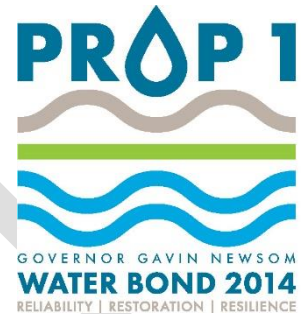


2022 Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs



Proposal Solicitation Notice

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

**Application Deadline:
March 4, 2022**

WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov



California Department of Fish and Wildlife



The Mission of the Department of Fish and Wildlife is to manage California's diverse fish, wildlife, and plant resources, and the habitats upon which they depend, for their ecological values and for their use and enjoyment by the public.

FOREWORD

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) is pleased to announce funding opportunities for multi-benefit ecosystem restoration and protection projects under Proposition 1 (Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014). This Proposal Solicitation Notice (Solicitation) for Proposition 1 Fiscal Year (FY) 2022-2023 focuses on planning, implementation, acquisition, and scientific study projects across multiple priorities outlined herein.

This Solicitation will mark the ninth award cycle under CDFW's Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs since the programs began in 2015. CDFW's Proposition 1 Grant Programs currently support hundreds of projects in the collective mission to protect and restore California's diverse ecosystems. This Solicitation also follows a year of unprecedented and ongoing challenges including COVID-19, a multi-year drought, and devastating wildfires throughout California.

This year also carries forward several ongoing efforts to implement efficiencies to supporting restoration through granting and permitting. Following last year's pilot initiative, CDFW has made permanent its Cutting the Green Tape program, with staff to support granting and permitting improvement efforts. The Cutting the Green Tape program is also administering the Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) process authorized under Senate Bill 155. The SERP process provides additional opportunity for restoration projects seeking approval, including those funded through grant programs like Proposition 1.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

| | |
|---------------|---|
| CALCC | California Association of Local Conservation Corps |
| CalEPA | California Environmental Protection Agency |
| CCC | California Conservation Corps |
| CDFW | California Department of Fish and Wildlife |
| CEQA | California Environmental Quality Act |
| Corps | CCC and CALCC, collectively |
| CWC | California Water Code |
| Delta | Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta |
| DGS | Department of General Services |
| DMP | Data Management Plan |
| GAMA | Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment |
| NEPA | National Environmental Policy Act |
| NMFS | National Marine Fisheries Service |
| NOAA | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration |
| PDT | Pacific Daylight Time |
| PRC | Public Resources Code |
| Proposition 1 | Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 |
| Solicitation | Proposal Solicitation Notice |
| USFWS | United States Fish and Wildlife Service |
| WCB | Wildlife Conservation Board |

1 BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW

The Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 ([Proposition 1](#)) provides funding to implement the objectives of the [California Water Action Plan](#) for more reliable water supplies, the restoration of important species and habitat, and a more resilient, sustainably managed water resources system.

Proposition 1 authorizes CDFW to award \$372.5 million in grant funds to multi-benefit ecosystem and watershed protection and restoration projects. CDFW distributes these funds on a competitive basis through the:

1. Watershed Restoration Grant Program, and
2. Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program

The [Project Solicitation and Evaluation Guidelines for Proposition 1 Grant Programs](#) (Proposition 1 Guidelines) provide a foundation for the basic requirements for project proposals; however, the information in this Solicitation supersedes any discrepancies among the documents.

Under this Solicitation, approximately \$31 million is anticipated for award:

1. Approximately \$24 million for the Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grant Program, and
2. Approximately \$7 million for the Proposition 1 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program

This Solicitation addresses priorities that will contribute to the objectives of Proposition 1 and that contribute to the implementation of the [California Water Action Plan](#), [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), [Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#), [Delta Plan](#), [California EcoRestore](#), [Safeguarding California Plan](#), [California Biodiversity Initiative](#), and the fulfillment of CDFW's Mission. This solicitation also focuses on projects that address impacts from recent wildfires throughout California.

Award Information

1. Anticipated total available funding: approximately \$31 million, dependent upon allocation in the Fiscal Year 2022-2023 Budget Act.
2. Grant award notifications anticipated in June 2022.
3. Awarded projects may start as early as August 1, 2022.
4. Grant-funded project work must be completed by March 15, 2026, except that grant-funded project work under grant agreements with California public universities using the AB 20 Model Agreement must be completed by January 1, 2026.

Proposal Deadline

The complete proposal application and all supporting documentation must be submitted via the [CDFW WebGrants System](#) by 4:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time, March 4, 2022.

Application Workshop

CDFW will schedule one online workshop to provide technical assistance with the application. Please see CDFW [Proposition 1](#) Restoration Grant Programs website for workshop details. Workshop will be recorded and made available online.

Contacts

For questions about this Solicitation please contact CDFW's Watershed Restoration Grants Branch by e-mail at WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov.

This document, email list subscription information, and further information about the funding sources can be found at the CDFW websites for the [Proposition 1](#) Restoration Grant Programs.

For questions regarding CDFW WebGrants, please contact the CDFW WebGrants Help Desk by email at CDFWebgrants@wildlife.ca.gov.

Eligibility Information

California Water Code (CWC) Sections 79702(p), 79702(s), and 79712 define the entities eligible to apply for this Proposition 1 grant funding. The following entity types are eligible for funding: state and local public agencies within California, federally recognized Indian tribes and State Indian tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, non-profit organizations, and public utilities and mutual water. Other entities that are not eligible for funding under this Solicitation may work as subcontractors for an eligible applicant.

To be eligible for Proposition 1 funding, projects must provide ecosystem benefits that are greater than required applicable environmental mitigation measures or compliance obligations (CWC §§ 79737(e), and 79738 (f)).

