



Request for Proposals:

Guidelines & Application

Capacity Building Grants for Alaska Tribal Conservation Districts

Administered by Tyonek Tribal Conservation
District in partnership with Ahtna Intertribal
Resource Commission and Knik Tribe

At-a-Glance

Purpose

To increase the capacity of Alaska Tribal Conservation Districts to build and maintain sustainable resource plans, as well as funding and technical relationships with NRCS and other TCDs.

Eligibility

Alaska Tribal Conservation Districts that have a current or prior signed MOA with USDA

Round 1 Grants

Project Length: Up to 13 months (May26-June27)
Budget Range: Up to \$40,000

Round 2 Grants

(Separate RFP to be published in April 2026)

Project Length: From agreement date to June 2027
Budget Range: Up to \$40,000, contingent on project length and available funding levels

Application Deadline

March 2, 2026

Notification

April 3, 2026

Contact

Erica Lujan, Grants & Projects Coordinator,
Tyonek Tribal Conservation District
TCDNetwork@ttcd.org
907-278-2103

How to Apply

Submit proposal documents by email (.pdf or .doc formats) to **TCDNetwork@ttcd.org**.

Overview

Tyonek Tribal Conservation District (TTCD), Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission (AITRC), and Knik Tribe (Knik) [also referred to as Project Administrators] are pleased to announce this funding opportunity funded in partnership with the Denali Commission and supported by USDA-NRCS Alaska. These subgrants are intended to increase the capacity of Alaska’s Tribal Conservation Districts to build and maintain sustainable resource plans, as well as funding and technical relationships with NRCS and other TCDs. This request for proposals contains details about this **non-competitive opportunity** – including eligibility and guidelines, submission requirements, and criteria expectations. Subgrants that are awarded will become a partnership between the subgrantee and the project administrative team.

Capacity Building Activities & Outcomes

For the purposes of this funding opportunity, **capacity building** refers to activities that enhance the skills, resources, and abilities necessary to increase your Tribal Conservation District’s ability to start projects that effectively address your District’s natural resource priorities. We are interested in learning how your district develops, utilizes, and strengthens existing internal resources (e.g., personnel, expertise, partnerships, supplies, facilities, etc.), as well as external partnerships with NRCS and other Tribal Conservation Districts, to most effectively achieve its natural resource goals. Proposals must clearly communicate how the proposed activities will enhance internal resources, skills and capabilities during project period, as well as how this capacity will be sustained once the grant period ends.

Each tribal conservation district is the expert in what their natural resource priorities are, as well as what your most critical capacity building needs are. It is anticipated that capacity building activities might include staff time, skills training for staff, accounting software, grant writers or strategic planning facilitators, building partnerships with other entities who share your resource concerns, providing leadership in sustaining the new TCD Network with a committee or trainings, etc. If you have questions or ideas that you want to discuss, please call or email us. Communication and collaboration are our goals!

Outcomes are statements that outline the change or difference you expect to see in your target audience(s) as a result of your project. Outcomes can describe how your Tribal Conservation District will operate differently after your activities are done and often describe changes in knowledge, skill, attitudes, interests, behavior, environment, or systems. Outcomes can also include visionary statements that describe changes which may continue to occur after the grant period concludes.

Example Outcome Statement: “The proposed training program for technicians in August will increase our participation in registering farm track numbers with the USDA Farm Service Agency.”

In 2026-2027, the Alaska Tribal Conservation District program will facilitate two annual meetings (January 2026 and January 2027 in Anchorage) and six regional trainings (dates and locations TBD). Travel will be provided for two representatives from each TCD to attend the annual meetings and does not need to be included in this proposal. However, TCDs wishing to travel to any of the regional trainings must include those costs in their subgrant proposals. The locations and training topics for those meetings have not yet been set, so it is understood that you may include general budget estimates for participation – and the program administrators will continue to communicate this spring about where and when specific trainings will become available.

Guidelines and Process

Goals

To increase the unique capacities of Alaska’s Tribal Conservation Districts to build and maintain their sustainable resource plans, as well as funding and technical relationships with NRCS and other TCDs.

