

## Enviva Forest Conservation Fund | Request for Proposals

### 2018 Enviva Forest Conservation Fund

*Protecting Bottomland/Wetland Forests in the Coastal Plain of Virginia and North Carolina*

The U.S. Endowment for Forestry and Communities (Endowment) seeks applications for the 2018 Enviva Forest Conservation Fund. This opportunity closes Friday, February 16, 2018 at 5:00 p.m. EDT. Proposals received after this time may not be considered.

#### Funding

Up to \$500,000 is available for the 2018 grant round. Funding at this level is anticipated on an annual basis at or around this time each year through 2025. A review committee will make final project selections. Initial funding is provided by Enviva Partners, LP Learn more at [envivaforestfund.org](http://envivaforestfund.org).

#### 2016 and 2017 Funded Projects

#### What's New for 2018?

The geographic eligibility in North Carolina has been significantly expanded. The expansion is driven by the desire to include bird conservation priorities described in the South Atlantic Partners in Flight Bird Conservation Plan, portions of the North Carolina Sentinel Landscape Partnership, the Onslow Bight Conservation Forum, and other conservation programs that address the habitat priorities for the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund. The full list of eligible counties is under the "Geography" heading below; new North Carolina counties added include: Anson, Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, Cumberland, Duplin, Granville, Greene, Harnett, Hoke, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Montgomery, Moore, New Hanover, Onslow, Pender, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Stanley, and Wayne. ([Map of eligible counties](#))

#### Enviva Forest Conservation Fund Goal

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund's goal is to permanently protect environmentally sensitive bottomland/wetland forests. These forests offer a wide range of economic and environmental benefits, but they face a number of potential threats, including conversion to nonforest uses. The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund targets sensitive forest areas that have been identified by the Endowment in consultation with other respected organizations.

The Enviva Forest Conservation Fund will consider a variety of protection strategies, including purchasing land via fee or conservation easement. The importance of active forest management for appropriate properties is recognized. Proposals that include sustainable forest management, or a mix of management and preservation, are desirable.

#### Geography

Proposals will be accepted for bottomland/wetland forest projects in the following counties:

Virginia: Brunswick, Chesapeake, Dinwiddie, Greensville, Isle of Wright, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Prince George, Southampton, Suffolk, Surrey, Sussex, Virginia Beach.



North Carolina: Anson, Beaufort, Bertie, Bladen, Brunswick, Camden, Chowan, Columbus, Craven, Cumberland, Duplin, Edgecombe, Franklin, Gates, Granville, Greene, Halifax, Harnett, Hoke, Hertford, Johnston, Jones, Lee, Lenoir, Martin, Montgomery, Moore, Nash, New Hanover, Northampton, Onslow, Pasquotank, Pender, Pitt, Perquimans, Richmond, Robeson, Sampson, Scotland, Stanley, Tyrrell, Vance, Wake, Warren, Washington, Wayne, Wilson.

### **Eligible Ecosystems**

The Endowment has identified four distinct forest ecosystems that are especially worthy of protection and that Enviva has agreed to work to conserve in collaboration with forest owners. These types are only suggestive of what the Fund seeks to conserve:

- Cypress-tupelo swamps: Characterized by saturated soils during the growing season and standing water during certain times of the year, these include various species of bald cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) and water tupelo (*Nyssa aquatic*).
- Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) stands: This species grows on wet sites at altitudes up to 50 meters above sea level.
- Pocosins: One of the South's rarest wetlands, low Pocosins are dominated by small trees and shrubs and have a high water table. The word "pocosin" is from the Algonquin Native American word for "swamp on a hill."
- Carolina bays: Called "bays," they are not ocean inlets but are geologic depressions usually surrounded by a variety of bay trees, including red and sweet bays.

### **Endorsements**

A priority for the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund is to accelerate implementation of existing conservation plans that have been developed collaboratively by local partners. Applicants should provide at least two but not more than five letters from relevant partners demonstrating their awareness of and support for your project. Project partners should be explicit in describing how the applicant's proposed project integrates with and preferably leverages existing conservation plans. Such groups might include state departments of natural resources and forestry, state or regional offices of federal natural resource agencies, and non-governmental conservation groups with a significant presence in Virginia and North Carolina.

### **Matching Fund Requirements**

Applicants should provide at least 50% of the total project cost. This may include cash donations or in-kind contributions from third-parties. Federal and non-federal funds may be considered as match.

### **Leverage**

Applications that leverage other financial resources for larger-scale outcomes are highly desirable. For example, proposals that tap into other sources of private or public funds to maximize acres protected will receive priority consideration.

### **Eligible Applicants**

Not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, tribes, and federal, state, and local government agencies are eligible for funding. Unincorporated individuals are not eligible. Public/private partnerships are particularly desirable.

### **Program Criteria**

Eight primary criteria are considered in evaluating applications. Please address the following in your application:

- Ecological quality of tract and associated conservation values (quantified, if possible), such as benefits for cypress-tupelo, Atlantic white cedar, pocosins, and/or Carolina Bays;
- Immediacy of threat to the site;
- Link(s) to other protected areas or inclusion within established conservation plans;
- Financial leverage and cost-effectiveness of proposal;
- Scale of forests protected (acres, miles of streamside zones);
- Adequacy of active forest management plans (if applicable);
- Partner history of accomplishment in the area; and
- Benefits to family forest owners, if any.

### **2018 Process Schedule**

The Endowment will coordinate a proposal review committee and will engage successful applicants in contracting at the earliest possible time.

- Proposal Deadline: February 16, 2018
- Applicants notified: Week of March 19, 2018

Contracting should be completed within four to eight weeks after applicants are notified unless complications arise. The Endowment administers grants for the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund.

### **Application Assistance**

For questions or clarification please contact Alicia Cramer ([alicia@usendowment.org](mailto:alicia@usendowment.org))

### **Proposal Submission**

Only proposals submitted electronically to [alicia@usendowment.org](mailto:alicia@usendowment.org) on the Endowment's [PDF proposal form](#) will be accepted.

**Publicizing the Grants** the Enviva Forest Conservation Fund has attracted significant interest from community leaders, elected officials and the media. Grant recipients may be asked to coordinate with the Endowment and Enviva to announce 2018 grant awards and, at the appropriate time, to provide the local community and conservation interests with more details about the project and the types of management and conservation taking place.