



## Funding Research Memo: Land Acquisition

Last updated June 2016

THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM AT [sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov](mailto:sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov).

**CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please check the program web sites for new information. The deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and are particularly unreliable. Check the program’s web site!**

### FUNDING SUMMARY TABLE

(\*Hyperlinks to more complete information later in memo, including links to program web sites.)

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) North American Wetlands Conservation Act Programs</a>	Small Grant up to \$75,000, Standard Grant over \$75,000. 1:1 non-federal match required.	Protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds.	See web site. February and July are usual for Standard Grant Program, November is usual for Small Grant program.	-Acquisition and costs related to acquisition (document preparation, appraisals, negotiation, legal, etc.) -Restoration -Enhancement
<a href="#">CAL FIRE Forest Legacy Program</a>	No specified funding limits. Some match required.	Protect environmentally important forestland threatened with conversion to non-forest uses.	July	Permanent conservation easements
<a href="#">Wildlife Conservation Board Habitat Enhancement and Restoration Program</a>	Wide range of funding, no specific limits. Match generally not required, but usually projects have more than one funding source.	Habitat and environmental restoration, including forest, riparian, wetland, and habitats for specific species such as deer and mountain lions.	On-going. Board meets quarterly. Contact Program Officer.	-Fee simple acquisitions -Acquisition of perpetual conservation easements to protect privately owned wetlands, wildlife-friendly agricultural lands, or open space to buffer existing wetlands from urban or residential development -Long-term acquisition of water for wetlands -Leases from landowners for specified period

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">Wildlife Conservation Board Proposition 1 Streamflow Enhancement Grants</a>	Not stated. Match not required, but leverage is a scoring criteria.	Providing and protecting enhanced stream flow, especially where it supports anadromous fish, special-status species, or provides resilience to climate change.	Late summer or fall (estimated)	Acquisition grants fund purchases of land and interests in land that provide a direct and measurable enhancement of stream flow. Acquisitions must be from willing sellers and at a price that does not exceed fair market value.
<a href="#">California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) Watershed Restoration Grant Program (Proposition 1)</a>	Not stated. Match not required, but leverage is a scoring criteria.	Watershed restoration and protection projects of statewide importance outside of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.	June	Project administration, pre-acquisition costs, interests in land (fee purchase, conservation easements), and water acquisitions that include permanent or long-term transfers or dedications (not less than 20 years).
<a href="#">Bureau of Reclamation/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Central Valley Project (CVP) Conservation Program and CVP Improvement Act Habitat Restoration Program</a>	\$25,000 to \$1 million. Contribution from other sources is expected.	Protect, restore, and enhance special-status species and their habitats affected by the CVP, with a special emphasis on federally-listed species.	October	Funding is for land acquisition, habitat restoration, or research in the areas impacted by the CVP.
<a href="#">Department of Water Resources (DWR) Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grants</a>	Depends on solicitation. General match requirement is 50%, but can be reduced or waived for disadvantaged communities.	Very broad – the project must address statewide priorities and be listed in the region’s IRWM Plan.	Set periodically – see the web site.	Both land acquisition and easements are eligible costs.
<a href="#">USFWS Tribal Wildlife Grant Program</a>	Grants up to \$200,000. Match is not required, but improves score.	Programs that benefit wildlife and its habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.	September	Acquisition of conservation easements is eligible. Funds may be used for salaries, equipment, consultant services, subcontracts, acquisitions, and travel.

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">CA Natural Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program</a>	Grants up to \$500,000 for projects, \$1 million for acquisitions. Match is not required, but makes the application more competitive.	Resource lands projects for the acquisition or enhancement of resource lands near transportation improvements; additional mitigation related to the environmental impact of the transportation improvement.	July	Direct project-related costs incurred during the project performance period. Indirect costs are not covered.
<a href="#">CA Department of Parks and Recreation Recreational Trails Program</a>	No minimum or maximum. 12% match required.	Development of non-motorized trails.	Not until late 2017 or 2018	Acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside, and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.
<a href="#">CA Department of Parks and Recreation Habitat Conservation Fund</a>	No grant minimum or maximum. 1:1 match required from private, non-state sources.	Several categories of programs: deer and lion habitat; rare, endangered, threatened, and protected habitat; anadromous, salmonid, and trout habitat; riparian habitat; wetlands; trails; and wildlife area activities.	October	Funding is for land acquisition, habitat restoration, trail construction, and wildlife/nature activities.
<a href="#">CA Department of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund</a>	Grants up to \$2 million. 1:1 match required.	Acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities.	Not until 2017	Can fund either acquisition or development projects, but not both.
<a href="#">Clean Water State Revolving Fund</a>	Not stated. Assistance is in the form of low or no-interest loans with possible principal forgiveness for disadvantaged communities.	Assist tribes and public entities in implementing clean water projects.	Ongoing	Land acquisition is an eligible cost.

