Funds may be used for 2022 projects only.

- Option 4: No change.

Next Steps

RCO staff will take direction from the board at the January 2023 meeting. If the board decides to move forward with considering cost increases for ALEA and WWRP, staff will draft options for consideration and solicit public comment before submitting a final proposal to the board in April along with the agency's capital budget (barring any delays in a final approval of the state budget).

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Cultural Resources Review & Consultation Update

Prepared By: Sarah Thirtyacre, Cultural Resources Unit Manager &
Sarah Johnson Humphries, Archaeologist

Summary

This memo serves as a summary of cultural resources process for most projects funded by the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board. Staff will provide more information regarding the regulatory framework, agency consultation methods, and highlight recent process improvements during the board briefing.

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

State and Federal Cultural Resources Regulation

State Regulation:

Washington Governor Jay Inslee signed Executive Order 21-02 (EO 2102) in April 2021, which replaced and rescinded Executive Order 05-05 signed by Governor Christine Gregoire in November 2005. EO 2102 requires agencies to consult with the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and affected tribes on the potential effects that state funded projects may have on cultural resources.¹ The goal of the EO 2102 is to have the State be proactive in protecting our rich history for future generations and to use taxpayer money wisely by avoiding unnecessary damage and loss of significant sites, structures, and buildings.

¹ "Cultural Resources" can be defined as any physical evidence or place of past human activity: site, object, landscape, structure; or a site, structure, landscape, object, or natural feature of significance to a group of people traditionally associated with it.

This consultation is required on any state-funded projects involving construction or acquisition that are not undergoing a review under federal regulation Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Section 106). If a project is required to undergo a review in accordance with Section 106, documentation of that review must be provided and may satisfy the state's EO 2102 requirements.

Agencies must initiate consultation with DAHP and affected tribes early in the project planning process and complete it prior to expenditure of any state funds for construction, demolition, or acquisition.

What's a Governor's Executive Order?

Executive Orders are formal orders issued by the Governor to cabinet agencies requiring that certain actions be taken. Executive Orders may have the force and effect of a law. In the case of EO 2102, non-cabinet agencies are invited to participate and implement the Executive Order. Additionally, as EO 2102 is codified in the budget and applies to all agencies receiving funding through the capital budget. ([*SHB 1080, Section 7012, April 24, 2021*](#))

Federal Regulation:

As massive government-sponsored construction projects, such as the interstate highway system and urban renewal in older cities, became commonplace after World War II, an estimated 25 percent of the nation's finest historic sites were lost. In response to growing public concern, Congress passed the [National Historic Preservation Act \(NHPA\) in 1966 \(16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.\)](#). The law established a national policy for the protection of important historic buildings and archeological sites and outlined responsibilities for federal and state governments to preserve our nation's heritage.

Each state has a State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) who is mandated to represent the interests of the state when consulting with federal agencies under Section 106 of the NHPA and to maintain a database of historic properties. The NHPA also created the [Advisory Council on Historic Preservation \(ACHP\)](#), an independent federal agency in the executive branch that oversees the Section 106 review process. In addition to the views of the agencies and council, input from the general public and Native American tribes is also required. The responsibilities of all parties in the Section 106 review process are codified in federal regulations.

A "Federal Nexus" is created by any federal agency issuing a federal permit or license or providing federal funds, and the agency must comply with Section 106. The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) administers several federal grant programs and funds

state projects that require federal permits or use federal funding as project match, thus mandating RCO's compliance with Section 106. RCO's role in the Section 106 process varies based on the program and any delegated authorities or agreements that have been established.

Federal Nexus Types in RCO Programs	
Land and Water Conversation Fund (LWCF)	National Park Service
Recreation Trails Program (RTP)	Federal Highways Administration
Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG)	United State Fish and Wildlife Service
Projects requiring a federal permit	United States Army Corps of Engineers
Projects occurring on federal lands	United States Forest Service, National Park Service, Tribal Lands

RCO's Cultural Resource Program:

Cultural Resource Review, Consultation and Compliance

Review: RCO² reviews planning, restoration, construction, and acquisition projects for impact to cultural and historic resources in compliance with the EO 2102 (unless a federal nexus exists). Most projects are required to undergo extensive review to ensure the agency avoids or minimizes impacts to cultural resources. RCO's goal is to facilitate a comprehensive consultation process that provides a thorough review of projects proposed for funding.

As projects are submitted via PRISM, RCO reviews the applications and project areas against DAHP's database, General Land Office survey maps, Lidar data, U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey T-sheets, historic U.S. Geologic Survey quad maps, historic aerial photos, and published ethnographic works where available.

In September of 2021, RCO hired a full-time [Secretary of the Interior](#) qualified staff archaeologist to assist RCO's cultural resources specialist and back-fill work that was previously being completed through an interagency agreement with Washington State Department of Transportation. Adding a full-time staff archaeologist to the RCO team has allowed us to better integrate early project review, assist grants managers and applicants in budgeting, and develop new Geographic Information System (GIS) tools that facilitate a more robust review of projects. A second full-time archaeologist will

²Cultural resources review and compliance for State Agency sponsored projects, or projects occurring on State owned or managed lands (regardless of sponsor type), is the responsibility of the respective agency. Documentation of compliance must be provided to RCO staff.

start on January 16, 2023, allowing each archaeologist to be dedicated to either salmon or recreation and conservation grants.

Consultation: Once projects are scored and ranked, RCO's cultural resource team conducts consultation with tribal councils, tribal cultural resources directors, and DAHP. This consultation effort serves to identify potential impacts to cultural resources and enhance the government-to-government relationship with tribes.

Active Phase: RCO grant recipients are responsible for hiring consultants that meet the Secretary of Interior Standards to complete any cultural resources work for their projects. This work may include archaeological field surveys, historic property evaluations and inventories, mitigation plans, or obtaining permits through DAHP. All cultural resources work is eligible for reimbursement via the grant agreements; it is vital that grant sponsors include costs to address cultural resources in their applications and budget appropriately.

Once initial consultation has been completed, grant agreements are conditioned with requirements that must be met prior to proceeding to construction or being fully reimbursed for an acquisition. RCO grants managers are responsible for ensuring sponsors comply with all grant agreement requirements.

Some projects require extensive cultural resources work and ongoing oversight and consultation efforts throughout the life of the project. Project sponsors may be required to have a professional archaeologist monitor all ground disturbing work, obtain an archaeological permit from the DAHP, enter into a federal agreement document, redesign projects to avoid or minimize effects, or develop mitigation plans.

What is an Archaeological Permit?

In the State of Washington, any alteration to an archaeological site requires a permit from DAHP ([RCW 27.44](#) and [RCW 27.53](#)). Archaeological sites are defined under RCW 27.53.030(3) as places that contain archaeological objects. All sites with objects that pre-date the historic era (prehistoric) require a permit, regardless of the level of "disturbance". Alterations to a site can include adding fill, building on, removing trees, using heavy equipment on, compacting, or other activities that would change or potentially impact the site.

RCO cultural staff work closely with grants managers, sponsors, cultural resources consultants, tribal staff and DAHP to navigate compliance and avoid adverse impacts wherever possible. Staff facilitates cultural resources trainings for grant recipients, attends conferences (such as the Washington Recreation and Parks Association 2022

conference), participates in the annual Cultural Resources Protection Summit, frequently meets with tribal cultural resources staff, and attends functions hosted by tribes.

Demonstration: New Tools

EO 2102 has enhanced and clarified the cultural resources requirements that must be met when state agencies are providing funds for projects, but the burden to review, analyze and consult on 800-1000 projects per year is a daunting task. RCO staff are also aware of the impacts to consulting parties (specifically DAHP and Tribes) and strives to present consultation materials in an organized and efficient manner. With increased funding for projects, being responsive to consultation requests is weighing heavily on tribal cultural resource's offices, DAHP, and other state agencies. Currently, the state does not provide dedicated funding directly to tribal governments to perform review and consultative actions, and as more agencies come into compliance and more funding is dedicated to projects, tribal staff are stretched thin. To ease the burden of reviewing hundreds of RCO grants proposals annually, we have implemented several new tools.

PRISM Database Enhancements:

- **Phase 1 (Complete):** In April 2021, RCO staff implemented Phase 1 of a mapping component into our PRISM Online Application Wizard to allow grant applicants to map the Area of Potential Effect (APE). PRISM also produces automated reports that include the APE map and the applicant's response to screening questions. The APE mapping capability and automated forms make consultation efforts with tribes and DAHP more efficient.
- **Phase 2a (in progress):** In 2022, RCO began Phase 2 design and development. Over the last six months, staff have been working with the developers to enhance the cultural resources module and mapping, along with a new internal review module that will facilitate early feedback for applicants.
- **Phase 2b (to come):** In 2023, staff will continue to build out the module, including: automating the consultation phase, developing internal tracking and notification systems, and exploring additional ways to share data to create efficiencies.

Integrating GIS Data: The cultural resources team has expanded its professional cultural resources staff and added GIS capacity. A few examples of recent work include:

- **DAHP data share:** RCO has entered into a data sharing agreement with DAHP that provides RCO's cultural staff with direct access to DAHP's archaeological/historic property database. The increase in efficiency of using DAHP data directly integrated with RCO's existing GIS data is particularly apparent when staff are reviewing hundreds of projects at a time.

- **Integrating Data Layers:** RCO is using this data to provide cultural resources review more efficiently and accurately to internal and external clients. Staff have assembled data layers that include the DAHP database, General Land Office survey maps, Lidar data, property ownership, U.S. Coast & Geodetic Survey T-sheets, county assessor parcel data, historic USGS quad maps, historic aerial photos, and published ethnographic works where available. Using GIS, staff are layering datasets on top of each other to illustrate the known and unknown about each of the project worksites that so, that staff can make more informed recommendations.
- **Interagency coordination:** Staff have been able to coordinate with sister state agencies and have integrated landownership layers to RCO's online resources. Staff can easily pull lists, reports, APE maps and share shapefiles with Department of Fish and Wildlife, Department of Natural Resources and the Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission.
- **Tribal Coordination:** Staff have digitized tribal consultation areas that assist in identifying the appropriate tribe(s) to consult with for each project. RCO now offers tribes shapefiles with APEs and links to the PRISM Snapshot for all projects.

