

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR COMMUNITY-BASED HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS IN OREGON, WASHINGTON, AND IDAHO

Proposal Deadline – November 20, 2009 at 5:00 PM PST

Grant Awards Announced – January 2010

Download Grant Applications – www.ecotrust.org

Contact:

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Ecotrust

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Ecotrust is pleased to request project proposals for the 2010 cycle of the Whole Watershed Restoration Initiative (WWRI). In partnership with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB), and the Pacific Northwest Region of the Forest Service, Ecotrust has the extraordinary opportunity to continue supporting community-based habitat restoration projects through the WWRI.

Introduction

Ecotrust's mission is to inspire fresh thinking that creates social equity, economic opportunity and environmental well-being. For nearly two decades, Ecotrust has created, capitalized and catalyzed innovative ways to restore environmental conditions while fostering economic opportunities in the temperate rain forest–Pacific salmon region that stretches from Alaska to California.

The goal of the Whole Watershed Restoration Initiative is to restore the natural functions of whole watersheds in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho along with amplifying community-based partnerships focused on the strategic restoration of Pacific salmon and steelhead ecosystems.

Available Funding

For 2010, the majority of WWRI funding comes from Federal sources, but may include up to \$250,000 in State funds. Successful applicants should expect project funding to be Federal.

Applicants may request between \$20,000 and \$100,000 in funding. Projects requesting less than \$20,000 or more than \$100,000 will not be considered for funding through the WWRI.

Applicants whose project will be implemented in 2010 will be given priority. Project activities must be completed within twenty-four months of the award start date.

Eligibility

Geographic Considerations

Projects located in one of the Pacific Northwest Whole Watershed Restoration Partnership priority basins will receive emphasis for funding. Additional emphasis for funding will be given to projects within a focus watershed. Priority basins are in **bold** font and *focus watersheds* are in italics.

- **Mid-North Oregon Coast:**

- *Alsea River*

- *Nestucca River*

- **South Oregon Coast:**
 - *Steamboat Cr in the North Fork Umpqua River*
 - *Upper South Fork and Jackson Cr of the Umpqua River*
 - *Sucker Cr of the Illinois River*
 - *Applegate River*
 - *South Fork Coquille River*
- **John Day:**
 - *Camp Creek of the Middle Fork*
 - *Granite and Wall Creeks of the North Fork*
- **Lower Columbia:**
 - *Salmon River and Still Creek of the Sandy River, Oregon*
 - *Hood River, Oregon*
 - *East Fork and Muddy River of the Lewis River, Washington*
 - *Wind River, Washington*
 - *Grays River, Washington*
- **Upper Columbia:**
 - *Twisp River*
 - *Nason Creek of the Upper Wenatchee River*
 - *Lower Chewuch River*
- **Puget Sound:**
 - *Upper Sauk and Lower Suiattle Rivers of the Skagit River*
 - *North and South Forks of the Skykomish River*
 - *South Fork Skokomish River*
- **Clearwater:**
 - *Lapwai Cr / Big Canyon Cr*
 - *Potlatch River*
 - *Lochsa River*
- **South Fork Salmon:**
 - *Secesh River*
 - *Upper South Fork Salmon River*

Look for a Priority Basin and Focus Watershed map coming soon to www.ecotrust.org/forestry/wwri.html.

Eligible Projects

Restoration projects including, but not limited to, the following activities will be considered for funding:

- Breaching or removal of levees
- Removal of dams or other large obstructions to rivers and streams
- Culvert removal and traditional culvert replacement with stream-bed simulation type culverts or bridges
- Reestablishing river flow patterns, meanders, and channels that have been altered or obstructed
- Restoring and enhancing connections between lakes, sloughs, side channels, the floodplain, and the main channel
- Restoring riverbanks and floodplains, including riparian restoration
- Road decommissioning

Projects should focus on restoration of anadromous fish habitat, implementing on-the-ground habitat restoration activities, but they may include other activities such as feasibility analysis, design, outreach, education, and monitoring. Applicants are encouraged to submit projects which are part of a recognized restoration action plan, salmon recovery plan, or other publicly-vetted prioritization document.

Activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by local, state, or federal law will not be considered.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants include: Tribes, local governments, and non-profit organizations, such as local watershed councils and Soil and Water Conservation Districts, educational institutions, and other non-governmental community groups and organizations. Federal agencies may apply, but are ineligible for NOAA funds. Federal agencies are encouraged to partner with non-federal, local organizations.

Partnerships and Match

Diversity of partners and degree of leveraged of funding are important considerations in project selection (see *Diversity of Partnership*, Evaluation Criteria D, below.) Applicants are encouraged to show non-federal match of at least 50% of the total project cost if possible. Projects with less than 50% non-federal match are eligible for funding, though some non-federal match is required.

