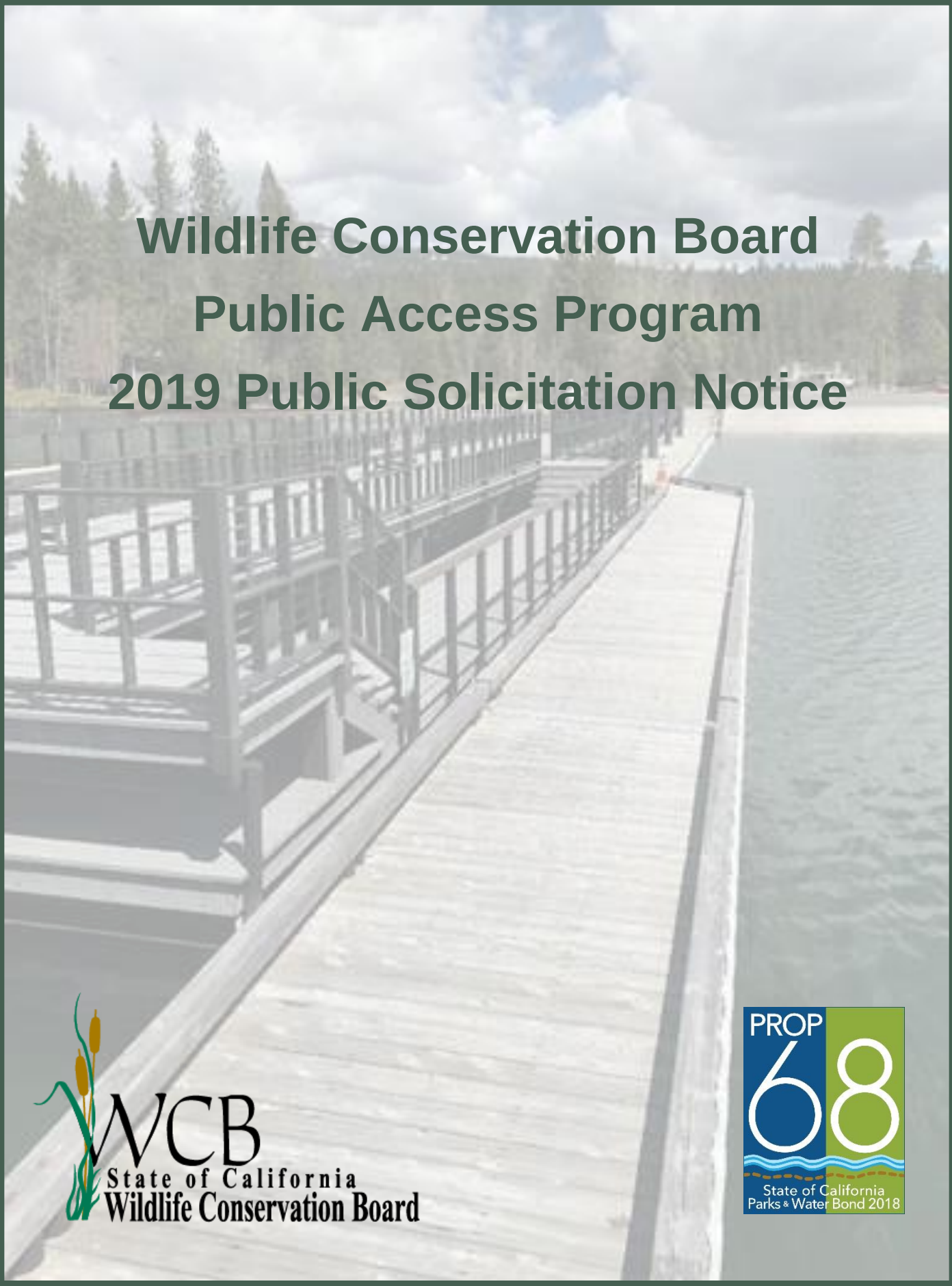
Wildlife Conservation Board
Public Access Program
2019 Public Solicitation Notice



