

Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Trust
Protection and/or Restoration of Wetlands and Habitats in Great Salt Lake's
Surrounding Ecosystem to Benefit the Hydrology of Great Salt Lake
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **What type of projects will be considered for funding?** To be eligible, projects must be within the surrounding Great Salt Lake ecosystem. This includes projects in the general vicinity of Great Salt Lake (defined as being within seven (7) miles distance from the meander line of Great Salt Lake). Projects that are located outside this general vicinity are eligible if the project applicant can adequately demonstrate benefit(s) to the hydrology of Great Salt Lake. Eligible project types include:
 - (1) Wetland protection: Refers to upland and wetland conservation easements or land protection¹ that prevent the further degradation or disappearance of any existing variety of wetlands, and which benefits the hydrology of Great Salt Lake.
 - (2) Wetland restoration: Refers to activities that improve, restore, or establish the hydrological and ecological function of wetlands and connected habitats. Activities can include those that restore the hydrological connectivity between wetland habitats and Great Salt Lake or otherwise facilitate water flows into wetlands and Great Salt Lake².

Wetlands protection and/or restoration projects may include Projects that combine both protection and restoration and can involve infrastructure components including water control and management structures. For this Protection and/or Restoration of Wetlands funding, the infrastructure components should address improvements to the ecological or hydrological function of wetlands and Great Salt Lake and/or improving or establishing water distribution to the wetlands and Great Salt Lake.

2. **Are wetlands mitigation or scientific research projects eligible for funding?** Wetlands projects being undertaken for legally or regulatorily-required wetland mitigation will not be considered eligible for consideration unless the Applicant can show that the project goes well beyond required mitigation or mitigation credit banking.

Projects designed **solely** for the purpose of research or scientific investigation **are not** eligible under this funding opportunity.

3. **Why is it necessary that a project benefits the hydrology of Great Salt Lake?** The legislation setting up the Great Salt Lake Watershed Enhancement Program, Utah Code Title 65, Chapter 16 ("Act"), provides that **no less than 25% (or \$10 million) of the funding will be used "to protect and restore wetlands and habitats in the Great Salt Lake's surrounding ecosystem to benefit the hydrology of the Great Salt Lake."** Applicants must show how a project benefits the lake's hydrology.
4. **Why are eligible projects generally limited to within seven (7) miles of the meander line of Great Salt Lake?** Given the focus on projects to "protect and restore wetlands and habitats in the Great Salt Lake's surrounding ecosystem to benefit they hydrology of the Great Salt Lake," proximity to the

¹ Potentially, this could include acquisition.

² Potentially, this could include water infrastructure activities.

lake and its associated habitats is more likely to be directly associated to the hydrology of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem.

- 5. If a project lies outside the 7-mile buffer zone around Great Salt Lake’s meander line, could it still be considered?** Projects that are located outside this general vicinity are eligible if the project applicant can adequately demonstrate benefit(s) to the hydrology of Great Salt Lake.

- 6. Who is eligible to apply for funding?** Categories of eligible entities that may apply for the Protection and/or Restoration of Wetlands funding include:
 - (1) *Public/Governmental* - State of Utah agencies, Tribal governments, local governments (e.g., municipal, county, or other political subdivisions of the state) or federal agencies.
 - (2) *Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)* – Non-profit organizations registered as Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
 - (3) *Private landowners, private entities, or institutions of higher education (whether governmental or private)* – Only eligible if working in partnership with a public/governmental entity or a non-governmental organization (i.e., category 1 or 2 above), and if the public/governmental entity or non-governmental organization serves as the lead project applicant.

- 7. Can a project include multiple partners?** Yes, projects may have multiple partners, but one eligible entity must take on the responsibility of the project applicant.

- 8. Is there a cap on how much funding any particular project may receive?** For the entire program (multiple projects), GSLWET will consider awarding up to \$10 million; however, that is dependent on the number and quality of applications received. The amount awarded under the program for 2023 may be less than \$10 million. There is no specific cap per project or application; however, not all applications will receive funding and some applications may only receive partial funding.

- 9. Can an organization submit more than one project application?** Yes.

- 10. Can a project applicant request the full \$10 million of funding?** While there is no prohibition on an applicant requesting \$10 million in funding, GSLWET wants to ensure a variety of quality projects, and will prioritize award funding for up to two (2) years of project activities. Not all applications will receive funding and some applications may only be awarded partial funding.

- 11. When do I need to submit my project application?** The application period will open on Tuesday, July 19, 2023, and will close at midnight Mountain Daylight Savings Time on Friday, September 15, 2023.

