

Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund

2022 Request For Proposals

Applicant Webinar ([Register Here](#)): **Thursday, February 3, 2022, at 2:00 PM Eastern Time**
 Full Proposal Due Date: **Tuesday, March 15, 2022 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is soliciting proposals to restore, enhance and conserve longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood forests within the historical longleaf pine range. The Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund represents a public-private partnership supported with Federal funding from USDA's Forest Service (USFS) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), and private funding from the Bezos Earth Fund, International Paper's Forestland Stewards Partnership, Southern Company and Altria Group. Approximately \$5.6 million in grant funds is expected to be available in 2022.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

To be eligible for funding, projects must occur within the historical longleaf pine range. Preference will be given to projects located within local implementation team boundaries as outlined in NFWF's [Business Plan: Longleaf Forests and Rivers](#). Focal areas are aligned with longleaf local implementation team (LIT) boundaries that are typically centered on significant geographic areas (SGAs) as defined in the [America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative Range-wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine](#). These SGAs are core areas, typically anchored by significant public lands, such as national forests, state forests, or military installations, where longleaf pine currently exists and around which coordinated efforts are being developed to further restore, enhance, protect, and connect longleaf pine on an ecosystem level. A detailed map can be viewed here: [Interactive Map](#)



PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Proposals should demonstrate how project strategies will advance specific longleaf pine and/or bottomland hardwood habitat and species goals and objectives outlined in the following guiding documents:

- [Business Plan: Longleaf Forests and Rivers](#) which outlines NFWF's strategic priorities and goals to restore and enhance longleaf pine forest ecosystems. Four species are targeted within the business plan: red-cockaded woodpecker, gopher tortoise, Bachman's sparrow, and northern bobwhite. These four species were selected as indicators of healthy longleaf ecosystems and represent the habitat needs of a broader suite of species dependent upon this system.
- [America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative's \(ALRI\) Range-Wide Conservation Plan for Longleaf Pine](#), which outlines strategic restoration goals for longleaf pine ecosystem restoration and enhancement on public and private lands through collaborative, on-the-ground actions. Applicants are encouraged to also review ALRI's three-year [strategic priorities and actions](#) document.

- [Forestland Stewards partnership business plan](#) which outlines bottomland hardwood restoration and enhancement strategies to benefit wildlife species and freshwater systems, while promoting and supporting working forests.

In pursuit of habitat and species restoration goals, applicants are encouraged to prioritize projects that also address co-benefits and engage local communities and historically underserved landowners as outlined below:

- **Conservation Co-Benefits:** Projects that will implement habitat restoration or improvement practices that benefit wildlife while also sequestering carbon and/or protecting and improving water quantity or quality are encouraged. Note, there is strong funder interest in tree planting projects. Applicants should reach out to program staff prior to submitting a proposal to discuss projects that will address carbon and water outcomes. Note: NFWF intends to calculate the estimated carbon benefits associated with any given project. These calculations will not be used for carbon credits, but rather for narrative and demonstration of the potential carbon value of any project and conservation practice(s) supported through this program.
- **Community Impact and Engagement:** Projects that incorporate outreach to communities, foster community engagement, and pursue collaborative management leading to measurable conservation benefits are encouraged. When possible, projects should be developed through community input and co-design processes ensuring traditional knowledge elevation. Additionally, projects should engage community-level partners (e.g., municipalities, NGOs, community organizations, community leaders, tribes) to help design, implement, and maintain projects to secure maximum benefits for communities, maintenance, and sustainability post-grant award.

Projects that specifically seek to engage minority, historically underserved and unserved landowners, as well as minority professionals in the field of forestry and longleaf restoration, are encouraged to review the ALRI's [Longleaf for All Initiative](#) and [barriers and recommendations document](#).

Funding Strategies: Projects should seek to implement one or more of the following strategies to address program priorities and restore or improve longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood habitats and populations of at-risk, listed and other wildlife species, with preference given to projects that benefit the following focal species: red-cockaded woodpecker, gopher tortoise, Bachman's sparrow, and/or northern bobwhite.

