



# Public Conservation Assistance Fund Application Rules & Guidelines

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Thank you for your interest in PCAF!

The Public Conservation Assistance Fund (PCAF) is a granting program offered by the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation that provides small grants to organizations and individuals who have a conservation project in mind but need financial help to make it happen. We welcome the opportunity to help carry out conservation work in your community!

**The application deadline for the 2021-22 PCAF intake is May 14, 2021 at 4:30 pm PST.**

**Mandatory!** A support letter from your regional Provincial fish and wildlife biologist (*i.e., Ministry of Environment (MOE) or Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations*) or other appropriate land manager (*i.e., federal or First Nations land*) is required with your PCAF application. Without this letter your application will not be considered.

**Apply before you start your project!** PCAF does **not** fund work that has already started on a project, that is, we will **not** fund proposals or project activities retroactively.

This document intends to provide additional information about:

- 1) [Eligibility](#)
- 2) [Funding requirements](#)
- 3) [Project reporting](#)
- 4) [Project administration](#)

## 1. Eligibility

PCAF proposals must align with HCTF's trust purposes as described in the *Wildlife Act*. PCAF projects must focus on activities that maintain, conserve, or restore native (indigenous) fish and wildlife species and their habitats. Projects that have long-range benefits, involve many volunteers, offer opportunities for organizational capacity building, raise community awareness and that are involved in conservation are preferred.

Some examples of PCAF projects and activities that we have funded include:

- building and installing bird next boxes
- planting shrubs
- tagging / monitoring animals
- restoring riparian areas
- restoring grasslands



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- building waterfowl nesting floats and boxes
- fencing to protect sensitive or restored areas
- improving habitat for freshwater fishes
- replanting forage species for ungulates to improve winter range

Some types of projects or activities are **ineligible** for PCAF funding, including but not limited to:

- Lecture series or conventions
- Photographic or film documentaries
- Promotion of business opportunities
- Activities required for ongoing maintenance
- Payment of wages (except for contracted equipment or special expertise required in the field, e.g., a biologist, restoration specialist, etc.). See table below for more information on special expertise.
- Vehicle mileage (Note that fuel costs can be covered)
- Salmon-only or marine projects that do not demonstrate clear benefits to freshwater species or their habitats
- Administrative costs (ex. rent, utilities, etc.)
- Hatchery activities
- Design costs for newsletters and websites (printing costs for newsletters are eligible)
- Routine courses such as First Aid, Small Vessel Operation, etc.

Other considerations:

Paying for special expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please include justification for any expert costs and time (i.e. explain what they will be doing and why they are essential to deliver the project). Preference will be given to projects where no more than 25% of the total PCAF request is going to a single expert (multiple experts may be acceptable with sufficient rationale). Note that regular wages for project coordinators are not eligible for PCAF funding.</li> </ul>
Restoration Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Please use only native plant species.</li> </ul>
Projects on Private Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With the exception of non-profit conservation organizations, landowners are <b>not</b> eligible to submit applications for work on their own lands.</li> <li>• Proposals for projects on private land must demonstrate long-term community conservation benefits (e.g., how will the restored habitat be protected in the event the property is sold).</li> <li>• If your project involves work on private land, you must submit written permission from the landowner.</li> <li>• You should also contact the local First Nations band for any interests or claims on the land where you are proposing to work.</li> </ul>



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<b>Research and Inventory type projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal must describe how the project applies to the conservation of fish, wildlife, and their habitats.</li> <li>• Proposals focused on research, inventory, or other similar type of project must explain how the results will be used to inform a specific conservation issue and solve a conservation problem.</li> <li>• Make sure you use standard inventory techniques; check with the provincial fish and wildlife staff to ensure data collected will be useful and is shared in appropriate formats. Experimental techniques may be considered.</li> </ul>
<b>Allowable recreation projects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects with the main purpose of providing public use should direct human activity in such a way as to 1) minimize environmental damage, and 2) promote access for legitimate use (fishing and wildlife viewing access, etc.).</li> <li>• Such projects must clearly demonstrate either direct conservation benefits or increased public awareness and minimize disturbance.</li> </ul>
<b>Allowable communications projects – public awareness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication products must be part of the specific PCAF project, or the conservation issue the project addresses. This may include signs, brochures, and pamphlets.</li> <li>• Costs for design of newsletters or websites are not eligible for funding.</li> </ul>
<b>Wildlife rehabilitation centers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A one-time only grant not exceeding \$5000 may be given to wildlife rehabilitation centers towards startup costs.</li> <li>• PCAF does not fund feed, veterinarian services and/or the purchase of medicine.</li> </ul>
<b>PCAF proposals overlapping with HCTF (Enhancement &amp; Restoration Grant) projects</b>	<p>In some cases, PCAF proposals may be associated with another HCTF project to the benefit of both projects. Please ensure the following conditions are met:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PCAF project must be a separate volunteer component that adds value to the other HCTF project.</li> <li>• The applicant must fully describe how PCAF activities relate to the HCTF project.</li> <li>• You cannot apply for PCAF activities or materials that have been funded by another HCTF project (i.e., no duplicate funding).</li> <li>• Staff time and equipment paid for by an HCTF project cannot be claimed as in-kind donations in the PCAF budget, nor can HCTF funds.</li> <li>• PCAF funds must be used only to support work carried out by volunteers.</li> </ul>

## 2. Funding Requirements

In general, applicants may apply for a **maximum of \$10,000 in any one year**. Grant Funds may only be used on the approved project. Once approved, you have up to five (5) years to use the grant money that has been awarded to your project. Upon completion of the project, a final report to HCTF is required. Any unspent funds must also be returned.

