



2024 Yakima Basin Request for Proposals for Salmon Habitat Projects

Pre-Application Due Date: **March 5, 2024**

Full Proposal Due Date: **April 10, 2024**

Background

The Washington State Legislature established the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) in 1999. The SRFB administers an annual salmon recovery grant program that provides state and federal funds to projects that help recover salmonids (salmon, trout, and steelhead) in Washington State. This RFP solicits projects for 3 separate SRFB funding opportunities. These are:

- 1) The regular SRFB annual grant round, for which we expect to have \$1.5 to 2 million to award to projects that promote recovery of salmon, steelhead and bull trout in the Yakima Basin;
- 2) A new riparian grant program through which we have ~\$1.5 million to award to projects that protect and restore riparian areas in the Yakima Basin; and
- 3) A new Targeted Investments grant round in which we will choose up to 6 proposals of \$1-5 million each to forward to a statewide competition to be run by the SRFB.

All three grant programs will be evaluated using the schedule, processes and criteria detailed in the [Yakima Basin Lead Entity Manual](#), and must also meet the state requirements detailed in RCO's [Manual 18](#). Grant applicants must demonstrate how their projects implement the actions defined in our regional recovery plans, the [2009 Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan](#), and the [2012 Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan \(use the 2017 Action Update\)](#). Examples of previously-funded SRFB projects in the Yakima Basin can be found in the [Yakima Basin Habitat Restoration Projects booklet](#).

These grant proposals are reviewed by our Technical Advisory Group (TAG), a group of local subject-matter experts, to ensure they are biologically and technically sound. TAG recommendations are forwarded to our Citizen Committee (CC), which is composed of representatives of diverse community interests. The CC evaluates the projects based on social, economic, and cultural values, and finalizes the ranked project lists for each of the three grant programs. The YBFWRB's Board of Directors then approves the final ranked project lists and submits them to the SRFB as a funding recommendation. Please see our [Lead Entity Manual](#) for a detailed description of our local review process.

Geographic Scope

This RFP solicits SRFB grant proposals for projects in the Yakima Basin (WRIA 38 and 39, and WRIA 37). This includes most of Benton, Kittitas, and Yakima Counties, and the Yakama Reservation, but excludes the portion of the Yakima Basin in Klickitat County.

YBFWRB Lead Entity SRFB Grant Round Schedule for 2024

Event	Date
Grant Announcement	January 25
Pre-Applications due	March 5
Pre-Application Conferences	March 14 – 18
Full Applications due	April 10
Presentations to TAG/CC	April 17 – 18 ¹
State Review Panel Visit	May 7 – 9 ²
Optional Call for Flagged Project with State Review Panel	June 10 or 11
TAG Project Evaluation	July 16 – 17 ¹
CC Ranks Projects	July 31 – August 1 ¹
YBFWRB reviews & approves annual project list	August 7
Final Ranked List Submitted by Lead Entity	August 13
SRFB awards funding to successful projects	September 24 - 25

All meetings will be held using a hybrid format with in-person attendance at the YBFWRB office, located at 1200 Chesterly Drive, Suite 280, in Yakima.

2024 Regular SRFB Grant Program

Eligibility

All applicants should download and review [RCO Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants](#) before starting the application process. This is the primary guide to the state's requirements for SRFB projects. If you have downloaded Manual 18 before, you may need to clear your browser history or cookies to download the 2024 version.

Some important points to consider:

- The SRFB funds projects that protect or restore salmonid habitat.

¹ Both days will only be used if there are a large number of proposals.

² Site tours may be scheduled on any of these days listed on the grant round schedule. Sponsors should block all of the days listed for site tours until the schedule is developed.

- Applicants must request at least \$5,000.
- Applicants must provide money or resources to match 15 percent or more of the grant. The exception to this requirement is that no match is required for applications for design only projects requesting \$350,000 or less and completed within 2 years of funding (see Section 2, Eligible Applicants and Projects of [RCO Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants](#)). The SRFB will not provide special consideration or preference in its evaluation process for projects with matches greater than 15 percent.
- Applicants must demonstrate a commitment to 10 years or more of stewardship for the project.
- Projects must be finished within two to three years.
- There is no upper dollar limit for a grant request; however, available funds typically range from \$1.5 - \$2 million for the Yakima Basin annually. The final SRFB grant allocation to the Yakima Basin will not be determined until after the grant round is underway. Please consider submitting proposals, which can be phased or scaled-up based on the final SRFB allocation to the Yakima Basin.

