

Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund Program

Program Year 2020-2021 Application Manual

District 8 NRAC



About the Application Manual

The purpose of this document is to provide eligible applicants guidance when applying for Clean Ohio Greenspace Program Funds. Links and Information within this document directly correlate to the Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund Program and the District 8 Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) application process. The application process follows the guidelines established by OPWC and evaluation criteria established by the District 8 NRAC and outlined in [Ohio Revised Code \(ORC\) Section 164.24](#).

Table of Contents

- 1.0 INTRODUCTION..... 1
- 2.0 IMPORTANT APPLICATION DUE DATES..... 2
- 3.0 FINAL APPLICATION MATERIALS- DETAIL 3
 - 3.1 *Program Year Schedule*..... 5
 - 3.2 *Eligible Applicants*..... 6
 - 3.3 *Eligible Costs* 6
 - 3.4 *Eligible Project Types*..... 6
 - 3.4.1 Open Space 6
 - 3.4.2 Riparian Corridor 7
 - 3.4.3 Eligible activities for both Open Space and Riparian Corridor projects: 7
 - 3.5 *Permit, Advertising, And Legal Documents*..... 7
 - 3.6 *Funding* 8
 - 3.6.1 Local Match 8
 - 3.7 *Project Submission, Review, And Scoring Process* 8
 - 3.7.1 Project Scoring 8
 - 3.7.2 Score Tie Breaking 9
- 4.0 CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION FUND 9
 - 4.1 *Full Application Package Information*..... 9
 - 4.2 *OPWC Application for Financial Assistance* 9
 - 4.3 *District 8 NRAC Eligibility Screening - Attachment B*..... 9
 - 4.4 *OPWC Project Emphasis Form – Attachment A* 9
 - 4.5 *PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 1* 9
 - 4.6 *PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 2*..... 9
 - 4.7 *PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 3*..... 10
- 5.0 ATTACHMENTS / COMPLETENESS REVIEW..... 10
- 6.0 OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES..... 11
- 7.0 LIST OF ACRONYMS..... 12

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This document is meant to provide guidance for applicants to the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Fund. The instructions in this document directly relate to the District 8 NRAC Project Scoring Methodology. There are electronic links integrated throughout this document that when clicked will direct you to either Ohio Public Works Commission's (OPWC) or Clean Ohio Greenspace Fund Program website.

Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Fund Program

In 2000, the State of Ohio voters approved a constitutional amendment authorizing the state to sell bonds and other obligations for the [Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund Program](#). The Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program is dedicated to environmental conservation including acquisition of green space and the protection and enhancement of river and stream corridors. Grant recipients agree to maintain the properties in perpetuity so that they can be enjoyed and cherished for generations to come.

The Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program provides funds to preserve open spaces, sensitive ecological areas, and stream corridors. The [OPWC](#) is responsible for administering the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program through districts set up in the State Capital Improvement Program (SCIP).

The District 8 NRAC is responsible for administering the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program in Summit County. Members of the NRAC are responsible for reviewing complete Clean Ohio Applications and recommending any final project application for OPWC funding.

District 8 Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC)

The District 8 Natural Resource Assistance Council is established per [ORC 164.21](#) with the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, and selecting applications from eligible entities within their district for financial assistance from the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program. Each NRAC consists of 11 members of which one must be a member of the appointing integrating committee and one must represent a soil and water conservation district located within the geographical jurisdiction of the NRAC. The other 9 members are appointed from categories of organizations, units of governments, or agencies prescribed in ORC 164.21(A)(1). At least one representative from each of the categories and an additional 4 at large members need to be appointed to serve as a member of the NRAC. See the above-mentioned ORC section for the categories.

Members' terms of office are three years, with each term ending on the same day of the same month as did the term before it, except that the term may not extend beyond their terms as an elected or appointed official. Appointments must be three years; other appointments are not accepted. The list of current District 8 NRAC members can be found at <https://www.pwc.ohio.gov/District/DistrictMembers/DistrictEightMembers>.

