



FIVE STAR AND URBAN WATERS RESTORATION GRANT PROGRAM

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: **January 30 2025, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC), in cooperation with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), USDA Forest Service (USFS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production, FedEx, and Southern Company are pleased to solicit applications for the 2025 Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration program. This program will award approximately \$2.5 million in grants nationwide.

The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration grant program seeks to develop community capacity to sustain local natural resources for future generations by providing modest financial assistance to diverse local partnerships focused on improving water quality, watersheds and the species and habitats they support.

Projects include a variety of ecological improvements along with targeted community outreach, education and stewardship. Ecological improvements may include one or more of the following: wetland, riparian, forest and coastal habitat restoration; wildlife conservation, community tree canopy enhancement, wildlife habitat, urban agriculture and community gardens, wildlife and water quality monitoring and green infrastructure best management practices for managing run-off.

Projects should increase access to the benefits of nature, reduce the impact of environmental hazards and engage local communities, particularly underserved communities, in project planning, outreach and implementation. This program expects that applicants will represent a mixture of urban and rural communities. NFWF may use a mix of public and private funding sources to support any grant made through this program and we expect that more than half of projects awarded will engage underserved communities.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Grants for this program are available nationwide, but additional funding is available for the geographic priorities listed in the Funding Availability section of this RFP.



PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Proposals should address at least one bullet under **each** of the five following bolded priorities:

On-the-Ground Restoration

Projects must restore and/or create wetlands, coastal or riparian areas:

- Address key species and habitats and link directly to established watershed and conservation plans, including establishment of urban wildlife corridors, fisheries and daylighting of streams.
- Address stressors through restoration techniques and green infrastructure practices that manage stormwater and rural run-off and link directly to stormwater management plans, source water protection plans and water supply planning efforts¹ or demonstrate the linkage between restoration and stormwater management and the quality, quantity and safety of local water and waterways
- Create and enhance community agriculture spaces that support pollinator and migratory bird habitats as well as manage urban heat islands and stormwater run-off.
- Develop/implement trash and litter prevention programs designed to keep urban waterways and riverfronts clean
- Develop public open spaces, create or enhance community parks, improve and protect community tree canopy, enhance brownfield sites beyond required remediation

Environmental Outreach, Education & Training

Projects must integrate meaningful outreach, education and/or training into the proposed on-the-ground activities that advance local watershed and conservation goals:

- Engage the public – particularly youth – in hands-on, outdoor experiences that build awareness of the importance of protecting and recovering priority and/or at risk species and habitats and promote stewardship and conservation practices
- Engage communities in restoration at public areas – such as schools, parks, birding trails and more – for public health and recreation
- Establish or advance a community science or water quality monitoring program that involves community members and/or addresses community water quality priorities²
- Improve understanding to prevent damaging trash and litter impacts in local waterways that affect community health and local economies

Community Partnerships

Projects must involve five or more partners (public and private entities) including the applicant:

- Directly engage a diverse group of community partners to achieve ecological and specific educational outcomes including partnerships among upstream and downstream communities

¹ Green infrastructure Best Management Practices may include increasing urban tree canopy, water harvesting and use (cisterns), bioswales, permeable pavements/pavers, bioretention, green roofs, downspout disconnection, installation of native vegetation and other proven practices for water quality, habitat and species protection and restoration.

² Eligible activities include water quality and/or habitat surveys, bird surveys, monitoring efforts that involve the collection, assessment, analysis and communication of water quality data (existing or new) to identify areas of concern



- Demonstrate that the project will advance existing local watershed or conservation plans and/or propose to foster and coordinate a diverse stakeholder partnership that develops and/or implements new plans
- Identify plans to provide training, partnership meetings and presentations to build support for the project during and beyond the project period

Measurable Results

Projects must result in specific, measurable ecological, educational and community benefits:

- Identify measurable activities and metrics which clearly link to watershed and community outcomes
- Document a high level of community engagement to support fish and wildlife habitat, urban and community agriculture or forestry, water quality-related recreational activities and improve understanding across diverse audiences of how fish and wildlife conservation, clean water and healthy forests contribute to community well-being

