CORAL REEF STEWARDSHIP FUND

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Pre-Proposal Webinar (Register here): **Wednesday, January 22, 2025 at 4:00 PM Eastern Time**
Pre-Proposal Due Date: **Wednesday, February 12, 2025, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**
Full Proposal Webinar: **March 2025 by invitation**
Full Proposal Due Date: **Wednesday, April 16, 2025, by 11:59 PM Eastern Time**

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) will award grants to improve the health of coral reef systems. Grants will be awarded to reduce land-based sources of pollution, advance coral reef fisheries management, increase capacity for reef-scale restoration, and to support management in their efforts to increase the natural recovery and resiliency of coral reef systems.

The Coral Reef Stewardship Fund is a partnership with the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Coral Reef Conservation Program (CRCP) and receives additional funding support from the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Aramco Americas. The Coral Reef Stewardship Fund expects to have approximately $3,500,000 available for funding this grants cycle.

SPECIFIC NEEDS BY STATE/TERRITORY

The Stewardship Fund prioritizes projects that will directly support the conservation and management of U.S. coral reefs. Therefore, applicants under this program are **strongly encouraged** to contact a local manager that they feel is most applicable to their project scope and/or the coral liaison for the jurisdiction where they plan to work. Listing the name, title, and affiliation of the individual you have contacted is helpful in the pre-proposal but not required. A letter indicating knowledge of the project may be required at the Full Proposal stage depending on the scope of work.

This engagement should serve as an opportunity to:

1. Share the conservation objectives of your proposed project;
2. Learn of any similar projects you might build upon or adjustments that would make your outcomes even more useful to local needs;
3. Discuss your intended scope of work for feedback on adjustments or requirements for local permitting and adapting to the local conservation context; and
4. Share your intended products and communication, including how local managers would like to be engaged or informed during or after implementation, if your project is selected.

A list of contacts and curated U.S. jurisdictional priorities that have a nexus to the program priorities in this RFP has been developed by NOAA for reference as a starting point. While it is not required to address one of the listed jurisdictional priorities, it may increase your competitiveness.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

Projects proposing coral conservation **work in any U.S. coral jurisdictions** (American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Florida, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, or the U.S. Virgin Islands) **are eligible and invited to apply**. Priority will be given to projects that conduct applicable land-based and in-water conservation activities in the locations found in the table below. Applications for projects in international jurisdictions are not eligible.

Jurisdiction	Land-based Priorities	In-water Priorities
American Samoa	Aua; Fuga'alu	Fagamalo Village MPA
CNMI	Achugao	Managaha Marine Conservation Area
Florida	Government Cut	FKNMS - Iconic Reef Sites (and controls where applicable) - Carysfort Reef, Horseshoe Reef, Cheeca Rocks, Newfound Harbor, Looe Key, Sombrero Key, & Eastern Dry Rocks
Guam	Manell-Geus	Piti Bomb Holes Marine Preserve
Hawaii	Kihei; West Maui	Kahekili Herbivore Fisheries Management Area, Kihei, Olowalu, Southeast Molokai (Kawela)
Puerto Rico	Culebra; Guanica	Canal Luis Pena Natural Reserve
USVI	St. Croix East End Marine Park; Salt River Bay	St. Croix East End Marine Park

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The most competitive applications under this funding opportunity will work directly with local coral reef managers to implement priority projects in the following conservation categories for reefs associated with the priority geographies above. U.S. coral reef conservation projects that either fall outside of or only indirectly address these priority categories or geographies **are still eligible for funding** but are considered a lower priority than those with a direct nexus.

I. Threat Reduction to Priority Reef Sites

Projects under this category will support the implementation of activities identified in watershed management plans, marine protected area plans, or fisheries management plans, with an increased priority for activities that benefit reefs at the above locations. Applicants should identify the specific plan – including the year it was finalized, how the threat/activity is listed in relative priority to other activities in the plan, the measurable goal/target for this activity in the plan, and the contribution to the target that the project seeks to achieve.

1. ***Establish Water Quality Targets*:** Projects will work at one of the listed watersheds above or the broader jurisdictional level to establish criteria and science-based targets for nutrient and/or sediment reduction. Projects under this priority must work directly with the appropriate management agency(ies) through scientific and technical assistance to establish water quality targets that directly address coral reef management goals. Further priority will be given to projects that focus on targets for a specific location and document the process and criteria in such a way that it can be used as a roadmap for establishing targets in other watersheds for the jurisdiction. Projects that seek to establish **sustainable monitoring infrastructure** through community engagement or other means are also encouraged to apply.

