



## **NATIONAL COASTAL RESILIENCE FUND**

### **INCREASING THE NATION'S NATURAL DEFENSES**

## **2018 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

RFP Overview Webinar: Wednesday, July 11, 2018 3:00 PM Eastern Time  
Full Proposal Due Date: Tuesday, August 7, 2018 11:59 PM Eastern Time

## **OVERVIEW**

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is pleased to announce the National Coastal Resilience Fund. Projects funded under this national program will provide benefits to communities, as well as for fish and wildlife. In partnership with NOAA, NFWF will make investments to advance identified priorities for restoring and strengthening natural systems so they can protect coastal communities from the impacts of storms and floods and enable them to recover more quickly, while also enhancing habitats for important fish and wildlife populations.

Contiguous areas of natural habitat such as coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster and coral reefs, and coastal forests and rivers and streams -- maintained at a significant size for the habitat type -- provide communities with enhanced protection and buffering from the growing impacts of sea-level rise, changing flood patterns, increased frequency and intensity of storms, and other environmental stressors. NFWF identifies these types of natural areas as "Resiliency Hubs<sup>1</sup>" – areas where natural resource restoration efforts will have the greatest impact for human community resilience, as well as for fish and wildlife – and have prioritized these areas that provide dual benefits under this program.

NFWF will award up to \$30 million in grants to create, expand and restore natural systems in areas that will both increase protection for communities from coastal storms, sea and lake level changes, flooding, and coastal erosion and improve valuable habitats for fish and wildlife species. NFWF will invest in projects in two focus areas:

- Project Planning and Design
- Project Implementation

This program is funded by and closely coordinated with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and will include input from other federal agencies and outside experts.

## **GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS**

---

<sup>1</sup> More about NFWF's Coastal Resilience Assessment and "Resiliency Hubs" can be found at <http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience>. It is not required that projects have completed a NFWF assessment or are classified as a resiliency hub by NFWF to be eligible.



Projects must be located within the coastal areas of U.S. coastal states, including the Great Lakes states, and territories<sup>2</sup>. For the purpose of this funding opportunity, the eligible project area is defined as all coastal Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) 8 watersheds that drain to the ocean and Great Lakes and any adjacent HUC 8 watersheds that are particularly low-lying or tidally influenced. An interactive map of the eligible areas can be found at <https://arcg.is/9OmSf>.

This program will be implemented as a national program focused on enhancement of resilience for coastal communities across the U.S., and award decisions will be made based on regional circumstances, needs, and priorities. Project interventions that help reduce regional threats, include, but are not limited to: changes in sea and Great Lakes levels; storm surge; ocean surge and tsunamis; increased flooding, including inland flooding, due to storms; subsidence; erosion; loss of sea ice; sea level rise and high tides, saltwater intrusion into coastal aquifers, or other impacts. Many of these threats are connected (e.g. subsidence exacerbates relative sea level rise leading to increased flooding), and the program anticipates that the proposed projects will address reducing vulnerability to multiple threats, as appropriate.

## PROGRAM PRIORITIES

In this initial year, the program will capitalize on extensive threat and vulnerability assessments and regional/local coastal planning that has been done to date and focus investments on preparing projects prioritized through these planning efforts and supporting their implementation. Applicants should apply under the focus area that best meets their needs. Please note that combined requests for both planning and implementation activities will NOT be considered.

1. **Project Planning and Design.** Recognizing that natural infrastructure projects require a phase of assessment, planning, design and permitting, applicants may request funding to support this phase of project development for on-the-ground projects. These awards are expected to range from \$100,000 to \$250,000. Such funding may be used to support the preparation of cost-benefit analysis, conceptual designs, engineering plans, stakeholder engagement efforts, and detailed cost estimates and other related tasks to position projects for project-ready implementation. If applicable, proposals should describe how the proposed project will facilitate innovative approaches to enhance coastal resilience with natural infrastructure or how the project will help to enable future resilience initiatives. Broad threat assessments and preliminary scoping efforts to identify project needs are not a priority for grant awards this inaugural year. The focus will be on project-level planning and design to advance high-priority projects that have already been identified as needs through previous assessments and scoping efforts.

