National Fish and Wildlife Foundation 2024 Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund Applicant Webinar



Today's Presenters



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Webinar Guidelines

- All attendees will be muted for the duration of the webinar.
- Please type your questions into the "questions" box in the webinar controls on the right side of your screen. NFWF staff will answer these questions during several breaks in the presentation, but you can type them in any time. Everyone will be able to hear the answers.
- Don't be shy. If you have a question, someone else is thinking it, too.
- If you experience a technical glitch, please type it into the chat/question box.
- The Webinar is being recorded. We will post a copy of these slides and the recording on the NFWF website at https://www.nfwf.org/programs/longleaf-landscape-stewardship-fund.



Webinar Agenda

Program Overview

Program Priorities

 Application Guidance and Navigating Easygrants

• Timeline and Resource Links





Program Overview

The **Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund** invests in on-the-ground projects to restore, enhance and conserve longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood forests within the historical longleaf pine range.

Public-Private Partnership





















2024 Funding Opportunity

- Request for Proposals: https://www.nfwf.org/programs/forestland-stewards/longleaf-landscape-stewardship-fund
- Proposal due date: by 11:59pm, Thurs. February 15, 2024
- Anticipated funding: up to \$30 million total
- Individual grant size: \$250,000 \$3,000,000
 - Project periods can span 24 48 months
- Matching funds:
 - Non-federal match is encouraged, not required
 - Will make a proposal more competitive
 - Applicants encouraged to describe federal partner contributions that will directly contribute to project outcomes



Proposals submitted online: easygrants.nfwf.org

Geography

Where should projects take place?

Projects should occur within the historical longleaf pine range in the following states...

Alabama Florida Georgia Louisiana

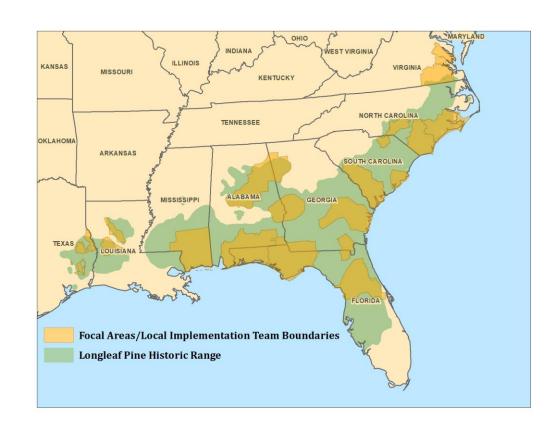
Mississippi North South Texas Virginia Carolina Carolina

Lands eligible for funding include:

- Privately-owned lands
- State and local government lands
- Federal lands

Applicants must be one of the following*:

- Non-profit 501(c)
- State, tribal and local governments
- Academic institutions



Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund Program Boundary

^{*}Federal agencies, for-profits and individual landowners cannot directly apply, but may partner on proposals

Program Priorities



Longleaf Forests and Rivers Business Plan

10-Year Business Plan Goals



Increase # of Breeding Groups



Sustain Acres of Habitat Occupied



Increase # of Viable Populations



Establish Focal Areas and Population Goals

10-Year Program Metric Targets

Metric	10 Year Goal
Establish new acres of longleaf	375,000 acres
Enhance and maintain existing longleaf habitat (excluding prescribed fire)	300,000 acres
Enhance and maintain existing longleaf pine habitat with prescribed fire	4,500,000 acres
Protect high priority existing longleaf habitat or sites identified for longleaf restoration	50,000 acres
Engage private landowners through outreach and technical assistance to implement conservation practices on their lands	50,000 landowners engaged
	5,000 landowners taking action

2024 RFP Goals:

- √ 75,000 acres of planting (longleaf)
 - √ 45 million seedlings
- √ 500,000 acres prescribed burning
- √ 50,000 acres of longleaf enhanced (mid-story control, invasives, etc.)
 - √ 5,000 acres protected
 - √ 5,000 landowners engaged
 - √ 500 landowners taking action

2024 RFP Priorities

- 1. Establishing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwoods
- 2. Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwood Forests
- 3. Silvopasture/Beef Cattle Grazing in Longleaf Pine (NEW)
- 4. Expanding and Coordinating Technical Assistance and Outreach
- 5. Building and Improving Local Implementation Team Capacity
- 6. Accelerating Species Recovery and Response Monitoring
- 7. Conservation Easements and Fee-Simple Acquisitions





1. Establishing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwood Forests

- Reforestation/afforestation
 - Site preparation, seedlings and labor are eligible expenses
 - Proposals should address:
 - ✓ all necessary site preparation for planting
 - ✓ number of acres and seedlings that will be planted
 - ✓ timing of when planting is expected to be completed
 - ✓ summarize plans to manage planted stands
- Treatments to convert existing forest stands to longleaf dominant*
 - ➤ Thinning and/or removal of other pine and hardwood species
 - ➤ Herbicide applications



