WASHINGTON STATE
Recreation and Conservation
Funding Board

Preliminary Ranking
Farmland Preservation Category
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
2027-2029

Rank	Score	Project Number and Type[1]	Grant Applicant	Project Name	Grant Request	Applicant Match	Total
1	66.00	26-1394 A	North Olympic Land Trust	Big Red Barn Farm	$1,545,000	$2,820,000	$4,365,000
2	65.64	26-1311 A	Jefferson Land Trust	West Valley Farm	$212,000	$212,000	$424,000
3	65.55	26-1633 A	Whatcom County	Steensma Farm	$669,000	$669,000	$1,338,000
4	64.68	26-1563 A	Columbia Land Trust	Trout Lake Valley-Charis Way	$336,000	$336,000	$672,000
5	63.65	26-1676 A	Okanogan Land Trust	Darling Loup Working Lands	$1,374,000	$1,374,000	$2,748,000
6	62.95	26-1565 A	State Conservation Commission	Fairview Agricultural Easement	$1,932,000		$1,932,000
7	62.50	26-1569 A	State Conservation Commission	Hinterlands Phase 2 Agricultural Easement	$2,595,000		$2,595,000
8	61.27	26-1568 A	State Conservation Commission	Wilson Creek Agricultural Easement	$5,674,000		$5,674,000
9	59.40	26-1750 A	Okanogan Land Trust	Wauconda Ranch	$763,000	$763,000	$1,526,000
10	57.86	26-1684 A	Whatcom County	Jensen Farm	$773,000	$775,000	$1,548,000
11	56.86	26-1450 A	American Farmland Trust	Rokalu Farms	$285,000	$355,000	$640,000
12	51.64	26-1338 A	Forterra	Treat Farmland	$328,000	$328,000	$656,000
				Total	**$16,486,000**	**$7,632,000**	**$24,118,000**

[1]Project Type: A=Acquisition

WASHINGTON STATE
Recreation and Conservation Funding Board

Evaluation Scores
Farmland Preservation Category
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
2027-2029

		Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	9	
Rank	Project Number and Type[1]	Project Name	Viability-Land Base	Viability–Infrastructure and Operations	Threat-Conversion	Threat–Agricultural Use	Benefits-Fish and Wildlife	Benefits-Community	Partnerships and Support	Easement Duration	Total
		Point Range	**0-20**	**0-15**	**0-10**	**0-10**	**0-10**	**0-6**	**0-4**	**-10-0**	
1	26-1394 A	Big Red Barn Farm	18.36	12.82	9.27	8.64	8.18	4.73	4.00	0.00	66.00
2	26-1311 A	West Valley Farm	17.64	13.09	8.18	8.55	9.27	5.00	3.91	0.00	65.64
3	26-1633 A	Steensma Farm	16.91	13.36	8.82	8.27	9.09	5.27	3.82	0.00	65.55
4	26-1563 A	Trout Lake Valley-Charis Way	17.27	12.95	8.27	8.36	8.73	5.18	3.91	0.00	64.68
5	26-1676 A	Darling Loup Working Lands	18.20	13.35	8.00	7.30	8.80	4.60	3.40	0.00	63.65
6	26-1565 A	Fairview Agricultural Easement	18.18	13.50	8.09	7.73	8.18	3.91	3.36	0.00	62.95
7	26-1569 A	Hinterlands Phase 2 Agricultural Easement	17.45	12.95	8.55	8.18	7.45	4.18	3.73	0.00	62.50
8	26-1568 A	Wilson Creek Agricultural Easement	16.91	12.55	8.64	7.73	8.00	4.18	3.27	0.00	61.27
9	26-1750 A	Wauconda Ranch	16.80	12.00	7.90	7.90	8.60	3.60	2.60	0.00	59.40
10	26-1684 A	Jensen Farm	14.91	11.59	8.55	7.91	7.09	4.18	3.64	0.00	57.86
11	26-1450 A	Rokalu Farms	14.91	10.77	8.64	8.09	7.45	3.82	3.18	0.00	56.86
12	26-1338 A	Treat Farmland	14.55	10.64	7.09	7.18	7.27	3.73	1.18	0.00	51.64

Evaluators score questions 1-8; RCO staff score question 9.

