

## 2019 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

### SMALL WATERSHED GRANTS

#### Implementation // Planning and Technical Assistance

Proposal Due Date: **Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 by 11:59 PM EDT**

### 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 to restore water quality and habitats of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams.

NFWF is soliciting proposals under the **Small Watershed Grants (SWG)** program for projects within the Chesapeake Bay watershed that promote community-based efforts to protect and restore the diverse natural resources of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams. NFWF will award funding through two distinct funding opportunities: **SWG Implementation (SWG-I)** grants will be awarded for projects that result in direct, on-the-ground actions to protect and restore water quality, species, and habitats in the Bay watershed; **SWG Planning and Technical Assistance (SWG-PTA)** grants will be awarded for projects that enhance local capacity to more efficiently and effectively implement future on-the-ground actions through assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities.

NFWF estimates awarding \$5-7 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2019 contingent on the availability of funding. Major funding comes from the EPA Chesapeake Bay Program Office, with other important contributions by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Altria Group, and CSX.



### GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

All projects must occur wholly within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Priority consideration will 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. Specific priority geographies have been identified for each of NFWF's major focus areas for the SWG program. Applicants should consult outcome-specific geographic priorities referenced in this Request for Proposals and NFWF's online Chesapeake Bay Business Plan [mapping portal](#) to determine appropriate geographic focus areas for their proposed project activities (see Appendix A for additional guidance).



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Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund



## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

Consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Program 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 and diverse citizen and stakeholder presence that will build upon and sustain measureable natural resource improvements. NFWF is soliciting proposals that provide measurable contributions for the following 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 priority outcomes:

Focus	Outcome	Activity	Geographic Focus
<b>Water Quality</b>	Reduce nitrogen, phosphorus, and sediment pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and its tributary rivers and streams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Improve water quality in agricultural areas by implementing best management practices to reduce polluted runoff</li> <li>- Improve water quality in urban and suburban areas by implementing green stormwater infrastructure practices to treat, capture, and/or store stormwater runoff</li> <li>- Restore riparian forest buffer and associated riparian habitat in order to continually increase the capacity of forest buffers to provide water quality and habitat benefits throughout the watershed</li> <li>- Improving the health and function of tributary rivers and streams</li> </ul>	Priority Subwatersheds for Water Quality Improvement
<b>Eastern Brook Trout</b>	Maintain and increase Eastern brook trout populations in stronghold patches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Increase habitat integrity in stronghold patches through protection and restoration of riparian areas, stream restoration, nonpoint source pollution controls and land use protections</li> </ul>	Eastern Brook Trout Patches (Tier I and II)
<b>American Black Duck</b>	Increase wetland habitat and available food to support wintering black duck populations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Create, restore, or enhance the function of tidal and non-tidal wetlands to increase black duck carrying capacity through improved food resources</li> <li>- Increase available food resources</li> </ul>	Black Duck Priority Subwatersheds (Tier I and II)
<b>River Herring</b>	Restore access and use of high quality migratory river and stream habitat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Implement high priority, cost-effective connectivity enhancement projects through culvert replacement, fish passage improvements, and dam removal</li> </ul>	Priority Culverts for River Herring
<b>Eastern Oyster</b>	Restore oyster populations in priority Chesapeake Bay tributaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Restore native oyster reefs in targeted tributaries through spat production and reef construction</li> </ul>	Oyster Restoration Tributaries
<b>Capacity and Planning</b>	Motivate individuals in the watershed to adopt behaviors that benefit water quality, species, and habitats	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enlist individuals in local volunteer events to restore local natural resources and providing hands-on education and skill-building for individual action</li> <li>- Develop or improve conservation, watershed, or habitat management plans that provide guidance to landowners, organizations, or local governments on how to manage properties and communities for improved conservation outcomes</li> </ul>	N/A

In order to achieve these outcomes and measurable accomplishments of contributing activities, the SWG program will support projects that address one or more of the following strategies through either (1) direct on-the-ground implementation of conservation or restoration actions (SWG-Implementation grants) or (2) assessment, planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities (SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance). SWG-Implementation grants may also include technical assistance-oriented activities in support of proposed on-the-ground implementation activities.