WCB
State of California
Wildlife Conservation Board

PROP 68
State of California
Parks & Water Bond 2018

Contents

ELIGIBILITY 1
PUBLIC ACCESS PSN PRIORITIES 1
Priority: Boating Access 1
Priority: Wildlife-oriented Recreation 2
Project Categories 2
Planning 3
Implementation 3
FUNDING PROSPECTS 3
SUBMISSION GUIDELINES 4
Timeline 4
PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS 4
Environmental Compliance and Permitting 4
Long-term Management and Maintenance 5
Land Tenure/Site Control 5
BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS 5
Budget 5
Cost Share 6
Eligible Costs 6
Ineligible Costs 6
Salary and Wages 6
Fringe Benefits 7
Contractual Services 7
Administrative Overhead 7
SELECTION PROCESS 7
Pre-Application Review 7
Administrative Review 7
Technical Review 8
Project Selection 10
Executive Director and Board Action 10
SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS 11
Community Access 11

Serving Disadvantaged Communities....11
California Conservation Corps / California Association of Local Conservation Corps Services....12
Proposal Forms, and Templates 12
Additional Information....12
Contact Us....12

Wildlife Conservation Board

Public Access Program

2019 Proposal Solicitation Notice

The Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) is seeking high quality grant proposals for enduring projects that enhance public access to outdoor recreational activities such as boating, fishing, and hunting.

This PSN includes the 2019 priorities, eligibility, deadlines, application process, scoring criteria, timelines, and links to important documents and templates. Potential applicants are strongly encouraged to read the WCB Proposition 68 Guidelines (Guidelines), the Public Access Guidelines, and this Proposal Solicitation Notice (PSN). Additional planning resources include the WCB Strategic Plan and the State Wildlife Action Plan.

This solicitation will not fund property acquisition, maintenance activities, or mitigation.

ELIGIBILITY

Entities eligible to submit grant proposals include federal, state, and local government entities, non-profit organizations, or public districts that manage and operate wildlife-oriented public access facilities or programs.

PUBLIC ACCESS PSN PRIORITIES

Public access projects should focus on creating meaningful outdoor experiences for all Californians. The 2019 Public Access PSN includes two priorities: boating access and wildlife-oriented recreation.

WCB is seeking projects that enhance the public's boating experience, provide additional boating opportunities, and/or improve boater amenities. In addition, WCB is seeking projects that provide for wildlife-oriented recreation. Projects should provide public benefits, leverage funding to produce the greatest benefit, and provide access to natural and wild areas. Public Access projects which provide mobility-impaired and/or Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access will be prioritized.

Examples listed below show the types of actions included in Public Access funded projects.

Priority: Boating Access

The Public Access Program will prioritize projects that enhance boater access. Boaters include those who own and/or rent motorized and non-motorized boats such as power boats, sail boats, kayaks, wind surfers, etc. All project components should benefit boaters.

Boat launch facility projects may include, but are not limited to:

- Boat launch facility improvements or replacement,
- Non-motorized launch facility installation or improvements for kayaks, paddleboard, etc.
- Kayak launch ramps,
- Parking upgrades including resurfacing parking lots, adding parking, ADA compliant parking stalls, and improved traffic flow,

- Shade structures, restrooms, fish cleaning stations, and access roads, and
- Educational / informational signage.

Boating project examples include, but are not limited to:

- An extension of a boat launch ramp to accommodate lower lake levels. Improvements could include installing of new boarding floats, resurfacing the parking lot, adding accessible parking stalls, and building a fish cleaning station.
- A replacement of an aging boat ramp that has significantly deteriorated. Improvements could include removing the existing boat launch, constructing new larger and multi-lane boat launch, expanding the parking lots, installing an accessible restroom, incorporating an accessible trail from the parking lot to the boarding floats, and adding informational signage.
- An installation of a new kayak/paddle board launch area. Improvements could include installing a kayak launch ramp, improving existing parking lots, and constructing an interpretive kiosk.

Priority: Wildlife-oriented Recreation

The Public Access Program will prioritize projects providing public access for wildlife-related recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife viewing. Projects should promote wildlife experiences and opportunities.