Sustainability

Projects must include a plan for maintenance and care of the project beyond the grant period:

- Describe a commitment to community strength and long-term capacity to remain engaged as partners
- Address any priority and/or at-risk species, habitats or conservation actions identified in State Wildlife Action Plans or other recovery or conservation plans
- Directly connect outcomes to community benefits of watershed restoration such as clean water, public health benefits, local economic development and jobs
- Fulfill or advance priorities identified through local planning efforts, including watershed, disaster and sustainability plans
- Develop restoration and stewardship approaches that contribute to pre and post disaster planning, resiliency of community water assets and link to local hazard mitigation, resilience and/or emergency management plans

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Five Star and Urban Waters program has a list of metrics in Easygrants for full proposal applicants to choose from for future reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table below). If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Sarah Vest (Sarah.Vest@NFWF.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Land, wetland restoration	# Acres restored	Enter # acres of non-tidal freshwater WETLAND (not riparian or instream) habitat restored. In the NOTES, specify landcover before restoration (Marsh, Wet meadow, Swamp) and % of vegetation on pre-project



Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
		site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%).
Removal of invasives	# Acres restored	Enter # acres of invasives removed. In the NOTES, specify: vegetation removed, desired dominant vegetation, average frequency (in years) of future treatment, and whether removed vegetation will be left on site to decompose (Yes/No).
Land Restoration	# Acres restored	Enter # acres of habitat restored. In the NOTES, specify landcover prior to restoration (barren, cropland, grass, shrub) and post-restoration (broadleaf, conifer, redwood, grassland, shrubland, marsh, wet meadow, tidal marsh, swamp, seagrass, kelp forest).
Riparian restoration	# Miles restored	Enter # of riparian miles restored, including riparian buffers. In NOTES section, specify landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland), dominant vegetation being planted (see list), and average width of riparian buffer. Provide # miles riverbank planted (decimals are acceptable)
Land, wetland restoration	# Trees planted	Enter # trees planted. In the NOTES, specify landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grass, shrub), # of acres, forest type planted (broadleaf, conifer, redwood, swamp-- either broadleaf or conifer, shrub), density per acre, and mortality rate.
Best Management Practices implementation for livestock fencing	# Miles of fencing installed	Provide # miles fencing installed
Best Management Practices	# Acres with Best Management Practices	Provide # acres managed with Best Management Practices including the type of green infrastructure being implemented



Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
implementation for stormwater runoff		
Best Management Practices implementation for stormwater runoff	Volume (gallons) of stormwater runoff prevented	Provide volume of stormwater captured by new green infrastructure practices including Best Management Practices for stormwater management
Improved management practices	# Acres under improved management	Enter # of acres under improved management to benefit people and wildlife, and indicate the types of best management practices (including nutrient and sediment reduction) in the NOTES section. Only count an acre once, even if multiple activities or treatments will occur on that acre during the project
Building institutional capacity	# of organizations contributing to project goals	Provide # partner organizations Identify each partner's sector (e.g. non-profit, private, local or state government)
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# social media posts	Include platforms and size of target audience, and a brief statement on the purpose of the posts.
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# people targeted	Provide total # of people targeted through email and newsletters
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# people reached	Provide # of people actively engaged through workshops, classes or other demonstrations
Volunteer participation	# volunteers participating	Provide number of community members directly volunteering in project. If volunteers include youth (up to age 18) or veterans, specify # youth or # veterans.
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# of educational signs installed	Enter the number of educational signs installed by project



Project Activity	Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# internships or fellowships	Enter the number of people employed as interns or fellows, and provide a general estimate of hours worked
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# teachers reached	Provide # of teachers reached through teacher training activities
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance	# of students reached	Enter the total number of students in pre-school-grade 12 engaged. In the notes, identify the grade level(s) for all students reached
Monitoring	# streams/sites being monitored	Identify the number of sites that will be monitored as part of the project
Restoration planning/design/permitting	Acres restored	Enter the number of acres for which planning, design, or permitting activities are being conducted under this project. Provide # acres impacted directly by plan.
Other	#lbs of trash or debris removed or prevented from entering waterways	Provide lbs of trash or debris removed from waterways or other restoration sites or expected amount prevented from entering waterways and specify removal or prevention.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal Governments and Organizations and educational institutions
- Ineligible applicants include unincorporated individuals, businesses, international organizations and U.S. Federal government agencies

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

Standard text on eligibility has been provided. Please do not edit the language, but feel free to add an additional bullet if needed.



