



# Fisheries Restoration Grant Program 2021 Proposal Solicitation Notice

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

*Updated February 2021*

### **Have there been any updates since last year's PSN?**

Yes, 80 updates made from the 2020 PSN, most of which were clarifying existing requirements. Below is a list of more significant changes to the PSN and Guidelines.

- The title of Fisheries Habitat Restoration PSN/Guidelines was changed back to Fisheries Restoration Grant Program (FRGP) PSN/Guidelines.
- The Forest Land Anadromous Restoration (FLAR) focus, previously funded through the state Timber Regulation and Forest Restoration Fund, has been removed from the solicitation, as this funding is no longer available to the grant program. Projects previously eligible under the FLAR focus are still eligible under FRGP.
- Priority 2 Large Scale MO and PL project types were removed from this solicitation because of a change in funding requirements.

- Project type EF, Enforcement and Protection, was removed from the solicitation indefinitely.
- FRGP will prioritize restoration proposals that address the consequences of large, damaging wildfires, for existing FRGP eligible watersheds and project types in areas impacted by wildfires since 2015. Projects that address substantial ecological impacts to watersheds and salmonids caused by wildfire and wildfire suppression will receive positive 0.5 points during proposal review. Details can be found in the Guidelines.
- An Administrative Review Grace Period was added to the solicitation. Details can be found in the Guidelines and Administrative Review Scoresheet.
- Clarified the need for applicants to review and understand unique environmental compliance requirements and permitting thresholds.
- Requested applicants using alternative restoration practices coordinate with the FRGP Permit Coordinator regarding possible permit coverage.
- Included the programmatic permits in the Environmental Compliance and Permitting definition.
- Added a requirement for implementation projects to provide a First Winter Observation Summary and included a definition of a First Winter Observation Summary in Part V: Definitions of Required Information.
- Clarified that applicants wishing to monitor their implementation project must also apply separately for an MO project within the same solicitation to allow proper review.
- Clarified when to use intermediate or conceptual plans.
- Required a description of quality and quantity of habitat for PD projects.
- Replaced Engineered Log Jams Design Plan Criteria with Large Wood Projects Design Plan Criteria.
- Allowed sites to be characterized by risk.

- Included language for applicants to coordinate with NOAA if they would like to use NOAA Restoration Center's Consistency Determination from the California Coastal Commission.
- Added a definition for a Riparian Road
- Included the Recovery Task to be reviewed in the Admin Review, allowing that to be updated during the grace period.
- Limited Engineering/Geotechnical reviewers to only evaluate licensed engineers' and/or geologists' qualifications.

### **What is process-based restoration?**

Process-based restoration aims to re-establish the physical, chemical, and biological processes that sustain ecosystems (Beechie et al. 2010). Examples of processes include erosion and sediment transport, storage and routing of water, plant growth and successional processes, input of nutrients and thermal energy, and nutrient cycling in the aquatic food web (Beechie et al. 2010). Process-based restoration, then, focuses on correcting anthropogenic disruptions to these processes, such that the river-floodplain ecosystem progresses along a recovery trajectory with minimal corrective intervention (Sear 1994, Wohl et al. 2005). Four process-based principles ensure that ecosystem restoration will be guided toward sustainable actions: (1) restoration actions should address the root causes of degradation, (2) actions must be consistent with the physical and biological potential of the site, (3) actions should be at a scale commensurate with environmental problems, and (4) actions should have clearly articulated expected outcomes for ecosystem dynamics (Beechie et al. 2010). Applying these principles will help avoid common pitfalls in restoration, such as creating habitat types that are outside of a site's natural potential, attempting to build static habitats in dynamic environments, or constructing habitat features that are ultimately overwhelmed by unconsidered system drivers. Such actions restore river dynamics and natural variation in habitat conditions, which are inherently more sustainable and resilient than engineered channels or habitats (Beechie et al. 2010).

Beechie TJ Sear DA Olden JD Pess GR Buffington JM Moir H Roni P Pollock MM . 2010. Process-based Principles for Restoring River Ecosystems. *BioScience* 60: 209-222.

