

**Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
Summary Information
06/07/21**

	Data Field	
1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
2.	Agency Contact:	Susan Duke Grant Administrator One Natural Resources Way Springfield, IL 62702 Susan.duke@illinois.gov (217) 785-4416
3.	Announcement Type:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Initial announcement <input type="checkbox"/> Modification of a previous announcement
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Illinois Habitat Fund Grant
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	FY2022 Illinois Habitat Fund
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	Special Wildlife Funds Habitat Fund
7.	CSFA Number:	422-20-1090
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	Habitat Fund
9.	CFDA Number(s):	n/a
10.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	unknown
11.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	Est. \$ 500,000
12.	Award Range	\$ 10,000 - \$300,000
13.	Source of Funding:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal or Federal pass-through <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Private / other funding
14.	Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
15.	Indirect Costs Allowed Restrictions on Indirect Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, provide the citation governing the restriction:
16.	Posted Dates:	July 1, 2021 to August 2, 2021
17.	Closing Date for Applications:	August 2, 2021 5:00 pm
18.	Technical Assistance Session: For any technical assistance call or email susan.duke@illinois.gov 217-785-4416	Session Offered: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Session Mandatory: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Specify date and time Provide link to registration, if applicable

Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity

A. Program Description

The Illinois Habitat Fund provides grants to appropriate not-for-profit organizations and to governmental entities for projects designated exclusively for the preservation and maintenance of high-quality habitat lands. This Fund is part of the Special Wildlife Funds Grant Program. Grants through the Illinois Habitat Fund are competitive and are evaluated for their merit.

Grant funding through this Fund supports activities and programs undertaken by land managers to preserve, protect, acquire, manage, and maintain high quality habitat for future generations. Goals include improving habitat quality and connectivity. Habitat can be characterized by such parameters as type, native diversity, size, structure, scarcity, and location. Connectivity is defined as linkage with neighboring habitat, whether existing or potential. Illinois' habitat includes all wetlands, woodlands, grasslands, and agricultural lands, natural or altered, that support or have the potential to support populations of wild animals in any or all phases of their life cycles. See [520 ILCS 25/10](#) for full text of the Habitat Endowment Act.

Grant Program Administration: The Office of Resource Conservation's Division of Wildlife Resources administers four special grant programs that are funded by Illinois sportsmen through the purchase of Habitat Stamps and Migratory Waterfowl Stamps. These are the Illinois Habitat Fund (the program described in this NOFO), the State Pheasant Fund, the State Furbearer Fund, and the State Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Fund. <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/grants/Pages/Special-Wildlife-Funds-Grant-Program.aspx>

These Funds are governed by Administrative Rule set forth in [17 Ill. Adm. Code 3060](#). The Grantee agrees and understands that the grant shall be administered pursuant to the Administrative Rule and shall comply with these terms and conditions. See Section H. for full text of the Administrative Rule.

Examples of Awarded Habitat Grants

2021 Awards: <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/news/Pages/IDNR-Announces-2021-Habitat-Fund-Project-Grants.aspx>

2019 Awards: <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IDNR-Announces-Spring-2019-Habitat-Fund-Project-Grants.aspx>

2018 Awards: <https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/news/Pages/IDNR-Announces-2018-Habitat-Fund-Project-Grants.aspx>

B. Funding Information

This Notice of Funding Opportunity is for grant awards that utilize only State appropriated funds from the Illinois Habitat Fund. Obligations of the State will cease immediately without penalty of further payment being required if in any fiscal year the Illinois General Assembly fails to appropriate or otherwise make available sufficient funds for this award. No federal funds are included in this grant program.

The Illinois Grant Funds Recovery Act (30 ILCS 705/5) limits the grant period for grants with advance payments to a maximum of twenty-four (24) months. The term begins on the date of the DNR Director's signature. All work must be completed within the grant term. All grant funds must be expended by the grantee within 2 years of receipt of such funds.

Any funds not expended or legally obligated at the completion of the project or at the end of the grant agreement, whichever is earlier, must be returned to the DNR within 45 days to be deposited in the Illinois Habitat Fund.

Funding is available for new projects as well as proposals that continue, supplement, or expand existing projects. New projects and continuing projects are given equal consideration.

