Long Island Sound Futures Fund
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 *https://www.nfwf.org/programs/long-island-sound-futures-fund*

Full Proposal Due Date	**May 29th, 2025, 11:59 PM, EDT**
Review Period	Summer/Fall 2025
Awards Announced	November 2025

OVERVIEW

The Long Island Sound Futures Fund (LISFF) is seeking proposals to restore the health and living resources of Long Island Sound (Sound). The program is managed by National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) in collaboration with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Long Island Sound Study (LISS). Major funding is from EPA through the LISS with additional funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Zoetis Foundation.

GRANT AWARD INFORMATION

There are multiple funding categories under the LISFF each with a different range of grant funding.

- **Implementation Projects:** $50,000 to $1.5 million for projects with particularly high environmental community benefit relative to cost, including:
  - Water quality, habitat restoration and resilience projects
  - Projects with the greatest promise to demonstrate, influence, pilot, innovate and/or provide a proof of concept with the aim of accelerating local and regional water quality improvements, natural resource restoration, coastal resilience and/or community and public outreach/engagement

- **Education and Public Participation Grants:** $50,000 to $250,000.

- **Design/Planning Projects:** $50,000 to $500,000 for:
  - Water quality or habitat restoration projects

- Watershed plans
- Community resilience/sustainability/natural hazard mitigation plans (See *Figure 1)*

Figure 1. Each box shown below is understood to represent a distinct phase of project development or delivery. Applicants for planning grants should only apply for planning activities that are feasible to complete in the allowable time period of a LISFF grant. Note: In many cases it is not feasible to complete both a design and build or to complete multiple planning steps in 24 to 36 months.

