



Trout Unlimited Land Conservation Fund Guidelines

Table of Contents

- I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
- II. ELIGIBILITY
- III. REVIEW PROCESS
- IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURES
- V. OTHER INFORMATION
- VI. PREPARING A CLCF PROPOSAL - FINAL CHECKLIST

I. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Coldwater Land Conservancy Fund is a matching grant program administered by the National Office of Trout Unlimited (TU) along with the Land Conservancy Work Group. This program is designed to provide grants for land protection projects that result in conservation easements or land trust or agency ownership of important properties that protect native and wild salmonid habitat.

Land Conservancy and the TU Mission. What is Land Conservancy? Consistent with the TU mission to “conserve, protect, and restore North America’s coldwater fisheries and their watersheds,” it is recognized that in order to further the TU mission, land conservancy in connections with cold water and watersheds – whether acquiring land, preserving it via easements, or restoring it to usefulness – is a critical connection in today’s complex land use environment, which environment will only become more complicated in the future. This program will specifically address the “Protect” element of TU’s mission.

Nature of the Funding. Funds are awarded to TU Chapters and Councils in partnership with land trusts and conservation agencies for coldwater fisheries protection.

Management – Grant-Making. The CLCF grant making process will be managed by a committee comprising of Land Conservancy Work Group members and Embrace A Stream Program (EAS) personnel and will leverage the EAS portal.

For the first annual funding cycle, TU chapters and councils are asked to submit proposals for projects that best address the needs of native and wild trout following TU’s “Protect, Reconnect, Restore, and Sustain” conservation model.

Please be sure to read each section carefully so that you understand the guidelines or requirements and visit the Coldwater Land Conservancy webpage which includes guidance for working with land trusts and examples of successful projects.

Proposals will be reviewed and grants awarded in a manner that reflects the often-urgent nature of important land protection projects, proposals. Funds available will be awarded with the intent that proposals can be funded in both grant rounds, but TU cannot guarantee there will be sufficient funding to approve all worthy proposals.

Proposals must be submitted through the online application portal. The online account must be in the name of the applying chapter or council with a general email. This account will be used to apply for CLCF funds, file final CLCF reports and file for future [Embrace A Stream](#) funds.

Special Emergency Situations: The CLCF recognizes that from time to time there may be urgent project needs that require funding commitment within a short time frame in order to secure agreements for protection projects. If an applicant believes that it has a project that requires special consideration between grant rounds, please contact Land Conservancy Work Group Chair at Landconservancy@tu.org to discuss whether the project meets the criteria to allow a special emergency application to be accepted.

II. ELIGIBILITY

The CLCF grant program supports the conservation projects of TU chapters and councils working in partnership with land trusts and public conservation agencies. A TU chapter or council must be a co-applicant, but land trusts or government agencies may be the principal authors or applicants of proposals. There must be significant TU involvement in the planning and execution of the project to warrant funding. CLCF will not make grants to individuals or non-TU projects.

CLCF Funding Policies

- Maximum CLCF project grant: award is normally \$5,000. Larger grants will be considered for exceptional projects.
- Timeline: Project completion must be within one year.
- Fund Match. Applicants must match, on at least a one-to-one basis, the CLCF grant request. For example, for a total project budget of \$10,000, the applicant can request up to \$5,000 and must match the balance of \$5,000. The CLCF one-to-one match can include cash gifts, in-kind donations of materials or services, and/or volunteer labor. Applications with less than a one-to-one match must provide reasons why the grant should be made with a lower match ratio.
- Non-TU Volunteer Involvement. CLCF will fund projects that use non-TU volunteers, contractors, and/or consultants if their portion of the project meets the evaluation criteria and if there is significant TU volunteer involvement.
- Funding of Salaries. CLCF will not fund projects that request salary expenses for government agency personnel or non-profit staff.
- Funding Previously Incurred Expenses. CLCF will not fund partially or fully completed projects that are seeking reimbursement for previously incurred expenses.
- Phased Projects. Chapters or councils undertaking multi-phase projects are welcome to apply for CLCF funds. However, the CLCF committee will only consider grant funding for a single phase at a time. CLCF is intended as a source of funding for the early stages of projects, not as a multi-year funding mechanism for long-term projects.