Disbursements: The disbursement of funds will be made after the final execution of the grant, and upon submission by the grantee of a written request for payment on the Request for Reimbursement form provided by DNR. All payments shall be based upon documentation of project expenditures as submitted by the grantee, as provided below:

1. All billings shall be submitted within ninety (90) days following the end of a project period or date of project completion. **Failure to do so may** render the grantee ineligible to receive payments under the current award or make them ineligible for future awards.
2. Project costs for which reimbursement is sought cannot be incurred by the grantee prior to the effective date of the agreement, unless otherwise authorized by the DNR. Costs incurred prior to DNR approval are ineligible for grant assistance. If purchase is initiated and documented by a written purchase order or invoice prior to the end of the term of the grant agreement and payment is made within 30 - 60 days, the expense may be allowable.
3. Final payment will not be processed until the Final Report and Request for Reimbursement are received and approved by the DNR. All local match (if any) will be paid by the grantee who will provide documentation at this time.

C. Eligibility Information

Eligible recipients are limited to any appropriate not-for-profit organization or government agency that has the expertise, equipment, and permission from the landowner (if applicable) to develop and/or manage habitat. "Appropriate Not-For-Profit Organization" means a not-for-profit corporation that is organized pursuant to the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986 [805 ILCS 105], is in good standing as a not-for-profit corporation and is authorized to conduct affairs in Illinois with one of its purposes as stated in its Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws being the support, development, conservation or management of habitat for future generations, or wildlife rehabilitation.

Grant Pre-qualification: All grantees are required to register with the State of Illinois, complete a prequalification process, and be determined "qualified." Registration and prequalification must be completed in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>

During pre-qualification, Dun and Bradstreet verifications are performed including a check of Debarred and Suspended status and good standing with the Secretary of State. If applicable, the entity will be notified that it is ineligible for award and if corrective action is needed to become eligible for a grant award.

Dun and Bradstreet Universal Numbering System (DUNS) Number and System for Award Management (SAM): Each applicant is required to have a valid DUNS number and be registered in SAM before submission of their application.

An applicant is exempt only if the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under [2 CFR § 25.110\(b\)](#) [2 CFR § 25.110\(d\)](#) or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under [2 CFR § 25.110\(d\)](#).

If an applicant is not registered in SAM, this link provides a connection for free SAM registration: <https://sam.gov/content/home>

An applicant must continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information while it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The State awarding agency may not make an award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable DUNS and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the State awarding agency is ready to make a State award, the State awarding agency may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

If an applicant does not have a DUNS number, this link provides a connection for a free DUNS number: <https://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>.

Kinds of Projects Eligible for Grants are limited to those seeking to preserve, protect, acquire or manage habitat (all wetlands, woodlands, grasslands, and agricultural lands, natural or altered) in Illinois that have the potential to support populations of wildlife in any or all phases of their life cycles. Examples of past funded projects include purchase of native grass and forb seed, herbicide, and purchase of habitat management equipment such as controlled burn tools, seeders, sprayers, native grass drills and land purchases.

Kinds of Projects Ineligible for Grants include education projects and the purchase or lease of a vehicle such as a truck or All-Terrain Vehicles (ATV's). Food plots are not funded as standalone projects.

Limitations: The maximum reimbursement for various types of habitat development is limited to the following cost-per-acre rates which include the grantee's percentage cost share match as listed in the Uniform Budget Template:

- a) \$100.00/acre for seed costs (grasses, forbs, legumes or any combination thereof)
- b) Food plots alone are not eligible for reimbursement.

Cost per acre limitations have not been set for trees and shrubs.

Cost Sharing or Matching is not required for award of these grants. However, providing cost share can improve the competitiveness of a project. See Section E below.

Indirect Cost Rate: To charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

- a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.
- b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization must negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have Federally Negotiated Rate or elect to use the De Minimis Rate. The indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted to the State of Illinois within 90 days of the notice of award.
- c) De Minimis Rate. An organization that does not have a current Federally Negotiated Rate may elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the de minimis rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the de minimis rate.

D. Application and Submission Information

Application Package: The complete application package consists of these documents found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/grants/Pages/Habitat-Funding-Opportunity.aspx>

If you need any assistance with the application forms or the process call or email Susan.Duke@illinois.gov 217-785-4416.