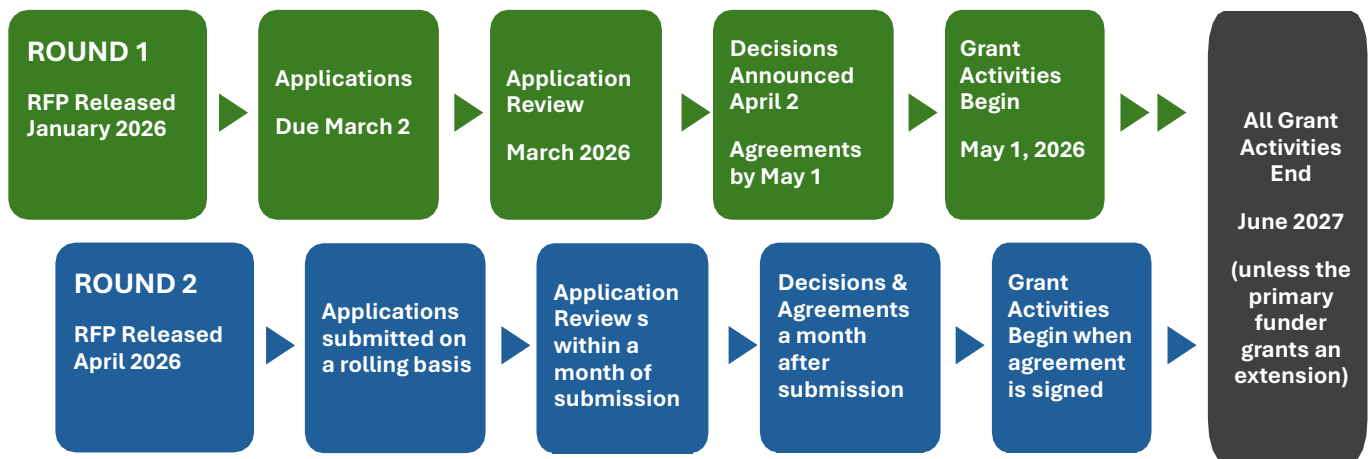
Eligibility

Applicants must be Alaska Tribal Conservation Districts with a negotiated Agreement with USDA. Agreements may be current or in the process of renewal. TTCD, AITRC, and Knik are program administrators and not eligible for subgrants.

Application Limits

An eligible Alaska Tribal Conservation District may only implement one grant at a time.

2026-2027 Timeline



Submission

Proposal documents should be emailed to TCDNetwork@ttcd.org. Any questions about this project should be directed to TCDNetwork@ttcd.org or 907-278-2103. Communication is encouraged.

Review & Selection Process

After submission, proposals will be reviewed by program staff at Tyonek Tribal Conservation District, Knik Tribe, and the Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission for adherence to program criteria. These program staff may reach out to applicants for clarification or revision of the activities and/or budget items. Consultation and approvals may also be solicited from USDA-NRCS and/or Denali Commission if there are questions about how activities may align with USDA conservation practices or subgrant requirements. Once a proposal has been fully approved, TTCD will notify applicants and initiate the subgrant process.

Distributions & Reporting Requirements

Half of the approved grant funds will be disbursed upon execution of the agreement. Program staff will check in with subgrantees once per quarter during the project to provide support and ensure the project stays on track. The remainder of funds will be disbursed approximately six months after the project start date if the project demonstrates being on track. The subgrant agreement will specify required narrative and finance reporting. Final narrative reports may be submitted in writing or by phone interview. Final budget reports must document how the funds were expended as proposed.

Criteria Rubric

Round 1 is not competitive. Grant administrators will assess each application and work with eligible applicants to meet the following criteria before approving subgrant awards.

