



WASHINGTON STATE DEPT OF
**NATURAL
RESOURCES**



**FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM
REQUESTS FOR FY 2026 PROJECT PROPOSALS (revised 4/8/24)**

INSTRUCTIONS

To nominate a tract of forestland into the State of Washington's Forest Legacy Program (FLP), review these instructions, visit the DNR and US Forest Service websites, and complete this project proposal.

DNR: <https://www.dnr.wa.gov/leaving-legacy-forests> (or enter Forest Legacy in the search box)

U.S. Forest Service: www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml

Project proposals are due by 5:00 PM, June 4, 2024.

Contacts: Mark Reed, project manager, 360-902-1408 or mark.reed@dnr.wa.gov
Robin Searl, program assistant, 360-280-1892 or robin.searl@dnr.wa.gov

We recommend consulting with the program staff before applying to ensure that your proposal meets state and federal Forest Legacy requirements. In addition, successful applicants who receive funding will be **required to sign the State's conservation easement document** or accept Forest Legacy deed language for fee acquisitions. Templates are posted on the Forest Legacy website.

Selection Process: DNR will evaluate your proposal and prioritize the project for inclusion in the program based on the information you provide in the application. Part I is the nomination form and **Part II** is the **Project Brief**, which is the portion that will be scored based on the national criteria (see Scoring Guidance Posted on the Forest Legacy web page). The Project Brief should reflect the goals of the Forest Legacy program found in the October 2004 State of Washington Assessment of Need publication available on the DNR website at http://www.dnr.wa.gov/Publications/amp_fl_aon2004.pdf. Reading the FAQ document, also posted on the web page is also recommended. A maximum of five proposals will be forwarded to the national selection committee in October 2024. If funded, grants will be awarded in 2025.

Instructions to Complete the Form and Brief: Please submit the application in a word processing format (not PDF), preferably MS Word. Read the specific instructions for each section of the application as character limits will apply when the information is entered into the federal database. If you choose, you may enter Part II of your application (the Project Brief) directly into the federal Forest Legacy Information System (FLIS). To obtain a logon ID and instructions for this system contact Mark Reed.

Maps and photos are required as part of the proposal, and should show the **Tract, Project Area, and Adjacent Ownership**. Maps should provide information to support and emphasize conservation benefits, threats, strategic importance, and adjacent landscape conservation planning efforts.

Tract: Parcel or area being considered for inclusion in the Forest Legacy Program in FY 2026. Please describe the interest (Land Acquisition or Conservation Easement) to be purchased in your FY 2026 Forest Legacy Program funding request. In describing benefits of the proposal focus on the specific tract.

Project Area: Your request for federal funding may be part of a larger landscape project or conservation strategy that may require phases and/or multiple sources of funding to complete. If so, please describe the entire project area in the description field and show how the nominated tract fits within it.

FY26 Changes made in FY26.

Core criteria and additional considerations remain the same, with only a few planned changes:

- Alignment with Justice40 Initiative goals by adding emphasis on benefits for disadvantaged communities in the Importance and Strategic sections.
- Incorporating Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov) data as an Additional Consideration to identify geographic alignment of proposed projects with disadvantaged communities (will offer separate learning event soon on this topic)
- Revisions to the Importance Section.
 - Clarifying the introductory and High/Medium/Low scoring language.
 - Listing *Tribal* as its own attribute, distinct from *Cultural/Historic*.
 - Adding *Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities* as an Attribute to Consider.
- Additional context around tribal relations roles/responsibilities and added requirement to document Tribal Nation(s) concurrence when a project's boundaries lie within or intersects the boundaries of a federal Indian reservation.
- Refinements to the readiness criteria – comparative market analysis is an eligibility **requirement** not part of the readiness score:

Please send your application **electronically** to robin.searl@dnr.wa.gov or mark.reed@dnr.wa.gov. Include maps and photos in .jpg format files – any other format will be rejected. If you use FLIS, indicate that your project brief is available in that system and email a copy of the completed State Project Nomination Form. If you have hard-copy items you wish to mail, please address to Forest Legacy Program at Department of Natural Resources, Recreation and Conservation Division, PO Box 47014, Olympia, WA, 98504-7014.