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

1. Establishing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwood Forests

- Addressing barriers to scaling-up of planting
 - Scaling- up may include:
 - ✓ Improved coordination between planting stakeholders
 - ✓ Seed collection, processing, and storage
 - ✓ Seedling propagation, improvement, and production
 - ✓ Planting workforce development
 - ✓ Monitoring planting survival and growth





2. Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwood Ecosystems

Eligible strategies to enhance and maintain existing forest habitat include:

For Longleaf Pine

Prescribed Fire:

- Increase prescribed fire capacity, coordination and collaboration through fire teams, prescribed burn associations, etc.
- Provide technical assistance, training and/or other incentives to increase prescribed burning on private lands
 - Forest management plans, burn plans
 - Implementation of Farm Bill and other government funded contracts for prescribed burning
- Identify and address specific barriers or roadblocks to Rx fire implementation





2. Enhancing and Maintaining Existing Longleaf Pine and Bottomland Hardwood Ecosystems (cont.)

Eligible strategies to enhance and maintain existing forest habitat include:

For Longleaf Pine (cont.)

Other silvicultural treatments:

- Thinning, invasive species control, mechanical and/or chemical treatments
- Planting native understory species on public and private lands

For Bottomland Hardwoods

 Invasive species control, pre-commercial thinning, additional underplanting as necessary





3. Silvopasture/Beef Cattle Grazing in Longleaf Pine (NEW)

Projects that provide technical and/or financial assistance to landowners to integrate beef cattle grazing within longleaf pine forests

Projects may include:

- Planting longleaf in pastures
- Integrating cattle into existing longleaf forests*

Preference for projects that balance grazing and stocking rates with wildlife habitat management and maintenance of native understory vegetation





^{*}Funds may not be used to purchase cattle or for building maintenance and construction

4. Expanding and Coordinating Technical Assistance and Outreach

Projects that implement targeted outreach and assistance to measurably increase private landowner and/or producer participation in conservation practices

- Increase outreach and technical assistance delivery success:
 - Capacity ("boots on-the-ground") to provide technical assistance, develop management plans, and assist with implementation of restoration and management treatments
 - ➤ Targeted outreach, including use of innovative methods to engage private landowners or producers and expand on-the-ground restoration and protection activities on private lands
 - Strongly encourage collaboration with NRCS, FWS and other entities that provide financial assistance
- * Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry Conservation Practices https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-basics/natural-resource-concerns/climate/climate-smart-mitigation-activities
- ** USDA definitions for Historically Underserved and Special Emphasis
 https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/getting-assistance/underserved-farmers-ranchers
 https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/conservation-by-state/connecticut/what-are-special-emphasis-groups

USDA NRCS Priorities

- Bolstering enrollment into the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).
- Promoting, designing, and implementing climate-smart agriculture and forestry conservation practices* and reducing the Farm Bill practice contracting and implementation backlog.
- Increase conservation program
 participation and practice adoption among
 USDA defined Historically Underserved
 and Special Emphasis farmers, ranchers,
 and forestland owners** are strongly
 encouraged.

Note: A portion of available NRCS funding is designated for the following states:

- Florida
- Georgia
- Mississippi
- **Texas**

4. Expanding and Coordinating Technical Assistance and Outreach (cont.)

- Advancing new market-oriented and/or incentive programs
 - Stimulate landowner implementation of habitat restoration and management practices
 - ❖ Example: piloting ecosystem service payments to support restoration and/or management practices that improve wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration and/or water quality and/or quantity outcomes.
- Increase participation in third-party forest certification programs
 - Encourage third-party verification of sustainable forest management practices for longleaf pine ecosystem, bottomland hardwood forests, and associated wildlife.





5. Building and Improving Local Implementation Team Capacity



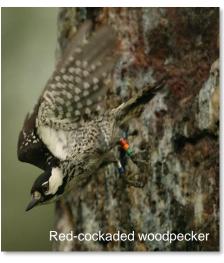
- Strengthen capacity of local implementation teams/partnerships
- Coordinator support is limited to LITs working within a Significant Geographic Area
- Address how investments will lead to measurable conservation outcomes



6. Accelerating Species Recovery

- Limited funding is available to support species-specific restoration and management activities to aid recovery of longleaf ecosystemdependent species.
- Preference will be given to projects that contribute to the species outcomes outlined in the Longleaf Forests and Rivers business plan for red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW), gopher tortoise, Bachman's sparrow, and northern bobwhite
- Projects aiding in the recovery of populations of other forest dependent wildlife species that are indicators of healthy forest ecosystems will also be considered
 - Includes, but not limited to: swallow-tailed kite, red-headed woodpecker, brown-headed nuthatch, eastern indigo snake, wild turkey, and flatwoods salamander (spp.)
- Species response monitoring







