



## **Stewardship Challenge Grant Program**

Frequently Asked Questions

December 2025

### **General Questions**

#### **How long is the grant period?**

18-months.

#### **Are contributions that have been received or expended before the grant has been awarded acceptable as match?**

No. All match contribution activity—cash donations and volunteer hours—must occur within the 18-month grant period to be eligible for payment.

#### **Is it required that all the funds under the grant program are spent within the 18-month grant period?**

It is encouraged that all of the funds are spent during the grant period. PSCC match funds can be expended after the grant period, but a detailed post-grant budget must be submitted with the final report and the Grantee must demonstrate that any funds remaining will be set aside to care for habitat at the Eligible Property.

#### **Can I use the funds that my organization receives from PSCC under Cash Donations or Volunteer Hours towards equipment?**

No.

#### **Can I use the funds that my organization receives from PSCC under Cash Donations to cover staff time?**

Grantees can use up to 10% of grant payments under both the Cash Donations Category and Volunteer Hours Category to help cover the cost of staff oversight of the project.

### **What can PSCC grant funds be used for?**

Grant funds received under Cash Donations and Volunteer Hours can only be used on activities that directly improve the natural habitat. Examples of such activity include: payment for contractors to conduct a prescribed burn, engineering work and hydrological improvements, removal of invasive species, and/or creation of burn breaks; purchase of plant materials including seed, trees, and plants. Grantees may spend a total of \$2,000 of the dollars received from PSCC under Cash Donations and Volunteer Hours on the purchase of interpretive signage if the signage highlights the stewardship work and the grant.

### **When should I take the before and after pictures required by the grant?**

If awarded a grant, establish your photo points and take your first set of photos soon after signing the grant agreement and before work is underway at your site. Take another set preceding the end of your grant period and submit both the “before” and “after” photos with your final report.

### **What is the purpose of establishing Photo Points?**

Before and after photographs help to document changes to the habitat over time as a result of the grant project. Repeated observations - photographs taken from the same spot, at the same distance, facing the same direction, at the same time of year – will show changes best as time goes on. Choose your two photo points based on the habitat improvement objectives you are seeking to achieve through your project.

### **Will extensions be issued for these grants?**

Generally, no, extensions are not given for Stewardship Challenge Grants. All fundraising must be completed, and all volunteer hours must be logged within the 18-month grant period. It is strongly encouraged, but not required, that you complete all spending on habitat improvements within the grant period as well.

## **Cash Donations Category Questions**

### **What must be submitted to receive payment for the Cash Donations category?**

Documentation that new dollars have been raised, or like-kind (non-cash) donations have been made as match in the form of a list of donors and donations that is signed by an officer or director of the organization.

**When can payment from PSCC be requested?**

No more than once every four months (specific payment request due dates will be listed in the grant agreement) until the organization receives the maximum total payment according to the grant agreement.

**Do all funds under the Cash Donations category need to be raised during the 18-month grant period?**

Yes. And it is encouraged that they are raised early in the grant project. This would allow the grantee to receive payment and use the grant funds to improve the site’s natural habitat during the grant period.

**Can one donor donate the entire match?**

Yes. However, PSCC encourages grantees to still continue their outreach to other donors.

**Who counts as “community” when making a cash donation?**

Individuals, businesses, community-based organizations and foundations that respond to the fundraising appeal on this grant project can all be considered part of the “community of supporters”. So too can members of the organization, including those who serve on its Board and/or otherwise volunteer.

**What counts as “cash”?**

Actual cash and/or contributions drawn from third-party accounts. In-kind (non-cash) donations of goods (seeds, plants, etc.) **can** be reported as match under the Cash Donations category. Hours spent providing in-kind services to improve the habitat may be reported under the Volunteer Labor category and counted towards the required match hours.

**Volunteer Hours Category Questions**

**What must be submitted to receive payment for the Volunteer Labor category?**

A volunteer sign-in sheet or sheet documenting the hours completed on the eligible property during the grant period. A staff member or board member from the organization must either sign off on

each sign-in sheet or sign off on a summary table that combines the information reported from all of the separate sign-in sheets submitted.

**When can payment be requested?**

Once the organization has reached the total amount of hours of volunteer labor required (400 for a \$4,000 payment), payment can be requested on the next request date outlined in the grant agreement.

**Can volunteer hours spent on improving the habitat of other natural areas that the grantee organization owns or manages, that were not specified in the grant application, be counted?**

No. The 400 hours for a \$4,000 payment requirement can only be met with volunteer hours logged while caring for habitat on the eligible property as outlined in the grant agreement.

**Can one volunteer donate all the hours required for payment?**

No. The grant program's intent is to increase community involvement.

**Equipment Purchases Category Questions**

**What does PSCC consider to be equipment under this grant program?**

Large items such as ATVs, UTV's, chainsaws, mounted sprayers, tractors, etc., and/or hand tools such as backpack sprayers, loppers, hand saws, rakes, Pulaski axes, etc.

**What must be submitted to receive payment for the Equipment category?**

Receipts, paid invoices, and/or other proof of payment.

**When can payment requests be submitted?**

Payments under Equipment may be submitted one time over the life of the grant to cover 100% of the cost of equipment or until total the payment reaches up to \$5,000.

**If a retailer gave the organization a discount on the cost of the equipment, would PSCC pay 100% of the discounted price or the retail price?**

The payment would be based on the discounted price, or the actual amount paid by the grantee upon submission of a paid invoice.