1. **Establishing Longleaf Pine and/or Bottomland Hardwood Forests:** Includes projects that create new longleaf pine and/or bottomland hardwood forest habitat, including site preparation and planting on public and private lands. Projects should describe all necessary site preparation for planting, number of acres and seedlings that will be planted, timing of when planting is expected to be completed, and summarize plans to promote long-term sustainability and maintenance of plantings (e.g., mechanical and/or chemical treatments, prescribed burning, etc.).
2. **Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Longleaf Pine and/or Bottomland Hardwood Ecosystems:** Includes projects that maintain, expand and promote effective management of existing longleaf pine and/or bottomland hardwood forest habitats on public and private lands through the use of management treatments to benefit wildlife, including, but not limited to the following:

For Longleaf Pine:

Prescribed Burning

- Increase application of prescribed fire on private and public lands, including capacity, coordination and collaboration through fire teams, prescribed burn associations, and/or other strategies.

- Provide technical assistance, training and/or other incentives to increase the amount and frequency of prescribed burning on private lands, including but not limited to assisting USDA service center staff in writing burn plans and implementing financial assistance contracts through Farm Bill programs, including projects within [USDA Working Lands for Wildlife](#) project and/or target species priority areas within the historical longleaf pine range.
- Pursue innovations and address specific barriers or roadblocks to prescribed burning, including strategies that may be transferred across the longleaf range.

Other Silvicultural Treatments

- Applicants should explain how silvicultural treatments contribute towards sustainable longleaf ecosystem restoration and maintenance, including how they will enable future prescribed burning as a management practice. Silvicultural treatments on stands where longleaf is not currently the dominant tree species are permitted where such treatments will result in conversion to a longleaf dominated forest¹.
- Treatments to reduce over-story tree density, improve over-story structure, and/or release recently planted longleaf and/or longleaf regeneration.
- Mechanical and/or chemical treatments to remove or control mid-story encroachment.
- Planting native under-story species to improve wildlife habitat and support the use of prescribed fire.
- Invasive species treatments including herbicide or mechanical single or multiple treatments to control non-native, invasive plant species.

For Bottomland Hardwood Forests:

- Support regeneration of natural stands and/or improved management of existing natural or planted stands through invasive species control, thinning and other treatments that enhance wildlife value.
- Additional inter-planting as needed to improve tree species composition and conditions for wildlife.

3. Expanding and Coordinating Technical Assistance and Outreach: Includes projects that implement collaborative and strategic outreach and technical assistance to increase the amount of private landowners and/or producers engaged in longleaf pine and/or bottomland hardwood restoration and stewardship practices. Proposals must estimate the number of acres to be restored, enhanced, or maintained as a result of proposed outreach and technical assistance activities. Projects should effectively align with and complement other existing private land initiatives, implementation plans or programs, such as [US Fish & Wildlife Partners for Fish & Wildlife Program](#), [NRCS's Longleaf Pine Initiative](#), [USDA's Working Lands for Wildlife](#), and/or DOD [Sentinel Landscapes](#). NFWF also seeks projects that include outreach and technical assistance to, and enhanced participation of historically underserved landowners, including landowners and/or producers that identify as one or more of the federal [underserved](#) and/or [special emphasis categories](#).

- **Increase outreach and technical assistance delivery success:** Strategies may include:
 - Increasing capacity through the hiring of staff or contractors to provide technical assistance on private lands, develop forest management and prescribed burn plans, and assist with implementation of forest restoration and management treatments. Dedicated funding is available this cycle to support private lands foresters, wildlife specialists and/or other natural resource professionals to deliver technical assistance and Farm Bill conservation programs within Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Positions within the other states within the longleaf range

¹ Longleaf dominated forests includes both longleaf pine forest type (pine ≥ 50% of live tree stocking and longleaf pine is most common pine species) and mixed longleaf pine-oak forest (pine 25-50% of live tree stocking and longleaf pine is most common pine species)

are also eligible and applicants are encouraged to contact NFWF staff to discuss needs prior to submitting a proposal.

