

Written Evaluation Process

How are Projects Ranked for Funding?

The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) decides funding based in large part on how well an evaluation team scores the projects when considering the applicant's responses to evaluation questions. The questions are approved by the RCFB and are published in each program manual.

Evaluation

Evaluators base their scoring on the evaluation criteria, but use discretion in interpreting these questions.

In the written process, applicants must submit the required materials in PRISM by the specified date. RCO distributes the materials to the evaluation team. These materials include evaluation question responses, maps, photographs, graphics, and information from PRISM such as project summaries, cost estimates, and application metrics.

The most effective written proposals should:

- Quantify answers to the questions.
- Concisely answer the questions with no irrelevant material.
- Contain clear and meaningful maps, photographs, and other graphics; the most successful graphics clearly show problems *and* example solutions.
- Allow plenty of time to seek feedback from RCO's staff.

Written Format

The following materials are prepared by the applicant and attached to PRISM. They should be prepared on 8.5" x 11" paper with 1" margins and a 12 point ordinary font (e.g., Arial, Times). At the top of each page, print: applicant name, project name, and the RCO grant number.

Boating Infrastructure Grants (Tier 1 and Tier 2)

Tier 1

- Evaluation Criteria Responses – A maximum of three, single-sided pages.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- Photographs and Graphics – A maximum of two, single-sided pages.
- Maps – A maximum of three, single-sided pages. Three maps maximum: A regional location map, a site location map, and a service area map.
- Site plan – One, single-sided page.

Tier 2

- A project narrative – No page limit.
- Evaluation Criteria Responses – A maximum of three, single-sided pages.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- Photographs and Graphics – A maximum of two, single-sided pages.
- Maps – A maximum of three, single-sided pages. Three maps maximum. A regional location map, a site location map, and a service area map.
- Site plan – One, single-sided page.

Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities

Education and Enforcement Projects

- Evaluation Criteria Responses - A maximum of three, single-sided pages.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- Maps - A maximum of two single-sided pages unless the project occurs in widely separate areas, in which case three single-sided pages are OK. Show the project's regional and site location and estimated service area.
- *Optional* - A maximum of two, single-sided pages for visuals (photographs or other graphics).

Recreational Trails Program

Education Projects

- A maximum of two, single-sided pages for evaluation criteria responses.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- A maximum of two, single-sided pages for maps, photographs, and graphics.

Development, Redevelopment, and Maintenance Projects

- A maximum of three, single-sided pages for evaluation criteria responses.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- A maximum of two, single-sided pages for maps, photographs or other graphics.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program State Lands Development and Renovation Category

- A maximum of four, single-sided pages for evaluation criteria responses.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- A maximum of two, single-sided pages for photographs and graphics.
- A maximum of three, single-sided pages for maps and site plans.

Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program State Lands Restoration and Enhancement and Natural Areas Categories:

- A maximum of four, single-sided pages for evaluation criteria responses.
 - In order, print the criterion number, followed by the criterion heading and then the response. Each criterion must have its own separate answer.
- A maximum of two, single-sided pages for photographs and graphics.
- A maximum of three, single-sided pages for maps and site plans.
- Multi-site acquisition strategy (For applicants attempting to purchase multiple parcels over a large target area in the Natural Areas category only)
- A completed Species or Communities with Special Status Table (Natural Areas category only)

What Additional Application Materials are Required?

Applicants must attach maps, site plans, photographs, and graphics in PRISM as part of the application process. These items are provided to the project evaluation team along with your answers to program criteria.

Applicants develop the following types of elements based upon the project proposed. If it is a combination project (for example an acquisition and a development or restoration project), the applicant should provide the elements that apply to all project types in the proposal.

| Element | Project Type | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------|----------|-------------|
| | Acquisition | Development | Education and Enforcement (NOVA) | Maintenance or Education | Planning | Restoration |
| Regional location map | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Site location map | X | X | X | X | X | X |
| Service area map | | X | X | X | X | |
| Parcel map | X | | | | | |
| Trail project map* | | | | X | | |
| Multi-site/geographic envelope map | X | | | | | |
| Conceptual site plan | X | | | | | |
| Development site plan | | X | | | | |
| Floor plan | | X | | | | |
| Restoration site plan | | | | | | X |
| Photos and Graphics | X | X | X | X | X | X |

* = Maintenance projects only.

