



How to Apply for a Grant from the State Coastal Conservancy (SCC)

Questions and Answers from Grants Webinar

November 9, 2022

Q: Can we submit multiple pre-proposals or do we need to be invited to submit one by a Program Manager?

A: Multiple pre-proposals are allowed. See <http://scc.ca.gov/grants> for instructions on submitting pre-proposals.

Q: What is the Explore The Coast budget, about?

A: We received \$14m for Explore the Coast in the FY 21/22 budget. We have granted much of that funding. We have about \$2m of the \$14m remaining and will receive about \$600k per year that can go towards Explore the Coast. After 2023, without additional appropriations, we will be back at about \$600k per year for Explore the Coast.

Q: Do you fund research that is crucial for designing restoration projects?

A: We fund technical analysis needed to plan and design projects. We do not fund basic research.

Is there a matching fund % requirement for potential grantees?

A: No.

Q: Does reimbursement policy include acquisitions (needing to front the money and invoice SCC)? How does reimbursement work with land acquisitions?

A: Land acquisitions are not paid for as reimbursements. With an acquisition, Coastal Conservancy funding goes directly into escrow and has a slightly different invoicing process.

Q: The old strategic plan acknowledged working waterfronts and commercial fishing infrastructure, does the new strategic plan (Waterfront and Piers) encourage the same?

A: The new Strategic Plan includes a Piers and Waterfronts objective.

Q: Are there geographic restrictions on where wildfire resilience work can occur within California? Does it have to be in proximity to coastal areas?

A: Grants are available for work in any coastal watershed, basically anywhere the Coastal Conservancy works.

Q: Is there a cap on Indirect Costs on all grants?

A: Yes, the cap on Indirect Costs is 20% of the total grant amount.

Q: What is the grant term? How long do you have to complete project?

A: Typically project terms are 3-5 years but it will depend on the project and the fund source. You would work with the Regional Manager on this.

Q: Are in-kind services eligible costs? Are they "other fund sources"?

A: Yes in-kind services can be considered as "other fund sources".

Q: During the strategic planning work, there was an online submittal form to outline potential projects. Are those projects being considered?

A: Yes, the projects that were shared with us during the Strategic Plan development were considered in the development of our goals and objectives.

Q: When do costs start counting? Upon award of grant? Execution of grant agreement? Budget funding date?

A: Allowable costs can be invoiced to the Coastal Conservancy after execution of grant agreement and an email or letter from the Conservancy project manager stating that all conditions have been met and work can start.

Q: If a project full-proposal is selected after your 60-day review period, what is the timeline to award, grant, and fund expenditure, specifically regarding acquisitions that have time-sensitive aspects?

A: The timeline to award, grant, and fund expenditure will vary from project to project based on our board meeting schedule and prioritization of time sensitive projects. In general, this process can take from 3-6 months. For acquisitions, this timeline also depends on the complexity of the acquisition and the number of documents and agreements that we will need to review and approve. For time-sensitive

applications, we will discuss the timeline during the application review with the project applicant to determine if we will be able to make the necessary timeline.

Q: Hi, are there samples of applications that are available for review / inspiration?

A: We have just revised our application process, so do not have samples. We are not looking for great writing – we are looking for great projects that help achieve our Strategic Plan objectives.

Q: Is there a limit to documents that can be sent with the preapplication?

A: The pre-application should be a concise summary of your project that does not require Conservancy staff to look through other documents beyond maps and design drawings to understand your project. We encourage you not to send a lot of other documents as we will not necessarily read them. That said, there is no limit to the additional information that you can send with the pre-application.

Q: Can we get the contact information for the regional managers?

A:

- North Coast (Del Norte, Humboldt, Mendocino, coastal Sonoma, and coastal Marin counties): Karyn Gear – [karyn.gear \(at\) scc.ca.gov](mailto:karyn.gear@scc.ca.gov)
- San Francisco Bay Area (San Francisco, bayside Marin, bayside Sonoma, Napa, Solano, Contra Costa, Santa Clara, and bayside San Mateo counties): Moira McEnespy – [moira.mcenespy \(at\) scc.ca.gov](mailto:moira.mcenespy@scc.ca.gov)
- Central Coast (Coastal San Mateo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, San Luis Obispo, and Santa Barbara counties): Trish Chapman – [trish.chapman \(at\) scc.ca.gov](mailto:trish.chapman@scc.ca.gov)
- South Coast (Ventura, Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego counties, as well as Riverside and San Bernardino for the Santa Ana River Conservancy): Megan Cooper – [megan.cooper \(at\) scc.ca.gov](mailto:megan.cooper@scc.ca.gov)

Q: I submitted a wildfire preapplication to the email: wildfire.resilience@scc.ca.gov on 10/24 do I need to submit again?

