TOOLBOX

for preparing proposals to the

DELAWARE WATERSHED CONSERVATION FUND

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NFWF

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

Cover Photo: Will Parson

INTRO TO NFWF'S DELAWARE WATERSHED CONSERVATION FUND

DELAWARE WATERSHED CONSERVATION FUND

The Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF) addresses near-term and long-range issues identified by the Delaware River Basin Restoration Partnership and Program Framework, for measurable gains for fish and wildlife conservation, clean water, access to outdoor recreation, and other values and natural and economic benefits for people living in the basin. Major funding for the DWCF is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The fund was launched in 2018 as a first step toward delivering the Delaware River Basin Conservation Act, bringing together various stakeholders invested in restoration and conservation efforts throughout the Delaware River Watershed to address different strategic program areas and cross-program activities, build networks, and improve efficiency and focus on a basin-wide scale. DWCF projects are implemented entirely within the Delaware River watershed. The fund's investments target areas of regional significance for restoration and conservation in order to support ongoing efforts, increase capacity, and facilitate maximum adaptive potential in changing watershed conditions.

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TOOLS FOR ESTABLISHING OUTCOMES

WATER QUALITY ANALYSIS, ASSESSMENTS, AND BMPS

FieldDoc: https://www.fielddoc.org/
> To assist applicants in generating credible metric estimates, NFWF has partnered with the Commons and the Academy of Natural Sciences to functionalize FieldDoc, a user-friendly tool that allows consistent planning, tracking, and reporting of water quality improvement activities and modeling of associated nutrient and sediment load reductions from proposed grant projects.

Spreadsheet Tool for Estimating Pollutant Load (STEPL): https://www.epa.gov/nps/spreadsheet-tool-estimating-pollutant-loads-stepl
> STEPL employs simple algorithms to calculate nutrient and sediment loads from different land uses and the load reductions that would result from the implementation of various best management practices (BMPs). STEPL provides a user-friendly Visual Basic (VB) interface to create a customized spreadsheet-based model in Microsoft (MS) Excel.

Model My Watershed: https://wikiwatershed.org/model/
> Model My Watershed is a watershed-modeling web app that enables citizens, conservation practitioners, municipal decision-makers, educators, and students to: analyze real land use and soil data in their neighborhoods and watersheds; model stormwater runoff and water-quality impacts using professional-grade models; and compare how different conservation or development scenarios could modify runoff and water quality.

CBP Expert Panels and Products: https://www.chesapeakebay.net/who/group/bmp_expert_panels
> The Chesapeake Bay Program utilizes expert panels to establish BMP efficiencies and loading estimates for incorporating restoration and conservation actions into Chesapeake water quality goals. While many of those products and analyses are tied to CB models and physiographic regions, their approaches and estimates can be useful in informing loading calculations and practice effectiveness for the Delaware watershed. This one is particularly comprehensive:
> - Chesapeake Bay Program Quick Reference Guide for Best Management Practices (BMPs): Nonpoint Source BMPs to Reduce Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Sediment Loads to the Chesapeake Bay and its Local Waters - https://www.chesapeakebay.net/documents/BMP-Guide_Full.pdf

Coastal Resilience and Evaluation Siting Tool (CREST): https://resilientcoasts.org/#Home
> CREST uses regional coastal resilience assessments seek to identify areas where natural resource restoration efforts will have the greatest impact for human community resilience, as well as for fish and wildlife, and identifies these types of natural areas as Resilience Hubs. For more information about NFWF's regional coastal assessment visit https://www.nfwf.org/programs/national-coastal-resilience-fund/regional-coastal-resilience-assessments. To view a targeted coastal resilience assessment of the Delaware Bay and Coastal Wetlands visit https://www.nfwf.org/programs/national-coastal-resilience-fund/targeted-watershed-assessments.

SPECIES AND HABITAT

DWCF Interactive Mapper: https://nfwf.maps.arcgis.com/dwcf_interactive_map
> NFWF and FWS have developed an interactive mapping tool for applicants to assist in geographic prioritization during proposal development. GIS focal layers are available for different DWCF priority species, including data from the Delaware River Program Business Plan, Nature's Network, and the TNC Delaware River Basin Barrier Assessment.

Nature's Network: http://naturesnetwork.org/
> Nature's Network is a conservation design for the Northeast region, developed by a team of federal, state, academic, and NGO partners based on the best available science at this scale. It identifies a network of

connected, intact, and resilient areas -- both lands and waters -- that encompass important habitats for key species. These areas are considered the best places to start for strategic conservation planning to support a sustainable future for both human and natural communities across the 13-state region. Our partners can apply this tool in the Delaware River Watershed to see how local conservation efforts fit into the bigger picture. That regional perspective can amplify local, state and regional conservation priorities by illustrating their significance on a landscape scale. In turn, by complementing regional priorities, our conservation work can make an impact beyond the watershed boundary by supporting the long-term viability of fish and wildlife species across their ranges.

