



**McKenzie Natural  
Resources Scholarship  
Fall 2026 Application**

## **Contact Information**

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Student Name

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Street Address

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City

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State

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Zip

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Name of High School

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Phone #

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Personal email

## **Checklist of Required Documents**

- Completed Application Coversheet (this page)
- Completed **McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship** application with written responses to the application questions
- Expected Family Contribution (EFC) amount listed on your FASFA
- Current high school transcript
- Documentation of acceptance to a college, university or community college
- Up to three letters of support from teachers, employers or community leader not related to you

Scholarship candidates will be scheduled for an interview with a panel of local education and natural resource professionals. One student will be awarded the scholarship for 2026 fall term/semester

# McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship

## *Serving students throughout the McKenzie – Upper Willamette River Basin*

Financial hardships and education are inextricably linked. People living in economically challenging situations may stop going to school so they can work to support themselves or their families. These choices may have life-long implications and challenge career development. The purpose of the **McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship** is to help address some of the inequities in our current system by making long-term investments in the lives of local students to support their secondary education pursuits.

Students from historically underserved and underrepresented communities are encouraged to apply.

The McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship will award one scholarship per academic year to a student graduating from **Springfield High School, Thurston High School, or Cottage Grove High School**. This scholarship is offered to help students pursue an undergraduate degree in natural resource-related fields.

## AWARD INFORMATION

The McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship awards up to \$15,000 over four years on a staggered scale to support students' successful completion of eligible degrees. The annual award is split evenly over terms or semesters (e.g., \$1,000/term).

### Staggered Scholarship Award Schedule

- Academic Year 1 - \$3,000
- Academic Year 2 - \$3,000
- Academic Year 3 - \$4,000
- Academic Year 4 - \$5,000

The scholarship allows for a range of expenses that more traditional scholarships and grants do not cover. Eligible expenses include tuition, living expenses (housing/meal plans or groceries/utilities), technology (calculators/computers) needed for classes, and required books and supplies. The scholarship may be combined with other school-based, private or foundation scholarships.

## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Applicants must meet the following criteria to be eligible for the scholarship:

1. Graduate in 2026 from a high school in the following areas: **Springfield, Mohawk, McKenzie, Oakridge, Lowell, Pleasant Hill, Creswell and Cottage Grove**.
2. Plans to enroll at a four-year college or university **or** a community college in fall 2026,
3. Declared for a natural resource-related major **or** stated intent within application to declare for eligible field. Students may remain undeclared for the first academic year, and
4. Enrolled in 12 credits each term/semester.

Eligible fields of study include those that support the sustainable management of natural resources (including geology, biology, chemistry, ecology, environmental science, and botany), fisheries, wildlife, water, or agriculture, and developing resiliency to expected impacts of climate change.

## SELECTION CRITERIA

The McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship will be awarded based on the following criteria:

- Completed Application,
- Demonstrated economic need,
- Member of a marginalized community based on race, culture, class, sexual orientation, gender identity, or economic status,
- Participation in extra-curricular activities that increase understanding or awareness of local natural resources concerns or challenges,
- Community engagement activities or volunteer experiences,
- A successful interview, and
- Maintenance of a 2.5 or better GPA.

The review and selection committee consists of local education and natural resource professionals. Individuals on the committee will be available to the student throughout their enrollment to offer mentorship and support.

## APPLICATION PROCESS

Applicants must submit the following application materials to the McKenzie Watershed Council, [stuart@mckenziwc.org](mailto:stuart@mckenziwc.org) by April 10th, 2026. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.

- Completed **McKenzie Natural Resource Scholarship** application form (See Page 3)
- Expected Family Contribution (EFC) amount listed on your FAFSA Student Aid Report (SAR).
- Current high school transcript.
- Documentation of acceptance to four-year college, university or a community college.
- Up to three letters of support from teachers, employers, coaches, or community members who are not related to you.
- To be considered for the scholarship, please note that a completed coversheet (see last page) must be submitted with your application along with all required documentation.

The application process will include an interview with a panel consisting of local education and natural resource professionals.

## SCHOLARSHIP RENEWAL CRITERIA and ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS

The student will sign a funding agreement with the McKenzie Watershed Council, [www.mckenziwc.org](http://www.mckenziwc.org) which will hold and disperse all funding and tax documentation. The McKenzie Natural Resource scholarship is renewable for up to 12 academic terms or 8 semesters (excluding summer). Payment distribution will occur at the beginning of each term/semester, contingent on meeting the scholarship renewal criteria/annual requirements. If the student needs to take one or more terms off due to financial, family, health or other considerations, scholarship funds will be suspended. If the student graduates prior to using all the years of the scholarship, funds for any remaining terms will be forfeited.

Renewal awards require a minimum 2.5 cumulative GPA and completion of 12 credits per term.

### **DISPERSEMENT OF FUNDS**

All payments will be made on a term or semester basis. Each year the *initial payment* will be dispersed when the student submits a copy of their class schedule. *Subsequent payments* require a copy of the students current transcript. At the end of each academic year, students will be required to complete an annual report documenting their experience, progress toward their goals, general use of funds and suggestions for program improvement. Any additional guidelines and conditions will be outlined in the funding agreement.

### **COMPLETING AND SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION**

#### **Instructions:**

People from historically underserved and underrepresented communities are encouraged to apply. Applications will only be shared with the selection committee, not publicly. Incomplete applications will not be considered for review.

1. Answer each application question. Do not exceed a total of five pages.
2. Completed Applicant Coversheet (an additional page to responses to application questions).
3. Heartfelt and personal answers are encouraged. Please no canned answers.

If there are any questions , please contact Stuart Perlmeter at [stuart@mckenziewc.org](mailto:stuart@mckenziewc.org)

**APPLICATION QUESTIONS:**

Please provide a written responses to each of the five questions below. Stay within the three page limit.

**1. What degree/certification are you hoping to obtain through this support?**

**2. What area of natural resources are you hoping to go into after completing your education?**

3. **Do you have any experience (school or volunteer) in the field that you are hoping to join after your education is completed? If so, please share how it has affected your decision to pursue this path.**

**4. What event or person inspired you to enter the natural resources field**

**5. How will this funding support your future plans?**

**6. Give us an example of a personal challenge during high school, followed by a brief explanation of how you navigated the challenge**