NFWF

Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund

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ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 5,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of $6.1 billion. Learn more at **www.nfwf.org**

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Riparian farmland in Pennsylvania

BACKGROUND

The Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund addresses near-term and long-range issues identified by the Delaware River Basin Restoration Partnership and Program Framework, for measurable gains for fish and wildlife conservation, clean water, access to outdoor recreation, and other values and natural and economic benefits for people living in the basin. Major funding for the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The fund was launched in 2018 as a first step toward bringing together various stakeholders invested in restoration and conservation efforts throughout the Delaware River Watershed to address different strategic program areas and cross-program activities, build networks, and improve efficiency and focus on a basin-wide scale.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The strategic program areas of the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund include:
- Sustain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat restoration and conservation activities
- Improve and maintain water quality to support fish and wildlife, as well as habitats of fish and wildlife, and drinking water for people
- Sustain and enhance water management for volume and flood damage mitigation improvements to benefit fish and wildlife habitat
- Improve recreational opportunities for public access in the basin consistent with the ecological needs of fish and wildlife habitat.

Cross-program activities include:

- Engage the public through outreach, education and citizen involvement to increase capacity and support for coordinated restoration and protection activities in the basin
- Facilitate strategic planning to maximize adaptive potential of natural systems in changing watershed conditions
- Increase scientific capacity to support planning, monitoring, and research activities necessary to carry out coordinated restoration and conservation activities in the basin
- Provide technical assistance for restoration and conservation activities
- Conserve areas of regional significance.

Projects under the fund are implemented entirely within the Delaware River watershed. The fund's investments target areas of regional significance for restoration and conservation in order to support ongoing efforts, increase capacity, and facilitate maximum adaptive potential in changing watershed conditions.

Covering 13,539 square miles of land and water, the Delaware River Watershed is home to native brook trout, red knots, river herring, freshwater mussels, oysters and many other species that are economically, ecologically and culturally important to the region. Headwaters and streams located in rural, forested and agricultural areas play a major role in the entire ecosystem, as do urban and suburban waterways such as those in Trenton, Philadelphia.

The Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund awards grants to projects that address these strategies. Since 2018, the fund has awarded $26.6 million to 123 projects, which generated $46 million in match, for a total conservation impact of $72.6 million. These projects will collectively restore over 20 miles of riparian habitat and 75 miles of stream habitat, conserve and enhance 882 acres of wetland habitat, restore 254 acres of floodplain, improve 22,309 acres of forest habitat and open 4,695 acres for public access.

Projects funded by the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund 2018-2021