

**THE NORCROSS WILDLIFE FOUNDATION, INC.**  
**NO-INTEREST LOANS FOR LAND CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

**Application Guidelines**

*Revised July 2021*

**About the Loans:** The Norcross Wildlife Foundation (“Norcross”) makes loans to land trusts, conservancies, and foundations to help them acquire land they have prioritized for conservation. The subject property must possess wildlife habitat of some tangible significance. Applicants must be private, non-profit organizations as determined by the Internal Revenue Service. Loans of up to \$350,000 are available for up to one full year. Repayment is expected when permanent funds have been raised, or one year from loan issuance, whichever comes first. Applicants must apply the full amount of the loan to the purchase of the subject land - none may be used for closing costs, legal fees or stewardship. Applicants may not apply for more than one loan at a time.

The Conservation Loan Program is **restricted to** projects in the U.S. northeast, including the New England States, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania. We will further *prioritize* projects that are in the regional flow corridor identified by The Nature Conservancy (TNC Resilient Land Mapping Tool, *Connectivity and Climate Flow*, <http://maps.tnc.org/resilientland/>) in which the Norcross Sanctuary in Wales is located, linking central eastern Connecticut through central Massachusetts and into New Hampshire and Vermont. Projects in the U.S. northeast outside of this corridor will be considered but must have very high conservation values.

Norcross Wildlife Foundation additionally encourages projects that support Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for diverse communities in the U.S. northeast. Norcross will consider supporting a broader range of projects beyond traditional land conservation, such as community agriculture in underserved communities, environmental justice and other “community conservation” projects (see <https://www.landtrustalliance.org/topics/community-conservation/what-community-conservation>).

**To find out more about eligibility**, email Ed Hood, Executive Director, at [ehood@norcrosswildlife.org](mailto:ehood@norcrosswildlife.org), or by phone, 413-245-1438.

We are only able to fund up to several projects at a time, so we cannot guarantee the availability of funds at any given time - please plan accordingly.

Applicants must provide security for the loan to the complete satisfaction of Norcross, preferably in the form of unrestricted funds or marketable securities. Personal guarantees, backed by cash, marketable securities or a letter of credit, are also acceptable. Plans for repaying the loan within the maximum one-year term must also be explained in detail.

Applicants must also provide information about the habitat values of the subject land. This information may be presented via a habitat assessment, management plan or ecological inventory prepared by a wildlife biologist, ecologist, or forester. It may also be a letter of support from an independent source such as a statewide NGO (e.g. a local chapter of Audubon or The Nature Conservancy, etc.) or a state or federal wildlife agency.

**Submission Deadline:** None - submit your loan application anytime.

**Submitting an Application**

**(A) First Step:** Please contact Ed Hood, Executive Director, to ensure that your application will be suitable for full consideration. Email is preferred – see above for contact information. If you receive approval to move forward with an application, proceed to Second Step.

**(B) Second Step:** To be accepted for consideration, loan applications must be complete and submitted by e-mail (**PDF file format only**). An application must include all of the items listed below.

- (1) a fully completed Loan Application Form, either typed or printed by hand;
- (2) a signed letter (no more than three pages) on your organization's letterhead from a member of your organization authorized to make financial decisions and commitments, describing your mission, the scope and nature of your land conservation strategy, relevant details regarding the real estate transaction (e.g. closing date and parties to the agreement), the legal mechanism used to ensure the property will be permanently preserved, and the final ownership interests of your organization and other partners;
- (3) an IRS Letter of Determination;
- (4) a fully executed purchase and sale or option agreement, or draft thereof.;
- (5) of a map (preferably GIS-based) depicting the tract's geographic location and its spatial relationship to other conserved land;
- (6) a map (either topographic or aerial photograph) at a scale that allows for the interpretation of natural resource and land cover characteristics (e.g. one inch equals 300 - 2,000 feet);
- (7) a habitat assessment, ecological inventory, forest management plan or other environmental report that sheds light on the subject's wildlife habitat values; and any letters of support from conservation non-profits or government agencies;
- (8) a complete copy of your most recent Federal Tax Return (Form 990) including all schedules.

**NOTE: Applications should be submitted by e-mail to [ehood@norcrosswildlife.org](mailto:ehood@norcrosswildlife.org) (please put "loan application" in subject line).**

When you are submitting an application via e-mail, please organize the above described documents in order into a single PDF, or if individual PDFs, with titles that clearly match the document.

**(C) Third Step:** If accepted for consideration, it will be reviewed by a committee of Norcross Directors, which can take a month to schedule and complete. You may be asked to schedule a site visit and will likely be asked to supply additional information about the land and financial information about your organization, as well as details relevant to loan security and repayment terms.

**(D) Last Step:** You will receive notification of conditional approval or denial. Final loan approval is reserved until Norcross is fully satisfied with the terms of loan security and the repayment plan. Upon final approval, the loan agreement will be prepared by Norcross.

**NOTE:** The initial approval process, from acceptance of an application for consideration to notification of conditional approval or denial, usually requires a minimum of four weeks to complete. Final approval and loan issuance takes as long as it is necessary for an applicant to satisfy Norcross's loan security requirements and repayment expectations. Allow plenty of time to get your application underway.