CHESAPEAKE BAY SMALL WATERSHED GRANTS

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

NFWF is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. We continuously monitor legal and regulatory developments to ensure our policies, procedures, and operations align with current federal directives. We encourage all applicants to do the same.

The ability and extent to which NFWF is able to make awards is contingent upon receipt of funds from federal agencies and/or other funding partners. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

TIMELINE

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

Applicant Webinar (recording available)	Monday, March 31
FieldDoc Webinar (Registration)	Tuesday, April 1, 11:00 AM ET
Proposal Due Date	**Tuesday, May 13, 12:00 PM ET**
Proposal Review Period	April – August 2025
Awards Announced	September 2025 (anticipated)

A recorded webinar detailing this Request for Proposals and answering frequently asked questions will be available on the Small Watershed Grants program page by Monday March 31, 2025. While NFWF does not require consultation prior to application, we strongly encourage interested applicants to schedule a virtual proposal lab with NFWF staff here or contact its contracted field liaisons to discuss their proposed project to gather constructive feedback in developing a competitive proposal and to obtain guidance on the most appropriate program and funding opportunity for project consideration. Applicants are also encouraged to review the CBSF Quick Reference Guide and Applicant Toolbox for further guidance on proposal development.

OVERVIEW

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

Through the **Small Watershed Grants (SWG) Program**, delivered in partnership with EPA and the CBP partnership, NFWF is soliciting proposals for projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that promote voluntary, community-based efforts to protect and restore the diverse and vital habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

NFWF will award funding through two distinct funding opportunities. All SWG Program proposals must directly align with one or more of the **SWG PROGRAM PRIORITIES** outlined further in this Request for Proposals.

1. **SWG Implementation (SWG-I)** grants of $150,000-1,000,000 will be awarded for projects that result in voluntary, direct, on-the-ground actions to protect and restore water quality, species, and habitats in the Bay watershed. NFWF expects all **SWG-I** proposals to have any necessary preliminary designs completed for proposed activities by the time of application.
2. **SWG Planning and Technical Assistance (SWG-PTA)** grants up to $150,000 will be awarded for projects that enhance local capacity to advance future on-the-ground actions, consistent with SWG Program priorities, through community-based assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities.

GRANT AWARD INFORMATION

NFWF will award grants through the **SWG Program** in 2025 with primary funding provided by EPA. Other important contributions from Altria Group, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), and the U.S. Forest Service. For both the SWG-I and SWG-PTA funding opportunities, non-federal matching funds are encouraged but not required. All proposed projects must begin on or after September 1, 2025, to facilitate necessary grant contracting, quality assurance, and environmental compliance activities. To qualify, match must be expended during the proposed period of performance.

	Funding Opportunity	
	SWG Implementation	**SWG-PTA**
Project Award Range	$150,000 – 1,000,000	Up to $150,000
Match Requirement	Encouraged, but not required	Encouraged, but not required

SWG Implementation grants should be completed within two years of award and **SWG Planning and Technical Assistance** grants should be completed with 18 months of award.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

All projects must occur wholly within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Heightened consideration may be provided to projects located within priority subwatersheds or habitat units based on the unique opportunities to maximize multiple goals and outcomes for water quality, species and habitats, and communities. Applicants are encouraged to consult NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Business Plan mapping portal in informing potential geographic focus.

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Consistent with the CBP partnership's 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement, the SWG Program supports efforts to achieve water quality improvement, restoration, and protection of key Chesapeake Bay species and their habitats, and the fostering of an engaged citizen and stakeholder presence that will build upon and sustain measurable natural resource improvements. NFWF is soliciting proposals that provide measurable contributions for selected goals and outcomes of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement and associated with NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Business Plan and will place priority emphasis on projects that meaningfully and materially contribute to multiple program priorities as outlined below.

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

In all cases, NFWF will prioritize proposals from applicants that effectively incorporate community stewardship into proposed project activities by directly and meaningfully engaging affected local communities in the identification, prioritization, selection, and implementation of proposed actions. Examples of direct and meaningful engagement include:

- Co-creating project with community members
- Empowering community members with knowledge and decision-making authority
- Ensuring the project team includes community members and leads to collaborative management with the community
- Undertaking specific, active engagement strategies such as workshops, classroom activities, field trips, and volunteer opportunities
- Addressing a specific and localized harm such as pollution, flooding, or fires
- Creating jobs in the target community or performing job training and certification

NFWF also explicitly encourages applications from or incorporating community-based organizations as key project partners in order to ensure that a broad spectrum of community

interests is represented and reflected in proposed activities. Furthermore, NFWF encourages the use of grant funding to enhance the internal capacity of applicants and their partners to engage with, mentor, and support community partners.

PRIORITY 1. Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff

- **Managing Upland Agricultural Runoff through Farm-Scale Conservation Systems and Solutions:** Includes efforts to reduce water quality impacts, enhance carbon sequestration and stewardship, and increase resilience of agricultural production systems while simultaneously delivering potential management benefits for the region's farms by implementing agricultural conservation practices direct nutrient and sediment load reductions.

  Generally, applicants should seek first to utilize existing federal, state, and local agricultural cost-share and incentive programs to finance implementation of agricultural conservation practices, with NFWF funding used to strategically fill gaps in existing funding programs. Where NFWF funding is sought to cover costs for practice implementation, describe why other public programs are insufficient or otherwise inappropriate for financing proposed practice implementation.

  In 2025, NFWF has dedicated funding from NRCS to support voluntary projects on private, working lands that provide technical assistance to interested farmers and ranchers to develop management plans, design and implement conservation practices, and participate in Farm Bill programs, especially the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). Emphasis should be placed on promoting, designing, and implementing conservation practices that also deliver improved water quality outcomes, and on reducing the Farm Bill practice contracting and implementation backlogs.

  Applicants proposing projects focused on the agricultural sector are encouraged to confer with the relevant NRCS State Conservationist and their staff in the state in which your project is located to ensure alignment with NRCS goals and priorities. A list of NRCS state contacts can be found here.

- **Managing Upland Urban Runoff through Nature-Based Solutions:** Includes efforts to reduce stormwater runoff on developed lands by implementing nature-based practices that capture, store, filter, and treat stormwater runoff through systems and practices that mimic natural hydrologic processes.

- **Accelerating Innovation in Watershed Management:** Includes in-field application of new technologies and management approaches that reduce costs, reduce nutrient and sediment loading and increase pollutant removal efficiencies, and more effectively control emerging nutrient and sediment pollutant sources.

PRIORITY 2. Improving Water Quality and Stream Health Through Riparian Restoration and Conservation

- **Restoring Riparian and Freshwater Habitats through Forested Buffers, Livestock Exclusion, and Stream and Floodplain Restoration:** Includes efforts to mitigate local stream impairments and improve stream health through establishment of riparian forested buffers (to an expected minimum standard width of 35 feet), livestock exclusion fencing (including stream crossings and off-stream watering systems where appropriate), and approaches to stream and floodplain restoration.

  Proposed stream and floodplain restoration efforts must be consistent with qualifying conditions for nutrient and sediment load reductions under the Chesapeake Bay TMDL and associated design and crediting protocols established by the CBP partnership (see Recommendations of the Expert Panel to Define Removal Rates for Individual Stream Restoration Projects and the Chesapeake Stormwater Network's Unified Guide for Crediting Stream and Floodplain Restoration Projects in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed to determine project eligibility). Beyond estimated load reductions, the most competitive projects must be effectively presented as part of a larger watershed restoration effort aimed at addressing the full range of stressors to stream health (especially upstream of the proposed restoration site), enhancing stream function, and optimizing co-benefits for ecosystems and affected communities.

  Because stream and floodplain restoration projects are capital-intensive and highly site-specific and require interventions with potential for significant impacts on existing natural resources, these proposals will accordingly undergo enhanced scrutiny in the proposal review and evaluation process. As a result, applicants considering applying for stream and floodplain restoration projects are strongly encouraged to contact an appropriate NFWF field liaison to schedule a pre-application site visit prior to submitting your application (see **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE** below for field liaison contact information).

  In addition, applicants for stream restoration and floodplain reconnection projects must complete and upload an accompanying "Stream and Floodplain Restoration Narrative Supplement" with the standard full proposal narrative. This supplemental narrative is intended to provide additional technical information and not duplicate or reiterate the main proposal narrative.

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

PRIORITY 3. Enhancing and Protecting Freshwater Habitat for Brook Trout

- **Increasing Habitat Integrity and Population Viability for Brook Trout:** In conjunction with efforts to manage polluted runoff and restore and conserve riparian and upland forest habitat, includes improving connectivity within and between stronghold eastern

brook trout population patches through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts and other fish passage improvements to increase populations and occupied habitat, and monitoring of species and population response. In-stream habitat enhancements may also be appropriate where instream habitat quality, cover, and structure can be identified as limiting factors to viable local populations.

- **Conserving Upland and Riparian Forests in Brook Trout Strongholds:** Includes long-term protection and preservation of upland and riparian forest ecosystems in identified brook trout strongholds by strategically leveraging federal, state, and local land conservation programs through assistance with transaction and due diligence costs, bonus payments for conservation easements and land acquisitions for high-quality upland and riparian forest, and incorporation of forestland protection into existing rural land preservation programs.

PRIORITY 4. Enhancing and Protecting Tidal and Estuarine Habitat

- **Restoring and Conserving Wetland and Tidal Marsh Habitat for American Black Duck:** Includes restoration of degraded tidal and non-tidal wetland habitats and conservation of existing high-quality wintering and nesting habitats for American black duck. To address threats to habitat from sea level rise, NFWF will further support strategies that seek to create corridors for future marsh migration through strategic land protection, restoration, and management.

- **Managing Shoreline Erosion and Marsh Loss:** Includes implementation of nature-based or hybrid living shoreline restoration practices, particularly those adjacent to or in the vicinity of priority oyster reef restoration sites, that help reduce nutrient and sediment loading to tidal waters, establish and expand emergent or submerged aquatic vegetation, and/or help to protect adjacent marsh systems documented as important habitat for American black duck and other waterfowl species.

- **Restoring Large-Scale Oyster Reefs:** Includes assisting efforts to restore and protect large-scale oyster reefs in tributaries strategically identified by Maryland, Virginia and federal partners by leveraging funding from federal and state agencies to support oyster larvae and spat production, development of sustainable reef substrate supplies, and reef construction efforts in established oyster reef restoration tributaries.

- **Restoring River Herring Habitat Connectivity:** Includes efforts to increase connectivity and access to spawning habitat along priority migratory corridors for alewife and blueback herring through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts, and other fish passage improvements. NFWF will prioritize cost-effective connectivity enhancements that provide access to the greatest amount of quality habitat at the lowest cost.

PRIORITY 5. Enhancing Nature-Based Solutions for Human Communities

- **Protecting and Enhancing Natural and Nature-Based Solutions for Community Benefit:** Includes efforts to protect and enhance natural and nature-based solutions to

help protect coastal and inland communities from the impacts of storms, floods, and other natural hazards and enable them to recover more quickly.

PRIORITY 6. Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Planning, Design, and Implementation

- **Regional-Scale Partnership Development:** Includes activities that scale up restoration outcomes through enhanced partnership and coordination across organizations at broad regional and landscape scales.

- **Improving Delivery of Outreach and Technical Assistance:** Includes support for conservation districts, nonprofits, local and state governments, and private sector partners to provide technical assistance necessary to achieve NFWF's habitat restoration, conservation, and management goals through field positions, development of targeted outreach strategies such as community-based social marketing, and enhanced coordination and partnership among technical assistance providers to improve efficiency and reduce administrative bottlenecks.

- **Assessing Local Watershed and Habitat Restoration Needs and Opportunities:** Includes watershed and habitat assessments, watershed implementation planning, and other planning and prioritization efforts to maximize conservation impact. Examples include small watershed restoration plans, property or farm-level conservation and stormwater management plans, stormwater retrofit assessments, patch-level population and habitat assessments for Eastern brook trout, culvert and barrier assessments in priority rivers for river herring, and wetlands restoration and protection assessments to maximize black duck population outcomes.

- **Designing and Permitting Watershed and Habitat Improvements:** Includes strategic assistance to local partners for costs associated with design and permitting for high-impact restoration and management actions. NFWF has specific interest in design approaches that integrate multiple species and/or habitat objectives and therefore provide meaningful contributions to multiple programmatic goals and outcomes. NFWF expects all **SWG-I** proposals to have any necessary preliminary designs completed for proposed activities by the time of application. Projects requiring support to develop preliminary designs are encouraged to apply for funding through the **SWG-PTA** funding opportunity.

- **Leveraging Social Science to Advance Behavior Change:** Includes efforts to utilize applied social science research to understand and apply frameworks to influence behaviors of individual landowners, homeowners, watershed residents, businesses, and institutions in support of watershed restoration and protection outcomes, as well as integration of best practices in social science program evaluation to measure success of engagement and behavior change programs.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund has a list of metrics in *Easygrants* for proposal applicants to choose from for future reporting. We ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from the list for their project (all possible program metrics are shown in the table in **APPENDIX A**). If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Oleksandr Faryga at oleksandr.faryga@nfwf.org or 202-595-2453, to discuss acceptable alternatives.

ELIGIBILITY

Organization Type	Program	
	SWG Implementation	SWG-PTA
501(C) non-profit organizations	☑	☑
Community based organizations	☑	☑
Local Governments	☑	☑
Municipal governments	☑	☑
Tribal governments and organizations	☑	☑
K-12 educational institutions	☑	☑
U.S. Federal Government agencies	☒	☒
State Government Agencies	☒	☑
Institutions of higher education	☒	☑
Businesses	☒	☒
Unincorporated Individuals	☒	☒
International Organizations	☒	☒

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:

Evaluation Criterion #1 – Conservation Outcomes

- **Implementation:** Project will clearly and demonstrably result in meaningful on-the-ground implementation of conservation and/or restoration actions that contribute to one or more of the identified program priorities. Where possible and appropriate, the proposal simultaneously contributes measurable and meaningful implementation actions supporting multiple priority outcomes.
- **PTA:** Project will result in the delivery of planning and technical assistance products and services that meaningfully advance potential conservation or restoration implementation efforts that would contribute to one of more program priorities. In considering who benefits from requested services, there is a demonstrated need for services and a clear commitment to utilize services to support future implementation efforts.
- Project supports new and existing partnerships working to advance conservation and restoration actions in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.
- Project incorporates plans and approaches to implement, verify and sustain conservation and restoration actions and outcomes beyond the timeframe of the grant.

Evaluation Criterion #2 – 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.
- Partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project.
- Proposal describes the community characteristics of the project area, identifies any communities impacted, and describes outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured.
- Proposal uses 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.

Evaluation Criterion #3 – Budget

- Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF's Budget Instructions cost categories. Federally-funded projects must be in compliance with OMB Uniform Guidance as applicable.
- Matching contributions 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 variety of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.
- 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.
- Budget clearly indicates the degree of partnership in conducting the proposed work, including funding for project partners, stakeholders, and community members, as appropriate.
- The federal government has determined that a de minimis 15% indirect rate is an acceptable minimum for organizations without a negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA), as such NFWF reserves the right to scrutinize ALL proposals with indirect rates above 15% for cost-effectiveness.

Evaluation Criterion #4 – Technical

- Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical, and achievable work plan, milestones, and timeline. All proposed projects must begin on or after September 1, 2025 to facilitate necessary grant contracting and quality assurance activities.
- Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.
- 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.
- Proposal demonstrates an understanding of necessary permitting and environmental compliance requirements and the ability to obtain necessary approvals consistent with the proposed work plan and timeline.
- Applicant organization has demonstrated an ability to manage and implement similar projects on time and within budget.

- **Implementation:** Proposal demonstrates, at minimum, that initial conceptual designs for proposed restoration activities have been completed by the time of application. Projects able to demonstrate further progress in design and permitting may receive priority consideration.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

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.

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 community 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), and carbon accounting (e.g., sequestration, avoided emissions).

Procurement – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF's express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures which reflect applicable laws and regulations.

Publicity and Acknowledgement of Support – Award recipients will be required to grant NFWF the right and authority to publicize the project and NFWF's financial support for the grant in press releases, publications and other public communications. Recipients may also be asked by NFWF to provide high-resolution (minimum 300 dpi) photographs depicting the project.

Receiving Award Funds – Award payments are primarily reimbursable. Projects may request funds for reimbursement at any time after completing a signed agreement with NFWF. A request of an advance of funds must be due to an imminent need of expenditure and must detail how the funds will be used and provide justification and a timeline for expected disbursement of these funds.

Compliance Requirements – Projects selected may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and National Historic Preservation Act. Documentation of compliance with these regulations must be approved prior to initiating activities that disturb or alter habitat or other features of the project site(s). Applicants should budget time and resources to obtain the needed approvals. As may be applicable, successful applicants may be required to comply with additional Federal, state, or local requirements and obtain all necessary permits and clearances.

Quality Assurance – If a project involves monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation. This includes any data collection activities described in the proposal as provided by match and partner activities. Examples of data collection or use which requires a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP):

- New data collection.
- Existing data use (a new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups).
- Data collection and analysis associated with development or design of plans and projects e.g. fish passage, watershed or water quality/habitat restoration project plans etc.
- Water or other environmental monitoring.
- Model development or use etc.
- Citizen or community based scientific data collection, monitoring etc.

Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task. No data collection or use may begin until a QAPP is approved and on file. Reimbursement for project activities, including non-data collection activities, may be delayed until quality assurance compliance requirements are complete. Plan to submit the draft QAPP to NFWF *within* three months of award. The timeline for receiving review feedback and comments and subsequent submittal

for EPA approval is dependent upon the quality of the draft QAPP submission and may involve several iterations. General assistance will be available to grantees to help with scoping and review of draft QAPPs. For more information, follow the link to EPA QA and CBSF Quality Assurance Project Plan Guidance. Please contact Oleksandr Faryga (oleksandr.faryga@nfwf.org) if you have any questions about whether your project would require a QAPP. Applicants interested in details of NFWF's quality assurance approach can visit our "Tools for Current Grantees" webpage.

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.

Tracking Implementation – 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. In addition, NFWF will require all projects submitted under this solicitation to utilize FieldDoc for tracking and reporting of on-the-ground conservation and restoration activities resulting from their grant project. NFWF expects all projects proposing to implement water quality improvements for the purposes of nutrient and sediment load reduction to utilize FieldDoc to calculate estimated load reductions included in their application. When setting up proposed projects in FieldDoc, please be sure to list your application's 5-digit Easygrants number in the FieldDoc project title. For technical support on FieldDoc utilization during the proposal development process, please contact the Commons at support@chesapeakecommons.org or visit the FieldDoc Help and Resource Center.

Practice Specifications – Unless otherwise noted, all water quality improvement practices implemented must conform to established and recognized standards and practice specifications (e.g., NRCS practice standards, state stormwater manuals and retrofit guidance, approved CBP BMP Expert Panel reports). Applicants must note where proposed practices will deviate from established standards and provide reasonable justification for why an alternative is necessary.

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

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through the 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* and quick reference guide is available for review while you are working through your application. These documents can be downloaded at http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake. Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's Applicant Information page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact Jake Reilly (jake.reilly@nfwf.org) or Oleksandr Faryga (oleksandr.faryga@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.

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

Liaison Contact	Email	Phone	Primary Focus
Kristen Saacke Blunk	kristen@headwaters-llc.org	(814) 360-9766	• All Sectors
Sarah Clark	sarah@icl.org	(240) 472-1772	• Partnerships and Collaborative Leadership
Kristen Hughes Evans	kristen@susches.org	(804) 554-3403	• Agricultural Conservation
Liz Feinberg	liz.feinberg63@gmail.com	(610) 212-2345	• All Sectors
David Hirschman	dave@hirschmanwater.com	(434) 409-0993	• Stormwater/Urban Sector
Katie Ombalski	katie@woodswaters.com	(814) 574-7281	• Agricultural Conservation • Habitat Restoration

Appendix A

Applicable Metrics
Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program

Activity/Outcome	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
Water Quality Improvement (All)	**CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs nitrogen/phosphorus/sediment avoided (annually)**	Use FieldDoc to develop estimates of the annual nitrogen, phosphorus, and/or sediment load reductions from your proposed project. Enter FieldDoc-generated pollutant load reduction totals in this field then upload your FieldDoc Project Summary in the "Uploads" section.
Water Quality Improvement (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs**	Enter the total number of acres under agricultural or non-urban BMPs to reduce nutrient or sediment loading. Do not double-count individual acres which have multiple BMPs. If you're implementing load reduction practices on urban lands, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs" metric. Do not include cover crops, conservation tillage, enhanced cropland nutrient management, or managed grazing.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with cover crops	Enter the number of cropland acres with cover crops practices. Describe the cover crop practices in the NOTES section.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with conservation tillage	Enter the number of cropland acres with conservation tillage practices. Describe conservation tillage practices in the NOTES section.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with enhanced nutrient management	Enter the number of cropland acres with enhanced nutrient management practices other than or in addition to conservation tillage or cover crops. Describe the nutrient management practices in the NOTES section.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with managed grazing	Enter the number of acres with managed grazing (i.e., promoting plant growth above and below ground, improving wildlife habitat, and maximizing soil carbon through a variety of grazing approaches). Describe the grazing practices in the NOTES section.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs	Enter total drainage area treated by stormwater BMPs. If you wish to also provide the extent of specific BMPs themselves (i.e. square feet of bioretention), do so in the "Notes" section.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Volume stormwater prevented	Enter the number of gallons of stormwater runoff treated through stormwater BMPs (e.g. runoff treatment volume).
	CBSF- Nature-based Infrastructure - number of trees planted	Enter the number of trees planted for urban stormwater reduction. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), # of acres, and average # of trees per acre.

Activity/Outcome	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
Stream and Riparian Restoration and Conservation (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored**	Enter the number of miles of riparian habitat restored through the implementation of forest or grass buffers that are at least 35 feet wide. If you're implementing livestock exclusion, report associated outcomes instead under the "CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock exclusion -- miles of fencing installed" metric. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover type prior to planting (barren, cropland, grassland, shrubland), the % of vegetation on the pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%), the dominant vegetation being planted (Broadleaf, Conifer, Shrub, Grass, Marsh, Swamp), the buffer width, and the acres.
	CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed	Enter the number of miles of livestock exclusion fencing installed. Assume activities include exclusion fencing and a 35-foot forest or grass buffer, unless otherwise noted.
	CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of stream restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the CBP.
	CBSF - Floodplain restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of floodplain restored for nutrient and sediment load reduction, consistent with qualifying conditions and restoration protocols established by the CBP. In the NOTES, indicate the % of vegetation on the pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%) and the dominant vegetation being restored (Broadleaf, Conifer, Shrub, Grass, Marsh, Swamp). Also report any associated linear stream restoration outcomes through the "CBSF - Stream restoration – Miles restored" metric.
	CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover prior to restoration (Marsh, Tidal marsh, Wet meadow, Swamp) and indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%).
Aquatic Habitat Connectivity and Restoration (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened**	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as number of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species. Only include the miles of main stem & smaller tributaries connected until the next barrier upstream (or headwaters), but NOT lakes, ponds, or distance downstream from the barrier removed. Consider utilizing the CBP's Fish Passage Prioritization Tool to assess potential outcomes.
Terrestrial Habitat Connectivity, Conservation, and Restoration (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement**	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr). Assuming the specific parcel(s) has been identified, in the NOTES indicate what % of natural land cover would have been cleared in the absence of the easement(s).
Tidal and Estuarine Habitat Connectivity, Conservation, and Restoration (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - American oyster - Marine habitat restoration - Acres restored**	Enter the number of acres of native oyster reef restored.
	CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland habitat restored, created, or enhanced. In the NOTES section, specify the landcover prior to restoration (Marsh, Tidal marsh, Wet meadow, Swamp) and indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 21-40%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 81-100%).
	CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened	Enter the number of miles of stream habitat opened to fish populations through dam removals, culvert replacement, or other fish passage improvements. A mile opened is defined as number of new miles that restoration makes accessible for aquatic species. Only include the miles of main stem & smaller tributaries connected until the next barrier upstream (or headwaters), but NOT lakes, ponds, or distance downstream from the barrier removed. Consider utilizing the CBP's Fish Passage Prioritization Tool to assess potential outcomes.

Activity/Outcome	Recommended Metric*	Metric Description/Instructions
	CBSF - Erosion control - Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of tidal shoreline stabilized or restored through erosion control, including living shoreline restoration. Projects implementing qualifying stream restoration practices for TMDL crediting should report those outcomes instead through the "CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored" metric.
	CBSF - Conservation easements - Acres protected under easement	Enter the number of acres protected under long-term easement (permanent or >30-yr). Assuming the specific parcel(s) has been identified, in the NOTES indicate what % of natural land cover would have been cleared in the absence of the easement(s).
Capacity Building and Partnership Development (Select all that apply)	**CBSF - Outreach/Technical Assistance - # people reached**	Enter the number of individuals reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how individuals are reached (newsletter mailing list total, training attendance, etc.).
	CBSF - Outreach/Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior	Enter the number of individuals measured as demonstrating changed behavior to benefit watershed restoration and protection. In the "Notes" section, provide a summary of how behavior change will be measured and tracked. If you have questions on whether your project contains behavior change activities, please contact NFWF staff.
	CBSF - Volunteer participation - # volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in project implementation, outreach, and education activities.
	Number of 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 shouldn't 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.
	Number of 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.
	Number of 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), how you will track enrollment. This should be equal to or less than the "# people with changed behavior" metric.
	Dollar value of government 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.
	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.
	Number of people with changed behavior	Enter the number of producers implementing new conservation practices with or without federal, state, local, or private financial assistance. This should be equal to or greater than the "# of farmers receiving gov't agency cost share or financial assistance" metric.
*** *Easygrants* metrics should be consistent with data entered into and/or derived from the FieldDoc platform.**		