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## **NFWF and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announce Launch of New Fund to Support Delaware Watershed Conservation Efforts**

*The Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund will accelerate restoration and conservation of wildlife habitat across the Delaware River watershed while supporting local communities*

**Washington, D.C. (August 7, 2018)**—The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) today announced the launch of the Delaware Watershed Conservation Fund (DWCF), a competitive grant and technical assistance program of \$4.3 million that will provide new support for the protection, restoration and conservation of fish and wildlife habitats in the Delaware River Watershed, which provides drinking water for more than 15 million people.

Congress provided funds to the FWS in fiscal year 2018 to leverage public and private funding to support the environmental and economic health of the Delaware River Watershed for boots-on-the-ground conservation projects — as outlined in the [Delaware River Basin Restoration Partnership and Program Framework](#).

Covering 13,539 square miles of land and water, the Delaware River Watershed is home to native brook trout, red knots, river herring, freshwater mussels, oysters and other wildlife. Headwaters and streams located in rural, forested and agricultural areas play a major role in the entire ecosystem, as do urban and suburban waterways such as those in Trenton, Philadelphia and Wilmington.

“We are pleased to be partnering with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to launch this conservation grant program in the Delaware River Basin that will improve the natural environment, economic health and quality of life for all citizens in the watershed,” said Wendi Weber, northeast regional director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “We look forward to getting these appropriated federal dollars on the ground to accomplish our shared conservation goals and augment existing efforts.”

Work supported by the DWCF will take place in a variety of landscapes and habitats across the Delaware River Watershed, from the beaches and tidal salt marshes of the Delaware Bay to the farms, cities and towns of Delaware, Pennsylvania and New Jersey, to the cold-water rivers and streams of New York. The DWCF will expand and further facilitate restoration and conservation efforts in the basin to:

- Restore and conserve fish and wildlife habitat
- Improve and maintain water quality for fish, wildlife and people
- Manage water volume and improve flood damage mitigation for fish and wildlife habitat

- Improve recreational opportunities consistent with ecological needs

“This new fund complements and enhances the incredible work already underway in the Delaware River Watershed,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “We are excited to play a role in sparking an even bigger and broader conservation impact on the habitats and communities of the watershed.”

Through the DWCF, NFWF will award ***Conservation Action Grants*** to nonprofit organizations; federal, state, interstate and local governments; Indian tribes; and educational institutions to implement on-the-ground restoration and conservation projects that achieve the goals of the framework. Projects also will engage and equip the public to:

- Support coordinated restoration and protection
- Facilitate resilience of natural systems
- Increase scientific knowledge, monitoring and research needed for successful project implementation
- Provide technical assistance for restoration and conservation
- Conserve areas of regional significance in the Delaware River Watershed.

NFWF will administer an annual competitive grant solicitation and selection process, working closely with the FWS and an advisory team comprised of federal, state, interstate and local government agency representatives, nonprofits and other leading experts. The request for grant proposals is [now open](#) and applications are due on September 27, 2018.

#### **About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**

*Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 4,500 organizations and generated a conservation impact of more than \$4.8 billion. Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org).*

#### **About the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**

*The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov).*

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