



**2025-2026  
Conservation Connect  
Fellowships**

Project	Timeframe	Location
1. <a href="#">New Mexico Wood For Life Initiative: Partnership Building and Coordination for Long-Term Benefits</a>	Summer 2025 into Fall 2025	New Mexico; remote or hybrid considered
2. <a href="#">Reforestation Needs and Landscape Assessment in the Pacific Northwest</a>	May–August 2025 with flexibility into the academic year	Oregon (southern Oregon preferred), with most work conducted remotely
3. <a href="#">Urban Connections and Community and Youth Engagement in Forest Service Region 9</a>	Spring, Summer, Fall 2025	Remote; New York / New Jersey area preferred but not required
4. <a href="#">Workforce Development Roadmap in Forest Service Region 9</a>	Spring, Summer, Fall 2025	Remote; Midwestern U.S. preferred but not required
5. <a href="#">Mapping Collaborative Capacity Investments Across U.S. Forest Service Regions</a>	Flexible	Remote
6. <a href="#">Impact Evaluation and Storytelling for Collaborative Forest Stewardship</a>	Flexible	Remote
7. <a href="#">Building NFF's Capacity for Community Engagement</a>	Likely summer 2025 but flexible depending on fellow's schedule	Remote with potential for travel
8. <a href="#">Protecting Source Water and Reducing Wildfire Risk for Rural Communities: An Innovative Finance Pilot in Wyoming</a>	Spring 2025 – Fall 2025	Wyoming; preferred Laramie, Saratoga, Encampment, Cheyenne
9. <a href="#">Telling the Story: Nature-based Solutions to Improve the Resilience of the Colorado River Basin</a>	Spring 2025 – Fall 2025	Remote
10. <a href="#">Demonstrating the Impact of Stream Restoration Projects through Data Management</a>	Spring 2025 – Fall 2025	Remote
11. <a href="#">Market and Funding Assessment for Colorado River Basin Watershed Health Activities</a>	Spring 2025 – Fall 2025	Remote
12. <a href="#">Increasing Tribal Capacity and Fundraising Success in the Northern Rockies</a>	Summer 2025, with some flexibility	Remote
13. <a href="#">Assessing and Enhancing Funding Partnerships in the Southwest</a>	Summer 2025, with some flexibility	Remote; Southwestern U.S. (AZ or NM) preferred but not required
14. <a href="#">Communicating Cross-Boundary Initiatives in Montana</a>	June 2025 – April 2026	Montana preferred but remote work will be considered

# 1. New Mexico Wood for Life Initiative: Partnership Building and Coordination for Long-term Benefits

## Project Description

The primary focus of this project is supporting the expansion of Wood For Life between the Navajo, Pueblo, and Apache Indigenous Communities; Land Grant Communities; USDA Forest Service; and NFF, focused on connecting wood from restoration projects with communities in need of firewood ([more info here](#)). Through this project, the fellow will assist in establishment of new wood banks (processing and distribution centers), logistical planning for delivery and receipt of wood, coordinate the core team, coordinate with Forest Service staff on available units for fuelwood initiatives, develop outreach materials for interested participants, conduct stakeholder analyses and interviews, and develop a short report and/or map summarizing findings and any recommendations. Other stakeholder engagement opportunities exist for the fellow to work on if time allows.

## Deliverables

Short report and/or map summarizing findings and any recommendations with relevant presentations to NFF staff.

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will be proficient in Microsoft Office, have experience presenting to multiple stakeholders, informative and personal email generation, possess excellent communication skills with cultural sensitivity and attention to detail. Familiarity with GIS is a plus but not required. Familiarity with the New Mexico cultural landscape is extremely valuable.

## Project Timeframe

Summer 2025 and into Fall 2025

## Location

New Mexico (remote or hybrid considered).

## 2. Wildfire Reforestation Needs and Landscape Assessment in the Pacific Northwest

### Project Description

This two-part project would begin with the creation of a StoryMap highlighting restoration of wildfire burn scars through reforestation on the Umpqua National Forest, detailing the reforestation needs, current work, and work needed in the coming years. Some example metrics of interest will include acreage of burn scars, density of seedlings needed on example project sites, native seed collection annual availabilities, etc.