Application Package - List of Required Items- Overview

1. District 8 Project Eligibility Screening– [Attachment B](#) (REQUIRED) **COMPLETE THIS FIRST**
If the project IS eligible per Attachment B, the application will comprise the following:
2. Clean Ohio Fund- Green Space Conservation Program- Application for Financial Assistance
3. District 8 NRAC- Project Evaluation Scoring Worksheet, Parts 1, 2 & 3

State Primary Project Emphasis form – Attachment A (The final page of [Ohio Public Works Commission Clean Ohio Fund Greenspace Conservation Program OPWC Application for Financial Assistance](#) form)

4. Supplemental materials – See 3.0

IMPORTANT: Review District 8 NRAC Minimum Score Policy (3.7.1)

2.0 IMPORTANT APPLICATION DUE DATES

All applications for the District 8 NRAC are **due by 3:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 1, 2021.**

Application may be delivered to:

ATTN: Stephen Knittel, Senior Administrator
NRAC District 8 Liaison
175 S. Main Street, Suite 103, Room 113
Akron, OH 44308

Applications arriving after 3:00 p.m. will not be accepted.

3.0 FINAL APPLICATION MATERIALS- DETAIL

Applications made to the Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Program must follow the OPWC Application in conjunction with supplemental materials the NRAC develops. Please provide the following documentation separated by a cover page or tab divider:

1. [Ohio Public Works Commission Clean Ohio Fund Greenspace Conservation Program OPWC Application for Financial Assistance](#) form;
2. District 8 NRAC Attachment B- Project Eligibility Screening, Required ([Attachment B](#))
3. District 8 NRAC Project Evaluation Scoresheet Part 1, 2, and 3 ([Attachment B](#))
4. Primary Project Emphasis (State)- Attachment A (The final page of the [OPWC Application for Financial Assistance form](#)).
5. Authorizations and Resolutions of Support;
6. Agreements and Letters of Support;
7. Draft of [Declaration of Deed Restrictions](#);
8. [Restricted Appraisal Report Prepared by ODOT Certified Appraiser](#);
9. Index to Supplemental Information; and
10. Supplemental Documentation:
 - a) Photographs of the project.
 - b) Individual Project Maps¹ showing:
 - 1) Project watershed location² with county boundaries shown;
 - 2) Project location with respect to its location within the county/township/municipality;
 - 3) Topographic map with property boundary indicated;
 - 4) Aerial view maps(s)³ of project indicating:
 - Major roadways
 - Major/Minor Streams & Riparian Setbacks
 - Floodplains
 - Wetlands
 - Other permanently protected lands
 - If part of a phased or an expansion of a previous Clean Ohio project (s), indicate current project with relation to previous project(s).
 - 5) Acquisition Conceptual Site Design indicating:
 - Public access point(s);
 - Proposed Parking area(s)
 - Proposed trail(s); and
 - Other eligible improvements.

¹ List of maps is not limited. Applicant may separate maps in order to provide clarity or provide maps relevant to the project with the intent of provide additional environmental information.

² See Ohio EPA's [Water Quality Assessment Unit Summary GIS map](#) for watershed information.

³ Applicant may provide several, separate maps with the information listed so as not to clutter a single map.

- 6) For restoration projects include items 1-4 from above and the following Conceptual Site Design information indicating:
- Stream/wetland restoration project boundary;
 - Tributaries;
 - Riparian area;
 - Location of and description of restoration activity(s),
 - Location of and description of revegetation activity(s);
 - Proposed public access point(s);
 - Proposed trail(s); and
 - Other eligible improvements.

Application Submittal

Applications must be submitted in the following two (2) formats:

- 1) **ONE** single sided, original hard copy, marked "ORIGINAL"
 - **DO NOT BIND OR STAPLE APPLICATION.** Metal clips and 3-ring binder are acceptable;
 - All sections/supplemental documents separated by a labeled cover page or tab divider.
- 2) An electronic version sent to the district liaison at the following address, sknittel@summitoh.net, for larger files send an email requesting a link for a dropbox. The electronic copy must use the following District Eight application format and file naming:
 - [Project Name] _ OPWCAApplication.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Attachment B.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Authorizations and Resolutions of Support.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Agreements and Letters of Support.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Declaration of Deed Restrictions.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Restricted Appraisal Report.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Supplemental Documentation.pdf

First time applicants are encouraged to reach out to the District 8 Liaison and/or OPWC District Representative at any time to discuss potential project ideas and guidance prior to submitting a final project application.

3.1 Program Year Schedule

CLEAN OHIO FUND- DISTRICT 8 PROGRAM YEAR 15 2020-2021 SCHEDULE

Clean Ohio Fund Program
District 8:
Summit County

District 8 Liaison:
Stephen Knittel
(330) 643-2551
sknittel@summitoh.net

All District 8 NRAC Meetings are open to the public.

