

## **LONG ISLAND SOUND FUTURES FUND**

### **2022 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Full Proposal Due Date: **Thursday, May 19, 2022 by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

### **OVERVIEW**

The Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) is seeking proposals to restore the health and living resources of Long Island Sound (Sound) with funding of approximately \$10 million for awards in 2022. The program is managed by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Long Island Sound Study (LISS). Major funding for the program is from EPA through the LISS with additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Avangrid Foundation.

### **GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

All proposed projects must be within the Long Island Sound watershed boundary as shown in *Figure 1*. The eligibility of projects within portions of the watershed is further restricted by geography depending on the project type, as described below.



*Figure 1: Long Island Sound Watershed (CT, MA, NH, NY, VT)*

Please review the [Long Island Sound Watershed Map](#) for all referenced boundaries.

- **Habitat restoration projects** *must* fall within the *Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed boundary in CT and NY*.
- **NEW! Resilience, water quality and fish passage projects** may be in any portion of the *Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY*.
- **Education projects** may be in any portion of the *Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY*. Projects may occur in communities outside this boundary in those states as long as the content is focused on the health and living resources of the Sound.
- **Nitrogen prevention watershed/plan/design and implementation projects** may occur anywhere in the Sound watershed of CT, NY, Massachusetts (MA), New Hampshire (NH), and Vermont (VT) as shown in the *Long Island Sound Watershed Boundary*.

**NOTE:** Proposals for habitat restoration, fish passage, education, and resilience projects in the Long Island Sound watershed upper basin states (MA, NH, VT) are not eligible for funding under the LISFF. Organizations are encouraged to consider applying to the [New England Forests and Rivers Fund](#) which seeks to sustain healthy forests and rivers that provide habitat for diverse bird populations, as well as freshwater and diadromous fish populations; or the [National Coastal Resilience Fund](#) which seeks to restore, increase and strengthen natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife.

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The LISFF supports efforts to test innovative approaches to conservation, deliver transformative projects and support people and communities who value the sound and take a direct role in its future. A road map guiding investments under the LISFF is the [Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2020-2024 Update](#). The CCMP Update has four themes (CCMP Theme) shown below, Implementation Actions (IAs) associated with each theme, and three cross-cutting principles: resilience to climate change, sustainability, and environmental justice. We seek proposal submissions that incorporate the theme(s), IA(s) and cross-cutting principle(s).

Projects that incorporate outreach to communities, foster community engagement, and pursue collaborative management leading to measurable conservation benefits are encouraged. When possible, projects—especially those implemented in underserved, under-resourced or overburdened communities—should engage community-level partners to help design, implement, and sustain projects to secure maximum benefits for communities and post-grant award.

**CCMP THEME:** [Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds](#) – Improve water quality by reducing nitrogen pollution, combined sewer overflows, impervious cover, stormwater runoff, and point and nonpoint source loading into Long Island Sound through:

- Implementation of “shovel-ready” projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction.
- Planning including: 1) Community Engagement, Planning and Prioritization; 2) Feasibility, Suitability or Alternatives Analyses; 3) Site Assessment and Conceptual Design; and 4) Final Design and Permits. Activities that eventually set-the-stage for implementation of water quality projects.

