

Applications due: September 28, 2016; 4:00 pm

Wild Resource Conservation Program Grant Application Manual Fiscal Year 2016-17



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Tom Wolf, Governor
Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Cindy Adams Dunn, Secretary

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Dept. of Conservation and Natural Resources
Wild Resource Conservation Program
P.O. Box 8552, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552

WILD RESOURCE CONSERVATION PROGRAM GRANT APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' (DCNR's) Wild Resource Conservation Program (WRCP) is charged with administering grants from the Wild Resource Conservation Fund (WRCF) and a portion of the Environmental Stewardship Fund (ESF). WRCF funds include money from the Pennsylvania state income tax check-off, voluntary donations, and purchase of WRCF specialty license plates. ESF funds include money collected from landfill tipping fees.

Eligible Applicants

Counties, municipalities, tax-exempt 501(3) (c) organizations registered with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations and educational institutions are eligible to receive grants from ESF for projects intended to protect and conserve biological diversity. Conservation Districts and municipal authorities are also eligible for some types of projects funded by ESF. Individuals, state government agencies and for-profit businesses, in addition to the categories above, are eligible for WRCF funds but not ESF funds. The great majority of the funds available through this solicitation are expected to be from ESF. Therefore, applicants are strongly advised to seek a sponsoring organization that is eligible for ESF funding. Note that the full legal name of the sponsoring organization must be used on the application form and for 501(3) (c) organizations must be the same name as is registered with the Bureau of Charitable Organizations and with the Internal Revenue Service.

Budget

In order to maximize the conservation impact of our grant dollars and the number of grants we provide, applicants must prepare accurate budgets that honestly reflect the level of effort necessary to complete the proposed work. When applicants submit inflated budgets, either because they've overestimated the cost of the work or because they anticipate the final grant award will be cut, they reduce the chances that other worthy projects will be funded. Additionally, successful applicants that leave grant money unspent at the end of the grant agreement jeopardize their chances for receiving future grants as well as WRCP's ability to secure adequate funding for future grant rounds.

2016 Targeted Priorities

WRCP is soliciting grant applications in the following categories – surveys, research, and conservation and management. Below are detailed priorities within each of these categories.

Surveys

- **Identify and catalog areas of legacy sediment within state parks located in the Piedmont and Ridge and Valley physiographic provinces.**
These areas, where historic wetlands and floodplains are buried beneath deposition from now-breached mill dams, have very high restoration potential. Identifying legacy sediment sites will help the Bureau of State Parks identify and prioritize key locations for wetland and floodplain restoration.

- **Perform baseline surveys of aquatic species (fish/macrobenthos/mussels) in State Parks.**
Surveys of aquatic species are needed in French Creek, Evansburg, and Ridley Creek State Parks.
- **Salamander Mussel and Mudpuppy surveys**
The Salamander mussel has an obligatory relationship with the Mudpuppy (as it's only host species). Distribution and demographic data is lacking for the Mudpuppy and is inexorably linked to the Salamander mussel distribution in PA.
- **Perform baseline surveys of amphibians & reptiles in State Parks, with an emphasis on seasonal pool inventories.**
Surveys of amphibians and reptiles found in seasonal pools are needed in Oil Creek, Parker Dam, and Black Moshannon State Parks.
- **Identify Bat Maternity Sites**
Conduct fall telemetry on northern long-eared bats at a maternity site. By trapping an active colony in fall, determine roost locations and follow use of each with counts. As transmitters near end of battery life, trap additional female(s) until site is no longer occupied (determining departure dates/weather patterns etc.), or follow females to a location that may represent a hibernation area. Conservation of this newly-listed species require identification of these locations.
- **Goshawk Status Assessment**
This project would continue the effort to assess the breeding status of goshawks in Pennsylvania. A combination of approaches could be used, including: revisiting locations of past goshawk nests within the state to determine presence or absence, conducting surveys in areas that may harbor goshawks but not visited in 2012 to 2015, and engaging citizen scientists across the state in finding and reporting goshawk nests, including falconers, hunters, birders, hikers and foresters. Clarification of the basic status of this species is needed.
- **Life history of the Chesapeake Logperch**
Information is needed including updating distribution, status, diet, growth, and habitat usage – which will be essential in the development of a reintroduction plan.
- **Surveys for Hellbenders in historically occupied streams and data gap areas, including deep water habitats**
Surveys of historic sites and data gap areas are needed to continue to assess the broad range of the Eastern Hellbender in PA. Among the areas with major data gaps are deep water habitats in the main stem rivers like the Allegheny, Susquehanna, and large lakes or impoundments (e.g., Kinzua dam).