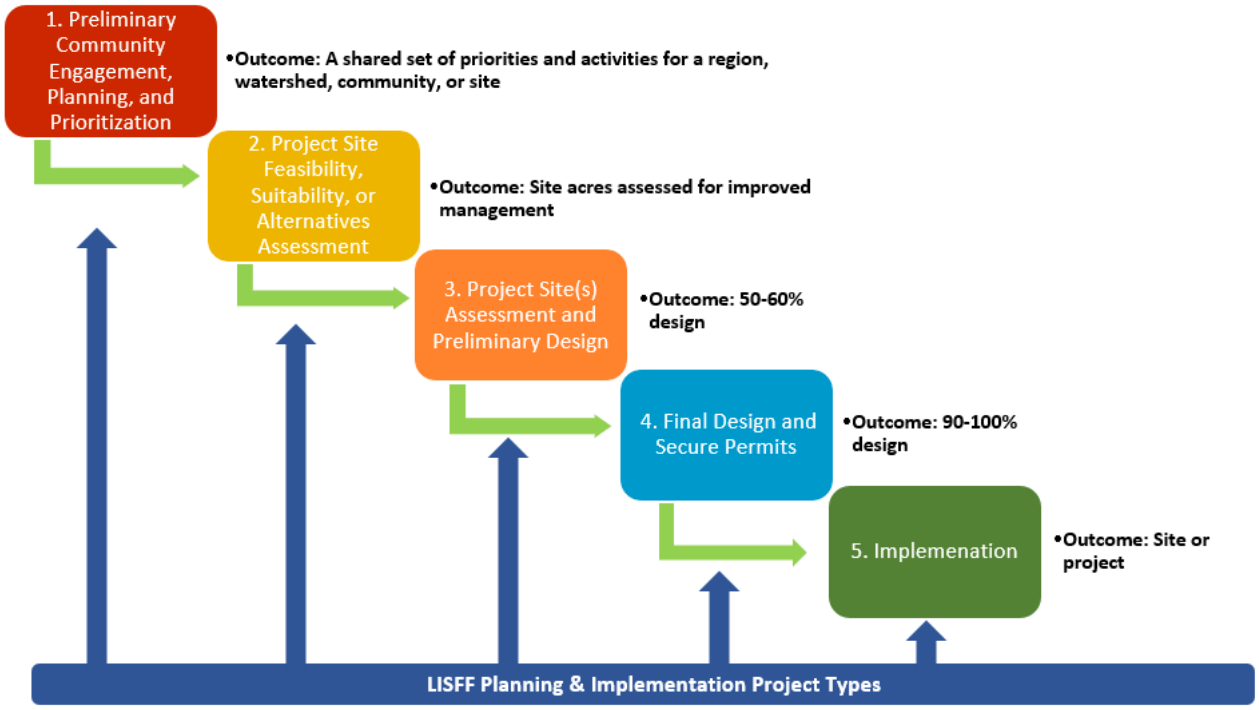

Figure 1: LISFF Planning and Implementation Project Types

Project Period: Project start date cannot be before October 1, 2025. Grants must start within six months and be completed within 24 months after notification of grant award. Project completion dates for projects may be adjusted to reflect the school year for educational projects. Education projects must be completed within 36 months after notification of grant award. Larger-scale complex implementation must be completed within 36 months after notification of the grant award. Notification of award is projected to be November 2025.

Match Requirements: Grants require a minimum nonfederal matching contribution valued at 50% of the "Requested Amount" from the LISFF. For example, for a project request of $100,000 from the LISFF, the required match is $50,000. Nonfederal matching contributions may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. The amount of matching funds offered is one criterion considered during the review process and projects that meet or exceed the required match will be more competitive.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

All proposed projects must be within the Long Island Sound Watershed boundary as shown in *Figure 2*. Project eligibility is also limited by geography depending on the project type.

Figure 2: Long Island Sound Watershed

Please review the interactive Long Island Sound Watershed Map for boundaries by project type.

- **Habitat restoration and stewardship projects** must fall within the Long Island Sound Coastal Watershed boundary in Connecticut (CT) and New York (NY)

- **Resilience, water quality and fish passage projects** may be in any portion of the Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY

- **Education and outreach projects** may be in any portion of the Long Island Sound Study Area in CT and NY. Projects may also occur in communities outside this boundary in those states as long as content concerns the health and living resources of the Sound

- **Nitrogen/nutrient prevention projects** may occur anywhere in the Sound watershed of CT, NY, Massachusetts (MA), New Hampshire (NH), and Vermont (VT) as shown in the Long Island Sound Watershed map

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The LISFF supports efforts to test innovative approaches to conservation, deliver transformative projects and support people and communities who value the Sound and take a role in its future. A

road map guiding investments under the LISFF is the Long Island Sound Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan 2020-2024 Update (CCMP).

The Long Island Sound Futures Fund invests in projects under three CCMP themes shown below, in CCMP Implementation Actions (IAs) associated with each theme, and in three CCMP cross-cutting principles as defined in the CCMP. The most competitive proposals will be those that incorporate theme(s), IA(s) and one or more cross-cutting principle(s) of the CCMP. **Note: due to the timing of the release of the 2025-2034 CCMP, this request for proposals is continuing to follow the 2020-2024 CCMP Update.**

Proposals should also strive to contribute to the goals detailed in NFWF's Northeast Watersheds Business Plan where possible, particularly those strategies associated with coastal habitats. Please see the Northeast Watersheds Business Plan Map for more details.

CCMP THEME: Clean Waters and Healthy Watersheds Improve water quality by reducing nitrogen pollution, combined sewer overflows, impervious cover, stormwater runoff and point and nonpoint source loading into Long Island Sound through:

- Implementation of "shovel-ready" projects should result in quantifiable pollutant prevention. The most competitive projects will be those that address water quality at a larger or more comprehensive scale such as a neighborhood, waterfront or downtown. Proposals must describe plans for long-term maintenance.
- Planning activities that set-the-stage for implementation of water quality projects including: 1) community engagement, planning and prioritization, 2) feasibility, suitability or alternatives analyses, 3) site assessment and conceptual design, 4) final design/permitting
- Projects must document the benefit to Long Island Sound, educate the community about the water quality benefits of the project and describe resources for long-term maintenance.