- Implementing innovative methods to engage private landowners or producers and expand on-the-ground restoration and protection activities on private lands, such as utilizing social marketing and preference data to identify and better understand landowner or producer motivations and barriers to sustainable forest management.
 - Targeting outreach for private landowners and producers and working with NRCS, FWS and other partners to prioritize, plan and deliver financial assistance to improve habitat and support at-risk species.
- **Address Barriers to Landowner Participation:** Projects that address landowner barriers to participation in forestry and conservation programs, including historically underserved landowners and/or landowners that have not previously participated in programs are encouraged. Preference will be given to projects that include implementation of restoration or management practices. Examples of potential strategies include, but are not limited to:
 - Hosting workshops, meetings, and trainings for landowners and/or forestry and conservation professionals, including programming specific to challenges faced by minority, underserved, and unserved landowners that help landowners assess forest management options, develop forest management plans, and/or apply for financial assistance opportunities.
 - Assisting forest landowners with addressing heirs' property title issues that limit eligibility for Farm Bill and other conservation programs. Funds may not be used to support litigation. Projects that address heirs' property challenges should also incorporate education and technical assistance to landowners on forest restoration and management as part of the scope of work.
 - Providing incentives for forest consultants, technical service providers, and vendors to work with smaller acreage landowners.
 - **Advance new market-oriented and/or incentive programs:** Pilot innovative, market-oriented solutions and/or incentive programs that stimulate landowner participation in longleaf restoration efforts. For example, utilizing ecosystem service payments to support restoration and/or management practices that improve wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration and/or water quality and/or quantity outcomes.
 - **Increase participation in third-party forest certification:** Increase participation in third-party forest certification programs to encourage third-party verification of sustainable forest management practices for longleaf pine ecosystem, bottomland hardwood forests, and associated wildlife.
- 4. Building and Improving Local Implementation Team Capacity:** A portion of available grant funding may be allocated to support a local implementation team (LIT) coordinator position to provide coordination across all significant geographic area (SGA) partners, priorities and activities, and accelerate achievement of longleaf restoration and maintenance goals for the defined region. Applicants should limit requests to **no more than 50% of the LIT coordinator's salary and benefits**. Applicants that are not able to cover the remainder of the LIT coordinator's salary and benefits must contact NFWF to discuss a waiver to the 50% threshold prior to submitting a proposal. Funding for LIT coordinators is currently limited to those LITs working within an SGA. Requests for coordinator support must address the following in the proposal:
- A clear work plan that outlines how the coordinator will facilitate implementing the SGA's conservation plan as well as monitoring and tracking progress and achievements of key activities, milestones, and goals.
 - Participation in LIT coordinator meetings to network, expand knowledge and share lessons learned.

- Description of how the coordinator position will be supported long-term and sustained through other financial resources.

Proposed capacity-building activities must be integrated as part of a larger project addressing one or more of strategies 1-3 above. Proposals must detail how LIT capacity investments will lead to specific, measurable, on-the-ground conservation outcomes within the project period.

- 5. Accelerating Species Recovery:** Limited funding is available to support translocation, installation of nest-cavity inserts, captive rearing and reintroduction, monitoring and/or other species-specific restoration and management activities to aid recovery of longleaf ecosystem-dependent species. Preference will be given to projects that contribute to the species outcomes outlined in the [Business Plan: Longleaf Forests and Rivers](#) for red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), gopher tortoise, Bachman’s sparrow, and northern bobwhite, and that are located within a business plan focal area. Species-specific strategies that aid in the recovery of populations of other longleaf ecosystem indicator species will also be considered. Proposals should demonstrate how activities advance implementation of established conservation strategies within federal species recovery plans, regional bird conservation plans and/or state wildlife action plans. Applicants must contact Jon Scott (Jonathan.scott@nfwf.org) prior to applying for species-specific strategies to discuss the project’s geographic location, proposed activities, and plans to monitor project outcomes.
- 6. Conservation Easements:** Funding is available to facilitate targeted conservation easement projects that protect existing, high-quality longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood habitat or key sites targeted for longleaf and bottomland hardwood restoration that are part of a broader restoration proposal.