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">CA Department of Parks and Recreation Off-highway Vehicle (OHV) Grants</a>	Depends on program category. 25% match required.	Planning, development, maintenance, operation, enforcement, programs, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of OHVs.	March or April	Can include purchase of right-of-way or easement, lease of twenty-five years or more, purchase of land in fee title, purchase of an option, and rights to use real property, such as permits or licenses. Covers all direct costs plus 15% indirect.
<a href="#">Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership - Ag Land Easements</a>	Will cover 50 to 75% of fair market value of easement.	Purchasing agricultural land easements that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of eligible land.	July	Natural Resources Conservation Service provides a percentage of fair market value of agricultural easements.
<a href="#">Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership - Wetland Reserve Easement</a>	Up to 100% value of easement, depending on type.	Restore, protect, and enhance wetlands.	May	Up to 100% of fair market value of wetland easement and all costs associated with recording the easement in the local land records office, including recording fees, charges for abstracts, survey and appraisal fees, and title insurance. Also covers wetlands restoration costs.
<a href="#">Infrastructure State Revolving Loan Fund</a>	Loans for \$50,000 - \$25 million.	Provide financing to public agencies and nonprofit corporations for a wide variety of infrastructure and economic development projects, including parks and recreational facilities, environmental mitigation measures, and many others.	Ongoing	Land acquisition is an eligible cost.
<a href="#">Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Indian Community Development Block Grants</a>	\$605,000 – \$2.75 million depending on tribal population. No match required, but adds to points.	Housing, community facilities, and economic development.	Varies every year	Limited to federally-recognized Native American tribes and tribal entities. Land acquisition is allowed for housing development and possibly for other purposes.
<a href="#">Environmental Protection Agency/National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Five Star Restoration</a>	Up to \$20,000. Substantial match required.	Environmental education and training through projects that restore wetlands and streams.	February	Acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities.

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline	Eligible Costs
<a href="#">The Conservation Fund: Land Conservation Loan Program</a>	Loans and technical assistance for conservation organizations to purchase land.	The goal of the program is to conserve America's legacy of land and water resources and to strive to achieve balanced conservation solutions that emphasize the integration of economic and environmental goals.	Rolling	Loans, bridge funding, lines of credit, and technical assistance. Projects should protect natural habitat, provide opportunities for outdoor recreation or educational use, improve water quality, or address threats to conservation values.
<a href="#">Bella Vista Foundation</a>	Up to \$150,000. Other sources of funding are important.	Riparian restoration with the goal of enhancing and maintaining self-sustaining watershed ecosystems.	Varies. See web site.	Restoration work and conservation easements.
<a href="#">Sierra Fund</a>	No grant programs, but can act as fiscal sponsor for projects related to mission. Particularly interested in the impacts of abandoned mines on water quality. Call program officer for more information: <a href="http://www.sierrafund.org/contact-us/">http://www.sierrafund.org/contact-us/</a> .			



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### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service: North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) Standard or Small Grants Program

<http://www.fws.gov/birds/grants/north-american-wetland-conservation-act.php>

These projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. Eligible costs under the 'acquisition' funding category include fee-title acquisition and donation (transfer of title), conservation easements, lease acquisition and donation, appraisal fees, acquisition negotiations, acquisition legal costs, boundary surveys, travel and transportation, and annual payments for 10-year conservation agreements (or the maximum duration allowed by state law). Other eligible costs include direct and indirect costs for eligible, necessary, and reasonable goods, services, salaries, and labor associated with long-term migratory bird and wetlands conservation work. These grants require a 1:1 non-federal match. However, applicants can count funds expended during the last two years before the application is submitted.

Standard Grants Program for requests over \$75,000: Contact the program officers to discuss the process. The deadlines are generally February and July. Check the web site for more details.