## Strategy 1: Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff

### 1.1. Managing Upland Agricultural Runoff through Farm-Scale Conservation Systems and

**Solutions:** Includes efforts to reduce water quality impacts while simultaneously maintaining or increasing profits, reducing costs, and enhancing financial performance of the region’s farms through the implementation of suites of best management practices that reduce pollution at the farm scale. Selected examples include:

- Soil health management systems that combine improved tillage and pasture management, cover crops, crop and livestock rotations, and other practices to increase soil fertility while improving the capacity of crops and soils to 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.
- Certification, labeling, and other sustainable sourcing initiatives that provide price premiums and/or new markets for agricultural products produced in a manner that improves and protects water quality and/or habitats.
- “Whole-farm” conservation systems that reduce pollution from crop and pasture lands, animal production areas, and high-value natural resource areas like wetlands and riparian areas and significantly improve the environmental performance of the farm while maximizing public and private financial assistance programs.

#### Special Emphasis: Soil Health

In partnership with NRCS and Altria, NFWF has secured up to \$3 million in dedicated 2019 funding to increase the adoption of soil health practices and management systems by agricultural producers in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Through the SWG program, NFWF is specifically soliciting pilot and demonstration-scale projects that increase adoption of soil health practices and management systems.

Applicants interested in pursuing this funding opportunity are strongly encouraged to consult with NFWF staff early in the proposal development process.

For projects managing agricultural runoff, applicants should seek first to utilize existing federal, state, and local cost-share and incentive programs to finance implementation of water quality improvement practices, with NFWF funding for practice implementation used to strategically fill gaps in existing funding programs. Where NFWF funding is sought to cover all or a portion of costs for practice implementation, applicants must describe why other public programs are insufficient or otherwise inappropriate for financing proposed practice implementation.

## 1.2. Managing Upland Urban Runoff through Green Stormwater Infrastructure

**Improvements (GSI):** Includes efforts to assist local governments, nonprofit organizations, and community associations to improve urban and suburban stormwater management by implementing green stormwater infrastructure practices that capture, store, filter, and treat stormwater runoff closer to its sources. Example practices include rain gardens, bioswales and other bioretention approaches, conservation landscaping, and urban tree canopy among others. In limited cases, NFWF may also support urban floodplain and stream restoration for water quality improvement where existing or planned green stormwater infrastructure effectively control stormwater runoff from upland sources. Selected examples include:

- Integrating GSI approaches into capital improvement and maintenance programs for public works, parks and recreation, emergency management, education, transportation, community redevelopment, etc.
- Assisting multiple local governments at the regional or subwatershed scale in the demonstration and development of projects and programs that mitigate stormwater impacts in communities experiencing rapid growth, especially those currently unregulated for stormwater management.
- Increasing adoption of GSI practices on residential, commercial, and institutional properties through community-based social marketing (CBSM) strategies.

**1.3. Accelerating Innovation in Watershed Management:** Includes in-field application of new technologies and management approaches with the potential to reduce costs, increase nutrient removal efficiencies, and more effectively control emerging nutrient and sediment pollutant sources. For instance, advancements in manure processing and management, market-based solutions to manure management, innovative stormwater practices and design approaches, and improvements in the cost-effectiveness of proven water quality improvement approaches all show promise.

## Strategy 2: Riparian and Freshwater Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management

### 2.1. Restoring Riparian and Freshwater Habitats through Forested Buffers, Floodplain and Wetland Reconnection, and Stream Restoration and Habitat Improvements:

Includes restoration of degraded riparian systems to improve water quality, enhance aquatic habitat, and increase fish populations across the Chesapeake Bay region through a variety of actions and interventions including but not limited to the following:

- Implementation of riparian forested buffers, consistent with standard specifications for buffer width, planting density, etc., to slow and intercept polluted surface runoff while providing long-term benefits for priority fish species.
- Reconnection of stream channels with historic floodplains and adjacent wetlands to promote nutrient removal, attenuate erosive stormflows and build more resilient riparian systems.
- Stream restoration in both urban and non-urban landscapes to control streambank erosion, increase in-stream nutrient processing, and provide food, cover, and habitat for priority species.

