

Waterways Advisory Committee Minutes

Thursday, December 11, 2025 @ 11:00 AM

Commissioners Conference Room – 3rd Floor

1500 Hwy 2, Ste. 338, Sandpoint, ID 83864

Members Present: Matt Zoeller, Doug McGeachy, Mark Knapp, Molly McCahon, Ray Pipella, Jennifer Arn; Zoom: Forrest Schuck, Win Taylor

Members Absent:

Others Present: Oldtown Mayor, Lonnie Orr

Matt opened the meeting at 11:04 a.m.

Matt introduced the process regarding WIF Grants and why it is helpful for all entities in the County work together as the funds available are by County.

Public Comment - None

Introduction & Discussion/Decision Regarding WIF Grant Proposals

Lonnie Orr, Oldtown Mayor

- Discussed the boat ramp and docks installed in 1997. There is a lot of damage on these and they are not safe. The ramp and docks get a lot of use, and in the long run it would be better to replace these as opposed to fixing them. They would like to do this in a two phase project. The ramp needs to be extended due to the proximity to Albeni Dam, and the docks are too far from the ramp area. He also discussed the breakwater that is there and how the water conditions depend on the dam. This is the only ramp/dam on this side of the dam, and it gets a lot of public use. The first year they would like to get the docks replaced and the second year they would fix the ramp.
- Estimate for the docks/Phase 1: \$141k with a match of \$
- The City of Oldtown owns and manages the property. They also would like to put in a space for kayaks.

Alicia Ehrmantrout, City of Oldtown

- Presented the proposed layout in comparison to the current layout

In support of Oldtown's proposal.

Matt discussed the request for Sam Owen Fire Dept., requesting \$20k to upgrade their equipment with a 50% match. There was a discussion regarding their proposal.

In support of Sam Owen's proposal.

Matt noted that the City of Sandpoint is not putting in a WIF Grant proposal this year.

Doug McGeachy, BCSO Marine

- Two of their boats getting close to 4k hours, they maintain their equipment and run them as long as they can. The two larger vessels have about one more season left. One request is to repower

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these vessels, the boats are in great condition, just need the engines repowered.

- Requesting \$65k with a match of \$25k for this project.
- Garfield Bay is one of the busier launches in the County and the only County dock facility that can be used in the winter. They have to pay to park a vessel at a private marine to cover this end of the lake. Most of the work done in the winter is medical aid in conjunction with EMS. They try to keep boats there for bad weather conditions. The dock here is in a good location, but the boats are not usable in the winter months due to the weather conditions and the damage this causes the boats. They would like to build a breakwater to protect the dock.
- Requesting \$90k for the breakwater alone
- Or \$126k with 10-15% match and they can deck the breakwater for use at high pool and build a floating dock to the breakwater which would provide more usable dock space for the public.

In support of the Marine Department's proposal.

These three proposals will be action items for the January meeting. The applications are due January 31, 2026.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:48 a.m.

Next meeting: January 16, 2026 @ 10:00 AM

Deputy Clerk: *Alisa Schoeffel*

Approved By

Date

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Waterways Advisory Committee Minutes

Monday, October 20, 2025 @ 9:00 AM

Commissioners Conference Room – 3rd Floor

1500 Hwy 2, Ste. 338, Sandpoint, ID 83864

Members Present: Molly McCahon, Doug McGeachy, Ray Pipella, Win Taylor, Forrest Schuck, Tom Trulock, Matt Zoeller

Members Absent:

Others Present: Commissioner Asia Williams, Kerry DeLair, Shane McKinley

Matt opened the meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Win made a motion to approve the WWAC minutes from April 17, 2025. Ray seconded. All in favor, the motion carries.

Win made a motion to approve the WWAC minutes from July 17, 2025 pending a name correction. Ray seconded. All in favor, the motion carries.

Public Comment - None

Parks & Waterways Updates/Reports

A) Matt Zoeller, Director

- 1) Lakeview Dock has been redecked
- 2) Cedar Creek Dock has been redecked
- 3) Coolin Boat Launch has been redecked
- 4) Laclede Boat Launch redecking in progress

B) Lt. Doug McGeachy, Marine Division

- 1) The summer was busy: three fatalities, two plane crashes, many boating under the influences

Old Business: Action Items / Discussion / Decision / Recommendation

A) WIF Grant-Waterways Tow Vessel-Vehicle Purchased, working on outfitting it

B) ORFAC Grant-PL Navigation Lights/Granite Creek Dock-in progress, pilings and new navigation lights are being installed. Granite Creek dock project will be starting in November.

