

## **SMALL WATERSHED GRANTS**

### **2021 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

Full Proposal Due Date: *Thursday, April 22, 2021 by 11:59pm ET*

### **OVERVIEW**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program partnership, is soliciting proposals to restore water quality and habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams.

NFWF is soliciting proposals under the **Small Watershed Grants (SWG)** program for projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that promote community-based efforts to protect and restore the diverse natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams. NFWF will award funding through two distinct funding opportunities: **SWG Implementation (SWG-I)** grants of \$50,000-\$500,000 will be awarded for projects that result in direct, on-the-ground actions to protect and restore water quality, species, and habitats in the Bay watershed; **SWG Planning and Technical Assistance (SWG-PTA)** grants up to \$50,000 will be awarded for projects that enhance local capacity to more efficiently and effectively implement future on-the-ground actions through assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities.

NFWF estimates awarding \$8-10 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2021 contingent on the availability of funding. Major funding comes from the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office, with other important contributions by Altria Group, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), U.S. Forest Service, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

All projects must occur wholly within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Priority consideration will be provided to projects located within priority subwatersheds or habitat units based on the unique opportunities to maximize multiple goals and outcomes for water quality, species, and habitats. Specific priority areas have been identified for each of NFWF's major focus areas for the SWG program. Applicants should consult outcome-specific geographic priorities referenced in this Request for Proposals and NFWF's online Chesapeake Bay Business Plan [mapping portal](#) to determine appropriate geographic focus areas for their proposed project activities.



### **PROGRAM PRIORITIES**

Consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership's 2014 [Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement](#), the SWG program supports efforts to achieve water quality improvement, restoration and protection of key Chesapeake Bay species and their habitats, and the fostering of an engaged and



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diverse citizen and stakeholder presence that will build upon and sustain measurable natural resource improvements. NFWF is soliciting proposals that provide measurable contributions for the following selected goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and associated with NFWF's [Chesapeake Bay Business Plan](#) and will place priority emphasis on projects that meaningfully and materially contribute to multiple priority outcomes:

Focus	Outcome	Activity	Geographic Focus
<b>Water Quality</b>	Reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve water quality in agricultural areas by implementing best management practices to reduce polluted runoff</li> <li>- Improve water quality in urban and suburban areas by implementing green stormwater infrastructure practices to treat, capture, and/or store stormwater runoff</li> <li>- Restore riparian buffers in order to continually increase their capacity to provide water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed</li> <li>- Improving the health and function of tributary rivers and streams</li> </ul>	Priority Subwatersheds for Water Quality Improvement
<b>Eastern Brook Trout</b>	Maintain and increase Eastern brook trout populations in stronghold patches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase habitat integrity in stronghold patches through protection and restoration of riparian areas, stream restoration, nonpoint source pollution controls and land use protections (e.g., conservation easements, zoning)</li> </ul>	Eastern Brook Trout Patches (Tier I and II)
<b>American Black Duck</b>	Increase wetland habitat and available food to support wintering black duck populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create, restore, or enhance the function of tidal and non-tidal wetlands to increase black duck carrying capacity through improved food resources</li> <li>- Increase available food resources</li> </ul>	Black Duck Priority Subwatersheds (Tier I and II)
<b>River Herring</b>	Restore access and use of high-quality migratory river and stream habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement high priority, cost-effective connectivity enhancement projects through culvert replacement, fish passage improvements, and dam removal</li> </ul>	Priority Culverts for River Herring
<b>Eastern Oyster</b>	Restore oyster populations in priority Chesapeake Bay tributaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restore native oyster reefs in targeted tributaries through spat production and reef construction</li> </ul>	Oyster Restoration Tributaries
<b>Capacity and Planning</b>	Motivate individuals in the watershed to adopt behaviors that benefit water quality, species, and habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enlist individuals in local volunteer events to restore local natural resources and providing hands-on education and skill-building for individual action</li> <li>- Develop or improve conservation, watershed, or habitat management plans that provide guidance to landowners, organizations, or local governments on how to manage properties and communities for improved conservation outcomes</li> </ul>	N/A

The SWG program will support projects that address one or more of the following strategies through either (1) direct on-the-ground implementation of conservation or restoration actions (**SWG-I** grants) or (2) assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities (**SWG-PTA** grants). SWG-Implementation grants may also include technical assistance-oriented activities necessary to support proposed on-the-ground implementation activities.



