

## Water Access Category

Water access means boat or foot access to marine waters, lakes, river, or streams.<sup>104</sup>

### Summary of Criteria

Criteria	Project Type	Maximum Points Possible	Focus	
<b>Unscored</b>				
0	Project Introduction	All Projects	0 points	State Focus
<b>Scored by the Advisory Committee</b>				
1	Need–Local Priorities	All Projects	20 points	State and Local Focus
2	Project Scope	All Projects	15 points	Local Focus
3	Immediacy of Threat	Acquisition Projects	20 points	Local Focus
		Combination Projects	10 points	
4	Site Suitability	Acquisition Projects	15 points	Technical Focus
		Combination Projects	10 points	
		Development Projects	5 points	
5	Project Design	Development Projects	15 points	Technical Focus
		Combination Projects	7.5 points	
6	Project Engagement	All Projects	15 points	State and Local Focus
7	Sustainability	Development Projects	10 points	State Focus
		Combination Projects	5 points	
8	Diversity of Recreational Uses	Development Projects	5 points	State Focus
		Combination Projects	2.5 points	
9	Cost Efficiencies	All Projects	5 points	State and Local Focus
<b>Scored by RCO</b>				
10	Need–Statewide Priorities	All Projects	9 points	State Focus
11	Proximity to People	All Projects	0.5 point	State Focus
12	County Population Density	All Projects	0.5 point	State Focus
13	Growth Management Act Preference	All Projects	0 points	State Focus
<b>Total Points Possible: 100</b>				

<sup>104</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.010

\*Focus: Criteria orientation in accordance with the following priorities:

- State—those that meet general statewide needs (often called for in Revised Codes of Washington or the *Washington State Recreation and Conservation Plan*)
- Local—those that meet local needs (usually an item of narrower purview, often called for in local plans)
- Technical—those that meet technical considerations (usually more objective decisions than those of policy).

## Detailed Evaluation Criteria

**0. Project Introduction.** In one to two minutes, introduce the project’s location and goals to set the stage for the project.

- Locate the project on statewide, regional, and site maps to help orient the evaluators to the project area and its context in the service area.<sup>105</sup>
- Summarize the site’s condition; the project’s acquisition, development, or renovation goals; and the recreation opportunities the project will provide.

Adopted in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27.

**1. Need–Local Priorities.** Describe the need for new or improved recreation facilities, how the need is known, and why existing amenities in the service area do not satisfy the need. A complete response should include the following:

- A simple inventory and condition of relevant outdoor recreation opportunities in the service area.
- Description of gaps in access, opportunity, or service delivery.
- Description of the current and/or anticipated use of the project site and any factors that contribute to fluctuations in use or demand for service.
- Description of how the need for this project has been identified and prioritized, including whether it is linked to local recreation or open space plans.

▲ Point Range: zero to ten points, which are multiplied later by two

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<sup>105</sup>The service area is the geographic area where most of the anticipated users live, as defined by the applicant.

**2. Project Scope.** Describe the site’s existing natural and built features. Describe what is being proposed in the project, including land acquisition and/or elements to be built or renovated, and for what purpose.

- What recreation opportunities will this project provide?

▲ Point Range: zero to ten points, which are multiplied later by one and a half

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**3. Immediacy of Threat** (acquisition and combination projects only). To what extent will this project reduce a threat to the public availability of water access?<sup>106</sup>

Consider the availability of alternatives. Where none exists, the significance of a threat may be higher.

▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by four for acquisition projects and two for combination projects

Zero points	No evidence presented.
One to two points	Minimal threat; water access opportunity appears to be in no immediate danger of a loss in quality or to public use in the next thirty-six months.
Three points	Actions under consideration could result in the opportunity losing quality or becoming unavailable for public use.
Four to five points	Actions will be taken that will result in the opportunity losing quality or becoming unavailable for future public use.
	Or
	A threat situation has occurred or is imminent that has led an organization to acquire rights in the land at the request of the applicant agency.

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28.

<sup>106</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.070(6)(b)(iii)

**4. Site Suitability** (acquisition, development, and combination projects only). Is the site well suited for the intended recreational uses?<sup>107</sup>

Compare the physical features of the site against the proposed use. In general, sites most compatible to the uses proposed score higher.

- **Acquisition projects.** Is the site to be acquired well suited for the intended recreational uses?

Or

- **Development projects.** Will site resources be made available appropriately for recreation; will environmental or other important values be protected by the proposed development?

Or

- **Combination projects.** Is the site to be acquired well suited for the intended recreational uses? Will site resources be made available appropriately for recreation; will environmental or other important values be protected by the proposed development?

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by three for acquisition projects and two for development projects

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28.

**5. Project Design** (development and combination projects only).

- Describe how the design aligns with the need, location, and project scope. Describe how the design addresses any constraints and whether the design provides access for users of all abilities. Applicants may choose to describe design elements such as parking and site access, accessibility features, environmental considerations, green infrastructure, cultural or historic interpretation, mitigation of public use impacts, etc. If available, include design visuals.

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by two for development projects

- Provide an overview of the project budget and how the cost estimate was determined. If the proposal includes additional site design and permitting, what is the process and anticipated schedule to be construction-ready?

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<sup>107</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.070(6)(b)(v)

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by a half for combination projects.

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27.

**6. Project Engagement.** RCO encourages applicants to use a variety of methods to gather input on the project. How were the people who will be most impacted by the project engaged?

- Describe what methods were used and the populations engaged, including underserved populations and/or Native American tribes. Describe the relevance of that participation for the population size, demographic, or socioeconomic conditions of the community or service area.

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points

- How has community input influenced the project design?

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points

- Describe any community partnerships that are providing support for the project whether through financial, in-kind, project delivery, or other means. Partnerships may be formal or informal. Describe the significance of the partnerships within the community or service area.

