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January 2, 2008

TOPIC #11: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Preference for Match

Prepared and Presented By: Jim Fox

Approved by the Director:

Proposed Action: Adopt Resolution 2008-08

Summary

There have been instances when an applicant to a Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) Habitat Conservation Account category has secured a large match of non-state funds after the application was evaluated. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) proposes to adopt a policy allowing the Board, at its fall WWRP decision-making meeting¹, to give preference to a project that has secured and certified a non-state match of \$2 million or greater between the time the project was evaluated and the fall meeting.

Background

The Habitat Conservation Account (HCA) has four categories:

- Critical Habitat
- Natural Areas
- State Lands Restoration and Enhancement
- Urban Wildlife Habitat

Local agencies and Native American tribes may apply for critical habitat and urban wildlife habitat category grants, and by statute must provide a minimum 50% match. State agencies are eligible applicants in all four categories and are not required to provide match. On occasion state agencies do have matching resources and have expressed an interest in getting credit for match in the evaluation process.

¹ The fall RCFB meeting is when the board approves WWRP ranked lists by category for submission to the Office of Financial Management for funding in the upcoming biennium budget.



provide match. On occasion state agencies do have matching resources and have expressed an interest in getting credit for match in the evaluation process.

An existing evaluation question addresses matching shares² in the critical habitat, natural areas, and urban wildlife habitat categories. The *public benefit* criterion, specifically asks applicants to: "Describe and document other monetary means that have been secured to help cover the costs for the project (i.e., grants, donations, in-kind contributions, etc.)." Subsequently, there are existing criteria that provide applicants with an opportunity to address matching resources.

On August 27, Recreation and Conservation Office staff requested comment from interested parties on whether or not the evaluation criteria for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Habitat Conservation Account categories should include a question about matching shares.

Stakeholders expressed a preference for no change to the existing evaluation criteria. If a change is made in the criteria, comments expressed a strong preference for applicants having to document the availability of match. Many thought an applicant should not receive any points for an undocumented match.

RCFB Proposal

At the November 1-2, 2007, RCFB meeting, the Board decided not to give any additional preference in the HCA evaluation criteria for projects providing additional matching resources. However, the Board recognized that a project securing a large non-state match after the time that the project was evaluated should be given special consideration if the match would be lost without WWRP funding. The Board decided to be clear that under certain circumstances it would consider giving preference to such a project at the fall WWRP decision-making meeting of the Board. The Board proposes adding the following to the WWRP HCA grant program policies:

The RCFB, at its fall WWRP decision-making meeting, may give a project preference for funding if, between the time the project is evaluated and the fall meeting, the sponsor secures and certifies a matching share of \$2 million or more in non-state funds and the matching share would be lost if the project did not receive the WWRP grant.

If the Board adopts the above proposal, staff will update Manual #10b, *WWRP: Habitat Conservation Account and Riparian Protection Account: Policies and Project Selection* and send out notices to potential applicants and other interested parties. Any adopted changes will affect grant requests beginning with the 2008 grant cycle.

² Matching shares refers to applicant resources used to match Recreation and Conservation Funding Board grants and may include: cash, local impact/mitigation fees, certain federal funds, the value of privately owned donated real estate, equipment, equipment use, materials, labor, or any combination thereof. WAC 286.13.045(1)

RESOLUTION #2008-08

**Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Outdoor Recreation Account Local Parks Category
Evaluation Instrument Revision**

WHEREAS, Chapter 79A.15 RCW established the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP); and

WHEREAS, Chapter 79A.15 RCW authorizes the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (RCFB) to adopt policies and rules for WWRP; and

WHEREAS, the RCFB desires to incorporate a change to the WWRP policy manual in order to give preference to projects seeking grants from the Habitat Conservation Account that provide exceptional non-state matching resources; and

WHEREAS, the proposed revision has been made available for review and comment by individuals and organizations that have expressed an interest in WWRP; and

WHEREAS, adoption of this resolution furthers the RCO 2007-2011 Strategic Plan objective to provide leadership through policy development by considering new and updated policy recommendations (Goal 1, Strategy 1.1);

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the following language shall be added to Manual #10b, *WWRP: Habitat Conservation Account and Riparian Protection Account: Policies and Project Selection*:

The RCFB, at its fall WWRP decision-making meeting, may give a project preference for funding if between the time the project is evaluated and the fall meeting the sponsor secures and certifies a matching share of \$2 million or more in non-state funds and the matching share would be lost if the project did not receive the WWRP grant.

and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that RCO staff is directed to take the necessary steps for implementation of this revision beginning with the 2008 grant cycle.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: January 15, 2008