2022 Cultural Resources Accomplishments

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board:

- Completed early review for 240 new applications; if funded this would be an investment of over \$400 million (NEW)
- Completed initial review for 15 new Land and Water Conservation Fund applications; if funded this would be an investment of \$45 million
- Led sponsor training at the WRPA annual meeting

Salmon Recovery Funding Board:

- Participated in the Salmon technical Review Team meeting (NEW)
- Completed early review for over 200 new applications (NEW)
- Completed consultation and developed grant agreement language for SRFB projects approved by the board in October
- Reviewed and consulted on 25 Family Forest Fish Passageway Program projects
- Reviewed and consulted on projects funded under the supplemental budget

Agency:

- Reviewed survey reports, site forms, and conducted on-going consultation with DAHP and Tribes for all active projects
- Negotiated and executed multiple Memorandum of Agreements (MOA)
- Worked with Tribes to update consultation areas, develop new GIS layers, and transmit project shapefiles

- Collaborated with state agency partners to share GIS data and transmit project shapefiles
- Established monthly coordination meetings with DAHP staff
- Met regularly (in-person and virtually) with tribal cultural resources staff
- Launched a new external cultural resource [webpage](#)



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Washington Recreation and Conservation Plan Update

Prepared By: Ben Donatelle, Natural Resources Policy Specialist

Summary

This memo summarizes the final 2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

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

Resolution: 2023-02

Purpose of Resolution: Adopt the 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan.

Background

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), and the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) update the Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan every five years. The plan serves as Washington's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) and satisfies the agency's outdoor recreation planning obligations required by Washington state law, the National Park Service's Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), and the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program.

RCO staff began developing elements of this plan in February 2021. Staff provided a briefing to the board on the draft plan report, statewide priorities, and Unified Strategy at the October 2022 meeting. Since that time, staff have posted the plan for public review, considered public comments submitted during the plan review period, and are finalizing the plan report for publication.

This memo provides an update on the 2023 State Recreation and Conservation Plan.

2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan

The central component of the comprehensive plan identifies the state's priorities, goals, and unifying strategy to address outdoor recreation needs of Washington's residents. The plan outlines a strategic framework for the planning, acquisition, conservation and development of public lands, waters, and trails to satisfy the state's outdoor recreation needs identified throughout the planning process. The priorities, goals, and unified strategy were developed with the input of over 12,000 Washington residents, two advisory committees, the board, and RCO staff. RCO staff presented the draft plan to the board in October 2022.

Public Review and Comment

RCO staff posted the draft plan for public review and comment on November 18, 2022. Notification of the posting and public comment period was emailed to over 2,000 contacts who expressed interest in the plan. A press release announcing the public review opportunities was sent to over 400 media outlets. The [SCORP Hub website](#) hosted the draft plan and supporting materials including the mapped inventory and service area analysis. The draft plan report and notice of public comment period was posted on [RCO's policy webpage](#).

The 30-day public comment opportunity was November 18 to December 18, 2022.

RCO received 18 comments on the draft plan, which staff are incorporating into the final plan.

A summary of the comments received and RCO's response is included as Attachment A.

Strategic Plan Link

The 2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan helps achieve Goal 1 of the board's strategic plan: *We help our partners protect, restore, and develop habitat and recreation opportunities that benefit people, wildlife, and ecosystems.*

Next Steps

The plan report is currently under final review and will be distributed to the board in advance of the January meeting.

Subject to the board's decision, RCO staff will prepare the final plan report for publication and submit it to the Governor's office and the National Park Service for final approval. RCO will publish the final plan online and notify stakeholders.

Request for Decision

Resolution 2023-02 is included as Attachment B. RCO staff requests the board approve Resolution 2023-02 to adopt the 2023 Recreation and Conservation Plan.

Attachments

Attachment A: Public Comment Summary Table

Attachment B: Resolution # 2023-02

	Name	Comment	Date	Notes/Response
18	<p>Larry Leveen Executive Director ForeverGreen Trails 243 S. 55th St. Tacoma, WA 98408 larryleveen@forevergreentrails.org</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p><i>NOTE: File attached</i></p> <p><i>Substantive comments from file</i></p> <p>We are particularly glad to see a multi-modal access/service area measure and inclusion of the concept of safe routes (to recreation) in the plan...We encourage RCO to work with state and local partners to help spread awareness of safe routes to parks/trails and think creatively about potential policies and funding that might help address these inequities.</p> <p>RCO might need to consider/clarify its grant program rules regarding in-road improvements so that trail crossings, a particularly important and often inevitable facility, are eligible for funding.</p> <p>Lastly, we suggest that RCO consider ways to help smaller jurisdictions compete in for grant funding.</p>	12/20/2022	<p><i>Substantive comments added to draft (and responses below)</i></p> <p>Thank you. We agree that policy alignment and public engagement to facilitate and encourage greater partnerships and participation to connect trail systems and address gaps in access is needed. See Goal 2.2 and 4.1</p> <p>Unified Strategy #2 calls for reviewing grant program policies.</p> <p>See Goal 2.2 and 4.1</p>
17	<p>Andrea Martin Statewide Recreation Manager Recreation & Conservation Division Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) andrea.martin@dnr.wa.gov</p>	<p>The attached comments are from Elizabeth Eberle, our Recreation Data Manager (and very skilled cartographer) and Brody Coval, our Recreation Policy Manager who was previously a timber sales forester. Both have much more experience with spatial data than I do, so I'm passing on their comments with very little editing. If it would be helpful for you to meet with either/both of them, please reach out.</p>	12/18/2022	<p>Comments are technical suggestions for improving the inventory map cartography and inventory dashboard user interface. Thank you for your suggestions and offer of assistance.</p>

	<i>email submission</i>	<i>NOTE: file attached</i>		
16	<p>Dave Fergus 2904 NW 133rd Street Vancouver, WA 98685 dave.fergus@comcast.net</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p>Dear Washington State Recreation and Conservation Planning Team,</p> <p>Please consider expansion of the trail system as a key element of your 2023 Recreation and Conservation plan.</p> <p>My wife and I are long-time homeowners of a property that abuts the Salmon Creek trail in Vancouver, Washington. We see hundreds of people of all ages enjoying the trail behind our house virtually every day in many positive ways such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running • Biking • Bird watching • Star gazing • Wildlife observation (beaver, otter, deer, numerous waterfowl species, coyotes, turtles, fox, etc.) • Photography • Quiet contemplation • Dog walking • Kayaking/Canoeing/SUP • Fishing • Berry picking • Habitat restoration and improvement for fish, wildlife and vegetation 	12/18/2022	<p><i>Substantive comments added to draft (response below)</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments. Goal 4.3 reflects the need to expand community trail systems for both recreation and multi-modal, active transportation purposes.</p>

		<p>Many users of the trail agree it would be beneficial to expand the Salmon Creek trail beyond its current roughly 3.5-mile length in both directions. If expanded 2-3 miles to the east of its current termination point at Klineline pond all the way to the WSU-Vancouver campus it could tie into the trail system on that campus. Expanding the trail 2-3 miles to the west of its current termination point at NW 36th Ave would offer hundreds of homeowners from the ever-expanding Ashley Heights subdivision easy access to the trail.</p> <p>Further expansion west to Lake River and then south to Vancouver Lake could also tie into the Burnt Bridge Creek trail, and then additional expansion south to the trail system along the Columbia River. Expansion from Lake River north to the Ridgefield Wildlife Recreation area would also be a very worthwhile consideration.</p> <p>The trail offers a safe place for both children and adults to walk, run and bike away from traffic and surrounded by the natural beauty and wildlife of the northwest. Expansion of the trail would offer safe, accessible recreation options for thousands more residents of Clark County.</p> <p>Thank you for considering expansion of the trail system as part of your 2023 plan and in particular expansion of the Salmon Creek trail system.</p>		
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15	<p>Rachel Fischer Western Policy and Engagement Manager National Marine Manufacturers Association O: (202) 737-9766 C: (317) 289-4418 rfischer@nmma.org www.nmma.org</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I hope this email finds you all well.</p> <p>The National Marine Manufacturers Association and Marine Retailers Association of the Americas would like to formally submit the attached letter for public comment on the 2023 SCORP. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments.</p> <p>Thank you so much for the opportunity to comment!</p> <p><i>NOTE: file attached</i></p> <p><i>Substantive comments from file</i></p> <p>The Washington state SCORP identifies boating and other water sports as having considerably increased the demand for access to water-related recreation; this demand continues to grow at a rapid rate with nearly 44% of Washington residents participating in motorized boating throughout 2021. Because of this growth, NMMA and MRAA echo the SCORP in its assertion that access to water is incredibly important throughout Washington state's outdoor recreation plans. To adequately increase access to water, NMMA and MRAA deem features such as proper funding for infrastructure like boat launches; the ability to move between major cities and boating</p>	12/18/2022	<p><i>Substantive comments from file added to draft (and response below)</i></p> <p>We agree. Connectivity is a core tenant of this plan's conceptual framework. RCO supports innovations such as car charging stations at launch sites as a component of climate resilience. RCO also supports increasing access and access equity to boating, water recreation and swimming facilities.</p>
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		<p>areas; and support structures such as charging stations for cars at launch sites, as opportunities to increase this access.</p> <p>...recreational boating can receive over \$15 million throughout the state of Washington. NMMA and MRAA applauds this fiscal effort as it is evident that boating is a respected, major portion of the state's outdoor recreation landscape.</p> <p>Lastly, we acknowledge the strategy of "research[ing] and communicat[ing] the multiple intersecting benefits, challenges and opportunities to align outdoor recreation with healthy ecosystems in Washington state." As Washington state moves towards this strategy over the next four years, NMMA and MRAA would like to volunteer for any working groups or task forces that may arise to support this strategy. We understand the importance of aligning outdoor recreation with healthy ecosystems so that the great outdoors can be experienced and enjoyed by generations to come. Specifically, we would like to acknowledge efforts being made towards infrastructure, access, and the environment throughout our industry, and we support appropriate, inclusive efforts towards this strategy.</p>		<p>Thank you. Boating is a foundational activity in Washington State and supported through a fuel use tax incentive program (BFP)</p> <p>Thank you for your offer to volunteer. We will be in touch in the coming year.</p>
14	<p>Kurt Hellmann Conservation Northwest Seattle kurt@conservationnw.org</p>	<p><i>NOTE: file attached</i></p> <p><i>Substantive comments from file:</i></p>	12/18/2022	<p><i>Substantive comments from file added to Draft (and response below)</i></p>