7. Conservation Easements and Fee-Simple Acquisitions

- Targeted land conservation projects that protect high quality, existing longleaf pine and/or bottomland hardwood habitat, or key sites targeted for longleaf and/or bottomland hardwood restoration
- Funding may be used for due-diligence costs, such as:
 - ✓ boundary survey
 - ✓ appraisal
 - ✓ environmental report (ex. Phase I)
 - ✓ legal fees
- Funding may not be used for stewardship endowments
- Will consider high leverage projects for acquisition costs on a case-bycase basis – applicants must contact NFWF to discuss prior to submission
- Land conservation should be included as a component of a broader proposal that also includes habitat restoration or management





Program Priorities: Co-Benefits & Community Impact & Engagement

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

Conservation Co-Benefits: Projects that will implement habitat restoration or improvement practices that benefit wildlife
while also sequestering carbon and/or protecting and improving water quantity or quality are encouraged. Note, there is
strong funder interest in tree planting projects.

Note: NFWF intends to calculate the estimated carbon benefits associated with any given project. These calculations will not be used for carbon credits, but rather for narrative and demonstration of the potential carbon value of any project and conservation practice(s) supported through this program.

- Community Impact and Engagement: Projects that incorporate outreach to communities, foster community engagement, and pursue collaborative management leading to measurable conservation benefits are encouraged.
- Projects that specifically seek to engage minority, historically underserved and unserved landowners, as well as minority professionals in the field of forestry and longleaf restoration, are encouraged to review the Longleaf for All Barriers and Recommendations document:



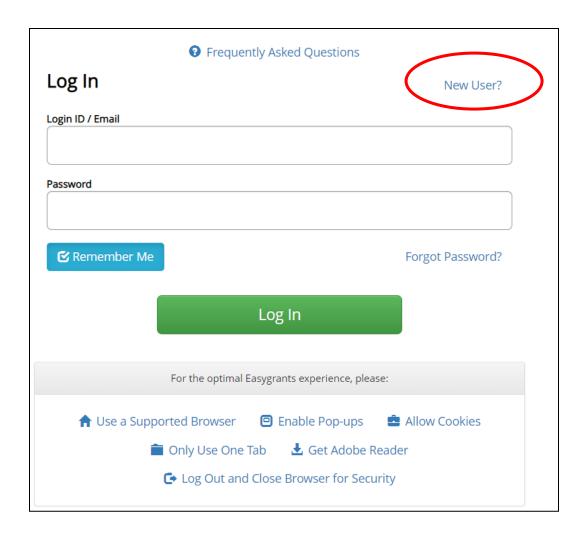
https://americaslongleaf.org/media/lodpan4n/longleaf-for-all_recommendations.pdf

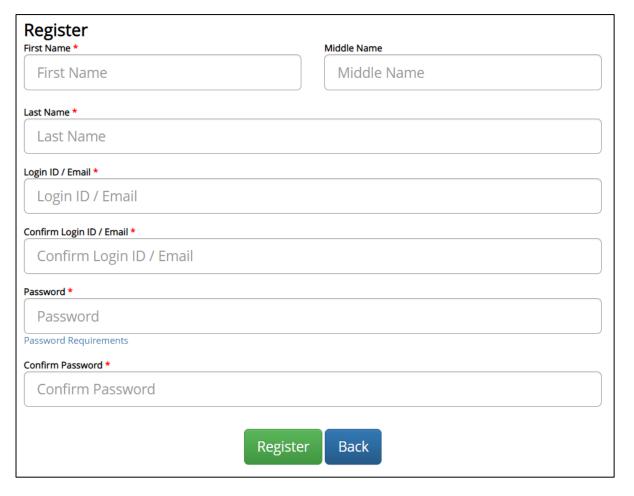
How to Apply in Easygrants





How to Apply in Easygrants – easygrants.nfwf.org





How to Apply in Easygrants

My Tasks My Grants Profile Apply For Funding

Click here to respond to an RFP or to a solicited request

Listed below are the current funding opportunities accepting applications. To view more details on the Funding Opportunity, click Guidelines next to the opportunity.

- . To apply to a Funding Opportunity, select the opportunity and click Continue.
- . To return to the Home page, click Cancel.

If you have been provided an RFP code please click the link at the top, then enter your code. Please note that the code is case sensitive.

