



# Chesapeake WILD Grants Program

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## FUNDING PARTNERS

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

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than more than 6,800 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$10 billion. NFWF is an equal opportunity provider.

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



Brook trout

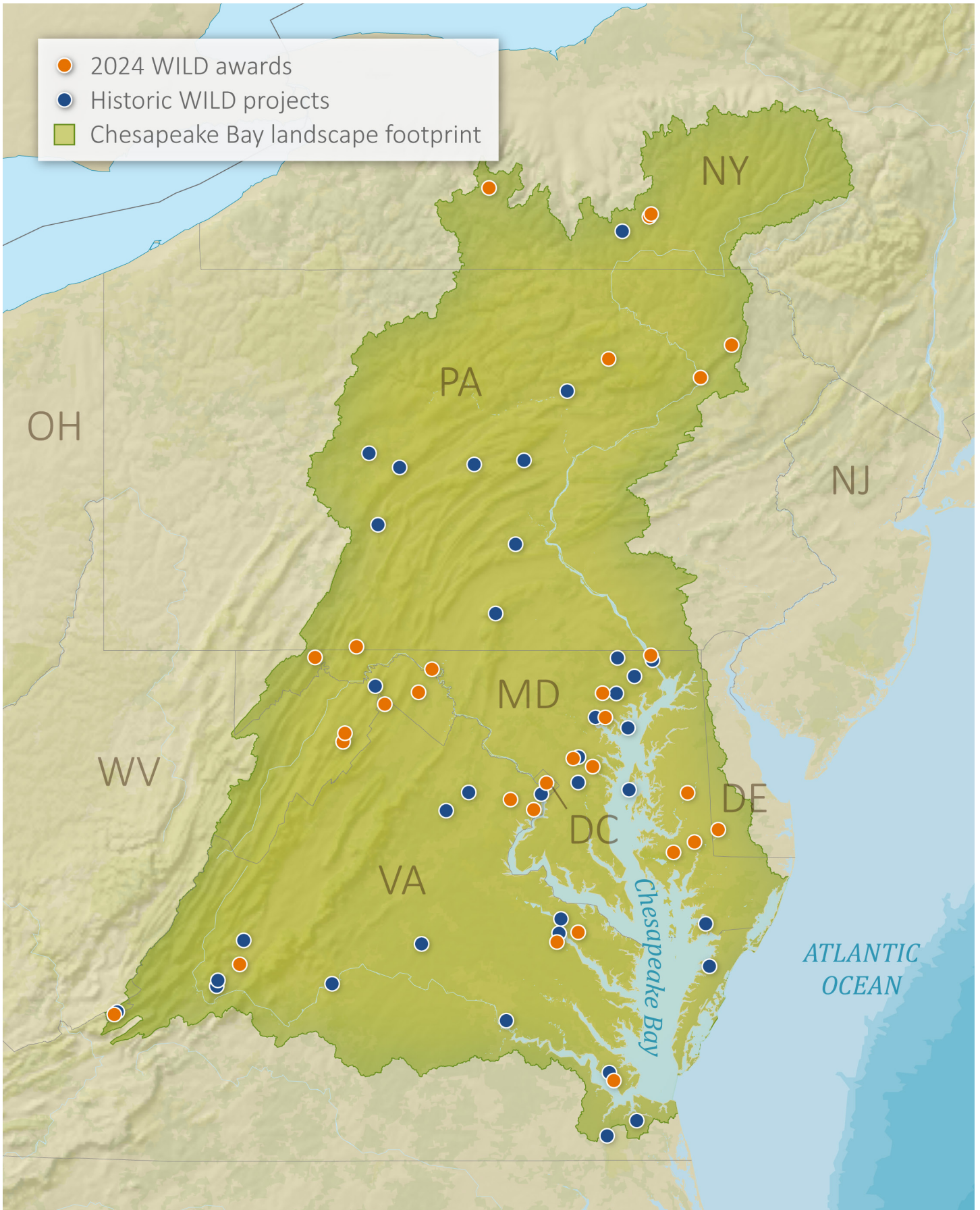
## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and U.S Fish and Wildlife Service announced a 2024-year round of funding for the new Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) projects. Thirty new conservation and restoration grants totaling \$8.9 million were awarded. The 30 awards announced leveraged \$13.7 million in match from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of \$22.6 million.