	<p><i>submitted online</i></p>	<p>We are happy to read that the 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan draft contains two statewide priorities of meaningful and barrier-free recreation access and the protection of natural and cultural resources on public lands. These two priorities are so important for today's recreation landscape in Washington.</p> <p>However, there is inherent difficulty while working on these priorities simultaneously. Recreation access and resource protection can easily be at odds due to the notable increase in recreation demand and underfunded management of public lands.</p> <p>We urge that this plan's stated strategies underscore the importance of adaptive management that uses the most up-to-date recreation ecological science and keenly understands visitor behaviors and motivations. We hope that adaptive frameworks can pinpoint the best recreation management strategies that grant the highest protection possible for natural and cultural resources yet provide meaningful recreation access.</p> <p>We also urge that this plan outlines meaningful engagement strategies with not only recreationists and recreation stakeholders, but with Tribes as well. In the future, we hope that engagement can go beyond month-long comment periods or email correspondence. Tribal Treaty rights and other Tribal interests regarding public lands are vital to</p>		<p>Thank you</p> <p>We agree. The challenge with this plan is in the balance of recreation and conservation principles. Goals 2.2 and Unified Strategy #3 support recreation and land managing agencies in planning for and managing recreation impacts.</p> <p>Unified Strategy #5 addresses improvements to public engagement and communication practices, including with tribes.</p>
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		understand as the State moves forward to find the best management possible of public lands.		
13	<p>Martha Hall Anacortes, WA pondfrog.mh@gmail.com</p> <p><i>submitted online</i></p>	<p>I attached a file with my comments. These comments explain why I believe this plan is focused far too much on recreation and not enough on conservation. Goals and strategies may be very different and conflicting. I try to explain this in my comments. Our wildlife and our wild places were not well represented in the writing of this plan. I'm not sure what the legislature expects, or the National Park Service. I do know that the recreational "wants" and "desires" of humans seem to be endless. This is not true for the ability of our wildlife and wild places to survive and flourish. We will lose these if we don't focus more on the negative impacts of human recreation and learn how to reduce and eliminate these. I'm well aware of WDFW's and DNR's failure to adequately consider impacts on their lands.</p> <p>I believe this plan needs to be reviewed by conservation biologists and ecologists, and perhaps sections need to be written with their input. I also oppose the current method of assigning points if hunting will be allowed to projects that are basically for habitat improvements, etc. This is preventing donations from some citizens and hunting is not a necessary part of many of these projects. There is no shortage of places to hunt. . Wildlife viewing and study is greatly impacted by hunting. As your survey and many others show, far more people are</p>	12/15/2022	Thank you for your comments.

	<p>interested in wildlife watching, study and photography which are not compatible with hunting.</p> <p><i>NOTE: file attached</i></p> <p><i>Substantive/relevant comments from file</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wildlife and wildlife habitat can only protected when human recreation of all kinds is well managed and restricted where this is necessary to protect wildlife or wildlife habitat. (p. 1) 2. The politics of this whole effort is to increase human recreation, accommodate more human recreation, and make humans feel happy about recreating on public lands... (p. 2) 3. I believe this plan needs to be reviewed by unbiased conservation biologists and ecologists before this process goes any farther. Their input is needed if RCO is really serious about the "conservation" part of this plan. This part in the current draft is unacceptable. I suggest putting this draft plan in the recycling bin and starting another effort that includes people at the table who truly represent wildlife and wild places. (p. 2) 4. The goals and priorities in this draft plan clearly show why this plan will not work for 	<p><i>Response to specific substantive comments</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This is a focal point of the Outdoor Action Compass: Protect natural and cultural resources while managing increasing demand 2. Yes. The goal of this plan is to identify opportunities to support and promote outdoor recreation and human/nature connection. 3. Managers from DFW, DNR, and conservation groups were all members of the advisory committee. Much of the advisory committee conversations that led to the plan's priorities were about protecting wildlife in the face of surging recreation demand. Unified strategy #3 focuses on supporting the natural resource agencies in their efforts to protect wildlife habitat, cultural resources and public lands conditions.
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		<p>conserving wildlife and wild places. Conservation of these is lost in the many goals and priorities that are focused on providing more and better recreation to meet the "wants" of humans. Protecting and improving wildlife habitat is often in direct conflict with these goals and priorities. This plan failed to adequately recognize and address this. That is why I call this plan "delusional. It fails to address the huge challenges wildlife and wild places face from both climate change AND from human disturbance and loss of habitat to human development and disturbance. (p. 3)</p> <p>5. WDFW's statistics show that only about 2-3% of Washingtonians still want to hunt or trap any wild animal. (p. 4)</p> <p>6. The survey did not show as much interest in riding bikes as some like to claim. (p. 5)</p> <p>7. Most Washingtonians do not want to hunt. (p. 6)</p> <p>8. I know that when grant requests are reviewed by the RCO, extra points are given when hunting will be allowed where grant money is received. (p. 6).</p> <p>9. Land managers receive money for more trails, parking, etc. but not enough for</p>	<p>4. This plan is not intended to be a habitat conservation plan.</p> <p>5. RCO's recreation demand survey showed the following:</p> <p>a. Wildlife/nature viewing participation: 85% Wildlife/ Nature viewing; 49% gathering/collecting things in nature</p> <p>b. Hunting/fishing participation: 18% Hunting; 7% Trapping; 31% Fishing</p> <p>6. RCO's recreation demand survey results for cycling participation: 40% road cycling; 28% mountain biking; 22% gravel road biking; 16% e-biking</p> <p>7. See #5 above</p> <p>8. This is factually incorrect.</p> <p>9. We agree. Unified Strategy #3 and Statewide Goal 2.2 speak to supporting natural resource agencies capacity to</p>
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		<p>management, for employees, to hire staff to be out there managing the land. (p. 8)</p> <p>10. I'm sorry that the rights of wildlife and wild places were not seen as more important in a plan that is called a Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan. Leave out the "conservation" part, and this would be accurate. (p. 9)</p>		<p>plan for, manage, and better understand recreation impacts.</p> <p>10. As stated in the introduction of the plan, this is not intended to serve as a habitat conservation plan. In this plan, <i>conservation</i> refers to the broad suite of land and water conservation grant programs RCO administers, including funds for habitat acquisition and restoration, working lands conservation, and wetland protection.</p>
12	Matt Johnson Sumner	I would like the plan to optimize hunting and fishing opportunities.	12/12/2022	Thank you for your comment.
11	<p>Tiffany Odell, Senior Planner Pierce County Parks tiffany.odell@piercecountywa.gov</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p>Attached are Pierce County Parks' comments on the draft SCORP. I'm hoping this is an effective way to convey them to you, as creating a list seemed like more work and potentially less easy for you to follow. If you'd like to follow-up on any of them, I'd be happy to talk.</p> <p>One comment that you'll see in a few places is that it looks like some of the Pierce County parks and trails data in your data hub are incorrect. What was the</p>	12/08/2022	<p><i>Comments Added to draft</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments, Tiffany. We are considering changes and clarifications in several priorities and goals based on your suggestions.</p> <p>The data for the mapped inventory was obtained from our</p>

		<p>source of that information, as I don't remember receiving a data request. Happy to provide updated data for you.</p> <p><i>NOTE: file attached</i></p>		<p>data partnership with Washington Hometown. Please contact Washington Hometown for updates or edits to specific sites or facilities.</p>
10	<p>Larry R Carey</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p>1--Open all waters for Salmon and Steelhead Fresh/Saltwater year round</p> <p>2-- Have a easy five choice color coded regulation guide for Salmon and Steelhead</p> <p>3--Make Salmon and Steelhead limits the same in all waters</p> <p>4-- Allow kids under 12 to fish up to hatchery entry points</p> <p>These simple changes would increase participation!</p>	12/06/2022	<p>Thank you for your comments. RCO does not manage or administer fishing regulations. RCO does provide grant funding to agencies such as the Department of Fish and Wildlife to build and maintain fishing access sites. The plan prioritizes water access opportunities through Goals 1.1, 1.3, and 2.2</p>
9	<p>Jeff Chapman Director, Peninsula Chapter Back Country Horsemen of Washington Port Townsend, WA bbbranch@olympus.net</p> <p><i>email submission</i></p>	<p>On behalf of the Back Country Horsemen of Washington, I would like to see the section in the plan that describes the trails grants improved to be more clear and accurate as well as correct the misspelled words. Attached is my recommendation.</p> <p>I'd also like to see added to the grants section a description for the WWRP-State Parks category. This category is used to fund many of our most noteworthy recreation areas including the distance trails such as the Palouse to Cascades, Willapa Hills, and Columbia Plateau State Park Trails.</p>	12/6/2022	<p><i>Comments added to draft</i></p> <p>Changes made to the draft to clarify the role of each of the trails grants programs. Misspelled words were corrected.</p> <p>This was section was inadvertently left out of the draft. Thank you for pointing it out.</p>