A: No.

Q: Where can we find out information about which specific projects receive funding through the \$100M portion of the funding allocation? I'm particularly interested in finding out about the Russian River projects.

A: Here is list of specific appropriations. Please discuss any specific project ideas with the Regional Managers (Karyn Gear for Russian River):

\$10,800,000 for the Santa Monica Bay Foundation for the restoration of the Santa Monica Bay, including kelp restoration.

\$11,000,000 for San Francisco Bay wetlands support.

\$5,000,000 for the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program.

\$300,000 to the City of Encinitas for the Marine Safety Connected Coastlines.

\$5,000,000 to the Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy for open space acquisition in Rancho Palos Verdes.

\$2,500,000 to "the Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo County for the Camatta Ranch Preservation.

\$1,500,000 to the Cayucos Land Conservancy for the Toro Coast Preserve Project.

\$3,000,000 for environmental cleanup, water supply studies, and public access projects in the Eel and Russian River watersheds.

\$36,000,000 for the East Bay Regional Park District for the Point Molate open space acquisition and clean up.

\$15,000,000 to the City of Berkeley for the Marina and Pier projects.

\$5,000,000 for Phase 2 of the Maritime Museum of San Diego redevelopment project.

\$2,000,000 for the City of San Diego for the Camino de la Costa Viewpoint Coastal and Beach access projects.

Q: Do you fund post-construction vegetation management and monitoring?

A: We can potentially fund post-construction vegetation management and monitoring if it is related to project success monitoring, but the timeframe for this work can be limited due to the expiration dates associated with our funding.

Q: If you have a Conservancy explore the coast grant, are you still eligible for these?

A: Yes.

Q: Will you fund long-term monitoring and adaptive management for restoration projects that are already completed/constructed?

A: The Conservancy recognizes the need for long-term scientific monitoring and adaptive management for restoration projects, however we cannot fund long-term maintenance or monitoring projects on their own. These projects should be included in capital restoration implementation phases for funding requests and monitoring activities should relate to the confirmation of the functioning of the project

and tracking of project success criteria and primary goals. If the Conservancy has invested in the completed restoration project, discuss monitoring and adaptive management options with the Regional Manager.

Q: What is the grant performance period? Will grantee be required to maintain the property for a period of time after project completion and how will that be determined?

A: The timeline of the grant depends on the project needs and the expiration date of the funding being used. We typically require a 20-year maintenance period in the grant agreement for construction/restoration projects. Land acquisitions have additional protection language in the deed restriction in perpetuity.

Q: Are regional block grants for forest resilience part of this call or separate?

A: Wildfire resilience projects are part of the single, ongoing grant solicitation.

Q: Is there a resource for locating individuals or agencies who help very small non-profits find and obtain funding?

A: We do not know directly of any such resource but some organizations that may be able to help you include: 1) the [Social Good Fund](#) – they have been a fiscal sponsor for some of our small Explore the Coast grantees; 2) [the Center for Nonprofit Management](#) which may have helpful resources; 3) [Candid](#) – The Foundation Center – historically this organization had a database of potential funders that was open to the public, but we don't know if they still have it; 4) if your community has a community foundation, it may also have useful resources.

Q: What type of acquisitions do you do? Do you acquire property to be converted to a recreational facility?

A: We support land acquisitions that protect habitats, working lands, and/or provide public access and recreational opportunities. We also support acquisitions that involve tribes. See the Strategic Plan for more information.

Q: Do you fund purchase of land that is environmentally invaluable - but promises high profits for the land owners, so we would have to make a high offer to be considered?