Category	Criteria
Justification	Proposal clearly describes the capacity gap or needs of the Tribal Conservation District.
Outcomes	Proposal describes how the Tribal Conservation District will be in a stronger position to meet its natural resource concerns in future years as a result of the activities included in this budget.
Activities	Activities are clearly described. Proposal describes how these activities will accomplish project outcomes. Activities can reasonably be accomplished within the budget and timeline of the proposal. Project outcomes and activities convey strong intention and probability to build relevant capacity needed to meet the applicant’s natural resource needs, as well as technical relationships with NRCS and other tribal conservation districts.
Timeline	Presents a realistic and reasonable timeline that supports proposed activities and outcomes.
Detailed Budget	Presents a reasonable and detailed budget that aligns to and supports the proposed activities. Expenses are explained in each line item. All expenses are allowable and the indirect rate is applied appropriately.
Identified Challenges	Proposal realistically details potential challenges to the success of this project. Program Administrators will discuss these challenges with applicants to build a monitoring and support plan.

Application Materials

Proposal documents should be emailed to **TCDNetwork@ttcd.org**. Please attach the following documents to the email:

1. **Project Narrative** – Refer to pages 6 for instructions on what to include in this narrative. This can be attached as a Word document (.doc) or PDF (.pdf).
2. **Detailed Budget** – Refer to pages 7-8 for instructions on what to include in a detailed budget table. A separate budget narrative is not required, as long as the budget table includes details that justify the expense calculations. This can be attached as a Word document (.doc), PDF (.pdf), or Excel Spreadsheet (.xlsx).
3. **Financial Health & Compliance Documentation** – Please submit an Audited Financial Statement for the last year an audit was conducted. If a recent audited report is not available or applicable, please attach a 2025 Statement of Income & Expenses. This can be attached as a Word document (.doc) or PDF (.pdf).
4. **NICRA (optional)** – If your organization has a current negotiated indirect cost rate agreement with a federal agency, please attach the current agreement as a PDF (.pdf). If your organization does not have a current NICRA, you may utilize a 15% de minimis rate in your budget.
5. **Letters of Commitment (optional)** – If your project activities and/or budget rely on partnerships with other organizations or entities, please include Letters of Commitment from the relevant partners.

Special note: Some applicant organizations may be most familiar with IGAP or other agency proposals. It is our intention to create an application process that reduces paperwork and administrative burdens while still ensuring fiscal and programmatic compliance. Applicants are welcome to submit their proposals in a format that they are most practiced in, as long as all of the required elements of the narrative and detailed budget are included. In March, grant administrators will be available to work with submitted applications to modify proposal details together.

Project Narrative

Please include the following information in your project narrative. For questions 8-12, there are no word or character requirements. Please be thorough enough in your responses that Program Administrators can understand your project.

Introduction:

1. **Organization's Legal Name and EIN**
(And Fiscal Agent's Legal Name and EIN, if applicable)
2. **Organization's Signing Authority** (Director/CEO/President): *Name, Title, Phone, Email Address*
(And Fiscal Agent's Director/CEO/President: Name, Title, Phone, Email Address, if applicable)
3. **Primary Applicant Contact:** *Name, Title, Phone, Contact Email Address*
4. **Secondary Applicant Contact:** *Name, Title, Phone, Contact Email Address*
5. **Project Name:** *Up to 10 words*
6. **Brief Summary of Project:** *(1-2 sentences) "The activities proposed in this project will increase the capacity of our Tribal Conservation District to address our resource concerns by..."*
7. **Requested Amount:** *Up to \$40,000*

Project Details:

8. **Justification:** What gap or need does this proposal address? If this proposal builds on existing work, please briefly summarize progress to date.
9. **Proposed Outcomes:** Describe one or two key outcome(s) or change(s) that your project will achieve. How will your TCD be in a stronger position to meet your natural resource concerns in future years? How will this project increase the capacity of your TCD to build and maintain sustainable resource plans, as well as funding and technical relationships with NRCS and other TCDs?
10. **Proposed Activities:** Briefly summarize proposed activities and their alignment to your project outcomes. What specifically will you do to accomplish the outcomes you identified and why do you think these activities will be effective?
11. **Timeline:** Provide a high-level timeline that outlines an achievable plan to carry out key activities throughout the grant term.
12. **Potential Challenges:** Describe any anticipated challenges or inherent risks that might inform, delay, or alter your project during this timeline, and how you are accounting for them in your plans. Program Administrators will discuss these challenges with you to build a monitoring and support plan.
13. **Other (optional):** Any additional information you wish to share?