Grant Program Guidelines

This Solicitation provides specifics for each grant program described in the [Project Solicitation and Evaluation Guidelines for Proposition 1 Grant Programs](#). The guidelines provide detailed information not included in this Solicitation regarding: project types, program and funding requirements, budgets, design plans and engineering, qualifications and licensed professionals, labor code requirements, long-term management, environmental compliance and permitting, water law, project monitoring and reporting, data management, the selection process, requirements for awarded grants, invoicing and payments, reporting, standard conditions, and many other general program requirements.

1.1 Proposition 1 Grant Programs

Proposition 1 includes provisions that govern how CDFW may allocate funds authorized by CWC [Section 79737](#) and [Section 79738](#), including the priorities identified below. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Proposition 1 to be eligible for funding by either program. Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

Watershed Restoration Grant Program Priorities

1. Large-scale wildfire recovery response and prevention
2. Manage headwaters for multiple benefits
3. Protect and restore mountain meadow ecosystems
4. Protect and restore anadromous and other native fish habitat
5. Protect and restore coastal wetland ecosystems
6. Protect and restore cross-border urban creeks and watersheds

Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program Priorities

1. Improve water quality
2. Improve habitats in the Delta
3. Planning for multi-benefit restoration through regional partnerships
4. Scientific studies to support implementation of the Delta Science Plan

1.2 Solicitation Schedule

CDFW will advertise timeline updates through e-mail announcements, postings on the [Proposition 1](#) website, and news releases. Please sign up for email updates on either of the program websites.

Table 1: Proposal Solicitation Process and Anticipated Schedule

| Activity | Schedule |
|---|--------------------|
| Draft Solicitation public review and comment period | January 3-21, 2022 |
| Public Workshop on Draft Solicitation | January 19, 2022 |
| Release Proposal Solicitation Notice | January 24, 2022 |
| Online Application Workshop | February 2, 2022 |
| Proposals due by 4:00 PM, Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) | March 4, 2022 |
| Proposal Evaluation | March-May 2022 |
| CDFW Director approval/awards announced | June 2022 |
| Execute grant agreements | June-October 2022 |
| All project work completed, and final invoice submitted for payment | March 15*, 2026 |

*January 1, 2026, for grants to University of California Public or California State University using the AB 20 Model Agreement.

1.3 Requirements for Awarded Proposals

Grant agreement requirements for awarded proposals can be found in Section 4.4 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#).

2 FUNDING PRIORITIES BY PROGRAM

All Proposition 1 grants funded by CDFW under this Solicitation must fall within the following priorities:

2.1 Proposition 1 Watershed Restoration Grants

The Watershed Restoration Grant Program will fund multi-benefit projects of statewide importance outside of the Delta. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Propositions 1, and contribute to implementation of the [California Water Action Plan](#). In addition, CDFW is seeking projects that contribute to implementation of [State Wildlife Action Plan](#), [Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#), [Safeguarding California Plan](#), [Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Conservation Strategy](#), [California Biodiversity Initiative](#), state and federal recovery plans, or other relevant state and federal plans. This solicitation also focuses on projects that address impacts from recent wildfires throughout California.

Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

1) Large-Scale Wildfire Recovery Response and Prevention

The objective of this priority in response to the increase in frequency and intensity of wildfires and the devastating effects on watersheds, is to fund Planning and Implementation projects in fire-damaged watersheds that will contribute to restoration and recovery of stream and riparian habitats, prevent erosion, protect and improve water quality, and prevent potential future negative ecosystem effects. Example projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Fuel reduction;
2. Native, fire-resistant understory vegetation restoration;
3. Sediment basin construction;
4. Prevention of upslope erosion;
5. Restoration of riparian habitat;
6. Improvement of water quality for aquatic and riparian species; and
7. Post-fire assessments that will inform a future implementation project.

Proposed projects that address this priority may include activities that are eligible for partial or full streamlining of regulatory requirements. Any such streamlining will have its own procedural and substantive requirements. As with other laws and regulations potentially applicable to applicants' projects, applicants are encouraged to review those requirements. For example, projects that address this priority may include activities that

are eligible for streamlining of regulatory requirements under a Governor's executive order suspending certain State statutes, rules, regulations, or requirements. Those Governor's executive orders require that an individual who desires to conduct activities under such a suspension request that the appropriate Secretary from either the California Environmental Protection Agency (CalEPA) or California Natural Resources Agency, or a delegate thereof, determine that proposed project activities are eligible to be conducted under that suspension. Applicants that believe their projects may be eligible for streamlining of regulatory requirements under a Governor's executive order should contact CDFW's Watershed Restoration Grants Branch at WatershedGrants@Wildlife.ca.gov and Cal EPA as soon as possible and prior to submitting an application in response to this PSN.

Please note in the event a request for regulatory requirement streamlining is not granted, applicants will remain responsible for all regulatory compliance and permitting, as outlined in Section 3.5. It is important that applicants communicate with CDFW as soon as possible to begin the coordination process.

2) Manage Headwaters for Multiple Benefits

Watersheds in the Cascades, Sierra Nevada and other forested areas of the state are places of origin for more than two-thirds of the state's developed water supply. Many of these crucial watersheds are in poor health. Implementing projects to restore, protect, and enhance the condition, function, and resiliency of forests, streams, meadows, and soils can contribute to several objectives, including, but not limited to:

1. Improve and protect the quantity and quality of water available year-round
2. Improve and protect habitat for wildlife, fish, and plant species
3. Reduce the risk and consequences of large, damaging wildfires
4. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and stabilize carbon storage
5. Improve and protect air quality
6. Improve local socio-economic conditions and public safety

CDFW seeks projects that contribute to managing headwaters for multiple benefits by:

1. Restoring forest health through ecologically sound forest management.
Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Thinning of overstocked forest stands to improve forest health
 - b. Treatment and prevention of forest pests and invasive species
 - c. Restoration of riparian areas and hardwood communities
 - d. Invasive species removal
 - e. Reforestation of native species
 - f. Thinning of encroaching conifers near aspen stands
 - g. Increasing carbon sequestration
 - h. Decreasing forest vulnerability to climate change
 - i. Road and culvert decommissioning and sediment control
2. Protecting and restoring degraded stream and meadow ecosystems to assist in natural water management and improved habitat.

