



## Meeting Reminder: The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership will meet virtually this Thursday, January 18, 2024

**Northwest Indiana Urban Waters  
Federal Partnership Meeting  
Thursday, January 18, 2024  
9:30am-12:00pm CST**

[Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)

Meeting ID: 258 104 178 036

Passcode: QJ4Guk

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

Or call in (audio only)

773-352-2023

Phone Conference ID: 413 740 598#



### Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Introductions
3. "Overview of Grant Databases, Technical Assistance Resources and Funding Opportunities," [Diana Toledo, River Network](#)
4. Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership Work Plan Working Session: 2023 Accomplishments and 2024 Goals
5. Partner Updates & Announcements

Questions? Please reach out to [Victoria Wittig](#),  
the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership Ambassador.

[View the Urban Waters Federal Partnership Grant Database](#)

[View the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership Work Plan:  
2022 Accomplishments and 2023 Goals](#)

### Save the Dates for all four of the 2024 NWI UWFP Meetings

Thursday, January 18, 9:30-12:00pm CST

Thursday, April 18, 9:30-11:30am CDT

Thursday, July 18, 9:30-11:30am CDT

Thursday, October 17, 9:30-11:30am CST

# Sustain Our Great Lakes Application Now Open

## [The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation](#)

(NFWF) recently released the 2024 Sustain Our Great Lakes (SOGL) Request for Proposals (RFP). 2024 SOGL funding priorities include:

- Restore and enhance stream and riparian habitat
- Restore and enhance coastal wetland habitat
- Expand green stormwater infrastructure in Great Lakes communities
- Maintain and enhance benefits of habitat restoration through invasive species control
- Restore and preserve natural areas and biodiversity in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan watershed
- Accelerate implementation of conservation practices and regenerative agriculture on working lands

Pre-proposals are due by Friday, February 16, 2024 and Full Proposals are due by Thursday, April 18, 2024.



Above Image Caption: Lesser Yellowlegs shorebird image shared on the NFWF's SOGL homepage.

[View SOGL RFP](#)

[View SOGL Summary and Program Information](#)

[Register for the SOGL Applicant Webinar](#)

## "Conservation Action Planning in the Calumet Region" Report Receives "George B. Rabb Force of Nature" Award from the Chicago Wilderness Alliance (CWA)

Conservation partners from Indiana and Illinois have laid out a collaborative approach for protecting nature in the Calumet region. Ten organizations, together called the Calumet Land Conservation Partnership (CLCP), have produced a series of coordinated Conservation Action Plans to identify conservation targets, threats, and strategies to meet emerging opportunities across the bi-state region. Partners are Save the Dunes, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, National Parks Conservation Association, Audubon Great Lakes, Openlands, Metropolitan Planning Council, The Wetlands Initiative, The Field Museum, and the Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Federal Partnership.

Congratulations to the many partners involved in this extensive report!



Above Image Caption: "Congratulations 2023 Awardees of the George R. Rabb Force of Nature Awards" banner image from the CWA website.

[View the Conservation Action Planning in the Calumet Region Report](#)

[Register to Attend the CWA Celebration of Conservation](#)

# Funding Opportunities

*The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership may be able to provide assistance to advance your initiatives by exploring grant opportunities, building partnerships, and helping you develop competitive proposals. Email [Victoria Wittig](mailto:Victoria.Wittig) to discuss your projects and ways we can help.*

## **NFWF Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program**

NFWF is soliciting proposals through the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program. This program seeks to develop nationwide community stewardship of local natural resources. Projects should seek to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development. Approximately \$2 million is available. To learn more about how to apply, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due January 31, 2024**

## **Department of the Interior WaterSMART Small-Scale Water Efficiency Projects for FY24 and FY25**

This opportunity provides funding for small-scale on-the-ground projects that seek to conserve, better manage or otherwise make more efficient the use of water supplies. It is open to States, Indian Tribes, irrigation districts, water districts and other organizations with water or power delivery authority to leverage their money and resources. The award ceiling is \$100,000. To learn more about this funding opportunity, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due January 16, 2024**

## **Department of Health & Human Services (HHS) Environmental Justice Community Innovator Challenge**

HHS is creating a national competition to identify innovative and effective approaches to enhance community-driven efforts to address the health consequences of communities burdened by environmental and climate change-related hazards. Desired outcomes include the development of community-driven strategies and application of data-driven tools to advance health equity and address environmental hazards including those related to climate change, and the cumulative impacts of environmental and other stressors. Participants will have access to a technical assistance opportunity in each phase of the Challenge. Total cash prizes equal \$1 million. To learn more about the Challenge and apply, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due January 30, 2024**

## **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Great Lakes Bay Watershed Education and Training (B-WET) Program**

Every year, the NOAA B-WET program supports environmental education programs for thousands of students and teachers. These programs engage youth in meaningful watershed educational experiences (MWEEs) that provide memorable hands-on, experiential learning that are not typically available within traditional classrooms. The MWEE educational framework can directly foster climate knowledge, skills and competencies to address climate change, climate impacts and the opportunities to contribute to climate solutions in their own communities. Eligible applicants, including nonprofits, can be awarded up to \$150,000. To learn more and apply, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due February 29, 2024**

## **USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry 2024 Challenge Cost Share Grant Program**

The USDA Forest Service Urban & Community Forestry Program is the only dedicated urban forest program in the federal government. It is a technical, financial and educational assistance program. The program works in partnership to restore, sustain and manage more than 140 million acres of urban and community forest lands for the benefit of communities in the United States. Through the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), the Forest Service is seeking proposals to address the National Ten Year Urban and

