Heritage Fund

The Arizona Game and Fish Department's Prioritization Process Manual

June 2007

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THE GRANT PRIORITIZATION PROCESS

This manual covers the Department's prioritization processes for Heritage grants which includes the Rating Resource Issues, Department Activities, and Strategic Objectives, and specific scoring involving technical review and Prioritization Committee evaluation and scoring of applications.

Rating Resources and Rating Department Activities

Resources (wildlife resources that the Department manages) and Department Activities (tasks and activities that the Department does) are rated by the five Commissioners, the Director, the Deputy Director, and the four Assistant Directors.

Resources are evaluated in four individual areas: biological needs, political impacts, sociological desires, and economic impacts. The scores resulting from each of the eleven scorers in the four areas are averaged for each resource.

The Activity scores from the eleven scorers are averaged.

The Resource and the Activity scores are each worth up to 200 weighted points on each application. The scores are included in the final scoring of the application (refer to the Final Score Sheet discussed below).

Strategic Objectives Comparison

Each resource is evaluated in comparison to Strategic Objectives. The scores are based on input from the Department Branches with the primary management responsibility for each resource. The resource score for Strategic Objectives is worth up to 100 points for each application (refer to page 5).

The above steps are completed annually, usually in the months of December and January.

The following steps apply to the review and scoring of the submitted applications.

Technical Review

Technical Review scores are based on input from Department staff with expertise and experience in technical subjects identified with the proposal. Applications are reviewed for Benefit, Feasibility, and Merit, using the Heritage grants Proposal Review Form (refer to pages 7 and 8) for a maximum 100 points, scored in 25 point increments. An average of the reviewer scores is included in the composite score when the Prioritization Process Committee evaluates applications.

Feasibility and Benefits

Each application is evaluated based on several feasibility and benefit questions. The score for feasibility and benefits is worth up to 150 points of the application's score. There are four questions that apply to all project areas that are worth 80 points (refer to page 9). The remaining 70 points apply to each of the specific project areas: Public Access (refer to page 10); Environmental Education and Schoolyard Habitat (refer to page 11); Urban Wildlife (refer to page 12), and Identification, Inventory, Protection and Management (IIAPM) (refer to page 13).

Merit

Each proposal is evaluated based on several questions of the proposal's merit. Merit is worth up to 150 points of the applications score (refer to page 14).

Cost

A series of specific funding source questions is asked of each proposal on 1) requested funding in relation to expected benefit, 2) match and in-kind contribution funding in the total project cost, and 3) percent share of funding requested compared to the amount of available funds (refer to page 15). The score for cost is worth up to 100 points.

Final Score-Sheet

In addition to the Rating Resources and Rating Department Activities and Strategic Plan Comparison scores discussed above, specific Technical Review scores, Feasibility and Benefit scores, and Cost scores are compiled and included on the final score sheet (refer to page 16).

In-Processing

The Funds/Planning Section receives all applications. Late, incomplete (missing mandatory documents), or those applications ineligible for funding are rejected at this time. Copies of all eligible applications are sent to the appropriate Project Leader, and appropriate Regional staff for review. The original copy of the application is kept in Funds/Planning.

During the review process, if a project proposal is found to be inappropriate or in conflict with the Program or Department Mission; the Project Leader identifies the issue and contacts the fund administrator. These applications may be rejected. The fund administrator will process all rejections for the Director's signature.

The Project Leader will develop a summary and review package. The Project Leader summary and review package should include: 1) A copy of all submitted reviews of the application and 2) to what degree the proposal supports the goals, objectives and mission of the Program and/or Department. The summary and review package is submitted to Funds/Planning. All applications and respective summary and review packages are sorted and assembled for each funding focus so that the convening Prioritization Committee can evaluate and score only those applications belonging to the funding focus.

The Prioritization Committee is responsible for assessing each proposal of the eligible set of proposals being evaluated in the funding-focus based on its Feasibility, Benefits, Merit and the Cost. The Committee can seek additional information/clarification from internal or external sources to assist in its evaluation of proposals. The Committee may recommend that portions of any proposal not be funded in its entirety. This Committee may also recommend rejecting a proposal which is determined not to fit the funding focus, or which may directly conflict with the Mission of the Department.

