



2024 EEF Request for Proposals Q&A

1. How are applications evaluated?

All projects are scored against a list of evaluation criteria by a technical review committee consisting of CDFW scientific staff. The Environmental Enhancement Committee makes the final decision on awards after receiving input from the technical review committee.

Please see Appendix B of the EEF Grant Program Guidelines

(<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=223731&inline>) for a list of evaluation criteria.

2. What does adjacent to “waters of the state” mean?

There is not a specific definition for “adjacent,” this is mostly at the discretion of the review committees. Projects that are closer to waters of the state may be evaluated higher than projects that are further from waters of the state.

3. Can EEF fund planning efforts, design completions, and permitting?

Yes, planning projects are eligible for funding. Projects in the planning stage are also eligible for implementation funding. Since projects that receive this funding must have measurable outcomes within a predetermined timeframe, the more information the proposal includes regarding permitting needs, status, timing, etc., and how the planning efforts will lead to completion of the project, the more competitive the proposal will be based on the evaluation criteria.

4. Can EEF fund research?

Research and studies are not eligible projects for this funding source unless there is an environmental enhancement/restoration component to the project.

5. Can EEF fund conservation easements? Have they been previously funded?

“Acquire habitat” is not limited to fee title purchases of habitat, conservation easements are also eligible. However, EEF has never awarded or funded a conservation easement project previously.

6. Are conservation easements required?

No conservation easements are not required for project locations. However, project locations with conservation easements add to the long-term benefit of the project and may be scored higher by the review committees based on the evaluation criteria.

7. Does the applicant have to own the project property?

No, the applicant does not have to own the property of the project. However, the applicant must state who owns the property and if they have access rights to do the work and maintain the benefits of the project. If the project occurs over multiple properties, this information should be included for all of them.

8. Can a project on Navy or any Federal Land be eligible?

Being on Navy or Federal land would not make a project ineligible. Evaluation criteria such as the long-term protection of benefits and the likelihood of success should be considered and described when developing a proposal. Information about site access/approval, long term protection, and any known contamination present on the site would be helpful to include in the grant application.

9. Are matching funds required? Are they considered in the overall proposal evaluation?

Matching funds are not required, however, likelihood of success and/or cost-effectiveness may be evaluated higher if matching funds are identified.

10. Can an applicant include 2 or more unrelated projects in the same application?

Applicants may submit multiple proposals. However, unrelated projects should be submitted as separate applications.

11. Can these funds be used for mitigation?

No, mitigation projects are not eligible for EEF funding.

12. Can an applicant apply solely for the acquisition of a restoration property or does active restoration need to be part of the project?

An applicant may apply for an acquisition only project, however, a restoration component may make it more competitive. Acquisition-only proposals should describe the future restoration plans/vision or the relevant development pressure present for the parcel.

13. Are projects involving ephemeral drainages eligible for this funding source?

Yes, ephemeral drainages are considered waters of the state and restoration projects involving them would be eligible.

14. What is the expected average amount of grant awards?

It is hard to predict what the average award amount will be, we expect most grants applications to be in the \$1.5 million - \$2.5 million range.

15. Is there a maximum award amount? Can an applicant request the full \$5 million?

No, there isn't a maximum award amount in the RFP. However, we do not recommend requesting the full amount available, as we are hoping to fund multiple projects.

16. Why is the minimum grant request \$500,000 when all of the awarded projects from previous years are under that amount?

This is the largest RFP we have ever had for EEF. The maximum amount available for previous RFP years has ranged from \$250,000 - \$750,000. This will be the first year EEF will award grants over \$500,000.

17. If the applicant requests \$3 million, but can accept \$1 million, should the applicant include that in the proposal?

Yes, please include the scalability of your project in your grant application. There may be instances in which the committee decides to award partial funding and having information in the proposal that states that the project is able to accept a reduced amount of funds to provide a lesser amount of work, would be valuable information for the Environmental Enhancement Committee.