		<i>NOTE: File included in email with suggested text changes</i>		
8	Alyssa Hoyt Clark County <i>submitted online</i>	looks good! glad to see an emphasis on equitable access.	12/6/2022	Thank you.
7	Vern Herrst Winthrop Jinglebobs1997@yahoo.com <i>submitted online</i>	Reduce the number of XC ski trails on state land or restrict trails to developed or semi developed roads. State lands should be for ALL potential users NOT just a few select groups or activities.	12/4/2022	Thank you for your comments. Land management agencies develop and maintain recreational facilities to meet the needs of users across the state. RCO does not dictate or direct the location or number of specific activities.
6	Darcy Mitchem Toutle Valley Community Association [sic] Cowlitz djmitchem@hotmail.com <i>submitted online</i>	My biggest concern is the lack of "balance" between equity issues and on-the-ground items. This plan is all about WHO is using land and facilities: What they look like, what "box" they check, what their color/gender/ BIPOC status is, and has very little to say about the land or facilities themselves, especially when compared with the 2018-2022 plan. This plan uses too much jargon and PC code that normal people don't understand. Where's the prior top goal of "sustain and grow the legacy of parks, trails and conservation lands". There is hardly a word about conserving land for its biological or habitat benefits. Without an on-the-ground focus this plan fails. It doesn't matter how "diverse" the user group is if basic legal access to lands doesn't exist! The survey	12/1/2022	<i>Comments added to draft</i> Thank you for your comments. We are considering changes to the language in the Core Values statements to reflect your suggestion to focus on on-the-ground outcomes. We are also considering how to clarify the use of the word safety in Goal 1.2 to better reflect our intent to focus on social and psychological

		<p>results were ignored: FOCUS ON THE GROUND. Go back to the previous 2018-2022 plan that did address diversity, but in balance with practical goals like "build, renovate and maintain".</p> <p>Resiliency as a goal should have a structural/engineering component (facility has a long life, hard to vandalize etc) Connection should also have a PHYSICAL on-the-ground component like a trail, river route, safe route and habitat component (not just human-centered).</p> <p>SAFETY as a goal is worrisome. How can a river or mountain be safe, and who decides? Imagine how this goal could be abused to close areas due to any normal natural condition, like ice, wind, rain, cold. Safety in the wild is dependent on the skill of the user.</p> <p>I like the one searchable document style and DO NOT like the website page format of the 2018-2022 plan. The 2023 update is easy to search and easy to evaluate as a whole. With the website page format, it is very hard to find a specific topic</p>		<p>safety, i.e. promoting a feeling of inclusivity and welcoming.</p>
5	<p>Heather Ramsay Ahndan Land Conservation Initiative Program Manager King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks hahndan@kingcounty.gov</p>	<p>See attached. Hopefully this is helpful – happy to discuss any of the comments further. Overall I think this is well drafted and clear so I just focused comments on the areas that I think could be beefed up to make it even stronger.</p>	11/29/2022	<p><i>Comments Added to DRAFT</i></p> <p>Thank you for your comments. We are clarifying our implementation schedule in the unified strategy. We are also considering how to more clearly</p>

	<i>email submission</i>	<i>NOTE: file attached</i>		identify outcomes anticipated from implementing this plan in specific program areas (chapter 5).
4	Monty Drebeck Olympia, WA <i>Submitted online</i>	I think leasing some land to clubs or groups to use and manage could be good.	11/29/2022	Thank you for your comment.
3	Jon Dykes dykesjonathan@gmail.com <i>email submission</i>	I wish the plan addressed the thousands of acres of Washington public land that are "landlocked" behind private lands. I have lost recreation acres to hundreds of acres of DNR land because of one small private land owner closing access in Snohomish county.	11/28/2022	<i>Comment added to draft</i> RCO supports the land managing agencies in evaluating and addressing this issue. RCO does not manage land directly and therefore only plays a supportive role in facilitating access to "landlocked" public lands.
2	James Eychaner 6109 St Andrews Dr SE Lacey WA 98513 jim623mo@comcast.net <i>email submission</i>	<p>I have reviewed the draft and offer the following observations.</p> <p>Page 5, I was startled to see the word "scrappy" used to describe IAC/RCO in its early days. It strikes me as self-promoting and therefore inappropriate for a government document.</p> <p>Page 6, the federal guidelines have not been changed since their inception of the land and water fund. The concept of "supply-demand equals need" is obsolete and was inadequate/inappropriate from the beginning. Supply-demand is a concept from</p>	11/22/2022	<i>Comments added to draft</i> Pg. 5 – changed to determined Pg. 6 – Conversations with local land managers through this planning process identified explicit concerns with establishing statewide minimum standards for facilities and activity provision. Local land managers were concerned such standards frustrated local flexibility and

	<p>economics developed to help describe the phenomenon of price. Finding alternatives to supply-demand has been needed for decades and yet has rarely been addressed. RCO developed a “level of service” approach in the mid-2000s, an approach that needs mention one way or another. RCO needs to propose that the National Park Service review its SCORP guidelines and find modern, useful tools or methods for recreation planners to utilize.</p> <p>Page 7 and forward, there is a bias toward recreating in or around “nature” throughout the document. However, participation data clearly shows the #1 activity as walking on sidewalks and roads, no doubt people simply leaving by the front door to get in a constitutional, as it were. The urgent need for urban paths, trails, and routes for walking and cycling – especially away from motor vehicle traffic – is missing. That people have adapted transportation infrastructure for recreational purposes is unmistakable and overlooked in the current document.</p> <p>Page 24, the data does not depict demand – it depicts current activity.</p> <p>Page 45 the compass is interesting but seems to be a gimmick. I don’t see it as a useful tool for making any rational decisions. Again level of service might be of interest. I do not find level of service anywhere in the document. There should e some mention of it,</p>		<p>ability to respond to local needs. RCO retired the LOS concept from SCORP in the 2018 edition to focus on a service area and gap analysis approach to evaluating available opportunities. RCO must still comply with federal grant requirements to evaluate supply and demand.</p> <p>Pg. 7 – RCO clearly heard through the public engagement process a focus on nature-based recreation being a high priority for Washington residents.</p> <p>Pg. 24 – Revised the description to clarify the survey was an assessment of recreational activity.</p> <p>Pg. 45 – The intent of the compass is to provide a snapshot that frames and communicates the plan’s priorities. We know that not all parties will be able to review the document in detail and wanted to communicate the plan’s priorities to as many and as diverse an audience as possible.</p>
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		<p>whether as a potential tool or complete waste of time,</p> <p>Page 50 – Strategy 6 mentions a fuel use survey for boating. I recall that the Legislature set the boating fuel tax level at 1% several years ago. If my recollection is correct, a boater survey would be unnecessary.</p> <p>Overall, an interesting document. SCORP and statewide = plans are 1) frustrating for planners, 2) a distraction at best for other agencies that normally don't care what your plan says as long as it doesn't interfere with their budgets, and 3) a source of misplaced expectations for the recreating public that pays attention usually to narrow special interests.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>		<p>Pg. 50 – a fuel use study would measure the current proportion of fuel consumed by nonhighway vehicle activities and boating activities. The previous study was done 20 years ago (2003). The federal government just completed an updated study for RTP in 2022. Washington needs an updated study to help ensure funding programs that rely on state fuel tax revenues are accurately credited.</p>
1	<p>Eric Burr ericburr48@gmail.com Okanogan County above Mazama</p> <p><i>Submitted online</i></p>	<p>It needs more specific trail recommendations, especially for reopening, maintaining, and rebuilding trails closest to urban populations. However it also needs to endorse efforts such as Shuksan Conservancy AmericanAlps.org and north of St. Helens: the GreenRiverValleyAlliance.org in places which although farther from urban populations, still draw too many people for their limited trail opportunities. Expanding North Cascades and bringing St. Helens into the national park system are essential.</p>	11/21/2022	<p>Thank you for your comments. This strategic plan sets broad goals for funding outdoor recreation and public lands conservation in Washington State. It is impossible to be aware of every trail project or trail development effort promoted by advocates in the state. Endorsing specific projects is beyond the scope of this plan.</p>

				The purpose of the plan is to focus on statewide activity rather than Federal government land management structure or activities.
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Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution #2023-02
Approval of the 2023 State Recreation and Conservation Plan

WHEREAS, the National Park Service (NPS) provides federal Land and Water Conservation (LWCF) grant-in-aid assistance to the states to preserve and develop outdoor recreation resources; and

WHEREAS, to be eligible for the funds, Washington State must submit a state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan, and update that plan at least every five years; and

WHEREAS, the Washington State plan must be updated and approved by the NPS by the end of May 2023; and

WHEREAS, Washington State law requires the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board to also plan for statewide trails and Nonhighway and off-road vehicle activities; and

WHEREAS, Washington State law requires the board to adopt a unified strategy to meet the outdoor recreation needs of Washington residents; and

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Conservation Office developed an updated state recreation and conservation plan and unifying strategy that meets the criteria set forth by the NPS for state comprehensive outdoor recreation plans and the requirements in state law; and

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Conservation Office utilized two advisory committees and conducted extensive public outreach during the development of the draft plan; and

WHEREAS, the draft plan and unifying strategy were posted for a 30-day public comment review and comment opportunity and the office incorporated the public's feedback into a final plan for the board's consideration.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the board hereby adopts the 2023 Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan and Unified Strategy as the state comprehensive outdoor recreation plan as presented on January 24, 2023

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the director is authorized to submit the plan to the Governor and NPS for subsequent approval and certification.

