



## Stewardship Impact Grants

Colorado's popularity as a place to live, work, and play has increased substantially in recent years and shows no signs of receding. Faced with this reality and amid federal and state funding shortfalls, Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) aims to improve the condition of our state's lands by providing grants for outdoor stewardship projects that demonstrate meaningful improvements to the ecological and recreational amenities that attract residents and visitors to numerous, diverse destinations throughout Colorado. The GOCO Board has allocated **\$1,000,000** for this inaugural grant cycle.

In an effort to strategically deploy resources to address meaningful stewardship outcomes, GOCO intends to fund projects that:

- take advantage of opportunities for collaboration among stewardship organizations, land managers, and community partners
- target a resource or location for stewardship, and scale-up from a project-by-project engagement model to a more comprehensive, prioritized effort at addressing resource stewardship needs
- increase capacity of existing stewardship organizations and provide opportunities for collaboration and mentoring among organizations
- solicit new funding sources to increase capacity and sustainability
- create opportunities to involve new populations and communities in stewardship work including deliberate and intentional actions to include populations not typically involved in stewardship

Examples of project outcomes might include but are not limited to: basin-wide eradication of invasive riparian species such as tamarisk and/or Russian olive; system-wide trail and ecological stewardship within a local/regional park system; or iterative stewardship interventions such as trail remediation or rerouting projects that address locally/regionally prioritized needs. For the purposes of this grant program, stewardship shall mean the maintenance, restoration, and management of Colorado's natural and outdoor recreational resources for the benefit of current and future generations and long-term sustainability of the resource.

With this pilot initiative, GOCO hopes to learn what models of collaboration or scaling create impact, how communities are engaging with volunteers and with their environmental/recreational resources, and what public engagement outcomes or strategies help move the needle on addressing stewardship across multiple facets from behavioral change to on-the-ground benefits. With this in mind, GOCO envisions convening successful applicants

through mandatory learning workshops and formal discussions to create opportunities to adjust approaches in order to achieve the greatest stewardship outcomes.

To request a link to our online application, you must first contact GOCO to discuss your proposed project; GOCO staff will determine whether the project is eligible for this program. Please carefully review all of the instructions and suggestions provided within this document. Thank you for your interest in GOCO's stewardship program. We look forward to reviewing your proposals!

## General Guidance and Grant Information

**IMPORTANT DATES:** Applicants must submit applications through the GOCO portal **no later than 5:00pm on January 17, 2019**. Please submit any draft applications for GOCO staff review **before January 3, 2019**. A committee of the GOCO Board will meet to discuss staff's funding recommendations in **February 2019**. The GOCO Board will make grant awards **on March 8, 2019** but note that this date is subject to change. Successful applicants shall have **three** years from the award date to complete the proposed projects and submit final documentation.

**APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS:** After receiving an application, GOCO staff and outside peer reviewers will review, score, and rank applications based upon responses to the questions in the narrative section of the application, other application materials submitted, and the general merit of the project. Each category within the proposal narrative is assigned a maximum point value, and final scores reflect the sum total of points awarded to each category.

**APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY:** This program is open to all entities eligible to receive GOCO open space and local government funds:

- a) Colorado municipality or county
- b) Political subdivision of the State of Colorado that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas
- c) Title 32 special district eligible to receive distributions from the Conservation Trust Fund
- d) 501(c)(3) non-profit land conservation organization that includes in its mission the identification, acquisition, or management of open space and natural areas, e.g., land trusts
- e) Colorado Parks and Wildlife

### **PROJECT/PROPERTY ELIGIBILITY:**

- a) The project's primary objective must consist of enhancing/restoring open space, wildlife habitat, or other ecosystem or enhancing/restoring trails or other passive recreational infrastructure including signs, fences, tent pads, etc.
- b) Developing new trails exclusively is not an eligible project outcome. If a project, however, includes new trail development as a project component among trail decommissioning, rerouting, etc., with the principle aim of creating a more sustainable system, then new

trail development is eligible. Motorized-only trails are expressly ineligible for this program.