Wildlife-oriented recreational improvements may include, but are not limited to:

- Observation decks
- Hunting blinds, hunter check stations, informational signs
- Educational / Informational signage
- Parking lot improvements
- Accessible restrooms
- Picnic area improvements, shade structures
- Piers, observation decks, and platforms (may be accessible for those with disabilities)
- Trails or boardwalks to fishing and viewing platforms
- Parking lot improvements, lighting and signs

Wildlife-oriented recreation projects often include several related components. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Providing mobility- accessible blinds for hunting, along with parking and trails
- Providing fishing access by construction of an accessible fishing pier, trails to the pier, parking lot improvements, and installation of an ADA compliant restroom
- Providing wildlife viewing opportunities by building a mobility-impaired observation deck, trails to the deck, construction of a pedestrian bridge, and interpretive signs

Project Categories

Eligible project categories include planning and implementation. Projects should either be a planning or implementation project, not both. Each of these project categories is described below.

Mitigation projects and activities, and long-term maintenance and management activities for past WCB grants cannot be funded.

Planning

Planning grants are intended to support the development of projects that are likely to qualify for future implementation funding under this program. Eligible activities and expenses for planning projects include, but are not limited to:

- Acquiring permits for a specific, future implementation project
- Analysis required to support completion of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and for a specific, future implementation project. Lead agencies need to be identified and demonstrate a willingness to complete adoption of CEQA.
- Developing project designs or supplementing existing designs for a specific, future implementation project
- Performing necessary studies/surveys to support project design and/or environmental compliance related to a specific, future implementation project

Implementation

Implementation grants may fund construction of public access projects. Proposals may request funding for new facilities or the enhancement or rehabilitation of existing facilities that will provide for public access to hunting, fishing, and wildlife-oriented activities. They are intended to support high priority, "shovel ready" projects that have advanced to the stage where planning, land tenure, and design plans are complete. CEQA must be completed at least 15 days prior to Wildlife Conservation Board approval. For evaluation purposes, WCB will consider CEQA complete when the lead agency has certified a NOD or filed a NOE with the State Clearinghouse and the equivalent for NEPA applies.

Implementation proposals should have 65% design plans and all necessary studies completed prior to submitting an application.

Implementation projects may include permitting as a project activity. If permits are to be obtained for a proposed project, a complete description of the permits needed and a timeline for obtaining them must be included in the proposal. Eligible activities and expenses for Implementation projects include, but are not limited to:

- Preparation of bid packages and subcontractor documents (when subcontractors have not been identified at the time of grant award)
- Acquiring necessary permits
- Construction activities
- Pre- and post-project monitoring (within grant term)

FUNDING PROSPECTS

Funding for proposals submitted under this PSN are subject to fund availability and approval of the Wildlife Conservation Board (Board). The total available funding for this 2019 PSN cycle is $5 million. The amount spent will be dependent of the number, quality, and cost of proposals submitted. The WCB may not spend the entire amount this year, though the WCB anticipates the 2019 PSN process to be highly competitive.

Projects funded through this PSN must be complete and funds expended before March 31, 2022. Successful applicants cannot spend any grant funds until a fully executed grant is in place and the grantee has received a Notice to Proceed from the WCB. Applicants should plan accordingly.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

All information requested in the PSN is mandatory. Failure to complete all required application components within the required timelines may result in an incomplete proposal. Incomplete proposals may not be scored or considered for future funding.

Timeline

The Board meets four times a year, typically February, May, August, and November. All successful proposals must be reviewed and approved by the Board.

Table 1: 2019 Grant Cycle Timeline

Schedule	Milestone / Activity
June 27, 2019	Release Proposal Solicitation Notice and Application
July 26, 2019 at 5:00 pm	Pre-applications Due
August 16, 2019	WCB Invitation for Full Application Submittal
September 20, 2019 at 5:00 pm	Full Application Due
November 1, 2019	Estimated Application Review Completion
February - May 2020	Potential Board Review and Decisions

PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

By submitting an application, project proponent agrees to and understands all requirements and responsibilities as outlined in Sections 2.0 Proposal Requirements, 4.0 Project Approval and Implementation, and 5.0 General Program Requirements of the Public Access Guidelines. Additional requirements are outlined below.