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## Strategy 1: Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff

### 1.1. Managing Upland Agricultural Runoff through Farm-Scale Conservation Systems and

**Solutions:** Includes efforts to reduce water quality impacts while simultaneously maintaining or increasing profits, reducing costs, and enhancing financial performance of the region's farms through the implementation of suites of best management practices that reduce pollution at the farm scale. Selected examples include:

- Soil health management systems that combine improved tillage and pasture management, cover crops, crop and livestock rotations, and other practices to increase soil fertility while improving the capacity of crops and soils to reduce runoff and increase nutrient uptake.
- Precision nutrient management systems that fine-tune the rate, source, method, and timing of nutrient applications to maintain or increase crop yields while minimizing nutrient input costs and associated losses to surface and groundwater.
- Certification, labeling, and other sustainable sourcing initiatives that provide price premiums and/or new markets for agricultural products produced in a manner that improves and protects water quality and/or habitats.
- “Whole-farm” conservation systems that package a variety of public and private financial assistance programs to reduce pollution from crop and pasture lands, animal production areas, and high-value natural resource areas like wetlands and riparian areas and significantly improve the environmental performance of the farm.

In working to manage agricultural runoff, interested applicants should generally seek first to utilize existing federal, state, and local cost-share and incentive programs to finance implementation of water quality improvement practices, with NFWF funding for practice implementation used to strategically fill gaps in existing funding programs. Where NFWF funding is sought to cover all or a portion of costs for practice implementation, applicants must describe why other public programs are insufficient or otherwise inappropriate for financing proposed practice implementation.

### 1.2. Managing Upland Urban Runoff through Green Stormwater Infrastructure

**Improvements (GSI):** Includes efforts to assist local governments, nonprofit organizations, community associations, and others, to reduce stormwater runoff on developed lands by implementing GSI practices that capture, store, filter, and treat stormwater runoff through systems and practices that mimic natural hydrologic processes. Examples range from relatively small-scale, distributed practices like rain gardens, conservation landscaping, and urban tree planting that aim to capture stormwater closer to its sources, to more comprehensive stream, floodplain, and wetland restoration projects and retrofits of existing stormwater systems or practices that aim to mitigate stormwater runoff impacts by enhancing ecosystem functions and pollutant removal. Example strategies and approaches include:

- Integrating GSI approaches into capital improvement and maintenance programs for public works, parks and recreation, emergency management, education, transportation, community redevelopment, etc.
- Assisting local governments at the regional or subwatershed scale in the demonstration and development of projects and programs that mitigate stormwater impacts in communities experiencing rapid growth.



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- Promoting stormwater management programs and practice implementation in communities that are currently unregulated for stormwater management.
- Increasing adoption of GSI practices on residential, commercial, and institutional properties through community-based social marketing (CBSM) strategies.

**1.3. Accelerating Innovation in Watershed Management:** Includes in-field application of new technologies and management approaches with the potential to reduce costs, increase nutrient removal efficiencies, and more effectively control emerging nutrient and sediment pollutant sources. Examples include advancements in manure processing and management, market-based solutions to manure management, innovative stormwater practice delivery and design approaches, and improvements in the cost-effectiveness of proven water quality improvement approaches.

## Strategy 2: Riparian and Freshwater Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management

**2.1. Restoring Riparian and Freshwater Habitats through Forested Buffers, Livestock Exclusion, and Stream Restoration:** Includes restoration of degraded riparian buffers to improve water quality, increase stream health and resiliency, and increase populations of priority species across the Chesapeake Bay region through a variety of actions and interventions including but not limited to the following:

- Establish riparian forested buffers, at a minimum standard of 35 feet wide, to slow and intercept polluted surface and groundwater runoff while providing long-term benefits for priority fish species.
- Install livestock exclusion fencing including stream crossings and off-stream watering systems where appropriate, in order to balance livestock management needs with riparian and stream health. Exclusion fencing should be paired with riparian buffer plantings to maximize nutrient and sediment load reductions and benefits to the stream.
- Restore priority stream reaches in both urban and non-urban landscapes to improve stream health, reduce nutrient and sediment loading, and build more resilient stream systems. Stream restoration projects must meet qualifying conditions and up-to-date restoration protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program partnership for creditable nutrient and sediment load reductions under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL (see [Recommendations of the Expert Panel to Define Removal Rates for Individual Stream Restoration Projects](#) and associated protocol updates to determine project eligibility). In addition to standard proposal narratives required for the SWG program, proposals seeking funding for qualifying stream restoration practices must complete and upload the accompanying “Stream Restoration Narrative Supplement” as a part of the application. Additional information is available in **Appendix B**.