Eligible Projects

CLCF will fund the following types of land protection project expenses:

- Direct costs associated with the purchase or donation of land or conservation easements on priority coldwater fishery watersheds. These may include:
 - o professional surveys,
 - o appraisals (commissioned by land trusts or agencies, not by land or easement donors) and performed by state certified real estate appraisers;
 - o legal fees;
 - o consultant fees for due diligence, habitat assessments, etc.

- Capital Costs. Funds for purchase of land or conservation easements
- Stewardship or Management Funding. The establishment or enhancement of permanent stewardship funds or endowments required by land trusts or agencies as a condition of land protection project completion. CLCF will fund up to 50% of the specified stewardship fund requirement for the project with a cap of \$5,000.

Projects Not Eligible for Funding. CLCF will not fund the following types of projects:

- Habitat improvement or restoration projects (These are funded by the regular Embrace a Stream program, see www.tu.org/eas)
- Advocacy campaigns that endorse a specific candidate or particular piece of legislation unrelated to a specific land protection project.
- Conservation planning or strategic planning projects

For questions about funding guidelines or project eligibility, please contact NLC Land Conservancy Work Group at Landconservancy@tu.org.

III. REVIEW PROCESS

The schedule and associated deadlines for the 2019 CLCF funding cycle are listed below:

Day 1 - Contact CLCF Chair to discuss project at Landconservancy@tu.org

Day 14 - Online application submission

Day 34 - CLCF grant selection meeting

Day 49 – Grant announcements made

Day 60 - Grant funds will be deposited via Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT)

The Coldwater Land Conservancy Fund Committee is comprised of EAS Committee members and NLC LC work group representatives. *The committee evaluates all proposed projects and makes final funding decisions based on exceptions or needs.* CLCF Committee members are a valuable resource for potential grant seekers. Chapters and Councils that receive money are often in contact with their CLCF committee member early in the process.

Grant Application Evaluation Criteria

Grant applications will be evaluated and ranked according to the following criteria. Primary and secondary criteria are as follows:

- A. Significance of the coldwater resource to the protection of habitat for native and wild salmonids, (with priority given to native species);
- B. Importance of the specific property to the identified species.
- C. Opportunities for future habitat restoration, reconnection or enhancement on the property.

Additional criteria that will contribute to proposal ranking:

- D. Opportunities for strengthening other TU impacts, such as youth education, public outreach, membership growth, etc.
- E. The creation of voluntary public angling access, whether managed by the land trust /agency or under agreement with TU or other method.

The Committee develops cumulative scores for each application and ranks all proposals based on the evaluation criteria before final funding decisions. Besides focusing on the overall clarity and merit of the project description, proposals must address one or more of the proposal evaluation criteria. The most successful applications will effectively combine TU capacity-building elements with a focus on measurable coldwater conservation results. In other words, projects that address all five project criteria will be given greater weight than projects that do not.

Relevant Questions

In preparing an application, answering the following questions will greatly help the CLCF committee evaluate a proposal:

- A. *Significance of the Coldwater Habitat Resource. Highest priority will be given to protection of habitat for native salmonids.*
- a. Is the project located within scientifically documented important habitat for native or wild trout or salmon? (If so provide relevant documentation)
 - b. Is the project nationally or regionally significant? (If so, provide supporting documentation)
 - c. Has this watershed or sub-watershed been identified as a conservation target by the TU CSI or other science-based initiative such as the Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture? (If so, provide appropriate supporting documentation.)
- B. *Importance - Specific Property.*
- a. How significant is the specific property to the integrity of the watershed for the identified native or wild trout or salmon?
 - b. Does the property contain substantial frontage on an important river, stream or other water body?
 - c. Have fisheries biologists or other scientists visited the property and documented the importance?
 - d. Is the property adjacent to or nearby other protected lands?
 - e. What is the current condition of the habitat on the property, both aquatic and riparian?
 - f. What is the risk to the property if it is not protected?
- C. *Opportunities for habitat restoration, reconnection or enhancement.*
- a. Is the habitat impacted by historic activities such that restoration activities (e.g. riparian fencing, planting, dam removal, culvert replacement, erosion control, instream habitat enhancement, etc.) could re-establish pre-impact conditions favorable to the target species?
 - b. Is the local TU chapter or Council planning to propose future collaborations to achieve restoration or enhancement?
 - c. Are there public agencies that are able and willing to support habitat restoration activities?
 - d. Is the landowner supportive of restoration?
 - e. Has the land trust/agency been involved in previous habitat projects?
- D. *Increasing the TU impact and building lasting partnerships.*
- a. Does the project create opportunities for future collaborations between land trusts or agencies and TU for protection of more of the targeted watershed or sub watershed?
 - b. Are there opportunities for public, youth or other education programs on the property?
 - c. What public outreach and education efforts about coldwater fisheries conservation exist?
 - d. Can the project enhance other TU mission goals or attract new members and volunteers?
- E. *Creation of Voluntary Public Access. (NOTE: TU does not require that projects provide angler access. However, projects that do provide voluntary access will receive extra points in the evaluation process. A statement should be provided that indicates angler access was discussed with the land holding entity.)*
- a. Does the project include an element of public angler access, to be provided voluntarily by the landowner, TU or land trust/agency?

IV. APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Applicants are required to contact Landconservancy@tu.org at least 60 days prior to online submission. Please contact the group before you start writing the proposal – they can help you refine the concept for your project and structure the proposal.

Once invited to apply, the applicant must use their existing [Embrace A Stream](#) chapter account or if the chapter has never applied online for an Embrace A Stream grant, the chapter must create an account in the chapter's name (First Name: Klickitat, Surname: Chapter) using a general chapter email (e.g. KlickitatTU@yahoo.com). This account will be used for the current application and, should the proposal be funded, final reporting, as well as any future Embrace A Stream applications.

Project proposals should include the following items in their online application submission:

1. *Executive Summary.*

In 250 words or less, please note the project name and location, name of the applicant, TU chapter or council and partner land trust or agency, amount requested, matching funds, background or purpose of the project, goals and objectives, proposed project costs to be funded, anticipated scope of impact, and any other partners. The executive summary should be brief and to the point. The CLCF Committee will refer to it frequently during the review process. The executive summary should appear after the application form and before the full proposal.

2. *Background.*

Describe the project location, including name of water body and salmonid species. Please show how this watershed, region or area has regional or national significance. If the project is part of a TU National initiative, please explain the extent of coordination with TU National staff.

3. *Project Description.*

Briefly describe the target property. Provide a map of the project region, showing location within the state. Provide a project map showing the important coldwater stream, pond, etc. Provide not more than 4 photographs. Also address: How many feet of waterfront/riparian corridor will be protected; the current condition of the aquatic and riparian habitat; any known data documenting the presence of the target coldwater fish species; proximity to other conserved or protected lands that will benefit from the protection of this property.

4. *Project Goals and Objectives.*

Briefly describe the goals of the project; how the property will be protected (fee or conservation easement/restriction); what entity will hold the land/easement resulting from the project; who will be responsible for monitoring and managing the property; opportunities for habitat restoration/enhancement projects in collaboration with TU; and opportunities for appropriate angler access. Also describe any economic benefits that will result from your work.

5. *Strength of Partner.*

Briefly describe the history and strength of the land trust/agency partner. How long has the partner been in existence; how many properties does the partner already protect; does the partner have a history of partnering with TU; does the partner have sufficient resources and a strong track record in land and/or easement stewardship; has the partner already identified/obtained other required sources of funding for the project?