Application Package must include:

- 1) Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance ([fillable pdf](#))
- 2) Project Narrative (word document). Must include the following:
 - a) Project Description with justification including:
 - (a) Wildlife to benefit from the project
 - (b) Plan for implementation, including an activity timeline on how the project's goals will be attained.
 - (c) Amount of habitat to be established or managed, including species to be planted or eliminated.
 - b) Comprehensive plan for the operation and maintenance of the project including supervision, estimated costs (including any and all fees) and storage location, if applicable.
 - c) Description of plan for general public access or use (or lack thereof)
- 3) Uniform Budget Template and Budget Narrative ([fillable pdf](#))

Application Attachments must include

- 1) **Project Area Map**
- 2) **W-9:** All applicants must complete and provide the **latest W-9 version** as found at www.IRS.gov. The Illinois Comptroller, who issues all State payments, will not accept earlier versions.
- 3) **IRS Determination Letter:** Not-for-profit applicants that have not done business with the State of Illinois in the last 3 years, or have reorganized since last doing business with the State must provide a copy of their **IRS Determination Letter** which declares

- the entity's legal status as determined by the IRS, e.g. tax-exempt, governmental, partnership, type of corporation, or type of Limited Liability Company. This letter is not the FEIN assignment letter, but is among the original legal/tax documents for an entity.
- 4) **Plat Map(s) and Contracts (Optional):** If the project will be completed with cooperators, a plat map showing each property to be developed and a copy of a farm program contract for each committed cooperator involved in the project or estimated acreage. Committed cooperators will be given priority over estimated acreage.

There is also a helpful document on how to write a grant proposal narrative on the DNR website:

<https://www.dnr.illinois.gov/grants/Documents/HowToWriteGrantProposal.pdf>

Certification and Assurances: All applicants must agree with and comply with the list of "Certification and Assurances" also found at www.grants.illinois.gov. Signing the Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance meets this requirement. Do not include this list with the submitted application. It will be part of the grant agreement documents.

To contact DNR, request or submit forms use the following means:

By US Mail: Department of Natural Resources
Office of Grant Management and Assistance
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702-1271

By e-mail: susan.duke@illinois.gov

By phone: (217) 785-4416

Application Format: The Application and Budget forms should be on letter-sized paper and type font size must be 9 or greater. Any and all project descriptions, proposals, pictures, charts, tables and maps on separate sheets must be included with the application. These forms are designed to allow the Department and the review committee to obtain enough information to evaluate the proposed project. Applications materials may be scanned and attached to an email.

Application Submission: The applicant must provide all information requested in the application package. Only one (1) original application with supporting documentation and legally authorizing signature needs to be submitted. You may submit more than one application, such as an application submitted for each proposed project if applicable. Paper copies may be double-sided. Applications can be submitted electronically by attaching to an email (an original signature is required), but not by facsimile. **The application deadline is 5:00 p.m. August 2nd, 2021.**

Submitting an incomplete application does not extend the application deadline date. Applications received after the deadline date will not be considered.

Signers of these documents must be authorized by their organization to enter into formal contracts. All communication, oral or written, **between** the applicant and DNR will be with the signer, or their designee. Applications that are not signed will be returned.

Intent to Award: Following a decision of intent to award, DNR is required to conduct a financial and administrative risk assessment of the applicant. Additional information may be required at that time from the successful applicant. For the applicant to remain eligible for the award, they must provide the requested information within 30 days after notification of intent to award.

E. Application Review Information

Review and Selection Process: All applications received on time and containing the information required by the application packet will be reviewed by Department staff and will be forwarded to the Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee for evaluation and recommendation to the DNR Director, who makes the final decision on awards. Committee members with ties to an applicant entity are not allowed to vote on that entity's application.

Applications Evaluation: The Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee will review applications according to the following criteria: completed application, past grant performance of the applicant, eligibility, feasibility, adverse impacts, quality of the proposed habitat, priority for the Department, the applicant's cost-share match, and the applicant's plan for general public access to and/or use of the proposed habitat development or equipment purchase. The application must provide an activity timeline on how the project's goals will be attained.

The Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee will forward to the Director all applications and the prioritized list of all projects deemed to be consistent with the purposes of the Habitat Fund. The Director will determine which grants will be awarded after considering the recommendations of the advisory committee. All applicants will be notified of the Director's decision.