New Business: Discussion

A) Discussion Item-New Buoy Requests

- 1) New “Danger Buoys” have been approved – for rocks near the water’s surface
- 2) Listen to any applicants who have been disapproved
 - Roberta Bagley, Thama – The waterway is very narrow, petitioned several years ago for a buoy, it was approved yet no buoy placed. There are more residents,

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more fisherman, boaters do not adhere to the no-wake zone causing danger to residents in the water and erosion to the banks. Read letters from neighbors who also would like buoys placed in the area

- Ray Pipella, Thama – Discussed the areas near Cocolalla Creek and Thama Bay and how they are narrow and that boaters do not see this as no-wake. Discussed a committee that was formed regarding buoys and the history of the buoy application/process as well as previously approved buoys that were not placed

There was a discussion regarding channels versus inlets along the river with Lt. McGeachy. He noted that one problem is the lack of boater education, and he discussed how the Marine deputies follow up with boaters when needed.

- Alex – Has 24/7 monitoring on this area and it needs to have buoys because kids swim there, and boats do not follow the no wake zone. His kids swim in this area, this is a huge safety issue

Win noted that the price of a buoy is less than the salary of a marine deputy and litigation against the County if a child were to be hit. Commissioner Williams requested clarification on the approval of this particular application and what that approval was based on as there is no written record of this approval, only verbal approval. Doug noted that they need to be consistent and that he does not recall any calls/complaints from this specific area. Ray discussed what he views as a channel. Doug noted that channel should be defined and that consistency is needed.

- Roberta B. Thama – Further discussion regarding her request for buoys and that former Director Hughes approved placement for one of the requested two buoys. She reiterated the hazards in this area.

Doug discussed placement of buoys and if there are too many buoys they tend to be ignored. If there are safety issues, he would prefer a call from citizens so they can take a look. He noted that they cite a lot of boaters for wake violations, and they take these seriously.

- Scott R., Thama – Owns the edge of the bay, he is constantly yelling at boaters, there are swimmers in the area; they have an orange buoy there, but boaters do not slow down and they don't understand. Now and again calls are successful but normally it is them yelling at boaters
- Judy Van Vleet, Gypsy Bay – They have requested no wake buoys on the east end, this is at the narrowest point of the river; the channel is more than 400' wide, but there is a safety issue, and this area is very active, and nobody pays attention to the no wake zone. On windy days there is more activity because there is much less wind there. This area should be closed off to all wake.

Doug discussed the laws regarding boaters and their vicinity to paddle boards/kayaks. He noted that in the video sent and the photos that the boats near the paddle boards were at no wake. He noted that a lot of their time is in the higher density areas, including Gypsy Bay. He asked Matt how many buoys are already placed in this area and their location. Matt advised that they have two buoys placed in that area. Ms. Van Vleet agreed that the buoys are not helping. There was more discussion regarding the width of this area (over 1,200') and relocating one of the buoys already there. There was brief discussion among the committee members.

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- Judy Van Vleet, Gypsy Bay – The neighbors will pay for the buoys

Win noted that there may be a legitimate reason for where the current buoys are placed.

- Tim Brady, Rocky Point – Wants a no wake buoy in front of his home, he thinks a no wake buoy reminds a boater to exercise caution and note where they are at; having a no wake buoy would increase the enjoyment of his property

Matt asked about which condition he placed his application under, Mr. Brady does not believe that under the listed conditions it does not qualify. Doug does not believe this location fits the criteria. Ray asked if he was the individual who purchased a buoy, Mr. Brady agreed, Ray noted that if the illegal buoys were not placed it would help boaters to pay attention to the legally placed/approved buoys. Doug noted that placing a non-approved buoy is illegal and persons who do this can be fined/cited and the buoys will be removed. Molly asked if these applications will be reconsidered, Matt will discuss this with his liaison, and it can be brought back to the January meeting.

