Conservation Partners Program 2019

2019 Webinar for Applicants
Eric Forward and Daley Burns, NFWF
Presenters

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Presentation Outline

- Overview
- Program Priority Areas (PPAs)
- Eligibility
- Funding Availability and Match
- Timeline
- Application Process and Assistance
Conservation Partners (CPP)

- **Joint Conservation Priorities of Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and NFWF**

- **Objective:** to better utilize and leverage Farm Bill Conservation dollars through *technical assistance* to private landowners in targeted Program Priority Areas (PPAs).

- **Method:** Provide grants to organizations ready to hire wildlife professionals, ecologists, foresters, biologists, etc. to work with NRCS field offices on conservation priorities.

- **Funding:** Total available funding is $4.6 million and awards range from $50,000 to $300,000. Projects can be funded for up to three years.
Technical Assistance

• Boots on the ground staff

• Provide assistance to landowners to address opportunities, concerns, and problems related to the use of natural resources and to help landowners make sound natural resource management decisions on private, tribal, and other non-federal lands.

• Expertise in comprehensive conservation planning, whole farm planning, conservation practice identification and implementation, engaging producers, etc.
CPP Priority Areas and Funding

2019 Program Priority Areas

- Pacific Salmon - $400,000
- Grassland Bird Habitat - $650,000
- Great Lakes Basin - $750,000
- Mississippi River Basin - $1,000,000
- Working Lands for Wildlife - $600,000
- Soil Health – North Carolina, Oregon and Washington - $1,200,000
Pacific Salmon

Improve the efficiency of on-farm irrigation practices and provide quantifiable benefits to in-stream flows. Projects should be located in salmonid streams in California, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho that experience insufficient instream flows that limit fish survival.

Photo credit: Vanessa Serrao
Grassland Bird Habitat

Focused on the Great Plains and Prairie Pothole portions of the United States. The region supports more than 300 species of breeding, migrating, and overwintering bird species and is a hotspot for about two dozen bird species of high national importance.

Projects will engage ranchers, farmers, and the agricultural sector in developing and implementing best practices, innovative and stewardship practices that benefit grassland bird habitat across this vast geography.
Mississippi River Basin

• Priority projects will occur in NRCS’s priority watersheds and subwatersheds as identified for the Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI) and for the Driftless Area.

• Priority activities will improve water quality and/or riparian habitat

• Engage producers and landowners to plan and implement best management practices and innovative practices to benefit water quality, fish and wildlife habitat.
Great Lakes Basin

Awards in the Great Lakes Basin will be made to reduce phosphorus runoff and associated harmful algae blooms.

Investments to reduce algal blooms and improve water quality will focus primarily in watersheds with high levels of phosphorus and sediment loading, including western Lake Erie, Saginaw Bay, and Green Bay.

Engage producers to develop farm nutrient management plans; enroll in Farm Bill programs; and implement conservation practices that may include, but not be limited to, construction of on-farm riparian buffers and wetlands, drainage and tillage practices, and application of soil health concepts.
Working Lands for Wildlife

Awards will be made to hire field conservation professionals who will, in coordination with State NRCS Offices, increase participation in federal Farm Bill programs and assist private landowners to implement conservation practices to advance the goals of the Working Lands for Wildlife program.
Soil Health – North Carolina, Oregon, Washington

Priority Projects will advance the adoption of conservation practices and management approaches that increase soil health in crop and livestock systems.

Geographic emphasis includes the coastal plain of North Carolina and portions of the Columbia River Valley in Washington and Oregon.
Eligible Applicants

- Eligible: Non-profit 501(c) organizations, farmer and commodity-led organizations, educational institutions, tribal governments, and state/local governments.

- Not eligible: Individuals, federal government agencies, and for-profit firms.
Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- Political advocacy, lobbying, litigation.
- Fundraising.
- Legally mandated mitigation projects.
- Implementing Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) projects
What Counts as Match?

- Non-federal (U.S.) in origin.
- Directly serves the goals of the project.
- Voluntary (mitigation, restitution, other permit or court-ordered settlements are ineligible).
- Applied only to the Conservation Partners grant.
- Spent during the project period of performance.
- A match of at least 1:1 non-federal cash or in-kind is required.
- Larger match ratios tend to make more competitive proposals but is not necessary.
Accepted Sources of Match

- Cash
- Staff time dedicated to the project
- Materials and services donated
- Volunteer time
- Indirect costs - You can find our indirect policy on the NFWF website, the link is provided in the Tip Sheet
Period of Performance

• Within the project start and end dates
  • All work must be accomplished
  • All requested funds spent
  • All matching funds spent
• Projects should be completed within 3 years following receipt of a grant agreement
Evaluation Metrics

• Activities
  – FTE jobs created or sustained
  – # of Landowners w/changed behavior
  – # of Landowners targeted
  – Acres under improved management
  – Pounds of nitrogen, phosphorous, or sediment avoided
  – # of BMPs developed for landowners
  – # of management plans with BMPs
  – Others, if needed, call to discuss
Project Competitiveness

• Demonstrates a conservation need or issue to be addressed
• Organization demonstrates “readiness” to address/accomplish the conservation need
• Is this an early stage project, a capstone effort to get across a finish line, or somewhere in between?
• Quantify
• Is this a new approach, if so, demonstrate how you anticipate getting over unexpected hurdles
• What groundwork has been set so that the project will succeed (e.g. we have a waiting list of “X” producers ready to engage further)
• How can you differentiate your project/organization from the rest of the applicant pool
• Please communicate with your NRCS state/local office early in the process
• Maximize the cost effectiveness of the project by focusing funding to on the ground work or other direct expenses
Enter your login ID and password and click Log In below. If you have forgotten your password, click Forgot your password? below. If you are a first time visitor to this system, click Register here below.