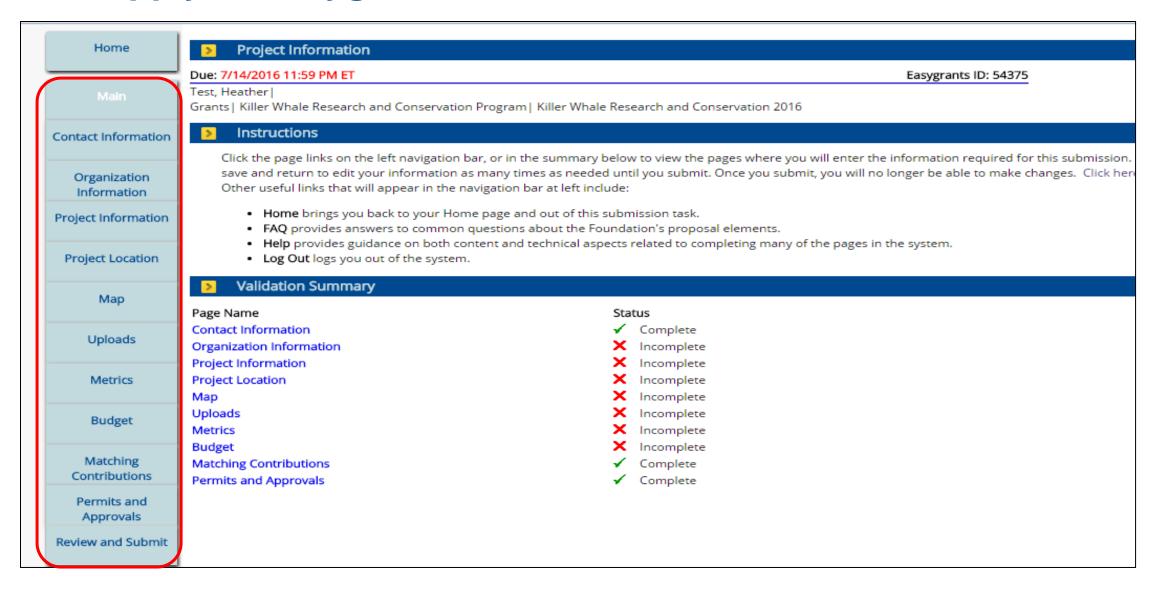
Available Funding Opportunities

Once you are on your Easygrants homepage, click on "Apply for Funding"

Choose the Funding Opportunity you're applying to.



How to Apply in Easygrants



Project Information

Title: Short, descriptive name indicating project purpose. (~100 characters)

Project start and end dates: Start within <u>six months</u> of the award announcement date and end within <u>24-48 months</u> of the start date.

Description: Two sentences about primary project activities, location, outcome/metrics and relevance to conservation. (~500 characters)

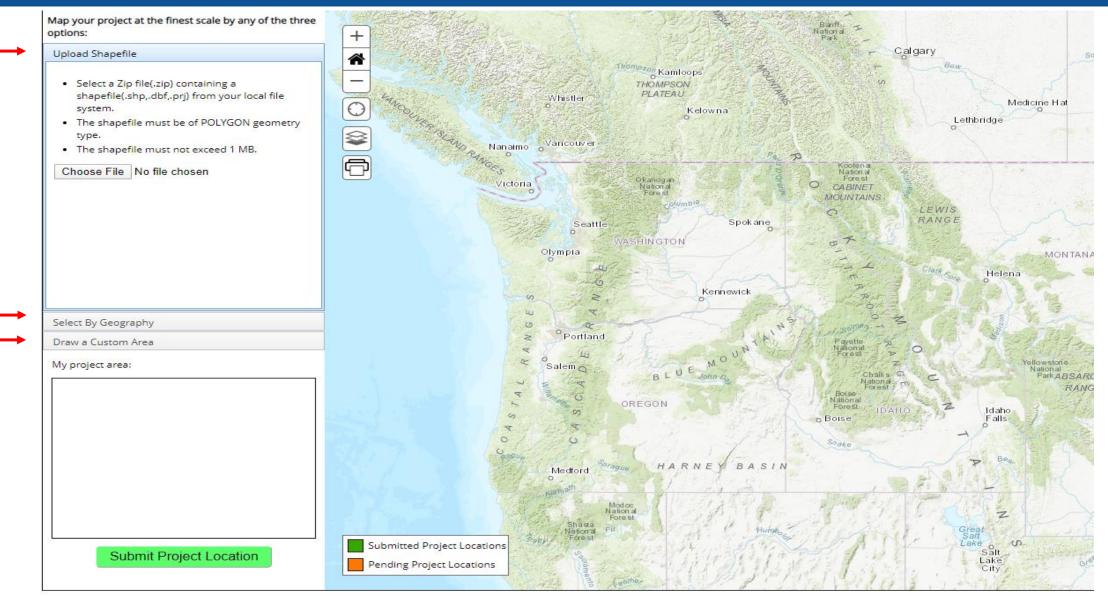
- Clearly state the main activity and the method being used
- Address a specific habitat, location or species benefitted

Abstract: More detailed description including location, major activities, outcome/metrics, and partners. (~1,500 characters)

- State what your organization will do
- Provide context and background information
- Explain how the project outcomes will specifically address a conservation issue



