

Matrix of Key Federal Conservation Funding Programs: A Tool Kit for Midwest Land Trusts

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We need your help! This is a community effort, so for corrections, comments, and additions for programs affecting the Midwest, please contact MaryKay O'Donnell at mkodonnell@lta.org or 269-352-7032.

PROGRAM	WHAT IT FUNDS	WHO IS ELIGIBLE	NOTES	WEBSITE
US Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)				
Agricultural Conservation Easement Program: Agricultural Lands Easements (ALE) and Wetland Reserve Easements (WRE)	The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP) provides financial and technical assistance to help conserve agricultural lands and wetlands. ACEP is a new program that consolidates three former programs – the Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP), Grassland Reserve Program (GRP), and Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRPP). Under the Agricultural Land Easements (ALE) component, NRCS helps protect working agricultural lands and limit non-agricultural uses of the land. Under the Wetlands Reserve Easements component, NRCS helps to restore, protect and enhance enrolled wetlands.	ALE: Land Trusts (NGOs) State governments Local governments Tribal governments WRE: Private landowners Tribal governments	The new Farm Bill was signed into law on February 7, 2014. There are several IMPORTANT changes in the new farm bill. Please go to the Land Trust Alliance website for more information and to stay up to date with the farm bill and the agency's rule making. http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/farm-bill Easements under the Wetland Reserve Easements portion of ALE will continue to be held by the United States government as reserve interest deeds. The ALE easements will be held by land trusts or state, local, or tribal governments. For FY2014 the ALE and WRE will follow existing rules for FRPP, GRP, and WRP with minor modifications.	http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farm_bill/
Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	RCPP promotes coordination between NRCS and its partners to deliver conservation assistance to landowners. RCPP aims to fund organizations to use more than one NRCS program, involve multiple partners, leverage resources, and result in real and measurable conservation results. RCPP encourages partners to join in efforts with producers to increase the restoration and sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife, and related natural resources on regional or watershed scales.	NGOS (Land Trusts) Producer groups or associations State governments Local governments Tribal governments Farmer cooperatives Water/ Waste Water Municipalities Colleges	Through RCPP, NRCS and its partners help producers install and maintain conservation activities in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding in project areas and report on the benefits achieved. RCPP is a new partnership program that delivers assistance through covered programs such as ACEP, EQIP, CSP, HFRP, and Watershed and Flood Prevention Operations. Partners are responsible for contributing to the cost of the project, conducting outreach and education to eligible producers for potential participation in the project and for conducting an assessment of the project's effects.	http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/farm_bill/rcpp/
Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP)	The Healthy Forests Reserve Program (HFRP) helps landowners restore, enhance and protect forestland resources on private lands through easements and financial assistance. Through HFRP, landowners promote the recovery of endangered or threatened species, improve plant and animal biodiversity, and enhance carbon sequestration.	Landowners Tribal Governments Land Trusts can assist as partners	Land enrolled in HFRP easements must be privately owned or owned by Indian tribes and restore, must enhance or measurably increase the recovery of threatened or endangered species, improve biological diversity or increase carbon storage. HFRP provides landowners with 10-year restoration agreements and 30-year or permanent easements for specific conservation actions.	http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/easements/forests/
Landscape Conservation Initiatives	Landscape Conservation Initiatives in the Midwestern states include: Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative (DALCI), Prairie Pothole Wetland and Grassland Retention Project (PPR), Great Lakes Basin Initiative (GLRI), Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative (MRBI), Lesser Prairie Chicken Initiative (LPCI), National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI), Ogallala Aquifer Initiative (OAI), Red River Basin Initiative (RRBI), and Illinois River/Eucha-Spavinaw Watershed Initiative (IRWI).	Landowners Land Trusts can assist as partners	Land trusts can partner with NRCS to provide financial and technical assistance to landowners. Each of these initiatives has a different focus and different goals. It is best to develop good relationships with your state and local NRCS agents to better understand how your land trust can help landowners take advantage of these initiative programs to better protect land and water resources in your service area.	http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/programs/initiatives/