**2.2. Increasing Habitat Integrity for Eastern Brook Trout:** In combination with pollution reduction and riparian habitat restoration, includes increases in connectivity within and between stronghold Eastern brook trout patches through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts, and other fish passage improvements as well. In-stream habitat enhancements may also be appropriate where improved habitat integrity will further enhance viable Eastern brook trout populations (see Trout Unlimited’s [Eastern Brook Trout Conservation Portfolio](#) for more information).



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- 2.3. Conserving High-Quality Riparian Corridors:** Includes long-term protection and preservation of these ecosystems by strategically leveraging federal, state, and local land conservation programs through assistance with transaction and due diligence costs, bonus payments for high-value riparian conservation easements and land acquisitions, and incorporation of riparian protection into existing agricultural land preservation programs.

### **Strategy 3: Estuarine and Tidal Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management**

- 3.1. Restoring Large-Scale Oyster Reefs:** Includes assisting efforts to restore and protect large-scale oyster reefs strategically identified by the Maryland, Virginia, and the Chesapeake Bay Program by leveraging funding from federal and state agencies to support oyster larvae and spat production, development of sustainable reef substrate supplies, and reef construction efforts in established oyster reef restoration tributaries.
- 3.2. Restoring River Herring Habitat Connectivity:** In combination with pollution reduction and riparian habitat restoration, includes efforts to increase connectivity and access to spawning habitat along priority migratory corridors for alewife and blueback herring through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts, and other fish passage improvements. NFWF will prioritize cost-effective connectivity enhancements that provide the access to the greatest amount of quality habitat at the lowest cost.
- 3.3. Restoring and Conserving Wetland and Tidal Marsh Habitat for American Black Duck:** Includes restoration of degraded tidal and non-tidal marsh and wetland habitats and strategic conservation of existing high-quality wintering habitats. To address threats to habitat from sea level rise, NFWF will further support strategies that seek to create corridors for future marsh migration through strategic land protection, restoration, and management. In proposing tidal marsh and wetland restoration activities, NFWF will prioritize approaches that maximize habitat benefits for other dependent species including, striped bass and juvenile herring.
- 3.4. Managing Shoreline Erosion and Marsh Loss:** Includes implementation of non-structural or hybrid living shoreline restoration practices that mitigate sediment transport to priority oyster reef restoration sites, establish and expand emergent or submerged aquatic vegetation, and/or help to protect adjacent marsh systems documented as critical black duck wintering habitat.

### **Strategy 4: Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Outcomes**

- 4.1. Regional-Scale Partnership Development:** Includes activities that aim to scale up restoration outcomes through enhanced partnership and coordination across organizations at broader regional and landscape scales. Interested applicants should consider appropriate models and frameworks for their own partnership efforts. For example, [collective impact models](#) provide a basis to develop common conservation, watershed, and habitat management agendas across multiple partner organizations.
- 4.2. Improving Delivery of Outreach and Technical Assistance:** Includes support for conservation districts, nonprofits, local and state governments, and private sector partners to provide technical assistance necessary to achieve NFWF's habitat restoration, conservation, and management goals through field positions, development of targeted outreach strategies such as community-based social marketing, and enhanced coordination and partnership among technical assistance providers to improve efficiency and reduce administrative bottlenecks.