The new Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) Grants program, authorized in late 2020, supports efforts to sustain natural resources and human communities, build capacity to address shared restoration and conservation priorities, and implementation of projects to conserve, steward, and enhance fish and wildlife habitats and related values throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

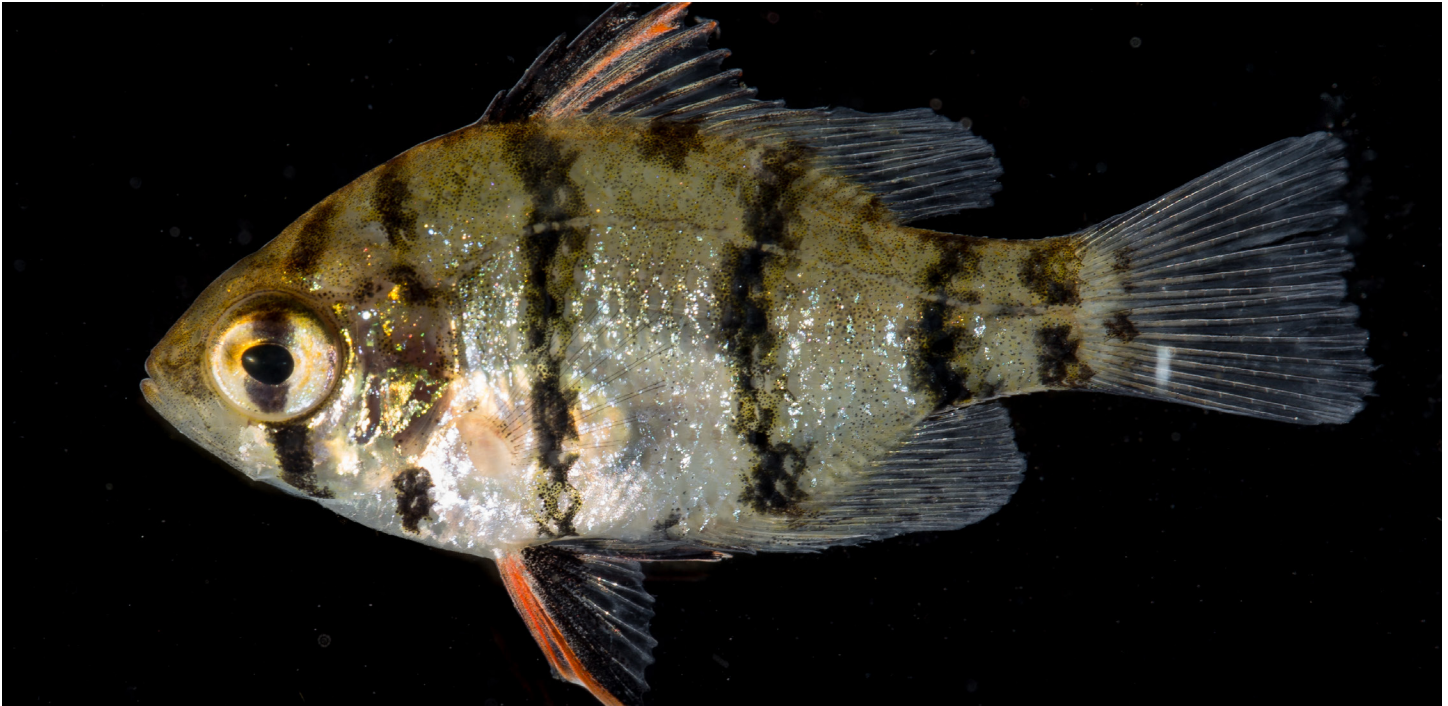
NFWF manages the Chesapeake WILD Grants program in partnership with government agencies and private corporations and in close coordination with the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership and federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program partnership. Major funding for the Chesapeake WILD Grants program is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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Blackbanded sunfish