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US Department Agriculture - US Forest Service (USFS)				
Community Forest and Open Space Conservation Program (CFP)	<p>CFP is a grant program that authorizes the USFS to provide financial assistance to local governments, tribal governments, and qualified nonprofit entities to establish community forests that provide continuing and accessible community benefits.</p> <p>CFP protects forests that are important for people and the places they call home. Community forests provide many benefits such as places to recreate and enjoy nature; they protect habitat, water quality and other environmental benefits, they can provide economic benefits through timber resources, and provide sites for environmental and cultural education.</p> <p>CFP ensures technical assistance from the state forester and will prioritize lands threatened by development.</p>	<p>Local governments</p> <p>Tribal governments</p> <p>Nonprofit organizations, typically land trusts</p>	<p>Full fee title acquisition is required (conservation easements are not eligible).</p> <p>Community forests can be owned by local governments, tribal governments and land trusts.</p> <p>The program pays up to 50% of the project costs and requires a 50% non-federal match.</p> <p>Public access is required for CFP projects.</p> <p>The community is involved in the establishment of the community forest and long-term management decisions.</p>	<p>http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/cfp.shtml</p>
Forest Legacy Program (FLP)	<p>FLP protects working forests for a variety of public benefits, including timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed values, and recreation.</p> <p>FLP provides grants for the fee acquisition or acquisition of permanent conservation easements on private forest lands.</p> <p>Most FLP conservation easements require sustainable forestry practices.</p>	<p>State governments</p>	<p>Land trusts can partner with state agencies. Land trusts provide valuable assistance with bringing landowners and projects to the table, negotiating and monitoring easements, and providing technical assistance. However, the real estate interest (fee or conservation easement) must be held by a unit of government.</p> <p>The federal share of FLP projects cannot exceed 75% of total costs, but a higher non-federal match may receive additional consideration.</p>	<p>http://www.fs.fed.us/spf/coop/programs/loa/flp.shtml</p>

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US Department of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association (NOAA)				
Coastal and Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP)	<p>CELCP provides state and local governments with matching funds to purchase significant coastal and estuarine lands, or permanent conservation easements on such lands, from willing sellers.</p> <p>Land trusts can't apply directly, but can work in partnership with local governments. A donation or purchase of land or easement by a land trust can serve as the non-federal match. Agencies can use CELCP funds to acquire land from a land trust (temporarily held for the government agency). Land trusts often provide technical support.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Local governments</p>	<p>Land trusts can partner with state or local units of government. Easements must be held by a non-federal government agency.</p> <p>The program requires a 1:1 non-federal match, which can be in many forms, including site restoration, land value donation, and other acquisitions.</p> <p>If other acquisitions are used as match, NOAA's boilerplate deed language must be put on the subject property, and must also be put on the match property. In addition, other acquisitions used as match must somehow be related to the subject property either in proximity, resource protection or implementation of some type of restoration/acquisition plan.</p>	<p>http://coastalmanagement.noaa.gov/land/</p>
US Department of Defense				
Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative (REPI) REPI includes other programs such as the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program (ACUB)	<p>The REPI Programs for each of the armed services work in cooperative conservation partnerships with states, local governments and public or private organizations to achieve common goals of addressing incompatible land uses, preserving sensitive habitats and working lands, and promoting sustainability on lands buffering military installations.</p> <p>These partnerships, including those with land trusts, enable private lands in the vicinity of military installations to be preserved as conservation lands; conservation easements and/or fee lands can be held by land trusts or appropriate state conservation agencies. Conservation organizations are becoming the military's most effective neighbors by collaborating to protect land adjacent to military installations.</p> <p>The partner, not the military, receives the deeded interest in the property and provides for long-term habitat management.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Local governments</p> <p>Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including land trusts</p>	<p>The Army uses a variety of supporting programs and tools to ensure sustainment of its installations, ranges, and test and training lands, including its implementation of the REPI authority through Army Compatible Use Buffers (ACUBs).</p> <p>For ACUBs, the cooperating partner purchases easements or fee simple properties from willing sellers with funds contributed by the Army and other partners. These areas provide a permanent natural buffer between military training lands and residential or commercial activities.</p> <p>Under the Department of the Navy, Navy and Marine Corps installations develop an Encroachment Management Program to address compatibility and readiness sustainment. The Encroachment Partnering (EP) program is a key component of the overall Encroachment Management Program.</p> <p>To further enhance its encroachment prevention efforts, the Air Force is developing a collaborative planning and partnering effort and is transforming its off-base encroachment efforts with a comprehensive strategy that integrates a full range of tools, including REPI.</p>	<p>http://www.repi.mil/</p>