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## Strategy 5: Watershed and Habitat Planning, Prioritization, Design, and Permitting

- 5.1. Assessing Local Watershed and Habitat Restoration Needs and Opportunities:** Includes watershed and habitat assessments, watershed implementation planning, and other planning and prioritization efforts to maximize conservation impact. Priority will be placed on efforts to translate Bay pollution reduction goals to local implementation plans, along with efforts to identify habitat restoration opportunities for NFWF's priority species at a local level. Examples include small watershed restoration plans, property or farm-level conservation and stormwater management plans, patch-level population and habitat assessments for Eastern brook trout, culvert and barrier assessments in priority rivers for river herring, and wetlands restoration and protection assessments to maximize black duck population outcomes.
- 5.2. Designing and Permitting Watershed and Habitat Improvements:** Includes strategic assistance to local partners for costs associated with design and permitting for high-impact restoration and management actions. NFWF has specific interest in design approaches that integrate multiple species and/or habitat objectives and therefore provide meaningful contributions to multiple programmatic goals and outcomes.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, NFWF has provided a list of metrics in *Easygrants* for grantees to choose from for reporting. For the SWG-Implementation program, awardees will be required to report both project-level metrics via *Easygrants* and more detailed site and practice-level data via [FieldDoc.org](https://www.fielddoc.org/) (see below for additional details), as applicable. NFWF understands that applicants may utilize a variety of tools and methods to estimate proposed nutrient and sediment load reductions other than FieldDoc and simply requires sufficient justification in either the project narrative or *Easygrants* metrics interface detailing the basis for estimated load reductions.

For a complete list of applicable metrics, see **Appendix A**. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project. It is in the applicant's best interest to be selective of the most meaningful and well-aligned metrics with the project objectives and outcomes. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Sydney Godbey at [sydney.godbey@nfwf.org](mailto:sydney.godbey@nfwf.org) or (202) 857-0166, to discuss acceptable alternatives.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

#### *Small Watershed Grants – Implementation*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, and K-12 educational institutions.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, state government agencies, institutions of higher education, businesses, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.



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### *Small Watershed Grants – Planning and Technical Assistance*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, and educational institutions.
- ✓ While eligible applicants include state government agencies and post-secondary educational institutions, funded activities are intended to support future implementation efforts of non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions only. Accordingly, applications submitted by state government agencies or post-secondary educational institutions entities must document support and/or request for proposed activities by appropriate non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions.
- ✓ Non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations and K-12 education institutions seeking potential service providers may visit our website in March 2021 for an updated listing of technical service providers offering assistance locating potential providers.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, unincorporated individuals, for-profit entities and international organizations.

### • **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. 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.

## **FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH**

NFWF will award \$8-10 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2021. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants Implementation program will range from \$50,000 to \$500,000 each, with a non-federal matching requirement equal to one-third of the grant request. All 2020 SWG-Implementation grants must be completed within two years of grant award. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants-Planning and Technical Assistance program will be no more than \$50,000 each, with no non-federal matching requirement. All 2021 SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance grants must be completed within one year of grant award.



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## EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness, and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. Proposals will then be evaluated uniquely based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria for each SWG program.

### Criteria #1 – Conservation Outcomes

- **SWG-Implementation:** Project will clearly and demonstrably result in meaningful on-the-ground implementation of conservation and/or restoration actions that contribute to priority outcomes of NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund and the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (see page 2). Where possible and appropriate, the proposal simultaneously contributes measurable and meaningful implementation actions supporting multiple priority outcomes.
- **SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance:** Project will result in the delivery of planning and technical assistance products and services that meaningfully advance potential conservation or restoration implementation efforts. In considering beneficiaries of requested services, there is a demonstrated need for services and a clear commitment to utilize services to support future implementation efforts.
- **All:** Project supports new and existing partnerships working to advance conservation and restoration actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- **All:** Project incorporates plans and approaches to implement, verify and sustain conservation and restoration actions and outcomes beyond the timeframe of the grant.
- **All:** Project conveys a clear communications plan that will actively transfer and disseminate project-related information to appropriate audiences and relevant stakeholders within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, with the goal of expanding adoption of successful approaches.

### Criteria #2 – Budget

- The quality and level of detail in the budget and budget narrative provide a clear and detailed understanding of the proposed funding request.
- Proposal demonstrates cost-effectiveness in achieving its proposed outcomes, considering both direct and indirect costs in the proposed budget.
- Proposed costs are reasonable based on the work plan, local or regional costs for similar activities, and commensurate with project outcomes.
- Budget clearly indicates the degree of partnership in conducting the proposed work, including funding for project partners, stakeholders, and community members, as appropriate.
- Proposed funding request is well leveraged by the partners and other contributors through cash-, in-kind, and other match.
- The federal government has determined that a de minimis 10% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a NICRA, as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize ALL proposals with indirect rates above 10% for cost-effectiveness.

