NATIONAL COASTAL RESILIENCE FUND
INCREASING THE NATION'S NATURAL DEFENSES

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NFWF is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. We continuously monitor legal and regulatory developments to ensure our policies, procedures, and operations align with current federal directives. We encourage all applicants to do the same.

The ability and extent to which NFWF is able to make awards is contingent upon receipt of funds from federal agencies and/or other funding partners. Final funding decisions will be made based on the applications received and the level and timing of funding received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information.

Pre-Proposal Webinar:	Tuesday, April 1, 2025 (See recording here)
Pre-Proposal Due Date:	**Tuesday, May 6, 2025 by 11:59 PM ET**
Full Proposal Invitations:	Mid-June 2025
Full Proposal Webinar:	Tuesday, June 24, 2025 (See recording here)
Full Proposal *by Invite Only* Due Date:	**Thursday, July 17, 2025 by 11:59 PM ET**
Award Announced:	Late November – Early December 2025

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is pleased to announce the 2025 National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) Request for Proposals (RFP)[1]. NFWF will make investments in planning, design, and implementation of nature-based solutions to enhance protection for coastal communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural hazards while improving habitats for fish and wildlife.

NCRF is a national program focused on reducing risks to coastal communities. Projects must be located within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and U.S. territories and Tribal lands. Habitats such as coastal marshes and forests, floodplains, rivers and lakes, dune and beach systems, and oyster and coral reefs can provide communities with enhanced protection and buffering from

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[1] As authorized under section 906(c) of division O of Public Law 114–113 (Title IX).

the growing impacts of natural coastal hazards, including rising sea- and lake- levels, changing flood patterns, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and other environmental stressors.

This program is primarily funded by, and coordinated with, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Limited funding may be available in partnership with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) to support projects advancing nature-based solutions *in the vicinity of* but not within the boundaries of DOD installations and ranges that decrease risks from coastal hazards to military assets and communities (for more information see the Grant Award Information section). Additional funding is provided by other partners, including Occidental and Shell USA, Inc. NFWF will also seek to leverage public or private funds that align with the goals of the NCRF projects to extend the impact of this program.

GRANT AWARD INFORMATION

Average awards: There is no maximum limit on the award amounts that can be requested for individual grants. The amount requested for an individual project should reflect the scope and needs of the project proposed. NFWF expects that average NCRF awards for projects involving Community Capacity Building and Planning, Site Assessment and Preliminary Design, and Final Design and Permitting to be in the range of $100,000 to $1,000,000. For Restoration Implementation projects, NFWF expects the average NCRF awards to be in the range of $1,000,000 to $10,000,000. It is expected that the award amounts will vary significantly based on the scope of the project, the work proposed, and regional variation.

U.S. Department of Defense funding: The U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration (REPI) Program may contribute additional funds to support coastal hazard risk reduction projects through the NCRF that benefit military installation resilience. Such projects must meet all the requirements of this RFP and propose a project *in the vicinity of* a DOD installation or range.[2] DOD funds *cannot* be used to support projects directly on military lands (i.e., "inside the fence line" of the DOD installation or range). In the proposal narrative, applicants will be asked to provide additional information to clearly describe the coastal hazards that threaten the military mission, the nature-based solution proposed to address those threats, and how the project will maintain and improve military resilience and directly benefit defense mission capabilities[3] of the DOD installation or range the project is associated with. **For the pre-proposal,** applicants should provide the contact information (name, organization, email, and phone number) of the installation personnel who are part of the project team and support the proposed project efforts. **For the full proposal**, applicants will be required to upload an endorsement letter from the lead Military Service, such as the installation commanding officer, to affirm support for the proposed activities. This endorsement letter also signifies that the lead Military Service accepts all necessary environmental compliance oversight responsibilities, including those under the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act, and should reflect this understanding in the letter. If there are multiple Military Services

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[2] For a map of DOD military installations and ranges see: https://repi.osd.mil/map
[3] DOD defines military installation resilience as "the capability of a military installation to avoid, prepare for, minimize the effect of, adapt to, and recover from weather-related events or from anticipated or unanticipated change in environmental conditions that do, or have the potential to adversely affect the military installation or essential transportation, logistical, or other necessary resources outside of the military installation that are necessary in order to maintain, improve, or rapidly reestablish mission assurance and mission essential functions." (Defined in Section 101(f)(8) of Title 10, U.S. Code)

benefitting from the project, applicants should work with all Military Service representatives involved to determine one lead Military Service and identify the lead Military Service in their application. Applicants who have questions regarding the DOD funding may contact the REPI Office at osd.repi@mail.mil.

Non-federal match: Non-federal match[4] is ***not*** required but is encouraged to demonstrate broad support for the project, especially for larger scale and/or higher budgeted projects. Match can be any combination of in cash and/or in-kind goods and services (for example external/partner services, volunteers or grantee in-kind, etc.) and there is no priority given to higher cash percentages. The ratio of matching contributions offered to grant funding requested is only one criterion considered during the review process. Full information about how to document non-federal match, including a description of acceptable sources of matching funds, is available at http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/faqs.aspx. Applicants who have questions regarding non-federal match beyond this guidance, may contact the NCRF program team (NCRF@nfwf.org).