The Grant Prioritization Committee

The prioritization committees are made up of the following members:

- Heritage Fund Administrator (and/or) Heritage Grant Coordinator (and/or) Planning Coordinator
- Field Operations - (1 representative)
- Division - (1 representative)
- Optional – Heritage Fund Public Advisory Committee (1 member)

Based on the outcome of the review and scoring, the Funds/Planning Section prepares a prioritized list of all proposals by funding source. This information is presented to the Director, Deputy Director, and the Assistant Directors, who have the final authorization to approve those applications that will receive funding.

TEST OF RESOURCE ISSUES

Please rate based on your perception of the **BIOLOGICAL NEEDS** , **POLITICAL ENVIRONMENT** , **ECONOMIC IMPACT** and what the **GENERAL PUBLIC THINKS** of these animals.

RATE EACH GROUP FROM A SCORE OF 0 TO 100. A SCORE OF 0 MEANS THE RESOURCE IS IN NO NEED OF ADDITIONAL BIOLOGICAL WORK AND A SCORE OF 100 MEANS THE RESOURCE IS IN NEED OF AN EXTREME AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL BIOLOGICAL WORK.

RESOURCE	POINTS
Big Game (All big game animals (Title 17))	
Waterfowl/Migratory Sport Birds (waterfowl, sandhill crane, dove, band-tail pigeon, etc.)	
Small Game Birds (all types of quail, grouse and pheasant)	
Small Game Mammals (Tree squirrels and cotton-tail rabbits)	
Predator/Furbearers (skunks, bobcats, raccoons, coyote, etc.)	
Aquatic Resources (All fish and amphibians)	
Sportfish (native and non-native fishes)	
General Wildlife (Everything)	
Terrestrial Wildlife (Birds, mammals, most reptiles, etc.)	
Wildlife Of Special Concern (Animals listed by AGFD as Wildlife of Special Concern)	
Federally Threatened Species (Spikedace, Mexican spotted owl, etc.)	
Federally Endangered Species (Condor, Black-footed ferrets, Gila trout, etc.)	
General Nongame (Every animal that is not a game animal)	
Terrestrial Nongame (Rodents, jack rabbits, most birds, etc.)	
Aquatic Nongame (nongame fish, amphibians, crayfish, mollusks, etc.)	

Rating Department Activities

Rate each activity from a score of 0 to 100. A score of 0 means the activity is not at all important; a score of 100 means the activity is extremely important.

	Score	Department Activity
1		Conduct fish or wildlife population surveys to acquire management data. (Deer and elk surveys etc.)
2		Conduct fish or wildlife research to acquire management information. (Glen Canyon Environmental Studies, turkey research project, DNA analysis, etc.)
3		Minimize fish or wildlife conflicts that result in economic loss to private property. (elk or predator depredation)
4		Manipulate habitat (waterholes, clearing, seeding, artificial reefs) for fish or wildlife.
5		Protect fish or wildlife habitat (fencing, road closures, does NOT include land acquisition).
6		Conduct harvest surveys to acquire management information. (hunter questionnaires and creel surveys)
7		Conduct fish or wildlife law enforcement activities. (Patrol, investigations, etc.)
8		Conduct public opinion research to acquire management information. (customer surveys, focus groups, responsive management)
9		Inform the public about Arizona's fish or wildlife resources. (presentations, publications, etc.)
10		Educate the public about Arizona's fish or wildlife resources. (Project Wild, Fishing Workshops, educational classes)
11		Enhance access into areas that are blocked to public access. (Respect Program, create new roads, improve roads/trails, etc.)
12		Acquire property rights for fish or wildlife management purposes. (Sipe – Wenima, Whitewater Draw, Conservation Agreements, etc.)
13		Enhance recreation by propagating, rearing and stocking fish or wildlife species. (Hatcheries – trout rearing and stocking, etc.)
14		Increase recreational use of fish or wildlife resources. (ADA fishing piers, etc.)
15		Provide or support wildlife rehabilitation services.
16		Restore, where feasible and provident, extirpated Threatened or Endangered fish or wildlife species into Arizona (Re-introducing animals no longer occur in AZ and are Federally listed: Condors, Mexican Wolves, black-footed ferrets, Gila trout, etc.)
17		Enhance existing fish or wildlife populations through transplants. (Transplanting antelope from another state into AZ, moving animals from one AZ population to another, etc.)
18		Re-establish (re-introduce) where feasible and provident fish or wildlife species into their historic range. (These animals still occur in Arizona, but have been eliminated from some areas. An example would be when we re-introduced bighorn sheep into the Superstition Mountains.)
19		Improve or increase boater access and recreation (fish cleaning stations, restrooms, new boat ramps, improvement to existing boat ramps, etc)