**Note:** Try the new tool developed to help [calculate](#) pollution prevention associated with water quality projects.

*Examples of project types and actions:*

- Green infrastructure/Low Impact Development (LID) activities.
- Technical assistance to help local communities build capacity to plan for or to implement green infrastructure/LID.
- Projects that reduce pollution from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) projects where they reduce runoff and support infiltration from a MS4 system.
- Riparian and forested buffer and channel bank vegetation enhancement to slow and intercept polluted surface runoff.
- Alternatives to current decentralized on-site wastewater treatment systems.
- Innovative wastewater treatment tools or strategies.
- Wastewater infrastructure asset management programs.
- Low-cost retrofits at wastewater treatment facilities.
- Alternatives to chemical and nitrogen-intensive turf and landscaping fertilizer and pesticide use.
- Reduction or prevention of single-use plastic and other water/land-based consumer debris, abandoned and lost fishing/aquaculture gear, microplastics and microfibers.
- Watershed planning addressing eutrophication-related water quality problems and which identifies potential projects. Plans should include EPA's nine elements – see the [Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans](#).
- [Nutrient bioextraction](#) planning or implementation projects that pilot or demonstrate approaches to resolve use conflicts, facilitate permitting and testing, and demonstrate water quality benefits.
- In-stream restoration to increase nutrient processing, and to reduce erosion.
- Replacing or right-sizing culverts or otherwise improving road and stream crossings in order to reduce downstream erosion of nutrients.
- Technical assistance to engage rural landowners and farmers in design and delivery of nitrogen prevention projects.
- Addressing agricultural runoff through farm-scale conservation systems and solutions, including efforts to reduce water quality impacts through best management practices.
- Efforts to accelerate implementation of regenerative agriculture practices on working lands.
- Soil health practices and management systems that combine improved tillage and/or pasture management, cover crops, crop and livestock rotations, and other practices to increase soil fertility while improving the capacity of crops and soils to reduce runoff and increase nutrient uptake.
- Precision nutrient management systems that fine-tune the rate, source, method, and timing of nutrient applications to maintain or increase crop yields, minimize nutrient input costs and nutrient losses to surface and groundwater.

**Projects in the Upper Basin of the Long Island Sound Watershed (MA, NH, VT) must have a specific outcome related to nitrogen prevention or reduction as a result of project activities through:**

- Implementation of “shovel-ready” projects that result in quantifiable pollutant prevention or reduction.
- Planning including: 1) Community Engagement, Planning and Prioritization; 2) Feasibility, Suitability or Alternatives Analyses; 3) Site Assessment and Conceptual Design; and 4) Final Design and Permits. Activities that eventually set-the-stage for implementation of water quality projects.

**Note:** Try the new tool developed to help [calculate](#) pollution prevention associated with water quality projects.

*Examples of project types and activities include:*

- Green infrastructure/Low Impact Development (LID) activities.
- Technical assistance to help local communities build capacity to plan for or to implement green infrastructure/LID.
- Projects that reduce pollution from Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) projects where they reduce runoff and support infiltration from a MS4 system.
- Watershed planning which addresses eutrophication-related water quality problems and identifies potential projects. Plans should include EPA’s nine elements – see the [Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans](#).
- Alternatives to current decentralized on-site wastewater treatment systems.
- Innovative wastewater treatment tools or strategies.
- Alternatives to chemical and nitrogen-intensive turf and landscaping fertilizer and pesticide use.
- Low-cost retrofits at wastewater treatment facilities.
- Riparian and forested buffer and channel bank vegetation enhancement to slow and intercept polluted surface runoff.
- Stream channel reconnection to historic floodplains and adjacent wetlands to promote nutrient removal and reduce erosion.
- In-stream restoration to increase nutrient processing, and to reduce erosion.
- Replacing or right-sizing culverts or otherwise improving road and stream crossings in order to reduce downstream erosion of nutrients.
- Technical assistance to engage rural landowners and farmers in design and delivery of nitrogen prevention projects.
- Addressing agricultural runoff through farm-scale conservation systems and solutions, including efforts to reduce water quality impacts through best management practices.
- Efforts to accelerate implementation of regenerative agriculture practices on working lands.
- Soil health practices and management systems that combine improved tillage and/or pasture management, cover crops, crop and livestock rotations, and other practices to increase soil fertility while improving the capacity of crops and soils to reduce runoff and increase nutrient uptake.
- Precision nutrient management systems that fine-tune the rate, source, method, and timing of nutrient applications to maintain or increase crop yields, minimize nutrient input costs and nutrient losses to surface and groundwater.

**CCMP THEME: [Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife](#)** – Restore coastal habitats to maintain resilience and function and to support populations of fish, birds and wildlife by:

- Implementation of “shovel-ready” projects that result in quantifiable habitat acres restored. *Please review the LISS [Habitat Restoration Guidelines](#) to inform development of a proposal.*
- Planning that sets-the-stage for implementation of habitat restoration projects including: 1) Community Engagement, Planning and Prioritization; 2) Feasibility, Suitability or Alternatives Analyses; 3) Site Assessment and Conceptual Design; and 4) Final Design and Permits. Priority will be given to projects developed through community input and co-design processes.
- Fostering diverse, balanced, and abundant populations of fish, birds and wildlife.