Federal leverage: Applicants are encouraged to describe federal partner contributions in the match section of their application. These contributions will not count toward any non-federal match described above but will help in understanding the amount of resources and partners contributing to the overall project and will be considered as part of evaluating the broader support for the project. *If applicants are applying for DOD funding, prior REPI Program funding does **not** count as federal leverage.*

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The NCRF is a national program focused on reducing risks to coastal communities. Projects must be located within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and U.S. territories and Tribal lands. For the purpose of this funding opportunity, the eligible project area is defined as all coastal Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 8 watersheds that drain to the sea and any adjacent HUC 8 watersheds that are particularly low-lying or tidally influenced ("coastal areas");[5] a map of the NCRF geographic footprint can be found here.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

All projects under this program must demonstrate benefits to both coastal communities and habitats. The NCRF supports projects that will result in the creation and/or restoration of natural systems to decrease community risks from coastal hazards and improve habitats for fish and wildlife species.

Award decisions will be made based on regional circumstances and needs, but all proposals must address the following priorities:

- **Nature-Based Solutions**: Projects must focus on identifying or implementing nature-based solutions,[6] such as restoring coastal marshes, reconnecting floodplains, rebuilding dunes, installing living shorelines, or other natural buffers (hereinafter "nature-based solutions").

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[4] If funds originated as a federal appropriation, they are unlikely to be considered as non-federal match.
[5] The NCRF footprint map can be found here
https://www.arcgis.com/apps/View/index.html?appid=1dd16e528fd844b49d765b51402feb8c&amp%3Bextent
[6] The term "nature-based solutions" is defined as natural, engineered and hybrid ("green-gray") approaches that strategically protect, restore, sustainably manage or mimic ecosystems to conserve or restore ecosystem functions and natural processes with the goal of reducing community exposure to natural hazards and enhancing habitats for

- **Community Risk Reduction Benefits**: Projects must show clear benefits in terms of reducing current and projected threats to communities from natural coastal hazards, including, but not limited to sea-level rise, lake-level change, coastal erosion, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and impacts from other chronic or episodic factors (e.g., nuisance flooding during high tides, permafrost melt) (hereinafter collectively referred to as "coastal hazards").

- **Fish and Wildlife Benefit**: Projects must help to improve habitats for fish and wildlife species. Proposals should be as specific as possible in identifying the anticipated benefits to habitats and species that will result from the project proposed.

- **Community Impact and Engagement**: Projects will be prioritized that provide direct risk reduction and job creation benefits to communities and that directly engage[7] community members in project planning, design, and implementation. NFWF encourages projects that are informed by local knowledge, that promote co-stewardship between a wide range of project partners, that protect or enhance habitat for (subsistence) species, and/or that contribute to food security. Project partnerships should ensure sustainability and long-term maintenance of projects. NFWF also encourages projects that are community-led, incorporate outreach to communities, foster community engagement and decision-making, and pursue collaborative management for measurable risk reduction and conservation benefits.

- **Transferability and Sustainability**: NFWF encourages projects that seek to re-shape our thinking on what constitutes coastal community risk reduction as experienced across different landscapes. NFWF seeks to advance solutions that are scalable, transferable to other areas, can catalyze further risk reduction, and can safeguard or create economic benefits for the impacted communities. Projects will be prioritized if they include specific plans for transferring and scaling the approaches developed through the project to ensure broader impact and integration into other government plans, programs, or policies in the community or region.

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fish and wildlife. If a proposal includes significant gray-infrastructure elements (e.g., tide gates, culverts, breakwaters) as part of the project design, the proposal should describe how the gray infrastructure elements will help to conserve or restore ecosystem function or natural processes, enhance community resilience and habitat restoration outcomes, *or* will be funded with matching contributions.

[7] Examples of activities that are considered "direct community engagement" include:

- Community partners are part of or leading the project team receiving funding through the grant;
- Community has opportunities to provide direct input into the project design and implementation (e.g., community design charrettes, resident surveys that directly inform project design and execution, community advisory committee with decision-making authority);
- Community is directly engaged through specific active engagement strategies (e.g., workshops, classroom activities, field trips, and volunteer activities (virtual or in-person);
- The project creates jobs in the target community or includes jobs training as a direct outcome of the project;
- Project provides community with direct decision-making authority (e.g., community voting directly informs decisions on implementation);
- For projects requesting DOD funding, installation personnel are part of the project team and are engaged throughout the project development and execution.

Project Categories
To implement these program priorities, NFWF funds activities in four categories designed to advance a project through NFWF's "project pipeline" from planning to implementation: 1) Community Capacity Building and Planning; 2) Site Assessment and Preliminary Design; 3) Final Design and Permitting; 4) Restoration Implementation.

| 1. Community Capacity Building & Planning | 2. Site Assessment & Preliminary Design | 3. Final Design & Permitting | 4. Restoration Implementation |

Except for *Community Capacity Building and Planning* projects, proposals should demonstrate the process by which the proposed project has been prioritized to address specific community threats and outline previous work that has been completed that makes the project ready for funding under the proposed pipeline category.

