



Request for Proposals, FY 2027

DUE: December 4, 2026, 8pm PDT.

Please submit proposals electronically to:

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The Mid-Columbia Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (MCFWCO) is excited to announce the annual U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) Request for Proposals (RFP) for habitat restoration, conservation, and fish passage projects. Funding is available for projects located in Central and Eastern Washington and is provided through the Service's National Fish Passage Program (NFPP), Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW), and Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Management Act (FRIMA). *Funding is subject to Federal budget approval.*

Who can apply: Any private individual, nonprofit organization, community group, land trust, city, county, state, or Tribe may be eligible for financial assistance.

Timeline of awards: Communication for new and on-going projects for financial assistance is encouraged throughout the entire year. *Give us a call any time!* In December, the MCFWCO will review and select the projects they wish to pursue, which will then be passed on for final review and acceptance. Timing and funding amounts are dependent on federal funding allocations for individual programs. Financial awards are granted for a three or five-year period, with an additional ten-year project maintenance commitment required of the landowner. Projects are assessed primarily on ecological benefit, in addition to amount of habitat restored, cost-to-benefit ratio, timeline to project delivery, demonstrated organizational success, and MCFWCO project familiarity and interest.

Types of projects we support (See Appendices 1 and 2 for more information, including types of projects we do not support):

Stream channel habitats

- Fish passage improvements, fish screening, dam removal, irrigation upgrades
- Culvert replacement or removal to improve fish passage
- Stream channel restoration
- Beaver Dam Analogs (BDAs)
- Placement of large wood structures/jams
- Projects which aim to restore or mimic natural processes

Riparian and wetland habitats

- Reduction of livestock impacts (fencing, crossings, off-channel watering devices)
- Non-native plant removal/control
- Native plant establishment
- Wetland hydrology improvements (levee removal, ditch plugging, fill removal)

Financial Assistance Awards: (See Appendix 1 for more program information)

- National Fish Passage Program (NFPP) awards: typically \$50,000-\$250,000, specifically for fish passage projects (no land ownership restrictions).
- Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) awards: up to \$50,000, specifically for projects on private, Tribal, municipal, or county lands (*NOT available for Federal or State-owned lands*)
- Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA) awards: typically \$100,000 - \$1M. Eligible projects include fish screens, fish passage devices, and related inventories with the goals of decreasing fish mortality associated with the withdrawal of water for irrigation and other purposes without impairing the continued withdrawal of water for those purposes. Required 35% cost share. This program is subject to annual congressional approval, so funds are not available every year.
- Funds for all awards are to be applied towards design and/or implementation only.
- All financial assistance awards include substantial involvement from the MCFWCO. Substantial involvement may include assistance with: project development, design review, permitting and compliance, topographic, hydrologic, and vegetation surveys, data analysis, planting assistance, and construction oversight (depending on MCFWCO staff availability).

Program cost-share: Service funds must be matched to some degree from project partners, even when non-federal match is not required as a condition of the award. Match can be monetary or in-kind (e.g., labor, use of equipment). Projects with greater than the 25% minimum cost-share are more competitive.

For more information, please do not hesitate to call or email your regional contact:

Yakima Basin

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(509) 421-1098 (cell)
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Upper Columbia

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**Habitat Restoration and Conservation Program
Mid-Columbia Fish and Wildlife Office
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
7501 Icicle Road, Leavenworth, Washington 98826**

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*(Please delete preceding pages and address the following questions when submitting final proposal.)*

## USFWS Request for Proposals, FY 2026

In **three to four pages** please provide the following information (figures and tables not included):

- 1. Project Sponsor/Organization and Contact Information:**
- 2. Project Title:**
- 3. Amount of Funding Requested:**
- 4. Estimated Total Project Costs:**
- 5. Is the project scalable such that an award of <\$50,000 would help move the project forward if the full funding request listed above is not available?**
- 6. Project Location:** *County, basin, lat/long, landowner, overview map, and photos.*
- 7. Abstract - Brief Project Description and Outcomes:** *Briefly describe the project and quantifiable outcomes (e.g., Remove 4 culverts and open fish passage to 3.7 miles of stream habitat).*
- 8. Project Narrative:** *Describe the project's goals, objectives, methods, benefits, etc. Is it part of a multi-year project? If so, explain what year(s) the funding you seek will cover, and how other years of the project will be funded.*
- 9. Proposed Project Timeline:** *Design, implementation, completion, etc. Note that funds will not be available for at least eight months after the proposal deadline.*
- 10. Degradation/Ranking:** *List action/recovery plan(s) your project supports*
- 11. Fish Passage Barriers:** *Are there any complete or partial fish barriers downstream of the project location? How far away is the closest upstream barrier? Identify if they are natural or manmade. Provide a map of all relevant barriers.*
- 12. ESA Listed Species that will benefit from the project:**
- 13. Partners:** *List and briefly describe the involvement of partners with this project.*
- 14. Budget Narrative:** *Please provide a summary description of your budget, budget categories, and expected cost-share.*
- 15. Budget:** *List the anticipated amounts of:*

