

## **SMALL WATERSHED GRANTS**

### **2022 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Full Proposal Due Date: *Thursday, April 21, 2022 by 11:59pm ET*

### **OVERVIEW**

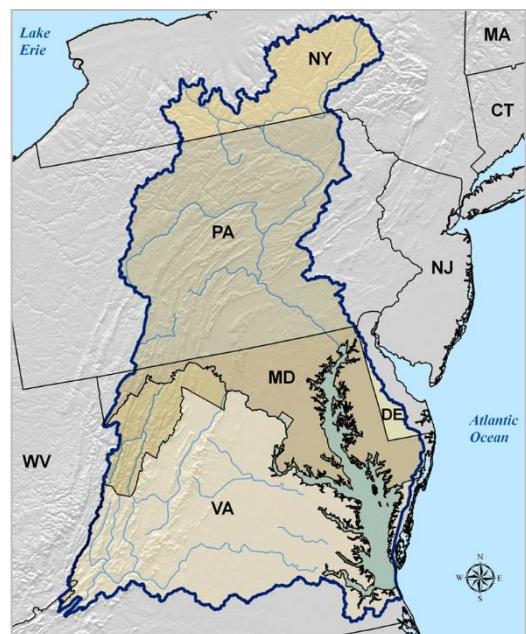
The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, is soliciting proposals through the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund to restore water quality and habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams.

NFWF is specifically soliciting proposals under the **Small Watershed Grants (SWG)** program for projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that promote voluntary, community-based efforts to protect and restore the diverse and vital habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams. NFWF will award funding through two distinct funding opportunities: **SWG Implementation (SWG-I)** grants of \$75,000-\$500,000 will be awarded for projects that result in direct, on-the-ground actions to protect and restore water quality, species, and habitats in the Bay watershed; **SWG Planning and Technical Assistance (SWG-PTA)** grants up to \$75,000 will be awarded for projects that enhance local capacity to implement future on-the-ground actions through community-based assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities.

NFWF estimates awarding \$15 to \$25 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2022 contingent on the availability of funding. Major funding comes from the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office, with other important contributions by Altria Group, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

All projects must occur wholly within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Priority consideration will be provided to projects located within priority subwatersheds or habitat units based on the unique opportunities to maximize multiple goals and outcomes for water quality, species and habitats, and communities. Specific priority areas have been identified for each of NFWF's major focus areas for the SWG program. Applicants should consult outcome-specific geographic priorities referenced in this Request for Proposals and NFWF's online Chesapeake Bay Business Plan [mapping portal](#) to determine appropriate geographic focus areas for their proposed project activities.



## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's 2014 [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), the SWG program supports efforts to achieve water quality improvement, restoration and protection of key Chesapeake Bay species and their habitats, and the fostering of an engaged and diverse citizen and stakeholder presence that will build upon and sustain measurable natural resource improvements. NFWF is soliciting proposals that provide measurable contributions for selected goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and associated with NFWF's [Chesapeake Bay Business Plan](#) and will place priority emphasis on projects that meaningfully and materially contribute to multiple program priorities as outlined below.

The SWG program will support projects that address one or more of the following priorities through either (1) direct on-the-ground implementation of conservation or restoration actions (**SWG-I** grants) or (2) assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities (**SWG-PTA** grants). SWG-Implementation grants may also include technical assistance-oriented activities necessary to support proposed on-the-ground implementation activities.

For all program priorities and consistent with broader goals to enhance diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice in Chesapeake Bay habitat restoration and conservation efforts, NFWF will prioritize proposals from applicants that have directly and meaningfully engaged local communities in the identification, prioritization, selection, and implementation of proposed actions. Examples of direct and meaningful engagement include:

- Incorporating community members in project design and implementation
- Empowering community members with knowledge or decision-making authority
- Ensuring the project team includes members representing and/or a part of the community
- Including specific, active engagement strategies such as workshops, classroom activities, field trips and volunteer opportunities
- Addressing a specific and localized harm such as pollution, flooding, fires
- Creating jobs in the target community or performing job training and certification
- Directly engaging in specific cultural activities with the community

Proposals from applicants or partnerships directly representing or resourcing underrepresented, underserved, and/or under-resourced communities, will receive priority consideration, especially those that align established interests of local communities with SWG program priorities. NFWF also explicitly encourages applications from or incorporating community-based organizations as key project partners, regardless of an environmental or conservation-related mission, in order to ensure that a broad spectrum of community interests are represented and reflected in proposed activities.

