NFWF
NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

2022 Applicant Webinar
America the Beautiful Challenge

Dedicated to investing in ecosystem and watershed restoration projects, resilience, equitable access, workforce development, corridors and connectivity, and collaborative conservation

Northern California

General Session Agenda

1. Webinar Instructions

2. Introduction to NFWF

3. Program Context and Priorities

4. Review of Request for Proposals

   • *Four Grant Categories*

   • *Evaluation and Guidelines*

4. Frequently Asked Questions

5. Q&A

6. Using Easygrants

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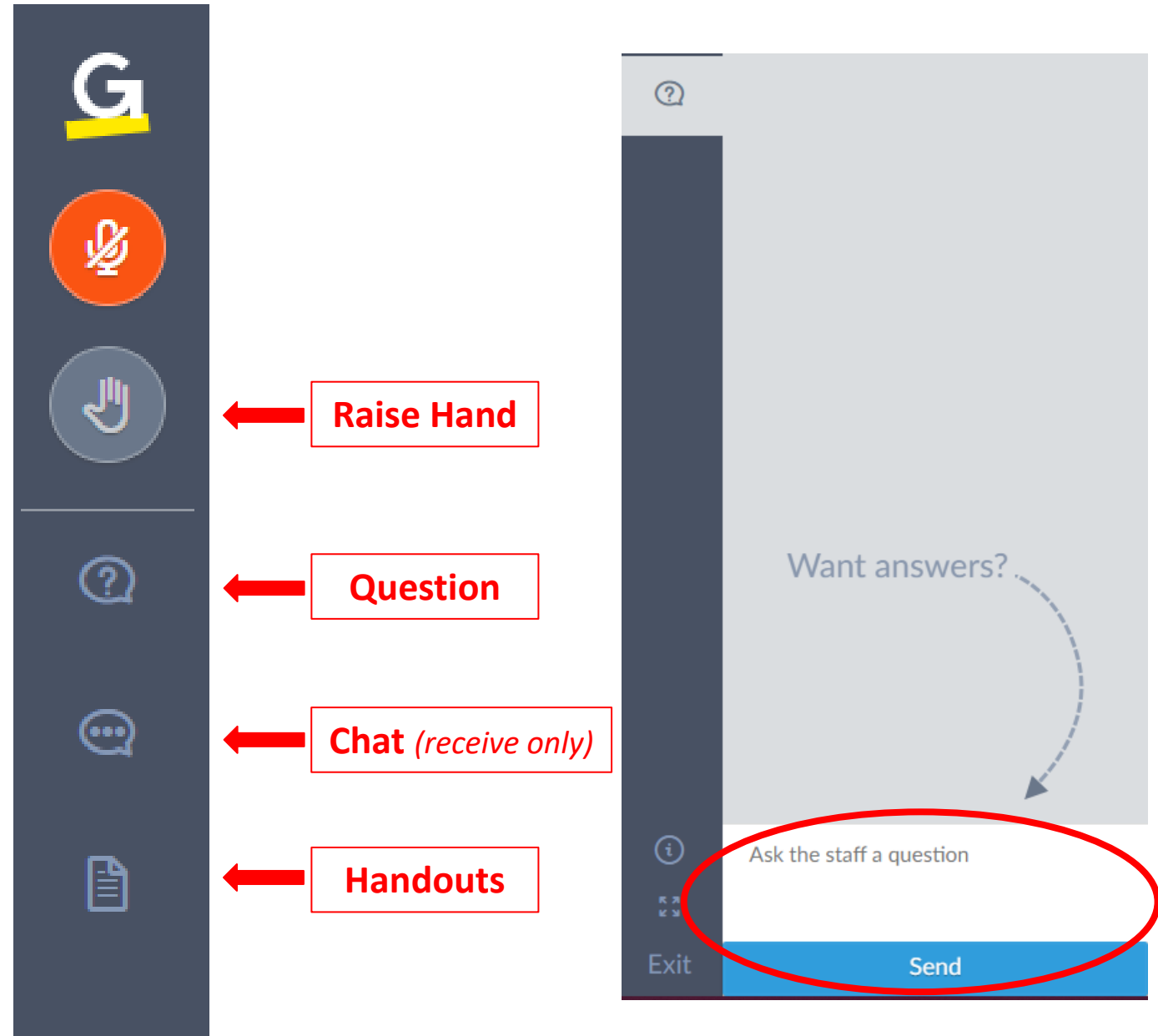sydney.godbey@nfwf.org
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Webinar Instructions

- To improve sound quality, all participants will be muted for the duration of the webinar. If you want to ask a question you have two options:

  1. Enter your query where it says "Enter a question for staff" and click send. A NFWF staff member will type a response or read your question aloud when we pause for Q&A.

  2. Write it down and contact us after the webinar. We have a lot of material to cover, so you may prefer to have a more in-depth discussion later.

- We may ask you to raise your "hand" in the webinar dialogue box to confirm participants can hear us.

- If you experience a technical glitch, please type it into the question box, since we can't hear you. (We may not know about the glitch unless you say something!)

The webinar will be available for download next week at www.nfwf.org/challenge

Raise Hand

Question

Chat *(receive only)*

Handouts

Want answers?

