



STATE OF WASHINGTON

RECREATION AND CONSERVATION OFFICE

June 2008

**Item #4: Applications Received for 2008 Grant Cycle**

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**Approved by the  
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**Proposed Action: Briefing**

**Summary**

The Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) received 642 applications, with a combined total request of \$319.5 million for the 2008 grant cycle. Increased outreach helped us achieve this record number of applications.

**Background**

In January 2008, the RCO announced the start of the 2008 grant cycle. As of May 1, 2008, the RCO received 642 applications in seven programs, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Applications and Funding Request by Program

Program	Applications	Funding Requested
<b>WWRP</b> ( <i>Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program</i> )	370	\$272.2 million
<b>ALEA</b> ( <i>Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account</i> )	32	\$11.7 million
<b>BFP</b> ( <i>Boating Facilities Program</i> )	40	\$19.9 million
<b>BIG</b> ( <i>Boating Infrastructure Grant</i> )	8	\$1.0 million
<b>LWCF</b> ( <i>Land and Water Conservation Fund</i> )	23	\$5.8 million
<b>NRTP</b> ( <i>National Recreational Trails Program</i> )	90	\$2.7 million
<b>NOVA</b> ( <i>Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities</i> )	78	\$6.1 million



<b>Grand Total All Programs</b>	642	\$319.5 million
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## **Analysis**

RCO staff, along with the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, increased outreach efforts during the 2008 grant application period. As in the past, staff sent email messages to previous grant applicants and conducted public workshops. In addition, RCO staff took the following steps to generate more applications:

- Sent personalized e-mails to our partner organizations, asking them to post grant information on their Web sites, in their newsletters, and to listservs;
- Sent a colorful, oversized postcard to a list of interested parties, as well as to every city council member and mayor;
- Sent an e-mail with grant information to all legislators ;
- Sent a release to the news media, as well as park, trail, and other trade publications, announcing grants availability and the workshops; and
- Publicized grants availability at the Washington Recreation and Park Association's annual conference.

## **Next Steps**

Staff hopes that the increased applications will result in exemplary projects. Volunteer panels will evaluate the proposals so that the Recreation and Conservation Funding Board (Board) can review prioritized lists at the September and November Board meetings. The evaluation process includes the following elements, as established by Washington Administrative Code and Board policy.

### Review by Outdoor Grants Managers

For the next several weeks, grant managers will review each individual application submission to screen for (1) eligibility of the project or project elements, (2) whether or not it is in the correct grant program, (3) the acquisition strategy, development plan, associated cost estimates, and (4) the “competitiveness” of a project. This review helps to ensure that projects can be competitive in the grant program and removes ineligible projects, activities, and project costs. In addition to reviewing the application materials, Outdoor Grant Managers visit as many of these applicants and project sites as possible. This in-person site visit is a critical component in the Board-approved application process because it can reveal more information about the project than is apparent in the application.

### Planning Completed

In the programs where comprehensive plans are required by statute to compete (Boating Facilities Program, Land and Water Conservation Fund, Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities, and Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program), applicants complete planning materials by the established deadline, which is roughly 3 months before the funding meeting. These plans play a critical role in providing the foundation

for the “response to the need” evaluation question that is part of most programs. The plans help document the open public process that identified the project proposals.

### Project Review

RCO conducts in-person Project Review Meetings for most grant programs and categories. The meeting is a technical review at which applicants present their project(s) to RCO staff and volunteer specialists who suggest improvements to the project in terms of eligibility, design, program “fit”, presentation quality, and more. The meetings happen much like the final evaluation session, except that they are less formal and are optional for the applicant to attend. These meetings will take place throughout June and July 2008 at locations across the state.

Written project reviews also occur in June and July. Review teams receive the project description, cost estimate, maps and visuals, and draft evaluation responses electronically, in lieu of in-person meetings. RCO staff gives the team’s comments to the applicants so that they can improve their projects before the evaluation meeting.

### Technical Completion Deadline

The technical completion deadline is the date when all application information or materials must be complete, in final form, and received by RCO. No changes to an application can occur after this date. The technical deadline occurs roughly three months before the funding meeting.

### Evaluation

Evaluation sessions are the keystone event in the project selection process. These meetings provide a basis for funding recommendations by assessing the merits of each project against evaluation criteria adopted by the Board rather than against each other. The standing advisory committees or volunteer panels evaluate projects through either in-person presentations or written submissions, depending on the grant program process determined by the Board.

### Certification of Match

Before final funding approval, applicants verify that the matching share of their project funding is committed and available. They must submit verification at least 30 days before the Board funding meeting (WAC 286-13-040 (3)). Projects that do not have match certified may not be recommended for funding.

### Board Meetings

At the September 23-24 Board meeting in Walla Walla, the Board will take several actions on these projects. The Board will make funding decisions for projects in the Land and Water Conservation Fund program and Tier 1 of the Boating Infrastructure Grant programs. The Board will also approve ranked lists for projects in the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and the Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account (ALEA) programs. Final funding approval for both the WWRP

and ALEA projects will occur at the July 2009 Board meeting, after the legislature has approved and the Governor has signed the next biennial budget for Washington State.

Staff will present projects for the remaining grants at the November board meeting for approval. These grants include the Boating Facilities Program, the Nonhighway and Off-road Vehicle Activities program, and the National Recreational Trails Program.

**Attachments**

None