- c) The project must occur on land owned by a:
  - i) federal agency, municipality, county, or other political subdivision of the state, or
  - ii) land trust or other private party, and
    - 1) the land is permanently protected by a conservation easement or other permanent use restriction, or
    - 2) the landowner is willing to enter into an agreement, with the grantee or other project partner, committing to maintaining the project for a reasonable period of years, e.g., 10-20 years.
- d) All work must comply with any conservation easement or other use restriction concerning management of the property's natural resources.
- e) Applicants may request funding for a coordinator or similar staff resources necessary to effectively and efficiently produce project outcomes.
- f) Planning and/or consulting work are eligible project components.
- g) Other eligible project components include:
  - i. Invasive species removal, riparian restoration including bank stabilization and development of in-stream structures, and/or floodplain restoration
  - ii. Revegetation, e.g., tree planting, shrub planting, seeding, etc.
  - iii. Citizen science, e.g., habitat/species monitoring, cultural site monitoring
  - iv. Natural disaster recovery and/or prevention, e.g., flood recovery, fire restoration or mitigation
  - v. Environmental education/interpretive programs, e.g., wildlife education, ethics and stewardship education
  - vi. General clean-up or beautification, e.g., trash removal, graffiti removal

**GRANT AMOUNT AND MATCH REQUIREMENTS:** GOCO intends to fund several high-quality projects throughout the state and a wide variety of project types. Therefore, GOCO recommends limiting your request to \$300,000 but will entertain requests exceeding that amount. Please contact us to discuss your project and requested funding amount.

GOCO will fund up to 75% of the proposed project's eligible costs. We require a minimum 25% match from other sources, and at least 10% must be cash.

**TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION:** You must complete your project and submit a final report within three years of the grant award date. GOCO may deauthorize a grant if the project is not completed within that time, or by any extended period of time authorized by staff or the board.

**COSTS:** Eligible costs are costs necessary to the project that GOCO can fund directly or will allow as match, either as cash or as in-kind donations. The following chart, though not comprehensive, summarizes GOCO's eligibility requirements with regard to project expenses. Please discuss any potential project expenses with GOCO to determine the eligibility of those expenses prior to applying.

| ELIGIBLE COSTS  | INELIGIBLE COSTS  |
|---|---|
| Professional services such as consultant or contracted services, youth corps crews, etc.  | Staff time on projects outside of the scope of the application  |
| Staff time when applicant can demonstrate that existing staff is the most effective and strategic way of managing the project, and that staff can still fulfill other existing duties | Any costs incurred prior to the grant award date with the exception of limited engineering and design costs, as described below |
| Equipment operation and/or rental   | Equipment purchases (unless equipment rental costs exceed purchase costs)   |
| Travel expenses related to project  | Fundraising costs   |
| Costs that relate directly to the project, such as surveys, engineering, design, GIS/mapping, monitoring and evaluation services, etc.  |   |
| Costs associated with project planning/coordination   |   |
| Costs associated with volunteer engagement and retention, e.g., prizes, awards, etc.  |   |

**SPECIFIC ELIGIBLE COSTS:**

**TRAVEL/MEAL EXPENSES:** Please be specific as to whom these expenses will cover. GOCO does not cover a “per diem” because we can only pay for expenses that are documented by receipts. Please estimate these costs in the application and simply document the actual expenses upon completion of travel/meals, if awarded a grant.

**MEASUREMENT/EVALUATION/MONITORING EXPENSES:** Expenses related to collecting data and evaluating and monitoring the project and project components are eligible for funding or as match. If you anticipate seeking funds for this purpose, please include a description of the anticipated approach in the appropriate section of the proposal.

**STAFF EXPENSES:** Staff expenses incurred by the applicant and any contracted service providers to manage the project, e.g., volunteer coordinators, are eligible for funding or as match. All requests to include staff time in the budget must be fully explained and well-documented. Please contact GOCO with any questions about eligible staff costs and how to explain or document them.

**INDIRECT EXPENSES:** Indirect expenses, whether funded directly by GOCO or used as cash match, are eligible. For purposes of this program, indirect expenses may include administrative expenses, office supplies, grantee/partner rent or other occupancy expenses, insurance costs, and equipment use or services not otherwise included in your project budget.