- Data download: http://naturesnetwork.org/data-tools/download-tables/
- Data Basin for live mapping and/or overlay of project boundaries, and map output into PowerPoint, PDF or PNG formats: https://nalcc.databasin.org/maps/522735111d19494a83b0a3badc710319/

Delaware River Watershed Business Plan: https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/delaware-river-watershed-business-plan-20230123.pdf

In 2017, the Board of Directors of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation approved NFWF's Delaware River Watershed Business Plan. The plan was developed with the input of a broad range of Delaware River Watershed stakeholders, experts, and practitioners—and included an in-depth geospatial analysis performed by the Trust for Public Lands. The plan outlines the species, goals, strategies, and activities that will provide the biggest return on investment in the Delaware River Watershed. In 2023, NFWF completed a refresh of the Business Plan and some of its goals. Please note the updated goals of the Delaware River Program Business Plan are preliminary pending NFWF Board Approval in March 2023.

NatureServe Explorer: http://explorer.natureserve.org/

NatureServe Explorer is an authoritative source for information on more than 70,000 plants, animals, and ecosystems of the United States and Canada. Explorer includes particularly in-depth coverage for rare and endangered species. Perform searches by Species and/or Ecological Communities & Systems by Name, Taxonomy, Location, or Conservation Status. Use the database to easily find scientific and common names, conservation status, distribution maps, images, life histories, conservation needs, and more.

NatureServe National Species Dataset: https://www.natureserve.org/products/national-species-dataset

NatureServe's foundational at-risk species dataset includes more than 900,000 location records (element occurrences) from our Network of biological inventories operating in all 50 states and in most of Canada. Over four decades, this network has collected and managed detailed local information on plants and animals of conservation concern. Representing the best available information on the known location, viability, and other information on at-risk species populations, this dataset is essential to regional and local analyses, decision-making, and planning.

The Black Rail Conservation Plan: https://acjv.org/black-rail/

The Black Rail Conservation Plan outlines the highest priority strategies needed to conserve the Eastern Black Rail throughout its former range on the Atlantic and Florida Gulf coasts. The plan sets population and habitat targets for the short and long term with a goal of creating sufficient habitat to support a sustainable population of Black Rails within the Atlantic Coast Joint Venture area.

Saltmarsh Sparrow Conservation Information and Plan: https://acjv.org/saltmarsh-sparrow/

This plan and mapping tool includes the Saltmarsh Sparrow Conservation Plan, which outlines the highest priority strategies needed to conserve the Saltmarsh Sparrow throughout its global range along the Atlantic coast. The plan sets population and habitat targets at the state and regional levels with a goal of creating sufficient high-quality habitat to support a long-term sustainable population of 25,000 Saltmarsh Sparrows. This site also provides access to the Saltmarsh Sparrow Habitat Prioritization Tool, which can be used to guide land protection and restoration efforts toward the most important patches for Saltmarsh Sparrow.

Red Knot Resources: https://www.fws.gov/species/red-knot-calidris-canutus-rufa

This site has information and resources related to red knot conservation, including the Red Knot Species Assessment and Recovery Outline. Information here outlines the issues facing Red Knot, sets research priorities,

prioritizes strategies towards recovery, and resources to support recovery efforts. The full recovery plan is not published yet; however, this USFWS site hosts resources and information related to Red Knot recovery.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE (DEIJ)

Coalition for the Delaware River Watershed's DEIJ Resource Hub: https://www.delriverwatershed.org/deij-resource-hub
> NFWF and our primary funding partner, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, feel it is important that our partners and grantees in the Delaware River watershed work toward implementing and encouraging inclusive practices that work to counteract discrimination and environmental injustice. It is important to incorporate diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) into practices and policies to foster a safe, diverse, equitable, and inclusive work environment which allows for new and impactful partnerships. The Hub provides resources that define DEIJ in the context of the watershed, guides on internal and external organizational practices that promote integration of DEIJ practices, and a DEIJ lens and screening tool that reorien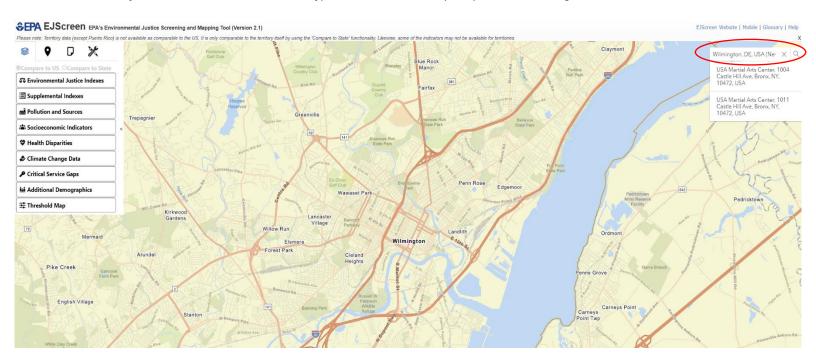ts how we view work, roles, and relationships, while also turning daily decision-making into an intentional practice of transforming organizational systems by aligning decision-making with CDRW's DEIJ definitions.

