



PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION FUND

2021 Information for Applicants

1.0 Background Information on the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund

The Prince Edward Island Wildlife Conservation Fund (PEI WCF) was created in 1998 to provide funding for the protection and enhancement of wildlife and wildlife habitats. Money for the Fund originally came from a contribution made once per year by each PEI licensed angler, hunter and trapper. As of December 2014, the Fund began receiving income from a second source: the sale of Conservation Plates for PEI vehicle licenses. Sales of the Conservation Plates began in September 2013. One hundred percent of these two revenue streams go to PEI WCF.

The PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund is overseen by a Committee of 11 persons:

- ✓ 3 representatives from the hunting community,
- ✓ 3 representatives from the angling community,
- ✓ 1 representative from the trapping community,
- ✓ 1 representative from community watershed groups,
- ✓ 1 representative from non-consumptive users,
- ✓ 1 representative of biodiversity,
- ✓ 1 representative from the PEI Department of Communities, Land and Environment.

Representatives are nominated by the public or organizations; selection of members is by a vote of sitting Committee members in January. Committee terms are for 3 years and two back-to-back 3-year terms are permissible. Terms are staggered so there are experienced and new members sitting at any given time.

2.0 Process for Evaluation of Applications

Applications are reviewed by the Committee in two annual funding rounds, one in the spring (February) and one in the fall (October). Projects are evaluated based in part on the following:

- **Projects must demonstrate benefit to Island wildlife and wildlife habitat**
- Preference will be given to **project-based** applications with well-defined, targeted goals over general watershed management applications. The Wildlife Conservation Fund is not a second watershed management fund (see section 1.0), but it will award funds in the habitat category to targeted, strategic restoration activities that benefit wildlife
- Projects should be clearly achievable within the reporting period
- Project outcomes for wildlife are given greater weight than the level of partner support. However, the applicant should show that the project has support from the local community(s) or partners
- The track record of the proponent is an important consideration in the evaluation of applications. Track records are defined based on tracking notes of previous WCF projects from the group, using criteria related to timeliness of reporting, adherence to approved project goals and budgets, adherence to WCF award conditions and success rates in achieving the original project goals
- The project must demonstrate a need for the funds requested
- The PEI WCF Committee may solicit outside expertise as needed when evaluating proposals

Applications must be complete! All sub-sections must be filled in and budget estimates provided in full, including identification of project partners, matching cash and in-kind values even if they have not yet been confirmed. Incomplete applications will not be forwarded to the Committee for evaluation.

Groups whose 2020 final reports were more than two weeks late are not eligible to apply in 2021. Further, groups receiving funds in 2019 or earlier who did not submit a final report are not eligible to apply until their reports are submitted or funds returned.

The WCF Committee does not have advance knowledge of the size of the funding pool that is available for awards each year. Therefore, it will not consider multi-year proposals except for research projects. Monitoring (including stream assessments) does not constitute research. Research applications must present a compelling rationale for the need for a multi-year commitment to achieve the research project goals. For research projects, applicants must additionally attach the hypothesis, methodology, and a description of any practical applications resulting from the research.

3.0 Application Guidance, Section-by-Section

Section 1, Applicant Information:

Please ensure that the contact person and address are ones that will be retained throughout the reporting period. In particular, award letters, contracts and cheques are mailed out; if contacts are for organization volunteers (board members, etc.), be mindful that all communication to the group will use the information provided in this section and it should remain accurate for the full award period.

The PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund invites applications from non-profit organizations. For-profit organizations may be a partner on the project, but they cannot apply to the fund directly.

Section 2, Project Description:

Applicants should choose only one of the categories listed in section 2.2 that best reflects their project: habitat restoration / enhancement, natural areas, education, research / monitoring or other. If your project spans many categories in its key goals, this may indicate that it is not achieving the targeted outcomes for wildlife that are given priority for WCF awards. Please supplement with a map if the project will be taking place in specific locations.

Work activities must be achievable in the reporting period for WCF. For the spring round, work could potentially be undertaken between April 1 and December 31. For the fall round, work could potentially be undertaken between late October and March 31 of the following calendar year.

The benefit to wildlife should be clearly stated in section 2.4. Identify where the work is improving specific ecosystems or species' habitats. If the focus of the work is public engagement, identify the target audience and the key message you're proposing to convey about the value of wildlife.

In section 2.5, please identify the purpose for the project in one (brief) sentence, and then identify the project goals. Each goal should be broadly stated (e.g., diversify the forest canopy and shrub understory along the Little Trout River); the detailed activities you have planned to achieve that goal can then be listed in the following section 2.6 table (e.g., plant 450 native trees and shrubs in the section of the Little Trout River between x and y locations). You will be asked to restate your goals in your final report so be sure that they are achievable within the reporting period.