For the second part, the fellow will create a detailed summary of the Regional Reforestation Plan to highlight the reforestation needs across the National Forests in Region 6 (Pacific Northwest). It will identify what the Forests are currently doing and what their greatest needs are, to cross reference with what NFF's Reforestation Program is currently doing in the region (pointing back to the StoryMap) and nationwide, and pinpoint how NFF can provide added support through partnerships, engagement (community + storytelling), and capacity.

### Deliverables

The fellow will develop an Umpqua National Forest Reforestation StoryMap and summary of the Regional Reforestation Plan to inform targeted reforestation communications with the Forest Service Region 6 (Pacific Northwest). In conjunction with the summary, the fellow will create a bulleted list of key themes in the Plan and content for targeted communications, including but not limited to one-pagers, infographics, and case studies.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will possess excellent writing, communication, and storytelling skills for creating compelling narratives and outreach materials. Strong research and analysis skills, with attention to detail preferred. Familiarity with GIS is extremely valuable. Familiarity with the PNW/Forest Service Region 6 and the reforestation landscape, or related conservation and natural resource issues, is extremely valuable.

### Timeframe

May–August 2025 for the StoryMap, with flexibility during the academic year for final edits and the summary

### Location

Oregon (southern Oregon preferred) with most work conducted remotely. The fellow can expect up to 10% travel to in-person meetings and project sites.

## 3. Urban Connections and Community and Youth Engagement in the Forest Service Region 9

### Project Description

NFF fosters investment in our public lands, mindful that future generations will inherit the responsibility to restore, conserve, and promote opportunities that National Forests and Grasslands provide. We aim to engage and develop future leaders and public land champions for decades to come. Yet, we know engaging youth in outdoor spaces can be challenging considering the many obstacles that exist (technology, perceptions of safety, transportation, etc.). This program of work includes supporting the NFF in the USFS Eastern Region (R9) to research and identify opportunities for better connecting urban organizations and communities in the Newark, New Jersey, area with National Forests and other green spaces. NFF will then assist Urban Connections staff to engage prospective partners and stakeholders.

### Deliverables

This effort will require stakeholder research and analysis of existing organizations, agencies, etc. We will develop processes to facilitate connections among key organizations, and to understand how they are currently working with Forest Service units and programs. Deliverables may include community and partner research, report(s) of findings, partner interviews and a situation assessment, coordination of convenings, and/or outreach materials based on findings.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have experience or interest in qualitative research, including conducting structured interviews, analyzing notes, and writing summaries and reports. They will be comfortable in virtual and in-person meeting settings. The candidate must have an interest in partnership development and engagement in underrepresented communities.

### Timeframe

Spring, Summer, Fall 2025

### Location

Remote with potential for travel; New York/New Jersey area preferred but not required.

## 4. Workforce Development Roadmap in the Forest Service Eastern Region

### Project Description

NFF fosters investment in our public lands, mindful that future generations will inherit the responsibility to restore, conserve, and promote opportunities that National Forests and Grasslands provide. We aim to engage and develop future leaders and public land champions for decades to come. Yet, we know engaging youth in outdoor spaces can be challenging considering the many obstacles that exist (technology, perceptions of safety, transportation, etc.). This project includes supporting the NFF in USFS Eastern Region (R9) to research and build a tracking system to identify existing Forest Service youth engagement and/or workforce development programs as well as partner organizations who are facilitating workforce development programs, ultimately to develop communication tools, connecting programs together in a cohesive system allowing young people “next steps” on their career journeys in the outdoors in collaboration with a partner R9 National Forest. NFF will engage a selected R9 Forest to identify and map existing youth programs and activities, coordinating with partners that are currently providing experiential educational and workforce development programs, while also identifying gaps in partner connections and/or pathway experiences across cohorts and geographies.

