



CHNEP 2023 Funding: Project Proposal Instructions

The Coastal & Heartland National Estuary Partnership (CHNEP) is a collaborative of citizens, elected officials, and resource managers working together to protect and restore water and wildlife habitat in Central and Southwest Florida since 1995. Currently, CHNEP has Fiscal Year 2023 funding available through a competitive proposal process for partner projects or initiatives that implement our [Strategic Plan](#) to protect and restore water and wildlife habitat throughout Central and Southwest Florida.

To seek CHNEP funding for your project or phase of a project that can be independently procured and managed, we request that you read the instructions below and complete the process to submit the summary, narrative, timeline, and budget table linked on this page.

Currently, CHNEP is able to fund projects from \$100,000 up to \$750,000. Once proposals are submitted in late 2022, CHNEP staff will reach out to discuss logistics for considered projects which will be added to the draft annual work plan in January. A formal scope of work for project procurement will be created in the spring of 2022, and the procurement process will take place shortly afterward. It is anticipated that project work should begin over the summer/fall of 2023 and should take no longer than 3 years to complete. All information for the CHNEP 2023 Project Funding Opportunity can be found online at: www.chnep.org/project-funding

PLEASE NOTE: CHNEP typically serves as 'Project Manager' for funded projects. Procurement of a contractor to complete the work, management of task deliverables and timelines, and invoice payment will be conducted through CHNEP and our fiscal host (Charlotte County). Applicants will work alongside CHNEP as 'Project partner' or 'Site Manager' throughout project implementation.

Proposal Deadline:

Proposals must be submitted electronically by **5:00 pm EDT, December 9th, 2022**. Please email any completed proposals and any questions to Nicole Iadevaia, CHNEP Director of Research & Restoration, at niadevaia@chnep.org or call 941-833-6582.

Proposal Guidelines:

CHNEP will fund a research or restoration project that implements Priority Actions found in our [Strategic Plan](#) through: Water Quality Improvement, Hydrological Restoration, and Fish, Wildlife & Habitat Protection. Projects must be completed by: June 2025 (or 36 months from Notice to Proceed NTP).

Examples of current projects can be viewed here:

Water Quality Improvement: <https://www.chnep.org/water-quality-improvement>;

Hydrological Restoration: <https://www.chnep.org/hydrological-restoration>;

Fish, Wildlife & Habitat Protection: <https://www.chnep.org/wildlife-habitat-protection>

Water Quality Improvement Actions:

- Support a comprehensive and coordinated water quality monitoring and assessment strategy
- Develop water quality standards, pollutant limits, and cleanup plans
- Reduce urban stormwater and agricultural runoff pollution
- Reduce wastewater pollution
- Reduce harmful algal blooms

Hydrological Restoration Actions:

- Conduct data collection, modeling, and analyses to support hydrologic restoration
- Increase fresh surface water and groundwater availability to support healthy ecosystems
- Protect and restore natural flow regimes

Fish, Wildlife, and Habitat Protection Actions:

- Protect, restore, and monitor estuarine habitats
- Protect, restore, and monitor environmentally sensitive lands and waterways including critical habitat areas
- Assess and promote the benefits of land, waterway, and estuary protection and restoration

Evaluation Criteria:

Projects should have long-term applicability or serve as a model for addressing habitat restoration and resource management challenges. Preference will be given to projects with **a)** assurances of long-term conservation use of the area after restoration is completed, **b)** monitoring restoration success, and **c)** informing and educating the public about habitat values and restoration methods.

Proposed projects should address at least one of the above Priority Actions, be transferable, demonstrate value to the community, and include monitoring and educational components. Please note that special consideration will be given to projects that in some way benefit underserved/disadvantaged communities or accelerates resilience and adaptation to climate change impacts.

Project Approach: (50 points)

Clearly describe activities that help meet the goals of one or more of the CHNEP Priority Actions **(15 points)**:

- Project provides measurable resource benefits and meaningful conservation outcomes linked to the goals of the CHNEP Priority Actions **(20 points)**;
- Project build on existing conservation efforts for CHNEP Priority Actions **(5 points)**; and
- Project partner will use project outcomes to further community stewardship through hands-on participation/volunteerism and/or innovative education and outreach associated with the project, if appropriate **(10 points)**.

