

Scoring Guide

For Community Sponsored Projects in Nebraska Land and Water Conservation Fund



Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
Planning and Programming Division
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PRIORITY RATING SYSTEM

Nebraska's Priority Rating System ensures equal opportunity for all eligible project sponsors to participate in the Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program. The rating system provides open and objective criteria for the LWCF Selection Committee to review, score and select projects for funding assistance that meet high priority needs identified in Nebraska's Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan 2021-2025: Guiding Success in Nebraska Outdoor Recreation.

MINIMUM ELIGIBILITY

All proposed projects must meet the following minimum eligibility requirements before consideration for funding under the Land and Water Conservation Fund Program.

- Must be in accord with and place strong emphasis on conformance with the action plan and priority projects identified in the current Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): Guiding Success in Nebraska Outdoor Recreation (2021 – 2025).
- Show evidence of public participation related to the project (e.g., public comment, surveys, meetings, etc.) and include, at a minimum, a current signed and dated resolution from the sponsor's governing body to support the proposal for LWCF assistance.
- Designed in conformance with the appropriate current design standards for the Architectural Barriers Act of 1968 (ABA) (P.L. 90-480), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Conform to eligibility requirements outlined in Land and Water Conservation Fund State Assistance Program Federal Financial Assistance Manual, Vol. 72 and application requirements published by Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.
- Project Sponsor (and applicant) must be the governing body and own the property or have a long-term lease with 25 or more years remaining.
- Other information related to the 2021-2025 NE SCORP components (SCORP, Chapter 3 – Supply of Outdoor Recreation, 4 – Demand of Outdoor Recreation, and Chapter 5 – Guiding Success).

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission does not discriminate based upon any protected status. Please see www.OutdoorNebraska.gov/nondiscrimination.

ROUND 1

Planning and Programming Qualifying Review

Round 1 – Qualifying (Attachments as Required)

An application will be incomplete and therefore not considered if required attachments are missing from the final submittal. Attachments that are optional are noted as only if applicable. See the Application Attachment Guide for details on submission type, file format, and appearance.

Location and Boundary Map

Submitted a map showing county and city level location references, as well as, a boundary map of the property to be encumbered. Should include main entrance if applicable and identify the affected area where the work is to be done.

Deed or Lease Agreement

Submitted a deed showing project sponsor as owner or a lease agreement with at least 25 years remaining on the lease.

Multi-Use Documentation (only if applicable)

Submitted multi-use information if noted as a yes.

Site Plan

Submitted a site plan for the design - and only the design, without other additional information.

Parks/Master Plan or Special Study (Highly recommended by not required)

Submitted a plan or study accessing the needs of the community in terms of outdoor recreation, the direction going forward for addressing those needs, and how it all fits into the overall plan for the community.

Resolution

Submitted a resolution from their governing body.

Letters of Support (only if applicable)

Submitted six or less letters of support from the community.

Partnership Letters (only if applicable)

Submitted a letter from the community partner referenced in the application.

Detailed Project Budget

Submitted a detailed project budget in the format requested showing line-item listing of major items, in the appropriate budget category, and with totals and percentage match.

Budget Narrative

Submitted a narrative of the estimated expenses with explanations in writing for items that are not

readily evident or difficult to show in the Detailed Project Budget.

In-Kind Match Documentation (only if applicable)

Submitted a breakdown of the in-kind match whether it be labor, equipment, and/or supplies.

Proof of Financial Match

Submitted proof of financial match in sufficient detail.

Pre-Award Costs Documentation (only if applicable)

Submitted the required information on any pre-award eligible costs.

Audit for Project Sponsor

Submitted a full audit.

Previous NEPA/SEPA (only if applicable)

Submitted NEPA/SEPA documentation from a previous review.

Justification Documentation (only if applicable)

Submitted the documents used to complete Table 1 and 2.

SHPO

Submitted a signed SHPO response documentation.

CERT & ERR

Used CERT to create an ERR. Submitted a completed and signed ERR.

Donated Property Evidence (only if applicable)

Submitted evidence the seller was offered fair market value of the property and willingly choose to donate instead.

Round 1 - Scoring

Number of Open Projects (0 or 5 Points)

New applicants with no history of receiving LWCF funding in the past 10 years receives 5 points.

