



OWEB 2020 Post-Fire Recovery Grant Program – OVERVIEW AND GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Introduction

During the 2021 Oregon Legislative Session, OWEB received funding to provide grants to support natural resource recovery in areas impacted during the 2020 fire season. These grants are supported by General Funds and have an explicit Legislative intent, per House Bill 5006 (2021). Funding was provided to support on-the-ground implementation activities focusing on ***upland and riparian replanting and floodplain restoration***.

Program Structure

For additional information about eligible applicants, eligible costs, and budget development, refer to OWEB's GoBig document for OWEB Post-Fire Recovery Grants at <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/Documents/Post-fire-recovery-GoBig.pdf>.

Eligible geographies for this program are the 14 fire impacted areas listed below. The legislative intent for this funding prioritizes work on non-federal lands (i.e., private, state, and tribal lands).

- 242 Fire
- Almeda Fire
- Archie Creek Fire
- Beachie Creek Fire
- Brattain Fire
- Echo Mountain Complex Fire
- Indian Creek
- Lionshead Fire
- Riverside Fire
- Slater Fire
- South Obenchain Fire
- Thielsen
- White River Fire
- *(Holiday Farm Fire is **not** eligible during the first grant cycle, at a minimum, due to pass-through funding provided to Eugene Water and Electric Board)*

For **2020 Post-fire Upland and Riparian Replanting** grants, applicants must demonstrate how proposed areas for natural resources recovery work have been identified and prioritized for restoration actions in assessments and/or analyses to address priority erosion and water quality concerns for drinking water supplies, source water areas, and important aquatic habitat. Examples of assessments and analyses with this information include: data layers from Oregon Departments of Environmental Quality and Forestry; Erosion Threat Assessment/Reduction Team (ETART) reports; federal Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) and Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) assessments; and locally conducted assessments.

- Eligible activities include restoration of riparian and upland areas via replanting. Comprehensive replanting projects—including site preparation, planting, and plant stewardship—are eligible for this grant offering. Project design is an allowable activity within grants for comprehensive planting projects. Treatment of invasive species is allowable if it is a component of site preparation for and/or plant stewardship following restoration planting. Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) or stand-alone treatment of invasive species IS NOT an eligible activity. Modest costs for exclusion fencing are eligible under this grant offering. However, the applicant must clearly describe why the use of exclusion fencing is

necessary to ensure the success of replanting activities, and provide details about the exclusion fencing (e.g., length, height, specifications).

For **2020 Post-fire Floodplain Restoration** grants, applicants must demonstrate how proposed areas for natural resources recovery work have been identified and prioritized for floodplain restoration and reconnection actions in assessments and/or analyses to re-establish hydrologic and ecological functions to address water-quality concerns and reduce flood risk. Examples of assessments and analyses with this information include: data layers from Oregon Departments of Environmental Quality and Forestry; Erosion Threat Assessment/Reduction Team (ETART) reports; federal Burned Area Emergency Response (BAER) and Emergency Stabilization and Rehabilitation (ES&R) assessments; and locally conducted assessments.

- Eligible activities include floodplain restoration and reconnection activities, as noted above. Projects should be focused on implementation of floodplain restoration and reconnection projects. Late-stage project design is an eligible activity if paired with implementation of a floodplain project as part of the proposed work. Replanting under the floodplain restoration offering is allowed only following eligible floodplain restoration and reconnection activities as listed in the grant application. If replanting is occurring following eligible floodplain restoration and reconnection activities, modest costs for exclusion fencing are eligible under this grant offering. However, the applicant must clearly describe why the use of exclusion fencing is necessary to ensure the success of replanting activities, and provide details about the exclusion fencing (e.g., length, height, specifications). Treatment of invasive species is allowable if it is a component of site preparation for and/or plant stewardship following restoration planting. Early detection and rapid response (EDRR) or stand-alone treatment of invasive species IS NOT an eligible activity.

Applicants must demonstrate capacity to plan and implement successful restoration actions at scale and over a relatively short timeframe (i.e., potentially as few as 15 months and as long as 3 years).

A 25% match (cash and/or in-kind contributions) is encouraged. However, applications with less than 25% match will be accepted.

Grant Cycles and Grant-Making Considerations

The Post-Fire Recovery Grant Program application cycles will be timed as follows, with award decisions to be made within approximately 6 weeks following the application deadline:

- The first grant cycle will open in early November 2021, with a deadline of 5 p.m. on January 31, 2022.
- The second grant cycle open in early April 2022, with a deadline of 5 p.m. on May 31, 2022. (If funding remains available, a third grant cycle will open in early August 2022 and close in late August 2022.)