**WILD PLANNING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE**

**Assessing Brook Trout Habitat in the Cohocton and Owego Watersheds (NY)**

Grantee: Trout Unlimited  
 Grant Amount:.....\$75,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$8,300  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$83,300

Collect and assess data on habitat conditions and trout populations in the Cohocton River and Owego Creek watersheds to improve habitat for brook trout and plan for future restoration in collaboration with New York’s Department of Conservation. Project will evaluate habitat conditions and trout biomass to plan strategic reconnection and restoration projects and create direct community outreach and involvement through citizen science data collection.

**Building Capacity to Protect Biodiversity in West Virginia’s Cacapon Watershed**

Grantee: Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust  
 Grant Amount:.....\$74,100  
 Matching Funds:.....\$43,700  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$117,800

Develop and implement strategies to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystem services in West Virginia’s Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed, which is recognized as a landscape with high watershed integrity, climate resilience, biodiversity and species migration values. Project will hire a technical consultant to implement the recently completed strategic Cacapon Watershed Conservation Plan, collect monitoring data, and advance adaptive manage to improve conservation outcomes over time.

**Building Capacity for Rare Freshwater Fish Conservation in the Chesapeake Bay (MD)**

Grantee: Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
 Grant Amount:.....\$74,900  
 Matching Funds:.....\$11,400  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$86,300

Collaborate to conserve endangered blackbanded sunfish through translocation, a captive propagation program, and identifying additional habitats for reintroduction in Maryland and Delaware. Project will plant 1,500 Atlantic white cedar trees within 20 acres of wetland habitat, establish two propagation facilities for future reintroductions, assess 10 sites to determine baseline conditions, and engage eight local community organizations and regional partners in planning sessions.

**Building Collaborative Capacity to Manage Invasive Species Habitats in Washington, D.C.**

Grantee: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
 Grant Amount:.....\$59,700  
 Matching Funds:.....\$40,100  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$99,800

Engage local communities in metro Washington, D.C., to create community-based invasive-species management plans. Project will collaborate to create invasive-species management work plans for imperiled species habitat at significant ecological sites, build invasives management capacity through learning and certification, and prevent future degradation by creating and maintaining an early detection and rapid response system for parks in each community.

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**Building Community Awareness and Addressing Habitat Loss in Baltimore, Maryland**

Grantee: Friends of Herring Run Parks  
 Grant Amount:.....\$74,800  
 Matching Funds:.....\$22,700  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$97,500  
 Address widespread degradation and habitat loss in the Lower Herring Run Park in northeast Baltimore through community-based assessment and planning. Project will build community awareness and involvement, connect underserved residents with local resources and bring all stakeholders together to map out durable solutions to the decades of disinvestment that have been destroying critical watershed habitats and excluding residents from engaging in accessible outdoor recreation and education.

**Conservation Planning for Eastern Hellbender and Native Turtle Habitats in Pennsylvania State Parks**

Grantee: The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission  
 Grant Amount:.....\$75,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$6,400  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$81,400  
 Conduct site-specific habitat management planning to prepare for future on-the-groundwork to benefit wood turtles, spotted turtles, eastern box turtles and eastern hellbenders. Project will improve existing knowledge of habitat use by these species within several Pennsylvania state parks and forests to provide a blueprint for plans to improve and maintain habitat for these four species.

**Conserving At-Risk Mussel Species in the Upper Susquehanna River Watershed (NY, PA)**

Grantee: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:.....\$74,900  
 Matching Funds:.....\$172,400  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$247,300  
 Develop a strategy to improve conditions for freshwater mussels and other priority species in the upper portion of the Susquehanna River watershed. Project will collect distribution data through surveys, examine existing threats to the mussel population, and finalize an action plan for next steps for freshwater mussel conservation and community engagement around aquatic conservation.

