
Watercourse Crossing Remediation Grant Program

2021-2024 Application Guide



JUNE 2023

Classification: Public

Alberta 



Contents

Program Overview	4
Funding Priorities.....	4
Who is eligible to receive funds?	4
What projects are eligible for funding?	4
What projects are not eligible for funding?.....	4
What costs are eligible for funding?.....	4
What costs are not eligible for funding?	4
Project Selection Criteria	5
Project Goals and Benefits	5
Project Description.....	5
Location.....	5
Data Gathering	5
Capacity And Timeline	6
Ancillary Factors	6
Cost Sharing and Leveraged Funding and Benefits.....	6
Longevity, Sustainability and Maintenance	6
Collaboration and Partnerships	6

Program Overview

The Alberta government established the Watercourse Crossing Remediation Grant Program in 2021 to provide financial and planning assistance to municipalities to remediate and reclaim roadway crossings that are causing erosion, excessive sedimentation and fragmentation of fish habitat in Alberta. The program has \$11.5 Million (\$1.5, \$4, \$3 and \$3 Million for 2021-22, 2022-23 and 2023-24 and 2024-25). This document describes the Remediation Grant Program and provides guidance on how qualified municipalities can apply for funding. Applications will be considered for 2023-24 funding as they are received. However, applications must be received by 11:59 PM MST on October 15, 2023.

Funding Priorities

Priority will be given to activities that:

- Clearly demonstrate improvement of fish access to high quality habitat.
- Reduce sedimentation impacting downstream fish habitat.
- Demonstrate collaboration with other watercourse crossing owners to improve the overall watershed condition, improve critical habitat for species listed under the *Species at Risk Act*: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/sara-lep/map-carte/index-eng.html>, and undertake activities that are within the priority 1 watersheds for the program.
- Collect watercourse crossing data to quantify fish passage and sedimentation using the Alberta Watercourse Crossing Inventory (ABWCI) in Survey123.

Get the ABWCI



You can download Survey123 from the Google play store for Android or the App store for Apple/iOS devices.

Search for “Survey123” or click the links below:

[Apple/iOS](#)

[Android](#)

Download the ABWCI form to Survey123 using the QR code.

Who is eligible to receive funds?

Municipalities

What projects are eligible for funding?

- Developing and implementing a watercourse crossing inspection program using the ABWCI to identify fish passage and sedimentation issues.
- Identifying and prioritising watercourse crossings for aquatic assessment and engineering design. Technical GIS support is available from Alberta Forestry and Parks (AFP) using the data collected with the ABWCI.
- Completing aquatic assessments and obtaining engineering design options for remediation.
- Construction and capital costs associated with repairing or replacing watercourse crossings and roadway infrastructure.

What projects are not eligible for funding?

- Repair or maintenance of watercourse crossings that does not show a clear improvement to fish passage or reduction to chronic sedimentation.
- Work or inspections on crossings that are not owned by a municipality.
- Work that is considered routine maintenance or work that will not result in a long-term sustainable solution to a habitat fragmentation or sedimentation issue.

What costs are eligible for funding?

Eligible project costs to the applicant funded under this program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Salaries and benefits directly tied to staff hired for project(s);
- Reasonable travel-related expenses as outlined by AFP;
- Cost of computer equipment together with software to be used for the eligible activities up to a maximum of \$3,000 unless otherwise approved;
- Cost of acquiring needed permits;
- Operating expenses related to the project;
- Equipment purchases and leases;
- Capital infrastructure directly tied to project;
- Materials and deliverables directly tied to the project;
- Technical consulting and professional services; and,
- Post project evaluation performed within the program term.

What costs are not eligible for funding?

Costs not eligible for funding under this program include:

- Salary and benefits of existing staff that are funded by other sources;
- Expenses for the administration and coordination of activities to maintain a project beyond the approved proposal;
- Goods and Services Tax (GST; refundable portion);
- Expenses incurred outside of the project term;
- Purchase of capital equipment not directly tied to the project;
- Purchase or construction of real property or structural works;
- Purchase of fleet (e.g., land, water, air vehicles);



McCue Creek: Before

- Land or wetland conservation offsets or compensation;
- Research projects or inventory programs not using the ABWCI;
- Expenditures or costs that are not approved by AFP.

Project Selection Criteria

The following outlines a list of broad criteria that will be taken into consideration during the selection of eligible projects. These criteria, as well as their relative weighting, are subject to change and should only be considered guidance to applicants.

To streamline the review, submit a grant application form (<https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/watercourse-crossing-remediation-grant-program>), and a proposal with the following headings:

Project Goals and Benefits

Explain how the proposed project will help achieve the Grant program goals, and how the proposed project supports the government's priorities of promoting conservation of land, protecting species at risk, and encouraging economic opportunities.

Project Description

A limit of 3,000 characters. Provide a summary of the proposal in plain language that the public can understand. Using simple terms, briefly describe the nature of the work to be done. Indicate the anticipated outcomes and the benefits.

Location

Describe the location of the proposed projects. Maps are encouraged.



McCue Creek: After

Priority will be given to activities that improve critical habitat for species listed under the *Species at Risk Act*: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/sara-lep/map-carte/index-eng.html> and for activities that are within the priority 1 watersheds for the program.