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If you intend to apply for more funding in future years, or if you know you have a multiyear project, you must complete a new application each year and submit a progress report that outlines expenditures and activities completed to date. The **maximum funding for a multi-year project is \$20,000 over the lifespan of the project.**

### Matching funds

Unlike other HCTF granting streams, PCAF requires a 1:1 match in that your contribution must be

#### Figure 1:

To be eligible for PCAF, at **least half (50%) of your matching funds MUST come from the volunteer labour.**

The example below shows that half of the matching funds coming from Volunteer labour. However, volunteer labour may amount to greater than half the matching funds.



equivalent to your funding request (*Refer to Figure 1*). In addition, at least 50% of the match must be in volunteer labour.

Your PCAF budget should clearly indicate what you will contribute and what you are asking PCAF to fund.

**At least half of your matching funds must be made up of volunteer labour.** Volunteer labour is calculated at \$15/hour. Your remaining contribution may be in the form of allowable donations made to your project. For example, this may include:

1. The **value of donated labour** - For example, if a consultant or equipment operator donates a day's worth of services to your project, you may claim that day's wage as a financial contribution.
2. The **value of donated materials or equipment (donated shovels, soil, wheelbarrows)**
3. **Cash donations.**
  - Cash donations may include community fundraising or club donations.
  - Note that grants received for the project from other funding agencies are **NOT** an allowable donation as part of your matching funding contribution.



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As PCAF is based on volunteer involvement, it is important for us to know what actual activities your volunteers will be doing for the hours you have indicated. Please be specific. Where possible, indicate the activity and the volunteer hours required to complete the work; you may want to use a table showing different activities and estimated volunteer hours for each one.

- For example: Volunteer planting activities:  
10 volunteers for 5 days (6-hr each) at \$15/hr = 10 x 30 x \$15 = \$4,500

## 3. Project Reporting

A report on your Public Conservation Assistance Fund project is required for all approved projects. Note that the cost of this report (photos, duplication, etc.) should be included in your initial budget.

### Progress reports

If you intend to apply for additional funds to support a multi-year project, you must submit a progress report with your new PCAF application by the deadline. Your progress report should include a statement of expenditure and outline what activities have been completed to date.

### Final reports

PCAF funds must be used within five years of approval, and any unused funds must be returned within sixty (60) days of completion, termination, or expiration of the allowable term. Upon completion of your project, a final report is required.

Download the **PCAF Report Form** from our website and indicate if this is a final report or a progress report. Don't forget to include any high-resolution photos documenting your project, news clippings, etc. as these are useful for displays, presentations and other public relations activities. We may share your story as inspiration for others!

Once complete, you can email your report and any attachments to [reporting@hctf.ca](mailto:reporting@hctf.ca) or mail it to:

Public Conservation Assistance Fund  
#102 – 2957 Jutland Road  
Victoria, BC  
V8T 5J9



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## 4. Project Administration

### Mandatory Letter of Support

A mandatory letter of support (email is also accepted) **must** be submitted with your PCAF application.

If your project is on *federal owned/controlled land*, a letter of support from the Federal government is required. For example, if you are working on a military base, this would come from the Department of Defense, or if you are on an area such as Alaksen or Little Qualicum estuary, a letter should come from Canadian Wildlife Service or Environment Canada Climate Change.

If your project is on *First Nations land*, a letter of support from the Band Council is required. For all other projects, please ensure you have contacted the appropriate regional fish and wildlife staff about your project. The most appropriate regional fish and wildlife biologist may work for either the Ministry of Environment (MOE) or the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO). It is recommended that you contact these individuals early, i.e., during the planning phase of your project.

Use the following links to locate provincial fish and wildlife biologists in your region:

MOE regional operations directory:	Click on the regional office for your area to find the fish or wildlife staff who can help advise you: <a href="https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/land/regional-environment-contacts">https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/land/regional-environment-contacts</a>
FLNRO Regional offices list:	<a href="http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/offices.html">www.env.gov.bc.ca/fw/offices.html</a>
BC Government Directory:	<a href="https://dir.gov.bc.ca/">https://dir.gov.bc.ca/</a>

### Other Project Considerations

1. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all authorization documents, licenses, and permits are obtained before commencing work.
  - For example, if your project involves working near or on the water then work must meet the requirements of the Water Sustainability Regulation and comply with any conditions set out by a habitat officer in response to a notification. You must submit your notification of proposed work to [FrontCounter BC](#) a minimum of 45 days before beginning work (submitting more than 45 days ahead of time is recommended).



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You may also require approval from various government ministries:

- Ministry of Environment or Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources Operations if the project involves stream bank or stream bed or flow alterations, handling of fish and wildlife, or working on timbered Crown land.
  - Federal Fisheries and Oceans Canada if ocean-going fish or marine environment are involved.
  - Ministry of Transportation if access, roadside habitat improvement or other developments near highways are involved.
2. Any employees, volunteers or agents working on the Project must be competent, properly trained and instructed, and exercise a standard of care as required to undertake and successfully complete the Project.
  3. You must ensure that all health and safety standards are met.

**If you have additional questions, please contact the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation directly.**

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