Furthermore, NFWF encourages more traditional environmental and conservation organizations and entities to use grant funding to enhance their internal capacity to engage with, mentor, and support diverse community partners.

Resources defining key terms related to diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts under the NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund, as well as tools for understanding demographic and socioeconomics of affected communities, are available on NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund [website](#).



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## PRIORITY 1. Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff

- **Managing Upland Agricultural Runoff through Farm-Scale Conservation Systems and Solutions:** Includes efforts to reduce water quality impacts while simultaneously maintaining or increasing profits and farm management benefits of the region's farms by implementing best management practices that reduce nutrient and sediment pollution at the farm scale.

In working to manage agricultural runoff, interested applicants should generally seek first to utilize existing federal, state, and local agricultural cost-share and incentive programs to finance implementation of water quality improvement practices, with NFWF funding for used to strategically fill gaps in existing funding programs. Where NFWF funding is sought to cover all or a portion of costs for practice implementation, applicants must describe why other public programs are insufficient or otherwise inappropriate for financing proposed practice implementation.

- **Managing Upland Urban Runoff through Green Stormwater Infrastructure Improvements (GSI):** Includes efforts to assist local governments, nonprofit organizations, community associations, and others, to reduce stormwater runoff on developed lands by implementing GSI practices that capture, store, filter, and treat stormwater runoff through systems and practices that mimic natural hydrologic processes. Examples range from relatively small-scale, distributed practices like rain gardens, conservation landscaping, and urban tree planting that aim to capture stormwater closer to its sources, to more comprehensive stream, floodplain, and wetland restoration projects and retrofits of existing stormwater systems or practices that mitigate stormwater runoff impacts by enhancing ecosystem functions and pollutant removal.
- **Accelerating Innovation in Watershed Management:** Includes in-field application of new technologies and management approaches with the potential to reduce costs, increase nutrient removal efficiencies, and more effectively control emerging nutrient and sediment pollutant sources. Examples include advancements in manure processing and management, market-based solutions to manure management, innovative stormwater practice delivery and design approaches, and improvements in the cost-effectiveness of proven water quality improvement approaches.

## PRIORITY 2. Improving Water Quality and Stream Health Through Riparian Restoration and Conservation

- **Restoring Riparian and Freshwater Habitats through Forested Buffers, Livestock Exclusion, and Stream Restoration:** Includes efforts to mitigate local [stream impairments](#), improve stream health, and maintain or enhance benthic macroinvertebrate populations through establishment of riparian forested buffers (at a minimum standard of 35 feet wide), livestock exclusion fencing (including stream crossings and off-stream watering systems where appropriate), and stream restoration and floodplain reconnection.

Proposed stream restoration and floodplain reconnection efforts must be consistent with qualifying conditions and protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership for creditable nutrient and sediment load reductions under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (see [Recommendations of the Expert Panel to Define Removal Rates for Individual Stream Restoration Projects](#) and associated protocol updates to determine project eligibility). In



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addition to standard proposal narratives required for the SWG program, proposals seeking funding for qualifying stream restoration and floodplain reconnection practices must complete and upload the accompanying “Stream Restoration Narrative Supplement” as a part of the application. Additional information is available in **Appendix C**.

- **Conserving High-Quality Riparian Corridors:** Includes long-term protection and preservation of riparian and floodplain ecosystems by strategically leveraging federal, state, and local land conservation programs through assistance with transaction and due diligence costs, bonus payments for high-value riparian conservation easements and land acquisitions, and incorporation of riparian protection into existing agricultural land preservation programs.

### **PRIORITY 3. Enhancing Freshwater Habitat**

- **Increasing Habitat Integrity and Population Viability for Eastern Brook Trout:** In conjunction with efforts to manage polluted runoff and restore and conserve riparian habitat, includes improving connectivity within and between stronghold eastern brook trout population patches through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts, and other fish passage improvements. In-stream habitat enhancements not otherwise creditable under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL may also be appropriate where instream habitat quality, cover, and structure can be identified as limiting factors to viable local populations. NFWF will prioritize projects working to protect and enhance stronghold populations most likely to persist under future climate conditions and considering local land use (see Trout Unlimited’s [Eastern Brook Trout Conservation Portfolio](#) for more information).
- **Increasing Habitat Connectivity and Quality for At-Risk and/or Federally-Listed Species:** Includes effort to remove barriers and enhance aquatic organism passage, restore instream habitat, and address invasive species in order to enhance populations of native freshwater mussels, eastern hellbender, American eel, and other at-risk species listed under the Endangered Species Act and/or prioritized through state natural heritage programs.
- **Restoring River Herring Habitat Connectivity:** Includes efforts to increase connectivity and access to spawning habitat along priority migratory corridors for alewife and blueback herring through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts, and other fish passage improvements. NFWF will prioritize cost-effective connectivity enhancements that provide the access to the greatest amount of quality habitat at the lowest cost.