3. Protecting strategically important lands within watersheds to ensure continued or improved watershed health, function, connectivity, and resilience.

Prioritization of projects to manage headwaters for multiple benefits will consider project scale and regional importance, degree to which the project addresses landscapes damaged by large, high-intensity fires, high-intensity fire in high-risk watersheds, degree to which the project reduces the likelihood of large, and the diversity and significance of the project benefits.

3) Protect and Restore Mountain Meadow Ecosystems

The objective of this priority is to protect, restore, and enhance mountain meadow ecosystems in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges. Mountain meadows throughout California's high mountain ranges are in a state of degradation due to land management practices and other factors. Restoring and protecting ecological and hydrological functions to mountain meadows will decrease their vulnerability to climate change and provide many critical functions and services, including, but not limited to:

1. Increased groundwater storage
2. Reduced and delayed peak flows on streams that flow through meadow systems
3. Improved water quality
4. Protection of climate refugia
5. Restored and expanded habitat for native species

Applicants proposing to conduct any project that creates or enhances in-channel ponds, pools, or deep run habitat capable of capturing sediment including pond-and-plug or beaver dam analogs, should address in their applications if (i) there had been any survey or when to conduct a survey in the watershed to assess whirling disease¹ presence, including documentation on the presence or absence of the tubifex worm (*Tubifex tubifex*) (ii) there is any salmonid fishery or imperiled salmonid population upstream or downstream of the proposed project site. If necessary, applicants will include actions plans for whirling disease in their scope of work.

Prioritization of projects to protect and restore mountain meadow ecosystems will take into account the extent to which the project restores landscapes damaged by large high-intensity wildfires, the significance and diversity of the project benefits, and where applicable, relevance to the [Sierra Nevada Meadow Restoration Business Plan](#) (National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 2010) and the [Sierra Meadows Strategy](#) (Sierra Meadows Partnership, 2016).

4) Protect and Restore Anadromous and Other Native Fish Habitat

The objective of this priority is to protect, restore, or enhance anadromous and other

¹ Whirling disease is a lethal parasite of salmonids and is present in some waters of the state. Ponds and still waters can increase the impact of whirling disease on trout populations, including trout native to California. Whirling disease requires a worm (*Tubifex tubifex*) as an obligate and alternate host. Ponds and still waters are preferred habitat for the tubifex worm and can result in amplification of the whirling disease parasite and greater impacts to sensitive and native salmonid populations.

native fish habitat in watersheds of California to aid in the recovery and conservation of these species. CDFW is seeking projects that address limiting factors and priority actions specified in state or federal recovery plans, the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (Chapter 6), and/or other relevant conservation plans, including:

1. Removing high priority fish passage barriers (refer to the 2019 Fish Passage Priorities List) and barriers to green and white sturgeon and Pacific Lamprey
2. Installing screens on priority unscreened diversions and repair/replacement of existing substandard screens (refer to the 2019 Priority Water Diversions for Screening)
3. Restoring or enhancing riparian, instream, floodplain, side channel, or estuarine habitat
4. Restoring instream spawning and rearing habitat
5. Restoring off-channel rearing, streambank, and riparian habitats and migratory conditions
6. Improving instream flow quality and quantity
7. Reducing erosion and instream/downstream sedimentation
8. Improving adult fish passage through the Sacramento River Flood Control Project
9. Protecting important watershed lands and riparian buffers in agricultural landscapes through acquisitions and conservation easements
10. Redesigning or improving road prisms, road surfaces and upgrading drainage structures and stream crossings to reduce the road's impact on water quality, by reducing hydrologic connectivity and sediment delivery to nearby streams
11. Decommissioning roads in riparian areas

Proposition 1 grant funds are also available for water conservation projects (e.g., off-channel water storage, changes in the timing or source of water supply, moving points of diversion, irrigation ditch lining, piping, stock-water systems, and agricultural tailwater recovery/management systems) that permanently dedicate 100 percent of the water saved due to project implementation for instream purposes to support anadromous fish during water limited seasons.

Projects for which the main purpose is to enhance stream flow should consider submitting proposals to the Wildlife Conservation Board's (WCB's) [California Stream Flow Enhancement Program](#). In instances where an applicant submits a proposal to both CDFW's Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Program and WCB's California Stream Flow Enhancement Program, the applicant should clearly define the streamflow enhancement component(s) of the project in the scope of work (task description) and budget intended to be funded by CDFW's grant program.

Prioritization of projects will take into account the listing status of the species for which the project is designed to benefit, passage designs that benefit or provide passage for multiple migratory species, and whether the proposal: focuses on populations and geographies that play an important role in recovery, implements a high priority recovery action identified in a final or public draft recovery plan, addresses restoration activities

specified in the [State Wildlife Action Plan](#) (Chapter 6), and also addresses other priorities in this solicitation. Prioritization of projects that eliminate barriers to migration will be informed by CDFW's [2019 Fish Passage Priorities List \(updated 2/25/2020\)](#) and [2019 Priority Water Diversions For Screening \(updated 2/26/2020\)](#). Prioritization of projects designed to enhance stream flows will consider coordination with WCB's California Stream Flow Enhancement Program.

