

Overview of 2026 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Program

PURPOSE

This funding source will implement the priorities of the:

- Snoqualmie Watershed Forum (WRIA 7),
- Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council,
- Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed (WRIA 9) Ecosystem Forum, and
- Puyallup-White Watershed Citizen Advisory Committee (WRIA 10).

The CWM grants are intended to recover ESA-listed salmon species and restore watershed ecosystems. The priorities, driven primarily by WRIA salmon conservation plans, include habitat restoration and protection, water quality improvements, regionally coordinated monitoring, watershed planning, stewardship, outreach, and education.

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Feasibility Study
- Project Design
- Project Construction
- Property Acquisition
- Programmatic work such as project site maintenance, monitoring, education, and planning

AWARD AMOUNTS

For 2026, the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council and WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum anticipate allocations of approximately \$4,521,110 each, the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum (WRIA 7) anticipates approximately \$2,393,175, and the WRIA 10 Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) anticipates approximately \$620,900 in grant funds for salmon recovery projects and activities. Additional funds may become available to each WRIA as older grants close out and unused funds are rolled forward.

AUTHORITY

FCD Resolution FCD2012-12 authorizes the expenditure of King County Flood Control District (FCD) funds on cooperative watershed management grants for purposes of water quality and water resource and habitat protection and management. An interlocal agreement between King County Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD) and the King County Flood Control Zone District authorizes WLRD to provide services overseeing and administering the grants.

PROGRAM NEED

Foremost, these grants help carry out the WRIA salmon conservation plans for ESA listed species for each of the four WRIs according to annual priorities set by the WRIA Forums that are based in King County. Projects must address high priority habitats or watershed processes that significantly influence productivity in each basin. To ensure high quality projects, only those that have been scientifically vetted and ranked competitively by their respective WRIA Forum will be proposed for funding.

ELIGIBILITY

Cities, towns, special purpose districts, public schools, King County, federally recognized tribes, non-profit organizations, and federal and state agencies are eligible. Individuals and for-profit businesses are not eligible.

SELECTION

- The grant solicitation and selection processes in WRIAs 7, 8, and 10 will occur in winter and spring and the WRIA forums or advisory committees will recommend projects for funding in late spring. WRIA 9 issues an approved project list recommendation in spring of each year. Grant applications are accessed via an online system – the WRIAs have links to that on their websites.
- The WRIAs will review and rank applications based on WRIA salmon conservation plan priorities and project merit according to a set of WRIA ranking criteria and will present a list of recommended projects to the King County Flood Control District.
- King County WLRD ascertains eligibility and proposal completeness and presents the recommended list of eligible projects of each WRIA group to the King County Flood Control District Executive Committee, who review and forward a recommendation to the Flood Control District Board of Supervisors for approval of the project lists. Typically, the FCD Executive Committee issues their recommendation in July-August of each year, with the Board issuing approval in July-September. Funding will be available to project sponsors the same year funds are awarded, once a grant agreement is complete.

AGREEMENT AND FISCAL MATTERS

- Grants are paid on a reimbursable basis. Grant recipients must invoice King County WLRD and provide verifiable expenses, backup documentation, and a progress report of the scheduled deliverables according to the scope of work in the grant agreement.
- Upon request, one-time advances of up to 25% of the award are allowable provided that each such advance only covers upcoming expenses related to the next phase of the project.
- Amendments to the grant agreements are allowed, conditioned upon approval by the appropriate Forum representative, and King County WLRD.
- At project completion, fiscal and project closeout report forms are required. These forms summarize grant and match expenditures and describe the accomplishments of the project and verify the delivery of its products and activities.
- Reimbursement for overhead for grant projects is not limited to a specific percentage but grant recipients who include overhead or indirect costs as a percentage of the project cost should be prepared to provide documentation as to how the overhead rate was calculated.
- Volunteer labor that is provided for grant projects as match may be valued at a maximum rate of \$28.54 per adult person per hour. Volunteer services provided by minors should be valued at the current minimum wage in the jurisdiction in which the work is conducted.

GRANT DURATION GUIDELINES

- Projects funded in any given year should start no later than December 31 of the following year (i.e. a project funded in 2026 should show progress on activities in the scope of work by December 31, 2027). This does not mean that grant funds must be expended in any amount by that date.
 - Exception: Acquisition projects that require the securing of real estate prior to commencing other activities may start to expend funds at a later date.
- All projects must be completed **within 36-months** after the date the grant agreement is executed. Grant agreements may be extended beyond this on a case-by-case basis – recipients should initiate a request to extend a grant at least three months prior to the end date shown in the grant agreement.