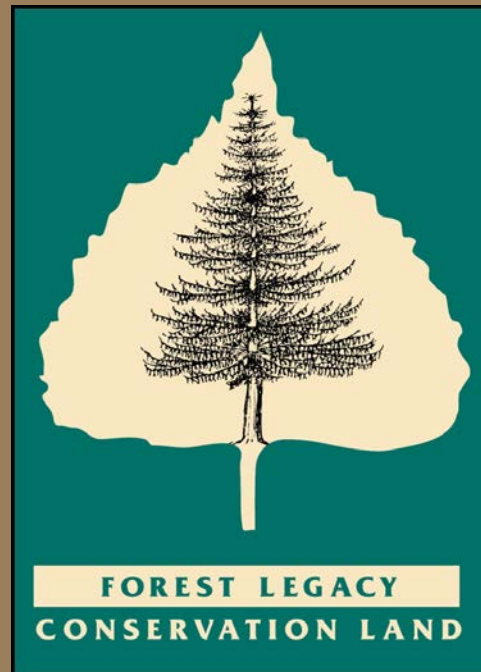


Forest Legacy Program

In Washington State



Forest Legacy

FAQ

- What is the Forest Legacy program?
- What does the grant require?
- How does the conservation easement work?
- What projects are likely to get funded?
- What is the application process?
- What is the selection criteria?



Forest Legacy

What is the Forest Legacy Program?

A federal grant program administered by the USFS, State and Private Forestry Program.

Its purpose:

To protect environmentally important forest areas that are threatened by conversion to non-forest uses. This includes protecting important scenic, cultural, fish, wildlife, riparian and recreation resources.

Unlike most forest conservation programs, commercial forestry is an allowed use.



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What does the grant require?

- Landowner must agree to encumber his/her property with a permanent conservation easement that restricts the property to forest uses.
- Fee purchase of property is also allowed but the land must be held by a government entity and permanently dedicated to the Forest Legacy program.
- Grant pays 75% of the total project cost. Cost share of 25% is needed from another source – the state, the landowner, a project partner, etc. Can be in the form of cash, services (such as paying for the appraisal or other project costs) or land.

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Figuring Cost Share

Scenario 1 – FLP funding request is for 100% of the property to be acquired or encumbered (Tract A). Another party is providing cost-share through a separate property (Tract B) dedicated to FLP by easement, covenant or fee conveyance.

Fund request is \$4.5 million for conservation easement on Tract A
Divide \$4.5 by 3 to figure 25% of total project (\$1,500,000)
Value of cost share property (Tract B) must be at least is \$1,500,000
(round up to nearest thousand)
Total project value is \$6,000,000

Scenario 2 – Total value of property to be encumbered or acquired (Tract A) will be split between grant and other funds.

Total value of proposed FL easement project is \$4.5 million
Divide \$4.5 by 4 to figure 25% (\$1,125,000)
FLP maximum request is \$3,375,000 (75%)
Landowner or other party pays \$1,125,000 (25%) through cash toward purchase or donating the remaining acres

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How does the conservation easement work?

- A conservation easement (CE) restricts use of the property to prevent conversion of forest land to any other use.
- Easement price is the difference in land value between the “before” (no restrictions on land) and the “after” (with CE in place).
- State holds the easement; landowner continues to manage the land, most often as working forest.
- The easement requires a management plan for the property, and annual monitoring to ensure compliance with CE terms.
- The owner may sell the property but the easement remains in place. It is recorded so it shows up on title reports.



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What projects are likely to get funded?

- Tracts of forest land that are large enough to sustain over time the conservation benefits they provide
- Properties located in the zone between “almost converted” and “really remote”
 - Too close to urban areas – high value, may be difficult to fund and manage
 - Too far from urban areas – low value, may be difficult to prove threat, may not be enough development value to motivate an owner to accept a CE.(note: this is a general observation; exceptions occur)