**ELIGIBLE CASH MATCH:** All costs directly eligible for GOCO funding are also eligible as match. Additionally, the applicant may include up to 100% of pre-project design and engineering costs completed up to one year prior to award date. **Please contact GOCO if you intend to use Colorado Parks and Wildlife funds as cash match because limitations may apply.**

**ELIGIBLE IN-KIND MATCH:** Volunteer time (@ \$24.69 per hour, rounded to nearest tens of dollars) is eligible as in-kind match. Likewise, any donated or discounted professional services, materials, equipment, etc. are also eligible.

## Online Application Instructions



**NOTE:** GOCO is piloting a new, online application system to provide a better end-user experience for our applicants. Please feel free to share any feedback you may have to help us continue to improve our system.

### ONLINE APPLICATION GUIDANCE:

1. You will receive a link to the application by e-mail after discussing your project with GOCO.
2. To start an application, follow the link provided and log into or register for the GOCO Grantee Portal. **Please use only this link to start a grant application; links from other grant programs will not work properly. Please discontinue using this link once an application is created; continuing to use the link will create new, separate grant applications within the system. See instructions below about accessing your newly created application.**
3. When you log in, you will land on the new application page and be prompted to enter a project title and press the “Save” button.
4. Complete the application:
  - Please read and follow the onscreen instructions in the application.
  - To begin the application, click on the green “Edit” button.
  - Fill in all fields as instructed on the screen. All fields are required, except where noted.
  - You can save your application and return to it at any time prior to submission.
  - Press “Save” often to avoid losing completed work.
5. Upload Attachments
  - Follow the onscreen instructions for details about what to include within each required attachment.
  - To upload, click the “Select File” button to locate the document and **then click the “Upload” button to attach it to the application.**
6. To submit a draft **please do not click the “Submit” button**; simply save your application to the portal and e-mail Chris using his contact information provided below. In your e-mail, please indicate the project title and any specific questions you have regarding the application.
7. When you are ready to submit your final application, go to the “Review & Submit” tab and click the “Submit” button.

8. 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:**

- To access your application after you've started it, log in at <http://tinyurl.com/GOCOGranteePortal>. (You cannot use this link to start a new application.)
- To edit an in-process application, click this  icon in the "Edit" column of the portal dashboard.
- To see a read-only version of your application, click this  icon in the "View" column.
- 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 username or password, please don't create a new account. Instead:
  - To recover your username, send an e-mail from the address you used during registration to [portal@goco.org](mailto:portal@goco.org). Include the first name, last name, and organization you used when you registered for the portal.
  - If you forget your password, reset it using the "Can't access your account?" link on the portal registration 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 requires access to the online application, have that person establish a portal account. Then, you can e-mail [portal@goco.org](mailto:portal@goco.org) and ask that the application be shared with the other person.

## **Grant Administration Information**

**GRANT AGREEMENT:** If a grant is awarded, GOCO will send a grant agreement to the applicant within approximately two weeks of the GOCO Board's decision. This document will serve as the official agreement between GOCO and the grantee. If the grant award is for less than full funding, a revised budget, approved by GOCO, will be required with the signed contract. Grantees will have 60 days after receipt of the contract to sign and return it to GOCO (along with a resolution from the grantee's board or other controlling body authorizing acceptance of the grant). The grantee must contact GOCO to request additional time. Extending the return of the grant agreement does not extend the project due date.

**CHANGES TO PROJECT:** Any changes that arise during the course of the project, or modifications the grantee desires, such as changing the scope of the project, matching resources, total project cost, etc., must be requested in writing and approved in advance by GOCO.

**INSURANCE:** GOCO requires that the grantee maintain general liability insurance for the entire period of the project that covers all staff and volunteers participating in the project, for

protection in the event of injury and/or damage. The insurance limits shall not be less than \$1,000,000 per occurrence and \$2,000,000 in aggregate. If the grantee contracts with another organization to complete the project, it is the responsibility of the grantee to ensure its contractor carries insurance that fulfills this requirement. Volunteer management organizations may provide adequate coverage for partnering organizations, so the grantee should consult with its volunteer management organization, if any, to determine whether separate or additional coverage is necessary.