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PART I

FY 2026 FOREST LEGACY PROGRAM PROJECT NOMINATION FORM

OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

1. Proposal submitted by:

Representing:

Contact person if different from above:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

Email:

Preferred Phone:

2. Owner(s) of the proposed Tract:

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Note: The TRACT is the property for which you are seeking funding in this application. It may be part of a larger PROJECT that has several tracts, including those funded in the past, those for which you may seek future funding, and any properties that may contribute acres as cost share for the grant.

The Tract in this application does not have to be one contiguous parcel but must be described as one package. For a successful application all the parcels in a Tract should meet the selection criteria together and individually.

1. Project Name: _____ **Tract Name:** _____

Purchase Type (Fee / CE) _____ **Interest Owner** _____

Seller Type _____ **Seller Name** _____

Federal Designation: _____ **Federal Area Name** _____

Public Access (Full, None, Restricted) _____

2. U. S. Congressional District(s) in which the tract lies:

3. Tract Acres:

4. Total Project Acres (for multiple tracts or phases):

5. County (ies):

6. Tax Lot #:

(for large Tracts, attach a map or spreadsheet showing tax parcel #s)

7. County Zoning:

8. Legal Description (Section, Township and Range):

(for large Tracts attach map with S-T-R grid, or description from a title report)

9. What percent of the Tract acres are forested?

10. What is the intended future use of this Tract?

11. Describe the surrounding land uses:

12. Does the Tract have legal access?

Describe main legal access (public roads or private easements):

13. Who owns the mineral rights on this Tract?

14. Are there any structures on the Tract?

Describe any buildings or other improvements:

15. Are the owners willing to manage the Tract under a Forest Stewardship Plan?

16. Conveyance: Have the owners reviewed the State's conservation easement or required deed language? Do they accept the mandatory terms? (copies posted on Forest Legacy web page)

17. If the proposal is implemented, who is the intended fee owner of the Tract?



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PART II

FY 2026 PROPOSED PROJECT BRIEF

The **Proposed Project Brief** describes both the tract and the project. The final ranking of the nominated tract will be based on the information provided in this brief.

A copy of the federal “Project Scoring Guidance” is available on DNR’s website to help you fill out this brief.

Please use font size 10 and try to keep responses within the character limits shown below. This information will be placed into the Forest Legacy Information System (FLIS) and is subject to editing by DNR staff.

The headings shown below are based on the project attributes used to score applications at the national level.

FUNDING SUMMARY – Please show how you propose to fund your project, including future funding requests if applicable. The Forest Legacy Program (FLP) will fund a maximum of 75% of the total project and requires a minimum of 25% cost share (match) in property, cash, or in-kind services. Cost share can be provided by the landowner, a non-profit organization or state or local government entities. **Note: FLP funding and cost share should equal the total tract cost, even if cost share is property not connected to the tract.** (For information on figuring the cost share amount see the FAQ document on the web page.)

<u>FY</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Total Tract Cost \$</u>	<u>FLP Funding (75%)</u>	<u>Cost Share \$ (25%)</u>
2026				
2027				
2028				
Totals				

In the following sections, we give examples that may apply to your project. Please contact DNR if you have questions about acceptable description statements.

DESCRIPTION *Limit this description to 1250 characters including spaces.* This information should include the following elements: (1) general location; (2) position in the landscape; (3) whether the project is a fee or conservation easement purchase (4) brief description of the Tract and its contribution to the larger Project; and (5) summary of why this parcel should get funding. (Tip: Don’t just repeat the points in the Importance section. Tell the story of why this property is significant.)

IMPORTANCE

A maximum of 20 statements is allowed. Each statement can have a maximum of 300 characters including spaces (can break longer statements into two parts but that counts as two statements).

This criterion focuses on the attributes of the property and the environmental, social, and economic public benefits gained from the protection and management of the property and its resources, now and into the future. This criterion reflects ecological assets as well as the economic and social values conserved by the project and its level of significance.

