



WATER SUPPLY DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT

GUIDANCE ON THE EVALUATION OF PUBLIC BENEFITS

Scoring of Applications

The evaluation of applications by the Technical Review Team will be based on demonstration of public benefits in three categories: economic, environmental and social/cultural. Each public benefit category contains six specific public benefits for a total of 18 public benefits. While a project is not required to score points in each of the 18 public benefits, a project must provide some benefit in each of the three categories and projects that provide the greatest public benefit have the best chance of receiving funding.

The public benefit description should include conditions prior to and following project implementation, and should be quantitative when possible. Information provided must be sufficient to allow evaluation of the application. Each of the public benefits will be graded on a seven-point scale (see below). In addition, there is a preference for collaborative efforts, projects that provide a measurable improvement in protected streamflows, and projects that provide measurable increased efficiency of water use.

This document identifies evaluation criteria for each of the 18 public benefits with a notes section to provide public benefit examples and clarification.

Contact

If you have any questions about the evaluation of public benefits, please contact Water Resources Grant Administrator, Jon Unger at (503) 986-0869 or Jon.J.Unger@wrд.state.or.us.

Seven-Point Scale Used in Evaluation of Public Benefits

- Highest
- ▲ Project is likely to yield exceptional benefits, unusually high standard or quality; results supported with data, professional opinion, narrative of qualified person(s), or other acceptable documentation
 - Project is likely to yield significant benefits; results supported with data, professional opinion, narrative of qualified person(s), or other acceptable documentation
 - Project is likely to yield moderate benefits; results supported with data, professional opinion, narrative of qualified person(s), or other acceptable documentation
 - Project is likely to yield minor benefits; results supported with data, professional opinion, narrative of qualified person(s), or other acceptable documentation
 - Project is likely to yield trace benefits; or project claims of benefits are unsupported / unquantified.
- Next Lowest
- No benefits likely.
- Lowest
- Project is likely to have negative effects in this category. (May be identified during public comment.)

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1a Does the project create or retain jobs?

- ◆ Project likely has exceptional increases in job creation or retention.
- Project likely has significant increases in job creation or retention.
- Project likely has moderate increases in job creation or retention.
- Project likely provides minor or short term job creation or retention.
- Project likely provides trace increase in job creation or retention; or project makes job creation or retention claims that are unsupported or unquantified.
- Job creation or retention not likely.
- Project likely to result in loss of jobs.

NOTE: Job creation or retention may include direct effects with the organization that owns or operates the project or it may include indirect effects with retail customers or consumers of the project. Temporary jobs resulting from project implementation will not receive as high of a score as permanent job creation or retention.

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1b Does the project increase economic activity?

- ◆ Project likely results in exceptional increases in economic activity for five or more years.
- Project likely results in significant increases in economic activity for three to four years.
- Project likely results in moderate increases in economic activity for one to two years.
- Project likely results in minor, short-term (less than two years) increases in economic activity.
- Project likely results in trace increases in economic activities; or project makes claims that are unsupported or unquantified.
- Increased economic activity not likely.
- Project likely to decrease economic activity.

NOTE: Economic activity includes but is not limited to the arrival of new firms, renewed contracts, or increased orders, production, gross sales, or net revenue, compared to the year preceding project completion. Such economic activity could occur within one or more entities/businesses.

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1c Does the project increase efficiency or innovation?

- ◆ Project is likely to result in exceptional efficiency or innovation.
- Project is likely to result in significant efficiency or innovation.
- Project is likely to result in moderate efficiency or innovation.
- Project is likely to result in minor efficiency or innovation.
- Project is likely to result in trace efficiency or innovation; or project makes claims of innovation or innovation that are unsupported or unquantified.
- Increased efficiency or innovation not likely.
- Project is likely to decrease efficiency or innovation.

NOTE: Focus here on things like time savings, innovative production techniques, energy savings (the energy required to move, treat, or heat water); water system efficiencies such as system redundancy (back-up, inter-ties), etc.

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1d Does the project enhance infrastructure, farmland, public resource lands, industrial lands, commercial lands or lands having other key uses?

- ▲ Project is likely to provide exceptional enhancements of infrastructure or land, increasing property value.
- Project is likely to provide significant enhancements of infrastructure or land, increasing property value.
- Project is likely to provide moderate enhancements of infrastructure or land, increasing property value.
- Project is likely to provide minor enhancements of infrastructure or land, increasing property value.
- Project is likely to provide trace enhancements of infrastructure or land; or project makes claims describing enhancements to infrastructure and land that are unsupported or unquantified.
- Enhancements not likely.
- Project is likely to result in infrastructure or lands that are degraded or removed from productive uses.