Ask the staff a question

Exit

Send

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Introduction to NFWF

WHO WE ARE

- Chartered by Congress in 1984

- 30 member Board appointed by Secretary of the Interior
  - Includes FWS Director & NOAA Administrator

WHAT WE DO

- Sustain, restore, enhance the nation's natural heritage

- Support collaboration among federal agencies & private funders

- Create common ground among diverse interests

HOW WE DO IT

- Leverage private money with public funding – average 3:1

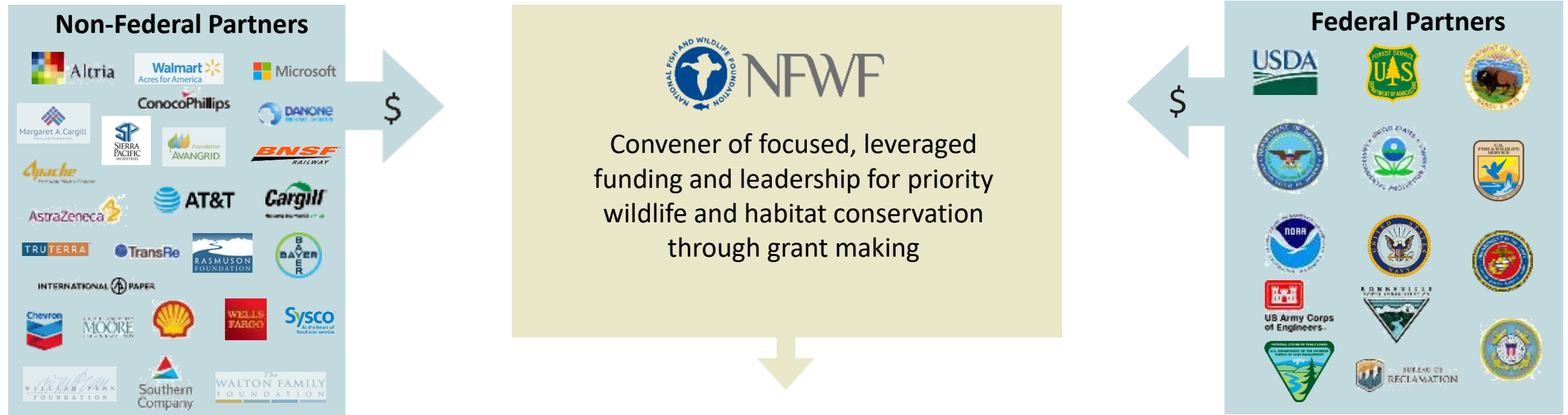- On-the-ground conservation projects through competitive grant making

NFWF IS
- An implementer – we fund projects

NFWF IS NOT
- An advocacy or litigation organization and does not fund these activities
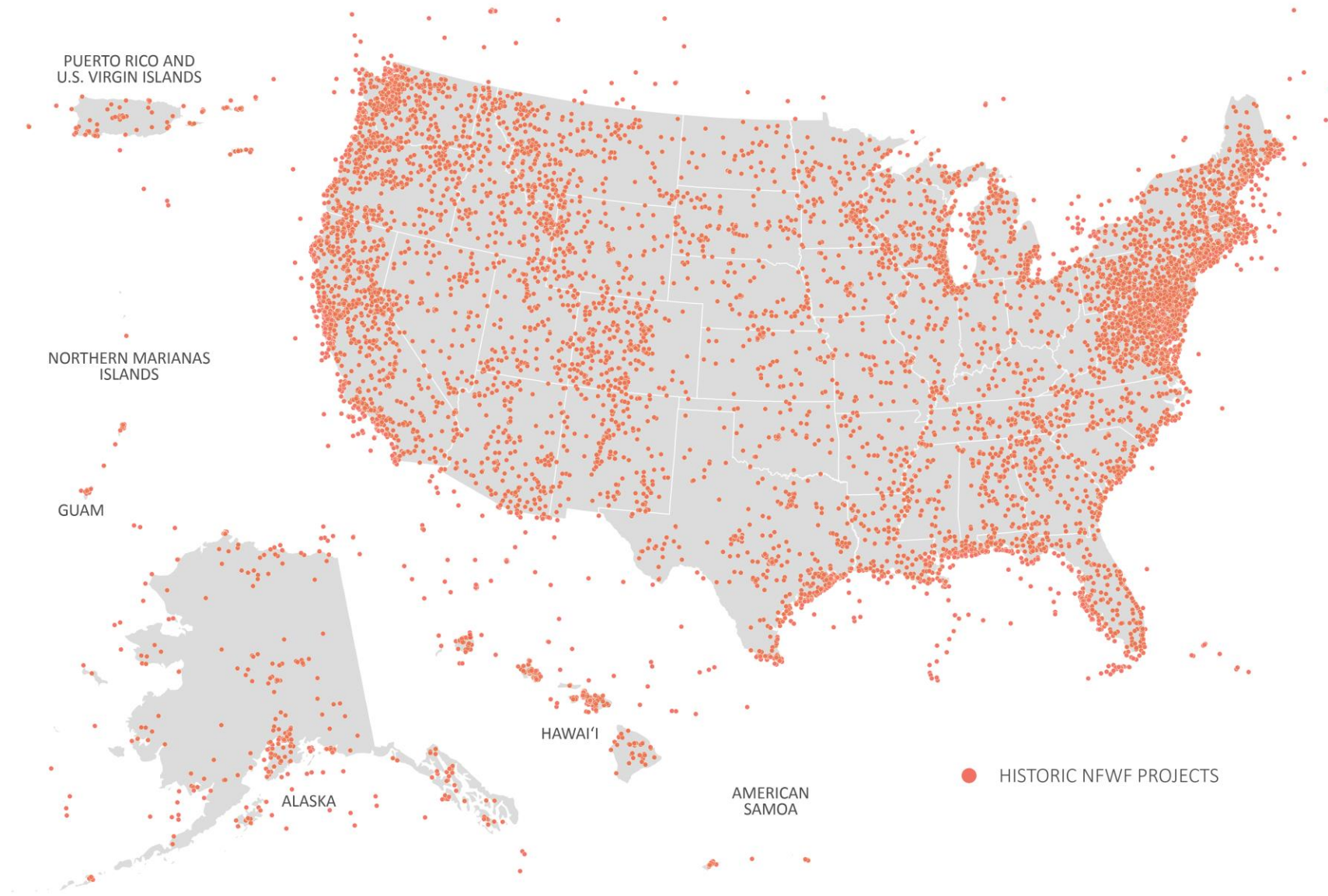
Public-Private Partnerships