### **PRIORITY 4. Protecting and Enhancing Terrestrial Habitat**

- **Maintain and Enhance Healthy Watersheds and Priority Habitat Corridors:** Includes efforts to support land conservation, effective land use planning, and forest and grassland protection and management to sustain and enhance the resiliency of [state-identified healthy watersheds](#) and protect [priority habitat corridors](#) for at-risk pollinator and forest and grassland bird species listed under the Endangered Species Act or prioritized through state natural heritage programs.
- **Restoring Pollinator Habitat:** In conjunction with efforts to manage polluted runoff and restore and conserve riparian habitat, includes efforts to expand native and flowering plant communities through grassland restoration and conservation, diversified forage and cover crop planting, and conservation landscaping.





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## PRIORITY 5. Protecting and Enhancing Tidal and Estuarine Habitat

- **Restoring and Conserving Wetland and Tidal Marsh Habitat for At-Risk and/or Federally-Listed Waterfowl and Marsh Nesting Birds:** Includes restoration of degraded tidal and non-tidal wetland habitats and strategic conservation of existing high-quality wintering and nesting habitats for American black duck, salt marsh sparrow, black rail, and other at-risk species listed under the Endangered Species Act and/or prioritized through state natural heritage programs. To address threats to habitat from sea level rise, NFWF will further support strategies that seek to create corridors for future marsh migration through strategic land protection, restoration, and management.
- **Managing Shoreline Erosion and Marsh Loss:** Includes implementation of non-structural or hybrid living shoreline restoration practices, particularly those that reduce sediment loading to priority oyster reef restoration sites, establish and expand emergent or submerged aquatic vegetation, and/or help to protect adjacent marsh systems documented as critical habitat for American black duck, salt marsh sparrow, black rail, and other at-risk species listed under the Endangered Species Act and/or prioritized through state natural heritage programs.
- **Restoring Large-Scale Oyster Reefs:** Includes assisting efforts to restore and protect large-scale oyster reefs strategically identified by the Maryland, Virginia, and the Chesapeake Bay Program by leveraging funding from federal and state agencies to support oyster larvae and spat production, development of sustainable reef substrate supplies, and reef construction efforts in established oyster reef restoration tributaries.

## PRIORITY 6. Enhancing Nature-Based Resilience for Human Communities and Critical Habitats

- **Protecting and Enhancing Habitat to Improve Community Resilience:** Includes efforts to protect and enhance natural and nature-based solutions to help protect coastal and inland communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural hazards and enable them to recover more quickly. Examples in coastal communities include restoration and protection of coastal marshes and wetlands, coastal forests, living shorelines, and oyster reefs. For inland communities, examples include hazard-focused stormwater management approaches that reduce localized flooding from high precipitation events and floodplain restoration and reconnection with measurable downstream flood reduction benefits. Priority will be afforded to projects that provide benefits to underrepresented, underserved, and/or under-resourced communities. In considering associated proposals, applicants should consider utilizing NFWF's [Coastal Resilience Evaluation and Siting Tool](#), which identifies areas of open space where projects may have the greatest potential to benefit both human community resilience and fish and wildlife.
- **Enhancing Long-Term Resilience for Critical Species and Habitats:** Like efforts aimed at protecting human communities, includes efforts to support long-term resilience of critical freshwater, terrestrial, and tidal and estuarine habitats from natural hazards and future climate impacts.



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## PRIORITY 7. Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Planning, Design, and Implementation

