

SECTION 5 : Application Procedures

Submit completed application package and all supporting documentation, to the extent feasible. Incomplete applications will not be disqualified, but applicants should take every effort to make their complete application as complete as possible. Complete applications are more likely to be considered as competitive, Tier 1 projects.

5.1 What to Submit

A complete application package will consist of **one (1) complete digital copy** of the required materials emailed to prop68@rmc.ca.gov. An esignature must be included on the Application Form via an online document signing application (i.e. DocuSign). Applicants shall provide the electronic format in PDF and provide using an online cloud storage link (i.e. Dropbox or Google Drive). A wet-signed, hard copy of the Application Form will be required before a project is recommended for award. Please provide a digital copy on a CD or flash drive before award recommendation as well. Photos, images, maps, etc. should be included in the PDF. *The submittal requirements have been updated to consider difficulties related to COVID-19 Pandemic, please contact the RMC if submittal any of the application requirements are still an issue.*

The following materials are required for a complete application (some submittal requirements may not be applicable to all submittals):

1. Application Form (Refer to Appendix D)
2. Project Description and Supporting Documents
3. Photo(s) of the Site (Optional)

***For Very Small Grants (under \$50,000): Complete Very Small Grant Application Form and submit with any supporting documents (Refer to Appendix D2)**

Information required for the Application is proposed to include:

1. **Grant Application Form** (Refer to Appendix D)
2. **Project Description** includes: (Sections 2a-2g should not exceed 7 pages, single-space, 11-point font minimum).
 - a. Complete Project Description: for acquisition projects include APN, acreage and purpose for acquisition; for planning and implementation include specific tasks and deliverables.
 - b. Statement of Need for the Proposed Project: a summary of the needs for the project and how the project meets the RMC's policies and project evaluation criteria, and exceeds Proposition 68, Chapter 6 objectives of the water bond legislation (RMC Grant Guidelines Section 2.3).
 - c. Description of audience and geographic area served: provide a summary of the communities, cities, and populations that will be served once the project is completed.

- d. Description of Goals and Objectives: the goals and objectives should clearly define measurable and outcome-oriented goals and objectives for the project, performance measures to track progress toward objectives, and a reporting system to present the analysis of performance measures against the deliverables and tasks.
 - e. Community Outreach: how will the community be involved in the project design and implementation, include how the project is consistent with the RMC Environmental Justice Policy and RMC Tribal Consultation Policy (RMC Grant Guidelines Section 2.4 and 2.5, include specific plans for community outreach, education, community involvement).
 - f. Monitoring and Assessment Plan: the monitoring and assessment plan should include the tracking of the progress of the measurable goals and objectives of the project during as well as after the project is completed. Outline of a monitoring and assessment plan should include measurable and quantifiable targets for a planning and implementation project. And, for acquisition projects include the long-term management and maintenance plan. The RMC is interested in measuring the progress of each of its activities in achieving results or outcomes. Hence, the focus of each project evaluation must be on outcomes, defined as the project results or impact on users and society. Output and other measures are important, but the focus should be on results.
 - g. Organizational capacity: include a brief history of your organization and the ability to fully complete and maintain the project long-term.
3. **California Conservation Corps**: Applicants applying for funds to complete restoration and ecosystem protection projects are strongly encouraged to consult with representatives of the California Conservation Corp (CCC) and the California Association of Local Conservation Corps (CALCC), the entity representing the certified CCC, to determine the feasibility of the CCC in completing the proposed project (Public Resource Code 80016). CCC and CALCC have developed the consultation process for inclusion in Proposition 1 and 68 funding, please complete Exhibit H, and find the complete application form at:
- a. Prop 68: <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/grant-programs/Documents/Prop%2068%20Corps%20Consultation.pdf>
 - b. Prop 1: <https://ccc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Prop-1-Corps-Consultation-Form-Rev.-Dec.-2019-03.2020.pdf>

Note, the Corps already has determined that it is not feasible to use their services on projects that solely involve either planning or acquisition. Therefore, applicants seeking funds for such projects are exempt from consultation requirement and should check the appropriate box on the Grant Application Form, Appendix D (#12).

- 4. **Certified Youth Employment Plan (as an alternative to CCC program) (suggested but not required)**: please include the organization’s capacity to develop, manage and implement a training program for young adults in the environmental discipline that leads to permanent employment in the green industry (maximum one page).

