

Clean Ohio Greenspace Conservation Fund Program

Program Year 2020-2021 Application Manual

District Six Natural Resources Assistance Council (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 Six Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) application process. The application process follows the guidelines established by OPWC and evaluation criteria established by the District Six 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..... 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
- 4.0 CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION FUND: 9
 - 4.1 *Full Application Information* 9
 - 4.2 *OPWC Application for Financial Assistance*..... 9
 - 4.3 *District Six Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Fund*..... 9
 - Attachment B: Request for Additional Information* 9
 - 4.4 *Primary Project Emphasis*..... 10
- 5.0 PROJECT EVALUATION- PART I..... 11
- 6.0 PROJECT EVALUATION- PART II..... 12
- 7.0 OTHER FACTORS AWARDED POINTS..... 17
- 8.0 ATTACHMENTS/COMPLETENESS REVIEW 19
- 9.0 List of Acronyms..... 21

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 Six 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 Eastgate's 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 Six NRAC is responsible for administering the Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Program in Mahoning and Trumbull Counties. Members of the NRAC are responsible for reviewing complete Clean Ohio Applications and recommending any final project application for OPWC funding.

District Six Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC)

The District Six Natural Resource Assistance Council is established per [ORC 164.21](#) with the purpose of reviewing, evaluating, and selecting applications from eligible entities within their respective 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 the each of the following categories and an additional 4 at large members need to be appointed to serve as a member of the NRAC:

A county, municipal corporation, township, conservancy district, regional or joint district or unit of local government, or regional or joint political subdivision that is located within the geographical jurisdiction of the appointing integrating committee;

A conservation organization, an environmental advocacy organization, an organization with a primary interest in watershed protection and restoration, the department of natural resources, the environmental protection agency, or the United States natural resources conservation service;

A city park system or metropolitan park system or a board of park commissioners from a county that is located within the geographical jurisdiction of the appointing integrating committee, a statewide parks and recreation organization, or the United States national park service;

District Six Natural Resource Assistance Council (NRAC) continued...

A statewide organization representing agriculture, an organization representing forestry interests, the Ohio department of agriculture, or the United States department of agriculture;

An organization representing business, local realtors, or a planning agency, including a port authority, located within the geographical jurisdiction of the appointing integrating committee.

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.

OPWC's website lists the current [District Six NRAC members](#).

2.0 IMPORTANT APPLICATION DUE DATES

All applications for the District Six NRAC are **due by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, November 20th, 2020**. Application may be delivered to:

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
ATTN: Stephanie Dyer
100 E. Federal Street, Suite 1000
Youngstown, OH 44503.

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

3.0 FINAL APPLICATION MATERIALS

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 Six Attachment B- Request for Additional Information](#);
3. Authorizations and Resolutions of Support;
4. Agreements and Letters of Support;
5. [Declaration of Deed Restrictions](#);
6. [Appraisal Report or Restricted Appraisal Report Prepared by ODOT Certified Appraiser](#);
7. Index to Supplemental Information; and
8. 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) Project location with respect to the [OH-PA 2010 Urbanized Area](#), if applicable;³
 - 4) Topographic map with property boundary indicated; and
 - 5) Aerial view maps(s)⁴ of project indicating:
 - Major roadways
 - Major/Minor Streams
 - 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).
 - 6) 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 Urbanized Boundary map if 50 % or more of the project is located within an urbanized boundary, Eastgate's [2010 Urban Boundary](#) link will help determine applicability.

⁴ Applicant may provide several, separate maps with the information listed so as not to clutter a single map.

Final Application Materials Continued.....

- 7) For restoration projects include items 1-4 from above and the following Conceptual Site Design information indicating:
- Stream/wetland 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 uploaded to the district liaison at the following address, <https://eastgatecog.org/environmental-planning/CleanOhio/#upload>.
The electronic copy must use the following District Six 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] _ Appraisal Report.pdf
 - [Project Name] _ Supplemental Documentation.pdf

First time applicants are encouraged to reach out to the District Six 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 SIX PROGRAM YEAR 2020-2021 SCHEDULE

Eastgate Regional Council of Governments
Clean Ohio Fund Program
District Six:
Mahoning And Trumbull Counties

District Six Liaison:
Stephanie Dyer
(234) 254-1520
sdyer@eastgatecog.org

All District Six NRAC Meetings are open to the public.
All District Six NRAC Meetings are held at Eastgate and begin at 9am, unless otherwise noted.