Map





I confirm that this project has been mapped as accurately as possible

Save and Continue

Uploads



DoD Questionnaire

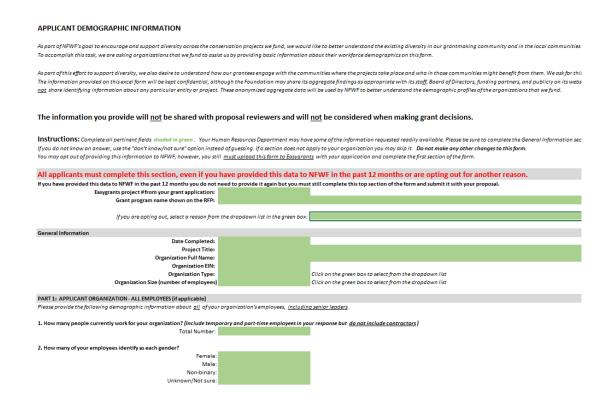
- Required for any projects on public or private lands that are adjacent to or near a military installation (i.e. may directly or indirectly benefit an installation).
- Must be completed and signed by the installation's natural resources staff.
- Questions? Contact NFWF

The full list of required financial uploads for your organization type is available on the NFWF website here:

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

Uploads - Applicant Demographic Information 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.





Narrative

- **Activities:** Elaborate on the primary activities that will be employed through the grant. Explain how these activities are expected to lead to the outcome(s). Describe how these activities relate to established plans (management, conservation, recovery, etc.) and priority conservation needs in the specific project location.
- Threats and/or Opportunities: Describe the threats that this project seeks to address in achieving large-scale conservation of the longleaf pine ecosystem, as well as bottomland hardwoods, if applicable. Highlight the opportunities that this project will create in sustaining restoration and protection efforts in the geographic area in which the project will occur.
- Outcome(s): Elaborate on the outcome(s) summarized previously in the application; discuss what makes this outcome(s) achievable and important.
- Implementation Strategy(ies) and Activities: Detail the strategies and activities that will be implemented to achieve the goals of the project.
- **Tracking Metrics:** Indicate how the project will monitor/assess progress on the metrics selected previously in the application. Please note any challenges or limitations anticipated with tracking the metrics.
- Benefits to Priority Species and Conservation Co-Benefits: Describe how the restoration work proposed will benefit listed, at-risk and/or other wildlife species that are representative of healthy woodland/savanna forest and freshwater habitats.
- **Project Sustainability:** Describe how the project will be maintained to ensure specific ecosystem benefits are achieved and sustained over time.

Most Competitive Narrative Elements:

- Program Goals and Priorities
- Technical Merit
- Partnership
- Transferability
- Communication
- Funding Need
- Conservation Plan and Context
- Monitoring
- Long-termSustainability
- Past Success
- Key Personnel



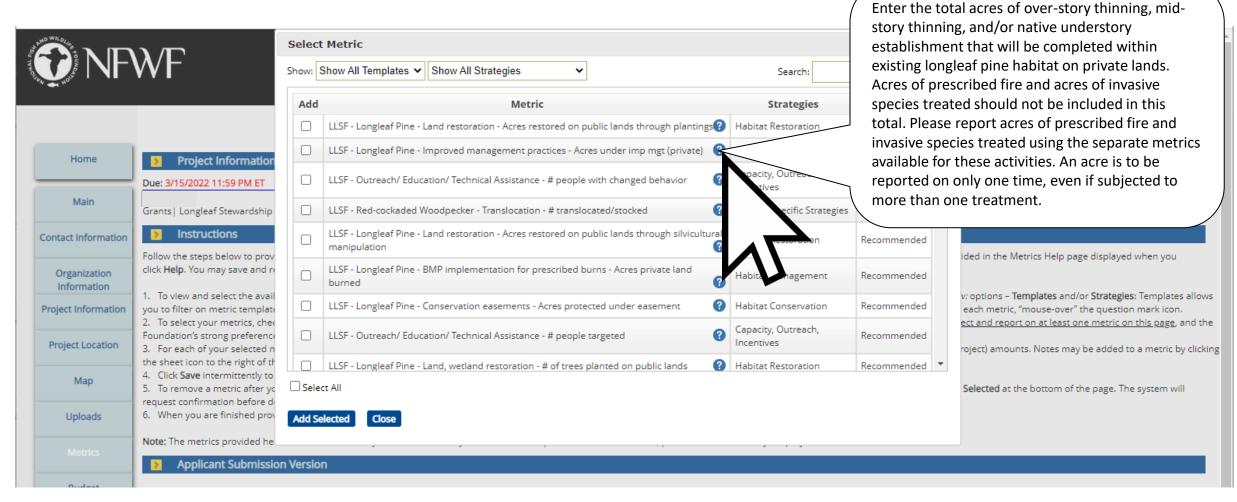
Narrative - Community Impact

Describe the community(ies) where the project will take place, who will benefit from the project, and how they were or will be engaged in project development and implementation. Provide demographic information on the community(ies), including but not limited to age, race and ethnicity, poverty rates.