Frequently Asked Questions

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New User?

For the optimal Easygrants experience, please:

- Use a Supported Browser
- Enable Pop-ups
- Allow Cookies
- Only Use One Tab
- Get Adobe Reader
- Log Out and Close Browser for Security
- Do not create duplicate accounts.

- Use your professional email address and full legal organization name.

- Fill out all required information.

- Unsure if you already have a user account or if organization is registered in Easygrants? Contact helpdesk at easygrants@nfwf.org or 202-595-2497.
Once you have created your easygrants log-in and/or log-in as an existing user, please visit review your contact details and make sure that you provide a phone number. To do so…
Used for navigating through your application in EasyGrants.
Project Information

• **Title**: short, descriptive name indicating project purpose. (~100 characters)

• **Project start and end dates**: 

• **Description**: Two sentences about primary project activities, location, outcome/metrics and relevance to conservation. (~500 characters)
  – Clearly state the main activity and the method being used
  – Address a specific habitat, location or species benefitted

• **Abstract**: More detailed description including location, major activities, outcome/metrics, and partners. (~1,500 characters)
  – State what your organization will do
  – Provide context and background information
  – Explain how the project outcomes will specifically address a conservation issue
Narrative

• **Activities**: Elaborate on the primary activities that will be employed through the grant. Explain how these activities are expected to lead to the outcome(s). Describe how these activities relate to established plans (management, conservation, recovery, etc.) and priority conservation needs in the specific project location.

• **Outcome(s)**: Elaborate on the outcome(s) summarized previously in the application; discuss what makes this outcome(s) achievable and important.

• **Tracking Metrics**: Indicate how the project will monitor/assess progress on the metrics selected previously in the application. Please note any challenges or limitations anticipated with tracking the metrics.

• **Project Team**: List key individuals and describe their qualifications relevant for project implementation. (include contractor info is known)

• **Other (Optional)**: Provide any further information important for the review of this proposal

**Most Competitive Narrative Elements:**
- Program Goals and Priorities
- Technical Merit
- Partnership
- Transferability
- Communication
- Funding Need
- Conservation Plan and Context
- Monitoring
- Long-term Sustainability
- Past Success
- Key Personnel
Budget

- Budget represents **only** the grant amount requested from NFWF

- Must comply with OMB’s Uniform Guidance (whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/index.html)

- Itemize all costs in appropriate budget categories. Costs must relate to project activities.

- No lumping costs i.e., ‘All Salaries: $10,000’ Add narrative details to explain costs in budget line items.

- ‘Total Amount Requested’ in Project Information section must equal the ‘Budget Grand Total’ in Budget section

- Budget Narrative must accompany every section of the budget
How-to input additional information in your Budget

- **Travel**
  - **Domestic Airfare - Per Flight**
    - To Seattle from Boston Round Trip: $4,271.00
    - To Anchorage from St. Petersburg Round trip: $2,645.00
    - $1,750.00
    - $895.00

- **Notes**
  - **Domestic Airfare - Per Flight**
    - Travel for one biotech and one volunteer to Seattle from Boston for Killer Whale Conference.
    - Travel for principal investigator to Anchorage from St. Petersburg for site visits.
Review ‘Upload Checklist’ and upload relevant files into Easygrants.

Required:
- IRS-990
- A-133 Audit
- GAAP Audit
- Board of Trustees, Directors or Equivalent
- GAAP audited financial statements

Templates provided for:
- Statement of Litigation
- Full Proposal Narrative

If you don’t have a required document, just upload an explanation on your company letterhead in place of the required document.
All financial documentation must:
• Represent the same fiscal year period
• Must be the most recent financial information available
• Must be less than two years old

For details on what documents you need to submit and for FAQs regarding financial documents, go here:
www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/required-financial-docs.aspx
Application Assistance

Program Homepage:
https://www.nfwf.org/conservationpartners/Pages/home.aspx

RFP:
https://www.nfwf.org/conservationpartners/Pages/CPP2019.aspx

TipSheet:

Technical Assistance / 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.
Timeline

- FULL-Proposal Due Date
  - Wednesday, August 7th 2019, 11:59pm ET/ 10:59 CT
- Review Period
  - August – October
- Awards Announced
  - Mid-November
Contacts

Programmatic Questions

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Application/Easygrants Questions

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