



Technical Assessment of Your Fish & Wildlife Grant Proposal

Review Criteria At-a-Glance

Process

Each application for a New or New Phase project undergoes a primary comprehensive review, and all applications (including continuing ones) are reviewed and discussed by a technical review committee (TRC) at arm's length. The TRC evaluates whether proposals are technically sound, feasible, and reasonable in terms of request and timeline, and whether they align with HCTF trust purposes. At the technical committee meeting, members discuss their own comments and the Primary Review assessment, and then the final score, rank, recommendation, and comments for each proposal are determined by consensus. The Board considers the scores and recommendations from the Technical Review Committee to make funding decisions.

Common TRC concerns include:

- “There were insufficient technical details to assess the technical merit of the proposed works.”
- “The TRC was challenged in evaluating the direct conservation outcomes of this work.”
- “The budget was inconsistent and lacking details, and costs were high overall.”
- “The TRC found the project scale to be broad in focus, leaving the specific conservation issue(s) not well articulated.”
- “The proposal is unclear on details, timing, and quantifiable measures of success, which made it challenging to determine whether an effective outcome would result.”
- “The TRC was concerned this conservation work is a long-term investment or program with no end-point insight or other long-term funders.”

The key criteria the TRC uses to assess a proposal are:

Project Effectiveness

- Does the application clearly articulate the conservation threat or challenge?
- How well is the management or conservation issue understood?
- Is the need for the project supported by facts, statistics, or other published reports?
- Does the application explain the expected benefits to fish and wildlife and their habitats and how the results will be used to inform clear management or conservation outcomes?
- Will project outcomes have far-reaching implications or benefits that extend beyond a limited or isolated scope?

Project Objectives

- Are the project objectives clearly defined?
- Are the objectives related to the conservation challenge?

- How realistic and attainable are the project objectives?

Activities/Methodologies

- Does the proposal contain sufficient technical detail explaining the specific methodologies for each objective?
- How well do the activities and methodologies relate to the objective(s)?
- Does the proposal cite pertinent scientific literature? If not, or if there are data gaps, how are other forms of knowledge considered?
- Is the timeline of activities clear and realistic?
- How well are proposed activities and methodologies rationalized as feasible and appropriate for the issue being investigated?
- Are the proposed Measures of Success specific and quantifiable?

Evaluation/Measures of Success

- How clearly does the proposal provide a plan for evaluating success?
- Are the measures of success/targets well explained?
- Does the proposal include specific targets for each Measure of Success?

Benefits/Risks

- Does the proposal clearly explain the expected benefits to fish, wildlife or their habitat?
- How well does the proposal explain any larger ecosystem benefits that may occur?
- How well are the potential positive and negative impacts of the project explained?

Benefit/Cost

- Is the proposed work cost-effective (i.e., is there value for money?)
- How realistic is the project budget and/or in-kind rates?
- Is the budget information sufficiently detailed?
- Are individual/day rates reasonable and adequately broken down?
- Is there sufficient partner funding in place and/or other partners contributing in-kind support?

Additional Technical Merits/Potential Shortcomings of a Project

- What is the probability that the lead proponent(s) and their partners will be capable of carrying out the proposed work?
- If applicable, how well does the proposal describe public support and/or opposition for the project?
- Does the proposal provide a realistic and achievable timeline to secure appropriate permits or authorizations?
- Does the proposal align well with Provincial management or conservation priorities?
- Are there sufficient and appropriate letters of support?

Additional recommended checklist for applications

Compare the budget table activities and total to the application worksheet and ensure they align	√
Provide an itemized budget showing the description, rate, quantity, and cost calculation for each expense rather than lump sum amounts	√
Partner organizations and additional funding partners listed in the application are also listed in the budget spreadsheet	√
Technical details and methodology are stated in the application – do not rely on attached documents to convey critical details	√
Maps have good image resolution, proper titles, legends, and scales necessary to depict the area(s) discussed in the application	√
Existing available data/research/methods have been considered and references made to existing works (including collaboration with others doing this work, explained)	√
The literature cited is current/relevant and accurate	√
Remove redundancy, copy and paste errors, or wordiness in the application	√