Applicants must apply under the *ONE* category that best describes the purpose and activities that will be carried out during the project. NFWF will NOT fund projects across combined categories (i.e., proposals seeking funding for both restoration project design and construction). While projects that have been previously funded under earlier pipeline categories are not guaranteed funding and each proposal will be reevaluated for competitiveness at subsequent stages of the pipeline, NFWF prioritizes proposals that seek to advance previously funded NCRF projects to the next category in the project pipeline (i.e., "pipeline projects")[8].

Community Capacity Building and Planning: Many coastal communities are in the early phases of understanding and identifying threats from coastal hazards and proposed projects in this category may look very different depending on the goals and needs of the community and stakeholders involved. Capacity may take the form of building local expertise, hiring or supporting personnel necessary to implement the project activities and functions needed to ensure the success and transferability of the project, providing training, engaging community members, supporting planning or broader environmental or economic data collection, among other activities.

Projects under this category should support the development of a plan(s) that prioritizes risk reduction strategies and projects, and identify specific efforts that, when implemented, will meet community goals and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. Projects should demonstrate community leadership and/or engagement and integrate community input in decision-making to ensure the specific needs and priorities of the community are addressed, help communities identify and overcome implementation challenges, and support development of risk reduction strategies or projects that can be advanced in future years, all with a focus on nature-based solutions. Proposed projects should result, at a minimum, in communities that are well-prepared to begin site assessment and design for specific strategies or nature-based projects that enable them to seek future funding under this program or other federal, state, or local programs.

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[8] NFWF also reserves the ability to review and fund pipeline projects, which have already been evaluated for consistency with the NCRF program priorities and criteria listed in the RFP, under an expedited schedule (e.g., through early invitations to submit full proposals).

Proposals under this category should clearly describe the coastal community(ies) and the geography(ies) for which projects will be considered; how communities will be centered and engaged; the factors, criteria and methodology(ies) that will be considered in prioritizing risk reduction projects and strategies; and the specific nature-based solutions likely to be considered in the planning efforts. Planning efforts and deliverables should be carefully scaled and scoped to ensure that specific nature-based projects are identified through the planning process and can be advanced to the next stages of the project pipeline in future phases of work. Proposals focused on a smaller geographic area should consider opportunities to partner with other communities or stakeholders to increase the scale of the project's impact and to ensure broad utility and transferability of the resulting plan(s).

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with a wide range of partners and sectors (e.g., residents and community leaders; community groups; local, federal, state, regional, territorial, or Tribal governments or affiliates; emergency management, natural resource, fish and wildlife, transportation and/or economic development, planning and public work agencies/officials). Projects that engage and involve key partners, community members, and other stakeholders throughout the planning process to ensure broad support and utility of the resulting coastal hazard risk reduction plan will generally be more competitive, with some exceptions (e.g., remote communities). Proposals should explain how these partners and stakeholders will be meaningfully involved in the planning and prioritization process, how the proposed funding will support their involvement, and how the plan and the stakeholders involved will help advance future implementation. Projects that are designed to inform decision-making and future project implementation at the local, state, regional, territorial, or Tribal level(s) will be more competitive.

Site Assessment and Preliminary Design: Many projects require preliminary design and feasibility assessments to lay the groundwork for successful implementation to meet risk reduction targets for communities and natural resources. Projects under this category have been previously identified and prioritized in planning efforts, where more work is needed to consider and determine appropriate site(s) and project(s) for achieving coastal hazard risk reduction goals and maximizing fish and wildlife benefits. At the end of the grant period, projects under this category are expected to be ready for the next phase, final design and permitting.

Most *Site Assessment and Preliminary Design* projects are expected to result in a preliminary design that allows the community to make a "go/no-go" decision on the project (this is generally between a 30-60% design depending on the needs of the community). Eligible activities under this category include, but are not limited to, the evaluation of potential project sites and project alternatives, continued and expanded stakeholder engagement efforts, assessing potential risk reduction benefits of project alternatives, gathering baseline data, conducting cost-benefit analyses, preliminary engagement with permitting agencies, and preparing preliminary project designs.

Proposals should clearly describe the planning and prioritization activities that have led to selection of the proposed project and the risk reduction goals of the project. This can include relevant coastal hazard risk reduction or other plans for the project area, prioritization tools, cost-benefit analysis, etc. Proposals should describe and provide specific examples of the types of nature-based solutions they anticipate designing. If a project will develop several conceptual designs and advance a small portion of those to preliminary designs, the proposal should be clear that the focus of preliminary designs to be developed will be nature-based solutions that have clear community and fish and wildlife benefits. Proposals that

describe key partners, community members, and stakeholders and how they will be engaged will be more competitive.

While *Site Assessment and Preliminary Design* projects are not required to secure permits for restoration activities during the period of performance of a NFWF grant, proposals should ensure affected landowners and community members are supportive and indicate plans for preliminary conversations with relevant permitting officials by the end of the grant period. Proposals will be more competitive if they demonstrate an understanding of the regulatory context and include a description of how funded activities will help advance permitting of nature-based project(s) in future phases of work.