NFWF Conservation Investments (1984 – 2021)

- **20,422 Investments**

- **6,000+ Organizations**

- **All 50 states**

PUERTO RICO AND
U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

NORTHERN MARIANAS
ISLANDS

GUAM

ALASKA

HAWAI'I

AMERICAN
SAMOA

● HISTORIC NFWF PROJECTS

NFWF

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What is the Challenge Program?

- A one-stop-shop for implementers to easily access federal conservation funding from multiple agencies

- An opportunity for public-private partnerships to further leverage federal investments

- A means to deliver infrastructure related conservation funding on the ground in a fast manner

- A way to pool federal agency funding and expertise to support cross-boundary and/or landscape-scale restoration projects

http://www.apps.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/sfrmp/silviculture.htm
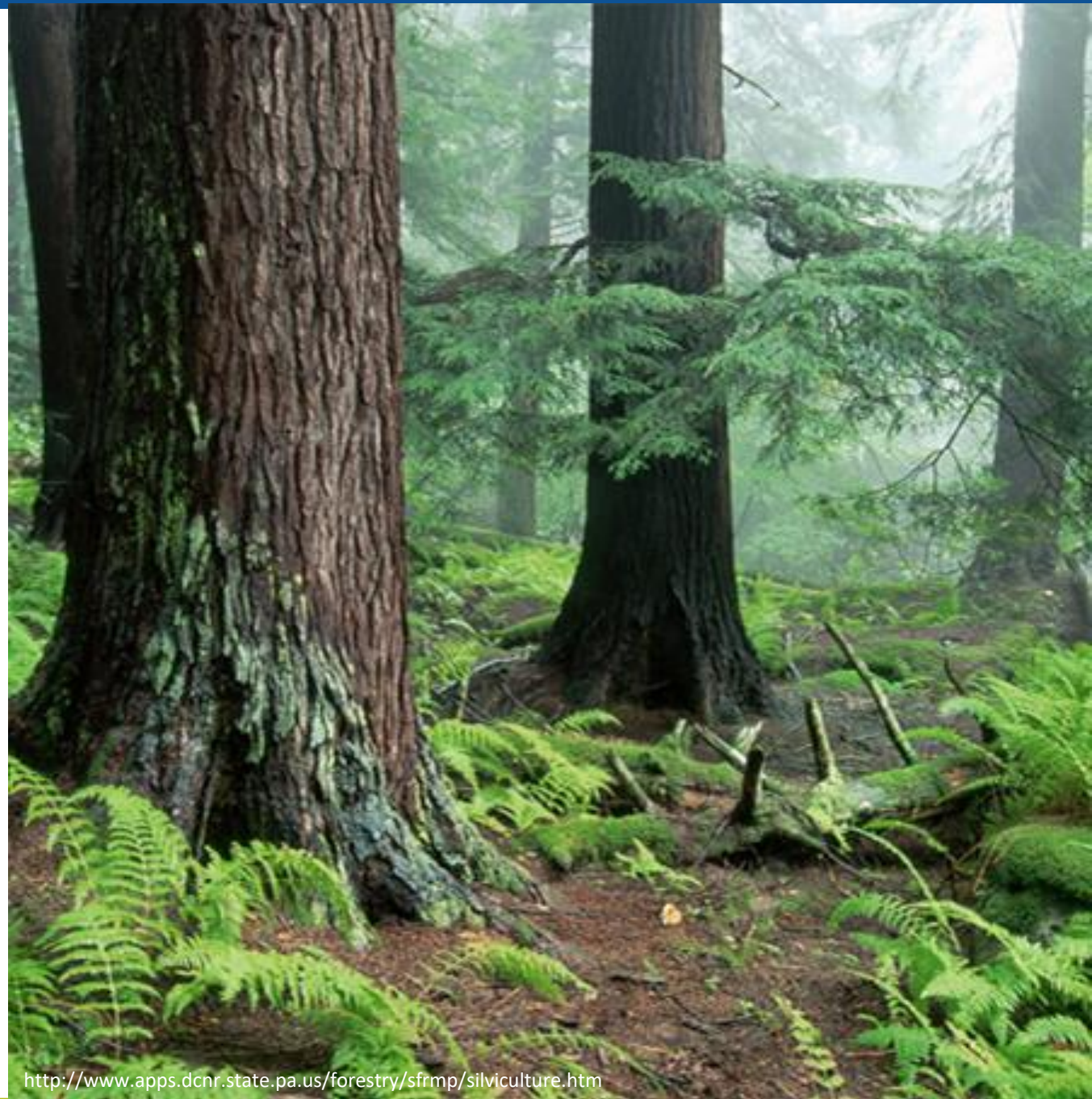
America the Beautiful Themes

