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East Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District
Grants Program
2022 Partners in Conservation (PIC)
Deadline: 1/3/2022

Columbia Riverkeeper
Columbia River Education and Monitoring Project

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\$ 50,000.00 Requested
\$ 100,874 Total Project Cost

Submitted: 12/13/2021 4:52:03 PM (Pacific)

Project Contact

Columbia Riverkeeper

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Telephone

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EIN

Executive

Director

Application Questions top



Organization Background

1. Briefly describe your organization

Include your mission, primary programs and constituents, number of board members, and number of paid staff.

Columbia Riverkeeper's (Riverkeeper) mission is to protect and restore the Columbia River and all life connected to it, from the headwaters to the Pacific Ocean. Our vision is a Columbia River that unites people to fight for clean water, abundant fish and wildlife, and our climate. Our constituents are people who use or care about the health of the Columbia River. We have over 16,000 members, the majority in Multnomah County, and nine board members and 17 paid staff.

Our primary program areas: (1) inspire people to care for the Columbia through science and education; (2) promote justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion in environmental decisions and our own actions; and (3) recover salmon, improve water quality, and protect habitat.

2. Please indicate the type of organization?

- Non-profit (501)(c)(3)
Education (school, school district, college)
Public agency (city, county, other govt.)
Native American tribe
Non-profit without (501)(c)(3) status that retains a fiscal agent

Other

3. How many years has your organization been in operation?

The number of years since your organization was founded.

21

4. What is the approximate annual operating budget of your organization?

For large institutions, such as universities or cities, please provide the amount for your department or program.

\$2,638,000

5. Has your organization been awarded a PIC grant previously?

Yes

No

6. Does your organization have an equity and/or non-discrimination policy or statement?

If yes, please include in a separate PDF document uploaded in the Documents tab.

Yes

No

7. If you have a fiscal agent to receive funds on your behalf, please provide the name of the organization, the Executive Director and contact information.

A fiscal agent is different from the lead applicant. When using a fiscal agent, you must provide a letter of support indicating their willingness to serve in that function. If no fiscal agent, please write N/A

N/A

Your Project

8. Project Location

Provide the physical address of all locations where the project will take place (or nearest intersection). If no locations, please write N/A.

N/A

9. Identify the watershed(s) where project activities will occur (check all that apply):

Columbia Slough

Columbia River

Johnson Creek

Sandy River

Willamette River

10. Identify the primary natural resource issue addressed by the project (select only one based on how the majority of the funds will be used).

Please see the PIC Guidelines in the library tab or on the EMSWCD website for more detailed information about each of these categories.

Habitat Restoration / Monitoring

Naturescaping / Stormwater Management / Urban Forestry

Sustainable Agriculture / Urban Food Gardening

Environmental Education for Youth / Adults

11. Provide a short description of the project.

The project will: 1) work with Yakama Nation to engage diverse communities fishing near Bradford Island, the Pacific Northwest's newest proposed Superfund Site; 2) monitor harmful algal blooms and E. coli at nine popular beaches, and share results in English and Spanish; 3) offer job-skills training to paid interns. The project taps into our experience working with Tribal Nations, public engagement, toxic pollution, applying DEI practices in recruitment, hiring and outreach, and water sampling.

Project Details

12. Provide a statement of the conservation problem your project is addressing, what has been accomplished to date by your organization, and how the project furthers one or more of the EMSWCD grant program goals.

The grant program goals are described in the PIC Guidelines.

Problem: Toxic fish

Bradford Island, located near the Bonneville dam, is one of the most popular fishing spots in Multnomah County. For over 40 years, the U.S. government dumped lead, mercury, and PCBs in and along the Columbia's shores at Bradford Island. The Oregon Health Authority warns people not to eat resident fish in the vicinity due to high levels of toxic pollution, including cancer-causing PCBs. Many anglers are unaware of the advisory.