Project Implementation (25 points)

- Project has a clear path for execution by contractor **(10 points)**;
- Organization and clarity of proposal **(10 points)**; and
- Deliverables/outcomes are measureable **(5 points)**.

Level of Effort and Cost by Phase (15 points)

- Project is cost effective relative to other conservation practices (i.e. cost per acre restored) (9 points);
- Project addresses the long-term sustainability of the project by providing a monitoring and maintenance plan and describing how future funding will be secured (3 points); and
- The Project is phased or a continuation of a larger effort (3 points).

Innovative Solutions and Partnerships (10 points)

- Provide other ancillary benefits that could benefit others working on conservation/restoration efforts in Central and Southwest Florida (e.g., serves as a model for others to replicate; shares methodologies developed with other practitioners; creates new partnerships; etc.); develops accessible and reproducible, open science tools, assessments or outcomes, etc.) (7 points); and
- Build new or enhance existing partnerships. Project partners are encouraged to leverage diverse organization strengths and resources to enhance project sustainability through partnerships and partnerships collaborations (3 points).

Project Deliverables:

All proposals should include specific deliverables and *approximated* lump sum estimates associated with each Task that will be tracked and measured to evaluate the success of the project in achieving stated goals- photos or maps where project work was conducted (e.g. installation of monitoring wells or treatment of exotic invasive species) or technical memos or report of collected data.

Examples of phased measurable resource benefits or metrics include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Number of acres treated for exotic invasive species;
- Tons of bagged oyster shells or number of native plants installed;
- Number of sampling events completed;
- Draft a final report documenting final measurable resource benefits for the project for review by the Project Manager;
- Final report addressing any review comments provided by the Project Manager;
- Photographs documenting completed work; and
- Signed and sealed permit drawings and/or as-built plans.

Additional Project deliverables:

- Quarterly progress reports or meetings with Project Manager; and
- Task technical memos or reports documenting measurable resource benefits. Invoices must be accompanied by documented deliverables identified for the phase

Project Partners:

Project Partners include local governments, agencies, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions.

Restrictions:

Funding cannot be used for political advocacy, fundraising, lobbying, or litigation activities; nor may they be used to support permitting fees or project costs associated with regulatory requirements/mitigation. Projects cannot be on private lands that are not open to the public or held in a conservation mechanism.

Partner Contributions:

Partner Contributions of cash or in-kind/contributed goods and services is not required, but is encouraged. All potential sources and amounts of match should be listed in the proposal including federal, non-federal, and private funds.

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Proposal should describe a plan for project implementation, including a narrative, budget, timeline, and measurable benefits resulting from each project phase, partnerships, and how the project will be sustained long-term. Proposals should include maps and, if available, photographs of the site. Maps should clearly identify the project area.

If the funding request is for one element of a larger project, please put the element in context relative to the larger project by stating the goals, outcomes, and timelines for both the element and the larger project (and the extent to which the funding request will help achieve the overall project goals).

Timeline:

The approximate timeline for the process is as follows:

- **November 2022:** CHNEP opens proposal process-notification sent to stakeholders.
- **December 9, 2022:** Full proposals are due via email to niadevaia@chnep.org
- **December 12th-22nd 2022:** CHNEP follow-up with project partners for additional information, as necessary.
- **January 2023:** Proposed project is added the CHNEP FY23 work plan for consideration and approval by CHNEP Policy Committee.
- **January 2023:** CHNEP will follow up with project partners of approved projects.
- **February-April 2023:** Project partner will work with CHNEP to create final scope of work for project to begin procurement competitive bid process to select appropriate contractor to complete proposed project.
- **April-May 2023:** CHNEP Procurement Request for Proposals/Qualifications (RFP) sent out and process begins to select appropriate contractor to complete work.
- **May-June 2023:** CHNEP Evaluation Committee meets/contractor selected/ purchase order for contracted work issued.
- **June 2023:** Project work begins. CHNEP works as Project Manager in partnership with project partner to complete project with contractor.
- **June 2025:** Project Completion with final deliverables and invoicing.

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