*Examples of project types and actions:*

- Habitat enhancement or restoration of the [Important Coastal Habitat Types](#) targeted by the LISS.
- Habitat enhancement or restoration of the [Important Coastal Habitat Types](#) targeted by the LISS of benefit to Species of Greatest Conservation Need associated with that habitat and Long Island Sound.
- Piloting innovative tools such as beneficial use of dredge materials coupled with shoreline softening, tidal wetland enhancement/restoration etc.
- Nature-based or green/gray hybrid restoration to reduce shoreline erosion and marsh loss and *in lieu* of hard armoring.
- Invasive *terrestrial* or *aquatic* species eradication coupled with long-term management.
- Shellfish (oysters, clams, and mussels) and reef restoration to establish self-sustaining populations; and/or to create or enhance benthic and reef structure for marine species. *Shellfish and reef areas proposed to be restored cannot be harvested for commercial or recreational purposes.*
- Planning to maintain, protect, and promote the expansion of existing eelgrass meadows.
- Reducing barriers to fish passage to high quality river and stream habitat for Long Island Sound fish such as alewife, blueback herring, American eel and American shad.
- Replacing or right-sizing culverts and/or improve road-stream crossings in order to provide riverine migratory corridors that promote species dispersal.
- Strategies to engage human communities to share the shore and reduce disturbance along shorelines also used by beach nesting species. Strategies are described in the [Atlantic Flyway Shorebirds Business Plan](#).
- **NEW!** Limited funding is available to *facilitate and contribute* to conservation easement and acquisition projects that protect existing, high-quality fish and wildlife habitat from the [Important Coastal Habitat Types](#) targeted by the LISS and within the [Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed Boundary](#). Requests for land protection funding may include transaction and project management costs such as surveys, appraisal, environmental reports. *Funding for full-fee or easement acquisition is not eligible.*

**CCMP THEME [Sustainable and Resilient Communities](#)** – Projects that 1) support vibrant, informed, and engaged communities that use, appreciate, and help protect and sustain the Sound; 2) sustain its ecological balance in a healthy, productive, and resilient state for the benefit of both people and the natural environment; and 3) improve habitat, enhance resilience, and directly engage communities through:



**Public Engagement, Knowledge and Stewardship:** *Examples of project types and actions:*

- Local behavior-change campaigns, including Community-Based Social Marketing.
- Public engagement in stewardship of local natural resources.
- Programs that foster, support, or develop community buy-in and meaningful inclusion in local environmental management projects.
- Programs to increase appreciation of the Sound including in underprivileged and underserved communities.
- Environmental Justice initiatives and collaborations that promote equitable access, appreciation and understanding of Long Island Sound. For example, develop tools (including training modules, websites, ordinances, best practices) and conduct regional or local workshops to assist municipal government in developing or incorporating environmental justice in projects that implement CCMP actions. *See LISS resources about state and federal [Environmental Justice](#).*
- Plans or activities to increase or enhance public access points and the length of shoreline accessible by the public to the Sound and its rivers with a focus on supporting projects and programs that promote environmentally sustainable recreational activities and protection of the Sound’s environmental and wildlife resources.
- Campaigns to build public awareness aimed at single-use plastic and other water/land-based consumer debris, abandoned and lost fishing/aquaculture gear, microplastics and microfibers prevention or reduction.
- Native plant landscaping guidance and training that encourages alternatives to chemical and nutrient intensive landscapes.
- Long Island Sound environmental and conservation-related classroom or informal instruction *Please note LISFF does not support development of new curriculum. See [LISS Educational Resources](#) for examples of available information and curriculum.*

***NOTE:*** *Public engagement, education and stewardship projects providing a hands-on conservation experience are highly desired.*

**Resilience & Sustainability.** Nature-based projects that combine resilience, community, and conservation goals... ***NEW! in any portion of the Sound watershed in CT and NY*** as shown in the [Long Island Sound Study Area](#).