Important Dates for Program Year 2020-2021:

Round 15 Clean Ohio Funds Available	July 1 st , 2020
District Six Application Workshop Webinar	July 29 th , 2020
District Six Annual Meeting*	September 10 th , 2020
Full Applications Due at Eastgate	November 20 th , 2020
Full Application Completeness Review	November 23 rd -25 th , 2020
Corrected Applications Due back to Eastgate	November 30 th , 2020– December 3 rd , 2020
Applicant Presentations to District Six NRAC Committee*	January 8 th , 2021
Final Application NRAC Member Voting Meeting*	January 22 nd , 2021

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

*Due to COVID-19 restrictions all scheduled meetings will follow a webinar format. Webinar information will be made available prior to the scheduled meeting date and can be acquired by contacting Stephanie dyer at sdyer@eastgatecog.org or 234-254-1520.

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 Corporations⁵

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 Types⁶

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.

⁵ [ORC 164.20](#)

⁶ 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 appraisal performed by a prequalified [ODOT appraiser](#).
- Closing costs
- Title search
- Environmental assessments
- Design
- Restoration

➤ An appraisal report OR restricted appraisal report is 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. Appraisals 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

District Six funding allocation for Program Year 2020-2021: **\$3, 228, 050.**

The total amount of funding available for the program year may change due to factors such as carry over funds. Please contact the District Six Liaison, Stephanie Dyer sdyer@eastgatecog.org, for the exact dollar amount available.

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 provided⁷. See [OPWC’s In-kind Instructions](#) for more information.

Eligible Local Match Sources⁸

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 Six 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.

An Applicant Question and Answering (Q&A) meeting is held prior to the NRAC’s final selection meeting. The Q&A meeting provides an opportunity for the applicant and NRAC members to interact either through a formal presentation (i.e. power point, display boards) or discussion. Applicants are encouraged to use this time to highlight ecological features pertaining to their project and provide clarification to questions NRAC members may have.

3.7.1 Project Scoring

The District Six NRAC reviews each complete application using the District’s adopted [Scoring Methodology](#). This methodology is located on [OPWC’s](#) and [Eastgate’s](#) websites. The Scoring Methodology document follows the information requested in the District Six NRAC’s [Attachment B-Request for Additional Information](#) (*Attachment B*). Application criteria presented in *Attachment B* is awarded varying points based on the applicant’s information provided. Projects with a

⁷ [NRAC Scoring Methodology](#) Part III, item #1.

⁸ A comprehensive list of [eligible match sources](#) can be found on OPWC’s website.

minimum score of 73 points or 40% of the total points available will only be funded in full or in part⁹ based upon a favorable vote of 8 NRAC members. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the scoring methodology to understand the NRAC evaluation point(s) allocated for each item listed in *Attachment B*.

4.0 CLEAN OHIO GREEN SPACE CONSERVATION FUND:

4.1 Full Application Information

Each application is required to contain OPWC's *Application for Financial Assistance*, District Six 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 Six Clean Ohio Green Space Conservation Fund Attachment B: Request for Additional Information

Each applicant is required to complete the District Six NRAC's [Attachment B](#).

Please use the same information located in *OPWC's Application* for the following *Attachment B* Items:

- Project Title
- Applicant (Projects involving multiple applicants must designate a lead agency).
- OPWC Applicant Code¹⁰
- Project Contact¹¹
- Phone/Fax
- Address
- County
- Project Cost
- List the total project cost
- Amount of Clean Ohio Funds requested

Total Clean Ohio Funds Requested:

List the total Clean Ohio Funds requested from the District Six NRAC. The amount should reflect the "Funding Request Summary" amount listed on *OPWC's Application*.

Applicant Match:

Provide the percentage of match the applicant is providing toward the project. The match should equal the percentage identified in *OPWC's Application, Section 1.2 (j)*.

⁹ 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.

¹⁰ Applicants must contact OPWC for Applicant Code if they are not already assigned one.

¹¹ Project Contact should be someone who can answer any questions about the project.

