
COMMUNITY CAPACITY & LAND STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

2017 Request for Proposals

National Forests in Oregon and Washington

Electronic Submission Deadline
December 12, 2016 at 10:59 pm PST

Informational Webinar
November 21, 2016 at 1:00 pm PST
Register at <http://www.nff.wildapricot.org/event-2364813>

This document contains important information about program requirements and application processes. Be sure you have reviewed in detail and fully understand it before continuing with the application process. The 2017 grant round will be especially competitive and only projects that are exceptionally aligned with programmatic criteria and very clearly defined are likely to be funded.

INTRODUCTION

The National Forest Foundation (NFF), chartered by Congress, engages America in community-based and national programs that promote the health and public enjoyment of the 193-million-acre National Forest System, and administers private gifts of funds and land for the benefit of the National Forests. The NFF believes that communities should play a significant role in determining the future of our National Forests and Grasslands.

OVERVIEW

In Oregon and Washington, the U.S. Forest Service (FS) is supporting collaborative natural resource management through an all-lands approach. The FS believes that it is important to support and build the capacity of collaborative efforts that further enhance natural resource and watershed restoration outcomes while also helping to build sustainable economic capacities in local communities.

The National Forest Foundation offers this grant program in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region to support local collaborative efforts that work toward achieving watershed and landscape restoration objectives. The U.S. Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region presently provides all program funding. The program operates with the additional support of implementation partners including Sustainable Northwest, Washington Department of Natural Resources, and Oregon Solutions.

The Community Capacity & Land Stewardship Program provides grants of \$5,000 to \$24,000 to enable community-based organizations and collaborative groups to build their capacity to facilitate and/or implement watershed or landscape-level

restoration. Ancillary goals of the program are to build capacity to help meet other objectives associated with the creation of family wage jobs that contribute to the economic sustainability of communities. Grants are for a period of 12 months. Organizations are not required to match CCLS Program award funds, but are encouraged to leverage additional private and local, state, or governmental resources to illustrate broad support for the project.

GOALS

The goals of the program are to ensure community-based organizations and collaborative groups have the capacity and resources to convene, plan, and monitor watershed restoration and landscape-scale restoration projects on National Forest and Grasslands. Work may take place off National Forest and Grasslands if there is a clear benefit to those lands.

As such, this program seeks to fund efforts that will measurably contribute to the following outcomes:

Program Outcome 1: Community-based and collaborative organizations within both Washington and Oregon are successful in coming to agreement on the design and implementation of watershed and/or landscape scale restoration projects.

Program Outcome 2: Community-based organizations and collaborative groups have developed plans for facilitating job creation and retention and business development in their region.

Applicants should explain how their proposal supports these two primary outcomes and, if successful, provide measurable results at the end of the grant period. Additionally, wherever possible applicants may wish to consider the following outcome as an additional goal:

Program Outcome 3: Community-based organizations and collaborative groups are successful in securing additional resources to implement projects and programs leading to job creation and business development.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Evaluation occurs based on answers to the narrative questions provided below, and the extent to which the organization's work will contribute to the outcomes listed above. Reviewers use the following criteria to rank proposals:

- The extent to which the proposed activities help organizations be successful in agreeing on the design and implementation of watershed and/or landscape scale restoration over the short and long term.
- The extent to which the proposed activities benefit National Forests and Grasslands over the short and long term.
- The extent to which the proposed activities help facilitate job creation and retention and/or business development over the short and long term.
- The extent to which valuable ecological, economic, and social benefits are likely to result from the scope of work.
- The extent to which the organization appears to have a broad, diverse base of support.
- The extent to which the award funds appear to be critical for the success of the organization and the identified program of work.
- The extent to which the budget is reasonable given the anticipated outcomes.

USE OF FUNDS

Recipients may use grant funds for the following categories of work:

- Organizational and staff support, including facilitation, technical assistance, networking and peer to peer evaluations leading to "Lessons Learned";
- Travel related to collaborative group activities;
- Development of action plans, project proposals, etc. as a result of or necessary for collaborative processes;
- Community outreach that helps support a collaborative group and enables them to be more effective on the ground;

- Workshops and training related to facilitation, contracting, and other topics that will assist groups in building their capacity to meet the program goals;
- Dissemination of best practices and tools to assist community-based nonprofit organizations and collaborative groups in project development, implementation, and monitoring;
- Build local support and credibility surrounding the impacts resulting from the restoration or management of federal, state, or private lands.

The USFS Pacific Northwest Region provides program funding under the [Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Agreement Authority](#), sometimes known as the *Wyden Amendment*. As such, all awarded grants must support the protection, restoration, or enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and other resources on public or private land, or reduce the risk of natural disaster that upon these resources when public safety is threatened. CCLS funding is not for on-the-ground implementation. These funds cannot fund the personnel or resources of any federal entity. Further, award recipients cannot use funding from grants to lobby or influence any federal, state, or local legislative body or any federal, state, or local legislative proposal.

Applications will be considered from 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations; regional, state or local governmental entities; colleges and universities; and Native American tribes implementing activities that lead to forest or watershed enhancement activities benefitting the National Forest System in Oregon and/or Washington.

WHO CAN APPLY

The NFF will accept applications from community-based nonprofit organizations, collaborative groups, or federally recognized tribes according to the below definitions. Please contact the NFF if you have questions about a group's eligibility.

Community-based nonprofit organizations are entities that have a nonprofit tax-exempt status (generally 501(c)(3)), a board of directors, staff, and programs, although some community-based organizations run on volunteers or with very few staff members. These organizations implement projects in the community on their own, through collaborative efforts, or in partnership with other entities, including businesses and county, state, and federal agencies. If the organization does not have 501(c)(3) status, it must utilize a fiscal sponsor with that status.

Collaborative groups 1) are comprised of diverse interests that may represent local, regional, national, and other interests; 2) agree to work together to identify common ground; and 3) agree to advance solutions based on that common ground. Many collaborative groups work out agreements through project development, design, implementation, and monitoring; others simply develop and advance recommendations; and others may do a hybrid of both. If a collaborative group does not have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status, it must utilize a fiscal sponsor with that status.

Federally recognized tribes are the tribal entities recognized by the Bureau of Indian Affairs by virtue of their status as Indian Tribes, as posted in the federal register.

AWARD TIMING

Awarded grants will likely begin early in 2017. Project completion must occur within 12 months of the project award date, which typically begins within one month of award notification. Successful applicants will have the opportunity to choose from a few pre-selected grant start dates.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS:

The online application contains the components listed below.

Full details on the requirements for each component are in the online application.

1. Project Overview
2. Project Narrative

- a. Context
 - b. Need
 - c. Goals
 - d. Activities
 - e. Timeline
 - f. Outcomes
 - g. Grant History
3. Supporting Information
- a. Organizational Background
 - b. List of Participants
 - c. Budget Narrative
 - d. NFF Financial Plan Form
 - e. NFF Expanded Budget Form
 - f. USFS Forest Supervisor's Letter of Support
 - g. Organizational Financials

FOREST SERVICE LETTERS OF SUPPORT

All applications must include a letter of support from the Forest Supervisor of each National Forest or Grassland unit included in a proposal. Do not submit letters from Forest Service District Rangers or any additional letters of support. If not uploaded with the proposal, email letter of support to Zia Maumenee at zmaumenee@nationalforests.org or fax it to (406) 830-3383 within 3 days of the grant deadline.

TO APPLY:

The NFF utilizes an online application system. To get started:

1. Visit <https://www.grantinterface.com/nationalforests/Common/LogOn.aspx> and either:
 - a. **Log on with an existing account**, OR
 - b. Click **"Create New Account"** and follow the steps to create a new account.
TIP: If you have never applied for an NFF grant through this system before, you will need to create a new account.
2. Once you create an account and log in, click Apply. When prompted for an access code, use the access code below.
Access code: **eggplant**
3. Click on **2017 Community Capacity and Land Stewardship – Oregon/Washington**
4. Follow the instructions provided on the online form. Please note that if you click "Question List" you can download all the application questions for offline review.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

One funding round is available for the 2017 grant year. Applications are due electronically by **December 12, 2016 at 10:59 pm PST**.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

Based on available funding, the NFF expects to fund about 6-8 proposals for work benefitting Oregon and Washington National Forests System lands through the 2017 grant round.

PEER LEARNING SESSIONS

The NFF will hold online interactive peer learning sessions for CCLS award recipients to promote cross-learning and sharing of lessons learned. Specific topics will be determined based on a review of grants awarded and conversations with grant recipients. Attendance at relevant peer learning sessions is an expectation of all award recipients.

PROGRAM RESOURCES

The National Forest Foundation and partnering organizations and agencies will help award recipients to build capacity through ongoing communications and will facilitate idea sharing between established and emerging organizations.

The NFF has developed [Conservation Connect](#) to provide tools needed for engaging in collaborative, community-based stewardship on our National Forests and Grasslands. Conservation Connect follows the NFF's peer learning philosophy of creating opportunities for practitioners on the ground to share their successes and challenges and to learn from the experiences of others. Conservation Connect hosts peer-learning teleconferences and offers mentoring, access to coaches, a resource library with best practices and tools, and a variety of information on emerging topics of interest.

The Forest Service and the NFF have also jointly developed the online [Partnership Resource Center](#), an excellent resource for community groups that focus on natural resource management issues.

Resources for grant seekers offering tips and best practices for writing successful proposals are widely available on the internet. The NFF has compiled a list of [some good starting places](#).

NFF staff is available to respond to questions about the application process; receiving help will not affect an organization's competitiveness for the program.

The NFF offers an informational webinar on **November 21, 2016 at 1:00 pm PST**. You must register in advance at <http://www.nff.wildapricot.org/event-2364813>.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

Contact **Adam Liljeblad**

Director, Conservation Awards

Phone: (406) 830-3357

Email: aliljeblad@nationalforests.org