Problem: Lack of water quality data

Harmful algal blooms that produce dangerous toxins are becoming more common on the Columbia. They can severely harm ecosystems, economies, and health. Toxic blooms can sicken or even kill people and animals. Pets and small children are particularly susceptible due to their small size and likelihood of ingesting water. E. coli is a water quality concern because fecal bacteria can cause nausea, diarrhea, and infections. Yet, no local or state agencies regularly monitor swim beaches on the Columbia River or Sandy River, despite the heavy usage.

Accomplishments:

In 2018, Yakama Nation encouraged Riverkeeper to engage in Bradford Island cleanup because Tribal Members and diverse communities use this area for subsistence and recreational fishing. With support from PIC, Riverkeeper worked in solidarity with Yakama Nation, conducting outreach and education to increase public awareness of this serious environmental justice issue. These efforts culminated in a 2021 proposal by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to add Bradford Island and surrounding waters to the Superfund List. We anticipate a listing in spring 2022. Superfund listing opens the door for critical public engagement opportunities in the stalled cleanup process.

We exceeded our deliverables in the last Scope of Work. For Bradford cleanup, Riverkeeper secured five media stories on contamination, including two feature stories on OPB; featured Bradford in 42 social media posts, including videos and podcasts in English and Spanish; educated thousands of people; and promoted our "Forgotten Toxic Waste Dump" webinar, featuring staff from Yakama Nation's Fisheries Program (viewed by over 300 people on YouTube). For water quality monitoring, Swim Guide grows in popularity every year, as river users continue to demand water quality information. Local usage increased by 20% in 2021, with over 77,000 views of Columbia and Sandy River E.coli data.

The project furthers the District's Goals. First, for Goal 2, the project engages diverse audiences in a dialogue on conservation issues and offers internships designed to expose diverse youth to conservation. Second, by collecting and sharing data in Spanish/English, we educate river users about water quality at popular swim locations. Finally, the project advances Goal 6 by increasing conservation benefits for Tribal communities and diverse populations experiencing disparities in environmental health, education, and amenities.

13. Provide the details of your project, including objectives and specific activities you plan to carry out with grant funds, estimated timeline and anticipated outcomes, including the project benefits to the community and/or watershed.

Your answer should provide a narrative description of your project work plan (a separate application section in table format). For on-the-ground projects, please provide a detailed site description including size, habitat, and condition.

Bradford Island Education and Outreach

The project gets at the root cause of a stalled-out toxic cleanup: the U.S. government is not engaging the people most impacted by toxic pollution at Bradford Island and opportunities to weigh in on cleanup. The project builds on the success of Riverkeeper's work in solidarity with Yakama Nation and provides critical public education and outreach about Oregon's newest proposed Superfund Site.

Timeline: 6/1/22 to 5/30/24

Specific Activities:

- Create educational materials in English and Spanish highlighting the latest information on pollution, fish advisories, cleanup, and public engagement. We anticipate new opportunities for public engagement now that the site has been proposed on the Superfund List.
- Develop and implement an education and outreach plan that includes community forums, community group presentations, Spanish language podcasts, personal outreach, earned media, and social media.

Project Outcomes:

- Six radio and podcast shows: We will feature Bradford Island education and action opportunities on our bilingual (Spanish and English) radio show and podcast.
- Five community meetings: We will host or share information on Bradford Island cleanup at three community forums (web-based or in-person depending on COVID) and two community group gatherings in the EMSWCD service area. The forums will include a speaker panel sharing different perspectives on the importance of toxic pollution cleanup, challenges, and how people can get involved.
- Two factsheets and accompanying videos: We will develop and disseminate culturally appropriate information on pollution and how to engage in cleanup decisions.
- Eight site visits: We will conduct one-on-one outreach with Bradford Island anglers.

- Strong media: We will secure eight media stories and produce regular social media content.

Community Benefits: greater public awareness of toxic fish; improved health of fishing families because people will consume less toxic fish; increased environmental literacy on natural resource management, contamination, and public decision-making processes; and a more robust cleanup process that includes diverse stakeholders.

