



Feasibility Study Grants



Frequently Asked Questions

Document Purpose

This document provides answers to common questions about the Oregon Water Resources Department's (Department) Feasibility Study Grants.

Contact Information

For questions about this document or Feasibility Study Grants please contact the Department Grant Program Specialist, Becky Williams, at (503) 986-0928 or fsgrants@wrд.state.or.us.

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General Questions

What is a feasibility study?

A feasibility study is an assessment of a proposed project. Feasibility Study Grants fund qualifying costs of studies that evaluate the feasibility of a proposed conservation, reuse, or storage project that appears to have merit but is lacking important details necessary to determine whether or not to proceed with implementation. The feasibility study focuses on helping to answer the essential question of, “should we proceed with the proposed project idea?” All activities of the study are directed toward helping answer this question.

Who can apply?

Any local government as defined in ORS [174.116](#), Indian tribe as defined in ORS [391.802](#), or person as defined in ORS [536.007](#) may apply for funding.

When are applications due?

The solicitation period for the current cycle of funding will close on **October 14, 2016**.

- All electronically submitted applications are due by 5:00 P.M. on October 14, 2016.
- Applications mailed to the Department must be postmarked by October 14, 2016.

Emailed applications received after 5:00 P.M. on October 14, 2016 or postmarked after October 14, 2016 will be considered late. Late applications will be evaluated as part of a subsequent funding cycle, which the Department anticipates will close in the fall of the following year (i.e., fall 2017).

What resources are available to help me complete my application?

The Department has a number of resources available to assist applicants. Please see Table 1 for below a list of resources.

Table 1. Resources for applicants

Resource	Description
Application Instructions*	This document explains what to include in each section of the application.
Pre-Application Conference	Pre-application conferences provide applicants with the opportunity to have questions answered by the Department and to ensure a competitive, quality application. They are recommended for applicants interested in pursuing a feasibility study grant. Please contact the Grant Program Specialist at 503-986-0928 or by email at fsgrants@wrd.state.or.us to schedule a meeting.
Storage-Specific Study Requirements*	This guidance document explains certain study elements required by statute for storage projects. Applicants pursuing feasibility study for a storage project should consult this guidance in order to determine: 1) if they are required by statute to incorporate specific study elements into their study and 2) consider how to address those elements.

*Available at: www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water_Resources_Development_Program_Forms_and_Guidance.aspx

Proposed Study Questions

What types of projects can a feasibility study examine?

The eligible projects that a funded study may examine are water conservation, reuse, and storage projects. Examples include the storage of surface water in an underground aquifer to meet summertime water needs, addressing water losses associated with open irrigation ditches, and finding alternative uses of wastewater to provide community benefit. Table 2 provides an explanation of each eligible project type and examples of feasibility studies for each project type.

Table 2. Examples of eligible project types

Project type description	Example studies include but are not limited to
<p>Water Conservation – A project which eliminates waste or otherwise improves the water use efficiency. Efficiencies may be achieved by modifying the technology or method of diverting, transporting, applying or recovering water.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study to quantify water losses associated with an open irrigation ditch including identification of solutions to reduce water loss • A study to assess the feasibility of installing more efficient irrigation methods such as conversion from flood irrigation to center pivot irrigation • A study evaluating methods to reduce water loss in a municipal system
<p>Water Reuse – A project that reuses wastewater for specific beneficial purposes. Sources of wastewater may include graywater (e.g., shower and bath wastewater, bathroom sink water, kitchen sink wastewater and laundry wastewater), recycled water, (e.g., treated effluent from a municipal wastewater facility) and industrial wastewater (e.g., treated effluent from an industrial process, manufacturing or business, or from the development or recovery of a natural resource).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study to assess the feasibility of using industrial cooling water to irrigate crops • A study to assess the feasibility of using municipal wastewater to irrigate a golf course • A study to reuse graywater, recycled water, or industrial wastewater for irrigation of crops and pasturelands, irrigation of urban landscapes, industrial cooling, dust control, street sweeping, or artificial groundwater recharge
<p>Above-Ground Storage – A project for water storage in a reservoir, such as a new above ground storage site or increasing the size of an existing reservoir. In most cases, the resulting project will require a water storage permit from the Oregon Water Resources Department.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study to evaluate construction of an off-channel reservoir for agricultural purposes • A study to assess the feasibility of enlarging an existing municipal reservoir to meet future municipal water demand
<p>Below-Ground Storage – Storage in an underground aquifer. Current techniques may include injection of treated surface water into aquifers for later recovery of the water for municipal or agricultural use or infiltration of water into an aquifer for later discharge to surface water to enhance stream flow.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An assessment of an aquifer storage and recovery project for summertime municipal use or artificial recharge for irrigation or discharge to surface water
<p>Other types of storage – A project that would result in water storage, but does not fit within the above-ground or below-ground storage study categories.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A study to evaluate a project enhancing natural storage through improved wetland function or flood protection • A study to assess the feasibility of installing or replacing a municipal storage tank that would not require a water right permit

What elements can a feasibility study include?

Studies may include, but are not limited to, the following study components or elements:

- Analyses of hydrological refill capacity
- Water needs analyses
- Refined hydrological analyses
- Engineering and financial feasibility studies
- Geologic analyses
- Water exchange studies
- Analyses of by-pass, optimum peak, flushing and other ecological flows of the affected stream and the impact of a proposed water conservation, reuse or storage project on those flows
- Comparative analyses of alternative means of supplying water, including but not limited to the costs and benefits of conservation and efficiency alternatives and the extent to which long-term water supply needs may be met using those alternatives
- Analyses of environmental harm or impacts from a proposed water conservation, reuse or storage project
- Analyses of public benefits accruing from a proposed water conservation, reuse or storage project
- Fiscal analyses of a proposed water conservation, reuse or storage project, including estimated project costs, financing for the project and projected financial returns from the project
- Hydrological analyses of a proposed water conservation, reuse or storage project, including the anticipated effects of climate change on hydrological refill capacity
- Analyses of potential water quality impacts of the project

Can I look at alternatives as part of my feasibility study?

Analysis of alternatives may be useful, and in some cases, a necessary part of a feasibility study. However, it is expected that the bulk of analysis and resources associated with the feasibility grant be directed toward the primary project concept.

Funding Questions

Is there a limit on how much I can request in a grant application?

Per OAR 690-600-0200, applications for funding may not exceed \$500,000 per project. The \$500,000 per project limit is applicable to the total amount of grant funds received at a location or general area to address a common water need. As an example, if you already received a \$300,000 grant from the Department for a previous study of a project, your future awards will be limited to no more than \$200,000 for the same project or location.

What is the amount of funding available this funding cycle?

The amount of funding available varies by biennium depending on the amount authorized and allocated to the Department by the Legislature. The Department has approximately \$1 million of available funds remaining for Feasibility Study Grants in the 2015-2017 biennium.

What are allowable costs under this grant?

Refer to the Water Resources Development Program’s Budget Procedures and Allowable Costs document for an explanation of eligible and in-eligible costs. This document is available at: [http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water Resources Development Program Forms and Guidance.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water_Resources_Development_Program_Forms_and_Guidance.aspx)

How can I come up with the required matching funds?

The grant can provide 50 percent of the total cost of the feasibility study, up to \$500,00. Applicants may include the following as part of their dollar-for-dollar match in their application:

- Secured funding commitment from other sources. This could be cash or other grant funding sources.
- Pending commitments of funding from other sources. The commitments must be firm and secured prior to the Department releasing any funds.
- The value of in-kind labor, equipment rental, and materials essential to the feasibility study.

Do I need to have all of my match secured prior to submitting an application?

No, the cost-match does not need to be secured prior to submitting an application. For the purpose of the grant application, cost-match can be pending commitments. If you are awarded a grant, the cost-match commitments must be firm and secured prior to the Department releasing any grant funds. Please refer to the Feasibility Study Grant Application Instructions for more information on how to fill-out the cost-match portion of your application.

How will the Department provide funding to grantees?

Grants funds are reimbursements of invoiced or expended costs as approved and described in the signed grant agreement. Funds are released upon receipt of a “Request for Release of Funds” form available at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water Resources Development Program Forms and Guidance.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water_Resources_Development_Program_Forms_and_Guidance.aspx) .

Evaluation and Schedule

How will my application be evaluated?

After submission, the Department first reviews an application to ensure that it is complete. If the Department identifies any omissions, the Department will notify the applicant that their application was incomplete and will not be considered for that funding cycle. Applications that are deemed complete by the Department will be forwarded to a multi-agency Application Review Team (ART). The ART evaluates applications and makes a funding recommendation to the Department. The funding recommendation is posted for a 30-day public comment period. The Department presents a funding recommendation to the Water Resources Commission based on the ART evaluation, public comments received, and available grant funds.

How many grants will be awarded?

The number of grants awarded will depend on amount of funding available as well as the number of applications received and deemed ready for funding through the review process.

When will grants be awarded?

The Department anticipates that the Water Resources Commission will make final funding decisions in May 2017. Refer to Table 3 for a tentative schedule of the current funding cycle. If your study is selected for funding, the Department will then work with you to develop your grant agreement. Please note that grantees cannot request reimbursement for costs incurred prior to the signing of a grant agreement; however, some costs incurred prior to signing the grant agreement can be included as cost-match.

Table 3. Tentative funding cycle schedule

Funding Cycle Phase	Tentative Dates
Applications due	5pm, October 14, 2016
Application review	October 2016 – February 2017
Public comment period	February – March 2017
Consideration of public comments on recommendation	April 2017
Water Resources Commission decision on grant awards	May 2017

Reporting Requirements

What reporting requirements are there for this grant?

Grantees are required to submit progress reports and financial status reports on a quarterly basis. Grantees must also submit a final report of study findings. Copies of those report forms are available at:

[http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water Resources Development Program Forms and Guidance.aspx](http://www.oregon.gov/owrd/Pages/Water_Resources_Development_Program_Forms_and_Guidance.aspx)