

Questions & Answers

Forestry Outreach and Implementation Project Partner for Roots for Resilience Initiative

Date Finalized: May 29, 2026

Submission Deadline: June 15, 2026

Office Hours:

- June 5, 2026 & June 12, 2026 - 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
- <https://meet.google.com/aiz-btro-dic>

Question 1:

Eastern Shore Land Conservancy (ESLC) and Lower Shore Land Trust (LSLT) are already on board as partners for the R4R program. How does that impact the competitiveness of this RFQ?

Response 1:

ESLC and LSLT have been subawarded for a separate task of developing coastal resilience plans on eased land for R4R. This RFQ is a separate opportunity with different goals and will be evaluated based upon the criteria defined in the RFQ that includes: experience, proposed methodology and project schedule, proposed budget framework, county and stakeholder engagement strategy, community outreach strategy, comprehension of Eastern Shore forests and forestry topics. All applications will be evaluated fairly against the criteria defined in the RFQ.

Question 2:

Has the state received the full grant amount and is there risk of the budget changing?

Response 2:

This grant was awarded by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to the Atlantic Conservation Coalition (led by North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources, NC DNCR) in August of 2024. NC DNCR has been able to draw down federal funds since the award date and DNR has been invoicing and receiving payments from NC DNCR, which we expect to continue.

Question 3:

Is DNR envisioning a single lead organization for the entire 6 county geography or are collaborative subregional approaches encouraged?

Response 3:

It is preferred that one organization, or a 'lead' organization, will apply to complete all requested activities in the 6 County geography due to cross-county collaboration being a priority of this RFQ. However, applicants can submit applications for specific counties that they are interested in covering. The selected partner will not be able to subaward; work can only be subcontracted.

Submissions will be evaluated against the criteria defined in the RFQ:

- Experience
- Proposed methodology and project schedule
- Proposed budget framework
- County and stakeholder engagement strategy
- Community outreach strategy
- Comprehension of Eastern Shore forests and forestry topics

Question 4:

Will a QAPP be needed?

Response 4:

No. The QAPP for forestry projects under Roots for Resilience has already been approved and signed by EPA.

Question 5:

Will the selected partner need to release a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the outreach activities?

Response 5:

The selected partner can complete the outreach activities under "personnel" in your budget, or you may subcontract out any of the outreach activities. Reminder that selection of contractors must follow federal procurement guidelines and applicants must abide by all regulations set forth in 2 CFR 200 since this Initiative is funded by Federal dollars.

Question 6:

Since this is an RFQ rather than a typical grant application, does Indirect Cost de minimis still apply? Can we include an indirect cost in our application?

Response 6:

This award is considered 100% Federal Funding so, yes, Indirect Costs of 15%, the *de minimis* rate, applies. Yes, Indirect costs may be part of the budget in your application.

Question 7:**What forestry acreage will the selected partner be responsible for completing?**

Response 7:

Reminder that the Maryland Forest Service (MFS) is responsible for reaching the 1,000 acres of forest management implementation goal. The MFS will select and plan the implementation projects.

The selected partner will be responsible for:

- Finding, hiring, and paying contractors to complete work on project plans passed to them by the MFS (up to the goal of 1,000 acres).
- Coordinate with the 6 counties to identify at least one project in each county on county-owned land.
- This will be a collaborative effort between county staff, the selected partner, and the MFS. Ideally, the county will already have ideas of projects outside their capacity that we can select from for implementation.
- Communicate project ideas that arise through community outreach to the MFS.

Question 8:**Is there a per-acre cost model for implementation activities?**

Response 8:

Yes, the expected activities and estimated costs are below:

- Reforestation – \$325 per acre
- Aerial herbicide spraying – \$160 per acre
- Crop tree release – \$275 per acre
- Pre-commercial thinning – \$325 per acre
- Invasive species control – very variable by species, site conditions, and control strategy; based on budget, we may be able to consider some simple projects.
 - Backpack spot treatment – \$400 per acre
 - UTV / truck spray treatment – \$1,500 per acre
 - Forestry mulching – \$2,000 to \$3,000 per acre

Prescribed burning will count toward the 1,000 acre goal but will not be paid for through this award. The selected partner should consider understory burning as an option for county implementation projects and should communicate any burn project ideas from community outreach to the MFS. The MFS will separately fund and internally complete any prescribed burning activities identified by the selected partner.

Question 9:**Are you expecting contractors to be selected as part of our application, or would that come following community meetings when there is more information on the desired activities?**

Response 9:

We are not expecting selection of contractors now. As noted in the question, selection of contractors will come into play when there is more information on the desired activities.

