



# Chesapeake WILD Grants Program

## NFWF CONTACTS

### Jake Reilly

Program Director,  
Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund  
jake.reilly@nfwf.org  
202-595-2610

### Joe Toolan

Program Manager,  
Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund  
joe.toolan@nfwf.org  
202-888-1677

### Carley Morton

Program Coordinator,  
Regional Programs  
carley.morton@nfwf.org  
202-857-0166

## FUNDING PARTNERS

- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Altria

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 6,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$8.1 billion. NFWF is an equal opportunity provider.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)



Ruffed grouse

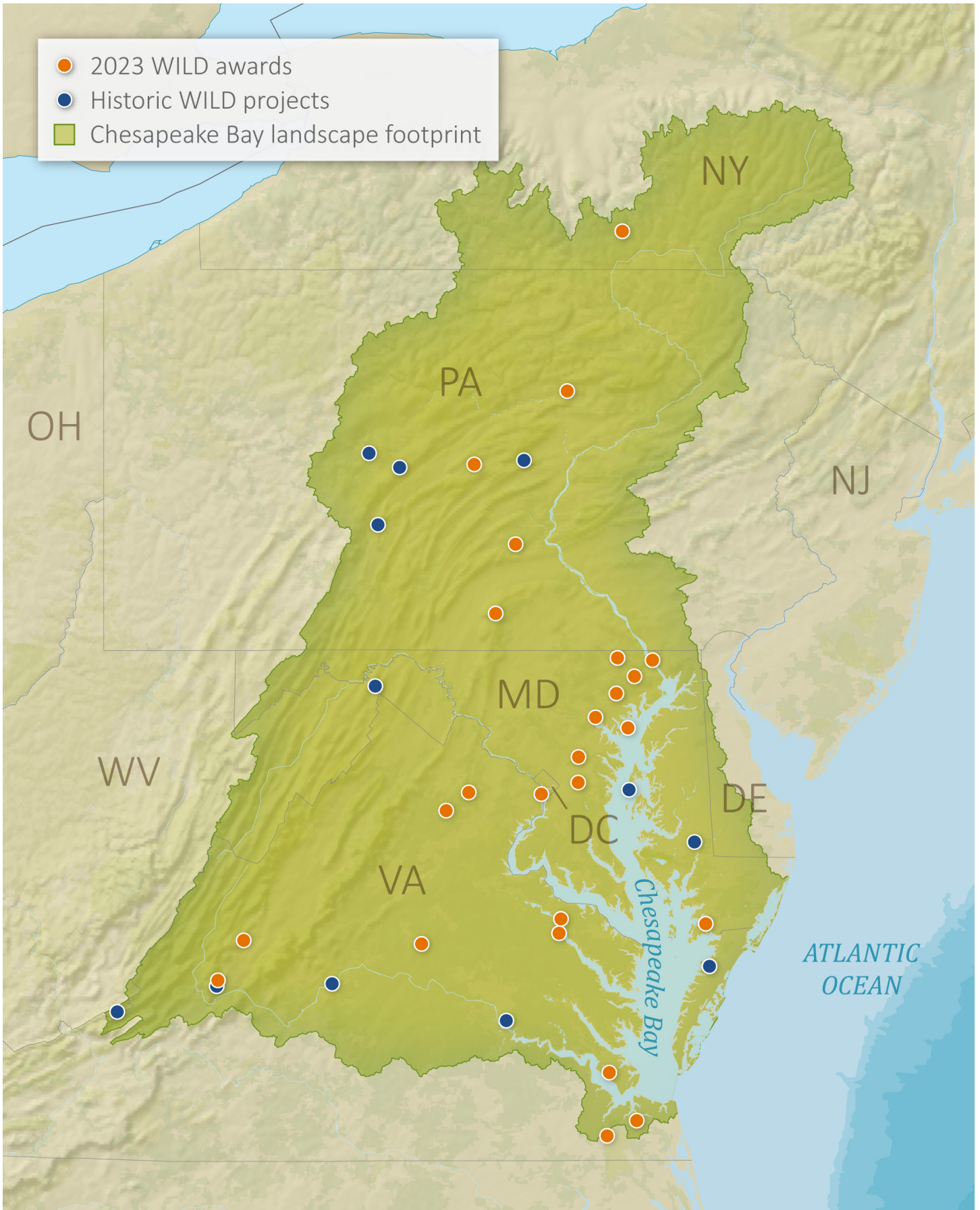
## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced a 2023 round of funding for the Chesapeake Watershed Investments to Landscape Defense (WILD) projects. Twenty-five new conservation and restoration grants totaling more than \$7.4 million were awarded. Twenty-five awards announced generated \$12 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of more than \$19.4 million.