Evaluation Criteria: The Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee shall evaluate each application presented as follows:

1. Biological Importance

- 25 = Assists with achieving the goals of the Illinois Statewide Wildlife Action Plan
- 20 = Assists with achieving partial goals of the Illinois Statewide Wildlife Action Plan
- 10 = Assists with development of habitat associated with general private land work
- 5 = Provides minimal assistance with habitat development
- 0 = No habitat development provided (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

2. Geographical Reach

- 15 = Regional scope; natural division, game division, watershed
- 10 = County or managed area
- 5 = Individual Landowner

3. Quality of Habitat Provided

- 15 = Provides high quality habitat for target wildlife species as prescribed by the Wildlife Action Plan
- 10 = Provides moderate quality habitat that can address some of the needs of target wildlife species

- 5 = Provides limited quality habitat that addresses only one of the target species' habitat needs
- 0 = Inappropriate plant materials are used or promoted (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

4. Methodology and Project Cost (Feasibility)

- 15 = Proposed methodology is sound and project cost is economical
- 10 = Proposed methodology is sound but project cost is average
- 5 = Proposed methodology is sound but project cost is expensive
- 0 = Proposed methodology is not sound (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

5. Match and Partners

- 15 = 50% or more match provided; or two or more partners participating
- 10 = 25% or more match provided
- 5 = less than 25% match provided
- 0 = no match provided

6. Public Access Provided

- 15 = Full public access provided
- 10 = Limited public access provided or habitat used as a refuge
- 5 = No public access allowed
- 0 = Paid public access (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

Maximum Habitat Development & Management Score = 100

Equipment Proposals

1. Equipment Need

- 35 = Equipment will be used by a habitat team for habitat development and/or management and will be used over broad areas or within Focus Areas or Conservation Opportunity Areas.
- 25 = Equipment is directly used for habitat development and/or management and is located in an area where equipment availability is limited.
- 20 = Equipment is directly used for habitat development and/or management and is located in an area where equipment with the same capability is available for timely use to conduct management.
- 10 = Equipment is indirectly used for habitat development and/or management and is located in an area where equipment with the same capability for timely use to conduct management is limited.
- 5 = Equipment is indirectly used for habitat development and/or management and is located in an area where equipment with the same capability is available for timely use to conduct management.
- 0 = Equipment is not involved with habitat development and/or management (Project Not Recommended for Funding).

2. Equipment Maintenance

- 15 = Equipment will be stored in a building sheltered from the elements
- 10 = Equipment will be stored under tarp or in an open shelter
- 5 = Plans for equipment storage are unknown but equipment will be protected
- 0 = Equipment will be stored without protection (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

3. Appropriateness of Equipment and Project Cost (Feasibility)

- 15 = Proposed equipment is appropriate and project cost is economical
- 10 = Proposed equipment is appropriate but project cost is average
- 5 = Proposed equipment is appropriate but project cost is expensive
- 0 = Proposed equipment is not appropriate (Project Not Recommended for Funding)

4. Match and Partners

- 15 = 50% or more match provided; or two or more partners participating
- 10 = 25% or more match provided
- 5 = less the 25% match provided
- 0 = no match provided

5. Public Access Provided

- 20 = Equipment will be used by a habitat team to provide habitat on private and public land
- 15 = Equipment will be provided to the public at no cost
- 10 = Equipment will be provided to the public at a reasonable cost
- 5 = Equipment will be limited to a group or site

Maximum Equipment Score = 100

Merit-Based Review Appeals Process

In compliance with GATA, applicants have the right to appeal the evaluation process but not the evaluation score. More information is available at:

<http://ilga.gov/commission/JCAR/admincode/044/044070000D03500R.html>

Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates: The Committee's recommendations are forwarded to the DNR Director, who usually makes their decisions shortly thereafter. Each applicant will be notified by letter and/or email of the Director's decision regarding their application.

F. Award Administration Information

State Award Notice: After the DNR Director has made their decision the successful applicant will be notified by email and/or letter of any final requirements before the grant can be awarded to them. Once all the final requirements have been completed, the Grant Agreement between DNR and the applicant will be electronically sent for the applicant to hand sign and return. Then the DNR Director will also sign. Once executed by the signature of the DNR director, an electronic copy will be sent to the applicant.

Only after the Grant Agreement has been signed by the Director can expenses be incurred for grant reimbursement. Any expenses incurred outside of the grant period (before or after) are at the applicant's risk and are not eligible either as match or for reimbursement related to the grant.