**Developing Resilience Corridors to Improve Wildlife Habitat and Human Wellbeing (DC)**

Grantee: Casey Trees  
 Grant Amount:.....\$48,800  
 Matching Funds:.....\$5,900  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$54,700  
 Develop a broader understanding of nature-based solutions for climate resilience in Washington, D.C., among government, nonprofit and civic decision makers, resulting in projects to support resilient urban habitat. Project will host two cross-sector planning sessions to share local knowledge, highlight



Spotted turtle

opportunities to protect habitat and improve flooding resilience, and create a story map and planning document for local nonprofits and community groups.

**Feasibility Study and Design Plan for Dam Removal to Benefit Chesapeake Logperch (MD)**

Grantee: USFWS  
 Grant Amount:.....\$75,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$0  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$75,000  
 Conduct a feasibility study and produce a design plan for the removal of the Camp Conowingo dam to benefit the Chesapeake logperch and other imperiled species. Project will conduct educational outreach with the Girl Scouts of Central Maryland and design a dam removal plan to open 62 miles of habitat, improve resiliency of Conowingo Creek and improve public access to recreational activities.

**Increasing Capacity to Accelerate Strategic Land Conservation on Virginia’s Northern Neck**

Grantee: Northern Neck Land Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:.....\$75,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$27,500  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$102,500  
 Advance land protection along the Potomac and Rappahannock Rivers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and increase regional and organizational capacity to sustain land protection and stewardship in the future. Project will increase outreach capacity, conduct targeted outreach events, and upgrade the land conservation prioritization maps to accelerate the number of permanent conservations recorded each year on private land and protect critical habitat in Virginia.

### **Preserving Tribal Heritage and Improving Habitat on the Lower Eastern Shore (MD, VA)**

Grantee: Upstream Alliance

Grant Amount:.....\$75,000

Matching Funds:..... \$0

Total Project Amount:.....\$75,000

Design a conservation initiative to preserve cultural heritage and protect and restore habitat for salt marsh sparrow, black duck and other priority species along the lower shore of the Chesapeake Bay. Project will work in collaboration with the Accohannock Indian Tribe of Maryland and partners to create a plan that strengthens Tribal community engagement in conservation efforts, promotes environmental and cultural awareness, and fosters equitable recreation opportunities.

### **WILD IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Advancing Grassland Restoration and Conservation on Virginia's Working Lands**

Grantee: Smithsonian Institution-National Zoological Park

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

Matching Funds:..... \$710,500

Total Project Amount:.....\$1,210,500

Promote a suite of Best Management Practices that benefit grassland birds while building healthier farms and facilitating more functional and productive ecosystems. Project will advance improved grasslands management and other agricultural conservation practices on more than 4,000 acres and permanently protect more than 2,000 acres of managed grassland habitat.

#### **Aligning Partnerships to Address Conservation Priorities in the Upper Susquehanna Watershed (NY, PA)**

Grantee: Tioga County Soil and Water Conservation District

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

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

Total Project Amount:.....\$1,250,000

Strengthen collaboration and impact of conservation groups engaged in habitat stewardship and enhancement across the Upper Susquehanna River watershed. Project will enhance collaboration among more than 30 organizations to conserve more than 1,000 acres of land, restore 25 acres of riparian forest buffer and 5 acres of wetland and create 44 miles of improved public access reaching at least 16,000 people.

#### **Building Community Awareness and Engagement to Protect Imperiled Bird Species Habitat in Virginia**

Grantee: The Mariners' Museum and Park

Grant Amount:..... \$364,400

Matching Funds:..... \$365,100

Total Project Amount:..... \$729,500

Collaborate with community partners to implement community education and engagement events that will

restore and enhance habitats for imperiled bird species in Mariners' Museum and Park in Newport News, Virginia. Project will engage partners and more than 8,500 individuals and students to eradicate invasive species and restore 100 acres of critical forest and wildlife habitat, provide environmental education and increase exposure to green career pathways for underserved youth.