- 2.2. Increasing Habitat Integrity for Eastern Brook Trout:** In combination with pollution reduction, riparian habitat restoration, and conservation actions, includes increases in connectivity within and between occupied Eastern brook trout patches through dam removal, repair and replacement of culverts and road crossings, and other fish passage improvements. NFWF will support similar connectivity improvements between occupied and unoccupied patches in order to increase the amount of occupied habitat and number of Eastern brook trout where local partners can demonstrate: (1) sufficient existing habitat integrity to support brook trout populations; and (2) the absence of current or planned populations of nonnative trout species in otherwise extirpated patches adjacent to occupied habitats.
- 2.3. Improving Riparian Management through Livestock Exclusion:** Includes efforts to implement livestock exclusion fencing, along with complementary practices like stream crossing and off-stream watering, in order to balance livestock management needs with riparian and stream health.
- 2.4. Conserving High-Quality Riparian Corridors:** Includes long-term protection and preservation of these 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 easements, and incorporation of riparian protection into existing agricultural land preservation programs.

### **Strategy 3: Estuarine and Tidal Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management**

- 3.1. Restoring Large-Scale Oyster Reefs:** Includes assisting efforts to restore and protect large-scale oyster reefs strategically identified by Maryland, Virginia and the CBP 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.
- 3.2. Restoring River Herring Habitat Connectivity:** In combination with pollution reduction and riparian habitat restoration and conservation actions, 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 road crossings, and other fish passage improvements. NFWF will prioritize cost-effective connectivity enhancements that provide the access to the greatest amount of quality habitat at the lowest cost.
- 3.3. Restoring and Conserving Wetland and Tidal Marsh Habitat for American Black Duck:** Includes restoration of degraded tidal and non-tidal marsh and wetland habitats and strategic conservation of existing high quality wintering habitats. 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. In proposing tidal marsh and wetland restoration activities, NFWF will prioritize approaches that maximize habitat benefits for other dependent species including, striped bass and juvenile herring.
- 3.4. Managing Shoreline Erosion and Marsh Loss:** Includes implementation of non-structural or hybrid living shoreline restoration practices that mitigate sediment transport to priority

oyster reef restoration sites, establish and expand emergent or submerged aquatic vegetation, and/or help to protect adjacent marsh systems documented as critical black duck wintering habitat.

#### **Strategy 4: Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Outcomes**

- 4.1. Regional-Scale Partnership Development:** Includes activities that seek to scale up restoration outcomes by significantly enhancing partnership and coordination across organizations at broader regional and landscape scales. See separate Request for Proposals for the Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction Grants program for further details. Proposals that address species and/or habitat outcomes through regional partnership development are restricted to funding under the SWG program. Applicants should consider appropriate models and frameworks for their meeting their partnership goals. For example, collective impact models provide the basis to develop common conservation, watershed, and habitat management agendas across multiple partner organizations.
- 4.2. 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.

#### **Strategy 5: Watershed and Habitat Planning, Prioritization, Design, and Permitting**

- 5.1. 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. Priority will be placed on efforts to translate Bay pollution reduction goals to local implementation plans, along with efforts to identify habitat restoration opportunities for NFWF's priority species at a local level. Examples include property or farm-level conservation and stormwater management plans, 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.
- 5.2. 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.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, NFWF has provided a list of metrics in *Easygrants* for grantees to choose from for reporting. For the SWG-Implementation program, awardees will be required to report both project-level metrics via *Easygrants* and more detailed site and practice-level data via FieldDoc.org (see below for additional entails), as applicable. While the table below includes all possible program metrics we ask that applicants select only the most relevant metrics from this list for their project. If you do not believe an applicable metric has been provided, please contact Claire Flynn at [claire.flynn@nfwf.org](mailto:claire.flynn@nfwf.org) or (202) 857-0166, to discuss acceptable alternatives.

