



RFP – Southern California Water Stewardship Projects

Business for Water Stewardship
Request for Proposals

June 21, 2023

BACKGROUND

Business for Water Stewardship ([BWS](#)) is a program of the Bonneville Environmental Foundation ([BEF](#)) that helps businesses advance solutions to ensure that communities, economies, and ecosystems have enough clean water to flourish. The program provides ways for businesses to actively help sustain rivers and replenish aquifers, promote forward-looking water policies, and boost their reputations as environmental stewards.

BWS is pleased to solicit proposals for water stewardship projects in Southern California / Los Angeles Metro Area River Basins, a region described in more detail below, that aim to have a long-term positive impact on freshwater ecosystems and/or water supply resilience for communities and business. BWS anticipates that funding for water stewardship projects in this region will continue for multiple years, and some awards made through this RFP may constitute multi-year funding commitments that support the design and implementation of projects over time.

PROPOSAL SUBMITTAL INSTRUCTIONS

- Proposals should be submitted using the following link: [Southern California Water Stewardship Projects Application](#)
- The RFP will request a budget, please use the following link: [Budget Template](#) and upload it as its own attachment.
- We recommend that you review the RFP first and draft your responses in a separate document before submitting to the link above.
- If you have issues using the application link, please contact BWSproposal@b-e-f.org to receive a template with submission instructions.
- All materials are due no later than 5:00 pm PST, July 21, 2023

Informational Resources

- Business for Water Stewardship program information and previously funded projects can be found at: <https://businessforwater.org/projects>
- Guidance on volumetric water benefit accounting can be found at: <https://www.wri.org/research/volumetric-water-benefit-accounting-vwba-method-implementing-and-valuing-water-stewardship>
- Contact BWSproposal@B-E-F.org with any questions regarding this RFP.
- An informational webinar will be offered on June 29 at 1 PM Pacific Standard Time (PST). Please contact Tyler Smith (tsmith@B-E-F.org) for details.



Timeline

- Request for Proposal Issued: June 21, 2023
- Informational Webinar: June 29, 2023
- Proposals Due: 5:00 p.m. PST, July 21, 2023
- Project Announcement: October 2023

SUBMIT YOUR PROPOSAL [HERE](#)

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DETAILS

BEF seeks to support water stewardship projects that address priority water stewardship needs and build water resilience in the Southern California region, encompassing the watersheds extending from the Santa Clara River south to the Santa Ana River watershed.

Through this Request for Proposal (RFP), BEF will assess opportunities to make meaningful contributions of up to \$500,000 in the design and/or implementation of one or more projects that produce quantifiable water stewardship outcomes for communities and the surrounding watersheds. To this end, the objective of this RFP is two-fold:

1. Identify water stewardship project opportunities that will be implemented in the next one to five years (2024-2028) that require implementation funding. See below for a discussion of eligible project types and desired outputs.
2. Identify water stewardship project opportunities that can be implemented no later than 2028 but require funding to help support early development phases, including design, engineering, and permitting. Projects seeking funding for project development must demonstrate a high likelihood that development funding will result in project implementation prior to 2028.

Focal Geography – BEF and its partner are specifically interested in identifying projects that address watershed management objectives throughout the following watersheds.

- Ventura County Watersheds ([MAP](#)):
 - o Santa Clara River
 - o Calleguas Creek
- Los Angeles County Watersheds ([MAP](#)):
 - o Malibu Creek
 - o Santa Monica Bay Coastal
 - o Ballona Creek
 - o Dominguez Channel
 - o Los Angeles River
 - o San Gabriel River

Desired Outcomes – BEF supports a diverse array of project types that benefit ecosystems, water quality and quantity, water supply resilience, and communities. BEF seeks to support projects that allow for a volumetric quantification of water stewardship benefits, measured in either liters or acre-feet per year.



Projects eligible for funding must be voluntary, located in one or more of the watersheds listed above, address a documented, high-priority water stewardship need, and build water supply resilience in the region through multi-benefit partnerships.

Projects that also meet one or more of the following criteria are of significant interest:

- Support water stewardship in places of particular importance (culturally, recreationally, economically, etc.) to stakeholders in the region
- Engage diverse communities in water stewardship
- Participate in marquee projects of region wide importance
- Catalyze innovative approaches
- Help scale new restoration methods

Eligible Project Types - For this opportunity, funding will be targeted to support voluntary projects that address key surface and groundwater stressors within the region. Key stressors include inadequate local water supply, impaired water quality, loss of habitat and biodiversity, and climate change. Project proponents are also encouraged to highlight other co-benefits of the proposed project, including but not limited to water-related recreation, equitable access, drinking water, carbon sequestration, etc.