Commissioner Williams asked about the process to get a denial in front of the board for a vote. Molly said there is a process and an opinion from legal regarding the process; the applicants who were denied are presented the opportunity to discuss the denial, following this the Waterways Director and Sheriff's Liaison will discuss and bring back to the WWAC for a vote. Doug noted that the process was discussed, and they have an opinion from legal regarding the process, but there is no formal appeal process, the Director is the only one who is able to submit an application. There was a brief discussion regarding this process with the committee and Commissioner Williams.

Win asked why the committee is here when the decision is up to the Director and Sheriff's Liaison and he wants to vote on this today. Commissioner Williams noted that they cannot vote as it was agendaized as a discussion item only. Molly discussed the process and how it was written, and we just went through the process regarding the appeals. Doug discussed this process and the administrative side that is not always seen. He noted that this committee was part of writing the process. There was further discussion with the committee and Commissioner Williams. The Director will get back to the applicants within 60 days.

Molly wanted on record that the WWAC can state an opinion, and she would support the reconsideration at Thama for a hazard buoy and no wake buoys at both Thama and Gypsy Bay, Win and Ray agree with Molly's opinion.

Commissioner Williams believes WWAC should look at enforcement of illegal buoys and how this process works. Doug noted that illegal buoys are enforced by IDL. There was discussion regarding having the buoys on the map.

Meeting was adjourned at 10:39 a.m.

Following adjournment, Win wanted to discuss Springy Point.

Next meeting: Special Meeting Regarding WIF Grants, 12/11/2025 @ 11:00 AM

Deputy Clerk: *Alisa Schoeffel*

Approved By

Date

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Oldtown Boat Dock Rehabilitation

Prepared by City of Oldtown
for Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Waterways Improvement Fund (WIF) FY2027

Primary Contact: Alicia Ehrmantrout



Opportunity Details

Opportunity Information

Title

Waterways Improvement Fund (WIF) FY2027

Description

The purpose of the WIF monies is for the protection and promotion of safety, waterways improvement, creation and improvement of parking areas for boating purposes, making and improving boat ramps and moorings, marking of waterways, search and rescue and all things incident to such purposes including the purchase of real and personal property.

Awarding Agency Name

Idaho Dept of Parks & Recreation

Agency Contact Name

Kathy Muir

Agency Contact Phone

208-514-2431

Agency Contact Email

kathy.muir@idpr.idaho.gov

Program

Fund Activity Categories

Category Explanation

Minimum match required is 5% of the total project cost.
Motorized equipment requires a 20% match (15% may be trade-in value of other equipment with a minimum 5% cash) per unit. Please consult with your regional grant specialist for detail on appropriate eligible match information.

Departments

Grants Program

Manager

Kathy Muir

Additional Users

Opportunity Posted Date

10/1/2025

Announcement Type

Initial Announcement

Public Link

<https://www.gotomygrants.com/Public/Opportunities/Details/bc871ae8-cbeb-4b6a-921c-4dcef1d1ce43>

Is Published

Yes

Funding Information

Funding Sources

State



Funding Source Description

The Waterways Improvement Fund (WIF) was created by legislation (Senate Bill 256) in 1963. The WIF is funded annually with a portion of the total state gas tax revenues.

The total amount of WIF grant funds approved in any one county may not exceed fifty percent (50%) of the total WIF grant funds approved for statewide distribution in a state fiscal year. The applications will be approved up to the 50% funding level according to their ranking order.

Funding Restrictions

5% match requirement; 20% motorized equipment match requirement

Award Information

Award Type

Competitive

Capital Grant

No

Indirect Costs Allowed

No

Matching Requirement

Yes

Submission Information

Submission Window

10/07/2025 8:00 AM - 01/30/2026 5:00 PM

Submission Timeline Type

One Time

Allow Multiple Applications

Yes

Other Submission Requirements

Per state statute, capital improvement projects require a signature from the county waterways committee chair. Applications are not eligible without the proper signed form attached. Please contact your IDPR representative for more information.

57-1501 - Provided that no such improvements shall be constructed in any county of this state without the approval of the county waterway committee of the plans for such improvements.

Eligibility Information

Eligibility Type

Public

Additional Eligibility Information

Governmental agencies or Native American Tribes only. The funding is intended for publicly owned and operated areas for boating purposes.

Additional Information

Additional Information URL

<https://parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/grants-and-funding/>



Additional Information URL Description

Guidance and training available on the IDPR website.