Water Quality Monitoring and Education

Riverkeeper will fill data and information gaps by monitoring for potentially toxic algal blooms and testing E. coli at popular recreation areas. We can boost confidence and promote safe swimming and fishing by posting results in English and Spanish on the free SwimGuide app, and educating the public and alerting agencies when concerns arise.

Riverkeeper will collect E. coli samples and conduct harmful algal bloom visual assessments at nine river locations in the EMSWCD service area. Key activities include making the data readily available to the public and alerting appropriate agencies and land managers (Oregon Health Authority, Dept. of Environmental Quality, city, county, port) when potentially toxic blooms are identified and when E. coli levels exceed safe limits. Riverkeeper will immediately post results on the Swim Guide website and app, now used by eight million people. We will also educate the public on harmful algal blooms and E.coli and how to stay safe.

Our most commonly asked question is “Is it safe to swim?” This monitoring will help to answer that question. While E. coli levels are typically within safe limits, every year there are multiple exceedances, and currently, there is no regular monitoring of harmful algal blooms at these beaches. The sampling timeline is June to October—the months of highest river use and peak algal blooms.

The project outcomes are:

- E.coli water quality data for nine popular swim and recreation locations in the EMSWCD service area made available to the public via a free smartphone app and website (two times/month from June-October).
- Monitoring and visual assessments for harmful algal blooms at popular recreation sites
- Communication with Oregon Health Authority, Dept. of Environmental Quality and land managers on problematic algal blooms and E.coli exceedances.
- Public education: We will create social media content in both Spanish and English educating the public on harmful algal blooms, E.coli, how to identify potentially toxic blooms, and how to stay safe when recreating.
- Job skills training for technician interns who will learn to conduct visual harmful algal bloom assessments, collect water quality samples, and manage lab processes, developing technical skills that will serve future employment in conservation.

The community benefits include an informed public that can make data-driven decisions on swimming, fishing, and recreating and increased public health due to warnings about harmful algal blooms and E. coli pollution.

14. Indicate your estimated project start date.

MM/DD/YYYY
06/01/2022

15. Indicate your estimated project completion date.

MM/DD/YYYY
05/31/2024

16. Describe your project's key partners. What role do they have in implementing the project and why were they selected as partners?

Include specific information related to funding, time and expertise the partners will contribute to the project. Letters of support should be included in the application from those identified.

The project features three government partners: Yakama Nation, Oregon Health Authority (OHA), and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), all of which provided letters of support.

Riverkeeper will partner with Yakama Nation to achieve less toxic pollution and safer fish consumption at the Bradford Island site. Yakama Nation will provide technical expertise on the toxic pollution cleanup and remediation efforts. Yakama Nation also provides cultural expertise on how the site is used by fishers and the quantity of fish consumed. We have been working closely with Yakama Nation on Bradford cleanup since 2018.

Riverkeeper will partner with OHA and Oregon DEQ for algal assessments and E. coli monitoring. OHA will provide technical expertise and guidelines for visual assessments, and Riverkeeper will report field results to both OHA and DEQ. DEQ will provide in-kind E. coli testing equipment (incubator, IDEXX sealer). DEQ provides Riverkeeper equipment and we follow an approved sampling protocol and share data with DEQ and other state and federal agencies, as well as the public. DEQ and OHA recognize the value of community science education and data collection.

17. What is the total number of people (non-staff) that will be served by, will participate in, or otherwise will directly benefit from your project?

50,000 People benefitting from project

50,000.00 TOTAL

18. What percentage of the total number of people served/participants/beneficiaries will be from within EMSWCD's service area?

Where this is not known, please provide your best estimate.

100 Percent from within EMSWCD service area

100.00 TOTAL

19. Does your project involve or primarily benefit Black, Indigenous or other communities of color, low-income communities, or other historically marginalized groups? If so, describe the benefit and the level of their involvement in the project. (Please answer to the extent this information has not already been provided in your answers to the questions above).

For example: Does the project management team include people of color? Are the project participants or volunteers from low-income communities? Are community disparities addressed in the project, such as access to nature, or environmental education.

