

Chesapeake Watershed Investments for Landscape Defense (WILD) Program

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Friends came together
Conservation inspires us
Now the work begins

Haiku credit: Mike Slattery





Improve the functionality and connectivity of habitat for imperiled and listed fish and wildlife



Improve water health to benefit both human and fish and wildlife communities



Enhance climate resilience and readiness in natural and human communities using nature-based solutions



Equitably connect people with nature to improve wellbeing and grow support for restoration and conservation actions and funding



Build capacity to access funding and implement coordinated restoration and conservation activities; emphasis on underserved partners and communities

WILD Grant Cycles (FY22 & FY23)



In 2 years, ~\$28M
invested!

- 2022: **awarded \$3.5M to 12 projects**
 - **total conservation impact of nearly \$8M** (>\$4M match)
- 2023: **awarded \$7.7M to 25 projects**
 - **total conservation impact of nearly \$20M** (>\$12M match)

FY23 WILD Grant Impact: Ecological

- Excellent coverage of grant pillars (WILD goals)
 - Imperiled & Listed spp...turtles, mussels, fish, birds, butterflies...
 - Science and data gaps
 - Actions led by Indigenous and people of color
 - Cross-jurisdictional management & capacity-building



FY23 WILD Grant Impact: Ecological



- Permanently protect forest, wetland, pollinator, and marsh habitat: **>4,700ac**
- Restore riparian forest and wetland habitat: **>32mi**
- Improve river and trail recreational access: **>31mi**
- Aquatic connectivity/river opened for migratory species: **>120mi**
- **Nature-based solutions** for stormwater & erosion management



FY22 Aquatic/Diadromous Funded Projects

- Create a **Mussel Richness Map for Virginia** and a Conservation Buffer Layer that will prioritize buffer placement to best enhance mussel habitat (VA).
- Create a **James River Basin Freshwater Mussel Restoration Plan** that will serve as an important tool for state government departments, federal agencies, nonprofits, and funders in mussel restoration efforts in the James River (VA).
- **Preserve and restore one of two remaining populations of the endangered James spiny mussel.** Project will **permanently protect a 40 acre tract** critical to the resident James spiny mussel population (WV).
- **Permanently protect 1,000 acres of critical habitat** for Eastern brook trout, freshwater mussels, several federally endangered species, and 60 other species of greatest conservation need (WV).
- Complete **aquatic organism passage projects** on PA state game lands to benefit brook trout and other important and at-risk aquatic species. Project will result in **20 additional miles of accessible stream habitat** through assessment and design, implementation, and monitoring of culvert replacement projects (PA).

Imperiled Species: Aquatic/stream habitat and adjacent riparian floodplain



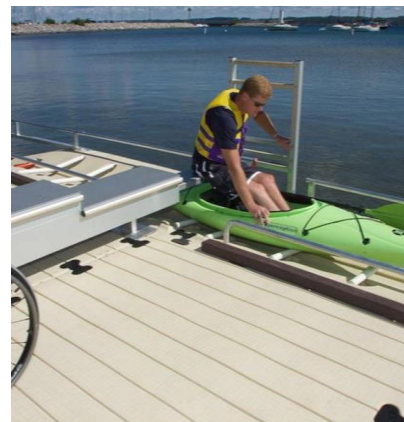
- Chesapeake logperch (*Percina bimaculata*) – RSGCN high, 100% NEAFWA endemic
- River herring (diadromous fishes):
 - American shad (*Alosa sapidissima*) – RSGCN high, cultural values, keystone spp
 - alewife (*Alosa pseudoharengus*) – RSGCN high, highly imperiled, migratory spp., cultural values, keystone spp
 - blueback herring (*Alosa aestivalis*) – RSGCN moderate
- brook trout (wild pop) (*Salvelinus fontinalis*) – RSGCN watchlist, climate vulnerable
- American eel (*Anguilla rostrata*) – RSGCN high, core pop, highly imperiled, climate vulnerable
- yellow lampmussel (*Lampsilis cariosa*) – RSGCN high
- Eastern lampmussel (*L. radiata*) - ?? no info
- brook floater (*Alasmidonta varicosa*) – RSGCN very high, Federal threatened status
- green floater (*Lasmigona subviridis*) – RSGCN very high
- James spiny mussel (*Parvaspina collina*) – RSGCN very high
- American black duck (*Anas rubripes*) – RSGCN high, cultural values
- American woodcock (*Scolopax minor*) – RSGCN moderate

All reported data subject to change

FY23 WILD Grant Impact: Connecting People with Nature



- **Restore cultural connections with living resources**
- **Equitable access**
- **Community led and managed greenspaces and pollinator habitat**
- **Faith-based and injustice-led conservation actions**





FY23 WILD Grant Investments in Underserved Communities

- **83% of WILD proposals** are doing conservation work in places with **more diversity, higher poverty and unemployment, and lower household income**, than the national average!
 - **65% of WILD proposals** work in a **highly underserved community**
- **89% of FY23 WILD funds** will be invested in conservation actions in **underserved communities!**

Chesapeake WILD FY24 RFP



- **FY24 RFP release** (late Jan/early Feb)
- **Applicant Webinar** (TBD)
- **FieldDoc Webinar** (TBD)
- **Proposal Due Date** (~mid-Apr)
- **Proposal Review Period** (Apr – Aug)
- **Awards Announced** (~Sept)

➤ **Proposal Technical Assistance**

- **WILD Proposal Labs (Feb – Apr)**
- **Webinars (TBD)**
- **NFWF Field Liaisons (year-round)**
- **One-on-one meetings (year-round)**





Questions?