5) Protect and Restore Coastal Wetland Ecosystems

The objective of this priority is to implement multi-benefit projects designed to protect, restore, or enhance coastal wetland ecosystems. These projects will seek to protect and restore diversity, quality, and connectivity across the range of wetland types extending from subtidal areas to upland transition areas, including non-tidal wetlands. Restoring ecological condition and function within coastal wetlands will provide a variety of important benefits, such as improved habitat for fish and wildlife, enhanced flood protection, increased resiliency to sea-level rise and storm events, and improved water quality.

The [California Water Action Plan](#) calls upon CDFW to implement large-scale habitat projects along the California coast in strategic estuaries to restore ecological health and natural system connectivity and help defend against sea-level rise. As such, project scale, regional importance, and significance and diversity of the benefits will be considered during prioritization of these projects.

6) Protect and Restore Cross-Border Urban² Creeks and Watersheds

The ecological health of California-Mexico cross-border urban creeks and watersheds is threatened by urban and agricultural encroachment and pollution, sedimentation, trash, and other stressors. CDFW is seeking projects that address these threats. Projects under this priority should address the unique ecological, flood control, water quality, and hydrological conditions associated with urban creeks and watersheds on the California-Mexico border. Funding in this solicitation is only available to the parts of a project that are located within the State of California.

2.2 Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grants

The Delta Water Quality and Ecosystem Restoration Grant Program will fund projects that benefit the Delta³. Projects must be consistent with the purposes of Proposition 1 and contribute to implementation of the [California Water Action Plan](#).

Applicants awarded grants for projects that are covered actions under the Delta Plan will be required to ensure that a written [certification of consistency](#) with the Delta Plan is

² CWC Section 7048(e) defines an "urban creek" as "a creek which crosses built-up residential, commercial, or industrial property, or which crosses land where, in the near future, the land use will be residential, commercial, or industrial."

³ Projects under this Program are not required to be physically located within the Delta; however, project activities must demonstrably benefit the Delta. Proposition 1 defines Delta as the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta as defined in CWC § 12220 and the Suisun Marsh as defined in Public Resources Code § 29101.

prepared as part of the pre-implementation project permitting requirements, including an adequate adaptive management plan (Delta Plan General Policy 1); this process includes consultation with the Delta Science Program's [Adaptive Management Liaison Team](#).

Proposals must address at least one of the following priorities:

1) Improve Water Quality

The objective of this priority is to plan for and implement multi-benefit projects that contribute to the improvement of water quality in the Delta to improve ecosystem condition, functions, and resiliency, including projects in Delta counties that provide multiple public benefits and improve drinking and agricultural water quality or water supplies. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Planning or implementing a specific on-the-ground water quality improvement project
2. Developing or enhancing water quality management models and tools
3. Implementing Best Management Practices or other tools that contribute to improving Delta water quality

2) Improve Habitats in the Delta

The objective of this priority is to plan for and implement projects that protect, restore, or enhance aquatic, terrestrial, and transitional habitats to improve the health and resiliency of native fish and wildlife species in the Delta. CDFW is seeking projects that are consistent with the [Delta Plan](#) including projects that contribute to the objectives of California EcoRestore but that will not be used to satisfy any regulatory compliance obligation. If a proposal includes actions that are geographically adjacent to, or integrated with projects used to satisfy compliance responsibility, the proposal must clearly demonstrate that the proposed activities go beyond the regulatory compliance requirements, and that the associated costs can be tracked separately. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Protecting, restoring, or enhancing tidal, sub-tidal, floodplain, riparian, transitional, and terrestrial habitats
2. Protecting, restoring, or enhancing riparian and transitional uplands to improve gene flow/connectivity of wildlife between the north and south Delta
3. Eradicating or controlling invasive species to benefit special status, at risk, endangered, or threatened species in the Delta
4. Supporting the beneficial reuse of dredged material for habitat restoration
5. Enhancing or developing managed wetlands for subsidence reversal and carbon sequestration

Habitat restoration and enhancement projects must be carried out in alignment with the recommendations in the [Delta Plan](#).

3) Scientific Studies and Assessments that Support Projects or the Delta Science Program

The objective of this priority is to fund scientific studies to inform water and natural resource policy and management decisions related to the Delta priorities stated above.

2.3 Project Categories

Eligible project categories for this Solicitation are Planning, Implementation, and Acquisition. Each project category is described below. In addition, scientific studies related to the Delta as described in Section 2.2(4) are eligible. CDFW's Fisheries Branch maintains a [list](#) of additional restoration manuals and guidelines that may be considered for salmon and steelhead habitat restoration in addition to [CDFW's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual](#).

2.3.1 Planning

Planning grants provide funding for activities that lead to specific on-the-ground implementation projects. Eligible activities for Planning projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Preparing plans or supplementing existing plans (e.g., watershed and habitat assessments) that will result in a specific project or set of projects
2. Developing monitoring, adaptive management, climate change adaptation, and long-term management plans for a specific project
3. Coordination with partners to develop large-scale restoration or enhancement projects
4. Coordination with partners to develop standardized monitoring procedures
5. Performing necessary studies and assessments, collecting baseline data, and developing project designs related to a specific site or physical project
6. Obtaining the services of licensed professional (refer to Section 3.8 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#) for guidance on when licensed professionals are required)
7. Acquiring permits
8. Preparing California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) documents
9. Conducting stakeholder and public meetings

2.3.2 Implementation

Implementation grants fund construction and monitoring of shovel-ready restoration and enhancement projects and new or enhanced facilities. Applicants should submit 65% or higher design plans, a Basis of Design Report, and technical studies (see Section 3.7 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)). Proposals for projects that are shovel-ready upon application, or that include schedules demonstrating adequate time to complete final planning tasks in addition to construction, will be the most competitive.