NOTE: Focus on the re-sale or rental value of the land. Consider improvements such as maintained, repaired, or upgraded infrastructure; maintained or buffered riparian areas; and maintained or improved soils.

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1e Does the project enhance the economic value associated with: tourism, recreation, fishing (recreational or commercial), fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream?

- ▲ Project is likely to result in exceptional increased value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.
- Project is likely to result in significant increased value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.
- Project is likely to result in moderate increased value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.
- Project is likely to result in minor increased value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.
- Project is likely to result in trace increased value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.; or project makes claims in these categories that are unsupported or unquantified.
- Enhanced values not likely.
- The project is likely to decrease the economic value of tourism, recreation, fishing, fisheries involving native fish of cultural significance to Indian tribes or with other economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream.

NOTE: Examples could include expected increase in daily park fees, tour guide revenues; boat or gear rentals; or fishing licenses. Examples of economic values resulting from restoring or protecting water instream include increased navigability, or scenic waterways.

Category 1. Economic benefits of a project, based on the change in economic conditions expected to result from the project.

1f Does the project result in increases in irrigated land for agriculture?

- ↑ Project is likely to increase irrigated acres by at least 20 percent.
- Project is likely to increase irrigated acres by up to 15 percent.
- Project is likely to increase irrigated acres by up to 10 percent.
- Project is likely to increase irrigated acres by up to 5 percent.
- Project is likely to increase irrigated acres by trace amounts (less than one percent); or project claims regarding increased irrigated acres are unsupported or unquantified.
- Increased irrigated land not likely
- The project results in decreased irrigated land for agriculture

NOTE: Focus here on expanded quantity of land (acreage). Acreage can be lands that were never historically in production or lands that were historically in production but were taken out of production as a result of insufficient water supply.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2a Does the project result in measurable improvements in protected streamflows?

- ↑ 75 to 100 percent of new project water (or equivalent volume) is protected instream or streamflow is exceptionally improved.
- 50 to 74 percent of new project water (or equivalent volume) is protected instream, or streamflow is significantly improved.
- 25 to 49 percent of new project water (or equivalent volume) is protected instream or streamflow is moderately improved.
- Up to 24 percent of new project water (or equivalent volume) is protected instream, or streamflow is somewhat improved.
- Trace amounts of streamflow are protected instream (less than five percent of new project water or equivalent volume); or project claims regarding protected streamflows are unsupported or unquantified.
- Improvements in protected streamflow not likely
- Decreases protected streamflow (e.g., proposes to reverse an instream lease)

NOTE: Protected streamflow means water that remains in or is released into the natural channel and is legally protected by the state, using tools such as instream water rights or permit conditions. Consider the quality, timing, duration or other value this streamflow may be contributing to the stream. Describe how the improvements in protected streamflow achieves one or more of the following:

- (A) Supports the natural hydrograph;
- (B) Improves floodplain function;
- (C) Supports state- or federally-listed sensitive, threatened or endangered fish species;
- (D) Supports native fish species of cultural importance to Indian tribes; or
- (E) Supports riparian habitat important for wildlife.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2b Does the project result in measurable improvements in groundwater levels that enhance environmental conditions in groundwater restricted areas or other areas?

- ▲ The project is likely to yield exceptional improvements in groundwater levels.
- The project is likely to yield significant improvements in groundwater levels.
- The project is likely to yield moderate improvements in groundwater levels.
- The project is likely to yield minor improvements in groundwater levels.
- The project is likely to yield trace improvements in groundwater levels; or project claims regarding improvements in groundwater levels are unsupported or unquantified.
- Improved groundwater levels not likely
- Project results in groundwater declines

NOTE: This question focuses on groundwater levels (quantitative measurement). Stabilization or improvements in groundwater levels could come from aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), artificial recharge (AR) projects, natural recharge, or discontinued / reduced groundwater use.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2c Does the project result in measurable improvements in the quality of surface water or groundwater?

- ▲ Project is likely to yield an exceptional improvement in water quality.
- Project is likely to yield a significant improvement in water quality.
- Project is likely to yield a moderate improvement in water quality.
- Project is likely to yield a minor improvement in water quality.
- Project is likely to yield a trace improvement in water quality; or project claims regarding improved water quality are unsupported or unquantified.
- Water quality improvements not likely
- Project is likely to result in decreased water quality.

