



Manitoba Climate and Green Plan Initiatives
delivered by The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation

Guidelines

January 2020 Call for Proposals

New Guidelines January 10th, 2020

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THE CONSERVATION TRUST

The \$102 million Conservation Trust was established in 2018 as part of Manitoba's Climate and Green Plan to fund activities that promote the conservation of natural resources by creating, conserving, or enhancing natural infrastructure for the benefit of Manitobans.

The Trust is held by The Winnipeg Foundation and revenues are managed by The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC). As a proposal-driven fund, The Trust invites grant applications from qualifying Manitoba organizations for on-the-ground projects that benefit watersheds, habitat and wildlife, advancing innovation and conservation planning, enhancing soil on Manitoba's working landscapes, and connecting people to nature. The Trust focusses on providing a broad range of ecological goods and services (EG&S) to Manitobans.

The activities supported by The Conservation Trust will conserve biodiversity, increase production of harvestable wildlife, mitigate floods and droughts, and improve water quality by decreasing nutrients and other pollutants entering waterways. In addition, Trust funded activities will improve climate change mitigation through carbon sequestration and reduction of other greenhouse gases, improve soil health, and decrease soil erosion. Projects may also provide other value to Manitobans, such as improving recreational opportunities to connect people to nature. Highest priority will be given to projects that impact significant areas of land, significant numbers of people, and demonstrate significant and/or multiple EG&S outcomes. The majority of funding will go towards landscape-based proposals for watersheds, habitat, and wildlife.

A thorough review process is designed to select projects that meet or exceed basic eligibility requirements, including:

- Address an evident conservation need that is a priority for The Conservation Trust
- Have significant, measurable, and/or multiple EG&S outcomes (conservation benefits)
- Involve active partnerships and have effective engagement with other organizations
- Have matching funds (cash and in-kind) that meet or exceed a 2:1 ratio i.e. Conservation Trust request is for one-third of the total project costs
- Show how requested funds support priority trust activities

What is Natural Infrastructure?

Natural Infrastructure is a strategically planned and managed network of natural attributes, such as forests, grasslands, wetlands, and riparian or other naturalized open spaces that conserve and enhance ecosystem values and functions. These natural attributes provide ecological goods and services and associated benefits to human populations.

What are Working Landscapes?

Working Landscapes are areas where people and significant economic activities co-exist with natural lands and water. Working Landscapes have a higher immediate risk of loss than areas without significant economic activity. Working Landscapes have generally experienced significant loss of natural areas already and the future risk of loss remains significant.

What are Ecological Goods and Services?

Ecological Goods and Services are the positive conservation benefits that come from healthy ecosystems, including clean water and air and enhanced biodiversity. EG&S include market goods produced from ecosystems (commodities, food and fiber) improved wildlife habitat, benefits from ecosystem processes, including water purification or carbon storage and other values such as improving recreational opportunities. Ecological Goods and Services are sometimes referred to as EG&S.

THE GROW TRUST

In March of 2019, Manitoba established a second trust fund for conservation purposes: the \$52.0 million GROW Trust. The GROW (GRowing Outcomes in Watersheds) Trust was established to support the new Provincial watersheds-based conservation initiative, GROW. Revenues from The GROW Trust are administered by MHHC and will be used to support elements of the new GROW program.

Eligible GROW delivery groups may apply for GROW Trust funds through The Conservation Trust grant process: they do not have to apply separately. At this time, applicants need to be recognized as GROW delivery groups in order to be eligible to receive GROW Trust funds. Contact the Trust Grants Associates for more information.

MANITOBA HABITAT HERITAGE CORPORATION

The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation (MHHC) manages The Conservation and GROW Trusts. MHHC is a non-profit Crown Corporation established through The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Act. Created in 1986, MHHC was formed to work in partnership with Manitoba landowners to maintain and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.

The Corporation is governed by an eight-member Board of Directors comprised of provincially appointed representatives. Twenty full-time employees, located in five offices throughout southern Manitoba, deliver a range of MHHC's conservation programs.

The mission of The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation is to be a pre-eminent leader in delivering diverse habitat conservation programs through partnerships with the community and other governments.