Requests for conservation easement funding should not exceed 15% of the total proposal request and should be for transaction and due-diligence costs, such as boundary survey, appraisal, environmental report, etc. In limited instances, highly leveraged projects will be considered for acquisition costs. Please contact Jon Scott (jonathan.scott@nfwf.org) to discuss specific land conservation projects.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund has a list of metrics in Easygrants for full proposal 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 Jon Scott (jonathan.scott@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Projects that may involve organizations, landowners or producers that identify as one or more of the federal Underserved/Special Emphasis Categories (described on page 11) are encouraged to apply and should report impact on such categories in the notes section of their selected metrics shown below.

Strategy	Easygrants Metric	Additional Guidance
Establishing Longleaf Pine and/or Bottomland Hardwood Forests	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land restoration - Acres restored on private lands through plantings	Enter the number of acres of longleaf pine that will be established through plantings on private lands.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land restoration - Acres restored on public lands through plantings	Enter the number of acres of longleaf pine that will be established through plantings on public lands.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land, wetland restoration - # of trees planted on private lands	Enter the number of longleaf pine seedlings that will be planted on private lands.

	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land, wetland restoration - # of trees planted on public lands	Enter the number of longleaf pine seedlings that will be planted on public lands.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Land restoration - Acres restored on private land	Enter the number of acres of bottomland hardwoods that will be planted on private lands.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Land restoration - Acres restored on public land	Enter the number of acres of bottomland hardwoods that will be planted on public lands.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Land restoration - # of trees planted on private lands	Enter the number of bottomland hardwood seedlings that will be planted on private lands.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Land restoration - # of trees planted on public lands	Enter the number of bottomland hardwood seedlings that will be planted on public lands.
Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Longleaf Pine and/or Bottomland Hardwood Ecosystems	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land restoration - Acres restored on private lands through silvicultural manipulation	Enter the number of acres of longleaf pine-dominant forest that will be gained through silvicultural treatments on private lands.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Land restoration - Acres restored on public lands through silvicultural manipulation	Enter the number of acres of longleaf pine-dominant forest that will be gained through silvicultural treatments on public lands.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - BMP implementation for prescribed burns - Acres private land burned	Enter the number of acres of prescribed burning that will be completed on longleaf pine habitat on private lands. Include site prep burning in this metric.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - BMP implementation for prescribed burns - Acres public land burned	Enter the number of acres of prescribed burning that will be completed on longleaf pine habitat on public lands. Include site prep burning in this metric.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Improved management practices - Acres under imp mgt (private)	Enter the number of acres of over-story treated, mid-story treated, native understory established, and/or non-native, invasive plant species treated that will be completed within existing longleaf pine habitat on private lands. Acres of prescribed fire should not be included in this total. An acre is to be reported on only one time, even if subjected to more than one treatment.
	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Improved management practices - Acres under imp mgt (public)	Enter the number of acres of over-story treated, mid-story treated, native understory established, and/or non-native, invasive plant species treated that will be completed within existing longleaf pine habitat on public lands. Acres of prescribed fire should not be included in this total. An acre is to be reported on only one time, even if subjected to more than one treatment.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Improved management practices - Acres under imp mgt (private)	Enter the number of acres that will be treated to improve or maintain existing bottomland hardwood forest on private lands.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Improved management practices - Acres under imp mgt (public)	Enter the number of acres that will be treated to improve or maintain existing bottomland hardwood forest on public lands.