#### **Conserving Brook Trout Populations in Maryland (MD)**

Grantee: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

Grant Amount:..... \$238,900

Matching Funds:..... \$239,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$477,900

Protect forest and agricultural lands within native brook trout watersheds, restore riparian buffers, and improve aquatic organism passage to reconnect coldwater habitats. Project will engage underserved youth groups in western Maryland through 10 environmental education events, reconnect 1.4 miles of stream through a fish friendly crossing project, plant 42 acres of trees, and protect 200 acres of land through a conservation easement.

#### **Conserving Farmland Raptors in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (MD, PA)**

Grantee: Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association

Grant Amount:..... \$246,000

Matching Funds:..... \$299,600

Total Project Amount:..... \$545,600

Enhance nesting opportunities for imperiled farmland raptors within the Chesapeake Bay watershed, particularly the barn owl, American kestrel and northern harrier. Project will deploy 180 nest boxes in watershed restoration areas, work with watershed partners to conduct landowner outreach and public education to promote farmland raptor conservation and watershed improvements and share live webcam footage from an active box.

#### **Conserving and Restoring Imperiled Species in the Anacostia River (DC, MD)**

Grantee: Anacostia Watershed Society

Grant Amount:..... \$271,600

Matching Funds:..... \$140,000

Total Project Amount:..... \$411,600

Restore and protect four native wildlife and plant species of the Anacostia River watershed. Project will restore 2 acres of American wild rice, prepare 8,000 freshwater mussels for release into the river and release 45,000 American shad fry, conduct community outreach and recreation events to educate and connect the community, and develop and implement methodology for tracking impacts of sea-level rise on wild rice populations and the marshlands in the Anacostia River.





American eel

### Improving Eel Passage on the Potomac River (MD, WV)

Grantee: Interstate Commission on the Potomac River Basin  
 Grant Amount:..... \$419,300  
 Matching Funds:..... \$725,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,144,800

Restore access of the American eel to historic habitat in the western Potomac River watershed. Project will open more than 1,500 miles of upstream river and stream habitat for eel and other migratory fish species.

### Expanding State Game Lands for Species Conservation in Northeast Pennsylvania

Grantee: The Conservation Fund, A Nonprofit Corporation  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$500,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,000,000

Permanently protect the 1,800-acre Carbondale Ridge property located north of Carbondale in northeastern Pennsylvania. Project will create a 4,000-acre wildlife corridor that will improve wildlife habitat for at-risk species such as northern long-eared bats and ruffed grouse, provide close to home outdoor recreation opportunities, and enhance water quality of the Chesapeake Bay drainage area of Susquehanna and Lackawanna River watersheds.

### Improving Forest Habitat in the Chesapeake with Woodland Stewardship Networks (MD, PA, VA, WV)

Grantee: Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$368,900  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$868,900

Improve forest landscape management by utilizing collaborative networks of woodland owners to scale forest management outcomes. Project will improve planning and management of more than 3,000 acres of forestland

by providing free forest management plans to members of established regional woodland stewardship networks, and facilitating funding to implement forest management practices that are not otherwise commercially profitable.

### Incentivizing Habitat Restoration on Working Lands in Maryland

Grantee: Maryland Department of Agriculture  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,250,000

Incentivize adoption of agricultural conservation practices on working lands in Maryland to benefit rare and declining species. Project will restore 500 acres of riparian habitat, 500 acres of wetlands and implement more than 1,000 acres of wildlife habitat improvement practices.

### Preserving Recreational Access and Wildlife Habitat at Campbell's Ledge (PA)

Grantee: The Trust for Public Land  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$506,200  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,006,200

Permanently protect the 246-acre Campbell's Ledge property in the Borough of Duryea in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania. Project will partner with public agencies and conservation organizations to retain the site's biodiversity, habitat integrity, and iconic landscape, and provide multiple public access benefits.

### Protecting Dragon Run Wildlife Corridor for Habitat and Water Quality Improvements (VA)

Grantee: Chesapeake Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$1,350,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,850,000

Permanently protect critical conservation lands in the Dragon Run watershed in Virginia. Project will protect habitat for critical imperiled species, connect and maintain the resilience of fish and wildlife habitats under pressure from encroaching development and climate change, and improve water quality of a major Chesapeake Bay tributary.