Small Grants Program for requests under \$75,000: These projects must involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats for the benefit of all wetlands-associated migratory birds. The program supports the same type of projects and adheres to the same selection criteria and administrative guidelines as the U.S. Standard Grants Program. However, project activities are usually smaller in scope and involve fewer project dollars. Funding priority is given to grantees or partners new to the Act's Grants Program. The deadline is generally in November.

Discussions with program officers are recommended. See the web site for more details.

### CAL FIRE Forest Legacy Program

[http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource\\_mgt/resource\\_mgt\\_forestryassistance\\_legacy.php](http://www.fire.ca.gov/resource_mgt/resource_mgt_forestryassistance_legacy.php)

The Legacy program administered by CAL FIRE is comprised of two separate but complementary programs: the Federal Forest Legacy Program and the California Forest Legacy Program. The Federal Forest Legacy Program protects environmentally important forestlands that are threatened by present or future conversion to non-forest uses. Priority is given to lands that can be effectively protected and managed and that have important scenic, recreational, timber, riparian, fish and wildlife, threatened and endangered species, and other cultural and environmental values. Project costs include interests in lands (including actual purchase price), appraisals, land surveys, closing costs, and other real estate transaction expenses. Federal funds are limited to

75 percent of the value of the conservation easement, with the remaining portion contributed by non-federal matching funds. Landowner contributions may be part of the match.

The California Forest Legacy Program Act allows CAL FIRE to accept lands and interests in lands, and to encourage the long-term conservation of productive forest lands by providing an incentive to owners of private forest lands to prevent future conversions of forest land and forest resources through the use of conservation easements. Eligible properties may be "working forests," where forestland is managed for the production of forest products and traditional forest uses are maintained. The purpose of these easements is to maintain these forests intact to provide such traditional forest benefits as timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection, and/or open space. These forests remain in private ownership except for the restrictions on development or other uses conveyed by the conservation easement to the agency selected by the landowner.

### **Wildlife Conservation Board Programs**

<https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs>

The state Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) has several relevant programs that allow land acquisitions, including forest, riparian, wetlands, rangelands, and oak woodlands. There is also a generic 'acquisition' program through which the WCB acquires real property rights on behalf of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) or other entities.

All acquisitions are made on a "willing seller" basis pursuant to a fair market value appraisal as approved by the Department of General Services (DGS). The acquisition activities are carried out in conjunction with the CDFW, which generally entails CDFW evaluating the biological values of property through development of a Land Acquisition Evaluation (LAE) for a single property or Conceptual Area Protection Plan (CAPP) for multiple properties. Once these evaluations are completed, they are submitted to CDFW's Regional Operations Committee (ROC) for review and approval. If approved by the ROC, they are then sent to the WCB with a recommendation to fund. Typically this process can take anywhere from six to 12 months.

Acquisition projects include:

- Fee simple acquisitions
- Acquisition of perpetual conservation easements to protect privately owned wetlands, wildlife-friendly agricultural lands, or open space to buffer existing wetlands from urban or residential development
- Long-term acquisition of water for wetlands
- Leases from landowners for a specified period

The WCB programs emphasize partnerships and have a great deal of flexibility. Contact the specific program officer for information on how to submit an application and how to maximize the chance of obtaining funding. Eligible applicants include 501(c)(3) nonprofit

organizations, local governmental agencies, state departments, and federal agencies. More information on the grant process can be found at: <https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Applications>.

The WCB meets four times a year, typically in February, May, August, and November. Processing time for applications can vary depending on completeness of the application, project benefits, and funding availability.

### **WCB Proposition 1 Streamflow Enhancement Grant program** <https://www.wcb.ca.gov/Programs/Stream-Flow-Enhancement>

The objective of this program is to provide and protect enhanced stream flow, especially in streams that support anadromous fish; special status, threatened, endangered, or at-risk species; or provide resilience to climate change. Enhanced stream flow is defined as a change in the amount, timing, or quality of the water flowing down a stream, or a portion of a stream, to benefit fish and wildlife.

Eligible grantees are limited to public agencies (not including federal agencies), nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized tribes, state tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies (if the project has a clear public benefit). There is no minimum or maximum grant.

