

Riparian Protection Category

"Riparian habitat" is defined as land adjacent to water bodies, as well as submerged land such as streambeds, which can provide functional habitat for salmonids and other fish and wildlife species. Riparian habitat includes, but is not limited to, shorelines and near-shore marine habitat, estuaries, lakes, wetlands, streams, and rivers.⁹³

Riparian Protection Category Evaluation Summary			
Criteria	Evaluation Elements	Project Type	Possible Points
Unscored			
Project Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map • Project goals and objectives 	All projects	Not scored
Scored by the Advisory Committee			
1. Acquisition Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecological makeup • Riparian habitat • Pollinator habitat • Surrounding land uses • Level of protection 	All projects	20 points
2. Planning and Community Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan support • Community engagement 	All projects	15 points
3. Stewardship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational capacity • Stewardship plan 	Acquisition projects	16 points
		Acquisition and Restoration projects	8 points
4. Restoration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restoration plan 	Acquisition and Restoration projects	8 points
5. Threats to the Habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threats to the site • Immediacy of threat 	All projects	5 points
6. Community Benefits and Public Access	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple Benefits • Public Access • Education and scientific opportunities 	All projects	10 points
Scored by RCO			
7. Matching Share	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other resources 	All projects	3 points
8. Matching Share Bonus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-federal, non-state contribution 	All projects	1 point

⁹³Revised Code of Washington [79a.15.010](#)

Riparian Protection Category Evaluation Summary			
Criteria	Evaluation Elements	Project Type	Possible Points
9. Growth Management Act		All projects	0 points
Total Points Possible			70

Detailed Scoring Criteria for Riparian Protection Category⁹⁴

Project Introduction

This is an opportunity to set the stage for the project. The following detailed criteria will provide an opportunity to describe the project in more depth; however, the intent here primarily is to help orient the evaluators to the project.

- Locate the project on statewide, regional, and site maps to help orient the evaluators to the project area and its context within the landscape.
- Briefly provide a broad overview of the site and the project’s goals and objectives (e.g., acquisition goals, habitat or ecosystem type, and opportunities for connecting people with nature).

▲ Project introduction is not scored.

1. Acquisition Benefits (acquisition and combination projects)

What are the specific environmental benefits of this project?

- Describe the ecological structure and composition of the property to be acquired. What riparian habitat types exist on the property (wetland, stream, estuary, etc.)? What non-riparian habitat types exist on the property and how do they contribute to the riparian function? Describe the extent to which priority species, including threatened or endangered species, occur on-site?
- How much of the property is considered riparian? How is the riparian area defined (flood maps, channel migration zone, wetland delineation, tree height, local regulations, etc.)?
- How does the site support the feeding, nesting, and reproduction of pollinator species (e.g., honey bees, butterflies, hummingbirds, etc.)?⁹⁵

⁹⁴Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2019-28

⁹⁵Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.060(5)(c)(x).

- What are the land uses surrounding the site? In the description, consider how this site is adjacent to other protected habitat, connects otherwise isolated habitat, or generally improves landscape connectivity.
- What level of protection will be placed on the property? Will the site be protected in perpetuity? If the site will be protected with a conservation easement, describe the plan for inspection and enforcement.

▲ Point Range: zero to twenty points

2. Planning and Community Support (acquisition and combination projects)

- How does this project or its ecological characteristics support a current organizational plan or a coordinated state or regional prioritization effort? Who are the plan's proponents and how does this proposal help meet the goals or strategies of the identified plans (Natural Heritage Plan, watershed plan, salmon recovery plan, climate adaptation plan, or other local comprehensive plan or shoreline master program)?
- What are the future potential additions to the conserved land base in the area? Is this site an anchor site for future conservation opportunities? Why is this site a high priority at this time?
- Describe the community engagement efforts for this project proposal. How was the local community engaged in the scoping and development of this project?

▲ Point Range: zero to fifteen points

3. Stewardship (acquisition and combination projects)

Please describe the following:

- What expertise and capacity the applicant's organization has for long-term management of the site including staff, volunteer, and financial resources, and any other relevant factors.
- What partners are involved and how these partners have demonstrated a commitment to assist with project implementation or long-term management of the site.
- The stewardship plan for the property and the ongoing funding sources to implement the stewardship plan. Include in the discussion consideration of future ecological condition and plans for controlling or removing invasive species and noxious weeds.

- The risks to achieving the stewardship or management goals.

▲ Point Range: zero to sixteen points for acquisition only projects, zero to eight points for combination (acquisition and restoration) projects.