A: Land acquisitions have to support at least one of the Conservancy's Strategic Plan objectives and cannot be purchased for more than Fair Market Value as determined by an appraisal that is approved by Department of General Services. Land acquisitions have many rules that need to be followed and Coastal Conservancy staff can share a checklist and advise on process if your acquisition project is being considered for funding.

Q: Can you apply for supplements for monitoring in ongoing or completed projects?

A: Yes, we can fund project success monitoring for ongoing restoration projects, though timeframes can be limited due to the expiration dates associated with our funding. If the Conservancy has invested in the completed restoration project, discuss monitoring and adaptive management options with the Regional Manager.

Q: Can we start the work early and just not ask for reimbursement for work prior to grant agreement execution?

A: This is typically okay, but please discuss the details of this with the Regional Manager.

Q: Would we invoice monthly, or by task, or just one final invoice at project completion?

A: We request invoices be sent no more frequently than monthly and no less frequently than quarterly.

Q: Can projects be phased, i.e., receive grant funding for both the planning and implementation phases of a single project?

A: Yes, we often fund multiple phases of a project, starting with planning. Each phase would be a separate grant application. The Conservancy board needs to make findings under CEQA in order to fund implementation and CEQA is usually completed as part of a planning grant.

Q: Do we need to know exactly what land we want to acquire before applying?

A: To receive a grant for an acquisition, we do need details about the land being acquired, but we can also fund planning processes that identify priority acquisitions.

Q: Would you fund public educational programs on the coast?

A: Education programs are funded under our Explore the Coast and Coastal Stories grants, which are separate programs with separate Requests for Proposals (RFPs).

Q: Can you clarify what "nature-based adaptation" refers to?

A: Nature-based adaptation projects refer to a variety of solutions that utilize the natural environment to mitigate impacts from climate change and/or sea level rise. "Natural" or "Green infrastructure" that uses existing natural areas (and engineered solutions that mimic natural processes) to minimize flooding, erosion, and runoff are included as well as "living shoreline" projects that use plants or other

natural elements – sometimes in combination with harder shoreline structures – to stabilize estuarine coasts, bays, and tributaries. These definitions come from the Conservancy’s 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.

Q: How do you envision supporting smaller community based organizations with limited resources who serve “Disadvantaged” frontline communities if this is a reimbursement grant?

A: We do (on rare occasions) allow for some advanced funds if projects meet criteria. This can be discussed with the Conservancy Regional Manager or Project Manager.

Q: Are projects on federal properties eligible (e.g. San Onofre State Beach is on federal (Navy) property)?

A: Yes.

Q: Is there a schedule for funds to be spent down? Is it a first come, first served situation? Or are funds released in a fractional way per year?

A: We will be spending the funds on projects that meet selection criteria and help achieve the Strategic Plan and goals of the funding source. Some of the funding must be encumbered in grants by June 30, 2024 and spent within two years after that, while other funding has longer expiration dates. We are working to ensure we don’t let funds expire, and anticipate all funds being granted in the next 5 years, depending on expiration dates of fund source.

Q: Could you expand on how grant approvals relate to your Conservancy Board mtgs? When are the meetings? Does that mean you'll formally approve large batches of grants based on the mtgs of the board?

A: The Conservancy board meets five times per year and considers approval of many grant awards at each board meeting. The board meeting schedule is here: <https://scc.ca.gov/public-meetings/> . It takes at least 6 months from initial pre-proposal to a staff recommendation being made to the board.

Q: Are there acquisition funds in the \$350M Climate Resilience pot, in addition to the \$50M acquisition allocation?

A: Yes, land acquisitions could be funded with the \$350m climate resilience funding. The acquisition would need to support climate resilience.

Q: Can your funding sources be used to establish a long term management endowment?

A: No.

Q: Can you fund CEQA environmental review and permitting?

A: Yes.

Q: With respect to that 20 year term that is tough to ensure with some of the living shoreline work. Any thoughts on timelines for living shorelines especially those pilot projects?

A: For most of the living shorelines projects we have funded to-date, they are at pilot scale and testing new concepts that haven't been tried in order to gather data and lessons learned that can be applied to future larger scale efforts and are low risk due to small footprint. Many of the pilot projects to date appear to be self-sustaining over the long-term even though there are species fluctuations seasonally or annually due to the ephemeral nature of species such as native oysters and eelgrass. The goal is to have these projects help reduce the impacts from sea level rise, so we are interested in living shoreline projects that incorporate lessons-learned from past projects and are scientifically-sound to help ensure they persist overtime even if there are small changes in their exact footprint or species composition. We assess and confirm whether 20 year performance is required depending on project scale and type, and if there are special circumstances, discuss those with the Conservancy Regional Manager.

