



Environmental Fund of Texas Priorities:

Environmental Fund of Texas (EFT) prioritizes on-the-ground conservation efforts for water, natural areas, and native wildlife—and projects that engage the public in direct, hands-on learning and action.

Water

We support projects aimed at protecting natural water sources—including rivers, lakes, aquifers, springs, estuaries, and wetlands—as well as their supporting watersheds.

Examples of previously approved projects:

- Native vegetation restoration in freshwater habitats, along riparian corridors, and in our bays and estuaries.
- Creation of rain gardens and water conservation demonstration sites in visible areas that aim to reduce water consumption, provide habitat for wildlife and native plants, and educate the public on the value of green infrastructure.
- Volunteer oyster gardening and reef monitoring project.
- Landowner engagement focused on protection and sustainable management of groundwater resources.



Natural Areas

We support the protection, restoration, and stewardship of ecologically functional natural areas.

Examples of previously approved projects:

- Protection and restoration of imperiled and native ecosystems and habitats (e.g. Blackland Prairie, Coastal estuaries, Post Oak Savannah).
- Removal or reduction of invasive and/or non-native species in conjunction with replanting of native species and continued land/habitat management (e.g. brush removal, prescribed fire).
- Outreach and technical guidance projects to promote land stewardship and restoration for the benefit of the environment and biodiversity.
- Collaboration with local landowners and communities to develop compatible use plans and a common vision for natural and cultural landscapes.



Native Wildlife

We support projects which focus on protecting and sustaining native, at-risk wildlife.

Examples of previously approved projects:

- Implementation of direct actions to help at-risk species and their habitats in Texas (e.g. habitat restoration, threat removal, communications for behavior change or actions needed).
- Strategic engagement of local communities/audiences in the conservation of threatened and endangered species in Texas.
- Technical guidance and resource projects for local landowners to conserve at-risk wildlife.
- Monitoring of threatened or imperiled wildlife species for the purpose of land use planning that facilitates improved habitat quality/connectivity and that demonstrate a direct link to conservation action.



Environmental Education and Public Engagement

We support projects that forge connections with the natural world, and projects that increase public action for current conservation issues. We prioritize projects that include interactive and hands-on experiences in nature and have strong evaluation components.

Examples of previously approved projects:

- Engaging students/community partners in the creation of a school pocket prairie/native gardens used in hands-on learning.
- Field trip to a local natural area to learn about native wildlife and ecology and participate in a civic project (e.g. planting native wildflower seeds)
- Project that engages educators on local conservation issues and provides resources and training for how to incorporate in learning settings.
- A community event that engages local families in a day of wildlife watching or citizen science and includes opportunities to learn how they can help local wildlife (e.g. planting native plants, reducing light pollution, etc.)

****Note: We place great importance on volunteer and public/community participation in all projects.****

Although not essential, other NGO organizations and government entities supporting a project, through donations and/or in-kind services, enhances an application.

EFT generally DOES NOT FUND requests for the following:

- Ongoing programming & organizational operating expenses/overhead
- Staff salaries that are not connected to implementation of a specific project
- Lobbying and political campaigns
- Endowment funds
- Projects with arts as the focus
- Fundraising events
- Conferences
- Animal welfare/rehab programs
- Private foundations
- Capital projects
- Educational websites/resources that are not linked to on-the-ground conservation

If you have questions about potential project eligibility, please email info@efundtexas.org.

Grant Guidelines:

- If after reviewing our guidelines and priorities, you believe that your project is a good fit, you may begin the application process.
- **Who We Fund:** We provide grants to 501c3 organizations whose primary mission is preserving the natural environment in Texas and doing work related to EFT's funding priorities.
- We only make grants to **501c3/tax-exempt organizations** in good standing with the IRS and with EFT.
- **We do not fund the same project unless it evolves or expands significantly.**
- Multi-year grants are offered only through our Tier 4 level of funding.

Although the Fund will not directly acquire real property nor undertake legal advocacy, we may consider requests to support land protection through fee simple purchases or the establishment of conservation easements and may support the charitable, conservation advocacy of grantees, consistent with Austin Community Foundation policies and the Fund's Advisory Committee recommendations.

EFT Grant Tiers:

Tier 1: Grassroots Funds — \$2,500 or less

Tier 1 grants are intended for grassroots organizations seeking funding for smaller-scale projects or start-up costs.

Tier 2: EFT Priority Projects — Up to \$12,000

Tier 2 grants are for projects that address threats to natural environments in Texas—in our priority areas of water, natural areas, and native wildlife. This also includes projects that empower public engagement and action, and forge meaningful connections with nature. Most of the grants we fund are Tier 2 grants.

Tier 3: Scaling-up Impact — Up to \$25,000

To apply for a Tier 3 grant, you must have successfully completed a Tier 2 grant. You must inform us of your interest by completing our eligibility quiz. If you initially qualify, we will request that you send us a Letter of Interest (LOI). For Tier 3 applications, although not required, we encourage organizations partnering with multiple stakeholders to accomplish something larger than an individual organization could do on its own. It is possible that we may request an in-person meeting, site visit, or teleconference during our review process.

Tier 4: Multi-year Grants — Up to \$50,000 spread over multiple years

Grants from Tiers 2 and 3 may extend up to 3-year commitments pending annual evaluation and reporting compliance. We generally do not fund continuing support for the same projects or programs over multiple years. Tier 4 funding will need to be projects that scale up and add novel components over multiple years. Please designate upon applying that your grant request is for Tier 4 funding no matter which Tier each year's funding will fall within (2 or 3).

Application Process:

All new and returning applicants must successfully complete our eligibility quiz as first step in the process.

You may access the eligibility form via our website at efundtexas.org/eligibility-quiz.

Tier 1 and Tier 2: The online application process is two-stage with an eligibility quiz linked on our website and an application which will only be emailed if you meet our eligibility requirements. We aim to get back with organizations who have submitted an eligibility quiz within two weeks. The Fund Manager may request additional information to determine eligibility. Upon applying and submitting all requested supporting documents, applicants applying for Tiers 1 and 2 should receive a determination letter within two months of application submission.

Tier 3 and Tier 4: The online application process is three-stage with an eligibility quiz, a single page Letter of Inquiry (LOI), and a grant proposal application. These grants require that you have successfully completed a Tier 2 grant and submitted a grant evaluation report from that grant. Only those applicants that receive favorable responses to their LOI will be sent the application to apply.

While we recognize many organizations are doing critical work to the environment in Texas, we have limited funds and will not be able to select all applicants for funding.

Grant Reporting:

Grant recipients will be required to submit annual grant evaluation reports and photos as defined in the grant award letter. If you have previously received a grant from EFT, you will not be able to reapply unless you have submitted an acceptable report on time. The Environmental Fund of Texas relies on grant reporting to evaluate the success towards project achievement and will improve an organization's ability to acquire future funding.

Ready to apply for a grant? Return to efundtexas.org to access our eligibility quiz.