While project planning and design grants are not expected to achieve immediate environmental or conservation outputs and outcomes, proposals should demonstrate that the resulting project plan will be sufficient to meet requirements for environmental review and

---

<sup>2</sup> Including Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

permitting, and when implemented, will address needs prioritized through a formal coastal resilience planning process and meet specific program goals related to community resilience and ecosystem enhancements.

Proposals should explain how key partners and stakeholders (e.g., local government leaders, federal and state regulatory and resource agencies) will be involved in the project planning, design and approval. Applicants are encouraged to include information on future sources of funding and to provide letters of support to demonstrate that the intended project is a priority and strong candidate for implementation once planning is completed.

Planning and design projects should be able to be completed within 18 months of the start of the grant.

2. **Project Implementation.** The largest portion of funds will be directed to implementation projects, with most awards expected to range from \$500,000 to \$3,000,000. Projects proposed under this category are expected to have already been prioritized through a formal planning process that addresses coastal resilience and have completed all necessary designs and engineering planning for implementation. Projects that have also secured all necessary permits will receive higher priority for funding.

Proposals must demonstrate how projects will protect and enhance resilience of natural systems and help mitigate the impacts of future storms and other flooding events and threats on local community assets (such as emergency services, infrastructure and property), as well as the anticipated benefit to fish and wildlife. Projects should result in measurable and observable improvements to these systems.

Projects can be conducted on Federal, state or local government lands or private lands where there is a sufficient commitment to the protection of those lands for conservation purposes. Given the goals of coastal resilience, projects that consider the larger landscape and involve multiple landowners and/or partners and jurisdictions, as appropriate, are encouraged.

Proposals should explain how key partners and stakeholders (e.g., local government leaders, federal and state regulatory and resource agencies) will be involved in the implementation process. Applicants are encouraged to provide letters of support from partners and beneficiaries to demonstrate that project's importance, readiness, and high priority to address resilience needs.

Implementation projects should be able to be completed within three years of the start of the grant. Acquisition of land and easements is not an eligible activity (although it can be part of the match).

Eligible projects include ecosystem restoration projects and the construction of natural, nature-based, and green-gray (hybrid) infrastructure, where tangible community resilience and conservation outcomes can be measured. Eligible restoration projects include, but are not limited to, restoration of subtidal habitat (e.g. oyster and coral reefs), beaches, dunes,

bluffs, and barrier islands, wetlands and marshes, coastal forests, and coastal watershed rivers and streams. Restoration projects should advance resilience goals (e.g. reduction of storm surge impacts), conservation goals (e.g. creation of habitat for native species), and community goals (e.g. protecting critical assets). Living shoreline projects that advance both conservation goals and community resilience goals are also eligible.

While the focus of competitive proposals will be on priority project implementation, NFWF and NOAA understand that implementation projects can be important springboards to test innovative approaches to managing coasts for resilience and to set the stage for future resilience initiatives. NFWF and NOAA are interested in funding implementation projects that will also benefit the broader community engaged in resilience planning and implementation, and will consider funding the following activities as part of an implementation project:

- *Innovative design approaches to enhance coastal resilience with natural infrastructure* - Applicants that are interested in testing innovative designs should outline the evidence that supports the need and justification for the proposed approach and describe the monitoring and analytical protocols and outreach approach that will allow the project to be understood as a case study to inform the broader resilience community. These applicants may be asked to work with NFWF to further develop monitoring protocols for specific research questions<sup>3</sup> and to track lessons learned to help streamline and build capacity for future implementation projects
- *Community engagement, incentives, and capacity building for coastal resilience* – Applicants may include activities that contribute to the successful implementation of a project that can also benefit the broader community engaged in coastal resilience planning and implementation, including planning leaders, restoration project managers, community leaders, agencies undertaking regulatory review, scientists, and others. This may include activities such as stakeholder and community engagement, building support for nature-based projects; using a project to learn from and build capacity within or across the community, such as training and guidance documents based on lessons learned; advancing the development of incentives to increase participation in resilience initiatives or other activities, as appropriate. Applicants should describe how such activities would contribute to immediate project implementation success and regional resilience goals. Program applicants are encouraged to limit these related but ancillary activities to 10% or less of the total NFWF budget request and to fund these activities with matching funds where possible.

