



# Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund

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## PARTNERS

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- AstraZeneca
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

## ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) works with partners to foster sustainable and impactful conservation solutions so that people and nature thrive together. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF has grown to become the nation's largest conservation foundation. Since its founding, NFWF has funded more than 23,300 projects that have generated a total conservation impact of \$11.3 billion.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

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Red knots in Cape May, New Jersey

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a 2025 round of funding for Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF) projects, with additional funds provided by AstraZeneca and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. Thirty new or continuing conservation and restoration grants totaling \$12.5 million were awarded. The 30 awards announced leveraged \$16.8 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of \$29.3 million.

DWCF supports projects that conserve and restore natural areas, corridors and waterways on both public and private lands to benefit native migratory and resident wildlife, fish and plants, while also enhancing the quality of life and economic vitality of communities within the Delaware River watershed. These grants address priorities in NFWF's Delaware River Watershed Business Plan. The fund was launched in 2018 to bring together various stakeholders to deliver restoration and conservation efforts throughout the Delaware River Watershed to strategically improve fish and wildlife habitat, grow partner capacity, build networks, and improve project efficiency and focus at a basin-wide scale.

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Delaware Water Gap National Recreational Area, New Jersey

**DELAWARE****Developing a Master Management Plan for the Milford Neck Preserve (DE)**

Grantee: Delaware Wild Lands

Grant Amount:..... \$498,900  
 Matching Funds:..... \$498,900  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$997,800

Identify and prioritize opportunities for habitat restoration on the Milford Neck Preserve in Kent County, Delaware, resulting in a master management plan to be used by land managers for future restoration projects. Project will benefit threatened and endangered species, including migratory shorebirds, saltmarsh sparrow and horseshoe crabs.

**Evaluating Project Success in the Wilmington Pollinator Corridor (DE)**

Grantee: Delaware Nature Society

Grant Amount:..... \$263,400  
 Matching Funds:..... \$266,700  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$530,100

Evaluate success at previously planted pollinator gardens in Wilmington, Delaware, to determine best practices for creating and enhancing pollinator habitat. Project will monitor established gardens, improve sites as needed, and create a best-practices guide tailored for conservation professionals to spread knowledge about pollinator habitat improvements to the greater watershed.

**Expanding Pollinator Habitat Restoration in the Red Clay Consolidated School District (DE)**

Grantee: Red Clay Consolidated School District

Grant Amount:..... \$238,100  
 Matching Funds:..... \$247,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$485,100

Install pollinator and rain gardens to improve wildlife habitat and water quality at schools in the Red Clay Consolidated School District in New Castle County, Delaware. Project will restore more than 13,000 square feet of pollinator habitat and provide meaningful outdoor learning opportunities for students in partnership with at least eight schools.

**NEW JERSEY****Advancing Tidal Marsh Restoration Planning in Mannington Meadows (NJ)**

Grantee: Partnership for the Delaware Estuary

Grant Amount:..... \$197,900  
 Matching Funds:..... \$187,200  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$385,100

Advance tidal marsh restoration planning within Mannington Meadows, New Jersey, to restore the health and ecosystem services of fresh and brackish tidal marsh, benefiting numerous tidal marsh dependent species, such as American shad and American black duck. Project will develop a monitoring plan through preliminary data collection and result in conceptual restoration designs.

**Advancing Voluntary Land Protection of Migratory Bird Habitat in Southern New Jersey**

Grantee: Ducks Unlimited

Grant Amount:..... \$157,400  
 Matching Funds:..... \$45,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$202,400

Develop a regional conservation strategy and conduct targeted outreach efforts to advance voluntary land protection of migratory bird habitat along the Delaware Bay in southern New Jersey. Project will increase knowledge of land protection programs in the area and increase enrollment in available programs, resulting in protection of priority habitat.

