



Funding Wetland Projects



The Caddo Indian Tribe received a Five-Star Restoration Grant to restore a wetland along the Washita River in Oklahoma. Students from the nearby Riverside Indian School, which educates at-risk Native American youth from around the country, are helping to revegetate the wetland with ecologically and culturally significant plant species. These species, which once played an important role in the Caddo Indian tribal heritage, are now absent from the area due to grazing and invasive species. This project not only initiates the ecological restoration of the wetland but also will result in important cultural and educational benefits for the Caddo Indian Tribe and other Native American youth.



Heron

Where Can I Get Funding to Start a Wetland Project?

Once you've decided to take on a wetland protection, restoration, or management project, funding may become an issue. Many state, tribal, and local governments, as well as some well-established non-profit organizations, are already familiar with financing programs and projects. But for many community groups seeking funds might be a new experience.

Many communities and private landowners are grappling with how to best protect their existing wetland resources or restore some of the thousands of acres the nation has already lost. In addition to its federal regulatory role in protecting wetlands, EPA helps states, tribes, and local governments develop their own programs for wetland protection and restoration by providing funds to help them get started. There are never enough public funds available, however, EPA also works with communities to leverage non federal funding for their wetland projects.

Federal Funding Programs

A number of federal programs are specifically designed to help support wetland projects, including the following:

- **Wetland Program Development Grants.** Support state, tribal, and local government



Dave Davis

With funding from EPA and other state and federal agencies, the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation initiated a statewide effort to develop a functional assessment approach, called the hydrogeomorphic approach, to managing the state's more than 175 million acres of wetlands. Approximately 43 percent of Alaska is covered by wetlands.



efforts to develop new or enhance existing wetland protection, management, and restoration programs (EPA). www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grantguidelines

- **Five-Star Restoration Program.** Through partner organizations, provides funds to support community-based wetland and riparian education/restoration projects (EPA). www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/restore/5star
- **Wetlands Reserve Program.** Provides landowners with financial incentives to restore and protect wetlands (U.S. Department of Agriculture). www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/wrp/
- **National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program.** Provides matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, management, or enhancement of coastal wetlands (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). www.fws.gov/CEP/cwgcovers.html
- **North American Wetlands Conservation Act Grant Program.** Provides matching grants to carry out wetland conservation and restoration projects in the United States, Canada, and Mexico (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service). northamerican.fws.gov/NAWCA/grants.htm
- **NOAA Restoration Center Programs.** Uses money received from various damage claims to restore saltmarshes and other wetlands. They also have a community-based restoration grant program. (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration). www.nmfs.noaa.gov/habitat/restoration

Many other broad-based federal programs fund wetland projects if they meet the program requirements.

State Funding Programs

Funds to support wetland projects are frequently available at the state level. Many states, for instance, receive State Revolving Fund loans for water quality management and source water protection activities. States also receive federal funds under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act that they award to local governments, nonprofit organizations, or tribes for implementation of nonpoint source projects. For more information, contact the agency in your state that is responsible for natural resources management.

Other Funding Sources

Funding for wetland projects is by no means limited to government funding. Many different organizations and corporations support wetland projects across the country. The sources can be divided into the following categories:

- **Philanthropic and community foundations** are legally required to give away at least 5 percent of their assets annually to qualify for foundation status. Several foundation directories are available over the Internet or at your local library.

- **Not-for-profit organizations** sometimes have programs to provide financial or in-kind support for projects that help them to fulfill their goals.
- **Public/Private partnerships** combine public and private efforts to fund projects or meet environmental goals.
- **Corporations** give funds through two mechanisms—corporate foundations and operating funds. Corporate foundations operate in a manner similar to other foundations and are frequently listed in foundation directories. Corporate operating funds are usually allocated through their community relations office.

These are just a few of the many sources of public and private funding for wetland protection and restoration projects. To best protect and manage wetland resources, states, tribes, and local governments should look beyond traditional sources of funding and use their available resources to best leverage funds for their wetland and watershed programs.

National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is a nonprofit charitable organization dedicated to the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources and the habitats on which they depend. The Foundation administers several grant programs that support wetland protection efforts, including National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Challenge Grants, Migratory Bird Conservancy Grants, National Wildlife Refuge Support Group Grant Program, and USDA-NFEF Partnership Challenge Grants. www.nfwf.org/programs/programs.htm

The Wetland Fact Sheet Series



Wetlands Overview

Types of Wetlands

Functions & Values of Wetlands

Threats to Wetlands

Wetland Restoration

Funding Wetland Projects

Wetland Monitoring & Assessment

Sustainable Communities

Volunteering for Wetlands

Teaching about Wetlands

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands.

Wetland Resources

On the Internet

- USEPA's Wetland Program Development Grants www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/grantguidelines
EPA's *Catalog of Federal Funding for Watershed Protection* www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/wacademy/fund.html
The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance www.cfda.gov
A Guidebook of Financial Tools: Paying for Sustainable Environmental Systems www.epa.gov/efinpage/guidbk98/index.htm
The Chronicle of Philanthropy www.philanthropy.com
The Foundation Center fdncenter.org
National Network of Grantmakers www.nng.org
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Grant Programs www.nfwf.org/programs/programs.htm

In Print and Related Fact Sheets

- Private Landowner's Wetlands Assistance Guide: Voluntary Options for Wetlands Stewardship in Maryland.* For a copy, contact EPA Region 3 at (215) 566-2718.
- The Oregon Wetlands Conservation Guide: Voluntary Wetlands Stewardship Options for Oregon's Private Landowners.* For a copy, contact the Oregon Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Division, at (503) 292-9451.
- Funding Wetland Projects: Wetland Program Development Grants Fact Sheet*, EPA 843-F-01-002i.