Compliance with NEPA and Other State and Federal Regulations

Successful applicants are very likely to receive Federal funds, and therefore will be required to satisfy all applicable financial and programmatic requirements and meet all applicable local, state, and Tribal environmental laws and Federal consistency requirements, including but not limited to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Endangered Species Act (ESA), and the Clean Water Act (CWA) before project implementation. Applicants are expected to work with the funding entities to provide information necessary to complete compliance requirements. For specific project inquiries, you may contact WWRI@ecotrust.org.

Applicants should provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, locations, sites, species and habitat to be affected, possible construction activities, and environmental concerns that may exist in order for the federal agency to make a NEPA determination on each proposal.

If environmental compliance requirements have not already been completed, applicants are encouraged to incorporate necessary funding in the budget section of the application. For

example, if the project may affect historic or cultural resources and a survey will be needed to complete consultation with State or Tribal Historic Preservation Offices, the funding for this survey should be accounted for in the overall project budget.

Proposal Evaluation

Each proposal will be ranked by a selection committee on a scale from zero to 100 points and awarded funding based on how well it meets each of the following criteria:

- A. Goals and Objectives** (10 points)
- B. Geographic Focus** (15 points)
- C. Benefits and Project Justification** (20 points)
- D. Diversity of Partnership** (10 points)
- E. Project Readiness** (10 points)
- F. Applicant Experience** (5 points)
- G. Monitoring** (10 points)
- H. Community Outreach** (10 points)
- I. Budget/Cost Effectiveness** (10 points)

Application Process

Application forms are available on Ecotrust's Web site at www.ecotrust.org. Applications and all other required documentation must be submitted electronically to WWRI@ecotrust.org by 5:00 PM on November 20, 2009. Applicants are required to use the application format provided below. Please limit the narrative section (A-H) of the application to eight pages. Applicants may submit other information, such as maps, pictures, or designs, relevant to the evaluation of the project in an attachment.

The application consists of three sections:

1. Title Page (basic organization, contact, and project information);
2. Narrative Questions (based on above evaluation criteria); and
3. Budget Section (expense description and budget table).

Evaluation Criteria – (Please respond to these in completing the narrative question section):

A. Goals and Objectives (10 points)

Goals and objectives refer to the expected condition of the treated area and anticipated project outcomes. Goals and objectives should be stated clearly and include quantifiable targets. Examples of measurable objectives include the number of barriers removed or number of points where flow patterns are restored.

B. Geographic Focus (15 points)

Scoring for this category is heavily weighted towards selecting and completing essential restoration work in priority basins (10 points) and focus watersheds (5 points). (See *Geographic Considerations* described above.)

C. Benefits and Project Justification (20 points)

What is the importance of the project and why is it needed? What is the context of the project in terms of accomplishment of whole watershed restoration? Is the action tied to or identified in an existing salmon recovery plan or a watershed action plan? What is the basis for the activity (extent to which the project is based on analysis and identification of limiting factors). Cite existing watershed analyses and restoration, or salmon recovery plans, water quality restoration plans, etc.

The description of project benefits should include benefits to target species (Pacific salmon and steelhead). Benefits include the number of acres and stream miles of habitat improved and the

magnitude of the improvements (percentage increase in usable habitat, floodplain capacity, etc.). The description should also address the degree to which the action will improve watershed condition and contribute to completion of whole watershed restoration. A discussion of how the project will benefit water quality and other water resource concerns would also be helpful. Economic and social benefits should also be described to the extent possible.

D. Diversity of Partnership (10 points)

Developing partnerships among communities, organizations, individuals and agencies is an important element to long term restoration success. Projects that involve more than one entity will be ranked higher during the evaluation process. *Diversity of partnership* will be measured by the number and level of confirmed partner contributions. Projects must show some funding matched by other (non-federal) organizations.

E. Readiness (10 points)

Readiness is the degree to which the project is ready for implementation in terms of NEPA standing, project design, permits, and contract preparation. Projects that are ready to implement will rank higher during the evaluation process than those that are in the planning phase.

F. Experience (5 points)

Applicants must show capacity to implement the scope and scale of the proposed work and the ability to successfully complete the project within the proposed budget and timeline. Organizations previously participating in similar projects with a proven record of project completion and qualified staff members may be ranked higher during the evaluation process.

G. Monitoring (10 points)

All funded projects must include plans for monitoring project effectiveness consistent with the Estuary Restoration Act of 2000. Guidance and tools for developing monitoring plans and more information on monitoring requirements are available at:

http://era.noaa.gov/htmls/era/era_monitoring.html

Project monitoring plans must also include a project completion report containing before and after photo points that illustrate the effects of the project activities as clearly as possible.

H. Community Outreach (10 points)

Ideal projects will demonstrate a high degree of community involvement in all phases of project development, implementation, and monitoring. Restoration project proposals that include complementary public outreach and awareness-building components contributing to their watershed restoration effort will be ranked higher than those without these outreach activities.

I. Budget/Cost Effectiveness (10 points)

The budget description should detail all funds requested, as well as all matching funds and in-kind contributions. Budgets submitted should follow budget format provided. Please also specify whether matching funds and other contributions are pending or secured.