Final Design and Permitting: Applicants under this category are requesting funding to support final design and permitting for on-the-ground projects. Such funding may be used to advance projects from conceptual or preliminary designs into final designs and engineering plans, continue and expand stakeholder engagement efforts, prepare detailed cost estimates, and engage permitting officials at various levels of government, along with other related tasks to position projects for implementation. Proposals can include some preliminary design, site assessment, and baseline monitoring provided that the project can be completed within 3 years of the start of the grant and result in a 90-100% design for the project.

Projects are not expected to achieve immediate environmental or conservation outcomes by the end of the grant period. However, proposals should demonstrate that the project, when implemented, will address needs prioritized through a formal coastal hazard risk reduction or other planning process(es) and meet specific goals related to community and ecosystem enhancements. Proposals for larger, more comprehensive project(s) are likely to be more competitive. However, proposals for smaller-scale projects can also be competitive if the efforts will increase the transferability of the approach in the region and will contribute to broader scale implementation across the community, region, or watershed. Proposals that describe plans to increase the transferability of the approach and to engage key partners, community members, and stakeholders will be more competitive. **For proposals applying for DOD funding**, applicants should clearly explain any support needed by the lead Military Service to assist with completing all necessary permitting, environmental analysis, and cultural and historic property consultations. If needed, applicants can include permitting and other environmental planning costs as part of the proposal's funding request.

Final Design and Permitting projects are not required to obtain permits by the end of the grant period, but projects should result in demonstrated readiness to move a designed project to the restoration phase, including showing that the resulting project design will meet requirements for environmental review and permitting. Recognizing that permitting requirements may vary among states, counties, tribes, territories, etc., proposals should demonstrate an understanding of the relevant permitting considerations to be addressed and should specifically describe planned activities to engage permitting officials at various levels of government early on and throughout the design process and how those activities will prepare the project for submission of permitting applications.

Restoration Implementation: Applicants under this category are requesting funds to construct a restoration project and projects **MUST** include a year of post-construction monitoring to assess the outcomes of the project. Eligible projects include ecosystem restoration projects and the adaptation or construction of nature-based solutions, where tangible community coastal hazard risk reduction and conservation outcomes can be measured. *Restoration Implementation* projects should advance both community goals (e.g., reduced risks from coastal hazards, protection of critical assets, people and

property), and conservation goals (e.g., creation or restoration of habitat to quality suitable for target species). Proposals must clearly describe how the project will protect and reduce risks of built and natural systems, help mitigate the impacts of future storms and other coastal hazards on key, local community assets (such as military facilities, emergency services, infrastructure, and centers of economic activity), and the expected benefits to habitat and fish and wildlife. Projects should result in measurable and observable improvements to these systems. Projects should complete pre-construction monitoring (baseline), post construction monitoring, and at least one-year post construction monitoring to assess the outcomes of the project. Projects that conduct monitoring *only* are not eligible.

Projects proposed under this category are expected to have already been prioritized through planning process(es) that address coastal risk reduction needs. Projects that are "implementation-ready" will be prioritized for funding, meaning that final design and engineering plans are 90% completed and permits necessary for implementation have been completed or will be complete within six months of award announcements. Projects that do not have 90% designs or submitted permit applications should consider applying under the *Final Design and Permitting* category instead. Restoration projects are expected to begin construction within one year of award announcements. Projects that have completed final designs and secured all necessary permits and approvals will receive higher priority for funding.

Proposals for larger, more comprehensive projects that are designed for greater impact are likely to be more competitive; however, where appropriate, 'demonstration' or 'pilot'-scale projects will be considered. If a 'demonstration' or 'pilot' project is proposed, please be clear about the need for this scale of project and any efforts that will be taken to increase the transferability of the project to broader, larger-scale implementation of nature-based solutions. Applicants can increase the competitiveness of smaller-scale projects in more urbanized areas or areas with site constraints by describing the broad benefits that will be delivered by the project, including risk reduction benefits, the number of people that are anticipated to benefit from the project, and by including specific project elements designed to ensure that the approaches developed through the project can be scaled or replicated in other parts of the community or watershed.

At the full proposal stage, proposals should clearly describe the status of relevant permitting and environmental planning requirements (e.g., National Environmental Policy Act, the Endangered Species Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and state and local requirements) for the project and include a comprehensive project schedule describing all activities from the start of the award. The project schedule should include when the project will commence restoration activities and demonstrate that the project will be able to complete construction and post-construction monitoring by no later than December 2029. Proposals should clearly state the month and year in which the project's final design was completed, describe all permits needed to begin construction of the project, describe the status of all state and federal environmental planning requirements, and provide information on the status of permitting (e.g., date when permit applications were submitted or date when permits were issued). **For proposals applying for DOD funding**, applicants should clearly explain any support needed by the lead Military Service to assist with completing all necessary permitting, environmental analysis, and cultural and historic property consultations. Applicants should also include a cost breakdown by project activity to enable an evaluation of cost effectiveness. In cases where funding is requested for a component of work that is part of a larger design or effort, applicants should clearly identify what portion of the design will be implemented with the requested NCRF funding. At the full proposal stage, applications must upload all relevant engineering and design documentation and complete specific questions related to needed permits and permit status.

