


**NFWF**

# Cumberland Plateau and Southern Appalachian Stewardship Fund

## NFWF CONTACTS

**Will Singleton**  
 Program Director,  
 Southern Region  
[will.singleton@nfwf.org](mailto:will.singleton@nfwf.org)  
 202-595-2477

**Zachary Bernstein**  
 Senior Program Manager,  
 Southern Region  
[zachary.bernstein@nfwf.org](mailto:zachary.bernstein@nfwf.org)  
 202-595-2433

## PARTNERS

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- International Paper
- Altria Group

## 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

1625 Eye Street, NW  
 Suite 300  
 Washington, D.C., 20006  
 202-857-0166



Northern bobwhite

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), International Paper and the Altria Group announced a 13th year of funding for Cumberland Plateau and Southern Appalachian Stewardship Fund projects. Eight new or continuing freshwater and forest habitat restoration grants totaling \$2.5 million were awarded. The awards announced leveraged \$3.4 million in matching funds from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of \$5.9 million.

The Cumberland Plateau and Southern Appalachian Stewardship Fund restores native forest, grassland and freshwater habitats to benefit populations of associated wildlife species while advancing strategies to support working forests and farms. The fund accomplishes this by focusing on priority areas that include:

- Restoring and enhancing shortleaf pine and oak forests
- Restoring aquatic ecosystems
- Increasing adoption of conservation practices on agricultural lands

*(continued)*

**2025 GRANTS****Engaging Private Landowners to Restore and Improve Forest and Aquatic Habitats in North Alabama**

Grantee: Alabama Forestry Foundation

Grant Amount: ..... \$60,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$210,000

Total Project Amount: ..... \$270,000

Engage family forest owners in a 29-county area of north Alabama to restore and improve shortleaf pine and white oak forests, and protect and improve in-stream habitat for at-risk aquatic species. Project will engage 600 landowners through outreach events and technical assistance to plant or improve management of more than 7,750 acres of upland and riparian forest and restore habitat connectivity to 15 miles of stream by retrofitting culverts or removing other stream barriers.

**Restoring Shortleaf Pine-White Oak Forest to Benefit Aquatic Species (AL)**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Amount: ..... \$125,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$287,700

Total Project Amount: ..... \$412,700

Promote shortleaf pine-oak forest health through targeted invasive species removal and prescribed fire. Project will increase technical assistance capacity to enroll landowners in voluntary Farm Bill programs.

**Restoring Aquatic and Forest Habitat to Accelerate Tornado Recovery (KY)**

Grantee: Office of Kentucky Nature Preserves

Grant Amount: ..... \$175,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$604,000

Total Project Amount: ..... \$779,000

Restore tornado-damaged upland oak-pine, riparian forests, and previously mined lands through thinning, prescribed fire, invasive species control, and use ecologically responsible salvage logging for erosion control on degraded mine lands. Project will engage and educate private landowners and train early-career conservation staff oriented to benefit species like northern bobwhite and eastern hellbender by enhancing forest and aquatic habitat and include outreach and education for private landowners and professional development for early-career conservation staff.

**Expanding Capacity for Aquatic Habitat Restoration in Kentucky**

Grantee: University of Georgia Research Foundation

Grant Amount: ..... \$879,500

Matching Funds: ..... \$734,700

Total Project Amount: ..... \$1,614,200

Expand technical capacity for aquatic habitat restoration through the hiring of a private lands biologist and private lands engineer who will develop and implement Farm Bill-supported practices to improve water quality, restore stream connectivity and enhance aquatic habitat. Project will open 12 miles of stream, install 1 mile of fencing and remove six barriers, benefitting eastern hellbender and blackside dace.

**Enhancing Forest Habitat through an Apprenticeship Program (NC)**

Grantee: The Forest Stewards Guild

Grant Amount: ..... \$380,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$393,400

Total Project Amount: ..... \$773,400

Establish a Forest Stewards Apprenticeship crew to engage landowners for forest restoration and management practices to enhance upland oak-pine habitat. Project will improve upland oak-pine and riparian ecosystems, improve water quality, and increase private landowner participation in voluntary conservation programs, while investing in local workforce development.

**Enhancing Landowner Awareness and Engagement through Outreach in the Lower Duck River Watershed (TN)**

Grantee: Duck River Conservancy

Grant Amount: ..... \$282,600

Matching Funds: ..... \$0

Total Project Amount: ..... \$282,600

Increase landowner technical assistance and outreach by creating a position for an outreach coordinator. Project will utilize cost share programs to assist landowners in habitat restoration and management to benefit native species, install 50 miles of fencing and restore 2 miles of stream with streambank stabilization activities.

**Improving the Shortleaf Pine Seed Supply (AL, GA, TN)**

Grantee: Paint Rock Forest Research Center

Grant Amount: ..... \$160,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$451,700

Total Project Amount: ..... \$611,700

Support native shortleaf pine seed collection and propagation and support a coordinator to promote shortleaf restoration among landowners and other organizations. Project will collect 3 million to 5 million seeds and engage 2,500 landowners to promote shortleaf restoration and cost-share opportunities available through NRCS.

**Expanding Oak-Pine Restoration and Management Networks across Kentucky, North Carolina and Tennessee**

Grantee: The Nature Conservancy

Grant Amount: ..... \$451,400

Matching Funds: ..... \$740,100

Total Project Amount: ..... \$1,191,500

Expand forest restoration and management across public and private lands in oak-pine forests through establishing an Oak Stewardship Network to create demonstration sites, leverage science through co-developed practitioners' guidance, and expand access to NRCS programs through private landowner outreach. Project will restore 1,745 acres of upland oak-pine forests, reach 250 private landowners, cover 2,000 acres with new conservation plans, engage 50 professional foresters and landowners in workshops, and sustain at least 36 forestry jobs.