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Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund



Chesapeake Bay Program
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INNOVATIVE NUTRIENT AND SEDIMENT REDUCTION GRANTS

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: **Noon (12:00PM EST), November 5, 2024**

Applicant Webinar: 2:00PM EDT, September 12, 2024 ([Registration link](#))

Proposal Consultations: ([Bookings link](#))

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 (CBP) 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 soliciting proposals under the **Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction (INSR) Grants** program to accelerate the rate and scale of water quality improvements through the voluntary implementation of best management practices that cost-effectively reduce nutrient and sediment pollution to Chesapeake Bay and contribute directly to improved health and function of tributary rivers and streams. For 2025, this includes both **INSR Partnership Grants** supporting the coordinated and collaborative efforts of sustainable, local and regional-scale partnerships working to implement proven water quality improvement practices more cost-effectively, as well as an **INSR Infrastructure Grants** opportunity for projects working to implement critical natural and nature-based watershed restoration infrastructure at scale.

Including funds made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, NFWF estimates awarding \$25-30 million in grants through the INSR program in 2025, contingent on the availability of funding. Major funding for the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund comes from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency’s Chesapeake Bay Program Office, with other important contributions by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Altria Group.



NFWF strongly encourages all prospective INSR applicants to consult with NFWF program staff prior to submitting applications and **no later than October 30, 2024**. These consultations help to ensure eligibility and competitiveness of proposed projects and allow NFWF program staff to provide constructive feedback to strengthen proposed projects, consistent with program priorities. Prospective applicants can schedule consultations with NFWF program staff using [this link](#). Prospective applicants are also encouraged to contact CBSF field liaisons to vet potential project ideas prior to contacting NFWF staff directly (see **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE** below).



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GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

All projects must occur wholly within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Priority consideration may be afforded to projects located within priority subwatersheds where NFWF has identified significant needs and opportunities for nutrient and sediment pollution reduction consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) and jurisdiction's [Watershed Implementation Plans \(WIPs\)](#). Applicants should consult NFWF's online Chesapeake Bay Business Plan [mapping portal](#) for more information on priority areas.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

As the CBP partnership advances the critical phase of implementation efforts under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, INSR program partners are intentionally targeting funding towards the accelerated implementation of established water quality improvement practices¹ necessary to achieve remaining pollution reductions. The desired result of INSR funding is a measurable increase in the rate and/or scale of implementation for priority water quality improvement practices, as identified through the TMDL and associated WIPs.

Effective community engagement is essential in generating long-term support, sustainability, and performance of local watershed restoration efforts. For both **INSR Partnership Grants** and **INSR Infrastructure Grants**, NFWF will prioritize proposals from applicants that have directly and meaningfully engaged local communities and affected stakeholders in the identification, prioritization, selection, and implementation of proposed actions. Examples of direct and meaningful engagement include:

- Co-creating with community members
- Empowering community members with knowledge or decision-making authority
- Ensuring that the project team includes members representing and/or a part of the community
- Incorporating 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, etc.
- 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 [underserved communities](#), may receive priority consideration, especially those that align established interests of local communities and stakeholders with INSR program priorities. NFWF also explicitly encourages applications from or incorporating community-based organizations and other community partners into proposed activities in order to ensure that a broad spectrum of community interests is represented and to support long-term sustainability, and performance of

¹ For the purposes of the INSR program, eligible water quality improvement practices include practices approved by the Chesapeake Bay Program for crediting under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL. For a complete list of approved practices, please visit CBP's [Quick Reference Guide for Best Management Practices \(BMPs\)](#).



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proposed watershed restoration efforts. Furthermore, NFWF welcomes the use of grant funding to assist traditional environmental and conservation organizations and entities to enhance their internal capacity to engage with, mentor, and support diverse community partners as part of their watershed restoration programming.

INSR Partnership Grants

NFWF is specifically soliciting proposals from existing partnerships, collaboratives, and networks (“partnerships”) working to implement proven water quality improvement practices more cost-effectively at scale. Explicit and intentional partnership-based approaches to watershed restoration offer a critical mechanism to achieve and sustain desired water quality improvement efforts through strategic leveraging of capacities, skills, and resources of diverse stakeholders. Such partnerships can take many forms and may often include nonprofit organizations, local governments, public agencies and institutions, and/or businesses, among other entities, with a shared focus that includes watershed restoration and protection.