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Project Information

Application Information

Application Name

Oldtown Boat Dock Rehabilitation

Award Requested

\$125,000.00

Cash Match Requirement

\$0.00

Cash Match Contributions

\$16,000.00

Total Award Budget

\$141,000.00

Primary Contact Information

Name

Alicia Ehrmantrout

Email Address

cityofoldtown@hotmail.com

Address

215 N. Washington Ave
Oldtown, ID 83822

Phone Number

(208) 946-6645



Project Description

Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Grant Application

Agency Information

County (where project is located)
Bonner County - 09

Project Location (Give a brief description that would allow reviewers to locate on Google Earth or drive to visit site.)
68 Old Diamond Mill Rd.
Located on the south side of the bridge, in the Oldtown/Rotary Park

Briefly summarize your overall project. Describe your project in 1-2 sentences.
We would like to replace the existing 1997 damaged docks with new ones.

Project Questions

Program Purpose - How does this project address the stated purpose of the program? Program descriptions can be found in the IDPR grant guidance book. Tell us how this project benefits the users who contribute to the program funds.

Oldtowns application will specifically aim to improve moorings so that the public has safer access to the river.

Project Urgency - What will be the adverse effects if this project does not receive funding? Describe potential resource damage or other impacts that may occur without action. Describe how this project will address any public health and safety issues.

The current dock systems has fallen into disrepair due to age and funding. The current docks have several holes making them unsafe for public use. The City will have to remove the docks in the near future due to liability and safety concerns.

Attach any current site deficiencies below
Oldtown Boat dock holes.jpg

Project Impact - Describe how the project creates new opportunities not currently available? (See examples in the application instructions)

Our proposed docks will contain a kayak port along with a swimming ladder.

Plan or Survey - Is this project included in an outdoor recreation plan or survey? How does this project relate to the recommendations of the plan? (See application instructions for examples of recreation plans.)

It does not.

Scope of Work - Describe what the project will accomplish and how. Describe the project planning. Explain, in detail, what will be accomplished and how, including the materials needed, labor, timeline, etc. If equipment will be used or purchased, who will be using it, number of hours used per year and for what?

We have published an offer to bid on the project. The city will higher dock builder to design the new set of docks and install them. The builders can install the docks in a matter of days or weeks once the docks have been built off site out of a composite decking.

Construction drawings or conceptual plans should be attached to this application.
Oldtown City of 3.1 NEW RAMPS+DOCKS 2025.pdf

Scope of Work - Have you discussed this project (in detail) with IDPR staff and/or the respective advisory committee member?

- ☐ Yes
☒ No

Justify the Need and Demand for the Project - Describe the CURRENT use in the area (what recreationist presently use this site) and the POTENTIAL use expected with the development of this project. (Include user days, types of users, number of users during high use, etc.) Describe the current deficiencies and how they will be corrected with the development of this project. How will this affect current and future use of the site?

We are the only public access boat launch north of the Alberni Falls Dam on the Idaho side of the Pend Orielle River.



Our boat launch is accessed by fisherman, kayakers, Pend Orielle Utility District, The Outboard Racing Association, the Kalispell Tribe and the public for swimming recreation.

Maintenance and Operation - Describe provisions for ongoing maintenance and operation of the project. This includes maintenance and upkeep of equipment purchases. (Who will be responsible for the maintenance and operation and what is the annual budget?)

The City of Oldtown and it's public works department will maintain the docks. We have a \$10,000.00 maintenance budget for the Oldtown/Rotary Park annually.

Obligated Matching Funds – (a.) List the source, (b.) amount, and give a (c.) description of matching funds obligated to the project. Add column “b” and put total at the bottom.

| | a. Contributor | b. Amount | c. Description |
|-------|-----------------|-----------|----------------|
| | City of Oldtown | 1130.00 | Clerical work |
| | City of Oldtown | 5200.00 | Demolition |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Total | | | |

Provide letter(s) of commitment or other documentation to verify the match from each contributor. Your match will not be considered without appropriate letter(s) of commitment. Make sure the dollar value is noted on the letter of commitment.

The total in column “b” must be the same as the total in the “matching share” column “B” on the next page.

Attach Letters of Commitment below

User Group Support - Describe the amount of support this project has from its associated user group(s). How has this support been demonstrated? (List supporting groups and attach letters of support.)

