

RCW 27.34.400 Heritage barn preservation program. (1) The Washington state heritage barn preservation program is created in the department.

(2) The director, in consultation with the heritage barn preservation advisory board, shall conduct a thematic study of Washington state's barns. The study shall include a determination of types, an assessment of the most unique and significant barns in the state, and a condition and needs assessment of historic barns in the state.

(3) (a) The department, in consultation with the heritage barn preservation advisory board, shall establish a heritage barn recognition program. To apply for recognition as a heritage barn, the barn owner shall supply to the department photos of the barn, photos of the farm and surrounding landscape, a brief history of the farm, and a construction date for the barn.

(b) Three times a year, the governor's advisory council on historic places shall review the list of barns submitted by the department for formal recognition as a heritage barn.

(4) Eligible applicants for heritage barn preservation program awards include property owners, nonprofit organizations, and local governments.

(5) To apply for support from the heritage barn preservation program, an applicant must submit an application to the department in a form prescribed by the department. Applicants must provide at least fifty percent of the cost of the project through in-kind labor, the applicant's own moneys, or other funding sources.

(6) The following types of projects are eligible for funding:

(a) Stabilization of endangered heritage barns and related agricultural buildings, including but not limited to repairs to foundations, sills, windows, walls, structural framework, and the repair and replacement of roofs; and

(b) Work that preserves the historic character, features, and materials of a historic barn.

(7) In making awards, the advisory board shall consider the following criteria:

(a) Relative historical and cultural significance of the barn;

(b) Urgency of the threat and need for repair;

(c) Extent to which the project preserves historic character and extends the useful life of the barn or associated agricultural building;

(d) Visibility of the barn from a state designated scenic byway or other publicly traveled way;

(e) Extent to which the project leverages other sources of financial assistance;

(f) Provision for long-term preservation;

(g) Readiness of the applicant to initiate and complete the project; and

(h) Extent to which the project contributes to the equitable geographic distribution of heritage barn preservation program awards across the state.

(8) In awarding funds, special consideration shall be given to barns that are:

(a) Still in agricultural use;

(b) Listed on the national register of historic places; or

(c) Outstanding examples of their type or era.

(9) The conditions in this subsection must be met by recipients of funding in order to satisfy the public benefit requirements of the heritage barn preservation program.

(a) Recipients must execute a contract with the department before commencing work. The contract must include a historic preservation easement for between five to fifteen years depending on the amount of the award. The contract must specify public benefit and minimum maintenance requirements.

(b) Recipients must proactively maintain their historic barn for a minimum of ten years.

(c) Public access to the exterior of properties that are not visible from a public right-of-way must be provided under reasonable terms and circumstances, including the requirement that visits by nonprofit organizations or school groups must be offered at least one day per year.

(10) All work must comply with the United States secretary of the interior's standards for the rehabilitation of historic properties; however, exceptions may be made for the retention or installation of metal roofs on a case-by-case basis.

(11) The heritage barn preservation program shall be acknowledged on any materials produced and in publicity for the project. A sign acknowledging the program shall be posted at the worksite for the duration of the preservation agreement.

(12) Projects must be initiated within one year of funding approval and completed within two years, unless an extension is provided by the department in writing.

(13) If a recipient of a heritage barn preservation program award, or subsequent owner of a property that was assisted by the program, takes any action within ten years of the funding award with respect to the assisted property such as dismantlement, removal, or substantial alteration, which causes it to be no longer eligible for listing in the Washington heritage register, the program shall be repaid in full within one year. [2024 c 168 s 3; 2007 c 333 s 2.]

Effective date—2024 c 168: See note following RCW 82.45.240.

Finding—Purpose—2007 c 333: "The legislature finds that historic barns are essential symbols of Washington's heritage representing a pioneering spirit of industriousness. Important for their association with broad patterns of agricultural history and community development and as examples of distinct architectural styles and methods of construction, historic barns serve as highly visible icons for local residents and visitors alike. The legislature acknowledges that factors such as changes in the agricultural economy and farming technologies, prohibitive rehabilitation costs, development pressures, and regulations restricting new uses, collectively work to endanger historic barns statewide and contribute to their falling into decay or being demolished altogether.

As historic barns represent irreplaceable resources, and recognizing that barn preservation will work to retain these structures as functional and economically viable elements of working lands, the purpose of this act is to create a system acknowledging heritage barns statewide that provides emergency assistance to heritage barn owners through matching grants, assesses the need for long-term barn preservation, and considers additional incentives and regulatory revisions that work toward the preservation of heritage

barns as integral components of Washington's historic landscapes."
[2007 c 333 s 1.]