Habitat Action Grant funding guidelines

August 2018

Purpose

These guidelines provide essential information for all applicants seeking funding from the NSW Recreational Fishing Trusts in 2018/19 and beyond.

Recreational Fishing Trusts

Background

When fishing in NSW waters, both freshwater and saltwater, recreational fishers are required by law to pay the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee. All money raised by the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee is placed into the Recreational Fishing Trusts and spent on **improving recreational fishing in NSW**. These trusts are **overseen by two committees made up of recreational fishers** - one for saltwater and one for freshwater.

A comprehensive angler survey of the Recreational Fishing Trusts, completed in 2013, indicated widespread support for the current range of programs that receive funding from the Trusts.

The Habitat Action Grant program has been running in its current form since 2008. The Habitat Action Grant program is a devolved grant program directing money raised from the NSW Recreational Fishing Fee toward projects that improve local fish habitats across NSW. Rehabilitation of fish habitat provides long-term sustainable benefits for native fish stock and in turn provides substantial benefits for NSW recreational fishers.

Who can apply?

Anyone who is interested in **rehabilitating fish habitats** in NSW can apply for a Habitat Action Grant including individual recreational fishers, fishing clubs and organisations, educational institutions, councils, community groups, individuals and so on. Joint applications are also encouraged.

What types of projects are funded?

These grants aim to enhance and rehabilitate degraded recreational fish habitat through a range of on-ground works such as those listed below. If you need some project ideas, go to the Habitat Action Grant page on the NSW DPI website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hag or contact local staff listed below.

Project type	
rehabilitation of riparian lands	reinstating native vegetation on river banks, wetlands, mangrove forests, saltmarsh; stock management on riparian lands through fencing
removal of exotic vegetation from waterways	removal of smothering vines, willows, privet, camphor laurel, osage orange etc and replacing them with native vegetation
bank stabilisation works	installing "rock fillets", environmentally friendly seawalls, soft erosion control works (coir logs or brush bundles), or natural wood material (such as pins, snags or engineered log jams)
removal or modification of barriers to fish passage and reinstatement of natural flow regimes	removal of disused roads, weirs and floodgates; replacement of poor functioning structures with bridges, improved culverts; improved management of floodgates; installation of fishways
re-snagging waterways with natural timber structure	installing natural woody habitat (snags), engineered log jams, "fish hotels"
new technologies	irrigation off-take screens

How long can projects run for?

Projects should aim to run for 1 year. The starting date is the date that the contracts have been co-signed by both the applicant and NSW DPI. This will usually occur early in the calendar year.

Allowance will be provided for conditions out of the applicant's control such as flooding or drought where survivorship of plantings or stability of instream works will be put at risk if undertaken in unsuitable conditions. Requests for project variations will need to be made in writing (email) to the Habitat Action Grant Administrator

Is matching funding a requirement?

Yes.

Matching funding is a requirement for funding, however this does not need to be in physical cash. Other contributions towards the project count as an 'in-kind' contributions and can include any voluntary labour (hands on work), project management time (administration, reporting, etc.) and cost of machinery use for example. It can also include on-going maintenance of a site (capped at 3 years after project completion).

Eligibility and priority areas

Funding applications **must relate to the enhancement of recreational fishing by improving fish habitat**.

Applications from recreational fishers or which demonstrate the support of local recreational fishers will be given preference.

Applications should:

- show consultation has occurred with NSW DPI Fisheries representatives listed below - **mandatory**
- be technically sound and utilise best practice methods
- have an understanding of permits required for projects including instream and bank works such as resnagging, fish hotels, and erosion control activities. Permits do not have to be obtained prior to submitting the funding application
- have matching funds on a dollar-for-dollar basis (cash and/or in-kind support by the applicant or project partners)
- have letters of support from recreational fishing clubs/long term fishers in the area of works and project partners.

To assist applicants, a checklist forms part of the application form and **must be completed**.

What project items are ineligible for funding?

Projects that would not receive favourable consideration include:

- Commercial ventures or materials developed for a primarily commercial purpose
- Construction of fishing related infrastructure such as boat ramps, fishing platforms or fish cleaning tables (applicants should seek funding from the general NSW Recreational Fishing Trust funding or the "NSW Boating Now" program)
- Construction of general amenities such as picnic tables, footpaths, toilet blocks, BBQs, and other picnic area enhancements
- Projects that are predominantly research focused
- Ongoing maintenance of a project site. The maintenance of a project site, post Habitat Action Grant activities, should be considered as part of the project proposal, but should be included within the in-kind support from the applicant or project partners.

Who decides how the Habitat Action Grant funds are spent?

The Minister for Primary Industries receives advice on Habitat Action Grant expenditure from the Advisory Council on Recreational Fishing. Sub-committees of the Advisory Council make recommendations to the Advisory Council based on recommendations determined by a Habitat Action Grant Technical Assessment Panel.

This Technical Panel consists of members from a range of backgrounds, but who have expertise in aquatic habitat rehabilitation and includes a member of the Recreational Fishing Saltwater Trust Expenditure Committee and a member of the Recreational Fishing Freshwater Trust Expenditure Committee.

How are projects assessed?

Projects are assessed against a number of criteria including:

- the extent of benefit to fish habitat, recreational fishing and support from recreational fishers

- whether the project is technically sound

- the adequacy of expertise within the project team, and

- cost effectiveness, value for money and sound budgeting.

What happens if I am successful?