- Describe community characteristics of the project area and identify any communities impacted.
- Describe outreach and community engagement activities.
- Use demographic data to document (poverty statistics, school lunch data, demographic records to articulate high need or underserved communities).
 - This data can be found using:
 - Census data
 - School District data
 - State data centers
 - EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJSCREEN)
 - other sources
 - Reach out to us if you need help finding this data



Metrics

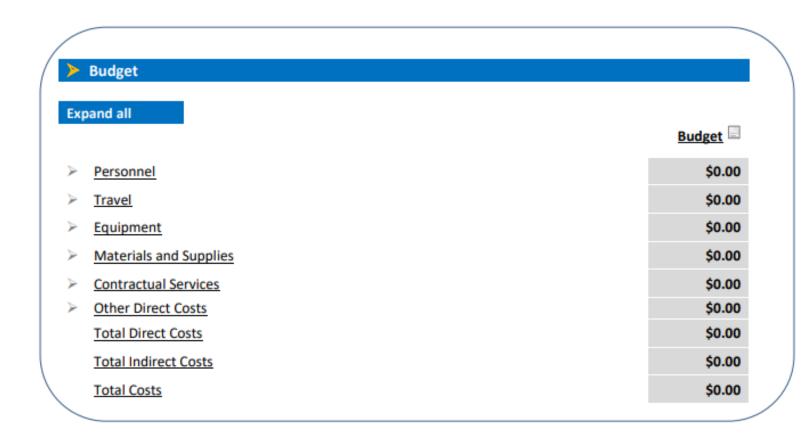


A list of available metrics is included in the request for proposals

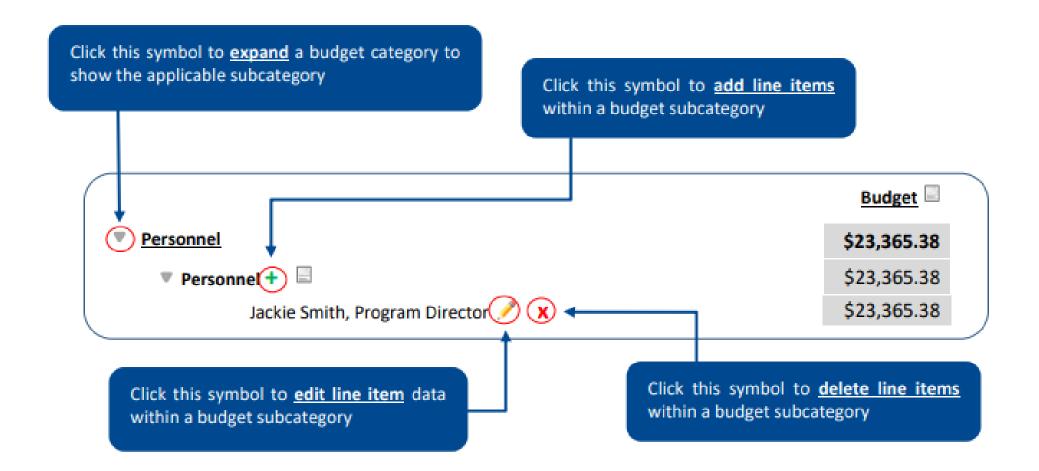


Budget

- If you do not anticipate an expense for a particular category, skip that category- it is not necessary to enter a "0" value in the cost fields.
- Try to anticipate factors that may affect the budget when developing projections and provide an explanation of those factors.
- Matching contributions should not be included in the budget.



Budget



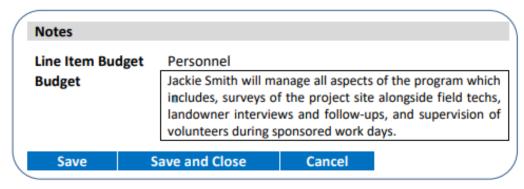
Detailed Budget Instructions: Adding/Editing Narratives

- Narratives are <u>required</u> for all budgeted categories.
 - Explain/justify the estimated costs including the unit cost and quantity requested
 - Explain how the costs associated with each line item supports the implementation of the project as outlined in the proposal
- Narratives should be written in such a way that someone not familiar with the project can conceptually understand the <u>rationale</u>, <u>purpose</u> and <u>calculation</u> of the anticipated costs identified by line item.
- Narratives should be concise and describe line items in 1-3 sentences.

Budgets without narrative descriptions will be returned to the applicant for further details and clarification.