Expanding and Coordinating Private Landowner Technical Assistance and Outreach	Note: Projects that will engage private landowners and/or producers should select all three of the following metrics:	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # people targeted • # people reached • # people with changed behavior 	
	Data for all three metrics will enable NFWF to better understand landowner/producer response to outreach, education and technical assistance efforts.	
	LLSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people targeted	Enter the number of landowners that will be targeted by outreach activities. Examples include direct mailings and targeted media advertisements.
	LLSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of landowners anticipated to be reached through educational meetings, trainings and/or technical assistance. The target value for this metric should be a subset of the “# of people targeted” metric. If the target value includes landowners reached through more than one activity, please break out in the notes section. If applicable, in the notes section, please report the number of people reached in each underserved/special emphasis category.
	LLSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of private landowners reached who are expected to implement conservation actions. Examples include developing a conservation plan, enrolling in a financial assistance program, implementing a conservation practice. The target value for this metric should be a subset of the “# of people reached” metric. If applicable, in the notes section, please report the number of people with changed behavior in each underserved/special emphasis category.
Accelerating Species Recovery	LLSF - Red-cockaded Woodpecker - Translocation - # translocated/stocked	Enter the number of pairs of red-cockaded woodpeckers that will be translocated.
	LLSF - Gopher Tortoise - Translocation - # translocated/stocked	Enter the number of individual gopher tortoises that will be translocated and/or released.
Conservation Easements	LLSF - Longleaf Pine - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres of longleaf pine habitat that will be protected by conservation easements.
	LLSF - Bottomland Hardwoods - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres of bottomland hardwood habitat that will be protected by conservation easements.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal Governments and Organizations, and educational institutions.
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies, businesses, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations. U.S. Federal agencies, businesses and unincorporated individuals are encouraged to partner with applicants, but are not eligible to submit an application.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- 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.
- **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.
- Federal funds and matching contributions may not be used to procure or obtain equipment, services, or systems (including entering into or renewing a contract) that uses telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

The Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund anticipates awarding approximately \$5.6 million in grants in 2022. Grant awards are expected to range from \$150,000 to \$500,000. Applicants considering proposals outside of this funding range are encouraged to contact NFWF prior to submitting. This program has one annual application cycle and awards approximately 20-25 grants per year.

Project Period: Anticipated completion time for funded projects typically will be 24-36 months following finalization of a grant agreement. Significant progress with project implementation is expected to be achieved in year one, including interim deliverables. Project start and end dates should define the period during which all proposed work is accomplished, all requested funds are spent and all matching funds are spent or applied.

Matching Funds: Projects should have a minimum match of 1:1 non-federal cash or in-kind, but larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive². Projects unable to provide a 1:1 non-federal match are eligible, but applicants must contact NFWF to discuss match waiver options prior to submitting a proposal. Applicants are encouraged to include federal partner contributions that directly contribute to project outcomes, although those contributions will not count toward the 1:1 non-federal match target.

Work on Public Lands: Dedicated funding is available to support longleaf restoration and management on National Forests located within the historical longleaf pine range. Applicants must coordinate with the National Forest Supervisor or other appropriate National Forest staff to identify and address priorities in the proposal consistent with the applicable National Forest Plan.

² Note that landowner contributions being used as match for a Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund grant must be outside of the amount already written into any agency financial assistance contract as a cost-share contribution.

Limited work on federal lands is eligible, but funding is limited for some portions of the historical longleaf pine range. Work performed on state and municipal-owned public land is eligible across all states within the historical longleaf range. **Projects that focus on public lands are strongly encouraged to include work on private lands as part of the broader project scope as some primary funders of this RFP only support proposals/expenses on private lands.** Please contact Jon Scott (jonathan.scott@nfwf.org) to discuss potential work on public lands prior to submitting an application.

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 program and funder priorities and the following criteria.

