

Framework for Expenditures from the OCRF

Vision

The Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee envisions an Oregon where native fish and wildlife thrives in healthy habitats across the state's lands and waters and where all Oregonians realize their role in achieving this vision. To do so, the Advisory Committee hopes to support robust conservation projects and get people involved with Oregon's fish, wildlife, wild places, and recreational opportunities to inspire their personal stewardship.

Expenditures

The Conservation & Recreation Fund was created to grow the capacity of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage all of Oregon's fish and wildlife species and to implement the Oregon Conservation Strategy. The legislation creating the Fund is not specific about how the Advisory Committee will allocate funds. Given the nature of this limited duration Fund, it has been deemed most appropriate for the 2019-2021 biennium to focus on granting monies to partners and organizations that can undertake projects that meet the intent of the Fund.

At the April 6, 2020 meeting, the Advisory Committee indicated their intent to allocate resources from the 2019-2021 biennium to projects via a competitive process. The Committee plans to solicit a diversity of projects through a competitive Request For Proposals process which will be objectively judged through a set of established criteria. The Committee will retain the authority to use their discretion to support projects with the Committee's priorities and the legislative mandate without a competitive process.

By statute and administrative rule, the activities for which the department may expend monies from the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Fund include, but are not limited to:

- (1) Promoting the health of Oregon's ecosystems and fish and wildlife species by implementing conservation programs and strategies identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, including conservation programs and strategies for the nearshore identified in the marine component of the Oregon Conservation Strategy;
- (2) Improving engagement of the public in wildlife watching, hunting and fishing opportunities and in other outdoor recreation opportunities related to and in support of healthy fish, wildlife and habitats;
- (3) Improving educational outreach and engagement of the public, including diverse and underserved communities, related to and in support of healthy fish, wildlife and habitats;
- (4) Engaging in, and providing funding for, joint projects of the department and the State Parks and Recreation Department or other state agencies as recommended by the Oregon Conservation and Recreation Advisory Committee; and
- (5) Other conservation, management, research, habitat improvement, enforcement, outdoor recreation or education activities.

Other Expenditure Details:

- There is no minimum or maximum limit on financial requests that can be made from the Fund.
- The Committee may consider accepting restricted donations on a case by case basis by evaluating proposals against existing program priorities and criteria.

Who Can Apply

Any public or private non-profit organization may request funds. Private non-profit organizations must have tax-exempt status under the IRS Code Section 501(c)(3). Businesses and individuals are not eligible to apply.

Program Priorities for the OCRF

To be considered for funding, the funded elements of a project must include one of the priorities defined as either Conservation and/or Recreation as described below. In all priority areas, the Advisory Committee will prioritize projects that engage Oregonians in the solution to a key conservation issue or in recreational opportunities that reach out to and engage people who have not participated in the past because of language barriers, financial barriers, access barriers, etc.

The definition of Conservation for the purposes of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee, is: ***Improving the health of Oregon's ecosystems and populations of fish and wildlife species.***

For conservation projects, The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

- Habitat restoration and improving habitat connectivity related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy and evolving science.
- Science, research, and monitoring directly related to implementing the recommendations in the Oregon Conservation Strategy, especially through community science activities.

The definition of Recreation for the purposes of the work of the Oregon Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee, is: ***Any activity undertaken to enjoy, appreciate, or support fish, wildlife, and their habitats.***

For recreation projects, The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

- Opportunities to engage and expand the number and diversity of Oregon's outdoor users.
- Opportunities to introduce Oregonians to wildlife-associated recreation.
- Educational materials and opportunities related to responsible recreation, ecology, and wildlife conservation for kids and adults in multiple languages.
- Research or planning that supports responsible recreational opportunities.
- Enhancement or restoration of trails and access to waterways in a way that preserves or enhances sensitive habitat or that resolves impacts related to informal or dispersed recreation in sensitive habitat.

The committee welcomes projects that combine conservation and recreation.

Measuring Success

The Committee recognizes the importance of both short- and long-term monitoring to evaluate project outcomes. Beyond the reporting that will be required by our successful applicants, the committee intends to allocate a minimum of 5% of funds to investigating, monitoring, and reporting on the success of our expenditures on a biennial basis. Both evidence-based and values-based metrics may be considered to measure the impact of our projects.