



2012-2013 WRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program

PROGRAM INFORMATION AND APPLICATION GUIDELINES

BACKGROUND

The WRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program provides funding for community-based restoration projects in coastal wetlands and watersheds in the southern California region. The purpose of the program is to further the goals of the WRP Regional Strategy; build local capacity to plan and implement wetland restoration projects; promote community involvement in wetlands restoration activities; and foster education about wetlands ecosystems. Projects funded in past cycles of the Program can be found on the WRP website: www.scwrp.org, under “Projects and Planning”, then “Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program”. Moreover, documentation, including proposals, progress reports, and photographs from highlighted Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program projects can be found on the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program page. Reviewing these materials prior to preparing a proposal may be helpful to an applicant.

The 2012-2013 WRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program is generously funded by Earth Island Institute (<http://www.earthisland.org>). Earth Island Institute (EII), founded in 1982 by veteran environmentalist David Brower, fosters the efforts of creative individuals by providing organizational support in developing projects for the conservation, preservation, and restoration of the global environment.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Eligible Applicants: Eligible applicants include 501c(3) nonprofit organizations, local government agencies, and university departments. Proposals from local government agencies and Universities that partner with local nonprofit organizations on their proposed project will be looked upon more favorably than those that do not.

Eligible Projects: To be eligible for funding, projects must meet the following general criteria:

- 1. Restoration or preservation of a coastal wetland or coastal stream corridor:** Projects must have as a primary goal the restoration or preservation of a coastal wetland – estuarine or vernal pool - or coastal stream corridor in southern California from Point Conception to the Mexican border region, including watersheds in Mexico that drain to the Tijuana River. Preservation projects could include implementation of best management practices on both public and private lands. Planning projects are eligible, but restoration projects will be given a higher priority in the selection process.
- 2. Community involvement and education element:** Projects must have community involvement and an education component. Through the projects it funds, the CWRGP is attempting to make significant impacts to both the region’s wetland resources and the region’s communities, with projects that engage and educate the community through their hands-on participation in restoration, resulting in measurable on-the-ground restoration outcomes. This education linked to a restoration experience builds a community’s capacity

for future restoration projects as well as providing numerous positive feedbacks to the community, such as creating a sense of place, fostering stewardship of wetland habitats, and improving environmental awareness. The CWRGP is particularly interested in engaging a diverse array of community members in the participating projects.

Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program Funding Total: \$200,000* for fiscal year 2012-2013

Individual Grant Size: Grant awards may range from \$1,000 to \$30,000.

Project Selection: A selection committee that includes the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program Manager, several California Coastal Conservancy staff members, an Earth Island Institute staff member, and potentially other WRP partner agency staff that may contribute funding to the Program will review the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program applications and select the projects to be added to the Program. See "Grant Process" below for additional details.

Selection Criteria: Applications will be evaluated based on the WRP's overarching Project Evaluation Criteria (go to: <http://www.scwrp.org/>, click on 'Project Evaluation Criteria'), plus the following considerations specific to the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program:

1. Extent to which the project will advance hands-on community involvement in a wetland restoration project, particularly involvement beyond the traditional environmental constituency existing within the community.
2. Degree to which the project will help build the capacity of local agencies or target organizations to plan and implement wetlands restoration projects.
3. Extent to which the project will foster education about wetland ecosystems and the impacts and threats to those ecosystems, as well as the opportunities for restoration and community BMP's.
4. Extent to which the project contributes matching funds or services. There is no required match for the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program; however, matching funds and services can help demonstrate broader community interest and support for the project.
5. *Additional Criteria – your project is not required to meet this criteria, but, if it does, it may be eligible for funding available through a partnership between NOAA and the CWRGP:* Projects involving on-the-ground habitat restoration that will specifically benefit the following NOAA trust resources may be considered for a special sub-focus of the CWRGP: anadromous fish and coastal marshes. In order to be eligible for this sub-focus, projects should also meet additional NOAA criteria (generally similar to CWRGP requirements but with some different specifics): (1) Applicants should clearly describe on-the-ground restoration and community involvement goals (e.g., acres restored, stream miles opened, expected number of volunteers and volunteer hours), and include a description of planned monitoring that reflects specific, measurable targets for at least one structural parameter (measures a physical aspect of the habitat) and one functional parameter (measures the response of the habitat, e.g. fish utilization). (2) Applicants

* This number may be increased depending on response and budgetary considerations.

should provide detailed information on the activities to be conducted, including any potential environmental concerns (e.g., the use and disposal of hazardous or toxic chemicals, introduction of non-indigenous species, impacts to endangered and threatened species, the presence of historic structures) in order for NOAA to make a NEPA determination on each proposal. If funded through this sub-focus, applicants must work with NOAA staff to provide such information so that NOAA can complete NEPA. No funds will be released until NEPA compliance is complete.

