



\$100 Million Needed to Protect Washington's Special Places

We request renewing \$100 million in the Capital Budget for the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). This funds 115 parks, trails, habitat areas and farms. Projects are listed by city, county and legislative district at www.WildlifeRecreation.org.

An Award Winning Program

- A Competitive Pork-free Process – The RCO, a state agency, competitively ranks projects in a nationally recognized process that funds the best first.
- Record Demand – The WWRP received 370 applications this year totaling \$272 million in requests. This is a 76% increase over last biennium.
- Matching Funds are Leveraged – Public and private dollars match local projects by 50%, and state projects are used to match federal grants.

Stimulating our Local Economy

- Capital Projects Create Jobs – Development projects create local jobs and acquisitions and easements put money in the pockets of local landowners. These projects fuel the economy and generate taxes that return to state and local coffers.
- Our Quality of Life Drives our Economy – If we don't act now, we will lose the natural values that help attract qualified employees and retain jobs.
- Outdoor Recreation Generates Revenue – Hunting, fishing and wildlife watching contributed \$2.8 billion to Washington's economy in 2006 (USFWS 10/08).
- Preserving Working Farms and Ranches – Conservation easements help farmers sell the development rights on their land, reducing the financial pressure to develop.

Protecting our Natural Resources

- Restoring Puget Sound – At \$100 M, 35 projects totaling \$35 million would help protect or restore Puget Sound. Local matches raise the total to *\$53 million*.
- Mitigating the Effects of Climate Change – We need to protect drinking water supplies and connect habitat areas so plant and animal species can migrate.
- Reducing our Carbon Footprint – Protected forests sequester carbon and urban parks and trails promote walking and biking (TPL 9/08).

Healthy Families Need Access to Recreation

- Reducing Obesity – Access to recreation is essential to getting kids outside.
- Planning for Future Generations – Washington's population has grown by 25% since 1990, and it is projected to add 2 million people in the next 25 years.
- Funding State Parks – At \$100 million the WWRP includes \$21M for State Parks.

What's the Source of WWRP Funds?

WWRP grants are funded in the state's capital construction budget, primarily from the sale of general obligation bonds. They do not compete with operating dollars for teachers and human services.

How WWRP Funds Are Used

The WWRP grant program is administered by the State Recreation & Conservation Office (formerly the IAC). This state agency ranks and distributes WWRP grants in a competitive process that funds the best projects first. \$100 million funds 115 projects:

- Habitat Conservation – \$36 M for natural areas, habitat and land stewardship.
- Outdoor Recreation – \$36 M for state and local parks, trails and shorelines.
- Farmland Conservation – \$9 M for conservation or restoration of working farms.
- Riparian Habitat Protection – \$19 M for acquisition and restoration of fresh and saltwater riparian habitat.

About the Coalition

The Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition is a non-profit citizen's group that leverages public funding for state and local parks, trails, habitat and working farms. Founded and co-chaired by former governors Dan Evans and Mike Lowry, this diverse Coalition includes over 130 organizations representing business, recreation and conservation groups.

The WWRP Grant Program

In 1990 the Coalition persuaded the legislature to establish the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP). By lobbying the legislature the Coalition has secured \$550 million for 922 WWRP projects around the state.

Find WWRP Projects in Your Community: www.WildlifeRecreation.org.

Frequently Asked Questions

How does the WWRP affect Local Tax Revenues?

The WWRP's 2005 amendments require state agencies to make Payments in Lieu of property Taxes (PILT) to local governments for all habitat land acquired by the program and taken off the tax rolls. The PILT payment is equal to the open space tax rate paid by private landowners. The state is also required to pay property assessments for weed control, local improvement districts, fire districts and all similar payments at the same rates as private landowners.

How does the WWRP help Local Governments?

Cities, counties and other local governments are eligible to apply for grants in the WWRP's local parks, trails, water access, urban wildlife, riparian and farmland categories. To date counties have received \$84M for 189 projects and cities have received \$123M for 378 projects. The new riparian category helps local governments implement shoreline and comprehensive land use plans, and the farmland category conserves working farms.

How does the WWRP Help Farmers?

The WWRP's Farmland Preservation category provides \$9 million in matching grants to cities and counties. The grants can be used for easements to help farmers sell the development rights on their land, lifting much of the financial pressure to develop and allowing them to continue farming. They can also be used to compensate farmers should they choose to put some portion of their farm into wildlife habitat. If a local government buys a farm, they must attempt to resell it to a private landowner to keep it in agricultural production.

How do Local Businesses benefit from the WWRP?