Related NFWF Business Plan Strategy: Northeast Watersheds Business Plan Strategy 4 - Restore the Quality of Stream and Riparian Habitat

- Reduce polluted runoff from developed and agricultural lands and the alteration of areas that degrade water quality and habitat complexity threatening brook trout and wood turtles
- Address impairments through riparian buffer restoration, best management practices to reduce runoff and improvements to in-stream habitat will bolster healthy populations while also expanding available habitat

Example Project Types and Actions:

- Nature-based stormwater infrastructure /Low Impact Development (LID) including:
    - Projects that filter and infiltrate stormwater pollution at a large scale such as in a neighborhood, on a waterfront or across a downtown and/or that are part of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) management
    - Projects that filter and infiltrate stormwater at a small scale and close to the source such as raingardens, bioswales and pervious surfaces
    - Technical assistance to help communities build capacity to plan for or to implement nature-based stormwater infrastructure/LID to reduce stormwater runoff

- Installation of decentralized on-site and/or low cost retrofits of wastewater treatment systems with a direct benefit to Long Island Sound in terms of reducing subsurface and surface nitrogen/nutrient loading
- Alternatives to chemical and nitrogen-intensive turf, landscaping fertilizer and pesticide use.
- Reducing marine debris (Long Island Sound Marine Debris Action Plan): applicants must provide projected pounds of marine debris prevented or removed by project in the metrics section of the proposal.
    - Removal of large marine debris such as abandoned and derelict vessels, abandoned or derelict fishing gear and other debris that is unable to be collected by hand
    - Reduction or prevention of water/land-based consumer debris
- Watershed planning projects addressing water quality problems such as nitrogen, sediments and trash and their impact on the watershed and Long Island Sound
    - Plans should include EPA's nine elements (EPA Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans).
    - Watershed plans in New York should follow the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation guidance for nine-element plans.
- Nutrient bioextraction (Long Island Sound Nutrient Bioextraction Initiative)
- In-stream restoration to increase nutrient processing benefitting Long Island Sound
- Replacing or right-sizing culverts or otherwise improving road and stream crossings to reduce erosion of nitrogen/nutrients into waterways that flow into Long Island Sound
- Agricultural conservation practices to improve farm economics and reduce nitrogen/nutrient runoff downstream to Long Island Sound such as:
    - Technical assistance or technical service to engage rural landowners and farmers in design and delivery of nitrogen/nutrient prevention projects
    - Delivery of nitrogen/nutrient prevention projects on farms
    - Regenerative agriculture or soil management systems and practices (including improved tillage and/or pasture management, cover crops, crop/livestock rotation) that reduce runoff and increase nutrient uptake
    - Precision nutrient management systems that fine-tune the rate, source, method and timing of nutrient applications to maintain or increase crop yields, minimize nutrient input costs and nutrient losses to surface and groundwater
    - Waste management planning or implementation of whole-farm non-structural or combined non-structural and structural management practices resulting in reduction of nitrogen/nutrient loading into waterways flowing to Long Island Sound

Projects in the Upper Basin states (MA, NH, VT) of the Long Island Sound Watershed must quantify nitrogen/nutrient reduction/prevention in metrics and have a specific outcome related to reduction in Long Island Sound by:

- Implementing "shovel-ready" projects that result in quantifiable nitrogen/nutrient pollutant prevention with a benefit to Long Island Sound
- Planning for activities that set-the-stage for implementation of quantifiable nitrogen/nutrient pollutant prevention with a benefit to Long Island Sound including: 1) community engagement, planning and prioritization, 2) feasibility, suitability or alternatives analyses, 3) site assessment and conceptual design, and 4) final design and permits

All projects must document the downstream benefit to Long Island Sound by indicating how the project addresses a source of nitrogen/nutrient pollution, project location and how project design and implementation will reduce downstream nutrient loading.

Examples of project types and actions:

- Nature-based stormwater infrastructure /Low Impact Development (LID) including:
    - Projects filtering and infiltrating stormwater pollution at a large scale such as in a neighborhood, on a waterfront or across a downtown and/or that are part of Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) management including implementing stormwater management practices with the aim of improving water quality in local waterways that flow downstream to the Sound
        - Proposals must document the benefit to Long Island Sound in terms of reducing downstream nitrogen/nutrient loading and describe resources for long-term maintenance.
    - Projects that filter and infiltrate stormwater at a small scale and close to the source of that runoff such as raingardens, bioswales and/or pervious surfaces
        - These projects must provide education about the water quality benefits and describe resources for long-term maintenance of the site.
    - Technical assistance to help communities build capacity to plan for or to implement nature-based infrastructure/LID with a benefit to Long Island Sound in terms of reducing downstream nitrogen/nutrient loading
- Riparian buffer and wetland restoration
- In-stream restoration to increase nutrient processing including restoration projects demonstrating nutrient/nitrogen reduction benefits coupled with benefits to brook trout will also be competitive
- Installation of decentralized on-site wastewater treatment systems that reduce subsurface and surface nitrogen/nutrient loading.
- Low-cost retrofits at wastewater treatment facilities such as optimization and process improvements
- Alternatives to chemical and nitrogen-intensive turf, landscaping fertilizer and pesticide use
- Agricultural conservation practices such as:
    - Technical assistance or technical service in design and delivery of nitrogen/nutrient prevention projects on farms
    - Regenerative agriculture or management systems and practices to reduce runoff and increase nutrient uptake, precision nutrient management systems, farm waste management planning or implementation of whole-farm practices
- Watershed planning addressing water quality problems including nitrogen/nutrient loading
    - Plans should include EPA's nine elements, see the EPA Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans.
- Replacing or right-sizing culverts or otherwise improving road and stream crossings to reduce erosion of nitrogen/nutrients into waterways
- Culvert retrofitting coupled with benefits to brook trout, see the Eastern Brook Trout Conservation Portfolio.

CCMP THEME: Thriving Habitats and Abundant Wildlife Enhance or restore coastal habitats to maintain habitat health and function and to support populations of fish, birds and wildlife, sustain

the ecological balance of the Sound in a healthy, productive and resilient state for the benefit of people, wildlife and the natural environment. Projects must document the benefit to Long Island Sound, educate the community about the water quality benefits of the project and describe resources for long-term maintenance.

- Implement "shovel-ready" habitat restoration and/or nature-based or hybrid projects. Proposals will be asked to describe plans for long-term maintenance
- Planning for implementation of projects including: 1) community engagement, planning and prioritization, 2) feasibility, suitability or alternatives analyses, 3) site assessment and conceptual design, and 4) final design and permits
- Fostering balanced and abundant populations of fish, birds and wildlife that consider the LISS Habitat Restoration Guidelines to inform development

Related NFWF Business Plan Strategies:

- Northeast Watersheds Business Plan Strategy 1: Protect and Restore Priority Marsh Habitat
    - Improve and increase high quality salt marsh habitat. Restore native vegetation and hydrologic function to priority salt marsh complexes and create microhabitats to support saltmarsh sparrow nesting sites
- Northeast Watersheds Business Plan Strategy 2: Restore and Improve Management of Beach and Dune Habitat
- Northeast Watersheds Business Plan Strategy 3: Restore Aquatic Connectivity
    - Build capacity to design road-stream crossings that allow for fish passage and flood risk reduction
    - Accelerate the design and permitting of right-sized road-stream crossings
    - Implement culvert replacement projects
    - Remove derelict or under-utilized dams that are barriers to fish movement

Examples of project types and actions:

- Habitat enhancement or restoration of Important Coastal Habitat Types targeted by the LISS with a particular focus on beach and dune, tidal marsh, shellfish reef and coastal forest
- Habitat enhancement or restoration of Important Coastal Habitat Types targeted by the LISS of benefit to Species of Greatest Conservation Need associated with that habitat, particularly forage species, shorebirds, seabirds and river herring
- Eelgrass restoration, protection and management to maintain and increase current extent in Long Island Sound including these activities:
    - Piloting or further advancing new and innovative restoration techniques to combat localized threats
    - Educating and engaging the public via community-based social marketing, community science or other outreach materials
    - Develop plans on a local level such as a subwatershed, municipality or embayment to protect eelgrass
    - Explore approaches and best management practices to address conflicting use issues including aquaculture and recreation activities
    - Implement embayment-specific water quality improvement projects to reduce nonpoint source nutrient loads and improve conditions for eelgrass meadows
        - Contact Cayla Sullivan for more information about these activities and reference that you are considering submitting a LISFF proposal.

