

VITAL LANDS ILLINOIS

Project Application



DIRECTIONS:

- Applications can be submitted by logging into your applicant account online at https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_5410/?SA=AM
If you do not have an online applicant account, click *New Applicant*. You will be prompted to create an account by using your email address and generating a secure password.
- Once an application has been started in the online system, it can be saved and returned to at a later date. To return to the in-progress application, log on to the Grand Victoria Foundation applicant portal using the link https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_5410/?SA=AM
- A confirmation email will be sent to the applicant account to confirm receipt of the Vital Lands Illinois application.
- Eligible organizations with projects that meet the minimum requirements will be invited via email, to submit a full proposal.

QUESTIONS?

- Review [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Contact the Foundation at grantsmanager@grandvictoriafdn.org
- Review the [Sample Project Application](#)

This initial application is designed to allow Grand Victoria Foundation to make a preliminary determination of whether your organization is eligible and whether your project meets the minimum requirements for funding under Vital Lands Illinois. Eligible organizations with projects that meet the minimum requirements will be invited to submit a full proposal. This application is solely for land acquisition projects (fee simple acquisition or conservation easement). Only projects that permanently protect land are eligible.

Applications are accepted throughout the year. Prior to submitting a Project Application, carefully review the Vital Lands Illinois project guidelines, including eligibility criteria and organizational documentation that will be requested if a full proposal is invited.

Please note that Grand Victoria Foundation believes that partnerships and multiple funding sources help ensure that a project is broadly supported and sustainable over the long term. Therefore, we are unlikely to be the sole funder on a project.

This is for informational purposes only. Please apply online as per the DIRECTIONS.

Today's Date:
December 5, 2015

Organization Information

Applicant Organization Name:
Elizabeth's Land Trust

Web Address (URL):
www.elizabethlandtrust.org

Full Mailing Address:
222 Buttered Toast Street, Suite 3, Tahiti, IL 66666

Name of Primary Contact Person
Elizabeth May

Title
Land Preservation Specialist

Telephone:
618-CONSERV

Email:
elizabeth@gmail.com

Date of IRS Ruling:
1999

Federal Tax ID Number:
54-8392838

Date your organization adopted the revised 2004 Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices:
December 2004

Brief Description of Organization (please limit to one or two paragraphs):

Elizabeth's Land Trust protects important natural areas in Williamson County. Since its founding in 1999, the organization has protected more than 62 acres of wetlands and forest. These preserves and adjoining state and federal lands provide habitat for jackalope, snipe, unicorns, and other species of concern identified in the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan. Our goal is to create a continuous network of wildlife corridors throughout Williamson County, linking major riparian corridors to permanently protected lands.

The Land Trust has 2 paid staff, a seven-member board, and we have adopted the 2004 revisions to Land Trust Alliance's Standards & Practices. We own 30 acres in fee simple preserves and hold 4 conservation easements that protect an additional 32 acres. The total amount of our dedicated stewardship and defense funds for our properties is \$12,000. We have completed several significant acquisitions in partnership with the U.S. Forest Service. In 2006, we acquired a 250-acre in-holding at the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge, and in 2004 we acquired a 170-acre parcel just north of Lake of Egypt. That parcel is now part of the Shawnee National Forest.

Project Information

Project Name:

Sugar Creek Corridor Acquisition

Estimated Project Budget

Acquisition costs: \$ 632,000

Survey costs: \$ 350

Staff time: \$ 6,850

Estimate personnel hours and provide hourly rate:

Land Steward: 150 hours @ \$35/hour; ED: 40 hours @ \$40/hour

Long-term stewardship costs: \$ 12,000

Briefly describe method of calculation:

Our land trust uses the fee land stewardship cost calculation table developed by the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy and published in LTA's guide, "Determining Stewardship Costs and Raising and Managing Dedicated Funds." (2007)

Long-term defense costs (conservation easement acquisitions only): \$

Briefly describe method of calculation:

Public engagement costs (if sufficient information is available to estimate): \$??

What activities will these costs support?

We are too early in the project development process to estimate public engagement costs at this time. Our current public engagement goals are to recruit more volunteer stewards and continue to build awareness about our organization and our mission in the community. Possible public engagement activities for this property include: a "Learn to Track Wildlife" session for local scouting organizations co-hosted with the U.S. Forest Service along our property's common boundary (estimated cost \$900) and holding our annual 'Burning to Hunt' volunteer recruitment event at the property (estimated cost \$2,300).

Appraisal costs:	\$ 500
Phase I Environmental Site Assessment costs:	\$
Title Policy Costs:	\$

Total project costs: **\$ 651,700***

*Does not include public engagement budget. We are developing our engagement plan now, and will be prepared to present the plan and budget if a proposal is invited.