### Criteria #3 – Technical

- Proposal provides specific goals that correlate with a clear, logical and achievable work plan, milestones, and timeline.



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- Proposed project team has the core competencies necessary to implement the proposed activities and achieve the proposed outcomes as well as the commitment to engage technical experts necessary to ensure activities are scientifically and technically sound and feasible.
- Proposal demonstrates an understanding of necessary permitting and environmental compliance requirements and the ability to obtain necessary approvals consistent with the proposed work plan and timeline.
- Applicant organization has demonstrated an ability to manage and implement similar projects on time and within budget.

## OTHER

**Nutrient and Sediment Load Reductions** – All SWG-Implementation projects proposing to implement water quality improvements must demonstrate reductions of nutrient and sediment pollution to local rivers and streams, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. To assist applicants in generating credible nutrient and sediment load reduction estimates, NFWF has partnered with the Chesapeake Commons and Maryland Department of Natural Resource to develop [FieldDoc](#), a user-friendly tool that allows consistent planning, tracking, and reporting of water quality improvement activities and associated nutrient and sediment load reductions from proposed grant projects.

FieldDoc currently includes functionality for a significant share of water quality improvement practices approved by the Chesapeake Bay Program for the purposes of TMDL crediting. Unless otherwise approved by NFWF staff, NFWF expects all projects proposing to implement on-the-ground water quality improvements to utilize FieldDoc to calculate estimated load reductions included in their application. When setting up proposed projects in FieldDoc, please be sure to list your application's 5-digit Easygrants number in the FieldDoc project title.

Upon grant award, NFWF will require all projects submitted under this solicitation to utilize FieldDoc for tracking and reporting of applicable water quality improvement activities during the course of their grant project. For technical support on FieldDoc utilization during the proposal development process, please contact the Commons at [support@chesapeakecommons.org](mailto:support@chesapeakecommons.org). Further help documentation can be found on our [website](#).

**Practice Specifications** – Unless otherwise noted, all conservation and restoration practices implemented through the SWG program must conform to established and recognized standards and practices specifications (e.g., NRCS practice standards, state stormwater manuals and retrofit guidance, approved Chesapeake Bay Program BMP Expert Panel reports). Applicants must note where proposed practices will deviate from established standards and provide reasonable justification for why an alternative is necessary.

**Partnership and Community Engagement** – Project engages diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant partners to ensure the long-term sustainability and success of the project, integration into local 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, consistent with Chesapeake Bay Program's [Diversity Outcome Management](#) Strategy. For more information on opportunities to align project activities with environmental justice needs and opportunities, applicants are encouraged to use [EJ Screen](#), EPA's environmental justice screening and mapping tool and



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[Environmental Justice and Equity Dashboard](#), Chesapeake Bay Program's consolidated mapping tool.

**Monitoring** – NFWF may implement independent monitoring efforts in the future to measure the environmental outcomes from projects funded under this solicitation. Award recipients may be asked to facilitate granting of access to project sites for NFWF or its designees for future environmental monitoring purposes.

**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.

**Matching Contributions** – Matching Contributions consist of 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 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.

**Compliance Requirements** – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and 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 monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation ([www.epa.gov/quality](http://www.epa.gov/quality)). [Examples of data collection or use](#) which requires a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP):

- New data collection.
- Existing data use (a new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups).



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- Data collection and analysis associated with development or design of plans and projects e.g. fish passage, watershed or water quality/habitat restoration project plans etc.
- Water or other environmental monitoring.
- Model development or use etc.

No data collection or use may begin until a QAPP is approved and on file. Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task. Plan to submit at least QAPPs several months in advance of data collection and analysis to allow for any needed comments and revisions to be made before final QAPP approval. If funded by the Small Watershed Grants program, general assistance will be available to projects to help with scoping and review of the draft QAPPs advance of submission for approval. Please contact [stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org](mailto:stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org) if you have any questions about whether your project would require a QAPP.

**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 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 it is received by NFWF.

## TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change and contingent on the availability of funding. Please check the Program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information (<http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake>).

Applicant Webinar ([Registration](#))  
FieldDoc Webinar ([Registration](#))  
Proposal Due Date  
Proposal Review Period  
Awards Announced

*Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>, 3:30 ET*  
*Thursday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm ET*  
*Thursday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>, 11:59pm ET*  
*April – August*  
*September (anticipated)*

## 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](http://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.
2. Once on your homepage, click the "Apply for Funding" button and select this RFP's "Funding Opportunity" from the list of options.



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- Follow the instructions in Easygrants to complete your application. Once an application has been started, it may be saved and returned to at a later time 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 at <http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake>. Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's "Applicant Information" page (<http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx>). Please disable the pop-up blocker on your internet browser prior to beginning the application process.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact Jake Reilly ([jake.reilly@nfwf.org](mailto:jake.reilly@nfwf.org)), Stephanie Heidbreder ([stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org](mailto:stephanie.heidbreder@nfwf.org)) or Sydney Godbey ([sydney.godbey@nfwf.org](mailto:sydney.godbey@nfwf.org)) via e-mail or by phone at (202) 857-0166.

NFWF also offers on-demand, field-based project and partnership development support through [field liaisons](#), providing broad geographic coverage across the Bay region for agricultural conservation, urban stormwater management, wetland and watershed science, and habitat experience and expertise relevant to Bay restoration goals. Applicants may also contact these field liaisons using the information below to discuss potential projects:

Field Liaison Contact	Email	Phone	Sector Expertise
Kristen Saacke Blunk	<a href="mailto:kristen@headwaters-llc.org">kristen@headwaters-llc.org</a>	(814) 360-9766	• All Sectors
Kristen Hughes Evans	<a href="mailto:kristen@susches.org">kristen@susches.org</a>	(804) 544-3457	• Agricultural Conservation
Liz Feinberg	<a href="mailto:liz.feinberg63@gmail.com">liz.feinberg63@gmail.com</a>	(610) 212-2345	• All Sectors
David Hirschman	<a href="mailto:dave@hirschmanwater.com">dave@hirschmanwater.com</a>	(434) 409-0993	• Stormwater/Urban Sector
Katie Ombalski	<a href="mailto:katie@woodswaters.com">katie@woodswaters.com</a>	(814) 574-7281	• Agricultural Conservation • Habitat Restoration

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto: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 to which you are applying, and a description of the issue.



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## Appendix A

### Applicable Metrics Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program

Strategy	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (Required of all INSR applicants)	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs N/P/S avoided (annually)</b>	Please use FieldDoc to develop estimates of the annual nitrogen, phosphorus, and/or sediment load reductions from your proposed project. Enter FieldDoc-generated pollutant load reduction totals in this field then upload your FieldDoc Project Summary in the "Uploads" section.
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (select all that apply)	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs</b>	Enter the total number of acres under agricultural or non-urban BMPs to reduce nutrient or sediment loading. Do not double-count individual acres which have multiple BMPs. If you're implementing load reduction practices on urban lands, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs" metric.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs</b>	Enter total drainage area treated by stormwater BMPs. If you wish to also provide the extent of specific BMPs themselves (i.e. square feet of bioretention), please do so in the "Notes" section.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Volume stormwater prevented</b>	Enter the number of gallons of stormwater runoff treated through stormwater BMPs (e.g. runoff treatment volume).
	<b>CBSF- Green Infrastructure - number of trees planted</b>	Enter the number of trees planted for urban stormwater reduction.
<b>Riparian and Freshwater Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management</b> (select all that apply)	<b>CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored</b>	Enter the number miles of riparian habitat restored through the implementation of forest or grass buffers that are at least 35 feet wide. If you are implementing livestock exclusion, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock exclusion -- miles of fencing installed" metric.
	<b>CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed</b>	Enter the number of miles of livestock exclusion installed. Assume activities include exclusion fencing and a 35-foot forest or grass buffer, unless otherwise noted.
	<b>CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored</b>	Enter the number of miles of stream restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program.
	<b>CBSF - Floodplain restoration - Acres restored</b>	Enter the number of acres of floodplain restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the Chesapeake Bay Program. Also report any associated linear stream restoration outcomes through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	<b>CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored</b>	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced.
	<b>CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened</b>	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as number of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species.
	<b>CBSF - Instream habitat restoration - Miles restored</b>	Enter the number of miles of instream habitat restoration activities not otherwise creditable for nutrient and sediment load reduction. Projects implementing qualifying stream restoration practices for TMDL crediting should instead report those outcomes instead through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	<b>CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement</b>	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr).
	<b>CBSF - Land, wetland restoration - Number of trees planted</b>	Enter the number of trees planted for all non-urban projects/practices.