Outdoor recreation related tourism is a major source of revenue in our state. Local and state sales tax revenues are generated by campers, boaters, hunters and others visiting state parks and wildlife lands. New sources of revenue are often generated by tourists, businesses and retirees who are drawn to the area by mountains, clean air, wildlife and scenic vistas. According to the US Fish and Wildlife Service, in 2006 Washington businesses received \$2.8 billion from hunting, fishing and wildlife related recreation.

How is the WWRP good for the Economy?

People want to live and work in scenic areas and our communities attract companies that value the region's natural amenities. By protecting our natural resources, the WWRP helps to ensure that our state's businesses continue to attract and keep quality employees. That's why major employers like Boeing, Puget Sound Energy, John L. Scott Real Estate, REI and Weyerhaeuser support the Coalition. The Coalition is also supported by the Washington Realtors, Washington Forest Protection Association and Washington State Grange.

How does the WWRP help keep our Waterways Clean?

Land conservation helps keep our waters clean by reducing surface run-off and helping

aquifers to recharge, making WWRP funding a key component to protecting the long term health of Puget Sound, the Columbia basin and even our drinking water. The WWRP's new Riparian category provides \$19 million to acquire and restore vital fresh and marine waters. This includes rivers, streams, wetlands, estuaries, and salt water shorelines. Both salmon and non-salmon habitat is eligible and all state and local agencies are eligible, including lead entities, tribes, and park, port, school, and conservation districts. At \$100 million, 35 projects totaling \$35 million would help protect or restore Puget Sound. Local matching funds raise the total to \$53 million.

How does the WWRP help keep Kids Healthy?

Healthy families need access to outdoor recreation. Having a nearby place to play is essential to getting kids outside and reducing childhood obesity. As our state's population has increased, so has demand for ball fields, parks, trails and swimming pools. For the many children who live in suburban and urban areas, opportunities to explore and experience nature are becoming a thing of the past. Our wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation areas, funded by the WWRP grant program, promote healthy lifestyles and provide opportunities for discovery and learning.

How does the WWRP affect Climate Change?

The WWRP has permanently protected nearly 350,000 acres, and much of this land is forested. Trees and other vegetation use carbon dioxide from the air to photosynthesize, storing carbon in their leaves and limbs as they grow. And as the single largest source of funding for non-motorized trails in this state, the WWRP provides safe opportunities for people to get out of their cars. As global warming progresses the WWRP will mitigate its effect by protecting drinking water supplies and connecting habitat areas so plant and animal species can migrate as their habitat changes.

How does the WWRP Leverage Matching Funds?

To date the WWRP has leveraged \$315 million in local matching funds from local governments which are required to match WWRP grants by 50%, doubling the state's investment. And by providing state funds to meet the match required for federal programs like the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and Coastal Wetland grants, Washington State was the single largest recipient of federal funding for habitat conservation in 2003, receiving 24% of federal endangered species conservation funds. This could not have happened without the availability of WWRP funds.

Where does the Money come from?

WWRP grants are funded in the state's capital construction budget, primarily from the sale of general obligation bonds. They do not compete with operating dollars for smaller class sizes and human services.

Does the WWRP help the State Maintain its Land?

The WWRP provides funding to Washington's departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources for stewardship projects that help maintain our state's habitat and recreation lands. The WWRP also requires the state to pay property assessments for

weed control, so if a state agency does not maintain its property, neighbors can contact the local weed board.

How does the WWRP Support Local Control?

Communities needing new parks, ball fields or bike trails can apply to the WWRP for matching grants, which allows them to leverage state dollars for local concerns. State agencies can apply for WWRP funds too, but the RCO's competitive ranking process gives preference to projects that comply with local land use and open space plans. The process also requires that county commissioners be notified about WWRP applications. If for some reason a project is not welcome in a community, then the legislators from that district just need to sign a request that it be removed from the list.

How does the WWRP affect Property Rights?

The WWRP promotes property rights by working with willing sellers to provide an alternative to regulation. Because the WWRP does not include any condemnation authority or land use regulation, each acquisition requires both a willing buyer and willing seller.

Can Projects be Added or Removed from the List?

Once the RCO ranks the applications, the Governor and Legislature may remove projects, but they can not add them or rearrange the list. This protects the integrity of the RCO's award-winning competitive process.

How are WWRP Applications Evaluated?

The Recreation and Conservation Office (formerly the IAC) is the state agency that administers the WWRP grant program. The RCO takes each application through an award-winning competitive process, beginning with consistency with local recreation or open space plans. The projects then go through a peer-review process. Written applications and verbal presentations are evaluated by a team of experts from state and local agencies and the general public according to the benefits of the project, the level of threat to the property and the amount of community support. Then projects are ranked within each category.

How does the Legislature Determine the WWRP Budget?