**Ecological Restoration and Floodwater Remediation at Lambertville Nature Trail (NJ)**

Grantee: Sourland Conservancy

Grant Amount:..... \$95,300  
 Matching Funds:..... \$104,100  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$199,400

Restore degraded upland forest along 16.5 acres of the Lambertville Nature Trail, which has been impacted by ash decline and beech leaf disease, through the planting of native woody and herbaceous species, the managing of invasive plants and the protection of regrowth from deer browse. Project will restore degraded riparian and upland habitat, reduce flooding and improve water quality.

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### **Ecological Restoration and Wildlife Habitat Improvements at Swede Run Fields (NJ)**

Grantee: Moorestown Township

Grant Amount:..... \$243,700  
 Matching Funds:..... \$243,700  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$487,400

Eradicate invasive species and establish native plant communities within the wetlands, riparian forest and upland meadow buffers of Swedes Run Creek in Moorestown Township, New Jersey. Project will restore native habitat, support ecological function for wildlife, improve water quality and enhance public access on the site.

### **Fish Passage Barrier Assessment in the Cooper River (NJ)**

Grantee: Academy of Natural Sciences of Drexel University

Grant Amount:..... \$238,300  
 Matching Funds:..... \$238,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$476,600

Assess three fish passage barriers and monitor for the presence of migratory alosine species, such as shad, herring and alewives, to support restoration planning efforts in the lower Cooper River in southern New Jersey. Project will conduct surveys and produce a four-year monitoring dataset on alosines in the Cooper River, providing crucial data to inform species management and guide future implementation efforts.

### **Improving Nature-based Stormwater Solutions and Pollinator Habitat in Salem County (NJ)**

Grantee: South Jersey Land & Water Trust

Grant Amount:..... \$238,900  
 Matching Funds:..... \$240,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$479,400

Partner with local municipalities to improve water quality and expand pollinator habitat through nature-based stormwater solutions and pollinator garden installations in Salem County, New Jersey. Project will install five rain gardens, plant two bioretention basins and convert 30 acres of former farmland to a pollinator meadow, reducing polluted stormwater runoff and addressing wildlife habitat needs in southern New Jersey.

### **Improving Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat through Nature-based Stormwater Solutions (NJ)**

Grantee: Sussex County Municipal Utilities Authority-Wallkill River Watershed Management Group

Grant Amount:..... \$428,500  
 Matching Funds:..... \$473,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$901,500

Implement nature-based stormwater solutions in partnership with community associations to improve water quality and support fish and wildlife habitat creation in the Paulins Kill watershed of New Jersey. Project will reduce nonpoint-source pollution by planting 1,000 trees and treating 1 acre with stormwater best management practices, preventing over 1 million gallons of stormwater runoff from entering the system annually.

### **Restoring Horseshoe Crab and Shorebird Habitat at the Kimbles and Bay Cove Beach Complex (NJ)**

Grantee: American Littoral Society

Grant Amount:..... \$1,760,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$1,760,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$3,520,000

Restore 1 mile of critical beach habitat for horseshoe crabs and shorebirds at the Kimbles and Bay Cove Beach Complex in the New Jersey portion of Delaware Bay. Project will place 49,000 tons of sand to stabilize the beach habitat to reverse coastal erosion, protecting the shoreline for key wildlife and surrounding communities.

### **Restoration and Recreational Programming on the Cooper River Water Trail (NJ)**

Grantee: Upstream Alliance

Grant Amount:..... \$322,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$970,100  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,292,100

Engage 3,000 community members through hands-on recreational programming, hiring of local youth and promotion of public access on the newly minted Cooper River Water Trail in Camden, New Jersey. Project will provide paddling and fishing programs for the surrounding community, restore 0.2 miles of native wild celery to the Cooper River through a citizen science volunteer program and create a Friends of the Cooper River Water Trail group to maintain the trail into the future.