The Pend Orielle Utility District, the Kalispell Tribe, the Stateline Outboard Racing Association and the Bonner County Sheriff have written letters of support on our behalf

Attach User Group Support Letters of support below

Support Letters.pdf

Project Eligibility

Accessibility - Explain how the project complies with accessibility requirements as stated in the Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards, Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines, or Uniform Building Code? (Include construction drawings or conceptual plans to support accessibility. Please do not use anything larger than 11x17 size paper.)

As a City we are legally required to conform to the UFAS, ADA and UBF. Our current dock system already complies.

Attach ONLY construction drawings or conceptual plans that support the accessibility portion of the project

Oldtown City of 3.1 NEW RAMPS+DOCKS 2025.pdf

Site Description - Describe the site as well as the surrounding area. Explain the compatibility of the project to the site. (Include site location map, scale site plan including boundary and utility information, if available.) If the grant is for equipment, describe where it will be used (include map). Be specific.

The Oldtown/ Rotary Park consists of 2.7 acres located along the east side of the Pend Orielle River, in Oldtown Idaho. There is one visitor center, several picnic areas, large boat parking lot, boat launch and dock system.

Attach site location map, scale site plan including boundary and utility information, if available.

Boat dock aerial.pdf



Project Design - Who will design and/or engineer this project? Is the person/company licensed?

Any builder the city chooses will be vetted and licensed.

Project Period - What are the intended start and completion dates?

Estimated Project Start Date

6/1/2026

Estimated Project End Date

10/1/2026

Projected Life of the Project/Equipment. This is the projected useful life of the components of the project you are applying for IN THIS application. This information will be used in the future to determine whether a conversion of use has occurred if the site is closed or altered in a way that removes the recreation utility.

- ☐ 1-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11-15 years
- ☐ 16-20 years
- ☒ 20+ years

Use Fee - Will fee be charged for use of or access to this project?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Public Involvement - Describe the public involvement process (in detail) used in the planning of this project and the results of the input (attach necessary documentation). **NOTE: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IS MANDATORY FOR ALL APPLICANTS AS STATED IN IDAPA CODE 26.01.31.100.03. YOUR APPLICATION IS NOT ELIGIBLE WITHOUT PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT!**

We handed out comment cards over an entire summer. The public requested safer docks and easier accessibility. We also included the boat dock repair/replacement in several regular meetings.

Attach necessary documentation. The applicant must include proof of public comment regarding the project in the application. The opportunity for public comment should begin within one (1) year of submitting the application. Acceptable proof may include a screenshot of a public announcement on your webpage or the agenda and minutes from a public meeting. Make sure that a date is visible within your attachment.

Comment Cards 1.pdf, Comment Cards 2.pdf, Comment Cards 3.pdf, October 2025 Min.pdf

Permits - Does this project require permits or clearances?

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Please identify the permits or clearances that will be required for this project

No permits should be required as the existing docks are just being replaced.

Environmental or NEPA. Are there any potential environmental clearances that will be required? (if yes, your project will not proceed until clearance has been obtained.)

- ☐ Yes
- ☒ No

Please detail an environmental processes or reports needed to complete this project

Applicant Ownership - Describe ownership of the project site. This will ensure authorized use, project liability, management for the life of the project and legal responsibilities. Your project is not eligible without proof of ownership or a management agreement.

- ☐ The application is for equipment/service (land ownership is not required)
- ☒ Applicant owns land (attach a copy of Fee Simple Title - Is the deed and title clear?)
- ☐ Applicant has a Management Agreement or Memorandum of Understanding with the legal landowner/management agency. (Attach copy of MOU and letter of support from landowner)
- ☐ If ownership is different from above, describe specifically:

Attach a copy of Fee Simple Title



Oldtown Boatlaunch title 1994.pdf

It is hereby mutually agreed and understood that the use of these funds will be for the purposes stated in this document only and are subject to the terms of the current Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation's Grant Agreement for this project, as signed by the authorized individuals. It is also understood that the applicant will comply with the appropriate Recreation Program rules as they now exist. Applicants that receive grants involving federal funds must comply with requirements as outlined in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) 2 CFR Part 200.

