



COAST CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND FOUNDATION

AWARDS POLICY – CONSERVATION FUND

Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the Conservation Fund (the “Fund”) award process. The policy encapsulates the parameters contained in the governing documents as well as recommendations for best practices.

The Finance Policy addresses the process for determining the annual award amount to be allocated to the Conservation Fund for distribution to the Participating First Nations (PFNs). There are separate policies for the Regional Planning Funds and for the Economic Development Fund.

Definitions are in Appendix A.

Conservation Goals

The goal of the Fund is to facilitate conservation of ecosystem integrity within the Project Area by funding projects and initiatives that will achieve the types of goals listed below:

1. Study, document, and interpret ecosystem function and processes within the First Nations’ traditional territories;
2. Enhance Participating First Nations’ ability to apply their knowledge about ecological systems and function to the management of ecosystems, protected areas, lands and resources in the Project Area;
3. Launch collaborative actions that will sustain and enhance the biodiversity, productive capacity and resilience of ecosystems in the Project Area to ensure the sustainability of cultural and traditional resources, such as fish, wildlife and cedar in perpetuity;
4. Maintain, restore or enhance habitats and ecosystem productivity in protected areas to ensure populations of migratory birds are maintained or enhanced, species at risk or of special concern to Participating First Nations are stabilized and enhanced where possible, and productive riparian areas are maintained and restored;
5. Provide Participating First Nations with the capacity to participate effectively in the management of protected areas and ecosystems within the Project Area;
6. Provide Participating First Nations with the capacity to develop a suite of programs or projects to restore damaged habitat in their traditional territories; and
7. Provide Participating First Nations with capacity to maintain a permanent base of jobs – seasonal or full time – to support conservation planning, research, monitoring and interpretation.

Annual Allocation

The annual award amount is allocated among the Participating First Nations based on the Conservation Investments and Initiatives Agreement (CIIA) Schedule G dated November 26, 2008 (refer to column entitled Private Funders Foundation Contribution”).

If a Participating First Nation does not fully utilize their annual award amount, the unused amount continues to be available to that PFN in subsequent years.

Awards Process

Awards will support and empower First Nation communities through a highly collaborative process, reflecting the belief that sustainable change is achieved through partnership and empowerment, not prescriptive solutions.

Awards may be approved for project-specific purposes, or as unrestricted contributions to the operating budget of a Participating First Nation undertaking specifically identified projects eligible for funding.

Minimum Requirements

1. All applications for funding must first be endorsed in writing by the First Nation’s band council or other acceptable governing body.
 2. The First Nation’s endorsement must also confirm it has conducted an evaluation of the Project with results that favourably confirm the viability of conservation benefits that will result from the activities to be conducted with the award funding.
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COAST CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND FOUNDATION

AWARDS POLICY – CONSERVATION FUND

3. Projects must be performed by or on behalf of a Participating First Nation.
4. Projects must conform with legal and compliance obligations of the Fund. Award recipients must be “qualified donees” under applicable Canadian charity law.
5. Projects must be located within the Project Area.
6. Projects must further the Fund’s conservation goals.
7. Any conservation project in a protected area must be consistent with any management plans that have been developed and approved for that protected area.
8. Conservation projects in respect of EBM must be consistent with any legal objectives adopted through Ministerial order or regulatory power.
9. The maximum award for any capital project may not exceed \$250,000.
10. Projects may not be for ineligible activities. Appendix B provides a list of ineligible activities.

Other Funding Considerations

1. Applicants are strongly encouraged to develop projects that utilize award commitments from the Fund as leverage to attract additional funds from other sources.
2. Applicants are strongly encouraged to maximize the value of each award dollar by developing projects with regional value, replicability and efficiencies that will catalyze and strengthen regional cooperation, leverage regional resources and maximize regional access and inclusiveness.
3. Multi-year award commitments will be considered for projects, with disbursements made upon meeting pre-determined milestone targets.
4. Awards may be for planning and capacity development activities.
5. Applicants are encouraged to provide complete applications well in advance of the proposed commencement date for projects, to minimize the risk of incurring expenditure for a project that may not be approved. In exceptional circumstances the Board will approve retroactive funding for reasonable work plan expenditures incurred by applicants up to 3 months prior to the date the application is approved by the Board. In no event will funding be provided for expenditures incurred prior to the date a full and final application is submitted.

Developing Project Applications

Project Concept

Staff are to work closely with First Nations in the early stages of developing project applications. Staff will confirm that a proposal meets the governing document and this policy’s minimum requirements as expeditiously as possible.

While First Nations are encouraged to provide a brief project summary, this step is not a requirement.

