



FY2024 Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership Request for Proposals

Issue Date: Monday, December 5, 2022

Deadline for proposals: Friday, February 17, 2023, 5:00PM PST

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Funding Opportunity Description

The Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership (PMEP) is one of 20 regional fish habitat partnerships in the United States. Its mission is to provide science, data, and funding to conserve and restore West Coast nearshore and estuarine fish habitat. Learn more about PMEP at www.pacificfishhabitat.org. PMEP supports estuarine and nearshore marine fish habitat restoration and assessment

projects through the [National Fish Habitat Partnership](https://www.pacificfishhabitat.org/nfhp/) (NFHP). To read about recent PMEP-funded projects, please visit <http://www.pacificfishhabitat.org/pmep-funded-projects/>.

Funding available, project budget, and matching funds requirement

PMEP will award an estimated \$100,000-\$350,000 in 2024 for projects that advance its mission. This amount is based on previous funding received from the NFHP for this purpose. The exact amount of funding available varies annually and is not known at this time. In an effort to fund a diverse portfolio of projects, strong project proposals that request less than \$100,000 are preferred. However, proposals of particular merit may be funded at a higher level, at PMEP's discretion.

America's Conservation Enhancement (ACE) Act was passed by Congress and signed by the President on October 30, 2020. Importantly, the legislation made significant changes to project requirements to be eligible for NFHP funding. The ACE Act places an emphasis on restoration efforts that will improve recreational fishing opportunities and public use of the resource. Improvements in public access as a component of projects are also encouraged. The ACE Act requires that all NFHP-funded projects demonstrate matching funds, with some exceptions:

- All projects must show 1:1 non-federal financial match. Matching funds may be in the form of in-kind support from non-federal sources and must be spent during the project period.
- Matching funding requirements are waived for projects proposed by tribal sponsors where the tribe is the applicant and funding recipient. Providing matching funds from tribes does not qualify a project for matching fund waivers.

A detailed project budget is required, specifying which components of the project will be paid for with PMEP funds, cost shared funds and the required matching funds. Funding status (in-hand, proposed, in-kind) should be indicated. See Appendix A for information required.

The project, or portion of a project, that PMEP funds should be spent within three years of receipt of funding and all funds matching PMEP funding should be spent during that time. The proposal should include a detailed timeline for the use of PMEP funds. See Appendix B.

Non-matching cost share funding includes federal funding that contributes to the project but is not eligible for formal matching requirement. Cost share details should also be included in the proposal budget.

Project review period and timing of funding

Project sponsors should assume that funding will be received in Summer of 2023. See below timeline for project funding timeline.

Timeline for project funding*

February 17, 2023	Proposals due
February-March, 2023	Proposal evaluation and project ranking by PMEP committees
March, 2023	Final approval of ranked project list by PMEP Steering Committee
March, 2023	Provision of ranked list to Congress by NFHP
Summer, 2023	Notification of project ranking (not award notification)
Winter, 2023	Announcement of award recipients*
Summer, 2024	Funding available*

*Subject to change. Funding availability is dependent upon the federal appropriations process.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include state, tribal, and federal management agencies, non-governmental organizations (e.g., conservation groups, community associations, watershed councils, cooperatives, civic groups), municipalities, universities, schools, private landowners, and local governments.

Eligible projects

Restoration, enhancement, and protection projects - PMEP funding may be used to pay for a small habitat restoration or protection project or parts of a larger project. Restoration and protection project summaries should clearly describe the need for the project relative to regional or local restoration and protection planning efforts. Proposals should clearly detail which part of the project will utilize PMEP funds in the project budget, see Appendix A. PMEP funding can be used for all phases of a project, from feasibility to post-construction monitoring. However, projects that involve on-the-ground implementation will be more competitive.

Assessment projects - PMEP will fund assessment projects that fill data gaps identified for estuary and nearshore marine fish habitats in its region. Proposals

should clearly justify the assessment in relation to needs identified in PMEP, or other, planning documents. PMEP encourages projects that assess the effectiveness of restoration techniques. If PMEP funds will be used to pay for part of a larger assessment project, proposals should clearly detail which part of the project will utilize PMEP funds in the project budget (see Appendix A). Any data collected should conform with data collection methods recommended or used in PMEP assessments.

Acquisition projects - The ACE Act allows a state, local government, or other non-federal entity to receive NFHP funds for the acquisition of real property or protective easements involving willing sellers if the acquisition ensures public access for fish and wildlife-dependent recreation or contributes a scientifically based, direct enhancement to the health of fish and fish populations as determined by the NFHP Board. Acquisition projects will be evaluated using the same criteria as restoration projects and must address PMEP priorities. Please contact PMEP's Coordinator if you have a project request that includes real property acquisition.