2. ***Reduce Land-based Pollution Inputs to Coral Reefs*:** Projects should engage local industry, agriculture, community groups, landowners, land managers, and/or individuals in direct sediment and nutrient threat reduction activities. Project activities may include, but are not limited, to actions such as stream restoration, green infrastructure, native planting, best management/conservation practice installations to reduce sediment and/or nutrient flow to reefs, and/or efforts to reduce polluted runoff through water conservation or gray water re-use as prioritized in established management plans.

   Proposals should incorporate specific performance targets to monitor the effectiveness of project activities in reducing threats to nearshore coral reef ecosystems, including estimates of percent reductions for each threat as a result of specific project activities and how these reductions relate to established goals. The highest priority projects will reference established water quality targets for the target reef(s) and incorporate evaluating the effectiveness of threat reduction activities in meeting these targets in their monitoring plan.

   NRCS Guidance – There are significant NRCS funds available for projects with a nexus to agricultural working lands, with a priority to fund projects that impact U.S. Coral Reef Task Force Priority Watersheds, or projects within U.S. jurisdictions that have potential to increase Farm Bill program participation and conservation practice implementation among agricultural producers, especially beginning, limited resource, and veteran farmers and ranchers. This priority is targeting land-use and land-use change, nutrient and sediment runoff, sewage treatment, streambank stabilization, buffer improvements, and improved sediment and erosion control.

   Grant recipients will provide technical assistance to interested farmers, ranchers, and private forestland owners to develop management plans, design and implement conservation practices, share their experiences and lessons learned, and participate in Farm Bill programs, (e.g., Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP). A particular emphasis should be placed on promoting, designing, and implementing conservation practices that improve soil health, support grazing system resiliency, restore wetlands, develop perennial wildlife habitat, improve nutrient management, and enhance forest health. Projects that promote, design, and implement Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry

(CSAF) conservation practices are of particular interest. Applicants are encouraged to discuss NRCS goals and priorities with the NRCS State Conservationist and their staff in the state in which your project is located prior to submitting a proposal. A list of NRCS state contacts can be found here.

3. ***Increase Fish Stocks of Key Species Along Priority Reefs*:** Projects should identify activities that support local managers and communities in reef fish management within priority reef tracts including, but not limited to, training, decision support tools like a cost/benefit analysis of management options, and activities to increase compliance. Proposals should incorporate specific performance metrics to monitor the effectiveness of project activities toward increasing biomass of fish with key functional roles over the long term. Priority taxa for this work include Parrotfish Family, Surgeonfish Family, and hogfish (*Lachnolaimus maximus*).

II. Coral Reef Emergency Response Preparation and Restoration

Projects under this category will enhance a jurisdiction's ability to implement coral reef emergency response and restoration projects. The expected size of awards through the Coral Reef Stewardship Fund is unlikely to be sufficient to support large-scale restoration efforts, but rather help jurisdictions to prepare for these larger efforts and increase their likelihood for success.

1. ***Piloting Response Options to Disturbance Events*:** Projects should take into consideration the history and frequency of the event type at the location and available information on what has been done to date that would support the pilot response. They should also have considered the feasibility of implementing the techniques long-term, including capacity, regulatory, and permitting needs. Projects proposing novel response options for events that do not currently have viable interventions (i.e. bleaching) are of highest priority. Projects should also include elements of local capacity that make the pilot potentially feasible at scale and a clear understanding of permitting hurdles if in-situ testing is proposed.

2. ***Support Out-planting Success*:** Projects under this category will focus on smaller scale out-planting case studies that seek to learn about the effects of predation, competition, water quality, disease resistance, etc. on survival of outplants or that help streamline logistical hurdles like permitting that can be used to increase the success of larger scale restoration efforts. Projects can also coordinate with existing out-planting activities on larger scale projects to further refine techniques to increase success and test approaches.

3. ***Increase Capacity for Coral Restoration at Larger*-Scale:** Projects under this category will increase the number and diversity of corals and associated reef species available for direct coral reef restoration efforts. Activities may include, but are not limited to, training in propagation techniques, establishing new nursery capacity, techniques to scale-up propagation, and exploring the needs of new and complex lifecycle species. Mechanization of coral restoration efforts will also be considered.

III. Increase Institutional Management Capacity in Coral Conservation

In a recent survey of coral managers and practitioners in the U.S., responses indicated that the greatest barrier to coral conservation was local agency capacity in the way of staffing, grant-writing, project oversight, and even day-to-day tasks like procurement. This category seeks to identify creative solutions to increase the necessary capacity in our coral jurisdictions to address priority threats.

1. ***Friend Groups and Similar NGO Support*:** Projects in this category will seek to stand up a friend's group or foundation that can provide direct support for an agency counterpart and fill gaps in grants writing and management, procurement, volunteer coordination, etc. as needed and appropriate. Projects must demonstrate a knowledge of the local challenges and their plan to work directly with the target agency representatives to address those challenges. Projects should also demonstrate a knowledge of the legal authorities for establishing a friend's group or agency foundation in this jurisdiction and include a plan for self-sustainment beyond the project period.

2. ***Resilience Project Development and Support*:** Projects under this category will work with U.S. jurisdictional managers to characterize the ecosystem services of specific reefs and to understand both resilience benefits and green infrastructure opportunities to assist managers in accessing funding for Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), NFWF, NOAA, and other federal resilience funding opportunities. Activities may include, but are not limited to, preliminary engineering and design work or reef assessment for ecoservices modeling, scope of work development, and initial permitting review. Projects should identify specific funding opportunities that they are seeking to prepare for and the need for support outside of the agency.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the *Coral Reef Stewardship Fund* has a list of metrics in Easygrants for 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 *Michelle Pico (pico@nfwf.org)* to discuss acceptable alternatives. **All applicants who wish to be considered for NRCS funding must include at least the metrics listed with an '*' in the table below:**

Recommended Metric	Additional Guidance and 'Notes' Requirements
I. Threat Reduction	
Management or Governance Planning - # plan activities implemented	Enter the number of management plan activities being implemented. All projects under the Threat Reduction category should reference specific plans and actions when applicable as priority will be given to activities that have previously been prioritized through a planning process. Please reference the specific action and plan in the notes field that will be

	implemented during the period of performance and characterize its priority relative to other actions in the plan.
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # gov't entities participating	Enter the number of municipalities or local governments participating in the project. Most projects under the Threat Reduction category will require some level of engagement with coral or land managers. In the notes field please list all agencies/offices that are directly engaged in establishing the parameters and targets for the study/plan/assessment or implementation and how they will be engaged in the project.
I. 1. *Establishing Water Quality Targets*	
Research - # studies used to inform mgmt.	Enter the number of research studies completed. If the project is providing general information on tipping points, regional targets, etc. then just list it as one research study and describe the research questions in the notes. However, if a specific assessment to determine key threats to a watershed/reef complex is being proposed, then count one study per watershed/reef tract and list the specific watersheds/reefs in the notes field.
I. 2. *Reduce Land-based Pollution Inputs to Coral Reef Tracts*	
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached	Enter the number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. Please use this metric to reference LANDOWNERS that you are working with to reduce LBSP, **not** general outreach activities
BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs	Enter the # of acres with BMPs. In the NOTES section, indicate the type of BMP(s) (e.g. manure storage) and the method of calculating reduction. DO NOT include cover crops, conservation tillage, enhanced cropland nutrient management, or managed grazing. Most proposals will have a combination of areas (acres) of improved management and threat reduction metrics (lbs avoided).
BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs nutrients avoided (annual)	Enter the amount of nutrients prevented from entering system annually. In the notes, indicate the model or method used to calculate this metric. Include necessary monitoring equipment and planning in the scope of work and budget to validate results. Please use the notes field to define target pollutants and explain models used to define how reduction targets are estimated.
BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction – Lbs sediment avoided (annually)	Enter the amount of sediment prevented from entering system annually. In the notes, indicate the model or method used to calculate this metric. Include necessary monitoring equipment and planning in the scope of work and budget to validate results. Please use the notes field to define target sediments and explain models used to define how reduction targets are estimated.
BMP development - # mgmt. plans with BMPS*	Enter the number of completed management plans into which Best Management Practices (BMPs) were incorporated.
Outreach / Education / Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior*	Enter the number of producers implementing new conservation practices with or without federal, state, local, or private financial assistance.

Economic benefits - # jobs created*	Enter the # of individuals hired to directly work on the project (non-volunteers). Jobs should be directly engaged in grant activities, funded by the grant, and should not have existed prior to the grant. The starting value for this metric should be zero and target value should be a whole number. In the NOTES section, provide the FTE for the jobs created.
Economic benefits - # jobs sustained*	Enter the # of paid jobs that are partially or fully sustained through this grant. The starting value for this metric should be zero and target value should be a whole number. Jobs should have existed prior to the grant, be funded by the grant, and be directly engaged in project activities.
Incentives - # participants receiving gov't agency cost share or financial assistance*	Enter the number of participants enrolled in government cost share or financial assistance programs. In the NOTES section, specify which program(s) (e.g., NRCS EQIP), and how you will track enrollment. This should be equal to or less than the "# people with changed behavior" metric.
Incentives - $ value of gov't agency cost share or financial assistance*	Enter the dollar value of federal, state, or local government agency cost share or financial assistance. In the NOTES section, specify which program(s) (e.g., NRCS EQIP) and how the value was estimated.
Incentives – acres covered by government agency cost share or financial assistance*	Enter the number of acres enrolled in government agency cost share or financial assistance. In the NOTES section, specify which program(s) (e.g., NRCS EQIP). If applicable, number should be equal to or less than "Acreage of project footprint" metric.
Project footprint – acreage of project footprint*	Enter the total number of unique areas where one or more conservation practices were implemented. Only count an acre once, even if multiple activities or treatments will occur on that acre during the project.
Land Use Planning – acres under a land use plan*	Enter the number of acres that are receiving conservation planning and other technical assistance to help producers meet eligibility requirements for USDA NRCS conservation programs and other Federal, State, and local conservation programs.
I. 3. *Increase Fish Stocks*	
Research - # studies used to inform mgmt.	Enter the number of research studies completed. For stock assessments please count one research study for each specific management question or population assessed. Please also use the notes to delineate any specific management questions your research study or assessment is seeking to address.
Marine habitat management - Acres under improved management	Enter the number of acres under improved management. Please only include acres for projects that are conducting implementation of a discrete reef area. Do not include all acres where there are known reefs for statewide efforts. In the notes field please outline your monitoring plan for this area to evaluate success. Most implementation proposals to reduce threats to fish stocks will have a combination of capacity building and target fish stock response metrics. Feel free to use other metrics available for training, government engagement, etc. but if targeting a specific geography or species please try to

	employ these metrics if applicable. Please use the notes field to define how acres are calculated and prioritized for implementation.
Fishing effort - g/m2 of fish biomass	Enter the fish biomass in grams per square meter. Most implementation proposals to reduce threats to fish stocks will have a combination of capacity building and target fish stock response metrics. Feel free to use other metrics available for training, government engagement, etc. but if targeting a specific geography or species please try to employ these metrics if applicable. Include necessary monitoring and planning in the scope of work and budget to validate results. Please use the notes field to define target species/family/guilds.
II. Coral Reef Emergency Response Preparation and Restoration	
Building institutional capacity - # FTE with sufficient training	Enter the number of staff or full-time equivalents with sufficient training and skills engaged in conservation activities. Use for targeted training efforts on disease control or other episodic event response. In the notes field please list the organizations that will participate in the training.
Marine habitat management - Acres under improved management	Enter the number of acres under improved management. Please include acres covered under proactive prevention or treatment effort (if discrete area). Do not include all acres where there are known reefs for statewide planning and training efforts. In the notes field please outline your monitoring plan for this area to evaluate success.
II. 1. *Piloting Response Options & II. 2. Support Out-planting Success*	
Research - # studies used to inform mgmt.	Enter the number of research studies completed. For pilots, please count one research study for each specific management question or mitigation option assessed. Please also use the notes to delineate any specific management questions your pilot is seeking to address and your monitoring plan with target controls sites identified.
Tool development for decision-making - # tools developed	Enter the number of tools developed. Metric should be used for projects that are creating a new tool or significantly recalibrating a BMP or model to meet the needs of an island setting. The notes should specifically list the 'end product' as to how the tool will be accessed and in what form as well as how the performance and impact of the tool will be evaluated.
II. 3. *Increase Capacity for Coral Restoration at Larger Scale*	
Captive breeding/ rearing/ rehab facilities - Capacity of facility	Indicate the capacity of the facility in terms of animals treated/bred. This metric is intended to capture new and enhanced capacity for coral nurseries (terrestrial or in water). Please estimate the increase in capacity based on the space for the grow-out size and type of coral you plan to raise/shelter and reference these parameters in the notes field.
Marine habitat restoration - # individuals propagated for coral restoration	Please enter the number of coral outplants or related individuals propagated. Metric meant to capture coral stock raised specifically for restoration efforts. In the notes please breakdown the value by species/genotypes the project will