Project Type:

Identify the LARGEST component of the application.

Number of Acres Preserved/Restored:

List the acreage preserved/restored.

Linear Feet/Stream Miles Restored:

List the linear feet and/or stream miles preserved/restored within the riparian corridor.

4.4 Primary Project Emphasis

Applicants must clearly demonstrate the project’s primary emphasis for the following:

A. and 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.

C. Project Ineligibility Factors:

Answer “yes” or “no” to the seven statements listed. If you answer “yes” to any of the questions, the project is ineligible ([ORC Section 164.22](#)).

D. For All Acquisition or Easement Projects

This section requires the applicant to answer questions about the current property owner and discuss any attempts made by the applicant to contact the current owner.

5.0 PROJECT EVALUATION- PART I

The District Six NRAC assigns points to criteria listed in *Attachment B* of the application. The criteria are evaluated by District Six NRAC. The total points for each project are used to rank each project in order to determine project recommendations to OPWC. **Bolded** print identifies where scoring is and is not applicable.

A. Project Emphasis

Please provide a detailed explanation to support the primary, secondary, and tertiary emphasis areas as identified in *OPWC's Application, Attachment A- Project Emphasis (A)*. **Scoring: No points are awarded for this section.**

B. Additional Information

The District 6 NRAC recognizes projects may emphasize more than those identified in *OPWC's Application, Attachment A- Project Emphasis (A)* of the application. Applicants who select additional areas of emphasis must provide an explanation and supporting documents for each additional area chosen.

Scoring: Up to 5 points per emphasized area; maximum 70 total points.

The [Clean Ohio Greenspace Glossary of Terms](#) 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.

6.0 PROJECT EVALUATION- PART II

1. Project Justification

Please state the need for the project. Explain how the project:

- Is under development pressure based on current surrounding land use and development trends.
- Protects sensitive ecological habitat and/or species.
- Increases habitat
- Is part of a greater linkage to an existing green space, park, conservation area, or proposed greenway.
- Serves an underserved population.
- Serves a low income and/or minority neighborhood.

Scoring: No points assigned.

2. Level of Collaborative Participation

Collaborative participation includes participation in the project through financial contributions, donation of property, assistance in planning and implementing, or responsibility for a part of the project. Applicants may not include themselves as a participant. This section does not include entities who have provided a Letter of Support for the project.

To be eligible for NRAC points, applicant must provide supporting documentation stating:

- The agency/organization providing the financial contribution and/or land donation
Documentation must specify the amount and reflect the amount in *OPWC's Application, Section 1.2 Project Financial Resources (line item I.)*.
- The agency/organization providing assistance in planning and implementation.
Documentation must be specific as to what role/duties the agency/organization has in the planning and implementation of the project.

Scoring: 1 point for each agency/organization listed; maximum 2 total points. Applicants may receive assistance from more than two entities but will only receive a total of 2 points.

3. Level of Coordination

Identify the level of coordination that exists among the applicant and local political subdivisions, federal, state and/or local agencies, community organizations, and/or conservation/watershed organizations. Identify partners, mutual goals, and explain relationships that exist between the applicant and agency/organization identified.

To be eligible for NRAC points, applicant must provide supporting documentation stating:

- A Letter of Support from the agencies/organizations identifying the partner(s), their relationship to the applicant, why they support the project, and how the project fits into their mission and/or mutual goals. **Scoring: 1 point for each agency/organization listed; maximum 2 total points. Applicants may coordinate with more than two entities but will only receive a total of 2 points.**

4. Operation and Maintenance (O&M) Plan and/or Stewardship Plan

Applicants must identify if a project specific O&M Plan or Stewardship plan exists, is in the process of being developed or will be developed upon completion of the project. Provide documentation of where the project will fit into the said plans. Applicants must include documentation outlining the resources (personnel, equipment, infrastructure) available to maintain the project. **Scoring: Up to 5 points**

5. Level of Community Planning

Applicants are encouraged to identify how the project aligns with planning/plans performed within the project's community/communities. Applicants should align their project with adopted community plans (i.e. comprehensive land use plans, balanced growth plans), former watershed plans, NPS-IS plans, or other adopted plan(s) following the spirit of the Clean Ohio Conservation fund.

*Applicants must identify the plan by name/title, cite or provide hyperlinks where within the plan the project/project components are discussed, and describe how the project aligns with the plan/plans. Identifying the plan(s) and listing the document's name is not sufficient documentation. **Scoring: Up to 6 points**

6. Community Benefits

Conservation and Restoration projects provide value beyond environmental and ecosystem benefits. Open Space and Watershed projects provide social and recreational benefits that flow into and enhance regional economies. Indicate applicable benefits anticipated as a result of this project. Applicant may select all that apply.

Scoring: 6 points each; maximum 6 points.

Applicants can use the following as a guide to determine a project's anticipated benefits:

Economic:

- Supports a local economic and/or community development initiative;
- Spurs economic activity/growth within the region (i.e. new outdoor recreation business starts, purchase and/or sale of outdoor recreational sport equipment);
- Increases the value of nearby or adjacent land;
- Reduces annual municipal service costs (i.e. public safety, public services);
- Provides reuse or repurpose for vacant or underutilized land in underserved areas of the region;
- Other economic benefits.

Social/Recreational Benefits:

- Provides public access;
- Creates a gathering place;
- Provides educational opportunities;
- Provides linkage to bicycle and pedestrian trails;
- Improves public health and safety;
- Enhances cultural and civic heritages of the area;
- Incorporates aesthetically pleasing and ecologically informed design;
- Other social benefits.

Environmental Benefits¹²:

- Balances a built out environment with the natural environment;
- Enhances environmental health or reduces ecological risks;
- Converts blighted property/acres into a natural area and/or green space;
- Creates habitat, natural areas, and/or open space;
- Improves biodiversity;
- Improves water quality;
- Protects a rare, threatened, or endangered species classified as regionally endangered or included in the State Natural Heritage Inventory (See OPWC Glossary of Terms);
- Protects high quality or regionally significant biological communities;
- Reduces and/or improves the quantity and/or quality of storm water runoff;
- Restores floodplain function;
- Other environmental benefits.

7. Access to Project

Applicants must identify whether the site will be physically or visually accessible to the public upon project completion. The District Six NRAC encourages applicants to provide the public with physical access. **Scoring: 0 points for visual access; 3 points for physical access.**

Projects providing physical access must provide a map as indicated in [Section 3.0 \(8\)\(6\)](#) of this manual identifying where the public will access the site (i.e. parking, entrance points) upon project completion. The map should also include preliminary trails and stream crossings (if applicable).

8. Applicant Priority

- A. If more than one project is submitted by an applicant, the applicant must prioritize their projects.

Priority	NRAC Awarded Points
One	5
Two	3
Three	1

- B. Identify whether or not the applicant is willing to and able to lower their request and/or project scope and complete the project should the amount of Clean Ohio Funds requested not be available in the current District Six funding round.

Score: No points awarded

¹² Applicants are encouraged to use the Ohio EPA's [Water Quality: Assessment Unit Summaries](#) GIS map detailing Ohio's water quality.

9. Median Household Income

Applicants must identify the Median Household Income (MHI) **percentage** of the community/communities in which the project is located. In the event a project is located in multiple communities, the applicant takes the average of the communities' MHI. Consult the [Median Household Income Community Percentage](#) table for the region's MHI information.

Community MHI	NRAC Awarded Points
BELOW 70%	5
70% to 79.9%	4
80% to 89.9%	3
90% to 99.9%,	2
≥100%	0

10. Urban Boundary

Applicants must identify whether or not 50% or more of the project is located within the Youngstown Ohio-Pennsylvania (OH-PA) [2010 Urban Boundary](#).

Score: 5 points if project is 50% or more within urbanized boundary; 0 points if not.

11. Natural Resource Vitality

Identify any species in the following categories. These species are those found within the project area and will be protected by the project. Applicants must provide supporting documentation (i.e. inventories).

Species Category	NRAC Awarded Points
Federally listed, extinct, extirpated, or newly identified species found in Ohio	7
State Endangered Species	5
State Threatened	3
State Potentially Threatened	2
State Concerned	1

Applicants are encouraged to use the following ODNR links to assist in their documentation:

- [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.