- **Regional-Scale Partnership Development:** Includes activities that scale up restoration outcomes through enhanced partnership and coordination across organizations at broader regional and landscape scales. Interested applicants should consider appropriate models and frameworks for their own partnership efforts.
- **Improving Delivery of Outreach and Technical Assistance:** Includes support for conservation districts, nonprofits, local and state governments, and private sector partners to provide technical assistance necessary to achieve NFWF's habitat restoration, conservation, and management goals through field positions, development of targeted outreach strategies such as community-based social marketing, and enhanced coordination and partnership among technical assistance providers to improve efficiency and reduce administrative bottlenecks.
- **Assessing Local Watershed and Habitat Restoration Needs and Opportunities:** Includes watershed and habitat assessments, watershed implementation planning, and other planning and prioritization efforts to maximize conservation impact. Priority will be placed on efforts to translate Bay pollution reduction goals to local implementation plans, along with efforts to identify habitat restoration opportunities for NFWF's priority species at a local level. Examples include small watershed restoration plans, property or farm-level conservation and stormwater management plans, patch-level population and habitat assessments for Eastern brook trout, culvert and barrier assessments in priority rivers for river herring, and wetlands restoration and protection assessments to maximize black duck population outcomes.
- **Designing and Permitting Watershed and Habitat Improvements:** Includes strategic assistance to local partners for costs associated with design and permitting for high-impact restoration and management actions. NFWF has specific interest in design approaches that integrate multiple species and/or habitat objectives and therefore provide meaningful contributions to multiple programmatic goals and outcomes.
- **Leveraging Social Science to Advance Behavior Change:** Includes efforts to conduct applied social science research to understand and apply frameworks to influence behaviors of individual landowners, homeowners, watershed residents, businesses, and institutions in support of watershed restoration and protection outcomes, as well as integration of best practices in social science program evaluation to measure success of engagement and behavior change programs.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, NFWF has provided a list of metrics in *Easygrants* for grantees to choose from for reporting. For the SWG-Implementation program, awardees will be required to report both project-level metrics via *Easygrants* and more detailed site and practice-level data via [FieldDoc.org](https://www.field-doc.org/) (see below for additional details), as applicable. NFWF understands that applicants may utilize a variety of tools and methods to estimate proposed nutrient and sediment load reductions other than FieldDoc and simply requires sufficient justification in either the project narrative or *Easygrants* metrics interface detailing the basis for estimated load reductions.



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For a complete list of applicable metrics, see **Appendix B**. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project. It is in the applicant's best interest to be selective of the most meaningful and well-aligned metrics with the project objectives and outcomes. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Nicole Thompson at [nicole.thompson@nfwf.org](mailto:nicole.thompson@nfwf.org) or (202) 857-0166, to discuss acceptable alternatives.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

#### *Small Watershed Grants – Implementation*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, community-based organizations, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, and K-12 educational institutions.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, state government agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

#### *Small Watershed Grants – Planning and Technical Assistance*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, community-based organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, educational institutions, and for-profit technical service providers.
  - For-profit applicants: please note that this is a request for grant proposals, not a procurement of goods and services; see the Budget section below for specific cost considerations.
- ✓ While eligible applicants include state government agencies and post-secondary educational institutions, funded activities are intended to support future implementation efforts of non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions only. Accordingly, applications submitted by state government agencies or post-secondary educational institutions entities must document support and/or request for proposed activities by appropriate non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions.
- ✓ Non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions seeking potential service providers may visit our website in early March 2022 for an updated listing of technical service providers offering assistance locating potential providers.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- **Equipment:** Applicants are encouraged to rent equipment where possible and cost-effective or use matching funds to make those purchases. NFWF acknowledges, however, that some projects may only be completed using NFWF funds to procure equipment. If this applies to your project, please contact the program staff listed in this RFP to discuss options.
- 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



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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.

## FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

NFWF will award up to \$25 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2022. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants Implementation program will range from \$75,000 to \$500,000 each. All 2022 SWG-Implementation grants must be completed within two years of grant award. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants-Planning and Technical Assistance program will be no more than \$75,000 each. All 2022 SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance grants must be completed within one year of grant award. All proposed projects must begin on or after September 1, 2022 to facilitate necessary grant contracting and quality assurance activities. There are no non-federal matching requirements for the 2022 SWG program, though NFWF strongly encourages applicants to describe federal and non-federal contributions to the proposed project.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

### Criteria #1 – Conservation Outcomes

- **SWG-Implementation:** Project will clearly and demonstrably result in meaningful on-the-ground implementation of conservation and/or restoration actions that contribute to priority outcomes of NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (see page 2). Where possible and appropriate, the proposal simultaneously contributes measurable and meaningful implementation actions supporting multiple priority outcomes.
- **SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance:** Project will result in the delivery of planning and technical assistance products and services that meaningfully advance potential conservation or restoration implementation efforts. In considering who benefits from requested services, there is a demonstrated need for services and a clear commitment to utilize services to support future implementation efforts.
- **All:** Project incorporates meaningful engagement of affected communities, furthers established community interests, and incorporates community members and stakeholders in project activities.
- **All:** Project supports new and existing partnerships working to advance conservation and restoration actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- **All:** Project incorporates plans and approaches to implement, verify and sustain conservation and restoration actions and outcomes beyond the timeframe of the grant.