18. Can federally recognized Tribes apply on their own?

Unfortunately, federally recognized Tribes are not eligible applicants at this time. However, this may change in the future, so we encourage you to check back for updates. In the meantime, Tribes may manage or partner with legal entities, including tribal NGOs, that do have eligibility to submit the EEF proposal for this RFP Cycle.

19. Can you provide guidance on permitting?

Unfortunately, we are unable to provide guidance on permitting. Please contact your local Lake Streambed Alteration office (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Environmental-Review/LSA/Contact>) for guidance on CDFW permitting. Permitting information (what's needed, status, timeline, budget) should be included in the project application.

20. Is a Board resolution required for application submittal?

No, a board resolution is not required for application. However, if awarded, public entities must submit a formal resolution from their governing board authorizing their agency to accept grant funds to enter into a grant agreement with CDFW.

21. Is it best for a non-profit or state/federal agency to be the applicant on the proposal?

All of these entities are eligible applicants. However, non-profit organizations tend to have less administrative constraints and lower indirect costs that may be scored higher in evaluation. Please include and explain any project partnerships in your proposal.

22. Do projects have to have a nexus to spill prevention and response?

No, although the funds are administered through the CDFW-Office of Spill Prevention and Response, there is no requirement for the project to have any nexus with a spill or pollution event.

23. Can an applicant submit more than 10 pages of attachments to the grant application?

Only the first 10 pages of attachments will be reviewed with the grant application, please refrain from submitting more than 10 pages.

24. Is there a size limit for attachments?

All grant applications and attachments should be sent via email to OSPREEF@wildlife.ca.gov. We have a 20 MB limit for emails. If your grant application and attachments exceed that limit, please send multiple emails.

25. Can EEF fund trash clean-up efforts?

Projects that are considered for funding through the EEF program must: 1. be located within or immediately adjacent to waters of the state, as defined in California Government Code (of Section 8670.3); 2. have measurable outcomes within a predetermined timeframe; and 3. be designed to acquire, restore, or improve habitat or restore ecosystem function, or both, to benefit fish and wildlife. A trash removal project would be eligible as long as it meets those requirements. It is recommended that applicants refer to the evaluation criteria when developing a proposal and assessing whether their project would be considered competitive.

26. What is required to be included as attachments for a land acquisition application?

For a land acquisition application, the following items should be included as attachments: 1. map of the property; 2. close up photos of the property; and 3. Land Sale Letter of Intent. Additional letters of support can be included. Information about access to the parcel should also be included. There are additional requirements that will be required later if a proposal is awarded funding (ie. appraisal, determination of mining risk). Those will be needed in order to proceed through the grant agreement phase with CDFW. Please see a

copy of the CDFW Grant Agreement Template for Land Acquisitions:
<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=225257&inline>

27. What is the difference between fringe benefits and staff benefits?

Staff benefits include the costs to employ the employee, such as medical, dental, unemployment, etc. Fringe benefits are the costs not directly related to employ the employee, such as car rentals, meals, stock options, etc. Fringe benefits are not an allowable cost for this grant program, however, staff benefits are.

28. Is there a template budget table?

Please refer to the Line-Item Budget Detail table on page 18 of this document
<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=223731&inline> as a template.

29. Is the University of California's federally negotiated Composite Benefit Rate structure allowable?

Yes, the benefits included in the Composite Benefit Rate are eligible costs for this grant. UC/CSU may use their negotiated indirect costs rates (<https://www.ucop.edu/research-policy-analysis-coordination/policies-guidance/indirect-cost-recovery/state-of-california.html>).

30. Are detailed budgets required for subcontractor costs?

No, subcontractor costs are not required to be broken down by line item. All subcontractor costs should include overhead, not added separately.

31. What are indirect costs?

Indirect costs are costs that cannot be directly assigned to a particular activity but are necessary to the operation of the organization and the performance of the project. The costs of operating and maintaining facilities, accounting services, and administrative salaries are examples of indirect costs. The indirect cost rate should be reasonable and necessary to fulfill the scope of work. The indirect cost rate should also be consistent with the Indirect Cost Rate Proposal (ICRP) rates approved by the Department of Interior and the California Department of Finance for reimbursable contracts. For more information, please refer to the State Administrative Manual 9213.1 (<https://www.dgs.ca.gov/Resources/SAM/TOC/9200/9213-1>). In previous years, UC groups have partnered with local NGO's to streamline the process.

