



Fall 2018 Instructions for GOCO's Open Space Grant Application

These instructions provide guidance for filling out the Open Space Grant Application. Please note that GOCO makes regular updates to the application and instructions. Please read them both carefully and contact Michele Frishman (303-226-4522 or mfrishman@goco.org) with any questions.

Issued: June 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. How to Submit an Open Space Grant Application**
- II. Instructions for Completing GOCO's Open Space Grant Application**
 - Summary Form Instructions
 - Selection Criteria Instructions
 - Budget

I. HOW TO SUBMIT AN OPEN SPACE GRANT APPLICATION

Online submission instructions:

1. Download the application form and other relevant documents from <http://www.goco.org/grants/apply/open-space>
2. Using the “Application Checklist” in the application form as a guide, you’ll create up to **five** documents for submission through the portal.
3. To start an application, follow [this link](#) and login to or register for the GOCO Grantee Portal. **Please use only this link to start a grant application; other links from previous grant cycles will not work properly and may result in your application not being properly submitted.**
4. When you log in, you will be on the new application page. If instructional text isn’t displaying properly, it will after you enter a Project Title and press “Save.”
5. Complete the portal application:
 - Fill in all fields in the “Details” tab. (This is general information like contact information, the project title, amount requested, etc.) All fields are required, except where noted.
 - Upload the documents in the “Attachments” tab.
 - i. Each document must be 25MB or smaller.
 - ii. To upload, click the “Select” button to locate the document. You will need to then click “Upload” to attach it to the application.
 - When you are ready to submit your application, go to the “Review & Submit” tab and click the Submit button. (The grant application will include a particular timeframe during which you are able to submit the application. Please make sure you’re within this timeframe.)
6. Once you have submitted your application, you will be able to view it through the portal, but you will not be able to edit it. (If GOCO staff finds something you need to change in the application, they’ll give you instructions on how to do that.)

Other useful information:

- You can register for the portal and start your application at any time during the process, but please keep in mind that there may be a particular timeframe during which you may *submit* your application.
- You can save your application and return to it at any time prior to submission. The only field you need to complete to save your application is the Project Title.
- To access your application after you’ve started it, login at <http://tinyurl.com/GOCOGGranteePortal>. (You cannot use this link to start a new application; instead use the link in paragraph 3 above.)
- To edit an in-process application, click the icon in the “Edit” column of the portal dashboard. It looks like this: 

- To see a read-only version of your application, click the icon in the “View” column. It looks like this: 
- When working on or viewing an application, you can return to the portal dashboard by clicking the “My Submissions” link. (Just be sure to save your application first!)
- If you forget your portal username or password, please don’t create a new portal account. Instead:
 - To recover your username, send an e-mail from the address you used during registration to portal@goco.org. Include the first name, last name, and organization you used when you registered for the portal.
 - If you forget your password, re-set it using the “Can’t access your account?” link on the portal login page.
- A grant application started on or submitted through the portal is visible only to the individual who created it; no one else at your organization will be able to access it without being granted permission to do so. If someone else needs to be able to access the online application, have that person establish a portal account. Then, you can e-mail portal@goco.org and ask that the application be shared with the other person.

II. INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING GOCO'S OPEN SPACE GRANT APPLICATION

SUMMARY FORM INSTRUCTIONS

Participant Information

Applicant: The applicant contact will be GOCO's main contact for this project.

Partner: If another entity plans to participate in the project, or is co-sponsoring the application, enter the name, address, and contact information for the cooperating entity.

Project Information

Project Title. Enter the title of the proposed project, e.g., "Fraser Valley Open Space Land Acquisition." Note: this title will be used in all press releases, reports, and other public documents. If you are concerned about confidentiality, select a project title that is descriptive but does not reveal the exact property or landowner name, and *please inform GOCO of the confidential nature of the project.* If there are other titles for this project that you plan to use in the future, please list these titles as well and note the status of these titles.

Legal Fees. If you anticipate spending more than \$15,000 on legal fees for your project or for each individual property within a project, please explain the anticipated complexities that necessitate fees this high. This does not mean that GOCO will not pay for higher legal fees or count them as match.

Certification and Authorized Signature

- GOCO requires this certification be signed before open space funds can be awarded. The person signing the certification must be authorized to sign for the applicant.
- The Colorado Constitution prohibits GOCO from awarding grants to state agencies where condemnation will be used, and it is GOCO's practice not to participate in any land acquisition projects involving condemnation, regardless of the applicant. If condemnation proceedings become an aspect of a project, even after an award has been made, GOCO will rescind the award and will not fund the project.

