# **Grant for Local Governments to Advance Biodiversity Conservation on Private Lands – REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST**

## *Interested parties, please complete this form to the best of your ability and send to* ***CFIPLG@fraserbasin.ca***

## ***Deadline: April 30, 2024****. Projects will be approved by* ***May 15, 2024****.*

## *Further details can be discussed during work planning.*

## **Background**

It is widely acknowledged within B.C. that there are challenges to biodiversity conservation since a large proportion of biodiversity, including species and ecosystems at risk, occur within valley bottoms and coastal areas that are comprised mostly of private land parcels. Incentive tools for private landowners to undertake conservation actions are not available in all parts of the province and, where they are available, there are challenges to their access and implementation.

To begin to address these challenges, Fraser Basin Council, in partnership with the Province of B.C., is offering a **one-time grant for local governments in 2024** to explore opportunities for funding conservation tools and incentives on private land **to enable and expand the role of local governments in conservation**.

## **Focus**

Local governments can utilize this grant to explore how to develop a **private landowner incentive model** to achieve biodiversity conservation and climate action goals through carbon storage or sequestration. The grant could also be used as seed funding to investigate how to support private land conservation through developing agreements directly with private landowners.

The amount available for a local government is expected to be **$15,000 to $90,000**. Local governments must be able to match the grant 1:1 with non-federal funds and/or in-kind staff time.

## **Collaborating**

The grant is targeted for local governments due to their role in private land use decisions, for example zoning bylaws, development permit areas and official community plans. Local governments have an important role to play in building relationships with First Nations that can bring benefits to both communities and enhance reconciliation. We encourage local governments to work directly with First Nations in their local and regional areas and provide details on their engagement process (please see #9 First Nations Engagement in the application form below).

Working in partnership with other agencies on new or existing regional conservation efforts is also encouraged. In some regions, there may already be plans underway to develop funds for private landowner incentives, or there may be existing funds for incentives that could be expanded upon. These funds could be administered by local governments and/or non-government organizations and conservation partnerships. Applicants are requested to consider what initiatives might already exist in their regions and outline how they will follow a collaborative approach.

## **Eligibility**

To be eligible for the grant, regional districts and municipalities will be required to:

* Focus work on developing and/or expand upon existing incentive models for biodiversity conservation and/or carbon storage and sequestration on private lands e.g., establishing a local conservation funds program that prioritizes maintaining or restoring functioning ecosystems as one of the main goals (*for more examples, please see project objectives section below*).
* Engage with First Nations.
* Match the grant 1:1 with non-federal funds and/or in-kind staff time.
* Submit this completed form by April 30, 2024.
* Optional: establish an agreement with a private landowner, either directly or through a non-government organization, with payment to the landowner for specific conservation actions e.g., maintaining existing biodiversity, restoring an ecosystem. Note, this agreement could be a case study using seed funding from the grant to test for potential future agreements with private landowners.

## **Examples of Local Government Approaches**

Some examples of existing local government financial tools that have been implemented in B.C. for biodiversity conservation on private land include:

* [Local Conservation Funds](https://kootenayconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Conservation-Fund-Guide-3rd-Edition-2022-Web.pdf) Service – a local government service that creates a dedicated fund for conservation projects, e.g.,
	+ Kootenay Conservation Program works in partnership with the Regional District of East Kootenay and the Regional District of Central Kootenay;
	+ The South Okanagan Similkameen Conservation Program works in partnership with the Regional District of Okanagan-Similkameen; and
	+ The Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program works with the Regional District of North Okanagan.
* Environmental levies and fees, e.g.,
	+ The District of West Vancouver’s [Environmental Reserve Fund Bylaw](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwestvancouver.ca%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fmedia%2Fdocuments%2F5188%2520ENVIRONMENTAL%2520RESERVE%2520BYLAW%25205188%25202022.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CLynn.Campbell%40gov.bc.ca%7Caa57c1cab8a64a23f1b408dc1b57945a%7C6fdb52003d0d4a8ab036d3685e359adc%7C0%7C0%7C638415310549255234%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=1SVtlfKKjDEOEIt70gehbymUEfen%2Fys3xEc9ogAQJyI%3D&reserved=0) enables the use of an environmental levy to support climate action and environmental protection initiatives; and
	+ The City of White Rock’s [Tree Protection Bylaw](https://www.whiterockcity.ca/324/Private-Trees) includes a permit fees and securities section to plant and maintain trees, support a local tree subsidy program, and support educational programs.
* Successful economic development collaborations and partnerships between First Nations and local governments, e.g.,
	+ [Pathways to Collaboration](https://www.ubcm.ca/policy-areas/pathways-collaboration) provides some good examples.