Important Dates for Program Year 2020-2021:

Round 15 Clean Ohio Funds Available	July 1, 2020
District 8 Annual Meeting	January 20, 2021 @ 9:00 am
Applications Made Available	February 1, 2021
Full Applications Due	April 1, 2021 by 3:00 pm
Site Visits by District 8 NRAC Committee	April 15 and April 16, 2021
Application Review with Applicants	April 22, 2021 @ 9:00 am
Final Application NRAC Member Voting Meeting	May 6, 2021 @ 10:00 am

***FULL AND CORRECTED APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY 3 PM ON THE SCHEDULED DUE DATE.**

*In response to the COVID-19 and social distancing practices, the District 8 PY 2020-2021 meetings will be held via webinar. Information to attend can be found on https://co-admin.summitoh.net/cgi-bin/protected/content/display.pl?content_id=15317#nav-custom3.

3.2 Eligible Applicants

Local Political Subdivisions

- Counties
- Municipalities
- Villages
- Townships
- Conservancy Districts
- Soil and Water Conservation Districts
- Joint Recreation Districts
- Park District/Authority

Non-Profit Corporations⁴

Non-profit organizations are eligible to apply if they are exempt from federal income taxation and a designated activity is related to the purposes for which Clean Ohio Conservation grants are awarded. Non-Profits must have their eligibility confirmed through OPWC by obtaining a subdivision code. For more information about Non-Profit eligibility, see OPWC's [Subdivision Applicant Code](#) advisory.

3.3 Eligible Costs

OPWC's website lists eligible and ineligible costs: <https://www.pwc.ohio.gov/Programs/Clean-Ohio-Application#591122-eligible-costs>

3.4 Eligible Project Types⁵

3.4.1 Open Space

Open Space projects should promote:

- Comprehensive open space planning
- Protection of rare, threatened, and endangered plant and animal species
- Protection of high quality, viable habitats for plant and animal species
- Preservation of wetlands or other scarce natural resources
- Balancing the natural ecosystem
- Educational opportunities
- Reduction or elimination of nonnative, invasive species of plants or animals

Open Space projects include:

- Acquisition of open space
- Acquisition of easements
- Acquisition of land or rights in land for parks, forests, wetlands, or natural areas that protect an endangered plant or animal population
- Connecting corridors for natural areas.
- Construction or enhancement of facilities to make open space accessible and useable by the general public.

⁴ [ORC 164.20](#)

⁵ Projects promoting active recreation such as baseball diamonds, tennis courts, and similar facilities **are not eligible**.

3.4.2 Riparian Corridor

Riparian Corridor projects should promote:

- Habitat protection
- Stream corridor-wide or watershed planning
- Recreations, economic and aesthetic preservation benefits
- Floodplain and Streamside forest functions
- Headwater stream preservation
- Restoration and preservation of aquatic biological communities

Riparian Corridor projects include:

- Reforestation of land or revegetating riparian corridors for the purpose of filtration.
- Fee simple acquisitions of land to connect riparian corridors or watersheds.
- Acquisition of easements to protect and enhance riparian corridors or watersheds.

3.4.3 Eligible activities for both Open Space and Riparian Corridor projects:

Acquisition:

- Fee Simple Purchase
- Easement Purchase
- Transfer of Conservation Easement

Planning and Implementation:

- Certified Restricted Appraisal Report performed by a prequalified [ODOT appraiser](#).
- Closing costs
- Title search
- Environmental assessments
- Design
- Restoration

- **Restricted Appraisal Reports are due at the time of application.** Applications with a purchase price more than 5% above the appraised value must show a local share meeting the additional costs. Justification must be provided to the NRAC for any acquisition above the appraised value. Restricted Appraisal Reports must follow [OPWC's appraisal standards](#).

Construction or Enhancement of facilities:

Access improvements to make open space accessible and useable by the general public must promote passive recreation and educational opportunities. OPWC lists various [eligible improvement](#) costs applicants can use Clean Ohio funds towards. However, the list is not meant to be exhaustive and applicants are encouraged to reach out to the district's OPWC representative to determine eligibility.

3.5 Permit, Advertising, And Legal Documents

- Eligible: permits, advertising and legal expenses.
- Not eligible: Administrative services incurred by the applicant.

3.6 Funding

The funding for Program Year 2020-2021:

Intentionally left blank

3.6.1 Local Match

A minimum 25% local match is required. The local match is any non-OPWC funds. A 25% match can be achieved using federal, state, or local funds. Local “pre-pays” for engineering or [in-kind work](#) may be used towards an applicant’s local match. The District Six NRAC awards additional points to projects if more than 25% match is provided⁶. See [OPWC’s In-kind Instructions](#) for more information.