### Deliverables

This effort will require stakeholder research and analysis of existing organizations, agencies, etc. We will develop processes to facilitate connections among key organizations and to understand how they are currently working with Forest Service units and programs. Activities may include community and partner research, report(s) of findings, partner interviews and assessment, coordination of convenings, and/or outreach materials based on findings.

Deliverables may include one or more of the following: Situation assessment, recommendations, tools, potential gap analysis, and communication materials.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have experience or interest in qualitative research, including conducting structured interviews, analyzing notes, and writing summaries and reports. They will be comfortable in virtual and in-person meeting settings. The candidate must have an interest in youth, next-generation leadership development, career pathways, and engagement in underrepresented communities.

### Timeframe

Spring, Summer, Fall 2025

### Location

Remote with potential for travel; Midwest preferred but not required.

# 5. Mapping Collaborative Capacity Investments Across U.S. Forest Service Regions

## Project Description

This fellowship position works closely with the [Collaborative Capacity Program for Forests & Communities](#) (CCP), a new program of the National Forest Foundation. The program aims to provide capacity for collaborative forest stewardship between local communities, organizations, and Tribal governments to increase progress towards on-the-ground stewardship outcomes on forests and grasslands currently managed by the USDA Forest Service. The CCP provides funding through grants, support services through advising and networking, and shared learning opportunities.

This project will focus on gathering information on funding sources and state legislation through interviews with regional leaders in the USDA Forest Service and statewide networks focused on collaborative forest stewardship. Additional research on technical assistance providers and capacity-building opportunities in specific regions will also be encouraged. The fellow will support the CCP by bringing their interest in informal qualitative research to increase understanding of investments in capacity for collaboration across the different Forest Service regions.

## Deliverables

The fellow will conduct 10-12 interviews with regional contacts within the USDA Forest Service and statewide networks and write a summary report of interview data. The fellow will also create at least one dynamic communications tool, such as a StoryMap of NFF's current and potential investments in collaborative capacity.

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have experience and interest in informal qualitative research and information gathering. The ideal candidate would possess excellent writing and communication skills. Familiarity with ArcGIS online, especially StoryMapping, is highly valuable.

## Timeframe

Flexible

## Location

Remote

## 6. Impact Evaluation and Storytelling for Collaborative Forest Stewardship

### Project Description

This fellowship position works closely with the [Collaborative Capacity Program for Forests & Communities](#) (CCP), a new program of the National Forest Foundation. The program aims to provide capacity for collaborative forest stewardship between local communities, organizations, and Tribal governments to increase progress towards on-the-ground stewardship outcomes on forests and grasslands currently managed by the USDA Forest Service. The CCP provides funding through grants, support services through advising and networking, and shared learning opportunities.

This project will focus on impact evaluation and storytelling for the CCP. The fellow will support the CCP by bringing their interest in understanding how to evaluate the impacts and outcomes of collaborative forest stewardship by researching existing frameworks and meeting with experts in the field. The goals of this project include providing CCP grantees and participants with tools for tracking their collaborative successes and communicating the stories of collaborative forest stewardship.

### Deliverables

The fellow will perform a literature review and conduct up to five informal interviews with experts on frameworks that describe the impacts of collaboration on forest stewardship outcomes using academic and practitioner-based literature. The fellow will write a summary of research results with recommendations on indicators and metrics for measuring the success of collaboration. This fellow will also co-develop a workshop session for CCP participants on how to measure the success of their collaborative efforts.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have experience and interest in informal qualitative research and information gathering. The ideal candidate would possess excellent writing and communication skills. Familiarity with evaluation and impact assessments is highly valuable.

### Timeframe

Flexible

### Location

Remote



## 7. Building NFF's Capacity for Community Engagement

### Project Description

The NFF brings people together to restore and enhance National Forests and Grasslands. As we pursue our mission, we reach out to communities, individuals, and partners to create ownership and support collective efforts that preserve and embrace these national treasures. We believe in the power of communities and collaboration to solve the hardest challenges facing our forests, and we are continually learning how to be more inclusive and effective in our engagement efforts. This fellowship will focus on building our internal library of resources for NFF staff to use in their community engagement efforts. The fellowship may include developing case studies, surveying NFF staff about their community engagement efforts and needs, collecting example project plans and group charters, or other deliverables determined with the project supervisor.