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- **All:** Project conveys a clear communications plan that will actively transfer and disseminate project-related information to appropriate audiences and relevant stakeholders within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with the goal of expanding adoption of successful approaches.

## Criteria #2 – Budget

- The quality and level of detail in the budget and budget narrative provide a clear and detailed understanding of the proposed funding request.
- Proposal demonstrates cost-effectiveness in achieving its proposed outcomes, considering both direct and indirect costs in the proposed budget.
- Proposed costs are reasonable based on the work plan, local or regional costs for similar activities, and commensurate with project outcomes.
- Budget clearly indicates the degree of partnership in conducting the proposed work, including funding for project partners, stakeholders, and community members, as appropriate.
- Proposed funding request is well leveraged by the partners and other contributors through cash-, in-kind, and other match.
- The federal government has determined that a de minimis 10% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA), as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize ALL proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

## Criteria #3 – Technical

- Proposal provides specific goals that correlate with a clear, logical, and achievable work plan, milestones, and timeline. All proposed projects must begin on or after September 1, 2022 to facilitate necessary grant contracting and quality assurance activities.
- Proposed project team has the core competencies necessary to implement the proposed activities and achieve the proposed outcomes as well as the commitment to engage technical experts necessary to ensure activities are scientifically and technically sound and feasible.
- Proposal demonstrates an understanding of necessary permitting and environmental compliance requirements and the ability to obtain necessary approvals consistent with the proposed work plan and timeline.
- Applicant organization has demonstrated an ability to manage and implement similar projects on time and within budget.

## OTHER

**Quality Assurance** – If a project involves monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation. This includes any data collection activities described in the proposal as provided by match and partner activities. [Examples of data collection or use](#) which requires a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP):

- New data collection.



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- Existing data use (a new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups).
- Data collection and analysis associated with development or design of plans and projects e.g. fish passage, watershed or water quality/habitat restoration project plans etc.
- Water or other environmental monitoring.
- Model development or use etc.
- Citizen or community based scientific data collection, monitoring etc.

Applicants *must* budget time and resources in their CBSF proposal to complete this task. No data collection or use may begin until a QAPP is approved and on file. Reimbursement for project activities, including non-data collection activities, may be delayed until quality assurance compliance requirements are complete. Plan to submit the draft QAPP to NFWF *at least* three months in advance of starting your data driven activity for review and comment. The timeline for receiving review feedback and comments and subsequent submittal for EPA approval is dependent upon the quality of the draft QAPP submission and may involve several iterations. General assistance will be available to grantees to help with scoping and review of the draft QAPPs. For more information, follow the link to [EPA QA](#) and [CBSF Quality Assurance Project Plan Guidance](#). Please contact Stephanie Heidbreder ([stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org](mailto:stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org)) if you have any questions about whether your project would require a QAPP. Applicants interested in details of NFWF's quality assurance approach can visit our "[Tools for Current Grantees](#)" webpage in early March 2022 for revised QAPP templates and recorded training and educational webinars.

**Nutrient and Sediment Load Reductions** – All SWG-Implementation projects proposing to implement water quality improvements must demonstrate reductions of nutrient and sediment pollution to local rivers and streams, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. To assist applicants in generating credible nutrient and sediment load reduction estimates, NFWF has partnered with the Chesapeake Commons and Maryland Department of Natural Resource to develop [FieldDoc](#), a user-friendly tool that allows consistent planning, tracking, and reporting of water quality improvement activities and associated nutrient and sediment load reductions from proposed grant projects.

FieldDoc currently includes functionality for a significant share of water quality improvement practices approved by the Chesapeake Bay Program for the purposes of TMDL crediting. Unless otherwise approved by NFWF staff, NFWF expects all projects proposing to implement on-the-ground water quality improvements to utilize FieldDoc to calculate estimated load reductions included in their application. When setting up proposed projects in FieldDoc, please be sure to list your application's 5-digit Easygrants number in the FieldDoc project title.

Upon grant award, NFWF will require all projects submitted under this solicitation to utilize FieldDoc for tracking and reporting of applicable water quality improvement activities during the course of their grant project. For technical support on FieldDoc utilization during the proposal development process, please contact the Commons at [support@chesapeakecommons.org](mailto:support@chesapeakecommons.org). Further help documentation can be found on our [website](#).