Strategic Objectives

Answer all questions either yes or no.

	Y	N	Questions for species with both specific population objectives and consumptive use objectives
1			Is the estimated population for this resource below the range of the strategic plan population objective?
2			Is the estimated annual harvest for this resource below the range of the strategic plan objective?
3			Are the estimated recreation user days for this resource below the range of the strategic plan objective?

	Y	N	Questions for species with consumptive use objectives, but with no population objectives
1			Has the estimated recreation use for this resource declined over the past two years?
2			Is the estimated harvest or success rate for this resource below the strategic plan objective?
3			Are the estimated recreational user days for this resource below the range of the strategic plan objective for user days

	Y	N	Questions for ALL wildlife resources (excluding listed or candidate sensitive species*)
Has the status of this resource group been negatively affected over the last two years by:			
4			The lack of information required to maintain existing management programs, or to answer questions resulting from higher than normal public or political concerns? And/or
5			Changes to habitat conditions resulting from land or water management practices or unusual and abnormal weather conditions?
6			Over the last two years has there been a documented increase in interest about this resource group?

* Listed or candidate sensitive species receive the maximum points.

Scoring Matrix**

Yes Yes Yes 50 points	Yes No Yes 40 points	Yes Yes No 35 points	Yes No No 25 points
No Yes Yes 25 points	No No Yes 15 points	No Yes No 10 points	No No No 0 points

** Scoring for consumptive resources includes questions 1 through 3 and questions 4 through 6 for a maximum of 100 points. Scoring for nonconsumptive resources apply to questions 4 through 6; thus scores where only questions 4 through 6 are rated, the scores are doubled to comply with the 100-point scoring scale.

List of Wildlife Resource Categories for Strategic Objective Questions

Resource	**Q1**	**Q2**	**Q3**	**Q4**	**Q5**	**Q6**
MULE DEER						
WHITE-TAILED DEER						
ELK						
JAVELINA						
BIGHORN SHEEP						
ANTELOPE						
TURKEY						
BEAR						
MOUNTAIN LION						
BUFFALO						
GAMBEL & SCALED QUAIL						
MEARNS QUAIL						
DOVES						
TREE SQUIRRELS						
COTTONTAIL RABBIT						
BLUE GROUSE						
BAND-TAILED PIGEON						
WATERFOWL						
SANDHILL CRANE						
PREDATOR/FURBEARER						
BOBCAT						
AQUATIC RESOURCES						
COLDWATER FISHERIES						
WARM WATER FISHERIES						
NONGAME FISH						
RAPTORS						
NONGAME BIRDS						
NONGAME MAMMALS						
REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS						
CRUSTACEANS & MOLLUSKS						

Note: This score sheet is used by the Project Leaders to score the resource categories based on the strategic objective questions discussed above.

Proposal Review Form

Please review and comment on the proposal. Submit your input to the appropriate Project Leader.

Name of Reviewer:

Proposal Title:

Your comments should represent your perspective, your work unit's perspective and/or the local perspective. Comments may discuss the importance of the proposal, the support (or lack of support) from the local community, the key personnel, the funding, or any information you believe would help the Prioritization Committee score the proposal. Additional guidance may be found in the Feasibility, Merit, and Cost/Benefit questions of the Prioritization Process (Pages 14 - 20).

COMMENTS:

Note: Include the General Summary of Technical Reviewer Conclusions Form with the review comments.