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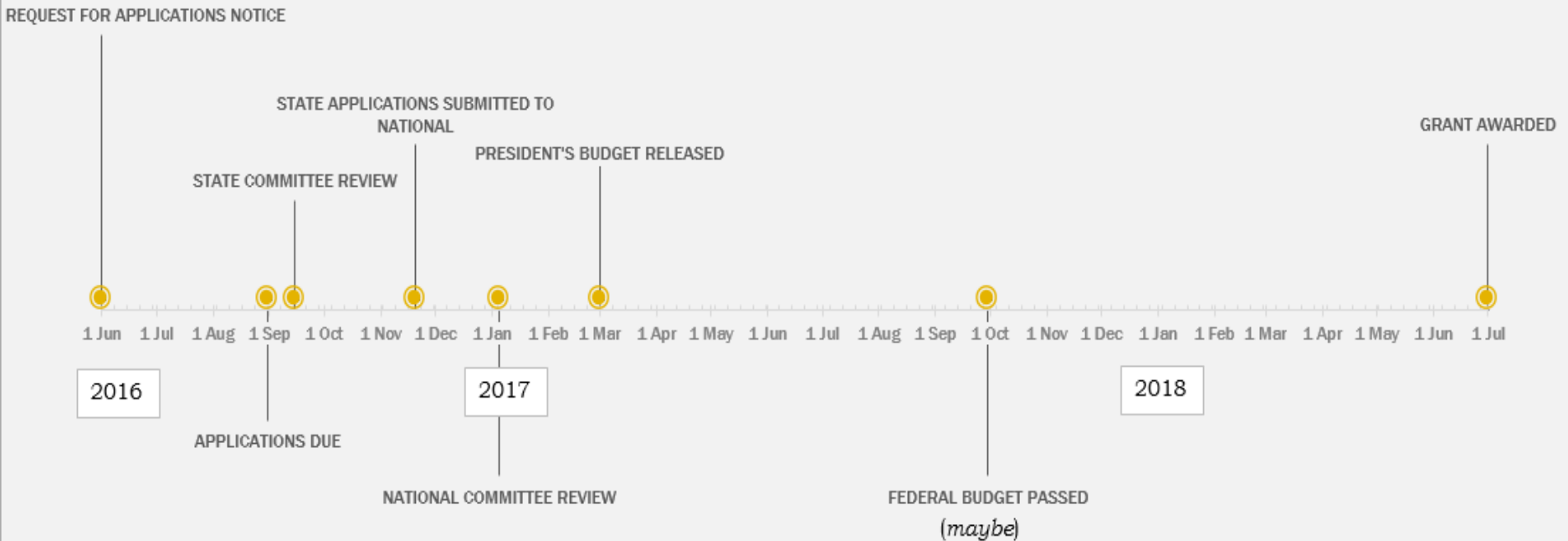
What projects are likely to get funded, cont.

- Properties with compelling stories
 - What will happen if property is or is not conserved? What conservation values does it provide? How threatened is it? Why is it significant nationally as well as locally?
- Projects with support from a variety of local, state and national agencies and organizations
- Projects that tie into federal interests:
 - Adjacent to or near federal lands
 - Affect federally designated scenic areas or highways
 - Complement the Clean Water Act, Endangered Species Act or other conservation initiatives

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What is the application process?

Forest Legacy Application Timeline



Sample timeline

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What is the selection criteria?

Scoring is based on three criteria:

- 1. Important** – what are the key attributes that make the property worth conserving?
- 2. Threatened** – how likely is the property to convert from forest to other uses?
- 3. Strategic** – how does this property fit with other conservation efforts?

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What counts as “important”?

- Economic benefits: revenue from forest products, employment, recreation activities
- Threatened/endangered species, unique forest communities or habitats
- Watershed protection, aquatic habitats, affects public water supply
- Scenic, historic/cultural/tribal significance, allows public access (owner may restrict public access)

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What counts as “threatened”?

- Lack of protection by zoning, moratoriums or other encumbrances that prevent conversion
- Landowner circumstances that contribute to conversion risk, often a need or desire to sell
- Adjacent land use contributes to risk, e.g., neighboring land is being subdivided
- Ability to develop, e.g., buildable ground, availability of utilities, road access

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What counts as “strategic”?

- Does the property fit within a larger conservation plan, strategy or initiative?
- Does the property enhance already protected lands in the area?



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Where can I find more information?

Julie Armbruster
Department of Natural Resources
Conservation, Recreation and Transactions Division
PO Box 47014
Olympia, WA 98501

360-902-1636 (office)

julie.armbruster@dnr.wa.gov

<http://www.dnr.wa.gov/leaving-legacy-forests>

<http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp>

