

Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program

June 2014

Funding Partners

Major funding for the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program is provided by:

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Wetlands, Oceans and Watersheds
- FedEx Earthsmart Program
- U.S. Forest Service Community Forestry Program
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Office of Water
- Southern Company
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Urban Refuges Program
- Pacific Gas and Electric Company
- Alcoa Foundation
- Bank of America

Programmatic Partners

Project review, application help, outreach and technical assistance are provided by NFWF with support from:

- National Association of Counties
- Wildlife Habitat Council

COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION

The Five Star/Urban Waters Restoration Program seeks to develop community capacity to sustain local natural resources for future generations by providing modest financial assistance to diverse local partnerships for wetland, forest, riparian and coastal habitat restoration, stormwater management, outreach and stewardship with a particular focus on water quality, watersheds and the habitats they support.



STRATEGIC STEWARDSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The program focuses on the stewardship and restoration of coastal, wetland and riparian ecosystems across the country. Its goal is to meet the conservation needs of important species and habitats, providing measurable and meaningful conservation and educational outcomes.

1. Engage broad coalitions and partnerships for collaborative conservation
2. Increase resources for conservation and community stewardship
3. Support innovative and sustainable community-based solutions

4. Recover and sustain viable and healthy ecosystems including healthy urban rivers and streams
5. Through outreach and education, shape and sustain behavior to achieve conservation goals

PROJECT ELEMENTS

Each Five Star and Urban Waters project incorporates four main elements. These fundamental pieces tie together the cornerstones of sustainable community-based conservation projects. All projects must have:

- On-the-Ground Activities such as wetland, river or coastal habitat restoration and/or targeted green infrastructure creation.
- Integrated Education, outreach and training into the restoration project through broad community engagement activities or participation and integration with K-12 environmental curriculum.
- Measurable ecological, educational and community benefits.
- Community partners united to achieve ecological and educational outcomes



TIME-TESTED RESULTS

Since 1999, the Foundation has funded over 700 projects nationwide, including projects in 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands through this program. More than \$13.3 million in grants has leveraged more than \$56 million in other funds or donated services.

- In 2013, NFWF partnered with the Urban Waters Federal Partnership to increase resources for community-based conservation in urban communities across the United States.
- Projects have engaged over 160,000 community members across the country in conservation efforts.
- Projects have restored and improved a broad range of habitat types in many different landscapes including coastal areas, forests, urban centers, streams and rivers.



- More than 75,000 acres of land have been restored including more than 350 acres of wetland habitat.

PUTTING THE MONEY TO WORK

Rhode Island Woods to Water Partnership (RIWWP) (RI) –The Rhode Island Woods to Water Partnership will increase restoration, education, and outreach activities that connect the people of Rhode Island to the woods that protect their clean drinking water. Most significantly, this partnership will be a critical steppingstone to continued forest/urban edge restoration, public outreach, education of schoolchildren, and engagement of people throughout the water supply chain in the importance of healthy forested watersheds in providing clean drinking water for 600,000 water users in Rhode Island.

LINC (Linking Individuals with Natural Communities) Programs (CA) –All LINC programs offer job experience, civic participation, service learning for school credit, and career development activities for diverse, urban high school youth. The LINC Summer Program is an intensive 6-week experience for students interested in taking on an educational summer job in the parks, requiring little or no prior related experience. During the school year, the LINC program organizes 2 - 3 service learning programs per week for students from local schools, or from local organizations serving youth. The LINC programs specifically reach out to engage young people from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to connect them with the parks, and help them acquire the skills they need to succeed at school, in the community, and in their future careers.

Village Creek Brownfield Remediation and Restoration Project (AL) – The Freshwater Land Trust (FWLT) in partnership with the Black Warrior River Keepers and Champions for Village Creek Greenway has purchased a former industrial site that lies along the banks of Village Creek. The site is a major connector for a planned greenway system that will connect the Enon Ridge and East Thomas communities in Birmingham Alabama. This missing piece to the larger greenway system will also link residents to existing park space and a future walking trail being built by the City of Birmingham under a Federal Department of Transportation TIGER grant. The anticipated outcomes of this project will include complete removal of all concrete and industrial debris, a vegetated riparian zone along the banks of Village creek and the first phase of design work for the trail which will connect the residential area to an existing park.