NFWF will competitively award funding through **INSR Partnership Grants** to partnership projects that achieve both (1) measurable and demonstrable increases in the geographic scale and/or rate of water quality improvements through the implementation of priority practices identified through the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and associated WIPs, and (2) the growth and enhancement of existing partnerships working to accelerate regional-scale watershed restoration efforts:

- 1. Accelerating the Scale and/or Rate of Water Quality Improvements:** All proposals must document how their proposal aligns with relevant state and local WIPs. Proposed **INSR Partnership Grants** projects should address one or more of the following specific strategies with the potential to advance transformational water quality improvement approaches:

- **Managing Upland Agricultural Runoff through Farm-Scale Conservation Systems and Solutions:** Includes efforts to voluntarily reduce water quality impacts of production agriculture, ideally while also advancing related watershed and habitat restoration and conservation goals, and farm management benefits (e.g., financial performance and productivity) of the region’s farms through the strategic implementation of agricultural conservation practices.

Proposals should advance the provision of technical assistance to interested farmers and ranchers to develop management plans, design and implement conservation practices, share their experiences and lessons learned, and increase participation in federal Farm Bill conservation programs, especially Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) and the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), as well as other state and local cost-share and incentive programs.

The most competitive projects will increase participation in Farm Bill programs as one way to advance shared outcomes for water quality improvement and regenerative agriculture principles. Proposals should further aim to increase Farm Bill program participation and conservation practice implementation among



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agricultural producers, especially farmers and ranchers in the [Historically Underserved](#) and [Special Emphasis](#) categories. Applicants proposing to enhance Farm Bill program participation should ensure the project is in alignment with NRCS goals and priorities by conferring with the NRCS State Conservationist and their staff in the state in which your project is located. A list of NRCS contacts can be found [here](#).

The most competitive applications will demonstrate and communicate how they seek to utilize existing federal, state, and local cost-share and incentive programs to finance implementation of water quality improvement practices, with NFWF funding for practice implementation 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 (GSI) Improvements:** Includes efforts to assist local governments, nonprofit organizations, institutional landowners, and community associations to improve urban and suburban stormwater management by implementing green stormwater infrastructure practices that capture, store, filter, and treat stormwater runoff. **INSR Partnership Grants** are intended to advance implementation of GSI improvements across multiple sites in the built environment. Proposals for individual, capital-scale GSI projects should instead apply under the **INSR Infrastructure Grants** opportunity.
- **Restoring Stream Health and Riparian Habitats through Forested Buffers, Floodplain and Wetland Reconnection, and Habitat Improvements:** Includes efforts to restore degraded stream systems and address local water quality impairments, improve local stream health, and, where appropriate through:
 - Establishment and maintenance of riparian forested buffers, livestock exclusion fencing, and associated practices like stream crossing and off-stream watering;
 - Reconnection of stream channels with historic floodplains and adjacent wetlands to promote nutrient removal, attenuate erosive stormflows and increase resiliency of riparian ecosystems; and
 - Restoring streams in both urban and rural landscapes to decrease streambank erosion, increase in-stream nutrient processing, and provide food, cover, and habitat for priority species.
- **Accelerating the Availability and Delivery of Agricultural Technical Assistance:** Includes novel approaches to address known gaps in the availability and delivery of agricultural technical assistance necessary to engage landowners and effectively plan, design, and implement agricultural conservation practices



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necessary meet water quality improvement goals for the agricultural sector. Examples include:

- Novel approaches to training, education, and job certification that can accelerate preparedness and performance of new staff in delivering conservation assistance;
- Working with Land Grant colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), and community and technical colleges, to develop educational programming and workforce development initiatives directly tied to relevant professional qualifications and educational requirements;
- Mentorship, internships, and professional development opportunities for current and emerging professionals to improve their professional capabilities and satisfy requisite technical qualification requirements
- Improvements to existing technical assistance systems, processes, and partnerships to increase efficiency and impact of associated technical assistance activities; and
- Organizational capacity building for conservation districts, state conservation agency staff, certified crop advisors and other key technical assistance providers to strengthen their impact in the delivery of agricultural technical assistance

Effective ongoing maintenance of water quality improvement practices is also an important consideration and eligible activity through the INSR program, both for new practices proposed for future implementation and for existing practices. However, any proposed maintenance activities should represent a relatively small portion of the requested funding (e.g., no more than 10-15%) and project effort, and will be considered most favorably when directed towards maintenance of long-lived structural practices capable of generating long-term load reductions and other ecological benefits.

2. **Cultivating Partnership Growth and Enhancement:** Consistent with program goals for accelerating near-term water quality improvements, the INSR program will focus primarily on efforts to enhance and expand the capacity and impact of **existing** partnerships for water quality restoration and protection. Projects seeking to establish new partnerships are encouraged to apply for funding through the separate Small Watershed Grants program Request for Proposals anticipated in early 2025. Proposals will be asked to describe the current composition and structure, function(s), and established processes of the partnership(s), as well as proposed enhancements in these partnerships that will be achieved through the project activities and how proposed partnership enhancements will enable accelerated implementation and associated water quality improvements.

While specific activities necessary to cultivate more effective and impactful partnerships will vary considerably, NFWF has identified four key areas for investment:



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- **Building and Sustaining Motivation:** Shared strategic planning processes, learning agendas, stakeholder engagement and recruitment initiatives, and leadership development activities can play important roles in building and sustaining inspiration and motivation for collaborative action. These processes and activities help to maintain an evident, transparent, and shared collaborative vision and purpose and further attract diverse stakeholders, organizations, and individuals for a comprehensive and inclusive vision given unique local or regional needs.
- **Establishing and Improving Effective Collaborative Processes:** Clear, consistent, and explicit agreements on internal and external communication protocols, coordinative roles and responsibilities, decision-making processes, and conflict management approaches can help to build trust and contribute to more effective and transparent processes for collaborative conservation action. Ensuring effective and consistent communication and convening of partnerships often plays a central role in clarifying and refining appropriate processes.
- **Enhancing Core Capacities:** Staffing of collaborative coordinators, building of requisite technical expertise, “mapping” of technical and financial resources, and professional development efforts can enhance the collective capacity and development towards greater efficacy of collaboratives to effect on-the-ground outcomes and leverage shared or pooled funding opportunities.
- **Promoting Continuous Evaluation:** Continued self-assessment and evaluation of collaborative process and performance can ensure adaptive management of collaboratives to meet emerging needs and opportunities.

Existing partnerships recently awarded INSR funding are invited to apply for additional funding for their ongoing efforts, particularly where prior efforts and investments have built robust pipelines for immediate expansion of practice implementation and water quality improvement, regardless of the breadth of proposed partnership enhancement activities.

INSR Infrastructure Grants

Among the water quality improvement practices prioritized by EPA, CBP, and watershed jurisdictions through the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and associated WIPs, there are select natural and nature-based practices that provide long-term pollution control, improve aquatic and terrestrial habitat for at-risk species, and enhance climate resilience for human and wildlife communities. Through funding provided by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, NFWF will competitively award funds for projects that specifically accelerate the scale of voluntary implementation for one or more of these watershed restoration infrastructure practices, including:

- Riparian forest buffers, including site preparation, planting, and maintenance, as well as associated livestock exclusion fencing;
- Non-tidal wetland restoration, creation, or enhancement;



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- Floodplain restoration that will improve stream health through reconnection with floodplains and floodplain wetlands;
- Shoreline management; and
- Urban tree planting

While accelerated implementation of these practices should be the primary focus of **INSR Infrastructure Grants** proposals, projects may also utilize program funding for implementation of other, related nature-based structural practices. However, **INSR Infrastructure Grants** will be specifically evaluated on proposed implementation outcomes for the practices listed above.

INSR Infrastructure Grants do not require the application of partnership-based approaches to advance implementation as outlined elsewhere in this RFP. However, NFWF encourages applicants to consider and utilize partnership-based activities and investments necessary to scale practice implementation. Proposals will be evaluated primarily on the scale of implementation outcomes and associated water quality improvements. **INSR Infrastructure Grants** also do not require non-federal matching funds, though projects that can leverage other funding sources to achieve greater implementation outcomes will receive priority consideration. See **FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH** below for more information.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge proposed activities and outcomes from individual proposals and grant awards, and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided across projects and entities, NFWF has provided a list of metrics in *Easygrants* for grantees to choose from for reporting. For the INSR program, awardees will be required to report both project-level metrics via *Easygrants* and more detailed site and practice-level data via FieldDoc.org (see below for additional details). NFWF recognizes that applicants may utilize tools and methods other than FieldDoc to estimate proposed nutrient and sediment load reductions. In these cases, FieldDoc must still be used for modeled metrics, but “custom” load metrics can be added to the associated FieldDoc project. Metrics numbers in *Easygrants* must match modeled metrics in FieldDoc.