Bog turtle

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**Restoring Riparian Habitat and Improving Public River Access in Hackettstown New Jersey**

Grantee: PEACE New Jersey

Grant Amount:..... \$437,000

Matching Funds:..... \$452,500

Total Project Amount:..... \$889,500

Restore a public park in Hackettstown, New Jersey, by planting a riparian buffer with native plant species, stabilizing 305 linear feet of riverbank, installing seven pollinator gardens and completing design plans for ADA-compliant paths. Project will benefit priority pollinator species and freshwater mussels, improve recreational access for the community and restore the park to a more natural condition.

**NEW YORK****Brook Trout Habitat Assessment and Restoration (NY)**

Grantee: Friends of the Upper Delaware River

Grant Amount:..... \$750,000

Matching Funds:..... \$750,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$1,500,000

Restore five streams and assess additional sites for potential restoration to improve habitat for brook trout in the tailwaters of the upper Delaware River in New York. Project will plant 2,000 trees, restore 2.9 miles of riparian buffer and assess 10 miles of river to address habitat erosion and identify priority areas for future implementation efforts.

**PENNSYLVANIA****Aquatic Connectivity and Habitat Improvement Planning and Design in Lehigh Valley (PA)**

Grantee: Wildlands Conservancy

Grant Amount:..... \$164,300

Matching Funds:..... \$168,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$332,300

Complete the design and permitting process for fish passage and stream restoration on two priority sites in the Lehigh Valley of the Delaware River watershed. The project will assess 0.7 miles of stream, complete the required monitoring and assessment of 5 acres to restore aquatic and terrestrial habitat, complete the designs and permitting requirements for the two restoration efforts, and conduct community outreach to inform the community of the benefit of restoring natural stream function.

**Designing and Planning for the South Philadelphia Wetlands Park II (PA)**

Grantee: Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

Grant Amount:..... \$325,000

Matching Funds:..... \$325,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$650,000

Complete final construction documentation for phase one of the South Philadelphia Wetlands Park, an innovative park that will restore wetland habitat and increase public access to piers and berths. Project will result in shovel-ready designs to add a kayak launch, a natural pier park and restore 2 acres of forested upland, meadow and wetlands.

**Geomorphological Watershed Assessment and Restoration of Pennsylvania State Parks**

Grantee: Social Enterprise Institute USA

Grant Amount:..... \$235,100

Matching Funds:..... \$248,300

Total Project Amount:..... \$483,400

Assess over 62,500 feet of stream habitat and restore six priority sites in Pennsylvania's Tyler, Ridley Creek, and Tuscarora State Parks in the Delaware River watershed. Project will enhance habitat for river herring, brook trout and golden-winged warbler through use of native plantings, placement of woody debris, bank stabilization and culvert replacements.

**Implementing a Stormwater Management Program in the Wissahickon Watershed (PA)**

Grantee: Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association

Grant Amount:..... \$200,000

Matching Funds:..... \$50,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$250,000

Implement two stormwater basin retrofit projects in the Wissahickon watershed of Pennsylvania and conduct targeted outreach to generate landowner interest in installing additional nature-based stormwater solutions. Project will result in a watershed-wide priority project pipeline for future stormwater management projects and provide technical assistance to landowners, ultimately enhancing water quality for people and wildlife.

**Improving Public Access and Recreation in the Pennsylvania Portion of the Delaware River - IV (PA)**

Grantee: The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission

Grant Amount:..... \$500,000

Matching Funds:..... \$500,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$1,000,000

Expand a subgrant program to provide grants to public entities, including townships, boroughs, municipal and county governments, and nonprofit groups for the planning, acquisition, development, expansion and rehabilitation of public boating facilities located in the Pennsylvania portion of the Delaware River watershed. Project will improve recreation access and ensure that boaters and anglers in the Delaware River watershed have safe, clean and updated boating facilities.