Q: Is there a cap to the amount of funding that can be awarded to existing grantees? (Such as grantees whose projects are currently active and being funded by another SCC grant.)

A: No.

Q: Are scoring criteria available for pre- or full- proposals?

A: We do not score projects. We evaluate projects based on our project selection criteria, which are here: <https://scc.ca.gov/grants/project-selection-criteria-2/>

Q: Are non-nature based activities eligible, such as design and construction of a bikepath that connects to the coast?

A: Yes, planning and implementation of public access projects can be funded.

Q: Will you consider habitat gardening programs on public school properties - connecting to support of species - to help them survive - connecting our students to positive actions to help in the climate crisis?

A: We encourage organizations seeking funds for urban greening or schoolyard projects to seek funds from the California Natural Resources Agency, who have funding specifically for urban greening projects.

Q: The legislature points to SCC funding as their solution to Sea Level Rise for coastal communities. Will these grants fund coastal flood protection infrastructure to protect from Sea Level Rise communities, both of economic importance and disadvantaged communities.

A: We have about \$160m for sea level rise adaptation. \$120m of that is for nature-based sea level rise resilience and \$37.5m is to protect communities and natural resources from sea-level rise with priority given to projects that adapt public infrastructure along the coast including urban waterfronts, ports, and ecosystems.

Q: Will you fund an ongoing construction project that has a funding shortfall? Or can you only fund projects that have not started yet?

A: Yes, we will consider funding ongoing construction projects that have funding shortfalls; however, we can only fund work that occurs after execution of our grant agreement.

Q: Could you tell us a little about your priorities with regards to projects in upper watershed areas? Does the proposal need to show potential impacts on coast and ocean?

A: Our work in upper watersheds varies geographically based on our enabling legislation ([Division 21 of the Public Resources Code](#)). In the nine counties of the Bay Area, we prioritize work throughout the counties based on the priorities of [Chapter 4.5](#) of our enabling legislation for the San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program. In the Santa Ana watershed, we prioritize work throughout the watershed based on the priorities of [Chapter 4.6](#) of our enabling legislation regarding the Santa Ana River Conservancy Program. In all other watersheds, we prioritize work based on the priorities of [Chapter 5.5](#) of our enabling legislation regarding Integrated Coastal and Marine Resources Protection. Projects authorized under Chapter 5.5 must benefit ocean and coastal resources in some way. Most of the upper watershed projects that we fund benefit either anadromous fish like salmon and steelhead or downstream water quality or quantity. Projects authorized under Chapters 4.5 and 4.6 do not need to have a coastal nexus.

Q: Are projects eligible that build local/regional collaborative Stewardship capacity (planning and Implementation, Invasive species removal, habitat enhancement, restoration) on already conserved coastal lands?

A: We can support capacity building as an integral part of project planning and implementation, such as habitat restoration or public access work.

Q: If you have a Conservancy explore the coast grant, are you still eligible for these?

A: Yes.

Q: Would there be funding for purchase of land for preservation of last remaining natural area of the north Petaluma River as a nature/education Reserve when property is commercially valuable? There would also be need for money for public education and creation of paths and signage, etc.

A: Questions about specific projects are best directed to the Regional Managers. For Petaluma River, please reach out to the SF Bay Area Regional Manager, Moira McEnespy.

Q: Is the application process open now, or will there be an open date? Thanks!

A: It is open now.

Q: Would you consider funding expansion of a green house that produces native plants for restoration projects.

A: We might consider it if the greenhouse were clearly tied to one or more restoration projects. We would evaluate the project based on the benefits of the restoration work and require the restoration work to occur.

Q: Do you fund access projects for the CA Coastal Trail?

A: Yes.

Q: How are we feeling about fish passage these days? Eligible?

A: Yes, eligible.

Q: So, dates within which the rolling applications will be accepted are???

A: From now until funds are all granted.