LEAP Conservation Fund
Small Grant Program Information
2026 Spring Program Year (Round 8)

Background:
The Lake Erie Allegheny Partnership (LEAP) for Conservation Fund has been established to fund projects that promote and protect our region's biodiversity. The Conservation Fund is now accepting proposals for projects that meet one or more of the following criteria that align with the goals and mission of LEAP:

- **Preserves** extant populations of globally, state, or federally threatened or rare species or communities within the LEAP region.
- **Protects** habitat needed to support viable populations of globally, state, or federally threatened or rare species or communities. (Important habitat may be on the project site or on a contiguous site with a verifiably high likelihood that these species would then inhabit the project site).
- **Restores** rare species or communities known to have historically existed in the LEAP region or restores important habitat necessary to support key species in the LEAP region.
- **Connects** currently protected natural areas and connects the public to natural areas.

Non-profit organizations and government entities are invited to apply. For-profit entities and individuals are *not* eligible to apply. Applicants may request up to $1,000 per project. Grant funds are dispersed via cost reimbursement. Invoices or receipts for project costs must be submitted for reimbursement. The Conservation Fund plans to award 5-8 proposals depending on applicant pool and total funds requested. Priority will be given to current LEAP members and member organizations. An organization may submit more than one application. The project period is 1/15/2027 through 4/15/2028. Funds may not to be used for overhead or administrative expenses. Travel expenses are not eligible. Food and promotional items for events are not eligible.

Projects may be for on-the-ground restoration, research, or public programs. Projects should focus on rare or threatened species and/or protection and restoration of area biodiversity. Projects must demonstrate meaningful impacts and show tangible results at the close of funding cycle. If the project is part of larger effort, please explain how your project contributes to this larger effort. For example projects, visit www.leapbio.org.

Application Procedure:

- ***The application is due November 13, 2026 by 5:00pm***.
- Please submit the complete application, including signature, by November 13, 2026 to Kristen Trolio at kmt@clevelandmetroparks.com. PLEASE INCLUDE "LEAP CONSERVATION FUND PROPOSAL" in the subject line. You will receive a confirmation email.
- Members of the Conservation Fund Committee will review and score all applications and scores will be averaged. MEMBERS WILL NOT SCORE APPLICATIONS FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE ORGANIZATIONS.
- Applicants will be notified of award in early June.

Conditions of Award Acceptance:

- Final reimbursement, including copies of receipts/invoices must be submitted by 4/15/2028.
- All awardees will be required to provide a brief presentation at a LEAP meeting following the end of their grant cycle.
- LEAP shall be acknowledged in publications/printed materials.
- Information on each funded project will be listed on the LEAP website: www.leapbio.org
- Information gained from the program/project will be made available to all LEAP members and member agencies and the public upon request.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Kristen Trolio at (216) 635-3244 or kmt@clevelandmetroparks.com.

LEAP Conservation Fund
Small Grant Program Application
2026 Fall Program Year (Round 9)

Project Title:

Project Location:

Applicant Organization:

Is your organization a LEAP Member organization?

Organization Contact:

Phone:

E-mail:

Do you have a fiscal agent? If so, please provide contact information:

Amount Requested from LEAP Conservation Fund:

Is this program/project supported by any other funding? ___Yes ___No

If 'Yes', name source (budget, outside organization, grant, etc.):

Please provide brief answers to the following questions. The Conservation Fund will use the information below to score your project.

Briefly describe and introduce your project. Projects may be for on-the-ground restoration, research, or public programs. Projects should focus on rare or threatened species and/or protect or restore our region's biodiversity. The project must demonstrate meaningful impacts and show tangible results at close of funding cycle. If the project is part of larger effort, please explain how your project contributes to this larger effort. ***THIS QUESTION IS REQUIRED. PLEASE LIMIT TO 250 WORDS.***

1. Please explain in detail how your project aligns with one or more of the above-listed criteria: Preserves, Protects, Restores, Connects? For example, does your project preserve an extant population? Or restore habitat to preserve a rare species? (15 points) Remember, this question is worth 15 points!

2. Please list 1-3 tangible and realizable goals of your project. How will you measure these results? (5 points)

3. Does the project build upon previous work or is it a necessary part of a larger project? Does the project align with regional priorities? Is your project replicable? (3 points)

4. Describe the educational benefits of your project – will your project serve to educate LEAP members? The public? Both? (5 points)

5. Provide a project timeline and identify key staff that will perform the work and make your project happen. (2 points)

Project Budget:

Provide a line-item budget for the amount requested. An example format is below. You do not need to follow this format, but please be specific! Please include back up documentation, if applicable, such as website screenshots or price quotes. Also, include any sources and amounts of any additional funds and tell us whether funding is pending or confirmed. Matching funds are not required, but please indicate any below. (5 points)

Item:	Quantity:	Price:	Total:	Grant Request:

I have read and agree to abide by the terms outlined in the application guidelines.

_____ _____

Signature of Authorized Organization Representative **Date**

_____ _____

Signature of Fiscal Agent, if applicable. **Date**

Applications must be signed to be considered eligible.