**CONSERVATION AND RECREATION PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS AND FORMAT**

**Please find below the Conservation and Recreation proposal format and instructions from the November 2023 LMF Workbook to assist applicants in preparing proposals. Please delete the instructions prior to submitting the proposal.**

All applicants are required to provide maps, visual aids (e.g. photos) and as much supporting information as necessary for the Board to better understand the project and the values it addresses. Carefully read this section to learn what the Board wishes to see in a well-developed proposal. Program staff can make available examples of successful proposals that may provide useful models.

All applicants are required to use the following proposal structure and numbering sequence and to provide complete information. If not applicable, indicate so by placing a N/A.

Submit an electronic PDF and one printed copy of your proposal to:

Land for Maine’s Future

22 SHS / 18 Elkins Ln. / Harlow Building Augusta, ME 04333-0022 LMFSubmissions.DACF@maine.gov

1. Proposal Summary page
	1. **Project Title:** This is the title by which your proposal will be catalogued by Program staff.
	2. **Proposal Category:** Indicate whether your project is a Community Conservation Project or a Project of Statewide Significance (see description in “[Overview](#_bookmark12)” for guidance). If your project is a Working Forest Project, please indicate so here.
	3. **Applicant Name & Contact Information:** Provide the applicant’s name, address, email, and phone number of the primary contact person. The entity that will hold the property in fee or easement must be listed as an applicant or co-applicant on the proposal.
	4. **Location of Project:** Provide the name of the municipality/township and county. Include the district number of the Senate and House Districts where the property is located. For this section, please include 1 map depicting the property and regional context. Additional maps are required in subsequent sections.
	5. **Size:** Indicate how many acres your project encompasses and identify fee acres vs. easement acres.
	6. **Status of Title:** Clear title is required prior to closing. Provide a brief status of title and documentation if available. Include a copy of the recorded deed, including book and page reference of subject property.
	7. **Funding request for acquisition:** Indicate the amount of LMF funding you are requesting for the fee or interest acquisition of the (See full budget information below).
	8. **Agency Sponsor & Proposed Ownership:** Possible agency sponsors for Conservation and Recreation Projects are the Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry, the Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife, or the Maine Historic Preservation Commission. A letter of agreement from the sponsoring agency must be included in the proposal. The letter must state that the sponsoring agency is prepared to hold the real estate interest proposed for protection either directly or via a project agreement.
	9. **Current landowner(s):** Include name and address of the current landowner(s). A letter from the landowner(s) indicating their willingness to be considered in the project must be included in the proposal.
	10. **Partners:** Other entities supporting this project. Include names of individuals, address, phone number, and e-mail address.
	11. **Date of Proposal:** Indicate the date you submitted your proposal.
	12. **Proposal Budget:** Use the form in [Appendix C.](#_bookmark35) Note: the Board will not consider a proposal with an incomplete budget.
2. Summary Project Description

Include a brief narrative description of the project and its context. The summary description should describe whether the proposed acquisition is fee, easement, or a combined strategy. Provide the Project’s objectives and the benefits. Please discuss the conservation and/or recreational assets that the project seeks to protect and other potential benefits. Subsequent sections of the proposal provide opportunity for more detailed discussion of specific aspects of the project that correspond to the scoring criteria.

Photographs of the property are required.

\*NOTE: Applicants should review the [Board Policies and Guidelines,](#_Board_Policies_&) and the previous section on “[Threshold Criteria](#_bookmark7)” including the list of “[Other Board Considerations](#_bookmark8)”. Use the summary project description to address any of these criteria that are not part of other sections of the proposal, including if there are municipal ordinances that limit or prohibit hunting, trapping or other traditional uses of the property.

1. Location Information

Project boundaries of all parcels included in the proposal must be delineated on:

1) A map showing project location and regional perspective

2) A USGS Topographic Base Map showing entire boundary of proposed project, legal access and adjacency of other conservation lands

3) Aerial Photo(s) - showing project location and boundaries

4) Other Maps as Appropriate – showing endangered species, significant natural communities, soils, outstanding physical features, proposed public access, trails, camping sites, etc., context of the project within a greenbelt plan, trail system, river corridor, comprehensive plan, etc. Data and maps related to fish, wildlife and plants is available through the Beginning with Habitat Program housed at IFW and is a resource that may help applicants satisfy this requirement. BWH Map Viewer: [https://webapps2.cgis-solutions.com/beginningwithhabitat/mapviewer/](https://webapps2.cgis-solutions.com/beginningwithhabitat/mapviewer/%20)

5) Please also include a GIS-compatible shapefile of project boundaries if your project area changed after submitting your inquiry form.

1. Project Readiness

Describe whether your project is ready to proceed rapidly to closing if selected as a finalist, based on the following criteria:

* The property is under contract, or will be under contract at the time the LMF Board meets

 to review proposals;

* For conservation easement projects, the applicant is able to provide a complete

 conservation easement or conservation plan meeting LMF’s requirements;

* The applicant will have match funds secured by the time the LMF Board meets to review

proposals. If match funds are not secured at the time of the proposal, the proposal should include a description of fundraising and/or grant application efforts; and

* The applicant has a plan for completing LMF’s due diligence requirements.

If your project does not meet all of the above criteria, describe the current status of the project and the timeline for completion of these criteria, and explain why your proposal is timely now and/or the harm that would result from waiting to apply in a future round.

1. Naturalness of the Land

Please provide a complete description of the physical and natural features of the proposed property and comment on all evidence of all existing disturbance. Based upon your evidence provided please identify which of the [scoring criteria](#_bookmark16) best represents your project and why.

1. Accessibility of the Land for its Intended Use

Describe the plans for public use of the property and the degree to which access to the proposed property is currently available, is suitable for the intended use, or needs to be developed to accommodate the intended use. Identify which of the [scoring criteria](#_bookmark17) best represents access to your property and supplement with specific descriptions and evidence supporting this.