Next, complete the narrative box as shown below:

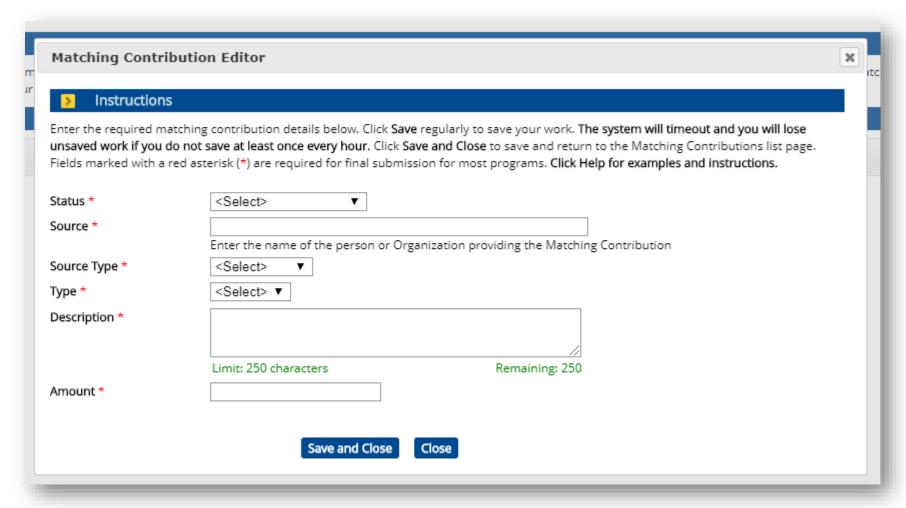


Detailed Budget Instructions

- The final expanded budget will appear as follows, showing the budget details.
- For further questions, contact Program Staff listed on the RFP.

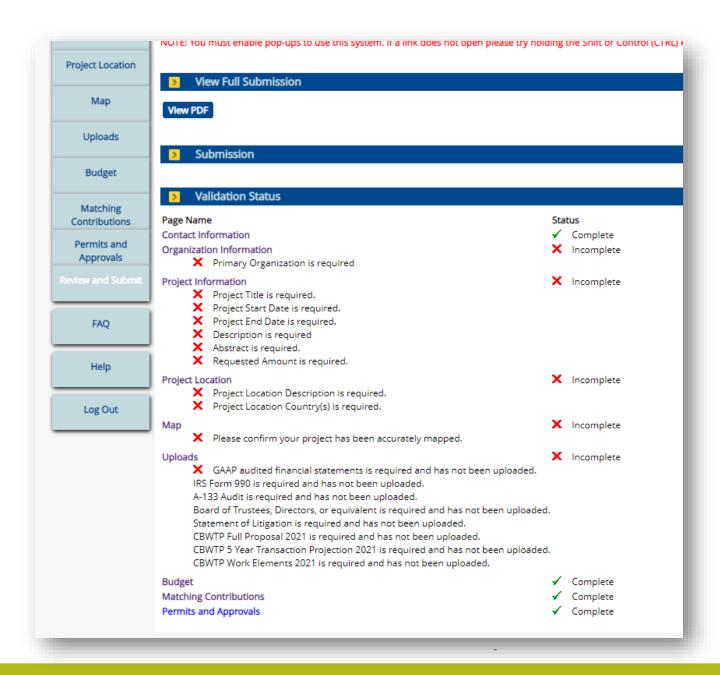
	Budget =
Personnel	\$23,365.38
Personnel	\$23,365.38
Jackie Smith, Program Manager	\$23,365.38
Travel	\$512.00
Domestic Airfare	\$0.00
International Airfare	\$0.00
Train- Per Ticket	\$150.00
Two Round Trip Tickets to Project Site	\$150.00
Rental Car- Per Day	\$0.00
Taxis – Per Trip	\$0.00
Mileage – Per Mile	\$0.00
Gasoline – Per Gallon	\$0.00
Per Diem (M&IE)	\$0.00
Lodging – Per Night	\$362.00
Washington, DC hotel for Kick Off & site visit	\$375.00
Meals (No M&IE) – Per Meal	\$0.00
<u>Equipment</u>	\$20,500.00
Equipment	\$20,500.00
Excavation Machine	\$20,500.00
Materials and Supplies	\$525.00
Materials and Supplies	\$525.00
Native Grass Seed	\$525.00
Contractual Services	\$60,042.00
Contract – Per Agreement	\$27,542.00
M.A.P. Consulting	\$27,542.00
Subaward – Per Agreement	\$32,500.00
ACME International, River Cleanup	\$32,500.00
Other Direct Costs	\$17.00
Other Direct Costs	\$17.00
River cleanup event parking.	\$17.00
Indirect Costs	\$5,841.34
Indirect Costs	\$5,841.34
Salaries & Benefits, 9/30/20, Provisional	\$5,841.34
Total Direct Costs	\$104,961.38

Matching Contributions



Review and Submit

- Make sure to click the blue "Submit" button to submit your proposal.
- If correctly submitted, you will receive a confirmation e-mail and the task will disappear from your homepage.