*Examples of project types and activities:*

- Implementation of “shovel-ready” projects that build resilience in communities. The LISFF will prioritize nature-based resilience projects that provide dual benefits – both benefits for human community resilience and benefits for habitat, fish and wildlife.
- Planning activities that set-the-stage for implementation of resilience projects including: 1) Community Engagement, Planning and Prioritization; 2) Feasibility, Suitability or Alternatives Analyses; 3) Site Assessment and Conceptual Design; and 4) Final Design and Permits. Priority will be given to projects developed through community input and co-design processes.

*Examples of project types and actions:*

- Natural infrastructure – Projects that use existing or rebuilt natural landscapes (e.g., forests, floodplains, and wetlands) to increase resilience to climate impacts resulting in

environmental, economic, and social co-benefits particularly in vulnerable communities that tend to be disproportionately impacted by stressors.

- Green infrastructure – Projects that combine gray infrastructure with nature-based solutions to create hybrid systems that improve habitat and resilience to climate impacts, while also often resulting in environmental, economic, and social co-benefits. Generally, green infrastructure is a built or engineered solution.
- Right-sizing stream-crossings or culverts.
- New or updated municipal, watershed or regional resilience/sustainability/natural hazard mitigation plans that evaluate the vulnerability of infrastructure, natural areas and develop strategies for making these features and infrastructure more resilient to hazardous events (sea level rise, flood and/or weather events).
- Technical assistance to help local communities build capacity to plan for or to implement resilience through nature-based infrastructure, such as living shorelines.

**CCMP THEME Sound Science and Inclusive Management** – Manage the Sound using science that is inclusive, adaptive, innovative and accountable.

*Examples of project types and actions:*

- Water quality monitoring to improve identification and source tracking in embayments, harbors, and near-shore areas. Monitoring must: 1) be related to the nature of local impairment designated under the Clean Water Act, Section 303(d) in [Connecticut](#) and [New York](#); 2) describe in specific terms how and what entity will use the data collected to address local use impairments (e.g., help local government detect illicit discharges); 3) describe how the project will manage data so it is accessible to citizens and resource managers; and 4) include data input into the [Water Quality Exchange](#). *Community monitoring programs are encouraged to participate in the [Unified Water Study](#) rather than request funding from the LISFF.*
- Shared tools and/or strategies to help community science monitors improve their data storage, management and visualization at a local and regional scale to enhance the utility, sharing and application of data.
- Development of data analytics tools to increase the efficiency of social marketing.
- Support the refinement and application of data on Species of Greatest Conservation Need that are particularly important to restoring ecosystem function in Long Island Sound.

## **PROJECT METRICS AND CCMP IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS**

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the LISFF has a list of metrics titled “Activities and Outcomes” in the Easygrants online application. *Applicants must select at least one and no more than three* of the most relevant metrics for their project (all possible project metrics for this program are shown on the table below). Additionally, in the project narrative section of the LISFF application you *must* identify the specific CCMP Implementation Action(s) associated with your project metrics. The IAs associated with each project metric is provided in the document [LISFF Metrics and Implementation Action Tracking Guidance](#). If you think an applicable metric or IA has not been provided, please contact [Erin Lewis](#) to discuss alternatives.