Maps

Maps are developed to visually provide accurate project locations and in some cases convey additional information. For consistency and ease of review by the evaluation teams, RCO strongly recommends these features be on all maps:

- Map title
- Project name and RCO project number
- Sponsor name or logo
- North arrow
- Map scale
- Label major highways, roadways, cities, towns, county boundaries, etc.
- Designation for acquisition parcels, project locations, project elements etc.

Map Types

- a. Regional location map** – Shows the location of the project in a geographic region of the state. The regional map should identify the county, incorporated areas, and major highways and water bodies, etc. so RCO staff and evaluators can locate the general worksite to within a few miles.
- b. Site location map** – Shows the specific location(s) of the project. This map must show the project in relation to local roadways, landmarks, etc. If possible, show the boundaries of the site on the map.
- c. Service area map (recreation projects only)** – Depicts where the predominant service audience lives and is used to convey the need for your proposal. Service area map scales vary depending on the type of project submitted.
 - i.** For projects serving local populations (such as a local, community, and some regional parks, trails, and shooting ranges), the service area should include the area from which about 80 percent of the anticipated users will come. On the map mark:
 - (1) the service area boundary
 - (2) the project site
 - (3) all other existing similar recreational opportunities that are within the service area of the type in the proposal (e.g. parks of a similar scope, trails, campgrounds, boat launches, shooting ranges, etc.).
 - ii.** For projects serving regional and/or statewide populations, the service area may be much broader. Instead of showing this broad geographic region, show the worksite and existing opportunities within the general vicinity of the project. These facilities should be the same type as that in the application and which most likely are to be used by the same clientele.

- d. **Parcel map** – Shows the parcels to be purchased with the grant as well as adjacent land ownership. This map must show the parcels in relation to local roadways, landmarks, etc.
- e. **Trail projects map** – Shows the geographic scope and extent of the project including the trails and trail systems and facilities to be patrolled or maintained.
- f. **Multi-site/geographic envelope map** – Shows the geographic area containing parcels being considered for acquisition within a multi-site project proposal.

Site Plans

Site plans provide a visual diagram of the scope of the project. Sponsors should put their names or logos, project names, RCO project numbers, and dates on each site plan.

Site Plan Types

- a. **Conceptual Site Plan** – Shows the site boundaries and the intended proposed future use of the site.
- b. **Development Site Plan** – Shows the proposed improvements at the project site. Development site plans should show site boundaries, major site features, and proposed project elements. Existing and future elements should be distinguished from those in the current project. Master, schematic design, development design, and construction document level plans are suitable for development site plans.
 - i. **Floor Plan** – A schematic plan of any substantial structure (bath house, restroom, etc.) being proposed for construction within the project scope.
- (1) **Restoration Site Plan** – Shows the restoration activities to take place on the project site. Existing and future restored areas should be distinguished from those in the current project.

Photographs and Graphics

Photographs and graphics are helpful to augment and support application materials. These images should “take” evaluators to the project site to help sell the project proposal. Applicants should put their names or logos, project names, and RCO project numbers on each photograph or graphic page. Videos and hand-out materials are not permitted.

Photograph and Graphic Types

- a. **Aerial and Ground Level Views.** Clearly show the worksite or property proposed for acquisition, development, restoration, maintenance, or planning. Orient aerial and site plan graphics in the same direction throughout. (Aerial imagery is available at county assessor sites, Google maps, etc.)

- b. Other Graphics.** It may be helpful to show the scope of the project through schematic drawings, special design features, renderings, graphs, charts, etc.

Other Materials

Some grant categories require specific materials to be developed and attached to PRISM as part of the application.

- a. Species and Communities with Special Status.** Required for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - **Natural Areas category**

Document the occurrence of species and communities with special status by submitting a completed Species and Communities with Special Status Table found in manual 10b. Applicants will have the opportunity to discuss the significance of these species and communities in the evaluation presentation.

- b. Multi Site Acquisition Strategy.** Required for grant applicants intending to acquire multiple parcels in a large targeted area(s).

The strategy should show how the applicant will approach selecting parcels to pursue and what will be done if negotiations are not successful. The strategy should be based on factors including ecological significance, threat, access, land management issues, real estate issues, degree of completion of the site, location of parcels previously acquired, and landowners. For additional information see Manual 10b, section 2.

- c. Project Narrative.** Required for Tier 2 Boating Infrastructure Grant Only.

Create a narrative that describes the project and includes the following elements (See Manual 12):

- Needs
- Objectives
- Approach
- Benefits
- Results