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**Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund
Frequently Asked Questions**
(July 2023)

Please Note: The contacts and resources referred to in this FAQ are available on OSI's [Appalachian Landscapes Protection Fund web page](#).

Science and Data

What data should I use to evaluate my project for Resilience & Carbon?
The Nature Conservancy (TNC)'s online [Resilient Land Mapping Tool](#) includes all the data you will need. OSI's [Definitions and Data Guide](#) provides detailed instruction on how to use this data.

What do terms like "Resilience," "Geophysical Settings" and "Carbon Storage" mean?
OSI's **Definitions and Data Guide** explains these and other science concepts. If you have questions, please contact the OSI Field Coordinator for your region (*see list at the end of this document*).

Project Eligibility

I note that the Fund has four focus areas, but funding is available only in **three** of the Focus Areas in this round, in Western/Central Pennsylvania, the Northern Appalachians, and the Cradle of Southern Appalachia. Is that correct?

Yes. Depending on funding, the Kittatinny Ridge Focus Area may be eligible to apply for grants in subsequent rounds.

If my project is only partly in a Fund Focus Area, can I apply?
Yes. As long as the project is partly in or touches the boundary, you may apply.

Is a project eligible if it falls entirely outside the Fund Focus Areas but the data indicates the property is resilient?
Probably not. Although there are many important areas outside of the Focus Areas, OSI is directing funding to selected regions. However, if your project lies *just outside* the boundary, please contact the OSI Field Coordinator for your region to discuss eligibility.

If my project is not above average for resilience, can I still apply?
Maybe. If your project **abuts** a resilient area **and** exhibits the characteristics of resilience as detailed in OSI's **Definitions and Data Guide**, please contact the OSI Field Coordinator for your region. If project partners plan to restore portions of the land to natural cover, the resilience of the project may increase. Please reach out to OSI staff to discuss eligibility.

Is farmland eligible?
Not usually. In most cases land that is converted out of natural land cover would not meet the Fund's criteria. If most of the property is forested with a small portion managed for agriculture, please contact the OSI Field Coordinator for your region.

Is active forest management allowed?
Usually. In many cases, forests can be actively managed and still meet the purposes of the Fund. However, the *primary purpose* of any forest management must be maintenance of habitat for native species and carbon storage. OSI staff will review forest management plan language and conservation easement language (if applicable) to provide guidance. Please refer to OSI's web page for the **Stewardship and Conservation Easement Standards** for details.

Are projects with active mining, severed or leased mineral rights eligible for funding?
Sometimes. Mineral extraction such as mining, quarrying, and drilling for oil and gas can damage the natural resources and climate values the Fund seeks to protect. OSI prefers to support projects that protect all natural resources on a property including those on the surface and subsurface. OSI will review projects on a case-by-case basis to evaluate the risks to conservation values associated with mineral extraction. If your proposed project has severed mineral rights that you are unable to extinguish, please contact the OSI Field Coordinator for your region to discuss project eligibility.

Project Structure & Funding

Can a property or conservation easement (CE) acquired with OSI funds be transferred to a government entity?
Yes. The property must be permanently protected and managed by an entity whose mission is consistent with the goals of the Fund and with the resources and expertise to manage the land appropriately.

Can a property conserved by another land trust or government agency count as match?
Probably. The match property must meet the Fund criteria, stewardship requirements, due diligence standards and match requirements *(see OSI website)* and the applicant must demonstrate that the match property is part of the same coordinated, conservation effort as the subject property.

Can OSI grant funds be used for associated acquisition costs?

OSI gives strong preference to funding land protection directly but if the applicant makes the case that funding out-of-pocket acquisition costs, such as appraisals or title work, is critical to success, we will consider that request. Please see the website for eligible project expenses.

What is the match requirement and does OSI ever waive it?

OSI gives preference to projects with a 4:1 or greater match. OSI will accept a lower match for projects that are spearheaded and/or will be stewarded by Black, Indigenous and People of Color-led organizations. OSI will also consider lower match for projects with outstanding carbon and resilience values where the applicant demonstrates other funding is not available. For details, please see the match information on the website.

How do I know if my organization should identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Color (BIPoC) led?

We will ask you to tell us how you define BIPoC-led. As a reference point, BIPoC-led conservation organizations often have at least one half of senior staff and/or board leadership positions held by those who self-identify as Black, Indigenous or People of Color. Consideration can also be made for organizations or projects with an explicit focus on or to serve BIPoC communities and have BIPoC leadership in executive and/or board chair positions.

Can a grant from another OSI fund be used to match an ALPF Grant?

Yes.

Does the Fund either require or prohibit enrollment in a carbon offset project?

No. OSI grantees (and landowners they are working with) may choose to enroll land in a carbon offset project, while also permanently protecting the property. While OSI allows for grantees to enroll projects in the carbon market, all projects must meet the [ALPF Stewardship and Conservation Easement Standards](#) at the time of closing. If your proposed project includes a carbon offset project, please reach out to the OSI Field Coordinator for your region.

Will protecting land through the Fund impact future carbon sales?

Maybe. Permanently protecting land through the Fund will limit – but not necessarily preclude – the ability to harvest trees. Such harvesting restrictions may have an impact on the value and viability of future carbon sales, depending on the length of time between the conservation project and the carbon project enrollment and on the terms of the conservation project. To understand how the Fund's requirements may impact a carbon project please consult an experienced carbon offset project developer.

How can I find out more about carbon offset projects and conservation easements?

The Land Trust Alliance has provided extensive guidance on blending conservation easements and carbon programs in *Carbon Offsets in Conservation Easements: The Essentials for Land Trusts*. OSI has also developed a brief summary of carbon market assistance programs that can provide a useful starting point.

What is the Fund's Stewardship Plan requirement?

All ALPF projects must meet the stewardship standards detailed in the Conservation Easement and Stewardship standards. Projects can meet these goals either through a CE and/or a stewardship plan that address how the land's use and stewardship will benefit climate resilience and carbon sequestration. The grantee can develop the stewardship plan post-closing with OSI's prior consent. In some cases, where there is a strong CE for example, a stewardship plan may not be necessary. The sources provided in this Forest Carbon Resource Guide may assist you in developing your plan.

Application Process

Can an organization submit grant proposals for more than one project?

Yes. Applicants can apply for more than one project; however, grant resources are limited so applicants should submit only strong projects that will score well.

My project will not close within OSI's 18-month timeframe. Should I still apply?

No. Please do not apply unless your project is highly likely to close within 18 months of OSI's grant approval. OSI will provide additional opportunities to apply to this Fund.

When will I learn if my project has been funded?

OSI staff aim to inform applicants if their project has been approved within three months of the application deadline and will likely be in touch throughout the evaluation process.

OSI Field Coordinators

Cradle of Southern Appalachia: Joel Houser (jhouser@osiny.org)
Northern Appalachians: Joel Houser (jhouser@osiny.org)
Kittatinny and Western/Central PA: Bill Rawlyk (brawlyk@osiny.org)