

**Rhode Island Land Trust Council**  
**Land Protection Grant Program**  
*Request for Applications - March 26, 2024*

**Project Overview:** As part of its efforts to support land trusts throughout the state, the Rhode Island Land Trust Council (the Council) has created a Land Protection Fund. The goal of this program is to help land trusts conserve important natural areas, open spaces, forests, and farmland in Rhode Island. With increased development pressure and high real estate prices in an already very densely populated state, the land conservation community must do everything possible to protect important lands while they are still there.

**Grant Program Details:** Rhode Island land trusts are eligible to apply for micro-grants to help with land acquisition projects. These grants fund up to \$3,000, and can be used towards a land purchase or related due diligence costs such as appraisals, legal fees, surveys, title searches, title reviews, recording fees and/or environmental assessments.

Unused grant funds will be returned by the applicant should the project not close, is cancelled, or the funds are no longer needed.

Grants are awarded once a year, and applications are reviewed by the Council's Land Protection Fund subcommittee.

**Ineligible costs:** staff time, salaries, management plans, land stewardship, or miscellaneous expenses.

**Eligibility Requirements:** Applicant land trust must be a current RI Land Trust Council member organization. Projects must be located in Rhode Island.

Land acquisition projects are for permanent conservation only, through fee-simple ownership, deed of public trust, donation, or purchase of conservation easement.

Note: If you are applying as a municipal land trust, please call Kate Sayles to discuss the project and options at 401-212-0832.

Land trusts may submit one application/round.

**Tracking Metrics:** Deed or other evidence of project closing.

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**Timeline**

Applications open on Tuesday, March 26, 2024, and close on Friday, May 10, 2024 at 6 pm EST

Notification of selection by Monday, May 20, 2024

Memorandum of Understanding and Contracts Anticipated by Monday, June 10, 2024

**Required Documentation Checklist:**

- Completed application
- Budget for project with description and amount requested
- Map of project area, including property boundaries

***Incomplete applications will NOT be reviewed.***

If there are questions about project eligibility, documentation and mapping, or the application process, please contact Kate Sayles at [ksayles@rilandtrusts.org](mailto:ksayles@rilandtrusts.org) or 401-212-0832

**Additional Documentation** (not required, but helpful): Maps showing significant resources, proximity to conservation lands, or any additional metrics listed in point value system.

*Helpful resources for your application:*

RI Department of Environmental Management Map Room - Information and guidance that can be helpful to determine the significance of your application can be found in the Environmental Resource Map, including proximity to conservation lands, conservation opportunities, wetlands, and watersheds.

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**Rhode Island Land Trust Council  
Land Protection Grant Program Application**

**Part 1. Organizational Information**

**Applicant Land Trust:**

**Project Manager Contact Information:**

**Affiliation with land trust (Board Member? Staff?):**

**Address/Business Address:**

**Phone/Email:**

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**Part 2. Project Information**

**Project Name:**

**Location of Parcel (address):**

**Plat/Lot:**

**Acreage:**

**Additional Project Partners (if any):**

**Is the property under contract (Y/N)?:**

**What is the Expected Closing Date?**

**Acquisition Steps that have been completed for parcel (check all that apply):**

\_\_\_ Survey

\_\_\_ Appraisal

\_\_\_ Environmental Assessment

\_\_\_ Title Review

\_\_\_ Other: Describe

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**Part 3. Project Narrative & Budget**

**Likelihood of Success**

Please provide a brief background (150 words or less) on your confidence in closing on this project.

**This question is worth up to 15 points.**

**Project Description:** Please describe the significance of your project, including relevant information about proximity to conservation lands, watershed protection, important habitat features and wildlife, agricultural value, cultural importance, and/or availability for public recreation (500 words or less).

Information provided in this section will be evaluated based on the “evaluation criteria” below.

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**Budget for Project:**

*Please attach a budget as a separate document and include purchase price, detail of estimated project costs, expected sources of funds and progress to date.*

## Evaluation Criteria

### 100 Possible Points Total

1. Project narrative: project demonstrates likelihood for success: **15 points**
2. Does the parcel abut existing conservation land or public lands? **15 points**
3. Will the parcel provide public access? **10 points.**
4. Is there evidence that the parcel contains rare, endangered, or threatened plant or animal species? **5 points**
5. Is the parcel within a drinking supply watershed? Will protection of the land improve water quality? **10 points**
6. Does the parcel contain wetland habitat or shore frontage on a river, stream, coastline, pond, lake, or other waterbody that protects water resources and/or supports high values for wildlife habitat? **10 points**
7. Does the parcel contain agricultural land with prime and statewide important soils and will it be conserved for agricultural use/production? **15 points**
8. Is the parcel forested, and does that forest fall within a forested block of 250 acres or more? **10 points**
9. Does the parcel include an existing trail network or could provide trail linkage with other trail networks that are open to the public? **10 points**