



NATIONAL COASTAL RESILIENCE FUND INCREASING THE NATION’S NATURAL DEFENSES

2019 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal Webinar: Thursday, April 11, 2019 1:00 – 2:00 PM Eastern
Pre-Proposal Due Date: Monday, May 20, 2019 11:59 PM Eastern
Full Proposal **by Invite Only** Due Date: Monday, July 22, 2019 11:59 PM Eastern

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is pleased to announce the National Coastal Resilience Fund for 2019. NFWF will make investments to restore and strengthen natural systems so they can protect coastal communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural hazards and enable them to recover more quickly, while also enhancing habitats for important fish and wildlife populations.

Contiguous areas of natural habitat such as coastal marshes and wetlands, coastal forests, rivers, and streams, dune and beach systems, oyster and coral reefs -- maintained at a significant size for the habitat type -- provide communities with enhanced protection and buffering from the growing impacts of sea-level rise, changing flood patterns, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and other environmental stressors. NFWF identifies these types of natural areas as “Resilience Hubs¹” – areas where natural resource restoration efforts will have the greatest impact for human community resilience, as well as for fish and wildlife – and have prioritized the areas that provide dual benefits under this program. It is not required that projects are located in an area identified by NFWF as a resilience hub to be eligible.

NFWF will award approximately \$29 million in grants to create, expand, and restore natural systems in areas that will both increase protection for communities from coastal storms, sea- and lake-level changes, inundation, and coastal erosion while also improving valuable habitats for fish and wildlife species. NFWF will invest in projects in three focus areas:

- Project Preliminary Design and Site Assessment
- Project Final Design and Permitting
- Project Restoration and Monitoring

Many of the projects will support natural restoration efforts proven to restore natural storm mitigation services and reduce flood risk from episodic events. NFWF seeks to enhance and

¹ More about NFWF’s Coastal Resilience Assessment and “Resilience Hubs” found at <http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience/Pages/home.aspx>. NFWF will be releasing a final report, maps and data on Resilience Hubs in the conterminous 48 coastal states in May 2019.



further refine these activities through grant making to learn and share best practices for the greatest impact nation-wide.

NFWF is also interested in funding innovative projects that seek to re-shape our thinking on how to protect communities in light of projected environmental stressors that may go beyond neighboring habitat restoration alone, to truly novel approaches to address these challenges. NFWF seeks to incorporate adaptation to the projected future conditions of each investment.

This program is funded by, and coordinated with, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration ([NOAA](#)), [Shell Oil Company](#), and [TransRe](#) and will include input from other federal agencies and outside experts.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Projects must be located within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and territories². 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.

This program will be implemented as a national program focused on enhancement of resilience for coastal communities across the U.S., and award decisions will be made based on regional circumstances, needs, and priorities. Project interventions that help reduce threats, including, but not limited to: flooding from sea-level rise, coastal erosion, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and impacts from other chronic and episodic factors. Many of these threats are connected, and the program anticipates that the proposed projects will address reducing vulnerability to multiple threats, as appropriate.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The program will capitalize on extensive threat and vulnerability assessments and regional/local coastal planning efforts that are completed to date and focus investments on advancing prioritized projects through feasibility assessment and site design and supporting implementation and project restoration. Applicants should apply under the focus area that best meets their needs (see Figure 1). Please note that projects requesting funding for multiple focus areas (i.e. Project Site Assessment and Preliminary Design and Final Design and Permitting) will NOT be considered. It is expected that planning, relevant assessments, and prioritization of project needs for specific community threats have occurred prior to application submission and will be referenced in the proposal. Given the limited funding available scoping work to initiate threat assessments and preliminary community engagement to identify projects are not a priority for funding under this program at this time.