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US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)				
Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI)	<p>GLRI provides critical funding to programs that clean up contaminated sediments, improve water quality, combat invasive species, protect watersheds from polluted runoff, and restore wetlands and other valuable habitats in the Great Lakes.</p> <p>GLRI is administered through the EPA in cooperation with 15 other federal agencies, which have developed a Great Lakes Action Plan. That means sometimes the grants are distributed through EPA, but other times come from one of 15 other agencies, typically flowing through previously developed programs.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Tribal governments</p> <p>Local governments</p> <p>Nonprofit organizations (including land trusts and watershed protection organizations)</p> <p>Community organizations; universities</p>	<p>Since enacted in 2009, President Obama and Congress have approved over \$1 billion in funding for GLRI.</p> <p>A task force of 16 federal agencies developed an action plan to implement the initiative. The Great Lakes Action Plan covers fiscal years 2010 through 2014 and addresses five urgent issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Toxic Substances and Areas of Concern, - Invasive Species, - Near Shore Health and Nonpoint Source Pollution, - Habitat and Wildlife Protection and Restoration, and - Accountability, Education, Monitoring, Evaluation, Communication and Partnerships. <p>GLRI encompasses the Great Lakes basin in 8 states: IL, IN, MI, MN, NY, OH, PA, WI.</p> <p>Check the Healing our Waters Coalition for additional information on GLRI: www.healthylakes.org.</p>	<p>http://www.epa.gov/glnpo/glri/</p> <p>http://glri.us/</p>
Nonpoint Source Implementation Grants Clean Water Act Section 319 Grants (319)	<p>Clean Water Act Section 319 funds are provided to designated state and tribal agencies to implement their approved Nonpoint Source Pollution Management Programs. Nonpoint source programs include technical assistance, financial assistance, education, training, technology transfer, demonstration projects and regulatory programs.</p> <p>Much of the plan implementation occurs at the local level; states typically regrant funds to various groups for projects. Many states have an advisory group that works to identify state-specific priorities and selects projects for funding.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Tribal governments</p> <p>Land trusts can partner with states; land trusts can receive regrants from states</p>	<p>Nonpoint source pollution is the leading source of water quality impairment in the United States.</p> <p>Beginning in 1999, when Congress nearly doubled 319 funding levels to \$200 million, EPA has directed states to devote approximately one-half of the funds (referred to as “base” 319 funds) to implement broad solutions to statewide Nonpoint Source pollution problems and one-half (referred to as “incremental” 319 funds) to solve local water quality problems utilizing a watershed-based planning and implementation approach.</p> <p>The federal share of the costs may not exceed 60% of the Nonpoint Source Management Program implementation cost.</p> <p>A 2011 evaluation of the 319 program can be found at http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/upload/319evaluation.pdf.</p>	<p>http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/nps/cwact.cfm</p>