**REPORTING:** Upon project completion, the grantee must submit a final project report, with associated attachments, available on GOCO's website. If you request an advance or progress payment, GOCO requires you to submit additional materials and documentation to comply with accounting rules. GOCO may pay up to 50% of the grant award as an advance payment or upon satisfactory completion of a mid-project progress report; the remainder is payable upon GOCO's approval of a final report. Grantees should consult with GOCO about payment options when negotiating the grant agreement. As with all grants, payments are subject to the availability of sufficient net lottery proceeds.

As part of this new grant program, GOCO may request periodic participation in various assessments or analyses throughout the project period. By accepting an award you are expected to participate in these as necessary. GOCO does not intend to create any undue burdens with this requirement, but please prepare for an increased level of interaction with GOCO throughout the course of the project.

## Contact

We strongly encourage you to contact GOCO in advance of submitting your application, to discuss any questions or concerns that arise throughout the application process. We encourage you to thoroughly review the application materials and submit a draft application for review (by January 3, 2019). We look forward to working with you!

### **Chris Yuan-Farrell**

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## Proposal Narrative

The following questions are provided for purposes of reference and planning only and mirror the questions in the online application. Please submit your answers to these questions in the online application and NOT IN THE SPACE PROVIDED BELOW. GOCO will only accept application submissions through the online portal as discussed previously in this guidance document.

1. **Need:**

Describe the stewardship problem that this project seeks to address. Provide context for the project, i.e., increased use and burden on recreational amenities and/or the environment and the related driving factors. Describe how the project addresses any priorities identified by the community. What will be lost if the project is delayed or not completed at all?

2. **Community engagement and planning:**

Demonstrate how this project represents a collaborative community-driven process with buy-in, direction, and support provided by a diversity of participants including individuals, organizations, and land managers. Describe in detail any completed or anticipated planning activities that influenced the project elements included in the proposal, and please detail the expected outcomes and how you will use any requested planning, coordination, or consultation services necessary for project delivery. Describe any attempts to engage new and/or diverse volunteers in this project and any attempt to identify and engage populations that are not currently engaged with the resources targeted for stewardship through this proposal. Describe any anticipated permitting needs or similar agreements that you will secure in order to execute the proposal and any progress to-date with regard to permitting.

3. **Project scope:**

Provide a detailed description of the project including specific locations, individual project elements, etc. Describe the work and quantify expected outcomes wherever possible including the anticipated benefits to recreationists, wildlife and wildlife habitat, the community, etc. Describe any additional benefits that may result from the implementation of the project, e.g., economic development, inspiring additional work, etc. Proposals that clearly describe the expected outcomes of the project will score better. Describe how this project will increase the scope/scale of your impact beyond what you have achieved in past efforts and how you will achieve that scale of impact, e.g., through collaborative partnerships, through increased local capacity, etc.

4. **Measuring impact:**

Describe how you will measure and report on the impact of this project. What measurable outcomes will result from this project? Describe how you will incorporate and evaluate the best practices and guidelines set forth by the Colorado Outdoor Stewardship Coalition (COSC) (available [here](#)) and use COSC-endorsed metric collection strategies (available upon request) including COSC's Asset Map and Database. Describe how you anticipate measuring any public



engagement impacts from this proposal, e.g., any measurable changes in public knowledge or perception of stewardship and the need for such activities in their communities.

**5. Financial resources:**

Describe the specific resources and investments you will make to create meaningful stewardship outcomes through this proposal. Specifically describe the need for GOCO funds and how these funds will allow you to accomplish the stewardship outcomes. Describe any cash and in-kind contributions, secured or planned, that are included in the budget. Describe how you will raise additional funds and any alternative strategy if you are unable to raise those funds. Describe the fundraising efforts associated with this project and the cash and/or in-kind partnerships established. Will applicant or partner funds dedicated to the project be lost if GOCO doesn't award a grant now?

**6. Support:**

Include up to eight letters of support from individuals, organizations, and land managers that are in support of this project and include in the body of those letters what financial or other commitments the individual or entity is making, if any. The letters should demonstrate the need and demand for and urgency of the project. Support letters/e-mails must be included with the application and will not be accepted if mailed to the GOCO office. Also, please describe any opposition to the project and what has been done to address the concerns of the opposition.