OWEB strongly recommends that applicants submit their grant applications at least 24 hours prior to the application deadline. OWEB's online grant applications include a verification step that will flag missing and incomplete information in the application. Verifying and submitting your grant application at least 24 hours in advance allows time for applicants to correct errors that are found during verification. **All applications must be successfully submitted through OWEB's online grant application system by 5 p.m. on the application deadline. No exceptions will be made.**

The OWEB 2020 Post-Fire Recovery Grant Program recognizes the broad geographic scale of impacts from the 2020 fire season. However, equal distribution of funding may not occur across fire impacted areas, given differences in the scale and severity of impacts to natural resources, the Legislative intent of the program funding, and other considerations.

The funding source for this program is General Funds provided during the 2021 Legislative Session. These funds typically have a 2-year lifespan. While OWEB will request authority from the Oregon Legislature to extend the

lifespan for these funds, all funding must be obligated during the 2021-23 biennium. During this biennium, grantees must be able to demonstrate meaningful progress on implementation of activities and expenditure of the funding.

OWEB's 2020 Post-Fire Recovery Grants cannot be applied to costs for activities that are required under existing regulations, such as the Oregon Forest Practices Act (FPA).

The expectation is that local partners coordinate activities to leverage strengths and maximize efficiency and effectiveness of on-the-ground work. To the extent possible, local partners should incorporate their collective activities into a single, comprehensive grant application that targets high-priority natural resources recovery actions.

Applicants should carefully review all guidance and information (including iButtons) in the online grant applications. This review will help applicants confirm before submission of their application that all questions are answered completely, based on the guidelines included in the application, and all required uploads are provided.

In addition to project completion reporting, grantees under this program will be required to complete quarterly billing and reporting for grants.

Grant Program Evaluation Process

Evaluation of grant applications will be based upon the [OWEB Restoration Grants](#) evaluation criteria. Within that evaluation framework, grant applications will be assessed on the following:

- Demonstrated need for the proposed restoration activities per post-fire recovery priorities identified in assessments.
- For **replanting** projects: expected benefit(s) from the project in addressing 1) soil-stabilization needs, 2) water-quality concerns for drinking water supplies and source-water areas, and 3) water-quality concerns for important aquatic habitat.
- For **floodplain restoration** projects: expected benefit(s) from the project in addressing 1) soil-stabilization needs, 2) water-quality concerns for drinking water supplies and source-water areas, 3) water-quality concerns for important aquatic habitat, and 4) post-fire flood risks.
- Organizational capacity to successfully implement the proposed project during a limited timeframe.
- Demonstrated coordination among local partners working in the fire affected area.
- Coordination with federally recognized Tribes.

Finally, consideration will be given to applicants' responses to questions about equity and climate.

Grant applications will be reviewed by a statewide team comprising agency staff who are knowledgeable about natural resources impacts and recovery needs associated with the 2020 fire season, and who have experience with organizational capacity, coordination, and partnership considerations related to planning and implementation of successful restoration projects and programs. This team will coordinate with agency representatives in the fire affected areas to ensure understanding of local recovery needs.

Additional Resources for Applicants

For additional information about applying for OWEB grants, see OWEB's Online Application Guidance at <https://apps.wrd.state.or.us/apps/oweb/oa/Images/Online%20Application%20GuidanceV3.4.pdf>. While not specific to the 2020 Post-Fire Recovery Grant Program, this general guidance may provide helpful tips.

For information about grant budgets, getting access to OWEB's Grant Management System, understanding insurance requirements, or using OWEB's online applications, see the video resources at <https://www.oregon.gov/oweb/manage-grant/Pages/videos-training.aspx>.

For technical expertise:

- About water quality considerations for source water areas and public water supplies, contact Joshua Seeds, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality, joshua.seeds@deg.state.or.us or 503-887-7273
- About post-fire replanting considerations, contact Nate Agalzoff, Oregon Department of Forestry, nathan.v.agalzoff@oregon.gov or 503-536-3348

For information about potential water-quality impacts, along with other post-fire impacts, see the [OSU Extension Fire Program's 'After the Wildfire' Wildfire Map tool](#).

For eligibility questions, or other questions about OWEB's 2020 Post-Fire Recovery Grant Program, please contact Renee Davis, renee.davis@oregon.gov or 971-345-7231.