² Including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

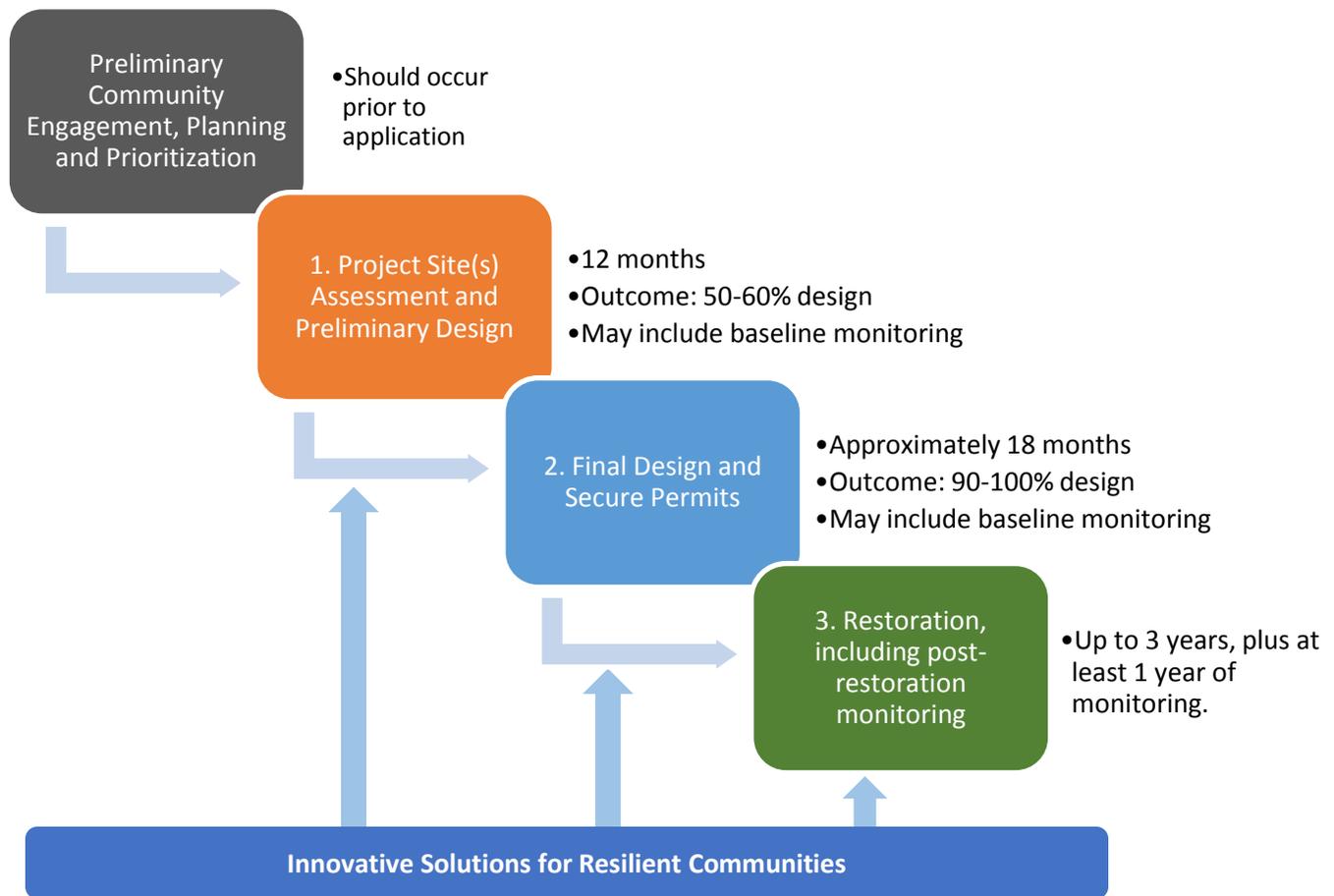


Figure 1 - Timeline context for focus areas 1, 2, and 3.

1. **Project Site(s) Assessment and Preliminary Design.** Many prioritized restoration projects require preliminary design and feasibility assessments to advance to restoration. This phase of a project is critical to lay the groundwork for successful implementation to meet resilience targets for communities and natural resources. Recognizing this need, applicants may request funding to complete site assessments and preliminary designs of best options to address restoration and community resilience goals. Projects under this phase will have previously prioritized and identified a community for which increased resilience and risk reduction is the goal, but for which a site or sites are still under consideration to determine the most appropriate site and project to achieve resilience goals. Competitive grant applications will focus on the goals of one specific community rather than a broader coastline project site assessment (exception possible for one project site that benefits more than one neighboring communities). At the end of the grant period, projects under this category are expected to be ready for the next phase, final design and permitting.