Environmental Compliance and Permitting

Projects funded by this program must comply all with applicable State, tribal and federal environmental laws and regulations, including the CEQA, NEPA, and other environmental permitting requirements. Several local, State, tribal and federal agencies may have permitting or other approval authority over projects that are eligible for grant funding. The applicant is responsible for obtaining all permits necessary to carry out the proposed work.

Applicants must identify the project's expected permitting requirements, state what permits have been obtained, or the process through which the permits will be obtained and describe the anticipated timeframe for obtaining each permit. Proposals to meet mitigation obligations, or projects that are under an enforcement action by a regulatory agency, will not be considered for funding.

Proposals for projects that are subject to CEQA and NEPA must identify the State and federal lead agencies and provide documentation that the agency or agencies have accepted the role. CEQA compliance must be complete 15 days before Board approval. If CEQA compliance for a proposed project is not complete at time of proposal submission, WCB will determine the likelihood of CEQA completion by the anticipated WCB Board date based upon the applicant's schedule for and progress toward completion. Applicants must provide environmental documents and lead agency compliance, such as Environmental Impact Reports and a Notice of Determination, upon request.

Long-term Management and Maintenance

Implementation project proposals are required to include a Long-Term Management Plan (LTMP) that describes how the project area will be managed for a minimum of 25 years to deliver enduring, sustainable benefits consistent with the purposes of the grant (see "Durability of Investment/Climate Change Considerations" proposal evaluation criterion). The LTMP should identify funding mechanisms and parties responsible for conducting maintenance and management activities. If a LTMP is not available for the project, one may be developed as a grant deliverable. However, if a LTMP is included as a grant deliverable, the project proposal should still describe a general strategy that addresses these maintenance and management considerations.

Land Tenure/Site Control

Applicants for projects conducting on-the-groundwork must submit documentation showing that they have adequate tenure to, and site control of, the properties to be improved for at least 25 years. Proof of adequate land tenure includes, but is not necessarily limited to:

- Fee title ownership,
- An easement or license agreement,
- Other agreement between the applicant and the fee title owner, or the owner of an easement in the property, sufficient to give the applicant adequate site control for the purposes of the project and long-term management,
- For projects involving multiple landowners, all landowners or an appointed designee must provide written permission to complete the project, and
- For most grants to non-profit organizations for project implementation and construction, WCB will require an agreement sufficient to protect the public interest. That agreement shall be recorded in the county in which the real property is located. This document is typically a Notice of Unrecorded Grant Agreement, or NOUGA.

When an applicant does not have tenure at the time of proposal submission but intends to establish tenure via an agreement that will be signed prior to grant execution, the applicant must submit a template copy of the proposed agreement, memorandum of understanding (MOU), or permission form at the time of proposal submission. Once a project has been awarded, the applicant must submit documentation of land tenure before a complete grant agreement can be executed.

WCB and its representatives shall have the right to access the project site at least once every 12 months from the start date of the grant for the life of the project. WCB will provide advance notice to Grantee and landowners prior to accessing the project site.

BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS

Budget

A budget using the format provided in Appendix B must be submitted with the application. This budget must show WCB grant money split into project task categories. The budget must also include any other funds, including in-kind services, the applicant intends to use as cost share.

Cost Share

Cost share is the portion of project costs not funded by WCB. It is typically provided by the applicant or other sources (e.g., private companies, non-profit organizations, public agencies, and/or other entities). A list of all cost share sources must be detailed in the budget worksheets. Proposals with higher proportions of secured cost share contribution towards total project costs may receive higher score through the "cost share" proposal evaluation criterion. Points may be awarded to proposals that are responsive to the Scoring Criteria. Proposals must specify the source and dollar amount of all cost share contributions of cash or in-kind services (e.g., volunteer time, materials, land donations). If volunteer time is to be used as part of the matching requirement, explain the type of service that will be provided, the number of hours the service will be provided, and the hourly rate associated with the service. Cost share must be:

- Used to support the proposed project
- Spent between PSN release and the end of the grant term
- Secured prior to application submission in order to be considered during proposal scoring

Where applicable, cost-share agreements or funding assurances will be required prior to grant execution. Applicant must also indicate if any cost share is being used as match for other grants or entities and whether they intend to leverage the other funding programs as match, if awarded. WCB may withhold retention until all cost share expenses are accrued.