In section 2.6, the anticipated result of your activity should include some concrete measure, for instance the target number of participants in engagement activities or a linear distance or area of land to be restored. If you cannot apply a target measure to your proposed outcome, consider whether it may be too broad or undefined for this fund. PLEASE NOTE; if your project requires a special permit for construction or repair of infrastructure (bridges, impoundments, fishways or other wildlife structures) you will need to show that a permit is in place for the work at the time of application to WCF.

If the group is participating in an activity but is not the lead for it, please do not include it in the project description. It is possible that the lead organization is also applying to this fund for that activity and funds cannot be awarded twice for the same work. If you wish to demonstrate your level of collaboration with like-minded partner organizations, please do so in section 1.1. The Committee only wants to see activities in section 2 that are led by your organization.

The income for this fund is all generated by Islanders who purchase an angling, hunting or trapping license or a vehicle Conservation Plate. The Committee wants to see that you have a plan to inform those supporters about where their money is being spent and on what. While the PEI Wildlife Conservation Fund now has their own website, the applicants will know best what communication strategies will be most effective in reaching that audience of supporters. One or two Facebook posts does not constitute a communications strategy. If you feel your best strategy is talking to your community face-to-face about your project and how you resourced it, then indicate that in section 2.7. The only caveat here is that you should be able to measure your effort in some way (# community presentations, # community events attended, # people spoken to, etc.).

Section 3, Project Budget:

The PEI WCF requires a detailed estimate of expenses associated with the proposed project. Where there is insufficient level of detail for the Committee to evaluate the expense, they are unlikely to award funds for that expense.

Applicants may choose to fill out a financial table in the Word application file OR fill out a separate financial Excel spreadsheet, a template for which will be made available along with the application form. The template uses built-in formulas that automatically calculate category sums as you go.

When reporting on partner support, it should be identified as either cash or in-kind. If the applicant is receiving money from a source outside of their organization (government, private landowners, corporate sponsors, etc.) that is considered cash support. If the applicant is receiving goods (e.g., trees, nest boxes, etc.) or services (e.g., bulldozer time, volunteer time, printing services, etc.) at no cost, that is considered in-kind support.

Labour:

Wages for project workers are eligible for WCF support. Applicants that have access to the provincial Watershed Management Fund (WMF) are subject to some restrictions. Applicants that do not have access to the WMF may ask for and receive greater wage support where it is integral to project delivery; they must, however, make a strong argument for its importance in achieving outcomes for wildlife.

Ineligible wage-related expenses are:

- watershed managers and administrators are ineligible for WCF support, regardless of their title (coordinator, manager, executive director, etc.)
- Mandatory employment-related costs (MERCs: CPP, EI, WCB, vacation pay) and benefits (health, pension, etc.) are ineligible for WCF support but they should be reported in the cash support column (paid with funds from project partners)
- WCF will not support full wages for any position over the duration of the project

Watershed groups can apply for wage top-ups above minimum wage at the following rates:

- For field supervisors and chainsaw operators, wages may be topped up to a maximum of \$6 per employee using WCF funds
- For general laborers and field technicians, wages may be topped up to a maximum of \$3 per employee using WCF funds

These top-ups are to gross wages only and cannot include vacation pay. As stated, MERCs are no longer an eligible WCF expense. Further top-up of these employee's wages using other funding sources is permissible and at the discretion of the applicant.

PLEASE NOTE: the minimum wage is scheduled to rise to \$13 per hour April 1st 2021 in PEI. Therefore, a watershed employer wishing to access \$6 per hour top-up for an employee should be budgeting in their application for a wage rate of \$19 per hour for that employee (as an example).

Wage rates must be clearly outlined in the budget table descriptions, including hourly wage, number of weeks, hours per week and job title.

Materials & Supplies:

This section should include only those items that are integral to the delivery of project outcomes. It includes goods but not services; using a sediment trap excavation as an example, costs associated with materials like rock and straw would be listed in this section, but the excavator hire would be listed in the following section “Professional and Contractor Services”. The applicant must identify items, the number needed and the unit cost. Listing “field supplies” as a budget item is not a sufficient level of detail for the Committee to evaluate the merit of the expense.

PLEASE NOTE: Groups that are GST- or HST-registered will be asked to back out reimbursable taxes from goods and services expenses when reporting.

For applicants who are accessing plant material through the provincial Greening Spaces program, the nominal fee charged for trees and shrubs is eligible for WCF support. However, WCF will not consider expenses associated with trees and shrubs distributed at community events or otherwise destined for lands not integral to the project. Final reporting will require location-specific numbers planted and monitored. The in-kind contribution from the Frank Gaudet Nursery for 1-gallon trees and shrubs should be calculated at \$6.50 per plant.