SELECTION CRITERIA INSTRUCTIONS

The Colorado Constitution directs GOCO to create “A program to identify, acquire and manage unique open space and natural areas of statewide significance through grants to the Colorado Divisions of Parks and Outdoor Recreation and Wildlife, or municipalities, counties, or other political subdivision of the State, or non-profit land conservation organizations, and which will encourage cooperative investments by other public or private entities for these purposes.” The selection criteria questions are designed to prioritize projects with unique open space and natural areas of statewide significance. Keep this in mind when answering the questions in the Project Values and Benefits section (**Selection Criteria A**).

Other questions of note:

Selection Criteria B – Reserved Rights and Property Uses

When an easement is being purchased to preserve agricultural lands, existing activities directly supporting the operation of the ranch can typically continue in the same general manner after an easement has been granted. However, activities that are inconsistent with GOCO’s open space program must discontinue.

Public Access: GOCO recognizes that public access may not always be appropriate on private property. Access can come in several different forms and usually does not mean general access for the public to the entire property. Hunting or fishing leases through an outfitter, guided wildlife watching tours, a parking area off the road where the public can stop to read information and see the property and landscape, fruit and vegetable stands, hiking trails, and other limited access that is in some way open to the public are all examples of access on the property. GOCO encourages its applicants to have a conversation with the landowner about the possibility of access opportunities. Please include any access that the landowner currently allows as well as any new proposed access activities that the easement will allow.

Building Envelopes and Reserved Development Rights: GOCO understands that the number of allowed building envelopes and buildings or other structures are often the subject of negotiations with the landowner that are not yet complete. However, it is important for GOCO to know what the maximum allowed number of envelopes and buildings or other structures will be in order to assess the potential impact on the conservation values. If the number and size of the envelopes or other areas containing structures have not yet been determined, please maximize the number and size that would be allowed in the easement since it is always easier to decrease the reserved rights than increase them. For dispersed structures that might exist or be allowed outside of a building envelope or area, such as hunting cabins, loafing sheds, small agricultural improvements, etc., please describe all such structures and any limitations imposed upon them by the conservation easement. Please note that if your project is awarded a grant, the GOCO Board is approving these reserved rights as proposed in the application. Any changes to the proposed development rights will have to be approved by GOCO and could result in a reduction or rescission of the grant award. See example Reserved Development Rights table on the following page.

Envelope or Area Name	Number and Kind of Existing Structures	Number and Kind of Additional Structures	Size of Envelope or Area (acreage)	Other Information
Building Envelope A	1 residential structure plus garage Ag structures	1 caretaker unit 1 residential structure Ag structures	12 acres	Contains existing ranch headquarters
Building Envelope B		1 residential structure plus garage Ag structures Riding arena	10 acres	Will be eliminated if Building Envelope C is chosen
Building Envelope C		2 residential structures plus garages Ag structures	8 acres	Will be eliminated if Building Envelope B is chosen
Workshop Envelope	1 enclosed workshop structure Ag structures		5 acres	Will be used for machinery, gasoline storage, other uses for maintaining ag equipment
Corral Area		1 fenced horse corral	1 acre	For horses on the property each summer

Selection Criteria C – Transaction and Due Diligence Requirements

Transaction Details: If the project is awarded funding, GOCO must ensure that all parts of the transaction, whether they receive funding or not, are completed in the correct form and order so that the transaction that has received GOCO funding will be legally valid. This includes sale of the property to another party, using this transaction as leverage for another transaction, completing an easement on another part of the property at the same time, or any other transaction that will occur simultaneously with or because of this transaction.

Access: Physical access relates to whether you can access a property in order to monitor it or easily get on it for the intended purpose. Legal access refers to the legal right to access the property, from a public road or an easement across an adjacent landowner's property. If the title commitment for the subject property reflects a lack of legal access, GOCO will require this exception to title be removed as a condition for the disbursement of GOCO funds.

Environmental Hazards: An environmental hazards assessment will be required prior to the disbursement of GOCO funds. A Transaction Screen Process may be all that is needed, or a Phase 1 or Phase 2 assessment may be required depending on the historic uses and existing circumstances on the property. The assessment is not necessary prior to submitting the application.

Mineral Rights: Any mineral severances will be described in the title commitment. Please review the commitment and confirm any severances with the landowner. If minerals are severed, a mineral remoteness report will be required prior to the disbursement of GOCO funds, but not prior to submitting the application.

