

- Partnerships committee has been working to shape up a new funding timeline utilizing the new flexibility afforded by the reauthorization of ACE.
- This does not change anything about the current project proposal process for FY26

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- This would be modified for the FY27 funding cycle and FHPs would run their RFP process Sept-November of 2026.
- What this would mean is that there would be a large gap in time between the FY26 RFP process (Sept 2024 – Jan 2025) until the next RFP process for FY27 (Sept 2026) – THIS DOES NOT MEAN A GAP IN FUNDING OF ANY KIND.
- In this new funding timeline we would need RFP process to be completed by ~mid-November (could open as early as you like)
- Board review would occur mid-Nov – mid-Feb and would be submitted to Interior
- We anticipate, based on the last several fiscal years, to get a Federal budget between February and April. So once the Secretary approves the project list (90 days after 2/10 submission would be no later than 5/10), awards could be processed in June or July for that same FY.

FY26 Ranked project List and funding amounts

Rank	Project Name	Funding Requested	Cumulative Ask
1	Operations	\$125,000.00	\$125,000.00
1	5- CA Fish Passage Structure Assessment: Evaluation of Effectiveness and Durability	\$88,920.00	\$213,920.00
2	6- Last Dam: Restoring Steelhead Rearing Habitat through Barrier Removal on Stuart Creek	\$45,000.00	\$258,920.00
3	1- Coastal Del Norte Habitat Restoration Response Monitoring	\$44,839.44	\$303,759.44
4	4- NF Ryan Fish Passage Project	\$36,340.00	\$340,099.44
5	7- Little Grass Valley Creek Fish Passage Improvement	\$99,325.00	recommended, likely not able to fund
6	3- SPAWN's Feasibility Study for Fish Passage within the Nicasio Reservoir	\$80,000.00	not recommending for funding
7	2- North Fork Schooner Gulch Culvert Replacement	\$41,959.70	not recommending for funding

Project Descriptions

Rank #1- Operations

Ask: \$125,000

Requesting the maximum 125k in operations funding for FY25 could allow the Forum to advance many goals discussed in the Forum Work Plan. Examples include plan and execute more workshops in fall 2025 and spring-summer 2026, fund travel assistance for members to attend meetings, host an outreach event with a Forum meeting, or hire a communications specialist.

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The committee can re-evaluate the ask in FY27 after assessing need (i.e. we don't have to request as much in future if project funding is higher priority).

Rank #1- CA Fish Passage Structure Assessment: Evaluation of Effectiveness and Durability

Ask: \$88,920.00

This fish passage assessment will review a representative subset of completed hardened ramp and technical fishway fish passage structures throughout California to identify key factors resulting in successful projects and lessons learned that can improve future projects. The project will be conducted by a project team comprised of experienced fish passage engineers, researchers and technicians guided by a Technical Advisory Committee. The results of this fish passage assessment, conducted through interviews and site visits about performance criteria, durability and O&M at selected sites, will be synthesized into a Technical Report with conclusions and recommendations.

Committee Consideration: PSMFC has indicated we have 60k extra in operations funding that should be spent by fall 2026. Perhaps that could go to this or another project.

Rank #2- Last Dam: Restoring Steelhead Rearing Habitat through Barrier Removal on Stuart Creek

Ask: \$45,000.00

The proposed project puts into action 100% design plans to remove Bouverie Dam - the final man-made barrier to unimpeded fish passage on Stuart Creek, a major tributary to Sonoma Creek in Sonoma County known for its important steelhead spawning and rearing potential. Channel incision and scouring below the spillway has made the dam a depth, velocity, and leap barrier to high quality salmonid rearing habitat and cool climate refugia pools in the creek's upper reaches. The dam will be replaced by a stream simulation reach with hydraulic and sediment transport characteristics that support recent downstream spawning habitat restoration.

Rank #3- Coastal Del Norte Habitat Restoration Response Monitoring

Ask: \$44,839.44

This project evaluates the effectiveness of salmonid recovery actions by monitoring habitat and biological responses in the Smith River Plain's coastal tributaries. The Smith River Alliance aims to restore natural hydrology, reconnect floodplains, and improve habitats for fish and wildlife. Monitoring will focus on areas where barriers to fish passage have been remediated or removed, in collaboration with other agencies. The project will also contribute to monitoring the summer adult salmonid population in the Smith River.

Rank #4- NF Ryan Fish Passage Project

Ask: \$36,340.00

This project will address a fish passage barrier that is the last man-made barrier in the Ryan Creek watershed. By removing a blown-out culvert and rock weir, this project will provide juvenile Coho and steelhead access to 1.0 miles of summer habitat and winter refugia that is

currently inaccessible. The project is located on a tributary to Ryan Creek, colloquially known as NF Ryan Creek, which is part of the Outlet Creek watershed, known as the longest migration corridor for Coho salmon in California.

Rank #5- Little Grass Valley Creek Fish Passage Improvement

Ask: \$99,325.00

The project consists of removing one existing undersized and failed culvert (removal is complete) and stabilization of 5000 cubic yards of decomposed granite soil. The culvert will be replaced with an 18' CMP multiplate culvert or suitable alternative that will allow the natural channel width to be maintained through the structure. Fill depth prevents installation of an arch per manufacturer. Restoration at the project site will restore access to at least 5 miles of potentially suitable anadromous salmonid habitat upstream of the crossing. An identified suitable structure alternative includes a bridge with an approximate 96' span (precast) and abutments (precast).