5. **Tasklist and Timeline:** The tasklist should include a detailed description of each task and should include tasks for evaluation, monitoring, and assessment. An example of a tasklist can be found on the RMC website at <http://www.rmc.ca.gov/>.
6. **Budget:** The budget will include any matching funds that may be used for the project. Please also identify any other grants for which you have applied for this project (include amount, potential funding agency, and contact). See the RMC website for an example of a project budget at <http://www.rmc.ca.gov/>. Applicants should endeavor to submit a budget in the format presented in the example on the RMC website.
7. **Resolution:** The applicant's governing body certifies that their governing board gives the authorized signatory the authority to apply, receive and manage the project.
8. **Environmental Compliance:** Identify the status of the environmental assessment. This information may include a notice of exemption filed with the county clerk, an initial study, or a brief description of how the applicant will comply with CEQA/NEPA once the grants are awarded.
9. **Permits, Easements, or Certifications:** Identify status of all permits related to the proposed project for implementation of the project and/or brief description of how applicant will obtain all permits (plan/schedule).
10. **Operation and Maintenance:** The applicant must demonstrate, specifically for development projects an outline of how the project will address future operations and maintenance needs (no more than one page).
11. **Agreements:** The applicant must include proof of ownership and compliance with Land Tenure Requirements or the applicant must demonstrate movement to secure land tenure through a willing seller letter, memorandum of agreement, or other binding agreements in place
12. **Non-profit:** If applicable, provide proof of non-profit status (Copy of IRS Determination Letter)
13. **Design/Construction Documents and/or Project Site Photographs:** Digital format is preferred, on CD, and each photograph should be saved as a separate file (no more than six (6) photographs, not larger than 8 ½" by 11").
14. **Project location map:** the applicant must submit a map of the project location.
15. **Letters of Support:** The applicant is required a minimum of three support letters to fulfill this requirement, but additional support letters may be included.

5.2 Project Completeness and Selection Criteria

RMC staff will review grant applications for completeness, and incomplete grant applications will be returned to the applicant with the potential for technical support for resubmittal. Following is the initial selection criteria which all grant applications must adhere to:

- The applicant is an eligible entity
- The applicant has submitted a complete grant application, as previously stated in Section 3.4, Items 1-15

- The project meets the RMC’s required grant selection criteria per the RMC Small Grant Program Guidelines
- The project meets the RMC’s Common Ground and the Proposition 68, Chapter 7 as well as Proposition 1 objectives
- The project consists of work that is eligible for bond funds under the General Obligation Bond Law

Applications that do not pass the initial selection criteria will not proceed to the scoring process. The RMC has the discretion to either return the application or assist the applicant with gathering additional information and modifying the proposal to enable the application to pass the screening process.

5.3 Scoring

Complete applications that have passed the initial selection will be reviewed and scored by a minimum of three professionals with relevant expertise. Reviewers may include local, state and federal agency staff and others with relevant expertise, including consultants, non-profits staff, and academics. All reviewers other than the RMC staff will be required to document that they do not have a conflict of interest in reviewing any proposals. The total score of the three reviewers will be averaged and then weighted against other grant proposals. All reviewers will score each grant application in accordance with the Project Evaluation Criteria—grant applications that receive an average score of 70 percent or better will be considered the most competitive for a funding recommendation. Recommendation for funding is dependent on numerous factors such as funding availability and project readiness and not solely dependent on a high evaluation criteria score. Staff will determine if funding is available and if the project is ready for recommendation to the RMC Board.

If projects do not meet the minimum administrative thresholds for grant award, they will be assigned a Tier and placed in a queue which will be regularly reviewed and considered for award against subsequent applications that also did not meet the minimum threshold. During this time, project proponents are provided the opportunity to receive higher scores based on additional information provided through staff interviews, clarifications, and/or updates that demonstrate project’s alignment with RMC goals and objectives, and granting of funds is consistent with RMC programs. This extended consideration process will ensure that the most competitive projects are recommended for funding and prioritization is not based on proposal submittal date.

Proposals for Very Small Grants under \$50,000 will be scored by a professional with relevant expertise and will be focused on high and very-high need areas. Grant applications that receive an average score of 75 percent or better based on Very Small Grant scoring criteria will be most competitive for a funding recommendation (Refer to Appendix D2).