Research

- **Rare Plant Propagation study**
Many endangered or threatened plant recovery plans call for augmentation of populations, either through creation of new populations, increased number of individuals in existing populations, or

other means of increasing plant numbers. Investigate the methods, efficacy, and cost of plant propagation for *Agalinus auriculata*, *Carex bicknellii*, *Pyncnanthemum torreyi*, and *Trollius laxus*. Appropriate planting and management methods will be determined such as location, timing, etc. and implementation of propagation trials if feasible and appropriate.

- **Goldenseal and Yellow Lady's Slipper ecological and social data**

The collection of ecological and social aspects of Goldenseal and Yellow Lady's Slipper is needed to have an understanding of the management needs for these rare, but collected species. Areas of investigation will include:

1. Ecological data: Compilation of survey data and population distribution information as well as a determination of the species habitat that is preferred or most common, and effective management techniques.
2. Social information: Collection of harvest needs from a public perspective, such as how much and where goldenseal and yellow lady's-slipper are being harvested, where it is being sold, is it sold inter-state or mostly kept for personal consumption, etc.

Conservation & Management

- **Installing Nano-tag Receiving Stations**

Identify priority locations for nano-tag receiving stations to fit the Motus Network for wildlife monitoring and install receivers (motus-wts.org). Motus links the efforts of many independent researchers interested in terrestrial animal movement, both birds and bats, at multiple spatial and temporal scales. The purpose of Motus is to facilitate landscape-scale research and education on the ecology and conservation of migratory animals. Each telemetry station can detect signals from active tags at distances of up to 15 km. When combined, this array can track animals across a diversity of landscapes covering thousands of kilometers. This network is valuable to collect information for specific projects, but networked across North America, this contributes to an infrastructure to support a broad array of wildlife movement projects. Pennsylvania's wide east-west extent is a huge gap in this infrastructure.

- **Rare Plant Recovery Plans**

The Department is interested in continuing our effort to develop recovery plans for the rarest plants in PA. This is step one of a conservation strategy that will be used as a blueprint in the future. Researcher will develop recovery and implementation plans for the following PA

Endangered plant species:

- Aconitum reclinatum*, white monkshood
- Lycopodiella margueritae*, Marguerite's club-moss
- Paxistima canbyi*, Canby's mountain-lover
- Malaxis bayardii*, Bayard's malaxis
- Polemonium vanbruntiae*, Jacob's ladder

Selection Criteria

Evaluation will be by a combination of agency staff and external technical reviewers. The reviewers will use the following criteria in judging the merits of proposals.

- Importance of the conservation issue being addressed and relevance to WRCP priorities
- Potential to improve or advance current conservation practices
- Statewide significance and/or potential for statewide application
- Technical soundness of the approach and potential for project success
- Innovativeness/creativity of approach
- Technical qualifications of the organization, technical staff, and sub-contractors
- Cost effectiveness

Matching funds

WRCP grants require a 25% match (i.e. WRCP will fund no more than 75% of a project's total cost). Cash match and non-cash match will count equally toward the matching requirement. Cash match must be a source of funds other than ESF or WRCP. Non-cash match is the performance, at no cost to the grantee, of a portion of the approved scope of work. The performance of this work must be documented, and must be in lieu of work otherwise charged to the grant. The two types of non-cash match are: (i) Donated service [professional service] (claimed at the firm's or individual's normal billing rate times the number of hours worked) and (ii) Volunteer service [non-specialized labor] (claimed at the normal hourly labor rate for the type of work performed times the number of hours worked).

Grant Size and Project Duration

While grant size varies, the average award size is \$30,000, and the term of the grant is 18 months.