32. Do you know of other funding options?

The CDFW grants webpage (<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Grants>) is a great resource to find recent CDFW grant opportunities. Additionally, the California Grants Portal

(<https://www.grants.ca.gov/>) may be helpful in finding funding opportunities appropriate for your project.

33. When will grant agreements be executed?

Grant agreements are expected to be executed starting spring 2025, with awardees notified in late November 2024.

34. Are you having another RFP next year?

We are expecting to release another RFP in 2025, however, the timing and amount available is not currently known. The amount available in 2025 will likely be less than this year.

35. What is the overall expected competitiveness for this year's RFP?

This is unknown and hard to predict, however, given the amount of funding available, the competitiveness will likely be greater this year than in previous years for this grant. In the past, we have received about 15-30 proposals in a given RFP. It is unknown how many applications we will receive this year, but we expect submitted proposals will be more complicated given the minimum amount they must request (ie. \$500,000 or more).

36. Do these funds have to be used in California?

Yes, to be eligible for funding, project must be located within or immediately adjacent to waters of the state, and funds awarded must be spent within California.

37. Are ground water recharge projects eligible?

As long as there is a habitat enhancement component that benefits fish and wildlife, yes, these projects are eligible. The benefits to fish and wildlife should be explained in the proposal.

38. Is CDFW eligible to apply for funding and/or are they eligible to receive funds as a subcontractor?

Yes, CDFW is an eligible entity and can be included as a subcontractor.

39. Would a project be negatively evaluated if a large portion of the project budget is used to pay a subcontractor or Tribe?

No, this would not negatively impact the way your project is scored. We encourage partnerships with Tribes. If a large portion of the budget is included as a lump sum for a subcontractor or Tribe, it is recommended that you include a supplemental table that shows a breakdown of the lump sum cost so that the review committees are aware of what the money will be spent on (ie. personnel, materials, construction, etc.)

40. Is it allowable to include a human recreational use component (ie. creation of a sports field) in a project proposal?

If the main goal of the project is enhancement of habitat to benefit fish and wildlife, yes, this would be eligible. All projects will be evaluated against a list of evaluation criteria, and ranked against the other projects that are submitted. Please see Appendix B of the EEF Grant Program Guidelines for a list of evaluation criteria (<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=223731&inline>).

41. Is there a target habitat type or geographic area for funding?

There is not a targeted habitat type or geographic area for this RFP. The EEF Grants Program may fund projects statewide in a variety of habitat types. Depending on how projects rank, the committee may choose to award a diversity of habitat types and locations if multiple projects are funded.

42. Is EEF funding considered State Funding?

Yes, EEF Funding is considered State Funding, and thus can be used as match for federal grants.

43. Are co-applicants allowed?

Partnerships are encouraged, however, only one entity can serve as the applicant and subsequent grantee for the award.

44. Are volunteers and education components allowed?

Yes, project components involving volunteers and educational aspects are allowed and have been funded in the past.

45. Do you have a Conservation Easement Deed Template?

Not at this time, please check back.

46. Does EEF use Webgrants like other CDFW grant programs?

No, we do not use Webgrants. We function differently than some CDFW grants, so expect some differences as well as some similarities.

47. Can you provide a copy of an EEF application that was awarded?

No, we cannot provide previous EEF applications as examples.

48. Do we need to provide a list of subcontractors to our subcontractors?

No, a list of subcontractors that will be hired by a subcontractor is not required as part of the application. However, project partnerships and their roles in the project is good information to include in your narrative.

49. With a 10-page maximum for additional information, do we have to provide CV's/resumes for everyone involved in the project.

No, please provide shortened resumes/CV's as they relate to the work being proposed for the main project manager(s).