Selection will need to follow federal procurement guidelines. It is okay to hire contractors that can do things in bulk.

Question 10:

How can contractors get involved in this work?

Response 10:

Potential contractors can reach out directly to the selected partner. DNR will put out a press release to formally announce the selected partner.

Question 11:

Could you speak a bit more about the implementation on County-Owned Land? Are these forestry projects (land managed for forest products), or primarily improving forest management and habitat in parks and other county owned land?

Response 11:

The R4R forestry projects will fit each of the county's objectives. For example, if a County goal is to harvest in the future, we will explore potential ways to guide the forest toward increased productivity. If a County goal is to enhance recreation and improve habitat, we will focus on activities that lead to those outcomes. We expect that implementation activities will likely address multiple County objectives.

Question 12:

What could count as a forest management project? Could, for example, training on invasive identification and removal qualify, or must there be direct implementation in each project?

Response 12:

Forest management projects must be direct implementation. However, DNR will consider how training might fit in under a forest management project.

Question 13:

What are the Community Liaisons and how they will help with the project?

Response 13:

DNR has already subawarded Audubon Mid-Atlantic to hire Community Liaisons (CL) to join the Roots for Resilience initiative. The CL opportunity will be funded through Audubon's Roots for Resilience subward, but the CLs will support the tasks on this scope of work. It is expected that the CLs will reside within the focal area but there will not necessarily be a liaison from every county. The CL may help organize and advertise community meetings, inform the public survey, and communicate directly with residents and groups. Our vision of the CL includes the below language:

As a Community Liaison, you won't just be "attending meetings." You will be the bridge between your community and the Roots for Resilience Team. You will ensure that local

voices shape how we protect our land and water. We are looking to hear voices and input from:

- *Indigenous Communities (Tribal members and leaders)*
- *Recreation Groups (Hunters, fishers, and outdoor enthusiasts)*
- *Local Neighborhoods (Long-time residents and heritage groups)*
- *Faith-Based Communities (Local churches and faith organizations)*
- *Natural Resource Economies (Watermen, foresters, and farmers)*

Duration: 1-year minimum, 4-year maximum

Compensation: \$10,000 per year (Paid upon completion of specific tasks).

Role: Guiding local engagement and gathering feedback to share and elevate community goals that align with on-the-ground restoration

You don't need a degree in science or planning. We are looking for local expertise - understanding the landscape and lived experiences of Lower Shore residents.

Question 14:

Have Community Liaisons been selected? Could you share a little more about the selection process?

Response 14:

No, the Community Liaisons have not yet been selected. Interested individuals will submit an application and virtual interviews will be scheduled. The opportunity is not open yet; more information will be available on our website in the coming months as locations for restoration projects get finalized.

Question 15:

The RFQ didn't talk specifically about carbon sequestration. Is this project focused on other elements of resilience?

Response 15:

This project focuses more on climate and community resilience by enhancing forests' ability to adapt to changing conditions. Healthy forests sequester more carbon and provide more ecosystem services. Many of our forests need management, like invasive species control or prescribed fire, in order to remain healthy. The goal is to spread awareness of the options within forestry that can enhance the health of forests. In the end, implementation of projects may have a carbon sequestration benefit in addition to resilience benefits. The tracking and communicating of the carbon project progress for R4R as well as the other states in the ACC will be completed by our ACC partner Duke University, Nicholas Institute for Energy, Environment & Sustainability. DNR will be coordinating with Duke to communicate our carbon progress.

Question 16:

The RFQ mentions participant stipends for the meetings. What is your vision for that?

Response 16:

The goal is to compensate participants for their time and local expertise. There is not yet a vision for exactly how the stipends will function but the \$40K budget is broken down as below:

- Participant Support: Community stipends (\$50/person), estimated at 30 participants per meeting for the 18 meetings total (\$30K total)
- Participant Support: Meeting space (estimated at \$200/venue) (\$4K total)
- Participant Support: Food & meal supplies (estimated at \$10 per person) (\$6K total)

Question 17:

For the forestry assessments, are there specific metrics that need to be collected for every county or are you expecting a unique assessment of data based on the information counties identify?

Response 17:

Data and information can come from existing sources. The goal is to compile and contextualize the data so that the county has easy access to answers that residents or staff might have questions about. See below for examples:

- Forest Inventory and Analysis program reports from the U.S. Forest Service – <https://research.fs.usda.gov/products/dataandtools/forest-inventory-and-analysis-one-click-state-factsheets>
- Maryland Forestry and Wood Product Resources dashboard from the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative – <https://esrgc.org/projects/forestry-hub>