Attributes to Consider: The descriptions listed below represents the ideal project for each attribute. *These attributes are **not** listed in priority order – applicants may provide this information in the relative order of importance for the proposed project.*

- **Economic Benefits from Timber and Potential Forest Productivity** – This category includes three independent components: (1) Landowner demonstrates sustainable forest management in accordance with a management plan. Additional points should be given to land that is third party certified (such as Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Forest Stewardship Council, and American Tree Farm System). (2) Forestry activities contribute to the resource-based economy for a community or region. (3) The property contains characteristics (such as highly productive soils) to sustain a productive forest over time.
- **Economic Benefits from Non-timber Products and Recreation** – Provides non-timber revenue to the local or regional economy through non-timber forest products (maple syrup, pine straw, ginseng collection, etc.); recreation and tourism (local or regional benefits related to lodging, rentals, bikes, boats, outdoor gear, guided tours for fishing, hunting, or birdwatching, etc.); hunting leases; and/or ranching.
- **Threatened or Endangered Species Habitat** – The property has documented threatened or endangered plants and animals or designated habitat. Documented occurrence and use of the project area should be given more consideration in point allocation than if it is habitat without documented occurrence or use. Federally listed species should be given more consideration than state-only listed species when evaluating the significance of this attribute. See Attachment A for a glossary of terms for Threatened and Endangered species information.
- **Fish, Wildlife, Plants, and Unique Forest Communities** – The property contains unique forest communities and/or important fish or wildlife habitat as documented by a formal assessment or wildlife conservation plan or strategy developed by a government or a non- governmental organization. Contributions to international initiatives to support and sustain migratory species can be considered here if the property will make a significant contribution, e.g. the target species has been documented to regularly use the property during seasonal migration.
- **Water Supply, Aquatic Habitat, and Watershed Protection** – (1) The property has a direct relationship with protecting the water supply or watershed, such as providing a buffer to public drinking water supply, containing an aquifer recharge area, or protecting an ecologically important aquatic or marine area, and/or (2) the property contains important riparian area, wetlands, shorelines, river systems, or sensitive watershed lands. When allocating points consider the importance of the resource, the scope and scale of the property, magnitude and intensity of the benefits that will result from protection of the property. Merely being located within an aquifer recharge area or in a water supply area should not be given the same consideration as a property that makes a significant conservation contribution to water, riparian, and aquatic resources and habitats.
- **Cultural/Historic** – The property contains features of cultural and/or historical significance that are documented by a governmental or a non- governmental organization. A Federal designation should receive greater consideration.
- **Tribal** – The property provides meaningful benefits to Tribal and other indigenous communities, contains features or resources of cultural significance, and/or utilizes management techniques significant to Tribes (traditional ecological knowledge). Greater consideration should be given to

projects that have been developed with active involvement and partnership with a Tribe, or where a Tribal organization has documented the importance of the property for cultural practices, resources, and benefits.

- **Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities** – The property provides meaningful benefits for an identified disadvantaged community, as designated by a government-sponsored data tool (such as the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool).
- **Public Access** – Protection of the property will secure existing access, expand access, or establish new access by the public for recreation (including waterfront access); however, restrictions on specific use and location of recreational activities may be allowed. More consideration should be given to projects that expand or provide certainty of public access as a result of the proposed project.
- **Scenic** – The property is located within a viewshed of a government designated scenic feature or area (such as a trail, river, or highway). Federal designation should be given more consideration than state-only designations when evaluating the significance of this attribute.
- **Carbon Sequestration/Climate Resilience, Adaptation to Climate Change** – Protection of the property will result in benefits related to climate resilience and adaption, and carbon sequestration.

THREATENED

A maximum of 10 statements is allowed. Each statement can have a maximum of 300 characters including spaces.

This criterion estimates the likelihood for conversion of the tract to a non-forestry use. During the evaluation of threat, a good land steward interested in conserving land should not be penalized.

Lack of Protection *(describe conversion potential due to lack of temporary or permanent protections, Examples: zoning allows 5 acre lots, no moratorium on development, no covenants or other encumbrances that limit development).*

Land and Landowners Circumstances *(examples: property held in an estate, aging landowner, future ownership or management by heirs is uncertain, property is up for sale or has a sale pending, landowner has received purchase offers, land has an approved subdivision plan, landowner has sold subdivisions of the property).*

Adjacent Land Use *(examples: adjacent land use characteristics such as existing land status, rate of development growth and conversion, % rate of population growth, % rate of change in local land ownership, market demand for the property type. etc.).*

Ability to Develop *(Describe physical attributes of the property that facilitate conversion such as access, buildable ground, availability of utilities, etc.)*

STRATEGIC

A maximum of 10 statements is allowed. Each statement can have a maximum of 400 characters including spaces.

This criterion reflects the project's relevance or relationship to conservation efforts on a broader perspective.

