

Interagency Committee For Outdoor Recreation  
360/902-3000  
360/902-3026 (fax)  
360/902/1996 (TDD)  
e-mail: [info@iac.wa.gov](mailto:info@iac.wa.gov)



**STATE OF WASHINGTON**

Salmon Recovery Funding Board  
360/902-2636  
360/902-3026 (fax)  
360/902/1996 (TDD)  
e-mail: [salmon@iac.wa.gov](mailto:salmon@iac.wa.gov)

OFFICE OF THE INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE  
1111 Washington Street SE  
PO Box 40917  
Olympia, WA 98504-0917

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Contact: Susan Zemek, 360-902-3081  
E-mail: [susanz@iac.wa.gov](mailto:susanz@iac.wa.gov)

### **Castle Rock Scores Top Slot, Receives \$1 million grant for Cowlitz River Boat Launch**

OLYMPIA – The City of Castle Rock scored the highest ranking project in a statewide competition, earning a \$1 million grant for a boat launch on the Cowlitz River.

Val Ogden, chair of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, which awards the grant, will present a symbolic check to the Castle Rock City Council at its meeting 7:30 p.m., March 26, in the Castle Rock Senior Center, 222 Second Ave. S.W.

Castle Rock will use this grant to build a two-lane boat launch on the Cowlitz River at the North Recreational Access Road, which is behind the Castle Rock High School ball fields. The ramp will be constructed of concrete with 8-foot-wide boarding floats to create two distinct launch lanes. Work will include paving a parking lot, building a restroom and adding lighting, signs, a picnic table and trash cans. The project also includes constructing roads and pathways, installing a pay station and making shoreline improvements.

The grant is part of the Boating Facilities Program, which was created in 1964 by a voter-approved initiative. The program provides grants for projects that acquire, develop and renovate boating facilities on both freshwater and saltwater. Money for the grants comes from a portion of the motor vehicle gasoline tax paid by boaters.

“Boating is popular in Washington with more than 250,000 registered boats alone on our waters,” Ogden said. “The boating grants help us ensure that we are providing good facilities in Washington.”

Since 1965, the IAC has awarded nearly \$92 million for 570 projects to accommodate boaters. Grant recipients have contributed another \$58 million, bringing the total investment to \$150 million. Castle Rock is contributing \$339,754 in donations and another grant for this project.

“It takes a lot of work to win these grants,” Ogden said. “With many local governments being strapped for cash, the competition is strong. Applications are scored on ten different criteria, including how well projects meet a need, suitability of the site, how well projects are designed, contributions made by the local community, and the type of boating experience the project creates. The criteria help us ensure we are funding the best projects.”

This is the second time the city has come out on top. Castle Rock received a grant in 2004 for engineering work to design the boat launch. That project also scored the highest in that competition. For the new grant, Castle Rock was competing against 10 other projects, requesting more than \$4 million in funding. Only six projects were funded.

“This is a great project because it will meet a need for more access to the Cowlitz River,” Ogden said.

The IAC was established in 1964 to finance recreation and conservation projects throughout the state. For more information on the agency or its grant programs, visit the Web site: [www.iac.wa.gov](http://www.iac.wa.gov). A map of all public boat launch ramps in the state also is available at [www.iac.wa.gov/maps](http://www.iac.wa.gov/maps).