1. Conserving and restoring rivers, coasts, wetlands and watersheds

2. Conserving and restoring forests, grasslands and other important ecosystems that serve as carbon sinks

3. Connecting and reconnecting wildlife corridors, large landscapes, watersheds and seascapes

4. Improving ecosystem and community resilience to flooding, drought, and other climate-related threats

5. Expanding access to the outdoors, particularly in underserved communities
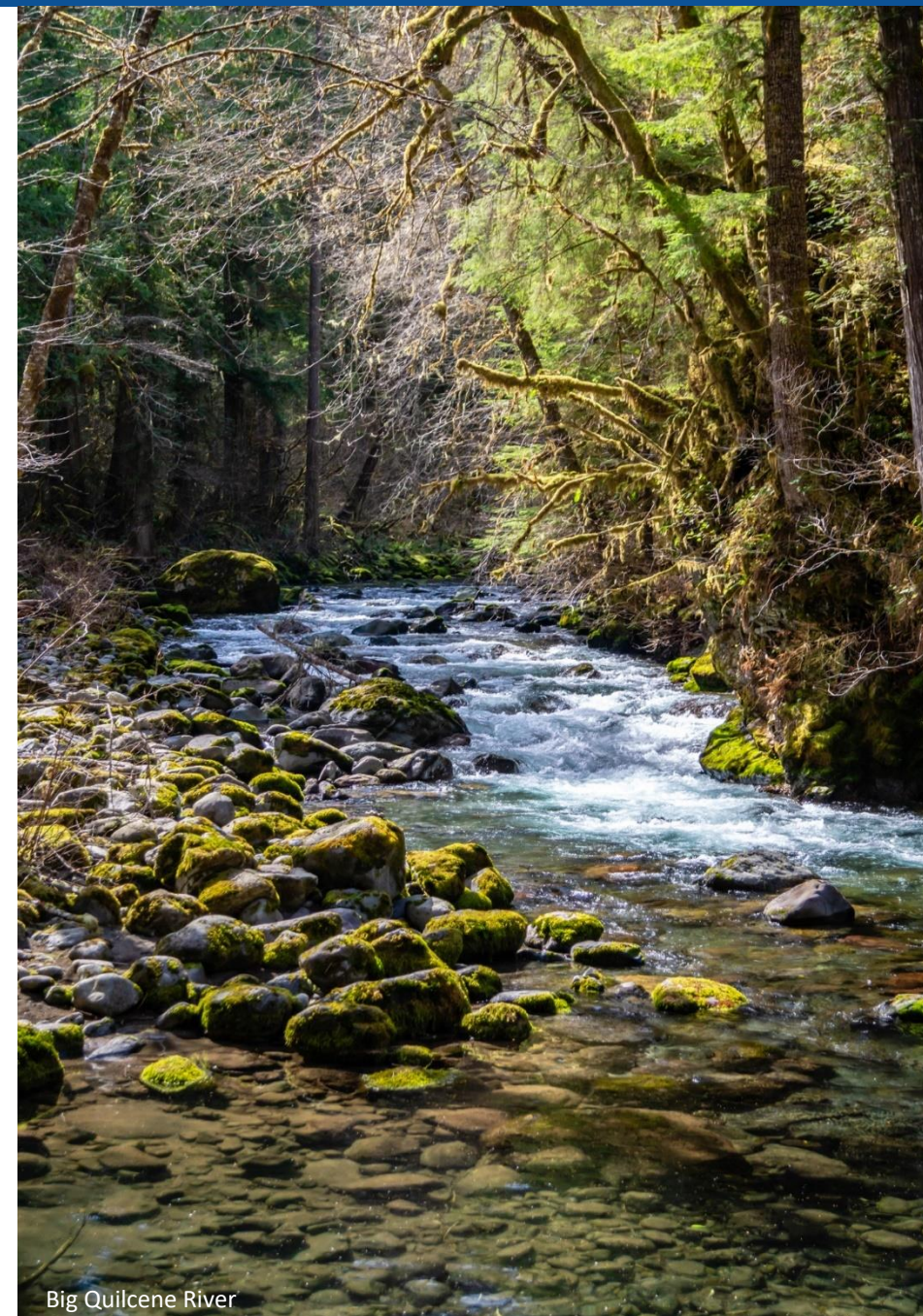
Big Quilcene River

America the Beautiful Cross-Cutting Connections

- Benefit At-Risk Fish, Wildlife and Plant Species

- Expand Habitat Connectivity

- Provide a Range of Ecosystem Services

- Strengthen Ecosystem and Community Resilience

- Expand Public and Community Access to Nature

- Engage Local Communities

- Support Tribally Led Conservation and Restoration Priorities

- Contribute to Local or Tribal Economies

- Contribute to Workforce Development

Golden Eagle

Native Nation Priorities and Opportunities

- Prioritizes Native nation and Tribal implementation, stewardship, collaboration, capacity, planning

- Seeks projects developed and informed by ITK/TEK

- Encourages direct local community engagement

- Directs benefits to accrue to local and Native nation economies

- Tribes and Tribal-affiliated organizations eligible as applicants

Mountain Goat

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Grant Categories

Funding: $375M over 5 years
Eligible: States, territories, and Tribes
Geographic Focus: National

1. **Implementation Grants:** Grants ranging from $1 million to $5 million will be awarded to implement projects that address the program priorities on public, Tribal, and/or private lands. Partnerships with NGOs and localities through subawards are encouraged.