<b>POLLUTION REDUCTION</b>		
<b>Project Activity</b>	<b>Recommended Metric</b>	<b>Metric Guidance</b>
BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction	Lbs N avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of nitrogen prevented from entering system annually. Please use the <a href="#">LISFF Pollution Prevention Calculator</a> for your calculations.
BMP implementation for Phosphorus reduction	Lbs P avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of phosphorus prevented from entering system annually. Please use the <a href="#">LISFF Pollution Prevention Calculator</a> for your calculations.
BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction	Lbs sediment avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of sediment prevented from entering system annually. Please use the <a href="#">LISFF Pollution Prevention Calculator</a> for your calculations.
BMP or strategy for marine debris reduction	# lbs of marine debris removed	Enter the number of pounds of single-use plastic and other water/land-based consumer debris, abandoned and lost fishing/aquaculture gear, microplastics and microfibers that has been removed from the environment and properly disposed of.
BMP implementation for stormwater runoff prevention	Volume stormwater prevented	Enter volume (in gallons) of stormwater prevented from entering the water body annually. Please use the <a href="#">LISFF Pollution Prevention Calculator</a> in your calculations.
Riparian restoration	Square miles restored	Enter number of sq. miles restored.
Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development/Riparian/Floodplain restoration	# trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted. In NOTES section: Provide average diameter of tree planted.
Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development/Riparian/Floodplain restoration	Sq ft impervious surface removed	Enter square foot of impervious surface removed or retrofitted.
Green Infrastructure/Low Impact Development/Riparian/Floodplain restoration	Sq ft of green infrastructure	Enter the square footage of green infrastructure installed. In NOTES section: describe the type of green infrastructure.
<b>HABITAT RESTORATION OR SUSTAINABLE AND RESILIENT COMMUNITIES</b>		
Habitat Restoration – Erosion control	Acres of living shoreline restored	Enter the acres of living shoreline to be restored. In NOTES section: describe the method used e.g., oyster reefs/castles, reef balls etc.
Floodplain restoration	Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored.
Critical facilities or infrastructure protected	# of critical facilities or infrastructure	Enter the # of critical infrastructure assets or facilities within the radius of enhanced protection.
Marine habitat restoration	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored. In NOTES section: describe the specific type of habitat restored e.g., shellfish reef, intertidal zones or flats, submerged aquatic vegetation, or estuarine embayments.
Land restoration	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored. In NOTES section: describe the specific type of habitat restored e.g., coastal grassland, coastal or island forest.
Beach habitat quality improvements	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of beach and dune restored.
Wetland restoration	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of salt marsh/tidal marsh or freshwater marsh restored.



Fish passage improvements	Miles of stream opened	Enter # of miles opened. In NOTES section: enter miles of riverine migratory corridor to be opened (streams, creeks, rivers) and fish species benefitted.
Acres of lake/pond habitat opened	# Acres of lake/pond habitat opened	Enter the number of acres of lake/pond habitat opened.
<b>PLANNING ALL TYPES</b>		
Management or Governance Planning	# plans developed	Enter the number of plans developed that had input from multiple stakeholders. In NOTES section: describe the type of plan, campaign or strategy e.g., watershed, feasibility/suitability/alternatives analyses, conceptual or engineered plan.
Planning or Monitoring	# Acres assessed for improved management	Enter the number of acres assessed for improved management.
Tool Development	# tools used by decision-makers	Enter the number of tools developed that are used by decision-makers.
<b>ACCESS/OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT</b>		
Access Improvements	# Access pts. developed/improved	Enter the number of public access points developed/improved.
Access Improvements	# Acres with public access	Enter the number of acres now open to public access.
Outreach/Engagement	# of orgs contributing to goals	Enter the number of of organizations community-based organizations and other relevant stakeholders contributing to the initiative's conservation goals.
Outreach/Engagement	# People reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities	Enter the number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities, In NOTES section: describe participant e.g., local community members, leaders and other relevant stakeholders, general public, farmer, students/teachers.
Volunteer Participation	# Volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in projects.
<b>SHOREBIRD HABITAT MANAGEMENT</b>		
Habitat Management	# Acres under improved management	Enter the number of acres under improved management as a result of mitigating recreational disturbance to shorebirds and seabirds. In the NOTES section: list the species benefitted.
<b>MONITORING</b>		
Monitoring	# Monitoring programs	Enter the number of programs established or underway. In NOTES section: describe types of data to be collected.

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

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

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- Research projects. Consider the [LISS Research Grant Program](#).
- Development of new educational curriculum.

- Support for fellowships and/or tuition support or reimbursement.
- Marketing efforts serving to generally promote the applicant organization and its initiatives.
- Funding for lunches or snacks, t-shirts and promotional items (e.g., key chains, coffee mugs, pens etc.).
- Full fee or easement acquisition **is not eligible** for funding. **NEW!** Limited funding is available to *facilitate and contribute* to conservation easement and acquisition projects that protect existing, high-quality fish and wildlife habitat from the [Important Coastal Habitat Types](#) targeted by the LISS and within the [Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed Boundary](#). Requests for land protection funding may include transaction and project management costs such as surveys, appraisal, environmental reports.
- **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.
- 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.
- 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.

