

## 2009 Land Conservation Grants

Request for Proposals  
October 22, 2009

### **Overview: A New Conservation Funding Opportunity**

In December 2009, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership (Q2C) will award grants up to \$50,000 to fund transaction-related expenses on land conservation projects in the “Quabbin-to-Cardigan” region of western New Hampshire. The area is part of the larger two-state Q2C region that spans one hundred miles from the Quabbin Reservoir in Massachusetts northward to the southern boundary of the White Mountain National Forest in New Hampshire. The region is bounded to the east and west by the Merrimack and Connecticut River Valleys. Encompassing approximately two million acres, the region is one of the largest remaining areas of intact, interconnected, ecologically significant forests in New England, and is a key headwater of the Merrimack and Connecticut rivers.

Launched in 2003, the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership is a collaborative effort of 27 private organizations and public agencies working on land conservation in the two Q2C states. The Q2C partners share a vision of consolidating the permanent protection of the region’s most ecologically significant forest blocks, and key connections between them for wildlife passage and human recreation. Q2C partners worked for more than three years to develop the Quabbin-to-Cardigan conservation plan, which combines state-of-the-art natural resource science and the consensus vision of the Q2C partner organizations.

Completed in 2007, the Q2C plan has identified approximately 600,000 acres of core conservation focus areas that represent the region’s most ecologically significant forests. These conservation focus areas represent about 30 percent of the two-million-acre region, and are currently 39 percent protected. An additional 400,000 acres, or another 21 percent of the region, have been identified as “supporting landscapes” that buffer and link the core areas, and are currently 26 percent protected. The extent to which proposed projects protect land in Q2C focus areas and supporting landscapes will be the primary criteria used to assess applications for funding.

For more information on the Quabbin-to-Cardigan region and conservation plan, grant application materials, maps, a list of towns in the region, etc. visit [www.q2cpartnership.org](http://www.q2cpartnership.org). If you need help determining whether your project is eligible for funding, please call Chris Wells at (603) 224-9945.

*Funding for the Q2C Land Conservation Grants program is being provided by USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS), and was requested by U.S. Representative Paul Hodes (NH-02). The program is administered by the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests on behalf of the Quabbin-to-Cardigan Partnership, through a cooperative agreement with NRCS.*

## What Can Grants be Used For?

- ✿ **Transaction-related expenses on land protection projects (fee or easement).** These expenses may include but are not limited to the procurement of surveys, appraisals and appraisal reviews, attorney's services to applicant related to the acquisition of easements, title searches, closing services, deed preparation and negotiation, baseline document preparation, easement and land recording, and other professional services.

*The Quabbin to Cardigan Partnership may also consider grant requests to fund the direct cost of the acquisition of conservation easements (i.e. purchase of the property interest), but such requests are not encouraged at this time given the limited pool of grant dollars available. Grant funds cannot be used to acquire the full fee interest in land.*

## Who Can Apply and Receive Funding?

- ✿ Nonprofit tax exempt 501(c)(3) organizations that have land conservation as their primary function;
- ✿ State agencies that have land conservation as a primary function;
- ✿ Local governments.

*All other entities, including but not limited to units of federal government and individuals cannot apply to or receive funding from this grant program. Maximum grant amount per project is \$50,000. Applicants may apply for grants for more than one project, but no more than \$50,000 will be awarded to any one applicant, unless there are no other qualified applications. Expenses incurred before 6/16/09 are not eligible for funding through this grant program.*

## How Will Projects Be Selected?

### *Primary Criteria*

**A.1. Eligible projects must be located in the Quabbin to Cardigan region of New Hampshire.** See maps of region and list of towns at [www.q2cpartnership.org](http://www.q2cpartnership.org) to determine whether your project is located in the Q2C region.

**A.2. The project must protect land that has been identified as “conservation focus area” and/or “supporting landscape” in the Quabbin to Conservation Plan.** To determine whether your project protects land in one or both of these categories, see maps on “download” page of [www.q2cpartnership.org](http://www.q2cpartnership.org). Geographic Information System (GIS) users will also find “shapefiles” of these Q2C priority areas. All applicants are required to submit a GIS shapefile of proposed project with their application, or if one is not available, supply other information from which GIS shapefiles can be created. See application form for details.

*Applicants are advised that the GIS shapefiles will be used to calculate total acres of Q2C “conservation focus area” and/or “supporting landscape” protected by proposed projects. Projects with a higher total number of acres and/or a higher percentage of acres in these priority areas will be more competitive than projects that protect smaller number of acres and/or a smaller percentage of acres in these areas.*

**A.3. The project must permanently protect the land** through acquisition of fee interest or with a permanent conservation easement or conservation restriction.

**A.4. The project must be completed and all grant funds spent no later than April 30, 2011.**

**A.5. Applicant must demonstrate the capacity and financial ability to execute the transaction and ensure perpetual stewardship of the protected property.**

*Additional Considerations (not in order of priority)*

B.1. Extent to which the project adds to existing protected land, and/or provides linkage between protected lands.

B.2. Extent to which the project provides financial leverage of grant dollars invested, in terms of total value of land protected.

B.3. Type and degree of conversion threat to land.

B.4. Extent to which project provides public recreational access.

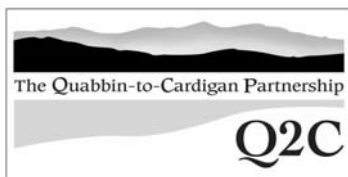
**Application Deadline**

Completed applications may be submitted electronically to [cwells@forestsociety.org](mailto:cwells@forestsociety.org), and must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on Friday, **November 20th, 2009**. Completed applications may also be sent by mail, and must be *postmarked* no later than Friday, November 20th, 2009. Mail applications to: Chris Wells, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord, NH 03301

Successful grant applicants will be notified in writing no later than December 31, 2009.

For questions regarding the grant program and the application process please contact: Chris Wells at (603) 224-9945 x355 or [cwells@forestsociety.org](mailto:cwells@forestsociety.org).

*The Q2C Partnership and NRCS reserve the right to modify this and other application materials in future grant rounds, based on experience gained from administering the program, changes in funding and/or legal requirements.*



The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or a part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at (202) 720-2600 (voice and TDD). To file a complaint of discrimination, write to USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

FINAL 10/22/09