Eligible funding categories for this solicitation may achieve one or more of the following grant program purposes:

- Planning
- Implementation
- Acquisition
- Scientific studies, monitoring, and assessments

Acquisition grants can fund purchases of land, water rights, and interests in land or water that provide a direct and measurable enhancement of stream flow to support the goals of the Program and the California Water Action Plan (CWAP). Acquisitions must be from willing sellers and at a price that does not exceed fair market value, as set forth in an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services.

### **California Department of Fish and Wildlife Watershed Restoration Grant Program** <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Restoration-Grants>

The Watershed Restoration Grant Program has \$285 million in funding focused on watershed restoration and protection projects of statewide importance outside of the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Delta). Projects that support the various state-wide and region plans get extra points in evaluation. Projects must address one of the following priorities:

- Protect and restore mountain meadow ecosystems
- Manage headwaters for multiple benefits

- Protect and restore anadromous fish habitat
- Protect and restore coastal wetland ecosystems

Acquisition grants fund purchases of land and interests in land or water to support the State Wildlife Action Plan or California Water Action Plan goals. Acquisitions must be from willing sellers and at fair market value, as confirmed by an appraisal approved by the Department of General Services Real Property Services Section. No grant minimum/maximum amounts have been stated. Eligible activities and expenses for acquisition projects include, but are not limited to:

- Project administration
- Pre-acquisition costs incurred after grant execution for the express purpose of, but prior to, obtaining the property (such as feasibility studies and personnel costs)
- Interests in land that include perpetual conservation easements
- Water acquisitions that include permanent or long-term transfers or dedications (not less than 20 years)

Eligible applicants are limited to public agencies (state agencies or departments, special districts, joint powers authorities, counties, cities, or other political subdivisions of the state), nonprofit organizations, public utilities, federally recognized tribes, state tribes listed on the Native American Heritage Commission's California Tribal Consultation List, and mutual water companies.

### **Central Valley Project Conservation Program and Central Valley Project Improvement Act - Habitat Restoration Program**

<http://www.usbr.gov/mp/cvpcp/>

This funding is for actions that will protect, restore, and enhance special-status species and their habitats affected by the Central Valley Project (CVP), with a special emphasis on federally listed species. Funding is for land acquisition, habitat restoration, or research.

The funding range is \$25,000 to \$1 million. There is no cost-sharing requirement, but partnering (i.e., cost sharing provided by the entities, through cash or in-kind services, which are contributing towards the proposed project) is highly encouraged and the level of partnering is considered during application evaluation.

Federally endangered and threatened species that have been impacted by the CVP have been rated "Low," "Medium," "High," or "Very High," and these priority ratings help determine selection of applications for funding. The CVP Priority Species rating is based on two factors: (a) the recovery priority assigned to the species, and (b) the extent to which that species is impacted, either directly or indirectly, from the CVP. A "Very High" rating means that the recovery priority for the species is rated high with an imminent threat of extinction and CVP actions contributed significantly to the species decline, either directly or indirectly. A "High" rating means that the recovery priority for the species is high and CVP actions contributed significantly to the species decline, either

directly or indirectly. In order for a project to be eligible for funding, at least one High or Very High rated species must benefit from the project. Further information about the ratings may be found [here](#). A spreadsheet showing the CVP Priority Species, their ratings, and other criteria may be found [here](#).

### **Department of Water Resources Integrated Regional Water Management Grants** <http://water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/prop1index.cfm>

The Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) grant program is an effort to develop collaborative approaches to identifying and implementing water management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. The state is divided into twelve funding areas, each of which is allocated a portion of the overall IRWM grant funds. Each funding area is divided into regions. These regions can be based on county lines, watersheds, or other factors. The IRWM activities in each region are governed by the Regional Water Management Group (RWMG). These RWMGs are responsible for identifying needs and approving IRWM grant applications in alignment with an IRWM regional plan.

IRWM grants are now funded through Proposition 1. There are three categories of grants, Planning, Implementation, and Disadvantaged Community Involvement. The Planning grant funding allows IRWM regions to develop new IRWM plans, comply with recent legislation, or improve existing IRWM plans. Implementation grant applications must be approved by IRWM regions through the Regional Water Management Groups (RWMG), though they are submitted through individual agencies. In order to be approved, the proposed grant activity must be included in the IRWM Plan. These Plans can be amended and modified by the RWMG. So if you are considering funding your project through IRWM funding, check the IRWM Plan for your region and if the project is not already part of the plan, take steps to have it added. There is a new category of funding for Disadvantaged Community Involvement which is available on a non-competitive basis to each funding area.