Responses Selected:

☒ I am authorized by the applicant to pursue these grant funds

Authorized representative details:

The authorized representative is the individual representing the applicant with the authority to sign contracts and agreements. Authorized representatives are: City Agency - Mayor; County Agency - County Commissioner; Forest Service - Forest Supervisor, Bureau of Land Management - Area Supervisor, Non-Profit Organization - President

Title

Mayor

Typed or Printed Name

Mayor, Lonnie Orr

Date

11/17/2025

This agency's programs and activities are operated free from discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, age or disability. Anyone who believes they have been discriminated against or who may need further information regarding discrimination should write: Director, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0065, or National Parks Service, Equal Opportunity Officer (010), P.O. Box 37127, Washington DC 20013



Budget and Instruction

Budget Completion Instructions

Using the attached template below, please complete a budget worksheet for your project. The total Grant Amount should be equal to the Amount indicated on your Project Information section of the application. The MATCH - from your grant sponsor should be equal to the Match Amount indicated on the Project Information section. At the end of the spreadsheet is a field where you will need to identify the person(s) responsible for preparing the Submission Budget. If additional line items are required within any section please be sure to right click the row number and insert additional rows as needed. If assistance is required please reach out to the Agency Contact listed on the Opportunity Details section.

Budget Template

Please download the attached Budget Worksheet and complete. Budgeted amount will need to equal amount indicated on your Project Information Section of your application

Budget Worksheet 2026.xlsx

Once completed please upload your Budget Worksheet

Cost Estimate Documents

Please upload cost estimates that support the budget you provided.

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Waterways Improvement Fund Signature

Waterways Improvement Fund Signature

Form Instructions

All applications for construction must have the signature of the chairman of the County Waterways Committee. No waterways improvements will be constructed in any county of the state without this approval. This signature does not obligate the county to any legal responsibilities regarding non-county applications. The signature certifies compliance with the Idaho Statute and ensures that the application meets the county's waterways improvement planning requirements.

Print attached page for signature and upload with your application.

County Waterways Signature Page.pdf

WIF Signature Page

DRAFT



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Executive Summary of Request for Waterways Improvement Fund Grant

The Sam Owen Fire Department has been using its 1989 19' Bayliner fire-rescue vessel for providing year around emergency response services to the boating public on Lake Pend Oreille to over half of the lake area from Ellisport Bay on the north, west to Sunnyside, Bottle Bay and the entire west shore of Sagle down to Evans Landing and the east shore from Whiskey Rock north including the Clark Fork River and Pack River delta area. While the Bonner County Sheriff Marine Division staffs its boat predominantly in the summer months, Bonner Dispatch dispatches our boat on all 911 calls from the boating public except for law enforcement related calls where our firefighters may be in danger of harm from a suspect. Over 90% of the calls we respond to for boater assistance or search and rescue are on the lake outside the boundaries of our fire district. While we call the boat a "fire-rescue" boat, for the past two years 66% of our dispatched calls were related to on the water boat, search and rescue or other rescue responses and not fire related. The calls for assistance that were fire related this year came mostly because of the Sunset Fire where the USFS used our boat to keep other vessels out of the restricted area so water dipping aircraft could safely operate, or to assist the USFS boat. We are the only rescue boat available on the lake during low water and winter months that is capable of an immediate response to a dispatch call for a search and rescue or on board medical or other rescue response to a boater as our firefighters are all local to the Hope area where the boat is based and are immediately available to respond. In addition, we are spill response trained in the event of a train derailment, boat accident or lakeshore road spill.

Examples of our rescue services to the boating public include: Boat accident 2 injured occupants; Sunset Fire - Assist USFS boat and provide restricted area patrol to keep boaters out of area for water dipping aircraft; Rescue, Boat sinking 3 souls on board including 6 year old; Boat in distress lost at night mid-lake and out of fuel; Rescue, duck hunter stranded; Rescue, child drowning; Rescue, Dog fell off boat and stranded in the lake, boat occupants elderly; Rescue, stranded boater; Rescue, Capsized Kayaker with hypothermia.

The Funding Request:

The problem: Simply stated, the funds are needed to complete deferred maintenance and upgrades on the boat and acquire a FLIR unit for night and bad weather rescue. Without addressing the deferred maintenance issues, the boat faces an increasing risk of unanticipated mechanical failure, reducing our ability to provide year-around emergency response capability. A mechanical failure or inoperative system during a rescue or other response only increases the number of people at the scene who need assistance. In addition, the upgrades for FLIR unit will provide reliable search and rescue operations at night and marginal weather conditions. Without the availability of the Sam Owen rescue boat this would leave boaters, anglers, and other recreational users vulnerable to delayed rescue and medical assistance as well as worsen the impact of hazardous spills due to delayed response, threatening both public safety and the lake environment.

