Feasibility Grant Applications

Study Summaries – March 2025

Background

Feasibility Study Grants provide funding for project planning studies that evaluate the feasibility of developing a water conservation, reuse, or storage project. A feasibility study is an evaluation of a proposed project or plan and can be used to determine *if* and *how* a project should proceed to the implementation phase. This funding opportunity covers up to 50% of the study cost.

Document Description

The following are study summaries for grant applications received by March 12, 2025 for the current funding cycle. The study summaries are adapted from submitted applications. The application summaries are listed below in alphabetical order.

Next Steps

Feasibility Grant applications are currently being evaluated by the multi-agency Application Review Team (ART). The ART funding recommendations will be posted on the Oregon Water Resources Department's (OWRD) website for a public comment period. OWRD staff will present funding recommendations, and the comments received to the Water Resources Commission at its meeting scheduled for September 11-12. The funding recommendations will be based on the ART recommendations and public comments received. The Commission will then make final funding decisions.

More Information

Additional information about this funding opportunity is available on the program website. If you have questions please contact Grant Analyst, Louisa Mariki, at 503-979-9160 or OWRD.Grants@water.oregon.gov.

List of Applications Received

Study Name	Project Type	County	Funding Requested	Total Cost of Study[1]
Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment	Below ground storage	Multnomah	$157,154	$314,308
Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study	Conservation	Deschutes	$330,000	$660,000
Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study	Conservation	Linn	$248,423	$496,846
Molalla Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasbility Study	Below ground storage	Clackamas	$203,927	$407,854
Natural Aquifer Recharge in the Upper Klamath and Coos/Coquille Basins	Below ground storage	Coos, Curry, Douglas, Klamath, Lake	$100,000	$200,000
		Total	**$1,039,504**	**$2,079,008**

[1]Studies require at least a dollar-for-dollar cost match.

2025 Applications

Corbett Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Reassessment Study

Study Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Corbett Water District

County: Multnomah

Funding Requested: $157,154

Total Project Cost: $314,308

Study Summary: The proposed study would reassess the feasibility of using Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) to develop a supplemental/emergency drinking water source for the Corbett Water District (District). The District currently obtains drinking water exclusively from Gordon Creek, which is vulnerable to low-flow conditions, wildfires, contamination, and other interruptions. ASR is identified in the District's 2023 Water System Master Plan as the preferred option to develop a second water source for the District in the event that its primary water source is temporarily unavailable for use. The feasibility of ASR was previously evaluated through OWRD's 2019 Feasibility Study Grant program which included installation of an ASR test well. Overall findings of the 2019 study indicated that "ASR does not appear feasible." However, subsequent review of the feasibility study by independent experts found that the 2019 ASR test well was not properly constructed and tested rending the majority of hydrogeologic data and findings unusable. Due to these construction issues the potential yield, storage capacity, water quality, geochemical compatibility, and overall feasibility of ASR within the target aquifer is inconclusive at this time.

Deschutes Basin Water Bank Feasibility Study

Study Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Deschutes River Conservancy

County: Deschutes

Funding Requested: $330,000

Total Project Cost: $660,000

Study Summary: The proposed study would examine the development and application of the formalized reallocation of water through voluntary, market-based transactions in the Deschutes River Basin, as facilitated through a basin-specific water bank. Market-based mechanisms, in combination with other practical conservation measures (e.g. piping, on-farm efficiency improvements, turf conversion), can be an effective, economic, and efficient way to move water across users and sectors to meet multiple needs for water. The Deschutes River Conservancy would engage with representatives from the irrigation districts, municipalities, Tribes, environmental interests and others to identify and address barriers, both physical and social/cultural, and help develop information, tools, and communication strategies to support an active and functional water bank for the Basin. Funds from this project would be used for planning, development, and feasibility studies associated with organizing processes, resolving information gaps, and clarifying questions and concerns for potential participants to engage in potential future water bank activity.

Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study

Study Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: Farmers Conservation Alliance
County: Linn

Funding Requested: $248,423

Total Project Cost: $496,845

Study Summary: The Lacomb Irrigation District Water Conservation Study would assess the feasibility of converting approximately 3.5 miles of the Main Canal from an open channel to a buried pipeline and retrofitting their fish screen facility. The study would assess the water savings and technical feasibility of reducing seepage and evaporation losses along the Main Canal and redesigning the fish screen. The goal of the study is to restore instream flows, support agricultural water supply, and improve fish passage. The study would provide 30% designs and cost estimates for future project implementation.

Molalla Aquifer Storage and Recovery Feasibility Study

Study Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: City of Molalla

County: Clackamas

Funding Requested: $203,927

Total Project Cost: $407,854

Study Summary: The proposed study would evaluate the feasibility of using Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) to develop a supplemental/emergency drinking water source for the City of Molalla and enhance the redundancy and resiliency of its water system. The City currently obtains drinking water exclusively from a direct intake on the Molalla River, which is vulnerable to low-flow conditions, harmful algal blooms, seismic events, wildfires, and flooding. The purpose of the proposed ASR Feasibility Study is to: identify potential locations for an ASR system, assess hydrogeologic feasibility, land use compatibility, potential impacts to the environment and existing groundwater users, develop preliminary designs and planning level costs for a new ASR system, outline permitting requirements and timelines, and provide recommended next steps for implementation if ASR is determined to be feasible.

Natural Aquifer Recharge in the Upper Klamath and Coos/Coquille Basins Feasibility Study

Study Information (adapted from application)

Applicant Name: The Nature Conservancy

County: Coos, Curry, Douglas, Klamath, Lake

Funding Requested: $100,000

Total Project Cost: $200,000

Study Summary: The proposed study would evaluate the conditions necessary for implementing natural aquifer recharge projects in the Upper Klamath Basin, the Coos, and Coquille Basins. With surface water resources nearly fully allocated in Oregon during summer, communities are turning to groundwater to fulfill their water supply needs only to recognize the severity of reduced ground water availability. Natural aquifer recharge projects for storing excess runoff and flood flows can benefit surface water-to-groundwater interactions by slowing and spreading water as it moves across the landscape thereby allowing more time for subsurface percolation, aquifer recharge and in many cases, important ecological co-benefits. Despite the geographic separation, social, economic, and environmental differences, these two planning areas share many of the same enabling conditions for aquifer recharge projects. The results of this project would directly inform place-based natural aquifer recharge efforts in these basins while providing a framework for the implementation of similar approaches elsewhere in the state.