The SRFB funds a range of projects, but ALL of them must address an important habitat condition or watershed process. The project may provide other benefits, such as flood control or education, but those benefits clearly must be secondary. All projects must comply with Revised Code of Washington [77.85.130](#) if the landowner has a legal obligation under local, state, or federal law to perform the project. The SRFB funds the following projects types:

- Acquisitions
- Restoration
- Non-Capital Projects: Assessments, Designs, Inventories, and Studies
- Design-Only Projects with No Required Match
- Combination Projects
- Phased Projects

Eligible Applicants

Only the following entities are eligible to apply for SRFB funding:

- Cities
- Counties
- Conservation Districts
- Native American Tribes
- Nonprofit Organizations:

Nonprofit organizations must be registered with Washington's Office of the Secretary of State. A nonprofit's charter, organizational documents, or corporate purposes must include authority for the protection or enhancement of natural resources, such as salmon, salmon habitat, or related recovery activities. The charter

must provide for a successor organization under the SRFB grant agreement, in case the nonprofit dissolves.

- Private Landowners:

Private landowners are eligible for restoration project grants when the landowner is a private citizen and the project will be implemented on the landowner's property. Individuals may not acquire land using SRFB grants, and may not be paid for their time. Landowner time on the project may serve as non-reimbursable match for a project.

- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Special Purpose Districts
- State Agencies:

State Agencies must have a local partner that is independently eligible to be a grant applicant. The local partner must be involved in the planning and implementation of the project and must provide an in-kind or cash contribution to the project. A [Project Partner Contribution Form](#) must be completed and submitted with the application.

Federal agencies may not apply directly but may partner with eligible applicants. Projects may occur on federal lands. Consider federal restrictions on using federal money for match when applying for a grant.

Technical Advisory Group's Focus Project List

[The Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board's Focus Project List](#) is a tool developed by the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) to help identify potential SRFB projects that would address the most immediate needs of priority species. Using the list as a guide, a project proposal will receive 10 bonus points if it is clearly a Focus Project. If a proposal is not a Focus Project, zero bonus points are awarded. The list:

- Gives the TAG a way to proactively guide Yakima Basin SRFB funding towards high priority and/or urgent projects.
- Provides guidance to sponsors deciding what types of projects to pursue and propose.
- Strengthens the link between the SRFB project review criteria and Recovery Plan priorities.

It is important to emphasize that the TAG uses this approach as a way to recognize and reward proposals that implement identified Focus Projects, but not as a way to exclude other SRFB proposals. Projects that are Focus Projects but have other significant weaknesses will have their score brought down by other elements in the TAG review process. Projects that do a strong job of addressing real needs, even if not identified as a Focus Project, will still have an opportunity to compete for funding based on all of the other TAG scoring criteria.

SRFB Riparian Funding Guidelines

In 2023, the state legislature allocated a portion of the revenues from the Climate Commitment Act for projects that enhance salmon recovery through the protection and restoration of fully functioning riparian ecosystems. We anticipate ~\$1.5 million to be available for riparian projects in the Yakima Basin. Requirements specific to this funding program are found in the [RCO Manual 18 Riparian Funding Policies and Guidelines appendix](#). Otherwise, all other Manual 18 requirements described above for the regular grant program apply to these projects, except that no match funds are required. Riparian projects will be scored using the same process and criteria as regular SRFB projects, but will be submitted to the state as part of a separate ranked list of riparian projects. Detailed information on the local review criteria can be found in Appendix G of the [Lead Entity Manual](#). In your 2024 applications, highlight features of your projects that meet these criteria.

