

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) National Wildlife Refuge System, in partnership with the FWS National Conservation Training, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (Foundation) and the National Wildlife Refuge Association are now soliciting applications from organizations interested in The Nature of Learning grants. The Nature of Learning is a community-based environmental education initiative that seeks to:

- Use national wildlife refuges as outdoor classrooms to promote a greater understanding of local conservation issues;
- Encourage an interdisciplinary approach to learning that seeks to enhance student academic achievement;
- Utilize field experiences and student-led stewardship projects to connect classroom lessons to real world issues; and
- Involve a partnership among local schools, community groups, natural resource professionals and local businesses.

First year grants of up to \$10,000 and second year grants of up to \$5,000 will be awarded on a competitive basis to support education projects focused on the causes and effects of climate change on refuges and to build citizen science partnership programs. Proposals that incorporate this theme are preferred; however, it is not required.

Examples of programs that support climate change education and citizen science efforts include but are not limited to:

National Phenology Network (<http://www.usanpn.org/education>)

Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology (<http://www.birds.cornell.edu/>)

Project Budburst (http://www.windows.ucar.edu/citizen_science/budburst/)

ELIGIBILITY

Academic institutions or non-profit organizations, including "Friends" organizations, cooperative and interpretive associations, Audubon Chapters, youth organizations, community groups, etc., are eligible to apply for funding.

GRANT GUIDELINES

- The program must involve a partnership with a national wildlife refuge and a letter of support from the refuge must be provided in your grant application.
- The program must be designed to improve scientific literacy, and conform to appropriate academic standards of learning.

- The program must be completed within 18 months.
- The program must include a community stewardship project.
- Preference will be given to start-up programs that can demonstrate a commitment to sustaining the program over time.
- Preference will be given to programs that incorporate climate change and citizen science.
- Matching contributions are not required; however preference will be given to applications that include other contributions of funds, goods and services from program partners, including letters of reference.
- You must reapply for the second year grant.
- Funding will be dispersed on an as-need basis with 10% of the funds held back for dispersal upon receipt of The Nature of Learning program final accomplishment report.

HOW TO APPLY

- Applicants must complete the on-line application form at <http://www.nfwf.org/grantapplication>. Projects will be evaluated to the extent by which the guidelines are met.
- Applications Deadline: Friday, April 1st, 2011
- Applicants will be notified of the outcome of their applications by Wednesday, June 15th, 2011.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For complete information on The Nature of Learning Program go to http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=charter_programs_list&CONTENTID=18432&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm.

For additional information on the Nature of Learning program contact Deborah Moore at Deborah_moore@fws.gov. For questions regarding grant applications, please contact Teal Edelen at teal.edelen@nfwf.org.

To see 2010 Nature of Learning programs that received funding, go to http://www.nfwf.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Charter_Programs_List&TEMPLATE=/CM/HTMLDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=18266.

Regards,

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