



STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

March 2008

**Item #9: Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Farmland Preservation Grants Awarded**

Prepared By: Marguerite Austin

Presented By: Marguerite Austin

**Approved by the
Director:**

Proposed Action: Decision

Summary

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) staff request approval of funding for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP), Farmland Preservation projects. As required by statute, the ranked list of projects was submitted to the Governor and included as part of the 2009 Supplemental Capital Budget request to the legislature. The legislature approved \$100 million for the program in the 2007-2009 budget. Most of the funds have been distributed, but \$4.7 million remains in the Farmland Preservation account. Staff is requesting final funding approval for projects evaluated during the 2007 grants cycle.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of funding for the ranked list of projects as shown in Table 1, *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program - Farmland Preservation, State Fiscal Year 2009*. The Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (Board) adopted this list of projects on November 1, 2007 and was submitted to the Legislature for approval in Legislative Evaluation and Accountability Program (LEAP) Capital Document No. 2008.

Resolution #2008-013 is provided for Board consideration.

Background

In 2005, the Legislature added farmland preservation as an eligible account and



category within WWRP. The primary focus of farmland preservation is to acquire development rights on farmland in Washington and ensure the land remains available for agricultural practices. A secondary goal is to enhance or restore ecological functions on farmland. To be eligible for consideration in this category, a project must include purchase of property interest, and applicants must provide at least 50 percent match.

Recommend List

Each biennium, the Legislature appropriates funds in the capital budget for WWRP and approves the ranked list of projects submitted by the Board. The project list shows which projects likely would be funded, and is attached to the budget as a LEAP capital document. The Legislature approves only the list of projects, not the dollar amounts associated with each project. After the Governor signs the capital budget, the Board must set the funding levels for specific projects, including which alternates will remain eligible for funding.

Funds Available

As part of the 2007-2009 State Capital Budget, the Legislature approved \$100 million for the WWRP. The portion given to the Farmland Preservation account for grants to cities and counties was \$8.73 million.

The first grant cycle occurred in 2006 (for funding in 2007). The Board funded ten projects requesting \$4 million; this action left an unspent balance of \$4.7 million. A proviso in the budget gave the Board authority to (1) provide grants to assist counties with the development of farmland preservation strategies and (2) conduct a second grants cycle in 2007.

2007 Grants Cycle

Farmland preservation grant applications were accepted until May 1, 2007. The Farmland Preservation Advisory Committee reviewed, evaluated, and ranked the projects, and the Board adopted the ranked list. The list was sent to the Governor on November 1, 2007, as required by statute. The Governor included the list in the supplemental budget request as LEAP Capital Document No. 2008-1. The legislature has approved the list.

Analysis

The final list submitted for approval incorporates statutory requirements, approved budget provisos, and established policies. Washington Administrative Code 286 requires applicants to certify the availability of matching resources at least 30 days before final funding approval. Several of the projects submitted for fund consideration identified grants from the National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) as match for their WWRP projects. Unfortunately, NRCS recently announced that they will not offer grants this year. Some applicants were able to identify alternate sources of match; others are looking for other match options.

If an applicant is unable to certify match by the deadline, the RCO director has authority to extend the certification deadline to allow applicants additional time to secure match. In keeping with established Board policies for other WWRP programs, staff recommends approval of a 180-day extension to allow applicants time to secure match. If they are successful, they will remain on the list as eligible alternates.

The RCO will encourage applicants without a secured match to resubmit their proposals for consideration during the next grant round. Since applicants have until 2009 to secure a match for projects submitted in 2008, they may be successful with an NRCS grant or other funds before the deadline.

Next Steps

If the Board approves funding for these projects, RCO staff will ensure funded applicants complete post approval requirements (e.g., submittal of milestones, preliminary title information, etc.), execute project agreements, and begin to monitor project progress.