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US Department of the Interior - US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)				
Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund ("Section 6" of the Endangered Species Act)	<p>Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act provides funding to states for listed species and habitat conservation on non-federal lands.</p> <p>Funding is provided for acquisition of permanent conservation easements or fee land. Generally, states must contribute a minimum non-federal match of 25% for the estimated program costs of approved projects. A state must enter into a cooperative agreement with the USFWS to receive grant funds.</p> <p>Section 6 provides funding for two distinct land acquisition programs: HCP Land Acquisition Grants and Recovery Land Acquisition Grants.</p>	<p>State Governments</p> <p>Territories</p> <p>Land trusts can partner with states</p>	<p>More than 1/2 of all species listed as threatened or endangered spend part of their life cycle on non-federal lands.</p> <p>HCP Land Acquisition Grants provide funds to states to acquire land associated with approved Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs).</p> <p>Recovery Land Acquisition Grants provide funds to states for the acquisition of habitat for endangered or threatened species in support of draft and approved recovery plans.</p>	<p>http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/index.html</p>
Landowner Incentive Program (LIP)	<p>LIP provides grant funds to establish or supplement state Landowner Incentive Programs that protect and restore habitats on private lands to benefit at-risk species.</p> <p>Funding can be used to purchase permanent conservation easements and may also be used to provide technical and financial assistance to private landowners for habitat protection and restoration.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Land trusts owning fee title land are eligible as landowners</p>	<p>Requires a minimum of 25% non-federal match.</p> <p>Land trusts, governmental entities, individuals, and organizations including tribal governments may partner with or serve as a sub-grantee to a state fish and wildlife agency</p> <p>LIP benefits species identified in the state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (Wildlife Action Plan); species classified as Special Concern by the state; federally listed, proposed, or candidate species; or other species determined to be at-risk.</p>	<p>http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/LIP/LIP.htm</p>
National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program	<p>The National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program was established to acquire, restore, manage, and enhance coastal wetlands adjacent to Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf of Mexico or Great Lakes coastlines.</p> <p>Grants are for the acquisition of real property interests. Funding is available for coastal states and territories, but can be sub-granted to other entities.</p>	<p>Coastal states (except LA, which has its own program under this Act)</p> <p>Territories</p> <p>They may sub-grant funds to other entities</p>	<p>Minimum non-federal match requirement is 25% for coastal states that have a dedicated fund established and used for acquiring coastal wetlands, other natural areas, or open spaces. If no state fund exists, the minimum match requirement is 50%.</p> <p>Projects are selected based on ranking factors contained in Title 50, Part 84 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) and must be consistent with the National Wetlands Priority Conservation Plan. Additional ranking factors include giving credit to projects that benefit threatened and endangered species, promote partnerships, and support conservation and recovery programs.</p>	<p>http://www.fws.gov/coastal/coastalgrants/</p>

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US Department of the Interior - US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)				
National Fish Habitat Partnership	<p>The mission of the National Fish Habitat Action Plan is to protect, restore and enhance the nation's fish and aquatic communities through partnerships that foster fish habitat conservation and improve the quality of life for the American people. The National Fish Habitat Action Plan is an unprecedented attempt to address an unseen crisis for fish nationwide: loss and degradation of their watery homes.</p> <p>The plan was born in 2001 when an ad hoc group supported by the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council explored the notion of developing a partnership effort for fish on the scale of what was done for waterfowl in the 1980s through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.</p>	Partnerships working across the United States.	<p>Contact a local or regional office of the USFWS Fisheries Program for more information.</p> <p>18 Fish Habitat Partnerships covering all 50 states have been approved. In the Midwest there are the following partnerships for: Driftless Area Restoration Effort, Midwest Glacial Lakes Partnership, Great Lakes Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, Ohio River Basin Fish Habitat Partnership, Great Plains Fish Habitat Partnership, Fish & Farmers Partnership,</p>	http://www.fishhabitat.org/
North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA)	<p>NAWCA provides matching grants to acquire fee or conservation easement interest in lands or water to restore, manage, or enhance wetlands ecosystems for migratory birds, fish and wildlife.</p> <p>NAWCA provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico.</p> <p>There are two programs: standard grants (up to \$1,000,000) and small grants (up to \$75,000).</p>	<p>Organizations, including land trusts</p> <p>Individuals</p> <p>State governments</p> <p>Tribal governments</p>	<p>A 50% non-federal match is required.</p> <p>Project proposals are reviewed and ranked by the North American Wetlands Conservation Council, which then recommends projects to the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission.</p> <p>NAWCA was passed, in part, to support activities under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international agreement that provides a strategy for the long-term protection of wetlands and associated uplands habitats needed by waterfowl and other migratory birds in North America.</p> <p>Contact the Joint Venture Coordinator in your project area for assistance with developing a project proposal, for information about how proposals are ranked, or for guidance on Endangered Species Act, National Environmental Policy Act, and National Historic Preservation Act compliance requirements.</p>	http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtml
State Wildlife Grants Program	<p>The State Wildlife Grants Program provides funding to purchase land and permanent conservation easements to address species and their habitats identified in State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plans/Strategies (Wildlife Action Plans). Priority is for those species of greatest conservation need.</p> <p>State Wildlife Grant Program funds can also be used for activities such as planning, research, monitoring and habitat management.</p> <p>Grant funds are disbursed to states.</p>	<p>State fish and wildlife agencies</p> <p>Land trusts, governmental entities, individuals, and organizations including tribal governments may partner with or serve as a sub-grantee to a state fish and wildlife agency</p>	<p>A non-federal match of 25% is required.</p> <p>Many states re-grant these funds to partners like land trusts, particularly when the agency needs help securing non-federal match. Developing a good working relationship with your state wildlife agency's wildlife diversity program is key. Find contacts and links at www.teaming.com.</p> <p>State wildlife action plans are a useful tool for land trusts to prioritize acquisition and stewardship decisions.</p>	http://wsfrprograms.fws.gov/subpages/grantprograms/swg/swg.htm

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US Department of the Interior - National Park Service (NPS)				
Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF)	<p>LWCF is divided into two distinct funding pots: state grants and federal acquisition funds. The state grants are distributed to all 50 states, DC, and US territories by a formula based on population and other factors.</p> <p>State grant funds can be used by states and local governments for park development and for acquisition of lands and easements on a matching basis for up to 50% of the total project-related allowable costs. The LWCF Act requires that all property acquired or developed with LWCF assistance be maintained perpetually in public recreation use.</p> <p>On the federal side, a portion of LWCF is used to acquire lands, waters and interests therein necessary to achieve the natural, cultural, wildlife and recreation management objectives of the NPS and other federal land management agencies.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Local units of government</p> <p>Federal agencies</p>	<p>The LWCF State and Local Assistance Program provides grants to local, state and tribal governments for planning, acquisition, development and stewardship of outdoor recreation lands throughout the country.</p> <p>Grant sponsors must match the federal award by contributing at least 50% of a project's funding using local resources and private donations.</p> <p>Land trusts often assist states, local governments, and federal agencies with LWCF acquisition by providing technical assistance, pre-acquiring properties, and by helping to identify non-federal match dollars.</p> <p>In its history, LWCF has provided more than \$14.4 billion to acquire new federal recreation lands and as grants to state and local governments.</p> <p>For information on advocating for LWCF appropriations go to: www.lwcfcoalition.org or http://www.landtrustalliance.org/policy/public-funding/lwcf-and-forest-legacy.</p>	http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/lwcf/
US Department of Transportation (DOT)				
Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21)	<p>MAP-21 creates a new "Transportation Alternatives Program" (TAP) which merges many functions previously funded by Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails Fund, and National Scenic Byways.</p> <p>TAP provides funding for programs and projects defined as transportation alternatives, including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; and safe routes to school projects.</p>	<p>State governments</p> <p>Tribal governments</p> <p>Local or Regional Government Agencies and others</p> <p>Land trusts can partner with state, local, or tribal government entities</p>	<p>The MAP-21 bill was enacted in July 2012. The federal highway funds are distributed to the states; TAP funds are administered by State Departments of Transportation. There is a non-federal match requirement (typically 20%).</p> <p>Contact your State Department of Transportation for information on how to access TAP funds, as there is an opt-out feature that individual states may enact. Developing good relationships with your state officials can aide in ensuring these funds are available in your state.</p>	http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21/guidance/guidetap.cfm
All Federal Agencies				
Grants.gov Website	<p>Grants.gov is a great place to find and apply for federal grants.</p> <p>You can search Grants.gov for federal grants by keywords or more specific criteria. All discretionary grants offered by the 26 federal grant-making agencies can be found on Grants.gov.</p>		Grants.gov provides an overview of the process to apply for federal grants.	www.grants.gov