Eligible activities for Implementation projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Preparation of bid packages and subcontractor documents
2. Development of final engineering designs
3. Acquiring permits
4. Construction
5. Habitat restoration and enhancement
6. Pre- and post-project monitoring and adaptive management
7. Finalization and initial execution of a long-term management plan
8. Communication of project results to stakeholders and the public

Implementation proposals may include certain planning activities, such as preparation of final designs. However, proposals should also demonstrate that a project can be feasibly completed by March 15, 2026, and that CEQA requirements will be satisfied prior to CDFW award (see Section 5.2). CDFW may award partial funding based on project readiness and/or other factors. For questions about eligible activities and project scope, applicants are encouraged to contact CDFW at WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov to schedule a consultation.

2.3.3 Acquisition

Acquisition grants fund purchases of interests in land or water. Property must be acquired from willing sellers at a price that does not exceed fair market value, as set forth in an appraisal prepared by a licensed real estate appraiser and approved by the Department of General Services (DGS) Real Property Services Section. A completed appraisal, approved by DGS, is not required at the time of proposal submission; however, if awarded, the appraisal must be submitted and approved by DGS prior to the request for distribution of acquisition funds. Costs associated with preparation of the appraisal are ineligible for reimbursement through an awarded grant. Appraisal review by DGS can take up to 4-8 weeks and can cost up to \$10,000; applicants should consider including this cost as a line item within their proposed budgets.

If a signed purchase option agreement is not available for submittal with the application, a Willing Seller Letter is required from each landowner (see Section 3.6 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)). Once funds are awarded and an agreement is signed with CDFW, another property cannot be substituted for the property specified in the application. Therefore, it is imperative the applicant demonstrate the seller is negotiating in good faith and that discussions have proceeded to a point of confidence.

CDFW is interested in funding conservation easements that protect fish and wildlife habitat as a primary objective. Applicants should describe the species and habitats that would benefit from the conservation easement. Applicants should also describe performance measures and conservation easement terms that demonstrate a clear nexus to the needs of target species. In particular, the proposal should demonstrate how the conservation easement will protect fish and wildlife beyond merely restricting the fee owner's right to subdivide parcels that make up the property that would be covered by the conservation easement; for example, a proposal to acquire and manage a forested property should describe how the proposed conservation easement terms will

provide greater fish and wildlife habitat protection than the minimum standards of the California Forest Practices Rules. Conservation easements purchased with CDFW Proposition 1 grant funds cannot be used to satisfy an environmental mitigation or compliance obligation.

Applicants should describe existing land uses and development on the subject property as well as land uses and development that would be allowed after grantee's acquisition of the fee interest in that property or a conservation easement over that property. Any future improvements that would be allowed, including residences and other structures, roads, trails, parking lots, interpretive facilities, utilities, utility lines, and stream crossings should be described in detail (including approximate quantitative measurements) and shown on a map. While this Solicitation does not set a specific limit on future improvements (i.e., a development cap), CDFW will weigh the potential impacts of allowed new development, such as fragmentation, noise and disturbance, water quality, or other habitat impairments, against the conservation value of the proposed acquisition.

For water rights acquisitions, applicants must demonstrate a legal right to divert water and sufficient documentation regarding actual water availability and use. For post-1914 water rights, the applicant must submit a copy of a water right permit or license on file with the SWRCB. Applicants who divert water based on a riparian or pre-1914 water right must submit written evidence of the right to divert water and the priority in the watershed of that diversion right with their proposal. All applicants must include past water diversion and use information reported to the SWRCB, required by CWC section 5101. Such reports include Progress Reports of Permittee and Reports of Licensee for post-1914 rights, and Supplemental Statements of Water Diversion and Use for riparian and pre-1914 water rights. All water rights must be accompanied by any operational conditions, agreements or court orders associated with the right, as well as any SWRCB orders affecting the water right. Projects that will result in a change in a stream's hydrograph must provide baseline reference data and demonstrate how the changes will be protected for the entire reach of stream within the project limits for a duration of 25 years or more.

Any proposal that would require a change to water rights, including, but not limited to, bypass flows, point of diversion, location of use, purpose of use, or off-stream storage shall demonstrate an understanding of the relevant SWRCB processes, timelines, and costs necessary for project approvals by SWRCB and the ability to meet those timelines within the term of a grant.

Subject to CDFW's discretion and prior approval, interests in water or real property acquired through this Solicitation may be transferred to another entity that would be an eligible grantee under this Solicitation for that transferee to own, manage, and steward consistent with the purpose of the grant. CDFW will not hold title to interests in land or water, nor will CDFW enter into forbearance agreements with applicants or other entities. CDFW encourages applicants requesting such a transfer to identify the proposed transferee at the time of proposal submission.

Eligible activities and expenses for Acquisition projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Acquisition of fee title or perpetual conservation easements
2. Water acquisitions that include permanent, long-term, or short-term water transfers, leases, or dedications
3. Project-related administrative costs, including DGS appraisal review, monitoring plan and/or long-term management plan

Ineligible costs include:

1. Appraisal preparation
2. Environmental site assessment
3. Mineral rights assessment
4. Other fees and costs to accomplish the transaction and the conveyance and acquisition of the property
5. Title escrow and closing costs

The following information is required at the time of application:

1. Parcel numbers, acreage, and willing seller information
2. Acquisition schedule
3. Description of existing improvements, if any
4. Description of proposed or allowed improvements, if any
5. Description of the species and habitats that would benefit from the acquisition and a summary of long-term management actions that would be taken to protect and enhance those resources
6. Description of uses that are proposed to be prohibited on the property following acquisition
7. Copy of the signed purchase option agreement or willing seller letter(s)
8. Appraisal or estimation of fair market value
9. Current Preliminary Title Report, with description of restrictions on the property, such as existing easements, Williamson Act contracts, loans, or liens
10. Map showing lands to be acquired, including parcel lines and numbers

For water rights acquisitions, the following additional items are required:

1. For riparian rights and all appropriative water rights (pre-1914, post-1914, registrations) transferred appurtenant to land, include a preliminary title report or legal opinion (ideal)
2. Legal description of diversion, if relevant
3. Copy of water right application, permit or license
4. Copy of all statements of diversion and use for past five years
5. A description of existing hydrological conditions

Applicants must disclose any known or suspected hazardous material release, threatened release, or other adverse environmental condition associated with the property. Prior to execution of a grant agreement for acquisition of an interest in real

property, CDFW will assess the risk posed to the intended conservation purposes by the environmental conditions of the property, including any recognized environmental conditions that could occur on the property. As part of that risk assessment, CDFW may require the surface estate landowner or project proponent to provide CDFW and any third parties with a Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment. Costs associated with preparation of the Environmental Site Assessment and related activities are not eligible for reimbursement. Successful applicants should consult with CDFW for specific requirements prior to initiating work on an Environmental Site Assessment. If CDFW determines that the risk is not acceptable, and the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then CDFW will rescind the grant award.

All grant awards for acquisition of an interest in real property are contingent on a CDFW determination that the risk posed to the conservation values of that property by mineral exploration, development, and related consequences is acceptable. Prior to execution of a grant agreement, CDFW will assess the risk that future mining activities could occur on the property. As part of the risk assessment, CDFW may require the surface estate landowner or project proponent to provide CDFW and any third parties with an interest in the minerals with a mineral assessment report. Costs associated with preparation of the mineral assessment report and related activities are not eligible for reimbursement. The content of the report must meet CDFW's minimum standards; applicants/grantees should contact CDFW for guidance prior to preparation of the report. Based on its risk assessment, CDFW will determine whether the risk of mining and the related consequences for intended conservation purposes is acceptable. If CDFW determines that the risk is not acceptable, and the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level within a reasonable amount of time, then CDFW will rescind the grant award.

CDFW may restrict grantees' authority to conduct or allow commercial activity on real property purchased in fee simple through these grant programs. CDFW may require that income generated from property purchased with CDFW grant funds (Project Income) only be used to offset the costs of owning, managing, or restoring the real property purchased with CDFW grant funds. CDFW may also require that so long as the grantee is receiving Project Income or Project Income remains unspent, the grantee must provide CDFW with a basic annual accounting of Project Income. Finally, CDFW may impose restrictions on the use of water rights associated with fee simple property interests acquired with CDFW grant funds.

2.3.4 Scientific Studies (Delta Proposals Only)

Scientific Studies grants fund projects to support future restoration projects, assess the condition of natural resources, inform policy and management decisions, or assess the effectiveness of grant projects and programs within the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Eligible activities for Scientific Studies projects include, but are not limited to:

1. Data collection, analysis, and management
2. Development of resource management tools and technologies

3 SUBMISSION PROCESS

3.1 Proposal Submission Deadline

Online submission of proposals must be received before 4:00 PM, PDT on March 4, 2022.

Proposals are subject to Public Records Act requests and may be made publicly available upon such requests.

3.2 Electronic Submission

Proposals must be submitted electronically through CDFW WebGrants online at <https://watershedgrants.wildlife.ca.gov>. The name of this Solicitation in WebGrants is “2022 Proposition 1 - Proposal Solicitation Notice.” To access the application, applicants must register an account in WebGrants. The WebGrants Help Desk is staffed Monday–Friday (9:00AM–4:00PM). Questions regarding the CDFW WebGrants website should be directed to the CDFW WebGrants Help Desk email at CDFWWebgrants@wildlife.ca.gov.

The Proposal Application in WebGrants consists of multiple forms. WebGrants includes dropdown menus, text boxes, multiple-choice selections, tables, and attachment upload links. Once submitted, applicants cannot alter their proposal or submit additional information without first contacting the WebGrants Help Desk. Applicants are encouraged to allow sufficient time to submit proposals to avoid last minute errors and omissions.

4 REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

Proposals received by the deadline will be evaluated using the multi-step review process described in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#). An overview of the administrative review and technical review criteria are described in this section. Engineering-Geological review will be completed on Planning and Implementation proposals as applicable, including designs and project team qualifications. See the [Engineering-Geological Review Scoring Criteria](#) for more information. The project selection process is described in more detail in Section 4.3 of the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#), including the Selection Panel process and Director’s final approval. CDFW will determine the funding program that best fits the submitted proposals and may conduct separate evaluations for each program.

4.1 Administrative Review

Administrative review determines if the proposal is complete. Proposals which receive a “No” for one or more of the Administrative Review Evaluation Criteria (Table 2) will be considered incomplete and may not be considered for funding under.

Table 2: Administrative Review Criteria

| Criteria | Score |
|--|--------------|
| Application is complete | Yes/No |
| Applicant is an eligible entity | Yes/No |
| Proposed project is applicable to Solicitation Priorities | Yes/No |
| Proposed project would provide ecosystem benefits that are greater than required applicable environmental mitigation or compliance obligations | Yes/No |
| California Conservation Corps and Certified Community Conservation Corps consultation form is complete | Yes/No |
| It is plausible that CEQA requirements will be satisfied prior to CDFW award (as applicable, see Section 5.2) | Yes/No |
| Applicant has submitted: intermediate (65%) or higher design plans, a basis of design report, and supporting technical studies (as applicable) | Yes/No |

4.2 Technical Review

Technical reviewers evaluate each proposal in accordance with technical review criteria (Table 3) and make narrative comments that support their scores. Each criterion is assigned a point value between zero and five and multiplied by the applicable weighting factor to calculate the criterion score. The sum of the criteria scores produces the total score for the proposal. Individuals selected to serve as technical reviewers will be professionals in fields relevant to the proposed project (CWC § 79707(f)). See the [detailed technical review criteria](#) for more information.