Yes. The project will serve approximately 1000 people (approximately 60% BIPOC) who eat resident fish. This includes: Native Americans, Latina/o/x, Asian American, and Eastern European Americans, which eat a substantial amount of fish from contaminated waters in East Multnomah County. Riverkeeper will develop high-quality educational materials in English and Spanish that explain the latest science on Bradford Island's toxic pollution and provide opportunities to make a difference. The project will also serve thousands of people who view our water quality monitoring data in English and Spanish on the Swim Guide app or on our website.

BIPOC community engagement: First, the project will partner with Yakama Nation and Tribal fishers to advocate for more effective cleanup. Like the last grant term, Yakama Nation will provide guidance on culturally appropriate materials and outreach efforts. Second, the project involves a deep level of involvement by Latina/o/x communities through relationships built by years of community engagement from Riverkeeper's senior community organizer.

Organization experience: Riverkeeper has forged strong partnerships with Tribal Nations, organizations, and individuals since our founding in 2000. We partner extensively with Tribal Nations and individuals on policy issues to protect clean water and salmon habitat. We are currently partnering with Yakama Nation to engage Tribal youth on Hanford Nuclear Site cleanup decisions.

In 2017, Riverkeeper hired a full-time Senior Community Organizer, Ubaldo Hernández, to focus on outreach with Latina/o/x communities. Ubaldo launched a Spanish-language radio show/podcast about the Columbia, teaches bilingual students, and founded Comunidades, a Latina/o/x-led organization fiscally-sponsored by Riverkeeper. In November 2021, Riverkeeper hired a full-time Field Manager, Ana Molina, who is bilingual (English/Spanish) and previously worked as the Statewide Environmental Justice Manager for Beyond To

20. Have the required permits been obtained for the project?

- Yes
- No
- Not Required

Project Evaluation and Sustainability

21. How will the success of your project and its impact be determined? Describe how you approach project evaluation, who is responsible for conducting evaluation, and how past evaluation has influenced your programs/projects?

We will evaluate the project impacts against clear metrics. Our Legal and Program Director is responsible for conducting the evaluation, working with project staff, and ensuring input from partners. Our Board of Directors conducts a higher-level evaluation of each program area. We evaluate project progress on a monthly basis and conduct a comprehensive review at the end of the grant period.

We will evaluate the project with the following metrics: number of meetings, radio programs, factsheets, and media stories; number of people reached; number of BIPOC people or underserved communities reached; hours of community outreach and educational instruction; number of events; number of water quality samples processed; number of sites sampled; and number of visual assessments completed; and number of Swim Guide users.

Beyond the metrics, what does success look like? For Bradford Island, success means that we: engage diverse communities in cleanup decisions; work in solidarity with Tribal Nations; publicize a serious pollution problem and how it impacts people

that depend on locally-caught fish for economic and cultural reasons; and develop leadership skills. For E. coli sampling and HABs monitoring, success means that more people are swimming and fishing in the Columbia River and tributaries in the EMSWCD service because they are confident the river is safe from E. coli pollution and toxic algae.

22. Is this project site-based?

Site-based projects take place at a specific location and involve on-the-ground activities. Non-site-based projects are primarily for educational and/or capacity building purposes. If both, please indicate. Answer will direct you to next question(s).

- Yes (site-based)
- No (not site-based)
- Both site based and non-site based

23. For on-the-ground project, please indicate how the site and project elements will be protected and managed over the long term to ensure that outcomes are sustained?

-answer not presented because of the answer to #22-

24. For education, capacity building, and other non-site-based activities, describe how your efforts will be sustained or expanded upon after the grant period is over?

For example, what can partners and beneficiaries do to adopt and continue educational programs, what measures have or will be taken to secure long-term funding?

Riverkeeper is a place-based group that works to develop and maintain relationships. The Bradford Island component of the project is designed to be a two-year effort that builds on the success of the last grant cycle and culminates in new members of the public engaged in river cleanup decisions. Superfund listing opens up new, critical public engagement opportunities. In the highly unlikely event that EPA does not proceed with its proposal to list the site, we expect an ongoing need to keep this forgotten toxic waste dump on the public radar. Regardless of whether the site is listed, cleanup is required under the law. Riverkeeper will also continue to engage with fishers and Yakama Nation. This will include: working with Yakama Nation to assess the success of the cleanup efforts and sharing the cleanup results with all people engaged in this project.