Eligible and Ineligible Costs

For a listing of eligible and ineligible costs, as well as a description of budget categories, please refer to the *Primer for Budget Categories* on the WRCP web site.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION INFORMATION

You should contact WRCP's Executive Director or the appropriate agency coordinator (see contact information below) before submitting a grant application. They can give valuable advice about the program's priorities, how to improve your project design and application content, and the probability of success for your application.

WRCP Executive Director

Ellen Shultzabarger
eshultzaba@pa.gov
(717) 705-2817

Native wild plants

Chris Firestone
DCNR-Bureau of Forestry
(570) 724-8149
cfirestone@pa.gov

Non-game birds and mammals

Dan Brauning
PA Game Commission
717-787-5529
dbrauning@pa.gov

Non-game fish, amphibians, reptiles and aquatic organisms

Chris Urban
PA Fish & Boat Commission
(814) 359-5113
curban@pa.gov

PNDI Review, Collection Permits & Research Approvals

Copies of all necessary clearances, permits, and PNDI reviews must be provided prior to the issuance of a final grant agreement. For more information on PNDI, which permits may be required for work on state lands or to collect specimens, consult the following:

- PA Conservation Explorer: <https://conservationexplorer.dcnr.pa.gov/>
- PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
 - State Forest Lands: <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/forestry/business/research/index.htm>
 - State Park Lands: contact the manager for the park(s) you will be working in
 - Wild Plant Management Permit:
<http://www.gis.dcnr.state.pa.us/PNDI/2016%20DCNR%20Wild%20Plant%20Management%20Permit%20Renewal%20Form.pdf>
- PA Game Commission
 - Bird and Mammal surveys: Bureau of Wildlife Protection, Special Permit Enforcement Division, 717-783-8164
 - State Game Lands: Bureau of Wildlife Habitat Management, Habitat Planning and Development Division 717-787-9613
- PA Fish and Boat Commission
 - Survey and Collection: <http://fishandboat.com/envIRON.htm>

Grant Application Submission Instructions (Deadline: Wednesday, September 28, 2016)

All applications must be submitted electronically through DCNR's electronic grant application system, DCNR Grants, which standardizes the application process and provides an environmentally friendly way to submit a grant application through a secure internet connection. To access the online application go to <https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us/>. The Department also has a Grants Customer Service Center that can provide help on the DCNR Grants system and direct callers with technical grant questions to the appropriate area for help. You can reach the customer service center by phone at 1-800-326-7734, by e-mail at DCNR-grants@pa.gov, or by clicking on the Get Help link in DCNR Grants.

The deadline for submitting your applications will be 4:00 pm, September 28, 2016. Note that a Commonwealth SAP number is required on the application. It can take up to two weeks to get an SAP number, so plan accordingly. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Central Vendor Management Unit can be reached at 1-877-435-7363 for help with obtaining or verifying an SAP number.

We strongly encourage you to start your application early. After creating your electronic application in DCNR Grants, click on the Download Forms link to see all of the requirements for the application package.

Selection Process and Post-Selection Actions

Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated by external technical experts prior to evaluation by the agency coordinators and WRCP staff. The WRCP Board of Directors will recommend allocation of funds based on these evaluations at its Annual Meeting in October, and final selection will be made by the Secretary of DCNR shortly thereafter. Funded applicants will be notified after that time.

Data Submission

All grantees are required to submit grant results in a final report. Grantees doing research on rare or endangered species will also be expected to follow protocols acceptable to the PA Natural Heritage Program and submit data using a standard data submission format.

Specimen Collections

Specimens collected in the course of any project supported by WRCP must be deposited in an institution that will curate the material in perpetuity according to the archival standards for that group of organisms and make them available for study by scientists, conservationists, and other individuals with a legitimate interest. Preference must be given to (i) institutions within Pennsylvania, (ii) the nearest appropriate institution for the taxa involved or (iii) an institution that has an established collection of material from Pennsylvania. The grantee should include in the budget any curatorial fees to be charged to the grant.

Records

For certifying final project costs and for auditing purposes, grantees must retain records for three years from date of final payment or three years from the date of an audit, whichever is later, including: detailed and auditable payroll, personnel fringe benefits, and organization operating cost records for costs charged to the grant and for match (such as time and attendance records for volunteer services), grant agreement documents, invoices and cancelled checks for all property, services, and materials purchased as part of the project.