Water Rights: If water rights are necessary to maintain the conservation values on a property, they must be encumbered by the conservation easement. This requires an adequate investigation of the water rights associated with the property. Please reference GOCO's [Land Acquisitions Procedures](#) for guidance on how to thoroughly complete a water rights investigation.

For water rights that are represented by shares in a mutual ditch or reservoir company, C.R.S. § 38-30.5-104(5) contains very specific requirements for encumbering these water rights with a conservation easement. It states:

If a water right is represented by shares in a mutual ditch or reservoir company, a conservation easement in gross that encumbers the water right may be created or revoked only after sixty days' notice and in accordance with the applicable requirements of the mutual ditch or reservoir company, including but not limited to its articles of incorporation and bylaws as amended from time to time.

Please be sure to explain what steps, if any, you have already taken to comply with this requirement. If no steps have been taken, please describe your plan to complete this requirement, including the timing.

Selection Criteria D – Meeting GOCO’s Strategic Plan

[GOCO’s 2015 Strategic Plan](#) included several broad goals for future investments that include components that the board intends will be addressed through the open space purpose.

Landscape-Scale Connectivity: List any priority areas that this property lies within and/or how this project builds on conservation efforts. This may include priority areas designated by the Colorado Conservation Partnership’s *Keep it Colorado* initiative, the Colorado Natural Heritage Program, Colorado Parks and Wildlife, or other organizations that prioritize conservation areas. Please include information about why the property fits within a specific priority area.

Rivers and Riparian Corridors: List any rivers or riparian corridors that this project will help protect and quantify the extent of these features on the property.

Urban Parcels: If this property lies within an urban area, describe the location and public benefits.

Access: Describe how any current or proposed uses of the property will lead to public access and education opportunities.

Selection Criteria G – Partnership and Non-monetary Support

GOCO requires applicants to make a substantial effort to seek letters of support or non-opposition from the county in which a property is located and also from the town or city, if the property is within town or city limits. These letters must be on official letterhead.

If the applicant seeks a letter from a jurisdiction and is unsuccessful, the applicant must describe in the application the efforts it took to procure a letter and may provide other letters of support up to the limit indicated in the application, all of which GOCO will consider in scoring the application. Additionally, if the applicant cannot obtain a letter from a jurisdiction with land use authority, the applicant must supply GOCO with any feedback about the proposed project that it received from the respective jurisdiction in response to the applicant’s outreach.

Selection Criteria H – Ability to Accomplish Goals

When the applicant is purchasing a conservation easement, GOCO expects that the landowner(s) understands what the applicant is proposing for funding. If the landowner(s) has not read the actual application, please explain what steps have been taken to ensure that he or she knows the details of the project as it is proposed.

BUDGET

- a. **Landowner cash contributions.** Landowners may cover eligible transaction costs; however, the landowner cannot donate funds toward the purchase price.
- b. **Matching resources and eligible costs.** Only costs that are required to acquire the property are eligible to be used as matching resources.
 - i. Land donations cannot be used to meet any of the minimum matching requirements, either as in-kind or cash, because the donation is not an expense to the grantee to complete the project. (GOCO instead gives credit for land donations in points awarded for project leveraging.)
 - ii. Eligible costs typically include only the following (see conditions below):
 1. Purchase price (This may only include the cost of the land and water rights, if any, and may not include the cost of any improvements or personal property to be acquired along with the land.)
 2. Survey (if necessary)
 3. Appraisal
 4. Environmental hazards assessment
 5. Baseline documentation report
 6. Title policy
 7. Mineral assessment (if necessary)
 8. Closing costs (these must match the settlement statement)
 9. Attorney fees (the grantee's attorney fees, not the landowner's)
 10. Water rights due diligence (may include project-related costs of subscribing to and using water rights-tracking software such as Water Sage)
 11. Stewardship endowments (GOCO will not pay more than 50% of the endowment cost. Requests for stewardship endowment funds from GOCO must be matched by an equivalent cash contribution by the applicant and/or partners. GOCO will not pay more than \$10,000 for a stewardship endowment. If there are multiple properties in the project, GOCO will pay up to \$10,000 for a stewardship endowment for each property. GOCO funds may support annual monitoring and reporting but may not be used for legal defense costs.)
 12. Indirect costs, such as staff time and overhead, if specifically approved by GOCO (See GOCO's [Request for Indirect Costs Form](#))