Ineligible projects

PMEP will not fund the following types of projects:

- Placement of large woody debris without addressing long-term habitat quality improvements or other means of restoring connectivity and function.
- Salmonid-only habitat use assessments. Habitat use assessments must be primarily designed to elucidate the use of estuary or nearshore habitat by non-salmonid PMEP focal species. Assessments that focus on multiple species are highly preferred.
- Modification rather than removal of tide gates, unless the project will significantly improve both habitat connectivity and fish passage to areas above the tide gate.
- Projects located above impassable barriers.
- Research studies (fish habitat assessment projects can be funded and are not considered research).
- Stand-alone long-term monitoring (this includes long-term monitoring of fish populations).
- Outreach-only projects.
- Mitigation projects.

Ineligible costs

The following types of costs will not be paid for with PMEP funds:

- Pre-award costs.
- Operation and maintenance of facilities or structures. This applies to buildings and structures only and not to maintenance or construction of earthen structures.

- Actions required by existing regulatory programs (e.g. mitigation projects), except that funds may support activities under voluntary agreements that exceed regulatory requirements for conserving habitats (e.g., hydropower licensing in which the licensee enters into a voluntary agreement to restore habitat that exceeds regulatory requirements).
- Incentive payments.

Priority Species and Priority Projects

Projects considered for funding should address science-based habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement activities that benefit fish habitat in PMEP's geographic scope. Assessment projects that fill identified data gaps about fish use and habitat will also be considered. PMEP's strategic plan recognizes the importance of juvenile rearing areas within estuaries, as well as nearshore habitats, for fish. Please review PMEP's strategic plan at https://www.pacificfishhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Strategic-Plan-2023_2028-FINAL.pdf for more information about its focus and geographic scope.

PMEP is seeking project proposals that restore, enhance, and protect habitats for PMEP focal species within estuarine and nearshore marine systems or that increase understanding of fish habitats in estuarine and nearshore habitats. Priority will be given to projects benefiting smaller estuarine systems defined as having an Estuary Size Class of 0-250 acres in the PMEP Estuary Explorer data tool <http://estuaries.pacificfishhabitat.org/explore>. **However, worthy projects that benefit larger estuarine or nearshore systems will still be considered.**

PMEP has identified the following priority/focal species:

- Green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*)
- Leopard shark (*Triakis semifasciata*)
- Bat ray (*Myliobatis californica*)
- Pacific herring (*Clupea pallasii*)
- Bay shrimp (*Crangon franciscorum*)
- Dungeness crab (*Cancer magister* or *Metacarcinus magister*)
- California halibut (*Paralichthys californicus*)
- English sole (*Parophrys vetulus*)
- Starry flounder (*Platichthys stellatus*)
- Shiner perch (*Cymatogaster aggregata*)
- Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*)
- Coho salmon (*Oncorhynchus kisutch*)
- Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*)
- Brown rockfish (*Sebastes auriculatus*)
- Staghorn sculpin (*Leptocottus armatus*)

Project proposals that benefit these priority species will score higher during the proposal evaluation process. **However, worthy projects that benefit other species will still be considered.**

Project proposals should also benefit USFWS priority species. The list of USFWS priority species can be found [here](#). Note that PMEP spans USFWS Regions 1 and 8.

Projects must also support at least one NFHP National Conservation Priorities¹:

1. Conserve waters and habitats where all processes and functions are operating within their expected range or natural variation.
2. Conserve hydrologic conditions for fish
3. Conserve physical and living habitats and features that support viable and sustainable species and/or populations in impacted or at-risk systems.
4. Reconnect fragmented fish habitats.
5. Conserve water quality for fish.
6. Support the structure and function of FHPs.
7. Enhance recreational, commercial, subsistence, and traditional fishing opportunities when conducting projects that conserve fish habitat.

Access this [site](#) for a fuller explanation of NFHP National Conservation Priorities.

Climate and ocean change

Restoration project proposals will be evaluated with climate and ocean change dynamics in mind. Projects should identify how they will perform under climate and ocean change scenarios and how they will contribute to ecological resilience over time. Assessment projects that improve our understanding of the threats to fish habitat posed by climate and ocean change are also welcomed. Applicants should cite appropriate climate and ocean change models, assessments, or scientific studies they have used to develop their project.