**Practice Specifications** – Unless otherwise noted, all conservation and restoration practices implemented through the SWG program must conform to established and recognized standards and practice specifications (e.g., [NRCS practice standards](#), state stormwater manuals and retrofit guidance, approved [Chesapeake Bay Program BMP Expert Panel reports](#)). Applicants must note



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where proposed practices will deviate from established standards and provide reasonable justification for why an alternative is necessary.

**Monitoring** – NFWF may implement independent monitoring efforts in the future to measure the environmental outcomes from projects funded under this solicitation. Award recipients may be asked to facilitate granting of access to project sites for NFWF or its designees for future environmental monitoring purposes. Applicant implementing community and/or habitat resilience are encouraged to review NFWF’s broader [resilience monitoring approaches](#), standard metrics and protocols in building their own potential resilience monitoring activities.

**Budget** – Costs are allowable, reasonable, and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. This funding opportunity will award grants of federal financial assistance funds; applicants must be able to comply with the [OMB Uniform Guidance \(2 CFR 200\)](#). While for-profit entities are eligible applicants, charges to a potential award may include actual costs only; recipients may not apply loaded rates or realize profit from an award of federal financial assistance funds.

**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.

**Project Period:** All project dollars, NFWF award request and matching funds, must be secured and expended within the period of performance. The period of performance is the period of time in which all activities in the proposed scope of work will occur and is defined by the start and end dates selected in the application. Projects should not have a start date prior to September 1, 2022 to facilitate necessary grant contracting and quality assurance activities. Projects must be completed within two years of grant award for SWG-I projects and one year of grant award for SWG-PTA projects. All 2022 SWG-Implementation grants must be completed within two years of grant award and all SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance grants must be completed within one year of grant award.

**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.



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**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.

## TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change and contingent on the availability of funding. Please check the Program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information (<http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake>).

Applicant Webinar ([Registration](#))  
FieldDoc Webinar ([Registration](#))  
Proposal Due Date  
Proposal Review Period  
Awards Announced

*Tuesday, February 15<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm ET*  
*Thursday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm ET*  
*Thursday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, 11:59pm ET*  
*April – August*  
*September (anticipated)*

## 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](http://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.
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 at <http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake>. Additional information to support





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the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's "Applicant Information" page (<http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx>). Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact Jake Reilly ([jake.reilly@nfwf.org](mailto:jake.reilly@nfwf.org)), Stephanie Heidbreder ([stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org](mailto:stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org)) or Nicole Thompson ([nicole.thompson@nfwf.org](mailto:nicole.thompson@nfwf.org)) via e-mail or by phone at (202) 857-0166.

NFWF also offers on-demand, field-based project and partnership development support through [field liaisons](#), providing broad geographic coverage across the Bay region for agricultural conservation, urban stormwater management, wetland and watershed science, and habitat experience and expertise relevant to Bay restoration goals. Applicants may also contact these field liaisons using the information below to discuss potential projects:

Field Liaison Contact	Email	Phone	Sector Expertise
Kristen Saacke Blunk	<a href="mailto:kristen@headwaters-llc.org">kristen@headwaters-llc.org</a>	(814) 360-9766	• All Sectors
Kristen Hughes Evans	<a href="mailto:kristen@susches.org">kristen@susches.org</a>	(804) 544-3457	• Agricultural Conservation
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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 to which you are applying, and a description of the issue.



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## Appendix A

### Glossary of Key Terms

**Aquatic organism passage:** structures that allow the natural passage of aquatic species (fish, frogs, salamanders, insects, microorganisms) upstream and downstream within a stream channel.

**At-risk species:** a species proposed for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

**Best management practice:** a practice, or combination of practices, that is determined to be an effective and practicable means of preventing or reducing the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources.

**Community-based organization:** an organization that is driven by community residents in all aspects of its existence in which the majority of the governing body and staff consists of local residents, the main operating offices are in the community, priority issue areas are identified and defined by residents, solutions to address priority issues are developed with residents, and program design, implementation, and evaluation components have residents intimately involved, in leadership positions.

**Connectivity:** the degree to which distinct patches of aquatic or terrestrial habitats are connected, thereby facilitating movement of animals.

**Conservation landscaping:** the practice of replacing turf grass of a traditional lawn with native plants that have adapted to local rainfall, weather, and soil conditions.

**Diversity:** the differences of people found in our program, our grantees and partners, and in the communities in which we fund

**Equity:** the promotion of justice, impartiality and fairness within the procedures, processes, and distribution of CBSF resources

**Green stormwater infrastructure:** the range of measures that use plants or soil systems, permeable pavement or other permeable surfaces or substrates, stormwater harvest and reuse, or landscaping to reduce stormwater flows to sewer systems or to surface waters.