Attachments

Resolution #2008-013

Table 1: *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Farmland Preservation, State Fiscal Year 2009*

RESOLUTION #2008-013
Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program
Funding for Farmland Preservation, State Fiscal Year 2009

WHEREAS, the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (Board) recommended a ranked list of eligible Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program projects to the Governor for inclusion in the 2008 Supplemental Capital Budget, and

WHEREAS, the Governor submitted to the 2008 Legislature the complete list of Board recommended Farmland Preservation projects (state fiscal year 2009) for approval, and

WHEREAS, the 2008 Legislature as part of Engrossed Substitute House Bill 2765 (Supplemental Capital Budget) approved projects contained in LEAP Capital Document No. 2008-1, and

WHEREAS, the 2007-2009 State Capital budget included \$8.7 million for the Farmland Preservation Account of the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, and

WHEREAS, \$4.3 million remains available for farmland preservation projects,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Board hereby approves funding for the ranked list of projects depicted in Table 1: *Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program Farmland Preservation, State Fiscal Year 2009*, contingent on the Governor's signing of ESHB2765, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board authorizes the Director to execute the appropriate agreements for prompt implementation of these projects.

Resolution moved by: _____

Resolution seconded by: _____

Adopted/Defeated/Deferred (underline one)

Date: March 27, 2008



Table 1
WWRP Farmland Preservation Evaluation Ranked List
State Fiscal Year 2009

Rank	Score	Number	Project Name	Project Sponsor	RCFB Grant Request	Sponsor Match	Total Amount	Cummulative Request	RCO Staff Recommends
1 of 16	111.857	07-1611A	Peoples Ranch	Snohomish County of	\$750,000	\$884,420	\$1,634,420	\$750,000	\$750,000
2 of 16	110.857	07-1540C	Glendale Farm	Jefferson County of	\$546,737	\$546,738	\$1,093,475	\$1,296,737	\$546,737
3 of 16	110.286	07-1600A	Ebey's Reserve Farmland - Engle	Island County of	\$750,000	\$900,200	\$1,650,200	\$2,046,737	\$750,000
4 of 16	109.429	07-1604A	Tarry's Berries Farm	Pierce County of	\$291,370	\$291,371	\$582,741	\$2,338,107	\$291,370
5 of 16	109.000	07-1597A	Orting Valley Farms	Pierce County of	\$750,000	\$800,000	\$1,550,000	\$3,088,107	\$750,000
6 of 16	108.571	07-1610A	Wille Greens Organic Farm	Snohomish County of	\$78,210	\$78,210	\$156,420	\$3,166,317	\$78,210
7 of 16	107.429	07-1574A	Rattlesnake Hills Working Rangelands	Yakima County of	\$576,650	\$576,650	\$1,153,300	\$3,742,967	\$576,650
8 of 16	105.286	07-1584A	Useless Bay East Farmland	Island County of	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$1,000,000	\$4,242,967	\$500,000
9 of 16	105.000	07-1571A	Crown-S Ranch Farmland	Okanogan County of	\$213,750	\$213,750	\$427,500	\$4,456,717	\$213,750
10 of 16	102.143	07-1607A	Biderbost Farm	Snohomish County of	\$280,710	\$280,710	\$561,420	\$4,737,427	\$280,710
11 of 16	102.000	07-1602A	Triple Creek Ranch	Kittitas County of	\$689,695	\$1,073,705	\$1,763,400	\$5,427,122	Alternate
12 of 16	101.571	07-1556A	Enumclaw Plateau Pasture Land	King County of	\$102,900	\$102,900	\$205,800	\$5,530,022	Alternate
13 of 16	101.000	07-1616A	Pearson Eddy	Snohomish County of	\$203,420	\$203,420	\$406,840	\$5,733,442	Alternate
14 of 16	100.857	07-1596A	Cowiche Basin Working Rangelands -	Yakima County of	\$690,900	\$690,900	\$1,381,800	\$6,424,342	Alternate
15 of 16	99.000	07-1603A	Finn Hall Farm Phase 1	Clallam County of	\$508,475	\$508,475	\$1,016,950	\$6,932,817	Alternate
16 of 16	95.286	07-1612A	Setzer Farm	Snohomish County of	\$20,210	\$20,210	\$40,420	\$6,953,027	Alternate
					\$6,953,027	\$7,671,659	\$14,624,686		\$4,737,427

WWRP Farmland Preservation funds available \$4,737,427

Date Created: 02/29/08