2. **Planning, Collaboration and Engagement:** Grants of $200,000 to $1 million will be awarded for projects that enhance local capacity to implement future on-the-ground actions through community-based assessments, partnership building, project design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities. Projects in this category should include multiple partners, be at a significant scale for the landscape/watershed/seascape, clearly demonstrate how efforts will lead to implementation projects, and be completed within approximately one year of award.

Grant Categories Continued

Funding: $25 million over 5 years
Eligible: Non-profits, local, municipal governments, and educational institutions
Geographic Focus: Sentinel Landscapes, Pacific, or off-base species/habitat goals

Funding: $25 million over 5 years
Eligible: Non-profits, local, municipal governments, and educational institutions
Geographic Focus: USFS lands focused on invasive species detection & removal

Funding: $10 million over 5 years
Eligible: Non-profits, local, municipal governments, and educational institutions
Geographic Focus: Water quality/fish passage on Tribal or federal lands

3. **Grants to Buffer and Benefit Public Lands:** Grants ranging from $250,000 to $1.5 million will be awarded for projects that result in direct, voluntary on-the-ground conservation actions that benefit National Forests and DoD facilities. Projects should be targeted toward outcomes identified in a conservation implementation plan.

Grant Categories Continued

Funding: $5 million over 5 years
Eligible: Non-profits, local, municipal governments, and educational institutions
Geographic Focus: Private lands with a focus on implementing Working Lands for Wildlife Frameworks

4. **Private Forests and Farmland Grants**: Grants ranging from $200,000 to $500,000 will support outreach and engagement with private landowners to advance voluntary conservation efforts on working lands that align with the NRCS Working Lands for Wildlife Framework (e.g. sagebrush, grasslands, bobwhite quail, northeast turtles, golden-winged warbler).

Matching Requirements

DOI Conservation and Restoration Funds

Recipient Type	Federal cost share	Non-federal cost share
States	90% of costs	10% of costs, at least 2.5% must be cash
Tribes & Territories	97% of costs	3% of costs, at least .75% must be cash

DoD Conservation and Restoration Funds

Recipient Type	Federal cost share	Non-federal cost share
All Entities	100% of costs	Not required

NRCS Technical Assistance Funds

Recipient Type	Federal cost share	Non-federal cost share
All Entities	50% of costs	50% of costs

USFS Conservation and Restoration Funds

Recipient Type	Federal cost share	Non-federal cost share
All Entities	80% of costs	20% of costs

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Overall Evaluation Criteria

All Proposals:

- Program Goals and Priorities

- Technical Merit

- Budget

- Partnership and Community Impact

- Cost-Effectiveness

- Monitoring

- Long-term Sustainability

Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep

Federal Funding Compliance Implications and Requirements

Yellow Warbler

- ATBC projects will be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (ESA; state and federal), National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), and Clean Water Act (CWA)
  - 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)
- Acquisition included in projects may be subject to requirements under Federal acquisition regulations and Yellow Book standards. Agency approval and reporting may be required.
- Contractors and subcontractors in budgets may be subject to prevailing wage requirements
- Materials and supplies may be subject to Buy American requirements
- *Be sure to budget time and resources towards completing these requirements and obtaining all necessary permits and clearances*

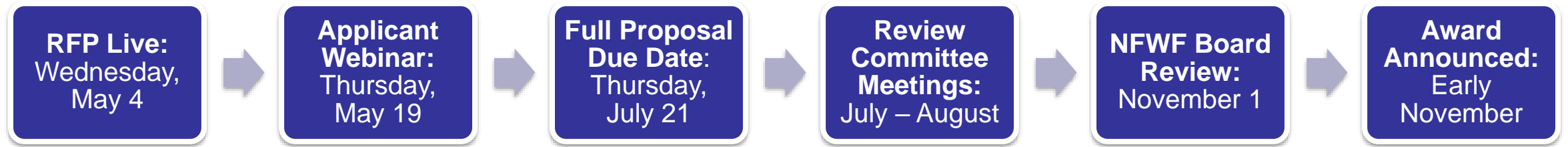# Overall Proposal Guidelines - Highlights

- Project periods of performance cannot start prior to August 1, 2022 or end after June 30, 2027

- Provide measurable outputs and outcomes, choose your metrics wisely, and provide details requested (see Appendix 1 for full metrics list)

- If you haven't thought about permits and compliance yet, START NOW!

- Start collecting your letters of support (write templates for your partners)

- Pursuant to OMB rules, indirect <u>is allowed</u> – please review the policy on our website (https://www.nfwf.org/grants/application-information/indirect-cost-calculator)

- Complete your budget narratives! Please review guidance on our website (https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/nfwf-detailed-budget-narrative-guide.pdf)

- Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds:

  – Support of ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements

  – Support of political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations

Applicant Demographic Information Form

- In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic demographic information on applicants and their organizations via a voluntary survey form.
- **The information you provide will <u>not</u> be shared with proposal reviewers and will <u>not</u> be considered when making grant decisions.**
- The Foundation will <u>not</u> share identifying information about any particular entity or project.
- While the form is a required upload, applicants can opt out of providing the information within the form itself
  - If your organization does not collect this information or if you have provided NFWF with this information in the last 12 months, you can opt out.
- **The information provided on this Excel form will be kept confidential.** The Foundation may share its anonymized aggregate findings as appropriate with its staff, Board of Directors, funding partners, and publicly on its website or through other media.