Successful applicants will be required to:

- enter into a Habitat Action Grant Funding Agreement

- obtain permits, where relevant, prior to any on-ground works commencing

- as a condition of funding, submit written reports on completed payment milestones and invoice NSW Department of Primary Industries.

- submit a final report within 60 days of completing the project

- provide annual photos / reports of any maintenance commitments

- acknowledge the Recreational Fishing Trusts in project publications, media and signage.

Milestone and Final Report templates can be accessed via www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hag under "Habitat Action Grant reporting forms".

How to apply

Applications can be made by completing the Habitat Action Grants application form and submitting it via

- **email:** fish.habitat@dpi.nsw.gov.au (preferred)

- **mail:** Habitat Action Grants Administrator

    NSW Department of Primary Industries (Fisheries)

    1243 Bruxner Highway, Wollongbar, NSW 2477

If you email your application, there is no need to send a hard copy by mail.

Only information which is considered essential for assessment should be sent as attachments with your application, please do not send excessive pages of attachments as these have to be copied multiple times for each assessor. If you wish to acknowledge a report in the application, include the title and relevant pages.

See *Notes for applicants* below for further information.

After submitting your application to the fish.habitat@dpi.nsw.gov.au email address, you will receive an automated response to note the receipt of the application. If you do not receive this email, please contact Scott Nichols 6626 1396 or scott.nichols@dpi.nsw.gov.au.

Who can assist you?

You **MUST** contact one of the following DPI staff to discuss your project and ensure applications are consistent with priorities for funding. They can also provide assistance on completing your application.

Scott Nichols, Fisheries Manager – Coastal, 02 6626 1396, scott.nichols@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Kylie Russell, Regional Manager – Coastal, 02 4916 3817, kylie.russell@dpi.nsw.gov.au

Your local Fisheries Manager listed in the table overleaf.

Local Fisheries Managers to be consulted during funding application development:

Regions	Contact	Email	Phone
Border Rivers, Gwydir & Namoi	David Ward	david.ward@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6763 1255
	Milly Hobson	milly.hobson@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6763 1206
Central West, Lachlan & West NSW	Rodney Price	rodney.price@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6881 1216
Murray, Riverina & Murrumbidgee	Iain Ellis	iain.ellis@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(03) 5051 6217
	Luke Pearce	luke.pearce@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6051 7768
North & Mid North Coasts	Scott Nichols	scott.nichols@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6626 1396
	Charlotte Jenkins	charlotte.jenkins@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 6620 9319
Hunter & Hawkesbury-Nepean	Kylie Russell	kylie.russell@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 4916 3817
Sydney metropolitan	Carla Ganassin	carla.ganassin@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 4222 8342
South Coast & Southern tablelands	Jillian Reynolds	jillian.reynolds@dpi.nsw.gov.au	(02) 4428 3406

Notes for applicants

File naming protocol

Please include **the abbreviated name of your project** in both the application email subject and the application file. e.g. "Stony River revegetation Stony Creek Landcare HAG.pdf"

Please DO NOT leave file name as "Large-grant-habitat-action-grant-program.pdf" or similar.

File sizes

Please keep file sizes to <10MB total, including attachments. Please do not send excessive pages of attachments as these have to be copied multiple times for each assessor. If you wish to acknowledge a report in the application, include the title and relevant pages only.

Photographs

Please incorporate photographs into a word or pdf document (preferred) prior to sending. A maximum of 5 photographs to be included in the application. Photos should be labelled to indicate their subject.

Project summary

This is used for media (e.g. on NSW DPI website). Please ensure 40 word summary is 40 words maximum – **all words past this number will be deleted**.

Project location details

Please ensure Latitude and Longitude are in **decimal degrees** as such: -28.870813°, 153.508457°.

Please include a map of the local and regional area to show where the site fits within its catchment and proximity to nearest towns. This can be achieved through use of Google Earth or Google Maps, or scans of topographic maps.

Project budget

Cost effectiveness, value for money and sound budgeting form assessment criteria for your project. It is imperative that the costs identified are realistic and that the project budget totals are calculated correctly.

It is understood that costs will differ across the state based on ease of access to materials, machinery and expertise, however it is very noticeable when costs are raised with no valid supporting evidence.

Refer to the example budget on the application form, but please do not copy the values listed - use them as a guide only.

Costs should be broken into (for example):

$/hour x required time x number of people

$/unit (tree/rock/material) x number of units.

Quotations for works are encouraged, but not necessary.

Speaking with contractors and experts in the field of work you are proposing will help guide the overall project budget. These people should be listed in the "Project consultation and support" section of the application form rather than team members.

In-kind contributions

Please ensure all aspects of the project are identified and costed in the budget table. This includes voluntary labour, donations of time or specialist expertise, project management and administration time, maintenance of the site following completion of works (eg. watering and weeding of plants), donation of plant and equipment to the project, the value of discounted rates given to the project, etc.

All of these 'in-kind' contributions to projects should be costed. These contributions, when realistically costed, add value to the project and improve the project's overall value for money.

As a guide, a rate of $30-$40/hour should be applied to volunteer labour, with a higher rate used for skilled services (justification for the value used will be required).

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Organisations that are GST registered must quote GST exclusive prices in their project item costings. If your organisation is not GST registered, your organisation will still pay GST on goods and services, therefore you need to quote GST inclusive prices in your costings.

More information

A list of previously funded projects and case studies can be found on the NSW DPI website at www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/hag.