- **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.

APPLICANT DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic information on applicants and their communities via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

Approximately \$2.5M is available nationwide for projects meeting program priorities. There is one round of full proposals annually for this program. Awards range from \$30,000 to \$60,000 with an average size of \$45,000 and 30-40 grants awarded per year. Grants should span 12 to 18 months with a start date in late summer/early fall 2025.

There is one application submitted to NFWF for all sources of funding.

All applicants must address the program priorities in order to be considered. This detailed list of funders is provided to identify areas of the country where additional funds are available and provide information on any funder-specific recommendations that applicants should include in proposals.

U.S. EPA Five Star Restoration Training Program

Funding Available:

Approximately \$225,000 is available nationwide from EPA to fund projects. These funds are available nationwide, in any size community. Given the destruction caused by Hurricane Helene in September 2024, special consideration will be made for eligible applicants with projects within watersheds impacted by Hurricane Helene.

Urban Waters Federal Partnership, U.S.D.A. Forest Service



Funding Available:

Approximately \$180,000 is available from U.S. Forest Service through the Urban Waters Federal Partnership to improve urban water quality, restore riparian habitat and community forests, increase public access to urban waterways and make linkages to municipal flood mitigation and stormwater programs in developed watersheds throughout the United States. Funds are available nationwide for urban areas.

U.S. FWS Urban Programs

Funding Available:

Approximately \$360,000 is available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to fund projects that engage urban neighbors and foster a sense of stewardship where there are Service lands or offices nearby (within approximately 25+/- miles) or where there is a designated Urban Partnership City.

- \$180,000 of these funds comes from the National Wildlife Refuge System to engage communities in conservation on easily-accessible lands that the Service does not own. Priority will go to projects that improve habitat or access for outdoor recreational experiences, especially to communities that have been historically excluded. Proposals should demonstrate how the project will meet at least one of the Urban Standards of Excellence for Urban Wildlife Refuges and Partnerships and show ongoing collaboration with FWS and local partners.
- \$180,000 these funds come from the Urban Bird Treaty program and projects should have an emphasis on protecting, restoring, and enhancing urban habitats for birds, reducing urban hazards to birds while engaging people, especially in diverse and underserved communities, in bird conservation, education, recreation and science activities. Priority project activities include restoration of migratory bird habitat, Chimney Swift conservation activities, bird-friendly building retrofitting and design, efforts to address light pollution, pesticide and hazardous trash reduction, and engaging diverse and under-resourced communities in birdwatching and bird trip leader training programs. Projects supported with this funding do not have to be located in an existing Urban Bird Treaty city, but active UBT and Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership cities receive priority for funding. For more information about Urban Bird Treaty Cities, visit <https://www.fws.gov/program/urban-bird-treaty>

USDA People's Garden Initiative

Funding Available:

Approximately \$1,000,000 is available from the [People's Garden Initiative](#) through the USDA Office of Urban Agriculture and Innovative Production to fund projects that will support community-based gardens that promote sustainable agriculture practices that benefit people and wildlife. Per the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture, gardens of different sizes and types, including school gardens, community gardens, urban farms, and small-scale agriculture projects in rural and urban areas, can be recognized as a People's Garden.

Project must meet the People's Garden criteria:

- **Join** the People's Garden community by registering a garden at usda.gov/peoples-garden.
- **Grow** the garden using sustainable practices that benefit people and wildlife.



- **Teach** about gardening and resilient, local food systems.