Community Forestry Action Plan (2016-2026). To view the Ten Year Urban and Community Forestry Action Plan and NOFO, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due February 29, 2024**

**Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Mitigation Assistance Grant Program** Each year, FEMA publishes a funding opportunity for the Flood Mitigation Assistance grant program. Awards made under this funding opportunity will be funded, in whole or in part, with funds appropriated by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The funding priorities for this application cycle are Capacity and Capability Building Activities, Localized Flood Risk Reduction Projects and Individual Flood Mitigation Projects. To learn more about eligibility and apply, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due February 29, 2024**

**FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructures and Communities (BRIC) Grant Program** The BRIC grant program makes federal funds available to states, U.S. territories, federally recognized Tribal governments and local governments for hazard mitigation activities. It does so with a recognition of the growing hazards associated with climate change and of the need for natural hazard risk mitigation activities that promote climate adaptation and resilience with respect to those hazards. These include both acute extreme weather events and chronic stressors which have been observed and are expected to increase in intensity and frequency in the future. For FY23, FEMA will distribute up to \$1 billion for the BRIC program. To learn more about BRIC, click [here](#).

**\*Applications due February 29, 2024**

### **NFWF America the Beautiful Challenge (ATBC)**

NFWF ATBC grants support projects that conserve, restore and connect habitats for wildlife while improving community resilience and access to nature. These projects will enable states, Tribal Nations, U.S. territories, nonprofits, academic institutions, and other grantees to develop and implement multijurisdictional, high-priority restoration projects on both public and private lands. Read more about how to apply [here](#).

**\*Pre-proposals due April 20, 2024**

### **USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants**

The USDA Emergency Community Water Assistance Grants program supports eligible communities prepare, or recover from, an emergency that threatens the availability of safe, reliable drinking water. Eligible applicants must show a decline in quantity or quality of water that occurred within two years of the date of the application or that a significant decline in quality or quantity of water is imminent. The award range is \$150,000-\$1 million. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

**\*Rolling application window open**

### **USDA Water & Wastewater Disposal Predevelopment Planning Grants**

The USDA Water & Wastewater Disposal Predevelopment Planning Grants program helps eligible low-income communities plan and develop applications for proposed USDA Rural Development water or waste disposal projects. Partnerships with other federal, state and local entities are encouraged, and grants are awarded only when the applicant cannot afford to borrow the needed funds. The award ceiling is \$30,000. To learn how to apply, click [here](#).

**\*Rolling application window open**

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## **Partner Resources**

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### **Spotted Lantern Fly Alert**

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources has issued an alert regarding recent Spotted Lantern Fly observations in NWI. Please review the resources provided [here](#) to learn more about this invasive insect including how to report sightings.

### **Environmental Protection Network (EPN) 6-Step Application Process for EPA's Community Change Grant**

To help applicants submit applications for EPA's Environmental and Climate Justice

Community Change Grants, EPN has created a suggested 6-step application process for Track I and Track II, including a suggested timeline. To view the suggested processes, click [here](#).

### **EPN Community Change Grants Program Partner and Assistance Survey**

EPN created a survey which organizations can use to find partners and share information about the EPA Community Change Grants, including whether they can give or would like assistance completing the application. This survey is NOT an EPA survey and EPA did not assist with its development. To complete the survey or view responses, click [here](#).

### **EPA Water Reuse Information Library**

EPA's Water Reuse Information Library is an interactive library designed to help water reuse practitioners access relevant and important resources, including reports and publications, fact sheets, webinar recordings and webpages. The library primarily features outputs from National Water Reuse Action Plan activities. To access the library, click [here](#).

### **EPA Fireside Chats**

EPA hosted special guests for inspiring conversations about environmental and climate justice issues and opportunities for communities to confront and overcome pollution and climate change challenges. Each Fireside Chat discusses how the Inflation Reduction Act and other new Investing in America programs can fund solutions to address today's pressing environmental issues. EPA hopes these chats help cultivate ideas to explore these funding and technical assistance opportunities. To view the chats, click [here](#).

### **Tree Vitalize Common Tree Species, Planting Initiatives, and Diversity Analysis**

Tree Vitalize analyzed over 5 million urban trees in 63 cities. The top 10 and 50 most frequently observed trees were identified for each city, as were local tree-planting initiatives aimed at increasing canopy cover. To view the analysis, click [here](#).

### **White House Fifth National Climate Assessment**

The Fifth National Climate Assessment is the government's preeminent report on climate change impacts, risks and responses. It is a congressionally mandated interagency effort that provides the scientific foundation to support informed decision-making across the United States. To view the report, click [here](#).

### **USDA Forest Service Webinar: Growing Next Generation Scientists and Advocates for Nature in Cities**

Forest Service scientists and educators, along with local practitioners and youth corps members shared how the "moss method" in Seattle's Duwamish Valley has advanced community priorities. The engagement of community leaders—both adults and youth—in data collection, analysis and communications has supported mutual-learning opportunities and resulted in urban planting, restoration and advocacy for more trees and green space as a public health solution. To view the webinar, click [here](#).

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*The Northwest Indiana Urban Waters Partnership focuses on the Lake Michigan watershed in Lake, Porter and LaPorte Counties, Indiana.*

*Urban Waters works to connect urban communities, particularly those that are overburdened or economically distressed, with their waterways by improving coordination among federal agencies and state and local partners. The goals are to improve the Nation's water systems and to promote their economic, environmental and social benefits.*

NWI Urban Waters | Northwest Indiana, Lake, Porter, & LaPorte Counties, IN 46360

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