



NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION 2025 SAN FRANCISCO BAY ESTUARY CONSERVATION FUND REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS (RFP)

2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Full Proposal Due Date: September 22, 2025 by 2:00 PM Pacific Time

OVERVIEW

The following guidelines have been prepared to assist project proponents ("Applicants") with the preparation of proposals in connection with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's ("NFWF") San Francisco Bay Estuary Conservation Fund ("SF Bay Fund"). The SF Bay Fund was established with community service payments arising from federal prosecutions of environmental cases brought by the United States Attorney's Office for the Northern District of California. The SF Bay Fund will provide approximately \$500,000.00 in 2025 for projects that will conserve, protect, restore, and otherwise benefit the San Francisco Bay estuary environment, including, but not limited to fish and wildlife, and the habitats upon which they depend, such as the water, land, and air resources of the estuary and its tributary watersheds located in, adjacent to, or affecting the estuary (together, the "Fund Area").

These guidelines are intended to assist Applicants in preparing the necessary information to allow for an appropriate technical and financial review of their proposed projects, and ultimately to facilitate the preparation of a funding agreement (a "Funding Agreement") for each project that is selected to receive funding. NFWF's online application system, Easygrants, has been set up to facilitate submission of project proposals.

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

The Fund Area is shown in the area that is outlined in both the blue and purple on the attached map entitled "Map of Fund Area."

PROGRAM PRIORITIES

The SF Bay Fund will provide funding to projects that will conserve, protect, restore, and otherwise benefit the San Francisco Bay estuary environment, including, but not limited to fish and wildlife, and the habitats upon which they depend, such as the water, land, and air resources of the estuary and its tributary watersheds located in, adjacent to, or affecting the estuary. Priorities include, but are not limited to, projects that benefit Steelhead trout.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible and Ineligible Entities:

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

Ineligible Uses of Grant Funds:

- NFWF will not provide reimbursement for any project expenditures prior to the start date of the term of the Funding Agreement and will not be liable for such expenditures.
- 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 legally-mandated baseline compliance efforts.

Other Application Information:

- Projects must be in the Fund Area as shown in the attached map entitled “Map of Fund Area.”
- SF Bay Fund monies are non-Federal.
- Funding Agreements will only be issued for amounts that are currently deemed available for obligation by NFWF under the SF Bay Fund.
- Funding Agreements will only be awarded for single projects, or a discrete element or phase or a group of consecutive phases within a larger scale project, which can be completed within an appropriate timeframe.
- Applicants must comply with all of the terms, conditions, and requirements of these guidelines in order for their respective proposals to be considered for a SF Bay Fund Funding Agreement. In addition, each Applicant should carefully consider the legal implications of implementing the requirements of the guidelines and executing a Funding Agreement before submitting a proposal.
- Applicants shall not be deemed under any circumstances to have any legal rights with respect to NFWF or otherwise under these guidelines by virtue of submitting a proposal hereunder. No legal relationship shall be deemed to exist between NFWF and any Applicant unless and until a Funding Agreement has been executed between the parties. Selection of a proposal submitted in accordance with these guidelines shall be made by NFWF, in consultation with applicable State and Federal resource agencies as appropriate, acting in its sole and exclusive discretion. The submission of a proposal by an Applicant shall signify such Applicant’s consent to such selection process and shall constitute a waiver of any right by such Applicant to contest the selection or non-selection of a proposal by NFWF. NFWF reserves the right to refrain from selecting any proposal, in consultation with applicable State and Federal resource agencies as appropriate, and in accordance with the authorities NFWF derives under the legal documents generating the funds deposited into the SF Bay Fund.

FUNDING AVAILABILITY

- The SF Bay Fund will provide approximately \$500,000.00 in 2025
- The grant award range is \$10,000 to \$500,000
- There is no requirement for matching contributions

APPLICATION INFORMATION

General Information:

- 1. Project Information.** Applicants will be required to submit basic project and organizational details in preset fields contained in Easygrants. Step-by-step instructions for filling in the required fields are provided in Easygrants.

2. **Project Narrative.** Proposals must address the criteria and questions as outlined below. Applicants are encouraged to provide additional information and explanations that would lend further support for potential selection of their proposals. Note: Easygrants allows for the Project Narrative and any associated supplemental information to be created as separate documents and uploaded into the application through the “Uploads” section. The maximum file size allowed per upload is 15MB. When possible, larger graphics, including but not limited to photos, organizational charts, work plan diagrams, and Gantt charts, should each be uploaded and appropriately labeled in the “Uploads” section as an appendix to the Project Narrative.