50. How detailed should the timeline be in the application?

Please provide the expected start and end dates and expected timelines of major milestones.

51. Who should serve as the Project Manager in the application?

The Project Manager should be the main person who can be contacted about daily duties and the progress of the project.

52. Is there an issue with applying for a project and being included as a partner in another project application?

No, projects will be scored based on their merits separately.

53. Does the project have to be in an area that has an established CDFW Habitat Management Plan?

No, this is not a requirement of the grant program.

54. Where do I find the grant application? How do I send in an application?

The EEF Grant Application Form (DFW 1910) can be found here:

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=221415&inline>. Please download the form and save it to your computer before filling it out. This form is a fillable PDF and can be saved to be completed in multiple sittings. However, pressing "Save" while in an internet browser will not save your work and any work completed while in the internet browser will be lost. Please submit the completed EEF Grant Application Form PDF along with up to 10 additional pages of supporting documents, including a budget table to OSPREEF@wildlife.ca.gov.

55. What is the deadline to submit an application?

All applications must be submitted by 5pm on Wednesday, September 11th 2024 to be considered for funding.

56. Can EEF fund herbicidal methods for invasive vegetation removal?

Yes, projects using herbicides are eligible for funding.

57. What time zone is the application due?

The application deadline is September 11 at 5 pm PST.

58. Is the table within the Grant Application Form sufficient and a separate budget is not required?

The budget shown in the [EEF Grant Application Form](#) under Section 6 on Page 1 is not sufficient, please include a separate attachment with a detailed budget table that follows the format shown in the Line-Item Budget Table on page 18 of the [EEF Program Guidelines](#).

59. Should the budget focus on the work funded through this grant or for the entire project budget?

Please include a line-item budget for only the work that is being requested for funding by this grant. You may describe the project as a whole and include the total cost of the project, but line-item details for the full budget is not needed.

60. Can a project collaborator be listed as a subcontractor?

Please list project collaborators as subcontractors only if they will be receiving funds from the grant request.

61. Are letters of support acceptable as optional attachments?

Yes, letters of support may be included as attachments.

62. Is there time after the grant performance period for final reimbursement and reports?

Final reporting and invoicing must be completed by April 1, 2031.

63. Is there an information session to learn more about the grant process?

No, there isn't a formal informational session for this RFP. We are recording questions that we are receiving in this Q&A document posted on our EEF webpage. This document is continually being updated as questions come in.

64. Will an encumbrance be placed on the property if awarded funds for a land acquisition?

No

65. Do specific project locations need to be identified for planning projects?

No, project location identification can be included as part of the project, however, projects with known locations may be scored higher.

66. Does a project that entails creation of a new wetland count towards the requirement of being within or immediately adjacent to waters of the state?

Being located within or immediately adjacent to waters of the state is a requirement of eligibility for this grant, and the creation of wetlands could be viewed differently from person to person by the reviewers, both technical and decision-making. While this situation may allow a project to meet the minimum requirement, some reviewers may not view it that way.

67. Can the funds be spent on genetic recovery of listed species to enhance ecosystem function?

The objective of EEF is to "...acquire, restore, or improve habitat or restore ecosystem function, or both, to benefit fish and wildlife", If this activity accomplishes that and is described in the proposal in that way, then it qualifies.

68. Can the funds support existing or ongoing projects?

Yes, a thorough description of the work that has been done and the cost as well as the future vision of the project is good information to include in the proposal.

69. What is the period that is considered eligible for cost share?

Cost share/matching funds are not required so we do not have specific requirements, but cost share spent outside of the grant term would be considered ineligible. You may describe the project as a whole and include the total cost of the project and general tasks covered by cost share outside of the project term.

70. Is a detailed budget needed for cost share?

No, line-item details for the full budget or cost share are not needed. Cost share should be included as a lump sum by source at the bottom on page 2 in the [EEF Grant Application Form](#).