The Governor submits the list of projects to the Legislature, along with a requested funding level in the Capital Budget. The legislature reviews the list and the Governor's budget in the House Capital Budget and Senate Ways and Means committees. Because the legislation that implements the Capital Budget requires a 60% vote, the WWRP requires bipartisan support on the floor of each house to pass.

Is there Monitoring and Accountability?

After the legislature approves the ranked lists and the capital budget, the RCO enters into contracts with project sponsors. This rigorous process provides accountability, establishes timelines for project completion, sets requirements for the long-term protection of the site and ensures only the highest quality projects are funded.

What's the Distribution if the WWRP is below \$100M?

Funding for the WWRP's new Riparian and Farmland accounts kick in once the appropriation exceeds \$40M, but these categories are not well funded unless the appropriation approaches \$100M.

WWRP in Millions	Breakdown in Each WWRP Account			
	Habitat	Recreation	Riparian	Farmland
\$40	\$20	\$20	\$0	\$0
\$50	\$21	\$21	\$4	\$4
\$60	\$24	\$24	\$7	\$5
\$70	\$27	\$27	\$10	\$6
\$80	\$30	\$30	\$13	\$7
\$90	\$33	\$33	\$16	\$8
\$100	\$36	\$36	\$19	\$9

Why does the WWRP Grant Program need more funding?

The Coalition has secured over \$550 million for state and local agencies for new parks, trails, water-access sites, critical wildlife habitat, natural areas and farms. However, despite the program's great success, increased population growth and demand for outdoor recreation areas mean that the WWRP grant program will need more funding if it is expected to meet the needs of Washington's citizens. In 2008 alone there were nearly \$272 million in requests for 370 proposed projects, but only 115 WWRP grants may receive funding from the legislature. The Coalition works to ensure that the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, the largest funding program for new parks and wildlife habitat in Washington State, is fully funded by the state legislature.

How Much Land is Enough?

This question is the most difficult to answer. Some communities use empirical standards, but they have their limitations. This issue will always be debated by those who wish to have a bright line test, and those who seek a qualitative, not quantitative, solution. In the end, as long as our population continues to grow, families need places to play, wildlife need protection from development, and aquifers need to recharge so we have clean drinking water and healthy waterways, we will never be done. Someday we will learn that our quality of life is commensurate with the quality of all life around us.

What Agencies are Eligible for WWRP Grants?

Local agencies include counties, cities, towns, tribes, and port, park, school and conservation districts, and they are eligible to apply for grants for local parks, trails, water access, riparian protection and urban wildlife habitat. Local agencies must provide a 50% match. Farmland grants are restricted to cities and counties. State agencies can apply for critical habitat, natural areas, urban wildlife habitat, riparian protection, state parks and stewardship funds.

How can my Community Get a WWRP Grant?

Only state and local agencies are eligible to apply for WWRP grants, so you will need to identify one that is interested in the property. The Trust for Public Land, Cascade

Land Conservancy and other local land trusts regularly collaborate with state and local governments to apply. Your local agency needs to contact the Recreation and Conservation Office (formerly the IAC), which administers the WWRP grant program. The next application deadline is in the spring of 2010.

What's the Role of the Coalition?

Since 1989, the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition has worked to secure legislative funding for WWRP grants. The WWRP provides state funds for new parks, trails, wildlife habitat and working farms. Because of the work of the Coalition, children can play in more parks and ball fields, hunters, anglers and hikers have more access to our great outdoors, and more habitat for fish and wildlife is safe for future generations.

What has the Coalition Accomplished?

Over the last twenty years, the Coalition has successfully advocated for \$550 million in state funds for the WWRP grant program. This money leveraged an additional \$410 million in local matching funds, for a total of \$960 million. Federal matching funds raise the total well over \$1 billion. The WWRP has funded 921 projects, encompassing nearly 350,000 acres of parks, ball fields and wildlife habitat across the state. This means more soccer fields for our children, more state parks for our families, better habitat for salmon and an improved quality of life for our state's citizens.

Why is the Coalition Effective?

The Coalition is a diverse group of over 130 businesses and organizations. Individuals representing a variety of interests including hunters, farmers, anglers, hikers, conservationists, timber companies and realtors and elected officials make up one of the most effective boards of directors in the state. The Coalition enjoys unparalleled success and bipartisan support. Former Governors Dan Evans and Mike Lowry, co-chair the Board, which includes legislators from both parties. Through the Coalition businesses, like Boeing, Weyerhaeuser and John L. Scott Real Estate, work hand in hand with non-profits such as The Nature Conservancy, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation and Washington Environmental Council to protect wildlife habitat and provide outdoor recreation opportunities.