[1]Project Type: A=Acquisition

Project Summaries (In Rank Order)

North Olympic Land Trust **Grant Requested: $1,545,000**
Conserving Big Red Barn Farm

The North Olympic Land Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, for the 135-acre Big Red Barn Farm. The easement will allow the farm to remain a farm, as it has been for the past 120 years. The farm has prime agricultural value and could be divided into five-acre residential lots. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1394.

Jefferson Land Trust **Grant Requested: $212,000**
Conserving West Valley Farm

The Jefferson Land Trust, on behalf of West Valley Farm landowners, will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement also called a conservation easement, to protect 61 acres of farmland and wetlands in Chimacum. The land once was part of the historic Brown Dairy. Although the dairy is no longer in operation and the property has been reduced from its original size, the easement will permanently protect the farm from subdivision and additional residential development. The land trust also will install fences to protect sensitive wetlands and the banks of Chimacum Creek from cattle grazing. Chimacum Creek provides critical habitat for chum and coho salmon and winter steelhead trout, all of which are species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act. The farm is used to graze cattle and grow hay. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1311.

Whatcom County **Grant Requested: $669,000**
Conserving the Steensma Dairy Farm

Whatcom County and the Whatcom Land Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve seventy-three acres of the eighty-eight-acre Steensma Farm northwest of Lynden. The easement will protect prime agricultural soils, remove development rights, and protect the remaining fifteen acres of the farm, which are in a Habitat Conservation Zone that protects a forest along Bertrand Creek. The creek is a salmon-bearing tributary to the Nooksack River. The land has been owned and operated by the Steensma family, a fourth generation, certified-organic dairy farm, since 1946. The property has senior

water rights and contains significant irrigation and manure infrastructure, making it highly valuable to the local agricultural economy. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1633.

Columbia Land Trust **Grant Requested: $336,000**
Conserving Trout Lake Valley Farmland

The Columbia Land Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to permanently protect about 66.5 acres of prime farmland in the scenic Trout Lake Valley. The land includes irrigated pasture and forestland buffering the White Salmon River. It supports both organic dairy operations and habitat for state-listed sandhill cranes and culturally important elk. The easement would protect prime volcanic agricultural soils, including soils of statewide significance. Trout Lake Valley is experiencing unprecedented development pressure. The local population has increased by more than 25 percent since the 2020 census, and some people are buying farmland for second houses, sight-unseen. The easement supports the long-term economic viability of the farm by preserving pastureland that is essential to the farm operations because it is next to the farm's barns and milking infrastructure. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1563.

Okanogan Land Trust **Grant Requested: $1,374,000**
Conserving Working Lands bear Little Loup Loup Creek

The Okanogan Land Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve 2,929 acres of working lands less than five miles from the town of Okanogan. The easement would extinguish 1,233 development rights. The land is in two tracts separated by 1.5 miles of public land owned by Washington Department of Natural Resourced. The 316-acre Little Loup tract, includes one mile of Little Loup Loup Creek and is Designated Forestland providing habitat for species listed by the State as threatened with extinction and that have specific habitat requirements, such as western grey squirrel and cavity-nesting ducks such as hooded Merganser and Barrow's goldeneye. The 2,613-acre tract encompassing Windy Hill and Dry Coulee is to the east on both sides of Spring Coulee and includes different tree types from mixed conifer woodland to aspen groves to shrub steppe, along with the bottom of the coulee where fields are irrigated for hay production. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1676.

Washington State Conservation Commission **Grant Requested: $1,932,000**
Conserving Land in Kittitas County

The Conservation Commission will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve 216 acres of productive, irrigated farmland in eastern Kittitas County, known as Fairview. The land is in an area identified by the Kittitas County Conservation District as a priority for conservation due to the unique combination of high-quality agricultural land, wildlife corridors, and implications for the watershed downstream. Situated in the Ellensburg Foothills wildlife corridor, it also contains wetlands and Schnebly Creek, which supports resident fish and downstream salmon species. Despite agricultural zoning, development pressure is high because of population growth, rising land values, and ongoing conversion of irrigated lands. The land supports diverse crop and livestock production. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1565.