MHHC seeks innovative solutions to conservation challenges that benefit landowners, wildlife, and all Manitobans. Over the past 30 years, MHHC has increasingly facilitated conservation partnerships and voluntary, farm-friendly conservation initiatives that promote ecosystem health and biodiversity. MHHC is pleased to build on this experience and host Manitoba's Conservation and GROW Trusts. MHHC is not eligible to apply to The Conservation and GROW Trusts.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS - JANUARY 2020

Funding is available for on-the-ground conservation projects across Manitoba's working landscapes that provide Ecological Goods and Services (EG&S).

The January 2020 call for Letters of Interest is for one category only: Watersheds.

This will be the first year in which organizations eligible to deliver the new GRowing Outcomes in Watersheds (GROW) Program may apply for additional GROW funding in their Letter of Intent.

In the early stages, GROW will be delivered by Manitoba's Conservation Districts (soon to be Watershed Districts). For more information about starting GROW in your area, please contact your local Watershed District or Government of Manitoba at 204-945-0002.

Because there is additional, dedicated funding available for GROW, applications up to \$500,000 will be considered from eligible GROW delivery groups.

Other organizations seeking funding from the Watersheds category may apply for up to \$250,000. A lead applicant may apply for as many projects as they wish per year across multiple categories. Projects may be approved for partial or full funding and should be scalable to the resources available. Applicants may partner on additional proposals over and above the funding cap.

If applicants have also applied in the fall 2019 call for proposals to The Conservation Trust, approved totals will take all proposals into consideration. Currently, there is a \$300,000 per organization maximum established for all organizations other than those eligible to deliver GROW.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Eligible Areas

- Project sites in “Municipal Manitoba”

Eligible Lead Applicants

- Community-based not-for-profit groups
- Provincially based not-for-profit groups
- National not-for-profit groups that have established operations within Manitoba

Lead applicants are encouraged to seek knowledge from various experts in the field and partnerships from other organizations. Organizations are not restricted from partnering multiple times in the same funding cycle.

Ineligible Applicants

- Organizations without established operations in Manitoba
- Governments (including Municipalities and Indigenous governments)
- Individuals
- For-profit organizations

Ineligible applicants are encouraged to participate as project partners with lead applicants. Grant recipients with existing CT funded projects that are substantially behind their proposed workplan and deliverables may be restricted from re-applying (in the same program category).

Eligible Expenses

A. Direct Project Costs

- Consulting/Professional Services: includes contractors, consultants, crews or equipment operators including equipment, and legal fees
- Construction Contracts
- Materials: required for conducting the proposal
- Equipment Rentals
- Acquiring Interest in Land: conservation easements, and land acquisition
- Landowner Incentive Payments

B. Delivery Costs

- Salaries and Benefits*
- Travel & Field Costs*
- Administration and Overhead (associated with proposal):* board expenses, management costs, rent, phones, computer infrastructure
- Communications (should not be calculated as part of a day rate)

**Note: Applicants could choose to capture all expenses in a day rate which is entered in the Salaries and Benefits line*

C. Other

Ineligible Expenses

The Trusts are project funders and it is not the intent of the funds to provide on-going operating, maintenance, or programming support. The following expenses are ineligible for Trust funding however these may be used as match. Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Land purchases
- Major equipment purchases (> \$5000 per item)
- Major capital assets such as buildings
- Maintenance of existing projects
- Research costs
- General repairs or rebuilding of existing projects
- Water quality monitoring
- Activities primarily focused on festivals and general public events
- Contributions to endowment funds
- Mapping-only projects that are not integral to the development of a larger CT project
- Creation or management of stand-alone electronic databases, websites, or file systems
- Organizational fundraising
- Tenancy agreements/rentals

Ineligible Activities

- Any activity that must be undertaken because of a government order or regulatory requirement (e.g. the restoration of wetlands that are already required by regulation)
- Primary and applied research
- Policy promotion and advocacy activities
- Conferences, lecture series, or conventions
- Fish or wildlife rearing, farming, stocking, or hatcheries projects
- Feeding or control of wildlife species
- Law enforcement activities
- Rearing or rehabilitating wildlife in captivity
- Prevention and ongoing control of alien invasive aquatic species (including Zebra Mussels) or wildlife species

Matching Funds

See Appendix A, Calculating Match.

The overall objective for The Trusts is a total match ratio (cash and in-kind) of 2:1. Therefore, The Trust funding request should not exceed one-third of the total project cost.