**Inclusion:** the degree to which groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed, and equally treated

**Justice:** a practice that makes communities more diverse, equitable, and just, including the dismantling of barriers to resources and opportunities so all individuals and communities can participate fully and thrive

**Match:** the portion of the total costs of the program provided by the applicant and its partners in the form of in-kind donations provided or cash expended during the project period.

**Nature-based solutions:** actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore natural or modified ecosystems for the purposes of providing human well-being and biodiversity benefits.

**Negotiated indirect cost rate agreement:** a document published to reflect an estimate of indirect cost rate negotiated between the Federal Government and a grantee organization.

**Nonpoint source pollution:** pollution caused by rainfall or snowmelt moving over and through the ground that ultimately deposits in lakes, rivers, wetlands, coastal waters, and groundwater.



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**Resilience:** the ability to anticipate, prepare for, and respond to hazardous events, trends, or disturbances related to climate.

**Riparian:** related to or situated on the banks of a river or stream.

**Riparian buffer:** an area adjacent to a stream, lake, or wetland that contains a combination of trees, shrubs, and/or other perennial plants and is managed differently from the surrounding landscape, primarily to provide conservation benefits.

**Stormwater:** water that originates from rain, snow, or ice melt.

**Underprivileged:** a group having less money, education, resources, and so forth than the other people in a society

**Underrepresented:** subsets of a population that hold a smaller percentage within a significant subgroup than it holds in the general population

**Under-resourced:** communities or individuals experiencing inequities such as leadership, physical assets, money, power, political will, institutions, community cohesion, and services



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## Appendix B

### Applicable Metrics

### Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program

Priority	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (Required of water quality improvement proposals)	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs N/P/S avoided (annually)</b>	Please use FieldDoc to develop estimates of the annual nitrogen, phosphorus, and/or sediment load reductions from your proposed project. Enter FieldDoc-generated pollutant load reduction totals in this field then upload your FieldDoc Project Summary in the "Uploads" section.
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (Select all that apply)	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs</b>	Enter the total number of acres under agricultural or non-urban BMPs to reduce nutrient or sediment loading. Do not double-count individual acres which have multiple BMPs. If you're implementing load reduction practices on urban lands, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs" metric. Do not include cover crops, conservation tillage, enhanced cropland nutrient management, or managed grazing.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with cover crops</b>	Enter the number of cropland acres with cover crops practices. Please describe the cover crop practices in the NOTES section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with conservation tillage</b>	Enter the number of cropland acres with conservation tillage practices. Please describe conservation tillage practices in the NOTES section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with enhances nutrient management</b>	Enter the number of cropland acres with enhanced nutrient management practices other than or in addition to conservation tillage or cover crops. Please describe the nutrient management practices in the NOTES section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with managed grazing</b>	Enter the number of acres with managed grazing (i.e., promoting plant growth above and below ground, improving wildlife habitat, and maximizing soil carbon through a variety of grazing approaches). Please describe the grazing practices in the NOTES section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs</b>	Enter total drainage area treated by stormwater BMPs. If you wish to also provide the extent of specific BMPs themselves (i.e. square feet of bioretention), please do so in the "Notes" section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Volume stormwater prevented</b>	Enter the number of gallons of stormwater runoff treated through stormwater BMPs (e.g. runoff treatment volume).
	<b>CBSF - Green Infrastructure - number of trees planted</b>	Enter the number of trees planted for urban stormwater reduction. In the NOTES section, specify the specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), # of acres, and average # of trees per acre.
<b>Improving Water Quality and Stream Health Through Riparian Restoration and Conservation</b> (Select all that apply)	<b>CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored</b>	Enter the number of miles of riparian habitat restored through the implementation of forest or grass buffers that are at least 35 feet wide. If you're implementing livestock exclusion, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock exclusion -- miles of fencing installed" metric. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), the % of vegetation on the pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%), the dominant vegetation being planted (Broadleaf, Conifer, Shrub, Grass, Marsh, Swamp), the buffer width, and the acres.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed</b>	Enter the number of miles of livestock exclusion installed. Assume activities include exclusion fencing and a 35-foot forest or grass buffer, unless otherwise noted.





