



TIPS FOR GETTING YOUR RESTORATION PROJECT FUNDED



- Form a community Watershed Group, or some kind of restoration work group with individuals of different backgrounds and expertise.
- Identify a fiscal agent (such as a non-profit 501c3, for-profit entity or government agency) that can accept grant funds.
- Contact your local grant representatives for the funding sources that you would like to pursue. Upfront, early communication with staff from the funding source will save you time in the long run. Provide a brief description of the project and invite the staff member on a pre-proposal site visit. The funding source personnel may have suggestions on ways to improve your project and likelihood of funding.
- Examine potential sources of matching funds (volunteer labor, donated supplies, equipment and personnel time) that you can offer to the project. Document all in-kind match, both non-federal and federal, and include time spent on project planning and development. Matching funds will improve your chances of receiving funding.
- Determine the local, state and federal permits that will be needed to complete your project and develop a timeline for when you expect to request/receive these permits. Initiate this process early, so you will be able to complete your project on schedule once funding has been secured.
- Apply to funding opportunities that relate specifically to your project type and funding needs. If you are unsure whether a particular grant is suitable for your planned project, call the granting agency and ask!
- Make sure your grant application/proposal addresses the grant's specific requirements and selection criteria. For example, if you are applying for a salmon habitat restoration grant, your application should be focused on how the project will benefit salmon (even though it may also benefit other organisms too).
In short, speak the language of the proposal review team in your text.
- Follow the Request for Proposal (RFP) directions and provide ALL requested information in the format specified by the RFP. Describe, in detail, the current conditions at the site, how you plan to implement the project and how you will monitor results.
- Continue to communicate with local staff from the funding source, even if you do not receive funding. If your project doesn't get funded, ask why. Many times there are just too many good applications and not enough funds to go around. Other times there are small problems with part of the project that can be easily modified and the proposal resubmitted during the next round of RFPs. Always ask!

In your funding proposal, be very specific in describing your project plans, including:

2. **Goals statement:** why the project is important for the natural resource, for your community, for the potential granting agency, etc.; what you plan to accomplish with this project, such as number of acres restored, miles of stream reopened to fish passage, number of volunteers and community members engaged and educated.
3. **Objectives statement:** how you plan to accomplish these goals. Examples include: removal or replacement of 2 undersized culverts to restore fish passage to 5 miles of spawning and rearing habitat; restoration of a three-acre eelgrass bed by transplanting 500 plants; restoration of one acre of shellfish beds by seeding with 1000 spats; education of 100 volunteers and community members through 3 community outreach programs and the creation of an educational video.
4. **Design/implementation plans:** how you plan to accomplish your goals and objectives. Include copies of design plans, maps and diagrams, and/or written descriptions of specific, step-by-step methods to be used to complete the project.
5. **Permits and regulatory compliance:** what permits will be required, what steps have already been taken to secure these permits, and when they will be secured; If you've already initiated the permitting or consultation process, mention this.
6. **Project partners and funding sources:** Who else is involved in the project? Does the project have strong community support and local buy-in? If the project has strong support, this demonstrates that the project has been thoughtfully planned and has local importance. This is also an opportunity to show the project's potential for leveraged funding and in-kind match.
7. **Monitoring plans:** Identify success criteria – how will you (and the funders) know if the project is successful? Incorporate pre- and post-restoration monitoring into your project so you will have a frame of reference for the success of your efforts.

Monitoring techniques should directly relate to your project goals and objectives. Examples include: measured improvements in habitat quality over time (i.e. changes in water quality); changes in species' composition or species' presence/absence before versus after project completion; visible and documented changes in habitat structure before and after project completion (i.e. photo points). Enlist a resource professional to help develop and implement your monitoring plans.

8. **Matching funds and budget narrative:** Be specific! If an RFP says a grant won't pay for general salaries and overhead costs, the narrative must be very clear about how any salary/overhead expenses relate **directly** to the proposed project.

For NOAA grants, match can be in the form of: volunteer hours; non-federal, donated staff time; donated equipment, supplies, facilities or land; additional non-federal grants for the same project; contributions from citizens, organizations, state or local governments.