Eligible Local Match Sources⁷

Eligible match sources can include:

- Contributions of money by any person, local political subdivision, or federal government.
- [In-kind contributions](#) through the purchase or donation of equipment, land, easements, interest in land, labor and materials necessary to complete the project.
- Bargain Sale/Donated Property- Projects for which the purchase price is less than the appraised value, and the value will be utilized for the purpose of creating match or recognized as a gift for tax or charitable purposes, shall be considered a Bargain Sale. Any project where a Bargain Sale will be used for match will be required to have the appraisal reviewed by a second, certified general who is also a prequalified ODOT Review Appraiser.

3.7 Project Submission, Review, And Scoring Process

Projects are submitted to the District 8 Liaison by the time and date indicated in [Section 3.1](#). The district liaison and NRAC Chairperson review each application for completeness using the *Attachment / Completeness Review* checklist, located in [Section 8.0](#) of this manual. If errors are found, clarification is need, and/or items are missing from an application the liaison notifies the applicant of those items. Each applicant is awarded one week to provide the missing information and/or correct any errors. Once the application is made complete, applications are distributed to NRAC members for review.

3.7.1 Project Scoring

The District 8 NRAC reviews each complete application using the District’s adopted scoring methodology. The scoring follows the information requested in the District 8 NRAC ‘s *Eligibility Screening- Attachment B* and *Project Evaluation Scoring Worksheet, Parts 1,2 & 3*. Application criteria presented in these documents are awarded varying points based on the applicant’s information provided. Projects with a minimum score of 55% of the total points available will only be funded in full or in part⁸ based upon a favorable vote of 7 NRAC members. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the scoring methodology to understand the NRAC evaluation point(s) allocated for each item based on all documents.

⁶ [NRAC Scoring Methodology](#) Part III, item #1.

⁷ A comprehensive list of [eligible match sources](#) can be found on OPWC’s website.

⁸ Full/partial funding is contingent upon funding availability and whether or not the round is competitive. A competitive round is one in which the amount of funding requested from applicants meeting the minimum score is greater than the district funding available.

3.7.2 Score Tie Breaking

If projects are awarded the same score the following tie breaking process will be followed, listed in priority order:

1. The highest score on Part 3 of District 8 NRAC's Project Evaluation Scoring Worksheet
2. The highest percentage of Local Match

4.0 CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION FUND

4.1 Full Application Package Information

Each application is required to contain OPWC's *Application for Financial Assistance*, District 8 NRAC's *Attachment B* along with the following required documents and/or attachments identified in this section.

4.2 OPWC Application for Financial Assistance

Each Application must include the OPWC's Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program's [Application for Financial Assistance](#) (OPWC's Application). Detailed [instructions](#) for filling out the application are found on OPWC's website.

4.3 District 8 NRAC Eligibility Screening - Attachment B

Each applicant is required to complete the District 8 NRAC's Eligibility Screening ([Attachment B](#))

Each applicant must clearly demonstrate the primary purpose involves at least one of the following items listed in: A. *Open Space* ([Sec.164.22 A](#)) or B. *Riparian Corridors or Watersheds* ([Sec. 164.22 B](#)). Depending upon the type of project, *Open Space/ Riparian Corridors or Watersheds*, select each factor achieved by this project. More than one factor may be selected for Open Space projects.

For project ineligibility factors, answer "yes" or "no" to the statements listed. If you answer "yes" to any of the questions, the project is ineligible ([ORC Section 164.22](#)).

4.4 OPWC Project Emphasis Form – Attachment A

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the project's primary emphasis following the directions and using the columns provided on the form. ([The final page of the OPWC Application for Financial Assistance form](#)).

4.5 PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 1

The District 8 NRAC assigns points to questions included in Parts 1, 2 & 3 to demonstrate the focus on environmental importance to this NRAC. The criteria are evaluated by District 8 NRAC and the total points for each part add to the total which are used to rank the projects in order to determine project recommendations to OPWC.

Part 1 questions are each worth 2 points. Some questions have required documents to support the points. **If the requested documents are not included with the submittal, no points will be awarded.** Part 1 has a total of 23 questions with a maximum of 46 points possible.

4.6 PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 2

Part 2 questions have varying point ranges. Points will not be awarded without the narrative and supporting information requested with each question. Pay attention to the maximum points

allowed for each question. Part 2 has a total of 7 questions with a maximum of 70 points possible.