- Nature-based or hybrid resilience and restoration projects such as living shorelines, thin-layer deposition, oyster castles/reef balls etc. focused on restoring Important Coastal Habitat Types like beach and dune, tidal marsh, shellfish reefs and coastal forest
- Shellfish and reef restoration to establish self-sustaining populations and/or to create or enhance benthic and reef structure for marine species.
    - **Shellfish and reef restoration planning and implementation projects for the purpose of supporting commercial or recreational harvest of shellfish is not eligible to be funded by LISFF. This includes activities to support restoration of commercial or recreational harvest areas such as shell recycling.**
- Invasive terrestrial species control coupled with development of or supporting an existing formal management plan, including:
    - First-time intensive efforts to treat invasive plants with subsequent re-treatment of secondary invasion and encroachment by invasive plants.
    - Treatment of invasive plants that follows prior primary and secondary intensive treatment
    - Proposals for stand-alone control of large meadows of monoculture common reed (*Phragmites australis*) are not eligible for funding. Please consult with Harry Yamalis about projects proposing control of common reed.
- Projects that reduce barriers (e.g., under-sized or perched culverts and small derelict or under-utilized dams) to fish passage for Long Island Sound fish such as river herring and American eel. The most competitive projects will be those with the greatest direct benefit to the Sound, open the most miles to fish passage, provide key habitats and promote species dispersal.
- Habitat enhancement or restoration that create or protect public access and/or stewardship opportunities
- Strategies to engage human communities to share the shore and reduce disturbance along shorelines also used by seabirds and beach nesting species such as American oystercatcher and piping plover
    - See the Shorebird Disturbance Reduction Toolkit.
- Restoring or enhancing habitat to improve community resilience including proposals that provide natural and nature-based solutions to protect coastal and inland communities from the impact of storms, floods and other natural hazards and to enable them to quickly recover
- Nature-based infrastructure/LID proposals that combine gray infrastructure with nature-based solutions to improve habitat and community resilience by increasing stormwater storage, reducing flooding and enhancing public space
- New or updated municipal, watershed or regional resilience/sustainability/natural hazard mitigation plans that evaluate critical community infrastructure and natural areas and develop strategies for making these areas resilient to hazardous events

CCMP THEME: Sustainable and Resilient Communities Support vibrant, informed and engaged communities that use, appreciate and help protect and sustain the Sound. Projects providing hands-on conservation experiences will be more competitive.

Examples of project types and actions:

- Encourage and facilitate the development of regional, state, and local sustainability, mitigation,and resiliency plans and integrate them into community comprehensive plans.

- Develop and implement sustainability and resiliency plans for new and existing development, housing, transportation, emissions control, energy efficiency, and job creation programs for all municipalities.
- Encourage communities to identify priority waterfront economic development activities
- Implement economic development strategies and infrastructure planning that result in vibrant, resilient, and environmentally sustainable communities.
- Public engagement in stewardship of local natural resources.
- Programs that foster, support or develop community support for local environmental management projects and increase public access to the Sound including behavior-change campaigns such as Community-Based Social Marketing
- Educational programs or campaigns or cleanups to build public awareness and direct engagement to reduce the use and impact of water/land-based consumer debris.
    - See the Long Island Sound Marine Debris Action Plan
    - Proposals must provide projected pounds of marine debris prevented in metrics
- Native plant landscaping guidance and training that encourages alternatives to chemical and nutrient intensive landscapes
- Create or enhance public access or stewardship opportunities along the Long Island Sound shoreline and rivers in the coastal boundary
- Long Island Sound environmental and conservation-related classroom or informal instruction
    - Note: **LISFF does not support the development of new curriculum.** See LISS Educational Resources for examples of available information and existing curriculum.

PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, the LISFF has a list of metrics titled "Activities and Outcomes" in the Easygrants online application. **Applicants must select at least one and no more than three of the most relevant metrics for their project (all possible project metrics for this program are shown in the table below).**

Additionally, in the project narrative section of the LISFF application, identify the specific CCMP Implementation Action(s) associated with your project metrics. The IAs associated with each project metric are outlined in the CCMP Implementation Actions (IAs). If you think an applicable metric or IA has not been provided, please email Victoria Moreno to discuss alternatives.

CLEAN WATERS & HEALTHY WATERSHEDS		
Project Activity	**Recommended Metric**	**Metric Guidance**
BMP implementation for nitrogen/nutrient reduction	Lbs. N avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of nitrogen prevented from entering system annually. Use one of the Calculator Resources to estimate pollution reduction/prevention.
BMP implementation for phosphorus reduction	Lbs. P avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of phosphorus prevented from entering system annually. Use one of the Calculator Resources to estimate pollution reduction/prevention.

BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction	Lbs. sediment avoided (annually)	Enter lbs. of sediment prevented from entering system annually. Use one of the Calculator Resources to estimate pollution prevention/prevention.
BMP implementation for stormwater runoff prevention	Volume stormwater prevented	Enter volume (in gallons) of stormwater prevented from entering the water body annually. Use one of the Calculator Resources to estimate pollution prevention/reduction.
BMP implementation for nitrogen/nutrient or sediment prevention	# Septic system upgrades	Enter # septic system upgrades.
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). Use one of the Calculator Resources to estimate pollution prevention/reduction.
Erosion control for nitrogen/nutrient or sediment prevention	Miles restored	Enter # of miles restored.
BMP or strategy for marine debris reduction or prevention	# Lbs. of marine debris removed	Enter the number of pounds of marine debris removed from the environment and properly disposed of.
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. If using this Metric, please also include the Riparian Restoration- Square miles restored Metric.
Nature Based Infrastructure/Low Impact Development/Riparian/Floodplain restoration	# Trees planted	Enter the number of 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.
Nature Based Infrastructure/Low Impact Development/Riparian/Floodplain restoration	Sq. ft. impervious surface removed	Enter square foot of impervious surface removed or retrofitted.
THRIVING HABITATS AND ABUNDANT WILDLIFE		
Habitat Restoration *(Resilience)*	Acres of living shoreline restored	Enter the acres of living shoreline to be restored. In NOTES section: describe the method used e.g., oyster reefs/castles, reef balls etc.
Habitat Restoration – Removal of invasives *(Invasives)*	Acres restored *(use this metric for first time invasives control)*	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).
Habitat Restoration – Removal of Invasives *(Invasives)*	Acres retreated *(use this metric for re-treatment or spot treatments)*	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).
Habitat Restoration (Tidal marsh restoration)	Acres restored	Enter the # of acres of salt marsh restored.
Floodplain restoration	Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored.
Marine habitat restoration	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored. In the NOTES: describe the type of habitat such as shellfish reef or eelgrass.

Land restoration – coastal forest	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres restored. In the NOTES: describe the specific type of habitat restored e.g., coastal forest. Specify landcover prior to restoration (barren, cropland, grass, shrub) and post restoration (broadleaf, conifer, redwood, shrubland).
Beach and dune habitat improvements	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of beach and dune restored.
Beach and dune habitat improvements	Miles restored	Enter the number of miles of beach and dune restored.
Riparian restoration	Square miles restored	Enter # of sq miles riparian 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. If using this metric, please also include the Riparian Restoration- Miles restored Metric.
Wetland restoration	# Acres restored	Enter the number of acres of wetland (not riparian or instream) habitat restored. In the NOTES: Specify landcover prior to restoration (Marsh, Tidal Marsh); and indicate % of vegetation on pre-project site (0-20%, 41-60%, 61-80%, 82-100%).
Fish passage improvements	Miles of stream opened	Enter # of miles opened. Enter total # of miles opened to improve aquatic organism passage. 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.
Fish passage improvements	# passage barriers rectified	Enter the # of in-stream barriers removed or rectified as part of this grant to improve aquatic organism passage and/or flooding. If multiple barriers exist at one specific location, please list "1" and list each individual barrier. . In the notes, provide the barrier's SARP ID--see SARP Natl. Aq. Barrier Inventory (aquaticbarriers.org). If the barrier(s) is not in SARP, provide its lat/long or its name and source.
Fish Passage Improvements	# of barriers assessed	Enter the # of in-stream barriers with assessments or engineering/design plans completed in this grant.
Acres of lake/pond habitat opened	# Acres of lake/pond habitat opened	Enter the number of acres of lake/pond habitat opened.
Improved management	# Acres under improved management	Enter the number of acres under improved management. Use this metric generally and for management to reduce human disturbance to bird species.
BMP implementation to mitigate recreational disturbance	# of sites with BMPs	Enter the # of sites with BMPs to mitigate recreational disturbance. In the notes, indicate the # of acres under BMPs, if available.
PLANNING ALL TYPES		
Management or Governance Planning	# Plans developed	Enter the number of plans developed that had input from multiple stakeholders. In NOTES section: describe the type of plan, campaign or strategy such as watershed, feasibility/suitability/alternatives analyses, conceptual or engineered plan.
Planning	# Acres assessed for improved management	Enter the number of acres assessed for improved management.

Planning	# Engineering and design plans developed	Enter the number of Engineering and Design plans developed. Generally, there will be 1 plan per project to be constructed.
Restoration Planning/Design/Permitting	Acres restored	Provide # (acres) and type of habitat to be addressed in planning. If different types of habitat to be addressed in planning, then provide # acres and list each individual type.
SUSTAINABLE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES		
Access Improvements	# Access pts. developed/improved	Enter the number of public access points developed/improved.
Access Improvements	# Acres with public access	Enter the number of acres now open to public access.
Outreach/Technical Assistance	# of orgs contributing to goals	Enter the number of organizations and stakeholders contributing to the initiative's conservation goals.
Outreach/Technical Assistance	# People reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities	Enter the number of people reached by outreach, training, or technical assistance activities, In NOTES section: describe participant such as local community members, leaders and other relevant stakeholders
Volunteer Participation	# Volunteers participating	Enter the number of volunteers participating in projects.
Outreach/Technical Assistance	# of Workshops, webinars, meetings	Enter the number of technical assistance workshops, webinars or meetings. In the NOTES section: describe the type of event.
Outreach/Technical Assistance	# Public events	Enter the number of public events completed.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities

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

EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

Conservation Outcomes	Budget	Technical
• Alignment with program goals and priorities • Quantifiable performance metrics • Appropriate monitoring of activities and outcomes	• Allowable and reasonable costs • Matching contributions • Cost effective	• Technically sound and feasible • Logical and achievable work plan and timeline • Engages appropriate technical experts • Accurate spatial data

• Partnership & community impact • Project long-term sustainability		• Sound compliance approach (permits, NEPA, QAPP, QA/QC) • Past grantee success • Transferable

Program Goals and Priorities – Project contributes to the Implementation Actions of the CCMP and has specific, quantifiable performance metrics to evaluate project success. Project addresses one or more of the CCMP cross-cutting principles.

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 experts and partners in project planning, design or implementation to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible. Proposal highlights how the project results are sustainable over time, including any maintenance.

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 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, describes outreach and community engagement activities and how those will be monitored and measured. Proposal uses data to support descriptions and includes letters of support from community partners and/or collaborators demonstrating their commitment to the project and engagement in project activities as proposed.

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 – Grants require a minimum nonfederal matching contribution valued at 50% of the "Requested Amount" from the LISFF. For example, if you request $100,000 from LISFF, then the required match is $50,000. Matching contributions may include cash, in-kind contributions of staff and volunteer time, work performed, materials and services donated or other tangible contributions to the project objectives and outcomes. Larger match ratios are encouraged and make proposals more competitive.

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.

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.

OTHER

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- Research projects. Consider the LISS Research Grant Program.
- Development of new educational curriculum, fellowships and/or tuition support or reimbursement
- Marketing efforts serving to generally promote the applicant organization and its initiatives.
- Full fee or conservation easement land acquisition
- Efforts to treat or control terrestrial invasive plants without an existing or planned for long-term invasive control operations and maintenance plan
- Aquatic invasive species control
- Proposals for stand-alone control of large meadows of monoculture common reed (Phragmites australis) are not eligible for funding
- General water quality monitoring to assess conditions or to identify pollution sources
- Shellfish and reef restoration planning and implementation projects for the purpose of supporting commercial or recreational harvest including activities to support restoration of commercial or recreational harvest areas such as shell recycling
- Funding for food, t-shirts and promotional items
- Contingency costs: do not include such costs in budgets. These costs are often understood as or associated with unanticipated major scope changes, unforeseen risks or an extraordinary event. When estimating the costs in contractual services where such contingency costs are applicable, use broadly accepted cost estimating methodologies and include those costs in the total value of the proposed costs.
- 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 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) 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. Requests for monthly advances will not be considered.

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.

Projects funded under this RFP will be subject to Buy America Sourcing. Certain limited exclusions may apply if the proposal meets either of the following conditions:

1. The restoration projects will not require any iron and steel, manufactured products, and nonferrous construction materials covered by the Act to be permanently affixed to, consumed in, or incorporated into the project, and
2. The total project proposal costs less than $250,000 of federal grant funding. The Buy America preference will apply to the entire project, including portions funded using non-

Federal funds (match). For legal definitions and sourcing requirements, consult EPA's Build America, Buy America website and the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) federal register notice and guidance (see below). EPA's Office of Water Implementation Procedures provides program-specific guidance relevant to water infrastructure projects.

Quality Assurance – If a project involves monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) for review by NFWF and review and approval by EPA before any data collection activities may commence. All QAPPs produced are public information.. Examples of the types of data collection or use which requires a QAPP includes (but are not limited to):

- New primary data
- Secondary data use (new use for data collected for a different purpose, whether by the same or different groups)
- Environmental media monitoring
- Modeling
- GIS/spatial analysis
- Data associated with assessment, development or design of watershed or project plans, development or design of watershed or community plans and surveys.

Applicants must budget time and resources in their LISFF proposal to complete this task. Plan to submit a QAPP *at least* four months in advance of data collection. The timing of review, comment and by NFWF and for EPA review and approval may involve several iterations. General assistance will be available to projects to help with scoping and review of draft QAPPs. For more information, follow the link to the LISFF Quality Assurance Project Plan Guidance and EPA QA. Contact Victoria Moreno if you have any questions about QAPP requirements.

For watershed planning in New York please review the following links for New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) quality assurance requirements; 1) NYS DEC nine-element reviewer guidance, and 2) the NYS DEC Quality Assurance page.

For fish passage projects (plans or implementation):1) if the barrier is one of multiple barriers that block downstream movement of fish to the Sound, 2) discuss planning and timing to remove the other barriers, and 3) the location of the barrier in terms of its distance from Long Island Sound.

For invasives control projects: discuss methods for treatment and retreatment of the area, types of invasives to be addressed, if replanting with natives provide a plant list, and preparation of a long-term management and stewardship plan as part of the project.

If you already have management plan(s), add it to the "Uploads" section in Easygrants as part of your proposal or if this area has received a prior LISFF grant to address invasives, discuss how this effort follows on the previous primary and secondary treatment and confirm that the proposed invasives control is being done under a management plan.

Permits – Successful applicants will be required to provide sufficient documentation that the project expects to receive or has received all necessary permits and clearances to comply with any Federal, state or local requirements. Where projects involve work in the waters of the United States,

NFWF strongly encourages applicants to conduct a permit pre-application meeting with the Army Corps of Engineers prior to submitting their proposal. In some cases, if a permit pre-application meeting has not been completed, NFWF may require successful applicants to complete such a meeting prior to grant award.

Federal Funding – The availability of federal funds estimated in this solicitation is contingent upon receipt from the agency. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

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.

Proposal Labs – One-to-one sessions to receive feedback and guidance about individual proposal ideas. April 2025 through May 2025 (Register)

One-to-one assistance to foster development of water quality improvement proposals in non-coastal CT, and the MA, NH and VT part of the Long Island Sound watershed – Contact Throwe Environmental to learn more about applicant assistance in the Northeast.

One-to-one assistance to applicants to develop project proposals in coastal CT and NY – Contact a Sustainable and Resilient Communities Extension Professional (SRC contact map).

Do you need help writing a grant application in CT and NY? Apply to the **Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program**! This funding opportunity is open on a rolling basis to municipalities and community organizations to hire a grant writing contractor to assist with proposal development for projects that will impact a community(ies) within or partially within the Long Island Sound Coastal boundary (within Westchester, Bronx, Queens, Nassau, Suffolk counties in New York and communities in western and eastern Connecticut). Applicants who are looking for assistance with the LIS Futures Fund grant are encouraged to **apply to the LIS Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program by April 17, 2025.** For more information, contact:

LISresilience@gmail.com. For answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) see the FAQ Document.

For more detail: **Track Two: *Long Island Sound Resilience Grant Writing Assistance Program*** FAQ Document and the LISS website. Contact: LISresilience@gmail.com

NFWF Assistance and Contacts
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:
[Victoria Moreno, Senior Coordinator
Victoria.Moreno@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.