- 12. How do I submit a project application?** Go to <https://www.gslwatertrust.org/wetland-grants> and click on “Register”. This will redirect you to a registration form (managed by Survey Monkey) where you can select the form: **Funding Application**. Once you have registered you will receive instructions for submitting an application via a specific online form (managed on Survey Monkey), a budget template (Excel), and a Conflict of Interest form. Please allow for at least one (1) full business day to

receive your link and additional instructions. Note: there is no requirement to submit an application if you register but later decide not to submit an application. Once you begin your online application form, you may save it and return to it at any time.

- 13. When will I know if my project is going to be funded?** Successful project applicants will be notified by GSLWET after final determinations are made. We anticipate that this will be sometime during the week beginning November 6, 2023.
- 14. Who will be reviewing the project applications?** GSLWET has established a Technical Review Committee (TRC), comprised of experts from disciplines relevant to the application requirements, such as wetlands habitats, water quality, wetlands management, invasive species, and communities. The TRC will review and score applications and provide recommendations to a sub-committee of the GSLWET Advisory Council. The sub-committee will make recommendations to the full GSLWET Advisory Council for final decisions.
- 15. Is a match required for this funding opportunity?** Yes, there is a requirement to provide a minimum of 25% match relative to the total funding request from GSLWET (see Project Budget template). Match can be in-kind or monetary contributions that support the project. Projects that provide match greater than the required minimum will be scored higher.
- 16. Will a project score higher if a higher ratio of match is provided for the project?** Depending on the details, it is likely that a higher ratio of match will be scored higher. Having a clear project budget including matching funds is worth up to 10% of the overall score for a project (see Exhibit B).
- 17. What are the reporting requirements for this funding opportunity?** Successful applicants will be required to submit annual reports annually and a project completion report that includes a summary of project activities, a financial summary, and a description of progress relative to indicators of success (see Exhibit A, Evaluation Plan). GSLWET may provide successful applicants with a reporting template for annual and completion reports. Successful applicants will also be required to submit brief progress reports and budget information when submitting requests for reimbursement. Applicants are also expected to present an evaluation plan as described in Exhibit A.
- 18. What is an Evaluation Plan?** This is a required component of the application and is a plan to evaluate the project's claimed or proposed hydrologic and ecosystem benefits. Please select one or more indicators of success for hydrologic benefits and one or more indicators of success for ecosystem benefits and describe how selected indicators will be measured within the 2-year project timeframe. Projects will be required to describe progress in meeting these indicators in annual reports and the final completion report. (Refer to Exhibit A for more details on Evaluation Plan.)
- 19. What is an indicator and how is an indicator determined?** A project applicant is required to identify at least two indicators to measure project performance. At least one indicator is required for the application component for "Hydrologic Benefit to Great Salt Lake," and at least one indicator is

required for the application component for “Ecosystem and Wildlife Benefits.” The project applicant is given the responsibility to identify and propose what indicators should be for a particular project and explain how the selected indicators will be measured and evaluated to determine project outcomes.

- 20. What happens if the indicators are not meaningful or will be inadequate to judge a project’s performance?** Failure to include meaningful or adequate indicators may result in a lower or no score for this requirement. If the project otherwise scores well, it is possible that the application reviewers may suggest other potential indicators for consideration to achieve an overall favorable recommendation. If that were the case, additional indicators might be a point of discussion during contractual negotiations.
- 21. Does proposing additional indicators result in a higher score?** The importance of indicators is how well they can be measured and how they can help determine whether a project will meet its claimed benefits. If additional indicators are proposed because they will help provide meaningful information, that may factor in the scoring relative to how well the indicators can show project success. Including additional indicators just for the sake of having more indicators does not necessarily translate into a higher score.
- 22. Must I use the Budget Template provided for by GSLWET?** Yes, applicants are required to submit a budget using the template provided. The budget template is designed to help you efficiently create a budget and incorporate criteria for match and overhead. Using the budget template allows GSLWET to more easily compare project budgets across applications.
- 23. Can we include the cost of permitting and compliance in our budget request and where do we enter this information?** Permitting costs required to complete the project are allowable under “Travel and Other Direct Expenses.”
- 24. Why is there more than one level of allowable rates of overhead?** Different overhead rates are allowed for different types of expenditures in order to align with requirements in the agreements establishing GSLWET. We recognize that questions may come up about what types of costs fit within each category. The different rates are explained in the Project Guidelines sheet of the Budget Template, which applicants will receive after registering. The guidelines also will be discussed at the webinar to be held on August 10, 2023 (see below).
- 25. If the allowable overhead rates are lower than our organization’s overhead rate, may I count the difference as match?** Yes, if an applicant foregoes some or all its normal overhead, the foregone overhead may be applied to match. However, an applicant’s overhead rates in excess of the allowable overhead rates under this grant may be applied toward match contributions if applicant provides documentation of a government negotiated overhead rate.
- 26. If my project is selected, will funding be provided upon signing an agreement with GSLWET?** No, funding will be provided to the project applicant via reimbursement requests. The project applicant

will be required to submit a brief progress report and budget information, including information on expenditures, when submitting a request for reimbursement. Typically, GSLWET will not make upfront payments.