### Deliverables

Deliverables may include case studies that showcase successful community engagement in forest stewardship, a report and recommendations for capacity building within the NFF, training modules, and/or additional resources to support NFF staff in their engagement efforts.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have excellent writing and analytical skills and a strong interest in community engagement in forest stewardship. Social science research skills and/or experience with community engagement would be highly valuable.

### Timeframe

Likely summer 2025 but flexible depending on fellow's schedule

### Location

Remote with potential for travel.

## 8. Protecting Source Water and Reducing Wildfire Risk for Rural Communities: An Innovative Finance Pilot in WY

### Project Description

The NFF fellow will play a crucial role in an initiative aimed at safeguarding drinking and irrigation water sources in the Medicine Bow-Routt National Forest (MBRNF), which faces significant wildfire risks. This fellowship involves working with NFF's locally based lead coordinator to engage the city of Cheyenne, the town of Encampment, and other stakeholders in collaborative discussions about the innovative financing model using Wyoming State Revolving Fund (WSRF) Loans. The fellow will facilitate collaborative analysis on key components of an application to the State Revolving Fund that will be workshopped via community forums that bring together diverse perspectives, ensuring that disadvantaged voices, particularly from Encampment, are represented as the project explores options for up to 75% principal forgiveness on loans. By promoting inclusive decision-making and leveraging partnerships with local governments and the U.S. Forest Service, the fellow will help establish a replicable funding strategy for National Forest management. This role offers students hands-on experience in fostering collaboration, ultimately contributing to sustainable watershed protection efforts that address urgent environmental challenges.

### Deliverables

- A guide outlining the key components required for a feasibility analysis of Wyoming State Revolving Funds (WSRFs). This guide may include criteria to evaluate technical (e.g., policies, deadlines), financial (loan terms/repayment), and operational (forest management) components of SRF projects.
- A report that serves as a guide to help align interests in processes aiming to set up SRFs, including evaluation of partner roles and agreements, stakeholder engagement, and the primary challenges. This report should be useful for Forest Service partners operating in other municipalities when navigating SRF projects.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have interest and background in conservation finance strategies, and must be able to summarize data and generate reports. The candidate will have strong relationship-building skills and the ability to communicate with federal, state, and local cooperating agencies, NGOs, and the public. Candidate will also have experience with qualitative research and/or analyzing various funding mechanisms and economic models. Familiarity with Wyoming resources and policies, watershed protection, wildfire risk reduction, and National Forests is a plus.

### Timeframe

Spring 2025 – Fall 2025

### Location

Wyoming: Laramie, Saratoga, Encampment, or Cheyenne preferred. The fellow can expect up to 10% travel to in-person workshops, town council meetings, and project sites.

## 9. Telling the Story: Nature-based Solutions to Improve the Resilience of the Colorado River Basin

### Project Description

This Conservation Connect fellow will elevate NFF's internal communications strategy by highlighting key messages, identifying key audiences, and improving overall storytelling related to NFF's watershed restoration program of work. The fellow will help develop and operationalize an internal communications strategy to better engage external audiences and improve the visual and written communications about NFF's watershed health improvement projects. The fellow will be integral in scaling up overall communications and storytelling when it comes to the Watershed Program and establishing NFF as a leader in this space.

### Deliverables

Deliverables include an array of blog posts, one-pagers on watershed program projects and initiatives, infographics, videos, and case studies. The fellow will collaborate with the NFF Marketing and Communications team to develop social media posts and website design and layout for a better user experience.

### Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have excellent written and verbal communication skills; proficiency in online platforms such as ArcGIS StoryMaps, Canva, Adobe, Microsoft Office, and social media platforms; be highly organized and efficient; have a passion for natural resources and/or environmental conservation; and have experience with communications and storytelling. Experience with ArcGIS, ArcGIS Pro preferred.

