Missouri Department of conservation
Land Conservation Partnership Grant:

Conservation Land acquisition program

July 27, 2022

# Overview

## Program Description and Purpose

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|  | The Land Conservation Partnership Grant (LCPG) – Conservation Land Acquisition Program provides financial assistance to local governments and non-governmental organizations for acquiring lands through fee title to be held and managed by the Applicant. The purposes of the grant are to: 1) provide public access to lands which allow citizens to discover and connect to nature and participate in related outdoor recreation activities, and 2) enhance long-term conservation of wildlife species, habitats, and ecosystem services through protection of lands having important conservation value.Applicants will request a percentage of the tract’s appraised land value they wish to be funded by the grant (up to a maximum of 75%) and a corresponding dollar funding request for the property’s land value on their application. If an appraisal has not been conducted at the time of application, then Applicant should provide an estimate. For approved projects that meet all requirements, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) will provide the lesser of the Applicant’s dollar request or the requested percentage of the tract’s appraised land value. The percent funding requested by Applicant will be factored into the project score. Projects in which partners are paying a greater portion of the cost will receive more points. Additionally, MDC is willing to cover the cost of an appraisal required for approved projects, as described under Special Requirements and Conditions below.  |

## Who Can Apply

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|  | Local governments and nonprofit organizations registered and in good standing with the Missouri Secretary of State whose mission includes holding and protecting lands for conservation purposes are eligible to apply. |

## What Lands are Eligible

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|  | Missouri lands being offered for sale by a willing seller (i.e. no eminent domain) are eligible. MDC assistance is limited to acres that will be managed as natural habitat (e.g. forest, stream, native grassland, wetland, etc.) and supporting infrastructure (e.g. trails, parking lot). MDC’s assistance will not apply to acres to be managed for other purposes (ball field, pool, golf course, agriculture, turf fields, etc.). Acres that are not currently in natural habitat cover (e.g. cropland, fescue fields, mowed turf) can be included in eligible acres if they are identified in long-term management plan to be converted to natural habitat within two years, or at least to have the conversion in progress within two years. There is no minimum/maximum acreage for participation.Public access is required on lands acquired through this program except on acres that directly support state or federally listed species or habitats of conservation concern that would be vulnerable to public access (e.g. a priority cave for bats in which public access could spread white nose syndrome).Lands are ineligible if they are required to be purchased by another entity (e.g. flood buyout, development requirement for common ground for subdivisions or condominiums, etc.). The property must include mineral rights, or a letter of mineral remoteness must be provided by a qualified geologist.  |

## Special Requirements and Considerations

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|  | **Funding Limitations*** Maximum MDC grant award per project proposal is $200,000.
* Applicant may not use other MDC funds towards the purchase of the property.
* MDC assistance will not contribute towards the value of buildings to be retained by the Applicant. The value of buildings to be retained shall be appraised separately from the remainder of the property and excluded from the grant funding request.
* A partial land value donation by Seller (Seller accepts less than appraised value) can contribute towards match. *For example, if a property appraising at $100,000 is approved for 75% funding and the landowner is willing to sell the property for $85,000, then $15,000 ($100,000 - $85,000) can be counted as part of the required $25,000 match, the Applicant must come up with $10,000, and MDC would pay $75,000.* If the Seller’s donated value exceeds required match, MDC’s contribution will be reduced to no more than the net amount of the appraised value minus the landowner’s donated value minus partner contributions. *For example, if a property appraising at $100,000 is approved for 75% funding, the landowner is willing to sell the property for $70,000, and another partner has committed to paying $10,000, then MDC would pay $60,000 ($100,000 minus $30,000 landowner donated value minus $10,000 partner contribution).*
* Applicant must own the land free and clear of all financial liens and encumbrances. The Applicant must provide certification to MDC indicating that the Applicant has other funds available such that, when added to MDC’s contribution, the Property will be purchased free and clear of all financial liens and encumbrances upon acquisition.