Resolution moved by: Member Amy Windrope

Resolution seconded by: Member Peter Herzog

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Approved Date: January 24, 2023

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Farmland Preservation: Buy-Protect-Sell

Prepared By: Kim Sellers, Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

This memo is to update the board on a recent clarification from the Attorney General's Office that makes it easier for applicants to implement a Buy-Protect-Sell (BPS) option within the Farmland Preservation Category of the Farm and Forest Preservation Account. Specifically, this involves the Doctrine of Merger of Title. This briefing is to inform the board of the clarification.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

- ☐ Request for Decision
- ☐ Request for Direction
- ☒ Briefing

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 held in 2006. When grant funds are used to purchase a farmland easement, the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) is a signatory to the easement, making RCO a third party with rights of enforcement.

RCO staff briefed the board at the April 2022 meeting on the growing need for applicants in the Farmland Preservation category to utilize a Buy-Protect-Sell (BPS) approach. A typical BPS scenario is where a farmer is retiring and has 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, making 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 an agricultural 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 a BPS scenario, 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.

Funds from the Farmland Preservation category can be used to purchase easements on working agricultural land but cannot be used to purchase farmland in fee. It may be possible for an applicant to use other funds to purchase fee title to farmland and then use grant funds to protect it with a conservation easement.

At the April 2022 meeting, board members recognized the importance of assisting with BPS scenarios and expressed an interest in RCO staff developing strategies to simplify the BPS process in the future. Since April, RCO staff have worked to identify challenges to successfully using a BPS approach. One potential challenge identified is the Merger Doctrine.

Doctrine of Merger of Title

The Doctrine of Merger of Title (or Merger Doctrine) states that if the same person owns both a property and an easement on that property, their interest in the property is essentially “fused” and the easement is dissolved. In the past, RCO staff have interpreted this to mean that for a sponsor to employ a BPS strategy, they must partner with a third-party entity that is not an eligible sponsor in this grant category.

RCO staff worked with staff at the Attorney General’s office to identify possible solutions that would allow an eligible sponsor to own both the land and an easement. RCO staff learned that Washington Courts recognize an exception to the merger of title doctrine if a third party (RCO in this case) has an interest in either the easement or the underlying property that could be harmed by application of the doctrine. Another exception is if application of the doctrine would be contrary to the interest of the owner. RCO’s current easement deed includes a “no merger” clause. Such language will also be inserted in any other conveyance documents used in a BPS transaction. The “no merger” clause language in addition to the judicially recognized third party exception, will help ensure that the Merger Doctrine is not a challenge to potential applicants hoping to utilize a BPS approach.

Going Forward

The determination that the Merger Doctrine does not apply to easements purchased under the Farmland Preservation category is an important step to support BPS scenarios. This allows an applicant to purchase farmland prior to placing an easement on the property and holding the land until an appropriate farmer is identified and able to purchase the property. Meanwhile, the rules of the Farmland Preservation category are protected in that grant funds are to be used to purchase an easement on the property that will be retained through the life of the easement. Although an easement may be for a specified term, all easements purchased with grant funds to date have been purchased in perpetuity.

Staff will update manuals and application materials for the 2024 grant round to reflect this change and will work with sponsors to begin implementation of the changes immediately.



Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Cost Increase Requests: Farmland Preservation Projects

Prepared By: Kim Sellers and Andrea Hood, Outdoor Grants Managers

Summary

The Columbia Land Trust and the Methow Conservancy seek cost increase approval from the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) for three projects funded with Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Farmland Preservation Category grants. The cost increases are needed due to an unforeseen and significant rise in land costs. The increases are for the following projects:

- Columbia Land Trust, Trout Lake Valley Phase 4 Agricultural Easement, [19-1539](#)
- Methow Conservancy, Fort Conservation Easement, [19-1431](#)
- Methow Conservancy, Woodward Conservation Easement, [19-1360](#)

The requested cost increases exceed ten percent of the total project costs; therefore, staff is presenting these requests to the board for consideration.

Board Action Requested

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

Resolution: 2023-03

Purpose of Resolution: Approve cost increases for three Farmland Preservation projects.

Background

During a supplemental grant round in 2019, the Columbia Land Trust (Land Trust) and the Methow Conservancy (Conservancy) applied for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Farmland Preservation Category grants. The grant applications were for purchase of agricultural conservation easements to permanently protect a combined total of 255 acres of prime farmland in Klickitat and Okanogan counties. The easements

will extinguish a total of 22 development rights with the primary conservation value being farmland. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) approved the final ranked list and grant awards for these projects at its October 2019 meeting. The funding source was unspent funds from the WWRP Farm and Forest Account approved as part of the 2017-19 state capital budget.

Sponsor	Columbia Land Trust	Methow Conservancy	Methow Conservancy
Project Number	<u>19-1539</u>	<u>19-1431</u>	<u>19-1360</u>
Project Name	Trout Lake Valley Phase 4 Agricultural Easement	Fort Conservation Easement	Woodward (Highway 20) Conservation Easement
Acres To Be Protected	101	66	88
Development Rights To Be Extinguished	4	2	16
Location	Klickitat County	Okanogan County	Okanogan County

To prepare budgets for their applications in 2019, the Land Trust and the Conservancy based their cost estimates on recent appraisals of nearby easements and properties. Both sponsors included a small increase to account for inflation. Despite this, property appraisals completed in 2022 reflect unprecedented increases in land prices. Appraised values were significantly higher than originally estimated.

Project Status

All three projects have landowners willing to sell an easement on their farmland and are committed to the process. Both the Land Trust and the Conservancy have secured the resources necessary to honor the match-to-grant fund ratios included in their grant agreements. If the board approves the requested cost increases, the sponsors will provide the required additional match.

To date, appraisals have been completed on the targeted properties and appraisal reviews are underway to confirm the original appraised values. If approved, the Land Trust and Conservancy will acquire agricultural easements on the properties.

Request and Analysis

Columbia Land Trust: Trout Lake Valley

Columbia Land Trust estimates it will need \$862,500 more to complete its acquisition project, with \$431,250 from WWRP Farmland Preservation funds and \$431,250 in sponsor match. This distribution will preserve the original match ratio and address the cost increase. This cost increase is about 61 percent of the total project cost, which is now expected to be \$1,416,500. If the cost increase is denied, the land trust will need to greatly reduce the scope of the project or see if the landowner is willing to wait for funding in a future grant cycle. The next WWRP grant cycle will be in 2024.

The original estimate and cost increase are summarized in the table below:

Cost Increase for Trout Valley Phase 4 Agricultural Easement #19-1539

RCO #19-1539	Original Project Agreement	Cost Increase Request	Proposed Project Agreement
WWRP-Farmland Preservation (50%)	\$277,700	\$431,250	\$708,250
Sponsor Match (50%)	\$277,700	\$431,250	\$708,250
Total Project Cost	\$554,000	\$862,500	\$1,416,500

Methow Conservancy: Fort Conservation Easement

The Methow Conservancy estimates it will need \$150,000 more to complete its acquisition project, with an additional \$75,000 in WWRP Farmland Preservation grant funds and \$75,000 in sponsor match. This distribution will preserve the original match ratio and address the cost increase. This cost increase is 33 percent of the total project cost, which is now expected to be \$456,784. If the cost increase is denied, the Methow Conservancy will need to greatly reduce the scope of the project. The Conservancy is not certain the landowner would be willing to reduce the scope. This uncertainty means they may lose the opportunity to complete the project.

The original estimate and cost increase are summarized in the table below:

Cost Increase for Fort Conservation Easement #19-1431

RCO #19-1431	Original Project Agreement	Cost Increase Request	Proposed Project Agreement
WWRP-Farmland Preservation (50%)	\$153,392	\$75,000	\$228,392
Sponsor Match (50%)	\$153,392	\$75,000	\$228,392
Total Project Cost	\$306,784	\$150,000	\$456,784

Methow Conservancy: Woodward Conservation Easement

The Methow Conservancy estimates it will cost \$155,700 more to complete this acquisition project, with \$77,850 in WWRP Farmland Preservation grant funds and \$77,850 in sponsor match. This distribution will preserve the original match ratio and address the cost increase. This cost increase is about 21 percent of the total project cost, which is now expected to be \$736,000. If the cost increase is denied, the Conservancy will need to reduce the scope of the project and there is a possibility that the project may be withdrawn.

The original estimate and cost increase are summarized in the table below:

Cost Increase for Woodward Conservation Easement #19-1360

RCO #19-1360	Original Project Agreement	Cost Increase Request	Proposed Project Agreement
WWRP-Farmland Preservation (50%)	\$290,150	\$77,850	\$368,000
Sponsor Match (50%)	\$290,150	\$77,850	\$368,000
Total Project Cost	\$580,300	\$155,700	\$736,000

Cost Increase Policy

The board's policy on cost increases is outlined on page 31 in Manual 3: *Development Projects*.

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.

Land acquisition project cost increases must meet the following criteria:

- *The sponsor must have diligently pursued the acquisition at the estimated fair market value, as appraised, and reviewed.*
- *An appraisal, developed using a technique accepted by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board, supports the increased real market value.*
- *A written report from the sponsor must explain any relocation cost overruns.*

Additionally, Manual 10f, *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program: Farmland Preservation Category*, page 39, further defines the cost increase policy for requests within the WWRP Farmland Preservation category.

Cost increases for approved projects may be granted by the board or director if financial resources are available. Each cost increase request will be considered on its merits. The director may approve a cost increase request as long as it does not exceed 10 percent of the total project cost. The director's approval of an acquisition project cost increase is limited to a parcel-by-parcel appraised and reviewed value.

Analysis

The primary focus of the WWRP Farmland Preservation category is to acquire development rights on farmland in Washington and ensure the land remains available for agricultural practices. A secondary goal is to enhance or restore ecological functions on farmland.