NOTE: Water quality parameters include but are not limited to, the following: temperature, dissolved oxygen, contaminated sediments, toxic substances, bacteria, or nutrients. Improvements could come from a higher quality of water discharged to surface water or injected into groundwater, or from increased flow, or from treatment or filtration of water already in the environment.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2d Does the project result in water conservation?

- ▲ Project is likely to see at least a 21 percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- Project is likely to see 11 to 20 percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- Project is likely to see 6 to 10 percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- Project is likely to see 1 to 5 percent reduction in water use to achieve the same outcomes.
- Project is likely to see a trace amount of reduction in water use (less than one percent) to achieve the same outcomes; or project claims regarding water conservation are unsupported or unquantified.
- Water conservation not likely
- Project results in additional water used to achieve the same outcomes (e.g., sacrificing water efficiency for energy/pumping efficiency)

NOTE: Water conservation is a means of eliminating waste or otherwise improving the efficiency of water use by modifying the technology or method of diverting, transporting, applying, or recovering water. Applicants should identify the technology or technique they are using, and then quantify the water savings they will achieve, compared to what they used previously to achieve the same outcome.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2e Does the project increase ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts?

- ▲ Project is likely to result in an exceptional increase in ecosystem resiliency to climate change.
- Project is likely to result in a significant increase in ecosystem resiliency to climate change.
- Project is likely to result in a moderate increase in ecosystem resiliency to climate change.
- Project is likely to result in a minor increase in ecosystem resiliency to climate change.
- Project is likely to result in a trace increase in ecosystem resiliency to climate change; or Project claims regarding increased ecosystem resiliency are unsupported or unquantified.
- Increased ecosystem resiliency not likely.
- The project is likely to decrease ecosystem resiliency to climate change impacts.

NOTE: Ecosystem resiliency to climate change could include increasing streamflow; increasing natural storage (e.g., wetlands, upland meadows); decreasing water temperature, protecting or enhancing cold-water habitat, restoring floodplain connectivity and backwater habitats, restoring stream buffers, decreasing risk of drought, fire, plant disease, and invasive species outbreak; decreasing coastal erosion and inundation.

Category 2. Environmental benefits of a project, based on the change in environmental conditions expected to result from the project.

2f Does the project address limiting ecological factors in the project watershed?

- ▲ The project is likely to make exceptional progress towards removing limiting ecological factors.
- The project is likely to make significant progress towards removing limiting ecological factors.
- The project is likely to make moderate progress towards removing limiting ecological factors.
- The project is likely to make minor progress towards removing limiting ecological factors.
- The project is likely to make a trace amount of progress towards removing limiting ecological factors; or project claims about addressing limiting ecological factors are unsupported or unquantified.
- The project is not likely to address limiting ecological factors in the project watershed.
- The project is likely to exacerbate limiting ecological factors in the project watershed.

NOTE: Limiting factors must be identified by peer reviewed scientific reports or studies from a state or federal agency. Examples of limiting factors include but are not limited to: improvement of fish passage, habitat for sensitive, threatened and endangered species, water quality, or streamflow. Applicants will need to cite public reports or studies that identify these limiting ecological factors.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3a Does the project promote public health, public safety, and local food systems?

- ▲ The project is likely to promote exceptional improvements in public health, public safety or local food systems.
- The project is likely to promote significant improvements in public health, public safety or local food systems.
- The project is likely to promote moderate improvements in public health, public safety or local food systems.
- The project is likely to promote minor improvements in public health, public safety or local food systems.
- The project is likely to promote trace improvements in public health, public safety or local food systems; or project claims regarding improved public health, public safety or local food systems is unsupported or unquantified.
- Promotion of public health, public safety, and local food systems not likely
- The project is likely to degrade public health, public safety or local food systems.

NOTES: Examples include protection of drinking water sources; repair of septic systems / field; maintenance and repair of other water infrastructure; treatment and protection of drinking water itself; improved emergency response and advisory systems (e.g., WARN network, fish consumption advisories, water contact advisories, etc.); improved or protected water quality for human consumption and human contact (e.g., removal or prevention of toxics, contaminants of concern, bacteria); and increased local food production.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3b Does the project improve conditions for Oregon’s environmental justice communities (e.g., minority or low-income communities, economically distressed rural communities, tribal communities, or other communities traditionally underrepresented in public processes)?