Strategy	Recommended Metric
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (all applicable projects)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs N avoided (annually)*</li> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs P avoided (annually)*</li> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Lbs sediment avoided (annually)*</li> </ul>
<b>Managing Agricultural and Urban Runoff</b> (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for nutrient or sediment reduction - Acres with BMPs*</li> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Acres with BMPs*</li> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for stormwater runoff - Volume stormwater prevented</li> </ul>
<b>Riparian and Freshwater Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management</b> (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - Riparian restoration - Miles restored*</li> <li>• CBSF - Instream restoration - Miles restored*</li> <li>• CBSF - Erosion control - Miles restored*</li> <li>• CBSF - BMP implementation for livestock fencing - Miles of fencing installed*</li> <li>• CBSF - Stream restoration - Miles restored*</li> <li>• CBSF - Floodplain restoration - Acres restored</li> <li>• CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored*</li> </ul>
<b>Estuarine and Tidal Habitat Restoration, Conservation, and Management</b> (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - American oyster - Marine habitat restoration - Acres restored</li> <li>• CBSF - Fish passage improvements - Miles of stream opened</li> <li>• CBSF - Wetland restoration - Acres restored*</li> <li>• CBSF - Erosion control - Miles restored*</li> </ul>
<b>Building Capacity for Landscape-Scale Watershed and Habitat Outcomes</b> (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached</li> <li>• CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior</li> <li>• CBSF - Volunteer participation - # volunteers participating</li> </ul>
<b>Watershed and Habitat Planning, Prioritization, Design, and Permitting</b> (select all that apply)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CBSF - Management or Governance Planning - # plans developed</li> <li>• CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people reached</li> <li>• CBSF - Outreach/ Education/ Technical Assistance - # people with changed behavior</li> </ul>

\* Selected *Easygrants* metrics should be consistent with data entered into and/or derived from FieldDoc.org.

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

#### *Small Watershed Grants – Implementation*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, and K-12 educational institutions.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, state government agencies, businesses, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

#### *Small Watershed Grants – Planning and Technical Assistance*

- ✓ Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Indian tribes, educational institutions, and for-profit entities.
- ✓ While eligible applicants include state government agencies, post-secondary educational institutions, and for-profit entities, funded activities are intended to support future implementation efforts of non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Indian tribes and K-12 education institutions only. Accordingly, applications submitted by state governments agencies, post-secondary educational institutions, and for-profit entities must document support and/or request for proposed activities by appropriate non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Indian tribes and K-12 education institutions.
- ✓ Non-profit organizations, local and municipal governments, Indian tribes and K-12 education institutions seeking potential service providers may visit <https://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake/Documents/2018-approved-provider-list.xlsx> for a listing of technical service providers.
- ✓ While for-profit entities are eligible applicants, charges to a potential award may include actual costs only; recipients may not realize profit from an award of federal financial assistance funds.
- ✗ Ineligible applicants include U.S. federal government agencies, unincorporated individuals, and international organizations.

### Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds

- ✗ 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, for example in achieving municipal separate storm sewer systems permit requirements.



## FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH

NFWF will award \$5-7 million in grants through the combined SWG program in 2019. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants Implementation program will range from \$20,000 to \$200,000 each, with a non-federal matching requirement equal to one-third of the grant request. All 2019 SWG-Implementation grants must be completed within two years of grant award. Awards for the Small Watershed Grants-Planning and Technical Assistance program will be no more than \$50,000 each, with no non-federal matching requirement. All 2019 SWG-Planning and Technical Assistance grants must be completed within one year of grant award.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

### Evaluation Criteria for the Small Watershed Grants-Implementation

**Environmental Results** – Project provides measurable contributions to the program’s priority outcomes and maximizes opportunities to achieve multiple priority outcomes, for example through strategic project location and design. Proposal references existing water quality, habitat, and species monitoring data and programs in the project area and utilizes associated data to validate estimated environmental results with real-world monitoring information.