The Farmland Preservation category receives 90 percent of the funds allocated to the WWRP Farm and Forest Account. The remaining ten percent funds projects in the Forestland Preservation category.

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) accepted Farmland Preservation applications in 2018; however, not enough proposals were submitted to use all available funds. With more than \$4.4 million available, the board authorized a supplemental grant round in 2019. All viable projects on the 2018 and the 2019 lists were fully funded. In 2020 with \$8.6 million available, the grant requests totaled \$5.2 million leaving nearly \$3.4 million in unspent funds. In summary, funds allocated to the Farm and Forest Account during the last two biennia have greatly exceeded the funds requested. These dollars combined with funds from unsuccessful projects or projects that did not use the full grant amount means there are currently resources available to fully fund these cost increase requests.

Alternatives Considered

The cost increase requests from the Land Trust and the Conservancy represent their preferred alternative to seek more funding to cover the full appraised value of the originally proposed easement purchases. This alternative supports the purchases of agricultural conservation easements to permanently protect prime farmland while fairly compensating the farm landowners.

Another alternative considered included reducing the number of acres to be protected in the current grant agreements and then applying in 2024 for additional grant funds to

purchase easements for the remaining acres. This option would delay the acquisition of the easements for another three years.

Asking the landowners to donate such a significant amount of easement value was not considered a viable alternative.

Conditions Causing the Overrun

The challenges with rapidly increasing land values are not unique to these projects. The sponsors had no control over the conditions causing the 2022 appraisal value increases over the 2019 estimates.

Elements in the Agreement

If approved, the increased budget will pay only for scope items included in the grant agreements.

Strategic Plan Link

Consideration of these requests support the board's strategy to help its partners protect, restore, and develop opportunities that benefit people, wildlife, and ecosystems.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of all three cost increases as requested.

Next Steps

If the board approves the three cost increase requests, RCO staff will execute the necessary amendments to the grant agreements.

Attachment

- A. Resolution 2023-03, *Cost Increases for Farmland Preservation Projects*

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution #2023-03
Approval of Cost Increases for Farmland Preservation Projects**

WHEREAS, Chapter 79A.25 of the Revised Code of Washington authorizes the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) to adopt policies and rules for the grant programs it administers; and

WHEREAS, the board adopted policies for cost increases for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Farm and Forest Account; and

WHEREAS, the board awarded WWRP Farmland Preservation Category grants to the Columbia Land Trust (Land Trust) for the Trout Lake Valley Phase 4 Agricultural Easement (19-1539) and to the Methow Conservancy (Conservancy) for the Fort Conservation Easement (19-1431) and Woodward (Highway 20) Conservation Easement (19-1360); and

WHEREAS, the property values for these easements unexpectedly escalated during 2019-2022; and

WHEREAS, the Land Trust and Conservancy need additional funds to buy development rights on farmland to ensure the land remains available for farming in the future; and

WHEREAS, the Land Trust and Conservancy have resources to match any approved cost increase; and

WHEREAS, funds are available in the WWRP Farm and Forest Account; and

WHEREAS, consideration of these cost increases supports the board's strategy to provide funding to protect the state's valuable agricultural land for future farming;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves cost increases, as documented in the January 24, 2023, Item 8 Cost Increase Requests: Farmland Preservation Projects memorandum, for Trout Lake Valley Phase 4 Agricultural Easement (19-1539A), Fort Conservation Easement (19-1431A), and Woodward (Highway 20) Conservation Easement (19-1360A); and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the board authorizes RCO's Director to execute the amendments necessary to facilitate implementation.

Resolution moved by: Member Kathryn Gardow
Resolution seconded by: Member Michael Shiosaki
Adopted/*Defeated/Deferred (underline one)*
Date: January 24, 2023

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Policy Waiver Request: Boating Facilities Program Multi-Site Cost Limit Increase

Prepared By: Ashly Arambul, Outdoor Grants Manager

Summary

Current Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) policy allows an applicant to apply for a boating grant that covers multiple sites, but the applicant is limited to spending no more than \$50,000 at each site. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is asking the board to waive the maximum per site cost for a multi-site Boating Facilities Program project because of escalating construction costs. WDFW is asking the board to allow them to spend up to \$100,000 per site.

Board Action Requested

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

Resolution: 2023-04

Purpose of Resolution: Approve a waiver of the grant limit for WDFW's Region 6 Boating Access Restroom Replacement, RCO #22-2181

Background

The Boating Facilities Program (BFP) provides grants to acquire, develop, or renovate motorized boating access sites and facilities on fresh or saltwater. Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board) policies for this program are outlined in Manual 9, Boating Facilities Program. Board policy limits the amount of funds an applicant may request for a multi-site boating project to \$50,000 per site. Multi-site projects must comply with several other eligibility policies, including:

- All work types, which means the specific work proposed for the project (i.e., boat launch development, dredging, installing boarding floats, etc.), across all worksites must be the same;
- All worksites and work types must be on either saltwater or freshwater. No combination of saltwater and freshwater in the same project;
- All work types must meet the Office of Financial Management's capital project criteria;
- All worksites must be in no more than two adjacent counties; and
- Each worksite must be available and accessible to Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff for inspections.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) submitted ten BFP grant applications this year (2022). One grant request is for a multi-site project. The scope of the project is to replace old, outdated toilets with new accessible CXT toilets at four separate locations. To ensure the toilets meet today's accessibility requirements, WDFW plans to install hard surface parking areas and accessible routes to the toilets in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The work will be completed at four popular freshwater lakes in Pierce County.

WDFW has estimated that the construction cost of each site is approximately \$100,000, exceeding the \$50,000 per site grant limit. WDFW brought this issue to RCO staff's attention when they were preparing their applications and asked if the board would consider increasing the limit to address escalating construction cost. RCO staff advised them to submit the grant application and bring it forward through technical review, pending board review of their waiver request.

Analysis

The board adopted the current multi-site development policies for BFP projects in 1994. The board established grant limits for individual worksites at \$50,000, which was an average cost and a reasonable amount given the construction costs at the time. While reviewing the 2022 grant applications, staff recognized that for most development proposals, applicants increased the amount of grant funds requested this year. The increase seems to be in response to escalating construction costs.

WDFW crews are very experienced at building public access sites. The agency has set a minimum level of development for each site when replacing toilets. The goal is to ensure that they have a fully accessible facility that meets current ADA standards. This means, in addition to replacing the toilet, WDFW must consider ADA parking and access routes. WDFW does not want to compromise their accessible designs nor would RCO let

them use grant funds to build something that did not meet or exceed today's accessibility standards.

While reviewing this request, staff considered three options.

Option 1: Ask the board to waive the grant limit for each worksite and allow the project to move forward as proposed. Although there are other options, the cap on multi-site development costs has the unintended effect of not allowing WDFW to make minimum upgrades to much needed toilet facilities and meet current ADA standards.

Option 2: Require WDFW to break the proposal into separate grant applications for each worksite. While this option is possible, the work that goes into preparing individual applications and presentation materials would be costly. Individual applications would mean more work for the applicant, RCO staff, and the Boating Programs Advisory Committee since it would result in the development, review, and evaluation of four separate grant proposals.

Option 3: Require WDFW to break the proposal into separate applications for each work type. This would result in two separate multi-site applications: one for installing toilets and one for upgrading the parking and access routes. The key challenge with this option is not knowing how the individual projects would score and rank. This could ultimately result in development of incomplete facilities that would not meet current ADA standards.

Staff is recommending approval of Option 1. The intent of the multi-site development policy is to allow for upgrades or development of basic facilities at similar sites in a manner that is cost effective and efficient. A typical multi-site project would include development or renovation of one element; however, upgrading the toilets without the appropriate improvements to parking and access routes would result in an incomplete facility.

In addition, the limit of \$50,000 per worksite has been in place for 28 years. Staff considered asking the board to modify the existing policy and increase the worksite limit for all multi-site projects. Because this policy is so seldom used, staff believes additional analysis is needed to determine what an appropriate amount is considering today's escalating construction costs. Therefore, staff is bringing forward WDFW's request for a single project to facilitate the 2022 grant cycle.

Although the Boating Programs Advisory Committee conducted the technical review of the proposal in November, pending board approval of this request, they will evaluate and rank the final proposal in February.

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 the board approve Option 1 and waive the grant limit for each worksite to allow WDFW's Region 6 Boating Access Restroom Replacement project to move forward as proposed.

Next Steps

If the board approves the waiver request, WDFW will finalize the grant proposal and prepare for the upcoming evaluation meeting. The Boating Programs Advisory Committee will evaluate BFP projects in February and staff will present the final ranked list for board consideration at the April 2022 meeting.

Attachment

Attachment A: Resolution 2023-04, Approval of a Waiver of the Per Worksite Limit for Region 6 Boating Access Site Improvements, RCO #22-2181D.

**Recreation and Conservation Funding Board
Resolution 2023-04
Approval of a Waiver of the Grant Limit for Region 6 Boating Access Restroom
Replacement, RCO #22-2181D**

WHEREAS, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) has submitted a multi-site grant proposal for the Boating Facilities Program (BFP), and

WHEREAS, the WDFW is requesting an amount that exceeds the \$50,000 per worksite limit, and

WHEREAS, the additional funds are needed to ensure the improvement are designed and built to meet current accessibility standards as specified in the *Americans with Disabilities Act*, and

WHEREAS, the Boating Programs Advisory Committee will evaluate this project to ensure consistency with the objectives of the BFP; and

WHEREAS, this assessment by the committee promotes the board's objectives to conduct its work with integrity and in an open manner; and

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

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board approves a waiver of the per worksite limit to allow a grant request of up to \$100,000 per worksite for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Region 6 Boating Access Restroom Replacement (RCO #22-2181D).

