

Enhancement Program

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What types of projects is the Stewardship Council interested in funding?

A: The Stewardship Council is seeking projects on PG&E Watershed Lands that fall under one or more of the categories described below:

- Habitat Restoration such as meadow or riparian habitat restoration, revegetation, and fuels treatments.
- Physical Improvements such new or additional trails, day use areas, onsite structure improvements, and noxious weed treatments.
- Protection which may include studies or plans, but directs the majority of funds toward physical enhancements to the land, such as fencing, berms, vehicle barriers such as boulders, and signage.

Q: Will studies, planning, and research projects be funded?

A: Studies, planning, and research projects will only be funded as a part of a larger project that includes physical changes and outcomes that enhance, restore, improve, or protect Beneficial Public Values (BPVs).

Q: Is it possible to get a copy of an enhancement application that was previously funded through the Stewardship Council?

A: Staff has developed a sample application that is similar to funded applications that is available upon request.

Q: Can an eligible applicant submit more than one application in response to the solicitation?

A: Yes. Each submitted application will be evaluated based on its individual merit. Alternatively, projects can be bundled into a larger application.

Q: Where can I find the LCP Parcel ID #s?

A: Please refer to the planning unit maps provided on our website. See this page - http://www.stewardshipcouncil.org/land_conservation/planning_units/index.htm. Then click on the watershed and the planning unit name on the map. Once you arrive at the planning unit webpage the maps will be in the links at the bottom of the page.

Q: Is there a minimum or maximum grant request amount?

A: No, there is no minimum or maximum grant amount. The Stewardship Council anticipates that there will be up to \$3 million available for funding and that the Enhancement Review Committee will want to make multiple awards from available funding. The total amount of funding available is still being evaluated, based upon transaction status and timing.

Q: Is there a percentage of funding that will be set aside for categories including planning, implementation, staffing, maintenance, or evaluation?

A: No. There is not a funding cap for categories of funding within your application. Applicants should determine the appropriate budget that includes all elements needed to complete the project. A funding breakdown by category has not been predetermined.

Q: If our project has already received enhancement funds, are we still eligible to receive funds for a new project?

A: Yes. All applications will be evaluated based on their merit.

Q: Where can I find examples of measurable outcomes that I can include in my application?

A: Measurable outcomes help you report the outcomes and effectiveness of your project. The Sierra Nevada Conservancy has a helpful page on performance measures that has many good examples at <https://sierranevada.ca.gov/funding/snc-grants/manage-your-grant/performance-measures/>. Your measurable outcomes should be tailored to show enhancement of the Stewardship Council BPVs.

Q: What reporting will be required if I am awarded a grant?

A: The Stewardship Council requires status reports at grant payment milestones and a final report. Reports will contain a financial report detailing expenditure of grant funds, a narrative of activities accomplished during the reporting period, and copies of plans, studies, maps, and reports generated during the grant period. Status reports are typically required on a quarterly basis.

Q: Can you suggest project partners for applicants?

A: Yes. Stewardship Council has a list of organizations that were interested in receiving or improving Watershed Lands in your local area and can provide you with a list. Please contact Steve Schweigerdt at 916-277-0700 to discuss.

Q: Do I need to get permission from the property owner to apply?

A: Permission from the property owner will be required if you are invited to submit a full proposal, but is not required at the concept application stage. We do strongly recommend that you coordinate any application with the owner in the concept proposal phase.

Q: May we ask questions about our application during the solicitation?

A: Yes. You are encouraged to discuss your project with Stewardship Council staff prior to submitting a concept proposal. Furthermore, submitting an early draft to the Stewardship Council by April 6, 2020 will allow time for staff to provide comments back to you by April 17th, so you may revise your application accordingly. Stewardship Council staff desire to work with you in order to present the best applications to our Enhancement Review Committee.

Q: May graduate students or other student interns perform work on projects?

A: Yes, graduate students can perform work; however, student fees and tuition will not be reimbursed through a grant agreement. Only hourly wages and salaries with established rates may be reimbursed.

Q: Is an authorizing resolution required to apply?

A: An authorizing resolution is not required in order to submit a Concept Application. However, if selected to submit a full proposal, a resolution (or order, motion, ordinance or other similar document) from the governing body authorizing execution of the agreement will be required prior to full Proposal submission.

Q: Can projects required as mitigation or compliance obligations for other projects be considered for funding?

A: No. Funding cannot be used for projects that are undertaken to meet required environmental mitigation measures or compliance obligations.

Q. What is the preferred timeframe for projects to be completed?

A. Projects should be completed by the end of 2022, although you may discuss the possibility of a longer term project by discussing with Stewardship Council staff.

Q. What if a nexus exists to connect two Planning Units together with a trail – will you fund off-property enhancements?

A. No. The Enhancement Program is restricted to PG&E Watershed Lands and cannot fund off-property improvements – even with a nexus between properties. We could fund the portion of the project that occurs on Watershed Lands only.

Q. How much funding does the Stewardship Council anticipate spending on the Enhancement Program?

A. The Stewardship Council has up to \$3 million available for new Enhancement Grants. As of December 2019, approximately \$13 million has been awarded to organizations for enhancement projects on Watershed Lands. The final amount will be determined by the Stewardship Council once land transactions have been finalized, and is subject to funding availability.

Q: Does CEQA review need to be completed prior to submission of the Concept Application?

A: No. CEQA permitting may be included in the application for projects that have not already obtained CEQA clearance. If projects have already completed planning and secured CEQA clearance, that should be mentioned in the Narrative of your proposal.

Q: Can Federal, State, and Local Agencies and special districts apply for these grants?

A: Yes. Public agencies are eligible to apply.

Q: Can an applicant partner with a private consultant to submit an application?

A: A private entity is ineligible to apply for a grant, but can perform work as a subcontractor to the Grantee. Private entities can also assist an applicant in the preparation of an application.

Only one entity may act as the lead organization on the application, and receive Grant funds from the Stewardship Council, if awarded.

Q: We have a project that is in the design phase with a goal of having the design and permitting completed by spring 2021. Is it possible to apply now for construction phase next summer?

A: Yes.

Q: Is cost share or match required?

A: Matching is not a requirement, but is a strong consideration of the Enhancement Review Committee.

Q: Is there a limit on indirect and overhead expenses?

A: Yes. The limit on indirect expenses is 15%

Q: Does the Project Narrative page limit (two pages) include tables/figures/graphics/pictures?

A: No. The two-page limit for the Project Narrative is specific to narrative text. Tables, figures, graphics, and pictures exceeding the two-page limit can be included and referenced (e.g., Figure 1, Table 1, etc.) within the document.

Q: Is there a template in Microsoft Word for the Concept Application?

A: Yes. A Microsoft Word version of the Application is available on the Stewardship Council webpage.

Q: If we are awarded funding, when can our project begin?

A: The Stewardship Council anticipates executing grant agreements beginning in early 2021, following Stewardship Council Board approval, when grant agreements will be signed. Work performed prior to the start date of an executed grant agreement will not be eligible for reimbursement.