Eligible Costs

Only project-related costs associated with eligible project activities incurred during the project performance period specified in the Grant Agreement may be funded. All such costs must be supported by appropriate invoices, purchase orders, canceled warrants, and other records.

Ineligible Costs

The following are costs that are ineligible for reimbursement through an awarded grant:

- All costs incurred outside of the grant agreement term
- All costs related to the preparation and submission of the grant proposal
- Travel costs not specifically identified in the grant budget
- Out of state travel without prior written authorization from WCB
- Appraisal, title, or escrow costs
- Student tuition and/or registration fees
- Purchase of electronics or other equipment not specifically identified in the grant agreement

Salary and Wages

Services of the Grantee's employees who are directly engaged in project execution, are eligible costs. These costs must be in accordance with the Grantee's prevailing wage or salary scales. College or graduate student time may be included as hourly wages, but tuition for students is not eligible and will not be reimbursed or otherwise directly paid. Costs charged to the project must be computed on actual time spent on the project and supported by time and attendance records describing the work performed on the project. Overtime costs may be allowed under the recipient's established policy, providing the regular work time was devoted to the same project.

Fringe Benefits

Fringe benefit costs included vacations, sick leave, social security contributions, etc. that are customarily charged to the recipient's various projects.

Contractual Services

Costs of consultant or sub-contractor services necessary for the project are eligible. If there are multiple consultant employees, list the contract costs separately.

Administrative Overhead

Administrative overhead, also known as incidental costs, indirect costs or administrative costs, are limited to 20 percent of the total direct WCB award to the grantee, minus sub-contractor's costs. Any amount over 20 percent will not be funded but may be used as cost share. Indirect costs include but are not limited to workers compensation insurance, utilities, office space rental, phone, and copying which is directly related to completion of the proposed project. Costs for subcontractors cannot be included in the calculation of indirect costs in the overall project budget. The applicant must explain the methods used to determine the rate and provide detailed calculations in support of the indirect cost rate.

SELECTION PROCESS

Each complete proposal received by the due date goes through a rigorous review process. The process includes a pre-application and a full application review. The full application review includes administrative and technical review, project selection, and review and approval by the Board. This process evaluates and scores proposals based on the project's ability to meet the focus areas and need, technical soundness and feasibility, and cost effectiveness.

Pre-Application Review

Applicants must submit a pre-application proposal. WCB staff review pre-applications for consistency with WCB goals, public access program priorities, and strength of pre-application. In addition, staff will look at all pre-applications for geographic location, regional need, project type, readiness, and funding. Staff will contact pre-application applicants to provide direction as to whether or not the proposal addresses the program objectives, where the pre-application has strengths and weaknesses, and request a full proposal if appropriate. If requested by WCB staff, applicants will then submit a full grant application.

Administrative Review

Full proposals will go through a yes/no administrative review for completeness (Table 2). Proposals that fail the administrative review are considered incomplete and may not be considered for funding under this solicitation. Proposals deemed complete by the administrative review will then go through a technical review.

Table 2: Administrative Review Evaluation Criteria

Administrative Criteria
Applicant submitted a pre-application proposal.
A complete proposal was received by the deadline.
The applicant is an eligible entity.
All proposal components are complete and in the required formats.
Every question has been answered. N/A is appropriate where a question is not applicable.

The project meets one or more 2019 program priorities.
The proposal is signed.
CEQA documents are current and complete or will be complete 15 days prior to being presented to the Board for final funding approval.
Applicant contact information, including person authorized to sign grant agreement is included.
Proposal demonstrates the applicant has long-term access to the property.

Technical Review

Full applications that pass the administrative review will be subject to the technical review. Multiple technical reviewers will evaluate each proposal using the scoring criteria in Table 3 and may make narrative comments that support their scores.