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27.

**7. Sustainability** (development and combination projects only). Sustainability reflects choices made to balance the desired benefits and potential impacts of a project on the surrounding landscape and community. Please discuss how the project's location or design supports the applicant's organization's sustainability plan or how the ecological, economic, and social benefits and impacts were considered in the project plan.

Examples of sustainability factors that could be part of a project or maintenance plan are provided below for consideration but are not all-inclusive. Applicants and evaluators should treat this list as a guide, not a checklist. Applicants are encouraged to be creative in expressing the sustainability factors of their projects, and evaluators should score projects based on the extent to which applicants have considered and addressed the benefits and impacts of their projects whether they discuss one of the factors below or many.

### *Ecological Factors*

- Minimizes impacts to, or improves ecological function of, surrounding lands
- Includes low-impact design or other green building techniques that reduce water, energy, resource consumption, or greenhouse gas footprint
- Provides a buffer to future natural disasters or anticipated climate impacts
- Includes landscaping that supports native species and/or pollinator habitat

### *Social Factors*

- Encourages access via multi-modal and active transportation choices
- Promotes opportunities for physical activity, social, and cultural connections, or community education

### *Economic Factors*

- Uses materials that support local producers, are recycled or recyclable, increase the project's anticipated lifespan, or reduce future maintenance costs
- Creates efficiency in the provision of public services (i.e., stormwater infiltration, increased tree canopy, carbon sequestration, etc.)
- Maximizes lifespan or reduces future operational costs
- Supports a local economic development initiative

▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by two for development projects.

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28.

**8. Diversity of Recreational Uses** (development and combination projects only). To what extent does this project provide diversity of possible water-based recreational activities?<sup>108</sup>

Water access can provide the opportunity for a variety of recreational uses including swimming, fishing, boating, picnicking, viewing, and shellfish gathering. In general, projects providing more *compatible* recreation uses will score better than projects providing just one type of water access opportunity.

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<sup>108</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.15.070(6)(b)(iv)

- ▲ Point Range: zero to five points, which are multiplied later by a half for combination projects

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- 9. Cost Efficiencies.** To what extent does this project demonstrate efficiencies or a reduction in government costs through documented use of donations or other resources?

*Donations—cash, real property, volunteer labor, equipment use, or materials*

- What are the donations for this project?
- Who is making the donations?
- What are the values of the donations and how were the values determined?
- Are the donations in hand?
- If the donations are not in hand, do you have a letter of commitment from the donors that specifies what is being donated and when?
- Are the donations necessary for implementation of the project? Are donations included in the project proposal?

*Private grants awarded by non-governmental organizations*

- Is there a private grant that is being used as match for this project?
- Who awarded the grant?
- What is the grant amount?
- What is the purpose of the grant?
- When will grant funds be available?

*Are there other efficiencies for this project that will result in cost savings?*

- What is the cost efficiency?
- Who is providing it?
- What's the value?
- When was the commitment made and when does it expire?

▲ Point Range: zero to five points

Revised February 2016, Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2016-05.

**10. Need–Statewide Priorities** (applicant does not answer). Social vulnerability and health scores are based on information from the Washington Tracking Network’s [Information by Location mapping tool](#). Social vulnerability scores use a combination of sixteen social and economic conditions such as limited English, crowded housing, or population living in poverty. Health scores are from the network’s Poor Health Outcomes ranking. Green space availability scores are determined using spatial data analysis from RCO’s equity review of grant programs. For that review, census tracts were classified as having High (more than eight acres per one thousand residents), Medium (three to eight acres per one thousand residents), and Low (less than three acres per one thousand residents) green space per capita.

- **Green Space Availability**

One point	High green space
Two points	Medium green space
Three points	Low green space

▲ Point Range: one to three points

- **Health Disparity Index–Poor Health Outcomes**

Zero points	Health outcome rating one to two
One point	Health outcome rating three to five
Two points	Health outcome rating six to seven
Three points	Health outcome rating eight to ten

▲ Point Range: zero to three points

- **Social Vulnerability Index**

Zero points	Vulnerability rating one to two
One point	Vulnerability rating three to five
Two points	Vulnerability rating six to seven
Three points	Vulnerability rating eight to ten

▲ Point Range: zero to three points

Adopted in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27.

**11. Proximity to People** (applicant does not answer). Is the project in the urban growth boundary of a city or town with a population of five thousand or more?<sup>109</sup>

RCO uses a map provided by the applicant help score this question. To receive a score, the map must show the project location and project boundary in relationship to a city's or town's urban growth boundary.

▲ Point Range: zero or half a point

Yes	Half a point
No	Zero points

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**12. County Population Density** (applicant does not answer). Is the project in a county with a population density of 250 or more people per square mile?<sup>110</sup>

RCO uses county population data from the Office of Financial Management to score this question.

▲ Point Range: zero or half a point

Yes	Half a point
No	Zero points

Revised in December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28.

**13. Growth Management Act Preference** (applicant does not answer). Has the applicant made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act?<sup>111</sup>

State law requires that:

- A. Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant<sup>112</sup> has adopted a

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<sup>109</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25.250

<sup>110</sup>Revised Code of Washington 79A.25.250

<sup>111</sup>Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250 (Growth Management Act-preference required.)

<sup>112</sup>County, city, or town applicants only. This segment of the question does not apply to state agency or tribal government applicants.

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 does any of the following:
  - 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.

This question is scored by RCO staff based on information obtained 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: RCO staff subtracts a maximum of one point.

Minus one point	The applicant does not meet the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250.
Zero points	The applicant meets the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250().
Zero points	The applicant is a nonprofit organization or state or federal agency.

July 1999, Recreation and Conservation Funding Resolution 99-15