Program Timeline

RFP Live:
Wednesday, May 4

→

Applicant Webinar:
Thursday, May 19

→

Full Proposal Due Date:
Thursday, July 21

→

Review Committee Meetings:
July – August

→

NFWF Board Review:
November 1

→

Award Announced:
Early November

Woody Island

Applicant Assistance Opportunities and Resources

- Full RFP and supporting materials are available on our website
  - Tip sheet for help navigating RFP and Easygrants
  - Frequently Asked Questions living document
  - Additional materials under development
- Proposal lab sessions with NFWF staff May 20th – July 15th
  - Intended only for discussion of specific project concepts and ideas; please send general RFP and program inquiries via email
- Applicants submit proposal through Easygrants portal – Due July 21st
  - easygrants@nfwf.org for help with Easygrants issues
- Webinar recording will be posted to website
- NFWF staff are available to assist

Bumblebee on Goldenrod

Please email us if you have any questions!
rachel.dawson@nfwf.org
sydney.godbey@nfwf.org

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Frequently Asked Question – 1

Q: Is land acquisition or conservation easement eligible under this program?

A: The focus of the 2022 ATBC is to implement restoration priorities identified in established or new conservation plans, broader ongoing restoration efforts and/or projects that are informed by Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK) and promote Tribal co-stewardship. Voluntary acquisition and easement projects are not excluded, but to be competitive, the application must demonstrate how the acquisition or easement is critical to the overall landscape restoration and/or stewardship work being conducted.

In short, acquisition or easement efforts in an ATBC proposal could be a means to achieving a broader restoration or conservation goal, but not the goal of the project itself.

An example would be protecting land within a high priority migration corridor as part of a broader effort to improve the overall health and functionality of that corridor.

Frequently Asked Question – 2

Q: Can multiple organizations submit a joint application for one project?

A: Yes, we encourage applicants to assemble strategic and collaborative partnerships in support of a project. However, the proposal can only have one primary applicant organization, and the point of contact in Easygrants must be directly affiliated with the applicant organization. If awarded, all funding will flow through the applicant organization, which will be responsible for managing subawards to any project partners.

Sockeye Salmon

Frequently Asked Question – 3

Q: Can an organization submit more than one application for this RFP?

A: Yes, more than one application may be submitted, but please note that anything beyond two or three submissions per grant category may see diminished competitiveness. We generally encourage applicants to submit the one or two of their best projects per RFP grant category. Please do not submit the same project to multiple categories — select only the most appropriate one.

Badlands Prairie

Frequently Asked Question – 4

Q: Can you explain the Tribal eligibility in more detail? The phrases Tribal government, Tribe, Indian Tribe, and Tribal-affiliated organization have all been used in the RFP – what is the distinction?

A: In general, for the ATBC RFP, any Federally Recognized Tribe is eligible for funding through all four grant categories. A Tribal-affiliated organization is one that is directly managed or run by the Tribe and would include entities like a native corporation or Tribal fish and wildlife department. Third-party associations or organizations collaborating with Tribes are not eligible to be lead applicants for grant categories 1 and 2, but may be sub-awardees and partners in proposals. State Recognized Tribes are also not eligible to be lead applicants for grant categories 1 and 2, but they are encouraged to partner with state or eligible Tribal applicants and can be sub-awardees in proposals.

Blue Ridge Mountains
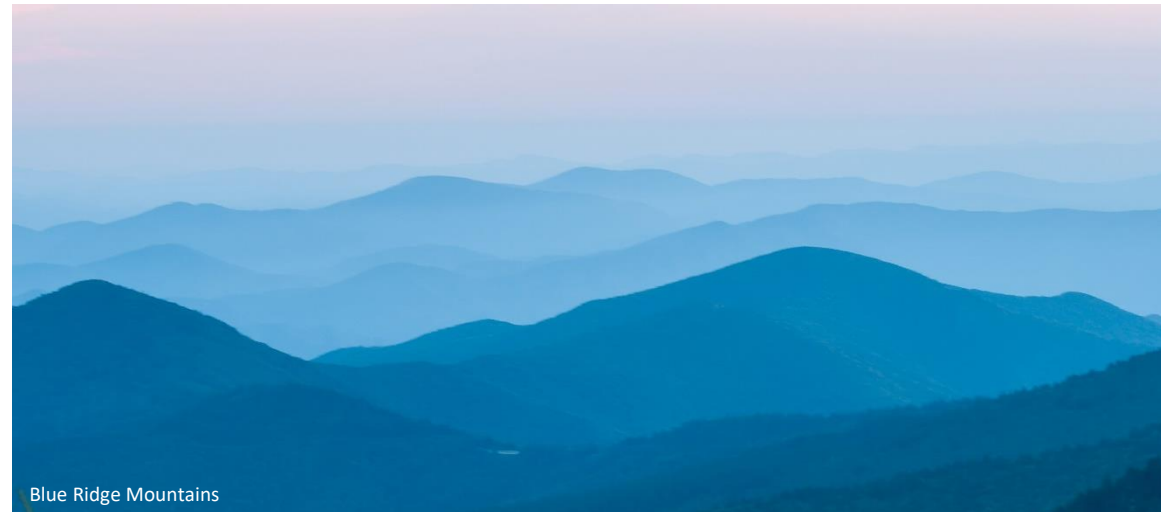
Frequently Asked Question – 5

Q: What if you have a project idea for the implementation or planning, collaboration, and engagement grant categories, but you aren't an eligible applicant?