While there is no minimum or maximum limit on the size of grants under this focus area, grants are expected to average around \$125,000 depending upon the scale and scope of



the project. Eligible activities under this activity are those necessary to bring the project to full design and restoration and may be used to evaluate potential project sites, assess alternatives for restoration and protection activities, determine site-specific characteristics that influence project and activity selection, assess the potential improvements in risk reduction, address potential barriers to moving to the final design and implementation phases, gather baseline data, conduct cost-benefit analyses, select the most appropriate natural or nature-based feature for a site, and prepare preliminary project designs.

Proposals should clearly indicate a community that has been prioritized for risk reduction and increased resilience and the specific site(s) selected assessment to achieve risk reduction and resilience goals. This can include relevant local, state, or national-level resilience plans, prioritization tools, cost-benefit analysis, etc. While *Project Site Assessment and Preliminary Design* projects are not required to secure permits for project restoration during the life of a NFWF grant, proposals should indicate plans for preliminary conversations with state and federal permitting officials by the end of the grant period.

Proposals should explain the roles that key partners and stakeholders (e.g., local government leaders, federal, state, territorial, or tribal regulatory and/or resource agencies) will play in the site assessment and activity selection. Partners and stakeholders should be meaningfully engaged in site assessment and preliminary design, from the beginning and throughout the project, to ensure broad utility of the work and enhance likelihood of successful implementation. Proposals should also identify how stakeholders have been meaningfully engaged leading up to this stage of the project. Applicants should provide letters of commitment to demonstrate that the intended project is a priority and has the support and expert engagement needed to advance to the next stage of project design and permitting. Applicants are also encouraged to identify potential sources of funding to advance implementation of the project.

Most *Project Site Assessment and Preliminary Design* projects are expected to be completed within 12 months of the start of the grant and result in a 50-60% design.

- 2. Final Project Design and Permitting.** Applicants may request funding to support final project design and permitting for on-the-ground projects. Such funding may be used to support the preparation of conceptual designs, engineering plans, continued and expanded stakeholder engagement efforts, detailed cost estimates, robust communications with permitting officials at various levels of government, and other related tasks to position projects for restoration-ready implementation. While there is no minimum or maximum limit on the size of grants under this focus area, grants are expected to average around \$250,000 depending upon the scale of the project.

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. Proposals should indicate plans to hold robust



conversations with permitting officials at various levels of government early on and throughout the design process and prior to submission of permitting applications.

Final Design and Permitting projects are not expected to achieve immediate environmental or conservation outputs and outcomes, and proposals are not required to obtain permits at the end of the grant period, but projects should demonstrate readiness to move a designed project to the restoration phase. Proposals should demonstrate that the resulting project plan will be sufficient to meet requirements for environmental review and permitting, and when implemented, will address needs prioritized through a formal coastal resilience planning process and meet specific program goals related to community resilience and ecosystem enhancements.

Proposals should explain how key partners and stakeholders (e.g., local government leaders, federal, state, territorial, or tribal regulatory and/or resource agencies) will be involved in the project design and approval. Partners and stakeholders should be meaningfully engaged in final project design and permitting, from the beginning and throughout the project, to ensure broad utility of the work and enhance likelihood of successful implementation. Proposals should identify how stakeholders have been meaningfully engaged leading up to this stage of the project. Applicants should provide letters of commitment to demonstrate that the intended project is a priority and is likely to advance to the next stage of construction and monitoring. Applicants are also encouraged to identify potential sources of funding to advance implementation of the project.

Most *Final Design and Permitting* projects are expected to be completed within 18 months of the start of the grant and result in a 90-100% design.

- 3. Restoration and Monitoring.** There is no minimum or maximum limit on the size of Project Implementation grants. Grants should be appropriate to the scale of the project, and most projects are expected to range between \$1,000,000 to \$3,000,000. Projects proposed under this category are expected to have already been prioritized through a formal planning process that addresses coastal resilience, to have completed all necessary designs and engineering planning for implementation, and to have a demonstrated understanding of the permits and other approvals necessary for implementation. Projects that have secured all necessary permits will receive higher priority for funding. Proposals must clearly describe how projects will protect and enhance resilience of natural systems and help mitigate the impacts of future storms and other natural-hazard events and threats on key, local community assets (such as emergency services, infrastructure, and centers of economic activity), and the anticipated benefit to fish and wildlife. Projects should result in measurable and observable improvements to these systems.