**Project Location** – Proposal clearly articulates the demonstrated need and/or strategic importance of locating the proposed activities to achieve the priority outcomes and implementation of associated activities. The proposed scale matches geographic aspects of conservation need or opportunity, community outreach and engagement, adoption, etc.

**Project Context** – Proposal clearly supports local plans and initiatives for achieving the priority outcomes and implementation of associated activities and can articulate the connection to larger regional plans including state and local [Watershed Implementation Plans](#) and/or [Management Strategies and Work Plans](#) developed by the Chesapeake Bay Program pursuant to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement. Proposal adequately contextualizes proposed activities, including how prior efforts in the project area or region have informed and shaped proposed approach.

**Partnership and Community Engagement** – Project engages diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant partners to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed restoration actions. Non-traditional partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project. For more information on opportunities to align project activities with environmental justice needs and opportunities, applicants are encouraged to use [EJ Screen](#), EPA’s environmental justice screening and mapping tool.

**Transferability and Dissemination Plans** – Project includes clear plans to actively transfer and disseminate project-related information to appropriate audiences and relevant stakeholders within the Chesapeake Bay watershed through multiple communications mechanisms, with the

goal of expanding adoption of successful approaches and integration into government programs and policies (e.g., state and federal cost share, MS4 program delivery, etc.).

**Technical Merit, Work Plan, and Budget** – Project is technically sound, feasible, cost-effective, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically-sound and feasible. Applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of technical assistance either received or committed to by appropriate state and federal agencies, academics and consultants.

### **Evaluation Criteria for the Small Watershed Grants-Planning and Technical Assistance**

**Priority and Overall Context** – Project connects proposed planning and/or technical assistance activities with demonstrable needs for assistance in achieving the program’s priority outcomes and implementing associated activities.

**Demonstrated Need** – Project clearly addresses a lack of capacity, technical expertise, financial resources, etc. in implementing projects and programs to improve local water quality and habitats and/or accelerate nutrient and sediment reductions to the Chesapeake Bay. Projects should establish a clear need for the funds being requested and demonstrate that activities would not move forward absent funding.

**Commitment to Implementation** – Proposal provides clear evidence that planning and technical assistance resulting from the project will reasonably lead to future measurable contributions to the program’s priority outcomes and associated activities.

**Partnership and Community Engagement** – Project engages diverse local community members, leaders, community-based organizations, and other relevant partners to ensure the long-term sustainability of the project, integration into local programs and policies, and community acceptance of proposed restoration actions. Non-traditional partners or communities are enlisted to broaden the sustained impact from the project. Projects successfully demonstrate how prior efforts in the project area or region have informed and shaped proposed approach. Proposals may document match from partners as an indicator of partnership and unique letters of support indicating the partners’ role in and contribution to the project.

**Technical Merit, Work Plan, and Budget** – Project is technically sound, feasible, cost-effective, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically-sound and feasible. Applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of technical assistance either received or committed to by appropriate state and federal agencies, academics and consultants.

### **OTHER**

**Nutrient and Sediment Load Reductions:** All SWG-Implementation projects proposing to implement water quality improvements must demonstrate reductions of nutrient and sediment pollution to local rivers and streams, and ultimately the Chesapeake Bay. To assist applicants in generating credible nutrient and sediment load reduction estimates, NFWF has partnered with the Chesapeake Commons and Maryland Department of Natural Resource to develop [FieldDoc](#), a user-friendly tool that allows consistent planning, tracking, and reporting of water quality

improvement activities and associated nutrient and sediment load reductions from proposed grant projects.

FieldDoc currently includes functionality for a significant share of water quality improvement practices approved by the Chesapeake Bay Program for the purposes of TMDL crediting. Unless otherwise approved by NFWF staff, NFWF expects all projects proposing to implement on-the-ground water quality improvements 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.

Upon grant award, NFWF will require all projects submitted under this solicitation to utilize FieldDoc for tracking and reporting of applicable water quality improvement activities during the course of their grant project. For technical support on FieldDoc utilization during the pre-proposal or proposal development process, please contact Erin Hofmann with the Chesapeake Commons at [hofmann@chesapeakecommons.org](mailto:hofmann@chesapeakecommons.org).

**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.

**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. This program will award grants of Federal financial assistance funds; applicants must be able to comply with the OMB guidance in subparts A through F of 2 CFR 200 (OMB Uniform Guidance). While for-profit entities are eligible applicants, charges to a potential award may include actual costs only; recipients may not realize profit from an award of federal financial assistance funds.

**Matching Contributions** – Matching contributions consist of cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review. In general, applicants may consider matching contributions raised or spent on or after January 1, 2019 as eligible under the 2019 INSR program.

**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 significant monitoring, data collection or data use, grantees will be asked to prepare and submit quality assurance documentation (<https://www.epa.gov/quality>) prior to starting this work. Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task. Applicants should budget time and resources to complete this task if appropriate. For more information about NFWF’s Stewardship Fund Quality Assurance process, visit [http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake/Pages/quality\\_assurance.aspx#.VO-S5vnF9KY](http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake/Pages/quality_assurance.aspx#.VO-S5vnF9KY).

**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 the federal appropriations process. Funding decisions will be made based on level of funding and timing of when it is received by NFWF.

**Good Standing Policy:** All applicants with active grants from NFWF must be in good standing in terms of reporting requirements, expenditure of funds, and QAPPs (if required). In addition, NFWF may also consider an applicant’s standing under grant programs administered by external partners in determining performance-based qualifications for proposed grantees. Active grantees with questions on their current standing are encouraged to contact NFWF staff in advance of submitting applications.

## TIMELINE

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

Applicant Webinar ( <a href="#">Registration</a> )	<i>Wednesday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 10:00am EDT</i>
FieldDoc Webinar ( <a href="#">Registration</a> )	<i>Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>, 10:00am EDT</i>
Proposal Due Date	<i>Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 11:59pm EDT</i>
Proposal Review Period	<i>May – July</i>
Awards Announced	<i>September (anticipated)</i>

## 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](http://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.
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 PDF version of this RFP can be downloaded at <http://www.nfwf.org/chesapeake>.

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document 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 (<http://www.nfwf.org/whatwedo/grants/applicants/Pages/home.aspx>).

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact Jake Reilly ([jake.reilly@nfwf.org](mailto:jake.reilly@nfwf.org)), Stephanie Heidebreder ([stephanie.heidebreder@nfwf.org](mailto:stephanie.heidebreder@nfwf.org)) or Claire Flynn ([claire.flynn@nfwf.org](mailto:claire.flynn@nfwf.org)) via e-mail or by phone at (202) 857-0166.

For issues or assistance with our online Easygrants system, please contact:

### Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: [Easygrants@nfwf.org](mailto: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 to which you are applying, and a description of the issue.

## APPENDIX A

### Navigating NFWF's Chesapeake Bay Business Plan Mapping Portal

NFWF has published a [mapping portal](#) to assist applicants in identifying alignment of planned activities and further focusing activities, where possible, within NFWF's outcome-specific priority areas. The portal includes the ability to display separate priority area maps for each of NFWF's priority outcome areas, including water quality, Eastern brook trout, American black duck, river herring, and Eastern oysters and identify areas of overlap between multiple priority outcomes.

Upon arriving at the portal landing page, users can immediately begin exploring the map by visiting the 'Details' menu on the left-hand of the landing page. Layers for each priority outcome can then be turned on and off by clicking the check box for each layer under the 'Content' tab under the 'Details' menu. Advanced users can also display the legend and detailed attribute data tables and change the style (i.e. color, transparency) of each priority outcome layer directly from the 'Content' tab. To quickly see a legend for each displayed layer, users can simply select the 'Legend' tab under the 'Details' menu.