Project monitoring

All project proposals must include a monitoring plan. At a minimum, projects should describe the implementation monitoring plan designed to document that the project was constructed or completed as proposed. Additional effectiveness monitoring is advised, though the short timeframe available for spending PMEP funds generally does not allow use for long-term effectiveness monitoring. For a

¹ Conserve means restore, enhance, and protect.

good description of the difference between implementation and effectiveness monitoring, please see <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/habitat-conservation/monitoring-and-evaluation-restoration-projects>.

Project monitoring plans will be evaluated on the extent to which they:

1. Appropriately assess the biological, ecological, or other results of the PMEP funded activities.
2. Articulate adaptive management strategies if the monitoring indicates that project objectives are not being met.
3. Identify improvements to existing fish populations, recreational fishing opportunities for the local community of the fish habitat conservation project.
4. Include completion of a monitoring report, which should be submitted at project completion, describing monitoring results and conclusions.

Data collection

If applicable, the spatial extent (lines and polygons) of tidally restored areas should be mapped, and spatial data (kml, kmz, shapefile, or feature class) should be provided to PMEP for inclusion in its Tidally Restored Areas data layer. See the report “U.S. West Coast Mapping of Restored Tidal Areas: Methodology, Results & Recommendations (2019)” for information about project attributes that should be reported along with spatial data.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

PMEP strives to include the full suite of perspectives, knowledge, innovation, and lived experiences of individuals and communities on the West Coast into our work. Projects that are led by or benefit populations that historically have been—and remain — underrepresented in grant making and among practitioners in the field and marginalized in the broader society are welcomed. We acknowledge and respect that there are many ways to define diversity, equity, and inclusion – concepts that can encompass many human differences. For the purposes of this grant, we welcome applications from all groups and are particularly encouraging applications from the following:

- Racial and ethnic groups: Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders, Hispanics/Latinos/Latinas, African Americans and blacks, and American Indians and Alaska Natives

- LGBTQ populations
- People with disabilities
- Women

How to Apply

To apply for funding, complete and submit the online application at <https://form.jotform.com/22318517776164>

NOTE: YOU MUST COMPLETE THE APPLICATION IN ONE SESSION. YOU CANNOT SAVE YOUR ANSWERS AND RETURN TO THE APPLICATION.

See below for an example of the Jotform application questions. **Incomplete or late applications will not be considered. The deadline for project proposal submissions is 5:00 PM PST, Friday, February 17, 2023.**

Notification of awards will be made in spring or summer of 2023, and funds are expected to be awarded in the summer of 2024. Please note that this funding is linked to the federal budget.

If you have any questions, please contact the PMEP Coordinator at (<mailto:info@pacificfishhabitat.org>). Please also copy Jamey Selleck, PMEP Coordinator, at jselleck@nrccorp.com.

Evaluation Criteria

Projects will be evaluated by an objective review panel of PMEP partners, who will consider the following criteria:

1. The capabilities and experience of project proponents.
2. The extent to which the proposed project:
 - a. Relates to/aligns with PMEP priorities.
 - b. Fulfills a local or regional priority that is directly linked to PMEP's Strategic Plan. Please review PMEP's strategic plan at https://www.pacificfishhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/10/Strategic-Plan-2023_2028-FINAL.pdf for more information about its focus and geographic scope.
 - c. Addresses the national conservation priorities established by the NFHP. For a full description of NFHP goals and objectives, see [The National Fish Habitat Action Plan, 2nd edition](#).

- d. Is supported by the findings of PMEP's or NFHP's habitat assessment and aligns, or is compatible with, other conservation plans, such as species recovery plans.
 - e. Addresses the causes and processes behind the decline of fish or fish habitats.
 - f. Effectively engages partners with federal, state, and local governments, Indian tribes, and private entities.
 - g. Identifies appropriate monitoring and evaluation measures and criteria that are compatible with national measures. See details on monitoring plans above.
 - h. Is cost-effective.
 - (A) Provides a well-defined budget linked to deliverables and outcomes.
 - (B) Leverages other funds to implement the project.
 - i. Includes an outreach or education component that includes the local or regional community.
 - j. Benefits underrepresented groups as explained above.
3. The extent to which the project will result in:
- a. Broad ecological benefit.
 - b. Benefits for the habitat of one or more of PMEP's 15 focal species and priority species of the USFWS.
 - c. Increased fish populations in a manner that leads to recreational fishing opportunities for the public.
 - d. Increased public access to land or water for fish and wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities, including visual access.
 - e. Advancement of the conservation of fish and wildlife species that have been identified by a state agency as species of greatest conservation need.
 - f. Where appropriate, advancement of the conservation of fish and fish habitats under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.) and other relevant federal law and state wildlife action plans.
 - g. Promotion of strong and healthy fish habitats so that desired biological communities are able to persist and adapt to stressors such as climate and ocean change.
 - h. Demonstrated results within a reasonable timeframe.
 - i. Recognition and engagement of the full suite of perspectives, knowledge, innovation, and lived experiences of individuals and communities on the West Coast.