While Oregon Health Authority does not do any sampling for harmful algal blooms on their own, they value individuals and organizations conducting visual assessments as a way to help them understand the extent and scale of toxic of algal blooms. OHA can then engage land managers to take action, warn the public when necessary, and direct monitoring activities. Trained observers and an informed public that know what to look for can take personal action to protect themselves and alert managers to issues that arise. Riverkeeper will continue to fill gaps in information by monitoring and sampling popular swimming and fishing locations. This work is important to our members, the majority of which live in Multnomah County. We will continue to seek public and private foundation grants to support water quality monitoring.

25. Does your project directly attempt to build resilience to climate change impacts, mitigate climate change through carbon sequestration or reducing emissions, and/or educate the public about climate change. If so, briefly explain.

Your response to this question will not impact your opportunity for funding. We are seeking to learn more about how applicants are responding to the climate crisis.

Not directly. Riverkeeper's work focuses strongly on climate change, but this project is focused on water quality monitoring and toxics education. However, harmful algal blooms are directly linked to climate change. We can expect algal blooms to increase in duration and intensity as temperatures rise. Identification of blooms and education on how to protect people, pets, and the river will become increasingly important.

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Project Revenues	Cash Match Secured	Cash Match Pending	In-kind Match Source	EMSWCD	Total
Grants	\$ 10,000.00	\$ 20,000.00		\$ 50,000.00	\$ 80,000.00
Memberships/other cash contributions	\$ 15,388.00				\$ 15,388.00
Volunteer labor/donated services (in-kind)		\$ 0.00	\$ 1,142.00		\$ 1,142.00
Donated supplies and equipment (in-kind)	\$ 0.00		\$ 4,344.00		\$ 4,344.00
Total	\$ 25,388.00	\$ 20,000.00	\$ 5,486.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,874.00
Project Expenses	Cash Match Expenses	In-kind Match Expenses	EMSWCD Request	Total	
Project Management/Staff (payroll)	\$ 36,948.00		\$ 36,986.00	\$ 73,934.00	

Contracted Services			\$ 2,400.00	\$ 2,400.00
Travel (\$.56/mile) or other transportation			\$ 1,232.00	\$ 1,232.00
Materials, Supplies and Equipment	\$ 1,770.00	\$ 4,344.00	\$ 2,860.00	\$ 8,974.00
Volunteer labor (\$28.54/hr) / donated services (in-kind)		\$ 1,142.00		\$ 1,142.00
Pre-implementation				\$ 0.00
Other expenses	\$ 750.00			\$ 750.00
Administrative/Indirect Costs	\$ 5,920.00		\$ 6,522.00	\$ 12,442.00
Total	\$ 45,388.00	\$ 5,486.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,874.00

Percentage of Total Project Expenses requested from EMSWCD 49.57 %

Budget Narrative

The two-year project budget of \$100,874 (PIC and matching funds) includes the following expenses.

Payroll – Riverkeeper’s Legal and Program Director, will serve as project director to ensure project implementation and review. Lauren will also continue to serve as the organization’s liaison with Yakama Nation’s Bradford Island cleanup team. Water Quality Director, Lorri Epstein, will serve as the water quality monitoring manager, including the hiring process for and supervision of the water quality technician interns. Senior Community Organizer, Ubaldo Hernández, will serve as the Bradford Island outreach project manager and lead the Bradford Island outreach, with support from Field Manager Ana Molina. Communications Director, Liz Terhaar, will manage all email and web, and Communications Coordinator, Karina Sahlin, will support with social media communications used to recruit volunteers, promote events, and highlight accomplishments. The expenses include funds to pay for water quality technicians. Our goal in paying technicians is to provide an opportunity for applicants who cannot afford to volunteer.

Contracted Services – The project will use contractors for graphic design and Spanish translation.