**Appraisal(s)*** Only one appraisal is required, but it must be obtained from a certified general appraiser licensed in Missouri, in good standing with the Missouri Real Estate Appraisers Commission, and experienced in appraising agricultural, timber, and hunting/recreation land. See third bullet under Funding Limitations concerning buildings.
* Reimbursement for appraisals conducted prior to a LCPG award are allowed only if all of the following conditions are met:
	+ The appraisal is conducted by a certified general appraiser licensed in Missouri, in good standing with the Missouri Real Estate Appraisers Commission, and experienced in appraising agricultural, timber, and hunting/recreation land; and,
	+ The appraisal must be less than 12 months old at the time of application submission; and,
	+ The project is approved for LCPG funding (i.e. appraisals will not be reimbursed for projects not selected for funding).

**Requirements for Payment*** For projects selected for funding, funding will be contingent upon Applicant providing proof of match (letter from contributing partners or formal resolutions) and an MDC site visit to ensure that the property’s conservation values meet MDC’s understanding from the application.
* A copy of the appraisal, boundary survey (if required by statute or title commitment), title commitment, environmental assessment (if required--see later bullet) and the closing settlement statement are required for payment. Other than appraisal, these expenses and closing costs are not covered by this grant.
* Any defects in title or requirements indicated in the title commitment must be cured or satisfied prior to payment.
* Applicant shall work with seller/landowner to complete the LCPG Environmental Assessment Form (provided with NoA) to determine if a full Phase 1 Environmental Assessment is required. Phase 1 Environmental Assessments are not covered by this grant if they are required.
* Surveys are only required if required by state statute or the title commitment. The cost of surveys is not covered by this grant.
* Applicant must enroll as a Missouri Vendor through the Missouri Treasurer’s office to receive MDC funds.
* At closing, Applicant shall execute and have recorded in the appropriate Recorder of Deed’s office a Notice of Award, in a form acceptable to MDC, indicating that:
	1. The property was acquired, in part, with funds provided by MDC;
	2. If the property is sold or transferred to another person or entity or converted to another use in violation of the grant terms and conditions, MDC shall be due the same percent of the net proceeds as was provided for the initial purchase through the Program for the affected acres, with the exception that the property may, upon prior approval by MDC, be transferred to another nonprofit organization for the same conservation purpose(s) so long as the transferee assumes all obligations with respect to compliance and reimbursement to MDC;
	3. Partial conversions are not allowed without prior MDC approval unless the conversion is the result of eminent domain. If compensation is received for a partial conversion, MDC shall receive the percentage of such compensation equal to the percentage of MDC’s contribution toward purchase of the property.
	4. Violations of grant terms and conditions will result in Applicant being ineligible for future MDC funding unless remedied to MDC’s satisfaction.
* MDC payment will be made at the time of closing upon satisfaction of all requirements.

**Other Requirements*** Applicant must include in its application a publicity plan indicating how it will publicize its acquisition of the property, the property’s conservation value, the property’s availability for public use, and MDC’s partnership and contribution toward purchase.
* Signage, in a form acceptable to MDC, must be placed on the property recognizing MDC’s assistance in acquiring the property.
* If public access is required (as stipulated in NoA), the property must be opened to the public within 2 years of closing.
* Under certain circumstances, where appropriate (e.g. large enough tract, compatible uses and surroundings, etc.) applicant may be required to allow public hunting as a condition of funding.
* The property shall be managed in keeping with the management plan included in the application. Management of the property that deviates from the management plan or is not otherwise addressed in the NoA shall be approved by MDC prior to implementation.
* A self-certifying letter must be submitted to MDC every five years stating that the property is still under the ownership of the Applicant and being used for the purposes set forth in the LCPG Application and Notice of Award.