Appendix A: Budget Sheet Template

Please attach two budget sheets in .xls or .pdf format to your application. If using .xls, please send one file with two clearly marked sheets within the file. One sheet should outline the detailed project budget and the other should outline funding sources and status of that funding. See below for example formats to follow.

DETAILED PROJECT BUDGET							
PROJECT NAME							
	# Units	Unit	Unit Price	PMEP funds Requested	Matching Funds	Cost Share	Total Project Cost
A. PERSONNEL SERVICES (add rows for each item/person)							
B. FRINGE BENEFITS							
C. TRAVEL							
D. EQUIPMENT							
E. SUPPLIES							
F. CONTRACTUAL							
G. CONSTRUCTION							
H. OTHER							
I. TOTAL DIRECT CHARGES							
J. INDIRECT CHARGES							
TOTAL COST							

COST SHARE and MATCHING FUNDING							
PROJECT NAME							
Funder	Funding type (federal, state, Local, other, program income)	Match or Cost Share?	Cash	In-kind	Status S, P, U (secured, pending, unknown)	Anticipated Award Date	Total
Total							



PMEP Funding Opportunity - FY2024

Please complete and submit this online application to be considered for funding from PMEP and its partners for FY2024.

See the RFP for instructions at: <http://www.pacificfishhabitat.org/funding-opportunities/>

Please direct questions to info@pacificfishhabitat.org.

Deadline for submitting proposals is 5 pm PST Friday, February 17, 2023.

PLEASE NOTE YOU MUST FILL OUT THIS APPLICATION IN ONE SESSION. YOU CANNOT SAVE YOUR WORK. PLEASE COMPLETE YOUR ANSWERS ON A SEPARATE DOCUMENT AND FILL THEM IN AT ONE SETTING.

Project Overview

Name of Project *

Requesting Organization *

Total Amount of Funding Requested from PMEP *

Project Location Description *

For example: Grays Harbor Estuary, Washington

Latitude of project *

Longitude of project *

Please use decimal degrees. Example: -124.017

Datum of Lat/Long Coordinates *

Example: WGS 1984

Name of Individual Submitting Application *

First Name Last Name

Submitter's Email *

example@example.com

Submitter's Phone Number *

Area Code Phone Number

Name of Project Manager (if different from above)

First Name Last Name

Project Manager's Email

example@example.com

Project Manager's Phone Number

Area Code Phone Number

Organization's Address *

Street Address

Street Address Line 2

City

State / Province

Description of requesting organization (250 words) *

Brief summary of your organization. Please also include a description of your organization's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion or how your organization incorporates diversity into its work.

0/250

Summary information

Project type

Note that research projects are not eligible for NFHP funding. Assessments of fish habitats are eligible.

PMEP Region *

Habitat type *

Project purpose: Conservation Actions & Project Outcomes (700 characters including spaces) *

Example: Project actions will restore floodplain habitat connectivity to 270 acres benefiting juvenile listed Oregon Coast ESU Coho Salmon, a FWS Trust Species and PMEP focal species while maintaining agricultural production. Implementing a Water Management Plan will maximize the effectiveness of new tidegates by flooding the property during winter months when salmon and other fish are rearing. The restored channel network and remaining 200+ acres of the project area is estimated to provide habitat sufficient to rear more than 40,000 juvenile coho. With an average return rate of 5%, the Seestrom project area is anticipated to produce an additional 2,000+ coho returning annually to the Coquille Basin. Effectiveness monitoring will be conducted in partnership with ODFW.
0/700

Measurable Goals & Objectives (700 characters including spaces) *

Example: The Seestrom Tidelands Restoration project will restore floodplain habitat connectivity to 270 acres of a working ranch. Project sponsor will replace two failing tidegates, remove one tidegate, reconstruct 19,000 ft of tidal channels, construct 36,000 ft of livestock exclusion fencing, and plant 7,000 native hardwoods and shrubs. Implementing a cooperative Water Management Plan will maximize the effectiveness of new tidegates, improving control for summer grazing. The project is a high priority tidegate removal identified through The Nature Conservancy Optipass tidegate prioritization model which considers climate change. The project addresses Goals 1 and 3 of PMEP's Strategic Plan and falls within a priority smaller estuarine system.
0/700