IRWM grants do not have a standard maximum amount; this is set in each solicitation. The general match requirement is 50 percent, though that can be waived or reduced if the project addresses the needs of a disadvantaged community.

The scope of IRWM grant projects is very large. Basically, they have to address statewide priorities, which are listed in the program solicitation. These can range from infrastructure to climate change response, but there is always a focus on water benefits.

### **Tribal Wildlife Grants** <http://www.fws.gov/nativeamerican/grants.html>

The goal of the Tribal Wildlife Grant program is to develop and implement programs for the benefit of wildlife and its habitat, including species of Native American cultural or traditional importance and species that are not hunted or fished.

Tribal Wildlife Grants are used to provide technical and financial assistance to federally-recognized tribes for the development and implementation of programs that benefit fish and wildlife resources and habitat. Activities may include, but are not limited to, planning for wildlife and habitat conservation, fish and wildlife conservation and management actions, fish and wildlife related laboratory and field research, natural history studies, habitat mapping, field surveys and population monitoring, habitat preservation, conservation easements, and public education that is relevant to the project. The funds may be used for salaries, equipment, consultant services, subcontracts, acquisitions, and travel.

Grants are for up to \$200,000. No match is required, though leveraging of funds improves scoring. The 2016 deadline is September 2.

### **CA Natural Resources Agency Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program**

[http://resources.ca.gov/bonds\\_and\\_grants/eemp/](http://resources.ca.gov/bonds_and_grants/eemp/)

The Environmental Enhancement and Mitigation Program (EEMP) is designed to fund projects that contribute to mitigation of the environmental effects of transportation facilities. Eligible projects must be directly or indirectly related to the environmental impact of the modification of an existing transportation facility or construction of a new transportation facility. This means that the proposed project must be in the immediate vicinity or general area of work done on a public street, highway, mass transit guideway (trains, ports, light rail lines, city streets, airports, etc.) or appurtenant features (park and ride facilities, high-occupancy vehicle lanes, transit stations, etc.). These are called 'Related Transportation Facilities' (RTF). Not all road work qualifies; see the guidelines. The RTF must have been constructed after January 1, 1990, or not yet have been constructed but is planned and budgeted, and has completed environmental reviews. You can identify eligible RTFs by contacting your City or County Transportation Department, Regional Transit Agency, Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA), Council of Local Governments (COG), Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), or Caltrans District Office. You will need a lot of documentation from this transportation agency, so contact it early in the process.

Project categories:

- Urban forestry projects designed to offset vehicular emissions of carbon dioxide
- Resource lands projects for the acquisition or enhancement of resource lands to mitigate the loss of, or the detriment to, resource lands lying within or near the right-of-way acquired for transportation improvements
- Mitigation projects beyond the scope of the lead agency responsible for assessing the environmental impact of the proposed transportation improvement

The EEMP encourages projects that produce multiple benefits which reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase water use efficiency, reduce risks from climate change impacts, and demonstrate collaboration with local, state, and community

entities. Eligible applicants are local, state, and federal governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations.

The maximum grant is \$500,000. Match funding is not required, but contributes to the competitiveness of the project. The 2016 deadline is July 12.

### **CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Recreational Trails Program (non-motorized)**

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=24324](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24324)

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) provides funds annually for recreational trails and trails-related projects. This program channels federal transportation funding through the CA Department of Parks and Recreation (CDPR). There is no maximum or minimum limit on grant request amounts for the program generally, but a maximum grant amount may be set each year by CDPR.

Eligible projects include acquisition of easements and fee simple title to property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors; development and rehabilitation of trails, trailside, and trailhead facilities; and construction of new trails.

The maximum amount of RTP funds allowed for each project is 88 percent of the total project cost. The applicant is responsible for obtaining a match amount that is at least 12 percent of the total project cost. Eligible match sources include state funds (including state grant funds), local funds (including general funds and bond funds), private funds, donated materials and services, value of donated land (for acquisition projects only), and other federal funds.

The program officer has stated that the next round of funding will not be until late 2017 or 2018.

### **CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Habitat Conservation Fund**

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page\\_id=21361](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21361)

The Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) program allocates approximately \$2 million each year for grants to cities, counties, and districts. Projects include:

- Nature interpretation and other programs which bring urban residents into park and wildlife areas
- Programs which protect various plant and animal species
- Acquisition or development of wildlife corridors and trails

Eligible applicants are cities, counties, and districts (park and open space district). The deadline is the beginning of October.

