



TOM THORNE SAGE GROUSE CONSERVATION FUND

Application Instructions

The Tom Thorne Sage-Grouse Research Fund (TSG) was established in 2005 by Shell Exploration and Production Company in partnership with the Wyoming Community Foundation. The \$1million gift is set up as a funding mechanism intended to be spent in five years to realize an immediate benefit to the conservation of sage-grouse in the Upper Green River Basin. Distribution of the fund is guided by a donor advisory committee that is composed of local and regional individuals selected by the Board of Directors of the Wyoming Community Foundation (WYCF). The TSG Advisory Committee reviews and recommends grants from this fund to the board of the WYCF.

The TSG Advisory Committee has established both a vision and mission statement. The vision of the Committee is “Ensuring a future for the sage-grouse population in the Upper Green River Basin”. The mission statement of the Committee is “To benefit sage-grouse through strategic funding of projects that promote science, education and cooperative management actions”. These concepts will guide the future actions and decisions of the Committee.

Eligible Organizations

Grants are made to nonprofit organizations exempt from federal taxation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and, on occasion, to public/governmental agencies. Grants are not made to individuals.

Application Deadlines

Proposals will be reviewed semi-annually. Deadline dates are June 1 with notification in August and December 1 with notification in February. The Committee will review all proposals that meet the established guidelines.

Criteria

The Tom Thorne Sage Grouse Advisory Committee focuses its grantmaking around three goals:

1. Projects that promote, support and disseminate research that furthers understanding of sagebrush systems and sage grouse populations in the landscape.
2. Projects that support approaches to maintain or improve sage grouse habitat and habitat connectivity through active management applied by land users and managers.
3. Projects that promote citizen engagement through education and awareness of sage grouse needs and issues.

The following govern the review process:

- Promoting private/public partnerships, collaborating with other agencies, and leveraging additional project support are encouraged.
- Projects that fill gaps in current knowledge and meet identified local needs including efforts to collect baseline data.
- Project results should be applicable for sage grouse management.

Application Forms

As outlined in the Application Format section, there are required forms that must accompany your application. If you received a hardcopy of these instructions, the forms should be in this packet. If you are downloading the information from the WYCF website, you will find the link for these forms on the same webpage as these instructions.

Application Format

1. Application Cover Sheet

Please complete the *TSG Application Cover Sheet*. Some definitions have been included here to assist you in completing the cover sheet correctly.

- *Organization Description*: Please describe your organization's mission, staff and role in this research area, and list any other pertinent information about your agency.
- *Project Title*: Provide a concise, one-phrase title that encapsulates the central theme of the project. Specify what type of project this is, research/education/management/etc.
- *Brief Description of Project*: Distill the essentials from the "Application Narrative," so that the reader can get an overview of the project. The summary should be able to stand on its own as the official description of your proposed project. Clearly state the problem (or opportunity) to be addressed, its significance, the plan you are proposing to address it, and how you expect your approach will solve the problem or meet the described opportunity. In one sentence describe how TSG Fund dollars would be used in the project. Use language comprehensible to the intelligent non-scientist. Include a total budget request.

2. Application Narrative

Describe your project in detail, using language of sufficient precision to be evaluated by individuals with expertise in this field. Your application narrative should not exceed 2 pages. Please use all section headers in your narrative and follow the format as indicated. Develop this section as follows:

A) Background:

Provide the programmatic and/or research context of this project. What events, circumstances conditions, etc. have served as the springboard for this project? What are the present strengths of your agency or organization that make it suitable to carry out this project? What areas need improvement or strengthening to better equip it for the task? How does this project build on your experience, strengths and priorities? If pertinent preliminary results have been obtained, describe them here.

B) Procedure:

Outline the approach that will be employed. Depending upon the nature of your project, this may be the heart of your proposal. Be sure to develop this with sufficient detail and precision so that it can be evaluated by experts in the field. Be clear about the objectives and the expected measurable outcomes. Include any important timelines or other important timeframes.

C) Brief Budget Overview:

Provide a detailed budget for the cost of your overall project. Indicate how much of the total cost has been requested and how much of the funding has been committed. Specifically indicate how the Foundation's funds will be used. List all current and requested funding sources.

D) Project Distinctiveness:

Discuss the distinctiveness of your proposed line(s) of research. Describe in detail the importance of this research for the Sage Grouse, for researchers beyond the scope of your institution as well as for your own research group. State whether the project will address any identified needs or gaps related to sage grouse.

E) Project Staff:

Identify key personnel who are currently working on or are anticipated to work on this project.

F) Future of the Project:

Describe how you anticipate this project will benefit sage grouse. Will this project lead to better management or understanding of sage grouse or its habitat? How long will this project be active and how long financially be supported, by other means, beyond the period of Foundation support?

G) Deliverables:

How will the outcomes and information gained from this project distributed and disseminated? Are there plans for results of this project to be published?

3. Project Budget Form

Complete the *Project Budget Form*. Please note that capital expenditures will be prorated for duration at 20%/year depreciation if over \$2,500. Indirect overhead will not be funded; direct overhead

expenditures related to the project will be evaluated on a case by case basis.

4. **Required Attachments**

Include one copy of each of the following, as applicable, with your application materials.

- Cover letter from the Chief Executive Officer endorsing the proposal, summarizing the background leading to the project and explaining how it relates to the organization's mission and priorities.
- A copy of the Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) tax exemption and 509(a) non-private foundation rulings for the submitting agency. **If a government entity**, see below.
 - If tax exempt under a group ruling for a central organization, attach the latest certificate of membership.
 - If tax exempt as a government entity or tribal government, use the appropriate letter, either for a government entity or Indian tribe status, to certify your tax exempt status.
- List of names, addresses and professional affiliations of your Board of Directors.
- Evaluation of project from up to three (3) qualified reviewers, which could include federal agencies personnel, state agency personnel, researchers, non-profits, or others. Use the **Reviewer Guidelines Form**.
- Most current monthly financial statements together with budget comparisons; current fiscal year budget; your spending policy regarding any endowment funds; cash flow forecasts.
- Complete copy of the most recent audited or reviewed financial statements or most recently submitted IRS Form 990 (if the audited statements are not available).

Instructions for Submitting an Application

All proposals must be submitted with the attachments listed in #4 of the instructions by **5:00pm on the deadline date**, either June 1 or December 1. Applications may be submitted in a PDF format or in a hardcopy. Please choose **one** medium.

EMAIL

Completed proposals may be emailed to the WYCF. Applications that are submitted electronically must be emailed as a **single** document in a PDF format to wcf@wycf.org by 5PM on the deadline date. Please put "TSG Application" in the subject line. Call the WYCF at 307-721-8300 or 1-866-708-7878 to verify that it was received.

MAIL

Completed applications may be submitted in hardcopy to the WYCF. Mail one (1) full copy of the application to:

Wyoming Community Foundation
Program Officer
313 S. 2nd Street
Laramie, WY 82070

If you need clarification of these instructions or have other questions, please call us at 1-866-708-7878 or 307-721-8300.

Review Process

The review process includes an initial staff screening, followed by advisory committee review. At the discretion of the committee, an independent expert reviewer may be consulted. The committee makes a funding recommendation to the Board of the WYCF which is responsible for all final decisions. Applicants are notified by mail 8-10 weeks after the deadline date.