Project need, benefits, and methods (2500 words) *

Please discuss the project's overall benefits. Explain how the project restores, enhances or protects estuarine and nearshore marine fish habitat. Please organize your response with subheadings: Project need, Objectives, Ecological benefits, Methods and approach. Note that descriptions of benefit to recreational fishing, outreach, and monitoring will be discussed in separate questions. • Project Need (describe why the project is necessary and note any local or regional plans that point to the need for the project). • Objectives (List your project objectives. Objectives are meant to be realistic targets or benchmarks that, if achieved, resolve the project need. Objectives are written in an active tense and use action verbs such as construct, survey, train, establish, repair, conduct, provide). • Ecological benefits (Describe how the project restores, enhances, or protects habitat-forming processes, ecological functions and connectivity. Note how the project will perform under climate and ocean change scenarios and how they will contribute to ecological resilience over time. Note how the project benefits PMEP focal species. • Methods and Approach (Describe what stage of the project PMEP funded is needed for, the activities or methods you will use to achieve the stated objectives, and how the methods demonstrate sound design, appropriate procedures, and accepted fish and wildlife conservation or management principles).
0/2500

Project Description

Brief Monitoring Plan description (250 characters) *

Provide a brief synopsis of your monitoring plan.0/250

Public Access - describe how the project increases public access (250 words) *

Public access includes visual access as well as physical access. Please describe to what extent your project improves, sustains, or provides public access on an ongoing basis, for cultural purposes, or during special events.

0/250

Recreational fishing - describe how the project benefits recreational fishing (250 words) *

Describe how the project benefits fish or invertebrate populations in a manner that leads to recreational fishing opportunities for the public.

0/250

For Estuary projects: Size Class

Is your project associated with a mitigation project? If so, please describe. (250 words)

0/250

Alignment with PMEP and NFHP Objectives

Project Location Uploads

Does the project support PMEP's Goal to restore, enhance, and protect resilient estuarine, and nearshore marine fish habitat? *

Yes

No

PMEP Focal Species benefitted by project (check all that apply) *

- Green sturgeon
- Leopard shark
- Bat ray
- Pacific herring
- Bay shrimp
- Dungeness crab
- California halibut
- English sole
- Starry flounder
- Shiner perch
- Steelhead
- Coho salmon
- Chinook salmon
- Brown rockfish
- Staghorn sculpin

List any species adversely affected by the project and explain how they are affected. (250

words) *

0/250

List USFWS priority species benefited by the project. (250 words) *

comma separated0/250

National Fish Habitat Partnership (NFHP) Goals (select all that apply) *

Priority 1: Conserve waters and habitats where all processes and functions are operating within their expected range or natural variation.

Priority 2: Conserve hydrologic conditions for fish.

Priority 3: Conserve physical and living habitats and features that support viable and sustainable species and/or populations in impacted or at-risk systems.

Priority 4: Reconnect fragmented fish habitats.

Priority 5: Conserve water quality for fish.

Priority 6: Support the structure and function of FHPs.

Priority 7. Enhance recreational, commercial, subsistence, and traditional fishing opportunities when conducting projects that conserve fish habitat.

Will the portion of your project that PMEP may fund be completed within two years? *

Yes

No

Project Readiness

What percentage of the overall project funding is secured? What percentage is pending? *

Monitoring Plan (250 words) *

Describe your monitoring plan. What metrics or criteria will you use to evaluate the success of your project? How will you monitor for ecological outcomes in the short and long term? How will you modify your project if monitoring shows your outcomes are not being met? Will any of your monitoring involve monitoring for juvenile fish or fish habitat associations?
0/250

Are all permits in place for this project? *

Yes

No

Permits status (250 words)

List permits needed, their status, and date of expected receipt (status: received, applied for, pending, not yet applied)
0/250

Total amount of Funding Requested from PMEP *

Budget

Do you have 1:1 non-federal matching funds for this project?

Yes

No

Still exploring options

Total matching funds for proposed project. *

Total Project Cost *

Will this project be fully funded if PMEP funds are received?

Yes

No

Budget narrative. (500 words) *

Describe and justify requested budget items and costs identified on the budget table. Provide sufficient information to show cost effectiveness.

0/500

Project Management

Technical Expertise of project sponsor. Identify the Project Lead of Principal investigator. Please list up to 5 previously completed projects. (500 words) *

Describe the technical expertise for this project. (include key staff and contracted companies and their qualifications). List up to 5 projects completed by the project sponsor or project team.

0/500

Partners (comma separated) and Community Support (500 words) *

List major project partners and their roles. For example, list name of partner organization and their role (funder, technical advisor, landowner, etc.). Include here a brief description of community support for the project.

0/500

Outreach - describe project outreach and results dissemination (250 words) *

Describe outreach activities associated with this project and plans for disseminating project results.0/250