

January 27-28, 2015 OWEB Board Meeting Executive Director Update #J-4: Coastal Wetlands

Overview

OWEB has been designated as an eligible state agency to submit applications to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (Coastal Wetlands Program). Applications from local implementers can only be submitted by a state agency, and OWEB is established as a trusted partner with the Coastal Wetlands Program. Any Oregon agency submitting a grant application for federal funding must receive legislative approval to submit the application and may also be required to obtain legislative authorization to receive and expend the funds if the grant is successful.

2014 Grant Application Status

In early January 2015, the USFWS announced Coastal Wetlands Program awards for project applications that were submitted in 2014. All three of OWEB's submissions were approved:

- 1) Scholfield Creek Tidal Wetlands Conservation Project – funded in the amount of \$630,577 for the acquisition and restoration of 241 acres in the Umpqua River estuary to be undertaken by the Partnership for Umpqua River and the McKenzie River Trust;
- 2) Kilchis Wetlands Conservation and Restoration Project – funded in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the acquisition of 61 acres and the restoration of 127 acres in the Kilchis River basin in Tillamook Bay undertaken by The Nature Conservancy; and
- 3) The China Camp Creek Project – funded in the amount of \$1,000,000 for the replacement and upgrade of the tidegate infrastructure to reestablish tidal influence on 1,700 acres in the Coquille River estuary undertaken by the Beaver Slough Drainage District.

Revised Review Process

Based on feedback at the July 2014 OWEB Board meeting and in order to better meet Board and legislative review requirements, staff have revised program deadlines for local implementers. Effective for the upcoming year's program, local implementers must submit a Letter of Interest (LOI) by December 15, 2014 and a Pre-Proposal by February 9, 2015. The deadlines for the Draft Full Application and the Final Full Application will be set once the USFWS releases notice of the upcoming year's program, but will most likely occur between April and June of 2015. With this new set of deadlines, staff will be able to obtain Board approval in April 2015 and legislative approvals before final submission of applications to the UFWFS in the summer of 2015. See Attachment A for more information about OWEB's refined process for local partners interested in participating in the Coastal Wetlands Program.

OWEB staff currently are vetting two LOIs from local implementers interested in participating in the upcoming year's program. The first is an acquisition and restoration project adjacent to the Ecola Creek Forest Preserve, which would be undertaken by the City of Cannon Beach with technical assistance from the Columbia River Estuary Study Taskforce. The second is an acquisition project at Winter Lake in the Coquille River estuary, which would be undertaken by The Nature Conservancy. Between December 2014 and February 2015, staff will be working with local implementers to determine if the proposed projects are a good fit for the Coastal Wetlands Program. At the April 2015 Board meeting, staff will present to the Board a request

for approval for OWEB to submit a grant application to the USFWS that includes projects that are eligible for and a good fit within the context of the Coastal Wetlands Program.

Staff Contact

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact Renee Davis at renee.davis@state.or.us or 503-986-0203, or Juniper Davis at juniper.davis@state.or.us or 503-986-0033.

Attachment

- A. Refined process for Coastal Wetlands grants

Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board
USFWS National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program
Program Administration Timeline

*Deadlines of importance to local implementers are noted in **red** below*

DEADLINE Dec. 15, 2014: Local implementer submits Letter of Interest to OWEB

Jan. 2015: USFWS announces FY2016 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program (NCWCGP) grant offering and sets the application deadline

DEADLINE Feb. 9, 2015: Local implementer submits Pre-Proposal to OWEB

Feb.-Apr. 2015: OWEB convenes a Coastal Wetlands Review Team to engage in programmatic vetting of the proposed NCWCGP application submission; OWEB conducts site tours with Coastal Wetlands Review Team and USFWS staff

DEADLINE Apr. 2015*: Local implementer submits Draft NCWCGP application to OWEB

Apr. 28, 2015: OWEB Board votes on decision to submit NCWCGP application at Board Meeting

May 2015*: OWEB submits Draft NCWCGP application to USFWS for review

May 2015*: USFWS provides comments on Draft NCWCGP application to OWEB

May-Jun. 2015: OWEB seeks legislative approval to submit NCWCGP application

DEADLINE Jun. 2015*: Local Implementer submits Final NCWCGP application to OWEB

Jun. 2015*: OWEB submits Final NCWCGP application to the USFWS

DEADLINE Oct. 19, 2015: Local implementer submits acquisition, technical assistance, and/or restoration grant application to OWEB for state match funding

Dec. 2015 – Feb. 2016: OWEB Acquisition and/or Regional Review Teams review OWEB grant applications through regular OWEB processes and make funding recommendations

Jan. 2016: USFWS NCWCGP awards are announced

Mar. 2016: OWEB Management determines funding lines for all OWEB grant applications with consideration of Review Teams' funding recommendations and available funding

Apr. 26, 2016: OWEB Board makes final funding decision on OWEB grant application and final decision to move forward with NCWCGP award

**Exact dates will be determined once the USFWS announces the FY16 NCWCGP program and deadlines*

Letter of Interest Process

The intent of this process is to notify OWEB of your interest, to initiate a dialogue between you and the agency, to determine baseline project eligibility, and to develop a strategy for the potential submission of state and federal applications.

Letters of Interest should be emailed directly to juniper.davis@state.or.us. Please include the following information:

- Entity proposing the project;
- Point of contact for the proposed project;
- Other direct project partners, if applicable;
- Location of the proposed project, including a basic project map;
- A list of basic project elements, such as acquisition, conservation easement, restoration, enhancement, management, technical assistance, etc.;
- Concise narrative description of the project;
- A brief discussion of the project's known timeline, ripeness, and/or project planning aspects that are still in development; and
- Other information you deem appropriate.

If you have any questions, please contact Juniper Davis, Partnerships Coordinator at juniper.davis@state.or.us, or at (503) 986-0033.