



NEW JERSEY HIGHLANDS COALITION

508 Main Street, Boonton, New Jersey 07005

973-588-7190 (office)/973-588-7193 (fax)

www.njhighlandscoalition.org

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Contact:
Julia Somers
973-588-7190 (office)
973-525-2768 (mobile)

**Local Groups Can Get Grants to Protect Environmental
and Cultural Treasures in the New Jersey Highlands**

BOONTON, N.J. - Local grassroots citizen groups protecting water and other environmental resources or preserving cultural and historic treasures (including “brick-and-mortar” projects for specific historic sites or districts) in northern New Jersey’s Highlands Region can apply for grants up to \$5000 through the New Jersey Highlands Coalition’s 2018 Small Grants Program.

Applications must be received by June 18, 2018. Grants will be presented on October 10 at the N.J. Highlands Coalition’s Annual Meeting.

“This is the twelfth year of our Small Grants Program for environmental projects,” said Julia Somers, Executive Director of the N.J. Highlands Coalition. “We’ve helped so many local groups working to protect the water supply depended on by 70 percent of New Jersey’s residents through implementing the Highlands Regional Master Plan or fighting damaging development in the Highlands. This is the fourth year that we have added grants for projects that protect cultural, historic, and archaeological resources in the Highlands, an important part of the Regional Master Plan.”

Grassroots organizations are defined as non-governmental organizations with a total annual operating budget of less than \$200,000. It is not necessary that the organization be incorporated. Prior to receiving a grant an organization must become a member of the New Jersey Highlands

Coalition. Grants from the Highlands Coalition cannot be used for political purposes.

A grassroots group may apply for one or more grants, either environmental, cultural or components of both. But the total amount requested by any one organization cannot exceed \$5000.

Grant applications should meet at least one of the following five criteria, with the items at the top getting more weight than those below:

1. Focus on implementation of the Highlands Regional Master Plan, such as projects that identify, map or verify Highlands natural or cultural resources;
2. Establish a precedent advancing strong environmental or cultural protection in the Highlands ;
3. Assist an organization to fight against development in the Highlands that seriously threatens or damages natural or cultural resources;
4. Support capacity building of Highlands Region grassroots organizations;
5. Educate the public about Highlands cultural resources or water and other natural resources.

Applicants are advised to view the full guidelines for the program on the Coalition's website, particularly for cultural and historic grant components which have very detailed requirements. Go to www.njhighlandscoalition.org. On the menu bar at the top, place your cursor on "Programs," then click "Small Grants" in the dropdown menu.

Groups considering applying for the 2018 program can learn from the types of projects that were funded last year. The following are the grants awarded in 2017.

Alliance for Historic Hamlets with Citizens to Save Tewksbury and Residents Alliance for Neighborhood Preservation to hire the Eastern Environmental Law Clinic to monitor compliance with a May 2017 precedent-setting court decision that mandated that N.J. Dept. of Environmental Protection must consult with the Highlands Council before approving permits anywhere in the Planning Area of the Highlands.

Coalition against Pilgrim Pipeline to produce a study to quantitatively demonstrate the economic value of Highlands water to New Jersey and the risk to the state's economy from the degradation or loss of this water.

Friends of the Musconetcong in Hampton Borough to retain an environmental professional to assist in efforts to protect a tributary to the Musconetcong River on a 77-acre site proposed for a development with more than 300 units. The development would include a sewer system that would discharge to groundwater in land that is part of the municipal well recharge area.

Highlands Nature Friends in Ringwood received an environmental grant to equip a laboratory to extend their program of educating visiting school groups on how to scientifically study the Highlands at their 150-acre New Weiss Center. The group also received a cultural grant to preserve and display historic photos, documents, oral history recordings and other artifacts from 1920 and onward when The Nature Friends of America, one of the first U.S. environmental groups, operated the site as Camp Midvale.

Ramapough Conservancy for compensating an expert working on identifying archaeological resources in the Ramapo Mountains and another consultant assisting the Citizens Advisory Group with the water and geological reports associated with remediation of the Ringwood Mines Superfund Site.

Rockaway Borough Conservation Alliance to help defray the Borough's DEP permitting costs associated with installing a pedestrian bridge over Fox's Brook that will enable full access to the historic trolley trail of the former electric trolley line built by the Morris County Traction Company in the early 1900's.

Stop the Quarry Expansion in Bloomingdale to pay for legal help to enforce a conservation easement that would prohibit the expansion of mining operations into an environmentally sensitive forested area. Mining could also threaten the historically-significant site of the Pompton Mutiny, where General Washington's troops mutinied in the winter of 1781.

Applicants seeking more information can contact Julia Somers at 973-588-7190 or julia@njhighlandscoalition.org

The New Jersey Highlands Coalition represents a diverse network of organizations working to protect the Highlands, ranging from small citizens groups working in one community to large state-wide organizations. The Coalition works to protect, enhance and restore the New Jersey Highlands and to preserve the quality and quantity of the region's drinking water upon which 6.2 million people depend. More information is available at www.njhighlandscoalition.org

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