## PROJECT METRICS

To better gauge progress on individual grants and to ensure greater consistency of project data provided by multiple grants, applicants will be asked to report on specific metrics from the list

---

<sup>3</sup> Additional funding may be available to address these requirements, if applicable.

below that relate to their project. Applicants should select *only* the most relevant metrics from this list for their project (all possible project metrics for this program are shown in the table below). In most cases this will be 1-2 metrics from the project category section and 2-3 metrics from the outcome section. For restoration metrics please only represent one acre/mile in one metric, do not include under several metrics. If you are enhancing a floodplain that is also considered a wetland just select the most relevant habitat. If you think an applicable metric has not been provided, please contact Michelle Pico, [pico@nfwf.org](mailto:pico@nfwf.org) to discuss acceptable alternatives.

In addition to the project metrics listed below, NFWF will be working on additional ecological and socio-economic indicators to better assess the projects' impacts on resilience. NFWF may invite a select number of applicants to build in increased monitoring for this purpose or commission a third-party to collect data consistently across the suite of funded resilience projects post-award. All awardees under this program may be engaged during their period of performance or in the years following to support these evaluation efforts.

Note: NFWF metrics are listed in three parts for standard organization across all of the foundation's programs – not everything in the broader metric organization will be relevant to the metric that is recommended. For example – the metric # of Engineering and Design Plans Developed, is found under the broader subcategory of 'Restoration Planning/Design/Permitting', which is found under the parent category, "Planning, Research, Monitoring" – but that does not mean that these broader categories are to be included in the metric or are even eligible for this program. To make this easier, we have bolded the relevant metric for this program.

| <b>Project Activity</b>                        | <b>Recommended Metric</b>  | <b>Additional Guidance</b>   |
|--|--|--|
| <b><i>Planning and Design</i></b>              |  |  |
| Engineering and Design Plans Developed         | Planning, Research, Monitoring – Restoration planning/design/permitting - # <b>E&amp;D plans developed</b>                 | Enter the number of Engineering and Design plans developed. Generally there will be one plan per project to be constructed.  |
| Government Agency Participation and Engagement | Capacity, Outreach, Incentives – Outreach/Education/Technical Assistance - # <b>of governmental entities participating</b> | Enter the number of municipalities, local, state, and federal government entities participating in the project and add the names of these institutions in the notes. |
| <b><i>Implementation</i></b>                   |  |  |
| Floodplain Restoration                         | Habitat Restoration – Floodplain Restoration – <b>Acres Restored</b>   | Enter the number of acres restored. In the notes, indicate the type(s) of flood plain habitat (i.e., coastal forest) restored and restoration method(s).             |
| Beach and/or Dune Restoration                  | Habitat Restoration – Beach habitat quality improvements – <b>Miles Restored</b>   | Enter the number of miles of beach or dune restored. In the notes indicate restoration action(s) taken (e.g., beach renourishment, dune vegetation planting).        |

|                                  |  |   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Marsh/Wetland Restoration        | Habitat Restoration – Wetland Restoration – <b>Acres Restored</b>  | Enter the total number of marsh or wetland acres restored. In the notes indicate the type of wetland (e.g., freshwater woody wetland, salt marsh) and restoration method(s) used (e.g., invasive species removal, thin-layer dredge deposition).  |
| Oyster or Coral Reef Restoration | Habitat Restoration – Marine Habitat Restoration – <b>Acres Restored</b>   | Enter the number of acres of oyster or coral reef structures restored. In the notes indicate the type of reef restored – oyster reef or coral reef.   |
| In-stream Restoration            | Habitat Restoration – Instream Restoration – <b>Miles Restored</b>   | Enter the number of miles of instream habitat restored. Note, this is in-stream restoration only. Stream miles opened should NOT be counted under this metric. Please use either the Floodplain Restoration metric (above) or the Aquatic Connectivity metric (below), as appropriate, to count those miles restored. |
| Aquatic Connectivity Restoration | Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements - <b># of fish passage barriers rectified</b><br><br>Habitat Restoration – Fish Passage Improvements – <b>miles of stream opened</b> | Enter the number of fish passage barriers rectified and in the notes indicate the number of remaining barriers in the system.<br><br>Enter the number of stream miles opened and, in the notes, those miles as a percentage of habitat available for restoration or reconnection.                                     |