A: Ineligible applicants for these two grant categories are encouraged to partner with eligible applicants (states, territories, and Tribes). Subawards and subcontracts to NGOs, associations, state recognized Tribes, counties/municipalities, land trusts, and others are allowed for all four grant categories.

Bull Moose

Q: What sort of information should be included in project context?

A: While NFWF, our funding partners, and our proposal reviewers have extensive conservation and restoration expertise, they may not know the context of your particular project. Please do make every effort to tell us why this is the right time for this project, why these are the right actions to take, and why it should happen in this geography. Also describe any additional plans (ITK, municipal, federal, state, etc) and goals this project helps deliver—but do not upload each of those full plans with your proposal (you may provide links). If you are submitting a proposal for planning, collaboration, or capacity building, please be sure to clearly characterize the final project vision and what implementation will achieve/benefit.

Orca Killer Whale

Frequently Asked Question – 7

Q: How do we pick which metrics showcase the potential impact of our project? How do we calculate or estimate the target value?

A: Metrics should be reasonable, achievable, and tell a story about your project. You can see the full list of metrics in Appendix 1 of the RFP. Please include at least one metric relevant to reporting your project's progress. When in Easygrants, hover your mouse cursor over the "?" next to a metric to read its description and specific guidance. For each metric you will need to provide values for "Starting Value" and "Target Value." **In all cases the starting value will be zero (0).** In your project narrative, you will have the opportunity to describe additional activities and outcomes associated with your project. **Please only select metrics associated with the project elements for which you are requesting funding in this grant.** Be sure to add metrics notes, click the small notepad icon to the right of a selected metric to add notes. Adding notes to metrics assists reviewers in understanding how values were determined.

Black Bear
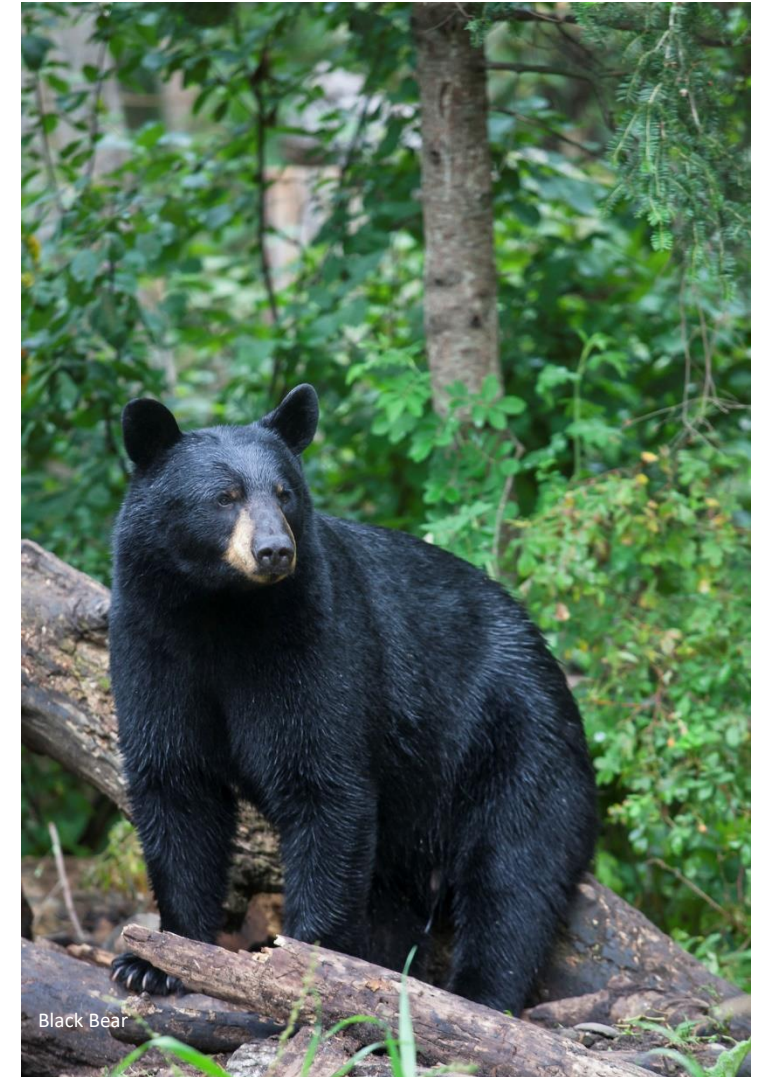
Q: Can we request funding for planning, collaboration, engagement and capacity building activities? What if my project is doing both implementation and planning?