- Matching funds can be cash and/or in-kind goods and services
- Projects with less than a 2:1 match ratio may be considered and ranked accordingly
- No more than 50% of matching funds can be from provincial government sources
- Matching funds for activities that directly relate to the project may have been received up to one year prior to the proposed start date

Examples of Cash Matching (costs with a financial transaction)

- Project staff time paid for by the lead applicant or project partner
- Goods and services paid for by the lead applicant or project partner
- Donations with a tax receipt

Examples of In-Kind Matching (costs with non-financial transaction, valued at generally accepted market rates)

- Landowner and community time in project planning and implementation
- Community volunteer time
- Goods and services provided for free (e.g. land use where no rent is paid)

If you are unsure if your project is eligible or have questions about match please contact the Trust Grants Associates at 204-784-4354 (Toll free 1-833-323-4636) or CTinfo@mhhc.mb.ca

Project Timelines

Applicants may submit projects for a one or two-year duration.

Partnership

Conservation Trust criteria are designed to encourage broad, effective partnerships. Partners may be involved in the planning and/or project implementation. Projects demonstrating interactive partnerships will be ranked higher in the Partnership Engagement category. For approved projects a signed letter from the partner(s) that clearly outlines the partner roles and responsibilities may be required as part of the contribution agreement.

APPLICATION PROCESS

The Conservation Trust Fund uses a two-stage application process and all applications and reporting will be completed entirely through the online Grant Management System:

- Stage 1: Letter of Interest
- Stage 2: Project Application

Stage 1: Open call for Letters of Interest (LOI), using the on-line LOI application. LOIs will be screened to ensure proposed projects meet the Conservation Trust program criteria. Applicants with similar LOI submissions may be asked to collaborate on a single application submission.

The LOI process is intended to screen out organizations and applications that do not meet CT eligibility criteria. If the category is oversubscribed the number of LOIs that may proceed to a full application may be restricted. The number of LOIs moving forward to the application phase may be restricted by a 3:1 ratio of eligible projects to available funding.

Stage 2: If the LOI is accepted, lead applicants will be invited to apply for project funding using the Applicant Guide and on-line Application form.

REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will undergo a multi-tier review process:

1. Applications will be screened to determine eligibility and suitability
2. Applications will be forwarded to a Technical Advisory Committee for technical review, evaluation and ranking. Reviewers have diversified expertise in wildlife, biodiversity, soil and water conservation, and are not employed by organizations eligible for Conservation Trust funding

Application review criteria include:

- Potential conservation benefit
 - Alignment with CT outcomes
 - Technical feasibility
 - Deliverables and delivery cost efficiency (cost/benefit)
 - Extent of co-benefits
 - Partnership engagement and matching funds
 - Organizational capacity and delivery history
 - Evidence to support project activities
3. Recommendations from the TAC will be forwarded to Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation
 4. MHHC makes a final determination of successful applications and funding levels, based on TAC rankings, funds available and CT priorities. The decision is final
 5. All applicants will be notified of decisions

JANUARY 2020 CALL FOR PROPOSALS TIMELINES

DATE	CONSERVATION TRUST PHASE
First Week in January	Call for Letters of Interest opens
February 14th, 2020	LOI intake closes
First week of March, 2020	LOI acceptance notification and full proposal intake process opens
April 10th, 2020	Full proposal intake closes
End of June, 2020	Project approval notification

CONSERVATION TRUST FUND APPLICATION PROCESS FEEDBACK

The Conservation Trust seeks input to develop the best process possible. A brief anonymous online survey regarding the grant application process will be distributed to lead applicants as part of the grant application process.

For any questions regarding The Conservation Trust please contact 204-784-4354 (Toll free 1-833-323-4636) or CTinfo@mhhc.mb.ca

APPENDIX A CALCULATING MATCH

Match funds are cash and in-kind expenditures that are required to complete the project but are not paid for by The Trusts.

Examples of cash matching

Costs with a financial transaction

- Project staff time paid for by the lead applicant or project partner
- Materials and services paid for by the lead applicant or project partner
- Donations with a tax receipt

Examples of In-Kind Matching

Costs with non-financial transaction, valued at generally accepted market rates

- Staff time paid for by a project partner
- Landowner time in project planning and implementation
- Landowner contributions of materials to the project
- Goods and services provided for free (e.g. project lands where no incentive is paid)
- Community volunteer time

Tips for Calculating Match

- Applicants can go back a full year from project approval date (usually April) for match (meeting and planning, feasibility etc.)
- Use any other grants associated with this project
- Time from partners towards the project
- Time from community volunteers
 - Calculate the time at the cost it would take to replace it (e.g. What would it cost if you had to hire a contractor to do the work?)
- Advisory Committee or Board member time is eligible. In the absence of any other calculated rate \$250/day may be used to estimate expenditures.