- a. **Project Goals and Objectives:** What are the purposes and objectives of the project? Describe how the project objectives benefit the Fund Area. What are the expected short-term net benefits to natural resources in the Fund Area and long-term measurable outcomes? How does the project measurably contribute to a priority natural resource outcome? If this project is a continuation or expansion of an existing project, describe the status and results/outcomes achieved to date. If the proposed work requests funding for an initial planning or design phase of a project, please describe any anticipated plans for project implementation and funding in the future.
- b. **Scope of Work:**
- i. Provide a comprehensive narrative statement that describes the methodology that will be used to complete the Scope of Work. This methodology should detail and thoroughly describe the primary tasks, the activities and deliverables associated with each task, and how each task will address the objectives and target outcomes described above. If applicable, describe any planning, design/engineering, and permitting that will be required prior to beginning any project construction and how the project team will complete those necessary steps and obtain all relevant permits.
 - ii. Provide a comprehensive narrative statement that describes how the activities and deliverables associated with each task in the Scope of Work relate to established plans (management, conservation, recovery, etc.) and priority conservation needs in the specific project location.
- c. **Project Schedule:** The project schedule should be detailed and should describe the primary tasks, deliverables, and milestones, as well as the planned project completion date.
- d. **Project Monitoring:** Project proposals are encouraged to include means of measuring, as appropriate, the effectiveness of the project (as against baseline conditions, etc.) in providing net benefits to the Fund Area. Proposals should address the manner in which the project is expected to deliver additive or net benefits to the Fund Area, including measurement of those benefits. Costs associated with collecting the data necessary to complete measurement and/or monitoring requirement may be included in the overall project budget, as appropriate. Applicants are encouraged to utilize standard monitoring protocols adopted by governmental resource agencies to facilitate integration of project results with larger ecosystem conservation efforts in the Fund Area.
- e. **Research / Management Implications:** Describe how the project results will be used to help protect, enhance or restore natural resources in the Fund Area. If the project is part of a larger program, please describe the larger program and how this component is integrated.

- f. Dissemination/Community Involvement:** Describe in detail your strategy for communicating project results. Describe any benefits to local communities, including educational values and stewardship benefits, of the project.
- g. Project Team:** What organizations, entities, or subcontractors comprise the project team? What is the expertise and prior experience of the project team in accomplishing similar projects? The names of the project manager, subcontractors and/or those providing technical guidance, along with their qualifications for involvement in the project, must be stated. Provide an organizational chart that identifies the individuals responsible for the completion of each task of the Scope of Work and illustrates lines of authority.
- h. Partnerships:** If the project is a cooperative effort with other agencies or organizations, please identify the other partners and describe their role in the project. Also, define the degree of funding participation by partners in the overall project, what the level of responsibility will be for the SF Bay Fund's component, and whether/how the other components may impact successful completion of the SF Bay Fund's portion of the comprehensive effort.

3. Project Budget Summary. The project budget summary in the "Budget" section online will demonstrate, through predetermined budget categories, how the Applicant will complete all work comprising the Scope of Work within the total amount of SF Bay Fund monies requested. Cost estimates should be as accurate as possible, and budgeted in accordance with NFWF's [Detailed Budget Instructions](#) cost categories. As part of the application, project costs will need to be broken down according to the following budget categories:

- a. Personnel:** Specific tasks and work to be performed by personnel are to be outlined. Total proposed costs should be broken down according to the amount of time estimated to be spent on the project (e.g., hourly, weekly, or monthly rates). Salaries are allowed only to the extent they are specifically attributable to work on the proposed project. Project work by consultants or other personnel hired specifically for the project should be included in Contractual Services as described below.
- b. Travel:** Describe all proposed travel expenses. Include the number of trips, number of travelers, mode of transportation, per diem expenses, mileage and rates (rental car, etc.). Mileage and gas costs cannot both be counted for the same trip.
- c. Equipment:** Specific equipment valued at more than \$5,000 in per unit cost necessary to complete the project must be identified. Capital equipment expenditures are highly discouraged – rental of such items should be considered instead unless the acquisition of equipment is a more cost-effective alternative or is needed to maintain the natural resource benefits over the long-term. Any equipment less than \$5,000 will be considered "supplies" and can be identified in the "Supplies and Materials" category.
- d. Materials and Supplies:** List the costs of any supplies and materials that will be used for the project (under \$5,000).
- e. Contractual Services:** Identify all work to be completed by subcontractors and their rates (or estimated rates). If a commitment to subcontract or a particular vendor has been made prior to application for funding, explain in the Scope of Work section of the Project Narrative the deliverables, time frame, and cost. If a subcontract has yet to be secured, please briefly describe in the Scope of Work section of the Project Narrative the work and estimated expenses expected to be subcontracted.