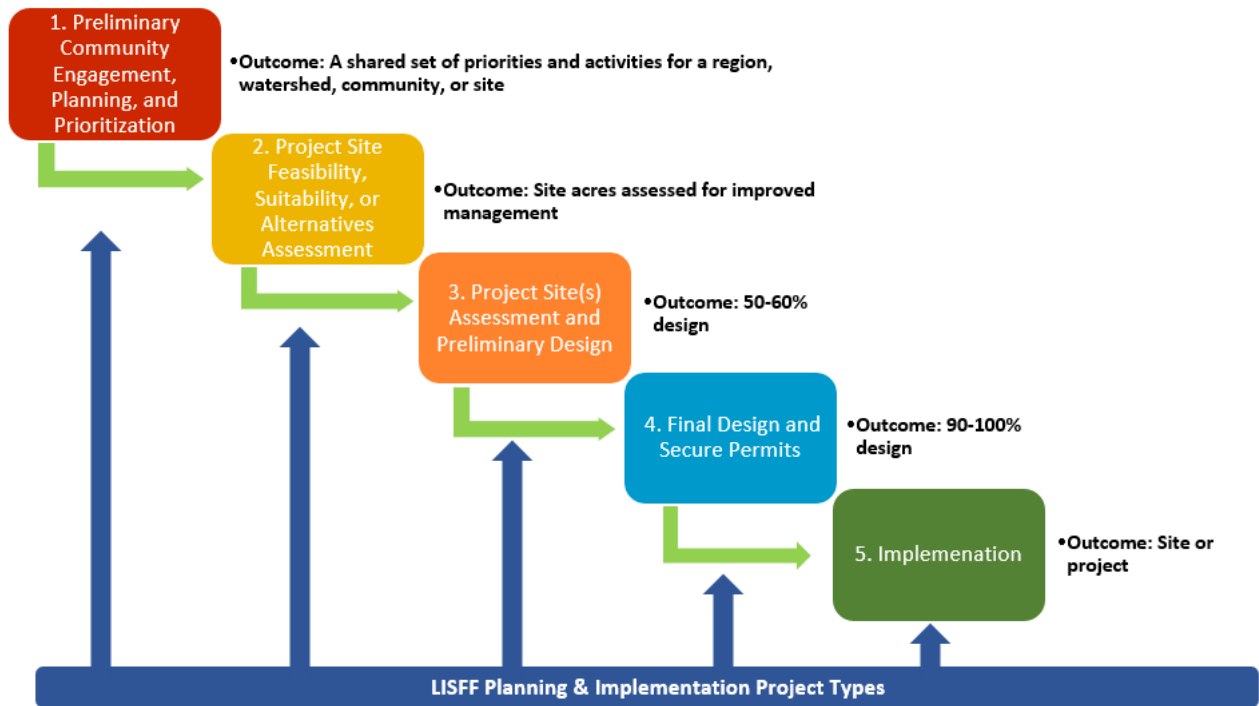
## FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

With funding of approximately \$10 million for projects in 2022. There are four funding categories under the LISFF each with a different range of grant funding.

- **Implementation Projects:** \$50,000 to \$1.5 million for projects that implement actions described in the [CCMP Update](#) and have particularly high environmental community benefit relative to cost, including:
  - Water quality improvement, habitat restoration, and resilience projects.
  - Projects with the greatest promise to demonstrate, influence, pilot, innovate, and/or provide a proof of concept with the aim of accelerating local and regional water quality improvements, natural resource restoration, coastal resilience, Environmental Justice/Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion and/or community and public outreach and engagement.
- **Design/Planning Projects:** \$50,000 to \$500,000 for costs associated with design/planning for:
  - Water quality or habitat restoration projects.
  - Watershed plans to mitigate eutrophication-related impairments.

- Sustainable behavior education and outreach including community based social marketing campaigns.
- Coastal resiliency/sustainability/natural hazard mitigation plans.

Examples of planning and implementation project types which may be funded by LISFF are in the figure which follows.



