General Questions

- **What is the maximum grant request?**
  - The maximum grant request is $50,000, 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, and to provide funding for costs that are typically difficult to resource, such as indirect costs and stewardship and legal defense funds.
- **Is this an annual grant program?**
  - Yes. This program has been offered each year since 2021 and we anticipate that it will continue to be available in succeeding years, though the total budget and grant amounts may vary.
- **What types of projects are likely to get funded? Do you have any examples?**
  - Brief descriptions of past Resilient Floodplains and Shorelines and Planning, Capacity and Strategy project awards can be viewed HERE..
- **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, and state government entities and Federally Recognized Tribal Nations. State Recognized Tribes affiliations and Indigenous-led organizations with 501(c)3 status are also eligible.
- **Do I need to complete the Conflict Inquiry form?**
  - The Conflict Inquiry form is required for all non-profit organizations. Government entities and Federally Recognized Tribal Nations do need to submit the form.
- **Can I submit more than one application?**
  - Applicants may submit one application per year to the CRGP. They may submit a second application for a different project (land acquisition only) to the RCA. Visit our Resilient and Connected Appalachians Grant Program page to learn more.
- **Can a project include multiple parcels?**
  - Yes, but they must be adjacent to one another. If they are not adjacent, they may still constitute a single "project" if 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?**
  - No. This program is intended to catalyze new protection projects that need to close a funding gap. The earliest a land acquisition project can close is April 30, 2025, when our review committee will have completed project scoring and know which projects will be funded.
- **Should I arrange to discuss my project before applying?**
  - While not required, we strongly suggest that you reach out to discuss your project, how it fits with our programmatic priorities, and answer any questions about which program to apply to. We welcome the opportunity to meet you, learn about your organization and project and provide guidance as appropriate. To ask questions or schedule a virtual meeting, email CCCFund@tnc.org
- **When is the webinar?**

- We will host an informational webinar on January 8

- **Do I need to register for the webinar?**
  - Yes, please! https://tnc.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_OZUWoYeqR0G1yvVn-12LBg

Community Benefits

- **Can you provide some examples of what you mean by community benefits?**
  - Here are some examples of community benefits described by previous program applicants.

Using the Map Viewer

- **How do I use the map viewer to see if my project is eligible?**
  - You can locate your Land Acquisition project site by entering the address in the search tool located in the upper right corner. Resilient Floodplains and Shorelines land acquisition projects must include at least some of the floodplains, sediment transport zones or tidal marshes depicted on the map (note that these feature layers will only appear when sufficiently zoomed in). RFS projects can be anywhere in New York—they are not restricted to the focal areas. The focal areas and the RCN layers are included to assist NY applicants in deciding which program to apply to. Planning, Capacity and Strategy projects may also be located anywhere in New York but should have a well-defined geographic footprint. You can upload a shape file or sketch a polygon to create a map to include with your application.
- **Who can I contact if I need help?**
  - For technical assistance with the map viewer, email David Fox at david.fox@tnc.org
  - For guidance on which program to apply to, email Matt Levy at mlevy@tnc.org

Focal Areas and the Resilient and Connected Network

- **What are Focal Areas?**
  - 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 investments in these geographies will meaningfully contribute to system-level resilience and continental connectivity outcomes. Boundaries are subject to updates.
- **How were they determined?**
  - 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 it 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 found on sites within linkages that 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 Resilient and Connected Networks?**
  - We’re so glad you asked! You can go right here to learn more

