



## 2026 Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program Terms

The Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program is an annual competitive grant program that provides funding to partners for projects that support and advance the goals of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape.

The Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape is a public-private partnership that drives strategic investment and actions around sustainability, conservation, community revitalization, and recreational projects across all of Berks County and portions of Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Lebanon, and Montgomery Counties. The Schuylkill Highlands partnership and the Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program are funded in part by a grant from the Community Conservation Partnership Program under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (PA DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. The Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape and the Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program are administered by Natural Lands, a 501(c)3 land conservation organization.

All projects, related costs, and funding must conform to the guidelines of the PA DCNR [Community Conservation Partnerships Program](#).

### Application Deadline:

Mini-grant applications will be accepted until **4:00 PM on Thursday May 14, 2026**.

### Applications:

Applicants must contact (via email or phone) the Schuylkill Highlands Program Manager prior to beginning a mini-grant application to discuss the project proposal.

All mini-grant applications must be submitted through the Natural Lands **online grant portal**, **found [here](#)**. A link to the application can also be found by visiting [www.schuylkillhighlands.org/mini-grants](http://www.schuylkillhighlands.org/mini-grants).

Beginning with the 2026 Round, the Natural Lands online grant portal for the Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program is on the Foundant grantmaking platform. An instructional video and written tutorial for the application portal are available on the logon page.

### Eligible Applicants:

All local, regional, and county government agencies within the boundaries of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape and incorporated non-profit organizations registered with the Bureau of Corporations and Charitable Organizations are welcome to apply for funding, regardless of their level of engagement with the Schuylkill Highlands Partnership. A map illustrating the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape boundaries can be found [here](#).

Awardees must have no more than two (2) Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grants open simultaneously.



### Eligible Projects:

Projects must be located within the boundaries of the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape, which includes 163 municipalities across all of Berks County and portions of Bucks, Chester, Lancaster, Lebanon, and Montgomery Counties. A map illustrating the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape boundaries can be found [here](#).

For Site Based projects, public access is required.

Funding may not be used for fee title or easement acquisition.

### Grant Amount, Project Costs, and Match:

Funding is awarded up to \$15,000. Total project costs are not to exceed \$50,000.

A 25% match of the grant award is required. Up to 50% of the match may be in-kind. In-kind match for municipal labor and/or professional services is equal to the individual's hourly billable rate multiplied by the number of hours they performed that service or job. For the current Independent Sector Volunteer Rate for Pennsylvania, please visit <https://independentsector.org/research/value-of-volunteer-time/>.

**NOTE: No portion of the match can originate from PA DCNR, either directly or indirectly.**

### Grant Timing:

Mini-grant applications will be accepted until **4:00 PM on Thursday May 14, 2026**.

Funding decisions will be made by June 30. All applicants will be notified of their application's status.

For awarded projects, a sub-agreement must be fully executed prior to project start up. At the onset of the project, 90% of the mini-grant funding will be provided. The final 10% of funding will be withheld until all final documentation is submitted and approved to close out the award.

Projects are to be completed within a twelve (12) to fifteen (15) month period from when the funding is awarded. The end date for the period will be stipulated in the sub-agreement.

Awardees must submit a brief Progress Report halfway through the grant period. Additional Progress Reports may be required at the option of the Schuylkill Highlands Program Manager.

At the conclusion of the project, awardees must submit the following:

1. **Brief Final Report** with evidence of deliverables
2. **Project Success Story** celebrating the project
3. **Summary of Costs** to include proof of expenditures for **all project costs (awarded funding, match, and additional)**, including paid invoices, cancelled checks, receipts, etc., as well as the date, pay rate, and action for labor and professional services
4. **Close Out and Final Payment Request Form**



**Acknowledgement:**

All projects must acknowledge funding support from the Schuylkill Highlands Conservation Landscape and PA DCNR. Language will be provided.

**Administrator:**

Address all communications to:

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