Eligible project types include:

- Groundwater recharge
- Remediation of contaminated groundwater
- Stormwater runoff management green infrastructure
- Water reuse
- Riparian and floodplain restoration
- Natural spring restoration and protection
- Stream channel rehabilitation
- Environmental flow restoration and protection
- Wetland protection and restoration
- Indoor and outdoor water use efficiency
- Water conservation

Eligible Organizations - BEF will consider potential partnership opportunities with any individual or organization with the capacity to implement voluntary water stewardship projects within the specified geography. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Non-profit organizations
- Irrigation and water conservancy districts and companies
- Flood control districts
- Municipal governments and water providers
- Water control districts
- Native American Tribes
- Private landowners
- Basin collaboratives
- Businesses
- State agencies



BEF does not support organizations whose policies or actions discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, age or disability.

BEF does not support projects designed to mitigate legal or regulatory compliance obligations or that are tied to ongoing legal or regulatory action.

EVALUATION

Project submissions will be evaluated based on the criteria contained in this RFP.

Priority will be given to projects that:

- have the potential to impact long-term water security,
- generate some measure or estimate of volumetric benefit that can be reported in acre-feet or liters,
- have the potential to impact long-term ecological health of the greater watershed or water body and contribute to an existing watershed or water quality improvement plan or initiative,
- demonstrate strong local stakeholder, community, and partner support,
- clearly address limiting factors or stressors in the watershed or basin,
- demonstrate cost-sharing and/or matching funds from public or private sources,
- demonstrate a high level of certainty that all necessary planning and construction steps will be completed within the project timeline,
- will generate lasting benefits for 10+ years or are expected to catalyze or lead to scaled up future benefits,
- have monitoring plans or programs in place to evaluate progress towards desired outcomes and delivery of expected benefits,
- will deliver two or more social / environmental co-benefits, and
- will be implemented by 2028 with a desired outcome for projects to begin delivering benefits by January 2030.

Through this RFP, BWS desires to fund a diverse array of projects that reflects the broad range of communities, project types, and organizations operating across the defined geography. This desire will also be considered in final project selection.

REQUIRED PROPOSAL ELEMENTS

The following elements should be addressed in a proposal. The content should be clear and concise, and applicants should strive for economy of words. Use of (and references to) material from relevant plans or proposals submitted to other funding sources is strongly encouraged. Applicants may provide internet links or include supporting documents as attachments to the proposal.

Project Title

- Provide a project title that is descriptive of the location and proposed action.

Project Sponsor Information

- Identify the organization that is the official proposal sponsor (name, address, phone, website, and EIN).
- Provide the contact information for the person responsible for all project related correspondence (name, phone, email).
- Provide a brief description of your organization, year of establishment, vision and mission, and experience and track record of planning and complete water stewardship projects. Provide internet links to

descriptions of past projects if available. Please also indicate the legal and/or tax status of your organization (200 word limit).

- List all project partner organizations.

Project Information

1. Project summary or abstract
 - o Provide a narrative that offers a concise description of the project type, context, approach, specific actions, outputs, and expected outcomes or desired impact (200 word limit).
 - o Provide volumetric measure of environmental water benefit if you have a methodology to estimate it (cfs, acre-feet/year, etc.).
2. Timeframe
 - o Define the project implementation timeframe. Include the proposed project start-date, key intermediate milestones (e.g. permitting, community engagement, funding, etc.), anticipated date of completion, and the anticipated date that water stewardship benefits will begin to occur (150 word limit).
3. Location
 - o All proposals should include a basic Project Map (e.g. Google Earth) and physical location of the project (Lat/Long coordinates). Please include names of streams or watersheds and nearest town and/or county place names.
4. Context
 - o Identify any relevant restoration/conservation plans or initiatives to which the project contributes (150 word limit).
 - o Identify and describe the environmental and/or social issue(s) the project addresses or solves (250 word limit).
5. Strategy
 - o Describe the project strategy, specific actions, and implementation objectives against which progress or completion can be tracked (250 word limit).
 - o Describe desired environmental and social outcomes (impact) and how they benefit the ecosystem and/or human communities (150 word limit).
 - o Describe how the project's implementation objectives and predicted outcomes will be measured and over what timeframe (150 word limit).
 - o If available or known, please provide any estimates or rationale related to the annual volume benefits that the project may generate upon completion and how long those benefits (in years) are expected to endure (150 word limit).
6. Budget
 - o Download and complete the following [Budget Template](#)
 - o Make sure to include: overall estimated cost of project, projected or expected contributions of other funders (in-kind donations if time and materials), unmet funding needs, how much funding is sought from BWS, and anticipated activities and costs.
7. Budget Narrative
 - o Indicate which project elements will be supported with requested funding. For example, does the proposal seek funding for one or more of the following: feasibility, design/engineering, permitting, implementation, etc.?
 - o If the proposed budget covers multiple years, please describe when (in which calendar year) and how much funding is needed from BWS.