1. Proximity to Conservation Lands or Larger Conservation/Recreation Effort

The narrative for this section should demonstrate how the project implements existing conservation/recreation planning, will address regional conservation needs, and enhances the connectivity of existing conservation holdings. Responses should provide evidence and be structured by referring to the [scoring criteria](#_Proximity_to_Conservation_1).

**Note**: If your project serves as an anchor parcel in an area of the state without existing conservation lands, or increases LMF investments to a part of the state that has had no or minimal investment, please provide a detailed description of how your project will address regional conservation needs and whether the project will serve as a catalyst for additional conservation and recreation opportunities.

1. Project Need

Using the definitions provided in the [Project Need section](#_Project_Need_(Max), identify the associated level of need to protect the property and the land assets identified in the proposal. This need must be substantiated by a published report(s) data base(s), or credible testimony.

1. Land Assets

Please describe either the project’s A) Multiple Land Assets or B) Single Exceptional Value. To determine which of these options is most appropriate for your project, please refer to the [scoring criteria](#_Land_Assets_(Max) and to [Appendix D: Land Assets](#_bookmark37) to review the eligible land asset categories. Projects with Single Exceptional Value are recognized as being the best or among the best in the state of their type, and because of this, Multiple Land Assets will be the most appropriate choice for most projects.

**Notes:**

* Applicants considering Single Exceptional Value scoring should consult with LMF and DSA staff prior to making this selection.
* If the LMF Board determines that a project seeking Single Exceptional Value scoring does not meet the criteria for this scoring, the proposal will be scored on Multiple Land Assets based on the information provided in the proposal.
1. Multiple Land Assets

Identify each land asset that your project demonstrates, and determine the level of significance of each land asset using the definitions of significance provided in the [scoring section](#_Land_Assets_(Max). Be sure that you provide information (reports, database information, credible testimony, etc.) that supports your selection.

*OR*

1. Single Exceptional Value

Describe the project’s documented single exceptional value that is exceptionally rare and of outstanding significance in a statewide context. Be sure that you provide information (reports, database information, credible testimony, etc.) that supports your selection.

1. Community and Economic Impact

The Board seeks to cultivate and support closer working relationships between land conservation efforts, businesses, and the community. Please review the community and economic impact attributes outlined in the [Community and Economic Impact section](#_Community_and_Economic_1) and describe the impact of your project via all applicable attributes.

1. Municipal Support

Please describe what efforts have been made to partner with the municipality(ies) where your project is located and provide evidence of municipal support for the project, such as matching funds, stewardship commitments, and/or letters of support. The Board requests that projects in the Unorganized areas of Maine demonstrate support from County Commissioners.

BONUS:

1. Significant Undeveloped Archaeological Site

Proposals claiming points for “significant, undeveloped archaeological sites” must have a written endorsement from the Maine Historic Preservation Commission that describes the significance of the archaeological resources on the site. Please also include a description of the archaeological resources in your proposal.

1. Public Water Supply

Using the criteria provided in the [Public Water Supply section,](#_bookmark24) describe whether your proposal is located within an area eligible for public water supply bonus points, and if so, describe how the intended use and management of the property is consistent with the protection of the public water supply. Please remember to include a letter of support from the water district.

1. Community Accessibility

Determine if the proposal is eligible for Community Accessibility bonus points by referring to the [scoring criteria](#_Community_Accessibility_(Max). In this section, please describe this eligibility, along with how the project will improve the ability of Maine residents to access open space and outdoor recreation.

1. Climate Change Adaptations

Describe how your proposal supports climate change adaptations using the criteria provided in the [Climate Change Adaptations section](#_Climate_Change_Adaptations) and referencing information provided in the project’s [Maine Natural Areas Program](https://www.maine.gov/dacf/mnap/index.html) pre-acquisition review.

1. Deer Wintering Area

See criteria provided in [Deer Wintering Areas.](#_bookmark26) These bonus points are available for DIFW proposals only, other applicants should describe protection of deer wintering areas in their Proposal, as appropriate.

1. Estimate of monitoring and management costs

Every applicant submitting a proposal to acquire property or an interest in property shall provide:

* A description of the management envisioned for the property for the first 10 years following acquisition. The proposal must provide a description of the anticipated management responsibilities retained by the landowner and those to be assumed by the State and/or the cooperating entity;
* Estimates of the costs to the State and/or the cooperating entity of managing the land for the uses proposed in the proposal. Please indicate if you are applying for a LMF Stewardship Award as part of the proposal (if yes, Stewardship Award request information must be entered in the [Project Budget](#_Appendix_C)); and
* Estimates of the costs associated with monitoring for compliance when an easement is acquired.
1. Organizational capacity

Describe the applicant’s capacity to undertake the project with a reasonable prospect of bringing it to a successful conclusion. The Board will consider all relevant factors including without limitation: level of debt, fundraising ability, past land conservation activity and transactions, organizational history, scope of conservation vision, and evidence of success in building and sustaining land protection campaigns. Land trusts that have been accredited by the Land Trust Accreditation Commission may submit proof of accreditation as proof of capacity. Non-profit applicants without proof of accreditation must submit their most recent financial audit if one exists and the most recent financial statement that represents the organization’s current financial condition. Describe the proposed title or easement holder’s ability, experience, and resources to manage the property appropriately.

1. **Easement Projects**

Easement projects must include a draft of the easement or a conservation plan. Working Forest Projects should refer to the Guidelines for Working Forest Conservation Easements published in July 2002 by LMF and available on the LMF website and from LMF staff (see [Appendix G](#_bookmark46) for a discussion of these easements). The easement will be subject to a separate.