The Chesapeake WILD program aims to accelerate direct on-the-ground conservation, stewardship, and enhancements of fish and wildlife habitats and related conservation values in the Bay watershed, while also enhancing the capacity of local and regional partners to implement future on the ground actions through community-based assessment planning, design, and other technical assistance-oriented activities.

NFWF manages the Chesapeake WILD Grants program in partnership with government agencies and private corporations and in close coordination with the Chesapeake Conservation Partnership and federal-state Chesapeake Bay Program partnership. Major funding for the Chesapeake WILD Grants program is provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

(continued)



(continued)

**MARYLAND****Collaborating with Bowie State University in Natural Resource Management Planning and Habitat Restoration (MD)**

Grantee: Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$579,600

Matching Funds: ..... \$682,000

Total Project: ..... \$1,261,600

Collaborate with partners to restore degraded habitat for imperiled species and develop a natural resources master plan for Bowie State University-owned woodlands and wetlands and Maryland Park Service-owned natural resource management areas adjacent to the university's main campus. Project will engage students through internships and entry level jobs, guided field experiences, and course integration.

**Creating an Upstream Design Plan to Promote the Passage of Anadromous Fish Species and Prevent the Spread of Invasive Fish Species (MD)**

Grantee: Maryland Department of Natural Resources

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$26,200

Total Project: ..... \$101,200

Develop a technical design document that will highlight the infrastructure needed for researching risk-based conservation strategies. Project will result in a plan that will support the upstream passage of anadromous fish species and prevent the upstream spread of invasive fish species.

**Developing a Conservation Management Plan for Wood Turtles (MD)**

Grantee: Susquehannock Wildlife Society

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$13,500

Total Project: ..... \$88,500

Use radio telemetry monitoring surveys of current wood turtle populations to better understand their habitat use



Bald eagle

and range. Project will host events to educate the public and develop a conservation management plan using collected data to highlight important habitat features and how they may be improved.

**Eden Mill Dam Eel Ladder and Aquatic Connectivity Outreach (MD)**

Grantee: Harford County

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$80,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$80,500

Total Project: ..... \$160,500

Increase American eel populations beyond the Eden Mill Dam in Deer Creek and serve as a hands-on community outreach tool to educate the public about the importance of fish passages. Project will design and install an eel ladder that will result in opening over a 110 miles of American eel habitat.

**Engaging Underserved Communities to Enhance Habitat for Imperiled Pollinator Species (MD)**

Grantee: Baltimore Green Space

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$30,600

Total Project: ..... \$105,600

Expand habitat for imperiled pollinators and gather data on bumble bees as an indicator species across 12 properties in Baltimore City. Project will engage underserved communities in this work by providing site leaders, community partners, and other stakeholders with education and technical assistance to support pollinator habitats.

**Establishing a Conservation Initiative within a High Priority Area of Wetland Habitats (MD)**

Grantee: Ducks Unlimited

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$125,000

Matching Funds: ..... \$75,000

Total Project: ..... \$200,000

Deliver three wetland restoration projects totaling at least 20 acres in coordination with multiple landowners. Project will lay the foundation for a strong, targeted conservation initiative in a high priority area that is primed for protection and restoration.

**Expanding Community Engagement and Habitat Connectivity in Baltimore (MD)**

Grantee: National Aquarium

NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$232,700

Matching Funds: ..... \$169,500

Total Project: ..... \$402,200

Partner to implement a co-creative community engagement plan focused on habitat restoration, stewardship, community science and meaningful education programming. Project will establish an 8,000-square-foot floating wetland habitat featuring a live oyster reef and pilot a network for native seed collection in support of Maryland's 5 million trees initiative.