### Timeframe

Spring 2025 - Fall 2025

### Location

Remote; familiarity with the Western United States where the bulk of the watershed projects are occurring (including but not limited to Colorado, Wyoming, Arizona, and New Mexico) is preferred.

# 10. Demonstrating the Impact of Stream Restoration Projects through Data Management

## Project Description

This Conservation Connect fellow will work with the Watershed Team at the NFF to formalize a Watershed Program Monitoring Framework and an associated data collection and management methodology. The fellow's work will involve integrating information from NFF's various databases, spatial analysis tool, and water metrics systems into an internal data management system and providing NFF project data to partners and collaborators' systems (for example, the Riverscapes Consortium platform). The fellow will play a critical role in helping the NFF leverage data to demonstrate the impact of NFF's watershed health and restoration projects occurring across the Colorado River Basin (CRB).

## Deliverables

Deliverables include supporting the integration of NFF's existing data processes and basic analysis of key Watershed Program data to better communicate NFF's watershed monitoring protocol and outcomes.

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have a strong background in ArcGIS, ArcPro, OpenSource, and coding; proficiency with programs such as Adobe, Microsoft Office, and Excel; be highly organized and efficient; and have a passion for natural resources and/or environmental conservation. Familiarity with the [Riverscapes Consortium and Data Exchange](#) and other watershed outcomes tracking platforms preferred but not required.

## Timeframe

Spring 2025 - Fall 2025

## Location

Remote; familiarity with the Western United States where the bulk of the watershed projects are occurring (including but not limited to Colorado, Wyoming, Arizona, and New Mexico) is preferred.

# 11. Market and Funding Assessment for Colorado River Basin Watershed Health Activities

## Project Description

The Water Market and Funding Conservation Connect Fellow will analyze NFF's opportunities for scaling funding for watershed restoration projects throughout the Colorado River Basin (CRB). Specifically, the fellow will be responsible for conducting a demand assessment for wetland mitigation credits and pay-for-performance watershed health improvement projects. In general, the fellow will help the NFF in the continued development of these two programs through studying opportunities for growth and potential funding opportunities in these spaces.

The fellow will also assist NFF by studying the uptake and future use of the [Volumetric Water Benefit Assessment \(VWB\)](#) framework and assess opportunities for use of additional water benefit frameworks in parallel to the VWB to supplement our Water Benefit Program.

Finally, the fellow will assess how and In-Lieu-Fee (ILF) public lands-based model operated by the NFF can support the needs of developers across CO western slope considering recent regulatory and legislative adjustments to relevant policies. The fellow would examine external models on public lands, their criticisms, and unique characteristics.

## Deliverables

Deliverables include findings documents, developed in coordination with multiple NFF staff across the Conservation Finance/Nature-Based Solution Team and Leadership Team, to support a strategy for wetland mitigation credit demand on the Western Slope of Colorado and a report documenting the opportunities for Nature-Based Solution/Ecosystem Service frameworks for watershed restoration projects across the CRB more broadly.

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will be familiar with wetland banking and mitigation as well as market assessments and demand studies; have strong writing and verbal communication skills; be highly organized and efficient; and have a passion for natural resources and/or environmental conservation.

## Timeframe

Spring 2025 – Fall 2025

## Location

Remote; familiarity with the Western United States where the bulk of the watershed projects are occurring (including but not limited to Colorado, Wyoming, Arizona, and New Mexico) is preferred.

# 12. Increasing Tribal Capacity and Fundraising Success in the Northern Rockies

## Project Description

The NFF's Northern Region Program is focused on three programmatic areas: reducing the risk of wildfire to communities, Tribal youth engagement, and Wood For Life (WFL), a program that connects communities in need of affordable heating sources with fuelwood from forest health thinning projects. As one of the NFF's newer program areas, the challenge we face in growing out our work and programs in the Northern Region (Montana, North Idaho, and North Dakota) is funding. The Northern Region is seeking a fellow to support our fundraising efforts in the Region, including supporting our Tribal partners' capacity for submitting funding proposals to support wood bank development. This fellow will work closely with the Northern Region Program Manager to identify and apply for funding opportunities to support work in the Northern Region and also with Tribal partners to develop and submit funding proposals to support Tribally run wood banks that supply fuelwood to elders and other vulnerable members of the Tribal community. This scope of work will include researching funding prospects and developing a fundraising strategy to support the Northern Region's growing programs.