There is also an opportunity to develop new financial tools through research, innovative ideas, and jurisdictional scans from other provinces or countries.

## **Eligible Activities**

Activities may include:

* Researching private landowner incentive programs and other conservation opportunities from other jurisdictions.
* Conducting public opinion polls within the region to determine local interest in supporting private land conservation or participating in incentive programs.
* Reviewing your local government’s potential conservation financing options.
* Reviewing your local government’s natural assets and/or priority areas for biodiversity conservation (e.g., mapping sensitive areas, inventory of natural assets).
* Developing a local conservation fund service (please see examples above).
* Working on agreements with private landowners and/or non-government organizations.

Grant recipients will be selected based on criteria and project information outlined below.

## **Eligible Expenses**

**Eligible expenses include staff or contractor time on:**

Salaries and wages; contractors, including Indigenous technical advisors; management and professional services; policy development; financial reviews and options; legal opinion; jurisdictional scans and analysis; work on biodiversity, carbon and/or natural asset inventory or mapping; communications; public opinion polls; travel; vehicle rental and operation expenditures; agreements development with landowners; payments to a landowner directly or through a third party; costs associated with easements or covenants; materials and supplies; equipment rentals; and other related expenses to further work on financing biodiversity conservation and private land incentives in your region.

**Ineligible expenses include:**

Costs associated with land purchase or acquisition.

## **Reporting**

Local government grant recipients must provide a report of findings to date by **March 31, 2025** using a template that will be provided, including evidence of engagement with First Nations.

## **Resources**

The following links are included to provide applicants examples of related initiatives that could be used to generate project ideas:

* <https://kootenayconservation.ca/about-local-conservation-funds/>
* <https://kootenayconservation.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Conservation-Fund-Guide-3rd-Edition-2022-Web.pdf>
* <https://soconservationfund.ca/>
* [Environmental Reserve Fund Bylaw](https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwestvancouver.ca%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fmedia%2Fdocuments%2F5188%2520ENVIRONMENTAL%2520RESERVE%2520BYLAW%25205188%25202022.pdf&data=05%7C02%7CLynn.Campbell%40gov.bc.ca%7Caa57c1cab8a64a23f1b408dc1b57945a%7C6fdb52003d0d4a8ab036d3685e359adc%7C0%7C0%7C638415310549255234%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=1SVtlfKKjDEOEIt70gehbymUEfen%2Fys3xEc9ogAQJyI%3D&reserved=0)
* [Tree Protection Bylaw](https://www.whiterockcity.ca/324/Private-Trees)
* [Learn more about the Community to Community Forum Program](http://www.ubcm.ca/EN/main/funding/lgps/community-to-community-forum.html)
* [Local Government and First Nations Engagement](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/local-governments/governance-powers/collaborating-building-relationships/relations/local-government-first-nations-engagement)

## **Acknowledgements**

This grant has been made possible by the **Conservation Fiscal Incentives Project (CFIP**), funded through the Province of B.C. and Environment and Climate Change Canada’s Nature Smart Climate Solutions Fund. The Purpose of the CFIP is to develop recommendations for provincial actions to support fiscal incentives that make positive impacts to biodiversity conservation and to carbon storage and sequestration on private lands in B.C. Through case studies with non-government organizations and local governments, we can learn how some fiscal incentives work on private lands and how they could be better supported or expanded.

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**Thank you for your interest in this one-time Local Government grant
to advance biodiversity conservation on private lands.**

**Please send any inquiries and the completed application form to:**

**CFIPLG@fraserbasin.ca** **by April 30, 2024.**

## **Application Form**

## **Eligibility – please indicate below how your organization meets the following criteria:**

**Name of your organization (regional district or municipality)**

[Insert text here]

**Project lead name, position and contact information**

Name:

Position:

Email:

Phone:

**1. Capacity**

Please indicate your current staff capacity, either directly or by managing a contract, to explore at least one type of private land conservation funding tool (e.g., environmental levy, fees, security funds, utilizing an existing tax or establishing a new tax) that includes biodiversity conservation and carbon storage/sequestration.

**2. Working with Partner Organizations**

What non-government organizations (NGOs) in your region are working on private land conservation and/or incentives that you are, or could potentially partner with? Please identify any partnerships or potential collaboration opportunities with other regional organizations. If you do not know of any, please contact the Fraser Basin Council for assistance.

**3. Existing Data and Information**

 **3a. Knowledge and Documentation**

Please indicate generally your local government’s knowledge and documentation of biodiversity hotspots (e.g., species and ecosystems mapping, reports, planning tools) and that may have carbon storage and sequestration potential under threat (if known) in your region.

 **3b. Biodiversity Conservation Projects**

Outline any past or existing biodiversity/conservation projects that your local government or staff have been involved in, either internally or through partnerships.

 **3c. Conservation Incentives/Funds (optional)**

Explain how your local government might have researched opportunities, have direct experience, or work with a partner organization that has experience with funding opportunities for conservation. If your local government is just beginning to consider funding opportunities, please briefly outline any plans to do so. If there is no existing work on private landowner incentives that you know of in your region, you can leave this question blank.

**4. Working with Private Landowners**

Please describe your local government’s ability to work directly with a private landowner, or through a land trust/NGO.

Optional: please share any existing, or future plans to develop, conservation agreements and payments to private landowner(s) (e.g., experience with agreements, partnering with land trust/NGO).

**5. Matching Funds**

Please outline your local government’s financial capacity to match provided funds 1:1 (in-kind or non-federal funding). This might be confirmed or anticipated and is related to the total funds you are requesting.

**6. Overall Project Purpose (< 50 words):**

Please provide a short description of the purpose of your project.

**7. Research (< 250 words):**

Please describe the research component of your proposed project [e.g., research on private land conservation funding tools (e.g., environmental levy, fees, security funds, utilizing an existing tax or establishing a new tax); jurisdictional scan; financial analysis; public opinion poll].

**8. Case Study Agreement with a Private Landowner (< 250 words) (optional):**

Briefly outline how your local government, or contracted partner organization, anticipates working with, monitoring, and supporting the private landowner(s) throughout the term of an agreement of at least one year. If known, please include site selection criteria and approximate annual payments to the landowner for activities or ecosystems services provided.

**9. First Nations Engagement** **(< 250 words):**

Please describe how First Nations will be engaged in the process for the proposed project for expanding or developing incentive models (opinion polls, research, policy work).

Optional: in the event a specific site is identified as a case study to provide an incentive to a landowner, the applicant would need to demonstrate how First Nations support the project.

**10. Optional Additional Information (< 250 words):**

Share any additional information about your proposed project that you feel will be useful. This could include how it could support other local or regional initiatives.

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| **11. Project Objectives** |
| Please provide an outline of the anticipated project objectives, timelines, expected outcomes and associated deliverables (examples are provided in grey italics). Complete a single or multiple objective rows as needed. |
| ***Objective*** | ***Timeline*** | ***Expected Outcome(s)*** | ***Deliverable*** |
| *e.g., Conduct a public opinion poll for a potential new conservation fund through a new charge/ levy/etc.* | *April-July 2024* | *The number of constituents within the region that support a new conservation fund*  | *Summary report of poll results and recommendations for next steps* |
| *e.g., Work with First Nations in the area to identify areas of shared priority* | *July-December 2024* | *Learn more about First Nations interests and/or knowledge* | *Summary report of shared priorities, learnings and next steps* |
| *e.g., Identify biodiversity and/or carbon rich areas on private lands to target for fiscal incentives*  | *May – September 2024* | *Able to select lands to maintain or restore functioning ecosystems, wildlife corridors, store carbon, etc.* | *A list of priority properties* |
| *e.g., conduct a natural assets inventory* | *June – August 2023* | *Understand what ecosystem services exist and where they need to be protected* | *A list of priority ecosystem services and corresponding key properties to protect* |
| *e.g., Establish an agreement with a private landowner, with or without a conservation covenant* | *July 2024-July 2025* | *Protection of existing ecosystems or regeneration of habitat on private land and increased carbon sequestered or stored (X ha.)* | *Agreement in place and initial summary report including landowner perspectives*  |
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| **12. Project Budget** |
| Total funds requested (range allowed $15,000 - $90,000): $ |

Please note that selected applicants will be required to submit a more detailed budget and clarify how matching funds (1:1) will be secured.

**Thank you for your interest in this one-time Local Government grant to advance biodiversity conservation on private lands.**

**Please submit the completed form to** **CFIPLG@fraserbasin.ca** **by April 30, 2024.**