### Outcomes

|                    |  |  |
|--------------------|--|--|
| Community Benefits | Planning, Research, Monitoring – Community Benefits Projected - <b># of Critical Facilities or Infrastructure Within Radius of Enhanced Protection</b> | Enter the number of critical infrastructure assets or facilities that are within the radius of enhanced protection <sup>4</sup> . This can include those necessary or ensuring public health and safety such as, hospitals, shelters, emergency and evacuation routes, fire and police stations, etc. as well as critical infrastructure – wastewater treatment facilities, power plants, etc. |
|                    | Planning Research, Monitoring – Community Benefits Projected - <b># of Properties with Enhanced Protection</b>   | Enter the number of commercial or residential properties within the radius of enhanced protection.   |

<sup>4</sup> The radius of enhanced protection refers to the area predicted to benefit from an implementation project.



|                   |   |   |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Capacity Building | Capacity, Outreach, Incentives<br>– Building Institutional<br>Capacity - <b># of Organizations Engaged</b><br><br>Capacity, Outreach, Incentives<br>– Outreach/Education/<br>Technical Assistance - <b># of Individuals Reached by Outreach, Training, or Technical Assistance Activities</b> | Enter the number of organizations engaged and contributing to project goals In the notes, please indicate the nature of organizations involved (e.g., municipal or state government, nonprofit, community groups, etc.).<br><br>Enter the number of people demonstrating a minimum level of knowledge, attitudes or skills to enable them to become resiliency leaders. This metric refers to people other than staff or FTEs. In the notes include the hours of training and participant demographics. |
|-------------------|---|---|

## ELIGIBILITY

### Eligible and Ineligible Entities

- Eligible applicants include non-profit 501(c) organizations, state and territorial government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Native American tribal governments, educational institutions, or commercial (for profit) organizations. Tribal governments include all Native American tribal governments (both Federally-recognized tribes and those tribes that are not Federally-recognized).
- As 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](#)).
- Ineligible applicants include federal agencies or employees of federal agencies, foreign organizations, foreign public entities and unincorporated individuals.

### 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 mitigation and settlement agreements. However, grant funds may be used to support projects that enhance or improve upon existing baseline compliance efforts.
- All projects must take place within the United States or territories or their respective waterways.

## FUNDING AVAILABILITY AND MATCH



The National Coastal Resilience Fund will award up to \$30,000,000 in grants in 2018. Project awards are expected between \$100,000 and \$3,000,000 in accordance with the guidance provided under the Program Priorities section above. A minimum 1:1 non-federal match in cash or in-kind services is expected for all awards.

## EVALUATION CRITERIA

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

**Prioritized in Existing Plans** – The most competitive projects will be those that have been prioritized through an existing planning process at the state, tribal, regional or local level that addresses coastal resilience. Projects should also support habitat and fish and wildlife restoration goals of NFWF and NOAA and complement other federal, tribal, state and local conservation priorities, such as State Wildlife Action Plans, which are consistent with the goals of this program and can clearly connect conservation and coastal community resilience actions and outcomes that are regionally relevant.

**Technical Merit** – Project is technically sound and feasible, and the proposal sets forth a clear, logical and achievable work plan and timeline. Project engages appropriate technical experts throughout project planning, design and implementation to ensure activities are technically sound and feasible.

**Transferability** – Project includes a plan to transfer lessons learned to other communities and/or to be integrated into government programs and policies.

**Communication** – Project includes a detailed plan to communicate information about the project to appropriate audiences.