How did we get to this point: As a quasi-government agency our fire district is limited to a 3% increase to our budget in any year. Because we are primarily a fire district, we have competing mandated priorities (personnel, EMS, structural fire apparatus). For several years, the district has only been able to fund essential annual service on the boat and has not had sufficient revenue to complete the accumulating repairs and upgrades needed on a 36-year-old boat that has seen hard use. The district's annual operating budget supports routine haul-out, inspection, engine tuneup and minor repairs. Since the fire district's primary purpose, which is supported by property taxes from our district, consists of fire and medical response, the majority of our annual budget is used for that purpose, and our budget cannot absorb the full costs of keeping the boat in the condition needed. We have been addressing the urgent maintenance that will keep the boat operational, but we now need to address the one-time cost of the comprehensive deferred maintenance items and needed upgrades. For that, we need outside assistance. Because we provide essential search and rescue and medical response services to recreational boaters on the lake, and often are the only available agency to respond during the off season, we are requesting Waterway Improvement funds for this one-time catch-up maintenance and upgrade of a FLIR unit. Boaters who use our services contribute for their 911 services through the fuel tax, which is an appropriate use of WIF funds if the department, which is supported by property taxes, is going to be able to continue the level of services required by the boating public.

Funding Solution: Our grant request is intended as a one-time "reset" so the boat can return to a reliable condition with an affordable continuing annual maintenance cycle. Once the boat is back in serviceable condition with the deferred repairs and upgrade addressed the department can resume routine maintenance that our regular budget can sustain long-term. With the WIF grant assistance, this is the optimum year for us to be able to fund the work. Combining our regular boat maintenance funds and the one-time availability of funds we received from the USFS from our services on the Sunset Fire this year, we are able to provide a cost share of fifty-fifty to the matching funds of a WIF Grant to accomplish the work. We estimate the total for the repairs and upgrades needed and to acquire a FLIR will be approximately \$40,000 and we will be requesting matching funds of a grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the Fund.

The Benefits to the boating public:

- **911 Calls:** For boaters using the lake year in the shoulder seasons for the fishing derby or during the winter months the Sam Owen Fire Department Boat is the primary dispatched agency for all 911 calls, search and rescue, medical and hazmat response calls by Bonner Dispatch for on the lake assistance. While the Sheriff Marine Division maintains a boat at Hope Marine in winter, their response is generally focused on law-enforcement calls; in practice, Sam Owen Fire is the primary on-water emergency search and rescue resource for 7–8 months of the year. The boating public has come to expect immediate help when they call 911 for assistance and it is the Sam Owen Fire Department that receives the call to provide that safety net.

- Medical response and rescue: We provide recreational boaters access to a capable rescue and medical response platform if their family experiences a medical emergency on a boat, becomes disabled in rough weather, or requires water-based evacuation from remote shoreline locations.
- Extended season confidence: With a reliable, well-equipped rescue boat available year-round, boaters can safely extend their season into spring, fall, and winter, as we provide an on-water response asset if weather changes, mechanical issues arise, or an incident or accident occurs.
- Night and marginal weather operations: Improved night-operations capability gives boaters a safety net if they return to marinas after dark, participate in evening events, or navigate in marginal weather conditions with assurance that a search and rescue platform can respond to locate them quickly if they become overdue.
- Environmental protection: Reliable hazmat and spill response protects water quality, launch areas, marinas, and railroad derailment spills response preserving the lake environment for sustainable boating and fishing.

Summary: We understand the WIF Grant program has not funded a fireboat request in the last 15 years. We are not asking as a fireboat. This grant request is not a request to replace or upgrade a fire suppression platform; it is a focused request to maintain critical on the water 911 response, lost or endangered boater search and rescue, medical, and spill-response services for recreational boaters on Lake Pend Oreille; in direct alignment with the Waterways Improvement Fund's safety and search-and-rescue purpose. The funding would directly advance the purpose of the Waterways Improvement Fund by providing lifesaving search and rescue, EMS-medical, and emergency response capabilities for recreational boaters who fund the program through their fuel taxes.