For **Heritage Grant applications**, rate summary recommendations on the General Summary of Technical Reviewers Conclusion form from a score of 0 to 100.

General Summary of Technical Reviewer Conclusions Form

WHAT IS YOUR RECOMMENDATION CONCERNING FUNDING THIS PROJECT? In explaining your position (for or against), please refer the reader to previous comments rather than repeating them here. Add any additional comments and/or synthesis. Score your recommendation by the value of points indicated, e.g., strongly support equals 100 points, as written 75 points.

Check one:

_____ I strongly support funding this project as written. (Please explain). **100 points**

_____ I support funding this project as written. (Please explain). **75 points**

_____ I support funding this project with reservations. (Please explain). **50 points**

_____ I support funding this project only if the following stipulations are applied (listed below). **25 points**

_____ I recommend against funding this project. (Please explain). **0 points**

FEASIBILITY Maximum points -- 150 (i.e., 80 points for questions 1 through 4, 70 points total for each subprogram fund). Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented, and then refer to the appropriate subprogram fund questions for scoring the remaining points.

1. Are the project accomplishments and deliverables stated clearly? **0 – 15 points**

   15 clearly stated and realistic
   0 unclear

2. As stated, could the project be completed within the time allotted? **0 – 15 points**

   15 realistic time schedule
   0 time schedule not realistic

3. Are key project personnel/managers adequately qualified? **0 – 30 points**

   30 well qualified
   15 qualifications insufficiently stated
   0 no evidence of qualified personnel

4. Evaluate the applicant's track record. **0 – 20 points**

   20 in good standing or new applicant
   10 minor out-of-compliance record or minor delinquent reporting
   0 evidence of failure to terms of agreement

HERITAGE - PUBLIC ACCESS -- maximum 70 points Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Define the access issue (including the cause) this project proposes to address. Has the applicant conferred with private landowners, the land management agency and/or the Department to resolve the issue? **0 – 15 points**

   15 yes
   0 no

2. Are all the drawings and permits necessary to start and complete this project proposal complete and submitted? These documents should include engineering/architectural drawings, Environmental Assessments, SHPO, Archeological Clearances, 404, etc. **0 – 10 points**

   10 yes
   0 no

3. Upon completion of this project, will the improvement or new access (previously unavailable) be available for more than one user group? **0 – 10 points**

   10 yes, with ADA-compliant availability for limited mobility persons
   5 yes, but not handicap accessible
   0 no, limited access

4. Will this become a permanent access route once the project is completed (i.e. right-of-way, easement, or equivalent)? **0 – 15 points**

   15 permanent
   10 at least 10 years
   5 5 to 9 years
   0 less than 5 years

5. Will access be available 24 hours per day, 365 days a year, notwithstanding temporary closures to protect the project from damage due to wet weather, fire danger, or other unforeseen conditions? **0 – 10 points**

   10 year around access
   5 seasonal closures
   0 not addressed

6. If applicable, are long-term maintenance issues adequately addressed? **0 – 10 points**

   10 yes or not applicable
   5 not thoroughly
   0 not addressed

HERITAGE - ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION/SCHOOLYARD GRANTS -- maximum 70 points
Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Are learning goals and objectives clearly defined? **0 - 20 points**

   20 learner outcomes are clearly defined
   10 learner outcomes are somewhat defined
   0 learner outcomes are poorly defined or missing entirely

2. Are project components integrated into appropriate disciplines across the curriculum? **0 – 15 points**

   15 fully integrated into several appropriate disciplines
   5 project limited to narrow discipline focus
   0 project focuses upon single discipline

3. Are wildlife and habitat the primary focus for this project? **0 – 15 points**

   15 major focus of project
   5 integrated into project, but not primary focus
   0 little or no emphasis on wildlife and/or habitat

4. Is the community directly involved with the project from inception to completion?
0 – 20 points

   20 strong involvement of students, staff, administration, and community partners at all (appropriate) project phases
   15 good community involvement in most portions of project
   5 little community involvement across the project life
   0 no community involvement

HERITAGE - URBAN WILDLIFE -- maximum 70 points Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Are the purposes and objectives of this project clearly related to urban wildlife? **0 – 30 points**