6. *Work Plan.*

Briefly describe or outline how the protection project will be implemented, including:

- A Timeframe or Schedule of when major activities will occur, including when closing is anticipated.
- The Role of TU leaders, volunteers, or staff in the project and the names and qualifications of the key participants. CLCF projects require that TU volunteers have significant involvement.
- The Role of Other Partners in the project and the names and qualifications of the key participants.

- A brief Outreach Plan to disseminate the results of the project to TU, project partners, and the general public.

7. *Project Costs.*

Applicants are required to indicate total project costs. Please be as specific as possible when describing your project expenses and keep in mind that there should be a one-to-one match for a CLCF grant.

CLCF requires that any cash grant from CLCF be matched by an equal amount of cash, whether through chapter or council contributions. If individuals are donors to the project, they should make their donation by way of a gift to the chapter or council.

Total project costs can be defined in terms of cash gifts, personnel and costs of materials and services. Applicants must identify all other contributors and indicate the type and amount of matched costs (e.g., \$5,000 cash, Town of Smallville). Estimates of direct cash costs and in-kind contributions to the specific project must be specified in the categories below:

- **Personnel/Consultant Fees** – Outline specific tasks, work to be performed by personnel/consultants, and the basis for their fees. Total fees should be broken down according to the amount of time spent on the project (e.g., hourly, weekly, or monthly rates).
- **Volunteer Labor** – Identify all sources of volunteer labor, both TU and non-TU. Donated professional services can be valued at current market rates. General volunteer labor may be valued according to the most recent determination of the value of volunteer time by Independent Sector, which is currently \$20.25/hour.
- **Contracts** - Identify all work to be completed by contract. If a commitment to contract a particular vendor has been made prior to application for funding, explain how the vendor was selected, type of contract, deliverables, time frame, cost, and basis for the cost.
- **Materials/Equipment** –CLCF does not fund the purchase of materials or equipment other than printed or other media materials to be used for the purposes of project fundraising or project advocacy.
- **Other Expenses** - Identify any other specific costs associated with the project. Please note that transportation costs for volunteer labor (i.e., lodging, mileage and gas expenses) are not eligible for CLCF funding. Travel may be counted as match at \$0.50/mi.

8. *Signatures.*

Please note that all requested signatures are mandatory – printed emails with “approval” messages are acceptable and should be attached. For all projects either the local Chapter Chair or state Council Chair must sign the application. Applications without required TU signatures will be ineligible for funding and automatically rejected. The form should be placed at the beginning of all your proposal documents.

Do not submit lengthy background materials (e.g. scientific reports, news reports, planning reports, etc.) used in preparing the application. Summaries and citations of such material relied upon are acceptable.

V. OTHER INFORMATION

- Grant applicants should take a common-sense approach to avoiding any real or perceived conflicts of interests. If a chapter or council board officer, board member, sponsoring professional, or other person in a position with decision making authority regarding the proposed project may appear to personally benefit either financially, materially, or otherwise through the project Please explain what steps will be taken to avoid a conflict of interest.
- All grant recipients must submit a final report via the same online portal used to apply within one year of grant awards. For continuations, a progress report must be submitted, including a brief description of the delays and work plan.
- Unexpended project funds must be returned to TU National at the conclusion of the project. Such funds will be used in the CLCF program for future projects.

- TU may use selected passages from successful applications in press releases and other media activities.

VI. PREPARING A CLCF PROPOSAL - FINAL CHECKLIST

In order for a CLCF proposal to be considered for funding it must include the following items:

- ___ A. Contact made with the CLCF Committee no later than 60 days prior to submission to discuss proposal idea. Phone or email contact is acceptable.

- ___ B. A complete Application Form including all of the required signatures:
 - ___ 1) Project Contact
 - ___ 2) Chapter President
 - ___ 3) Council Chair
 - ___ 4) Collaborating Land Trust or agency
 - ___ 5) Landowner (if applicable)

- ___ C. A complete Proposal document including:
 - ___ 1) Executive Summary (300-400 words, see Paragraph IV for content)
 - ___ 2) Background (1,000 words or less)
 - ___ 3) Goals and objectives (300 words or less)