Brook trout

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### Monitoring Wild Trout Populations in the Unassessed Waters of the Delaware River II (PA)

Grantee: Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds

Grant Amount:..... \$191,400

Matching Funds:..... \$680,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$871,400

Address the lack of assessments and monitoring of wild trout populations in the Pennsylvania drainage of the Delaware River Basin. Project will utilize a proven and transferrable private-public partnership between the Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds and Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission to assess more than 500 stream miles, increasing the scientific capacity to support planning and prioritization of future implementation work.

### Native Habitat Restoration and Nature-based Stormwater Solutions in Southeastern Pennsylvania

Grantee: Pennsylvania Resources Council

Grant Amount:..... \$365,600

Matching Funds:..... \$466,900

Total Project Amount:..... \$832,500

Implement nature-based stormwater solutions and restore native pollinator habitat through the creation of rain gardens, compact native forests, and lawn conversions across the Darby-Cobbs and Schuylkill sub-watersheds of Southeastern Pennsylvania. Project will reduce polluted stormwater runoff, restore habitat connectivity and build long-term technical capacity for future stormwater infrastructure improvements in developed landscapes.

### Reintroducing Wild Brook Trout in Restored Agricultural Watersheds in Chester County (PA)

Grantee: Stroud Water Research Center

Grant Amount:..... \$450,200

Matching Funds:..... \$450,200

Total Project Amount:..... \$900,400

Reintroduce wild brook trout in two restored agricultural watersheds in Chester County, Pennsylvania. Project will monitor the success of the reestablishment effort and continue to implement agricultural best management practices at the reintroduction sites to give brook trout the best possible chance of biological recovery in its native range.

### Restoring Dynamic Forest Structure for Forest Songbirds in the Delaware River Watershed (PA)

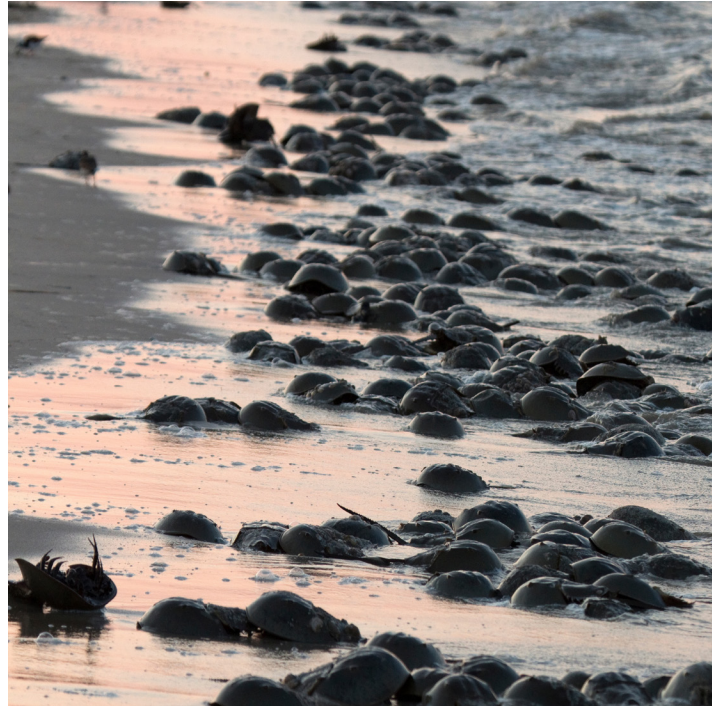
Grantee: American Bird Conservancy

Grant Amount:..... \$500,000

Matching Funds:..... \$500,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$1,000,000

Address threats to forest health and full breeding season habitat needs of golden-winged warbler, cerulean warbler and wood thrush in the Poconos-Kittatinny region of Pennsylvania. Project will conduct baseline avian monitoring and implement forest best management practices on 1,510 acres of public land and 180 acres



Horseshoe crabs

of private land, increasing forest age class diversity and improving within-stand structural complexity to benefit forest birds.