Capital assets are those that will be retained by the applicant and used in subsequent projects after the proposed project is complete. Capital assets valued over \$1,000 per unit are not eligible for WCF support. That includes land being purchased by an applicant. Those valued less than \$1,000 may be proposed as an eligible expense. They MAY NOT be identified as in-kind support in subsequent years’ WCF applications.

Professional and Contractor Services:

This category includes professional services that are integral to project delivery. While eligible for WCF support, the applicant must include a quote from the service provider at the time of application submission. Using the excavator example again, the quote should indicate a cost associated with floating the equipment to the site and an hourly rate for excavator and operator.

If your project has a substantive infrastructure component, you should demonstrate that a significant amount of time and effort has already been invested into planning. **Proposals that ask for funds to build bridges, restore impoundments, create fishways or construct other wildlife structures will need to show that a permit is in place for the work prior to applying to WCF.** Activities covered under a blanket watershed permit would not be subject to the same restrictions.

This expense category does not include administrative services (administrator wages, book-keeping, audit preparation, etc.); these costs should be shown in the Administration expense category.

Travel and Communications:

Travel includes mileage and accommodation where appropriate. Out-of-province travel is unlikely to be supported by WCF funds. The allowable mileage rate for 2021 projects is 0.42 cents per kilometer or less.

Costs associated with printing or community engagement may be considered for support if they can be shown to be integral to delivery of the project outcomes. Volume and unit prices must be provided. When reporting, the distribution of printed materials funded by WCF must be clearly tracked. Costs tied to watershed planning activities are ineligible for WCF funds. Facilities rental for other outreach events are eligible.

Administration:

All administration costs associated with the project are ineligible for WCF funds, but must be identified and counted as matching support. This includes but is not limited to administrator wages, book-keeping services, audit services, office overhead (rental, photocopy, etc.), group liability insurance and volunteer board time at meetings that are specifically tied to discussions of this project. All projects have some level of administration; applications where this section is left blank will be deemed incomplete and will not be forwarded to the Committee for review!

4.0 Project Management & Reporting Requirements for Successful Applicants

Payments will be made by PEI WCF to approved project applicants in the form of a grant subsequent to the signing of a legal contribution agreement. Successful applicants will receive 80% of the funding allocated at the beginning of the project, with 20% withheld until the submission of a final report. Once the final report is approved the final payment will be made. Successful applicants may anticipate an advance in May for the spring funding round and in November for the fall funding round.

The proponent is responsible for securing all required permits and obtaining landowner permission for work and access to private land. Copies of required permits must be submitted to PEI WCF as soon as they have been received. PEI WCF will not issue the 80% advance payment until the fund administrator receives copies of permit approvals.

All WCF funds that are expended in any way other than as approved by the PEI WCF Committee and as applied for must be returned. If these funds are not returned, no further applications by the same group will be considered. Should the successful applicant need to change the budget or goals of the project, they must make a formal request in writing for that proposed change to the Committee via the fund administrator. The Committee will make every effort to consider and approve or deny the request promptly.

Successful proponents are expected to give PEI WCF appropriate credit and acknowledge the Fund's financial contribution in any product or publicity relating to the project. A copy of any published article or publicity that mentions PEI WCF must be forwarded to the Fund with the final report.

The deadline for final reporting, using the WCF template, will be identified in each signed contribution agreement. For the spring round, it is December 31. For the fall round, it is March 31. The final report requires an outline of the work completed, results, complete financial statements on the form supplied and copies of all receipts, payroll and mileage information.

5.0 Application Deadline and Delivery Location

PEI WCF applications must be submitted on the form provided. The 2021 funding deadlines for the two funding rounds are as follows:

Spring Round – before 5:00 PM, Monday, February 1, 2021

Fall Round – before 5:00 PM, Monday, October 4, 2021

Applications may be submitted in any of the following ways:

- in person, to the offices of the WCF Administrator: Island Nature Trust, in Ravenwood House, off Mt. Edward Road, 15 Crown Drive, on the Charlottetown Experimental Farm, please call (902) 892-7513 for more information.
- by email, to wcfund@eastlink.ca Do not email applications to any other address
- by mail, to PEI WCF, P. O. Box 265, Charlottetown, PE C1A 7K4 or
- by fax, to (902) 628-6331

No other application format or submission process will be accepted. Funds requested must be clearly indicated in the appropriate spaces. **Applications submitted late or incomplete will not be accepted.**

Receipt of applications will be confirmed by the administrator. **If you do not receive confirmation of receipt, the application has not reached its destination.**