| Description                                       | Cost | Quantity | Total Amount | USFWS Funds | Additional Project Funding <sup>2</sup> |
|---------------------------------------------------|------|----------|--------------|-------------|-----------------------------------------|
| a. Personnel                                      |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| b. Fringe Benefits                                |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| c. Travel                                         |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| d. Equipment (add specific details)               |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| e. Supplies (add specific details)                |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| f. Contractual (add specific details)             |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| g. Construction (add specific details)            |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| h. Other (add specific details)                   |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| i. Total Direct Charge (sum of a-h)               |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| j. Indirect Charges (administrative) <sup>1</sup> |      |          |              |             |                                         |
| k. Totals (sum of i-j)                            |      |          |              |             |                                         |

Notes:

1. Administrative costs requested. List the dollar amount and the percentage of k. Cannot exceed 15% of all direct costs, unless applicant holds a federally approved NICRA.
2. List who is providing the funds, the dollar amount, and if these funds are secured or unsecured at the time of proposal submission.
3. Provide details about what specific equipment, contractual, and construction elements you are requesting.

## **APPENDIX 1 – Program Information**

(This information is included for reference. Please do not include the following pages in your final proposal)

### **National Fish Passage Program**

The National Fish Passage Program is a voluntary program to restore native fish and other aquatic species to self-sustaining levels by reconnecting habitat that has been fragmented by man-made barriers. Fish passage projects restore unimpeded flows and fish movement by removing barriers or providing ways for aquatic species to bypass them. Projects are prioritized based upon the benefits to species and the geographical area. Typical projects include barrier culvert/dam/crossing removal or replacement with a fish passable culvert or bridge and re-opening oxbow and off channel habitats. Typical funding amounts range from \$30,000 to \$250,000 in the usual NFPP Program with a minimum 25% cost share requested. Cost-share may be federal or non-federal.

*Projects preferred for funding for NFPP should:*

- Show demonstrable ecological benefits for Federal trust species
- Exhibit permanence of fish passage benefits
- Make use of the most current scientific knowledge and proven technology
- Address objectives outlined in approved management plans

MCFWCO staff helps with the development and evaluation of projects for NFPP. More information on the NFPP is available at: <http://pacific.fws.gov/fisheries/fishpassage/>.

### **Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program**

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Program is a national, voluntary habitat restoration and conservation program that provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners, Tribes, and other conservation partners. The PFW Program focuses on restoring and conserving habitat for listed and declining plant and animal species, migratory birds, and inter-jurisdictional fish. The PFW Program has identified geographic Focus Areas. These areas in Central and Eastern Washington include the Yakima and Methow sub-basins. Projects occurring outside of these Focus Area boundaries are eligible; however, we prioritize partnership and project development within the Focus Areas. Priority habitats in Washington include wetlands, rivers and streams, riparian areas, prairies, shrub-steppe, and forests. The PFW program typically provides financial assistance of \$25,000 to \$50,000 with the possibility of up to \$100,000 with additional review and approval for individual habitat restoration projects.

The PFW Program cannot fund work on state or federal property but can collaborate with state and federal agencies. **Funding is not available for land or water acquisition, easements, research, or monitoring (though MCFWCO may assist with monitoring activities).** For on-the-ground restoration and recovery projects that will receive funding, the landowner, the cooperator, and the Service must sign a Landowner Agreement before funding is made available. This agreement: 1) describes the restoration or recovery activity that will take place;

2) ensures that all parties understand the activities that will be undertaken; 3) defines the extent and value of the Federal investment for at least 10 years, preferably longer; 4) allows the cooperator and the Service to access the project site for post-project monitoring (with advance notification); 5) outlines modification procedures; and, 6) outlines the rights and responsibilities of the Service, the landowner, and the cooperator.

