

MENDOCINO COUNTY FISH AND GAME COMMISSION

Guidelines for Funding Recommendations Pertaining to Fish and Game Projects in Mendocino County for the 2022/2023 Grant Cycle

The Mendocino County Fish and Game Commission is given considerable latitude in the selection of fish, game and/or wildlife projects to recommend to the County Board of Supervisors for funding. The following guidelines have been written and adopted by the Commission, specific to Mendocino County, to help its members solicit and evaluate proposed projects in a fair and consistent manner.

1. The Commission will ensure that grants application announcements (Request for Proposals, or RFP), are widely disseminated throughout the County in order to get applications from a representative mix of county locations.
2. The deadline for submission of proposals for the 2022/2023 Grant Award Cycle is October 15, 2022.
3. The Commission provides digital application documents to help standardize the process. The documents, (available online at <https://www.mendocinocounty.org/government/planning-building-services/fish-game/grants>) include the Grant Summary Sheet, Grant Guidelines, Grant Terms Agreement, and a copy of the Fish and Game Code Section 13103(a)-(m).
 - a) Application documents are available online, on the Commission's website. Applicants may also request that hard copies be mailed to them.
 - b) The applicant should use this format for the project proposal, bearing in mind that not all sections may be applicable.
 - c) The Commission also encourages submission of individual material specific to each project.
 - d) Letters of support are not essential to send along with the applications, but will be reviewed along with other supporting documentations.
4. The application will clearly identify which sections of F&G Code Section 13103 (a)-(m) the project complies with, both on the grant summary statement, and within the proposal text.
5. The Commission will limit grants to projects completed within Mendocino County.
6. The proposal must include maps and drawings showing the location and scope of the project, with the exception of some educational projects.
7. All applicants must supply a Taxpayer/Organization ID/EID number, and, if approved for funding, complete and submit a W9 form.
8. The submitted application should have a timeline for completion of the proposed project.
9. Grant applications submitted after the proposal deadline will not be accepted..
10. Construction projects must keep administrative costs to a maximum of 10% of total costs.
11. Given the fact that many hands-on projects will deal with endangered, threatened, or species of special concern, the Commission requires that **all** permits be in place before recommending dispersal of any monies.
12. There must be a signed agreement with any landowner involved who gives permission for the work to be done, and which grants permission for later monitoring after completion of the project.
13. Any restoration or habitat enhancement project must document the existence of a problem (and therefore the need for the project) with photographs, a textual description, and a plan of action. Attention should be paid to any prior research and the application should have some familiarity with the literature that will help determine the feasibility of the project.
14. There should be significant matching funding in place along with the request for Commission funds for restoration projects. The definition of "significant" remains open to interpretation and each project will be examined on its own merits.

15. Proposals for projects that are categorized as “mitigation” projects under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), such as a Timber Harvest Plan, or required as mitigation for other projects (Fish and Game Code, Section 6923) will **not** be accepted within this RFP.
16. The Commission may investigate the applicant’s prior history of projects. Obviously, one cannot penalize a newcomer for no history, but if there is a history, an honest assessment of the success or failure would be helpful. The Commission will inquire if there are any contract or work violations.
17. For educational projects, the applicant must state who will benefit and give some estimate of the number of people reached. The applicant should state if the programs are to be conducted at the organization’s site, as field trips to various locations, or as programs for the classroom.
18. Grant applicants are encouraged to present to the Commission prior to the meeting when the Commissioners review and/or vote on funding recommendations. Presentation time must be limited, in order to give each applicant an opportunity to speak and answer questions.
19. The Commission requires a post-project evaluation/final report to see the results of the project. A written report of the progress and outcomes is required **by June 30, 2024**, outlining the project’s difficulties and failures, along with the successes. The report should describe methods, activities, and outcomes, and should include digital photographs. Final reports are required to include copies of receipts, or an accounting of expenditures, documenting how funds were expended. Applicants are welcome to present to the Commission in person and may contact the Commission Secretary to schedule.
20. Every proposal should include an itemized budget with clear justification of costs. Receipts, invoices, or a detailed accounting of how funds were spent must be included in the final report (e.g. for equipment purchases).
21. **If a complete final report is not submitted by the deadline, the state requires that the funds be returned, in full, to the Commission.**
22. The Commission recognizes that due to unforeseen circumstances, grant funds recommended by the Commission and approved by the Board of Supervisors for use by an applicant for a specific project may not always be spent in its entirety and/or in a timely manner on the approved project. In this case, unused funds from a previous grant cycle must be reported and considered part of a budget for an **extended** proposal or for a **new** proposal.

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCESS:

- The Commission will do its best to fairly allocate resources between projects.
- The Commission is not in favor of hard and fast rules to ensure a suitable mix of activities and geographical area coverage, but is aware that there are projects with very different purposes in need of financial assistance. A reasonable solution is to attempt to ensure that the broad categories are represented each year, even if unequally.
- The Commission will apply a qualitative and quantitative review process to each proposal to ensure guidelines are met. Some individual criteria will naturally carry more weight than others, but generally speaking, the more criteria met by a proposal, the more favorable the recommendation.
- Review criteria include: (1) compliance with F&G Code Section 13103; (2) project feasibility; (3) ecological benefits; (4) benefits to hunting and fishing opportunity in Mendocino County; (5) cooperative relationships; and (6) effective use of funds.
- Sponsors of proposals that are not in compliance with all Request for Proposal requirements will be notified in writing, and those proposals will be removed from funding considerations.