Notification: Notification of the grant award or denial will be made not later than the end of June 2012.

Other Considerations for Applying:

1. Proposals should represent projects that are ready to implement. Note that the Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program is designed for relatively low-dollar projects or a distinct portion of a larger project that can be implemented quickly and effectively to achieve on-the-ground restoration while building a community's capacity for future, potentially larger projects and expanding education and outreach efforts on wetlands restoration. A project should have clearly defined goals and outcomes that can be achieved on the order of a year, rather than a project that is encumbered by the increased logistics of a larger multi-year project, such as complex management, permitting, and planning.
2. Do not submit a vague proposal that merely states goals without a specific strategy or planned actions and a timeline to achieve those goals. Be specific.
3. A group may submit more than one project; CWRGP will fund only one project from a group, however, so it is recommended the group picks their highest priority and dedicates resources to making that project a successful proposal.
4. Follow-on funding (funding over two consecutive grant cycles) to a project is possible but not likely since this would no longer constitute a small grant. Provision of follow-on funding is only considered in unique extenuating circumstances.
5. General funding to an ongoing program will not be granted. Startup costs (capital costs) or a specific restoration project within a multiyear program may be considered.
6. Funding to an ongoing monitoring project will not be granted. Startup costs (capital costs) for a monitoring project or monitoring tied to a specific restoration project may be considered.
7. Regular participation in the WRP County Task Force Meetings is highly desirable for groups wishing to submit project proposals. (Note: Task Forces are operating only in Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties at this time – project leads with projects in these counties should plan on participating in the appropriate Task Force).
8. If the applicant is not the primary landowner of the subject site, please obtain landowner permission and fill out the Provisional Landowner Access Agreement at the back of this application, acquiring the necessary permission and signature.
9. Projects proposed for upland areas must demonstrate in their proposal a clear connection and benefit to the adjacent wetland habitat.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

An electronic copy of the application template is available on the WRP website at: www.scwrp.org; please follow the application template when preparing your proposal. Each application should include:

1. Application Summary – one page **maximum**
2. Project Narrative (4 page **maximum**; no less than 10 pt. font, 1 inch margins) that includes:
 - a. Site Description.
 - b. Project Description – include the need for the project and specific project tasks to be completed. This section should be the substantial part of the application.
 - c. Ecological benefits of project.
 - d. Description of community involvement and the education elements of project.
 - e. Brief summary of applicant's experience undertaking wetlands restoration projects.
3. Budget. Budget numbers should be rounded to the nearest \$100. Please note that the grant cannot be used to pay for food or drink, even for volunteers.
4. Attachments
 - a. A regional map (county-scale would be appropriate) that clearly identifies the project area; and a site-scale map that shows the location of project elements. Electronic copies of maps should be sent as separate files, preferably in jpg or gif format. If you are able, please provide a Google Map link of your project site.
 - b. One to three photos of the site may be included if they facilitate understanding the site, especially illustrating key site conditions.
 - c. Do not include unsolicited attachments such as resumes, letters of support, etc. These will be specifically requested if they are needed.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

1. Application must be postmarked by **March 26, 2012**; electronic copies must be received via email by March 26, 2012.
2. Three hard copies should be sent to:
Shawn Kelly
SCWRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program
124 Simi Ave
Oxnard, CA 93035
3. An electronic copy should also be sent to Shawn Kelly at skelly@scwrp.org

Please follow the guidelines for emailing proposals and attachments: Proposal summary, narrative and budget should be emailed as **one** file in Microsoft Word. Name the electronic file by the project name. Do not embed pictures in the project proposal; pictures should be attached as separate files. If possible, please send electronic copies of all maps and photos (jpg or gif are the preferred formats). Please keep in mind that the Program Manager may receive dozens of applications, both via mail and email, and those applications that do not follow directions or are poorly organized in content or submittal are not appreciated. Late applications are not accepted. Thank you for your interest and we look forward to working with you.

GRANT PROCESS

1. Applications are due March 26, 2012.
2. A committee will review applications at a meeting in May and select projects for the Program.
3. Applicants will be notified of grant award or denial subsequent to the selection meeting. At this point applicants may be asked to provide clarification on their proposed project or additional information about their project regarding CEQA review and consistency with local coastal planning.
4. Notification of final grant award will be made not later than the end of June 2012.
5. The Earth Island Institute will set up Grant Agreements with successful applicants during July/August 2012.
6. Funding for all projects should be available not later than August 2012.

INQUIRIES should be directed to:

Shawn Kelly
WRP Community Wetland Restoration Grant Program Manager
(805) 984-9531; skelly@scwrp.org