



# *Riparian Grant Program*

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### **2025 – 2027 Mid-Biennium Funding Opportunity**

*This document will be updated weekly during the application period, May 8 – June 5, 2026.*

Questions related to the application must be submitted by email, directed to:  
Margaret McKeown, Riparian Grant Program Manager  
[mmckeown@scc.wa.gov](mailto:mmckeown@scc.wa.gov)

**Q: I am working on preparing the budget for a District Implemented Project (DIP) that we plan to submit for funding in the upcoming application cycle. Since this will be a relatively small project, I believe we already have sufficient funding for maintenance of this site from previous awards. Could we spend funds from the outcomes we already have for maintenance of this project rather than applying for additional maintenance funding?**

A: Yes. SCC has flexibility to add maintenance of an existing restoration site that was not originally included in a funding award through an email approval process. Once your DIP is complete, you may request to add maintenance for the site using existing maintenance funds. The request should include updated maintenance metrics for the additional site. For this interim funding round, activities needed during the first year of a new restoration project to ensure plant survival, such as watering and replanting, may also be included directly in the project funding request.

**Q: Can we run our knotweed control and maintenance activities through a District Implemented Project (DIP) style approach?**

A: Yes. Maintenance activities, including knotweed and other invasive species control, may be implemented directly by the conservation district in a manner similar to District Implemented Projects (DIPs). If the district is implementing the work directly (rather than using a cost-share approach), maintenance activities do not need to be entered into the [Conservation Practice Data System](#) (CPDS). Instead, applicants will report outcomes using the [maintenance metrics template](#) and final grant report. Landowner agreements are still required and should include the permissions and commitments outlined in the [RGP Guidelines](#) and [SCC Grants & Contracts Manual](#).

**Q: Are cultural resource surveys included in the RGP technical assistance (TA) funding section?**

A: No. Funding for cultural resource surveys is set aside separately and should not be included in the budget for this interim funding round.

**Q: We are partnering on early project development activities to get a project “shovel ready,” and some of that work may include cultural resources. Should we include only our project development time in the application? How do we request reimbursement for cultural resource costs?**

A: Include eligible project development costs, such as planning and coordination, in your Track 3 (Project Development) budget. Cultural resource survey costs should not be included in the application budget. Instead, once those costs are incurred, they may be submitted on a voucher as a separate line item. SCC will amend the award to reimburse eligible cultural resource costs. If a partner’s contract includes both cultural resource work and other project development tasks, identify those costs separately when vouchering.

**Q: How should salaries, benefits, and overhead be included in the budget template? Would listing them under both Best Management Practice (BMP) costs and technical assistance (TA)/project administration result in double counting?**

A: On-the-ground staff costs associated with implementing or maintaining a project site, such as crew salaries, benefits, and overhead, should be included within the cost of the applicable BMP. TA/project administration costs should include staff time associated with coordinating the project, such as ordering materials, processing timesheets, preparing vouchers, and coordinating with landowners or partners. When these two categories are used as intended, costs should not be duplicated.

**Q: Is there a desired format for buffer width exception requests?**

A: No formal template is required. Applicants may provide a narrative description within the application explaining the site conditions that warrant a buffer width exception. Please refer to the [RGP Guidelines](#) for riparian buffer standards and requirements.

**Q: I submitted my application but did not see a place to upload maps or the DIP metrics spreadsheet. Am I missing something?**

A: For Track 3: Project Development, a DIP metrics spreadsheet is not required because projects may be at various stages of planning.

For Track 1: Project Implementation, if funding is requested for District Implemented Projects (DIPs), an upload field for the DIP metrics spreadsheet will appear in the application. Use either the [DIP metrics template](#) or [CPDS](#) to report planned metrics.

SCC has updated the application to allow applicants to upload supplemental materials, including maps and metrics spreadsheets, using the same upload section used for Climate Commitment Act Tribal notification documentation.

**Q: I’m planning a riparian restoration project with interested landowners, and they are considering incorporating agroforestry practices within portions of the restoration area. Construction would not occur until 2028 at the earliest, but I’m trying to think ahead.**

**Would practices such as high-density native alder plantings managed for future mushroom production, native elderberry plantings for small-scale harvest, or mixed plantings that include both native riparian species and non-native horticultural trees potentially be eligible under the Riparian Grant Program?**

A: Currently, multi-story cropping (forest farming, BMP 379) is an eligible practice under the Riparian Grant Program. Other practices not specifically listed in RGP's eligible BMPs may also be considered if they demonstrate a direct restoration benefit within a critical riparian management zone. All proposed practices must be designed to maintain and protect riparian function over the lifespan of the project. Harvest activities should not compromise the long-term restoration objectives of the site.

As you work with landowners on restoration designs, consider the following questions:

- What riparian functions or resource concerns are being addressed?
- Do the proposed practices support optimal restoration outcomes for salmon recovery?
- How will riparian function be protected during and after harvest activities?
- If non-native species are proposed, are they climate-adapted and compatible with long-term riparian restoration goals?

Eligibility is evaluated based on the specific project design and how well the proposed activities align with RGP Guidelines and program objectives. Early coordination with SCC staff is encouraged when considering innovative or non-traditional restoration approaches