Projects may be conducted on Federal, tribal, state or local government lands, or private lands where there is a demonstrated commitment to the protection of those lands for conservation purposes. Given the goals of coastal resilience, projects that consider the larger landscape and involve multiple landowners and/or partners and jurisdictions, as appropriate, are encouraged.



Proposals should explain how key partners and stakeholders (e.g., local government leaders, federal, state, territorial, or tribal regulatory and/or resource agencies) will be involved in the implementation process. Applicants are encouraged to provide letters of commitment to demonstrate the importance of the project to address high-priority resilience needs.

Implementation projects should be able to be completed within 3 years of the start of the grant and should include at least one year of monitoring. Acquisition of land and conservation easements are not eligible activities (although they may be part of the match; see [OMB Uniform Guidance for more information](#)).

Eligible projects include ecosystem restoration projects and the construction of natural, nature-based, and green-gray (hybrid) infrastructure, where tangible community resilience and conservation outcomes can be measured. Restoration projects should advance resilience goals (e.g. reduction of storm-surge impacts), conservation goals (e.g. creation of habitat for native species), and community goals (e.g. protecting critical assets). Living shoreline projects that advance both conservation goals and community resilience goals are also eligible.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, applicants will be asked to report on specific metrics from the list below that relate to their project. 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). In most cases, this will be 1-2 metrics from the project category section and 2-3 metrics from the outcome section. For restoration metrics, please only represent one acre/mile in one metric; do not include under several metrics. If you are enhancing a floodplain that is also considered a wetland, just select the most relevant habitat. If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Kaity Goldsmith (kaitlin.goldsmith@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

In addition to the project metrics listed below, NFWF is working on additional ecological and socio-economic indicators to better assess the projects' impacts on resilience. NFWF may request applicants that are invited to the full proposal to build in increased monitoring for this purpose or commission a third party to collect data consistently across the suite of funded resilience projects post-award. All awardees under this program may be engaged during their period of performance or in the years following to support these evaluation efforts.



		renourishment, dune vegetation planting).
Marsh/Wetland Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Wetland Restoration – Acres Restored Habitat Restoration - Erosion Control - Acres Restored	Enter the total number of marsh or wetland acres restored. Enter total acres of eroding wetlands restored. For both metrics, in the notes, indicate the type of wetland (e.g., freshwater woody wetland, salt marsh) and restoration method(s) used (e.g., invasive species removal, thin-layer dredge deposition).
Oyster or Coral Reef Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – Acres Restored	Enter the number of acres of oyster or coral reef structures restored. In the notes, indicate the type of reef restored – oyster reef or coral reef.
In-stream Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Instream Restoration – Miles Restored	Enter the number of miles of instream habitat restored. Note, this is in-stream restoration only. Stream miles opened should NOT be counted under this metric, rather use # miles of stream opened under Aquatic Connectivity Restoration if applicable
Aquatic Connectivity Restoration	Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements - # of fish passage barriers rectified Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements – miles of stream opened	Enter the number of fish passage barriers rectified and in the notes indicate the number of remaining barriers in the system. Enter the number of stream miles opened and, in the notes, those miles as a percentage of habitat available for restoration or reconnection.

Project Accomplishments Related to Community Benefits and Capacity Building

<p>Community Benefits</p>	<p>Planning, Research, Monitoring – Community Benefits Projected - # of Critical Facilities or Infrastructure Within Radius of Enhanced Protection</p> <p>Planning Research, Monitoring – Community Benefits Projected - # of Properties with Enhanced Protection</p>	<p>Enter the number of critical infrastructure assets or facilities that are within the zone of influence³. This can include those necessary or ensuring public health and safety such as, hospitals, shelters, emergency and evacuation routes, fire and police stations, etc. as well as critical infrastructure – wastewater treatment facilities, power plants, etc.</p> <p>Enter the number of commercial or residential properties within the zone of influence.</p>
<p>Capacity Building</p>	<p>Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Building Institutional Capacity - # of Individuals Reached by Outreach, Training, or Technical Assistance Activities</p> <p>Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Volunteer participation - # of volunteer hours</p>	<p>Enter the number of people demonstrating a minimum level of knowledge, attitudes, or skills. This metric refers to people other than staff or FTEs. In the notes, please indicate the groups targeted by outreach efforts and how they engage.</p> <p>Enter the number of volunteer hours in this project.</p>

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state and territorial government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Native American tribal governments, educational institutions, or commercial (for-profit) organizations. Tribal

³ The zone of influence refers to the area predicted to benefit from an implementation project.



governments include all Native American tribal governments (both federally recognized tribes and those tribes that are not federally recognized).