For a complete list of applicable metrics, see **Appendix A**. Applicants should select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project as it is in the applicant’s best interest to utilize the most meaningful, well-aligned metrics with the project objectives and outcomes. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Jake Reilly at jake.reilly@nfwf.org to discuss acceptable alternatives.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

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



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Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- ✓ 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 telecommunications equipment or services produced by Huawei Technologies Company or ZTE Corporation (or any subsidiary or affiliate of such entities) as a substantial or essential component, or as critical technology of any system. Refer to Public Law 115-232, section 889 for additional information.
- ✗ NFWF funds and matching contributions may not be used to support political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, litigation, terrorist activities or Foreign Corrupt Practices Act violations.
- ✗ NFWF funds may not be used to support ongoing efforts to comply with legal requirements, including permit conditions, mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts, for example in achieving municipal separate storm sewer system requirements through the implementation of green stormwater infrastructure.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

NFWF will award up to \$30 million in grants through the INSR program in 2025, including up to \$15 million each for **INSR Partnership Grants** and **INSR Infrastructure Grants**. Awards will range from \$500,000 to \$2 million each, for an estimated 20-40 individual grant awards. **INSR Partnership Grants** require non-federal matching contributions equal to the grant request. Non-federal match is encouraged but not required for **INSR Infrastructure Grants**. All 2025 INSR grants must be completed within three years of grant award. All proposed projects should expect to begin on or after April 1, 2025, in order to facilitate necessary grant contracting and quality assurance activities. Generally speaking, match expended on or after January 1, 2025 and before the proposed project end date is eligible to count against programmatic match requirements.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

Spatial Data - Project spatial data submitted to NFWF's online mapping tool accurately represent the location(s) of conservation activity(ies) at the time of proposal submission. Successful projects will be required to submit improved spatial data for each conservation activity within the period of performance as necessary.



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Criteria #1 – Conservation Outcomes

- Project clearly and demonstrably increases the rate and/or scale of implementation of priority water quality improvement practices identified through the Chesapeake Bay TMDL, jurisdictional WIPs, and local pollution reduction plans. Where possible and appropriate, the proposal contributes measurably to other, non-water quality outcomes outlined in the [2014 Chesapeake Watershed Agreement](#).
- **For INSR Partnership Grants:** Project results in meaningful growth and/or enhancement of existing partnerships working to improve water quality and outlines specific efforts to build and sustain motivation, efficient processes, core capacities, and ongoing evaluative efforts.
- **For INSR Infrastructure Grants:** Project results in meaningful increase in the rate or scale of implementation of identified watershed restoration infrastructure practices.
- Project incorporates plans and approaches to implement, verify and sustain pollution load reductions and plan for their continuance beyond the timeframe of the grant.
- Project directly and meaningfully engages local communities in the identification, prioritization, selection, and implementation of proposed actions.

Criteria #2 – Partnership and Community Impact

- The applicant organization partners and engages collaboratively with diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement the proposed project. This ensures long-term sustainability and success of the project, integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed restoration actions.
- Non-traditional partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project.
- Community characteristics of the project area are described, any communities impacted are identified, outreach and community engagement activities are described, as well as how those will be monitored and measured.
- Proposal uses demographic data to support descriptions and includes letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

Criteria #3 – 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.



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- Budget clearly indicates the degree of partnership in conducting the proposed work.
- Proposed funding request is well leveraged by the partners and other contributors through cash-, in-kind, and other match.

Criteria #4 – 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 April 1, 2025 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

Nutrient and Sediment Load Reductions – All INSR proposals must demonstrate reductions of nutrient and sediment pollution to local rivers and streams, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. To assist applicants in generating credible and consistent nutrient and sediment load reduction estimates, NFWF has partnered with The Commons to develop [FieldDoc](#), a 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 and applicants should utilize the FieldDoc platform to estimate water quality improvements from proposed implementation efforts. When setting up proposed projects in FieldDoc, 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 their grant project. For technical support on FieldDoc utilization during proposal development, please contact The Commons at support@fielddoc.org

Applicant Demographic Information – In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic demographic information on applicants and their organizations via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers and will not be considered when making grant decisions. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.



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Budget – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable.

Environmental Services – NFWF funds projects in pursuit of its mission to sustain, restore and enhance the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations. NFWF recognizes that some benefits from projects may be of value with regards to credits on an environmental services market (such as a carbon credit market). NFWF does not participate in, facilitate, or manage an environmental services market nor does NFWF assert any claim on such credits.

Intellectual Property – Intellectual property created using NFWF awards may be copyrighted or otherwise legally protected by award recipients. NFWF may reserve the right to use, publish, and copy materials created under awards, including posting such material on NFWF’s website and featuring it in publications. NFWF may use project metrics and spatial data from awards to estimate societal benefits that result and to report these results to funding partners. These may include but are not limited to: habitat and species response, species connectivity, water quality, water quantity, risk of detrimental events (e.g., wildfire, floods), carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions), environmental justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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.