- f. Other Direct Costs:** Applicants must detail other specific costs associated with the project that do not appropriately fit within any other budget category, such as printing costs, as Other Direct Costs.
- g. Indirect Costs:** Indirect costs are allowable. However, Applicants should note that proposals with budgets including low indirect rates and/or low allocations for indirect costs will be more competitive than proposals with high indirect rates and/or high allocations for indirect costs.

Required Uploads:

- a. Certificate of Good Standing.** A Certificate of Good Standing, sometimes called a Certificate of Existence or Certificate of Authorization, is a state-issued document used to demonstrate that a corporation, limited liability company, or non-profit entity exists, is authorized to do business in the state, and has complied with all state-required formalities.
- b. Certificate of Insurance.** A Certificate of Insurance (COI) is a document issued by an insurance company that verifies the existence of insurance coverage. Specifically, the COI lists the effective date of the policy, the type of insurance coverage purchased, and the types and dollar amount of applicable liability. If awarded, the Applicant must agree to obtain and maintain all appropriate insurance against liability for injury to persons or property from any and all activities undertaken by the Applicant and associated with the Contract in any way and must have NFWF named as an additional insured on all such policies and provide NFWF with appropriate Certificates of Insurance reflecting such additions within sixty (60) days after the Contract is fully executed.
- c. GAAP Independently Audited Financial Statement.** A GAAP audit is a certified audit of an organization's financial standing by a certified public accountant (CPA) in accordance with generally-accepted accounting principles (GAAP), as determined by the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants. In other words, if an organization's finances are audited by an independent (external) CPA, their report (the audit) usually will satisfy NFWF's GAAP audit requirement. If an organization does not have an audit, the organization must submit a balance sheet and profit and loss statement with income, expenses, assets, and liabilities, certified to be true and accurate by an officer of the organization with authority to do so. The balance sheet and profit and loss statement should cover a full 12 month period which corresponds to the most recent completed fiscal year. An A-133 Audit will also be required for organizations which receive more than \$500,000 in federal dollars in a given year.
- d. Statement of Litigation.** In the form provided, state any litigation (including bankruptcies) involving your organization and either a federal, state, or local government agency as parties. This includes anticipated litigation, pending litigation, or litigation completed within the past twelve months. Federal, state, and local government applicants are not required to complete this section. If your organization is not involved in any litigation, please state accordingly.
- e. Conflict of Interest Disclosure.** Each proposal must include a statement identifying whether the Applicant, or any individuals or organizations associated with the Applicant, has an actual or potential conflict of interest with respect to NFWF, the Scope of Work, or the subject matter of this RFP and, if so, the nature and specific details of that conflict.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

All proposals will be screened for relevance, accuracy, completeness and compliance with NFWF and funding source policies. NFWF is committed to operating in full compliance with all applicable laws, regulations, and Executive Orders. We continuously monitor legal and regulatory developments to ensure our policies, procedures, and operations align with current federal directives. We encourage all applicants to do the same. Proposals will then be evaluated based on the extent to which they meet the following criteria.

Required Criteria:

- **Program Priorities** –Project addresses the program priorities outlined in this RFP.
- **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.
- **Budget** – Costs are allowable and reasonable.

TIMELINE

Dates of activities are subject to change.

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| ✓ Full Proposals Open in Easygrants | June 23, 2025 |
| ✓ Full Proposal Due Date | September 22, 2025 at 2:00 PM Pacific Time |
| ✓ Anticipated Announcement of Awards | January 2026 |

HOW TO APPLY

All application materials must be submitted online through NFWF’s Easygrants system.

1. Go to easygrants.nfwf.org to register in our Easygrants online system. New users to the system will be prompted to register before starting the application (if you already are a registered user, use your existing login). Enter your applicant information.
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

Additional information to support the application process can be accessed on the NFWF website’s “Applicant Information” page (<https://www.nfwf.org/apply-grant/application-information>).

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

Anne Butterfield
Assistant Director, Impact-Directed Environmental Accounts (IDEA)
Phone: (415) 243-3106
anne.butterfield@nfwf.org

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

Easygrants Helpdesk

Email: Easygrants@nfwf.org

Voicemail: 202-595-2497

Hours: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm Eastern Time, Monday-Friday.

Include: your name, proposal ID #, e-mail address, phone number, program you are applying to, and a description of the issue.

MAP OF FUND AREA

The Fund Area is shown in area that is outlined in blue and purple in the map below.