Technical reviewers will score each criterion with a point value between zero and five based on the how well the proposal addresses that criterion. Each score will then be multiplied by the applicable weighting factor to calculate the criterion score. A total score for the proposal will be generated by averaging the scores from each of the reviewers. Unless otherwise described in Table 4 below, standard scoring criteria are applied, and points are assigned as follows:

Table 3. General Scoring Guide.

Points *	Description
5	Criterion is fully addressed and supported by thorough and well-presented documentation and logical rationale.
4	Criterion is fully addressed and supporting documentation and or rationale is less robust.
3	Criterion is not fully addressed and supporting documentation or rationale is insufficient to justify methods or objectives.
2	Criterion is marginally addressed and supporting documentation or rationale is insufficient to justify methods or objectives.
1	Criterion is minimally addressed and supporting documentation and rationale is insufficient to justify methods or objectives.
0	Criterion is not addressed.

*Categories with special scoring are identified below.

Table 4: Technical Review Evaluation Criteria

Technical Review Criteria				
Category	Criteria	Weight Factor	Point Value	Maximum Criteria Score
Project Value				
Needs, Goals & Objectives	Proposal provides a detailed need justification and clearly articulates the goals and objectives.	2	0-5	10
Solicitation Priorities	Project aligns with the priorities stated in this PSN, the Public Access Guidelines, Proposition 68 Guidelines, and WCB's Strategic Plan.	3	0-5	15

Project Value Continued				
Project Value	Project provides tangible benefits and value to recreational users.	2	0-5	10
Climate Change	Project design considers climate change and provides enduring climate change and resilience benefits.	1	0-5	5
Accessibility	Project provides access for the mobility-impaired, and/ or meets ADA requirements	1	0-5	5
Serving Disadvantaged Communities	The extent to which a project falls within and/or provides direct, meaningful, and assured benefits to one or more economically disadvantaged community, per California Department of Water Resources guidance Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool	1	0-2	2
Project Readiness				
Project Purpose	Proposal provides a well-thought out detailed project description.	1	0-5	5
Implementation Readiness	Proposal demonstrates environmental compliance, permitting, planning, engineering design, or other necessary preparations are sufficient for prompt project implementation.	2	0-5	10
Schedule and Deliverables	Proposal demonstrates a logical and timely sequence of project tasks, reasonable milestones, and appropriate deliverables ensuring fund liquidation by March 31, 2022.	1	0-5	5
Project Costs				
Budget	Proposed budget and justification are appropriate to the work proposed, cost effective, and sufficiently detailed to describe project costs. Proposed budget is consistent with project work plan and schedule.	2	0-5	10
Cost Share	Proposal leverages applicant or other sources (state, federal, or local funding) to produce the greatest public benefit. Points will be awarded for Non-WCB cost share contributions as follows: • 5 Points: Greater than 40% • 4 Points: 31-40% • 3 Points: 21-30% • 2 Points: 11-20% • 1 Point: 1-10% • 0 Points: No cost share	1	0-5	5

Special Considerations				
Durability of Investment	Project design accounts for a long-term project life, with minimal repairs, maintenance, and upkeep required and a 25-year management plan.	1	0-5	5
Conservation Corps Services	Project uses California Conservation Corps or Local Conservation Corps services. • 1 Point: Yes • 0 Points: No	1	0-1	1
Support and Collaboration	Proposal demonstrates broad based support and engagement from stakeholders and the local community.	1	0-2	2
Community Access	Project provides engagement programs, technical assistance, or facilities that maximize safe and equitable physical admittance, especially for low-income communities, to natural or cultural resources, community education, or recreational amenities.	1	0-3	3
Education, and Wildlife Interpretation	Proposal clearly demonstrates inclusion of wildlife-oriented educational and /or interpretive components.	1	0-2	2
Organizational Capacity				
Project Team Qualifications	Proposal demonstrates the project team has the expertise and capacity to perform the proposed tasks.	1	0-5	5
			Maximum Score	**100**

Project Selection

The selection panel will generate preliminary funding recommendations based on the following considerations:

- Technical review scores and comments,
- Program purposes and goals,
- Balance/distribution of funds by geographic area, project type, or type of institutions, and availability of funds.