Application Resources and Timeline



Things to Keep in Mind...

- <u>Please</u> add budget narratives for every budget line item
- NFWF grants are paid out on a reimbursable basis
- Certain funding sources include compliance requirements and may require documentation prior to implementing ground-disturbing activities (ex. National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act)
- If you've never applied for a NFWF grant, we recommend:
 - Setting up an Easygrants login
 - Scheduling a call with NFWF staff to discuss your proposal



Resources

Conservation Plans and Data

NFWF Longleaf Forests and Rivers business plan:

https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2019-12/longleaf-forests-rivers-business-plan.pdf

ALRI Range-Wide Plan for Longleaf Conservation:

https://americaslongleaf.org/resources/range-wide-conservation-plan-for-longleaf-pine-2025-2040/

Longleaf for All Barriers and Recommendations:

https://americaslongleaf.org/media/lodpan4n/longleaf-for-all_recommendations.pdf

Longleaf Pine Sustainability Analysis:

https://www.fnai.org/species-communities/longleaf-lsa

Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Occurrence Geodatabase

https://www.fnai.org/species-communities/southeast-longleaf

Resources

NFWF Application Guidance

RFP Webpage: https://www.nfwf.org/sites/default/files/2023-11/2024-longleaf-rfp.pdf

Required Financial Documents: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/required-financial-docs.aspx

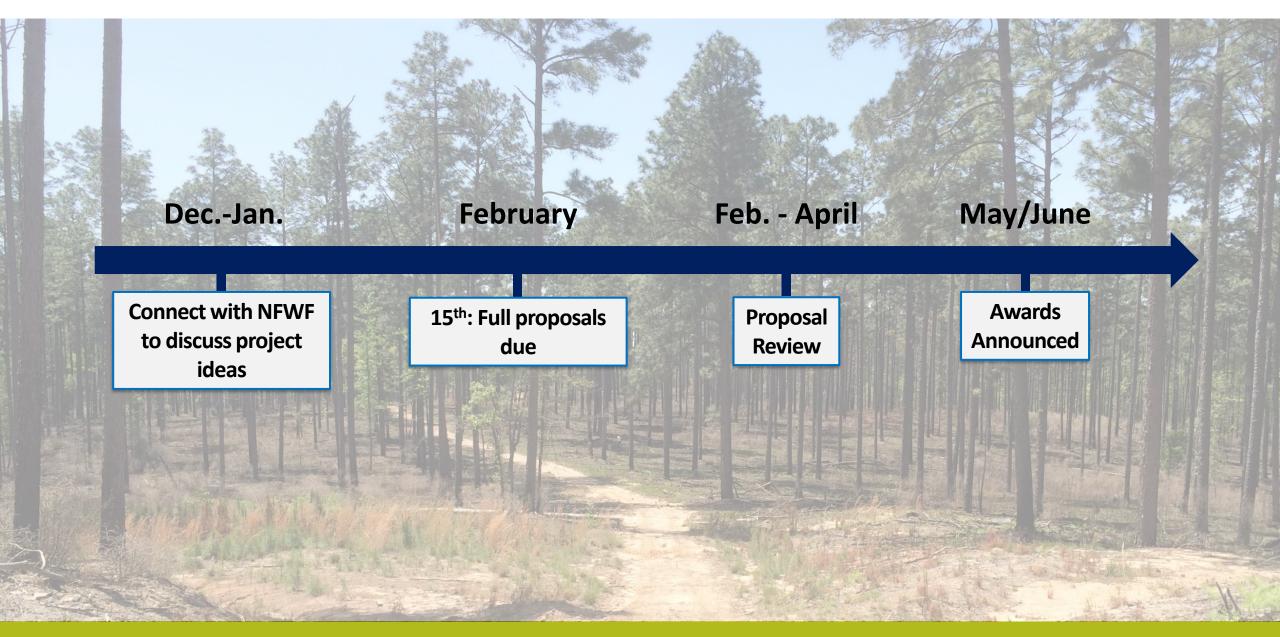
Budget Instructions: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/budget-instructions.aspx

NFWF Indirect Policy: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/indirect-policy.aspx

Mapping Tutorial: http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/mapping-tool.aspx

EPA's EJSCREEN tool: https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen

Program Timeline



QUESTIONS or COMMENTS

To discuss proposal/project ideas:

Jon Scott
Program Director, Southern Forests
jonathan.scott@nfwf.org
(202) 595-2609

Zack Bernstein
Manager, Southern Forests
zachary.bernstein@nfwf.org
(202) 595-2433

For help with navigating Easygrants:

Sarah Vest Coordinator, Regional Programs sarah.vest@nfwf.org (202) 888-1657

For help with Easygrants technical issues:

Email helpdesk at Easygrants@nfwf.org or leave a message at 202-595-2497