A: Yes, activities associated with planning, collaboration, engagement, and capacity building are eligible. It will be helpful to show what initial steps are already underway and what partners and/or impacted communities have offered support or buy-in. Be sure to articulate the ultimate potential and vision for the effort. Giving reviewers the full picture—in addition to describing the activities for which funding is requested—will be helpful. If your project includes a combination of planning and implementation, try to apply to the category that best fits the scope of work and clearly describe each part and how they work together in a seamless effort. If the planning and implementation work does not fit together, then they should be submitted as two separate projects.

Barred Owl

Frequently Asked Question – 9

Q: Can you clarify what you mean by capacity building? Will you fund staff positions to help deliver conservation and restoration?

A: We are open to a wide variety of capacity building activities as it relates to increasing the capacity of an organization or collaborative network to deliver on-the-ground restoration or conservation that aligns with the program priorities. In terms of funding full-time positions, while this is an eligible use of funds and budgets should be constructed to adequately reflect what's needed to deliver the project, be aware that full or partial funding of a staff position is not guaranteed after the end date of your project. Be sure to include context on the need for the position and how it will be sustained post-award.

Mule Deer Herd

Frequently Asked Question – 10

Q: Is ATBC the same as the 30 by 30 Initiative?

A: The America the Beautiful Challenge is intended to fund a broader range of outcomes focused on conservation and restoration, whereas the 30x30 Initiative is a worldwide effort to designate 30 percent of the Earth's lands and oceans as protected areas by the year 2030. The America the Beautiful Challenge includes objectives such as conserving and restoring rivers, coasts, wetlands, and watersheds and connecting and reconnecting wildlife corridors, large landscapes, watersheds, and seascapes. In short, the ATBC is much more comprehensive and focused on a broader range of activities to conserve and restore America's natural heritage for the benefit of future generations.

Mount Shasta

Michigan

Q: Is the ATBC related to the Justice40 Initiative?

A: The ATBC incorporates aspects of the Justice40 initiative since one of the ATBC priorities is direct outreach and engagement with communities, especially underserved communities. The Justice40 Initiative also focus on community engagement but includes many other priorities beyond this. Applicants are encouraged to show how their project engages residents and communities and particularly underserved communities that lack access to the outdoors or opportunities to engage with and learn about nature. In the narrative template, there is a question where applicants can describe the community impacted by the project and how they will be engaged.

Frequently Asked Question – 12

Q: How is ATBC different from NFWF's National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF)? If I already applied to NCRF and haven't heard back yet, can I apply to ATBC with the same project?

A: While NCRF and ATBC are both national programs with an emphasis on resilience, ATBC is not limited to funding only in coastal areas or only on flooding/coastal resilience. In terms of project focus, although ATBC does prioritize projects aimed at mitigating flooding and storm threats, it may also funds projects that improve resilience to fire and drought. You may submit the same project to both NCRF and ATBC, but note that we will not fund the project through both programs. NFWF staff will work to identify and address any overlap, but feel free to reach out to us with specific project submission questions.

Florida Salt Marshes

Frequently Asked Question – 13

Q: If we didn't have to undergo an A-133/Single Audit, do we upload a statement to that effect?

A: Depending on your organization type, you may not be required to provide this upload. To see which documents are required of your organization go here: https://www.nfwf.org/apply-grant/applicationinformation/required-financial-documents. If an upload does not apply to your organization, you will need to upload a simple document stating it is not needed and why in one to two sentences in lieu of the financial document itself. The same applies for the Statement of Litigation requirement (state and local government applicants are not required to complete this document).

Kenai Peninsula

Frequently Asked Question – 14

Q: We have privacy concerns when it comes to submitting a full proposal. How will the data provided in the proposal be used and distributed?

A: As stated earlier, the applicant demographic data will not be shared with reviewers, nor used to make grant decisions. Additionally, all financial documents submitted will not be shared with reviewers or externally to NFWF. The Foundation will not share identifying information about any particular entity or project and proposal content will be kept confidential.

All reviewers are subject to a confidentiality clause in order to participate, and are not allowed to share any proposal details outside of their own personal review.

Long-Eared Owl

Final Tips for Applicants

1. Print/download the tip sheet and use it as a reference
2. Re-read the RFP and reference the linked-information provided
3. These are competitive grants; projects should address all criteria, respond to all requirements and have a "wow" factor
4. Include lots of context and details—do not assume reviewers know about or understand your project!
5. Don't skimp on the budget or metrics notes.
6. Submit your proposal ON OR BEFORE July 21st
7. Note that NFWF staff will not be in the office at 11:59 pm on **July 21st**!
8. Reach out if you need help

RESOURCES:
- Tip Sheet
- Proposal Lab
- Webinar Recording
- FAQ Document
- NFWF Staff

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Questions?

Proposals are Due
Thursday, July 21st!!

Awards will be announced in
November

www.nfwf.org/challenge

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How to Apply to NFWF – Easygrants System

easygrants.nfwf.org

1. Log in with existing email and password
   - Register now if you do not have one – this will allow for time to familiarize yourself with the system
   - If you have trouble logging in, use the help feature
2. Turn off your pop-up blockers
3. Download and use the tip sheet available on the program webpage
4. You can work on the narrative offline – download the template and upload when you're finished
5. Please be as specific as possible with mapping AND providing location information on your project
6. Click save frequently
7. Input budget line-item narratives!
8. Make sure all your check marks are green; do not click SUBMIT until you are completely finished

NFWF

Submitting a Proposal
Step One: Create an Account

Let's try it...

Visit: www.nfwf.org/challenge

Program Contacts:

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