   30 yes, clearly related
   15 somewhat related
   0 not related

2. Is the project methodology and planning appropriate and adequate? **0 – 30 points**

   30 yes, both methodology and planning appropriate and adequate
   15 somewhat
   0 no, neither methodology or planning appropriate or adequate; or no evidence of such is presented in the proposal

3. How involved will the community be in the implementation of this project? **0 – 10 points**

   10 very involved
   5 somewhat involved
   0 no apparent community involvement

HERITAGE – IIAPM -- maximum 70 points Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Are the purposes and objectives of this project clearly addressed? **0 – 40 points**

   40 clearly addressed
   20 moderately addressed
   0 not addressed

2. Will the proposal provide information on more than one species or habitat identified as a sensitive element on this year's AGFD list, and does the proposal describe eligibility objectives for the additional species or habitats addressed? **0 – 30 points**

   30 yes; for three or more additional species or habitat objectives
   10 yes; for two additional species or habitat objectives
   5 yes; for one additional species or habitat objective
   0 no; one species or habitat objective addressed

MERIT Total Points – 150 Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Will Arizona wildlife habitat and or Department be able to utilize or benefit directly from the project's end products? **0 – 30 points**

    30 strongly benefits
    15 somewhat benefits
    0 no apparent benefits

2. Does the project proposal support, supplement, or enhance an ongoing Department or Heritage grant project or study?
    0 – 30 points

    30 strongly aligns
    15 somewhat aligns
    0 no apparent alignment

3. Is the publicity plan adequate? **0 – 30 points**

    30 gives credit to funding source(s) and provides high visibility for AGFD
    15 credits funding source or AGFD, but visibility not adequate
    0 inadequate publicity plan

4. Has the applicant provided documentation that the proposal has been reviewed? **0 – 30 points**

    30 thoroughly reviewed and documentation of strong support
    15 evidence of review and/or community support
    0 no review or support indicated

5. Are potential negative side effects (e.g. public safety, resource impact or planning conflicts) recognized?
    0 – 30 points

    30 thoroughly identified a range of effects
    15 inadequately evaluated potential effects
    0 none identified

COST Total Points – 100 Use score values in the range as shown in the question (or item) with reference to the criteria presented.

1. Is the amount of the funding requested justified by direct benefits to Arizona wildlife, habitat and/or the Department? **0 – 40 points**

   40 expected benefits greatly exceed requested funding
   20 expected benefits exceed requested funding
   10 expected benefits justify requested funding
   0 requested funding excessive with very little, if any, expected benefits

2. Evaluate cost sharing by percentage of total project cost. Compare match and substantiated donation (Columns B plus C) to total estimated project cost on Estimated Project Cost Sheet.
   0 – 30 points

   30 match plus donation greater than 75 percent of total project cost
   20 match plus donation 50 to 75 percent of total project cost
   10 match plus donation greater than 25 but less than 50 percent of total project cost
   5 match plus donation greater than zero to 25 percent of total project cost
   0 requested funding only, no match or donation

3. Percent of the cost of the project compared to the available funds for the grant funding-focus.
   0 – 30 points

   30 requested funds 0 to 20 percent of funds available
   20 requested funds 21 to 40 percent of funds available
   10 requested funds 41 to 50 percent of funds available
   0 requested funds more than 50 percent of funds available

Final Score-Sheet Fund _____

Project Title:	
Proposal Number:	**Applicant:**
Funding Source:	**Available Funds:**
Amount of funding requested:	

Rating Criteria	**Points**	**Weight**	**Weighted Points**
Resource Issue (up to 200 weighted points) List Resource:		**2.0**	
Department Activities (up to 200 weighted points) list activity:		**2.0**	
Strategic Plan Objectives (up to 100 points)		**1.0**	
Technical Review (up to 100 points)		**1.0**	
Feasibility/Benefits (up to 150 points)		**1.0**	
Merit (up to 150 points)		**1.0**	
Cost (up to 100 points)		**1.0**	
Total score			

This proposal was scored by: (Please sign and date)

Name:	date
Name:	date
Name:	date
Name:	date

Remarks or Special Consideration