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.

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



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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
- 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, will be delayed until quality assurance compliance requirements are complete. Plan to submit the draft QAPP to NFWF *within the first* three months of contracting 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 Tori Sullens (tori.sullens@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 for revised QAPP templates and recorded training and educational webinars.

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>).



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Applicant Webinar ([Registration](#))

2:00PM EDT, Thursday, September 12, 2024

FieldDoc Webinar ([Registration](#))

2:00 PM EDT, Tuesday, September 24, 2024

Full Proposal Due Date

12:00PM EST, Tuesday, November 5, 2024

Awards Announced

March 2025 (anticipated)

HOW TO APPLY

All full proposal materials must be submitted online through National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Easygrants system.

1. Go to easygrants.nfwf.org to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information. Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.
2. Once on your homepage, click the “Apply for Funding” button and select this RFP’s “Funding Opportunity” from the list of options.
3. Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time for completion and submission.

APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A PDF version of this RFP can be downloaded in the Related Content Section.

A [Tip Sheet](#) is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be downloaded in the Related Content Section. Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website’s “Applicant Information” page (<http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx>).

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact Jake Reilly (jake.reilly@nfwf.org) or Tori Sullens (tori.sullens@nfwf.org).

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:

| Liaison Contact | Email | Phone | Sector Expertise |
|--------------------------------------|--|----------------|---|
| Kristen Saacke Blunk | kristen@headwaters-llc.org | (814) 360-9766 | • All Sectors |
| Sarah Clark | sarah@icl.org | (240) 472-1772 | • Partnerships and Collaborative Leadership |
| Kristen Hughes Evans | kristen@susches.org | (804) 554-3403 | • Agricultural Conservation |



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| Liz Feinberg | liz.feinberg63@gmail.com | (610) 212-2345 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Sectors |
| David Hirschman | dave@hirschmanwater.com | (434) 409-0993 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater/Urban Sector |
| Katie Ombalski | katie@woodswaters.com | (814) 574-7281 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agricultural Conservation • Habitat Restoration |

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

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: 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

Applicable Metrics

Chesapeake Bay Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants Program

| Program Priority | Recommended Metric* | Metric Description/Instructions |
|---|--|--|
| Managing Upland Agricultural and Urban Runoff (Required) | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs N/P/S avoided (annually) | 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 Summary in the "Uploads" section. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs | Enter the total number of acres under agricultural or non-urban BMPs to reduce nutrient or sediment loading. 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. These totals should include and aggregate proposed outcomes for specific, individual practices reported through other metrics (e.g. cover crops, conservation tillage, nutrient management, managed grazing). If individual acres are expected to receive multiple BMPs, they should only be counted once for this metric. |
| Managing Upland Agricultural and Urban Runoff (Select all that apply) | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with cover crops | Enter the number of cropland acres with cover crop practices. Please describe the cover crop practices in the NOTES section. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with conservation tillage | Enter the number of cropland acres with conservation tillage practices. Please describe conservation tillage practices in the NOTES section. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with enhanced nutrient management | 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. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with managed grazing | 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. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs | Enter total drainage area treated by stormwater BMPs to the appropriate performance standard (e.g. state stormwater manual). 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. |
| | CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Volume stormwater prevented | Enter the number of gallons of stormwater runoff treated through stormwater BMPs (e.g., runoff treatment volume). |
| | CBSF - Green Infrastructure - number of trees planted | Enter the number of trees planted for urban stormwater reduction. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), # of acres, and average # of trees per acre. |
| | Restoring Stream Health and Riparian Habitats through Forested Buffers, Floodplain and Wetland Reconnection, and Habitat Improvements (Select all that apply) | CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored |
| CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed | | 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. In the NOTES section, specify the width of any associated vegetated riparian buffer and expected areal outcomes (e.g., acres). |



NFWF



NFWF

Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund



Chesapeake Bay Program
Science. Restoration. Partnership.

| Program Priority | Recommended Metric* | Metric Description/Instructions |
|--|---|--|
| Restoring Stream Health and Riparian Habitats through Forested Buffers, Floodplain and Wetland Reconnection, and Habitat Improvements (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. In the NOTES, indicate % of vegetation on the pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%) and the dominant vegetation being restored (Broadleaf, Conifer, Redwood, Shrub, Grass, Marsh, Wet meadow, Swamp). |
| | 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) and indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%). |

* *Easygrants* metrics should be consistent with data entered into and/or derived from FieldDoc.org.