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Strategy	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
Estuarine and Tidal Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management (select all that apply)	CBSF - American oyster - Marine habitat restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of native oyster reef restored.
	CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced.
	CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as # of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species.
	CBSF - Erosion control - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of tidal shoreline stabilized or restored through erosion control, including living shoreline restoration. Projects implementing qualifying stream restoration practices for TMDL crediting should instead report those outcomes instead through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr).
Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Outcomes (select all that apply)	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of individuals reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how individuals are reached (newsletter mailing list total, training attendance, etc.).
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of individuals measured as demonstrating changed behavior to benefit watershed restoration and protection. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how behavior change will be measured and tracked. If you have questions on whether your project contains behavior change activities, please contact NFWF staff.
	CBSF - Volunteer participation - # volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in project implementation, outreach, and education activities.
Watershed and Habitat Planning, Prioritization, Design, and Permitting (select all that apply)	CBSF - Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed	Enter the number of conservation, watershed, and/or habitat management plans developed or improved. In the "Notes" section, provide specific information on the aggregate areal extent of associated plans (e.g. acres, square miles), and the number and areal extent of contributing planning activities.
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of individuals reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how individuals are reached (newsletter mailing list total, training attendance, etc.).
	CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of individuals measured as demonstrating changed behavior to benefit watershed restoration and protection. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how behavior change will be measured and tracked. If you have questions on whether your project contains behavior change activities, please contact NFWF staff.

\* *Easygrants* metrics should be consistent with data entered into and/or derived from [FieldDoc.org](https://www.fielddoc.org/).



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## Appendix B

### Stream Restoration Resources Checklist

- **Recommendations of the Expert Panel to Define Removal Rates for Individual Stream Restoration Projects** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2013/05/stream-restoration-merged.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2013/05/stream-restoration-merged.pdf))
- **Consensus Recommendations for Improving the Application of the Prevented Sediment Protocol for Urban Stream Restoration Projects Built for Pollutant Removal Credit** ([https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2020/03/PROTOCOL-1-MEMO\\_WQGIT-Approved\\_revised-2.27.20\\_clean\\_w-appendices.pdf](https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2020/03/PROTOCOL-1-MEMO_WQGIT-Approved_revised-2.27.20_clean_w-appendices.pdf))
- **Appendix B Protocol 1 Supplemental Details** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-B.-Protocol-1-Supplemental-Details.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-B.-Protocol-1-Supplemental-Details.pdf))
- **Recommended Methods to Verify Stream Restoration Practices Built for Pollutant Crediting in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed** ([https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2019/07/Approved-Verification-Memo-061819.pdf](https://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/07/Approved-Verification-Memo-061819.pdf))
- **Appendix C Protocol 2 and 3 Supplemental Details** ([http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-C.-Protocol-2-and-3-Supplemental-Details.pdf](http://chesapeakestormwater.net/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2015/03/Appendix-C.-Protocol-2-and-3-Supplemental-Details.pdf))
- **Additional Guidance on a Function-Based Assessment Approach.** This guidance from Harman (2018) provides a conceptual approach for determining the restoration potential of a specific project. This information is provided as guidance to aid in understanding the full context of stream restoration projects. There is a link at the end of the article to download detailed guidance and checklists for the Function-Based Framework outlined in the article. As stated above, NFWF does not mandate this particular methodology, and it is offered as an educational resource. It is one example of the type of strategic thinking, assessment, and design that will lead to more successful stream restoration projects. ([https://stream-mechanics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Determining-Restoration-Potential\\_V4.pdf](https://stream-mechanics.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Determining-Restoration-Potential_V4.pdf))
- Detailed guidance on the **Function-Based Rapid Assessment Method** as well checklist forms for the catchment assessment and reach-scale function-based assessment (<https://stream-mechanics.com/stream-functions-pyramid-framework/>)