- 27. Will there be future funding opportunities for wetlands protection and/or restoration projects with GSLWET?** Future funding opportunities will depend on whether the full \$10 million in funding is committed in this 2023 funding period and whether additional funding becomes available in the future.
- 28. If there are multiple projects on the same water delivery system (e.g. multiple large control structures), do they have to be submitted as different proposals or can they be combined?** Multiple projects can be included in the same application, but the program will prioritize project award funding for up to two (2) years of project activities.
- 29. What is the purpose of the required Tribal site visit prior to project groundbreaking?** The Nature Conservancy and National Audubon Society met with some tribes at the beginning of 2023 and they specifically requested that they be consulted in any instances where there may be land disturbance. The applicant must include a commitment to work with GSLWET to participate in a coordinated approach to Tribal engagement, which could include an opportunity for a site visit prior to groundbreaking or site restoration work.
- 30. How will recusals be handled by the Technical Review Committee?** If a project applicant has a relationship or conflict of interest with an agency, organization, or person represented in the Technical Review Committee, that member of the committee will not participate in scoring or recommendations on the project where the conflict of interest exists.
- 31. Does the match funding need to be secured prior to submission of the application?** The match funding does not need to be secured before application submission. However, the project should meet its minimum 25% match by the conclusion of the project. Scoring of prospective (unsecured) match funding will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and weighted accordingly.
- 32. Can match be counted on a funding source that was expended prior to the application?** Match contributions (see Project Template Budget Guidelines) may be determined and accounted for from the date of the announcement of the funding opportunity. **However, match contributions cannot include costs incurred in preparing and submitting the Project Application.**
- 33. Can match secured prior to the application and/or will continue after the proposed project is completed be counted?** Match contributions secured before or after the funding announcement date (July 19, 2023) or that will continue after the project completion can be counted if related to the purpose of the project.

- 34. Are insect pollinators considered wildlife?** Yes, all wildlife species (including insects) will be considered in the ecosystem benefits section, particularly if they are sensitive species or species of concern.
- 35. Can monitoring costs be included in project costs?** Yes. Monitoring costs can be included in any of the appropriate categories (personnel, contractors, or other direct expenses).
- 36. Will project costs incurred before the award is announced and contracted be eligible for reimbursement?** Pre-award costs are costs incurred between the announcement of this funding opportunity (July 19, 2023) and the date of the contract, where such costs are necessary for efficient and timely performance of the project work. These costs are allowable under the project budget only to the extent they would have been allowable if incurred after the date of the contract. Potentially allowable costs are non-staff time associated with planning the project such as engineering and design, environmental and cultural studies, and permitting. Any and all costs associated with preparing the Project Application are not allowable. If the project is selected, and any pre-award costs are included in the project budget, GSLWET staff will determine whether they are allowable.
- Note: costs incurred in the performance of the project prior to the grant award are at the applicant's own risk. There is no guarantee the applicant will receive an award or that the costs will be allowable.**
- 37. What if I have additional questions?** Please email GSLWET@audubon.org. Additionally, a webinar will be held on Thursday, August 10, 2023. A webinar registration link will be posted on the GSLWET website (<https://www.gslwatertrust.org/>).

Submissions for Indications of Interest

- 1. What is an indication of interest?** In addition to applications for Protection and/or Restoration of Wetlands projects, GSLWET is seeking high-level **indications of interest** for projects that may not be at a stage to support a **funding application**.
- 2. What is the purpose of submitting an indication of interest?** Submissions for indications of interest submissions will help inform future funding needs for wetlands protection or restoration that benefit the hydrology of Great Salt Lake.
- 3. Who can submit an indication of interest?** The same eligible entities that can apply for funding – See above.
- 4. How do I submit an indication of interest?** Concepts for projects that are not at a stage that would support a funding application at this time may be shared with the GSLWET by submitting the form: **Indication of Interest in Future Funding**. To access this form, go to <https://www.gslwatertrust.org/wetland-grants> and click on “Register”. Once you have registered you will receive instructions for submitting an indication of interest via a specific online form.