Amount of request from Grand Victoria Foundation*: **\$ 314,850***

*This request includes only 30% of the estimated long-term stewardship costs. If a proposal is invited, we would like to include our public engagement expenses in the request to Grand Victoria Foundation. We estimate that those expenses will be less than \$3,500.

Other current or anticipated project support: **\$ 336,000**

- Describe source, amount, and status:
- US Fish & Wildlife Foundation: \$45,000 (confirmed)
 - Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation \$280,000 (pending)
 - Little Sisters of the Shawnee Community Fdn \$5,000 (confirmed)
 - Cash Contribution from Elizabeth’s Land Trust \$6,000 (confirmed)

The Property

Where is the property located? Be as precise as you can (include township and county).

A map can be attached to this application:
 Along western Shawnee NF Boundary, north of Stonefort Road, East of Palzo Road, Stonefort Township, Williamson County

How many acres is the property you wish to acquire?

(Please indicate if this is an estimate.)
 250 (estimated – survey will be completed before purchase agreement is finalized.)

Is this a fee simple acquisition or a conservation easement?

Fee simple

Briefly outline the permanent protection strategy for the property:

Purchase and hold, with possible rollout to U.S. Forest Service.

* This amount can include up to 30% of the long-term stewardship and defense costs.

Describe the current status of the transaction, including an estimate of when it will close. If the transaction is particularly time-sensitive, let us know why and if there are any “drop dead” dates:

We have an agreement with the landowner on the parcel we’re buying and the cost per acre. We have reached this agreement based on our familiarity with the cost of similar properties in the area that have sold recently. The purchase agreement and purchase price will be finalized when the appraisal and survey are completed. We’d like to know if we have a reasonable likelihood of raising the acquisition costs before incurring the survey and appraisal costs as we would have difficulty closing the transaction without support from Grand Victoria Foundation. We need to close by April 1, 2009. The elderly landowner needs proceeds of sale to pay 2008 income taxes.

Please describe the project’s primary conservation and habitat values, as well as other public benefits it will provide (refer to the Vital Lands Illinois Project Guidelines for definitions and guidance in preparing this description):

This acquisition protects upland oak-hickory forest along both sides of Sugar Creek. This forest has not been logged in the thirty years it has been held by the current owner, and the presence of invasive species appears to be minimal. The parcel is contiguous with U.S. Forest Service property and extends wildlife corridors and habitat areas northwestward from protected areas in the Shawnee National Forest. The property provides habitat for neotropical migratory birds, alligator snapping turtles, and recent sampling has confirmed a relatively intact freshwater mussel population in this reach of Sugar Creek. Because the property includes both banks and approximately 1/2 of a mile of Sugar Creek, its protection also helps protect water quality in Sugar Creek.

The U.S. Forest Service is interested in acquiring this parcel. We intend to hold the property unless and until the agency can purchase the property from us. If acquired, we will include this property in our “Happy Trails” public education program. This outreach effort is carried out in partnership with local civic organizations, including garden clubs, scouting groups, the Elks, and others. The program informs people of the economic and community benefits of expanded wildlife corridors in Williamson County. The property will also be added to our “Burning to Hunt” program. Volunteers who log a certain number of stewardship hours on our properties are entered into a hunting lottery. The project builds good will in the community, helps us with our stewardship responsibilities, and manages the impact of the deer population. If the property is acquired by the U.S. Forest Service, it will be open for public hunting.

What is the parcel’s status in relation to the Illinois Wildlife Action Plan (IWAP)? Has the parcel been identified as a conservation priority in any other plans? If so, please describe:

The land is within the Eastern Shawnee Conservation Opportunity Area. The Illinois Wildlife Action Plan gives upland forest conservation in this region the highest ranking in the state.

Does the landowner have past or current relationship to your organization, including any volunteer, staff or board member?

Yes No

If yes, please describe the relationship:

The landowner was a volunteer with our organization for several years before she got too frail to help with stewardship. The landowner is also the mother-in-law of one of our board members.

Does anyone associated with your organization have an actual, potential or apparent conflict of interest related to this project? (See LTA Standard 4 for additional guidance and information.)

Yes No

If yes, please describe the conflict and how your organization is addressing it:

Our board member has recused himself from all discussions and voting regarding this project. Minutes of the Board Meeting reflecting this recusal are attached. Staff negotiating the acquisition have been directed to have no conversations about the project with this board member. To ensure a fair valuation, the land trust will retain a qualified, independent Illinois-certified appraiser with verifiable conservation real estate experience to prepare an appraisal in compliance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice.

If this is a collaborative project, list names of partnering organizations, contact people, and their telephone numbers:

U.S. Forest Service, Joe Joblanski 618-222-2222
Carbon Hoarders, Inc., James Jones 342-666-6666
Alligator Snappers Forever, Joe Gator 377-222-2222
BPOE Williamson County, Tom Smith 618-444-4444
Campfire Girls Council, Tanya Francis 618-555-5555

GRAND VICTORIA FOUNDATION

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