Washington State Conservation Commission **Grant Requested: $2,595,000**
Conserving the Hinterlands

The Conservation Commission will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve 177 acres of high-value orchard and shrub steppe, known as the Hinterlands, in the Lake Chelan Valley. The land has produced premium apples since 1988 and includes native shrub steppe vegetation and a wetland system that support regional wildlife. The soils support diverse perennial and specialty crops. The land faces development pressure from expanding rural residential growth around Manson, where parcel splits and rising land values have driven rapid conversion of farmland. The easement complements protection of the adjacent 336 acres now underway. If both projects are successful, the combined 513-acre block of working lands will be one of the largest protected orchard regions in Chelan County. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1569.

Washington State Conservation Commission **Grant Requested: $5,674,000**
Conserving One the Largest Agricultural Blocks in the Kittitas Valley

The Conservation Commission will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve 877 acres of productive, irrigated farmland across the Cooke, Bar 14, and Bratkus properties, forming one of the largest intact agricultural landscapes remaining in the lower Kittitas Valley. Together, these properties contain more than 780 farmable acres. The three properties lie within two miles of one another and have operated as a unified farm for more than fifty years, reflecting deep generational stewardship and a shared commitment to maintaining agricultural use despite recent succession challenges within the family. Protecting all

three sites prevents fragmentation and keeps a legacy operation intact at a pivotal transition moment. The project also safeguards a landscape of exceptional ecological value. The properties include extensive wetlands and are next to the Ellensburg Foothills Wildlife Corridor. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1568.

Okanogan Land Trust **Grant Requested: $763,000**
Conserving the Wauconda Ranch

The Okanogan Land Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to conserve 862 acres of a historic cattle ranch. The land is in Okanogan County east of Tonasket and bisected by State Highway 20. The purchase will help preserve the agricultural viability of the operation and conserve hundreds of acres of wildlife habitat by linking grassland and forestland to the neighboring U.S. Forest Service's Mount Anne Unit. The property is part of a biodiversity area and corridor in the Okanogan Highlands, protecting grey wolf, elk, and waterways used by rare birds such as black tern. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1750.

Whatcom County **Grant Requested: $773,000**
Expanding the Conservation of the Jensen Farm

Whatcom County and Whatcom Land Trust will use this grant to help buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, on 136 acres of the Jensen Farm in northern Whatcom County, near the community of Custer. The easement will eliminate eleven residential development rights, ensuring these productive soils continue to be available for agricultural use forever. The property, which is being farmed for dairy feed, is flat and well-drained, making it highly valuable to the local agricultural economy. The farm is next to 107 acres of conserved land owned by the Jensen family. and abuts the Jensen Family Forest Park, which has a conservation easement held by Whatcom Land Trust and Whatcom County. With this easement, 260 contiguous acres of land would be protected, including 243 acres of agricultural land. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1684.

American Farmland Trust **Grant Requested: $285,000**
Conserving the Rokalu Vegetable Farms

American Farmland Trust will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, to help permanently conserve Rokalu Farms, a twenty-six-acre vegetable operation nine miles southwest of Port Orchard in Kitsap County. The land has been managed by the Gilby family for the past seventy-three years and first started as a dairy before transitioning to a vegetable farm. The farm

soils are designated as "Prime Farmland" by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The landowners and farmer who leases the property are committed to regenerative agriculture and have implemented a variety of conservation practices, including planting cover crops, composting, doing minimal tillage, increasing soil organic matter, and diversifying the landscape with native trees and pollinator species. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1450.

Forterra Northwest **Grant Requested: $328,000**
Conserving Treat Farmland

Forterra will use this grant to buy a voluntary land preservation agreement, also called a conservation easement, on the 86-acre Treat Farm, near Oroville. The Treat family has owned and operated the farm for more than thirty years, and raises cattle. As one of just 10 percent of farms in the region that still sell beef directly to local consumers, Treat Farm contributes to the supply of affordable, locally grown food. The farm abuts the Okanogan River, which meanders unconfined on the property. The farm also contains about a quarter-mile of shoreline along the river and about 0.84 mile of shoreline along Horseshoe Lake, an oxbow lake along the river. A seven-acre seasonal pond is in forested sections on the property. This habitat is home to Okanogan summer steelhead trout, which is a species listed as threatened with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act, and sockeye and summer Chinook salmon. The land has U.S. Department of Agriculture Statewide Important soils. Since 2017, at least 24 percent of Okanogan River valley agricultural land has been converted to other uses, primarily residential and vacation homes. Visit RCO's online Project Snapshot for more information and photographs of project 26-1338.