

Draft Expenditure Framework – intended to start the conversation and will be revised by the full committee

Framework for Expenditures from the OCRF

The legislation creating the Conservation & Recreation Fund is not specific about how the Advisory Committee will allocate resources from the Fund. The greatest need and the origin of the Alternative Funding Task Force is to grow the capacity of the Department of Fish and Wildlife to manage all of Oregon's fish and wildlife species for the benefit of all Oregonians. Given the nature of a 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 intent of the Committee is to solicit a diversity of projects through a competitive Request For Proposals process.

- 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 criteria and program priorities.
- Preference may be given to projects with higher levels of contributions from multiple community and funding partners or that bring funds to the OCRF.

By statute and administrative rule, the activities for which the Department may expend moneys 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.

Who Can Apply

Any public or private non-profit organization may request funds to implement fish restoration or enhancement projects. 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. Preference may be given to

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projects that focus on the intersection of conservation and recreation. In all priority areas, the Advisory Committee will prioritize projects that engage Oregonians in the solution to a key conservation issue or recreational opportunity. [Get people involved with wild places and recreation areas and inspire personal stewardship]

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

The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

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

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

The Advisory Committee will prioritize:

- New opportunities to engage Oregon's outdoor users in activities that protect fish and wildlife.
- New opportunities to introduce new Oregonians to wildlife-associated recreation.
- Educational materials and opportunities on responsible recreation, ecology, and wildlife conservation for kids and adults in multiple languages.
- Supporting research or planning that supports planning for 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 and dispersed recreation in sensitive habitat.

Fundability Criteria

While any project that fits the definition of Conservation or Recreation is eligible for funding, the following project elements are more likely to be recommended to the Commission. Those projects that:

1. Identify a clear and direct benefit to priority fish and wildlife species identified in the Oregon Conservation Strategy. (https://oregonconservationstrategy.org/media/ODFW-Wildlife-Priority-Strategy-Species-by-Ecoregion_3.2018.pdf)
2. Demonstrate intersectional objectives between conservation and recreation.
3. Are underway and can be expanded or improved with the addition of OCRF funding.
4. Involve large numbers of partners.
5. Engage youth, underserved communities and diverse audiences, such as communities of color, tribes, and low income communities, in conservation and recreation activities.
6. Do not include staff time, except in cases where the outcome of the staff time is clearly tied to the project deliverable.
7. Include minimal or no administrative, project management, or overhead costs.

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8. Do not require a long term funding commitment.
9. Clearly demonstrate the project is consistent with ODFW plans, policies and goals.
10. Clearly demonstrate the project is, or will be, consistent with local, state, and federal regulations.
11. Projects that are proposed to fulfill a regulatory requirement, such as mitigation, are not acceptable.

Discretionary Expenditures

The Conservation & Recreation Advisory Committee plans to initially fund project(s) that seeks to increase habitat connectivity for Oregon Conservation Strategy Species and large-scale community science efforts that seek to engage Oregon's outdoor recreationists, wildlife watchers, and new participants in gathering important baseline information about the current abundance and distribution of Oregon Conservation Strategy Species.

1. Connectivity (details TBD)
2. Community science (details TBD)