Projects may be conducted on federal,[9] Tribal, state or local government lands, or private lands where there is a demonstrated commitment from the landowner to support implementation of the project and long-term protection of the lands for conservation purposes. Projects that consider the larger landscape and involve multiple landowners and/or partners and jurisdictions, as appropriate, are encouraged. Where invited to submit a full proposal, projects proposed on private land MUST submit a letter of support for the project from landowner(s).

Restoration Implementation projects should be able to be constructed within three years of the start of the grant and **MUST** include at least one year of post-construction monitoring. For many habitat types NFWF has developed monitoring metrics and protocols that set the minimum monitoring standard that will need to be incorporated into full proposals. These minimum metrics and protocol standards are located here.

Site Visit Requirements: Over the years, NCRF has received a high volume of applications. To better evaluate proposals, site visits (virtual or in-person) may be requested at the full proposal stage. If required for your project, NCRF program staff will reach out after full proposals have been submitted to schedule a site visit. *Restoration Implementation* projects are likely to receive a site visit request, especially for higher budget or more complex projects.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, NCRF has a list of metrics in Easygrants for full proposal applicants to choose from for future reporting. Applicants should select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible project metrics for this program are shown in the table below). Applicants should select at least 1-2 metrics from the *Community Benefit and Outreach* section (required for all project categories) AND at least 1-2 relevant metrics from the proposed project category section. For *Restoration Implementation* metrics, select both acres and miles/feet where indicated. For example, for Living Shoreline, and Beach and/or Dune Restoration, applicants should provide metrics in miles AND in acres. It is possible to select multiple habitats for your project activities, e.g. marsh and floodplain, where applicable. If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact the NCRF program team (NCRF@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

In addition to the project metrics listed below, NFWF has developed additional ecological and economic indicators to better assess the projects' risk reduction impacts. NFWF will request applicants that are invited to full proposal for *Restoration Implementation* to include specific ecological monitoring metrics and protocols into their projects and NFWF may contract a third party to collect data across several funded projects post-award. All awardees under this program may be engaged during their period of performance or in the years following to support these monitoring and evaluation efforts.

All **Project Categories – Community Benefit and Outreach**

Project Activity	*Recommended Metric*	*Additional Guidance*

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[9] Federal lands do NOT include land within a DOD installation's boundary.

Community Outreach and Engagement	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Volunteer participation - # of volunteer hours	Enter the number of volunteer hours in this project.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance – # people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities	Enter the number of people meaningfully engaged in the process of the proposed project. Please indicate the groups targeted by outreach efforts and how they will be engaged.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives - Volunteer participation - # of volunteer events	Enter the number of volunteer events completed.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Building institutional capacity - # of organizations contributing to the initiative's conservation goals	Enter the number of organizations contributing to the initiative's conservation goals.

Community Capacity Building and Planning

Project Activity	*Recommended Metric*	*Additional Guidance*
Community Outreach and Engagement	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance – # people targeted through email and newsletters	Enter the total number of people targeted through email and newsletters.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance – # social media posts	Enter the number of social media posts. In the NOTES platforms and size of target audience.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance- # workshops, webinars, meetings	Enter the number of workshops, webinars, and meetings held to address project activity.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Management or Governance Planning– # plans developed with input from multiple stakeholders	Enter the number of plans developed that had input from multiple stakeholders.
Tool development for decision-making	Tool development for decision-making – # tools used by decision-makers	Enter number of tools developed to be used by decision-makers

Government Agency Participation and Engagement	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance - # of governmental entities participating	Enter the number of municipalities, local, state, and federal government entities participating in the project. In the NOTES, add the names of these institutions and their primary role.

Site Assessment and Preliminary Design

Project Activity	*Recommended Metric*	*Additional Guidance*
Site Assessment and Design Plans Development	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives - Volunteer participation - # volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers engaged in assessment of sites and preliminary design. In the NOTES, please include the percent design to be completed at the conclusion of the project.
	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance- # workshops, webinars, meetings	Enter the number of workshops, webinars, and meetings that will be held to address project activity.
Government Agency Participation and Engagement	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance - # of governmental entities participating	Enter the number of municipalities, local, state, and federal government entities participating in the project. In the NOTES, add the names of these institutions and their primary role.
Planning, Research, Monitoring	Research – # studies completed whose findings are used to adapt management/ inform mgmt. decisions	Enter the number of studies/plans created that will be used to inform adaptive management decisions
	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Research – # sites assessed	Enter the number of sites assessed.
	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # acres restored	Enter the number of acres for which planning, design, or permitting activities are being conducted under this project based on project footprint. Select ACRES AND MILES.
	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # miles restored	Enter the number of miles for which planning, design, or permitting activities are being conducted under this project based on the project footprint Select ACRES AND MILES.