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Priority	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
Improving Water Quality and Stream Health Through Riparian Restoration and Conservation (Select all that apply)	CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of stream restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program.
	CBSF - Floodplain restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of floodplain restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program. Also report any associated linear stream restoration outcomes through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced. In the NOTES section, specify the dominant vegetation being planted (Marsh, Swamp).
Enhancing Freshwater Habitat (Select all that apply)	CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as number of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species.
	CBSF - Instream habitat restoration - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of instream habitat restoration activities not otherwise creditable for nutrient and sediment load reduction. Projects implementing qualifying stream restoration practices for TMDL crediting should instead report those outcomes instead through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
Protecting and Enhancing Terrestrial Habitat (Select all that apply)	CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr).
	CBSF - Land, wetland restoration - Number of trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted for all non-urban projects/practices.
Protecting and Enhancing Tidal and Estuarine Habitat (Select all that apply)	CBSF - American oyster - Marine habitat restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of native oyster reef restored.
	CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced.
	CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as # of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species.
	CBSF - Erosion control - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of tidal shoreline stabilized or restored through erosion control, including living shoreline restoration. Projects implementing qualifying stream restoration practices for TMDL crediting should instead report those outcomes instead through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr). Assuming the specific parcel(s) has been identified, in the NOTES indicate what % of natural land cover would have been cleared in the absence of the easement(s).
Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Planning, Design, and Implementation (Select all that apply)	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of individuals reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how individuals are reached (newsletter mailing list total, training attendance, etc.).
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of individuals measured as demonstrating changed behavior to benefit watershed restoration and protection. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how behavior change will be measured and tracked. If you have questions on whether your project contains behavior change activities, please contact NFWF staff.
	CBSF - Volunteer participation - # volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in project implementation, outreach, and education activities.



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Priority	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Planning, Design, and Implementation (Select all that apply)	CBSF - Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed	Enter the number of conservation, watershed, and/or habitat management plans developed or improved. In the "Notes" section, provide specific information on the aggregate areal extent of associated plans (e.g. acres, square miles), and the number and areal extent of contributing planning activities.
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of individuals reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how individuals are reached (newsletter mailing list total, training attendance, etc.).
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of individuals measured as demonstrating changed behavior to benefit watershed restoration and protection. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how behavior change will be measured and tracked. If you have questions on whether your project contains behavior change activities, please contact NFWF staff.

\* *Easygrants* metrics should be consistent with data entered into and/or derived from [FieldDoc.org](http://FieldDoc.org).



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## Appendix C

### Stream Restoration Resources Checklist

- **Recommendations of the Expert Panel to Define Removal Rates for Individual Stream Restoration Projects** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2013/05/stream-restoration-merged.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2013/05/stream-restoration-merged.pdf))
- **Consensus Recommendations for Improving the Application of the Prevented Sediment Protocol for Urban Stream Restoration Projects Built for Pollutant Removal Credit** ([https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2020/03/PROTOCOL-1-MEMO\\_WQGIT-Approved\\_revised-2.27.20\\_clean\\_w-appendices.pdf](https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2020/03/PROTOCOL-1-MEMO_WQGIT-Approved_revised-2.27.20_clean_w-appendices.pdf))
- **Appendix B Protocol 1 Supplemental Details** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-B.-Protocol-1-Supplemental-Details.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-B.-Protocol-1-Supplemental-Details.pdf))
- **Recommended Methods to Verify Stream Restoration Practices Built for Pollutant Crediting in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed** ([https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2019/07/Approved-Verification-Memo-061819.pdf](https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/07/Approved-Verification-Memo-061819.pdf))
- **Appendix C Protocol 2 and 3 Supplemental Details** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-C.-Protocol-2-and-3-Supplemental-Details.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-C.-Protocol-2-and-3-Supplemental-Details.pdf))
- **Additional Guidance on a Function-Based Assessment Approach.** This guidance from Harman (2018) provides a conceptual approach for determining the restoration potential of a specific project. This information is provided as guidance to aid in understanding the full context of stream restoration projects. There is a link at the end of the article to download detailed guidance and checklists for the Function-Based Framework outlined in the article. As stated above, NFWF does not mandate this particular methodology, and it is offered as an educational resource. It is one example of the type of strategic thinking, assessment, and design that will lead to more successful stream restoration projects. ([https://stream-mechanics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Determining-Restoration-Potential\\_V4.pdf](https://stream-mechanics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Determining-Restoration-Potential_V4.pdf))
- Detailed guidance on the **Function-Based Rapid Assessment Method** as well checklist forms for the catchment assessment and reach-scale function-based assessment (<https://stream-mechanics.com/stream-functions-pyramid-framework/>)