71. How detailed does a budget table have to be for a land acquisition project?

Please use the Line-Item Budget Table shown on page 10 of CDFW Grant Agreement Template for Land Acquisitions as a template:

<https://nrm.dfg.ca.gov/FileHandler.ashx?DocumentID=225257&inline>. Only include line items that are relevant to your project.

72. Can I submit further information after the submission deadline as it becomes available? (ie. 100% designs will be completed after the deadline)

No, all information needs to be submitted by September 11th to be considered by the committee. Information about dates for deliverables like 100% designs can be included in the project proposal narrative.

73. Can indirect costs be applied to subcontracts?

Unfortunately, indirect costs may not be applied to subcontracts, indirect costs may only be applied to personnel services and general operating expenses. Please see Section 9 on Page 17 of the [EEF Grant Program Guidelines](#).

74. Are vehicle leases allowable costs?

No, unfortunately, this is not an allowable cost.

75. Should a budget table by task be included in addition to a line-item budget?

A task budget is not required but it would be helpful information to include as supplemental.

76. What is the period in which funds would be available?

Funds are not available until a funding agreement is fully executed, the timeline of full grant agreement will vary but is estimated to start around Spring 2025. Final invoices must be submitted by April 1, 2031.

77. Can we provide letters of support for our project that are not addressed to CDFW due to time constraints?

Yes, it is fine to provide project support letters that are not specifically addressed to CDFW, however, you should make note of it in your proposal.

78. For land acquisition applications, if funded, does the property then belong to the applicant or CDFW?

Land acquisitions funded through EEF would belong to the grantee, not CDFW. Please refer to our [Grant Agreement Template for Land Acquisitions](#) for more information.

79. Is prevailing wage a requirement?

State Grants may be subject to California Labor Code requirements, which include prevailing wage provisions. Certain grants administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife are not subject to Chapter 1 of Part 7 of Division 2 of the Labor Code. Please refer to Fish and Game Code Section 1501.5 for exemptions. Grantees are responsible for Labor Code compliance, and CDFW cannot provide advice about Labor Code compliance. More information is available at the [Department of Industrial Relations](#).

80. Are meals and incidentals an allowable cost?

Meals and incidentals are allowable if they are part of work-related travel and must follow CalHR's 24-hour guidelines for what meals are allowable during certain travel timeframes. These costs can be included as a per diem cost in the budget, but receipts must be provided during invoicing. There is a maximum reimbursement rate for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and incidentals. The per diem costs cannot exceed State rates. Please see the Cal HR webpage regarding [Travel Reimbursements](#) for more information.

81. If funded, what is the expectation for site visits/work inspections by CDFW?

Grantees should expect site visits to the project location at least once during the project period.

82. What is the most important Project Evaluation Criteria?

All Project Evaluation Criteria are weighted the same. However, it is important to focus on the goal of the EEF Grants Program: to acquire, restore, or improve habitat or restore ecosystem function, or both, to **benefit fish and wildlife**. The proposal should highlight the ability of the project to provide benefits to natural resources and how those benefits will be measured and sustained over time.

83. Does EEF award money to projects that include capital improvements?

If these project elements meet the overall goal of EEF to restore, or improve habitat or restore ecosystem function, or both, to benefit fish and wildlife, they would be eligible. However, it is important to consider how these efforts would score against the Project Evaluation Criteria.

84. Is “Section 6 – Project Statement” on page 12 of the EEF Grants Program Guidelines document a separate requirement?

Appendix C of the EEF Grant Program Guidelines is for information purposes only. This Appendix refers to the draft language that would be used in a grant agreement *if a project is approved for funding*. The Line-Item Budget Table on page 18 may be used as a template for the application. Other than that, nothing within Appendix C is a separate requirement for the application.

85. Does the 10-page attachment limit include the budget, resumes/CV’s, and optional attachments combined?

The 10-page limit refers to all attachments including the budget and resumes/CV’s. If space is limited, you may include the resumes/CV’s for the main project manager(s) and reduce the length by focusing on qualifications that would support the work proposed (1-page). If the line-item budget is already imbedded in the application form, you do not have to include it as an attachment, and it would not count towards the 10-page limit.