Table 3: Technical Review Criteria

| Criteria | Weighting Factor | Maximum Score |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Project Team Qualifications | 1 | 5 |
| Location Information / Land Tenure | 1 | 5 |
| Climate Change Considerations | 1 | 5 |
| Goals, Objectives & Performance Measures | 2 | 10 |
| Monitoring and Long-Term Management | 2 | 10 |
| Deliverables and Timeline | 3 | 15 |
| Applicant Budget | 1 | 5 |
| Budget Justification | 2 | 10 |
| Community Support | 2 | 10 |
| Purpose, Need and Background | 2 | 10 |
| Approach, Feasibility, and Scope | 3 | 15 |
| Total Possible Points | | 100 |

Where standard scoring criteria are applied, points will be assigned as follows:

1. A score of 5 points will be awarded where the criterion is fully addressed and supported by thorough and well-presented documentation and logical rationale.
2. A score of 4 points will be awarded where the criterion is fully addressed but is supported by less thorough documentation or less sufficient rationale.
3. A score of 3 points will be awarded where the criterion is less than fully addressed and is supported by less thorough documentation or less sufficient rationale.
4. A score of 2 points will be awarded where the criterion is marginally addressed, or the documentation or rationale is incomplete or insufficient.
5. A score of 1 point will be awarded where the criterion is minimally addressed, or no documentation or rationale is presented.
6. A score of 0 points will be awarded where the criterion is not addressed.

5 CEQA and Permitting

5.1 Permitting

There are several potential accelerated or programmatic permitting pathways available for projects funded through this Solicitation. These pathways, and related application requirements, are summarized below. Additionally, Sustainable Conservation, a nonprofit organization, has prepared additional guidance for restoration practitioners that may be useful when evaluating permitting options: <https://suscon.org/technical-resources/>.

For all permitting pathways, applicants interested in obtaining coverage should review the eligibility requirements carefully and should account for costs associated with permit compliance (e.g., pre- and post-project and construction monitoring) in the application budget and scope of work.

If an applicant cannot verify whether its project will be eligible for a specific permitting pathway or it is uncertain when a permitting pathway for restoration projects that is under development by a permitting agency will be available for use, applicants may estimate costs for preparing individual permits and include these costs in their proposal's budget, indicating that the project's actual permitting pathway and costs may differ. CDFW will work with applicants selected for funding to adjust grant award budgets as applicants resolve their projects' permitting pathways and costs.

CDFW Restoration Permitting Options

CDFW has several permitting options that are specific to restoration projects:

Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act

The Habitat Restoration and Enhancement Act (HREA) established a permitting process for landowners, state and local governments, and conservation organizations seeking to implement small-scale, voluntary habitat restoration projects throughout California. Restoration and enhancement projects approved by CDFW, pursuant to

HREA, do not require additional permits from CDFW, such as a Lake and Streambed Alteration agreement or California Endangered Species Act permits. To qualify, HREA projects must:

- Meet the eligibility requirements for the State Water Resources Control Board's [Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects](#) (401 SHRP certification), which includes not exceeding a maximum project size of 5 acres or a cumulative 500 linear feet;
- Have the primary purpose of improving fish and wildlife habitat; and
- Avoid or minimize any incidental impacts.

For more information, please see: <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/HREA>.

Restoration Management Permit

As part of its Cutting the Green Tape Initiative, CDFW developed a Restoration Management Permit (RMP) for larger restoration projects. The RMP is a new document that incorporates multiple “take” authorizations into a single streamlined permit:

- (1) endangered, threatened, and candidate species pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (CESA)
- (2) fully protected species pursuant to Fish and Game Code sections 3511, 4700, 5050, and 5515

The RMP is designed to work in conjunction with a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, which must be obtained separately. For further information on whether a specific project is eligible for an RMP, please contact CDFW Proposition 1 staff at WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov.

Consistency Determinations for Federal Approvals

In response to a strong interest in facilitating programmatic permitting options, CDFW also worked with the NOAA Restoration Center to develop a new process for issuing CESA consistency determinations (CD) for restoration projects that have received approvals pursuant to federal programmatic biological opinions (BOs)(see below). CDFW may also issue CDs for voluntary restoration projects using approved project-specific federal BOs. Under existing law, restoration CDs are exempt from CESA fees.

Restoration CDs are designed to work in conjunction with a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement, which must be obtained separately. For further information on whether a specific project may be eligible for a restoration CD, please contact CDFW Proposition 1 staff at WatershedGrants@wildlife.ca.gov.

Programmatic NOAA Fisheries Biological Opinions

NOAA Fisheries has existing programmatic BOs that cover certain restoration actions in various parts of the state. Offices and their coverage areas are shown at:

<https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/west-coast/about-us/west-coast-area-offices>

For questions about coverage of projects out of the Arcata office, please contact:

Bob Pagliuco, bob.pagliuco@noaa.gov

For questions about coverage of projects out of the Santa Rosa office, please contact:

Joe Pecharich, Joe.Pecharich@noaa.gov

For questions about coverage of projects out of the Sacramento or Long Beach offices, please contact:

Ruth Goodfield, ruth.goodfield@noaa.gov

Clean Water Act 401 Certification

The State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) has an Amended Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects which covers certain restoration projects with a project size that does not exceed 5 acres or a cumulative total of 500 linear feet of stream bank or coastline. For more information on this order see the following State Water Board webpage: [General Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects\(PDF\)](#).