(continued)

### **Restoring and Enhancing the Nepali American Cultural Center's Green Infrastructure (MD)**

Grantee: Nepali American Cultural Center of Baltimore  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$44,700  
 Total Project: ..... \$119,700  
 Develop a comprehensive plan that will restore and enhance the Nepali American Cultural Center's green infrastructure and resilience. Project will create designs for stormwater management facilities, underground cisterns for rainwater harvesting, reforestation, meadows, a native tree nursery and removal of impervious surfaces.

### **Utilizing Partnerships to Restore the Noonan's Run Tributary of the Little Patuxent River (MD)**

Grantee: Earth Conservation Corps  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$74,900  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$0  
 Total Project: ..... \$74,900  
 Work with partners to restore 2,500 feet of an unnamed tributary, commonly known as Noonan's Run, of the Little Patuxent River. Project will enhance habitat for several species of endangered birds, dragonflies, and freshwater mussels and also work with AmeriCorps members to provide underserved youth with hands-on experiences and pathways to pursue green careers.

## **NEW YORK**

### **Assessing Habitat and Enhancing Resiliency for Brook Floater Mussel Populations in the Susquehanna (NY)**

Grantee: The Research Foundation for SUNY on behalf of SUNY Oneonta  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$73,700  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$0  
 Total Project: ..... \$73,700  
 Address current scientific knowledge gaps and assess potential habitats needed to rebuild brook floater mussel populations. Project will develop a plan to evaluate alternative sites and conduct habitat assessments that consider stream character, substrate compositions and water quality.

## **PENNSYLVANIA**

### **Creating and Enhancing a Climate Resilient Habitat Mosaic in Upper Tributary Watersheds and Forest Systems (PA)**

Grantee: American Bird Conservancy  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$749,600  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$793,100  
 Total Project: ..... \$1,542,700  
 Improve habitat conditions within two upper tributary watersheds encompassing approximately 1,400 acres in the Michaux State Forest. Project will stabilize and build resiliency in several populations of species of highest conservation concern, including eastern brook trout, timber rattlesnake and ruffed grouse.

### **Permanently Conserving Forest Habitats and Wildlife in Centre County (PA)**

Grantee: The ClearWater Conservancy of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$155,700  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$158,900  
 Total Project: ..... \$314,600  
 Permanently conserve over 250 acres of vital forest and wildlife habitat. Project will create an updated forest management plan to enhance existing young forest habitat on the property and educate local foresters and landowners about the importance of prioritizing imperiled birds and other wildlife species.

### **Restoring Freshwater Mussel Communities in the West Branch Susquehanna River (PA)**

Grantee: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$411,500  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$566,400  
 Total Project: ..... \$977,900  
 Establish a partnership among state, academic and nonprofit entities to enhance freshwater mussel restoration efforts in the West Branch Susquehanna River. Project will prioritize the resilience and propagation of mussels within the watershed while improving aquatic habitat and water quality.

### **Utilizing Partners and Forest Management Practices to Improve Early and Late Successional Habitats Along the Kittatinny Ridge (PA)**

Grantee: Ruffed Grouse Society  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$546,500  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$611,700  
 Total Project: ..... \$1,158,200  
 Work with partners to apply forest management practices to benefit over 1,600 acres of habitat along the Kittatinny Ridge. Project will control invasive plants, enhance late-successional habitat characteristics, create early-successional habitats through regeneration harvests, and improve roads to better enable forest management and habitat restoration.

## **VIRGINIA**

### **Building Collaborative Capacity for Conservation and Public Access in the Rappahannock River (VA)**

Grantee: Friends of the Rappahannock  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$61,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$2,500  
 Total Project: ..... \$63,500  
 Build capacity for the Rappahannock River Roundtable to lead a partnership-based conservation and public access workgroup that will operate on a landscape-scale. Project will host a series of strategic planning workshops and partner meetings to establish guiding principles following a collective impact model.



Eastern box turtle

**Collaborating with Partners to Conserve and Improve Public Access to the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge (VA)**

Grantee: Friends of the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge

NFWF Subtotal:..... \$582,200  
 Matching Funds:..... \$695,000  
 Total Project: .....\$1,277,200

Collaborate with partners to restore, conserve and improve access to the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Project will execute an action plan that will conserve the refuge’s ecosystems and make it more accessible and enjoyable for the public and traditionally underserved communities.