Performance Reporting: The grantee shall be required to provide reporting of its activities under this project. The DNR may withhold or suspend payment if the grantee fails to submit the required reports and/or may add a grantee to the statewide Stop Payment List (see: <https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Documents/Resource%20Library/GCES.pdf>) which may

impact eligibility for future awards. The following reports are required under this Agreement, and the forms can be found at <https://www2.illinois.gov/dnr/grants/Pages/Special-Wildlife-Funds-Grant-Program.aspx> :

- a) **Quarterly Progress Reports:** If the amount of grant funds awarded exceeds \$25,000.00, the grantee is required to provide to the DNR quarterly progress reports that describe the progress of the project and expenditures of funds according to the budget line items as detailed in the approved Uniform Application for State Grant Assistance. The Quarterly Progress Report will be due as follows:

<u>Period of Work</u>	<u>Quarterly Progress Report Due Before</u>
January 1 – March 31	April 30
April 1 – June 30	July 31
July 1 – September 30	October 31
October 1 – December 31	January 31

- b) **Annual or Final Report:** The grantee shall submit a written **Final Report** to the department no later than 30 days following the completion of the Project or the ending date of the grant agreement, whichever is earlier, in accordance with the applicable administrative rules. The Final Report shall include:

- Grant Agreement Number
- Grantee name, address and telephone number
- Time-frame of the report
- Name and telephone number or e-mail address of grantee representative completing the report
- Project objective as described in the application and grant agreement
- Completed Project description,
- Summary of the Project accomplishments (if applicable) as follows:

for habitat preserved, protected, acquired, managed or improved (list of wildlife and/or native plant resources [by species] that benefit from the Project and how they benefit; acres planted in cool season grasses, warm season grasses, forbs, legumes, shrubs, trees or other appropriate description, including whether the acres were new or replanted; acres sprayed or controlled through the use of herbicides; acres upon which controlled burns were undertaken; acres affected through woody vegetation and/or tree removal; acres planted, disked, mowed, sprayed, or burned; trees/shrubs planted or removed with equipment purchased through the grant; number of cooperators involved in the Project);

Total project expenditures itemized to include the following: name and address of vendor, item description identifying details (if applicable), quantity purchased, date item purchased;

Project expenditures paid by funds other than Special Wildlife Grant Funds;

Documentation to support the summarized report including a complete list of landowner names and full address (note if absentee owner), acreage location and acres affected by the project. Multiple conservation practices on the same acreage do not multiply the acreage. On habitat development projects where other

governmental or private funding programs are involved, the grantee is required to provide detailed information including but not limited to the type of eligible conservation practice completed, the amount (\$) of other cost sharing provided, the name of the cost share provider, and length of time committed to maintain the developed habitat area.

The DNR can provide a Final Report form.

c) Equipment Use Report: If the grant is for the purchase of equipment, a similar written report of equipment usage shall be due to the DNR by December 31st in each of the first five years following the purchase of equipment. The **Equipment Use Report** shall include the following:

- Details on the Grant recipient:
 - Grant Agreement Number
 - Grantee name, address and telephone number
 - Time-frame of the report
- Details on the piece of equipment:
 - Equipment type, model number and serial number
 - Storage location address
 - Acre or odometer meter reading at the beginning and ending of the reporting period
 - Contact person name and telephone number
 - Rental rate charged and total fees collected for the use of the equipment
 - Description of any equipment maintenance and total expenditures for maintenance, supported by paid invoices
- Detailed information on the use of the equipment, including:
 - Date equipment was used
 - Location of equipment use, including county, township, range and section
 - Landowner name and full address (note if absentee owner)
- Description of how equipment was used:
 - management practice completed (planting, disking, mowing, herbicide application, prescribed burn)
 - materials planted including the quantity and species planted and provide details of seed mix contents;
 - acres established, enhanced or otherwise affected and how. (Note when multiple practices are on the same acres.)

Failure to provide reports in a timely fashion shall render the grantee ineligible to receive payments under the current award and make them ineligible for future awards. Deadlines for reports may be extended for just cause when such requests are submitted in writing at least two weeks prior to the deadline. All reports are to be delivered to:

Illinois Department of Natural Resources
Office of Grant Management
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702-1271
Attn: Susan Duke

G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

To contact DNR with questions related to this grant, please use the following means:

By US Mail: Department of Natural Resources
Office of Grant Management and Assistance
One Natural Resources Way
Springfield, IL 62702-1271

By e-mail: susan.duke@illinois.gov

By phone: Susan Duke 217-785-4416

By fax: (217) 785-2438

H. Other Information

Besides the Illinois Habitat Fund, the Special Wildlife Funds offer non-profit organizations three (3) grant programs annually with specific purposes: the State Pheasant Fund focuses on wild pheasant conservation. The application deadline is August 2nd. The State Furbearer Fund focuses on conservation of fur-bearing mammals and developing and/or improving public fur-bearing mammal habitat management areas within Illinois. The application deadline is March 1st. The State Migratory Waterfowl Stamp Fund focuses on development of waterfowl areas within the Dominion of Canada or the United States that specifically provide waterfowl for the Mississippi Flyway. The application deadline is January 2nd.