4.7 PROJECT EVALUATION SCORING WORKSHEET - PART 3

Part 3 questions have varying point ranges. Points will not be awarded without the narrative and supporting information requested with each question. Pay attention to the maximum points allowed for each question. Part 3 has a total of 10 questions with a maximum of 50 points possible.

5.0 ATTACHMENTS / COMPLETENESS REVIEW

The District 8 NRAC Liaison reviews each application to determine if it is complete. An application is considered complete when all the required documents and original signatures are included with the application. The following items are required and must contain an original signature:

- A certified copy of the authorization by the governing body of the applicant authorizing a designated official to sign and submit this application and execute contracts with the commission. This individual is required to sign and print their name, list their title, and provide the date of signature in Section 6.0, *Applicant Certification*, of the OPWC application.
- A certification signed by the applicant's chief financial officer (CFO) stating all local share funds and/or private contributions pertaining to the project will be available on or before the dates listed in the Project Schedule section. If the applicant is not providing local share funds, a letter stating other committed funds/private contributions must be signed and submitted by the applicant's CFO in lieu of the certification.
- A cooperation agreement, (if the project involves more than entity) which identifies the fiscal and administrative responsibilities of each participant.
- Resolution of Support (please refer to [ORC Section 164.23\(B\)\(1\)](#) for guidance).
- Information concerning the coordination of the project among local political subdivisions, state agencies, federal agencies, community organizations, conservation organizations, and local business groups.
- Supplemental Documentation: Materials such as additional project description, photographs, and/or other information to assist your District 8 NRAC in ranking your project. A list of Supporting documentation can be found in [Section 3.0\(8\)](#).
- For Land Acquisition Projects: Applicants MUST provide documentation of either a Signed Purchase Agreement or Letter of Intent to Sell.
- For Restoration Projects: Applicants MUST provide documentation of one of the following: Stamped Preliminary plans by architect, landscape architect, or other qualified professional; Documentation of Secured Appropriate Permits or Permitting Process; Project Schedule.

- Include a conceptual site plan and map indicating where public access points, trails, parking, etc. will be located within the project. Stating that public access will be allowed is not sufficient.
- All applications must include the Individual Project Maps listed in [Section 3.0\(8\)\(b\)](#).
- Acquisition costs must be supported by a purchase contract, letter of intent, or other acceptable documentation. Site Improvement costs must be supported by a formal estimate provided by an architect, landscape architect, or other professional. Costs may also be supported by quotes.
- Proposed Declaration of Restrictions; also include restrictions for any other funding sources.
- Identification of any participation by state agencies that may have expertise regarding the project and may provide assistance with respect to the project.
- Appraisals: **Restricted Appraisal Reports are due at the time of application.** Applications with a purchase price that is more than 5% above the appraised value must show that local share is meeting the additional costs. Justification must be provided to the District 8 NRAC for any acquisition above the appraised value.

6.0 OTHER INFORMATION RESOURCES

The [Clean Ohio Greenspace Glossary of Terms](#) is provided here for your convenience. This list provides a beneficial description of supporting documentation and materials that may be useful to applicants and NRAC members. All applicants are encouraged to consult the glossary to determine how their project may provide additional benefits beyond those listed.

Other helpful links include:

- Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR)- Division of Wildlife [State Listed Wildlife Species](#)- Wildlife species can be queried by County. [Invasive Species in Ohio](#)- ODNR provides information about invasive plants, animals, aquatic animals and insects found in Ohio.
- State of Ohio Endorsed Watershed Action Plans- Beginning in 2016 Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) abandoned the guideline for developing Watershed Action Plans under the Appendix 8 guidelines. The Ohio EPA has since adopted the development of 9-Element Nonpoint Source Implementation Strategic Plans (NPS-IS). The NPS-IS plans are similar to watershed action plans but are specific to smaller drainage areas, called Hydrologic Unit Codes (HUC), and nonpoint sources of pollution. For more information about NPS-IS plans visit the [Ohio EPA's Nonpoint Source Pollution Control Program's](#) website.

The Ohio EPA created an interactive [GIS map](#) identifying all the 9-Element NPS-IS Plans. Please consult the link to determine if your project is located within a HUC-12 watershed with an endorsed NPS-IS plan.

7.0 LIST OF ACRONYMS

CFO: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

EPA: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

HUC: HYDROLOGIC UNIT CODE

NPS-IS: NONPOINT SOURCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

NRAC: NATURAL RESOURCE ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

ODNR: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ODOT: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OPWC: OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

ORC: OHIO REVISED CODE

Q&A: QUESTION AND ANSWER

SCIP: STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM