

each is eligible to be an Evergreen Community, the board will give preference to the applicant enrolled in or holding the highest Evergreen Community tier. If one of the tied applicants is not eligible for Evergreen Community recognition, then the board will award funding based on its previously adopted prioritization approach.

Evaluation Criteria

The ALEA program strives to fund projects focused on the following two main program purposes:

- **Protection and Enhancement:** to improve or protect aquatic lands for public purposes
- **Public Access:** to provide and improve public access to aquatic lands.⁴⁶

Below are three tables that reflect the evaluation questions based on the two project purposes above and the seven project types below:

- Acquisition
- Acquisition, Development, and Restoration
- Acquisition and Development
- Acquisition and Restoration
- Development
- Development and Restoration
- Restoration

⁴⁶Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(1)

Projects Meeting **Both Purposes: Protection and Enhancement** AND Public Access Projects

Project Types: Acquisition; Acquisition, Development, and Restoration;
Development and Restoration

| Criteria | Project Type | Points |
|--|---|--------|
| Unscored | | |
| Project Introduction | All | 0.0 |
| Scored by Advisory Committee | | |
| 1. Fit with Public Access Goals | All | 7.5 |
| 2. Fit with Protection Goals | All | 7.5 |
| 3. Need for Public Access—Local Priorities | All | 12.5 |
| 4. Need for Protection | All | 12.5 |
| 5. Project Scope—Public Access | All | 7.5 |
| 6. Suitability for Protection | All | 7.5 |
| 7. Urgency and Viability | Acquisition | 15.0 |
| | Acquisition, Development, and Restoration | 5.0 |
| 8. Development Design—Fit | Development and Restoration | 5.0 |
| | Acquisition, Development, and Restoration | 2.5 |
| 9. Development Design—Budget | Development and Restoration | 2.5 |
| | Acquisition, Development, and Restoration | 2.5 |
| 10. Restoration Design and Viability | Development and Restoration | 7.5 |
| | Acquisition, Development, Restoration | 5.0 |
| 11. Project Engagement—Methods | All | 7.5 |
| 12. Project Engagement—Community | All | 7.5 |
| 13. Project Engagement—Partnerships | All Project Types | 5.0 |

| Criteria | Project Type | Points |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Scored by RCO | | |
| 14. Green Space Availability | All Project Types | 3.0 |
| 15. Social Vulnerability | All Project Types | 3.0 |
| 16. Health Outcomes | All Project Types | 3.0 |
| 17. Proximity to People | All Project Types | 1.0 |
| 18. Growth Management Act Preference | All Project Types | 0.0 |
| | | Total 100.0 |

Projects Meeting the **Single Purpose** of Protection and Enhancement

Project Types: Acquisition, Acquisition and Restoration, and Restoration

| Criteria | Project Type | Points |
|---|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Unscored | | |
| Project Introduction | All | 0.0 |
| Scored by the Advisory Committee | | |
| 1. Fit with Protection Goals | All | 15.0 |
| 2. Need for Protection | All | 20.0 |
| 3. Suitability for Protection | All | 15.0 |
| 4. Urgency and Viability | Acquisition | 20.0 |
| | Acquisition and Restoration | 10.0 |
| 5. Restoration Design and Viability | Restoration | 20.0 |
| | Acquisition and Restoration | 10.0 |
| 6. Project Engagement—Methods | All | 7.5 |
| 7. Project Engagement—Community | All | 7.5 |
| 8. Project Engagement—Partnerships | All | 5.0 |
| Scored by RCO | | |
| 9. Green Space Availability | All | 3.0 |
| 10. Social Vulnerability | All | 3.0 |
| 11. Health Outcomes | All | 3.0 |
| 12. Proximity to People | All | 1.0 |
| 13. Growth Management Act Preference | All | 0.0 |
| Total | | 100.0 |

Projects Meeting the **Single Purpose** of Public Access

Project Types: Acquisition, Acquisition and Development, and Development

| Criteria | Project Type | Points |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------|
| Unscored | | |
| Project Introduction | All | 0.0 |
| Scored by Advisory Committee | | |
| 1. Fit with Public Access Goals | All | 15.0 |
| 2. Need for Public Access—Local Priorities | All | 20.0 |
| 3. Project Scope—Public Access | All | 15.0 |
| 4. Urgency and Viability | Acquisition | 20.0 |
| | Acquisition and Development | 10.0 |
| 5. Development Design—Fit | Development | 15.0 |
| | Acquisition and Development | 5.0 |
| 6. Development Design—Budget | Development | 5.0 |
| | Acquisition and Development | 5.0 |
| 7. Project Engagement—Methods | All | 7.5 |
| 8. Project Engagement—Community | All | 7.5 |
| 9. Project Engagement—Partnerships | All | 5.0 |
| Scored by RCO | | |
| 10. Green Space Availability | All | 3.0 |
| 11. Social Vulnerability | All | 3.0 |
| 12. Health Outcomes | All | 3.0 |
| 13. Proximity to People | All | 1.0 |
| 14. Growth Management Act Preference | All | 0.0 |
| Total | | 100.0 |

Detailed Evaluation Questions

Look in the tables above to determine which questions need to be answered based on the project's purpose (protection and enhancement or public access or both) and type (acquisition, development, restoration, etc.).

Project Introduction.⁴⁷ In less than a minute, 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.⁴⁸
- Summarize the site's condition; the project's acquisition, development, or renovation goals; and the recreation opportunities the project will provide.

1. Fit with Public Access Goals.⁴⁹ How well does this project improve or provide public access to aquatic lands?⁵⁰

- How will this project do the following:
 - Provide new opportunities for people to get to the water and access aquatic resources for recreational and educational purposes?
 - Renovate or improve existing public access to aquatic lands for recreational and educational use?
 - Create non-motorized boating or small boat and pedestrian-oriented access to aquatic lands that is designed to protect the integrity of the environment?
 - Integrate public access in a way that is compatible with the physical features of the site?
 - Increase public awareness of aquatic lands as a finite natural resource with irreplaceable public heritage?

⁴⁷Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

⁴⁸The service area is the geographic area where most of the anticipated users live, as defined by the applicant.

⁴⁹Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

⁵⁰Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150

- What are the environmental benefits of the proposed project?⁵¹

▲ Point Range: 0 to 5 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by three.

2. Fit with Protection Goals.⁵² How well does this project fit the goals to enhance, improve, or protect aquatic lands?

Additional guidance on ALEA program goals and objectives is in section 2 of this manual.

- How will this project do the following:
 - Protect existing, high-value aquatic land that will contribute to important ecological functions and processes?
 - Improve the ecological function of aquatic resources through the restoration and enhancement of critical marine, estuarine, and freshwater aquatic land?
 - Preserve or establish naturally, self-sustaining aquatic and riparian areas that are a high priority in the larger ecological landscape?

- What are the environmental benefits of the proposed project?⁵³

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects meeting only the protection and enhancement purpose are multiplied later by three.

3. Need for Public Access: Local Priorities.⁵⁴ 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:

⁵¹Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(2)

⁵²Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150 and Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

⁵³Revised Code of Washington 79.105.150(2)

⁵⁴Adopted December 2023 by Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

- 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: 0-10 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a quarter. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by two.

4. Need for Protection.⁵⁵ What is the need for this project and how will this project address the applicant's protection and enhancement priorities?

- How does the project address priorities in an approved watershed plan, shoreline master plan, species recovery plan, or other state or local plan? Is the project mentioned specifically in the plan?
- How does the project enhance or complement other nearby protection and enhancement efforts in the watershed or on the shoreline?
- How is the need for this project supported in studies, surveys, and other analyses?
- Will the project benefit sensitive, threatened, or endangered species or critical plant and animal communities? If so, how?
- For Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19, how is the project referenced in the *Action Agenda* developed by the Puget Sound Partnership? The [Action Agenda](#) is on the Puget Sound Partnership's website. Evaluators should ignore this question for projects outside Water Resource Inventory Areas 1-19.

⁵⁵Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

- ▲ Point Range: 0-10 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a quarter. The points for projects meeting only the protection and enhancement purpose are multiplied later by two.

5. Project Scope: Public Access.⁵⁶ 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: 0-5 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and half. The points for projects meeting only the public access purpose are multiplied later by three.

6. Suitability for Protection.⁵⁷ Is the site well suited for the intended uses?

- Are the location and natural features of the site, for example the size, topography, soil conditions, and natural amenities, well suited for the intended uses?
- What are the historic and current human uses of the site?
- What are the historic and current ecological functions of the site?
- What steps will be taken to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts to the site once it has been acquired, restored, enhanced, or developed? Possible impacts to address could include flooding, extreme tides, storms, sources of contamination, and long-term impacts due to development and climate change.
- Are there similar sites available near the area that provide a similar opportunity or is this property a one-of-a-kind opportunity to address an ecological need?
- Are the site size and configuration sufficient to meet the specified ecological goals on their own? Possible things to address include water quantity and flow patterns at the site, patch size and shape, edge and interior habitat, and habitat corridors.

⁵⁶Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁵⁷Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

- Is the site contiguous with other conservation areas or actions that address similar ecological functions and processes?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. The points for projects that meet both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by one and a half. The points for projects that meet enhancement and restoration only purposes are multiplied later by three.

7. Urgency and Viability.⁵⁸ Only projects including acquisition answer this question.

- Why purchase this particular property now? How viable are the anticipated future uses and benefits of the site?
- If ALEA funding is not made available, will high-priority aquatic land habitat and/or public access be lost?
- What are the alternatives to acquiring the property?
- Is there an immediate threat or will the property be available for acquisition or enhancement later?
- What is the likelihood that the property will be converted to a non-recreational use or that aquatic habitat resources will be impacted or lost if the property is not acquired now?
- Is there a threat to the public availability of the resources at the site?
- Will the site be available immediately for public use or will the site require some improvement to make it available for public use? If improvements are necessary, when will the improvements be made?
- What are the nature and condition of existing surrounding land uses as well as future factors such as shoreline designation, zoning, or comprehensive or project-specific planning that may impact the viability of the site?
- Describe land management practices in the area that may affect the viability of the site?

⁵⁸Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

- Who will maintain the site and what resources are necessary and available for that maintenance?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. For acquisition-only projects, the points for projects meeting both purposes are multiplied later by three and for those meeting only one purpose are multiplied later by four. For projects that combine acquisition with either development or restoration and that meet only one purpose are multiplied later by two.

8. Development Design: Fit.⁵⁹ Only projects including development answer this question. 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. The applicant 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. If available, include design visuals.

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. The points for projects that meet both protection and enhancement and public access purposes that combine acquisition, development, and restoration are multiplied later by a half point. The points for projects that meet public access purposes and are for development are multiplied later by three.

9. Development Design-Budget.⁶⁰ Only projects including development answer this question. 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?

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. The points for projects meeting both protection and enhancement and public access purposes are multiplied later by a half.

⁵⁹Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶⁰Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

10. Restoration Design and Viability.⁶¹ Only projects including restoration answer this question.

- How does the project address the stated restoration or enhancement need? Is the project well designed? Will the project lead to sustainable ecological functions and processes over time?
 - How will the site be treated to re-establish the desired ecological processes and functions?
 - What habitat functions will be enhanced or restored?
 - How well does the proposed restoration or enhancement design or actions address desired long-term results?
 - What is the certainty that the restoration or enhancement actions will be successful?
 - Will the project require decreasing involvement over time?
 - What are the habitat quality and land management practices in the area that may affect the viability of the site?
 - What are the nature and condition of existing surrounding land uses as well as future concerns such as shoreline designation, zoning, or comprehensive or project-specific planning?
 - How will the site be managed over time to maintain the desired ecological processes and functions?
 - Who will maintain the site and what resources are necessary and available to do it?
- ▲ Point Range: 0-5 points. The points for restoration-only projects are multiplied later by four. The points for projects that combine acquisition and restoration are multiplied later by two. The points for projects that combine development and restoration are multiplied later by one and a half.

⁶¹Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-28

11. Project Engagement-Methods.⁶² RCO encourages applicants to use a variety of methods to gather input on projects. 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: 0-5 points, which are later multiplied by one and a half.

12. Project Engagement: Community.⁶³ How has community input influenced project design?⁶⁴

▲ Point Range: 0-5 points, which are later multiplied by one and a half.

13. Project Engagement-Partnerships.⁶⁵ 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 in the community or service area.

▲ Point Range: 0-5.

14. Green Space Availability.⁶⁶ Applicant does not answer in evaluation session.

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.

▲ Point Range: 1-3 points

- | | |
|----------|--------------------|
| 1 point | High green space |
| 2 points | Medium green space |
| 3 points | Low green space |

⁶²Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶³Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶⁴For acquisition projects, RCO staff suggests focusing on how community input influenced site selection.

⁶⁵Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶⁶Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

15. Social Vulnerability.⁶⁷ Applicant does not answer in evaluation session.

Social vulnerability scores use a combination of sixteen social and economic conditions such as limited English, crowded housing, and population living in poverty. The scores are based on information from the Washington Tracking Network's [Information by Location mapping tool](#).

▲ Point Range: 0-3 points

| | |
|----------|------------------------------------|
| 0 points | Vulnerability rating one to two |
| 1 point | Vulnerability rating three to five |
| 2 points | Vulnerability rating six to seven |
| 3 points | Vulnerability rating eight to ten |

16. Health Outcomes.⁶⁸ Applicant does not answer in evaluation session. This score is from the Washington Tracking Network's [Information by Location mapping tool](#), which shows the Health Disparity Index scores and Poor Health Outcomes ranking.

▲ Point Range: 0-3 points

| | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| 0 points | Health outcome rating one to two |
| 1 point | Health outcome rating three to five |
| 2 points | Health outcome rating six to seven |
| 3 points | Health outcome rating eight to ten |

17. Proximity to People. Applicant does not answer in evaluation session. RCO is required by law to give funding preference to projects in populated areas. Populated areas are defined as a town or city with a population of 5,000 or more, or a county with a population density of 250 or more people per square mile.⁶⁹ Is the project in an area meeting this definition?

⁶⁷Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶⁸Recreation and Conservation Funding Board Resolution 2023-27

⁶⁹Revised Code of Washington 79A.25.250

▲ Point Range: 0-1 point

0 points No

1 point Yes

18. Growth Management Act Preference. Applicant does not answer in evaluation session. Has the applicant⁷⁰ made progress toward meeting the requirements of the Growth Management Act?⁷¹ State law requires the following:

- A. Whenever a state agency is considering awarding grants to finance public facilities, it shall consider whether the applicant 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 comprehensive plan and development regulations. An applicant is deemed to have satisfied the requirements for adopting comprehensive plan and development regulations if it has done one 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; or
 - 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.

Scores for this question are based on information from the state Department of Commerce, Growth Management Division. If an agency's comprehensive

⁷⁰Applicant in this question means counties, cities, and towns only. This segment of the question does not apply to state agencies, Tribes, nonprofits, or lead entities.

⁷¹Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250

plan, development regulations, or amendments have been appealed to a Growth Management Act Hearings Board, the agency cannot be penalized during the period of appeal. Scoring occurs after RCO's technical completion deadline.

▲ Point Range: RCO staff subtracts a maximum of 1 point.

- | | |
|----------|---|
| -1 point | The applicant does not meet the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250. |
| 0 points | The applicant meets the requirements of Revised Code of Washington 43.17.250. |
| 0 points | The applicant is a state, Tribal, or federal agency. |