### Protecting Forests and Working Lands to Restore James Spiny Mussel Habitat (WV)

Grantee: The West Virginia Land Trust  
 Grant Amount:..... \$269,500  
 Matching Funds:..... \$148,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$417,500

Protect 540 acres of working farms and forests in Potts Creek Valley harboring West Virginia populations of the imperiled James River spiny mussel. Project will host a public outreach and education field workshop with conservation partners and landowners and install a kiosk at the Rail-Trail parking lot to showcase the valley's conservation values and partners work protecting them.

**Protecting Marsh Migration Corridors for Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (MD)**

Grantee: Eastern Shore Land Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$750,000  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$1,250,000

Protect the migration corridor between Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge and the Nanticoke River by conducting targeted outreach and completing conservation easements in the region. Project will identify and protect approximately 500 acres of land, with selection criteria focusing on protection of important wildlife habitat and restoration of wildlife-focused green infrastructure in Dorchester County, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland.

**Protecting Native Brook Trout in the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia**

Grantee: Trout Unlimited  
 Grant Amount:..... \$439,900  
 Matching Funds:..... \$230,000  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$669,900

Leverage partnership to expand and protect existing watershed-scale restoration efforts to benefit native brook trout strongholds in West Virginia. Project will mitigate three barriers to aquatic organism passage on Halfmoon Run and reconnect more than 4 miles of headwater sources on public lands, restore 0.75 miles of instream brook trout habitat, and enroll at least 50 acres of land in a brook trout focused conservation easement pilot project in the Cacapon and Lost River watershed.

**Protecting Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat Through Conservation Easements in Pennsylvania**

Grantee: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$1,321,600  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$1,821,600

Protect critical habitat for imperiled species in western Pennsylvania’s Chesapeake Bay watershed through fee acquisitions and conservation easements. Project will protect more than 1,000 acres of habitat for imperiled species, along with forested slopes and riparian areas along West Creek, to benefit wood turtle, brook trout, Indiana bat, Allegheny woodrat, golden-winged warbler, cerulean warbler, freshwater mussels and other invertebrates.

**Restoring Forest Canopy in South River Greenway, Maryland**

Grantee: Scenic Rivers Land Trust  
 Grant Amount:..... \$322,600  
 Matching Funds:.....\$1,611,900  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$1,934,500

Restore forest habitat along the South River Greenway in Anne Arundel County, Maryland, to benefit wood thrush and other imperiled birds identified in Maryland’s State Wildlife Action Plan. Project will provide conservation work experience to citizens reentering society from incarceration,

restore more than 32 acres of forest and plant native species needed to prevent invasive plant regeneration.

**Restoring Wetland and Fish Passage on Short Hills Indigenous Land (VA)**

Grantee: NDPonics  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$1,560,000  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$2,060,000

Permanently protect and advance habitat restoration on 800 acres of indigenous-owned forest and wetland in Rockbridge County, Virginia. Project will build a fish passage remediation of several dozen springs to reconnect 2.5 miles of brook trout stream to the remainder of cedar creek, protect the landscape, wetlands and springs to reconnect the aquatic ecosystem.

**Wildlife Habitat Conservation in the Cacapon and Lost Rivers Watershed (WV)**

Grantee: Cacapon and Lost Rivers Land Trust  
 Grant Amount:..... \$500,000  
 Matching Funds:.....\$1,047,700  
 Total Project Amount:.....\$1,547,700

Conserve terrestrial and aquatic wildlife habitats in the Cacapon and Lost Rivers watershed of West Virginia. Project will protect 2,000 acres of priority habitat for species of greatest conservation need in West Virginia, foster collaboration between state and federal agencies to explore funding mechanisms for conservation easement purchases and staff capacity, and offer landowners financial incentives to expand and enhance riparian corridors.



Golden-winged warbler