

Anderson County Citizen Empowerment and Watershed Protection Project Grants

Note: In order for an application for funding to be complete and considered, applicants must complete the Google Form application found on the website at andersonwatercouncil.com, and the items for signature and checklist highlighted below. Items on this form should be scanned and sent to info@andersonwatercouncil.com.

SUMMARY

In response to Kinder Morgan's 2014 gasoline pipeline spill in Anderson County, the Southern Environmental Law Center—on behalf of Upstate Forever and the Savannah Riverkeeper—filed a Clean Water Act lawsuit that resulted in a settlement agreement providing \$1,500,000 (“the Fund”) to the plaintiffs for the protection and remediation of Anderson County water resources. The Fund, to be administered by Upstate Forever and the Savannah Riverkeeper, is being held in an account at the Foothills Community Foundation.

In the spirit of community engagement and collaboration, Upstate Forever and the Savannah Riverkeeper have assembled an advisory committee composed of Anderson County residents and stakeholders to help influence project prioritization, selection, and evaluation over time. The advisory committee, called the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council (“Water Council”), consists of one representative from Upstate Forever, Savannah Riverkeeper, Anderson County Council, Anderson County Soil and Water Conservation District, Clemson PSA, Anderson County Board of Education, as well as an Anderson County resident.

The mission of the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council is to assist Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever in identifying, prioritizing, and funding projects that empower citizens to take action on existing and emerging threats to water resources and to restore water quality in the Savannah River watershed's impacted areas. The Water Council is particularly interested in funding projects that empower local communities to collect and share water quality data publicly.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) seeks to identify projects for funding and completion in FY 2023 that protect or restore water quality in the surrounding watershed, as well as projects that increase citizen awareness and participation in water quality issues in parts of Anderson County. Projects in nearby portions of the Savannah River watershed may also apply.

QUALIFYING ENTITIES

A not-for-profit charitable corporation or trust authorized to do business in South Carolina or Georgia whose mission aligns with the goals of the Water Council; the Georgia and South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; Forestry Commissions; Department of Parks, Recreation, and Tourism; educators,

municipalities, and school systems in the impacted area; and any agency, commission, or instrumentality of such a municipality. Priority is given to grant proposals closest to the spill site.

PROJECT AWARDS

Average individual grant awards range between \$10,000 to \$50,000 for citizen empowerment and education projects, and up to \$100,000 for water restoration projects, with occasional opportunities for multi-year awards, when necessary, not to exceed three (3) years. Funding matches and partnerships are encouraged and prioritized. Grants cannot be used for projects where information is not shared publicly. Projects that contribute to the Know Your River database—a central location for publicly-available water quality monitoring information—will receive strong ranking.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Award recipients shall submit reports twice per year to the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council tracking project deliverables and expenditures. Annual in-person presentations are required for all award recipients.

DEADLINE

The deadline for proposal submission is no later than 5:00 p.m. on August 29, 2022. Proposals must be completed and submitted on andersonwatercouncil.com. Any proposal received after the deadline posted in this notice shall be rejected. The Anderson County Watershed Protection Council assumes no responsibility for unmarked, improperly marked, or incomplete applications. Applicants will receive an automatically generated confirmation email upon receipt.

Every effort has been made to ensure that all information is included herein; however, questions are allowed and encouraged for further clarification. All questions shall be in writing and addressed to info@andersonwatercouncil.com. Questions regarding this RFP must be submitted in writing no later than 1:00 p.m. on August 15, 2022 to guarantee a response.

APPLICANT INFORMATION IS TO BE COMPLETED IN THE GOOGLE FORM ON THE WEBSITE.

1. Number of applications per entity is unlimited; however, only one project proposal per entity will receive funds annually.
2. Applications must be made in the official name of the individual, firm, company, partnership, corporation, joint venture or other legal entity under which the business is conducted (showing official business address) and must be signed in ink by a person duly authorized to legally bind the legal entity submitting the proposal.

3. Applications should be prepared simply and economically. All data, materials, and documentation shall be available in a clear, concise form.

4. Applications shall provide a straightforward, concise description of applicant's ability to satisfy the intent of the Water Council's mission, as well as relevant criteria.

5. All grantees and awards may be made public.

6. No substitutions shall be considered after the award except by consent from the co-chairs of the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council.

7. Applicants are responsible for completion of the work described in their application and will receive funds as deemed appropriate by the Water Council.

8. All proposal applications should be complete and carefully worded and shall convey all of the information requested by Anderson County Watershed Protection Council. If errors or exceptions are found in a proposal, or if the proposal fails to conform to the requirements of the RFP, the Water Council co-chairs shall be sole judge as to whether that variance is significant enough to reject the proposal.

9. The applicant is responsible for all costs and expenses associated with the preparation of the proposal and of any supplementary presentation (including any oral presentation) requested by the Council.

10. Each applicant by submitting a proposal application represents that:

A) The applicant has read and understands this RFP and that its application is made in accordance therewith.

B) The applicant has reviewed the RFP and has become familiar with the local conditions under which the project will occur. The failure or omission of an applicant to acquaint himself with existing conditions shall in no way relieve him of any obligation with respect to this proposal or any resulting award.

C) The applicant is qualified to provide the services and equipment required under this RFP and, if awarded, shall do so in a professional, timely manner using successful skills and attention.

D) The applicant is guaranteeing that the project deliverables will occur during the annual award time period and will communicate with the funder if deliverables require modification.

EVALUATION

The Anderson County Watershed Protection Council shall utilize the following objective ranking criteria to evaluate, prioritize, and recommend projects to Upstate Forever and Savannah Riverkeeper—the Fund sponsors. The Fund is being held at the Foothills Community Foundation and shall be disbursed,

leveraged, and matched over 20 years to fulfill the intent and purpose of the legal settlement, i.e. environmental remediation and conservation in the impacted watershed.

Annually, the highest number of total points from #1, #2A, and #3 will result in 50% of the recommended projects for funding; The highest number of total points from #1, #2B, and #3 will result in 50% of the recommended projects for funding.

#1

Within the Broadway Creek watershed - 50 points

Within Savannah Basin of Anderson County (but not within the Broadway Creek watershed) - 25 points

Within Upper Savannah Watershed (allowed, but will not receive points) - 0 points

#2

The sponsors aim to have fifty percent of the annual funds spent on projects in Column A; with the other half spent on Column B. In the event that there are not enough funds in Column A or B to satisfy equal distribution, projects in any given column can receive the awards based on the highest ranking value.

#2A	#2B
<p>Riparian and Hydrologic Conservation Values: The project protects or restores the watershed through unique habitats, flood control, sediment filtration, and contaminant filtration.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situated on a river or stream (5) • Extensive river or stream shoreline (5) • Includes the 100-year floodplain (5) • Includes a designated scenic river, stream or wetland (5) • Contains minimum 50-foot buffer of trees along shorelines as a sediment buffer (5) • Contains ecologically significant wetlands such as isolated bays, bogs, depression meadows and ponds (5) • Adjacent to or near other protected wetlands (5) • Contributes to erosion control and watershed health (5) • Includes the surface watershed or the ground water aquifer of a public water supply (5) • Other (please explain) 	<p>Citizen Engagement: The project empowers local residents, children, and educators to become stewards and advocates of the impacted watershed. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citizen science project that contributes to data collection and transparency (20) • Workshops and training that lead to water quality awareness and transparency (10) • School resources and projects that further the mission of the committee to share data publicly (20) • Project includes at least one Adopt A Stream site adopted through the grant and maintained for a period of at least one year (20)

<p>Agricultural BMPs: The project implements agricultural best management practices.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Streambank fencing (5) • Heavy-use area improvement (5) • Armored stream crossings (5) • Alternative watering sources (5) • Cover crops (5) • Other 	<p>Innovative Approaches to Problem Solving:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technology solutions to water quality monitoring and pollution prevention (20) • Community awareness through innovative approaches (20) • Other
<p>Wildlife: The project conserves habitats of rare, threatened or endangered species of fish, wildlife or plants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Known occurrences of rare, threatened or endangered species of animals or plants (5) • Within close proximity to a site with known occurrences of species of concern (5) • Good or excellent habitat or habitat potential for forest inhabiting birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians and invertebrates (5) • Areas for resting and feeding of migratory species (5) • Connective habitats, corridors, habitat linkages and areas that reduce biological isolation (5) 	<p>Data Collection and Monitoring: The project contributes to water quality data collection that is publicly accessible.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality monitoring and equipment for data that is publicly accessible and used to inform public decision making (30) • Data collection / database creation (5) • Sediment and ground water research that is publicly accessible (10) • Organized approach (10) • Contributes to data that is shared transparently about water and toxin movement through the ground and surface water (30) • Affects water quality for drinking water (30) • Data is collected and provided publicly through www.KnowYourRiver.com (30)

#3

Financial matches can be in the form of in-kind or monetary and must be shown in the project budget and narrative.

20%-39% financial match (monetary or in-kind) - 20 points

40%-49% financial match - 30 points

50%-74% financial match - 40 points

More than 75% match - 50 points

During the evaluation process, representatives from Upstate Forever or Savannah Riverkeeper, on behalf of the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council, reserve the right to request additional information or clarification from applicants, or to allow corrections of errors or omissions.

Funding award shall be made to the most responsive, complete applications that fulfill the ranking criteria and priorities.

Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever shall be the sole arbiters of final rankings and recommendations to the Foothills Community Foundation for the release of funds to the applicants.

NOTICE OF AWARD OF CONTRACT

The successful applicants shall be notified of the funding awards by a written and email Notice of Award no later than November 11, 2022.

NOTICE OF AWARD OF CONTRACT

The successful applicants shall be notified of funding awards by email with the subject line “Notice of Award.”

INDEMNIFICATION

The award recipients hereby expressly agree to indemnify and hold Upstate Forever, the Savannah Riverkeeper and members and representatives of the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council harmless against any and all expenses and liabilities arising out of the performance or default of this award.

APPLICANT’S QUALIFICATIONS

The Anderson County Watershed Protection Council reserves the right to request satisfactory evidence of applicant’s ability to furnish services in accordance with the terms and conditions listed herein. The Water Council further reserves the right to make the final determination as to the applicant’s ability to provide said services. We reserve the right to investigate the qualifications of any respondent under consideration, require confirmations of information furnished, and require additional evidence of qualifications to perform the work described in this RFP, contact references, and request an audited financial statement in order to determine a potential applicant’s capabilities.

ASSIGNMENT

The applicant(s) shall not assign in whole or in part its duties without the prior written consent of the Water Council. The award recipient shall not assign any money due or to become due to it under this contract without the prior written consent of the Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever.

COMPLIANCE WITH LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

All applicable Federal, State and local laws, ordinances, and rules and regulations of any authorities shall be binding upon the award recipient throughout the pendency of this Project. The recipient shall be responsible for compliance with any such law, ordinance, rule or regulation, and shall hold the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council harmless and indemnify the same in the event of non-compliance.

OWNERSHIP

All data, material, technology, information, and documentation originated and prepared from the funds awarded shall be co-owned by the Council and grantee and made public.

FUNDING

Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever, in consultation with the Foothills Community Foundation, shall determine a set timeframe for the availability of funds for successful proposals. Funds will be released by one of the following methods:

- a. Provide 50% of the total approved funding when the proposal has been approved and the remainder once 6-month report has been submitted and approved; or
- b. Provide 50% of the total funding when the proposal has been approved and the remainder once the work is completed; or
- c. Reimburse the applicant only upon project completion.

The Anderson County Watershed Protection Council reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to reject submissions, reissue a subsequent RFP, terminate, restructure or amend this process at any time. The final selection and negotiation rests solely with the Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever.

BUDGET AND NARRATIVE

Each application must include a detailed project budget, with an accompanying budget narrative, that reflects how each cost furthers implementation of the project.

MEDIA RELEASE

Award recipients agree to appearing in public media channels as deemed relevant by the Council.

AWARD LENGTH

The initial term of an award shall be for one year. The Council reserves the right to extend the annual funding if it determines it is in its best interest; said extension will be on an annual basis and shall not exceed three (3) additional one (1) year periods.

ORAL STATEMENTS

No oral statement of any person shall modify or otherwise change, or affect the terms, conditions or specifications stated in the resulting grant. The Anderson County Watershed Protection Council shall not be legally bound by any interpretation that is not in writing.

PROPRIETARY INFORMATION

If an applicant does not desire proprietary information in the proposal to be disclosed, the applicant may identify all proprietary information. This identification will be done by individually marking each page with the words "Proprietary Information" or "Confidential" on which such proprietary information is found. If the applicant fails to identify proprietary information, it agrees that by submission of its proposal that those sections shall be deemed non-proprietary and may be made available upon request.

SUSPENSION AND DEBARMENT

The applicant certifies, by submission of this proposal, that neither it nor its principals are presently debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participation in this transaction by any federal, state or local agency.

CERTIFICATE OF FAMILIARITY

Having been fully familiarized with the information contained within this entire RFP, I submit the attached project application, and other applicable information, which I verify to be true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I further certify that this proposal response is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm or person submitting a proposal for the same materials, supplies, equipment or services in all respects, fair and without collusion or fraud. I agree to all of the conditions in this solicitation and certify that I am authorized to sign this application.

Signature: _____

Company Name: _____

Date: _____

REFERENCES

Applicants must supply a minimum of three (3) references for which they have worked on similar projects for restoration funding. Please outline the nature and outcomes of the relationship/partnership.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

I understand that members of the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council may contact these references to learn more about the applicants and past projects.

Project applicant signature: _____ Date: _____

Applicant Checklist

1. Did you provide required information in the RFP? _____ Yes _____ No

2. Did you review the ranking criteria and ensure that your project fulfills the intent and purpose of the settlement fund? _____ Yes _____ No

3. Did you complete and include a project budget with a budget narrative clarifying expenses? _____ Yes _____ No

4. Did you include the required references? _____ Yes _____ No

5. Did you double check to make sure you have included everything that was requested? _____ Yes _____ No

Proposals will be received until: August 29, 2022 @ 5:00 p.m.

IMPORTANT

This solicitation seeks project proposals responding to this Citizen Empowerment and Watershed Protection Project RFP. This solicitation does not commit the Anderson County Watershed Protection Council to award any grants, to pay any costs incurred in the preparation of applications submitted, or to procure or contract for any proposals. The Savannah Riverkeeper and Upstate Forever reserve the right to

accept or reject any, all, or any part of any proposal received as a result of this RFP, or to cancel in part or in its entirety this RFP if needed for any reason.

I certify that this application is made without prior understanding, agreement, or connection with any corporation, firm, or person submitting a proposal for the same fund and is in all respects fair and without collusion or fraud. I agree to abide by all conditions of this proposal and certify that I am authorized to sign this application. This signed page must be included with submission.

Authorized Signature: _____

Title: _____

Date: _____