- ◆ Project is likely to provide exceptional benefits to environmental justice communities, and Environmental justice communities were consulted in the process of developing projects.
- Project is likely to provide significant benefits to environmental justice communities, and Environmental justice communities were consulted in the process of developing projects.
- Project is likely to provide moderate benefits to environmental justice communities, and Environmental justice communities were consulted in the process of developing projects.
- Project is likely to provide minor benefits to environmental justice communities, and Environmental justice communities were consulted in the process of developing projects.
- Project is likely to provide trace benefits to environmental justice communities; or Environmental justice communities were not consulted in the process of developing the project; or Project claims regarding improved conditions for environmental justice communities are unsupported or unquantified.
- Improved conditions not likely
- The project is likely to worsen conditions for environmental justice communities.

NOTE: Applicants will need to identify the communities benefitting from the project and quantify these benefits. Demonstrate that siting decisions were vetted and approved by affected landowners and environmental justice communities.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3c Does the project promote recreation and scenic values?

- ◆ The project is likely to result in exceptional promotion of recreation or scenic values.
- The project is likely to result in significant promotion of recreation or scenic values.
- The project is likely to result in moderate promotion of recreation or scenic values.
- The project is likely to result in minor promotion of recreation or scenic values.
- The project is likely to result in trace promotion of recreation or scenic values; or Project claims of promoted recreation and scenic values are unsupported or unquantified.
- Benefit to recreation and scenic values not likely
- The project is likely to detract from recreation and scenic values.

NOTE: Information can be provided in the form of qualitative “testimonials” (e.g., interviews, professional opinion, or surveys of household willingness to pay for improvement or preservation of river flows.) The following use categories may be used to identify “promotion of recreation and scenic values”: recreational fishing, motorized boating, non-motorized boating, other forms of water-based recreation, swimming, fishing, hunting, wildlife viewing, sightseeing, hiking, photography, aesthetic values.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3d Does this project contribute to the body of scientific data publicly available in this state?

- ↑ The project is likely to contribute an exceptional amount of new data to the body of scientific data publicly available in the state.
- The project is likely to contribute a significant amount of new data to the body of scientific data publicly available in the state.
- The project is likely to contribute a moderate amount of new data to the body of scientific data publicly available in the state.
- The project is likely to contribute a minor amount of new data to the body of scientific data publicly available in the state.
- The project is likely to contribute a trace amount of new data to the body of scientific data publicly available in the state; or project claims of scientific contribution are unsupported or unquantified.
- Contribution not likely
- N/A

NOTE: Contributions could include but are not limited to: SVF analysis, water quality or habitat monitoring, groundwater or other studies, new stream gages, monitoring wells, or other measurement devices whose data will be available to the Water Resources Department and its stakeholders. Will equipment include telemetry or transponders that make data publicly available in real time? Note any plans to calibrate/maintain the equipment.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3e Does this project promote state or local priorities, including but not limited to the restoration and protection of native fish species of cultural significance to Indian tribes?

- ↑ Project is likely to play an exceptional role, supporting a state or local priority.
- Project is likely to play a significant role, supporting a state or local priority.
- Project is likely to play a moderate role, supporting a state or local priority.
- Project is likely to play a minor role, supporting a state or local priority.
- Project is likely to play a very minor role, supporting a state or local priority; or its impacts are not well quantified, or supported.
- No promotion of state or local priorities likely.
- Project is likely to run counter to state or local priorities.

NOTE: Cite reports or studies identifying these local priorities, including Oregon's Integrated Water Resources Strategy, place-based integrated water resources plans, Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds, TMDLs, recovery plans, forestry plans, etc.

Category 3. Social or Cultural benefits of a project, based on the change in social or cultural conditions expected to result from the project.

3f Does this project promote collaborative basin planning efforts, including but not limited to efforts under the state Integrated Water Resources Strategy?

- Project made exceptional attempts at a collaborative process.
- Project made significant attempts at a collaborative process.
- Project made moderate attempts at a collaborative process.
- Project made minor attempts at a collaborative process.
- Project made trace attempts at a collaborative process; or
Project claims regarding collaboration were unsupported or undocumented.
- Project made no discernable attempts at a collaborative process
(i.e., stakeholders from different perspectives were not informed about nor consulted during the process).
- Project was developed while excluding stakeholders.

NOTE: Provide evidence of a public process that was transparent and inclusive. Examples include evidence of publicly noticed meetings, agendas and decisions that were available on-line, multiple types of water users represented in the process (e.g., instream interests, agricultural, municipal, domestic and industrial users), projects that are supported by the community, projects that meet multiple water needs and projects that were identified in an Integrated Water Resources Place-Based Plan.