Resolution moved by: _____ Member Amy Windrope

Resolution seconded by: _____ Member Kathryn Gardow

Adopted/*Defeated/Deferred (underline one)*

Date: _____ January 24, 2023

Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Briefing Memo

APPROVED BY RCO DIRECTOR MEGAN DUFFY

Meeting Date: January 24, 2023

Title: Annual Compliance Report
Policy Proposal: Additions to the Exception to Conversion Policy

Prepared By: Myra Barker, Compliance Unit Manager

Summary

Staff will provide an update on the agency's compliance program and a briefing on a proposal for additions to the Exception to Conversion policy.

Staff will ask for Recreation and Conservation Funding Board comments on the proposed addition to the Exceptions to Conversion policy in preparation for seeking public comment.

Board Action Requested

This item will be a:

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

Background

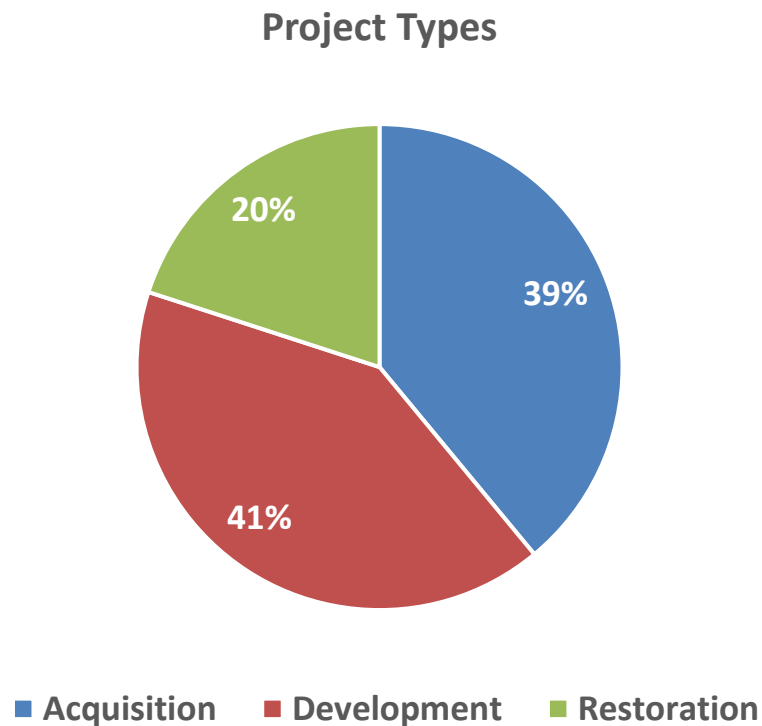
The Recreation and Conservation Office's (RCO) compliance program helps to ensure that sponsors and funded project areas remain in compliance with their grant agreements. This occurs primarily in two ways:

- RCO compliance inspections.
- Communication with project sponsors.

Compliance Portfolio

The long-term obligation or compliance period applies to acquisition, development or renovation, and restoration project types. The compliance period varies by grant program and ranges from 10 years to perpetuity.

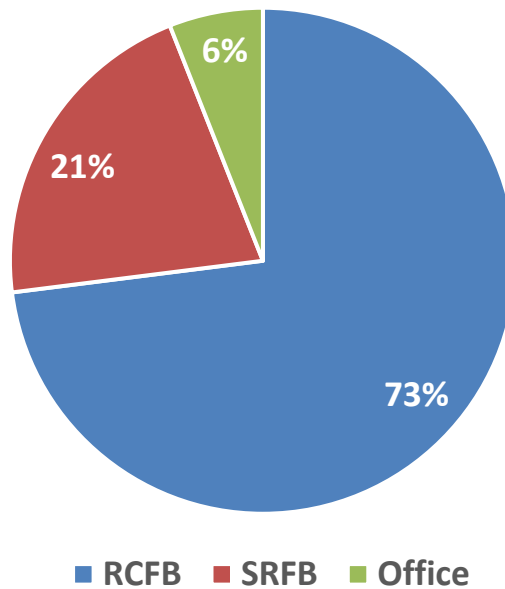
A project may have more than one worksite. There are 6,251 worksites in the Compliance Portfolio. As noted in the chart, there are slightly more development sites with a long-term obligation, followed closely by acquisition projects. Restoration projects are primarily funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and RCO Office programs and represent the remainder of the portfolio.



The majority of projects with a long-term obligation are funded through the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (board). The majority of the board's funded projects have a perpetual compliance period.

Salmon recovery grants represent 27 percent of the Compliance Portfolio. The majority of those are restoration projects, which have a 10-year compliance period.

Board and Office Projects



2022 Compliance Report

Compliance work completed in 2022 included site inspections and working with sponsors on allowable use, exception to conversion, and conversion requests. Compliance staff met with over 30 sponsors throughout the year on specific issues.

Compliance Inspections

RCO's goal in 2022 was to complete 500 compliance inspections with a focus on inspecting acquisition projects and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) projects. Staff completed 345 compliance inspections in 2022.

There were 127 acquisition worksites, 186 development worksites, and 32 restoration worksites inspected. Of those, 90 percent were board projects, 5 percent salmon recovery projects and 5 percent office projects.

Compliance Actions

During 2022, staff closed 29 issues. These ranged from completing conversions to executing grant agreement amendments to transferring the grant agreement from one sponsor to another sponsor.

There are 302 open compliance issues. These include 80 conversions that are in a potential (6), preliminary (19), or pending (55) status.

The most common issues include ineligible structures (school, fire station, private residences, restaurants), undeveloped sites (property that was acquired for development), and no public access or permanent closure.

In addition, staff completed the following:

- One board approved conversion;
- Five Director approved conversions;
- Six allowable use requests approved; and
- Five exceptions to conversion requests approved.

2023 Compliance Goals

Inspections

RCO's goal is to conduct a compliance inspection for a project every five years¹ using a rotating process of in-field inspections and desk reviews. There are approximately 3,900 worksites that are due for an inspection.

In 2023, the agency's goal is to complete 400 compliance inspections, which represents 10 percent of sites that are due. The priority remains inspecting acquisition sites with an emphasis on those funded with federal grants.

Issues

The agency's goal is to resolve 10 percent of the compliance issues by prioritizing outreach to sponsors with unapproved conversions. This effort will include meeting with sponsors, explaining the reason for the conversion, exploring options they may have for replacement, and agreeing on a timeline for resolution.

Resolving a compliance issue or a conversion can only occur with the sponsor's cooperation and willingness to address the issue. Having an unresolved compliance issue, including an unapproved conversion, does not impact a sponsor from continuing to receive a grant.

¹ The 5-year cycle is consistent with the requirements of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) post-completion inspection policy.

Policy Proposal – Exception to Conversion

In 2019, the board approved an Exception to Conversion policy (Attachment C). The policy provides flexibility for addressing changes to a project area that have minimal impact to the intended purpose and use as described in the grant agreement. The actions or uses that meet the Exception to Conversion policy must be secondary to the site's intended purpose and use.

There are no automatic approvals granted for an exception.

A sponsor must request approval for an exception to conversion and provide documentation that supports the request as having minimal impact to the intended purpose and use of the project area.

Policy Proposal

Staff are proposing the following revision and additions to the policy. Staff request board comments in preparation for seeking public comment.

Revise the “Relocation of an Easement” Exception to include related infrastructure:

Relocation of an easement and related infrastructure that would benefit and/or improve the intended purpose and use of the project area, with restoring the disturbed area to original or better condition in a specified period of time.

Example: Street/road frontage improvements are a permitting requirement to develop a park. The frontage improvements require relocating an existing easement for overhead electrical lines and the related infrastructure (pole/s and guide wire/s).

Add – New Exceptions to Conversion:

A new easement and/or right-of-way and related infrastructure (such as a utility box, poles, guide wires) that would benefit the intended purpose and use of the project area.

Example: A new easement is needed to provide electrical service for lighting a ballfield.

Not intended to provide a blanket exception to any new easement, such as conveying an easement to a private party for their convenience.

A new easement and/or right-of-way for a culvert replacement or improving fish passage that has minimal impact to the intended purpose and use of the project area.

Example: Culvert replacement to improve fish passage requires expanding the width of the road right-of-way to accommodate a larger bridge/culvert.

Changes to an existing easement, right-of-way, or encumbrance (and related infrastructure) that would have minimal impact to the intended purpose and use of the project area.

Example: Modifying the location of an existing encumbrance (reserved right) for a septic system to lessen or remove its impact on the habitat being protected.

Telecommunications and related infrastructure (such as tower, fencing, equipment, access and related lease or easement) that has minimal impact on the intended purpose and use of the project area and enhances safety for the public.

Example: A telecommunications tower (and related infrastructure) that provides or improves service to the public using the funded project area.