Attributes to Consider: The descriptions listed below represent the ideal project for each attribute. *These attributes are not listed in priority order – applicants may provide this information in the relative order of importance for the proposed project.*

- Conservation Initiative, Strategy, or Plan – How the project contributes to either an existing or new conservation initiative, strategy, or plan. Describe the relative contribution of the property to achieving the conservation goals of the plan, strategy, or initiative considering scale, location, and project attributes. Conservation plans that have been formally designated by a governmental, tribal, or non-governmental entity should be given more consideration. Contributions to a new strategy or a strategy under development may also be discussed. This can be useful if a project would contribute to, or catalyze, a new conservation initiative, strategy, or plan. For new initiatives, specific goals should be defined and potential contributions of how the project advances those goals should be highlighted.
- **Complement Protected Lands** – How the project is strategically linked to or enhances already protected lands, including past FLP projects, public lands (Federal, State, or local), or private lands conserved through permanent easements. Provide specifics on how the proposed tracts connect to and maintain landscape-scale benefits, e.g. ecological resilience, wildlife migration, watershed function, and scenic viewshed integrity.
- **Benefits to Disadvantaged Communities** – How the project benefits a disadvantaged community (as defined in the Importance section) and strategically contributes to local, state, or federal environmental justice initiatives (such as Justice40).
- **Other Landscape Scale Goals and Public Benefits** – How the project strategically contributes to the advancement of larger scale conservation goals and public benefits. Examples could include but are not limited to:
 - Climate resilience and mitigation.
 - Reduced community impacts from wildfire, floods, invasive species.
 - Expanded public access; and
 - Protection of critical water supplies.
- Provide specifics on the project's contributions to the larger scale goals and benefits.

A comparative market analysis is required to support the requesting funding level.

READINESS

Items listed in this may provide extra points for your proposal in the national evaluation process.

Project Readiness is defined as the degree of due diligence applied and the certainty of a successful Forest Legacy Program project. To demonstrate project readiness, completed items need to be documented (including completion date). These will be entered in the Forest Legacy Information System (FLIS) and credit will only be given to those items documented.

1. Have landowner and easement holder agreed to the easement or fee acquisition conditions? (The State can provide a template for a conservation easement).

Date completed:

2. Has a cost share commitment been obtained from a specified source?

Date completed:

3. Has an option or purchase and sale agreement been signed?

Date completed:

4. Has a title search been completed?

Date completed:

5. Have ownership of mineral rights and mineral potential been determined?

Date completed:

SUPPORTING PARTIES

80 character limit per item

This Legacy Project would be Supported by (*list organizations, partners, stakeholders, local and national leaders, and other interested parties who have given letters of support or would be willing to do so.*)

PHOTOS

(MAX 4, JPGS only)

- Any photos that demonstrate the importance of the project and enhance your application. Photos should include description and photo credits.

MAP

(MAX 1, JPGS only)

- Show the project area, project phases, and vicinity. Add features that help demonstrate project significance and illustrate points made in the description (such as creek names, trails or other described features), but be careful to keep the map clear and uncluttered.

Note: if your project is selected, a GIS shape file of the Tract will be required for submitting the application to the national committee.

General Recommendations

- Check spelling and grammar; write concisely.
- Maps are critical and can visually demonstrate the points raised.
- Many projects that score in the middle range present good facts but fail to elaborate on the implications of development and the benefits that the project area offers. By explaining key statements, the reader can see the larger picture of the project and doesn't have to guess what the writer is trying to convey.
- The top projects have benefits and supporters that cross over many different categories and are very diverse.
- Convincing points should be as extensive as possible but should not repeat facts or previous statements. We are looking for *quality not quantity*.

Recommendations for Maps from National Project Selection Panel

- First impressions matter. Many reviewers have indicated that the map was the first item they reviewed on a project brief. If the map is difficult to read, reviewers can become confused about why the project is important, threatened, or strategic.
- The project brief content and the map need to tell the same story. If the proximity of features is highlighted in the brief they should also appear on the map.
- The information portrayed in the map should be clear, concise, and easy to read. Some suggestions: Reserve bright colors for the project area and other Forest Legacy areas (e.g., highlight proposed projects in red). Other protected lands are easy to spot as saturated earth tones (e.g., different shades of green to differentiate federal, state and privately conserved land). The map is easier to analyze if the base map is light gray or neutral, so it doesn't distract from the map message. Don't clutter the map with unnecessary labels. Scale the map to show how the project tract fits into the area's conservation landscape. If the area is too large, use an inset map for location.