Project sponsor with open projects receives 0 points

Conversion Issues (0-5 Points)

Does the project sponsor have a conversion issue that NGPC – LWCF team is aware of?

No known conversion issue, the application receives 5 points. Known conversion issue, the application receives 0 points.

Point Range: 0 to 10

Round 1 - Site Visit

Pre-Award Site Visit

All applicants that pass the first qualifying round will have a site visit to document site conditions and to verify that the project has not been started. Any site that has broken ground will automatically be disqualified per NPS rules.

ROUND 2

Panel Review Scoring

Applications will be ranked by the highest score and down. The scoring and project ranking is calculated as an average of assigned points by each panel member.

Planning and Community Involvement

Comprehensive Planning (0-10 Points)

To what extent is the project identified in an approved local, regional, county and/or parks comprehensive plan, master plan, and/or special study?

Special study can be the project sponsor demonstrating their method of assessing/inventorying current outdoor opportunities, gathering and including public opinion, and how the project addresses what is lacking in their community through both a short and long term lens) No plan/study = 0 points.

Public Participation (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor identify how the public informed their choices/decision about the project and overall community support?

This relates to any action to reach out to the community for guiding direction and any subsequent response to the public feedback beyond the resolution process. Letters of support are acceptable.

Community Partners (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor specify any community groups that have committed their support to this project by 1 or more of the following actions:

- a) involvement in the development of the project scope and/or final design plans
- b) funding
- c) assist with the operation and/or maintenance of the finished project

Ongoing Maintenance (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor adequately account for how the project will be maintained?

This is of particular importance if the project is a new park/facility. For replacement projects, the full points should be given unless the site visit reflected overall poor maintenance.

Section Point Range: 0 to 40

Project Site

Pre-Award Site Visit (0-5 Points)

Does the pre-award site visit document a well-maintained site and/or appropriate conditions for this project?

Site Appropriateness and Balance (0-5 Points)

Does the project sponsor clearly explain why the site is adequate for the outdoor recreation activity?

When assigning points consider the site conditions and the surrounding setting, whether it is adequately sized for the activity within the space, as well as, the amount of curated spaces and open play spaces.

Visually Distracting Elements (0-5 Points)

Does the project sponsor or pre-award site visit note any elements that are distracting for outdoor recreation or could potentially be a safety hazard?

Proximity to Public Resources (0-5 Points)

Does the project support other public resources in the area? This would include whether the project extends an existing green area, improves or connects access to other recreation areas, or is located near other public resources making it convenient to use and enhancing other public areas.

Site Amenities (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor identify the amenities that are within or in close proximity to the site that make an outdoor space usable? (This would include: public restrooms, water, shade, rest areas, waste receptables, etc).

Section Point Range: 0 to 30

Project Activity

ADA and ABA Compliance (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor provide evidence of compliance to ADA and ABA access? This would include accommodating strollers, assist-walkers, and others with limited mobility who would typically not be considered impaired.

Underserved Population (0-10 Points)

Does the project provide and/or improve outdoor recreation for persons with disabilities (consider hearing and visually impaired in addition to mobility issues), older citizens, and other special populations or groups that are under served?

Economically Disadvantaged (0-10 Points)

Does the project consider those economically disadvantaged by allowing participation in this activity free of charge and/or require no or little equipment, or if it requires equipment, does the project sponsor provide it for free? For projects that require a fee for entrance or equipment rental, is it nominal considering a family around the poverty line?

Age Groups (0-10 Points)

Does the project provide opportunities for multiple age groups?

If limited by age group, are there amenities for support people? For example, does a playground have benches for adults that are supervising or does a trail have a bench for resting as needed?

Reachability (0-10 Points)

Is the project within walking distance of the intended user, or easily accessible by car with adequate, free, and/or handicap accessible parking?

Increase Outdoor Recreation Spaces in Perpetuity (0-5 Points)

Does the project encumber new acreage (5 points) or is the project on an existing LWCF encumbered site (0 points)?

Conservation (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor provide evidence of any conservation measures?

Consider native landscaping, life span of selected equipment, measures to provide natural surroundings, bioswales, solar lighting, wind turbines, and the number of resources needed to maintain the project, etc.