12. Mineral Rights

Applicants must identify what, if any, mineral, extraction and timber rights are tied to the project site. An explanation and documentation of the following items must be provided in the application:

- Property Rights
 - Will the applicant retain property AND mineral rights AND prohibit future mineral extraction lease agreements?
 - Does the Property have an existing mineral extraction lease agreement? If yes, will the applicant retain property AND mineral rights? Please explain and provide appropriate documentation.
 - Will the applicant retain ONLY the property rights (mineral rights have been severed from the property for future extraction allowance)? Please explain and provide appropriate documentation.

If the project contains legal restrictions prohibiting surface disturbance within the property, applicant must provide documentation stating so.

Score: 8 points if said legal restrictions are in place and documentation is provided; 0 points if said legal restrictions are not in place.

13. Project Immediacy

Provide justification for the project addressing a situation where action must be taken now or the opportunity may be lost forever. Identify if the surrounding area is under pressure to develop as something other than open space (i.e. residential, commercial, industrial development).

Score: Up to 5 points.

14. Project Contiguosness

Identify whether or not THIS project is contiguous¹³ with an existing preserved open space or riparian area. **Score: Up to 5 points.**

¹³ Contiguous is defined as properties being adjacent to one another and sharing a common property boundary.

7.0 OTHER FACTORS AWARDED POINTS

The District Six NRAC allots for additional points in the following areas of the application:

Fiscal and Project Management

Projects are awarded points based on the percentage of Clean Ohio funds necessary to complete the project.

Percent Clean Ohio Funds Requested	NRAC Points Awarded
75% (required)	0
74-70%	1
69-65%	2
64-60%	3
<60%	4

Land Involved in the Project

The District Six NRAC awards points based on the amount of land acreage involved in the project.

Acreage	NRAC Points Awarded
≥ 200 acres	4
100-199 acres	3
50-99 acres	2
< 50 acres	1

Clean Ohio Funding Request

The District Six NRAC awards points based on the amount of Clean Ohio Funding an applicant requests.

Amount of Clean Ohio Funds Requested	NRAC Awarded Points
< \$200,000	4
\$200,000- \$399,999	3
\$400,000 - \$599,999	2
\$600,000 - \$799,999	1
≥\$800,000	0

Readiness to Proceed

Applicants are asked to Identify which documentation the project has indicating its readiness to move forward upon notice by OPWC awarding of funds. Documentation is required showing all land transactions, including pending land transactions and must be included with the application. In the case of a third party involvement, transaction(s) between the landowner and the third party must be included in the application as well as the pending transaction between the third party and applicant. **Score: see below for breakdown.**

- Land Acquisition Projects are required to provide either:
 - Signed Purchase Agreement, **Score: 10 points**
 - Letter of Intent to Sell, **Score: 5 points**

- Restoration Projects are required to have at least one of the following:
 - Stamped preliminary plans by architect, landscape architect, or other qualified Professional, **Score: 6 points**
 - Documentation of appropriate permits secured or permitting process, **Score: 3 points**
 - Project schedule, **Score: 1 point**

A project may be a land acquisition with restoration and receive a maximum of 20 points. The scoring for such projects depends on the documentation submitted for both Land Acquisition and Restoration as stated in OPWC's *Application for Financial Assistance, Attachment A*. **Score: based on items submitted; maximum 20 points.**

NRAC Member Priority Points

NRAC members are afforded the opportunity to award each applicant personal priority points based on their determination of the project's scope, description, and impact it has on the environment of our region. **Score: Up to 5 points.**

8.0 ATTACHMENTS/COMPLETENESS REVIEW

The District Six 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: Include those materials listed 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.

- 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: **An appraisal report OR restricted appraisal report is 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 Six NRAC for any acquisition above the appraised value.

9.0 List of Acronyms

CFO: CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

EPA: ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

HUC: HYDROLOGIC UNIT CODE

MHI: MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

NPS-IS: NONPOINT SOURCE IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

O&M: OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

NRAC: NATURAL RESOURCE ASSISTANCE COUNCIL

ODNR: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

ODOT: OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

OH-PA: OHIO-PENNSYLVANIA

OPWC: OHIO PUBLIC WORKS COMMISSION

ORC: OHIO REVISED CODE

Q&A: QUESTION AND ANSWER

SCIP: STATE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM