



Habitat Conservation Fund Information and Eligibility Requirements

The Transportation Corridor Agencies (TCA), in partnership with the Save San Onofre Coalition (SSOC), is pleased to announce a Call for Projects and the availability of the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF). Funding is available to organizations that have the experience, structure and resources to implement habitat restoration and/or acquire land for conservation. These organizations can be non-profits, governmental entities and private entities. A total of \$8 million is available to be spent by the end of 2025 for qualified projects. To be considered for the HCF, an application must be completed and submitted online by December 15, 2024. TCA and SSOC will evaluate all HCF applications based on meeting specific selection criteria. Qualified projects and award amounts will be approved by the TCA Board of Directors and SSOC prior to notification. TCA will host two virtual HCF application workshops to answer questions and provide guidance to grant applicants. Information about the HCF application workshops is provided at TheTollRoads.com/HCF.

I. General Eligibility

- 1) Projects eligible for funding:
 - a. Land/property acquisition for the purpose of biological conservation and preservation.
 - b. Habitat restoration including planning, design, restoration activities, monitoring and maintenance.
- 2) The following activities are not eligible for the HCF: construction of buildings or other facilities; research; acquisition of land for active recreation, such as sports facilities, water parks, playgrounds, or similar uses; reimbursement of expenses incurred prior to the award of the HCF.
- 3) Projects must be located within Orange County.
- 4) HCF application must be completed by December 15, 2024.

II. Instructions

- 1) Complete the HCF application: Section I, Section II(a) and/or Section II(b), and Section III.
- 2) Attach supporting documents to the HCF application (as applicable).
- 3) Submit application on or before December 15 at:
TheTollRoads.com/HCF.

III. Schedule

Call for Projects: October 9, 2024

HCF Application Workshop #1: October 29, 2024 from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Please visit TheTollRoads.com/HCF to register.

HCF Application Workshop #2: December 3, 2024 from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Please visit TheTollRoads.com/HCF to register.

Application Due Date: December 15, 2024

Application Evaluation Period: Winter 2024 to Spring 2025

Notification of HCF Grant Award: Summer 2025

Allocation of HCF Grant Award: Fall/Winter 2025



Habitat Conservation Fund Application

2024 Call for Projects

Application Instructions

Applicants seeking the Habitat Conservation Fund (HCF) are required to complete and submit this application. Any projects not in compliance or incomplete information may not be eligible for funding.

Section I: General Project Information	
Primary Applicant Information	
Agency/Organization/Entity	
Organization Type	
Applicant's Contact Name and Title	
Phone	
Email	
Mailing Address	
Project Information – Include location map and property boundary	
Project Title	
Primary County	
Project Address or Assessor Parcel Number	
Landowner Name	
Landowner Type	
Project Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Habitat Restoration <input type="checkbox"/> Land/Property Acquisition <input type="checkbox"/> Both
Is the project a mitigation requirement to address another project's impacts?	
Indicate watershed location of the project.	
Indicate the party/parties responsible for long-term maintenance/conservation of the property.	
Is there potential threat for development at the site?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the project acquiring land or property? If "Yes" answer the question below.	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Acreage to be acquired _____ acres <input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the current property owner a willing seller?	
What is the estimated cost of the property?	
Has it been appraised within the last two years?	

Project Overview – Provide an overview of the land acquisition and/or habitat restoration. Describe the need, goals and expected outcomes/benefits for wildlife and biological resources. If applicable, identify the major tasks involved in the project. As needed, include tables, illustrations, and photos to elaborate. Identify the major tasks involved in the project. Be specific about the portion of the project that would be funded by the HCF.

Empty space for project overview details.

Project Cost and Funding Sources – List all of the sources of any cost share. Please indicate if other funding sources have been secured or are pending (applied for but not yet awarded). Indicate the HCF amount needed for the project.

HCF Funding Request Amount	\$	
Source	Amount (\$)	Funding Status – Secured/Applied
Total Project Cost:		

Project Readiness & Schedule

<p>Environmental Review</p>	<p>The proposed project (select the appropriate answer):</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is not a project under CEQA. Briefly specify why in the box below.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Is exempt under CEQA. Provide the CEQA exemption number and specify how the project meets the terms of the exemption in the box below.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Requires Neg Dec, MND, or EIR. Specify the lead CEQA agency (the agency preparing the document) and the completion date (or expected date) in the box below.</p> <p>Agency:</p> <p>Completion Date:</p>
<p>Indicate required permits (if applicable) needed for the project. Indicate whether permits have been issued by the applicable agency.</p>	
<p>Anticipated start and completion dates (if applicable).</p>	<p>Start:</p> <p>Completion:</p>
<p>Indicate other approvals and activities needed to begin on the portion that would be funded by the HCF (if applicable).</p>	

Application Checklist

	Yes	N/A
A Environmental documentation (as applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B Project cost estimate	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C Location maps & project site photos	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
D Project milestone schedule	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
E Design/concept drawings (as applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
F Permits	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
G Preliminary agreements with joint and/or third-party entities (as applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
H Supporting information (as applicable)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section II(a) Application Instructions

If the applicant is seeking to acquire or conserve land with the HCF, complete Section II(a). If the applicant is seeking funding for habitat restoration, please complete Section II(b). Applicants seeking funding for both land acquisition/conservation and habitat restoration, please complete both Section II(a) and Section II(b).

SECTION II(a): Detailed Project Information for Land and Property Acquisition for Conservation

For projects requesting the HCF to acquire or transfer land, please complete the section below. Provide responses for each topic as applicable or available. Applicants may attach additional supporting information (Attachment H) to accompany the responses below.

Project Description for Land and Property Acquisitions – *Describe the proposed land/property acquisition. How would the HCF be utilized to achieve overall goals? What are the benefits of the land/property acquisition in terms of enhancing wildlife habitat? Discuss current and future activities at the project site and whether restoration is needed. Indicate current and future land use designations on the site and adjacent to the project site. Describe any anticipated long-term management and conservation of the project site. What are the main issues or risks related to the project and indicate how they would be addressed? Use additional pages as needed.*

	Topic	Response
1	Provide habitat inventory within property. What are the vegetation communities naturally occurring on-site? (e.g. coastal sage scrub, riparian woodlands, grasslands, etc.)	
2	Would the project acquisition conserve sensitive habitats? Does the property have the potential for conservation and restoration of species, sub-species, and natural communities identified as sensitive under California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB).	
3	Does the acquisition area contain habitat for special status species? The potential property supports the presence of endangered, threatened, species of special concern, and other sensitive species.	
4	Does the land acquisition enhance natural lands connectivity, including significant wildlife corridors? Acquisition of this property would connect to existing conservation areas, support movement of wildlife and identify as an essential habitat linkage in regional or local plans.	
5	Property acreage. Provide the acreage of the property acquisition or land transfer.	
6	Enhances natural lands contiguity. Is the property adjacent to existing open spaces? Does the acquisition increase the amount of core habitat or reduce edge effects?	
7	Habitat diversity. Does the property contain vegetative structural diversity, functional ecosystem diversity (e.g., upland and wetland habitats) and the ability of ecosystem processes (e.g. fire, flood) to support natural vegetation succession.	
8	Provides for quality habitat or potential for quality habitat. Does the property include mature habitats or minimal property constraints. Does the property have potential to support high-quality habitat after acquisition? Is there a need for on-site restoration?	
9	Isolated habitat or habitat fragmentation. Is the property a fragmented habitat or isolated?	
10	Climate resilience. Does the project protect pathways for habitat and species migrations in response to sea level rise or changing lake levels? Does it reduce existing stressors that hinder the ability of species or ecosystems to withstand climactic events?	
11	Potential of development. Is the current landowner in the CEQA and other permitting processes to develop the property? Quantify the degree of the development threat?	

	Topic	Response
12	Utilizes partnership & leverages opportunities. Would the acquisition be enhanced by existing conservation efforts, partnerships and/or includes existing funding?	
13	Property value. Provide price per acre and appraisal value, if any.	
14	Conflicting easements or in-holdings. Does the property have restrictive deeds, easements, other agreements, and/or in-holdings that would limit management/public use options?	
15	Neighboring land uses. Provide land uses at adjacent properties.	
16	Encroachments/unauthorized uses. Are there adopted plans for future uses that are inconsistent with the planned conservation of the property?	
17	Hazardous materials or waste contamination. Any potential or known hazardous conditions on the property? Any historical contamination?	
18	Other potential issues or complications. Does the property have unidentified complications associated with acquisition and management including, vector control, vandalism, inadequate access, significant obstacles to restoring water quality (toxics, pesticides, salts), etc?	
19	Co-benefits. Does the property have other non-biological benefits? This may include public access, trail connectors, watershed protection, proximity to underserved area, archeological sites, cultural/historical sites, paleontological sites, scenic/viewshed, economic benefits, etc.	

Section II(b) Application Instructions

If the applicant is seeking to acquire or conserve land with the HCF, complete Section II(a). If the applicant is seeking funding for habitat restoration, please complete Section II(b). Applicants seeking funding for both land acquisition/conservation and habitat restoration, please complete both Section II(a) and Section II(b).

SECTION II(b): Detailed Project Information for Habitat Restoration

For projects requesting the HCF to restore habitat, please complete the section below a. Provide responses for each topic identified below as applicable and available. Discuss benefits that can enhance fish and wildlife habitats. Priority will be given to those projects that protect or restore high-quality ecosystems; increase connectivity to improve habitat conditions; and/or prevent fragmentation, maintain species or habitat diversity.

Project description for habitat restoration projects – *Describe the project and/or proposed habitat restoration activities. How would the HCF be utilized to achieve the project's goals? What are the benefits of the project in terms of enhancing wildlife habitat? Discuss current and future activities at the project site. Indicate current and future land use designations at the site and adjacent to the project site. Describe anticipated long-term management and conservation of the project site. What are the main issues or risks related to the project and indicate how they would be addressed? Describe performance criteria for project success and indicate if it is part of a multi-year project. Use additional pages as needed.*

	Topic	Response
1	Is the project located within a habitat restoration priority area identified in a HCP/NCCP, habitat management plan, other state, regional or watershed level plan? Please state applicable plan(s).	
2	Does the restoration/conservation activity create or maintain sensitive habitats and enhance or maintain ecosystem connectivity to support populations of sensitive species?	
3	Does the restoration/conservation activity improve or maintain hydrological connectivity between habitats that improve ecosystem function?	
4	Does the project enhance or restore important ecosystem services that support habitat communities, vulnerable populations or cultural resources (flood protection, extreme weather resilience, water quality and quantity, erosion etc.)?	
5	Discuss the long-term plan for monitoring specific criteria relevant to achieve project objectives.	
6	Are engineering and design plans completed (shovel ready)?	
7	Are environmental clearances and permitting in progress or completed? (If applicable)	
8	Are matching funds available? (if applicable)	
9	Does the restoration/conservation activity account for future environmental conditions in restoration designs, ensuring long-term ecosystem function to the full extent possible with available data and information?	
10	Does the restoration/conservation activity protect pathways for habitat and species migrations in response to sea level rise or changing water levels?	
11	Does the restoration/conservation activity reduce existing stressors that hinder the ability of species or ecosystems to withstand climatic events?	
12	Does the restoration/conservation activity protect key ecosystem features (e.g., keystone species or habitats, or natural infrastructure)?	

SECTION III: Additional Project Details

Habitat Conservation Funding Measure of Effectiveness and Success – Describe the measure of effectiveness and criteria for success for the property acquisition/conservation and/or the habitat restoration project as described in the project description in Section I. If TCA awards the grantee the amount requested, explain the monitoring and reporting process to achieve project goals.

Joint Applicant Information (if applicable)

If there is a joint applicant, please enter the details below.

Organization:	Organization:
Contact Name:	Contact Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

Additional Comments

I hereby certify that the information provided herein this form is accurate and consistent with accompanying documentation. If TCA awards the HCF, I further certify that the funds will not be used outside of their intended purpose as stated in this application.

Name (Print)

Signature

Date

Title/Agency/Organization