

## **Riparian Grant Program proviso language in SSB 5195**

NEW SECTION. Sec. 3081. FOR THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

2025-2027 Voluntary Riparian Grant Program (40000049)

The appropriations in this section are subject to the following conditions and limitations:

(1) The appropriations in this section are provided solely for the state conservation commission to provide grants for riparian restoration projects with landowners.

(2)(a) Within funds appropriated in this section, the commission shall develop and implement the voluntary riparian grant program to fund protection and restoration of critical riparian management zones. The commission is responsible for developing the voluntary grant program criteria to achieve optimal restoration of functioning riparian ecosystems in priority critical riparian management zones.

(b) In adopting the program criteria under this section, the commission must:

- (i) Invite federally recognized tribes to be full participants;
- (ii) Coordinate with private landowners and other interested stakeholders;
- (iii) Coordinate with the department of ecology, the department of fish and wildlife, conservation districts, and the department of agriculture; and
- (iv) Consider the best available, locally applicable science that is specific to each region of the state where the program criteria will be applied.

(3) The commission shall prioritize critical riparian management zones at the watershed or subbasin scale where grant funding under the program created in this section would be primarily targeted. The prioritization must be informed by, consistent with, and aligned with one or more of the following: Watershed plans developed pursuant to chapter 90.82 RCW; the action agenda developed under RCW 90.71.260; regional recovery plans created under RCW 77.85.090; the habitat project lists developed pursuant to RCW 77.85.050; the prioritization process developed under RCW 77.95.160; and priority projects identified for salmon recovery through agency grant programs.

(4) Conditions for awarding funding for projects under this program include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Consistency with the program criteria established under subsection (2) of this section;
- (b) Tiered incentive rates tied to improving functionality for riparian areas; and
- (c) Other requirements as determined by the commission.

(5) The commission must distribute riparian grant program funding equitably throughout the state, consistent with received grant applications and benefit to salmon habitat. Funding is intended primarily for projects located in salmon recovery regions, as defined in RCW 77.85.010, but funding may also be distributed to a project not located in a salmon recovery region upon a determination by the commission that the project will provide a unique benefit to salmon habitat.

(6) Allowable expenses to a grantee receiving funds under this section include, but are not limited to, labor, equipment, fencing, mulch, seed, seedling trees, manual weed control, and yearly maintenance costs for up to 10 years.

(7) Any native woody trees and shrubs planted with funding provided under this section must be maintained for a minimum of five years or as otherwise set by the commission for each grantee. Vegetation must be chosen to prevent invasive weed populations and ensure survival and successful establishment of plantings.

(8) The commission shall determine appropriate recordkeeping and data collections procedures required for program implementation and shall establish a data management system that allows for coordination between the commission and other state agencies. Any data collected or shared under this section may be used only to assess the successes of the riparian grant program in improving the functions of critical riparian habitat.

(9) The commission shall develop and implement a framework that includes monitoring, adaptive management, and metrics in order to ensure consistency with the requirements of the riparian grant program. The monitoring and adaptive management framework may include, but is not limited to, consideration of:

- (a) Acres identified as eligible for restoration within a watershed;
- (b) Acres planned to be restored;
- (c) Acres actually planted and maintained;
- (d) Success in targeting and achieving aggregated project implementation resulting in increase in linear miles restored;
- (e) Plan review criteria; and
- (f) Other similar factors as identified by the commission.

(10) The commission may use up to two percent of any amounts appropriated in this section for targeted outreach activities that focus on critically identified geographic locations for listed salmon species.

(11) The commission may use up to four percent of amounts appropriated in this section for administrative expenses.

(12) For the purposes of this section, "critical riparian management zone" means the area adjacent to freshwaters, wetlands, and marine waters that has been locally or regionally identified as an area where salmon recovery efforts would significantly benefit from enhanced protection or restoration.

(13) The state building construction account—state appropriation in this section is subject to the provisions of section 8018 of this act.

Appropriation:

Natural Climate Solutions Account—State. . . . .	\$20,000,000
State Building Construction Account—State. . . . .	\$5,000,000
Subtotal Appropriation. . . . .	\$25,000,000

Prior Biennia (Expenditures) . . . . .	\$0
Future Biennia (Projected Costs) . . . . .	\$100,000,000
TOTAL . . . . .	\$125,000,000