2027 Climate Resilience Grant Program Request for Applications

The Nature Conservancy in New York is pleased to announce the seventh round of the Climate Resilience Grant Program (CRGP). The goal of the program is to support New York's conservation community in protecting the lands and waters that contribute to climate resilience for the benefit of people and nature. Funding is available to land trusts, other conservation organizations, academic institutions, Tribal Nations, municipalities, and local agencies. Previously funded projects from earlier rounds can be found here.

Since 2021, the CRGP has contributed $3.1 million toward the protection of over 14,000 acres of lands and waters and support for organizations through planning and capacity grants.

Program Structure and Funding Availability

The 2027 CRGP funding cycle offers grants to support land protection projects (fee and easement acquisitions) as well as planning and capacity initiatives in two distinct categories:

- **Conserving Resilient Lands**
- **Conserving Resilient Waters**

Conserving Resilient Lands acquisition projects will protect lands located in the Terrestrial Resilient and Connected Network within mapped focal areas.

Conserving Resilient Lands planning and capacity projects will focus on initiatives that increase an organization's effectiveness and ability to protect resilient and connected lands within focal areas.

Conserving Resilient Waters acquisition projects will protect shorelines and lands that contain or intersect with mapped hydrological features throughout New York.

Conserving Resilient Waters planning and capacity projects will focus on initiatives that increase an organization's effectiveness and ability to protect lands at the land/water interface, such as floodplains, wetlands, and shorelines.

Click here to access the map viewer

The total amount of funding available is $650,000. Applicants may apply for up to $50,000 for acquisition projects or $25,000 for planning and capacity projects. Awards may be less than the amount requested.

Please note that *Conserving Resilient Lands* acquisition projects **over 500 acres** are eligible for The Nature Conservancy's, Resilient and Connected Appalachians Grant Program, which is more competitive but also offers larger grants.

All projects must be completed by June 30, 2028, which is approximately 12 months from the beginning of the grant term.

Awards for acquisition projects are provided at the start of the grant term, except for any portion of the grant allocated for Stewardship and Legal Defense, which is released once the project closes.

Planning and capacity grantees will receive an initial payment at the start of the grant term followed by two staged payments tied to interim and final reporting requirements. A $25,000 grant will be dispersed in the following three installments:

1. $3,000 after the grant agreement is fully executed
2. $17,000 upon receipt of the interim report due December 15, 2026
3. $5,000 upon receipt of the final report due June 30, 2027

Proposals are due January 22, 2027.
For questions about requirements, guidelines, application process, or other relevant concerns please email us at: CCCFund@tnc.org

Funding Priorities:

Land Acquisition Grants

Conserving Resilient Lands – As the climate continues to change, plants and animals require access to landscapes upstream, uphill, and up north to adapt to warming temperatures. The Nature Conservancy's Terrestrial Resilient and Connected Network is a proposed portfolio of climate-resilient conservation sites designed to sustain biodiversity and ecological functions under a changing climate. It can be viewed as a data-rich road map of "core forests and connectors" that shows where plant and animal species have the best chance to move away from growing climate threats and find new places to call home. Protecting and sustaining these lands collaboratively is critical for a climate-resilient future. The Conserving Resilient Lands category provides funding for the fee or easement acquisition of parcels that are part of the network and are within broad focal areas shown in the map viewer.

Conserving Resilient Waters – New York is experiencing more intense rainfall, erosion, and sea level rise as the climate continues to warm, putting people and nature at risk. Floodplains, streams, wetlands, tidal marshes, beaches, dunes, and bluffs provide natural infrastructure that help mitigate flooding and erosion. They also provide additional benefits like water filtration, groundwater recharge, recreational opportunities, habitat, and support for human wellbeing. The Conserving Resilient Waters category provides funding for the fee or easement acquisition of lands along rivers, streams, wetlands, and coasts to help mitigate flooding and erosion, preserve aquatic migration pathways and habitats, maintain water quality, facilitate sediment transport, and protect aquifers. Projects in this category are not limited to the Climate Resilient Lands focal areas and may include any parcel or tract that contains or intersects with shorelines or any of the hydrological

features shown in the map viewer.

Planning and Capacity Grants

The CRGP will provide up to $25,000 for projects and initiatives that strengthen an organization's effectiveness to protect the lands and waters most important for nature and people. Applicants can apply for planning and capacity grants under the Conserving Resilient Lands category *or* the Conserving Resilient Waters category.

Conserving Resilient Lands – Planning and Capacity projects under the Conserving Resilient Lands category should include activities that will strengthen the applicant's ability to protect land for the benefit of climate resilience in New York, focusing on the Terrestrial Resilient and Connected Network. Examples include:

- Creating or updating strategic conservation plans at the local or regional scale
- Professional development such as GIS or other training related to land protection
- Developing and implementing landowner outreach strategies
- Pursuing accreditation by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC)
- Building relationships and boosting collaboration with peer organizations
- Funding for new conservation or land protection staff
- Hiring consultants or short-term employees to focus on parcel prioritization
- Initiatives to expand an organization's reach or service area

Conserving Resilient Waters – Planning and Capacity projects under the Conserving Resilient Waters category should include activities that will strengthen the applicant's ability to protect lands and waters that contribute to flood mitigation, improved water quality, habitat protection, and adaptation to sea-level rise. In addition to the examples provided above for Conserving Resilient Lands, planning and capacity projects for Conserving Resilient Waters can include:

- Community engagement focused on protection and/or use of shorelines and lands that contain or intersect with mapped hydrological features
- Developing or updating conservation plans for the protection of wetlands, shorelines, and floodplains
- Staff training to learn a skill that will assist the organization in more effectively and equitably protecting lands important for water quality, flood mitigation and sediment transport
- Engaging community members in the development of land protection strategies, preserve/land management goals, etc.

Planning and capacity projects that lead to or support projects that protect or restore wetlands and flood and erosion prone lands are prioritized for funding. Shoreline and streambank stabilization projects, including living shorelines, are not eligible.

Community Benefits and Engagement

The Nature Conservancy believes that communities and people should be engaged in conservation projects and benefit from their outcomes, whenever possible. The CRGP prioritizes projects that conserve natural resources, benefit biodiversity, ***and*** help meet the needs of local communities. Projects supported by the CRGP will demonstrate specific actions for engaging communities and articulate tangible benefits for people. The grant application provides a list of community benefits and engagement categories to choose from, and leaves space for additional activities not listed. Applicants will need to explain how community benefits and engagement are explicitly embedded within their project. Project evaluation and scoring looks at how well projects engage local people and groups in project design, collaborative management, two-way learning (between organizations and communities), or other related approaches.

Some examples of community benefits include facilitating greater access to nature for local communities and individuals, protecting drinking water sources, enhancing recreational and resource-based economic opportunities, flood mitigation, or protecting lands that will meet community-defined conservation or other needs. Community engagement occurs when external partners and local community members are invited to participate in the project's development and outcomes.

Additional context and examples of community benefits and engagement from successful applications in previous rounds can be viewed HERE.

Who Can Apply

The program is open to all land trusts and other non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations with a conservation-related mission, non-profit academic institutions, State or Federally Recognized Tribal Nations (as well as affiliated non-profits applying on their behalf), municipalities, and village, town and county agencies that operate in New York State. Land trusts that are not accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission will need to provide additional information about their governance structure and financial health in the application. Municipalities and agencies may be asked about their history of and capacity for acquiring and managing conservation lands. Please reach out to the CRGP team with any questions regarding eligibility.

Scoring Criteria

All projects will be evaluated for:

- Eligibility
- Alignment with and clear connection to the goals of the CRGP
- Degree of collaboration or engagement with other conservation organizations, community groups, local governments, and/or Tribal Nations
- Extent and specificity of community benefits and engagement
- Project feasibility and reasonable costs—project feasibility for fee and easement acquisitions includes evidence that the transaction involves a willing landowner.

Conserving Resilient Lands Acquisition projects will also be evaluated for:

- **Location:** the project is within a mapped focal area. Projects with outstanding conservation values and compelling community engagement attributes that are outside of but close to a focal area may be considered as funding allows. Please discuss this with the CRGP program team before applying.
- **Resilience:** the percentage of the total project area that is part of the Terrestrial Resilient and Connected Network.
- **Connectivity:** the project's adjacency to other protected lands or other demonstrated evidence that it will promote landscape connectivity over time (e.g., the project is a necessary acquisition for advancing a local or regional plan that aims to protect a critical conservation corridor).

Conserving Resilient Waters Acquisition projects will also be evaluated for:

- **Scale**: Acres of resilient floodplains or wetlands; amount of shoreline protected.
- **Urgency:** Threat of development to floodplains or erosion-prone lands within the project area or region.
- **Adjacency:** Project adds to contiguous acres of already protected lands, and/or;
- **Upstream/Downstream Connections**: Project reduces impacts (e.g. water quality, flood mitigation) to downstream infrastructure or development.

Eligible Project Expenses

<u>Acquisition Projects (Land and Water)</u>

- Project capital (purchase price)
- Project development (surveys, title search, environmental assessments, other due diligence)
- Stewardship and legal defense funds (does not include direct stewardship, land management or restoration)
- Community engagement (meeting venue, supplies, travel, facilitation, etc.)
- Match funding
- Legal support
- Technical support (e.g., hiring GIS or natural inventory consultants)
- Operational costs (e.g., staff salaries and travel expenses associated with project)
- Indirect costs (not to exceed 20% of the total grant amount)

Planning and Capacity Projects (Land and Water)

- Consultant fees related to plan development and protection strategies
- Partner participation, coordination, and outreach efforts for regional or landscape-level conservation activities
- Skills training for conservation strategies, community engagement, and other relevant capacity needs
- Developing tools that advance or improve collaborative conservation
- GIS training course fees, software licenses, and hardware
- Operational costs (e.g., staff salaries and travel expenses associated with a qualifying project)
- Community engagement costs related to project (meeting venue, supplies, travel, facilitation, etc.)
- Match funding
- Indirect costs (not to exceed 20% of the total grant amount)

This is not a comprehensive list and if you have any questions about what an appropriate planning and capacity project could be, please reach out to us at CCCFund@tnc.org

Ineligible Expenses

- Costs related to lobbying
- Direct stewardship, land management or restoration

Dates to Know

Application window opens	November 12, 2026
Application window closes	January 22, 2027
Award notification	April 2027
Award distribution	June 2027

Proposal Requirements

Applications must include:

- All required and relevant fields in the application form
- Completed budget narrative and worksheet
- Organizational due diligence documentation, as noted in the application form

Optional uploads include:

- Maps, photos and other project-specific materials
- Letters of Support from partner organizations, local municipalities, or State and Federal agencies.

These are not required to submit an application but are welcome and will be considered during project evaluation.

Applications are due by 11:59 PM on January 22, 2027

Link to the 2026 webinar, for project overview

and reference

Frequently Asked Questions

Click here to submit a Technical Assistance inquiry form