A 1:1 match is required from local, private, non-state sources. Match funds must be committed at the time of the application and must be specifically for the project that is the subject of the grant.

There are several categories of funding. The categories that allow land acquisition are:

- Deer and Lion Habitat
- Rare, Endangered, Threatened, or Fully Protected Habitat
- Anadromous Salmonid and Trout Habitat
- Riparian Habitat
- Wetlands
- Trails

### **CA Department of Parks and Recreation Land and Water Conservation Fund**

[http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page\\_id=21360](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?Page_id=21360)

Applications may fund either acquisition or development of outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Priority development projects include trails, campgrounds, picnic areas, natural areas, and cultural areas for recreational use.

Eligible applicants include cities, counties, and districts authorized to acquire, develop, operate, and maintain park and recreation areas. Property acquired or developed under the program must be maintained in perpetuity for public outdoor recreation use. This is a very difficult, technical application.

Grants are up to \$2 million. A 1:1 match is required and may include:

- Funds from state local assistance programs
- Grantee employee labor
- Local or private funds
- Gifts of real property, equipment, and consumable supplies
- Volunteer services directly related to project completion furnished by professional and technical personnel, consultants, and other skilled and unskilled labor
- Free or reduced-cost use of land, facilities, or equipment
- Bequests and income from wills, estates, and trusts

The grant web site states that there will not be another round of funding until 2017.

### **CA State Funding for Wastewater Systems – Clean Water State Revolving Loan Fund**

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/grants\\_loans/srf/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/srf/)

This program provides below-market financing for projects as well as some 'principal forgiveness' in disadvantaged communities. Eligible projects are generally infrastructure-related, but also include implementation of nonpoint source (NPS) projects to address pollution associated with agriculture, forestry, and wetlands. Land acquisition and easements are eligible costs.

Eligible applicants include:

- Any city, town, district, or other public body created under state law, including state agencies
- A Native American tribal government or an authorized Native American tribal organization having jurisdiction over disposal of sewage, industrial wastes, or other waste
- Any designated and approved management agency under Section 208 of the Clean Water Act
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and National Estuary Programs

Small and disadvantaged communities can obtain assistance in their pre-development and funding applications from the new [Office of Sustainable Water Solutions](#). Applications are accepted continuously. There is a program which allows loan forgiveness for 'green projects' that meet specific guidelines. See the web site for more details.

### **CA Department of Parks and Recreation – Off Highway Vehicle Program** [http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=1164](http://ohv.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1164)

This program supports the planning, acquisition, development, maintenance, administration, operation, enforcement, restoration, and conservation of trails, trailheads, areas, and other facilities associated with the use of off-highway motor vehicles (OHVs), as well as programs involving OHV safety or education. Funds can be used to secure interests in land to sustain and/or expand OHV recreation access and opportunities. Only local government entities, federal agencies, and federally recognized tribes are eligible for acquisition grants.

Acquisition can include:

- Purchase of right-of-way or easement
- Lease of 25 years or more
- Purchase of land in fee title
- Purchase of an option
- Rights to use real property, such as permits or licenses

The proposed activity must be directly related to OHV recreation. In general, the more robust the OHV opportunities (more diverse OHV options, more developed facilities, signage, education programs, monitoring, and enforcement, etc.), the higher the application will score.

Note that the application requires a great deal of information about the OHV project and the information must be well-documented by reports, statistics, plans, studies, and other records. Other important points about the application:

- More points are awarded if the applicant has multiple partners actively involved
- Projects developed with public input score higher
- Projects will score higher if they are part of an existing land management plan or help implement such a plan

- Because of the heavy documentation requirements (including project descriptions, site plans, maps, photos, etc.), substantial planning and analysis is needed for new projects

Eligible project costs are very broad – basically any costs directly related to the work identified in the project description. Additionally, the applicant may receive reimbursement up to 15 percent of the requested amount for indirect costs.

### **Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership - Ag Land Easements**

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/#part>

The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) is a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) program that provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands, and their related benefits. Under the Agricultural Land Easements component, NRCS helps Native American tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land.

NRCS provides financial assistance to eligible partners for purchasing agricultural land easements that protect the agricultural use and conservation values of eligible land. In the case of working farms, the program helps farmers and ranchers keep their land in agriculture. The program also protects grazing uses and related conservation values by conserving grassland, including rangeland, pastureland, and shrubland. Eligible partners include tribes, state and local governments, and non-governmental organizations that have farmland or grassland protection programs.

Under this program NRCS may contribute up to 50 percent of the fair market value of the agricultural land easement. Where NRCS determines that grasslands of special environmental significance will be protected, its contribution can be as high as 75 percent. Land eligible for agricultural easements includes cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland, and nonindustrial private forest land. NRCS will prioritize applications that protect agricultural uses and related conservation values of the land, as well as those that maximize the protection of contiguous acres devoted to agricultural use. To enroll land through agricultural land easements, NRCS enters into cooperative agreements with eligible partners. Each easement is required to have an agricultural land easement plan that promotes the long-term viability of the land.

To enroll land through agricultural land easements, eligible partners may submit proposals to the [NRCS state office](#) to acquire conservation easements on eligible land. The 2016 deadline was May 16.

### **Wetland Reserve Enhancement Partnership - Wetland Reserve Easement**

<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/acep/#part>

The Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands, and related benefits. Under the Wetland Reserve Easement component, NRCS helps to restore, protect, and enhance enrolled wetlands. Wetland Reserve Easements provide habitat for fish and wildlife, including threatened and endangered species; improve water quality by filtering sediments and chemicals; reduce flooding; recharge groundwater; protect biological diversity; and provide opportunities for educational, scientific, and limited recreational activities.

Through the wetland reserve enrollment options, NRCS may enroll eligible land through:

- Permanent easements, which are conservation easements in perpetuity. NRCS pays 100 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 75 to 100 percent of the restoration costs.
- 30-year easements, which expire after 30 years. Under 30-year easements, NRCS pays 50 to 75 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.
- Term easements, which are for the maximum duration allowed under applicable state laws. NRCS pays 50 to 75 percent of the easement value for the purchase of the term easement. Additionally, NRCS pays between 50 to 75 percent of the restoration costs.
- 30-year Contracts, which are only available to enroll acreage owned by Native American tribes. Program payment rates are commensurate with 30-year easements.

For wetland reserve easements, NRCS pays all costs associated with recording the easement in the local land records office, including recording fees, charges for abstracts, survey and appraisal fees, and title insurance.

Land eligible for wetland reserve easements includes farmed or converted wetland that can be successfully and cost-effectively restored. NRCS will prioritize applications based the easement's potential for protecting and enhancing habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife.

To enroll land through wetland reserve easements, NRCS enters into purchase agreements with eligible private landowners or Native American tribes that include the right for NRCS to develop and implement a wetland reserve restoration easement plan. This plan restores, protects, and enhances the wetland's functions and values. To enroll land through wetland reserve easements, landowners may apply at the [local USDA Service Center](#). The 2016 deadline was May 16.

**Infrastructure State Revolving Fund Program**  
[http://ibank.ca.gov/infrastructure\\_loans.htm](http://ibank.ca.gov/infrastructure_loans.htm)

The Infrastructure State Revolving Fund (ISRF) program provides financing to public agencies and nonprofit corporations for a wide variety of infrastructure and economic development projects. ISRF Program funding is available in amounts ranging from \$50,000 to \$25 million, with loan terms of up to 30 years. Interest rates are set on a monthly basis. Financing applications are continuously accepted.

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to, any subdivision of a local government, including cities, counties, special districts, assessment districts, joint powers authorities and nonprofit corporations (as deemed eligible). Relevant eligible project categories include drainage, water supply and flood control, environmental mitigation measures, public safety facilities, and parks and recreational facilities.

The interest rates for the loans are scaled to respond to different credit situations. However, they all receive a certain amount of subsidy.

### **Housing and Urban Development (HUD) - Indian Community Development Block Grants**

[http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program\\_offices/public\\_indian\\_housing/ih/grants/icdbq#3](http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/grants/icdbq#3)

The Indian Community Development Block Grant (ICDBG) program is for federally-recognized Native American tribes or tribal entities. Grant funding limits depend on the size of the tribe, but are usually about \$600,000. A match is not required, but adds to the scoring. At least 70 percent of the grant funds must be used for activities that benefit low and moderate-income persons. The proposed activities must benefit the neediest segment of the population and must be critical to the viability of the cultural, social, and/or economic viability of the community.