Note that for Audit Purposes The Trusts require you keep a record for in-kind match such as

- Partner hours
- Volunteer hours
- Board contributions

See the Trust section of the MHHC website for an example in-kind tracking form.

APPENDIX B

CALCULATING THE VALUE OF IN-KIND LAND

Calculating the value of in-kind land

If land is being impacted by a project and incentive payments are not being offered, the value may be used as an in-kind contribution

- Match should be equivalent to the opportunity cost, in this case the loss of ag income that occurs because of the project
 - E.g. If land that is currently cultivated is going to be dedicated to a wetland restoration/ water retention project, then the loss of ag use is essentially 100%
 - If that same property has perennial cover established, but the landowner can hay or graze, then the loss of agricultural opportunity is partial, and the in-kind calculation should reflect this (e.g. 30-60% of the ag value of the land)
 - If non-arable land is impacted by a conservation project, then the impact on ag production is expected to be very small (10% or less)
- If land is owned by an individual who is not receiving an incentive payment the applicant still needs to have a written agreement with the landowner
- The area of land that is counted as match should be the footprint of the project plus a reasonable buffer zone of enhancement to a maximum of three times the actual footprint (for habitat purposes)
- Land operating costs such as property taxes, debt servicing etc. are not eligible

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

CARBON SEQUESTRATION: a process that removes carbon from the atmosphere and stores it in the natural environment.

ECOLOGICAL GOODS AND SERVICES: the positive conservation benefits that come from healthy ecosystems, including clean water and air and enhanced biodiversity. EG&S include market goods produced from ecosystems (commodities, food and fiber), improved wildlife habitat, benefits from ecosystem processes, including water purification or carbon storage and other values such as improving recreational opportunities. Ecological Goods and Services are sometimes referred to as *EG&S*.

FISH HABITAT "ABOVE THE WATERLINE": riverbank and lake shoreline enhancements that significantly contribute to fish habitat restoration. An example would be establishing bank vegetation to promote bank stability, decrease silt accumulation, reduce the degree to which rocks, boulders, gravel, etc. are embedded in silt and sand (embeddedness) and provide shade, and nutrients and insects for food.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS: all project activities should be measurable, whether quantitatively or qualitatively. Activity measures are referred to as Measures of Success or indicators or performance measures. Measures of Success are tracked to determine how well project objectives are being met and relate to outputs.

MUNICIPAL MANITOBA: any municipality that is continued or formed under The Municipal Act (C.C.S.M. c. M225)
<https://web2.gov.mb.ca/laws/statutes/ccsm/m225e.php>

NATURAL INFRASTRUCTURE: a strategically planned and managed network of natural attributes, such as forests, grasslands, wetlands, and riparian or other naturalized open spaces that conserve and enhance ecosystem values and functions. These natural attributes provide ecological goods and services and associated benefits to human populations.

OBJECTIVES: describe the specific, measurable ways a project will address the conservation issue identified. Objectives should be S.M.A.R.T. - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound.

OUTPUTS: result from activities that you carry out and are an indication of project effort. Outputs are measurable and can be activities that you do, people you are trying to reach, products or services you provide. E.g. in a wetland restoration the outputs are the number of acres of restored wetland, the water storage capacity (volume), wildlife benefits etc.

OUTCOMES: are the measurable Ecological Goods & Service benefits you wish to achieve or changes or benefits that result from project activities. Outcomes measure how people and the environment are impacted by your project. E.g. in the above example of a wetland restoration the outcomes are the volume of water actually held back in a runoff event, the quantity of nutrients sequestered (phosphorus etc.), and the amount of carbon sequestered.

RIPARIAN ZONES: the transition zones that are found along streams, rivers, lake shores and wetlands. These areas support unique wildlife and plant communities. Healthy riparian areas have many important functions in our watersheds (Manitoba Climate and Green Plan).

WORKING LANDSCAPES: areas where people and significant economic activities co-exist with natural lands and water. Working Landscapes have a higher immediate risk of loss than areas without significant economic activity. Working Landscapes have generally experienced significant loss of natural areas already and the future risk of loss remains significant.