	make available and the relevance of these species/genotypes to restoration for the area/jurisdiction.
Marine habitat restoration - # of coral outplants	Please enter the number of coral outplants that have 're-seeded' the reef. Metric meant to capture coral propagules planted within the period of the grant. In the notes please breakdown the value by species/genotypes planted.
Marine habitat restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of marine habitat acres restored. Most restoration projects will have a combination of outplants, and area (acres) please include just the area targeted for out-planting and in the notes please identify to what density you are restoring and how survivorship will be monitored and evaluated.
III. Increase Institutional Management Capacity for Coral Conservation	
Building institutional capacity - # of orgs contributing to goals	Please identify the number of new organizations created that contribute to the initiative's conservation goals.
Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # gov't entities participating	Enter the number of municipalities or local governments participating in the project. This metric is **required** for all projects seeking funding in this category. In the notes, please list the specific office/agency and point of contact that you are engaging in project planning, implementation and report-out.
Outreach/ Education / Technical Assistance - # of volunteers engaged	Enter the number of volunteers/members that have been coordinated to serve as a community workforce in partnership with the targeted coral management authority. In the notes, please list the specific activities/services that these volunteers will be engaged to provide.
Tool development for decision-making - # tools developed	Enter the number of tools developed. Metric should be used for projects that are creating a new tool or significantly recalibrating a BMP or model to meet the needs of an island setting. The notes should specifically list the 'end product' as to how the tool will be accessed and in what form.
Building institutional capacity - # FTE with sufficient training	Enter the number of staff or full-time equivalents with sufficient training and skills engaged in conservation activities. Metric should be used for targeted training efforts to a specific management entity as requested by the entity. Notes should define what 'sufficient training' should look like (i.e. participants will be able to understand the steps of chain of custody, identify pollutants and use guidebook to determine most effective mitigation options, etc.)
Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed	Enter the number of plans developed that had input from multiple stakeholders. Metric should be used when the outcome of the project does not fall within other categories but assists management in coral conservation (i.e. targeted outreach plan, prioritization plan, engineering plan, permit assistance package, volunteer monitoring plan) The notes should specifically list the 'end product' as to how the plan/capacity/assistance will be accessed and in what form.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Tribal governments and organizations, and educational institutions in the United States. For-profit entities and individuals are potentially eligible for Priority Category III. Increase Management Capacity for Coral Conservation. If this applies to your project, please contact Michelle Pico (*pico@nfwf.org*)
- Ineligible applicants include U.S. Federal government agencies and projects seeking to work on non-U.S. coral reefs.
- NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program staff are available and encouraged to provide general information on programmatic goals and objectives, ongoing coral reef conservation programs/activities, and regional funding priorities; however, NOAA employees are not permitted to assist in the preparation of applications or write letters of support for any application. If NOAA employees will be a collaborator on a project, they may provide a statement verifying that they are collaborating with the project applicant, confirming the degree and nature of the collaboration, and acknowledging the utility of the proposed work. NOAA employee activities, including travel and salaries, are not allowable costs.

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

The Coral Reef Stewardship Fund offers one grant cycle per year and available funding is expected to be approximately $3,500,000. Average grant awards will range from $80,000 to $600,000, with higher amounts going to threat reduction and BMP implementation projects, however there is no maximum or minimum requirement. Most awarded projects will be 6 months to 3 years in duration. Matching funds from non-U.S. federal cash or in-kind sources are required at a 1:1 ratio for most projects. Applicants that are concerned about their ability to meet the matching requirement or to see if they may qualify for the lower ratio could contact Michelle Pico (*pico@nfwf.org*).

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 represents 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 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. Community characteristics of the project area are described and any communities impacted and/or engaged are identified with listed activities and how they 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 plans 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

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. This information may include but is not limited to: habitat and species response, species connectivity, water quality, water quantity, risk of detrimental events (e.g., wildfire, floods), and carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions).

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.

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 the level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information *Coral Reef Stewardship Fund.*

Pre-Proposal Webinar (Register here)	January 22, 2025, at 4:00 PM, Eastern Time
Pre-Proposal Due Date	February 12, 2025, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time
Invitations for Full Proposals Sent	Mid-March 2025
Full Proposal Webinar ***by Invite Only***	March 2025, details in invitation email
Full Proposal Due Date	April 16, 2025, 11:59 PM, Eastern Time
Review Period	May-July 2025
Awards Announced	August 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:
Michelle Pico, (*pico@nfwf.org*).

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:
Easygrants Helpdesk
Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org
Voicemail: 202-595-2497
Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm ET, Monday-Friday.
Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.