

2025 National Public Lands Day Department of Defense Awards – Request for Applications

In commemoration of [National Public Lands Day \(NPLD\)](#) 2025, funding is available through the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) for NPLD projects on military lands that are open for recreation. The 2025 NPLD DoD Awards will provide up to **\$15,000** to selected installations to implement projects focusing on, but not limited to: pollinator protection, installation resilience, habitat restoration, or natural and historic resources management, restoration, or enhancement on or around this year's NPLD on **September 27, 2025**.

Applicants are asked to think creatively and strategically about how they can positively impact the environment and help participants learn about these lands and their natural and historic resources. We seek proposals that enhance broader strategic or programmatic initiatives at installations. Applications for the 2025 NPLD DoD Awards are due by 11:59pm (PDT) on Friday, June 20, 2025. Please see detailed instructions to apply on NEEF's [Grants webpage](#).

Before you apply, please take a moment to review the award details below.

I. Eligibility and Criteria for Selection

Applicants must:

- Be a DoD installation site that is open for recreation, including lands managed by the US Army, Air Force, Marine Corps, National Guard, Navy, or Space Force. Lands managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers are not eligible for Award funds.
- Register an event on the NEEF website for National Public Lands Day.

For previous Award winners, the recipient must have successfully completed past project(s) on time, achieved project goals, and demonstrated responsive and effective communications with the National Environmental Education Foundation, including submitting a satisfactory Final Report by the due date.

Applicants must propose a project that:

- Takes place on, or within two weeks of, National Public Lands Day on Saturday, September 27, 2025. Alternate later dates for NPLD events may be allowed for those regions where weather conditions during September and October are prohibitive. However, all projects must be completed by **March 31, 2026**.
- Presents an appropriate and detailed project budget.

- Demonstrates how the project will:
 - Engage a variety of volunteers, either in person or virtually, in the project and create a positive experience for them. (Please see our website [Resource Page](#) for ideas on how to lead projects that are virtual.)
 - Improve or enhance the installation's broader strategic or programmatic objectives by focusing on: pollinator protection, installation resilience, habitat restoration, and/or natural and historic resources management, restoration, or enhancement on the DoD installation.
 - Engage installation scientists and resource managers for advice, if the applicant does not know these program objectives.
 - Involve or benefit the broader community.
 - Promote a stewardship ethic among participants via project-relevant environmental education and communication opportunities.

Please note that proposed projects can include but are not limited to:

- Pollinator protection and conservation, and/or pollinator garden development
- Tree and native vegetation planting
- Invasive plant removal
- Trash and debris cleanup
- Wildlife habitat improvement and restoration activities
- Wetland, streamside, or shoreline restoration and erosion control
- Trail building and maintenance
- Restoration of historically significant areas, buildings, and structures

II. Funding Restrictions

Award funds may NOT be used for:

- Lobbying, propaganda, or attempting to influence legislation
- Influencing the outcome of any specific election by any means
- Covering budget shortfalls, general support or endowment funds
- Land acquisition or real estate purchases
- Giveaways or gift items, such as t-shirts
- Purchasing food*
- Paying for labor or salary costs
- Scholarships, fellowships, or grants to individuals
- Any costs not directly related to the funds requested in the proposal

Purchasing items required to complete work (e.g., small tools, garden gloves) is allowable.

*Federal funds cannot be used to pay for food and beverages unless doing so is reasonable and necessary (i.e., providing water at an outdoor event where there is no other source of water is allowable).

III. Timeline

NEEF prefers that projects take place on, or within two weeks of, National Public Lands Day, Saturday, **September 27, 2025**. Later dates for NPLD events may be allowed for those regions where weather conditions during September and October are prohibitive. However, all projects must be completed by **March 31, 2026**, with Final Reports due on **April 30, 2026**.

- **Application Due:** by 11:59pm (PDT) on Friday, June 20, 2025
- **Awards Announced:** August
- **National Public Lands Day:** September 27, 2025
- **NPLD project completion deadline:** March 31, 2026
- **Final Reports Due:** April 30, 2026

IV. Submission

National Public Lands Day DoD Award applications are only accepted through NEEF's online system. Follow these steps to register and begin your application:

1. [Click here](#) to apply.
2. You will be taken to a login page. If you have not created an account from a previous NEEF award, select Create New Account. If you have created an account with NEEF, skip to step 4.
3. Follow the instructions to create your account. It will ask you for your contact information as the account holder and the contact information for your organization's representative. Contact information supplied in the User Information section should reflect the individual who will be directly handling the application process for your organization. In the Organization Information section, we recommend that you include the contact information of the person in charge of your installation site or office. This would be the person who is authorized to sign off on items such as Award Agreements.
4. Upon creating an account, it will take you to your home screen. To start your application, click Apply in the menu on the left. You will be taken to a list of NEEF awards and funding opportunities. Select "2025 National Public Lands Day DoD Awards."
5. Complete the application.
6. You can save the application and return later.
7. Pay close attention to character limits. These limits include spaces.
8. Once you have completed the application and uploaded all attachments, click Submit Form to complete your application. If you do not click Submit Form, you will not have completed your application. You will receive an email confirming your application was submitted.



V. Contact

If you have any questions or problems, [please consult our FAQ](#) or don't hesitate to contact us at grantsadmin@neefusa.org.