Targeted Investments

Targeted Investments grant applications must accelerate the on-the-ground pace and scale of project implementation to drive significant population-scale benefits consistent with regional recovery priorities as specified in the [2009 Yakima Steelhead Recovery Plan](#) and the [2017 Action Update](#) to the [Yakima Bull Trout Action Plan](#). The Yakima lead entity's TAG and CC will evaluate and rank up to six projects using the same procedure, schedule, and criteria as other SRFB projects. However, they will conduct this review in parallel with the process for other SRFB projects and develop a separate ranked list. This will be submitted to the state Review Panel for final ranking in a statewide competition.

Eligible Project Types

Applicants for Targeted Investments should download and review [RCO Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants](#). See [Appendix J](#) of Manual 18 for further information on the Targeted Investments program.

Some important points to consider:

- Targeted Investments fund projects that 1) drive significant population-scale benefits consistent with regional recovery priorities and 2) accelerate the on-the-ground pace and scale of project implementation, which cannot be fully funded through the current allocation to regions and lead entities.
- Targeted Investments must accomplish this by restoring and/or acquiring habitat and funds may support designs for these projects.
- Applicants must request at least \$1,000,000 and at most \$5,000,000. There is no limit to the overall cost of the project.

- Proposals may request Targeted Investments funding in combination with regular SRFB funds and can be evaluated for both grant opportunities.
- Each region can submit a ranked list of up to six proposals, which will then be evaluated against other proposals from around the state by the SRFB Review Panel. If the supplemental funds are received, the SRFB will award funding to the top ranked projects at its September meeting. If there are a substantial number of unfunded targeted investment projects remaining, the SRFB will include them in a funding request to the legislature for the 2025-2027 biennium.

Targeted Investments may fund a range of projects addressing specific regional priorities to accelerate salmon recovery. Targeted Investments are made in the following project types:

- Acquisitions
- Restoration
- Design-Only

Eligible Applicants

See above under Annual SRFB Grant Program.

Targeted Investments Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated and ranked using the YBFWRB technical review and Citizen Committee processes described in the [Lead Entity Manual](#), followed by the State Review Panel and the SRFB using the Evaluation Criteria found in [Manual 18](#), [Appendix J](#) and the supplementary ranking criteria for regional ranking in the [SRFB Targeted Investments Request for Proposals](#).

Funding Availability

Up to \$25 million is expected to be available for Targeted Investments statewide in 2024, but available funding will not be known until after the close of the 2024 legislative session. Unfunded projects will be included in a project list to be submitted by RCO for consideration by the Legislature in the 2025 legislative session.

Application

Applicants for all three Salmon Recovery Funding Board programs should complete a [pre-application](#) before submitting a full application. The pre-application process is meant to provide early feedback to applicants as they determine which proposals to pursue and how to develop them. Shortly after applicants submit the pre-application, they will be asked to schedule a conference with the pre-application subcommittee. When an applicant decides to carry a proposal beyond the pre-proposal review, they will need to work with the Lead Entity Coordinator to obtain a project number. Refer to the Yakima [Lead Entity Manual](#) for forms and requirements for pre-applications.

[Pre-applications](#) should be submitted by email to Alex Conley (aconley@ybfwrb.org) by **March 5, 2024**.

Full proposals must be submitted electronically through the PRISM computer system. You will need both a SecureAccess Washington and PRISM account, so allow enough time. Create your accounts at the [RCO website](#). Next, you will need a PRISM project number. Work with YBFWRB staff to obtain this number prior to beginning your application. Once you receive your project number(s), please visit the [PRISM](#) website to complete your application. In addition to the data you enter into PRISM, there are several other documents required for a complete application. Please see [RCO Manual 18: Salmon Recovery Grants](#) section 3. The application deadline is **April 10, 2024**.

Resubmissions: Applicants are encouraged to attach a file to their final proposal indicating how a project has changed if it was proposed in a previous grant round. Highlighting any improvements to the previous submission will help our committees focus on these more easily.

Further Information

For more information about this opportunity, please visit <http://www.ybfwrb.org>. If you have questions about the Yakima Basin annual SRFB process, contact Alex Conley at the Yakima Basin Fish & Wildlife Recovery Board at aconley@ybfwrb.org or 509-453-6007.