*Goals:*

- Develop partnerships through proactive, voluntary cooperative efforts with private landowners, nongovernmental organizations, other Agencies, and Native American Tribes to restore habitat
- Reestablish habitat function through restoration and/or enhancement activities
- Provide corridors and decrease impediments to native fish and wildlife migration
- Enhance the environmental integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System by restoring private lands that influence habitat on Refuge lands
- Work with Native American Tribes to restore tribal trust species and their habitats

*Types of projects preferred for PFW (Projects may include, but are not limited to):*

- Stream restoration
- In-stream fish passage
- Native riparian restoration
- Installing fencing and off-stream livestock watering facilities
- Restoring wetland hydrology and function

**The Fisheries Restoration and Irrigation Mitigation Act (FRIMA)**

FRIMA (Public Law 106-502) of 2000 was established with the goals of decreasing fish mortality associated with the withdrawal of water for irrigation and other purposes without impairing the continued withdrawal of water for those purposes; and to decrease the incidence of juvenile and adult fish entering water supply systems. FRIMA is a voluntary fish screening and passage program targeted at Pacific Ocean drainages. Eligible projects include fish screens, fish passage devices, and related inventories.

Activities proposed under this award:

- a. Must be located in Pacific Ocean drainages.
- b. Project type must be voluntary irrigation diversion passage, screening, barrier inventories, and 'related features'.
- c. Award minimum: \$100,000; Award maximum: \$1,000,000.
- d. Non-federal cost share: 35% (BPA funds can be used as cost share).
- e. Project components that receive funding under this Act shall be ineligible to receive federal funds from any other source (with the exception of BPA funds) for the same purpose.
- f. The project will be agreeable to Federal and non-Federal entities with authority and responsibility for the project.
- g. Non-Federal participants in any project carried out under the Program on land or at a facility that is not owned by the United States shall be responsible for all costs associated with operating, maintaining, repairing, rehabilitating, and replacing the project.
- h. Who can apply: Any private individual, nonprofit organization, private organization, community group, irrigation district, land trust, city, county, municipality, state, Tribe, or Federal entity may

be eligible for financial, and technical, assistance so long as their project is eligible for FRIMA funding consideration.

## **APPENDIX 2 – Supplemental Information**

### ***Ineligible program activities:***

- Pond creation
- Cleanup of Federal or State designated environmental contaminant sites
- Community beautification and/or recreational access
- Fines/penalties due to non-compliance with Federal, State, or local laws
- Gravel bar mining
- Gravel trap development or maintenance
- Improvement of natural resources for commercial or private profit
- Land acquisitions, conservation easements, or appraisals
- Required Habitat Conservation Plan activities
- Required mitigation
- Streambank hardening (rip-rap, bulkheads, or other armoring)
- Structure-based restoration planned without primary consideration of habitat protection, habitat connectivity, or habitat-forming processes
- Standalone research or monitoring proposals

### ***Climate Change***

The Service is committed to considering how species and habitats are affected by climate change in making our funding decisions. We seek projects that help ecosystems and species adapt to climate change and promote climate change resiliency in all our work. We encourage applicants to envision and describe the longevity of their project with a demonstrated knowledge of projected climate impacts in mind. Expected climate change impacts in Washington State include changes in temperature, precipitation, snowpack, and hydrology; increases in intensity and frequency of fire, storm surges, impacts from sea level rise; and shifts in the distribution and range of native and non-native species.

The project information should describe how the project promotes ecosystem and species adaptation and is resilient to a changing physical and biological environment. Adaptation and resiliency may result from increased habitat connectivity, securing transitional habitats, restoring temperature and structural refugia, reducing fire risk, protecting water quality and quantity, restoring processes that form and maintain habitat, and protecting habitats from invasion by non-native species.

More information on climate change is available at:

<http://www.fws.gov/pacific/Climatechange/changepnw.html>

<http://cses.washington.edu/cig/res/ia/waccia.shtml>

### ***Invasive Species***

The Service is concerned about the impacts of invasive species on ecosystems and species. Invasive species degrade, change, or displace native habitats and compete with native species and are thus harmful to fish, wildlife, and plant resources. Preventing the introduction or spread of invasive and non-target species is the most effective strategy to avoid impact to restored ecosystems. Preventive measures typically offer the most cost-effective means to minimize or eliminate environmental and economic impacts due to invasive species.

The project information will need to describe how invasive species prevention will be addressed during the planning and construction phase of the proposed project. One method that can help your planning is the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP). HACCP is a management tool that provides a structured method to identify risks and focus prevention procedures on pathways for invasive species introduction. The Service will work with you to develop a HACCP plan for each project funded through the NFPP.

Additional information is available:

<http://training.fws.gov/EC/Resources/pdf/HACCP%20Manual>

An online wizard is available for development of a HACCP plan at:

<http://www.haccp-nrm.org/wizard/actdesc.asp>

*Please let us know on the project summary form if you plan to use HACCP as an invasive species management tool.*