Resilient Floodplains and Shorelines

- **What are floodplain complexes and why are they included in this grant program?**
  - About 17% of New York State lies in a floodplain. While it would be great to protect all floodplains from conversion to development so that people are safe and nature has the space it needs to adapt to a changing climate, we may be more effective by focusing our protection efforts on those floodplains that are likely still intact enough to be providing all those great ecosystem services like water filtration, flood mitigation, habitat provision, etc. Floodplain complexes were identified using a geospatial analysis that uses a “cores and corridors” approach. It begins by finding cores, at least 50 acres of contiguous natural floodplain, and then builds corridors by adding connected floodplain lands that are in either natural or agricultural land cover. The resulting floodplain complexes represent undeveloped areas that are large enough to allow for natural floodplain processes like movement of water and sediment, storage of flood waters, recharge of groundwater, treatment of pollutants, and provision of a diversity of habitats.
- **Why have certain sections of shoreline on Lake Ontario been prioritized?**
  - These prioritized sections are related to longshore sediment transport. Longshore sediment transport refers to the cumulative movement of sand, gravel, and cobble (i.e., coarse sediments) along the coasts of oceans and lakes by the combined action of shore-parallel currents, wind, and waves. This mobilization of new sand and gravel from naturally occurring erosion provides nearshore sediment-dependent protective features such as beaches, barrier bars, and dunes with the materials they need to persist and rebuild. These natural features host critical coastal habitats, provide the protected conditions that support Lake Ontario’s drowned-river mouth wetlands, and provide flood protection and attenuation to surrounding properties and communities. Without these coarse sediments, these protective natural features and their associated wetlands disappear, impacting resiliency for coastal communities and ecosystems as well as recreational opportunities. These coarse sediments are also important for maintaining nearshore fish habitats. When sediment dynamics are interrupted or altered in lacustrine systems, it can deprive nearshore habitats of substrate needed for spawning and larval fish. Coarse sediment sources need to be protected so they can continue to feed the longshore sediment transport system. Too often conflict between development on shorelines and natural erosion lead to hardened or armored shores. If we can maintain an undeveloped buffer between erosion and structures, our shorelines will be more resilient in the face of uncertain conditions created by climate change.

- **Are tidal shorelines eligible?**
    - Yes! If you seek to protect an eroding shoreline so it can continue to feed the sediment transport system or protect natural shoreline features like beaches, dunes and barrier bars, your project is eligible for this grant program! To help in your decision making and prioritization processes, we have included sediment source visuals where they exist, but any tidal or Great Lake shoreline in New York State is eligible.
- **Why are tidal marshes and marsh migration areas eligible?**
    - Tidal wetlands fuel coastal food webs, provide habitat, clean coastal waters, sequester carbon, offer opportunities for recreation, and mitigate storm impacts. In order to provide these services into the future, they need to have the space to migrate landward in response to sea level rise. Otherwise, they will be lost as they are squeezed between the rising sea and coastal development.

Grant Awards

- **When will I get notified about the status of my application?**
    - You will receive an automated email from us once your application has been successfully submitted. We intend to notify applicants of our award decisions by April 30th and we expect to enter into grant agreements by June 30th.
- **When and how will I receive the grant funds?**
    - For Land Acquisition projects, grantees will receive their awards shortly after their grant agreements are fully executed, except for those awards or portions of awards that are budgeted for stewardship and legal defense funds, which will be made available once the project has closed and we receive a copy of the recorded deed. There may be other exceptions or additional documentation required which will be specified in the grant agreement.
    - For Planning, Capacity and Strategy projects, grantees will receive an initial payment of one-third of the grant amount, followed by a second payment upon receipt of an interim progress report and a final payment upon receipt of a final report. Reporting templates are included with the grant agreements. The details for the disbursement of funds and other requirements for grantees will be addressed in a grant agreement between TNC and your organization.
- **How long is the grant term?**
    - 1 year from the execution date of the grant agreement.
- **What if I need an extension or amendment?**
    - Contact Matt Levy 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 mlevy@tnc.org to discuss.
- **What are the reporting requirements?**
    - For Land Acquisition projects, grantees must send a copy of the recorded deed to Matt Levy mlevy@tnc.org no later than 60 days from the date of closing. Details will be included with the grant agreement. Additional documentation may be requested.

- For Planning, Capacity and Strategy projects, grantees must submit brief interim and final reports. The reports should address your progress on the project with respect to the timeline and deliverables specified in your application. Reporting requirements will be addressed in more detail in a grant agreement between TNC and your organization.

- **Who do I contact to discuss any of the above?**
  - Email us at CCCFund@tnc.org or contact Matt Levy mlevy@tnc.org, we will respond as quickly as possible!

Organizational Due Diligence Requirements

- **What documentation about my organization do I need to include with my application?**
  - Land trusts that are currently accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission (LTAC) and will maintain their accreditation through 2026 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 may 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.