(Not recommended) Rank #6- SPAWN's Feasibility Study for Fish Passage within the Nicasio Reservoir

Ask: \$80,000

Our feasibility study of the Nicasio Reservoir seeks to undertake an assessment and cost-benefit analysis of fish passage strategies around the Seager Dam structure. This would be done in order to reconnect habitat between Lagunitas Creek and the headwaters of Nicasio Creek above the dam. Nicasio Creek and its tributary Halleck Creek were once significant spawning and rearing streams for coho and steelhead, prior to the installation of Seager Dam. These headwater creeks can likely still support salmonids, so our study is aimed at determining the feasibility for undertaking fish passage strategies around the dam.

(Not recommended) Rank #7- North Fork Schooner Gulch Culvert Replacement

Ask: \$41,959.70

North Fork Schooner Gulch. Access is a private road of Schooner Gulch County Road that crosses North Fork Schooner Gulch. In 2016, a severe storm washed out the 4-foot diameter culvert, resulting in no vehicular access to seven properties. Replacing the road crossing on NF Schooner Gulch will provide access to 0.7 miles of salmonid habitat, benefiting threatened North Coast Steelhead Trout. CDFW monitored the stream in 2018 and observed several age classes of steelhead within the first 0.15 miles of stream.

Extra 60k

Sandi putting in for WCB, rolling concept proposal, hearing preliminary review in about a month. Starting earlier with funding in hand. Van mentions that the workshops are a good use of money. Van recommends funding for updating the paper form to Survey 123.

NFHP Story Map funding application due soon

The governance committee supports that the Forum will apply to develop a StoryMap using NFHP MSCG funding, if awarded the StoryMap will be developed in the fall when Holly returns from leave. The proposal is posted below.

This StoryMap will feature two projects supported through CFPF which involve the local community and youth to monitor and improve riparian habitat and fish passage: one in a wild watershed, and one in an urban watershed. The StoryMap will start with the Mid-Klamath watershed council, which uses youth field crews to conduct snorkel monitoring and hand-manipulation of the riverbed to improve passage on the Klamath River. The StoryMap will focus on the story of youth doing science. Themes will include how snorkel surveys are used, how natural barriers to passage are remediated, and what the youth learn about the watershed. Funding from NFHP/CFPF to support these efforts will be highlighted. The Mid Klamath Watershed Council has secured high-resolution imagery of the project which will be utilized in the StoryMap.

The StoryMap will then travel south to Richmond, a highly urbanized and disturbed neighborhood in the North Bay area, where the story will focus on the Watersheds Project's work to restore Wildcat creek through community input and engagement. The StoryMap will highlight the degradation of the watershed, the citizen science efforts to clean and monitor the creek, and the ongoing and future plans for restoration. The project will focus on the community connection to the watershed. Actions highlighted will include community stakeholder meetings, school visits, community development of interpretive signage and community development of a children's book about finding fish in the creek. Funding from NFHP/CFPF will be highlighted. The Watershed Project and CFPF have secured high resolution images and video of the project which will be utilized in the StoryMap.

The StoryMap will connect viewers with relevant tools and information on fish passage best practices, such as identifying barriers to passage in the CFPF's Passage Assessment Database, monitoring of stream conditions and fish counts, and the benefits of a healthy watershed to fish and community. The StoryMap will be prominently featured on the CFPF website. Its development will encourage engagement consistent with our Strategic Objective #7: Implement education and outreach activities, targeting both the public and fish passage practitioners.

Committee Decisions: Date and location for 2025 in-person SC meeting (All)

In-Person Steering Committee Meeting

Most suggestions were for late fall/winter. Early December seems to be a good time, maybe we should stick with that.

Date for In-Person meeting: **Thursday December 4th, Thursday December 5th**

Location Suggestions:

North- Area with access to Klamath for site tour? Limited in places to go. Great tour but difficult to access with limited meeting places. Klamath Core staff is dedicated to give

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tours. Yreka or Etna are the only places with accommodation. Focusing on Yreka may be a better option. Possible venues:

- The Yurok Tribal community center (basketball court)
- Tribal offices
- USFWS office in Yreka
- CDFW office in Yreka
- Scott Valley watershed council

Anna will talk to Brian Johnson, Marisa will talk to Bob, Sandi will talk to Damon.

South- Santa Barbara San Diego 2027

Notes on match scoring (All)

The committee discussed changes to the guidance for scoring match for project applications. There has been little specific guidance given, reviewers recommended providing more structure to determine how match is scored.

The committee recommendation is to use a bracket system (for example, five brackets of possible score of 1-10, brackets 1-4 going up to 100 percent, and a 5th bracket for match over 100%. The coordinator will confer with the review committee and implement these changes for the next RFP.

Match Ratio (nonfederal: federal)	Project Score
TBD	1-2
TBD	2-4
TBD	4-6
TBD	6-8
>100%	9-10