

April 21, 2021

Grant Review Team
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
1133 Fifteenth St., N.W. Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005

Re: Grant Application - Tree Equity in Greater Washington – Leveraging Urban Forests for Climate & Health with the Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA)

Dear Grant Review Team,

In collaboration with American Forest's (AF), the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is excited to apply for grant funding to support our efforts to bring the Tree Equity Score Analyzer (TESA) to the Greater Washington region. American Forest's leadership in the urban forestry movement combined with COG's innovative approaches to community engagement and regional partnerships on climate and equity make this proposal unique in addressing high priority climate and health issues for the region.

For more than 30 years, COG has been conducting reforestation projects in the Metropolitan Washington Region, primarily through our Anacostia Watershed Restoration Partnership program and COG's Regional Forestry Program. Reforestation efforts carried out by COG in partnership with our member local governments have always given deference to underserved communities when selecting our planting locations. However, planting trees in the built environment is becoming increasingly difficult due to challenges in many neighborhoods and commercial zones, (concrete, asphalt, narrow street corridors, overhead power lines and such). Our proposed development and application of the Tree Equity Score Analyzer will help us do more work in underserved communities by shining a light on some of these infrastructure barriers, and identifying suitable public locations to plant trees where the benefits are maximized and inconveniences are minimized. The expected project outcomes include increased forest cover, reduced urban heat island effects, improved microclimates, and enhanced community livability. Furthermore, this project will help in meeting our regional climate goals set in the Metropolitan Washington 2030 Climate and Energy Action Plan.

The Greater Washington TESA, should it be funded, will not only provide the type of decision-making support our region needs to allocate scarce resources, but it will also help to direct resources towards those communities that have too often been neglected in our fight against climate change. Through this grant and using the Anacostia Watershed Restoration Plan as a backbone, the partnership will employ existing programs and funding mechanisms to implement tree planting projects in the Anacostia watershed. COG pledges in-kind support for this effort in the form of networking resources, convening skills, and facilities and staff support.

COG appreciates your consideration of this important, innovative proposal. We are committed to working with American Forests in implementing this work watershed-wide, across multiple jurisdictions.

Please do not hesitate to contact Phong Trieu (ptrieu@mwkog.org; 202-962-3291) or Brian LeCouteur (blecouteur@mwkog.org; 202-962-3393) of the COG Department of Environmental Planning staff if you require additional information or to answer any questions regarding this important project.

Sincerely,



Chuck Bean
COG Executive Director