Detailed Budget

Please submit your budget in a format the same as (or similar to) the table outlined on page 8.

For each of the Major Expense Categories, please break down the items and costs included to reach the totals included in your budget spreadsheet. The detailed budget and proposal narrative should work together to explain how costs are essential and support project objectives.

Personnel (Salaries + Fringe): Salaries are expenses paid by the grantee organization for employees that are key to accomplishing the objectives by working on the project activities during the grant period for the percentage of effort estimated in the budget for each staff member.

Fringe benefits can be included in the calculations, calculated based on total cost of employee benefits as a percent of annual salary. Fringe benefits include, but are not limited to, the costs of leave, FICA, health insurance, matching contributions, pensions, workers' compensation, and unemployment insurance.

List the key contributors and/or positions who will be leading the project, including their job titles and FTE dedicated to their project. In a few phrases, describe each position/person's role and relevant experience.

Travel: Itemize all costs used for transportation, lodging, meals, ground travel, and related items incurred by project personnel and outside consultants employed on the project who are on project-related travel. Calculations should follow the grantee organization's travel policies. Travel allowances and per diem (or meals provided in lieu of per diem) are allowed but should not exceed federal per diem rates.

Conferences, Meetings, Professional Development: Itemize costs used for planning or participating in conferences or meetings, or costs paid to support educational or training expenses for project personnel that are essential to the project.

Materials / Supplies: Itemize tangible items and consumables, including equipment costing less than \$5,000 per unit, as well as consumable items that can be documented and are essential to the project.

Equipment: Itemize any individual piece of equipment (physical item) with a useful life of more than two years and a total cost of \$5,000 or more that is necessary to support the project. Equipment costing less than \$5,000 is considered a supply item. NOTE: The calculation of indirect costs as a percentage of total direct costs must **exclude** equipment costs. Equipment must be acquired in accordance with grantee organization's procurement process and policy.

Contractors, Outside Services: Itemize costs budgeted for professional services of persons or companies contributing to the project who are not employees of the organization. Your project narrative should have summarized the goal of their work and how it will build your internal organizational capacity. The selection, documentation, and payment of contractors should be done in accordance with written policies of the grantee organization; however, it is recommended to seek more than one quote for a scope of work.

Other: Please describe any costs that do not fit into the categories above.

Indirect Costs: You may include a 15% de minimis indirect cost recovery of Direct Costs (excluding Equipment), unless you have a current NICRA that can be applied. Indirect cost recovery can be applied to administrative or general operations of an organization that are shared among projects and/or functions. Examples include executive oversight, existing facilities costs, accounting, grants management, legal expenses, utilities, and technology support.

Suggested Format for Detailed Budget Table:

MAJOR EXPENSE CATEGORIES	GRANT TERM (May 1, 2026 – Dec 1, 2027)		
	AMOUNT REQUESTED	COST SHARE (NOT REQUIRED)	TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET
Personnel (Salaries + Fringe)			
Personnel #1, including title, FTE on this project, salary, and benefit rate			
Personnel #2, including title, FTE on this project, salary, and benefit rate			
Personnel #3, including title, FTE on this project, salary, and benefit rate			
Personnel #4, including title, FTE on this project, salary, and benefit rate			
Travel			
List itemized travel expenses			
Conferences, Meetings, Prof. Development			
List itemized conference, meeting, and/or professional development expenses			
Materials, Supplies			
List itemized supply expenses			
Equipment			
List itemized equipment expenses			
Contractors, Outside Services			
List itemized contract and services expenses			
Other			
List itemized "other" expenses			
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS			
INDIRECT COSTS (not to exceed 15% or NICRA)			
TOTAL DIRECT + INDIRECT COSTS			