## Deliverables

- In partnership with Tribes, develop 1-3 funding proposals to support Tribally run wood banks in the Northern Rockies.
- In partnership with the Northern Region Program Manager, develop a fundraising plan, including prospect list, for the NFF's Northern Region program.

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have excellent writing and research skills and a strong interest in development/fundraising/nonprofit work. The candidate will have experience or interest in conducting interviews and analyzing notes to create a cohesive narrative. They will be comfortable in virtual meeting settings. The candidate must have an interest in creating a fundraising strategy to support a program of work and engagement with Tribal communities. Previous experience in fundraising/development would be highly valuable.

## Timeframe

Summer timeframe is ideal although there is flexibility depending on fellow's schedule and the timing of grant opportunities that the fellow will be applying to.

## Location

Remote

# 13. Assessing and Enhancing Funding Partnerships in the Southwest

## Project Description

This fellowship will focus on enhancing collaborative fundraising and partnership strategies for conservation in the Southwest region. The fellow will work with the Southwest Conservation Partnerships Coordinator to analyze the current Southwest partner portfolio, develop innovative strategies to diversify the funder/partner base, and create storytelling and communication materials for effective fundraising. Activities may include conducting funder/project assessments and partnership mapping, facilitating local partnership meetings, and creating compelling narratives and communication materials. The project aims to prioritize a target community and develop the partnership strategy by conducting outreach, supporting key events, and developing relevant communications products. Potential deliverables include a comprehensive summary report and final presentation. Expected outcomes may include improved fundraising strategies, strengthened partnerships, networking and professional development for the fellow, and the creation of valuable resources for future fundraising for the NFF Southwest Program.

## Deliverables

- Southwest partner portfolio analysis/GIS map or StoryMap
- Report on targeted community for regional fundraising strategy
- Comprehensive summary report/presentation

## Skills Required

The ideal candidate will have a blend of skills and qualities tailored to enhancing collaborative fundraising and partnership strategies for conservation initiatives. The candidate should possess strong analytical and strategic thinking skills to effectively assess the current funder/partner portfolio. Excellent communication, writing, and storytelling abilities are important for creating compelling narratives and outreach materials. Interest in fundraising and partnership development is preferred. They will be comfortable conducting meetings both virtually and in person. Having an understanding and experience with communities and Forests in the Southwest is preferred, but not required. A passion for conservation and community engagement will be highly valued.

## Timeframe

Summer timeframe is ideal with flexibility depending on fellow's schedule

## Location

Remote; location in the Southwest (Arizona or New Mexico) is preferred but not required.

# 14. Communicating Cross-Boundary Initiatives in Montana

## Project Description

This two-part project will begin with an ArcGIS StoryMap about cross-boundary forest management in Montana. The first part of the project will involve information gathering and informal interviews to understand existing cross-boundary collaborations and partnerships and examples of innovative ways partners are accomplishing work in high-priority areas. Information will be communicated through a StoryMap or some other interactive communication tool. The second part would be an online ArcGIS dashboard displaying completed cross-boundary projects in Montana's Priority Areas for Focused Attention and other priority fireheds. This project will include compiling information from entities such as the MT Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, the USDA Forest Service, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, and others engaged in collaborative forest restoration projects.

## Deliverables

ArcGIS StoryMap communicating ongoing cross boundary coordination/partnership efforts in the Flathead; Arc GIS overview displaying recently completed cross-boundary projects.

## Skills Required

Familiarity with ArcGIS Online including StoryMaps. Excellent verbal and written communication, specifically related to storytelling. Experience and interest in informal qualitative research and information gathering. A strong interest in community engagement and forest stewardship.

## Timeframe

June 2025 - April 2026

## Location

Montana preferred but remote work will be considered.