



ATLANTIC FLYWAY SHOREBIRD INITIATIVE

2021 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: **Monday, November 16, 2020 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

Migratory birds link habitats, people and cultures, offering an extraordinary opportunity to connect people across a hemisphere. Shorebirds undertake some of the longest migrations of any animals on earth. The great distances and routes travelled each year – referred to as “flyways” – also expose shorebirds to numerous threats. Those threats include habitat loss, human disturbance, predation, harvest pressure, and conflicting resource management objectives. In addition, the relatively small population numbers for many shorebird species make them vulnerable to both anthropogenic and environmental impacts. As a consequence, shorebirds are one of the North American bird guilds undergoing the steepest population declines.

NFWF and partners developed and implemented a single-species shorebird initiative in 2008 that helped reverse the decline of American oystercatcher along the U.S. east coast. The oystercatcher effort laid the groundwork for NFWF’s Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative, a multispecies effort to implement the [2018 business plan](#). The goal of this plan is to increase populations of three focal species – American oystercatcher (short-distance migrant), whimbrel (mid-distance migrant), and red knot (long-distance migrant) – by improving the function and condition of habitat at critical sites these migratory species depend on at various stages of their lifecycles. Conservation actions to address threats to each of the focal species is expected to provide ancillary impacts to dozens of other shorebird species. This request for proposals will award up to \$625,000 in federal and private sector funding.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

This program focuses on priority shorebird sites along the U.S. Atlantic seaboard, the Florida gulf coast and panhandle, and priority wintering sites for the focal species, including portions of the Caribbean and South America.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

All proposals must address how projects will directly and measurably contribute to the [Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Business Plan](#) goals. Overall, NFWF is interested in advancing full lifecycle monitoring for focal species. In 2021, the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative seeks projects that will address at least one of the following priorities:

1. **Focal species:** NFWF seeks proposals that advance American oystercatcher, red knot and whimbrel focal species goals. In 2021, we specifically seek site-based projects that continue population and reproductive success monitoring for American oystercatcher and population monitoring for red knot. NFWF also seeks projects that complete population estimates and evaluate threats for non-breeding red knots using the US coast of Georgia as well as in Brazil, Argentina and Chile.
2. **Conserve habitat:** NFWF seeks projects that lead to the designation of new WHSRN sites which support important populations of red knot, whimbrel and American oystercatchers within priority geographies along the eastern seaboard of the United States. NFWF will also consider support for Tier 1* sites in Latin America and the Caribbean. [Business Plan - refer to page 12, Strategy 1, (a)]. NFWF also seeks proposals that would secure permanent or long-term protection of key sites.
3. **Restore habitat:** NFWF seeks projects that restore shorebird habitat within the 10 business plan focal areas [Business plan – refer to page 9] and engage with key stakeholders at local and regional levels. While it is unlikely that the resources are adequate for large-scale restoration projects at this time, NFWF is interested in project planning and preliminary design for large-scale restoration efforts or best management practices for restoration projects to benefit shorebird species. [Business Plan – refer to page 12, Strategy 2, (a) and (b)].
4. **Improve habitat management:** NFWF seeks projects that improve habitat management at Tier 1* breeding, staging and/or wintering sites for American oystercatcher and red knot along the eastern seaboard. Activities should focus on implementing best management practices developed by the AFSI working group to reduce human disturbance and predation by working with local community groups or networks of local organizations. [Business Plan – refer to page 13, Strategy 3, 3.1 (a)].
5. **Monitoring and assessing progress:** NFWF seeks to develop a Flyway health index tool to evaluate progress in addressing threats across the flyway. The goal of the index is to measure the annual status of focal species, priority sites and progress towards addressing key threats. In support of developing the index, NFWF will consider (a) projects that complete site assessments for Tier 1* sites supporting red knot and whimbrel, and (b) projects that assess the importance of vital stopover sites for red knot. Lastly, NFWF seeks proposals to expand the monitoring infrastructure in key Atlantic flyway locations (e.g., Motus systems) [Business plan– refer to pages 15-16, Strategy 5, a, c, d, f, g].