EJSCREEN: Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool: https://www.epa.gov/EJScreen
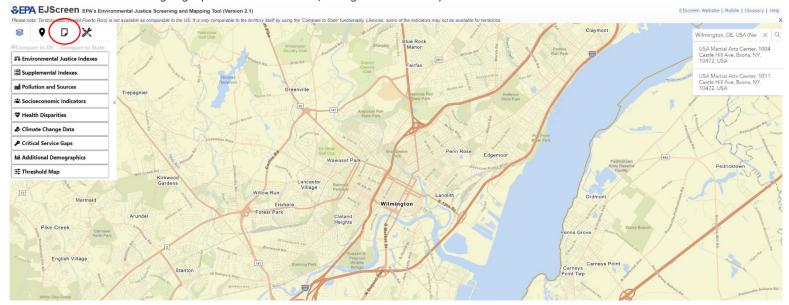> EJScreen is an environmental justice (EJ) mapping and screening tool that provides EPA with a nationally consistent dataset and approach for combining environmental and demographic indicators (https://EJScreen.epa.gov/mapper/). EJScreen users choose a geographic area; the tool then provides demographic and environmental information for that area. All the EJScreen indicators are publicly available data. EJScreen simply provides a way to display this information and includes a method for combining environmental and demographic indicators into EJ indexes. EJScreen includes 12 environmental indicators, 7 socioeconomic indicators, and 12 EJ indexes.

> ***Pulling an EJScreen report for DWCF Applications:*** as noted above, EJScreen provides demographic and environmental information for a geographic area. DWCF applicants are encouraged to pull EJScreen report for the geographic area they are proposing work in.
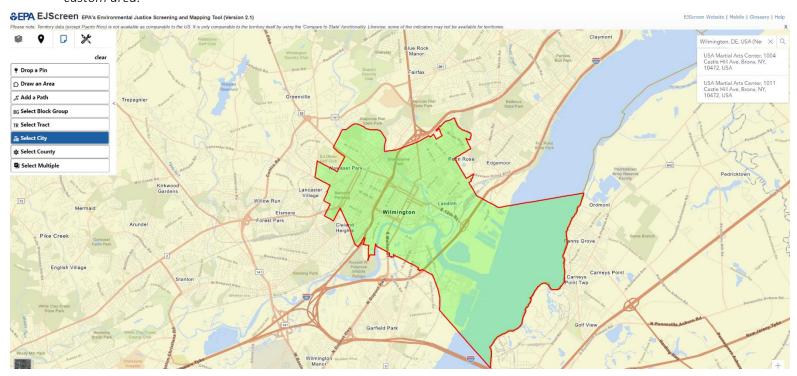
1. *Users will first use the search bar to identify the area/community they will be working in.*
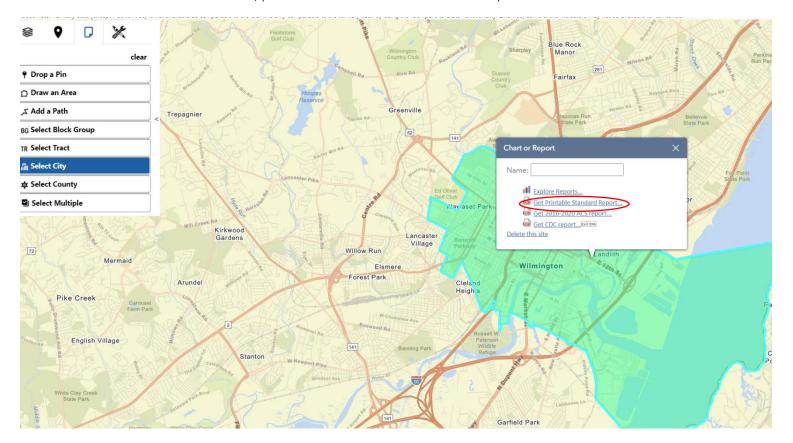
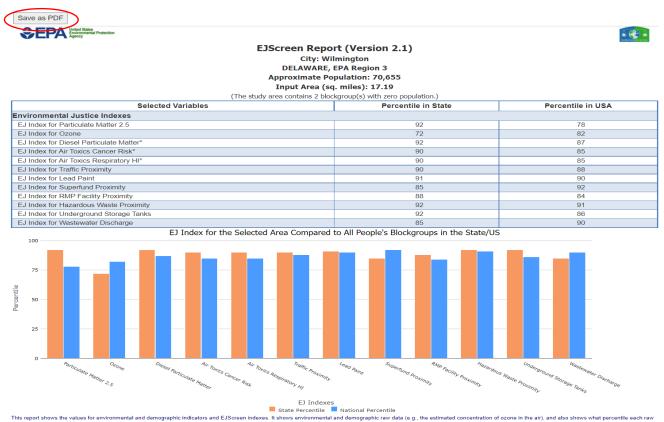2. *Once the correct geographic area is selected, navigate to the "Reports" tab.*

