General Questions about the Resilient and Connected Appalachians Grant Program

- **What is the maximum grant request?**
  - The maximum grant request is $100,000 though the actual award amount may be lower than what was requested. Our grants are intended to supplement state, federal and other funding sources that require match, be applied to project development costs, and to provide funding for costs that are typically difficult to resource, such as stewardship and legal defense funds (does not include direct stewardship, land management or restoration). When deciding how much to apply for, please be aware that we anticipate only awarding the maximum amount for exceptional projects that secure large tracts that are mostly or entirely within the Resilient and Connected Network AND that demonstrate tangible community benefits.
- **Is this an annual grant program?**
  - Our goal is to make this program available each year through at least 2030.
- **What types of organizations are eligible to apply?**
  - The program is open to all land trusts and other non-profit organizations that have conservation-oriented missions, as well as local, county, state government entities and Federally Recognized Tribal Nations. Indigenous-led organizations with 501(c)3 status are also eligible. While we hope to be able to include State Recognized Tribes in future rounds, we are unable to do so this year, but projects submitted by other organizations on behalf State Recognized Tribe are eligible .
- **Do I need to complete the Conflict Inquiry form?**
  - The Conflict Inquiry form is required for all non-profit organizations. Government entities, including Federally Recognized Tribal Nations do not need to submit the form.
- **Can I submit more than one application?**
  - No. Applicants may only submit one application per year.
- **Can a project include multiple parcels?**
  - Yes, if they are adjacent to one another and under a single ownership. If they are not adjacent, the project is still eligible so long as they are owned by the same individual(s) or entity and there is a clear conservation relationship between them that promotes landscape connectivity—please contact us to discuss before submitting your application.
- **Are projects that have already closed eligible?**
  - The earliest a project can close and still be eligible for a grant is April 1, 2027.
- **Should I discuss my project with TNC before applying?**
  - While not required, we strongly suggest that you contact your state representative to discuss your project, how it fits with our programmatic priorities, and ask any relevant questions. We welcome the opportunity to meet you, learn about your organization and project and provide guidance as appropriate. A list

of state representatives can be found towards the end of the Program Description.

- **When is the webinar?**
  - A recording of last year's webinar is available on the program website.

Community Benefits

- **Can you give some examples of community benefits?**
  - Here are some examples from applications submitted in previous years.

Using the Map Viewer

- **How do I use the map viewer to see if my project is eligible?**
  - Instructions are available on the viewer. You can locate your project site by entering the address in the search tool located in the upper right corner. Projects that are entirely or partially within one of the focal areas and include at least some of the Resilient and Connected Network (shaded in green) are eligible. When completing the application there will be an opportunity to upload a shape file of your project. Alternatively, you can sketch a polygon using a map viewer from within the application.
- **Who can I contact if I need help?**
  - For help with the map viewer, email David Fox at david.fox@TNC.ORG

Focal Areas and the Resilient and Connected Network

- **What is a focal area and how were they determined?**
  - Focal areas are places within TNC's Resilient and Connected Network (RCN) selected for their importance to biodiversity conservation in the face of climate change, along with considerations of vulnerability and opportunity. Targeted land protection in these geographies will meaningfully contribute to system-level resilience and continental connectivity outcomes. Boundaries are subject to updates.
  - The focal areas were developed by teams comprising land conservation specialists, GIS experts, and science and conservation leads. In generating the Focal Areas, this team considered the best available science to guide a process to determine where natural habitats need to be maintained and improved to give biodiversity the greatest chance of persisting in the face of a changing climate. The Focal Areas are the result of that work.
- **What is "resiliency"?**
  - Resiliency is the capacity of a site to maintain species diversity, productivity and ecological function as the climate changes. Resiliency is found on sites that are ecologically representative with a diversity of connected microclimates and low human modification.
- **What is "connectivity"?**

- Connectivity is a measure of a property's capacity to allow species to move across sites and climate gradients. Connectivity improves when a site links existing protected parcels or is part of a local, state, or regional plan to protect linked parcels. When evaluating connectivity, it is helpful to ask, "how does conserving this site contribute to and enhance conservation outcomes at a landscape scale?"

- **Where can I learn more about the RCN?**
  - The Resilient Land Mapping Tool is The Nature Conservancy's publicly accessible, interactive map viewer that provides a wealth of data about any parcel or area in the United States. It is an excellent resource for identifying which lands are the most important for preserving biodiversity and ensuring species movement in the face of climate change.

Grant Awards

- **When will I get notified about the status of my application?**
  - We intend to notify applicants of our award decisions by April 30th and we expect to enter into grant agreements by early-mid June.
- **When and how will I receive the grant funds?**
  - Grantees will receive their awards within 15 days of their grant agreement being fully executed, except for those awards or portions of awards that are allocated for stewardship and legal defense funds, which will be paid within 20 days of receipt of a copy of the **recorded** deed. There may be exceptions or additional documentation required, which will be specified in the grant agreement.
- **How long is the grant term?**
  - While projects are required to close within 12 months, the grant term is 18 months, from June 30 through December 31 to allow for any unexpected delays.
- **What if I need an extension or amendment?**
  - Contact Matt Levy at mlevy@tnc.org to discuss. **Requests for extensions must be made no later than 30 days before the end of the grant agreement term**.
- **Can I make changes to my project after it has already been awarded?**
  - You can request an amendment or extension as appropriate. Contact Matt Levy at mlevy@tnc.org to discuss.
- **What are the reporting requirements?**
  - Grantees must send a copy of the recorded deed to Matt Levy at mlevy@tnc.org no later than 60 days from the date of closing. Additional pre- and post-closing documentation may be requested.

Organizational Due Diligence Requirements

- **What documentation needs to be included with my application?**
  - Land trusts that are currently accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC) and will maintain their accreditation through 2027 must

upload their current accreditation letter. Expired accreditation letters cannot be accepted.

- Land trusts that are not LTAC accredited, and other non-profit organizations must upload the following documents:
  - § Letter of Intent for accreditation submitted within the past year (if applicable)
  - § IRS determination letter
  - § Organizational by-laws and articles of incorporation
  - § Most recent Form 990 or Financial Statement
  - § Certificate of Good Standing from State where organization is located

- **For government entities and municipalities:**
  - These will vary, but for land acquisition projects, documentation will be related to evidence of your history of and capacity for owning and managing conservation lands, and mechanisms to ensure their permanent protection. If you have such documentation and wish to include it with your application, please do. If not, we will contact you if needed.