Final Design and Permitting

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Engineering and Design Plans Developed	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # E&D plans developed	Enter the number of Engineering and Design plans developed to construction ready (90-100%). Generally, there will be one plan per project to be constructed.
	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # acres restored	Enter the number of acres for which planning, design, or permitting activities are being conducted under this project. Indicate if the purpose is for engineering and design plans in the notes. Select ACRES AND MILES.
	Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # miles restored	Enter the number of miles for which planning, design, or permitting activities are being conducted under this project. Select ACRES AND MILES.
	Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvement - # of barriers assessed and/or with design plans	Enter the # of in-stream barriers with assessments or engineering/design plans completed in this grant.
Government Agency Participation and Engagement	Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/ Technical Assistance - # of governmental entities participating	Enter the number of municipalities, local, state, and federal government entities participating in the project. In the NOTES, add the names of these institutions and their primary role.

Restoration Implementation

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Planning, Research, Monitoring	Monitoring – # monitoring programs established or underway	Enter the number of monitoring programs established or underway
Habitat Conservation	Habitat Conservation – Site protection - # of acres with enhanced protection	Use this metric for site protection. Enter the number of acres with enhanced site protection.
	Habitat Conservation – Site protection - # of acres with protection from a Nature-based Solution	Enter the number of acres that are protected by nature-based solutions. Use this metric for acres conserved/protected by the project but

		outside the project footprint. (i.e. existing marsh landward of a living shoreline).
	Habitat Conservation – Project footprint - Acreage of project footprint	Enter the total number of acres in the project footprint Only count an acre once, even if multiple activities or treatments will occur on that acre during the project.
	Habitat Conservation – Land restoration - Acres restored on Tribal lands	Enter # acres of habitat restored. In the NOTES, specify landcover prior to restoration (barren, cropland, grass, shrub) and post-restoration (broadleaf, conifer, redwood, grassland, shrubland, marsh, wet meadow, tidal marsh, swamp, seagrass, kelp forest).
	Habitat Restoration – Land, wetland restoration - # of native plants outplanted	Enter the # of native plants outplanted. In the NOTES, list the species planted.
	Habitat Restoration – Removal of invasives - Acres restored	Enter # acres of invasives removed. In the NOTES specify: vegetation removed, desired dominant vegetation, average frequency (in years) of future treatment, and whether removed vegetation will be left on site to decompose (Yes/No).
Floodplain Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Floodplain Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter the number of floodplain acres restored. 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 (e.g., Marsh, Swamp).
Beach and/or Dune Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Beach habitat quality improvements – Miles Restored	Enter the number of miles of beach or dune restored. In the NOTES, indicate restoration action(s) taken (e.g., beach

		enhancement, dune vegetation planting).
		Select BOTH miles and acres.
	Habitat Restoration – Beach habitat quality improvements – Acres Restored	Enter the number of acres of beach or dune restored.
		In the NOTES, indicate restoration action(s) taken (e.g., beach enhancement, dune vegetation planting).
		Select BOTH miles and acres.
Living Shoreline	Habitat Restoration – Living Shorelines – Linear Feet of Living Shoreline Restored	Enter the linear feet of living shoreline created.
		In the NOTES, indicate the living shoreline substrate used (e.g., rock sills, oyster castles, reef balls). If the living shoreline includes oyster reef creation, capture the linear feet of rock, sills, reef balls here AND oyster reefs in the oyster reef metric.
		Select BOTH linear feet and acres.
	Habitat Restoration – Erosion control – Acres of Living Shoreline Restored	Enter the acres of living shoreline restored.
		Select BOTH linear feet and acres

Marsh Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – Acres of Marsh Restored	Enter the total number of marsh acres restored. Do NOT include acres of marsh outside the scope of the work proposed in your application (i.e., marsh landward of a living shoreline proposal). Instead use acres protected metric. In the NOTES, specify type of marsh (estuarine, tidal saltwater, tidal freshwater, inland marsh). Specify landcover prior to restoration (Marsh, Tidal marsh), indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%), and the proposed restoration method(s) to be used (e.g., invasive species removal, thin-layer dredge deposition).
	Habitat Restoration – Tidal Marsh Restoration – Acres Restores	Enter the acres of tidal marsh restored.
	Habitat Restoration - Erosion Control - Acres Restored	Enter total acres of eroding marsh restored. In the NOTES, indicate the type of marsh (estuarine, tidal saltwater, tidal freshwater, inland marsh) and restoration method(s) used (e.g., invasive species removal, thin-layer dredge deposition). If it is a marsh that is not eroding, please use the "Marsh restoration" metric.
Oyster Reef Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter the number of acres of oyster reef created/restored. Select BOTH acres and miles.
	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – Linear Feet of Oyster Reef Restored	Enter the linear feet of acres of oyster reef created/restored. Select BOTH acres and miles.
Coral Reef Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter the number of acres of coral reef created/restored.