Program Goals and Priorities – Project contributes to the Fund’s habitat and species goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics that will be tracked and measured to evaluate project success. In addition to meeting key habitat needs for longleaf ecosystem indicator species (red-cockaded woodpecker, gopher tortoise, Bachman’s sparrow, northern bobwhite quail), describe any significant benefits to other at-risk, threatened or endangered species. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities outlined in the request for proposals.

Conservation Plan and Context – Describe how the project addresses the priorities and goals outlined in the [Business Plan: Longleaf Forests and Rivers](#) and other existing conservation plans or strategies that benefits the longleaf pine ecosystem and associated species. Projects that include bottomland hardwood restoration should address how the project advances the bottomland hardwood restoration priorities and acreage and species goals outlined in the [Forestland Stewards partnership business plan](#). Proposals submitted on behalf of an LIT/SGA should describe how the project will support and advance the priorities identified in a LIT/SGA conservation plan.

Funding Need – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding. Applicants with active Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund grants that overlap with the period of performance of the proposed project should describe why additional funds are needed, and how the proposed project will complement and expand upon previously funded project(s).

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, and design and implementation. Applications involving private lands should be shared with the appropriate NRCS State Conservationist for input and guidance before submission ([View NRCS State conservationist contacts](#)).

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.

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.

Letters of Support and/or Acknowledgement of Coordination:

- Letter(s) from the applicable State Forestry office(s), highlighting how the proposed project is being coordinated with their office must be submitted for projects including work on state and private lands ([View state forest agency contacts](#)).
- Letter of support from the appropriate military installation/base Commander, or official designee that addresses the specific project benefits to the military mission are required for projects involving or benefitting a local military installation or base.
- Letter of support from the Forest Supervisor of the applicable National Forest is required for projects that include work on a National Forest ([View National Forest contacts](#)).
- Letter(s) from the appropriate NRCS State Conservationist(s) acknowledging how the proposed project is being coordinated with their office are recommended for projects including private lands ([View NRCS State Conservationist contacts](#)).
- Letter(s) from the appropriate State Department of Wildlife Conservation and/or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service acknowledging how the proposed project supports a State Wildlife Action Plan or conservation and recovery of at-risk or listed species or the [Partners for Fish and Wildlife Service](#) Strategic Plan are recommended.
- Projects that geographically overlap with a local implementation team (LIT), but are not submitted on behalf of the LIT partnership, must provide an acknowledgement letter from the LIT(s) outlining how the project will coordinate with the LIT partners and complement or enhance existing/planned LIT/SGA activities. [Contact Information for LITs](#)
- Letters documenting the support/contributions of all other project partners are strongly encouraged.

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.

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

Applicant Demographic Information – In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic information on applicants and their communities via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.

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 prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). 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.

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.

USDA Historically Underserved/Special Emphasis Categories – The historically underserved farmer and rancher categories include those with limited resources, beginning farmers/ranchers, socially disadvantaged (American Indians or Alaska Natives, Asians, Blacks or African Americans, Native Hawaiians or other Pacific Islanders, and Hispanics) and veterans. More information can be found at https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/detail/national/people/outreach/slbfr/?cid=nrcsdev11_001040.

The special emphasis categories are American Indian/Alaska Native, Asian American, Black, Disability, Women, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Hispanic, and Veterans. More information can be found at <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/people/employee/sep/>

Special Instructions: Explanation of how Project Supports DoD Mission Objectives – For applicants whose project includes work on, adjacent to, or within close proximity of military bases or installations, applications must demonstrate how proposed projects will support DoD’s mission objectives and complete the DOD questionnaire provided as an upload in Easygrants.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information *Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund*.

Applicant Webinar [Register Here]	February 3, 2022, 2:00-3:00 PM, Eastern Time
Full Proposal Due Date	March 15, 2022, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time
Review Period	March 2022-July 2022
Awards Announced	August 2022

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:

Jon Scott

Southern Forests Program Director
202-595-2609
jonathan.scott@nfwf.org

Zack Bernstein

Program Coordinator, Southern Regional Office
202-595-2433
Zachary.Bernstein@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.