More information can be found at DNR's website: www.dnr.illinois.gov Search for "Grants" under the A-Z tab.

The Administrative Rule for the Illinois Habitat Fund Grant program is as follows:

Section 3060.30 Illinois Habitat Fund Grant Program

a) Eligibility Requirements

- 1) Eligible recipients are limited to managers of land.
- 2) Eligible projects are limited to those seeking to preserve, protect, acquire or manage habitat in Illinois.

b) Application Procedures

- 1) Grant applications for funding assistance under this program shall be submitted to the Department at One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, Illinois 62702-1271, Attention: Office of Resource Conservation. The application deadline will be August 1. Application forms and instructions are available

through the Department. Applications received after the application deadline will be returned to the applicant and not considered by the Department.

- 2) Applications shall contain all of the following required information:
 - A) the name and address of the applicant
 - B) the name of a contact person
 - C) a daytime telephone number and e-mail address (if available) for a contact person
 - D) a comprehensive project description with justification, including:
 - i) wildlife to benefit from the project
 - ii) plan for implementation
 - iii) map of project area
 - iv) amount of habitat to be established or managed, including species to be planted or eliminated
 - v) if with cooperators, plat map showing each property to be developed and a copy of a farm program contract for each committed cooperator involved in the project or estimated acreage. (Committed cooperators will be given priority over estimated acreage.)
 - E) comprehensive plan for the operation and maintenance of the project, including supervision, estimated costs (including any and all fees) and storage location, if applicable
 - F) a comprehensive funding/budget summary, including:
 - i) actual cash contributions other than the grant amount
 - ii) documented purchase price of equipment or commodities
 - G) description of plan for general public access or use (or lack thereof)
 - H) signature of the applicant or authorized individual for applicant

c) Project Evaluation and Procedures

- 1) All applications received on time and containing the information required by the application packet will be reviewed by Department staff. Incomplete applications will be returned to the applicant for completion and resubmittal. Submitting an incomplete application does not extend the application deadline beyond the designated deadline date. All complete, eligible and timely applications will be forwarded to the Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee.
- 2) The Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee shall evaluate each application presented to it according to criteria such as: past grant performance of the applicant, eligibility, feasibility, adverse impacts, quality of the proposed habitat, priority of the Department, the applicant's cost-share match and the applicant's plan for general public access to and/or use of the proposed habitat development or equipment purchase. The Committee shall provide to the Director all eligible applications and a prioritized list of recommended projects deemed to be consistent with the purposes of the Illinois Habitat Fund.
- 3) The Director shall make the determination of what grants shall be awarded after considering the recommendations of the Illinois Habitat Fund Advisory Committee. Applicants shall be notified of the Director's decision.

(Source: Amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 19781, effective December 4, 2008)

The statutory guidance on the use of the Illinois Habitat Fund is:

520 ILCS 25/10 “It is the purpose of this Act to provide a stable and supplemental source of money to support activities and programs undertaken by the Department or other managers of land to preserve, protect, acquire, and manage habitat for future generations. Habitat quality is measured by such parameters as type, native diversity, size, structure, scarcity, and location. Linkage with neighboring habitat, whether existing or potential, is another important consideration. Illinois’ habitat includes all wetlands, woodlands, grasslands and agricultural lands, natural or altered, that support or have the potential to support populations of wild animals in any or all phases of their life cycles.”

520 ILCS 25/15 (a) “There is established in the State treasury a special fund entitled the Illinois Habitat Fund. The moneys in this fund shall be used, pursuant to appropriation, exclusively by the Department (of Natural Resources) for the preservation and maintenance of high quality habitat lands....”

The State of Illinois is not obligated to make any award of the Illinois Habitat Funds as a result of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Only the Director of Natural Resources makes the determination of what grants shall be awarded after considering the recommendations of the Habitat Advisory Committee. Grant applicants are not authorized to proceed on their projects until the Director has signed the Grant Agreement.