### Riparian Corridor Restoration in the South Branch of French Creek (PA)

Grantee: French and Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust

Grant Amount:..... \$1,000,000

Matching Funds:..... \$1,000,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$2,000,000

Restore an impaired and incised stream channel and the surrounding wetland to improve habitat for brook trout and bog turtle in the South Branch of French Creek, Pennsylvania. Project will restore 6.7 acres of riparian buffer and more than 13 acres of surrounding wetland and floodplain, implementing a system-wide approach to generate instream habitat and improve floodplain resilience for priority species.

### Supporting the Growing Cobbs Creek Watershed Coalition (PA)

Grantee: LandHealth Institute

Grant Amount:..... \$393,700

Matching Funds:..... \$373,800

Total Project Amount:..... \$767,500

Advance the Cobbs Creek watershed Coalition by building capacity and strengthening coordination efforts that aim to improve the watershed and access to the park through community-led programming, activities and stewardship. Project will improve restoration and conservation of the Cobbs Creek watershed, and expand access to recreation throughout several communities adjacent to the trail, including the improvement of 5 miles of trails.

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**MULTIPLE STATES****Conserving Habitat through the Upper Delaware River Conservation Collaboration (NY, PA)**

Grantee: Delaware Highlands Conservancy

Grant Amount:..... \$1,000,000

Matching Funds:..... \$4,256,300

Total Project Amount:..... \$5,256,300

Conserve forests, waterways and wetland habitat through land acquisitions and conservation easements in the upper Delaware River watershed in Pennsylvania and New York. Project will convene the Upper Delaware River Conservation Collaboration, a partnership of five stakeholders, to protect more than 9,000 acres of forests, floodplains, waterways, and other natural resources in perpetuity and host a minimum of 660 community engagement events to generate support for these efforts.



Golden-winged warbler

**Developing an Aquatic and Terrestrial Connectivity Plan for the Upper Delaware**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Amount:..... \$340,300

Matching Funds:..... \$340,800

Total Project Amount:..... \$681,100

Develop a strategic plan to improve habitat connectivity for fish and wildlife by synthesizing existing connectivity plans and filling data gaps with additional field sampling in the Appalachian portion of the Delaware River watershed. Project will assess 100 road-stream crossing sites and develop a prioritized list of road crossing upgrades and complementary conservation and restoration actions.

**Enhancing Wildlife Habitat and Water Quality through Development of Forest Management Plans (NY, PA)**

Grantee: American Forest Foundation

Grant Amount:..... \$250,000

Matching Funds:..... \$250,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$500,000

Conduct outreach and provide technical assistance on privately owned forest land in New York and Pennsylvania to enroll landowners in a long-term forest management conservation program. Project will develop forest management plans for 91 landowners covering 13,000 acres, maintaining forest habitat for songbirds like the golden-winged warbler and enhancing water quality.

**Expanding Public Access and Stewardship Along the Tidal Delaware River Trail (NJ, PA)**

Grantee: RiverWays Collaboration of CultureTrust Greater Philadelphia

Grant Amount:..... \$246,200

Matching Funds:..... \$215,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$461,200

Expand safe access to recreation along the Tidal Delaware River Trail through a youth stewardship program and environmental education across six sites in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Camden, New Jersey. Project will enhance stewardship of local trails and waterways through community programming and citizen science monitoring efforts.

**Reducing Bird-Building Collisions for Migratory Birds in the Delaware Watershed (PA, NJ)**

Grantee: Wildlife Management Institute

Grant Amount:..... \$496,100

Matching Funds:..... \$498,800

Total Project Amount:..... \$994,900

Identify and retrofit existing buildings in western New Jersey and southeast Pennsylvania to be bird-friendly and conduct community engagement to inform residents about the built-environment hazards experienced by migratory birds, and how to mitigate them. Project will sustain and enhance wildlife habitat by reducing hazards for birds like the golden-winged warbler and wood thrush that live and migrate through the Delaware River watershed.