* Tier 1 sites are listed in the Business Plan Annex.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative has a list of metrics in Easygrants for applicants to choose from for future reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table below). If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Scott Hall (Scott.Hall@nfwf.org) or Bridget Collins (bridget.collins@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Habitat Conservation	Site protection - # of sites with enhanced protection	Enter the number of Tier 1 sites designated by land management authorities - the target is formal agreement for a site's protection (e.g. NWRs, state refuges, private owners, other)
Habitat Restoration	Beach habitat quality improvements - Miles restored	Enter the # miles of beach restored. In the metrics notes, please also include the equivalent acres restored (if available).
Habitat Management	BMP implementation to mitigate recreational disturbance - # of sites with BMPs	Enter the # of sites where BMPs have been successfully implemented for one or more focal species (i.e. contribute to focal species productivity, provide refuge for staging).
Habitat Management	BMP implementation to mitigate recreational disturbance – Acres with BMPs	Enter the number of acres where Atlantic Flyway, community-based social marketing, or other disturbance reduction BMPs are implemented. If using this metric in combination with acres under improved management, please detail any acreage overlap in the metrics notes.
Habitat Management	Improved management practices - Acres under improved management	Enter the number of acres with shorebird habitat improvement practices implemented, including predation management, disturbance reduction, vegetation management, etc. If using this metric in combination with acres with disturbance reduction BMPs, please detail any acreage overlap in the metrics notes.
Habitat Management	Invasive animal or predator removal/ Fencing nests from predators - # sites with goals met	Enter the number of sites with predation reduction goals met.
Planning, Research, Monitoring	BMP development - # BMP recommendations developed	Enter the number of best management practice documents or tools developed for the Atlantic Flyway or a focal geography therein, such as for human disturbance, coastal engineering, or predation management.

Planning, Research, Monitoring	Monitoring - # sites being monitored	Enter the number of site assessments completed in focal geographies using the WHSRN Site Assessment Tool.
Planning, Research, Monitoring	Research - # studies used to inform mgmt	Enter the number of studies completed whose findings are used to adapt management/ inform management decisions.
Planning, Research, Monitoring	Tool development for decision-making - # tools developed	Enter the number of Motus towers operational as a result of the project (include in narrative number of nanotags deployed through the project); also include narrative on number of other tracking devices deployed through the project.
Capacity, Outreach, Incentives	Building institutional capacity - # FTE with sufficient training	Enter the number of staff or full-time equivalents with sufficient training and skills engaged in conservation activities. This applies to managers of sites who are professionally trained in harvest mgt techniques in the Caribbean and in particular in French overseas territories and Barbados - two regions identified as a priority by the Foundation owing to sport hunting pressure.
Capacity, Outreach, Incentives	Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities on shorebird conservation issues like human disturbance and incompatible management practices.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal Governments and Organizations, educational institutions, and international organizations.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, businesses, and unincorporated individuals.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. NFWF acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using NFWF funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.
- NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

The Atlantic Flyway Shorebird program has approximately \$625,000 to award in funding for grants this year. The majority of awards under this program will fall in the \$50,000 to \$250,000 range. However upper or lower limits to award size are not specified. A minimum of a 1:1 non-Federal match of cash and/or in-kind services is required and will be considered in application review. Projects may extend from one to three years.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Program Goals and Priorities – Project contributes to the program’s overall habitat and species conservation goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities.

Technical Merit – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically-sound and feasible.

Cost-Effectiveness – Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation may include, but is not limited to, an assessment of either or both direct and indirect costs in the proposed budget. The federal government has determined that a *de minimis* 10% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a NICRA, as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize **ALL** proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

Transferability – Project has potential and plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

Communication – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

Funding Need – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

Conservation Plan and Context – The project advances an existing conservation plan or strategy.

Monitoring – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Long-term Sustainability – Project will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. This should include how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

Past Success – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation practices with specific, measurable results.

Partnership – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant. Identify proposed partners, if known (including potential or contemplated subawards to third party subrecipients of the applicant), the roles they will play in implementing the project, and how this project will build new or enhance existing partnerships. (Note: a project partner is any local community, non-profit organization, tribe, and/or local, state, and federal government agency that contributes to the project in a substantial way and is closely involved in the completion of the project.)

OTHER

Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF's [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable.

Matching Contributions – Matching Contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF's express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF's financial support for the grant in press

releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

Receiving Award Funds – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

Compliance Requirements – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and National Historic Preservation Act. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved by NFWF’s Atlantic Flyway Shorebirds 2019 RFP programmatic funders (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s) on federal or non-federal lands. **As necessary, applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals.** As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state or local requirements and obtain all necessary permits and clearances.

Quality Assurance – If a project involves significant monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation (www.epa.gov/quality). Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task.

Permits – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements. Where projects involve work in the waters of the United States, NFWF strongly encourages applicants to conduct a permit pre-application meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers prior to submitting their proposal. In some cases, if a permit pre-application meeting has not been completed, NFWF may require successful applicants to complete such a meeting prior to grant award.

Federal Funding – The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information: [Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative](#).

Full Proposal Due Date	November 16, 2020 by 11:59 PM EST
Review Period	December 2020 – February 2021
Awards Announced	March 2021

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife

Foundation's Easygrants system.

1. Go to easygrants.nfwf.org to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information. Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.
2. Once on your homepage, click the "Apply for Funding" button and select this RFP's "Funding Opportunity" from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be downloaded [here](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's [Applicant Information](#) page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:
Bridget Collins (bridget.collins@nfwf.org), or *Scott Hall* (Scott.Hall@nfwf.org)

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org

Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.

Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.