	Habitat Restoration – Marine habitat restoration - # individuals propagated for coral restoration	Enter the number of coral outplants or related individuals propagated. Metric meant to capture coral stock raised specifically for restoration efforts. In the NOTES, breakdown the value by species/genotypes that the project will make available and the relevance of these species/genotypes to restoration for the area/jurisdiction.
	Habitat Restoration – Marine habitat restoration - # of coral outplants	Enter the number of coral outplants that have 're-seeded' the reef. This metric is intended to capture coral propagules planted within the period of the grant. In the NOTES, breakdown the value by species/genotypes planted.
	Species-specific Strategies – Captive breeding/ rearing/ rehab facilities - Capacity of facility	Indicate the capacity of the facility in terms of animals treated/bred. This metric is intended to capture new and enhanced capacity for coral nurseries (terrestrial or in water). Estimate the increase in capacity based on the space for the grow-out size and type of coral you plan to raise/shelter and reference these parameters in the NOTES field.
	Habitat Management – BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs	Enter the number of acres with Best Management Practices (BMPs) for sediment and nutrient reduction. In the NOTES section, indicate the type of BMP(s) and the method of calculating reduction.
	Habitat Management – BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs. sediment avoided (annually)	Enter the number of pounds of sediment discharge (lbs./year) reduced. In the metric NOTES section, specify the reef tract that this metric is supporting and describe the method used to calculate the reduction.
	Habitat Management – BMP implementation for nutrient or	Enter the number of pounds of nutrient discharge (lbs./year) reduced. In the metric NOTES section, specify the reef tract that this metric is

	sediment reduction – Lbs. nutrients avoided (annual)	supporting and describe the method used to calculate the reduction.
Submerged Aquatic Habitat	Habitat Restoration – Seagrass Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter the number of acres of seagrass or kelp restored/created.
Riparian Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Riparian Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter # of riparian acres restored, including riparian buffers. In NOTES section, specify landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland), dominant vegetation being planted (see list), and average width of riparian buffer. Select BOTH acres and miles.
	Habitat Restoration – Riparian Restoration – Miles Restored	Enter # of riparian miles restored, including riparian buffers. In NOTES section, specify landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland), dominant vegetation being planted (see list), and average width of riparian buffer. Select BOTH acres and miles.
Mangrove Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – # acres of mangrove restored	Enter the # of acres of mangroves restored. In the NOTES, enter the species of mangrove being planted. If multiple species are being planted, list the number of each species to be planted.
Coastal Forest Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – # acres of coastal forest restored	Enter the # of acres of coastal forest restored. In the NOTES, enter the species of trees being planted.
In-stream Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Instream Restoration – Miles Restored	Enter the number of miles of instream habitat restored.
Aquatic Connectivity Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements - # of fish passage barriers rectified	Enter the number of fish passage barriers rectified. In the NOTES, indicate the number of remaining fish passage barriers in the system.

	Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements – miles of stream opened	Enter the number of stream miles opened. In the NOTES, enter total # of miles opened to improve aquatic organism passage. Only include the miles of main stem and smaller tributaries connected until the next barrier upstream and downstream.
Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure	Habitat Management – Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure - Volume (gallons) of stormwater storage added	Enter the volume (in gallons) of stormwater storage added through nature-based stormwater infrastructure improvements. Include projection of gallons for stormwater captured or infiltrated annually.
	Habitat Management – Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure - Square feet of impervious surface removed	Enter the square footage of impervious surface removed or retrofitted
	Habitat Management – Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure - Square feet of nature-based Stormwater infrastructure installed	Enter the square footage of nature-based Stormwater infrastructure installed. In the NOTES, describe the stormwater infrastructure methods to be used (e.g., wetland restoration, bioswales)
	Habitat Management – Nature-based Stormwater Infrastructure - # of trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted (include species, tree size, planting density and anticipated total acres of tree planting)

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities
- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state and territorial government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, educational institutions, or commercial (for-profit) organizations.
    - Tribal governments include all Native American Tribal governments (both federally recognized tribes and those tribes that are not federally recognized).
    - 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.
- As this program will award grants of federal financial assistance funds, applicants must be able to comply with the OMB guidance in subparts A through F of 2 CFR 200 (OMB Uniform Guidance).

- Ineligible applicants include federal agencies or employees of federal agencies, foreign organizations, foreign public entities, and unincorporated individuals.

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 alignment with the priorities of the program and the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Conservation Outcomes	Budget	Technical
• Alignment with program goals and priorities • Quantifiable performance metrics • Appropriate monitoring of activities and outcomes • Partnership & community engagement • Project long-term sustainability	• Allowable and reasonable costs • Matching contributions • Cost-effectiveness	• Technically sound and feasible • Logical and achievable work plan and timeline • Engages technical experts • Accurate spatial data • Sound compliance approach (permits, NEPA, QAQC) • Past grantee success • Transferability

Community Impact and Engagement – The applicant organization partners and engages collaboratively with local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement the proposed project. Projects should be developed through community input and co-design processes that incorporate local and regional knowledge and community experience. Engagement is designed to ensure long-term sustainability and success of the project, integration into 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. The proposal identifies how stakeholders have been meaningfully engaged leading up to the stage of the project being proposed and how key partners and stakeholders will be involved in the project moving forward. The proposal describes the community characteristics of the project area, identifies and describes any communities impacted by the project, and specifically describes outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured.