The selection panel may recommend modifications, such as reducing request grant amounts to meet current and potential future program priorities, funding targets, and available funding limitations. Once all due diligence is complete, the project will be scheduled for the Board meeting.

Executive Director and Board Action

The Selection Panel's final recommendation will be presented to WCB's Executive Director. The Executive Director will consider the comments and recommendations from the entire review process

and will determine which projects will be to be presented to the Board for approval and funding. The Board has sole and absolute discretion to approve or reject funding for a project.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Community Access

Proposition 68 defined community access as "engagement programs, technical assistance, or facilities that maximize safe and equitable physical admittance, especially for low-income communities, to natural or cultural resources, community education, or recreational amenities" (PRC 80002). Community access-related costs should be identified as a separate task in the "Budget Justification" Budget Worksheet and may comprise up to 10% of the grant amount from WCB.

Serving Disadvantaged Communities

Proposition 68 requires that at least 20 percent of the chapter funds available be allocated for projects serving severely disadvantaged communities. Projects that directly benefit a severely disadvantaged community and/or are located within a severely disadvantaged community will score more points through the "Serving Disadvantaged Communities" proposal evaluation criterion. Proposition 68 defines a severely disadvantaged community as "a community with a median household income less than 60 percent of the statewide average." The Department of Water Resources has developed the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool that shows the location and boundaries of disadvantaged communities in the State.

Applicants should use the following two-step process to evaluate whether their proposed project will benefit one or more disadvantaged communities.

Step 1 – Determine whether a majority (≥ 50%) of the proposed project area is located within a severely disadvantaged community. For interactive maps of disadvantaged communities, refer to the Disadvantaged Communities Mapping Tool. The applicant may use data at the census place, census tract, or census block group geography levels to determine whether the project is located within a severely disadvantaged community, based on the geography that is the most representative for that community.

Step 2 – Determine whether the proposed project will provide benefits to a severely disadvantaged community. If the proposed project meets one or more of the following criteria, it will be deemed to provide benefits to a severely disadvantaged community.

- Project preserves, restores, or enhances a site that allows public access, enhances public recreational opportunities (e.g., fishing, hiking, biking, bird watching), and is within 1 mile of a severely disadvantaged community
- Project significantly reduces flood risk to one or more severely disadvantaged communities
- Project reduces exposure to local environmental contaminants (e.g., water quality contaminants) within a severely disadvantaged community
- Project includes recruitment, agreements, policies, or other approaches that are consistent with federal and state law and result in at least 25% of project work hours performed by residents of a severely disadvantaged community
- Project includes recruitment, agreements, policies, or other approaches that are consistent with federal and state law and result in at least 10% of project work hours performed by residents of

a severely disadvantaged community participating in job training programs which lead to industry-recognized credentials or certifications

California Conservation Corps / California Association of Local Conservation Corps Services

The California Conservation Corps (CCC) is a state agency with local operations throughout the state. The California Association of Local Conservation Corps (CALCC) is the representative for certified local conservation corps. To the extent feasible, a project whose application includes the use of services of the CCC or certified Local Area Community Conservation Corps, as defined in Section 14507.5 of the Public Resources Code, shall be given preference for receipt of a grant. The CCC has developed a Corps Consultation Review Document to help determine whether it is feasible for CCC or CALCC to provide services for the proposed project.

Proposal Forms, and Templates

2019 Public Access Project Pre-Application Template (Word)

2019 Public Access Project Application (PDF)

2019 Public Access Appendix A: Scope of Work (Word)

2019 Public Access Appendix B: Budget, Cost share, Timeline (Excel)

2019 Public Access Appendix C: Project Map (Word)

2019 Public Access Appendix D: Project Drawings (Word)

2019 Public Access Appendix E: California Conservation Corps Service Request (PDF)

Additional Information

Additional information is available at the WCB Public Access web page.

Contact Us

For questions regarding this PSN or the WCB Public Access Program, please contact Heather McIntire at Heather.McIntire@wildlife.ca.gov or (916) 445-9728.