Priority will be given to projects that

- Educate and train local citizens, build diverse partnerships, foster local food systems and provide other socio-economic benefits
- Provide measurable ecological, educational and community benefits
- Support the conservation of fish, wildlife, and habitat, especially at-risk species including migratory birds and pollinators

Geographic Priorities:

These funds will support projects **nationwide**. Special priority will be provided to projects in the following [U.S. Census statistical areas](#) ([state maps available here](#)):

- Columbia, SC
- Houston, TX
- Las Vegas, NV
- Little Rock, AR
- Memphis, TN

Southern Company Five Star Restoration Program

Funding Available:

Approximately \$315,000 is available from Southern Company and its affiliates to support on-the ground wetland, riparian, in-stream or coastal habitat conservation and restoration projects in key areas served by its subsidiaries. Priority given to projects that address at-risk species and habitats; address watershed and federal recovery or state wildlife action plans and coordinate with those plan coordinators; and, engage the public – particularly youth – in hands-on, outdoor conservation experiences that build awareness of the importance of protecting and recovering priority species and habitats. In Georgia, projects that take actions to help remove streams from the 303(d) impaired streams in the Atlanta area will be given priority.

Geographic Priorities:

Southern Company will support high quality projects in the following states:

- **Alabama** (excluding Lauderdale, Colbert, Lawrence, Limestone, Madison, Marshall, Morgan, Jackson and DeKalb counties)
- **California** Kern, Fresno, and Imperial counties
- **Georgia** (excluding Union, Fannin and Towns counties)
- **Illinois** Will, Kendall, DuPage and Kane counties
- **Kansas** Lyon and Osage counties
- **Mississippi** Leake, Neshoba, Kemper, Scott, Newton, Lauderdale, Smith, Jasper, Clarke, Jefferson Davis, Covington, Jones, Wayne, Marion, Lamar, Forrest, Perry, Greene, George, Stone, Pearl River, Hancock, Harrison and Jackson counties
- **North Carolina** Rutherford county
- **Nevada** Clark county
- **Oklahoma** Grant, Kay, and Murray counties
- **South Dakota** Deuel county



- **Tennessee** Bradley and Hamilton counties
- **Texas** Concho, Crosby, Donley, Floyd, Gray, Haskell, and Pecos counties
- **Virginia** Chesapeake, Hampton City, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth City, Suffolk and Virginia Beach
- **West Virginia** Greenbrier County
- **Washington** Lewis and Thurston Counties
- **Wyoming** Laramie county

FedEx

Funding Available:

Approximately \$400,000 is available from FedEx to support projects in the metropolitan areas listed below that address the Program Priorities listed above—with a particular emphasis on increasing and improving community tree canopy. All proposals in these areas must propose a volunteer event for up to 100 local FedEx employees in the project narrative to be considered for funding under this funding source.

Geographic Priorities:

These funds will support projects in any of the following metropolitan areas:

Chicago, IL	Miami, FL
Colorado Springs, CO	Milwaukee, WI
Dallas/Ft. Worth, TX	Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN
Denver, CO	Pittsburgh, PA
Indianapolis, IN	San Francisco/Oakland, CA
Memphis, TN	Seattle, WA

MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

The ratio of matching contributions offered is considered during the review process, and projects are required to meet or exceed a 1:0.75 match ratio to be competitive³. Matching contributions must be non-federal in nature and may include in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated, cash or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. Projects applying for the USDA People’s Garden Initiative funding do not require match.

Additionally, partner contributions can serve as matching contributions and grantees for this grant program commonly use a large amount of in-kind matching contributions to reach this threshold by utilizing their community partnerships to generate match. **Applicants are highly encouraged to contact NFWF for assistance in determining what qualifies as in-kind or any other matching contribution.**

In addition, if not paid with requested grant funding, indirect costs may be applied as match by an applicant with a federally approved indirect rate.

³ For example, a \$60,000 grant request should be matched by contributions totaling \$45,000.



To be eligible, matching contributions typically must be:

- Not paid by the Federal government under another Federal award
- Verifiable from the grantee's records
- Not included as matching contributions for any other award
- Necessary and reasonable for accomplishment of project or program objectives
- Allowable costs based on the program and funding source guidelines
- Committed directly to the project and used within the period of performance

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 the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Program Goals and Priorities – Project contributes to the Program's overall habitat and species conservation goals, and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the program priorities.