Partnership – Applicants demonstrate strong partnerships with Federal, state, and local agencies, existing regional partnerships (e.g. Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, local installation representatives), as well as communities and/or non-profit organizations necessary to implement the project. Project is supported by a strong local partnership, including key state or local agencies with responsibility for developing and implementing coastal resilience or risk reduction plans, and that can leverage additional funds through matching contributions and sustain the work after the life of the grant. If invited to submit a full proposal, applicants are encouraged to include letters of support and commitment from partners, collaborators and other stakeholders key to the successful completion of the project to demonstrate that implementation of the project is feasible and a community priority.

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. 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 under this program.

Cost-Effectiveness – Applicant demonstrates that the proposed approach is economically the most efficient way to meet project objectives. Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of effective direct/indirect costs across all categories in the proposed budget according to the type, size, and duration of project and project objectives. Project budgets will be compared to similar projects to ensure proposed costs across all budget categories are reasonable for the activities being performed and the outcomes proposed.

Transferability and Communication – Project includes a meaningful plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and to integrate project approaches into government plans, programs, and policies to ensure transferability and to catalyze future investment in the project or similar approaches in the community, region, or state. Proposal includes a plan for communicating information about the project to key stakeholder audiences, including local, state, regional, Tribal, and federal decision-makers and other partners and stakeholders, as appropriate and needed to ensure transferability.

Long-term Sustainability and Adaptive Management – Project reflects planning, design, and long-term management approaches that consider the future conditions of a site, including effects of changing environmental conditions and sea level rise, and ensure that the project can adapt to those changing conditions. Project design either does not require maintenance or will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. Narrative includes how partnerships and/or future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring, maintenance and/or adaptive management activities, as well as risk associated with not securing future funding. For planning and design projects, narrative includes information on likely sources of funding for eventual project implementation.

Scale or Comprehensiveness – The project is at a large enough geographic scale to have an impact on reducing risks from coastal hazards. The project is comprehensive and designed for a greater impact – versus a 'demonstration' or 'pilot'-scale project. If a project is not itself large or comprehensive, then it proposes the advancement of a piece of a larger, more comprehensive effort underway. Proposals for smaller scale projects can increase their competitiveness by demonstrating the transferability of the pilot technique(s) and by including a plan in the scope of work for scaling or replicating the approach in ways that will increase the broader impact of the project in the community, region, or state, including through other plans, programs, policies, or future investments.

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.

OTHER

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 and will consider applications for funding essential equipment on a case-by-case basis. 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.
- All projects must take place within the United States or territories or their respective waterways.

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 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), and carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions).

Matching Contributions – Matching Contributions consist of non-federal 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 range 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. Requests for monthly advances will not be considered.

Compliance Requirements – Selected projects may be subject to state and Federal environmental planning requirements including, but not limited to, the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act, and the 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. **For proposals applying for DOD funding**, applicants should clearly explain any support needed by the lead Military Service to assist with completing all necessary compliance requirements. **For the pre-proposal**, applicants should provide the contact information (name, organization, email, and phone number) of the installation personnel who are part of the project team and support the proposed project efforts. **For the full proposal**, the required project endorsement letter from the lead Military Service will include acknowledgment of the applicant's compliance assistance request. This endorsement letter signifies that the lead Military Service accepts all necessary environmental compliance oversight responsibilities, including, but not limited to, those under the National Environmental Policy Act, the National Historic Preservation Act, and the Endangered Species Act, and should be reflected in the endorsement letter.

Quality Assurance – If a project involves significant monitoring, data collection, or data use, grantees must comply with NOAA's Data Sharing Policy for all environmental data. Applicants should budget time and resources to complete these tasks.

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 U.S. 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. NFWF strongly encourages applicants to conduct conversations with all relevant permitting agencies.

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Easygrants system.

1. Go to https://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 later 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 here.

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's Applicant Information page.

Have an idea for a proposal and want to talk about it with our staff? **Sign up for a 15 minute proposal lab to ensure your idea aligns with NCRF's goals here**.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact one of the following individuals based on your question:

General questions about this RFP or requirements of the program and questions about the online application and submission process	NCRF Program Team – NCRF@nfwf.org

If you have a question about a project idea in…	Please contact…
Northeastern states (ME, MA, NH, CT, RI, NY)	John Wright – John.Wright@nfwf.org
Mid-Atlantic states (NJ, PA, DE, MD, VA)	Tori Sullens – Tori.Sullens@nfwf.org
Southeastern and Gulf States (NC to TX)	Will Singleton – Will.Singleton@nfwf.org
California	Femke Freiberg – Femke.Freiberg@nfwf.org
Washington and Oregon	Alexander Mahmoud – Alexander.Mahmoud@nfwf.org
Alaska	Jana Doi – Jana.Doi@nfwf.org
Great Lakes	Aislinn Gauchay – Aislinn.Gauchay@nfwf.org
Hawaii, Caribbean and Pacific territories	Michelle Pico – Michelle.Pico@nfwf.org

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 you are applying to, and a description of the issue.