3. *In the Reports tab, users can select the desired geographic area by clicking on a city, county, census tract, or drawing a custom area.*

4. *Once the correct area is selected, please select "Get Printable Standard Report".*

5. *An EJScreen report will load in a separate tab. Save the report as a PDF and upload to the "Uploads" section of your Easygrants application.*

EJScreen Report (Version 2.1)
City: Wilmington
DELAWARE, EPA Region 3
Approximate Population: 70,655
Input Area (sq. miles): 17.19
(The study area contains 2 blockgroup(s) with zero population.)

Selected Variables	Percentile in State	Percentile in USA
Environmental Justice Indexes		
EJ Index for Particulate Matter 2.5	92	78
EJ Index for Ozone	72	82
EJ Index for Diesel Particulate Matter*	92	87
EJ Index for Air Toxics Cancer Risk*	90	85
EJ Index for Air Toxics Respiratory HI*	90	85
EJ Index for Traffic Proximity	90	88
EJ Index for Lead Paint	91	90
EJ Index for Superfund Proximity	85	92
EJ Index for RMP Facility Proximity	88	84
EJ Index for Hazardous Waste Proximity	92	91
EJ Index for Underground Storage Tanks	92	86
EJ Index for Wastewater Discharge	85	90

EJ Index for the Selected Area Compared to All People's Blockgroups in the State/US

This report shows the values for environmental and demographic indicators and EJScreen indexes. It shows environmental and demographic raw data (e.g., the estimated concentration of ozone in the air), and also shows what percentile each raw

TOOLS FOR A ROBUST PROPOSAL

DWCF PROPOSAL BEST PRACTICES

Metrics Guidance: https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/delaware-river-program-2023-metrics-guidance.pdf To increase consistency in the usage and calculations of metrics, the NFWF Delaware team has created a "2022 Metrics Guidance" document to provide additional details and instructions about each metric. Please ensure that, upon choosing a metric to include in your proposal, the calculation of the target value accounts for the details listed for the metric in the guide.

Letters of Support Best Practices: https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/delaware-river-program-2023-letters-support-best-practices.pdf

Delaware River Program RFP Tip Sheet: https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-01/delaware-river-program-2023-tip-sheet.pdf

PERMITTING AND COMPLIANCE

Fish and Wildlife Service NEPA Reference Handbook: https://www.fws.gov/node/265335#nepa
> Projects selected will be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and National Historic Preservation Act. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved prior to DWCF projects initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Reimbursement for project activities may be delayed until compliance requirements are complete. Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. NFWF has made resources available to assist grantees in completing NEPA and other federal compliance upon award. These resources include templates, contacts, and a NFWF-funded consultant available to review documentation and provide process guidance.

NFWF GENERAL INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS

Applicant Information: https://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx

Indirect Cost Policy: https://www.nfwf.org/apply-grant/application-information/indirect-cost-policy

Indirect Cost Calculator: https://www.nfwf.org/grants/application-information/indirect-cost-calculator

Required Financial Documents: https://www.nfwf.org/apply-grant/application-information/required-financial-documents

This toolbox is not intended to be exhaustive, guarantee accuracy in estimating outcomes, or endorse the use of any tools over others. These resources should help provide contextual information for proposals. NFWF will update this document regularly as resources become available or are updated. If you have tools and resources you would like to suggest for the toolbox, please feel free to send them to erin.lewis@nfwf.org (updated January 2023).