- 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.

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- 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.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

The National Coastal Resilience Fund will award approximately \$29,000,000 in grants in 2019. Project awards are expected between \$125,000 and \$3,000,000 in accordance with the guidance provided under the Program Priorities section above. A minimum 1:1 non-federal match⁴ in cash or in-kind services is expected and strongly encouraged. Match can be any combination of in cash and/or in-kind goods and services and there is no priority given to higher cash percentages. Full information about NFWF matching fund requirements, including a description of acceptable sources of matching funds, is available at <http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/faqs.aspx>. Questions regarding match beyond this guidance may be directed to Kaity Goldsmith (kaitlin.goldsmith@nfwf.org).

All project dollars, NFWF award request and matching funds, must be secured and expended within the period of performance. The period of performance is the period of time in which all activities in the proposed scope of work occur and is defined by the start and end dates selected in the application. The period of performance cannot begin earlier than one year prior to the pre-proposal application deadline, and most should conclude within the time guidance listed for the project priority category.

⁴ If funds originated as a federal appropriation, they are unlikely to be acceptable as match.



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.

Prioritized in Existing Plans – Project has been prioritized through an existing planning process at the state, regional, or local level for addressing coastal resilience and demonstrates activities that support habitat and fish and wildlife restoration goals of NFWF and NOAA. Project complements and builds off other federal, state and local conservation priorities that are consistent with the goals of this program and can clearly connect conservation and coastal community resilience actions.

Technical Merit – Project is technically sound and feasible using proven methodologies, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical, and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design, and restoration to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.

Transferability – Project includes a meaningful plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

Communication – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences. Key stakeholders and partners are meaningfully engaged throughout the project.

Monitoring and Adaptive Management – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

Long-term Sustainability – Project design either does not require maintenance, or will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. Narrative includes how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities. For planning and design projects, narrative includes information on likely sources of funding for project implementation. Project includes a design that takes into account the future conditions of a site and adapts the site to those conditions.

Past Success – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing large-scale projects with specific, measurable results.

Innovation – Projects proposing proven habitat restoration activities that incorporate best practices testing and learning to increase desired impact. Projects seeking to employ completely new thinking to approach community protection still have natural and green infrastructure as part of the design.



Partnership – Applicants demonstrate strong partnerships with Federal, state, and local agencies, existing regional partnerships, such as Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, 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 agencies with responsibility for developing and implementing coastal resilience plans, to leverage additional funds and sustain it after the life of the grant.

OTHER

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

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 diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures that 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.

Compliance Requirements – Selected projects may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), 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.



Quality Assurance – If a project involves significant monitoring, data collection, or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation (www.epa.gov/quality) and 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.

Federal Funding – The availability of Federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon the Federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when the Federal funding is 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:	April 11, 2019
Pre-Proposal Due Date:	May 20, 2019 11:59PM EDT
Full Proposal Webinar:	Week of June 17, 2019
Full Proposal by Invite Only Due Date:	July 22, 2019 11:59 PM EDT
Review Period	August-October, 2019
Awards Announced	November, 2019

HOW TO APPLY

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

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



APPLICATION ASSISTANCE

A PDF version of this RFP can be downloaded [here](#).

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.

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

<i>If you have a question about...</i>	<i>Please contact...</i>
A project idea in Northeastern states (Maine to Maryland)	Lynn Dwyer – Lynn.Dwyer@nfwf.org
A project idea in Southeastern and Gulf States (Virginia to Texas)	Suzanne Sessine – Suzanne.Sessine@nfwf.org
A project idea in West Coast and Alaska	Femke Freiberg - Femke.Freiberg@nfwf.org
A project idea in Great Lakes	Aislinn Gauchay - Aislinn.Gauchay@nfwf.org
A project idea in Hawaii, Caribbean and Pacific territories	Michelle Pico – Michelle.Pico@nfwf.org
General questions about the RFP or requirements of the program	Kaity Goldsmith – Kaitlin.Goldsmith@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.