Beechie TJ Bolton S. 1999. An approach to restoring salmonid habitat-forming processes in Pacific Northwest watersheds. *Fisheries* 24: 6–15.

Sear DA. 1994. River restoration and geomorphology. *Aquatic Conservation* 4: 169–177.

Wohl E Angermeier PL Bledsoe B Kondolf GM MacDonnell L Merritt DM Palmer MA Poff NL Tarboton D. 2005. River restoration. *Water Resources Research* 41: W10301.

**Do I need to submit a separate MO proposal to complete project type required monitoring?**

No. Only proposals wishing to “determine if restoration treatment and features have produced the desired habitat response and/or physical watershed processes” need to submit a separate MO proposal. Projects carrying out monitoring required in the Project Type Requirements do not need a separate MO proposal.

**Can I submit paper copies of my application by mail or bring it to your office?**

No. All applications, including attachments, must be submitted online at the [CDFW WebGrants website](#).

**Can CDFW suggest project partners that can help develop a project for an applicant?**

Due to the competitive nature of the solicitation, CDFW is unable to offer project development guidance to applicants while the solicitation is open.

**Can I copy and resubmit my application from last year under the current 2020 Solicitation?**

Yes, you may. However, there have been some changes to the application from last year. Be prepared to review every form and add or update information as needed. Note that the Budget forms will **not** be copied over. It is your responsibility to ensure that your application is complete and accurate.

**As an eligible applicant, can I submit more than one proposal in response to the Solicitation?**

Yes. The program will evaluate each submitted proposal independently and on its individual merit.

**I want to submit a proposal application with more than one Project Type. Is this allowable?**

Yes. However, an applicant must identify in the application the one project type that best describes the proposed project and will be reviewed and scored on that project type. If more than one project type is incorporated into a proposal all applicable Guideline documents and information must be provided.

**Will a project required as mitigation or other compliance obligations be eligible for funding in this program?**

No. Funding cannot be used for projects required to meet required environmental mitigation or compliance measures. Similarly, any project that is under an enforcement action by a regulatory agency will not be considered for funding.

**Why is my waterway and/or watershed not included in the 2020 FRGP Focus Watershed Table? How can I get the watershed added to the table?**

It takes a coordinated effort of State and Federal agencies to develop the FRGP Focus Table and mostly prior to the Solicitation release. Suggestions on adding a waterway and/or watershed into a future table may be sent to the appropriate recovery plan coordinator (see contacts in Appendix B of the Guidelines).

**Can I use Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act (HRE) approval in lieu of a Lake and Streambed Alteration, if my project includes dewatering and fish exclusion/relocation?**

Yes. An applicant may use HRE approval for a qualified project. If awarded funding, the applicant/grantee will also need to obtain any additionally required permits.

**Is cost share or match required for me to apply to your program?**

No. Neither cost share nor match is required. However, the proportion of cost share/match relative to the total project cost is assessed points in the scoring criteria.

**What criteria are used to score proposals?**

The criteria used to score proposals are in Appendix C of the Guidelines.

**I want to charge less overhead in my budget than allowed through my NICRA and use the unclaimed portion as cost share or match. Can I do that?**

No. An applicant or subcontractor that already has a federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) should use the approved rate. If the applicant does not have a federally approved rate, then the prevailing federal de minimis rate (10%) should be used. It is the responsibility of the applicant to comply with all applicable laws and regulations for their project.

**Is it possible to increase the requested funding amount after proposal application or before, during, or after the grant execution?**

Due to the competitive process, grant award is limited to the amount requested in the proposal. CDFW is unable to increase the requested funding amount.

**If awarded a grant, are sub-recipients/subcontractors required to follow the same indirect rules as the grantee?**

Yes. All recipients of the grant fund including sub-recipients/subcontractors must follow the same federal uniform guidance.

**Where can I find more guidance on interpreting the Federal Uniform Guidance?**

The Federal Uniform Guidance 2017 (2 CFR 200) is available on the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](#). Additional helpful resources on 2 CFR 200 can be found in the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) prepared by the Office of Management and Budget.