**Project Scoring and Selection*** Projects will be considered for funding based on score (using the Conservation Land Acquisition Program Score Sheet), available LCPG funds, and other criteria determined by MDC. Applicants are encouraged to review the Score Sheet criteria and answer application questions completely to ensure due consideration.
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## Program Timeline

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|  | **NEW:** The LCPG Land Acquisition Program is no longer using a set annual Request for Proposals. A rolling application process is now used in which proposals can be submitted anytime. Applications shall specify whether MDC funds are being requested for the current state fiscal year (the property purchased before June 1, 2023) or for the following state fiscal year (the property purchased between July 1, 2023 through June 1, 2024). |

**Note: If your project is awarded, additional requirements or restrictions may be included with your Letter of Award. You will have the opportunity to accept or reject your award accordingly.**

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*Note: If a question has direct implications towards the Project Scoring Sheet it will be noted.*

**Project Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Applicant Information**

**Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Phone: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Project and Financial Request Information**

**Percent of tract appraisal value requested for MDC funding: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_%** *(Include eligible acres only; exclude the value of buildings to be retained; question applies to Criterion 10 on project score sheet)*

**MDC tract funding request (not to exceed $200,000/project): $\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** *(This will be the MDC project funding cap excluding appraisal costs; exclude the value of buildings to be retained)*

**Indicate if the following timeframes for project completion and funding are: A) Preferred, B) Acceptable, or C) Not an Option.**

**September 1, 2022 – June 1, 2023: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_July 1, 2023 - June 1, 2024: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**If urgent consideration of this project is being requested, please explain:**

**Describe readiness and likelihood of being able to complete project** *(what actions and discussions have already taken place)***:**

**Describe any already committed partner funds for this project (if any):**

**Briefly describe your organization’s financial and staffing capacity to manage this property:**

**Provide an overview of the project and a clear statement of project benefit(s):**

**Describe the publicity plan you would execute if approved to publicize the acquisition of the property, the property’s conservation value, the property’s availability for public use, and MDC’s partnership and contribution toward purchase:**

**Tract Information**

**Attach: 1) proximity map, 2) aerial photo of property, 3) existing land cover map (e.g. forest, mowed, native grassland, etc.), and 4) planned land cover map if different than present.**

**Township/Range/Section(s): \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Nearest City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Total acres of tract funds are being requested for: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** *(if only requesting MDC funds for part of property, clearly show which part of property on maps)*

**Existing acres per cover type (e.g. forest, cropland, turf):** *(question applies to Criterion 4 on project score sheet)*

**Planned acres per cover type (e.g. forest, wetland, native grassland), including acres to be under habitat restoration within 2 years of closing:**

**Does the property include any noteworthy features such as significant natural features (springs, caves, etc.), cultural resources, buildings, hazards, or disturbances? (describe):**

**Long Term Management Plan (describe in general terms your plans for managing the property into the future. How do you intend to manage existing or planned natural habitats? What public use infrastructure is planned and how will it be maintained?):**

**Describe any easements or severed rights that exist on the tract’s eligible acres (utility, ingress/egress, conservation, mineral rights, etc.):**

**Is the property/project involved in any kind of mitigation activity/settlement? (describe):**

**Do you plan to use the property to generate revenue? (describe):**

**Is this tract specifically recognized in a local green space/green infrastructure/outdoor recreation plan developed using public input? If not, is the creation of open space in general supported by such a plan? (describe):** *(question applies to Criterion 7 on project score sheet)*

**Does the land conservation opportunity fall within a known priority area (i.e. landscape, watershed, etc.) for conservation purposes of a partner organization? Explain:** *(question applies to Criterion 8 on project score sheet)*

**Is the property adjacent to any other public or protected lands? (if so, explain):** *(question applies to Criterion 6 on project score sheet)*

**List and describe the kinds of public outdoor recreation activities that will be allowed (trails, hunting, fishing, boating, conservation education), the amount of public use anticipated, and any notable restrictions on the timing and kinds of public use that will be allowed:** *(question applies to Criterion 9B on project score sheet)*

**Does the property already include public access via roads, sidewalks, trails, etc.? What new infrastructure is planned? Or will property simply be managed as greenspace?** *(question applies to Criterion 9A on project score sheet)*

**Are there other important points or considerations?**

**Signature and Submission Information**

**Applicant signature(s): I certify that \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (organization) has read, understands, and agrees to the requirements of this program (as described in Land Conservation Partnership Grant Details Document); understands all the above responses to be true, and has the capacity to manage the property in accordance with proposed Long Term Management Plan.**

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**Applicant signature Date**

**Please submit application to:**

Email: Gus.Raeker@mdc.mo.gov or

Mail: Gus Raeker

Missouri Department of Conservation

P.O. Box 180; Jefferson City, MO 65102

**For any questions please contact: Gus Raeker at Gus.Raeker@mdc.mo.gov or by phone: 573-522-4115 ext. 3129**

**Land Conservation Partnership Grant – Conservation Land Acquisition Project Scoring Sheet**

*(to be completed by MDC based on applicant responses and other data)*

**Applying organization: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_­­\_\_ Project name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Reviewer name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Review date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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|  | **Criteria** | **If yes, point allocation** | **Points\*:** |
| 1 | Within one of 15 most populous counties or City of St. Louis | >175,000 population (7 points)<175,000 (5)Not in top 15 or City of St. Louis (0) |  |
| 2 | Does the land conservation opportunity fall within a CCS Priority Geography or other CCS priority area (COA/PFL/Priority Watershed/etc.)? | Within one of the 9 Priority Geographies (5)Within other priority area (3) |  |
| 3 | Does the land conservation opportunity increase conservation of **imperiled species or habitats**?  | Protection of intact habitats/imperiled species (5)Potential imperiled habitat/species restoration opportunity (3) |  |
| 4 | Is property dominated by intact habitats (forest, glade, wetland, prairie, native grassland, etc.)? | >75% dominated by intact habitats (5)>50% dominated by intact habitats (3)>25% dominated by intact habitats (1) |  |
| 5 | Does the land conservation opportunity protect existing Natural Heritage Value? | Multiple Heritage records (5)Single Heritage records (3)Proximate (w/in 0.5 mi.) of Heritage record(s) (2) |  |
| 6 | Is the land conservation opportunity adjacent to MDC or other publicly owned conservation lands or otherwise permanently protected conservation lands (i.e. private land trust holdings, conservation easements, etc.)? | Adjacent to MDC lands (5)Adjacent to other protected lands (4)Within 1 mile of protected lands (2) |  |
| 7 | If property is in an urban context, is this land purchase supported in a local greenspace/green infrastructure/outdoor recreation plan developed using public input process?  | Tract specifically identified as keystone in plan (5)Tract not specifically identified by, but is supported in plan (2) |  |
| 8 | Does the land conservation opportunity fall within a priority area (i.e. geography, watershed, habitat type, other) for conservation purposes of a partner organization? | Partner priority area (2) |  |
| 9A | What public access is available or planned? | Public access infrastructure (trails, sidewalks, public parking) already exist (3)Public access infrastructure planned (2)Greenspace w/o infrastructure (1) |  |
| 9B | How many significant outdoor recreation public use activities will be provided on the property? (trails, hunting, fishing, boating, wildlife viewing, conservation education) | 3 or more activities (3)2 (2)1 (1) |  |
| 10 | How much match is being offered by applicant/partners? | Up to 25% MDC funds requested (6)Up to 50% MDC funds requested (3)Up to 75% MDC funds requested (0) |  |
|  | **TOTAL SCORE\***  | **Total points X’s 1.96; max score 100** |  |

\*Score is NOT a ranking unless otherwise noted. Consider each criterion on its own merits. Additional criteria will be used by Realty Committee in evaluating and ranking a project.

**Other scoring considerations:**