**Monitoring and Adaptive Management** – Project includes a plan for monitoring progress during and after the proposed project period to track project success and adaptively address new challenges and opportunities as they arise.

**Long-term Sustainability** – Project design either does not require maintenance, or will be maintained to ensure benefits are achieved and sustained over time. Narrative includes how future funding will be secured to implement necessary long-term monitoring and maintenance activities. For planning and design projects, narrative includes information on likely sources of funding for project implementation.

**Past Success** – Applicant has a proven track record of success in implementing large-scale projects with specific, measurable results.

**Partnership** – Applicants demonstrate strong partnerships with Federal, state and local agencies, existing regional partnerships such as Landscape Conservation Cooperatives as well as





communities, and non-profit organizations necessary to implement the project. Project is supported by a strong local partnership, including key state agencies with responsibility for developing and implementing coastal resilience plans, to leverage additional funds and sustain it after the life of the grant.

**Budget** - The budget is cost-effective for the resilience and habitat benefits to be accomplished, is in-line with industry standards, is generally reasonable, and leverages other financial contributions.

## OTHER

**Budget** – Costs are allowable, reasonable and budgeted in accordance with NFWF’s [Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. Federally funded projects must be in compliance with [OMB Uniform Guidance](#) as applicable.

**Matching Contributions** – Matching Contributions consist of non-federal cash, contributed goods and services, volunteer hours, and/or property raised and spent for the Project during the Period of Performance. Larger match ratios and matching fund contributions from a diversity of partners are encouraged and will be more competitive during application review.

**Procurement** – If the applicant chooses to specifically identify proposed Contractor(s) for Services, an award by NFWF to the applicant does not constitute NFWF’s express written authorization for the applicant to procure such specific services noncompetitively. When procuring goods and services, NFWF recipients must follow documented procurement procedures that 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** – Selected projects may be subject to requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act, Endangered Species Act (state and federal), and the 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 ([www.epa.gov/quality](http://www.epa.gov/quality)) and must comply with [NOAA’s Data Sharing Policy](#) for all environmental data. Applicants should budget time and resources to complete these tasks.

**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 U.S. 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.

## **TIMELINE**

Dates of activities are subject to change. Please check the program page of the NFWF website for the most current dates and information: <http://www.nfwf.org/coastalresilience>

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| RFP Overview Webinar:   | July 11, 2018 3:00 PM EDT   |
| Full Proposal Due Date: | August 7, 2018 11:59 PM EDT |
| Review Period           | August-October, 2018        |
| Awards Announced        | November, 2018              |

## **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. 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 PDF version of this RFP can be [downloaded here](#).

A *Tip Sheet* is available for quick reference while you are working through your application. This document can be [downloaded here](#).

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website's [Applicant Information](#) page.

For more information or questions about this RFP, please contact:

Michelle Pico, [pico@nfwf.org](mailto:pico@nfwf.org) or 262-567-0601

For region specific assistance, please contact:

| <i><b>If you have a question about...</b></i>          | <i><b>Please contact...</b></i>  |
|--|--|
| Northeastern states (Maine to Virginia)                | Amanda Bassow – <a href="mailto:Amanda.Bassow@nfwf.org">Amanda.Bassow@nfwf.org</a>       |
| Southeastern and Gulf States (North Carolina to Texas) | Suzanne Sessine – <a href="mailto:Suzanne.Sessine@nfwf.org">Suzanne.Sessine@nfwf.org</a> |
| West Coast and Alaska                                  | Femke Freiberg - <a href="mailto:Femke.Freiberg@nfwf.org">Femke.Freiberg@nfwf.org</a>    |
| Great Lakes  | Aislinn Gauchay - <a href="mailto:Aislinn.Gauchay@nfwf.org">Aislinn.Gauchay@nfwf.org</a> |
| Hawaii, Caribbean and Pacific territories              | Michelle Pico – <a href="mailto:Michelle.Pico@nfwf.org">Michelle.Pico@nfwf.org</a>       |

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 you are applying to, and a description of the issue.