The ICDBG program can provide funding for recipients in the following categories:

- Housing - Housing rehabilitation, land acquisition to support new housing construction, and under limited circumstances, new housing construction.
- Community facilities - Infrastructure construction, e.g., roads, water and sewer facilities, and single or multipurpose community buildings.
- Economic development - Wide variety of commercial, industrial, agricultural projects which may be recipient owned and operated, or which may be owned and/or operated by a third party.

In 2016 the deadline was in June, but it changes each year. Like most HUD CDBG grants there are stringent public notice and participation requirements.

The web site mentions land acquisition for housing projects, but it may also be an eligible cost for other projects. Check the most recent guidelines or call the program officer for more information.

### **EPA Five Star Restoration Grant Program**

[http://water.epa.gov/grants\\_funding/wetlands/restore/index.cfm](http://water.epa.gov/grants_funding/wetlands/restore/index.cfm)

The Five Star Restoration Program brings together students, conservation corps, other youth groups, citizen groups, corporations, landowners, and government agencies to provide environmental education and training through projects that restore wetlands and streams. The program provides challenge grants, technical support, and opportunities for information exchange to enable community-based restoration projects. These are small grants (less than \$50,000) which are focused on education combined with restoration. Eligible applicants include nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, state government agencies, local governments, municipal governments, Native American tribes, and educational institutions.

Competitive proposals should address each of the five priorities:

- On-the-ground restoration and planning
- Partnerships
- Environmental outreach, education, and training
- Measurable results
- Sustainability

## **FOUNDATION FUNDING**

### **The Conservation Fund: Land Conservation Loan Program**

<http://www.conservationfund.org/what-we-do/land-conservation-loans>

The purpose of this program is to assist and empower conservation organizations to accelerate the pace of conservation in their operating regions. Awards provide recipients with flexible financing and capacity to swiftly purchase high-priority lands that come up for sale. In the past, purchase lands have included historic battlefields, state parks, natural areas for wildlife, forests, farms, historic sites, trails, and open space areas. Ultimately, the goal of the program is to conserve America's legacy of land and water resources, and to strive to achieve balanced conservation solutions that emphasize the integration of economic and environmental goals.

The Conservation Fund provides loans and bridge funding, and also offers technical assistance throughout real estate deals to assist award recipients.

Applicants must describe how their proposed projects:

- Protect the natural habitat for fish, wildlife, plants, or ecosystems
- Provide opportunities for outdoor recreation and educational use, or support government policy such as protecting farmland, fulfilling a Wildlife Action Plan, or implementing a local open space plan
- Improve water quality
- Address threats to conservation values that may occur if the project is not completed or will be addressed by new stewardship practices

There is no deadline for the program; applications are accepted on a rolling basis. For more information, contact one of the California Field Offices:

<http://www.conservationfund.org/about-us/contact-us>.

### **Bella Vista Foundation**

<http://www.pfs-llc.net/foundations/bella-vista-foundation>

Under the Ecosystem Restoration Grant program, the foundation focuses on protecting, restoring, and revitalizing high-priority watershed ecosystems in California and Oregon. Within these watersheds, the priorities are promoting the sustainable management of forest and agricultural land, revitalizing streams, and restoring riparian areas, with the goal of enhancing and maintaining self-sustaining watershed ecosystems. Target watersheds in California include: The Mattole River watershed; the mid-Klamath/Scott/Shasta Rivers; the McCloud tributary of the Sacramento River; and in the Sierra Nevada, the Truckee River watershed and Yuba/Bear/American Rivers. The foundation invites proposals only within the geographic and subject areas stated above.

No specific match is required, but the foundation strongly prefers not to be the sole or primary source of funding.

The foundation will consider projects that include acquisition, but will only support conservation easements, not fee purchase.

### **Sierra Fund**

<http://www.sierrafund.org/>

The Sierra Fund's mission is to increase and organize investment in protecting and restoring the natural resources and communities of the Sierra Nevada.

The Sierra Fund serves two roles:

- As a community foundation, it provides philanthropic services to donors and organizations in the Region.
- It identifies and initiates critically needed programs in the Region. Currently, the Sierra Fund's main program is its Reclaiming the Sierra Initiative, which works to address the legacy of historic mining in California.

For more information, contact the Sierra Fund: <http://www.sierrafund.org/contact-us/>.