4. **Restoration** (combination projects)

Please describe the following:

- What expertise and capacity the applicant's organization has to conduct this riparian restoration project?
- Other sources of funding or resources that will be used for the restoration activities.
- The desired future condition of the site, the restoration goals, and the project design. What is the restoration plan and timeline? When will it be implemented? How does the restoration plan consider and anticipate future ecological conditions?
- What are the risks that would prevent achieving success of the restoration goals?

▲ Points Range: zero to eight points

5. **Threats to the Habitat**

- Characterize the threats to the site. Threats may be ecological, biological, human-caused, or related to climate change. Include in the discussion the county zoning, critical areas, and shoreline master program regulations, and why these are not adequate to protect the property. Based on this assessment, please also describe the potential for development or conversion of the property.
- What are the near-term consequences of the identified threats to the project site? How do these threats affect the function of the riparian habitat?
- How will this project address these threats? What will happen if this project is not funded?

▲ Point Range: zero to five points

6. **Community Benefits and Public Access**

- How does this project provide multiple benefits to the community, habitat, or surrounding ecological landscape? Include the following in the

discussion:

- Other resource uses or management practices that are compatible with and provide the ability to achieve additional conservation benefits (grazing uplands for weed control, supporting community-based forestry, etc.)
- How this project provides other ecosystem service benefits to the surrounding land (increased tree canopy cover in a dense urban area, aquifer recharge, flood attenuation, increased fire security, etc.).
- If public access is not currently allowed on this site, describe the plans to facilitate public access or recreation. Describe how the recreation opportunities are compatible with the conservation goals of this project? How will public access or recreation opportunities be managed to not interfere with the conservation purpose of this project? If public access will be excluded from some or all the project area, please explain why?
- Describe the plan for community outreach for use of this site. For example, how will this site be used for youth and community education or scientific study (university research, school programming, citizen science, etc.)?

▲ Point Range: zero to ten points

7. Matching Share (applicant does not answer).

To what extent will the applicant match any Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grant funds with other contributions?

This question is scored based on information submitted as part of the application. Native American tribes, local agencies, nonprofits, and lead entities are required to provide a 50 percent match.⁹⁶ Of the 50 percent match, 10 percent of the total project cost must be from non-federal and non-state sources. State agency applicants are not required to provide a matching share.

All applications are scored whether a match is required or not.

To qualify, matching resources must be eligible for Riparian Protection Category funding. An RCO grant used as match will not count toward the award of matching share points.⁸³

⁹⁶Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.120(7)

▲ Point Range: zero to four points

Zero points	50 percent of project's value will be contributed from other resources
One point	50.01-60 percent of project's value will be contributed from other resources
Two points	60.01-70 percent of project's value will be contributed from other resources
Three points	70.01 percent or more of project's value will be contributed from other resources

8. Matching Share Bonus (applicant does not answer).

Does the non-state, non-federal contribution described in the "Matching Share" criterion above equal more than 10 percent of the total project cost?

▲ Point Range: zero to one point

Zero points	No
One point	Yes

9. Growth Management Act (applicant does not answer).

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

State law⁹⁷ requires that:

- A. Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant⁹⁸ has adopted a comprehensive plan and development regulations as required by Revised Code of Washington 36.70A.040.
- B. When reviewing such requests, the state agency shall accord additional preference to applicants that have adopted the comprehensive plan and development regulations. An applicant is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for adopting a comprehensive plan and development regulations if it completes any of the following:

⁹⁷[Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250](#)

⁹⁸County, city, or town applicants only. This segment of the question does not apply to state agency, tribal government, nonprofits, or lead entity applicants.

- Adopts or has adopted within the time periods specified in state law.
 - Adopts or has adopted by the time it requests a grant or loan.
 - Demonstrates substantial progress toward adopting within the time periods specified in state law. An agency that is more than six months out of compliance with the time periods has not demonstrated substantial progress.
- C. A request from an applicant planning under state law shall be accorded no additional preference based on subsection (B) over a request from an applicant not planning under this state law.

RCO staff score this question using information from the state Department of Commerce, Growth Management Division. Scoring occurs after RCO's technical completion deadline. If an agency's comprehensive plan, development regulation, or amendment has been appealed to the Growth Management Hearings Board, the agency cannot be penalized during the period of appeal.

▲ Point Range: Minus one to zero points

Minus one point	The applicant does <i>not</i> meet the countywide planning policy requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250
Zero points	The applicant <i>meets</i> the countywide planning policy requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250
Zero points	The applicant is a nonprofit, state agency, or tribal government