Priority watersheds and what you need to know if you are a crossing owner can be found in the WCP info package.

- [Alberta Watercourse Crossing Owner Information Package](#)

Data Gathering

Projects must collect and report data using the ABWCI. Data collected with the ABWCI will be entered in the provincial database. Support from AFP is available to provide preliminary GIS analysis and attributes such as mapped upstream distance, predicted amount of sedimentation and relationship of the crossing to other known roadway fish barriers. These data provide a consistent way of screening and prioritising sites for site investigation by qualified professionals, which may include determining fish habitat quality and identifying the presence or absence of key fish species using fish surveys.

Budget and Cost/Benefit

Include an itemized budget that is consistent with eligible costs.

The proposed project must provide good value for money and must justify the costs of the project in relation to the benefits for Albertans and for the watershed.

In addition to the standard budget requirements, metrics such as the ratio of funding requested to the kilometre of stream habitat accessible, or reduction of tonnes of sediment per year (i.e. \$/km or \$/tonne), will be used to evaluate the cost/benefit of proposals. Alberta Forestry and Parks can provide preliminary mapped information, but a qualified professional should validate field conditions prior to design.

Capacity And Timeline

Include a timeline that is consistent with the Grant Program.

Provide a description of the organizations and people involved and their responsibilities to allow the reviewers to assess the capacity of organizations to deliver the project within the proposed timeline.

There are processes in place to streamline the approval process of projects under this Grant. However, it is the applicant's responsibility to obtain all required approvals under the provincial and Federal legislation.

The *Water Act* Code of Practice for Watercourse Crossings is applicable to a bridge, culvert and other types of watercourse crossings. If you propose to construct a watercourse crossing, you will need to follow the requirements of the Code. Additional information on the Codes and the Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS) can be found at: <https://www.alberta.ca/water-codes-of-practice.aspx>.

Once you believe you have met these requirements, you will need to fill out the Notice form on our Digital Regulatory Assurance System (DRAS) website located at <https://www.alberta.ca/digital-regulatory-assurance-system.aspx/>.

You will need to submit a location plan of the crossing, detailed plan(s) showing the dimensions of the crossing, and some photographs of the crossing site.

You may also need a *Public Lands Act* authorization if your proposed watercourse crossing will permanently impact or will be located on the bed and/or bank of a waterbody. To learn more please see the following website: <https://www.alberta.ca/shorelands.aspx>.

A *Water Act* approval would also be required for any other activities that may impact water management in the area or the aquatic environment. The potential approvals required will depend on the scope and location of the work, in proximity to the waterbody, and the potential impacts it may have on the waterbody and its aquatic environment. For example, if a proposed berm or other associated works are located in a flood plain, a *Water Act* approval may be required prior to constructing any of these works. Additional information on the *Water Act* and flood hazard areas can be found at <https://www.alberta.ca/water-legislation-and-guidelines.aspx> and <https://www.alberta.ca/flood-hazard-identification-program.aspx>.

Note, any construction which has the potential to impact water management or the aquatic environment without first obtaining a *Water Act* and/or a *Public Lands Act* authorization may be considered a contravention.

You'll need approval from Fisheries and Oceans Canada if you want to undertake an activity that affects a fish species protected under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA). To determine if you need to obtain a permit for your project in areas where aquatic species at risk are present and to learn how to apply visit: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/species-especes/sara-lep/permits-permis/index-eng.html>

In addition, projects that may result in the death of fish or harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat require authorization under the federal *Fisheries Act*. Refer to guidance for projects near water to determine if a Fisheries and Oceans Canada project review is required: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pnw-ppe/reviews-revues/request-review-de-mande-d-examen-001-eng.html>

The guiding legislation includes:

Provincial

- [Code of Practice for Watercourse Crossings](#)
- [Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act](#)
- [Fisheries \(Alberta\) Act](#)
- [Public Lands Act](#)
- [Watercourse Crossing Management Directive](#)
- [Water Act](#)

Federal

- [Fisheries Act](#)
 - [Interim code of practice: Culvert Maintenance](#)
 - [Interim code of practice: Temporary Stream Crossings](#)
- [Species at Risk Act](#)

Ancillary Factors

Cost Sharing and Leveraged Funding and Benefits

Proposed projects should include a level of cost sharing and will ideally leverage funding or benefits from other programming. This is not a requirement of the program; however, projects that bring additional resources outside of the program will receive priority.

Longevity, Sustainability and Maintenance

Proposed projects with a lasting impact on the watershed and require minimal ongoing maintenance will receive priority. For example, replacing culverts with a single span structure may be favoured to a replacement culvert. To avoid misinterpretation by the reviewers, provide justification and description of the design measures. For example, explain if culverts are intentionally oversized and embedded to provide long-term fish passage. A cost analysis of alternatives and proof that approach is a legitimate long-term solution will be helpful in determining how well the proposal meets this requirement.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Projects that show a collaborative approach with other crossing owners and that are planned to have a positive impact on the entire watershed are favoured over those affecting a single reach.

For questions related to the program or the information package, email AEP.WCCrossing@gov.ab.ca.

Erin Humeny (Provincial Watercourse Crossing Capital Planner)
(587) 215-3132 or Erin.Humeny@gov.ab.ca

Alberta 