**Creating a Model for Urban Habitat Restoration within the Elizabeth River Watershed (VA)**

Grantee: The Elizabeth River Project

NFWF Subtotal:..... \$650,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$185,000  
 Total Project: ..... \$835,000

Collaborate with over 20 partners to create a model for urban habitat restoration. Project will co-create additional habitats, reconnect habitats, improve water quality, and engage approximately 16,000 individuals from underserved communities while also improving their access, recreation and education.

**Developing Best Management Practices for Enhanced Landowner Participation in Eastern Box Turtle Conservation (VA)**

Grantee: Smithsonian Institution

NFWF Subtotal:.....\$75,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$0  
 Total Project: .....\$75,000

Develop the technical capacity needed to inform the selection of best management practices for eastern box turtle populations on private lands. Project will then work with private landowners to co-develop said practices for diffusion and adoption across a private lands conservation network.

**Establishing an Indigenous Conservation Council for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed (VA)**

Grantee: Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia

NFWF Subtotal:..... \$183,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$485,000  
 Total Project: ..... \$668,000

Establish a Chesapeake Bay watershed conservation council led by federally recognized indigenous tribes. Project will provide access to the rivers and land previously denied to this underserved population, rebuild fish and wildlife habitats, and protect cultural resources that are being lost to development and sea level rise.

(continued)



Blue crab on Chesapeake Bay, Maryland

**Improving Aquatic Recreation Access and Opportunities at Four Mile Run Park (VA)**

Grantee: Four Mile Run Conservatory Foundation  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$75,000  
 Total Project: ..... \$150,000  
 Create a public ADA-accessible kayak and canoe launch site. Project will result in the opening of 1.5 miles of Four Mile Run and provide the first such access to the Run and to the Potomac River Water Trail within the entire Washington, DC metro area.

**Introducing a Companion Mussel Species to Serve as a Biomarker for Future Brook Floater Survivability (VA)**

Grantee: Northern Virginia Regional Commission  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$55,600  
 Total Project: ..... \$130,600  
 Select and introduce a companion mussel species to serve as a biomarker for future brook floater introduction. Project will evaluate stream conditions and closely monitor the companion species' success in order to determine if the brook floater can survive in the same habitat.

**Permanently Protecting Wildlife Corridors in the Shenandoah Valley (VA)**

Grantee: Valley Conservation Council  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$749,500  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$2,620,000  
 Total Project: ..... \$3,369,500  
 Expand the permanent protection of wildlife corridors across 15 properties totaling over 2,000 acres. Project will prevent additional development in the area, require the adoption of best management practices, and lay the groundwork for future green infrastructure work that will benefit several plant and animal species in high elevation wetlands.

**Piloting an Engagement-Based Approach in Underserved Communities to Protect and Restore Tidal Marshes and Blue Crab Populations (VA)**

Grantee: Criminal Injustice Reform Network  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$75,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$0  
 Total Project: ..... \$75,000  
 Pilot an engagement-based approach to protect and restore tidal marshes and blue crab populations. Project will provide underserved communities with the education and agency needed to participate in decision-making processes directly impacting their resilience.

**Restoring Freshwater Mussel Communities and Riparian Buffers to Enhance the James River Watershed (VA)**

Grantee: James River Association  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$748,500  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$748,500  
 Total Project: ..... \$1,497,000  
 Restore freshwater mussel communities and 60 acres of riparian buffers to enhance the James River watershed. Project will establish a greater understanding of the connection between riparian buffer maturity and the condition of the associated instream habitat and its ability to support freshwater mussels.

**Reacquiring Ancestral Lands on the Rappahannock River to Restore Aquatic and Terrestrial Habitats (VA)**

Grantee: Rappahannock Tribe of Virginia  
 NFWF Subtotal: ..... \$750,000  
 Matching Funds: ..... \$2,850,000  
 Total Project: ..... \$3,600,000  
 Acquire over 700 acres of ancestral homelands along the Rappahannock River and apply the Rappahannock Tribe's traditional knowledge of sustainable stewardship. Project will enhance the purchased land by reforesting and conserving aquatic and terrestrial habitats to improve biodiversity and