

PFA Mitigation Fund September Staff Report

September 6th, 2023

Virtual

General Program Updates on MAC and Staff Efforts The Advisory Committee has finalized the following important components of program establishment:

- ✓ [Advisory Committee Operating Procedures](#)
 - Clarifies the Advisory Committee's basic procedures and roles for Staff, Advisory Committee members, and the public.
- ✓ [Oregon Administrative Rules](#)
 - Adopted by the Fish and Wildlife Commission on August 4, 2023.

The Advisory Committee will be developing and finalizing the following documents on the estimated timelines below:

1. Expenditure Framework – **Attached to email.**
 - a. Outlines the purpose, priorities, and funding formats within the Fund and is aimed at providing clarity to ODFW staff and the public.
 - b. Pending Committee adoption at the September 2023 meeting
2. Grant Review Process – **Attached to email.**
 - a. Outlines the grant review and evaluation process, from project submission to award.
 - b. There were no objections to the review process which was discussed and shared at the August Committee meeting. Once we receive our first round of applications, the Committee chairs will appropriately tailor the review process.

The goal date for releasing the PFA Grant Program's first RFP remains for Fall 2023, with a goal month of October 2023. This is pending the implementation of the Interim Grant Management System. More information is below.

Administratively, Staff is also working on the following:

- A new ODFW PFA web page with more information and links for the grant program
- A communications strategy in advance of the RFP and longer-term
- The interim grant management system for applications, grant review, agreement processing, and reporting is wrapping up final negotiations.
 - The final contract is planned to be executed on September 5.
 - The contractor states the system will take 4-6 weeks to create, test, and implement. The goal is to have the system online in early October.
 - The Advisory Committee should be aware that the grant program will not launch until this system is online, which could cause delays into late October/Early November, but that is not expected at this time with the proposed contractor timeline.
- Template grant agreements, working with Dept of Justice
- The hiring of the Staff Assistant is in the reference checks stage of the process.
- Grant templates for the Grant Application are being finalized. Examples include:
 - Reporting forms

- Reimbursement forms
- Advancement forms
- Budget forms
- Evaluation forms

Agenda item: 4. Staff Report

Below is a preliminary update.

1. Grant Guidelines – *In ODFW Review Stage*
 - a. The guidelines are moving through an internal ODFW review process by Information & Education and ODFW Leadership. External reviewers are expected to be engaged post ODFW reviews, after which the Advisory Committee will receive a final copy for review.
 - b. These guidelines accompany the RFP and will illustrate to the public the grant program's purpose, how to apply, and what attachments are required for applications.
 - c. Committee goal approval October 2023 meeting.
2. Public Informational Grant Session
 - a. Andy is working with the ODFW Information and Education Department to create a recorded public informational grant session for the PFA Mitigation Fund. The recording will discuss the grant program, priorities, how to apply, and application requirements. This will not be a live webinar to avoid technical issues.
 - b. The recording will be posted online and distributed to the growing PFA Mitigation Fund list server.
 - c. A Q&A link will be embedded into the recording description and the distribution email for prospective applicants to engage with. All questions will be responded to and posted online before the opening of the grant solicitation.
3. Project Reporting Requirements - *See attached reporting requirements document*
 - a. Currently, the grant program has minimal reporting requirements for grantees by design. It is recommended that we encourage some reporting requirements to ensure that both the grantees and ODFW can quantify the success of the Grant Program to both the public and legislators. Andy will lead a discussion with the Advisory Committee about reporting metrics the Committee would like to see in the program.
 - b. As it currently stands, the following are required reports of all funded projects:
 - i. Quarterly Reports
 - ii. Mid-project performance reports
 - iii. Final Reports
4. Funding Ceiling and Floor
 - a. After consultation with other ODFW programs, ODFW recommends implementing a funding floor of \$50,000 to reduce administrative burden and contractual bottlenecks on the grant program.
 - b. The Advisory Committee is also encouraged to seek insight from partners if a floor will be detrimental to applications.

Agenda item: 5. Adoptions

- The Advisory Committee Expenditure Framework is ready for adoption by the Committee. This document has been shared with the Advisory Committee since its completion in early summer. It is attached once more for reference.

Agenda item: 6. ODFW Priorities Presentation

- The ODFW Director's office will present to the Advisory Committee in tandem with Department Divisions on expected priorities for each Division. A Q&A will follow the presentation. This presentation will help prepare the Advisory Committee for the review process next year, informing the Committee on what the Department believes are some of the highest priorities throughout the State concerning the Grant Fund.

Agenda item: 7. Beaver Action Plan

- The Beaver Action Plan will be presented to help inform the Advisory Committee of how to incorporate priorities and goals from the Action Plan when reviewing funding proposals.

Agenda item: 8. Committee Membership

- The current terms for the Chair and Vice Chair are expiring on September 30, the Committee will discuss upcoming appointments to the Chair and Vice Chair for the next two (2) years.
- Bob Van Dyk has decided not to seek reappointment and he will finish his service on September 30.
- Chad Washington will seek reappointment.
- Appointments are made by the Governor, and statute states that "the Governor shall solicit and consider the recommendations from the timber industry and nongovernmental organizations that promote the conservation of freshwater habitat." (SB 1501, Section 30, (3)(B)(b).
- Bob Van Dyk was a representative of the conservation community, so his replacement should be one of the "three members who represent nongovernmental organizations that promote the conservation of freshwater habitat."
- SB 1501 language is not clearly synced with terms, as 1501, Section 30, (6)(b) states that "Before the expiration of the term of a voting member, the appropriate appointing authority shall appoint a successor whose term begins the following January 31. Yet current terms do not end on January 31.
- ODFW is pursuing the next steps.