Travel – The expenses include \$1,232 for mileage for training, education, and collecting samples.

Materials – The expenses include printing, room rental, light food, communications outreach, lab supplies, and in-kind E. coli sampling equipment. Previously DEQ provided consumable lab supplies for E. coli monitoring, but budget cuts have prevented them from doing so this year. DEQ will still provide monitoring equipment but lab supplies (\$2,860) are included in this request.

Volunteer Labor - We will also utilize 40 hours of volunteer time to complete projects.

The grant duration is two years. For PIC funds, the project would spend \$25,000 in year one and \$25,000 in year two.

The two-year project revenue includes:

Secured funding - 11th Hour Foundation \$10,000*; Riverkeeper membership, \$15,388; DEQ in-kind materials and supplies, \$4,344; and in-kind volunteers, \$1,142.

Projected funding – Bullitt Foundation 2022 \$10,000*; EMSWCD 2022-2024, \$50,000; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2023-2024, \$10,000*

* = part of a larger grant

Project Work Plan [top](#)

Project Work Plan

Project Work Plan	Activities	Timeline	Outcomes/Deliverables
1	Collect and process water quality (E. coli) samples and complete harmful algal	June to September 2022,	Water quality data for E. coli at popular swim and recreation locations in the EMSWCD

	blooms visual assessment at 9 sites in the EMSWCD service area	June to September 2023	service area
2	Water quality data for E. coli and harmful algal blooms at popular swim and recreation locations in the EMSWCD service area	June to September 2022, June to September 2023	Real-time data available to the public via a free smart phone app and Riverkeeper's website
3	Share water quality data with relevant municipalities on a monthly basis and submit data to Oregon's water quality database; share harmful algal bloom observations with Oregon Health Authority	June to September 2022, June to September 2023	Water quality data supplied to Oregon for longer-term analysis of whether the river is meeting water quality standards
4	Draft communications plan to increase the public profile of Bradford Island cleanup	June to July 2022	Strong earned and social media focused on storytelling throughout the grant term
5	Create and distribute two fact sheets on Bradford Island and accompanying videos	August 2022 and June 2023	Culturally appropriate fact sheets and accompanying videos in English and Spanish
6	Design and execute five community meetings on Bradford Island	June and October 2022, May, August, and October 2023	Bradford Island education at three community forums and two community group meetings
7	Record six radio shows/podcasts that include Bradford Island information	Quarterly throughout the grant term	Outreach and education via Spanish and English radio shows/podcasts
8	Eight site visits to Bradford Island area to conduct one-on-one angler outreach	June to September 2022; June to September 2023	Outreach and education on fish consumption health advisories and Bradford Island cleanup
9	Eight media stories and produce regular social media content on Bradford Island cleanup	June 2022 to May 2024	Outreach and education on Bradford Island fish advisories, environmental justice, and cleanup shared through diverse media outlets and Columbia Riverkeeper social media
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Documents [top](#)

Documents Requested *

Organizational budget, including prior and current fiscal years. For large institutions such as universities or cities, please provide a program budget.

Biographies of key staff and/or contractors (one paragraph each)

List of Board members and their affiliations. Please indicate how long each member has served. If your organization does not have a board, please provide a list of Steering Committee members or other oversight committee members.

Required? **Attached Documents ***



[Organizational Budget](#)



[Biographies of Key Staff](#)



[List of Board Members](#)

Letters of support from key partners. A letter from your fiscal agent is required if applicable. Limit: 4 letters. These should be contained in one PDF document.



[Letters of Support](#)

Photographs of the site if it is site-based or site drawings, project design, etc. Limit: 4 photos. Photos should be contained in one PDF document.

Equity and/or non-discrimination policy or statement (include a short description of any efforts your organization is making to address and/or increase understanding of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion issues).

[Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement](#)

Project Budget: expense detail
[download template](#)



[Project Budget: expense detail](#)

Project location(s) and site maps, if applicable (map of point location(s) and/or map of project areas with defined boundary). Use Google Maps or similar map service. This is a required document if you have a site-based project.

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