Next Steps

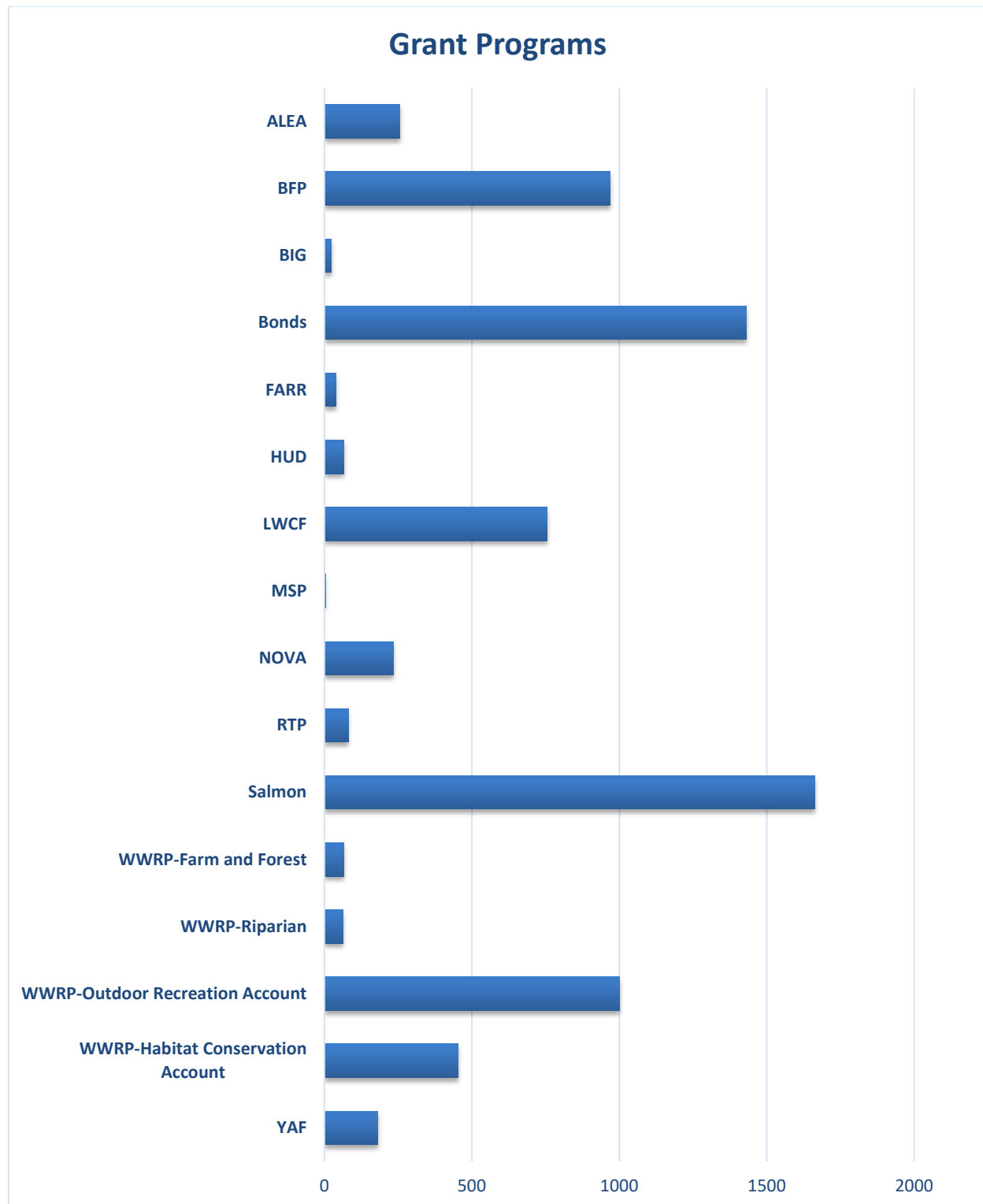
Staff will seek public comment on the additions to the Exception to Conversion policy and bring a final proposal to the board for approval in April 2022.

Staff will provide updates to the board as requested.

Attachments

Attachment A: Compliance Portfolio by Grant Program

Attachment B: Current Exception to Conversion Policy and Conversion Policy

Attachment A: Compliance Portfolio – Grant Programs

Attachment B: Exception to Conversion and Conversion Policies

Exceptions to Conversion²

Under certain circumstances, a change in the use or function of a project area may be considered an exception to conversion.³

A sponsor may request RCO review for an exception to conversion for the actions below when demonstrating the action will have no permanent impact to the intended purpose, use, and function of the project area. RCO will consider the cumulative impacts of previously approved exceptions and encumbrances.

Exceptions that may be considered include the following:

- Relocation of an easement that would benefit the intended purpose and use of the project area, with restoration in a specified period of time.
- Right-of-way for road improvements that improve access to the project area.
- Underground utility easement for electrical, fiber optic, sewer, stormwater, or water, with restoration in a specified period of time.
- Temporary construction easement, with restoration in a specified period of time.
- Levee and related infrastructure relocation that expand and support the original habitat purpose of the project. A levee may consist of a landform or structure such as an embankment, dike, road, or similar structure that inhibits natural floodplain or tidal processes. Related infrastructure relocation may include easements for rights-of-way for roads, utilities, and other infrastructure. This exception is limited to sites funded for habitat conservation or restoration purposes.
- Granting utility permits. After determining that a pipe or power line will have no adverse effect on present and future public recreation or habitat use of a project site, any permit issued must include the following:
 - Not be an easement giving property rights to a third party.⁴

² Manual 7 Long-term Obligations

³ Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2019-05. Additionally, this policy does not apply to the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The National Park Service policy does not exempt these actions from conversion.

⁴Underground easements may be considered an exception to conversion as described above.

- State that the pipe or power line will be underground.
- Require that the third party give prior notice to and receive approval from the sponsor to enter the site for construction or maintenance. Regular maintenance checks and the method of performance (which must not involve disruption of any recreation or habitat conservation function), must have prior approval based on a schedule. Emergency maintenance would not normally require prior notification and approval. Adequate assurance of surface restoration also is necessary.
- State a duration for construction and include language that allows setting a duration for reconstruction.
- Non-permanent, non-conforming use or temporary closure. A non-permanent, non-conforming use that will have minimum impact to the project area (or portion of) from 180 days to 2 years must be reviewed by RCO and may be approved by the director. The project area impacted must be restored⁵ in a specified period of time following the use. The board may approve an extension of the non-permanent, non-conforming use.

Conversion Policy⁶

A conversion occurs when one or more of the following takes place, whether affecting an entire site or a portion of a site funded by RCO:

- Permanent property interests are conveyed for non-public, outdoor recreation, habitat conservation, or salmon recovery uses.⁷
- Permanent property interests are conveyed to a third party not eligible to receive grants in the program from which funding was derived.⁸
- Non-outdoor recreation, habitat conservation, or salmon recovery uses (public or private) are made in a manner that impairs the originally intended purposes of the project area.

⁵The portion of the project area impacted by the action is returned to its original (or better) surface condition.

⁶ Manual 7 Long-term Obligations

⁷Unless approved as an Exception to Conversion. See Exception to Conversion section.

⁸An exception is allowed under Salmon Recovery Funding Board rules: Property acquired for salmon recovery purposes may be transferred to federal agencies, provided the property retains adequate habitat protections, and with written approval.

- Non-eligible indoor facilities or non-eligible structures are built in the project area.
- Public use of the property or a portion of the property acquired, developed, or restored with an RCO grant is terminated unless public use was not allowed under the original grant.
- If a habitat project, the property, or a portion of the property acquired, restored, or enhanced no longer provides the environmental functions for which RCO funds were approved originally.

A conversion requires replacement. Replacement requirements vary by program and project type but, at a minimum, must provide equivalent value and reasonably equivalent usefulness. The replacement must be eligible in the grant account or category that funded the original project.

A sponsor may not use RCO funding to purchase replacement land or develop replacement facilities or for replacement of restoration activities on the replacement project area. Grants may be used to develop or restore replacement property only for acquisition projects that have been converted.

From: [Roxanne Miles](#)
To: [McNamara, Julia \(RCO\)](#)
Subject: FW: WRPA Comment On SCORP - RCFB - January 24
Date: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:18:26 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

External Email

Apologies. I had opened an old announcement and followed those instructions and not those associated with the current RCFB packet for today.

Roxanne Miles, Director
PIERCE COUNTY PARKS | EVERYDAY ADVENTURES
P: 253-798-4007 | C: 253-380-1189
She/her/hers
Connect: [Web](#) | [Facebook](#)

From: Roxanne Miles
Sent: Tuesday, January 24, 2023 8:16 AM
To: Wyatt.Lundquist@rco.wa.gov
Subject: WRPA Comment On SCORP - RCFB - January 24

Chair Lundquist,

I write to you as Legislative Chair for Washington Recreation and Parks Association (WRPA).

We are always appreciative of the work that goes into updating the SCORP to capture what is and what is needed to serve Washingtonians' outdoor recreation interests.

WRPA wanted to provide a few comments as you contemplate adoption:

1. Technology has become more accessible and we hope that the recommendation for maintaining and updating the databases collected for this edition of the SCORP is enacted. Agencies can contribute to this work and the evaluation of projects should be able to include a factual representation of demographics, gaps and connectivity moving forward into the future.
2. The SCORP recognizes that many of the top 20 interests are performed in local parks, and a majority of respondents wanted more opportunities near where they live, better facilities and more neighborhood access to recreation. The Level of Service has a greater burden on providing these opportunities locally, which is especially important in low income and high density areas. While the plan noted this in terms of needs, the strategies were not as focused on these issues. This concerns us, especially as the Local Parks and Trails categories of the WWRP continue to be the most oversubscribed and under resourced (less than 40% funded), while categories that represent the greatest need to commute to destinations are often fully

funded. We have spoken with RCO about ways to help balance the categories, potentially by increasing the Youth Athletic Facilities (YAF) to accommodate the larger sport field projects so applicants are not applying to both YAF and Local Parks to get enough resources to make these multi-million dollar projects viable.

3. We, too, desire a more equitable system of parks and recreation opportunities and like many elements that have been raised for consideration, however, we feel like density is not adequately addressed in SCORP or project evaluation. There may be a geographic gap in service, but what is the benchmark for facilities per 1,000 population? Rural areas may have much more acreage per resident than urban areas that may need more parks to serve a much higher population within the same size of land mass.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on behalf of the Membership of WRPA.

Roxanne Miles, Director

PIERCE COUNTY PARKS | EVERYDAY ADVENTURES

Environmental Services Building at Chambers Creek Regional Park

9850 – 64th St. W, University Place, WA 98467

P: 253-798-4007 | **C:** 253-380-1189

She/her/hers

Connect: [Web](#) | [Facebook](#)