Meet the Purpose (0-5 Points)

Rate how well the project meets the purpose as outlined by the project abstract.

Existing versus Projected Need (0-5 Points)

Does this project address an existing need versus a projected need based on estimated growth, development, etc.?

Section Point Range: 0 to 75

Fiscal Responsibility

Prior Grant Experience (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor show evidence of fiscal responsibility and examples of success with grant-funded projects?

Grant experience could be local, state, federal, through foundations, DNR, and/or block grants.

Audit Findings (0-10 Points)

Does the audit have any findings and were the findings directly related to poor oversight of finances or related to grant funding?

Cost Assurance (0-10 Points)

Does the project cost estimates align with other like projects, include the necessary items to be a complete project, and if providing in-kind match, reasonable rates and work?

Section Point Range: 0 to 30

SCORP Alignment

Rate the project based on how well it aligns with each:

- Outdoor Recreation Goals for Nebraska identified in Chapter 5: Guiding Success of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): Guiding Success in Nebraska Outdoor Recreation (2021 – 2025).
 - The project sponsor is to clearly explain how the project **actively** meets the Goal.
 - Each goal should be scored separately.
 - Not all goals have to be addressed.
- Wetlands and Outdoor Recreation in Chapter 3: Supply of Outdoor Recreation of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): Guiding Success in Nebraska Outdoor Recreation (2021 – 2025).
- The number of elements in the project that are identified in Chapter 5: Guiding Success of the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP): Guiding Success in Nebraska Outdoor Recreation (2021 – 2025)

Goal 1 (0-10 Points)

Improve Quality of Life By Promoting Healthy Lifestyles Through Outdoor Recreation

Goal 2 (0-10 Points)

Develop the Understanding, Appreciation, and Engagement of Nebraska's Natural Resources and Outdoor Recreation Opportunities

Goal 3 (0-10 Points)

Understand the Opportunities and Threats in Developing Urban Areas and Areas of Rapid Population Growth

Goal 4 (0-10 Points)

Provide and Manage Outdoor Recreation Education Opportunities that are Effective and Inclusive

Goal 5 (0-10 Points)

Provide Effective and Inclusive Outdoor Recreation Programming

Goal 6 (0-10 Points)

Provide and Manage Outdoor Recreation Opportunities that are Sustainable and Ensure Economic Vitality

Wetland Features (0-10 Points)

Does the project include any wetland features?

Priority Project(s) (0-10 Points)

Based on identified priority projects in SCORP, rate the project for the number of facilities, type of activities or services and/or amenities included in the project that have been identified as most important to Nebraskans in the list below. (Note: more does not always mean best; the number of activities must be site appropriate for balance).

- Camping Facilities
- Wildlife Habitat Viewing Opportunities
- Picnicking Facilities
- Outdoor Recreation Education - Related Facilities and Partnerships
- Access to and Opportunities for Fishing
- Hiking / Biking Trails

Playgrounds
Swimming Opportunities (Beach or Pool)
Adventure Activities (e.g., Zip Line, Rock Climbing, Floating Playgrounds, etc.)

Area SCORP Need (0-10 Points)

Does the project sponsor explain if this project addresses a specific deficit of a SCORP activity within their region? (Regions as identified in SCORP).

Section Point Range: 0 to 90

Acquisition Component

Development Plans for the Acquisition (0-10 Points)

- Does the project sponsor plan to develop the space within the grant period (approximately 3 years)? The application would receive the full 10 points.
- If not, does the project sponsor specify how the acquisition works into a phased plan and therefore expects to develop it within 5 years? The application would receive 5 points.
- If the project sponsor does not specify any development plans, the application would receive 0 points.
- If the project does not include acquisitions, the application would receive 0 points.

Section Point Range: 0 to 10

Quality of Application

Application Quality (0-15 Points)

Does the project sponsor provide meaningful and sufficient information, as well as, appropriate response to questions so that you are confident in their ability to carry out this project?

Section Point Range: 0 to 15

Point Breakdown by Section

SECTION	Points
Round 1 Scoring	10
Planning and Community Involvement	40
Project Site	30
Project Activity	75
Fiscal Responsibility	30
SCORP Alignment	90
Acquisition Component	10
Quality of Application	15

APPLICATION TOTAL POINT RANGE: 0 to 300