- **Community Science/Water Quality Monitoring:** \$50,000 to \$100,000 for water quality monitoring.
- **Education and Public Participation Grants:** \$50,000 to \$250,000 for public participation and education projects.

**Project Period:** Projects must start within six months and be completed within 24 months after notification of grant award. Larger-scale complex implementation projects must start within six months and be completed within thirty-six months after notification of grant award. Notification of award is projected to be November 2022. **Project start date cannot be before October 1, 2022.**

**Match Requirements:** Grants require a minimum matching contribution valued at 25% of the “Requested Amount” from the LISFF. For example, if you request \$100,000 from LISFF, then the required match is \$25,000. Matching contributions may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes.

**Note:** The amount of matching funds offered is one criterion considered during the review process, and projects that meet or exceed the required match will be more competitive.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

- **Program Goals and Priorities** – Project contributes to the Implementation Actions of the Long Island Sound Study CCMP Update and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more the three CCMP Update cross-cutting principles (resilience to climate change, long-term sustainability and/or environmental justice).
- **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 experts and partners in project planning, design or implementation to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.
- **Community Impact** – Partners and engages collaboratively with diverse local community members, leaders and community-based organizations and other relevant stakeholders to implement and ensure the long-term sustainability and success of the proposed project. Describes integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed actions. Describes proposed partners and roles—including short- and long-term—are clearly identified (including potential or contemplated subawards to third party subrecipients of the applicant). Describes community characteristics of the project area, identifies communities impacted, describes community outreach and engagement activities, and provides means to monitor and measure. Provides demographic data and letters from community partners demonstrating commitment to and engagement in project activities as proposed.
- **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.
- **Match** – These grants require a minimum matching contribution valued at 25% of the “Requested Amount” from the LISFF. For example, if you request \$100,000 from LISFF, then the required match is \$25,000. Matching contributions may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. Larger match ratios are encouraged and will make proposals more competitive during evaluation.
- **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 Negotiated Indirect Rate Agreement. As such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize all proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

## 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 “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 non-federal cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance (project start date cannot be before October 1, 2022). Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged.

**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 and the Long Island Sound Study 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.

**Quality Assurance** – If a project involves monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for review by NFWF and review and approval by EPA before any data collection activities may commence. Examples of the types of data collection or use which requires a QAPP includes (but is not limited to): New Primary Data; Existing Secondary Data use (new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups), Water or other Environmental Media Monitoring; Modeling;



GIS/Spatial Analysis; Data associated with Assessment, Development or Design of Project Plans (e.g., fish passage, nitrogen prevention/reduction, green infrastructure, habitat restoration, resilience), Development or Design of Watershed or Community Plans (e.g., watershed, hazard mitigation/resilience), and surveys/workshops.

Applicants **must** budget time and resources in their LISFF proposal to complete this task. Plan to submit a QAPP *at least* 3-4 months in advance of data collection. The timing of review, comment and by NFWF and for EPA review and approval is dependent upon the quality of the draft QAPP submission and may involve several iterations. General assistance will be available to projects to help with scoping and review of the draft QAPPs. For more information, follow the link to the [LISFF Quality Assurance Project Plan Guidance](#) and [EPA QA](#). Contact [Erin.Lewis@nfwf.org](mailto:Erin.Lewis@nfwf.org) if you have any questions about QAPP requirements.

**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 under “Application Information” tab at the [Long Island Sound Futures Fund](#) webpage.

Informational webinars about the RFP and application process:

CT & NY Applicant Webinar ( <a href="#">Register</a> )	March 15, 2022, 2:00PM – 3:30PM Eastern
MA, NH, VT Applicant Webinar ( <a href="#">Register</a> )	March 16, 2022, 2:00PM – 3:30PM Eastern
Pollution Prevention Calculator Webinar ( <a href="#">Register</a> )	March 22, 2022, 9:30AM – 10:30AM Eastern
Proposal Due Date	May 19, 2022, 11:59PM, Eastern
Review Period	Summer 2022
Awards Announced	November 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](https://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 about prior grants can be found [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 or to share project ideas, please contact: [Erin Lewis](#)

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

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto: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.