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

Spatial Data – Project spatial data submitted to NFWF's online mapping tool accurately represent the location(s) of conservation activity(ies) at the time of proposal submission. Successful projects will be required to submit improved spatial data for each conservation activity within the period of performance as necessary.

Partnership and Community Impact – The applicant organization partners and engages collaboratively with diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant stakeholders to develop and implement the proposed project. This ensures 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. Describe the community characteristics of the project area, identify any communities impacted, describe outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured. Use demographic data to support descriptions and submit letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

Cost-Effectiveness – Cost-effectiveness analysis identifies the economically most efficient way to meet project objectives. Project includes a cost-effective budget that balances performance risk and efficient use of funds. Cost-effectiveness evaluation includes, but is not limited to, an assessment of effective direct/indirect costs across all categories in the proposed budget according to the type, size and duration of project and project objectives. Project budgets will be compared to similar projects to ensure proposed costs across all budget categories are reasonable for the activities being performed and the outcomes proposed.



Transferability – Project has potential and 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.

Funding Need – Project establishes a clear need for the funds being requested, and demonstrates that activities would not move forward absent funding.

Conservation Plan and Context – The project advances an existing conservation plan or strategy.

Monitoring – 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 will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. This should include how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities.

Past Success – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing conservation practices with specific, measurable results.

Partnership – An appropriate partnership exists to implement the project and the project is supported by a strong local partnership that leverages additional funds and will sustain it after the life of the grant. Identify proposed partners, if known (including potential or contemplated subawards to third party subrecipients of the applicant), the roles they will play in implementing the project, and how this project will build new or enhance existing partnerships. (Note: a project partner is any local community, non-profit organization, tribe, and/or local, state, and federal government agency that contributes to the project in a substantial way and is closely involved in the completion of the project.)

OTHER

Applicant Demographic Information – In an effort to better understand diversity in our grantmaking, NFWF is collecting basic demographic information on applicants and their organizations via a voluntary survey form (available in Easygrants). This information will not be shared externally or with reviewers and will not be considered when making grant decisions. For more details, please see the tip sheet and the Uploads section of Easygrants.

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.



Environmental Services – NFWF funds projects in pursuit of its mission to sustain, restore and enhance the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations. NFWF recognizes that some benefits from projects may be of value with regards to credits on an environmental services market (such as a carbon credit market). NFWF does not participate in, facilitate, or manage an environmental services market nor does NFWF assert any claim on such credits.

Intellectual Property – Intellectual property created using NFWF awards may be copyrighted or otherwise legally protected by award recipients. NFWF may reserve the right to use, publish, and copy materials created under awards, including posting such material on NFWF's website and featuring it in publications. NFWF may use project metrics and spatial data from awards to estimate societal benefits that result and to report these results to funding partners. These may include but are not limited to: habitat and species response, species connectivity, water quality, water quantity, risk of detrimental events (e.g., wildfire, floods), carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions), environmental justice, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

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.



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.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information: [Five Star and Urban Waters](#)

Applicant Webinar (click here to register)	November 21, 2024, 2pm-3:15pm ET
Full Proposal Due Date	January 30, 2025, 11:59pm ET
Review Period	February to July 2025
Awards Announced	Late Summer 2025

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 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 [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:
Sarah Vest
Coordinator, Regional Programs



(202) 595-2602

Sarah.Vest@nfwf.org

Kaitlyn Hill

Program Manager, Community Conservation

(202) 595-2436

Kaitlyn.Hill@nfwf.org

For one-on-one guidance, sign up for a virtual proposal lab:

NFWF staff will be holding 30-minute virtual proposal labs for the 2025 RFP on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m eastern time, November 12th through December 19th and January 2nd-30th. The labs will provide a space and time where partners can share proposal ideas and receive coaching and constructive feedback. To reserve some time in the lab, [please complete this lab appointment request form](#). We're excited to work hand-in-hand with our partners to make certain they get the support needed to develop competitive proposals, ensuring that the Five Star and Urban Waters program funds the most effective and innovative conservation and community engagement activities nationwide.

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.