Project Application

Staff will develop and maintain application guidelines which are readily accessible to the First Nations. All award applications must include:

- i. Name of applicant First Nation or other organization or individual applying for the award (in which case, name of the Participating First Nation that will endorse the application);
 - ii. Award amount;
 - iii. A brief description of the nature of the conservation issue (need) being addressed and an explanation of how it aligns with the conservation goals of the Fund;
 - iv. Qualitative description of award outcomes and where possible, performance measurements for outcomes; and
 - v. Explanation of the scope of work of the project, activities to be funded, along with specific deliverables of the work for which funding is being requested, and the project time period with start and end dates.
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COAST CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND FOUNDATION AWARDS POLICY – CONSERVATION FUND

Review and Approval

Staff will work with the applicant throughout the review and approval process and expediently address any concerns regarding project eligibility and viability.

Approval of all eligible applications will be based on the following considerations:

- i. Alignment with Fund goals;
- ii. The project's viability and reasonable likelihood of success, with success measurements clearly defined. This evaluation should include the identification and evaluation of all relevant risks associated with the successful undertaking of the project; and
- iii. Whether the project presents notable opportunities or unacceptable risks for the Fund from a high level strategic, leveraging and relationship perspective.

Staff will provide the Project Review Committee with a recommendation to approve or decline the application.

Recommendations will detail:

- i. Key issues and considerations;
- ii. Conditions and estimated timeline for disbursement of funds; and
- iii. Interim and final reporting requirements.

If an application is not approved, due consideration will then be given to the feasibility of funding or facilitating the provision of technical support to the applicant, for the purpose of enabling the re-submission of a successful grant application.

Monitoring, Reporting and Project Evaluation

The applicant will be required to submit regular reports that demonstrate appropriate monitoring and evaluation, including the degree of success in achieving stated objectives as presented in the final award application.

A funding agreement must be signed by CCEFF and the applicant prior to disbursement of any funds. The funding agreement will address:

- i. Disbursements conditions and estimated timeline; and
- ii. Reporting requirements.

Staff will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the outcomes of all funded projects.

Other

The Awards Management Manual will be developed to document operating practices and procedures and updated as required.



COAST CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND FOUNDATION AWARDS POLICY – CONSERVATION FUND

Appendix A Definitions

“Participating First Nation” means a First Nation that has entered into a land use planning agreement covering all of its traditional territory that is a part of the Project Area or a First Nation that has entered into a treaty and has accepted EBM over all of its traditional territory that is part of the Project Area.

All Participating First Nations are listed on the CIIA Schedule G dated November 26, 2008 with amounts in the column entitled “Private Funders Foundation Contribution”.

“Project Area” means the Central Coast and North Coast LRMP areas, the traditional territory of Haida Gwaii, and the portions of the traditional territory of the Haisla and the Gitga’at that are included in the South Kalum LRMP, all as outlined on the map attached to CIIA as Schedule C.

“Sustainable” means an activity that can be sustained over many years, without any significant adverse impacts on the environment and without diminishing the ability of other people, other species or future generations to survive and prosper.



COAST CONSERVATION ENDOWMENT FUND FOUNDATION AWARDS POLICY – CONSERVATION FUND

Appendix B Examples of Eligible and Not-Eligible Activities for Funding

Projects that may be eligible for funding:

1. Science, research, and monitoring for conservation matters;
2. Conservation, protected area, and cultural zone resource planning and management consistent with EBM (Eco-system Based Management);
3. Participation in joint conservation management initiatives;
4. Programs to protect or interpret biophysical or cultural resources in protected areas or areas of specific biological or cultural significance;
5. Monitoring compliance with conservation management plans;
6. Habitat restoration activities;
7. EBM conservation capacity building; and
8. Other conservation and resource management activities consistent with the Foundation's constitution and the Income Tax Act.

Funding will not be approved for any of the following activities:

9. Activities to promote British Columbia, Canada or the Private Funders, provided that this restriction will not prevent the Fund from acknowledging the contributions of British Columbia, Canada and the Private Funders;
10. Any activity inconsistent with any EBM land and resource management objectives, particularly those which have been adopted through Ministerial order or regulatory power;
11. Any financial costs or obligations incurred by First Nations with respect to any consultations with any government or corporation concerning that government or corporation's duty to consult or accommodate, except in support of protection area management or other Conservation management initiatives;
12. Costs associated with meeting statutory obligations of the provincial or federal governments or other entities, except in support of EBM Conservation capacity building for Eligible First Nations. This restriction is intended to prevent the off-loading of statutory obligations, or the costs of meeting statutory obligations, of the provincial or federal governments to First Nations. This restriction is not intended to preclude the funding of negotiations or discussions between Eligible First Nations and the provincial or federal governments regarding the development or implementation of a Conservation Project;
13. Open net-cage finfish aquaculture;
14. Political activities as defined by the Income Tax Act or for any other purpose or activity inconsistent with the Fund's registered charitable status under the Income Tax Act;
15. Any activity inconsistent with section 501(c)(3) and 509(a) of the Internal Revenue Code;
16. Any activity or expenditure for initiatives not consistent with provincial laws, permits, regulations, established policies, orders and/or approvals; and
17. Any activity inconsistent with the Fund's constitution.