Also, the State Water Board is currently developing a General Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements for Restoration Projects Statewide (General Order) and supporting Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR). According to the proposed General Order, its purpose is to provide authorization for restoration projects that meet the eligibility criteria of the proposed General Order and do not qualify for coverage under the Amended Order for Clean Water Act Section 401 General Water Quality Certification for Small Habitat Restoration Projects. The proposed General Order and draft PEIR would apply statewide and establish a permit authorization process for specific types of restoration activities, which would, subject to other eligibility requirements, include the following types of restoration projects:

- Improvements to Stream Crossings and Fish Passage
- Removal of Small Dams, Tide Gates, Flood Gates, and Legacy Structures
- Bioengineered Bank Stabilization
- Restoration and Enhancement of Off-Channel and Side-Channel Habitat
- Water Conservation Projects
- Floodplain Restoration
- Removal of Pilings and Other In-Water Structures
- Removal of Nonnative Terrestrial and Aquatic Invasive Species and Revegetation with Native Plants

- Establishment, Restoration, and Enhancement of Tidal, Subtidal, and Freshwater Wetlands
- Establishment, Restoration, and Enhancement of Stream and Riparian Habitat and Upslope Watershed Sites

For more information on the proposed General Order and draft PEIR, see the following State Water Board webpage:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalordersunderdevelopment/.

Projects that would require 401 Certification and that do not fit under these options would need to obtain individual permits.

Individual Permits

When a project does not meet the eligibility requirements for one of the permit options specified above, individual permits may be required. The schedule and budget in the application should reflect adequate time and budget to obtain necessary individual permits and implement any measures or actions required in those permits (i.e., costs associated with compliance).

5.2 CEQA

For implementation and acquisition projects (see Sections 2.3.2 and 2.3.3), applicants should demonstrate that their project qualifies for a statutory or categorical CEQA exemption or that a state or local agency will have filed a Notice of Determination with the Office of Planning and Research for that agency's approval of the project before CDFW will award a grant to the project (see Sections 2.2 and 3.11.2 in the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#)).

CEQA Exemptions

Many smaller restoration projects that meet certain qualifying criteria (e.g., not exceeding five acres in size) may be categorically exempt from more detailed analysis under CEQA pursuant to Section 15333 of the CEQA Guidelines.

Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill (SB) 155, on September 23, 2021, adding Section 21080.56 to the California Public Resources Code. This statute provides a new CEQA statutory exemption for fish and wildlife restoration projects meeting the qualifying criteria in the statute. For more information on the new Statutory Exemption for Restoration Projects (SERP) process, please see CDFW's Cutting the Green Tape SERP webpage at <https://wildlife.ca.gov/Cutting-Green-Tape/SERP> or email CDFW staff at RestorationPermitting@wildlife.ca.gov for questions.

State Board Programmatic Environmental Impact Report

Another CEQA compliance option being developed by the State Water Board is the PEIR for the General Order described above. The State Water Board released the draft PEIR for public review in June 2021 (SCH No. 2019100230). For additional detail

please see:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/cwa401/generalordersunderde v.

The State Water Board proposed General Order and draft PEIR are being developed as part of a broader effort in California to facilitate statewide implementation of restoration projects, including projects too large to qualify for the “Class 33” Categorical Exemption for Small Habitat Restoration Projects. The State Water Board draft PEIR is structured by design as a CEQA platform to facilitate other state and local agency review and approval of individual restoration projects that may qualify for coverage under the proposed General Order. The public review draft PEIR describes various ways that the State Water Board’s environmental analysis could be used by a lead or responsible agency to streamline environmental review of individual projects. Related details are described in the public review draft PEIR in Chapter 1 (Introduction), Section 1.3 (Overview and Use of the PEIR), at pages 1-6 through 1-10.

CDFW encourages applicants and project proponents generally to consider and exercise their independent judgment regarding the various ways that the State Water Board PEIR might help streamline CEQA review of individual restoration projects. Applicants that intend to rely on the State Water Board PEIR in some respect for an individual restoration project should estimate related cost for that effort and include that estimate in the project-specific budget. CDFW may adjust any relevant grant award once the CEQA compliance strategy is finalized and estimated costs are confirmed.

Applicants that intend to rely on the State Board PEIR, if and when certified, may identify the State Board as the lead agency, as an initial matter, or another state or local agency, including a relevant Regional Water Quality Control Board.

Project-Specific EIRs, MNDs or NDs

Other restoration projects may be approved by state or local lead and responsible agencies relying on an environmental impact report (EIR), mitigated negative declaration (MND), or negative declaration (ND), among other options.

6 LINKS

Links within the body of this Solicitation are provided below for your convenience. Please see the [Proposition 1 Guidelines](#), and the CDFW, WRGB's [Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs](#) webpage for additional resources.

State Departments and Programs:

California Department of Fish and Wildlife

[2019 Fish Passage Priorities List](#)

[2019 Priority Water Diversions for Screening List](#)

[CDFW's California Salmonid Stream Habitat Restoration Manual](#)

[Additional Restoration Guidelines and Manuals that may be Considered for Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Restoration in California](#)

[Ecosystem Restoration Program Conservation Strategy for Restoration of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, Sacramento Valley and San Joaquin Valley Regions](#)

[Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs](#)

[Proposition 1 Restoration Grant Programs - Resources for Grantees](#)

[State Wildlife Action Plan \(SWAP\)](#)

Consulting with the California Conservation Corps

[California Conservation Corps](#)

[California Association of Local Conservation](#)

[Corps Consultation Form](#)

[Corps Consultation Process](#)

California Natural Resources Agency

[Bond Accountability Proposition 1](#)

[California Biodiversity Initiative](#)

[California EcoRestore](#)

[California Water Action Plan](#)

[Central Valley Flood Protection Plan Conservation Strategy](#)

[Safeguarding California Plan: 2018 Update](#)

[Sacramento Valley Salmon Resiliency Strategy](#)

Delta Stewardship Council / Delta Science Program

[Delta Plan](#)

[Delta Plan Covered Actions](#)

Enabling Legislation

[Water Quality, Supply, and Infrastructure Improvement Act of 2014 \(Proposition 1\)](#)

Mutual Water Companies

[California Corporations Code § 14300](#)